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The Tolerance Level of High School Students

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Abstract

Consciousness of citizenship is a support for living together and sharing conceptions and depends on democracy, human rights, tolerance, justice and solidarity. This conception is gained by education and culture. Tolerance, the right to vote, to be elected and to engage in political activity, freedom of religion and conscience, critical view are important and necessary to be gained culture and conscious of democracy to adolescents. This paper examines the tolerance level of high school students in Çanakkale, Turkey. In this, the level of tolerance was related to grade level of high school education, to see if there were significant differences between them.

Introduction

What is tolerance?

> We can define the term tolerance as involving the willingness to accept differences of which, at whatever level, one might, as an individual or as a community, disapprove (it is related to, but distinct from, notions of freedom of belief. Put simply, only to tolerate something falls short of and does not necessitate granting or advocating freedom of expression to the action or belief tolerated.). For a person or group to be tolerant, three conditions must be met. First, there must be some conduct about which one disapproves, even if only minimally or potentially. Second, although such a person or group has power to act coercively against, or interfere to prevent, that of which they disapprove, they do not. Third, not interfering coercively must result from more than acquiescence, resignation, indifference or a balance of power. One does not tolerate that which one is not concerned about; nor is it tolerance simply to accept what one cannot, or is not willing to, change (either because one lacks power to effect change or because, for whatever reason, one fears to use one's power) (Luke, 2004).

Because of being a value that helps people to be aware of other individuals' ways of thinking, feeling, behaving differently from each other and strengthening to accept people as how they are, tolerance has a significant effect on the consciousness of citizenship: because the individual is aware of other individuals' thinking, feeling behaviour as different from his/hers and accepts each other how they are. People should tolerate opinions even if they disagree with some of them. Tolerance can also have patronising elements, which can even irritate or antagonise. Yet the rationale for tolerance is understandable, and it is a relatively non-threatening way to approach difference and prejudice. We must educate for peace and tolerance, for human rights and

democracy, for responsible citizens who know their rights, as well as their obligations, for a sustainable future. Tolerance is integral and essential to the realisation of human rights and the achievement of peace.
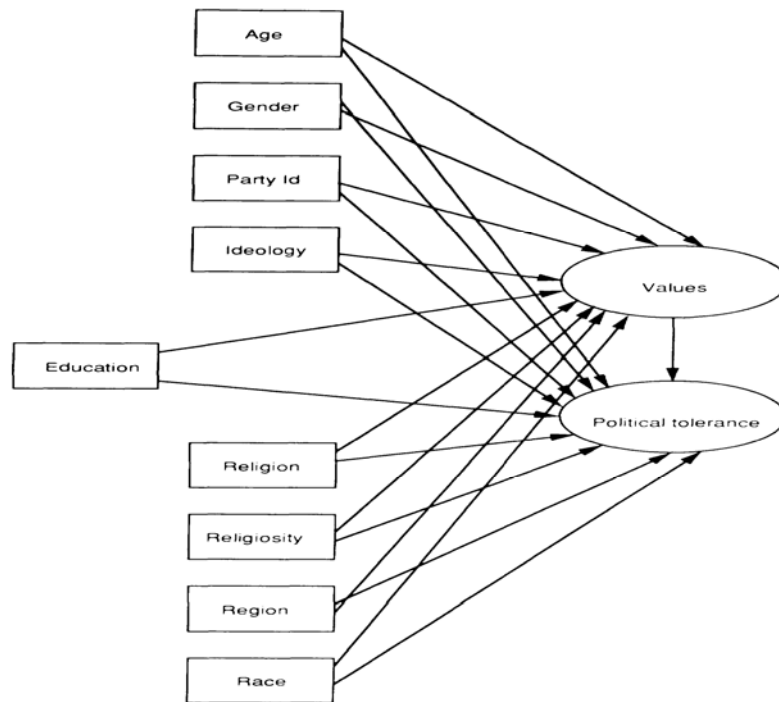
Fig 1. Theoretical expectations concerning the relationship between education, values and political tolerance, controlling for other variables (Ewa A. Golebiowska, 1995 pp.32).

Figure 1 shows theoretical expectations concerning the relationship between education, values and political tolerance, controlling for other variables. We wanted to define education's effect on tolerance.

