

INVESTIGATION THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS IN SYSTEM OF GENERAL EDUCATION: FORMS OF STATE-CONFESSIONAL INTERACTION

Olga S. Ivanova¹, Irina S. Chalykh², Boris V. Makogon³, Leonid P. Rasskazov⁴, Elvira M. Vasekina⁵

^{1,2}Pitirim Sorokin Syktyvkar State University, 55, Oktyabrsky prospect, Syktyvkar, Komi Republic, 167001 Russia,

^{3,5}Belgorod State University, 85, Pobedy Street, Belgorod, the Belgorod region, 308015, Russia, ⁴Federal State-funded Educational Institution of Higher Professional Education «Kuban State Agrarian University», 13, Kalinina Street, Krasnodar, 350044, Russia.

Email: ¹asia@prescopus.com, ²michael.l@prescopus.com, ³peter.seliverstov@prescopus.com, ⁴editor@prescopus.com, ⁵russia@prescopus.com

Article History: Received on 25th July 2019, Revised on 31st August 2019, Published on 03rd October 2019

Abstract

The purpose of the article: This was aimed at conducting a system analysis of the forms of interaction between religious organizations and modern states implementing the secular model regarding the regulation of religion component in the field of general education.

Materials and methods: Various general scientific methods and methods of logical cognition were used in this study including analysis and synthesis, systemic, formal-logical. The subject under study was investigated by the use of a formal legal method and content analysis.

Results of the research: The necessity with respect to the role of the state to guarantee activities of confessional educational organizations implementing general education programs (their components) in legal, organizational, methodological and financial spheres were substantiated. It was proposed to unify the approach according which the state regulating the participation of religious organizations in the field of general education in order to ensure equal opportunities for students in implementation of freedom of conscience and religion.

Applications: This research can be used for the universities, teachers, and students.

Novelty/Originality: In this research, the model of investigation of the role of religious organizations in system of general education: forms of state-confessional interaction is presented in a comprehensive and complete manner.

Keywords: *Freedom of Conscience and Religion, General Education, Religious Component, State and Legal Regulation, Religious Organizations, Interaction, Forms.*

INTRODUCTION

Despite of background of the modern globalization processes, economic problems, population migration, displacement and disappearance of many traditional lines and emergence of new spiritual and moral guiding ones, as well as contradictions of the values publicly declared but supported by the society, the uncertainty in modern life is increasing, which qualitatively changes the influence of the factor of religion in public life and gives rise to important, but rather contradictory trends in modern confessional relations. In addition, the modern stage is characterized by deep changes in worldview processes and at a different level, by convergence and joint development of scientific and religious forms of human thinking, which were contrasted for a long time. These trends have been reflected in the field of education, as one of the significant areas of human activity, positively influencing the process of formation and development of an individual's personality [Zhuravlev, V. M. 2008, p. 274-275], and at the same time actualizing the corresponding segment of interaction between religious associations and the state.

The significance of changes in ideological, confessional spheres of social relations, and problems accompanying them determines the use of various models for managing the relevant processes by modern states. Currently, implementation of the secular characteristic of the Constitution, referring as a secular state is the most common model applied for such management (Article 1 of the Constitution of the French Republic, Article 17 of the Constitution of the Austrian Republic, Articles 4, 7 of the Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany [Kozyrev, F. N. 2006] Article 28 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation [Bezrogov, V. G. 2004], etc.).

At the same time, in the field of education, legal foundations of this model can be fixed not only in the Basic Laws of the states but also directly in the relevant national legislation [Robbers, G. 2009]. Fixing of these acts, as a rule, guarantees the human right to education, regardless of his confessional affiliation, secular nature of education in state (municipal) educational organizations, and at the same time would guarantee the realization of the right to receive their own religious education.

Meanwhile, legal consolidation of secular nature of education does not mean the complete exclusion of religious denominations (communities) from process of education and upbringing or exclusion of religious education as such in state (municipal) educational organizations. In education system of the state, this possibility is preserved in one form or another, although it differs significantly in particular states. Evaluating this diversity, the European Court of Human Rights noted

that, the goal of the state regarding carrying out its functions in the field of education and training is to ensure that students can develop critical thinking, especially concerning the religion, in a calm environment free from any proselytism. Each state is free to independently determine the ways and forms, and the state determines them based on a particular place of any denomination in history and tradition of state, as well as in the context of its duty to respect the right of parents, education, and training in accordance with their religious and philosophical views [[Ayele, M. A. 2016](#)].

