

**SCTMG 2023**  
**International Scientific Conference «Social and Cultural Transformations in the Context of**  
**Modern Globalism»**

**RELIGIOUS STUDENTS IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES OF**  
**RUSSIA**

Tatyana Vladimirovna Tkacheva (a)\*, Natalya Sergeevna Kharina (b)

\*Corresponding author

(a) Yugra State University, 628012, Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Okrug - Yugra, Khanty-Mansiysk, Russia,  
tattkacheva@mail.ru

(b) Yugra State University, 628012, Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Okrug - Yugra, Khanty-Mansiysk, Russia,  
hanase83@yandex.ru

**Abstract**

This article analyzes a sociological survey conducted among students of the Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Okrug – Ugra in order to assess the state of religiosity and experience in practice. The territory of the district, as the main oil and gas province of Russia, is characterized by active migration movements, primarily by the youth group of the population and students. The immigrant and indigenous population of the district forms a modern multi-confessional picture of the territory. The survey of student politics was carried out through radiant assessment and was aimed at determining religious self-identification, institutional religiosity, manifestations of attitudes towards young and political church organizations in modern Russian society. The survey results show that the obstacles of the ideological foundations of this group of governments have a decisive advantage in the processes of influence of secularization and globalization. The basis of the religious type is commitment to religion, which forms the cultural, historical, ethnic tradition, family education of students and is expressed, as a rule, in formal religiosity. The religious consciousness of students is fragmented, which is manifested in a selective attitude towards religious practices. Students participate only in the most important holidays and rituals, most often in accordance with traditions. Students do not associate the implementation of their social functions with religious additives and incentives.

2357-1330 © 2024 Published by European Publisher.

*Keywords:* Extended practice, students, religion, religiosity, youth

## 1. Introduction

Currently, a rethinking of religion, the degree of its adaptation to social processes, is taking place in the world (Herbert, 2004; Kladis, 2017). As a result of democratic reforms and changes in attitudes towards religion as a social institution on the part of the state, the religious factor was strengthened in the life of Russian society and began to influence a certain structure as a moral and value factor. Accordingly, interest in the study of the world, religion, and institutions has increased, especially with the aim of ensuring the development of modern Russian society and the preservation of traditional values.

This is very important for Russia, since it is traditionally characterized by a close connection between ethnicity and religion. Knowledge of the confessional situation and religious identity of the population of a multinational country is necessary to logically assess the ethnopolitical development of the country (Dokuchayeva et al., 2024; Tang & Yang, 2024).

Acquisition of religious freedom at the turn of the 1980-1990s was viewed by researchers as the beginning of some kind of “religious boom” in Russia. Currently, a distinction has been made between the thorough growth of religiosity and the severity of institutions (Lipich & Balahura, 2024; Regnerová et al., 2024; Shumilina & Antsiferova, 2024).

In the classical approach to defining religiosity, it is customary to adhere to a three-factor, characteristic level and degree of religiosity, guiding people: self-identification as a believer; affiliation with a non-denominational affiliation; religious behavior (observance of instructions, attending services, performing rituals, etc.) (Kapalin, 2011). For the postclassical case, the main criterion is the self-identification of the individual, in which modern researchers distinguish three levels: worldview, cultural-historical and actually religious (Osmachko, 2014).

In modern religious measures, researchers note its “adogmatic nature”, “amorphousness and vagueness”, the persistence of linguistic ideas, the tendency of Russians to non-traditional beliefs (Dubov, 2001), and the predominance of external religiosity.

## 2. Problem Statement

Currently, Russian youth exist in conditions of ideological pluralism and religious diversity, which largely determines the modern religious situation, the contours of which began to take shape in the early 1990s (Grashevskaya, 2014).

Student life is a period of active formation of a stable system of values, the formation of self-awareness and sociocultural identification (Shcherbakova, 2015). Students as professionals will determine the future path of development of the Russian state and society.

There has been a quantitative increase in empirical research on religiosity in various communities of nations, in particular in the student movement (Shirokolova & Shimanskaya, 2018). Researchers believe that gradual religion becomes a connecting link between generations, which makes it possible to maintain self-identification and orientation to the current range of cultural values (Tikhomirov, 2017).