Toleration cannot be taught directly. Educational goals must include teaching students "to think" comprehensively. For toleration, respect for students leads inevitably to greater thinking. The mission of select high schools is the development of the mind, character, and physical well-being of students through the creation of an environment fostering academic excellence, maturity, responsibility and mutual respect.

> To Gerhard Lenski, in general, that higher tolerance is linked to younger age, greater education. … And Samuel A. Stouffer emphasized the importance of positive relation between education and tolerance. His data indicated that there are independent, positive effects of education and age. And then discussed the importance of education in terms of a contact effect which takes place as a result of the structure mass education system. He viewed education as a process which,

"…puts a person in touch with people whose ideas and values are different from one's own." The effect of this contact with new and sometimes unpopular ideas leads, according to Stouffer, to the development of tolerance of others' speech rights (Education and Tolerance An Analysis Of Intervening Factors-Walles Dynes "Social Forces" Vol 46.no.1. 1967 pp 23.).

High school education encloses the age of adolescence. According to Erikson (Woolfolk, 1998; 70-72), this age is important for people's personality acquisition. People are becopming egocentric and more interactive with their environment. In addition, people's violence bias increases in this age in Turkey and other countries. One of the solutions of this problem is increasing people's tolerance level and in this process the education is important to be successful.

Children learn intolerance from television and from modelling by teachers, peers and families. Children detect even subtle forms of intolerance. They don't always express their anger in appropriate ways; they may resort to inappropriate comments. They also may find that this behaviour wins the approval of peers, gets attention and makes them feel powerful. We all want children to respect each other, to understand about similarities and differences and to be open to learning about others. We hope children will learn to express their feelings in acceptable ways without being cruel to others. (Building tolerance and acceptance in young children
www.ecrtno.caresourcesdocumentsresource_sheetsbuilding_tolerance.pdf).

Tolerance and diversity

Tolerance as an ethical virtue does not require us to accept other people's beliefs or behaviours. Tolerance does require us to respect every person's human dignity and human rights, including freedom of conscience (Making Sense of Tolerance and Diversity, Thomas Lickona,
www.character-education.infoArticlestolerancemakingsense.pdf).

In the first place, it is clearly not the case that tolerance and freedom are connected in the same person, in the sense that the more tolerant I am the freer I am (Nicholson, 1985: 166-169; Thompson, 2003). Tolerance supposedly contributes to a freer society, and the freedom of each of us comes from our mutual tolerance of each other. (Thompson, 2003).

Why is education for tolerance?

More than 2000 years ago, Plato asked in *Meno*, What is virtue, and can we teach it? The question asked in this section is similar: What is tolerance and can we teach it? The answer to this questions crucial. If we do not know what tolerance is how can we possibly teach it? As with virtue for Plato, we shall see that tolerance is much more difficult to define than it might seem. Even if we arrive at a clear definition of tolerance it does not necessarily mean that we will be able to teach it? Plato, for example, after defining virtue, argued that it is innate, not learned, and therefore we cannot instruct others in how to be virtuous.

Societies educate to serve socially constructive purposes. Often those purposes relate to particular goals and problems. As education prepares citizens to participate in the process of social, cultural, environmental, and economic development, education provides instruction about the threats to the natural environment and encourages behaviour to overcome them, education for tolerance has also socially constructive purposes (Agius, 2003; 56-57).

School is also place where students should learn diversity and tolerance. In teaching tolerance at school, teachers should use real life curriculum (Chandler, 1996: Kobayashi, cehs.unl.educci861webpagesKobayashi.pdf; 3). When teachers see a sign of prejudice or discrimination among the students, they should respond immediately and find ways to incorporate it into classes (Kobayashi, cehs.unl.educci861webpagesKobayashi.pdf; 3).

The philosophy and structure of every school have to be directed to the creation of tolerance. In different parts of the world, schools are variously known as co- educational, interdenominational, mixed race, integrated, and comprehensive, whatever their name, their goals are the same- to teach children from different communities together on the basis of equality by having the governors, teaching staff, student body and curriculum reflect each community with equal weight (Agius, 2003; 59).

Schools are laboratories for the practice of tolerance. School or 'schooling' in the sense of intentional instruction that socializes children and youth, whether it takes place within or outside a formally constituted school, is the most direct means for teaching social values. Schools can be arenas for community building. They must be places in which tolerance is practiced as well as taught.

