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Print ISSN: [3006-2497](#) Online ISSN: [3006-2500](#)<https://doi.org/10.55966/assaj.2025.4.1.078>Platform & Workflow by: [Open Journal Systems](#)**Teachers Role to Cultivate Tolerance among Students at Graduate Level****Ayesha Saddiq**

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rashid.minas@uskt.edu.pk**ABSTRACT**

Teachers play a decisive role in fostering tolerance through inclusive classroom environments, encourage critical thinking, and model respectful dialogue. In order to assess the role of teachers to cultivate tolerance among college students' researcher used explanatory sequential mixed-method research design. Population for this study was all Government Graduate Colleges (Women) and working teachers in Government Graduate Colleges (Women) from District Sialkot. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select sample from different departments of BS level program. Sample size was 204 students and 50 teachers from Tehsil Sambrial and Sialkot of District Sialkot. Data was gathered through two questionnaires, one is self-developed questionnaire which collected data from students and other questionnaire comprises an open ended question which collects data from teachers. Frequency, percentage, mean score, standard deviation, and T.test were used to analyses of data. Thematic analysis was also used to analysed the open ended question. The result of the study depicts that a potential area for improvement because the outcomes of study recommended that educators may not find success in encouraging pupils to interact each other with respect and avoid biases. The study highlights the need of opportunities to promote tolerance effectively. A critical number of respondents accept that educators didn't organize collaborative activities, cultural exchange projects, or conversations about cultural diversity and decrease prejudices.

Keywords: *Cultivate Tolerance, Critical Thinking, Social Harmony, Democratic Engagement.*

Introduction

In today's diverse and interconnected world, tolerance has become a critical value for promoting peaceful coexistence, social harmony, and democratic engagement. Tolerance involves the respectful acceptance of differences in race, religion, language, culture, and opinions. Students' attitudes, actions, and worldviews are greatly influenced by educational institutions, particularly graduate programs. As future professionals and leaders, graduate students must develop the capacity to engage with diverse perspectives without prejudice or discrimination.

Teachers play a crucial role in fostering tolerance through inclusive classroom environments, encourage critical thinking, and model respectful dialogue. According to Banks (2016), teachers have an impact on how students interact with others who have different beliefs and backgrounds through both the formal curriculum and the hidden curriculum, which is made up of values and

attitudes that are communicated indirectly. Higher education provides a unique setting for developing democratic values such as respect for human rights, civic responsibility, and intercultural understanding. However, the challenge lies in how effectively teachers are equipped and motivated to cultivate these values among their students. Without intentional efforts, universities may risk reinforcing social divisions rather than bridging them (UNESCO, 2017).

In light of the rising levels of intolerance, extremism, and polarization in many societies, it is crucial to investigate the ways in which university educators can actively promote tolerance as a fundamental educational objective. This article explores the role of teachers at the graduate level in fostering a culture of tolerance, with a focus on teaching practices, institutional challenges, and recommendations for improvement.

Teachers develop a relationship between individuals and society, encompassing rights, responsibilities. Over the years, their importance has become even more evident due to their role to develop social cohesion, ensuring democratic participation, and enhancing social growth. Tolerance cultivates a sense of belonging, creating understanding about different cultures. This understanding transcends individual differences and encourages collaboration towards common goals, such as national development and social harmony. This sense of unity is especially important in multicultural societies, where tolerance serves as a bridge for integration (Center for American Progress, 2024).

Tolerance is a fundamental value in higher education, as it supports the development of inclusive, respectful, and intellectually learning environments. Universities are not only places where academic knowledge is shared, but also places where people from different cultures, religions, ideologies, and socioeconomic backgrounds meet, often for the first time. Tolerance fosters mutual understanding, aids in the prevention of discrimination, and improves students' capacity for critical thinking and democratic participation in such settings. The importance of tolerance lies in its contribution to peaceful coexistence, social cohesion, and academic freedom. When students learn to engage with different viewpoints respectfully, they become better prepared to function in pluralistic societies and diverse workplaces. Moreover, cultivating tolerance helps reduce prejudice, promote intercultural dialogue, and build resilience against extremism (UNESCO, 2015).

