Are Saudi Graduate Students Tolerant of Non-Muslims?

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The current study sought to reveal the level of tolerance towards non-Muslims among graduate students in Saudi Arabia. To achieve this goal, the dimensions of tolerance were determined; which are cultural tolerance, religious tolerance, and political tolerance; and a scale was built to measure them. The study used a descriptive analytical method obtaining data from (40) male and female students who were randomly selected from among the students at the College of Education at Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal University. The results showed that the level of tolerance is average. This may well reflect the dilemma of not spreading and deepening the idea of tolerance among university students. Also, the findings demonstrated that there are no differences between the students due to the variables (gender - academic major) in the level of tolerance. The study recommends the need to enhance the dimensions of tolerance among students and to include them in the preparation programs, to pay attention to activities that help to enhance the dimensions of tolerance, and to spread a culture of tolerance.

INTRODUCTION

Tolerance is a human characteristic of all races, nationalities, countries, and religions. Among the qualities that distinguish man from other creatures is that he/she possesses unique and distinctive qualities such as tolerance. The United Nations has defined tolerance as the individual's respect, acceptance, and appreciation for the rich cultural diversity of the world and for different human qualities (United Nations [UN], 1995). It is mutual respect between adherents of different religions and schools, which is shown by allowing people to worship freely without criticism, prohibition and disturbance (Rahmat & Yahya, 2022). As testament to the importance of tolerance, the world has paid great attention to this capacity; for example, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) allocated an award to promote

tolerance and non-violence, which was established by the United Nations in 1995. In addition, the world celebrates on November 16 of each year the International Day of Tolerance, which was adopted by the United Nations in 1996 (AlMajali & AlKhaaldi, 2020; UN, n.d.).

However, some human beings may strip themselves of those values, such as tolerance, for various reasons. For example, after the United States invaded Iraq in 2003, the world began to listen to strange and reprehensible speech that was not commonly circulated in circles and societies, especially Islamic societies (Karouny, 2007). Many extremist groups have emerged that have embraced hate speech against non-Muslims. The hate speech continued and increased until the world felt the need to unite and stand in the face of this widespread discourse, until world leaders of various religions and nationalities stood together to declare their opposition to this rhetoric hostile to humanitarian principles. At this point, the United Nations announced in 2019 its strategic plan to confront hate speech (UN News, 2019).

Definition of tolerance

Language dictionaries refer to the meaning of tolerance as a feeling of kindness and acceptance of others' beliefs (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). "Tolerance is a moral principle and virtue. Tolerance means that one should treat others in the same way, as one needs others to treat him/her". (AlMajali & AlKhaaldi, 2020, p. 572). It is the transcendence of guilt and error, and omitting punishment (Cambridge University Press, n.d.). Tolerance also means forgiveness, pardon, and indulgence (Omar, 2008).

The efforts of Saudi Arabia in spreading the culture of tolerance

The moderate positions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia played a major role in confronting these foreign ideas in the Islamic world. Among those important actions, which are aimed at consolidating and spreading a culture of tolerance towards non-Muslims, is the meeting of King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz with Pope Benedict XVI in the Vatican City during the King's visit to Italy on November 6, 2007 (Saudi Press Agency [SPA], 2007). This event was a distinguished historical talk that was reported by the international press, at which the king of one of the largest countries in the Islamic world met the largest figure in the Christian world (BBC News, 2007; Pullella, 2007; Rosenthal, 2007). This position was not the only one adopted by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, but King Abdullah called for the convening of an international conference on interfaith dialogue. The Muslim World League encouraged the holding of that conference, which was organized in the Spanish capital, Madrid, on July 16-18, 2008. The opening ceremony of the conference was attended by King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz and King Juan Carlos I, the King of Spain (The Embassy of The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 2008). In addition, in 2012, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in cooperation with the Republic of Austria and the Kingdom of Spain, established the King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID) in the Austrian capital, Vienna. Then, the KAICIID was moved to the Portuguese capital, Lisbon, in 2021 (Arab News, 2012; Portuguese Government Portal, 2021). Furthermore, in 2020, King Salman, the current King of Saudi Arabia, received in the

capital, Riyadh, members of the KAICIID, which delegation included a group of representatives of different religions in the world (SPA, 2020). All these and other efforts illustrate some of the attempts made by the government and people of Saudi Arabia to establish brotherhood, peace and tolerance among the various sects and religions of the earth.

