

Preconditions for Tolerance Development at Higher Educational Institution

Educational institution and the teacher are responsible not only for knowledge conveying to the student, but also for personal development. It is necessary to take care of value integration into educational content. Values have to become part of the spirit of the whole educational institution, to be integrated into the educational environment and relationships. Tolerance is one of the most important aspirations for educating young people and shaping humanistic attitudes and respect for human values. The importance of developing tolerance as a core of democratic society is underlined in the documents of the Council of Europe. Increasingly, in assessing social skills in the labor market, there is a clear need to educate tolerant citizens, especially teachers who are able to communicate and collaborate with others, constructively resolve conflicts, think democratically, and respect other people's beliefs and opinions. To develop a tolerant personality is a long and difficult process. The relationship between teacher and learner must be based on mutual respect and trust, the principle of equality between the teacher and the learner as a personality, since only then there can be mutually beneficial cooperation that enables the development of tolerance in the community of the educational institution. Tolerance of the teacher is of particular importance to the learner's tolerance. This article defines the concept of tolerance, examines the true conditions of tolerance, highlights the development of a tolerant personality, that is part of the development of a common personality, due both to internal and external factors, describes the aspects of tolerance development and reveals the preconditions that make up the development of tolerance.

Keywords: *tolerance development, preconditions, pedagogical tolerance, toleration, educational environment.*

Introduction

Nowadays, countries of the European Union, including Lithuania, belong to the global economy, share common information, technological and cultural space. In order the changes brought about by globalization to play a constructive role in society, it should be realized that this is inevitably linked to the practical implementation of the fundamental values of democracy, peace, human rights and tolerance. At the state level, tolerance is manifested in the fairness and impartiality of state laws, equal treatment of every citizen, applying the same criteria in the administration of justice and in the provision of social and economic opportunities. While respecting rights and freedoms, the state cannot discriminate against any citizens on the grounds of religion, race or social status. The principle of tolerance towards a person or social groups must be observed not only by the state and its institutions, but also by the people and social groups themselves.

Tolerance is one of the most important preconditions educating the young generation in spirit of humanism and respect to general human values. To educate tolerance is one the most important objectives nowadays and therefore it is very important to create necessary preconditions for it as Lithuanian society have chosen a democratic way and have open space to multi-cultural Europe. The importance of tolerance education, as the basic value of democratic society, is highlighted in the documents of UNESCO and Europe Council.

The aim of the article is to reveal the preconditions for tolerance development at Marijampolė University of Applied Sciences by carrying out a comparative analysis. The following objectives of the research were set: 1) to define the concept of tolerance prevailing at the university during the comparative analysis of 2 groups; 2) to find out students' attitude towards tolerance as a value and the level of internalization of tolerance; 3) to determine students' attitudes towards the importance of teaching methods in developing tolerance; 4) to analyze the peculiarities of the relations between the main participants of the interaction - students and lecturers - from the students' point of view.

The Concept of Tolerance

The etymological dimension and significance of the term 'tolerance' addresses the notion of tolerance in the history of European culture at the beginning of the 16 century, reflecting the humanistic thinking represented by Erasmus of Rotterdam in his effort to combat religious fanaticism, as well as John Locke (1632-1704), Voltaire (1694-1778) and Gotthold Lessing (1729-1781)¹. 'To tolerate' has its roots in Latin, where *toleratus* and *tolerare* imply to endure or to put up with. Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary gives one meaning of 'tolerance' as 'a sympathy or indulgence for beliefs and practices differing from or conflicting with one's own', and 'the **act** of allowing something.'

In 1995, the UN adopted the "Declaration of Principles on Tolerance," which reveals the essence of the key concepts of human relationships – tolerance. According to this document "Tolerance is a term that means respect for different views and beliefs, behaviors and practices"².

In the scientific literature the notion of tolerance is defined by many different authors. Vogt describes it as "<... intentional self-restraint in the face of something one dislikes, objects to, finds threatening, or otherwise has a negative attitude toward-usually to maintain a social or political group or to

¹Boghian, I. (2017). A Psycho-Pedagogical Approach to the Concept of Tolerance. *Journal of Innovation in Psychology, Education and Didactics* Vol. 21, No. 1, p. 97 – 110.

²"Declaration of Principles on Tolerance", 1995 (http://www.unesco.org/webworld/peace_library/UNESCO/HRIGHTS/124-129.HTM)

promote harmony in a group”.³ Professor Reardon, the author of many peace education works, argues: “tolerance is according others the right to have their persons and identities respected”.⁴ According to Lickona⁵:

“Tolerance as an ethical virtue does not require us to accept other people's beliefs or behaviors. Tolerance does require us to respect every person's human dignity and human rights, including legitimate freedom of conscience. Freedom of conscience, however, is not absolute. It is the liberty to make personal moral choices as long as those choices do not infringe on the rights of others or undermine the common good”.

As Levi-Strauss points out, true tolerance is possible only with a strong value position and a perceived identity. From Levi-Strauss's point of view, tolerance can no longer be just a passive and forgiving attitude towards the processes taking place in society, but should be based on perspective insight and manifest itself as an active strategy to achieve certain values⁶. This view is supported by many foreign contemporary authors (N.Loewen, A.Tucicov-Bogdan, E. Stan, and others). Following Loewen⁷: „Tolerance is the ability to build peace between different peoples. Education opens the way to tolerance and its scope is continuously expanded. This expansion will be tempered by the basic values of human dignity and integrity“. To practice tolerance does not mean making concessions, being indulgent, or giving up your own beliefs. It is not compulsory, but absolutely necessary in the family, school and society“. Tucicov-Bogdan⁸ elucidates: „To practice tolerance does not mean making concessions, being indulgent, or giving up your own beliefs. It is not compulsory, but absolutely necessary in the family, school and society“. One more very interesting point of view on tolerance is expressed by Stan⁹: “Education always involves positivity, and tolerance, besides making a certain, unproblematic entry in the register of positivity, is even one of the assumptions of education. To be tolerant means to prefer to laugh rather than to criticize in a world where we need to share our joys, to help us in times of distress, to achieve personal or group goals for the social and economic progress of all”.

