

Factors and Conditions Determining the Specifics of the Formation, Size and Sources of Financing Educational Services for Students of Different Religions

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Abstract

The paper discusses debatable questions about the role of religion in modern society, including higher educational organizations. There is much evidence of both supporters and opponents of special attention to the interests, wishes and needs of students of different religions in higher educational bodies. One of the most important findings is the idea about both additional and reduced costs associated with the training of religious students, and accordingly about the availability of revenue sources. The main attention focuses on the factors and conditions that predetermine the peculiarities of financing the education of religious students. Another important finding is that the quality of financing correlates with the degree of religiosity of students, their place of residence and food. It also depends on the organization of arranging religious needs and external differences in clothing, attributes, and the symbolism of religious students.

Keywords: Religious contradictions; Religious students; Education; Living conditions of religious students; Catering services; Religious arrangements.



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1. Introduction

Evidence suggests that the changes taking place in the world through the processes of integration and globalization have also affected the position of higher education in various countries. Historical traditions, family values and foundations, on the one hand, and the activity of supporters of globalization in introducing foreign rules, methods and ratings, on the other hand, caused a serious discussion between supporters of gender philosophy, feminism, juvenile justice, political correctness, tolerance and the transmitters of the national mentality. Within this context some countries witnessed a significant rise of the positions of religion, including its influence on the organization of the educational process in higher education.

It is quite natural for universities to admit religious believers in their student body. Such universities are forced to solve several problems with the selection of compulsory and additional disciplines in the curricula. Simultaneously, they must invite instructional experts who have a good command of religious questions, as well as history, national traditions, philosophy, and the organization of the educational process. Such experts and universities must realize the necessity to arrange cult activities and the specifics of everyday life of believers. But at the same time, they will be able to more intensively attract applicants, to get support from influential public organizations, to enhance discipline and reduce aggressiveness in the student environment.

To achieve these goals and resolve the problems successfully, it is critical to understand the variations of believers' behavior, the impact of their residence place and food, the methods of religious arrangements of students depending on the religious denomination to which they belong. All these things considered constitute the focus of the paper.

The hypothesis of this paper is as follows. The financing of the provision of educational services to students of different religious denominations has specific aspects and serious differences from standard options. Religious students will require several additional costs and, accordingly, the sources of their coverage. Consequently, a university may reduce the costs which arise during the work with aggressive, restless and disorderly students' community. The work with purposeful, modest, well-disciplined, believing students emerges as more profitable. As a result, not only will universities' funding improve, but their reputation among patriotically-minded people, public

organizations, entrepreneurs, political leaders and statesmen, and, of course, primarily among religious circles, will significantly increase.

Different theories exist in the literature regarding the question under discussion. The methodological basis of this study stems from the works of scientists and specialists working both in Russia and abroad. The analysis of Russian and international regulatory documents plays a pivotal role within the framework of the research.

There is a growing body of literature which discusses the issues of provision of educational services in higher education institutions and the analysis of reforms held in the field of education. Russian scholars [Bodrov \(2017\)](#), [Privalov \(2018\)](#), [Karpenkov \(2003\)](#) describe the methodological aspects of these innovations. The focus of their attention is a critical description of the integration of legislative and organizational administrative initiatives proposed by Russian educational officials. Questions of the place and role of religion in the life of Russia, including the field of higher education, receive a lot of attention in the works of such Russian scholars and religious figures as [Krutov \(2018\)](#), [Polynskii \(2003\)](#), priest [Shishkin \(2018\)](#), archpriest V. Breged ([Pavlova, 2018](#)).

As far as the academic perspectives of an increasing number of religious students of different denominations are concerned, there are discussions describing controversial issues regarding the incompatibility of censorious religious postulates. Such postulates are typical of modern liberal democratic principles referring to personal freedom, on the one hand, and juvenile justice, on the other one. Another area of controversy is the difference arising from these challenges related to the state standards of higher education and the essence of their competences. There are also inequalities in the organization of religion-related disciplines in different universities. Of much importance is the fact that there are several serious advantages, both reputational and financial, that universities acquire, including believers of various religious denominations to their students' body.