Tolerance in the Holy Quran

The Holy Qur'an is concerned with consolidating tolerance in the hearts of Muslims and spreading the spirit of brotherhood with other religions. Therefore, the Qur'an emphasizes a very important issue, which is forgiveness of the mistakes of others. The Holy Qur'an refers to this sense, "whoever forgives and makes reconciliation, his reward is with Allah. Verily, He likes not the Zalimun (oppressors, polytheists, wrong-doers)" (Qur'an 42:40, King Fahd Complex edition). The Qur'an did not stop at urging tolerance and forgiveness for the affliction of others only, but also asked Muslims to engage in dialogue with others, so it said, "Say (O Muhammad): O People of the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! Come to a word that is just between us and you" (Qur'an 3:64, King Fahd Complex edition). It is as if the Qur'an wanted to make tolerance a method to be followed by its followers, to learn from and practice it throughout their lives.

The reason for the intolerance among many Muslims stems from ignorance of the meaning of belief and disbelief contained in their holy book, the Holy Qur'an (Yahya & Rahmat, 2021). When the Holy Qur'an refers to the word "People of the Scripture", it means the followers who follow the heavenly religions such as the Jews and Christians (Ibn-Kathir, 2016). In the Holy Qur'an, the People of the Scripture divide into two categories, believers and disbelievers (Yahya & Rahmat, 2022). The believers among them are those who truly believe in Allah Almighty (God) from the depths of their soul, and work righteousness with other human beings even if they bear different names such as Jews, Christians, Sabians and others. The Qur'an explains this meaning by saying, "verily, those who believe and those who are Jews and Christians, and the Sabians, whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day and does righteous good deeds shall have their reward with their Lord, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve" (Qur'an 2:62, King Fahd Complex edition), "not all of them are alike; a party of the people of the Scripture stand for the right, they recite the Verses of Allah during the hours of the night, prostrating themselves in prayer." (Qur'an 3:113, King Fahd Complex edition), "Surely, those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah, in His Messenger Muhammad SAW and all that was revealed to him from Allah), those who are the Jews and the Sabians and the Christians, - whosoever believed in Allah and the Last Day, and worked righteousness, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve" (Qur'an 5:69, King Fahd Complex edition), and "there are, certainly, among the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), those who believe in Allah and in that which has been revealed to you, and in that which has been revealed to them, humbling themselves before Allah. They do not sell the Verses of Allah for a little price, for them is a reward with their Lord. Surely, Allah is Swift in account" (Qur'an 3:199, King Fahd Complex edition).

On the other hand, the unbelievers of the People of the Book are those who pretend to believe and follow the truth, however, in reality, they follow their worldly interests and benefits from collecting money and power. This category does not seek the truth and deals with people badly, harshly, and unjustly. The Holy Qur'an refers to this meaning by saying, "neither those who disbelieve among the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) nor Al-Mushrikun (the disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah, idolaters, polytheists, pagans, etc.) like that there should be sent down unto you any good from your Lord. But Allah chooses for His Mercy whom He wills. And Allah is the Owner of Great Bounty" (Qur'an 2:105, King Fahd Complex edition).

The Qur'an commanded its followers to coexist peacefully with the Ahl al-Kitab (the People of the Book), eat their food, and intermarry with them, and this is a practical practice of tolerance with non-Muslims, so it said, "This day [all] good foods have been made lawful, and the food of those who were given the Scripture is lawful for you and your food is lawful for them. And [lawful in marriage are] chaste women from among the believers and chaste women from among those who were given the Scripture before you" (Qur'an 5:5, King Fahd Complex edition).