Lithuanian authors such as A. Sprindžiūnas, L. Jakavonytė, R. Plečkaitis, V. Žemaitis and others also analyzed the phenomenon of tolerance and tolerance development, as the traditions of tolerance in Lithuania have been cherished by people of different nationalities and religious beliefs for centuries.

³Vogt, W.P. (1997). *Tolerance and Education: Learning to live with diversity and difference*. Thousand oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

⁴Reardon, B.A. (1997). *Tolerance: The threshold of peace: Unit 1 teacher training resource*. Paris: Unesco, p. 19.

⁵Lickona, T. *Making Sense of Tolerance and Diversity*, The Fourth and Fifth Rs, Vol.8, Issue 2, Winter 2002; www.cortland.edu/character. p.65.

⁶Levi-Strauss C. *Rasë ir istorija*. Vilnius, 1992.

⁷Loewen, N. (2013). „A proposal to support college internalization within a pedagogy of positive tolerance.” *Pedagogie Collegiale*, 26(3), 1-6.

⁸Tucicov-Bogdan, A. (2001). Toleranța interetnică, teorie și realitate. *Revista Psihologia*, nr. 5, 9-11.

⁹Stan, E. (2004). Educația pentru toleranța. *Didactica Pro ...*, № 4. 43-48.

Žemaitis¹⁰ presents the following definition: “Tolerance can be discussed as a principle when a person not only has his / her own opinion, views, but also critically evaluates others and defends his / her own ones. In this way, by arguing with the views or beliefs of others, one can test oneself. By learning not only from one's own but also from other mistakes, each person improves. Therefore, tolerance requires respect for different views and beliefs”.

An essential aspect of tolerance is the limits and the conditions of true tolerance. The Lithuanian scholar Plečkaitis¹¹ focuses on the conditions of tolerance: „The first condition is that we can only tolerate what we value negatively, what we disagree with, what is unpleasant. Therefore, a tolerant, which can be a person, a group of people, society, must feel dissatisfaction, hostility to a certain phenomenon, to see a certain evil in it. The notion of tolerance should not be confused with indifference, because a person who values nothing can only be indifferent, but not tolerant. This notion is not appropriate when under certain circumstances (for instance because of helplessness) we need to put up with certain evils. The second condition of tolerance is the belief or knowledge that one can resist something that is viewed negatively. Thus, the tolerant must endure the evil, even though he could resist it. What is impossible to resist cannot be tolerated either, because tolerance out of fear or helplessness cannot be considered a tolerant position. Determining by free will to endure what is unacceptable is the third condition for true tolerance. Such a determination expresses respect for the rights of the other person. We therefore tolerate only when we disagree, disapprove and oppose other people's ideas and actions, and we have a real power to prevent these actions, but while respecting the autonomy of those individuals and groups and recognizing their rights, we refrain from violence against them. And that violence can manifest itself not only as outright hostility, intimidation, contempt, rejection, but also as ridicule or ignorance”.

To sum up, we must admit that in different cultures, the concept of tolerance is interpreted slightly differently if we follow Boghian's¹² point of view.

The authors examining the theoretical problem of tolerance usually distinguish the following areas of tolerance: political, moral, social, religious (Reardon¹³, 1997; Plečkaitis¹⁴, 1998). Deveikienė, Manelis¹⁵ distinguish eight types of tolerance, defines their content, concepts and states that “an educated person must know the types of tolerance - political, moral, social, religious, legal, creative, taste, thought - and be able to allocate them”. It should therefore be noted that tolerance covers practically all areas of life. The object of tolerance can be people's views, beliefs, tastes and inclinations, principles of behavior, habits and customs. Although tolerance is proclaimed as perhaps the most fundamental modern virtue, and various international conventions and

¹⁰Žemaitis, V. (1997). Pedagoginė tolerancija. Vilnius: Ethos, p.6.

¹¹Plečkaitis, R. (1998) Tolerancija. Vilnius: Pradai, p.43.

¹²Boghian, I. (2017). A Psycho-Pedagogical Approach to the Concept of Tolerance. *Journal of Innovation in Psychology, Education and Didactics* Vol. 21, No. 1, p. 98. EBSCO.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Deveikienė, L., Manelis, E. (2004). Tolerancijos ugdymas mokykloje. Vilnius: Garnelis.

educational programs encourage to foster it, not always enough attention is paid to a deeper analysis of the development of this value.

The Importance of Tolerance Development

The skills and characteristics of a person's relationships with other people and the social environment, which belong to the field of social competence, are increasingly valued in the labor market. It is clear that there is a need to develop tolerant citizens who are able to communicate and cooperate with other people, to resolve conflicts constructively, to think democratically, and to respect the opinions and beliefs of others. Tolerance is one of the values of a democratic society. This value is a prerequisite for learning to live in peace in a world full of differences.

Țurcan, 2015 as cited in Boghian, 2017 states: „Education for tolerance is a new dimension of education, which through specific objectives, contents and strategies ensures the development of human values of tolerance (acceptance of diversity, empathy)“.

As we could see from the quotations in the previous section, almost all of them are related to education. So, it is possible to state that tolerance is acquired through education. It has been posited that tolerance can be learned both directly and indirectly, through socialization and instruction (Vogt¹⁶). Many researchers argue that indirect teaching of tolerance is more effective than direct teaching. Cristea, 2004 as cited in Boghian, 2017 claims: „Speaking in strictly pedagogical terms, tolerance is not an end in itself but a means and the goal of education in the spirit of tolerance lies in recognizing and respecting the dignity and integrity of all human beings“.

The development of personality, as well as the spread of tolerance, is determined by both innate, inherited personality traits and external circumstances. The development of a tolerant personality is part of the general development of the personality. The influence of an educational institution on the development of learners' tolerance is determined not only by the content of education conveyed in lessons, but also by the favorable internal climate, learners' relations with teachers and peers, and teaching methods. Although the importance of tolerance as a principle in the relationship between teachers and learners has been recognized by many world-renowned teachers, a special role has been played by the proponents of humanistic education that encourage to pay greater attention to learners' individual needs taking into account their interests and personal qualities, as well as to recognize the greater autonomy, creativity and initiatives of learners themselves.

