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## Role Of Teacher to Enhance the Interfaith Tolerance Among the Students: In the Light of Islam

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### Abstract

The term “interfaith tolerance” means for the people belonging to different religions or to different groups of the same religion to behave warmly, discuss and debate the common matters and cooperate together without trying to impose their thoughts and beliefs upon other people. It involves promoting understanding between different religions to increase acceptance of others, rather than to synthesize new beliefs. The objectives of the study were to examine the existing level of interfaith tolerance among students, to find the effect of classroom activities on the tolerance level of students and to confirm that teaching according the Islam increases the interfaith tolerance level of the students. It is raised a question that what is the existing level of interfaith tolerance among students? What is the effect of classroom activities on the tolerance level of students? Does the teaching according to Islam enhance the level of interfaith tolerance among the students? The research work will guide to the parent, teaching community and every person in understanding the role of teacher to enhance the interfaith tolerance among the students and to identify the problems related to training of interfaith tolerance, to make those problems understandable and also projecting their solutions in the light of the teachings of the Islam. It is a six-month long study the subjects will be two intact groups who are studying in the school. Tolerance Scale will be developed for the study. The study will be conducted in two different phases. At the first phase the Tolerance Scale



## *Role Of Teacher to Enhance the Interfaith Tolerance Among the Students: In the Light of Islam*

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will be administered to the subjects as a pre-test. In the 2nd phase the experimental group will be taught teachings of Islam for six months. After six months the Tolerance Scale will be re administered to record the change in the level of tolerance. The data will be collected. The results will be found and analyzed and recommendations will be presented for increasing the tolerance level of the elementary school students.

**Keywords:** interfaith tolerance, character building, role of teacher. Teachings of Islam.

### **World View**

Today the adoption of peaceful environment becomes an international critical issue, not for the Muslims countries but also for non-Muslim countries. It effects all fields of life; religious, social, geographic, economic and especially the educational field, creating an intense situation, affecting most parts of the world. Muslim students as well as teachers particularly, all over the world severely facing problems in the name of terrorists.

The problem basically reasons the religion and faith depending propaganda against the Islam and the Muslim. It demands the interfaith tolerance severely felt for resolving the present awful scenario all over the world. Most of the anti-Muslim agencies are trying to present "Islam" as a terroristic religion and are also working hard for the spread of non-Islamic civilization and culture all over the world<sup>(1)</sup>which is provoking the innocent mind to create intense condition specially in educational institutions i.e. brutal killing of student Amir Cheema in the Germany university<sup>(2)</sup> killing of Mashaal in Mardan university and also killing of a professor in SE university in Jhang are the painful incidences of interfaith intolerance.

Islam is the religion of peace and prosperity. It grants every Muslim as well as non-Muslim the freedom of life and estate, belief and worship, residence and traveling and working thanks to the law of zimmah (covenant) <sup>(3)</sup>. It is one of the most gifted quality of a universal religion to embrace people from all religions of the humanity, to be tolerant and to give people their fundamental rights and freedoms. It is much needed sound actions to resolve the serious problems related to interfaith intolerance in our educational institutions.

No doubt that educational institutions play the vital role for character building of the nation. It has four main elements: teacher, student, curriculum and method of teaching but the role of teacher is most important in the educational process. A teacher can change the life of the students. Allama Iqbal got his glory due to his teacher. Molana Shibli Noumani also says that he is the Shibli because of his teacher. So the role of a teacher is very important to develop the interfaith tolerance among the students so that they become more tolerant and accepting of differences among the students. In fast-changing society, new differences among people swimming out rapidly. Many cultures and religions instill certain moral and ethical values always to accept all people's differences easily. Islam

is the most peaceful religion. Therefore as the Muslim we should train our new generation to adopt the habits of the interfaith tolerance to accept the differences creating in our society so that it become a peaceful nation all of the world and can prove that Islam never teaches hate but love and peace. It trains not only to the Muslims but to the whole humanity to be humble and peaceful. As it is said in Quran:

الَّذِينَ إِنْ مَكَّنَاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الرِّزْكَةَ وَأَمْرُوا بِالْمُعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا عَنِ  
الْمُنْكَرِ وَلِلَّهِ عَاقِبَةُ الْأُمُورِ

(These men of Truth) are those who, if we establish their rule in the earth, will establish (systems of) Prayer, (organize and control) paying of Zakat (the Alms-due), enjoin righteousness (and piousness in the whole society) and forbid (people from) evil. And the result of all the endeavors is in the control of Allah (⁴).