The role of the home and the family in the creation of tolerant and peaceful attitudes and respect for human rights is fundamental. Parents and caregivers need to be prepared to bring up the young in ways that enable them to develop capacities for tolerance and peacemaking (Agius, 2003; 62).

Method

In this study, the relationship between high school students' tolerance levels and their socio-economic conditions in Canakkale was examined. This research is field study and was done by survey model.

Participants

The sample of research was chosen from the high schools which are in Çanakkale City. Total of the high school students is 6152. 2921 students of these have been studying in grades 9 and 11 of the high schools. 438 of 2921 students have been selected randomly as a sample. The researchers took feedback about study subjects from 355 high school students who study in 'Milli Piyango Anatolian High School', 'Canakkale Science High School', 'Mehmet Akif Ersoy Technical High School and Anatolian Technical High School' and 'Avukat İbrahim Mutlu High School'.

Data Analysis

Collected data from students was analyzed using SPSS 13.0(Statistical Package for Social Sciences). Data about students' personal information were analyzed using frequencies and percentages statistical values. The relationship between students' tolerance levels and socio-economic levels was analyzed using t-test and Anova statistical methods.

Results

This section of research looked at the consequences of analysed data and comments related to these consequences.

Table 1. Distribution of students connected to sex, grade level, school type and parents' income

		9		11	
		n	**%**	**n**	**%**
Sex					
Girl		80	42,3	70	42,2
Boy		109	57,7	96	57,8
	Total	189	100	166	100
School					
MP		53	28,0	44	26,5
ÇF		42	22,2	63	38
MA		56	29,6	30	18,1
Aİ		38	20,2	29	17,5
	Total	189	100	166	100
Monthly Income (YTL)					
0-999		47	24,9	29	17,5
1000-1999		71	37,6	86	51,8
2000-...		30	15,9	18	10,8
	Total	148	78,4	133	80,1

(*'Milli Piyango Anatolian High School as MP', 'Çanakkale Science High School as ÇF', 'Mehmet Akif Ersoy Technical High School and Anadolu Ticaret Technical High School as MA' ve 'Avukat İbrahim Mutlu Lisesi as Aİ' was coded*).

In table 1, there are distributions of students connected to school type, grade level and sex. The distributions of girls and boys that study in 9th and 11th: 42,3 percent girls (n: 80), 57,7 percent boys (n: 109) of 9th grades; 42,2 percent kız (n: 70), 57,8 percent boys (n: 96) of 11th grades.

When it is categorised connected to school types; 9th grade students study in proportion as 28 percent (n: 53) in Milli Piyango Anatolian High School, 22,2 percent (n: 42) in

Çanakkale Science High School, 29,6 percent (n: 56) in Mehmet Akif Ersoy Technical High School and Anadolu Ticaret Technical High School, and 20,2 percent (n: 38) in Avukat İbrahim Mutlu High School. 11th grades students study in proportion as 26,5 percent (n: 44) in Milli Piyango Anatolian High School, 38,0 percent (n: 63) in Çanakkale Science High School, 18,1 percent (n: 30) in Mehmet Akif Ersoy Technical High School and Anadolu Technical High School, and 17,5 percent (n: 29) in Avukat İbrahim Mutlu High School.

When students' parents monthly income is examined, the vast majority of both of two grades' students' parents' monthly incomes are seen between 1000-1999 YTL space (37, 6 percent in)th grades, 51, 8 percent in 11th grades).

Table 2. Distribution of students related to literacy

	9		11	
	n	%	n	%
How Often Do You Read Books Except Lesson Books ?				
Once a week	56	29,6	16	9,6
One or more in a month	79	41,8	69	41,6
One or more in a six months	24	12,7	30	18,1
One or more in a year	18	9,5	38	22,9
None	10	5,3	11	6,6
What kind of books do you read except lesson books ?				
Novel-Tale	150	79,4	137	82,5
Poetry	34	18,0	32	19,3
Remembrance-Diary	46	24,23	19	11,4
Writings of Journey	33	17,5	19	11,4
Biography	11	5,8	13	7,8
Art	7	3,7	10	6,0
Science and Research	26	13,8	34	20,5
History	42	22,2	37	22,3
None	26	13,8	18	10,8
How Often Do You Read Newspaper?				
Everyday	45	23,8	85	51,2
Once a week	57	30,2	40	24,1
One or two in a week	10	5,3	8	4,8
Sometimes	66	34,9	28	16,9
None	8	4,2	4	2,4
How Often Do You Read Periodicals?				
Once week	46	24,3	38	22,9
Once a month	50	26,5	40	24,1

Sometimes	71	37,6	75	45,2
None	20	10,6	12	7,2

How Often Do You Watch News on Television?