Reardon¹⁷ argues that “tolerance education actually designates the education of a culture of peace that involves the development and maintenance of positive relationships, social responsibility and ethical maturity in decision-making concerning social behaviors and relationships. Tolerance is, therefore,

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Reardon B.A. (2001). Education for a Culture of Peace in a Gender Perspective, UNESCO

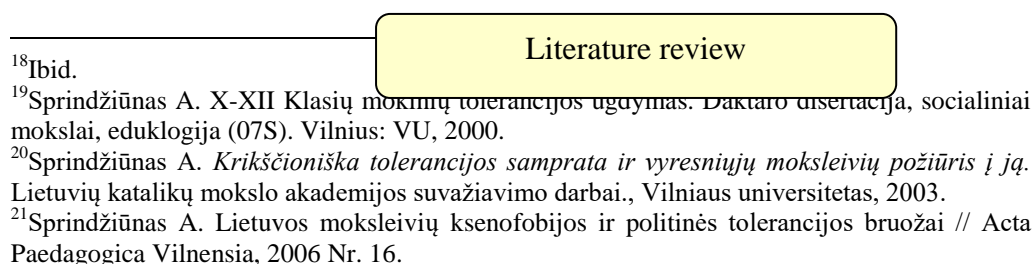
1 a general-human value of education“. She also points out that success in
 2 creating tolerant relationships in an educational institution can only be
 3 expected by teaching tolerance in a complex way: teachers show it by their
 4 posture practically and in various ways by creating a classroom and
 5 educational atmosphere in order to ensure learners' safety, to promote the sense
 6 self-esteem, mutual support and trust, to improve learners' communication
 7 skills, to be favourable to their self-expression. Thus, teachers who want to
 8 teach tolerance, must themselves be tolerant personalities as well as to possess
 9 pedagogical tolerance as a professional competence. Žemaitis¹⁸ argues:
 10 Pedagogical tolerance requires that the teacher should be as patient and tolerant
 11 as possible“. However, according to the author, pedagogical tolerance must
 12 also have limits. Only accidental misconduct or unmotivated bad behavior can
 13 be adequately assessed by the educator, but when the behavior is deliberately
 14 malicious, the limits of pedagogical tolerance end. The author emphasizes that
 15 the limits of pedagogical tolerance are much wider than the limits of tolerance
 16 in general. Therefore, the teacher must be much more tolerant for learners'
 17 behavior.

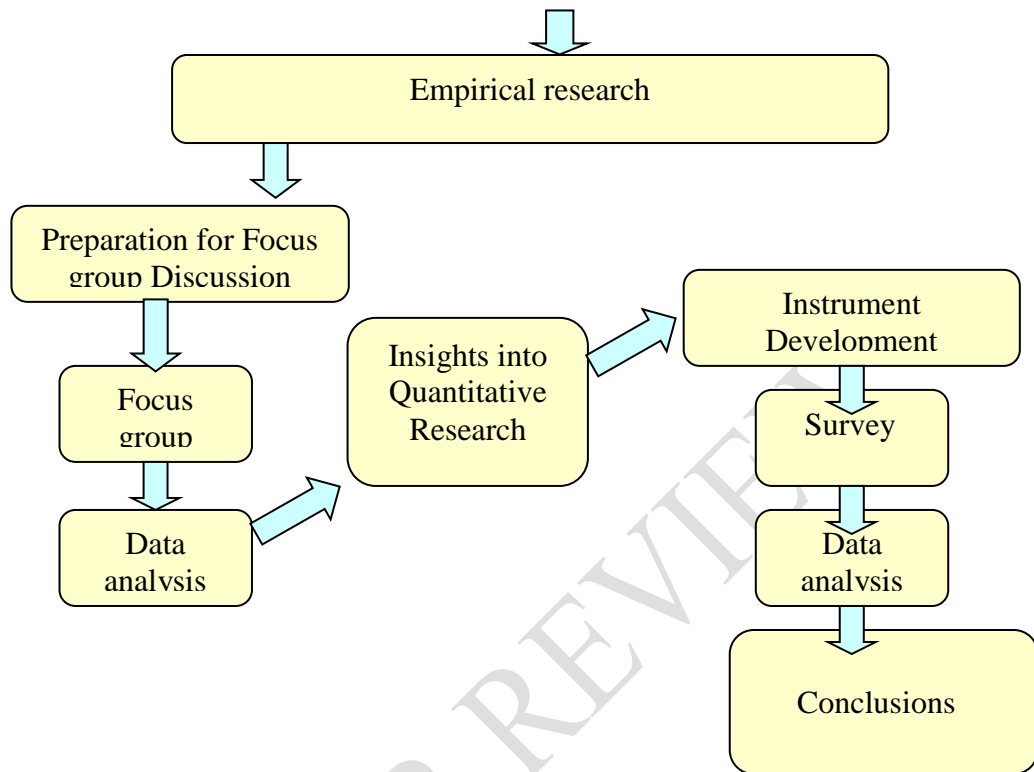
18 Lithuanian researchers' mostly focused on tolerance itself and the problem of
 19 tolerance limits. Sprindžiūnas¹⁹ researched tolerance development of the upper
 20 - grade students, the same researcher²⁰ analyzed the Christian concept of
 21 tolerance and the attitudes of high school students towards it, and the scholar
 22 conducted a study of the characteristics of xenophobia and political tolerance
 23 of high school students²¹. However, so far in Lithuania, preconditions for
 24 tolerance development have been little researched and especially at higher
 25 educational institutions.

26 27 28 **Methodology** 29

30 The stages of the research organization on preconditions of tolerance
 31 development at Marijampolė University of Applied Sciences from the point of
 32 view of students in different periods (see Figure 3) are presented in the scheme:
 33
 34
 35
 36
 37
 38

39 *Figure 1. Research organization scheme*
 40



1
2
3
4
56
7

The model of the research was based on Charles²², Bitinas²³, Rupšienė²⁴. The research methodology was grounded on humanistic theory. According to Maslow,²⁵ the representative of this approach, the educator seeks to teach students to live based on shared human values and in the pedagogical process tries to create an environment for students in which they can learn about values.