The problem of intolerance and impatience is due to lack of education and neglecting the teachings of the holy Quran and of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). In the present scenario it is much needed to promote the interfaith tolerance in our new generation through education.

The fast growing problems of the age i.e. political injustice, economic inequality, continuing war in different parts of world, ethnic and sectarian tensions, poverty, famine, pandemic and epidemic diseases, domestic and international terrorism are the major sources of instability and disharmony among the nations. None of these problems can be solved only through political sentiments or economic programs but there is also needed a sound educational system to develop human dignity and respect for others and bring us closer to one another as equal human beings (⁵).

### What Concepts Interfaith Tolerance?

The term “interfaith tolerance” is not a single word. To some, the term interreligious has the same meaning as interfaith which means the people belonging to different religions or to different groups of the same religion to behave warmly, discuss and debate the common matters and cooperate together without trying to impose their thoughts and beliefs upon the people other religions. It involves promoting understanding between different religions to increase acceptance of others, rather than to synthesize new beliefs. As narrated in following hadith:

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا، قَالَتْ: «مَا سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَنْسِبُ  
أَحَدًا إِلَّا إِلَى الَّذِينَ

Narrated by Hazrat Aisha, Ummul Mu'minin: I never heard the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) attributing anyone to anything except to religion .(⁶)

## *Role Of Teacher to Enhance the Interfaith Tolerance Among the Students: In the Light of Islam*

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By following the teaching of the Holy Prophet(ﷺ) we should enhance the interfaith tolerance among the students inside the classroom so that a peaceful nation can be promoted.

### **Why needs Interfaith Tolerance?**

Peace always needs a fair, objective, and permissive attitude which is free from bias and every one should accept the differences i.e: gender, religion, color, race, ethnicity, ability line, caste, religious beliefs that existed among our people. It makes a peaceful and coherent society, where the intolerance towards Muslims and non-Muslims should be decreased. But fast technology inventions era has severe effect on the minds of the new generation. Aggressive video games and horse opera movies grasp the mind of the new generation and injected their behavior with aggressiveness and harshness. The suicides of two young boys It is very critical situation for the peace of the nation. so it is important that new generation give respect to those having any kind of differences <sup>(7)</sup>. It is not an easy attitude to obtain. It's a naturally based trait of character to dare <sup>(8)</sup> to benefit a person and society by ignoring their misbehavior and taunting opinions. As Allah says in Quran :

إِنَّمَا يَنْهَاكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ قَاتَلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَأَخْرَجُوكُمْ مِّنْ دِيَارِكُمْ وَظَاهَرُوا عَلَىٰ إِخْرَاجِكُمْ أَنَّ تَوَلَّهُمْ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

which becomes the ability or willingness to tolerate the existence of opinions or behavior that one dislikes or disagrees you should take them for friends, and whosoever takes them for friends, they are the oppressors.<sup>(9)</sup>

It is very essential to teach our new generation the best approach while looking the good sides and ignoring the bad points <sup>(10)</sup>. So that they can be independent of their beliefs which enable them to show respect and moral attitude towards others, , stop restraint against others, overcome the offensive behavior and replace with a positive attitude towards the offender and make forgiving him in good manner as it is taught by our Holy Prophet (ﷺ):

رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ مَا نَقَصَتْ صَدَقَةٌ مِّنْ مَالٍ وَمَا زَادَ رَجُلًا بِعَفْوٍ إِلَّا عِزًا وَمَا تَوَاضَعَ أَحَدٌ لِلَّهِ إِلَّا رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ ... هَذَا حَدِيثٌ حَسْنٌ صَحِيحٌ

Sayyidina Abu Huraira reported that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said“ ,Sadaqah does not diminish wealth. And Allah increases a man, who forgives, in honour and no one observes humility for Allah's sake but Allah raises him ”.<sup>(11)</sup>