The Holy Qur'an did not neglect how its followers dealt with disbelievers, non-People of the Book. It asked Muslims to coexist peacefully with them. Rather, it permitted them what is beyond that, which is the righteousness of disbelievers, connection, and affection of them as well. The Holy Qur'an refers to this sense, "Allah does not forbid you from those who do not fight you because of religion and do not expel you from your homes - from being righteous toward them and acting justly toward them. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly" (Qur'an 60:8, King Fahd Complex edition). The previous verse confirms that the Qur'an is a book of peace, coexistence, and tolerance. It is worth noting that the Holy Qur'an contains a complete chapter called Sura Al-Kaafiroon, which means the chapter of disbelievers. This sura draws a road map for Muslims of how to deal with disbelievers. The Qur'an teaches its followers that disbelievers have a different belief, and a different culture that must be respected, so it said, "Say, "O disbelievers, I do not worship what you worship. Nor are you worshippers of what I worship. Nor will I be a worshipper of what you worship. Nor will you be worshippers of what I worship. For you is your religion, and for me is my religion" (Qur'an 109:1-6, King Fahd Complex edition).

The Holy Qur'an goes further than that, where it explains to its followers the importance of tolerance and coexistence with non-Muslims, whether they are the People of the Scripture (believers) or disbelievers. Thus, it refers to the reason why people are created different in their cultures, religions, faiths, and ideas, so it said, "O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Aware." (Qur'an 49:13, King Fahd Complex edition). Therefore, the main criterion for differentiation between human beings is not the religion in which they believe, but rather noble, good neighborliness, high morals, and respect for the humanity of others regardless of their colors, races, and beliefs.

Tolerance in the history of Arabs and Muslims

History confirms that tolerance has a very high power. If tolerance prevails, people will feel safe and happy. Tolerance not only preserves the individual, but also preserves and protects society from fragmentation. Therefore, Islamic history indicates that when the Messenger of God, Muhammad, conquered Mecca, which was the capital of the enemies of Muslims, he did not deal with them with violence. He used tolerance to erase all grudges, when the Prophet of God, Muhammad, issued his decision by telling them, *Go, you are free* (Ibn-Hisham, 1990).

On the other hand, Islamic history shows that there is a history of intolerance against Muslims. Many of the caliphs, the rulers of the Islamic State, were killed (Adh-Dhahabi, 1990). Groups apparently affiliated with Islam emerged, but they practiced intolerance and used violence against Muslims and others (Ibn Aljawzi, 1995). For example, Caliph Ali bin Abu Talib, a cousin of the Prophet of Islam and the husband of his daughter, ruled the Islamic state in Medina from 657 to 661 (Ibn Al-Athir, 2008). During his rule, Ali bin Abu Talib was forced to fight three wars that were imposed on him: the War of the Camel (Ibn-Kathir, 2015), the War of Siffin (Al-Tabari, 2011), and the War of Nahrawan (Al-Suyuti, 2013). Ultimately, this caliph was murdered by the intolerant and extremist Khawarij who claimed to be Muslims. Ali bin Abu Talib was killed while he was on his way to pray at the door of the mosque (Ibn Khayat, 1995). In the face of all this hatred and intolerance, history records the great heroic and human stance of Caliph Ali bin Abu Talib. After he was hit on the head with a sword, he became bedridden. He did not treat the killer the same way; however, he used softness and tolerance with the killer. The Caliph Ali bin Abu Talib said to his son Alhassan bin Ali, *be kind, my son, to your prisoner, and have mercy on him. Be kind to him, and pity him. Do you not see that his eyes have flown into the top of his head, and his heart is trembling with fear, terror, and dread?* (Abu Talib, 2009). This practical practice of using tolerance in exchange for violence and hatred is the right way to build tolerance, whether religious tolerance or otherwise.

Study problem

Achieving tolerance among people has become one of the most important challenges facing countries, societies, and scientific institutions such as universities and schools due to the rapid and significant repercussions of the actions of extremist groups, parties, and organizations. The need for a national tolerance that achieves stability for the individual in society and for the student at the university, psychological balance, protecting his/her beliefs, and his/her intellectual and cultural inheritance from deviant influences and ideas, has become one of the most important requirements of the current era.

The development of tolerance for all individuals and societies is the safety valve against the violence, terrorism, and violation of the most basic human rights that societies need to live with. The duty today requires everyone to work to spare society all attempts to slip into the labyrinths of deviant thought, which in turn leads to the absence of tolerance.

Therefore, the questions of the current study are represented in the following main question: What is the level of tolerance among College of Education students at Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University (IAU) and its role in confronting the danger of deviant groups, parties, and ideas?