In the 21st century, universities are expected not only to produce skilled graduates but also responsible global citizens. According to Janmaat, J. G. (2022) teaching tolerance is in line with broader educational objectives like human rights, civic responsibility, and sustainable development. Teachers play a central role in this process by modeling inclusive behavior, managing classroom diversity, and facilitating discussions that encourage empathy and respect.

Pakistan's different social and ethnic structure requires cultivating development and unprejudiced society. Instructors assume a fundamental part and empower exchanges on compassion, regard for contrast perspectives, and settle clashes calmly. Teachers can incorporate legitimate proficiency and moral conversations into the educational plan, stressing the significance of law and order for cultural advancement and individual prosperity. Educators advocate for the extraordinary force of education, rousing graduate understudies' self-esteem as a way of individual and cultural strengthen through education for all. As indicated by Qazi and Shah (2020), develop resilience through education is vital for tending cultural contentions and advance concordance.

Educators develop tolerance through encouraging individuals to embrace diversity, understand different perspectives, and build mutual respect in multicultural societies. As global interconnectivity grows to promote tolerance through citizenship, it becomes essential for societal harmony and democracy. Teachers and students create an environment about cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity, where differences are respected. Programs like the European Union's Paris Declaration emphasize citizenship's role in promoting tolerance, equality, and freedom through structured education policies. These initiatives aim to counteract extremism and discrimination by embedding the values of inclusivity into education systems (UK Parliament, 2023). Effective educational strategies engage students in discussions about societal and political issues, develop critical thinking and reduce stereotypes. Structured debates and participatory projects empower individuals to express and understand diverse viewpoints. For instance, studies have shown that citizenship programs boost trust and empathy among young learners, which is necessary for cultivating tolerance Popova, R. (2025). Schools play a pivotal role by introducing active citizenship projects that foster collaboration and a sense of belonging among students of varied backgrounds (European Commission, 2016). Understand and respect laws through citizenship education that contribute to tolerance through legal frameworks which protect rights and freedoms. Democratic processes and human rights tells that individuals should appreciate and respect the rights of others, regardless of differences (European Commission, 2016).

Researcher wants to know if teachers are playing their role in promoting tolerance because it is necessary for a peaceful place to live in. In fact, we can identify two opposing trends: on the one hand post-national forms of identity are emerging in an increasingly interconnected, interdependent and culturally diverse society and on the other hand populism, nationalism, identitarian closure, ethnic conflicts and religious extremism are rising. So, it is very important to develop understanding about emerging trends among students. It is the responsibility of teachers to understand the need of the hour and develop understanding and acceptance about cultural diversity as a citizen of Pakistan in graduate students.

Role of Teachers in Cultivating Tolerance

Teachers work as middle people among educational plans and understudies, installing tolerance ideas into examples. For instance, teachers in Finland stress participative school culture and democratic administration, empower understudies to effectively add to school decisions. This approach lines up with more extensive objectives to encourage democratic commitment and social obligation (Salzburg Global Seminar, 2024). Tolerance education expects educators to direct understudies in investigating different viewpoints and handling complex cultural issues. By engaging understudies in conversations and discussions, educators assist with building abilities like basic examination, compassion, and critical thinking. Programs in the U.S. furthermore, Canada, similar to service learning projects, link classroom knowledge with real world community issues, showing the way that understudies can have a tangible effect while grasping cultural designs (Salzburg Global Seminar, 2022). Proficient development programs, like those in the U.S. furthermore, Canada, give educators the resources to adapt to modern instructive demands, guaranteeing that they are prepared to get ready understudies for dynamic citizenship in different settings (ERIC, 2020; UNESCO, 2021).

Teachers promote tolerance which upgrading student's abilities, mentalities, and academic ways to prepare understudies as dynamic, capable citizen. Recent initiatives emphasize furnishing educators with capabilities in critical reasoning, global awareness, and sustainability lined up with

21st-century instructive objectives (AFS Intercultural Programs. 2020). Foundations like Piramal have supported project-based learning (PBL) to upgrade citizenship training. PBL includes active activities that show understudies real-world critical thinking, decisive reasoning, and teamwork (Piramal Foundation. 2024) This approach enables educators to progress from customary systems to dynamic, student-centered practices. Reflective practice urges instructors to ceaselessly break down and further improve their educating procedures. Workshops encourage growing mentality which assist educator to adopt innovative practices and defeat difficulties, which are fundamental for effectively nurturing tolerance values in understudies

Digital platforms and resources are progressively incorporated into educator training to help the conveyance of tolerance education. These tools give intuitive and open means to understudies and educators to engage with worldwide issues, encouraging digital proficiency alongside civic obligation. Cooperative endeavors among associations like UNESCO, AFS, and public foundations focus on fortifying instructors' capacities to meet assorted classroom needs. These organizations give resources, training, and acknowledgment programs for instructors committed to cultivating dynamic citizenship (UNESCO. 2023).