The purpose of our study is to substantiate the possibility and relevance of creating special conditions and ensure their proper financial support for organizing residence, food and opportunities to arrange religious fundamentals for the students of various religious denominations. Our strong belief is that this will allow universities to acquire several financial and reputational benefits.

2. Materials and Methods

1. During the study, the following methods were used:
 - the method of economic analysis and statistical evaluation;
 - the method of historical and logical description;
 - the method of analogies;
 - descriptions;
 - classifications;
 - rankings;
 - generalizations.
2. The main source of information included several resources which were as follows:
 - special literature on education, history and religion;
 - the information of the Russian television channels “Spas”, “Union”, “Muslims”, “RenTV”;
 - the Internet resources;
 - the data from a survey of university students, teachers and administration;
 - the conversations with believers of various religions organizations and denominations held during the visits to monasteries, temples (including internal temples of universities, hospitals), synagogues, mosques, the holy places of various religions, holy sources, Buddhist temples;
 - the curricula and timetables for both basic and additional university courses with the different levels of religiosity.
3. All this allowed us to collect and to analyze the determining factors which described the education of believing students from three perspectives which were as follows:
 - the place of residence;
 - catering;
 - clothing.

3. Results

In one form or another, education has always accompanied the development of mankind, being, in fact, its foundation. Educational processes, schemes, methods and tools could have a lot of specificity in different ethnic groups and nations, in different countries and regions, often acquiring serious inequalities stemming from natural conditions, resource provision, national composition, the forms of management and leadership, family relations, ethics and morality. Interestingly, educational schemes diversified into a certain hierarchy according to estate, caste, and professional principles.

Quite often, religion was actively involved in educational processes. The church, having its own internal educational structures at almost all levels, created and still creates children's schools intended for all segments of the population. Moreover, religious courses were emerging in the curricula of schools, colleges and universities. This situation was typical of the Russian empire, where religion, instead of their nationality, was indicated in the passports of residents. This tradition almost disappeared in the Soviet Union and is clearly reviving nowadays in modern Russia ([Valentei, 2017](#)).

However, in a higher educational institution the organization of a teaching process for religious students implies additional costs. Interestingly, it also stimulates additional savings, and consequently, the sources and models of crediting and financing these additional costs. In this case, the type and level of such costs depend on many factors, often predetermining the sources of their coverage.

To form more substantiated conclusions and obtain more reasonable results, the authors conducted a wide survey within the framework of this study. The focus group was the people who had information on the prospects for the training of believing students. The results of these surveys are summarized in the following tables.

Table-1. The variants of answers to the following question. What or who influenced in the past and influences today your religious choice primarily?

№	Religion, confessions and the number of students surveyed	Answer options				
		This is my personal choice	The wish of my relatives, family traditions	This is the religion of my girlfriend (friend), wife (husband)	The choice emerges from the situation in the country, region, university	The requirements of the future employer
1.	an Orthodox – 60	14	25	2	14	5
2.	a Catholic – 2	1	1	-	-	-
3.	a Protestant – 2	1	1	-	-	-
4.	a Jew – 10	-	2	1	4	3
5.	A Muslim – 10	2	4	-	3	1
6.	a Buddhist – 15	-	13	-	2	-

The results of the survey of students on this issue allow us to draw the following conclusions.

1. Among the believing students in Russia, the largest group compose Orthodox Christians, the smallest group include Catholics and Protestants. The proportions of Jews, Muslims and Buddhists are approximately equal. The representatives of nontraditional religions and religious sects were not included in the list of respondents.

2. A leading role in determining the religious choice of students stems from the wishes of relatives, family traditions (46 out of 99), as well as the personal choice of students (18) and the situation in the country, region, and university (23). Much less students made their religious choice because of the requirements of the future employer (9) and the fact that a friend / girlfriend or husband / wife were believers.

3. As far as the variety of factors that determine the religious choice of students are concerned, they are most fully represented among Orthodox Christians (5 factors), slightly less by Jews and Muslims (4 factors each), and minimally by Catholics and Protestants (2 factors each).