Interfaith tolerance is needed for seeking to raise the profile of the Muslims and the social status of Islam. We observe many examples of interfaith tolerance evident from the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) in the thirteen years of his preaching of Islam in Makkah, raised the profile of the Muslims and the social status of religion Islam. It is the basic objective of Islam to raise the morale so that the non-Muslims can accept the Islam freely. The whole life (Sunnah) of

the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) is full of such type of excellent examples: as narrated by Hazrat Ayesha (R.A)

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ قَالَتْ مَا ضَرَبَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ شَيْئًا فَطُبِّعَ بِيَدِهِ وَلَا امْرَأًا وَلَا خَادِمًا إِلَّا أَنْ يُجَاهِدَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَمَا نِيلَ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا فَطُبِّعَ فَيَنْتَقِمُ مِنْ صَاحِبِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ يُنْتَهَكَ شَيْئًا مِنْ حَارِمِ اللَّهِ فَيَنْتَقِمُ لِلَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ

Hazrat 'A'isha reported that The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) never beat anyone with his hand, neither a woman nor a servant, but only, in the case when he had been fighting for the cause of Allah and he never took revenge for anything unless the things made inviolable by Allah were made violable; he then took revenge for Allah, the Exalted and Glorious (12).

At the conquest of Makkah, in Taif The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) selected the Malik bin Owf as the chief of his tribe and advised him not to be harsh with the non-Muslims and use to give them the part of money (taleef e quloob) so that they can embrace Islam. It happened that they embraced Islam by observing the exemplary behavior of Muslims with them (13).

Let our new generation be known these incidents so that they can understand that how and why we need to raise our profile as a nation all over the world. Teacher should preach these examples to the students so that they can weed out the aggressive thinking and hatred behavior.

Interfaith tolerance needed to stop the harmful prejudices among faiths. It is necessary to correct the wrong explanations and misunderstandings between faiths. We have to do peaceful negotiations with those who are making or publishing blasphemous pictures and movie about the Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) in different Western countries which are raising many issues growing with anger of the Muslim all over the world effecting the peaceful environment. We should not be aggressive in this situation but we have to struggle for making an international policy for religious respects so that no one can even think to disrespect the Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). No doubt Allah raises the honor of the Prophet of mankind, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

As Allah says in the holy Quran:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَرْفَعُوا أَصْوَاتَكُمْ فَوْقَ صَوْتِ النَّبِيِّ وَلَا تَجْهَرُوا لَهُ بِالْقُوْلِ كَجَهْرٍ بَعْضُكُمْ لِيَعْضُّ أَنْ تَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالُكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ

'O believers! Raise not your voices above the voice of the Communicator of unseen (the Holy Prophet ﷺ (ﷺ)) and speak not aloud in presence of him as you shout to one another, lest your deeds become vain while you are unaware.'(14)

But we should make our new generation to realize that the blasphemous and harmful prejudice are the propagandas against the Muslim and Islam to make the Muslim aggressive and terrorist so it is their responsibility to struggle peacefully for the honor of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) but not behave

## *Role Of Teacher to Enhance the Interfaith Tolerance Among the Students: In the Light of Islam*

aggressively which results the violence aggression and brutal killing. We should prove them that Muslims are not terrorists. They are humble and peaceful because they begin all their activities in the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most beneficent.” (bismillah) Who loves His creation and wants them the Good way in their lives so that He also says to His Prophet Hazrat Muhammad(ﷺ) to be lenient to the non-Muslim. He says:

فِيمَا رَحْمَةً مِنَ اللَّهِ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَقَطًا غَلِيقَ الْقُلُوبِ لَا نَفَضُوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ فَاغْفُ عَنْهُمْ  
وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ

(O My Adorable Beloved!) What a Mercy of Allah that you are lenient with them! Had you been stern and hard-hearted, people would have deserted, scattering away from around you So pardon them, and pray for their forgiveness<sup>(15)</sup>)

For the preaching of Islam it is the basic rule to be humble to the non-Muslim and never be stern and hard hearted. Therefore we should also train our new generation to adopt the good way, dignified good behavior and moderation because all of these qualities are the twenty-fifth part of Prophecy (.<sup>16</sup>).