In order to achieve the aim and the set objectives of the research, the qualitative and quantitative methodology and the descriptive type of research were chosen. The following research methods were used for the study:

17
18
19
20
21
22

1. Review of scientific literature;
2. Focus group method
3. Questionnaire survey method;
4. Statistical data analysis;
5. Comparative analysis method.

²²Charles, C.M., Mertler, C.A. (2002). Introduction to Educational Research (4th ed.). Boston: Allyn&Bacon.

²³Bitinas, B. (2006). Edukologinis tyrimas: sistema ir procesas. Vilnius: Kronta

²⁴Rupšienė, L. (2007). Kokybinio tyrimo duomenų rinkimo metodologija. Klaipėda: KU, p. 87.

²⁵Maslow, A. (1989). Psichologijos duomenys ir vertybių teorija. Gėrio kontūrai. Vilnius: Mintis

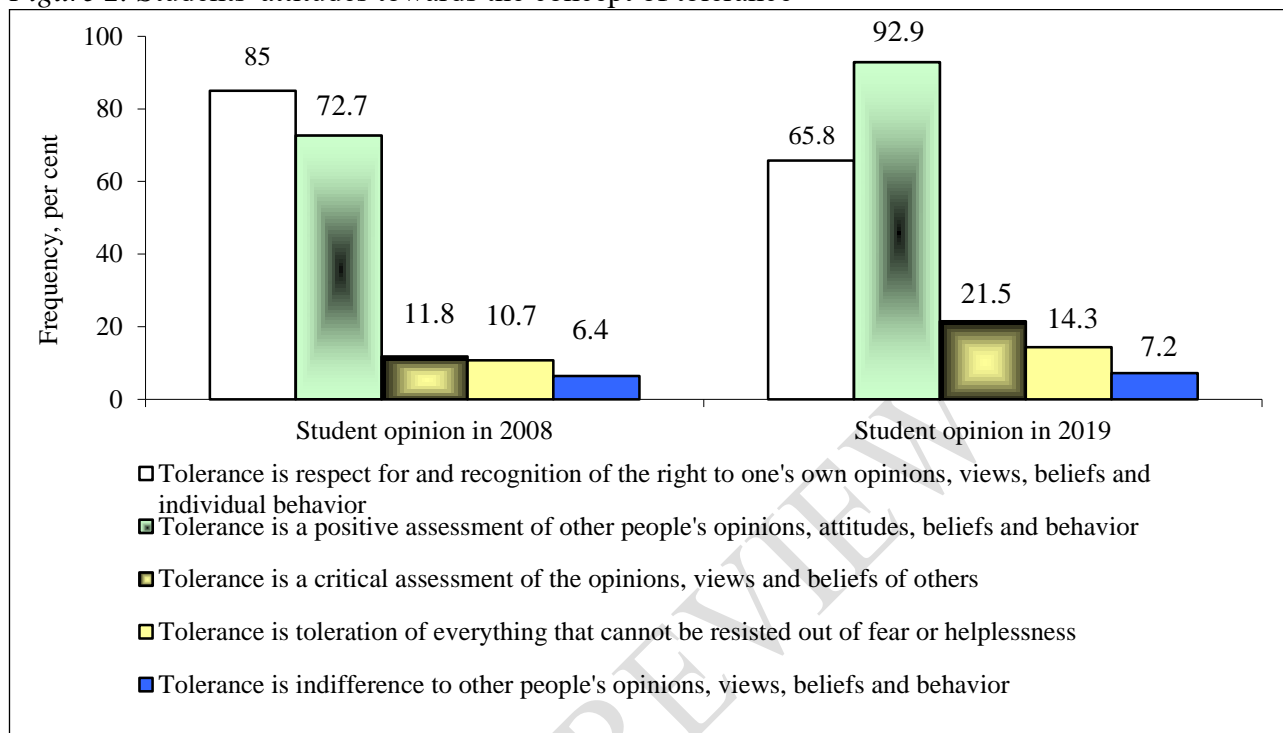
Various research methods were used to better understand the aspects of tolerance education and to explore the assumptions of such education at university in a more comprehensive way. Tolerance as a value orientation is basically a qualitative feature, but the mass of information gathered through a questionnaire survey was extremely important for describing educational phenomena.

In order to investigate students' attitudes towards preconditions for tolerance development 97 students of the Faculty of Educational Studies and Social Work (40 students of Childhood education study programme and 57 students of Social work study programme) were researched at Marijampole University of Applied Sciences in 2019. In 2008, 30 students of Childhood education study programme and 38 students of Social work study programme participated in the research (in total 165). The age of the respondents ranged from 18 to 45 years old, 127 female students and 38 male students were participants of the research. The attitude of students of Childhood education and Social work study programmes were chosen to examine students' opinion shift over a decade on preconditions of tolerance development at one of Lithuanian universities of Applied Sciences.

Findings

Students' attitudes towards the concept of tolerance

When analyzing the respondents' attitude to the preconditions of tolerance development, first of all, an attempt was made to find out what concept of tolerance prevailed in the environment of Marijampole University of Applied Sciences, whether tolerance was perceived as a value. 100 per cent of the respondents in 2019 considered tolerance as a value. There were no indecisive and unspoken opinions on this aspect expressed by the respondents. Meanwhile, in 2008, 92,2 per cent of the respondents indicated that they valued tolerance. 85,0 per cent of the respondents defined the concept of tolerance as respect for and recognition of the right to one's own opinions, views, beliefs and individual behavior (see Figure 2), and in 2019 the majority of the research participants described this value as a positive assessment of other people's opinions, attitudes, beliefs, and behavior. In 2008, the minority of the respondents agreed that tolerance was indifference to other people's opinions, views, beliefs, behavior (6,4 per cent of all students) and toleration of everything that cannot be resisted out of fear or helplessness (10,7 per cent of all students), similar assessments were in 2019, respectively – 7,2 per cent and 14,3 per cent.

1 *Figure 2. Students' attitudes towards the concept of tolerance*

2
3
4 The data presented in Figure 2 show the respondents' attitude to the
5 perception of the concept of tolerance according to the study programs in
6 different periods.

