

ABSTRACT
of the dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in the speciality
«6D020600 - Religious Studies»
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Contemporary Condition and Development Prospect of Religious Education in
Kazakhstan

General description. The dissertation analyzes modern problems of religious studies education in Kazakhstan, considers development prospects, and offers recommendations. Theoretical and methodological bases of religious studies education, stages of historical development, prerequisites of study up to the present time, and its modern reality are comprehensively covered. The current state of domestic and foreign educational institutions in religious studies is revealed.

Research relevance. The changes that occurred in the late twentieth century in Kazakhstan led to the revival of religion. The influence of religion on various spheres of public life, including education, has increased. Religion, having entered the realm of secular education, brought the problem of “education and religion” to the agenda and thus contributed to the emergence of new research areas on religion. This topic has caused various discussions in society. These discussions were such questions as the imitation of faith by young people and the influence of destructive ideology alien to our country on their consciousness. The primary role in solving this problem is assigned to education, which is the basis for forming a person who respects his culture and is brought up in the spirit of patriotism, as well as the basis for the education of the youth of new Kazakhstan.

In the sphere of education, the formation of an adequate attitude to religion in the younger generation is achieved by teaching religious studies subjects in the secondary and higher education system. Therefore, the analysis of the quality and effectiveness of religious studies subjects and training programs is very relevant in forming a citizen of a secular state. The study of religious studies and religious education allows us to determine the significance and status of religious and religious studies education for our multinational and multi-confessional society, will enable us to predict the trend of changes to a certain extent in the future not only in the field of education but also in social, political, historical and other aspects.

Degree of study of the dissertation’s theme. In the dissertation work, all the material was divided into groups. The first group includes authors of the so-called “theological” direction, who consider religious studies education as an introduction to the confessional tradition: V. Fedorov, N.D. Nikandrov, R.A. Lopatkin, F.G. Ovsienko, D. Kenzhetay, B.K. Beisenov, K.K. Begalinova, K. Zholdybayuly, A.G. Kosichenko, A.N. Nysanbaev, and others. In the second group, more felt the question of the method of teaching religious studies in schools can be attributed to the authors: A.N. Krasnikov, I.N. Yablokov, V.V. Mironov, E.S. Mironov, V.S. Mironov, and others. Mironov, E.S. Elbakyan, D.M. Ugrinovich, D. Kenzhetay, G. Yessim, E. Smagulov and others. The third group includes Western researchers who consider religious education a “science of religion” or “non-denominational religious education”; they include M. Grimmit, J. Hull, N. Smart, N.F. Kozyreva, and others.

The formation of religious and religious studies education abroad is considered in the publications of N.F. Kozyrev, E. Miroshnikova, M.M. Shakhnovich, R. Jackson, N. Smart, J. Waardenburg, D. Bates, L. Francis, K. Greflein, M. Grimmitt, G. Schmid, G. Morris and others. In addition, media materials, including those from the Internet, were used in the study of the relationship between religion and education.

Such scientists considered the topics of religious studies and religious education in our country as N.Zh. Baitenova, N.L. Seitakhmetova, A.D. Kurmanalieva, K.M. Borbassova, Sh.S. Rysbekova, E.E. Burova, B.K. Beisenov, K. Tyskhan, T. Kastuganov, V. Shapoval and others.

The purpose and objectives of the research. The work aims to differentiate the past and present state of religious studies education in modern Kazakhstan, to conclude the prospects for further development. To achieve this goal, the following tasks were set:

- consideration of the theoretical and methodological foundations of the science of religion and religious studies education in the framework of the study of the history and development of religious studies education;

- comprehension of foreign experience based on research and comparative analysis of educational programs in the field of religious studies education;

- substantiation of the role of religious studies education in the formation of tolerance and a system of tolerant communication in society;

- as part of the study of the historical formation of religious studies education in Kazakhstan, to study the conditions of the socio-cultural and historical building of the features of education in madrasah schools in the Kazakh steppe;

- to determine the place of religious studies in the system of secondary and secondary special education in Kazakhstan and analyze its features;

- to analyze the role of the personality of a religious studies teacher as a carrier of secular education;

- to analyze the history of the formation and the current state of religious studies as a new direction of science of independent Kazakhstan;

- to study the problems of religious studies education in Kazakhstan based on learning the experience of improving the solution of the issues of religious studies education and training in higher education institutions;

- substantiation of the effectiveness and prospects for developing religious studies education as one of the essential mechanisms for implementing state policy in the field of religion.

The object of research is religious studies education in the present period and its development perspective;

The research subject is the study of the current state and development horizons of religious studies education in Kazakhstan.