The following sub-questions are derived from the main question:

1 - What is the level of tolerance among College of Education students at IAU?

2 - What is the relationship of the level of tolerance with the variables (gender - academic major)?

Hypotheses

To answer the second sub-question, the following hypotheses were formulated:

1. There is no statistically significant difference in the students' tolerance level due to gender.

2. There is no statistically significant difference in the students' tolerance level due to academic major.

Study importance

The importance of the current study is represented in the following points:

1. It is a response to the calls emphasizing the importance of awareness of the dimensions of tolerance values among students.

2. It may open the door for more research and studies on the values of tolerance.

3. It may help to introduce the dimensions of tolerance within the preparation and training programs for the College of Education students.

Study objectives

The current study aims to:

1. Identify the level of tolerance among the graduate students.

2. Determine the dimensions of tolerance.

3. Identify the effect of the variables (gender - academic major) on the level of tolerance.

4. Assist those in charge of the preparation programs for the College of Education students in developing those programs to include tolerance training.

Study delimitations

Objective Delimitation: The educationally acceptable level is that the participants obtain 70% or more on the tolerance scale, which is the degree that was confirmed by previous studies and experts.

Temporal Delimitation: The study was conducted at the end of the first semester of the academic year 2021/2022.

Spatial Delimitation: This study was conducted in Dammam, Eastern region of Saudi Arabia.

Population Delimitation: The sample comprised 40 male and female students from the College of Education

Study terms

Level of tolerance: the researchers of this study define it operationally as the informational outcome of the College of Education graduate students about the dimensions of tolerance. It is operationally measured by the degree that the student obtains on the tolerance scale prepared by the researchers to measure their tolerance level.

Dimensions of tolerance: the researchers of this study define it as the cultural, religious and political determinants of the individual.

Literature Review

Almazin (2009) investigated the role of Palestinian universities in promoting the values of tolerance from their students' point of view. The study used the descriptive analytical method to examine the point of view of 294 students. The results showed that the role of universities ranges between weak and medium. Therefore, the study recommended the necessity of including information on the values of tolerance in the academic curricula.

Almshigri (2010) analyzed the school curricula in the Sultanate of Oman to determine the ability of the curricula to consolidate the values of tolerance, dialogue, and cultural diversity. The study emphasized the need for all community institutions to interact to spread the values of tolerance among students, and the need to train teachers on strategies that contribute to achieving that.

Almansoub (2011) discussed the reasons for the absence of national unity and a culture of tolerance on a sample of 583 male and female students at Ibb University in Yemen. He also studied the effect of gender, place of residence, type of college, and political affiliation on the degree of awareness of the seriousness of these challenges. The results showed that there were no differences due to gender and place of residence, and there were differences due to the type of college. The most important challenges were security challenges, following by economic, and political challenges. The study recommended the necessity of conducting more studies on the reasons for the absence of tolerance values in Yemeni society.

Al-Sharifi et al. (2011) determined the level of tolerant behavior of secondary school teachers in Amman, Capital Governorate, from the teachers' perspective in the light of some variables (gender - school type - experience - educational qualification). The researchers built a questionnaire to measure the level of tolerant behavior. Their results showed that there were no differences due to gender and school type; however, there were differences due to experience and educational qualification in favor of the most experienced and those with master's and doctoral degrees.

Xanthacou et al. (2013) identified the relationship between creative thinking and tolerance among undergraduate students in Greece. Also, the researchers examined how

tolerance varies by academic major. The researchers relied on a questionnaire to collect data from a sample of 836 male and female university students. Their results showed that students of scientific disciplines were more tolerant than their counterparts in humanities, and the home environment had a significant impact on the level of tolerance of male students.

Alghamdi 's study (2014) aimed to reveal the extent of the spread of the culture of tolerance with others, and the extent of cultural diversity among students of Taibah University in Saudi Arabia. To achieve this goal, the descriptive approach was used, and a questionnaire consisting of 30 items was distributed to a sample of 1641 male and female students. The results showed that there were statistically significant differences in favor of the males. The study recommended the need to reduce violence and intolerance among university students.