The above-mentioned statements allowed considering the impossibility of abstracting state from the religion component in the educational sphere, and, on the contrary, the need for its focal interaction with religious denominations (at least officially recognized). At the same time, the key platform for the formation and development of this segment of state-confessional relations should be recognized in the system of general education, within the framework of which the main stage of students' personality formation is carried out.

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Various general scientific methods and methods of logical cognition were used in this study including analysis and synthesis, systemic, formal-logical. The subject under study was investigated by the use of a formal legal method and content analysis.

RESULTS

It should be noted that according to the doctrine there are various approaches for classification regarding the forms of state regulation of religious component in system of general education. In context of this study, the position in which the following forms stand out should be recognized as optimal [[Trámpuz, J. P., & Ibáñez, D. B. 2018](#)]:

1. Secular – as used in France [[Irvani, M. R., & ShekarchiZade, A. R. 2014, p. L141-3](#)], as well as a number of Asian countries; practically consisting of excluding a religious component from general education program, but, as a rule, it allows for the possibility of promoting religion outside school;
2. Confessional - resulted from prerequisites of students' belonging to a single confession, in which the religion component is included in a number of educational goals and objectives, including in-state (municipal) educational organizations and is maintained at the state level. The general education program has consisted of disciplines that have religious content, which is developed based on teachings of one religion (confession), but may include fragmentary information about other religions for informational purposes, or implies a waiver of religious education in the prescribed manner. The confessional form remains fairly common in several European countries, where the experience of Austria is the most demonstrative one, followed by the experience of Latin America, the Islamic world;
3. Non-confessional - assumes a state-guaranteed general education based on recognizing the student's right to freedom of religion as well as the right to keep his religious beliefs, confidential where the religion component is neither a condition nor a goal of the educational process. In relation to this form, religious education is differently variable - from fragmentary inclusion in the culturological courses of information about various denominations to implementation of special disciplines, the specific religious component of which is determined by students or their legal representatives, based on the confession of the former; but in any case, it is not based on the possibility of studying only teachings of one confession. For example, in a number of English public schools, religious education is carried out on the basis of the so-called "coordinated program", designed to reflect the Christian religious tradition as the main one in Great Britain, but at the same time teachings and practices of other faiths are taken into account [[Fateminasab, A. 2014, p. 375](#)]. The application of non-confessional form began relatively recently and now is taking place in the USA, Great Britain, some countries of Eastern and Western Europe, and also beyond its borders - in Brazil, South Africa, Australia and Canada, and in the Russian Federation.

At the same time, an analysis of the constitutional and special legislation with respect to the area under study, as well as practice of its implementation, allowed to conclude that, the non-confessional form of regulation of religion component in the general education system is the most optimal form for the modern model of a secular state so that, on the one hand it allows the state to guarantee generally accepted rights and freedoms in the considered sphere, and, on the other hand, to take into account historical and other traditions in the field of state-confessional relations.

In Russian Federation, similar to many other countries (Austria, Germany, Great Britain, etc.), regulation of the religion component implies the participation of recognized religious associations to support the teaching courses in terms of organizational and methodological aspects in the state general education system related to a religion component. However, the non-confessional form allows for alternative regulation of religious component in the field of general education, both within its state system and in conjunction with it, including various forms directly involving with religious associations in this process as founders of (private) educational organizations, as well as carrying out religious training and education of followers of this denomination, and general education programs. The balance of management decisions in this segment of relationships will minimize the effect of "majority principle" and fully ensure the principle of equal rights of each member of society in implementation of an individual's "religious" rights and freedoms [[Habibullina, Z. \(2014\)](#)].

In this regard, the regulation of educational activities of religious organizations is considered one of the topical aspects of secular nature of public administration in the field of general education. In most cases the right to exercise religious

education and upbringing of their followers is recognized as an important component of the right to freedom of religion. Mostly, modern states do not hinder creation of educational institutions by religious organizations, regardless of denomination. Religious organizations, as a rule, are allowed to create private educational institutions aimed at implementing general education programs (schools). But mostly it is concerned with officially recognized denominations of the state religion (communities, churches) (Article L141-3 of the Code de l'éducation, Article 7 of the Basic Law of Germany, Article 14, Section 1, Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution Austria and others). In Russia, centralized religious organizations also have the right to create their own educational organizations, implementing both "secular" basic educational programs (including those accredited by the state), and educational programs of their own religious orientation, consisting of educational disciplines providing general education.