The scientific novelty of the research is explained by the attempt of the dissertation for the first time in the framework of religious studies in Kazakhstan to comprehensively study the problem of religious studies education using historical and religious research methods.

In the course of fulfilling the goals and objectives set out in the dissertation, the following scientific results were achieved:

- the nature of religious studies and religious education in theoretical, normative and substantive aspects is systematized and studied, a comprehensive view of the ideas

that served as the basis for the growth of its relevance at the conceptual level is substantiated;

- it is revealed that the post-Soviet space has standard features characteristic of the period of formation of religious studies and religious education and develops on the basis of secular principles, and in Western religious studies education, there are no fundamental differences between religious studies and religious types of education;

- tolerance is considered as the basis of the humanization of society, the theoretical and methodological foundations of religious education in the formation of tolerance in the framework of general problems of humanization are analyzed and determined;

- as a prerequisite for the formation of religious studies education in Kazakhstan, the features of teaching in madrasah schools in the Kazakh steppe were identified and it was concluded that the first education centres in the Kazakh traditional society were formed based on religious education and became one of the tools for the formation of the Muslim culture of the Kazakh people and improving their religious literacy;

- the role and place of religion in religious studies education in the modern system of secondary education in the country was justified, the attitude of the school to religion in the learning process should be informative and informative, and the program of public education should not give priority to a particular religion or atheism, but should be neutral;

- it is proved that the responsibility and requirements imposed on the personality of a religious studies teacher as a provider of secular knowledge are high, and a religious scholar must be a qualified specialist capable of combining deep understanding of modern science and the foundations of religions, he is an essential and responsible person in carrying out the principles of secularism in education, state policy related to religion;

- in assessing the existing distinctive experience of religious studies as a new direction of science of independent Kazakhstan, new debatable problems are highlighted that religious studies communities are not monolithic, that individual scientific schools and directions, although distinguished by their unique projects, cannot be part of a particular whole, which in most cases leads to the heterogeneity of religious studies, due to then, the features of domestic religious studies are considered;

- based on the study of religious studies education in higher educational institutions of Kazakhstan, curricula and practices, it was analyzed that religious studies education is implemented as a universal subject of choice and within the framework of training programs and professional qualifications necessary for the religious studies labor market to respond to problems arising from the demands of society, as well as educational programs. The orientation of specialists to improve their skills and the great need of the Kazakh society for them is determined;

- the effectiveness of religious studies education in the implementation of state policy in the field of religion and the main goal of religious studies education in the implementation of its development prospects were focused on the fact that the main goal of religious studies education was the secularization of the state and concluded that it provides a basis for the formation of religious consciousness of Kazakhstanis, not contrary to national traditions, and the basic principles of state policy in the field of religion and human dignity - the right to freedom of conscience and religion, recognition of the historical role of Hanafi Islam and respect for other religions, recognition of the importance of interfaith harmony, tolerance and respect for religious beliefs of citizens in

combination with the spiritual heritage of the people of Kazakhstan, methods of religious education by this policy were proposed.

Provisions for defence:

– currently, there are many definitions of the science of religion and the concept of religious studies education, all of which define religious studies as interdisciplinary. Religious studies includes such research areas as philosophy of religion, psychology of religion, phenomenology of religion, religious semiotics, sociology of religion, history of religions, etc. The science of religion and religious studies education are very closely related to each other, in the course of scientific research on religion or to improve religious knowledge, a person's personal religiosity or religious views should not interfere with his scientific and teaching activities;

– as the foreign experience of religious studies education shows, in Western countries, there are no strict requirements for classification in the field of religious and religious studies education, the fundamental principles of religious studies are actively used in the departments of theology in the training of religious figures, and in post-Soviet countries, there are similar moments in the field of religious studies and religious education, which are developed based on secular principles;

– the role of religious education in the formation of tolerance is very great. The formation of tolerance is determined by giving a large intercultural orientation, the creation of a stable and positive balance between civil and cultural, ethno-cultural identities in the structure of education, the direction of various components of education on respect for man and his rights, a positive attitude towards different peoples and their culture, tolerance is the humanization of society and as the main basis within the framework of common problems of humanization acts theoretical and methodological basis of religious education;

– the prerequisites of religious studies education in schools and madrassas, the development of universal religious literacy in the traditional Kazakh society was closely connected with the rich literary heritage of the Kazakh people. They were complemented by the religious views of the Kazakh people, the spiritual values of the nation, with works of oral literature. These works, playing the role of religious textbooks for the masses, have become an unsurpassed means of forming the Muslim culture of the Kazakh people while increasing religious literacy;