Alajmi et al. (2014) aimed to determine the values of tolerance among 506 students in the College of Basic Education in Kuwait as the way to achieve digital citizenship. The results showed that the students had a high degree of cultural tolerance, followed by religious tolerance, and finally political tolerance. The results also showed that there were no differences related to gender, academic major, or level of religiosity. The researchers recommended that faculty members should adopt tolerant behaviors when dealing with students.

Shepherd and Shepherd (2014) compared the level of tolerance among students of the University of Michigan and students of the University of Arkansas in the United States of America. The researchers relied on a 53-item questionnaire to collect data from 385 students from the University of Michigan, and 409 students from the University of Arkansas. The results indicate that the rate of tolerance is higher among students at the University of Michigan compared to the University of Arkansas, and the study recommended that there is a need to conduct more studies to raise the level of tolerance.

Albhlal (2020) was interested in studying the level of understanding of 100 students at Majmaah University in Saudi Arabia of the teachings of the Islamic religion in how Muslims deal with non-Muslims. A survey study was used to investigate the students' understanding and knowledge of the provisions of Islam in the relationship with non-Muslims. The results showed that the students had weak to medium knowledge of the correct rulings of Islam in dealing with non-Muslims, which indicates that their dealings with non-Muslims did not stem from Islamic teachings. The study recommends the necessity of educating students about the tolerant provisions of Islam in dealing with non-Muslims, because extremism is a product of a superficial and distorted understanding of the teachings of religion and the Holy Qur'an.

Mutholingah (2021) investigated the efforts of the State University of Malang, Indonesia, to spread the values of religious tolerance towards non-Muslims. The researcher used the qualitative approach through documentation, observation, and interviews to find out the steps taken by the university in developing religious tolerance. The results indicate that the State University of Malang used (1) promoting a culture of tolerance through Islamic education subjects taught at the university, (2) holding lectures that benefit from Quranic verses in promoting tolerance, and (3) holding

seminars and conferences that revolve around the benefits of pluralism, difference and religious tolerance to increase tolerance among students.

The study of Rahmat and Yahya (2022) aimed to identify the effect of a proposed model for Islamic religious education materials on increasing students' tolerance towards non-Muslims in Indonesia. Statistics indicate that 50% of students were intolerant of other religions and adopted the takfiri ideas of Takfiri Salafis. The researchers used the quasi-experimental approach on a sample of 460 students, where 230 students were in the experimental group, and 230 students were in the control group. The results confirmed that the proposed model for Islamic religious education materials had a positive impact in increasing the tolerance of Indonesian students towards non-Muslims. The researchers recommend making use of the proposed model when teaching religious subjects.

METHOD

The current study used the descriptive analytical method to determine the level of tolerance, and to identify the effect of gender and academic major variables on their level of tolerance among graduate students at Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal University (IAU).

Population

The research population for this study consisted of all Saudi graduate students enrolled at the IAU, Saudi Arabia, in Winter 2021.

Participants

The participants for this study were Saudi graduate students enrolled at the College of Education, IAU. Using random sampling, the scale targeted 40 students, males (n = 20) and female (n = 20).

Study procedures

This study proceeded according to the following steps:

1. Determining the dimensions of tolerance by reviewing previous literature and studies, books, and references related to tolerance.

2. Preparing a scale of tolerance and presenting it to experts in the field of education.

3. Selecting a sample of students from the College of Education at the IAU.

4. Applying the scale to the sample.

5. Processing and interpretation of results.

6. Providing recommendations and proposing future studies and research.

Instrument

A scale was designed to measure tolerance by reviewing the literature and previous studies, where the domains of the tolerance concept were determined to include cultural tolerance, religious tolerance, and political tolerance. Religious tolerance is the freedom to practice religious rites, abandon religious intolerance against others, and not force others to convert to any religion or renounce their own. Cultural tolerance refers to

respect for the opinions and behaviours of others from different cultures. Political tolerance means recognition of others, whether they are a minority or a majority, in their rights to work, organization, participation, and promote their political ideas. Table 1 provides an items example of each dimension of the scale.

Table 1
Sample items of the tolerance scale

Domains	Sample Item
Cultural tolerance	I feel the importance of communication between other civilizations and peoples.
Religious tolerance	I respect the people of different religions.
Political tolerance	I am interested in the participation of all groups in political life.