4. Describing the reasons for the choice of religion the Orthodox believers mentioned the wishes of relatives and family traditions (25 Orthodox students), the situation in the country, region, university, and personal choice (14 Orthodox students per each reason). However, the Buddhists answered that their choice to a lesser extent was influenced by the wishes of relatives and family traditions (13 Buddhist students).

These results will help determine the most likely potential sources of getting finance necessary for the educational services of religious students.

Table-2. The variants of answers to the following question. What qualities of religious students seem attractive to you?

№	Respondents and their number	Answer options				
		Neatness, diligence	Discipline state, allegiance	Appearance, clothes	Patriotism	Working capacity
1.	Faculty member – 80	+	+	-	-	+
2.	University administration – 10	-	+	+	+	-
3.	Employers – 20	+	+	+	+	+
4.	The members of public organizations – 5	-	-	+	+	-

Table-3. The variants of answers to the following question. What qualities of religious students seem unattractive to you?

№	Respondents and their number	Answer options				
		Appearance, clothes	The distraction to religious ceremonies	The communication style determined by religious rules	The refusal to follow the priorities, restrictions and prohibitions of the internal policy of the organization	The refusal to participate in all events of the organization (meetings, elections, corporate parties)
1.	Faculty member – 80	+	+	-	-	+
2.	University administration – 10	-	+	+	+	-
3.	Employers – 20	+	+	+	+	+
4.	The members of social organizations – 5	-	-	+	+	-

The answers of persons who can directly or indirectly participate in the education of religious students (see Tables 2 and 3) allowed the authors to formulate the following provisions.

1. The distribution of respondents, assessing both the attractive and unattractive qualities of religious students, is approximately equal, i.e., 3 out of 4 respondents noted attractive features, and 3 out of 4 - unattractive features.

2. The most active in assessing both attractive and unattractive qualities were employers who showed their interest in all the questions and answers' options. The least active respondents were the members of public organizations, who marked only 2 options out of 5 possible options. The faculty members and the university administration showed an average activity, noting 3 options for the proposed answers.

3. One can note that only factors which are indirectly related to the labor process have big influence on the positions of respondents and, accordingly, on their willingness to finance the education of religious students. Therefore, attractive qualities include such positive features, as "patriotism". The unattractive qualities are represented by "the distraction to religious ceremonies", "the refusal to participate in all the events of the organization".

There is much evidence that the organizational and financial aspects of the education of a religious student largely depend on his place of residence, where a significant portion of his time can be spent. The study showed that extracurricular contacts, food, the opportunity to worship were broadly enough, costly, depending on where and with whom the student lived (Pavlova, 2018; Voronova, 2017). There are several options which are as follows.

- A student lives at home with parents or in an extended version with sisters, brothers, a grandmother, a grandfather. Much in this situation depends on whether the family is religious or not, how much close relatives are respectful or hostile to the student's religious choice in general, whether relatives allow him to perform prayers and religious rites at home or to do so a student must visit a temple and how far the temple is (Sinelnikov, 2017).
- A nonresident or a student who wishes to live separately from parents. Such students rent an apartment most often with the help of parents or relatives or alone. In this case, the opportunities and wishes of the students for religious rituals (e.g. attributes, reading religious books, observance of fasting, prayers, etc.) emerge in accordance with the desire of the apartment owners who put certain restrictions or requirements, or following the advice and recommendations of friends, girlfriends, relatives who come to visit the student
- A nonresident student or a religious student who wants to live closer to a university or temple, renting a room in a communal apartment. Quite a common situation, when a room or apartment is rented by several students. The situation is likely and most desirable when friends, neighbors, and owners are believers and belong to the same religion or denomination. Nevertheless, this situation most likely occurs when housing is selected purposefully considering the attitude to the religion by neighbors or owners;
- A religious student lives in a student dormitory during the educational process, and at the weekends, on official holidays, as well as during vacations he returns home to his parents and relatives. Despite the declared loyalty of the authorities to religion, not all religious holidays requiring the active participation of believers in religious activities and rituals are days off. This means there can be problems with attending classes, academic debts, strained relations with the administration and teachers.
- A student lives in a student dormitory, he is a nonresident and his house, his parents' place is far away, and he can visit them only during vacations or on long official holidays. In such cases, believers are forced to adjust religious activities to such official time periods. This in turn does not always find support from church authorities, who usually have their own opinion about the nature of behavior and organization of believers' lives, including students, and requiring them to strictly observe the content and timing of religious rituals and ceremonies.