7
8 *Table 1. Respondents' attitudes towards the perception of the concept of*
9 *tolerance in different periods according to the study programmes (per cent)*

Study programme	Statement about tolerance				
	Respect and recognition	Positive assessment	Critical assessment	Toleration of everything	Indifference
Childhood education in 2008	83,3	76,7	13,3	6,7	16,7
Childhood education in 2019	60,0	100	0	0	0
Social work in 2008	81,6	76,3	10,5	15,8	7,9
Social work in 2019	71,5	85,8	42,9	28,6	14,3

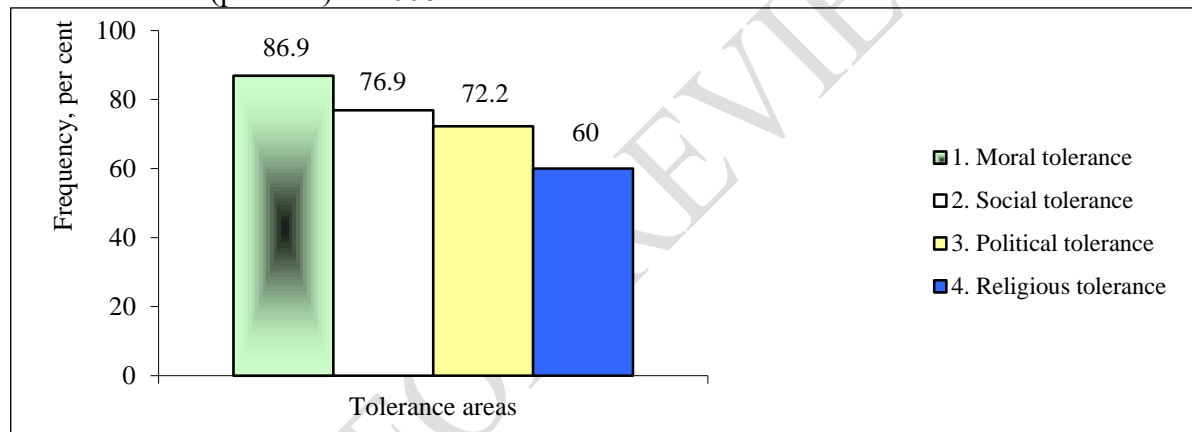
10
11 The number of respondents interpreting tolerance as a positive assessment
12 of other people's opinions, attitudes, beliefs and behavior increased especially
13 among the students of Childhood education programme (100 per cent), and
14 85,8 per cent of the students of Social work study programme. In the latter
15 study programme, there was a significant increase in the number of
16 respondents who interpret tolerance as a critical assessment of others' opinions,
17 views and beliefs (from 10,5 per cent to 42,9 per cent), who believe that it is
18 possible to tolerate everything that cannot be resisted by fear or helplessness
19 (from 15,8 per cent increased to 28,6 per cent, and considering tolerance as

indifference to other people's opinions, views, beliefs, behavior (from 7,9 per cent in 2008 increased to 14,3 per cent in 2019).

Students' Attitude to the Development of Tolerance Areas

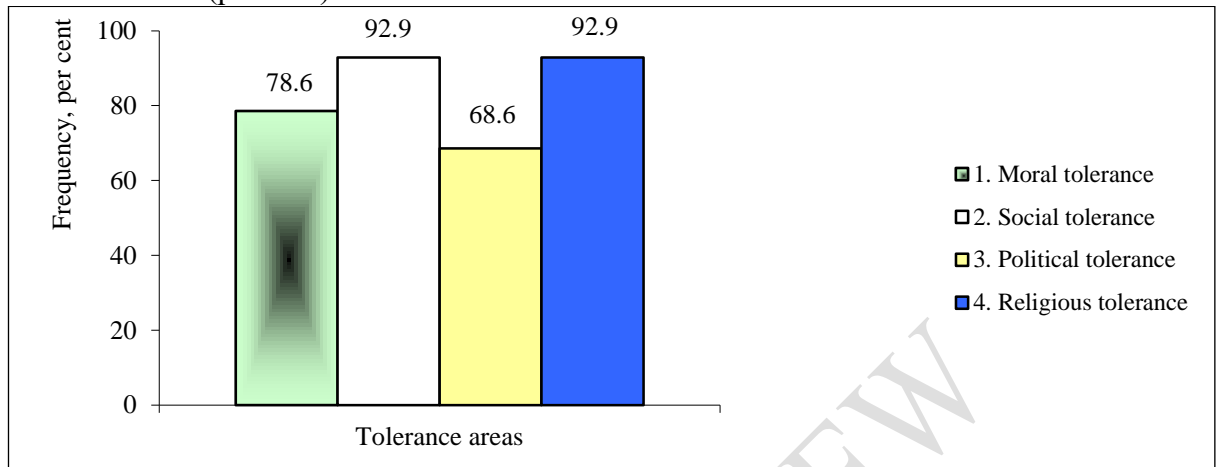
Students were presented with four statements that could reflect four areas of tolerance: political, moral, social, and religious. Most of the respondents in 2008 agreed that all of these areas were included in the educational process. Students emphasized the moral side of tolerance, since as many as 86,9 per cent of the respondents stated that they were taught to respect and recognize human dignity at university (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. Students' attitudes according to the importance of development of tolerance areas (per cent) in 2008



As a second priority, the students chose the area of social tolerance. More than half of all researched students (76,9 per cent) admitted that there were discussions on equality of citizens, regardless of their race, gender, nationality, origin, education during classes and seminars. In the third place was the aspect of political tolerance for the majority of respondents, as 72,2 per cent of the respondents argued that human rights, freedoms, and ways to ensure them were explained at university. According to the respondents' opinion, the least attention was devoted to the religious area of tolerance – 60 per cent of all students. In this way, taking into account all respondents' attitudes, the following ranking positions in the areas of tolerance were revealed: 1st moral, 2nd social, 3rd political, 4th religious.