Successful educating incorporates establishing comprehensive conditions that respect different perspectives and backgrounds. In countries like Singapore and Estonia, educator capabilities emphasize engaging students through tailored help and cooperation with families, exhibiting the significance of value in current school systems (NCEE, 2024). Educators are urged to show lifelong learning by participating in professional improvement that reflects contemporary educational demands, like digital proficiency, interdisciplinary information, and socio-emotional abilities. For example, proficient standards in Hong Kong and Estonia focus on preparing educators to be facilitators of profound learning and problem solvers (NCEE, 2024).

Educators have been instrumental in tending to educational disparities and encouraging inclusivity inside multicultural communities. They instruct as well as serve as role models and connectors among schools and the broader community, enhance efforts to establish equitable learning environment and community wellbeing. These commitments strengthen the evolving and effective role of teachers in reinforcing community ties and promoting aggregate progress (Harvard Graduate School of Education. 2024, March).

Objective of the study

To examine teachers' role to promote tolerance in graduate students.

The significance of this article lies in highlighting how graduate-level education, often seen as a stage for developing professional and civic responsibilities, must integrate tolerance as a key educational outcome. Graduate students are future leaders, researchers, educators, and policymakers; cultivating tolerance at this stage contributes to building a more peaceful and democratic society. Teachers influence students not only through curriculum delivery but also through their behavior, classroom management, and interaction styles.

As literature suggests, educational institutions must go beyond knowledge transmission and actively engage in value-based education. Tolerance is not an automatic outcome of higher learning; it must be consciously developed through pedagogical strategies, discussions, and exposure to diverse viewpoints (UNESCO, 1998). The role of the teacher is central in this process, as they model respectful communication and create safe spaces for dialogue.

Research Methodology

In order to assess the role of teachers to cultivate tolerance among college students' researcher use explanatory sequential mixed-method research design. It helps researcher to assess areas quantitatively in which teachers contribute to cultivate citizenship among students (Shields, P. M., & Whetsell, T. A. 2014). This study conduct in two phases in first phase quantitative data is collected about a phenomenon through survey and then in second phase researcher collect qualitative data through open ended questionnaire. The population of the study comprised all the students and teachers in Government Graduate Colleges (W) in District Sialkot. The students were (740) and the teachers (153) in the above-mentioned graduate colleges. The information about the population of the study collected from the administration of concerned graduate colleges. Stratified random sampling technique is used to select sample from different departments of BS level program. Strata's are made on the basis of gender (male and female), female are selected and then further from all 8 semesters students, semester 1, 3, 5, 7, students are selected as sample. A structured survey is administered to a sample of 204 graduate students (female) and 50 teachers (female) in Tehsil Sialkot and Sambryal of District Sialkot. Sample size was 204 students and 50 teachers from Tehsil Sambrial and Sialkot of District Sialkot.

Data Analysis

The researcher put the raw data in MS Excel and then import the file to the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 25). Quantitative data are analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize the prevalence of specific teaching practices and institutional supports. The study's research issues were addressed using the statistical concepts of mean, standard deviation, frequency, and T.test. Qualitative data are analyzed using thematic analysis. Themes are identified to provide a nuanced understanding of the practices, challenges, and contextual factors shaping students' attitude in District Sialkot.

Table 1; *Teachers encourage students to interact with peers.*

Sr. No	Statement	Scale	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	SD	T.test
1	Teachers encourage students to interact with peers.	SD	36	17.6%	3.17	1.404	32.207
		D	40	19.6%			
		U	20	9.8%			
		A	70	34.3%			
		SA	38	18.6%			
			204	100.0%			

This table indicates that majority of respondents (34.3%) agreed and (18.6%) strongly agreed that teachers encourage students to interact with peers, which suggests positive response towards the statement. A notable portion of respondents strongly disagree (17.6%) and disagree (19.6%), shows a polarized view and (9.8%) respondents gave undecided response. The mean score (3.17), indicates that the average response tends to lean slightly towards agreement and Standard Deviation (1.404), suggests considerable variability in responses across the scale. T-test value of (32.207), indicates a significant result regarding teachers encourage students to interact with peers. The overall respondents have positive view towards the statement "Teachers encourage students to interact with peers."