Most important goal and target of interfaith tolerance is to reach the peace among the nations or countries. Our Holy Prophet ﷺ was the great teacher of interfaith tolerance who always tried to establish a peaceful society, without any quarrel: As narrated by Abi Umama(R.A):

عَنْ أَبِي أَمَامَةَ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ -صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ- : "أَنَا زَعِيمٌ بِبَيْتٍ فِي رَبِيعِ  
الْجَنَّةِ، لَمْ تَرَكِ الْمِرَاءَ وَإِنْ كَانَ مُحِقًّا، وَبِبَيْتٍ فِي وَسْطِ الْجَنَّةِ"

The Holy Prophet ﷺ said: I guarantee a house in the surroundings of Paradise for a man who avoids quarrelling even if he were in the right<sup>(17)</sup>.

Interfaith tolerance is also the solutions for many problems which threatens the life i.e. terror, wars, exploitation, malnourishment, self-destruction, physical torments, psychological pressures and human interreligious tensions. Therefore teacher should teach the students different inter-religion and effective strategy for the peace in our country. It will provide the chance for the Muslims to pay their duties of Amr bil Maroof wa nahi anil munker, as Allah says in Quran:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرُ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجْتُ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ

You are the best community brought forth for (guidance of) mankind: you command righteousness, forbid evil and believe in Allah. <sup>(18)</sup>

Globalization is an international challenge can be a severe danger for the peace and preaching of Islam. The global capitalists are controlling the race all over the world <sup>(19)</sup> through trade, financial flows, technology, spillovers, information

networks and cross cultural currents. <sup>(20)</sup> using the power against Islam and Muslims. Therefore we enable our new generation whether they cannot get the control over the globalization but it should be very essential to enable them to compete this globalization in peaceful environment <sup>(21)</sup> so that they can perform their particular duties of preaching of Islam in a peaceful environment<sup>(22)</sup>

**Interfaith tolerance does not means friendship of Muslims with the non-Muslims** specially with the Jews and the Christians as Allah says in Quran;

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصَارَى أَوْلَيَاءَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلَيَاءُ بَعْضٍ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ  
مِّنْكُمْ فَإِنَّهُ مِنْهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ

O Believers! Do not make friends with the Jews and the Christians. They (all) are friends to one another (against you). And whoever of you makes friends with them will (also) become one of them. Surely Allah does not guide the wrongdoing people <sup>(23)</sup>.

But it needs to make a peaceful region so that our new generation cannot pay more for the sake of Islam but can get an easy platform for the preaching of Islam as the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) signed various agreements with Jews and Christians for the protection of peace in the region. The best example of the tolerance shown by the Prophet (ﷺ) to other religions may be the constitutions, called the 'Sulah Hudebia and also Methaq e Madina. Due to the Methaq e Madina, the Prophet ﷺ laid down a 'constitution' which detailed the responsibilities of all parties which resided in Medina, their obligations towards each other, and certain restrictions which were placed on each. All parties were to obey what was mentioned therein. That was the treaty of interfaith tolerance <sup>(24)</sup>. The Sulah Hudebia is also a treaty of peace and interfaith tolerance through which the follower of any one religion would never object on any other religion and especially on Islam. Before this treaty, Muslims and non-Muslims could not live peacefully in that region but with the advent of this treaty the scenario in the region changed and the quarrel between them ended <sup>(25)</sup>. Now its our duty to struggle for establishment of an international treaty for the sake of interfaith tolerance.

Teacher should make clear in his/her mind the clear objectives of the interfaith tolerance then according to these objectives students should be trained.

### **How can a Teacher Develop Interfaith Tolerance among the Students**

It is found very difficult to get the victories in the pursuit of interfaith tolerance among the students but it is most difficult to accept the unmistakable instances of casual taunts and name calling during the school time. Although much of the verbal discrimination began as seemingly innocent jokes, it was a shocking thing to discover the seeds of hatred in new generation which results as the brutal murder cases in educational institutions. This observation of students attitude that began as a painful attitude soon grew into a continually craze. It creates the fundamental responsibilities of the teachers in our

## ***Role Of Teacher to Enhance the Interfaith Tolerance Among the Students: In the Light of Islam***

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educational institutions to train new generation according to the teachings of Islam.

