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THE RELIGIOUS SITUATION AS UNDERSTOOD BY STUDENT YOUTH

Religious identity is the most important component of cultural identity. Religious self-awareness is very significant in shaping world attitudes and in uniting the subjects of world civilizations. The identification strategy of religion is carried out in accordance with the emergence in civilizational knowledge of the concept of God as the highest value and the highest judge, who is in charge of issues of human life and death. The significance of religious identity is especially noticeable when implementing typologies of cultures along confessional lines. In Buddhist, Christian, Islamic types of cultures, religious identity, along with the specifics of the lifestyle, influences the formation of both everyday and vital semantic attitudes of a person. Religious identity is especially strengthenedis taking place in a historical period of uncertainty, characterized by the rise of religious fundamentalism – Hindu, Muslim, Jewish, Christian, Buddhists. In this case, religious identity ensures the integrity of person's self-awareness, helping to overcome the state of despair and uncertainty in future. As the practice of developing

intercivilizational relations has shown, the positive meaning of religious identity is that, by mediating individual's relationship with the world and people through faith in God or the world's transcendental law, it contributes to the achievement of mutual understanding with the «Other» person – a representative of another civilization.

In accordance with this, we can say that this level of identity is determined by the sequence of events of interpersonal and group interactions of a religious community through the implementation of the axiological-normative base of religion and religious practices. This sequence of events forms the corresponding sequence of emotional concerns and experience of interaction with the sacredsphere; as well as the system of self-perception of the believer in accordance with the given religious images of a person.

Personal identity is manifested in the totality of the believer's experiences, which reveal the internal meaning of religion for his life and social functioning; it is a system of relations between the qualities, characteristics, actions of the believer with the axiological-normative base of religion, as well as with the totality of expectations and assessments on the part of his significant religious environment. All this ultimately determines the personal level of functioning of religious self-consciousness, its structure and dynamics. [1, p.239]

The religious identity of young people is revealed through the detailed consideration of interrelated, sort of secondary concepts, such as: youth as a social group; identity as a basic scientific category of the concept under consideration; social identity as an integrative system of personality; religion and religiosity as a set of religious properties of consciousness, behavior, and relationships. When forming the religious identity of young people, social identity is manifested in the experience of belonging and unity with a group with which a person shares the same religious values and attitudes, the system of religious norms and orientations, experiences a religious picture of the world, and shares the system of meanings and symbols of the given religion.

Analysis of the religious situation shows that the religiosity of young Kazakhstanis is increasing not only due to the natural need for spiritual self-determination, but also due to the intense activities of pseudo-religious organizations. The active spread of extremist ideas among young people is determined precisely by the factors of socio-economic nature, since today some young people cannot fully fulfil their resource potential, hence the confusion, apathy, and pessimism. Unfortunately, the underdevelopment of our national identity, legal and political nihilism and the lack of religious literacy facilitate the mobilization of large masses of young people under religious slogans.

Based on the relevance of this topic, we conducted an applied empirical study of the religious orientations of the students studying at Karaganda Medical University. The objects of the study were 1st – 3rd- year students.

The choice of this social group was due to the fact that student youth, who are mainly in the age range from 16 to 25 years, is characterized by high vital activity, mobility, flexibility, and receptivity, as well as the speed of mastering the surrounding reality.

The process of life self-determination includes conflict situations in which values-based orientations and specific motives formed on their basis play a special role. The core of self-determination is the formation of value bases for independent and responsible choice. These aspects are the product of rather complex searches, revealing their significance especially in crisis situations in the life of a student's personality development.

Taking into account the specific age characteristics of students, as they enter the age of social maturity, the need for self-determination leads them to an intensive search for their groups in society, to defining and recognizing their own interests.

The modern Kazakhstani students are a generation whose socialization occurs in an atmosphere of mixing cultures, religious preferences and changing moral accents. There are representatives of various religious groups in higher educational institutions; so different systems of world perception and understanding come into contact. Under the influence of these contacts, many students develop stereotypes of behavior that they will carry throughout their adult lives, since by the time they graduate from a university, the process of social stereotyping will have been completed.

Therefore, in general, student age is a crunch period in the development of worldview and religious orientations. The decisive point in choosing the object of study for us was the fact, that, due to their psychological characteristics, heightened perception of social injustice, and the presence of protest potential, student youth can easily become a means in the hands of sophisticated politicians and national and religious radicals being engaged in open confrontation. Student youth, being in a situation of life self-determination, without clear social guidelines, is the most vulnerable social group to the influence of all both positive and negative processes occurring in the modern society.