Table 2; *Teachers organize activities to encourage collaboration among students.*

Sr. No	Statement	Scale	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	SD	T.test
2	Teachers organize activities to encourage collaboration among students.	SD	34	16.7%	2.84	1.203	33.704
		D	47	23.0%			
		U	58	28.4%			
		A	48	23.5%			
		SA	17	8.3%			
			204	100.0%			

This table indicates that majority of respondents (16.7%) strongly disagreed and (23.0%) disagreed that teachers organize activities to encourage collaboration among students, which suggests negative response towards the statement. A notable portion of respondents strongly agree (8.3%) and agree (23.5%), shows different opinion and (28.4%) respondents gave undecided response. The mean score (2.84), indicates that the average response tends to lean slightly towards disagreement and Standard Deviation (1.203), suggests considerable variability in responses across the scale. T-test value of (33.704), indicates a significant result regarding teachers organize activities to encourage collaboration among students. The 31% respondents have positive view towards the statement "Teachers organize activities to encourage collaboration among students."

Table 3; *Teachers behavior reduce prejudices in classroom.*

Sr. No	Statement	Scale	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	SD	T.test
3	Teachers behavior reduce prejudices in classroom.	SD	37	18.1%	3.01	1.271	33.820
		D	35	17.2%			
		U	38	18.6%			
		A	77	37.7%			
		SA	17	8.3%			
			204	100.0%			

This table indicates that majority of respondents (37.7%) agreed and (8.3%) strongly agreed that teachers' behavior reduce prejudices in classroom, which suggests positive response towards the statement. A notable portion of respondents strongly disagree (18.1%) and disagree (17.2%), shows a polarized view and (18.6%) respondents gave undecided response. The mean score (3.01), indicates that the average response tends to lean slightly towards agreement and Standard Deviation (1.271), suggests considerable variability in responses across the scale. T-test value of (33.820), indicates a significant result regarding teachers' behavior reduce prejudices in classroom. The overall respondents have positive view towards the statement "Teachers behavior reduce prejudices in classroom."

Table 4; *Teachers organize activities to promote different cultures to reduce biases.*

Sr. No	Statement	Scale	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	SD	T.test
4	Teachers organize activities to promote different cultures to reduce biases.	SD	47	23.0%	2.70	1.277	30.149
		D	53	26.0%			
		U	31	15.2%			
		A	61	29.9%			
		SA	12	5.9%			
			204	100.0%			

This table indicates that majority of respondents (23.0%) strongly disagreed and (26.0%) disagreed that teachers organize activities to promote different cultures to reduce biases, which suggests negative response towards the statement. A notable portion of respondents strongly agree (5.9%) and agree (29.9%), shows different opinion and (15.2%) respondents gave undecided response. The mean score (2.70), indicates that the average response tends to lean slightly towards disagreement and Standard Deviation (1.277), suggests considerable variability in responses across the scale. T-test value of (30.149), indicates a significant result regarding teachers organize activities to promote different cultures to reduce biases. The 35% respondents have positive view towards the statement “Teachers organize activities to promote different cultures to reduce biases.”

Table 5; *Teachers organize cultural exchange activities in classroom.*

Sr. No	Statement	Scale	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	SD	T.test
5	Teachers organize cultural exchange activities in classroom.	SD	59	28.9%	2.50	1.288	27.659
		D	54	26.5%			
		U	37	18.1%			
		A	39	19.1%			
		SA	15	7.4%			
			204	100.0%			

This table indicates that majority of respondents (28.9%) strongly disagreed and (26.5%) disagreed that teachers organize cultural exchange activities in classroom, which suggests negative response towards the statement. A notable portion of respondents strongly agree (7.4%) and agree (19.1%), shows different opinion and (18.1%) respondents gave undecided response. The mean score (2.50), indicates that the average response tends to lean slightly towards disagreement and Standard Deviation (1.288), suggests considerable variability in responses across the scale. T-test value of (27.659), indicates a significant result regarding teachers organize cultural exchange activities in classroom. The 25% respondents have positive view towards the statement “Teachers organize cultural exchange activities in classroom.”