At the same time, empirical studies show that it is premature to talk about a religious upsurge among students; the religiosity of modern youth is largely unstructured and uncertain (Antonova & Gafiyatullina, 2015). Assessments of the consequences in judicial practice and socialization show the

process of differentiation of groups of believers (practicing and affiliated) among young people over the past 20 years (Pavlyutkin, 2020). It is indicated that in modern conditions, cultivating an attitude of religious tolerance is the most important condition for the religious security of society (Arinin & Petrosyan, 2016; Chernichkin et al., 2021).

Currently, the Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Okrug – Ugra is a multi-ethnic and multi-confessional territory in which both a developed population and indigenous peoples of the North live. The district is characterized by active migration movements of the population (Kharina et al., 2019), including young people, which raises the urgent question of studying various aspects of the religious consciousness of student youth (Ahmad et al., 2024; Singh et al., 2024; Waite, 2024).

### **3. Research Questions**

The subject of the research involves solving the following problems:

- i. Determining the level and nature of self-identification of student youth.
- ii. Identifying the degree and nature of student participation in practices.
- iii. Assessing student placement and participation of specific organizations in the life of modern Russian society.

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to identify the level of religiosity of the student revolution in the Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Okrug – Ugra, the degree and nature of their participation in practice.

### **5. Research Methods**

The study was conducted in 2022–2023, on the territory of the Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Okrug – Ugra in three stages:

- i. Theoretical stage: the study of the source and literature base, selection of research methods.
- ii. Practical stage: conducting a survey, collecting empirical material.
- iii. Generalizing stage: analysis and summing up the results of the study.

Research methods:

Theoretical level: analysis, synthesis, generalization.

Empirical level: survey in the form of online and offline questionnaires.

The survey involved 170 people in the age group from 18 to 24 years old, students of higher educational institutions (97.6%) at bachelor's, specialist and master's levels, and secondary specialized educational institutions of the Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Okrug. Mostly students living in Khanty-Mansiysk (87.1%) took part in the elections. Girls made up 78.2% of respondents; youth amounted to 27.8%.

## 6. Findings

During the study, respondents were asked to define their religious identity. To the question “Do you consider yourself a believer?” 23.5% of respondents confidently answered “Yes”. 29.4% of respondents consider themselves rather a believer than unbelievers. The position of a non-believer rather than a believer was taken by 27.6%. 13.5% considered themselves convinced atheists. 6% were not sure in the answer.

58.8% considered themselves representatives of Orthodoxy, 12.3% believed in Islam. Among the respondents there were no adherents of other movements (Catholicism, Protestantism, Baptists, Judaism, Buddhism). 28.9% do not identify themselves with any religion at all.

It should be noted that 71.1% of respondents associate themselves with adopting a confession, while 52.9% identify themselves as believers. This result is the basis for this kind of survey and decision-making on the self-identification of the national territory and cultural type, the identification of “Russianness” and “Orthodoxy”.

A number of questions in the questionnaire were aimed at identifying signs of institutional religiosity (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Participation in practices (in %)

Indicators	Regularly	Sometimes	Never
Participating in general prayer in a religious organization	2.5	15.2	82.3
I go to confession at a religious organization	1.3	15.4	83.3
I give alms to the poor	3.8	41.8	54.4
I attend a religious school	1.3	1.3	97.4

More than half of the respondents (55.3%) practically do not visit churches, mosques or houses of worship, 20% have never been to them, 18.8% have been to institutions only a few times a year, 4.1% have visited them 1-2 times per month and only 1.7% at least once a week.