In this connection, it seems promising to activate and systematize this form of state-confessional interaction. Religious associations (recognized by the state) were found to be an alternative to the general educational activities of state (municipal) organizations - provided that they comply first with requirements of state educational standards in the "secular" part of the educational program and guaranteed state support (legal, organizational, financial, etc.). Therefore, each student, who is subject to the implementation of such an approach by the state regulation in the field of general education, (his legal representatives) will have a real right to choose the type and place of receiving such education in case of exercising the right to freedom of conscience and religion. In case of applying the non-confessional form, the contradictions arising from inclusion of disciplines of a religious nature in-state educational programs of general education will be decreased [Sheryazdanova, K. \(2014\)](#).

As noted by a number of experts [[Bezrogov, V. G. 2004, p. 56-57](#)], and confirmed by the judicial practice [[Trámpuz, J. P., & Ibáñez, D. B. 2018](#)], at present, following the normative declaration of non-confessional form of education regulation in public schools of some countries, there is a predominant coverage of teachings of only one denomination (for example, in the UK, especially Ireland, and in Norway, or, similarly in some Scandinavian countries, such courses are politicized in order to preserve national identity based on the religious system. These deviations from principles of secular states are dangerous in a multi-religious society, and they provoke an increase in social tensions, resulting in failure to meet the criteria for application of non-confessional forms of regulating general education.

At the time of implementing the above measures related to focal state support for regulation of religious educational organizations, gradual "removal" of religious disciplines (Fundamentals of Hinduism, Orthodoxy, Islam and etc.) from general education programs might occur accompanied with replacement with neutral culturological courses [Luria, K. P. \(2005\)](#).

In the light of the above statements, maintaining a balance in state-confessional relations in the field of education was found to be important, it means not delegating state functions to religious organizations regarding providing basic general education to citizens; since (municipal) secular general education organizations of the state provide guaranteed sufficient, affordable, adequate public funding. In this regard, the experience of Germany is interesting, where large religious communities (churches) have a significant number of private schools, most of which are recognized as alternative state (municipal) and receive state support, since they provide a similar level of education, fulfilling rather tough conditions and requirements [[Fateminasab, A. 2014, p. 136](#)].

It is noteworthy that, the decision-making on the issue of state participation in financing educational institutions of religious organizations, as opposed to recognizing the possibility of their formation, is made ambiguously today, including inadmissibility of such financing recognized as violating principle of secularism of the state and its implementation in various forms. For example, in Austria and Germany, educational institutions established by religious organizations traditionally constitute an important component in the educational system of the state and, therefore, receive state funding, like other private schools, if they provided an adequate level of education for students [[Iravani, M. R., & ShekarchiZade, A. R. 2014](#)]. At the same time, for example, in the United States, the First Amendment to Constitution is interpreted by the Supreme Court, according which the state is not allowed to provide the funding of educational institutions of religious organizations in one form or another (for example, reimbursement for purchasing textbooks on secular subjects, setting a premium for teachers who teach secular subjects in such institutions, etc.), even in order to improve quality of secular education in them, although there is no direct legislative prohibition in this regard. Additionally, such funding is considered unacceptable in connection with the possible establishment of any connection between the state and religious organizations, including process of further state supervision and audit of expenditure of allocated funds. This does not exclude the possibility of allocating public funds (for example, in the form of grants) for the students themselves, if they wish to receive education in a confessional school according to their convictions [Аймухамбетов, Т. \(2017\)](#).

In this regard, it is believed that, in relation to non-confessional form, financial and other support for educational organizations, established by religious associations of recognized faiths, should be viewed by the state as a significant guarantee for the actual realization of the right to freedom of conscience and religion in the field of general education, while choosing the form of its receipt with an emphasis on inclusion of a focal religious component in the general educational program [Lotz-Heumann, U. \(2016\)](#). In addition, funding such organizations by the state will allow its competent authorities to legally and reasonably control quality of general education segment, and ensuring the effectiveness of the principle of equality (with respect to the right to education, along with the right to freedom of conscience and religion) [Sailaubekkyzy, A. \(2019\)](#). At the same time, each state is capable to work out the optimal variant

of such support in the form of direct (full or partial) financing or indirect financial support, for example, by providing a state grant on a competitive basis, or subsidies for remunerating of teaching staff in secular disciplines, so that it corresponds to the payment of labor educators in public schools. Since there is not enough ground to legally fix the possibility of such support; an effective organizational mechanism of support is needed, which is possible only by the state involvement [Ashkhamakhova, A., & Yakovenko, I. \(2012\)](#). It is important to take into account the existing experience of a number of states with respect to this area, for example, the experiences of countries such as Austria, Germany, in which the state support is provided only when all requirements for educational activities and provision of educational services in general education are met at the appropriate state-level [Sezgin, Y. \(2013\)](#).