Table 6; *Teachers provide literature to encourage tolerance in students.*

Sr. No	Statement	Scale	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	SD	T.test
6	Teachers provide literature to encourage tolerance in students.	SD	56	27.5%	2.64	1.345	28.008
		D	45	22.1%			
		U	41	20.1%			
		A	41	20.1%			
		SA	21	10.3%			
			204	100.0%			

This table indicates that majority of respondents (27.5%) strongly disagreed and (22.1%) disagreed that teachers provide literature to encourage tolerance in students, which suggests negative response towards the statement. A notable portion of respondents strongly agree (10.3%) and agree (20.1%), shows different opinion and (20.1%) respondents gave undecided response. The mean score (2.64), indicates that the average response tends to lean slightly towards disagreement and Standard Deviation (1.345), suggests considerable variability in responses across the scale. T-test value of (28.008), indicates a significant result regarding teachers provide literature to encourage tolerance in students. The 30% respondents have positive view towards the statement “Teachers provide literature to encourage tolerance in students.”

Table 7; *Teachers introduce cross-cultural friendship in classroom to develop understanding.*

Sr. No	Statement	Scale	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	SD	T.test
7	Teachers introduce cross-cultural friendship in classroom to develop understanding.	SD	60	29.4%	2.66	1.390	27.309
		D	38	18.6%			
		U	43	21.1%			
		A	38	18.6%			
		SA	25	12.3%			
			204	100.0%			

This table indicates that majority of respondents (29.4%) strongly disagreed and (18.6%) disagreed that teachers introduce cross-cultural friendship in classroom to develop understanding, which suggests negative response towards the statement. A notable portion of respondents strongly agree (12.3%) and agree (18.6%), shows different opinion and (21.1%) respondents gave undecided response. The mean score (2.66), indicates that the average response tends to lean slightly towards disagreement and Standard Deviation (1.390), suggests considerable variability in responses across the scale. T-test value of (27.309), indicates a significant result regarding teachers introduce cross-cultural friendship in classroom to develop understanding. The 30% respondents have positive view towards the statement “Teachers introduce cross-cultural friendship in classroom to develop understanding.”

Table 8; *Teachers encourage students to practice patience in difficult situations.*

Sr. No	Statement	Scale	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	SD	T.test
8	Teachers encourage students to practice patience in difficult situations.	SD	50	24.5%	3.01	1.433	30.044
		D	29	14.2%			
		U	21	10.3%			
		A	76	37.3%			
		SA	28	13.7%			
			204	100.0%			

This table indicates that majority of respondents (37.3%) agreed and (13.7%) strongly agreed that teachers encourage students to practice patience in difficult situations, which suggests positive response towards the statement. A notable portion of respondents strongly disagree (24.5%) and disagree (14.2%), shows a polarized view and (10.3%) respondents gave undecided response. The mean score (3.01), indicates that the average response tends to lean slightly towards agreement and Standard Deviation (1.433), suggests considerable variability in responses across the scale. T-test value of (30.044), indicates a significant result regarding teachers encourage students to practice patience in difficult situations. The overall respondents have positive view towards the statement "Teachers encourage students to practice patience in difficult situations."

Table 9; *Teachers organize debates on tolerance.*

Sr. No	Statement	Scale	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	SD	T.test
9	Teachers organize debates on tolerance.	SD	55	27.0%	2.80	1.380	28.963
		D	33	16.2%			
		U	34	16.7%			
		A	62	30.4%			
		SA	20	9.4%			
			204	100.0%			

This table indicates that majority of respondents (27.0%) strongly disagreed and (16.2%) disagreed that teachers organize debates on tolerance, which suggests negative response towards the statement. A notable portion of respondents strongly agree (9.4%) and agree (30.4%), shows different opinion and (16.7%) respondents gave undecided response. The mean score (2.80), indicates that the average response tends to lean slightly towards disagreement and Standard Deviation (1.380), suggests considerable variability in responses across the scale. T-test value of (28.963), indicates a significant result regarding teachers organize debates on tolerance. The 39% respondents have positive view towards the statement "Teachers organize debates on tolerance."