1 *Figure 4. Students' attitudes according to the importance of development of*
 2 *tolerance areas (per cent) in 2019*



3
 4
 5 In 2019 respondents' views were slightly different: according to the most
 6 students' opinion, social and religious tolerance was most emphasized at
 7 university (see Figure 4), as equal attention was given to these tolerance
 8 development areas – 92,9 per cent. Compared to the results of 2008 it was
 9 possible to argue that there was a particular increase in the focus on the
 10 religious dimension of tolerance development. Therefore, it could be stated that
 11 during classes and seminars at university, equality of citizens was discussed,
 12 regardless of their race, gender, nationality, origin, education, and people of
 13 other cultures and confessions were taught to be respected. From the point of
 14 view of most respondents, other areas of tolerance development were also
 15 emphasized at university.

16 From the point of view of the students of Childhood education study
 17 programme, the emphasis on all areas of tolerance development increased and
 18 even to three areas of development were given maximum attention during the
 19 classes and seminars – 100 per cent (see Table 2).

20 Analyzing the opinions of the students of Childhood education study
 21 programme, it became clear that in this study programme the teachers paid
 22 more attention to the development of tolerance in comparison with the students
 23 of Social work study programme. It could be concluded that the reason for such
 24 a situation was caused by a different field of the study programme, i.e. much
 25 more attention was paid to tolerance development in the study programme
 26 within educational field.

Table 2. Students' attitudes towards the development of tolerance areas in different periods according to their study programmes (per cent)

Study programme	Moral tolerance Teaches to respect and recognize the dignity of the individual	Social tolerance Deals with equality for all social groups	Political tolerance Interprets human rights and freedoms	Religious tolerance Teaches respect for people of other cultures and religions
Childhood education in 2008	100	80,0	73,3	70,0
Childhood education in 2019	100	100	80,0	100
Social work in 2008	73,7	73,7	71,1	50,0
Social work in 2019	57,2	85,8	57,2	85,8
All students in 2008	86,9	76,9	72,2	60,0
All students in 2019	78,6	92,9	68,6	92,9

Student self-assessment

Going deeper into the phenomenon of tolerance, an attempt was made to reveal the personal traits of the respondents, i. e. how students assessed themselves, whether they consider themselves tolerant individuals.

First, how students internalize the understanding of tolerance was analyzed. In this way, the respondents of this target group were asked nine questions related to their behavior and attitudes towards other people, different from their opinion, the unique behavior of others.

The obtained results of the research showed that the majority of students in 2008 described themselves and appreciated their behavior, i. e. sought consensus with other people (96.3%), respected other people's opinions, views, beliefs, their unique behavior (91,8 per cent), tried not to violate other people's rights (88,8 per cent), did not blame others for their failures (98,3 per cent), knew how not to give in to anger, not to use violence (83,2 per cent), did not take revenge on people for wrongs (89,0 per cent), treated people kindly in various situations (74, 6%) Two thirds of students (see Table 3) thought that they avoided extremes when assessing and criticizing other people (66,9 per cent).

The majority of respondents seeking consensus with other people and respecting different opinions and behavior in 2008 belonged to Childhood education study programme (96,7 per cent). They also stated that they tried not to violate human rights (93,3 per cent) and did not give in to anger or did not use violence (90,0%). It was important to note that in 2019 the level of tolerance internalization of students of this study programme increased. The

absolute majority of the respondents in this study programme stated that they all sought consensus with other people (100 per cent), tried not to violate human rights (100 per cent), were in no rush to condemn others (100 per cent) and avoided extremes in judging others. Among them, nobody took revenge for others for the wrongs, while in 2008 there were 16,7 per cent of such respondents in this study programme. The level of tolerance internalization in the study programme of Social work was slightly lower, but compared to 2008 also rose. Among them, the absolute majority also stated that they sought consensus with other people (100 per cent), tried not to violate human rights (100 per cent) and behaved nicely in any situation (100 per cent). However, if in 2008 there were no students in this study programme who blamed others for their failures, in 2019 there were 14,2 per cent of such respondents. In summary, it could be concluded that the study programme influenced the internalization of tolerance, although most students considered themselves tolerant, i.e. sought consensus, respected the beliefs and views of others, did not violate the rights of the individual, did not blame others for their failures and did not rush to condemn others, did not give in to anger, did not use violence and did not take revenge for the harm done to them.

Table 3. Students' opinion according to tolerance internalization (per cent)

Study programme	Seek consensus with other people	Respect different opinions, behaviors	Strive not to violate human rights	Do not rush to condemn others	Do not give in to anger, do not use coercion	Treat other people nicely	Avoid extremes in judging others	Revenge for wrongs	Blame others for their own failures
Childhood education in 2008	96,7	96,7	93,3	83,3	90,0	83,3	73,3	16,7	3,3
Childhood education in 2019	100	80,0	100	100	80,0	80,0	100	0	20,0
Social work in 2008	94,8	86,8	84,2	78,9	76,3	65,8	60,5	5,3	0
Social work in 2019	100	71,5	100	14,3	87,6	100	42,9	14,3	14,2
All students in 2008	96,3	91,8	88,8	81,1	83,2	74,6	66,9	11,0	1,7
All students in 2019	100	75,8	100	57,2	83,8	90,0	71,5	7,2	17,1

Comparing attitudes towards their behavior among students of different genders, it was observed that female respondents more often than male respondents avoided extremes in criticizing others, but not all and not always treated other people kindly and beautifully. Such behavior also differed between students of different age groups. Older (26-year-old) students were

more likely than younger (up to 25-year-old) students to state that they avoided extremes in judging others and behaved kindly in various situations. In addition, some students in the youth group (under the age of 25) admitted that they did not always treat other people kindly and beautifully.

Table 4. Students' attitudes towards self - assessment in different periods according to study programmes (per cent)

Study programme	Would like to be a more tolerant personality			It is possible to learn tolerance		
	Agree	Disagree	Unaware	Agree	Disagree	Unaware
Childhood education in 2008	63,3	16,7	20,0	56,7	23,3	20,0
Childhood education in 2019	20,0	40,0	40,0	60,0	20,0	20,0
Social work in 2008	60,5	15,8	23,7	63,2	21,1	15,8
Social work in 2019	57,2	42,9	0	42,9	42,9	14,3
All students in 2008	61,9	16,3	21,9	59,9	22,2	17,9
All students in 2019	38,6	41,5	20,0	51,5	31,5	17,3

It was possible to conclude that, regardless of the study programme, age differences and gender, most students tried to be tolerant, i. e. sought consensus, respected beliefs and views of other people, did not violate the rights of the individual, did not blame others for their failures and did not rush to condemn others, did not give in to anger, did not use violence and did not take revenge for the harm done to them. On the other hand, almost two thirds of all students in 2008, regardless of their study programme, age and gender differences, would like to be more tolerant personalities (61,9 per cent) and believed that it was possible to learn tolerance at university (59,9 per cent) (see Table 4). In 2019, respectively 38,6 per cent of the respondents would like to be more tolerant, and 51,5 per cent of them believed in the possibility to learn this at university.