So it is essential to start from grassroots' level to seed out the interfaith tolerance in our future builders because the students at this level are very innocent they never realize the potential negative power of some of their words and actions. Teacher whether he teaches at school, college or university level should effort to satisfy the students' lofty ideas about Islam as well as other religions. Teacher can easily involve his students in different types of activities.

First of all Teacher should set himself/herself an example of tolerance because attitude makes attitudes. The words are spoken by the teacher but the action is taken by the students. So teacher should be tolerant ,forbearing and kind to students. He/she should promote the morale (Ikhlaqyat) of himself/herself that is very essential because students learn the attitude from the teachers 'attitude. Whatsoever the students are listening or watching they are performing in the same manners. Good morale of teacher to the students shall have the fast effect on the training of student. Which develop the morale of the students easily and enable them to differentiate among the right and wrong. <sup>(26)</sup> This continual training of the students will enable them to not quarrel for the supremacy of their religion/faith but paying the duty to preach the Islam peacefully.

Teacher should get the guidance from the teaching of The Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (ﷺ), the great teacher of the nation who never created any discrimination among His trainees. So teacher of our nation should follow the teachings of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) for educating new generation. Teacher must teach the new generation the specific laws of Islam laid down by Him(ﷺ) according to the doctrine of religion where He not only taught the Muslims how to live peacefully with Muslims but he also taught them how to live with different tribes and families of other religions <sup>(27)</sup>. Teacher should present many examples of interfaith tolerance shown by the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) in the thirteen years of his stay in Mecca. The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) never said a single word against any other person and also never liked the Muslims to say ill words against any other person (whether Muslim or non-Muslim). As narrated:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ: قِيلَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَدْعُ عَلَى الْمُشْرِكِينَ قَالَ: إِنِّي لَمْ أُنْبَعِثْ لَعَنَّا، وَإِنَّمَا  
بُعْثَتْ رَحْمَةً<sup>28</sup>

Narrated Abu Huraira: It was said to The Prophet (ﷺ) to say words against the prostrates, He (ﷺ) said I am not sent for saying ill word but for lenient(<sup>28</sup>)

In another Narration:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ إِنَّ الدِّينَ يُسْرٌ وَلَنْ يُنَاسِدَ الدَّيْنَ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا  
غَلَبَهُ فَسَدَّدُوا وَقَارُبُوا وَأَبْشَرُوا وَاسْتَعِنُوا بِالْغَدْوَةِ وَالرَّوْحَةِ وَشَيْءٍ مِنْ الدُّلْجَةِ

Narrated Abu Huraira: The Prophet said, "Religion is very easy and whoever over burdens himself in his religion will not be able to continue in that way. So you should not be extremists, but try to be near to perfection and receive the good tidings that you will be rewarded; and gain strength by worshipping in the mornings, the nights." (29).

Teacher should be aware of that the purpose of His (ﷺ) preaching and teachings was not focused on gaining victory over regions, nations and countries but the main purpose was to focus to win the souls and hearts of the humanity (30). Before the arrival of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) when The Arabia was a region in which there were Christians, Jews, , polytheists, and others who were not affiliated with any religion and there was no peace in the Arabia. When The Prophet (ﷺ) practiced Himself the highest level of tolerance to the people of other faiths, there was observed the increasing level of the peace and interfaith tolerance in the Arabia (31).

**Teacher should avoid discrimination among the students inside the classroom** as well as in the school. He should never allow any student to be harshed by other student in the classroom in the name of religion. He/she should be very polite and kind to the students of Muslim as well as non-Muslim so that they can impress by the good behavior of the teacher and can easily understand the supremacy of Islam and its teachings. Teacher should teach the students that Islam was being preached all over the world in the base of morality(Ikhlaqyat) as Narrated:

عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ يَسِّرُوا وَلَا تُعَسِّرُوا وَبَشِّرُوا وَلَا  
تُنَفِّرُوا

Narrated Anas bin Malik (RA): The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Facilitate things to people (concerning religious matters), and do not make it hard for them and give them good tidings and do not make them run away (from Islam)." (32)

Teacher should teach the students that The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) always facilitated to all of the peoples. He never teased any person whether he was Muslim or non-Muslim. He (ﷺ) always treated them in a frank and friendly way. He should explain that the results of intolerance is urged by our beloved Holy Prophet (ﷺ) who taught us that is narrated by Jurair ibn e Abdullah:

عَنْ جَرِيرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ قَالَ : قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ( لَا يَرْحَمُ اللَّهُ مَنْ لَا  
يَرْحَمُ النَّاسَ )

"Whoever does not show mercy upon the peoples will not be shown mercy by Allah" (33)

## *Role Of Teacher to Enhance the Interfaith Tolerance Among the Students: In the Light of Islam*

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In another Narration Hazrat Aisha, Ummul Mu'minin said: A man asked the permission to see the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), and the Prophet (ﷺ) said: He is the bad member of the tribe. When he entered, the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) treated in a frank and friendly way and spoke to that man. When he went, I asked: The Holy Prophet (ﷺ)! When he asked you for permission, you said: He is the bad member of the tribe, but when he entered, you treated him in an open and friendly way. The Holy Prophet (ﷺ)! replied: Ayesha! Allah does not like the person who is inappropriate and rude in his language (34).

In another Hadith, He (ﷺ) respects the people of Humanity, as finishing with the Muslim, Christian or Jew saying almost every human being has value.

عَنْ جَابِرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، قَالَ: مَرَّتْ جَنَازَةً، فَقَامَ لَهَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، وَقُتِّنَتْ مَعَهُ فَقُتِّلَنَا: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، إِنَّهَا يَهُودِيَّةٌ، فَقَالَ: «إِنَّ الْمَوْتَ فَتْرَعٌ، فَإِذَا رَأَيْتُمُ الْجَنَازَةَ فَقُوْمُوا»

One day, He (ﷺ) stopped along the road due to the passing of a Jewish funeral. At the time, a Sahabi said to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), "O Allah's prophet (ﷺ), he is Jewish," he says. Attendant In prophet (ﷺ) and facial lines without changing his attitude, the time to "stop and listen to me" "But a man!" (35)

**Teacher should avoid to discuss differences of religions in the classroom.** He/she should train them as a beneficent person for society and a nation and avoid to discuss any differences of the religion in the classroom before the students but make them to learn the basic concepts of Islam as the methods of worships i.e. prayer, fast, etc. He/she should teach them that love and enmity is always for Allah not for one's personal affairs so one should always keep the duties only for Allah, never fight with the followers of other religions but for the Islam only.

**Teacher should make habit of the students to study** books related to the life of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (ﷺ) who is a Symbol of interfaith tolerance. He(ﷺ) is modest and humble(36). His (ﷺ) life is an example full of tolerance and patience, (37) the human society can never produce any other example or personality as He(ﷺ) for signifying tolerance. Before the preaching of Islam he announced Firstly the protection and preservation of life, property and respect of each and every person as Narrated :

«فَإِنَّ دِمَاءَكُمْ، وَأَمْوَالَكُمْ، وَأَعْرَاضَكُمْ، بَيْنَكُمْ حَرَامٌ، كُحْرَمَةٌ يَوْمَكُمْ هَذَا، فِي شَهِرِكُمْ هَذَا، فِي بَلَدِكُمْ هَذَا،

He said, 'No doubt! Your blood, your properties, and your honor are sacred to one another like the sanctity of this day of yours, in this (sacred) town (Mecca) of yours, in this month of yours'.(38).

**Avoid to curse false gods and goddess of other religions**

Teacher make the conceptual learning of the students that Islam is a religion of peace and harmony. Interreligious goodwill, cooperation and tolerance even Allah never allow us to curse false gods and goddess of other religions neither

allows Muslims to forcefully impose its teachings on them but to guide them and ask them to accept Allah with their own will, in one revelation, Allah says:

وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا أَشْرَكُوا وَمَا جَعَلْنَاكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا وَمَا أَنْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِوَكِيلٍ

"But if the people turn away (then do not be sad because) we did not sent you to be a guardian over them. It is for you only to deliver the message" (39)

In this verse, Allah says to his Prophet (ﷺ) that he should forgive the cruel behavior of the non-Muslim. (40). The Muslims have their own religion and the Jews have theirs and the Christians have theirs. Although every person of a society or citizens of the country has the right of own religion who should not be violated. One is allowed to practice according to his beliefs freely without any hindrances, and no acts of provocation would be tolerated. Allah does not allow us to forcefully impose Islam on non-Muslims but give the message of Islam to them peacefully because it's the matter between Allah and its man only, He says:-

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشُدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ فَمَنْ يَكْفُرُ بِالظَّاهِرَاتِ وَيُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرُورَةِ الْوُثْقَى لَا انْفِصَامَ لَهَا وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلَيْهِ

Let there be no compulsion in religion. Truth (right path) has been made clear from error. Whoever rejects false worship (taghoot: the satanic path) and believes in Allah, has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that never breaks. And Allah hears and knows all things "(41).