Everyday	101	53,4	88	53,0
One or two in a week	75	39,7	56	33,7
One or two in a month	7	3,7	14	8,4
None	5	2,6	6	3,6

Which Subjects Do You Interested in Forms of Digital Media?

Diplomacy/Politics	27	14,3	69	41,6
Economics	14	7,4	22	13,3
Sports	99	52,4	91	54,8
Culture/Art	65	34,4	62	37,3
Magazine	55	29,1	47	28,3
Science	100	52,9	88	53,0
Technology	107	56,6	78	47,0
Health	47	24,9	61	36,7
Others	18	9,5	13	7,8

Table 3. The frequency of students' reading books, journals and newspapers except school

	Frequency of reading books except lesson books		*Frequency of reading newspaper*		*Frequency of reading journal*	
	9(X)	11(X)	9(X)	11(X)	9(X)	11(X)
MP	Once a month	Once a six months	One or two in a week	One or two in a week	Once a month	Sometimes
ÇF	Once a month	Once a month	One or two in a week	Every day	Once a month	Once a month
MA	Once a month	Once a six months	One or two in a week	One or two in a week	Once a month	Once a month
Aİ	Once a month	Once a six months	One or two in a week	One or two in a week	Once a month	Once a month

Table 4. Kinds of books that students read most rarely and most frequently

	Kinds of books that students read					
	Min	9(X)	Max	Min	11(X)	Max
MP	Art	Novel-tale		Art	Novel-tale	
ÇF	Art	Novel-tale		Art-Science and Research	Novel-tale	
MA	Art	Novel-tale		Art-Biography	Novel-tale	
Aİ	Art-Biography	Novel-tale		Art-Biography	Novel-tale	
(*Novel-Tale, Poetry, Remembrance-Diary, Writings of Journey, Biography, Art, Science and Research, History, Other*)						

In table 2 and table 3, students' reading habits except lesson books were examined. Students' reading habits except lesson books, on 9th grades 'once a month', on 11th grades, excluding Çanakkale Science High School, 'once a six months'. When 11th grades of Çanakkale Science High School were examined, these students expressed their frequency of reading books except lesson books as 'once a month' . In table 4, what kind of books that reading except lesson books were examined related to school types. In 9th grades, the kind of most rarely read book excluding Avukat İbrahim Mutlu High School is 'Art'. When Avukat İbrahim Mutlu High School students' answers examined, their kind of most rarely read book is 'Art and Biography'. The kind of most read books in all of school types are 'Novel-Tale'. In 11th grades of all school types, the kind of most rarely read book except lesson books was 'Art', also in MA and AI 'Biography' and in ÇF 'Science and Research'. The kind of most read book except lesson books is the same with 9th grades(Novel-Tale).

If the frequency of students reading newspapers and journals is controlled, it can be seen that there is no significant difference between 9th and 11th grades and school types. Students usually read a newspaper 'once a week' and a journal 'once a month'.

Table 5. Subjects of students' interest on digital media forms (most rarely and most frequently)

	Interesting Subjects on Digital Media					
	Min	9(X)	Max	Min	11(X)	Max
MP	Economics		Technology	Economics		Technology
ÇF	Economics		Science	Economics		Science
MA	Economics-Politics		Sports	Economics-Politics		Magazine
Aİ	Economics-Politics		Sports	Economics-Magazine		Politics-Diplomacy

(Politics/*Diplomacy, Economics, Sports, Culture/Art, Magazine, Technology, Science, Health, Other)*

In table 5, students were categorised considering subjects on media that interested students. While at all of school types and 9th and 11th grades the least interesting subject was found as 'economy', the most interesting subject differentiate related to school types.

When the frequency of students watching news was controlled connected to grade levels, 9th and 11th grades student answered this question 'every day' in proportion as 53,0 percent average.

Table 6. Students' parent's economic conditions related to school types.