The predominant type of religion of the studied students is Islam (60%). **In our opinion, this is due to the ethnic component of the sample:** 75% of the youth studied were representatives of the Kazakh ethnic group. As we can see, the majority of Kazakhs consider themselves Muslims based on their ethnicity. Then, according to percentages, there are «other» religions, where the respondents noted such types of religion as Buddhism, Protestantism, Judaism, etc. Such answers as «I believe in God, but I do not identify myself with a

particular religion», «World religion» were also included in this category. Consequently, not all students tested, but 24% of them, strive to identify themselves with a certain religion; faith itself is important for them. 10% of the respondents noted Christianity. As the study showed, these were representatives of the Russian ethnic group, who, like the Kazakhs, considered themselves Christians by the fact of their birth.

Analyzing this study, it is worth noting that religious attitudes among student youth are formed not only through internal religious practices, but also under the influence of external factors such as social and economic conditions. It is also important to take into account that this age group is in search of its place in society, which can influence their religious and attitudinal views.

It is interesting to note that the diversity of students' religious preferences, especially in a culturally mixed environment, can contribute to the formation of tolerance and understanding. However, the interference of pseudo-religious groups and the spread of extremist ideas pose serious challenges to the formation of a stable religious identity.

This period of students' lives, as a critical juncture, emphasizes the need to provide youth with clear social guidelines and religious literacy to prevent them from being exposed to various influences, including radical ideologies.

In addition, the presence of different worldview systems in educational institutions creates a unique environment for the exchange of ideas, which contributes to the intellectual development of students. This cultural mosaic context can also inspire discussion and understanding of differences, and despite challenges, can encourage a more tolerant society.

It is worth noting that religious and ethnic factors are often intertwined in youth identity. In the case of Kazakh student youth, Islam can be influential not only as a religious belief, but also as part of cultural heritage. This is due to the particularities of ethnic and cultural identity, which makes it important to understand the context when analyzing religious preferences.

Finally, the importance of supporting students in their search for meaning and place in society is emphasized. Educational programs that promote critical thinking and intercultural understanding can play a key role in fostering a sustainable religious identity for student youth.

This study highlights the dynamism and complexity of the process of religious identity formation at college age, and the need to pay attention to social, cultural and educational aspects in order to create favorable conditions for the diverse and harmonious development of young people.

Moreover, the religious identity of student youth can influence their learning experiences and interactions in the university community. Research shows that students whose religious identity is strongly rooted often find additional support and connection in religious communities on campus. This can contribute to their overall well-being and adjustment to university life.

Given the diversity of religious views among students, the question of ensuring religious freedom and creating an inclusive environment where every student feels respected and accepted arises. This can also inform further discussions on interreligious interaction and the importance of cultural pluralism in educational institutions. [2, p. 863]

In light of the factors identified, it is important to continue research aimed at better understanding the relationship between religious identity, education and social adaptation of student youth. This can serve as a basis for the development of effective support programs and educational initiatives that promote the formation of sustainable value bases among the younger generation.

Thus, further research and discussion in this area can not only expand our understanding of the impact of religiosity on students' lives, but also contribute to the creation of a more open and inclusive educational space.

In addition, given the role of student youth in shaping the future society, it is necessary to pay attention to their participation in dialogues about religious issues and sociocultural challenges. The development of interreligious interaction and dialog skills can help reduce conflicts and promote mutual understanding in society.

Integrating educational programs that seek to increase knowledge of different religions and cultures can help to foster critical thinking and respect for diversity in students. It can also reinforce the principles of tolerance and inclusion in the educational environment.

However, it should be noted that these issues require a balance between religious freedom and respect for differences. This emphasizes the importance of developing strategies that foster a harmonious blend of religious beliefs with general principles of cooperation and respect in the learning environment [3, p. 77].

Thus, the empirical study has confirmed that the problem of religious identity among young people in post-Soviet Kazakhstan is becoming particularly relevant. Analysis and systematization of the research results obtained at three stages, conducted with the help of methodological tools – a scale of religious orientation, a questionnaire of religious orientations, have shown the inconsistency of the religious orientations of modern Kazakhstani youth.

Additionally, it's important to acknowledge the historical and socio-political context within which religious identity formation occurs among young people in post-Soviet Kazakhstan. The dissolution of the Soviet Union and the subsequent revival of religious practices have significantly influenced the religious landscape of the region. This historical backdrop adds complexity to the process of religious identity formation, as young individuals navigate between traditional beliefs, modern influences, and globalized trends.