One of the indicators was measuring the degree of student participation in religious educational activities, in the affairs of local religious organizations, and in religious self-education (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Participation in religious activities and self-education (in %)

Indicators	Regularly	Sometimes	Never
I participate in religious spiritual and educational activities	0	17.2	82.8
I turn to religious organizations for help	2.6	7.9	89.5
I read religious literature, magazines, watch/listen to additional television programs/radio	3.8	15.4	80.8
I visit holy places	0	36.7	63.3

To the question “Do you observe the requirements and rituals among your people, depending on their religious self-identification?” only 8.2% comply with the basic requirements and rituals, 40.5% comply with them partially, the majority of students (46.4%) do not comply with the requirements. 4.9% of respondents found it difficult to answer this question. This type of response generally corresponds to a certain degree of religious self-identification of students; on the other hand, it partially indicates a weak level of knowledge and motivation to obtain information about requirements and rituals.

In general, in the sample, 25.2% of respondents were not subject to difficulties in carrying out rituals, but 7.6% indicated shyness and fear of insects; condemnation was carried out while carrying out the rituals manually. For Muslims, the priority for overcoming difficulties in specific rituals is the presence of co-religionists.

14.7% of respondents necessarily celebrate all remote holidays, 65% only celebrate major holidays, and 20% do not celebrate them.

Among the most students, prayers are performed every day at normal times by 5.3%, rarely, in difficult moments of life by 37.6%. They do not know prayer, but have a desire to learn (12.9%). They do not consider it necessary to pray because they do not believe in God (36.5%).

For 12.4% of respondents, religion is of decisive importance in life; in a work situation, religion helps 22.4%; 21.7% consider religion to be a given tradition; 22.3% do not support the need for religion; 21.1% found it difficult to answer.

The survey offered various recommendations for organizations. The majority of respondents answered that religious organizations do not need to change anything in their activities. Second place was taken by the recommendation to study one’s main function: spiritual and moral. Respondents ranked third the recommendations for representatives of organizations to lead a more virtuous life, to be built in content and morality. And then in descending order is the organization of charitable assistance to those in need, that is, the participation in particular of organizations in modern society, the expansion of missionary activities, activities to establish an interethnic agreement, the establishment of religious and educational activities in international institutions.

## **7. Conclusion**

As a result of the study, the following conclusions can be drawn:

Despite the political positions, religion in modern Russian society should be cautious in asserting the growth of religious consciousness of the student revolution. The processes of secularization and globalization have a significant impact on the ideological foundations of this development group, in which atheistic, non-religious values are encouraged as the deep motives of life.

The religious type of students is characterized by instability; it is based on adherence to one or another religion, depending on the cultural, historical, ethnic tradition, which is developed by family upbringing and is expressed, as a rule, in formal religiosity.

The low level of student participation in practical practices shows not only a reluctance to participate in them, but also a lack of knowledge about them.

This leads to the fact that religious activities rarely occur among students, affecting only the most important holidays and rituals, most often according to tradition. In the foreign market, external preferences clearly do not have a determining effect.

The majority of respondents are satisfied with their appearance and role, which reduce the criteria in the modern organization of life in Russian society. They believe that the spiritual and moral environment and educational functions are the main sphere of activity of the organization. The image aspect of the behavior of individual representatives is important for students.

Therefore, religiosity in the implementation of the student revolution of the Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Okrug exists in a latent form, manifests itself in an unconscious form, which generally corresponds to the type of religiosity of Russian youth.

## Acknowledgments

The research was supported by a grant of the Russian Science Foundation, No. 22-28-20414, <https://rscf.ru/project/22-28-20414/> and the economy of the Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Okrug – Ugra.