	9(X)	11(X)
Milli Piyango Anatolian High School	2,25	1,89
Çanakkale Science High School	1,95	2,06
Mehmet Akif Ersoy Technical High School and Anatolian Technical High School	1,43	1,63
Avukat İbrahim Mutlu High School	1,96	1,74

(1: 0-999 YTL, 2: 1000-1999 YTL, 3: 2000-… YTL)

In table 6, the relationship between school types and students' parents' economic conditions were controlled. The results reveal that parents' economic status was above Turkey's average.

Table 7. Students' average tolerance points according to different factors

	9	11
	X	*X*
Self Tolerance	1,50	1,41
Tolerance against friends	1,43	1,41
Tolerance against family	1,40	1,47
Tolerance against different ideas.	1,44	1,44
Tolerance against differences of social life	1,47	1,42

(1,00: tolerant, 2,00: intolerant)

In table 7, students' tolerance status were controlled in respect of students' answers about subscales of tolerance scale. Students' tolerance status was found as a positive direction. There are significant differences between 'Self tolerance of 9th and 11th grades' students ($t_{(345)}=2,95$, p<.05') and tolerance against differences of social life of 9th and 11th grades' students($t_{(345)}=2,47$, p<.05). Students' 'self tolerance' and 'tolerance against differences of social lifes' show development from 9th grade to 11th grade.

Table 8. The relationship between students' sex and tolerance dimensions

	9		11	
	Kız (X)	Erkek (X)	Kız (X)	Erkek (X)
Self Tolerance	1,53	1,48	1,46	1,38
Tolerance against friends	1,43	1,43	1,39	1,42
Tolerance against family	1,49	1,37	1,50	1,43
Tolerance against different ideas.	1,44	1,44	1,38	1,48
Tolerance against differences of social life	1,44	1,49	1,38	1,45

In table 8, tolerance status of 9th and 11th grades is controlled connected to sex. There is a significant difference between girls and boys in the 'tolerance against family ($t_{(184)}=2,47$, p<.05)' dimension of 9th grades students. Boys are more tolerant than girls in this dimension.

There is a significant difference between girls and boys in ' tolerance against different ideas ($t_{(161)}=2,18$, p<.05)' and 'tolerance against differences of social lifes ($t_{(161)}=2,43$, p<.05).' Girls are more tolerant than boys in these dimensions.

Table 9. The relationship between school types and tolerance dimensions

	9(X)				11(X)			
	MP	ÇF	MA	Aİ	MP	ÇF	MA	Aİ
Self Tolerance	1,56	1,48	1,48	1,48	1,47	1,41	1,28	1,44
Tolerance against friends	1,51	1,37	1,44	1,34	1,39	1,37	1,44	1,46
Tolerance against family	1,47	1,44	1,42	1,29	1,58	1,41	1,46	1,39
Tolerance against different ideas.	1,56	1,23	1,50	1,44	1,57	1,29	1,58	1,42
Tolerance against differences of social life	1,50	1,40	1,50	1,44	1,40	1,37	1,30	1,21

In table 9, tolerance status of 9th and 11th grades were examined related to school types that they study in. In 9th grades' students' views about the dimension of 'tolerance against friend ($F_{(3-180)}$=4.398, $p<.05$),' dimension of 'tolerance against family ($F_{(3-182)}$=3.432, $p<.05$),' dimension of 'tolerance against different ideas ($F_{(3-182)}$=3.922, $p<.05$),' and dimension of 'tolerance against differences of social lifes,' there are significant differences depending on school types.

- On the dimension of 'tolerance against friends', there are positive tolerance developments in order of MP, MA, ÇF, AI.
- On the dimension of 'tolerance againnst family', there are positive tolerance developments in order of MP, ÇF, MA, Aİ.
- On the dimension of 'tolerance against different ideas', there are positive tolerance developments in order of MP, MA, Aİ, ÇF.
- On the dimension of 'tolerance against differences of social lifes', there are positive tolerance developments in order of MP=MA, Aİ, ÇF.
- In students of 11th grades, there are significant differences as grades school types on the dimensions of 'self tolerance ($F_{(3-159)}$=2.837, $p<.05$),' 'tolerance against family ($F_{(3-158)}$=4.161, $p<.05$),' 'tolerance against different ideas ($F_{(3-159)}$=10.95, $p<.05$),' and 'tolerance against differences of social lifes ($F_{(3-159)}$=7.248, $p<.05$),'.
- On the dimesion of 'self tolerance,' there are positive tolerance developments in order of MP, Aİ, ÇF, MA.
- On the dimension of 'tolerance against family,' there are positive tolerance developments in order of MP, MA, ÇF, Aİ.
- On the dimension of 'tolerance against different ideas,' there are positive tolerance developments in order of MA, MP, Aİ, ÇF.
- On the dimension of 'tolerance against differences of social lifes,' there are positive tolerance developments in order of MP, ÇF, MA, Aİ.
- There is no significant difference between the econimic conditions of students' parents and students' tolerance level in 9th grades. But in 11th grades, a significant difference was found on dimension of 'tolerance against differences of social lifes' ($F_{(2-130)}$=3.445, $p<.05$)