CONCLUSION

Recognizing the non-confessional form of regulating religion component in the general education system as the most optimal form for modern secular states, it was justified to establish a correlatively equal state support for implementation of general education programs in the context of core activities of both state (municipal) and faith-based educational organizations, provided that the latter presents general education at the established (state standards) level. This approach was found to be constitutionally grounded and more rational than the inclusion of mono-confessional courses in general education programs in state (municipal) educational organizations, or replacement with culturological courses. At the same time, it requires a unified index or characteristic, which implies establishment of legal, organizational, methodological, financial guarantees and formation of a typical mechanism for their implementation in each secular state.

In this regard, ensuring the development of a “Doctrine of confessional education” at the national level is important, along with the involvement of scientific and pedagogical community, public organizations representing the interests of students, representatives of religious organizations and other interested parties, that among its other provisions, consolidating the basic principles and guarantees of the designated state-confessional interaction [Rabil, R. \(2011\)](#).

REFERENCES

1. Ayele, M. A. (2016). Mathematics Teachers' Perceptions on Enhancing Students' Creativity in Mathematics. *International Electronic Journal of Mathematics Education*, 11(10), 3521-3536.
2. Bezrogov, V. G. (2004). Svetskie i religioznye nachala v shkol'nom obrazovanii Irlandii // *Pedagogika*. 2004. # 3. S. 99-102. (in Russian)
3. Fateminasab, A. (2014). Investigating the challenges and barriers of convergence between Iran and republic of Azerbaijan, *UCT Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Research*, 2(1): 18-24.
4. Irvani, M. R., & ShekarchiZade, A. R. (2014). A social work study of effective cultural, social economic factors on work stress: A Review, *UCT Journal of Management and Accounting Studies*, 2(1): 5-7.
5. Kozyrev, F. N. (2006). Nekonfessional'noe religioznoe obrazovanie v zarubezhnoj shkole: avtoref. diss. ... dokt. ped. nauk. S-Pb., 2006. 42 s. (in Russian)
6. Robbers, G. (2009). Gosudarstva i religii v Evropejskom Soyuze (opyt gosudarstvenno-konfessional'nyh otnoshenij) / Pod red. M.A. Voskresenskogo, A.A. Krasikova, R.N. Lunkina, R.A. Podoprigrory, L.S. Simkina, I.A. SHalobinoj. M.: Institut Evropy RAN, TC Yunesko, 2009. 719 s. (in Russian)
7. Trámpuz, J. P., & Ibáñez, D. B. (2018). Convergencia y medios universitarios: Una aproximación al nuevo escenario ecuatoriano. *Opción*, 34(86), 898-923.
8. ZHuravlev, V. M. (2008). Process «koehvolucii» nauchnogo i religioznogo znaniya v obrazovanii // *Filosofiya obrazovaniya*. 2008. # 3. S. 270-275. (in Russian).
9. Аймухамбетов, Т. (2017). EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN MODELS OF STATE-CONFESSIONAL RELATIONS: RELIGIOUS ANALYSIS. *Вестник КазНУ. Серия религиоведение*, 10(2), 9-15. <https://doi.org/10.26577/EJRS-2017-2-110>
10. Lotz-Heumann, U. (2016). Confessionalization. In *The Ashgate Research Companion to the Counter-Reformation* (pp. 53-73). Routledge.
11. Sailaubekkyzy, A. (2019). Aspects of the formation of the religious identity of young people. *Journal of Philosophy, Culture and Political Science*, 66(4), 39-47.
12. Ashkhamakhova, A., & Yakovenko, I. (2012). The Present State of Religious Consciousness of Russian Citizens (on Example of Adygea). *Russia and the moslem world*, (7 (241)).
13. Sezgin, Y. (2013). *Human rights under state-enforced religious family laws in Israel, Egypt and India*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139649612>
14. Rabil, R. (2011). *Religion, national identity, and confessional politics in Lebanon: the challenge of Islamism*. Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230339255>
15. Sheryzdanova, K. (2014). Complexity and the Relationship of the State with Islam. In *Chaos, Complexity and Leadership 2012* (pp. 35-41). Springer, Dordrecht. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-7362-2_6
16. Luria, K. P. (2005). *Sacred Boundaries: Religious Coexistence and Conflict in Early-Modern France*. CUA Press.
17. Habibullina, Z. (2014). *Muslim Clergy in the Republic of Bashkortostan: Status and Development Trends*. Russia and the moslem world, (8 (266)).