– religious studies in the modern secondary education system can be realized only when knowledge about religion is accepted as an instrument of general cultural knowledge and not as the acceptance or imposition of certain religious truths or other non-traditional religious beliefs and views. Undoubtedly, religious studies education is a search for answers to ideological and philosophical questions about man, society and the world. It is necessary to implement methodological and pedagogical models to determine the possibilities, methods and tools of religious studies in the education and upbringing of young people. In educational programs, the principle of secularism should be the methodological basis for teaching religious studies;

– in the training process, a religious studies teacher has a great responsibility to convey secular knowledge. In this regard, the requirements for the qualification of a teacher of religious studies are very high. The religious studies teacher should be a qualified specialist capable of combining deep knowledge of the basics of modern science and religion. The teacher should be able to fully fulfil his role in the implementation of

state policy related to religion, be guided by the principle of secularism in education, the principle of scientific objectivity and ethical standards;

– religious studies as a new direction of science of independent Kazakhstan has its own experience: scientific schools of religious studies, religious studies education, and religious studies associations have been formed. The field of religious studies in our country studies religion from scientific positions and different directions of philosophy, considers religious principles as an object of scientific research and is aimed at impartial and objective research. Religious studies and education in religious studies and the formation of religious culture are viewed through the prism of secularism. The separate consideration of religious studies and religious education in domestic religious studies and the fact that religious communities are not monolithic, the orientation of religious studies to respect the principle of secularism shows that religious studies is a special area of public consciousness;

– at the beginning of the XIX century, religious studies were included in the list of subjects of higher educational institutions as a scientific, educational, humanitarian subject. When considering religious studies education in higher educational institutions, the purpose, content and main directions were determined. The secularism of education is not atheistic in nature, but has developed outside of religious structures and ideology and regardless of the direct subordination of educational activities to religious organizations. The methodological basis of religious studies education in higher educational institutions is scientific, i.e. objectivity and ideological neutrality - it is aimed at preserving the principle of secularism without forming a special attitude to a particular religion in the student;

– the main goal of religious studies education in the implementation of state policy in the field of religion is the fundamental secularization of the state. The role of religious education is great in shaping the orientation of the people of Kazakhstan on the continuity of national traditions and religion, preserving the right to freedom of conscience and religion, recognizing the historical role of Hanafi Islam and respect for other religions based on interfaith harmony, religious tolerance and respect for religious beliefs of citizens inextricably linked with the spiritual heritage of the people of Kazakhstan. Systematic collection of material related to religious studies education, selection and justification of parameters and indicators of research methods, improvement of decision-making, issues related to the informatization of society, all these problems considered in the dissertation can be the basis for state programs and has a certain significance in the conduct of state policy in the field of religion.

Theoretical and methodological bases of dissertation work.

The theoretical basis of the work was based on socio-philosophical, historical and cultural concepts, positions, and theories, as well as pedagogical principles, legislative acts, works of domestic and foreign researchers and was considered on the basis of an interdisciplinary approach. The research methods are theoretical methods, quantitative and qualitative research, as well as materials and research results, reports of research centres, encyclopedias, normative legal acts related to religion, education, results of surveys of state bodies, statistical data, monitoring reports were used as an empirical research base.

Theoretical and practical significance of the research. The results of scientific work can be used as information and methodological materials for employees of the authorized body in the field of religion in regulating the religious sphere. The theoretical

part of the dissertation's content can be helpful as sources of scientific knowledge in various religious studies. The content and conclusions can be used to prepare lecture courses to expand the fundamental understanding of students, masters and doctoral students in religious studies and Islamic studies related to studying various religions.

The results obtained as part of the research work on the current state of religious studies education in Kazakhstan and the prospects for its development can be used in conducting new research in the field of religious studies. Issues related to teaching religious studies education in secondary specialized and higher educational institutions can become the basis for forming the right competencies for future specialists in religious studies. It is effective from the point of view of the possibility of introducing the collected and analyzed material on Kazakh religious studies education into scientific circulation.

The formulated conclusions can serve as a basis for studying the interdisciplinarity of religious studies and religious studies education at various levels, its implementation in modern Kazakhstan. The conclusions presented in the paper are of particular interest for the future of religious studies, state and public administration, and the implementation of Kazakhstan's policy on religion.

Approbation and approval of research work. The dissertation's main scientific results and conclusions are published in 9 scientific articles. 1 is published in a scientific publication in the Scopus database, 4 in journals listed and approved by the Higher Attestation Commission of the Republic of Kazakhstan, and 4 in collections of international scientific conferences. The research results were presented at scientific conferences.

The structure of the dissertation work. The dissertation includes an introduction, three sections, nine chapters, a list of references and 1 appendix.