## References

- Ahmad, S. S., Almobaideen, W., Abdelhakim, M. N., & Rani, R. (2024). Artificial intelligence-enabled cutting-edge technologies: *Innovation for Industry 5.0, Healthcare 5.0, and Society 5.0. Converging Pharmacy Science and Engineering in Computational Drug Discovery*, 12, 140–158. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-2897-2.ch007>
- Antonova, O. I., & Gafiyatullina, K. R. (2015). Attitude of students in the Sverdlovsk region to religion. *Society and power*, 5, 42–47.
- Arinin, E. I., & Petrosyan, D. I. (2016). Features of students' religiosity. *Sociology Recourses*, 6, 71–77.
- Chernichkin, D. A., Topchiev, M. S., & Rogov, A. V. (2021). The influence of the level of religious identity on the religious security of students in the Russian Caspian region. *South Russian Journal of Social Science*, 22(1), 105–123.
- Dokuchayeva, N., Ivanova, S., Azimbayeva, Z., Ten, A., & Baimamyrov, S. (2024). Value-Based Perspectives on the Teacher's Role in Modern Education. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 14(4), 60. <https://doi.org/10.36941/jesr-2024-0085>
- Dubov, I. G. (2001). Level of religiosity and the influence of religious views on the attitude of Russians towards political leaders. *Polis*, 2, 78–92.
- Grashevskaya, O. I. (2014). Study of the attitude of student youth to religion. *Probl. of territ. development*, 5(73), 57–68.
- Herbert, D. (2004). *Religion and civil society: rethinking public religion in the modern world*. Ashgate.
- Kapalin, V. V. (2011). Religious situation in the south of the Tyumen region (according to a sociological survey). *News of the Tobolsk Theolog. Seminary*, 2, 6–34.
- Kharina, N., Tkachev, B., Moldanova, T., & Tkacheva, T. (2019). Impact Of Oil And Gas Development On Everyday Life Of Indigenous Peoples. In D. Karim-Sultanovich Bataev, S. Aidievich Gapurov, A. Dogievich Osmaev, V. Khumaidovich Akaev, L. Musaevna Idigova, M. Rukmanovich Ovhadov, A. Ruslanovich Salgiriev, & M. Muslimovna Betilmerzaeva (Eds.), *Social and Cultural Transformations in the Context of Modern Globalism. European Proceedings of Social and Behavioural Sciences* (Vol. 76, pp. 3124-3129). Future Academy. <https://doi.org/10.15405/epsbs.2019.12.04.421>
- Kladis, M. (2017). Solidarity, religion and the environment: challenges and prospects of the 21st century. *Change in Society and Personality*, 1, 353–372.

- Lipich, L., & Balahura, O. (2024). Consumers of tourist services in the subject field of sociology. *E3S Web of Conferences*, 538, 05010. <https://doi.org/10.1051/e3sconf/202453805010>
- Osmachko, S. G. (2014). Orthodox self-identification of the population of the modern Russian Federation. *Yaroslavl Pedagogy Bulletin*, 2, 86–91.
- Pavlyutkin, I. V. (2020). Dynamics of religiosity among Russian youth. *Science results, Sociology and Management*, 6(3), 153–183.
- Regnerová, O., Chelombitko, T., Rakityanska, L., Zaplatynska, A., Sizhuk, I., Bondar, S., & Derbak, O. (2024). Using music in ESG education. *E3S Web of Conferences*, 538, 05006. <https://doi.org/10.1051/e3sconf/202453805006>
- Shcherbakova, E. V. (2015). Religiosity of student youth. *Historical, philosophical, political and legal sciences, cultural studies and art history. Issues in Theory and Practice*, 8, 210–213.
- Shirokolova, G. S., & Shimanskaya, O. K. (2018). Religiosity of students: gender aspect. *Modern studies of soc. probl.*, 10(2), 191–212.
- Shumilina, A., & Antsiferova, N. (2024). Environmental legal culture legislative consolidation methodology in the Russian Federation. *BIO Web of Conferences*, 116, 03028. <https://doi.org/10.1051/bioconf/202411603028>
- Singh, M., Joshi, M., Tyagi, K. D., & Tyagi, V. B. (2024). Future Professions in Agriculture, Medicine, Education, Fitness, Research and Development, Transport, and Communication. *Topics in Artificial Intelligence Applied to Industry* 4.0, 181-202. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781394216147.ch10>
- Tang, L., & Yang, S. (2024). Improving Social Civilization. *New Progress in Research on Perspective. Ethics in Progress*, 15(1), 95–110.
- Tikhomirov, D. A. (2017). Features of religiosity of Moscow students. *Monitor. of public opinion: Econ. and sociology changes*, 3, 77–191.
- Waite, L. (2024). Global human exploitation: Trafficking, forced labour, and modern slavery. *The Companion to Development Studies*, 12, 414–418.