No significant difference was found in the tolerance levels of 9th and 11th grades' students connected to frequences of reading books except lesson books.

Discussion and Conclusion

High school students' tolerance levels were found to be positive between grades 9 and 11. There are significant differences between the dimension of 'self tolerance' and dimension of 'tolerance against differences of social lifes.' In deference to these results, we can say that high school education is effective for students' tolerance development. In addition, there is no significant difference on the other dimensions, which shows that education given in the midst of 9th grades and 11th grades has no effect on tolerance development for our sample group. Personality development is effected from not only high school education but also is effected by friends, family, social life, different ideas, media, culture and perception of self-respect.

In grades 9 and 11, tolerance levels of girls and boys were found to be positive. In grade 9, in the dimension of 'tolerance against family', boys were found to be more tolerant than girls. It can be said that this result sources from social construct, culture and differences of social lives between boys and girls. No significant difference was found in the other dimensions related to sex.

In grade 11, girls were found to be more tolerant than boys in the dimensions of 'tolerance against differences of social lifes' and 'tolerance against different ideas'. While boys' social life conditions in both grade levels are the same that makes no difference, it can be said that the increasing of girls' social environment through late adolescence and decreasing on account of flexible behaviours against girls resourcing from culture are reasons for rising of girls' tolerance levels.

When students' tolerance levels are controlled related to school types; in 9th grades, students' tolerance levels of Aİ were found to be higher than the other high schools in the dimensions of 'tolerance against friend' and 'tolerance against family' and on the dimensions of 'tolerance against different ideas' and 'tolerance against differences of social lifes', tolerance levels of ÇF students were found to be higher than the other high schools. It can be said that in MA High School, due to there being more boys than girls, who are very few and who have little communication with each other, in related dimensions tolerance levels of students were found to be low. In ÇF, the cause of students' tolerance levels were found, owing to students' study as boarding, they have competition with friends that effect on their tolerance levels against friends. Because of their school's aim as the educating scientist, using different ideas in the education process, it can be seen to have raised the tolerance levels of students. Owing to Aİ students being a prototype of society and being a transduction of social constructs, it can be said that these factors effect students' tolerance levels being higher.

If we evaluate the same results for 11th grade students; in the dimensions of 'tolerance against difference of social lifes' and ' tolerance against family' Aİ have higher positive scores than others, whereas ÇF have higher positive scores than others in the dimensions of 'tolerance of different ideas', and in the dimension of 'self tolerance', MA have higher positive scores than others. The cause of these results is that 11th grade students overcame the academical differences, social life differences, differences of perspective for life and the vast majority of adolescence process as well as the given factors above.

Students' media interest and level of literacy changes related to grade level. Decreasing of reading frequency and rising of reading newspaper frequency can depend on whether the students are preparing for an exam in order to pass upper education level and are worried for this exam. There was a change in the media interest of students towards science in ÇF, technology in MP, and a change from sports to magazines in MA, showing a change from sports to politics and diplomacy.

The students' personality development in the age of secondary education is effected by friends, culture, media and social environment extensively as well as by the family. The tolerance development that is one of a person's personality features cannot be depended on to be effected by education while our education system attaches more importance to cognitive learning, but it doesn't attach importance to affective and social learning.

This study can be done as controlling tolerance levels of students' families, friends and teachers and the relationship between two studies can be examined.

Because of personality development which can be done via education, in education levels not only cognitive education but also affective and social education must be provided, because a person develops as a whole.

Tolerance can be acquired by ways of practicing in life, therefore we must serve various exemplary behaviours. This practicing must take place in families, media, teachers and all factors that effect the person.

The activities that must provide different states, different environments and different people so that students can communicate with other people can be organised. For example, student transferring programs, education camps, group works, and giving working chances in social services.

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