Design and preparation of the scale in its initial form

After determining the scale's domains and formulating its statements, the number of items for the scale in its initial form were 45 items. Then, the scale was sent to four arbitrators to express their observations and views on the clarity of the scale's statements and the extent to which each item belongs to the domain. In light of their recommendation and suggestion, some items were removed, and the number of items on the scale was reduced to 33 items.

Pilot study

A pilot study was conducted on a sample of students in the College of Education; there were 20 students in order to ensure the validity of the scale statements. In the light of the pilot study's results, the change and modification to the scale in its initial form were made (see Table 2).

Table 2
Components of the tolerance scale and the number of its items in its final form

Domains	Number of items
Cultural tolerance	12
Religious tolerance	13
Political tolerance	8
Total	33

Test Validity. The validity of the scale was verified in several ways, as follows:

a. Discriminant Validity. The scale was applied to a sample of 40 students, then the peripheral comparison method between the upper and lower sets was used to test the scale validity (See Table 3).

Table 3
Results of the peripheral comparison

Sample	n	Mean	SD	t	Sig.
upper sets	10	29.02	2.1	28.96	0.000*
lower sets	10	14.51	4.8		

Note: * significant at the 0.01 level.

Table 3 shows that there are differences between the scores of the upper and lower sets in the tolerance scale. This result indicates that the scale has one of the psychometric properties of a good scale, which is its ability to discriminate between individuals.

b. Internal Consistency. The researchers calculated the correlation coefficient between the scores of each item and the domain to which it belongs, and between the scores of each item and the total score of each domain to which it belongs. The results show a correlation, which indicates the validity of the scale that is used.

c. Face Validity. The scale was presented to a group of arbitrators (four experts) belonging to the specialization of psychology, curricula and instruction. They were asked to respond regarding:

- The consistency of the items with the main domain.
- The appropriateness of each of these domains for students at the College of Education.
- How important each domain is to these students.
- The extent of the integrity of the linguistic formulation of these domains.
- Deleting, modifying, or adding some appropriate items from the experts' point of view to enrich the scale.

The arbitrators suggested the deletion of some items to reduce the time of the scale, some items that were unclear in terms of wording and content, and some items that did not have an agreement rate of more than 80%. In light of the arbitration, the scale was modified by deleting and adding some items and reformulating others.

Reliability. The reliability of the scale was verified in several ways, as follows:

a. Test-retest Method. The correlation coefficient was calculated between the results of the first application and the second application of the scale, where the researchers applied the scale to the pilot study sample and then re-applied after fifteen days on the same sample. The correlation coefficient between the two applications was calculated using Pearson's correlation coefficient (see Table 4).

Table 4
Reliability coefficient of the scale

Domains	Correlation coefficient
Cultural tolerance	0.87
Religious tolerance	0.77
Political tolerance	0.84
Total	0.82

Table 4 shows that the reliability coefficients for each scale domain, and for the whole scale have a good degree of reliability.

b. Internal Consistency. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated to ensure the stability of the scale. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.85, which means that the scale has a good degree of reliability.

Scale correction method

The scale of this study includes three domains with 33 items. Three points are given when the answer is (yes), two points when the answer is (to some extent), and one point

when the answer is (no). The highest sum scores in the scale are 99. A high score obtained by participants indicates a high level of tolerance, and a low score indicates a low level of tolerance.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

First question: What is the level of tolerance among College of Education students at IAU?

The arbitrators suggested that individual should have three types of tolerance for non-Muslims (cultural tolerance, religious tolerance, political tolerance) in order to be able to say that he/she is tolerant. Table 4 indicates that the level of tolerance is average among male and female students at the College of Education, where the percentage of total tolerance level was (78.79%).