Moreover, economic factors and globalization have also impacted the religious landscape, with increased exposure to diverse religious ideologies and practices through media, travel, and migration. This exposure can further shape the religious identities of young people, leading to a broader spectrum of beliefs and affiliations.

Furthermore, the role of family, peers, and educational institutions cannot be overstated in shaping religious identities among youth. Family upbringing, social networks, and educational curricula all contribute to the formation of religious attitudes and behaviors. Understanding the multifaceted influences on religious identity formation requires a comprehensive examination of these social dynamics.

Lastly, it's essential to recognize the agency of young people in navigating their religious identities. While they are influenced by various societal factors, young individuals actively engage with and interpret religious teachings and practices to construct their own identities. This agency underscores the importance of providing spaces for open dialogue, exploration, and reflection within educational settings to support the diverse religious journeys of student youth. In conclusion, the exploration of religious identity formation among young people, particularly in the context of post-Soviet Kazakhstan, reveals a multifaceted and dynamic process influenced by historical, socio-political, economic, and cultural factors. The intertwining of religious and ethnic dimensions highlights the complexity of youth identity construction, where Islam not only serves as a religious belief but also as a cultural heritage.

Moreover, the significance of supporting students in their search for meaning and integration into society cannot be overstated. Educational initiatives promoting critical thinking and intercultural understanding play a pivotal role in nurturing sustainable religious identities among student youth.

As we delve deeper into the complexities of religious identity formation, it becomes evident that the religious landscape is constantly evolving, influenced by global trends, technological advancements, and social dynamics. Therefore, continued research and dialogue are essential to adapt educational strategies and support programs to the evolving needs of young individuals.

Furthermore, fostering inclusive environments that respect diverse religious perspectives and promote interreligious dialogue is imperative in nurturing a harmonious society. By embracing cultural pluralism and valuing religious diversity, educational institutions can serve as catalysts for social cohesion and mutual understanding.

In essence, the journey of religious identity formation among youth is a nuanced and ongoing process, shaped by a multitude of internal and external factors. By acknowledging the complexities of this journey and embracing diversity, we can cultivate environments that empower young individuals to navigate their religious identities with agency, empathy, and respect. Through

collaborative efforts and continuous engagement, we can strive towards building a more inclusive and tolerant society where every individual's religious beliefs are valued and respected.

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ҚАЗАҚСТАННЫҢ ЭТНИКАЛЫҚ МОЗАИКАСЫ: 2012-2022 ЖЫЛДАР АРАЛЫҒЫНДАҒЫ ӨЗГЕРІСТЕР

Мақалада 2012-2022 жылдар аралығындағы Қазақстанның этникалық құрылымы қарастырылып, әртүрлі этникалық топтардың таралуы мен санындағы негізгі өзгерістері анықталды. Статистикалық деректерді, әлеуметтанулық зерттеулер мен далалық жұмыстарды талдау негізінде автор елдің этникалық көрінісіне әсер еткен факторларды, мысалы, көші-қон үрдістерін, экономикалық өзгерістерді және саяси жағдайды талқылайды. Этникалық топтардың өзара іс-қимылына, олардың мәдени және әлеуметтік қоғамдағы ықпалына, сондай-ақ Қазақстанның этникалық құрылымдық мозаикасын одан әрі дамыту жөніндегі болжамдарға ерекше назар аударылады.

Өзінің көпұлтты құрамымен және мәдени әртүрлілігімен танымал Қазақстан Орталық Азия кеңістігінде түрлі этникалық топтардың қатар өмір сүруіндегі бірегей үлгісі болып табылады. 2012 жылдан 2022 жылға дейінгі онжылдық ішінде ел бірқатар маңызды әлеуметтік-экономикалық, саяси және демографиялық өзгерістерді бастан өткізді, бұл өз кезегінде оның этникалық құрамына әсер етті.

Қазақстанның этникалық қалыптасу динамикасын зерделеудің маңыздылығы елде болып жатқан ішкі үрдістерді түсінуге деген ұмтылыспен ғана емес, сондай-ақ осы динамика ұсынатын сын-қатерлер мен мүмкіндіктерге барабар ден қою қажеттілігімен де байланысты. Интеграция, мәдени мұраны сақтау, әлеуметтік келісім мен тұрақтылықты қамтамасыз ету мәселелері мемлекеттік құрылымдардың да, ғылыми қоғамдастықтың да назарында.