Expression of tolerance in teaching and learning methods

Teaching methods are important in developing tolerance, so the aim was to find out how educational activities for students were organized at university.

The majority of students in 2008 agreed that teachers used a discussion method during classes and seminars (98,7 per cent of all students) and that they often had to collaborate with each other when performing various tasks (87,7 per cent of all students) (see Table 5). However, it was observed that in 2019 the focus on this training activity slightly decreased, i. e. 92,9 per cent of respondents indicated that the teachers used the method of cultural discussion, and 70,0 per cent of respondents noted that the teachers used a collaborative group approach. On the other hand, the results of the research revealed that in 2019 slightly more teachers organized teaching activities in teams in the process of education (85,8 per cent of all students, while in 2008 there were 68,2 per cent of respondents stating that). The focus on project activities also increased from 57,9 per cent in 2008 up to 65,8 per cent in 2019.

1 *Table 5. Students' opinions on the use of teaching methods in different periods*
 2 (per cent)

Study programme	Cultural, reasoned discussion	Collaboration in student groups	Sufficient training activities in teams	Sufficient attention to project activities
Childhood education in 2008	100	83,3	60,0	50,0
Childhood education in 2019	100	40,0	100	60,0
Social work in 2008	97,4	92,1	76,3	65,8
Social work in 2019	85,8	100	71,5	71,5
All students in 2008	98,7	87,7	68,2	57,9
All students in 2019	92,9	70,0	85,8	65,8

3
 4 The lack of educational activity organization in groups and teams was felt
 5 more by older students (from 26 years of age) than by younger students (under
 6 25 years of age). No gender differences were observed. However, comparing
 7 the two study programmes, it was possible to see that in the educational
 8 process of implementing Social work study programme in 2019 as well as in
 9 2008 discussions and group work methods predominated, while in Childhood
 10 education study programme in 2019 teachers' attention to group work
 11 significantly decreased (from 83,3 per cent in 2008 to 40,0 per cent in 2019),
 12 but time spent on teamwork decreased from 60,0 per cent in 2008 increased to
 13 100 per cent in 2019.

14 Based on the research data, it could be stated that various forms of
 15 educational activities - reasoned discussion, cooperation with each other, group
 16 work, project activities - were organized quite often at university.

17 However, a significant proportion of the students researched expressed
 18 their additional preferences, i.e. they would like to see as many active teaching
 19 methods as possible in the teaching process and wished the teachers to pay
 20 even more attention to developing tolerance. Thus, half of all students wanted
 21 even more active teaching methods in the study process (55,1 per cent), and
 22 that teachers to pay more attention to the development of tolerance (51,9 per
 23 cent).

24 25 26 **Influence of educational environment on students' attitude to the** 27 **preconditions for tolerance development** 28

29 In order to go deeper into the preconditions of tolerance development at
 30 university, the aim was to find out the influence of the educational environment
 31 on the development of tolerance. To this end, two blocks of environmental
 32 interaction were identified: the interaction of students and teachers, and the

interaction of students themselves. The interactions among the participants of this environment showed the influence of the educational environment on tolerance development.

Interaction between students and teachers

Adherence to the principles of tolerance is first and foremost reflected in human interaction. Therefore, in the further analysis, an attempt was made to reveal the peculiarities of communication between students and teachers, whether their relationship was really based on each other's respect, trust and responsibility.

To this end, ten statements related to student-teacher interactions were identified (see Table 6) that could reveal students' attitudes and allowed for comparison.

According to the 2008 research data, it was obvious that the majority of teachers respected students' opinions, views, beliefs (69,0 per cent), gave advice and suggestions on how to complete tasks (80,7 per cent), paid enough attention to each student (86,6 per cent), promoted their sense of self-esteem (72,2 per cent), encouraged and supported students (70,6 per cent), reasoned their criticism (61,5 per cent). However, as many as two-fifths (41,2 per cent) of all students admitted that teachers tended to moralize. Only a small proportion (36,9 per cent) of all students agreed with the statement that teachers devoted sufficient time to foster communication habits among students. There were also teachers at the university who were annoyed by the clothing style and manners of some students (15,0 per cent) and downgraded students for unusual behavior (18,7 per cent). In 2019, the percentage of teachers who promoted students' sense of self-esteem decreased significantly (from 72,2 per cent in 2008 to 58,6 per cent in 2019) and the number of teachers who reasonably criticized students (from 61,5 per cent in 2008 to 31,5 per cent in 2019). It should be noted, that still there were teachers who were annoyed by the clothing styles and manners of some students (7,2 per cent), and lowered the grade for students for their unusual behavior (1,8 per cent).

Table 6. Distribution of attitudes towards the interaction between students and teachers in different periods (per cent)

Comparative statements about the interaction between students and teachers	Percentage of students who agreed with the statement in 2008	Percentage of students who agreed with the statement in 2019
1. Students are given tips and suggestions on how to complete the tasks	80,7	82,9
2. Teachers encourage and support students	70,6	68,6
3. Teachers respect students' opinions, views and beliefs	69,0	68,6
4. Teachers promote students' sense of self-esteem	72,2	58,6

5. Teachers criticize students by making arguments	61,5	31,5
6. Teachers are annoyed by the clothing styles and manners of some students	15,0	7,2
7. Teachers lower the grade for students for their unusual behavior	18,7	1,8
8. Teachers tend to moralize	41,2	31,5
9. Teachers devote enough time to foster communication habits among students	36,9	30,0
10. Teachers pay enough attention to each student, they do not ignore them	86,6	75,8

Assessing the opinions of the respondents at different times, it could be concluded that the relationship between teachers and students was based on respect, cooperation and tolerance.