Table 5
The level of tolerance among graduate students in the College of Education at IAU

Tolerance	Items	Mean	SD	% tolerance	Tolerance level
Cultural	12	28.300	7.760	78.61%	Average
Religious	13	30.700	8.343	78.72%	Average
Political	8	19.000	5.023	78.17%	Average
Whole Scale	33	78.000	21.082	78.79%	Average

Table 5 shows that the percentage of religious tolerance level is (78.72%), followed by the cultural tolerance level (78.61%) and the political tolerance level (78.17%). This result is consistent with Albhlal's study (2020), which indicates that the level of religious tolerance among Majmaah University students in Saudi Arabia was a medium-level. The reason for this result is because the students had a superficial understanding of the teachings of the Islamic religion in dealing with non-Muslims. Some of them think that Islam commands them to be rough and violent with non-Muslims. This thought is the result of the spread of extremist views and ideas in popular circles. However, this result differs from the result of Badarussyamsi and Latif (2021), which surveyed the opinions of students of four Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia. The authors concluded that the vast majority of students had an open nature in dealing with non-Muslims and were tolerant towards them. It may be argued that the reason for the emergence of this average level of tolerance among the sample members in the current study is because tolerance in its classical concept has limits. It is not possible to accept all differences (intellectual, belief, and behavioural) with the other (Cohen, 2004). What is important in tolerance is that this rejection of difference does not develop until it reaches the assault on others, whether verbal or physical.

Moreover, Table 5 indicates that students of the College of Education at IAU have a medium degree of tolerance in the cultural aspect. This result differs from the result of Alajmi et al. (2014), which confirmed that students in the College of Basic Education in Kuwait possess a high degree of cultural tolerance. Perhaps the reason is that the cultural openness in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia came late compared to Kuwait. Saudi Arabia has recently witnessed a major shift in the cultural aspect, accepting the different other, and striving to be a destination for tourists in the Middle East; this was evident in

the Kingdom's Vision 2030, which was announced by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman on April 25, 2016 (Vision 2030, n.d.). Furthermore, respondents may have a different understanding of cultural tolerance. The result of Verkuyten and Kollar (2021) indicates that cultural meanings of tolerance are not fixed, and people may have a different understanding of what tolerance means. The culture of Saudi Arabia is distinguished by its peculiarity in many different aspects, as it is linked to the Islamic heritage and Arabian traditions (Salam for Cultural Communication, 2021). Some people may be wary of cultural tolerance for the different, for fear of losing the country's cultural identity and assimilation with different cultures. In addition, the failure to attract or study many international students in Saudi universities may be one of the reasons for not celebrating cultural difference and accepting the culture of non-Muslims

In addition, the results of this study indicate that the lowest percentage was for the political tolerance level (see Table 5). This result is consistent with the results of several studies (e.g., Albhlal, 2020; Rahmat & Yahya, 2022). Albhlal (2020) indicated that the knowledge of the students of Majmaah University in Saudi Arabia of the provisions of Islam in alliances and wars was a weak to medium. This result raises concern because ignorance of Islamic rulings in alliances and wars may lead to compatibility with extremist Islamic groups that reject those rulings and teachings. Rahmat and Yahya (2022) concluded that more than 50% of Indonesian students at Indonesia University of Education would not elect a non-Muslim regional leader for the country even if he/she was better and possessed the right qualities.

Second question: What is the relationship of the level of tolerance with the variables (gender - academic major)?

The t-test was used to investigate the effect of gender on the level of tolerance. Table 6 indicates that there are no statistically significant differences between males and females on the level of tolerance ($t = 0.852$, $p = 0.399$). Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is rejected, and the null hypothesis is accepted, which stated that there is no statistically significant difference in the students' tolerance level due to gender. This result is consistent with the results of several studies (e.g., Almansoub, 2011; Al-Sharifi et al., 2011; Alajmi et al., 2014); which indicated that there are no differences between students in the level of tolerance due to the gender variable. On the other hand, this result differs from the result of Alghamdi 's study (2014), which found that males are more tolerant than females.

Table 6
Results of t-test for gender variable

Tolerance	Gender	n	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean	df	t	p
Cultural	M	20	29.400	6.125	1.370	38	0.894	0.377
	F	20	20.270	9.140	2.044			
Religious	M	20	31.580	6.635	1.484	38	0.869	0.390
	F	20	29.550	9.801	2.191			
Political	M	20	19.600	4.083	0.913	38	0.751	0.457
	F	20	18.400	5.862	1.311			
Whole Scale	M	20	80.850	16.844	3.766	38	0.852	0.399
	F	20	75.150	24.729	5.529			

In addition, the t-test was used to measure the effect of academic major on the level of tolerance. Table 7 indicates that there are no statistically significant differences between scientific and literary majors ($t = 1.517$, $p = 0.167$). Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is rejected, and the null hypothesis is accepted, which stated that, there is no statistically significant difference in the students' tolerance level due to academic major. The reason for this result may be due to the great similarity between the sample members with different specializations. They live in one environment, profess one religion, speak one language, and learn in one educational system. This result is consistent with the results of several studies (e.g., Almansoub, 2011; Alajmi et al., 2014); which indicated that there are no differences between students in the level of tolerance due to the academic major variable. On the other hand, this result differs with the result of Xanthacou et al. (2013), which found that students of scientific disciplines are more tolerant than students of literary disciplines.