This verse clearly tells that the spiritual and moral values of Islam do not allow to the conversion of people at force to embrace Islam, (42) for Islam is plain and clear, and its proofs and evidence are plain and clear. Therefore, there is no need to force anyone to embrace Islam. (43)

The verse refers to a man amongst the Banu Salim Banu 'Awf, who had two sons who accepted Christianity before the advent of the Prophet. After the migration of the Prophet, Allah blessed him and gave him peace. Both of his sons came to Medina along a group of Christians to trade in food. Their father went to them and stopped them, saying: 'By Allah! I will not leave you until you embrace Islam'. They refused to become Muslim. The matter came in the court of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) to settle their dispute. The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) did not allow their father to convert them forcibly to embrace Islam (44) This is the example of an interfaith tolerance.

Prophet (ﷺ) was a leader of the whole humanity including all of the religions, sects, races and genders who gave the universal messages of humanity defense by winning the hearts and souls of all of the human beings not forcefully, intolerantly, unjustly or disrespectfully but by forgiveness as narrated:

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ ابْنِ الزُّبَّارِ، فِي قَوْلِهِ {حُذْلُقُ الْعَفْوِ} [الْأَعْرَافِ: 199] قَالَ: «أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنْ يَأْخُذَ الْعَفْوَ مِنْ أَحْلَاقِ النَّاسِ»

## **Role Of Teacher to Enhance the Interfaith Tolerance Among the Students: In the Light of Islam**

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Explaining the Quranic verse “hold to forgiveness”, Abdullah bin Al-Zubair (R.A) said: The prophet of Allah (ﷺ) was commanded to hold to forgiveness from the conduct of the people. (45)

Teacher should enable the Muslim students to hold forgiveness and behave politely to the persons belonging to all of the religions, sects, races and genders and also invite the non-Muslim to the Islam politely, as the way can be followed from the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) in which he teaches the non-Muslim to be just to everyone. (46)

**Teacher should develop the dialogue frankly among the students to enhance the confidence.** He/she should give the chance to every student to speak freely with the teacher and teacher should give the importance to the speech of the students. He/she should listen students keenly and politely. He/she also can take the opinions from the students to solve different problems of the life. This is the tool through which a teacher can create the confidence and can convert the attention of the students into positive thinking which enable the students to serve their energy and stamina in positive deeds which is very helpful for their practical live. Teacher can promote this activity to the interfaith dialogue in which the students of different religion or sects of same religion can talk politely among themselves.

Quran also promotes the dialogue among the religions as stated as:

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ يَنْتَنِي وَبِيَنْكُمْ لَا تَعْبُدُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَلَا تُشْرِكُ بِهِ شَيْئًا  
وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُكُمْ أَرْبَابًا مِّنْ دُنْيَةِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ تَوَلُّوْا فَقُولُوا اشْهُدُوْا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُوْنَ

Say: "O People of the Book, come to a proposition that is the same for us and you—that we should worship none but God, and not associate any partners with Him, and not take one another as lords besides God." If they turn away, say: "Bear witness that we are Muslims." (47).

The way for the dialogue can be followed from the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) in which he (ﷺ) sent the letter to the ruler of non-Muslim states (48).