Student interaction

Further deepening the influence of the educational environment on the development of student tolerance, an attempt was made to reveal the interaction between students. As expected, most students not only communicated with each other but also collaborated with each other. 68,3 per cent of students indicated that they received peer advice and assistance in carrying out their tasks in 2008 (see Table 7). This percentage increased slightly in 2019 (up to 72,9 per cent). In 2008, almost two-thirds (57,9 per cent) of all students and 75,8 per cent in 2019 stated that their peers showed enough attention, listened carefully, and that they felt each other's support. Comparing the same study programmes in different periods, no significant changes were observed, except that there were no fellow students in Social work study programme who criticized without arguments (in 2008 there were 26,3 per cent of them). In this study programme, the percentage of students receiving peer support increased (from 63,2 per cent in 2008 to 85,8 per cent in 2019) and attention (from 52,6 per cent in 2008 to 71,5 per cent in 2019). It should be noted that no significant deviations from the general opinion were observed between students of different age groups and genders.

Table 7. Students' opinions on the signs of interaction according to study programmes (per cent)

Study programme	Receive peer assistance	Receive peer attention	Feel peer support	Receive peer respect	Receive non-argumentative peer criticism	Would like more respect in the relationship
Childhood education in 2008	73,3	63,3	60,0	66,7	23,3	73,3
Childhood education in 2019	60,0	80,0	60,0	60,0	40,0	40,0

Social work in 2008	63,2	52,6	42,1	44,7	26,3	81,6
Social work in 2019	85,8	71,5	42,9	42,9	0	71,5
All students in 2008	68,3	57,9	51,1	55,7	24,8	77,5
All students in 2019	72,9	75,8	51,5	51,5	20,0	55,8

Although many of the researched students cooperated with each other, they received the respect and peer support, especially the students of Childhood education study programme, but the majority (77,5 per cent) of all respondents in 2008, and in 2019 more than half of the respondents (55,8 per cent), however, wished even more respect and friendliness in student relationships.

Thus, it could be argued that student interaction was based on respect, support, and positive appreciation of each other, which formed the main preconditions for developing tolerance within oneself regardless of social demographic (age and gender) factors.

Conclusions

The empirical research, described in this article, elucidates the aspects of tolerance development at the higher educational institution. Interrelations and educational activities of all participants in the educational process determine the preconditions for tolerance development at Marijampole university of Applied Sciences. Active teaching methods are based on communication and cooperation, which creates the conditions for the development of tolerance. At Marijampole University of Applied Sciences, teachers use active teaching methods and they are the predominant form of teaching. The educational environment is important for tolerance development. At Marijampole University of Applied Sciences, the mutual relations between the main participants of the interaction - students and lecturers - are based on respect and trust. This creates excellent conditions for the spread of tolerance, as only tolerant teachers can teach tolerance. Still there are cases where teachers criticize students without arguments (31,5 per cent), teachers are annoyed by students' clothing or manners (7,2 per cent), teachers reduce students' grades for unusual behavior (1,8 per cent), teachers tend to moralize (31,5 per cent). There could also be more respect and support in the relationships between the students themselves, especially among those studying Social work study programme.

References

- Bitinas, B. (2006). Edukologinis tyrimas: sistema ir procesas. Vilnius: Kronta
- Boghian, I.(2017). A Psycho-Pedagogical Approach to the Concept of Tolerance. *Journal of Innovation in Psychology, Education and Didactics* Vol. 21, No. 1, p. 97 – 110.
- Charles, C.M., Mertler, C.A. (2002). Introduction to Educational Research (4th ed.). Boston: Allyn&Bacon. "Declaration of Principles on Tolerance", 1995 (http://www.unesco.org/webworld/peace_library/UNESCO/HRIGHTS/124-129.HTM)
- Deveikienė, L., Manelis, E. (2004). Tolerancijos ugdymas mokykloje. Vilnius: Garnelis.
- Lickona, T. *Making Sense of Tolerance and Diversity*, The Fourth and Fifth Rs, Vol.8, Issue 2, Winter 2002; www.cortland.edu/character. p.65.
- Jakavonytė L. Creating Culture of Tolerance: Transforming Tradition of Monologue into Tradition Dialogue//Globalizacija: taikos kultūra, žinių visuomenė, tolerancija. Vilnius: Lietuvos teisės universiteto Leidybos centras, 2003, p. 156–170.
- Loewen, N. (2013). „A proposal to support college internalization within a pedagogy of positive tolerance.” *Pedagogie Collegiale*, 26(3), 1-6.
- Maslow, A. (1989). Psichologijos duomenys ir vertybių teorija. Gėrio kontūrai. Vilnius: Mintis
- Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th Edition: Springfield, Massachusetts, USA.
- Plečkaitis, R. (1998) Tolerancija. Vilnius: Pradai.
- Reardon, B.A. (1997). *Tolerance: The threshold of peace: Unit I teacher training resource*. Paris: Unesco, p. 19
- Rupšienė, L. (2007). Kokybinio tyrimo duomenų rinkimo metodologija. Klaipėda: KU, p. 87.
- Tucicov-Bogdan, A. (2001). Toleranța interetnică, teorie și realitate. *Revista Psihologia*, № 5, 9-11.
- Stan, E. (2004). Educația pentru toleranță. *Didactica Pro ...*, № 4. 43-48.
- Sprindžiūnas A. X-XII Klasių mokinių tolerancijos ugdymas. Daktaro disertacija, socialiniai mokslai, eduklogija (07S). Vilnius: VU, 2000.
- Sprindžiūnas A. *Krikščioniška tolerancijos samprata ir vyresniųjų moksleivių požiūris į ją*. Lietuvių katalikų mokslo akademijos suvažiavimo darbai., Vilniaus universitetas, 2003.
- Sprindžiūnas A. Lietuvos moksleivių ksenofobijos ir politinės tolerancijos bruožai // *Acta Paedagogica Vilmensia*, 2006 Nr. 16.
- Vogt, W.P. (1997). Tolerance and Education: Learning to live with diversity and difference. Thousand oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Žemaitis, V. (1997). Pedagoginė tolerancija. Vilnius: Ethos.