Table 7
Results of t-test for academic major variable

Tolerance	academic major	n	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean	df	t	p
Cultural	S	18	26.222	19.124	2.150	38	1.560	0.127
	L	22	30.000	6.141	1.309			
Religious	S	18	28.500	9.781	2.306	38	1.535	0.133
	L	22	32.500	6.653	1.418			
Political	S	18	17.778	5.857	1.380	38	1.410	0.167
	L	22	20.000	4.094	0.873			
Whole Scale	S	18	72.500	24.679	5.817	38	1.517	0.138
	L	22	82.500	16.888	3.601			

CONCLUSION

In conclude, there is a high importance to study and discuss the idea of tolerance for the different other due to the cultural, religious, and political overlap and diversity in societies, institutions, and partnerships. This study attempted to measure the level of tolerance with non-Muslims (cultural tolerance, religious tolerance, political tolerance) among graduate students at Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University in Saudi Arabia, and to study whether there are differences in the level of tolerance due to gender or academic major. The results of this study indicated that the level of tolerance was average in the sample, and it was not found a significant differences due to gender or academic major. These results confirm on the importance and strength of the discourse of tolerance in spreading a culture of tolerance among members of society and openness to the other, and in correcting the concept of tolerance in people's minds.

LIMITATION

The small sample size (n = 40) is a limitation of this study. Therefore, the results of the current study cannot be generalized.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The researchers recommend the following:

- Since the results of the research conclude that the level of tolerance is average among graduate students in the College of Education at IAU, the spreading of knowledge

regarding the importance of tolerance and the need to consider it as a way of life is recommended. The use or development of religious books that address and encourage the issue of tolerance of non-Muslims will have a great impact in spreading the culture of empathy, moderation, and tolerance towards others (Badarussyamsi & Latif, 2021; Mutholingah, 2021). This was confirmed by Lutfiyah et al.'s study (2016), which indicated that the reason for the spread of violence and extremism in the city of Lamongan Regency in Indonesia is their study of literature with a radical content. Therefore, Rahmat and Yahya (2022) emphasized the necessity of presenting the religious textbooks to moderate Muslim scholars before starting to use them with students in order to assess their clarity and impact on students' religious tolerance.

- Since the results indicate that there are no differences between participants due to gender and academic specialization, it is recommended that more opportunities should be provided for all students to realize the importance of tolerance. One of the ways that students can realize the importance of tolerance is by holding educational religious lectures, seminars, discussions, and comparative studies, and also making use of the means of communication to spread the spirit of tolerance among university students. This was confirmed by Rahmat and Yahya's study (2022) that the Takfiri Salafis were more active and widespread among students on university campuses to spread a culture of exclusion and intolerance towards non-Muslims. Also, the Takfiri Salafis used social media to spread hatred and reject the other, which caused a decrease in the rate of tolerance for non-Muslims in the university.

- Correcting the concept of tolerance in the minds of students by spreading the modern meaning of tolerance, which is mental openness to the diversity and differences of human beings, and the celebration of diversity in minority identities and their cultures.

- Forging partnerships between universities in Saudi Arabia and universities in other non-Muslim countries may contribute to promoting awareness of the importance of diversity and acceptance of others, and thus the spread of a culture of tolerance among students.

SUGGESTIONS

The researchers suggest the following:

- Studying the extent to which students practice tolerance.

- Studying the effect of tolerance level on student achievement.

- Studying the effect of students' regions, academic level, and GPAs on the level of tolerance of students.

- Applying the tolerance scale of this study to other samples.

- Establishing a program to develop tolerance among graduate students at the College of Education.

- Conducting similar studies on different educational areas in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and linking with other variables.

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