### **Teaching of comparative religion studies**

The teacher who teaches the Pak Studies subject of each class at secondary level and the subject of comparative religion studies at college and university level can be the best ambassador of Islam. He/she should teach the subjects with the help of historical incidents about prophets and other famous personalities of different religion. He/she should tell the students that a true and sincere followers of any real religion will never be intolerant to the truths of all religions. They know that the ultimate Truth exists in each religion. They may fight on the way to the goal, but not for goal (49). The events of killing of humanity all over the world and also the Globalization race have made clear the extraordinary importance of interfaith tolerance for the peace all over the world (50). Teacher should discuss the concept of Interfaith tolerance in the prophetic religions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam) and the Indian religions (Hinduism and

Buddhism). For example if teacher has the non-Muslim students in the class; for example Christian then he/she should start to teach the Christianity, he should select the past incidents from the bible and from the life of Hazrat Isa(R.A). In the bible there are lots of teaching about the interfaith tolerance that enhances belief in the particular faith in Catholic theology <sup>(51)</sup> and this was the result of the teaching of Jesus himself.

He said: "If your enemy slaps on your right cheek, offer the other (cheek) one also" <sup>(52)</sup>. This is the strongest statement of Jesus's tolerance and love who didn't want their followers to be harsh to their offenders. So it needs that teacher should be aware of teachings of interfaith tolerance in different religions.

### **Methodology**

The research was projected to develop interfaith tolerance among the students through classroom teaching and activities in the light of teachings of Islam which were planned to compare the possible change in level of tolerance of the experimental group with the other parallel group on base of the pre-test which will identify any differences between the two groups at the start of the experiment. The study was conducted using a particular research design. All the students who were enrolled in a class 8 were the population of study. The plan of study was almost six months long. There are 2 section of class 8, all of the student of both section having the same background features. Section A was select for the experimental group and section B was selected for controlled group. For the purpose of the study, Tolerance scale and Classroom activities were developed: Keeping in view the context of Pakistani society, it was decided to develop a scale based on the factors of interfaith tolerance which are particularly related to our society.

It was a six-month long study following Pre-test/ Post-test/ control group design. The subjects will be two intact groups (control, N=25) and (experimental, N=25) of the students (girls) of GGE\S Gehlan Chak no. 9 in tehsil Pattoki, district kasur . With the help of experts a Tolerance Scale and classroom activities had been developed for the study. The Tolerance Scale measured the level of tolerance among the students. The study was conducted in two different phases. At the first phase the Tolerance Scale was administered to the subjects as a pre-test. The Tolerance Scale was filled by the 50 students (two intact groups (control, N=25) and (experimental, N=25) of the elementary students) before the training of interfaith tolerance by the teachers inside the classroom. In the 2nd phase the experimental group was taught and trained according to the Quran and Sunnah for six months using different teaching methods and activities.

After six months the Tolerance Scale was re administered to record the change in the level of tolerance. The data was collected before the teaching of Islam and then after six months the same data with the help of same Tolerance Scale was collected. The results was found and analyzed along with factor correlation.

**Results:** The control group had a significantly higher pre-test score on the Tolerance Scale than the experimental group. During the study, we continually

## ***Role Of Teacher to Enhance the Interfaith Tolerance Among the Students: In the Light of Islam***

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observed that the experimental group increased their tolerance level, in the earlier days the improvement was not significant when compared with pre-test scores. However, when teachers use different activities and taught the lesson in the light of teachings of Quran and Sunnah. It significantly increased the tolerance of students toward other religions and different religious sects in Islam. The cumulative effect of activities is seen after the last session.

**Findings:** It was concluded that interfaith tolerance is teachable if a teacher plans his/her lesson according to the teachings of Islam. However, there is a gradual positive increase in the level of interfaith tolerance after every activity.

### **Recommendations**

Teachers should educate and train the new generation according to the teachings of Quran and Hadith to enable them to protect the lives, properties, honor and religious dignity of Muslim as well as non-Muslims living in Pakistan or in any other Islamic country but for this purpose it is essential to know that why Islam purposes the need of interfaith tolerance in current situations. So there should be needed the research work to develop the interfaith tolerance among the nations which can prevent the western countries to dishonor the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) or to prevent those who make or publish the blasphemous pictures of the Holy Prophet(ﷺ). Teachers should be trained continually according to the teachings of Islam keeping view the demands of the worldly affairs. Teachers' knowledge should be updated and the teaching strategies should be upgraded with the help of frequent professional trainings and workshop.



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## *Role Of Teacher to Enhance the Interfaith Tolerance Among the Students: In the Light of Islam*

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