Table 10; *Teachers encourage participation of all students to promote tolerance.*

Sr. No	Statement	Scale	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	SD	T.test
10	Teachers encourage participation of all students to promote tolerance.	SD	60	29.4%	2.81	1.443	27.843
		D	31	15.2%			
		U	23	11.3%			
		A	67	32.8%			
		SA	23	11.3%			
			204	100.0%			

This table indicates that most respondents (29.4%) strongly disagreed and (15.2%) disagreed that teachers encourage participation of all students to promote tolerance, which suggests negative response towards the statement. A notable portion of respondents strongly agree (11.3%) and agree (32.8%), shows different opinion and (11.3%) respondents gave undecided response. The mean score (2.81), indicates that the average response tends to lean slightly towards disagreement and Standard Deviation (1.443), suggests considerable variability in responses across the scale. T-test value of (27.843), indicates a significant result regarding teachers encourage participation of all students to promote tolerance. The 44% respondents have positive and 44% respondents also recorded negative view towards the statement “Teachers encourage participation of all students to promote tolerance.” whereas (11.3%) respondents’ response undecided.

Findings

Teachers Cultivate Tolerance among Graduate Students

Thematic analysis was used to examine the information gathered from graduate level instructors. The following open ended question was included in a questionnaire that was used to get teacher’ thoughts in order to determine whether there was a common understanding of how teachers cultivate traits of tolerance among graduate students.

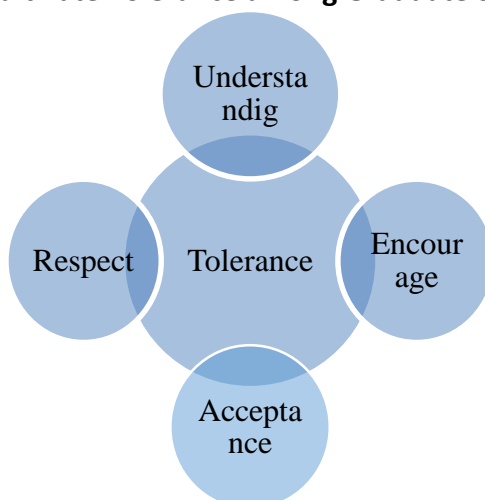
What challenges teachers face in promoting tolerance?

According to the coding system provided by Braun and Clarke (2006), the data were examined using an inductive thematic analysis with a realistic and semantic perspective. In order to find themes, the answers were examined, read again and then classified to identify themes in each piece of information. The roles of teachers to cultivate tolerance among students at graduate level are described under following main theme.

Tolerance

Majority of the respondents believed that understanding differences among people and acceptance of others rights are basic things which promote tolerance among students. They claim that respect for diversity and encourage practice tolerance in daily life is essential for developing socially acceptable behavior, arrange discussions to develop understanding and need of practice tolerance in their life. Teachers responded in favor of developing a sense of acceptance about differences in cultures, religions, race, gender and society to promote tolerance.

Fig 1 Teachers Role to Cultivate Tolerance among Graduate Students



Thematic Map of Cultivating Tolerance among Graduate Students

Conclusion

Based on the findings about teachers' role to examine teacher promote tolerance in students at graduate level, several conclusions are drawn:

The study highlights the role of educators in promoting tolerance among understudies, and findings demonstrate that educators energize understudy interaction and help to reduce biases in class through their behavior. They play a role in cultivating patience among understudies while confronting difficulties. However, the outcomes recommend that instructors may not be utilize opportunities to promote tolerance effectively. A critical number of respondents accept that educators don't organize collaborative activities, cultural exchange projects, or conversations about cultural diversity and decrease prejudices because these projects demand a big amount for accomplishment. Moreover, the lack of literature and organized debates on tolerance restricts understudies' exposure to different perspectives. There is a need of professionally training educators for relating concept of tolerance with day to day activities.

Instructors overall contribute to encourage interpersonal cooperation and decrease prejudices, there is a requirement for additional organized initiatives to promote tolerance effectively. Incorporating cultural activities, cross-cultural friendships, literature, and open discussions on tolerance could further enhance students' ability to respect and appreciate diversity.

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