An Orthodox church, a prayer house, a mosque, a synagogue or another religious center within walking distance of the university or student's place of residence gives him a real opportunity to actively and practically fully perform all the required religious activities with minimal damage to the educational process and with a few additional expenses. In many countries, and especially in Russia, the historical tradition of inner temples is realized. Many Moscow universities have built or restored their churches (Shtynko, 2017), in which services are carried out and in which students, teachers and administration representatives are actively involved.

There is enough evidence that food is one of the most significant aspects of religion. A variety of catering options correlate with the presence of certain financial resources. There is a distinguished difference in the level of amounts of money to provide food for religious students, i.e., from very large amounts which include eating in top-level restaurants, using the home money from parents, relatives (depending on the position of the student in the family or clan), to the minimum or completely absent financing, with the participation of the student in religious ceremonies, religious and charity events or the feeding of the student in the monastic refectory.

Regarding bank services for religious students, it is critical to say that the religion and the religiosity of students, depending on the degree of their immersion in religious rules and environmental factors, imply several differences that require corresponding costs and sources of funds. Studying sociocultural factors and their influence on the mechanisms of bank risk management related to the religion of clients and partners, as well as developing the models of financing educational services for students of different religions and denominations, it is necessary to take into account the significant specificity of items and styles of clothing, shoes and hats that are prescribed to wear to believers, both in everyday life, and while participating in church holidays and ritual ceremonies (Voronova, 2017).

Such adherence to historical national traditions undoubtedly has a positive effect on the attractiveness, reputation and ratings of universities (Shtynko, 2017). The attention of universities to religious aspects strengthens their standing with the authorities, public organizations, progressive entrepreneurs who adhere to the ethics of business (entrepreneurship), and, of course, with religious students and their environment.

The results of the study can be summarized in the following table.

Table-4. The results of the study

Result	Explanations
The revival of interest in the church	At present, in many countries, including Russia, an increasing interest is being expressed in the participation of the church in various fields, including education.
The evaluation of the influence of the residential place of a religious student	The authors assessed the influence of the residential place on a believing student, regarding the relations with neighbors, the ability to fulfill the requirements of religions and the level of expenses for educational training
The identifying places of religious activity	Describing religious places, the authors have obtained the following options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A temple, a mosque, a synagogue, etc. located within a walking distance of the student. – The presence of internal temples, including universities, which has a positive effect on the reputation of the university. – The allocation of certain places for the commission of religious activities, including universities. – The equipment of places of religious activity inside the places of residence of religious students.
The study of features in the organization of food and meals in different religions	<p>The specific attitudes towards certain types of food in different religions and denominations during the fasting or on holidays were observed.</p> <p>The authors expressed the doubt in several bans on some food products and vice versa, the permission to consume such products.</p> <p>The cost of food for believing students, depending on the place of receiving food or the organization of the process of its preparation, was assessed.</p> <p>The prohibitions on several products as a historical and temporary nature in different religions were revealed.</p> <p>The options for organizing catering of believing students and the level of catering costs were highlighted.</p>
The assessment of the appearance factor of a religious student	<p>The options for wearing special religious clothing, depending on the location and historical traditions of the students, were considered.</p> <p>The requirements of individual religions to wear clothes, hats and shoes in everyday life when visiting religious places were highlighted.</p>

4. Discussion

A critical analysis of the findings and results obtained during this study revealed several discussion questions and incomplete objectivations, which are as follows:

1. The possibility and relevance of the formation and widespread use of differentiated financing schemes for higher education of religious students. There is an opinion that such schemes are not obvious. Universities implementing such projects will not only face the need to seek and activate additional sources of funding but will also be subject to criticism from supporters of gender philosophy experts and atheists who constitute quite a number in our country. They are also present in government authorities, functioning as consultants and advisers.
2. Universities in which students of different religions will receive educational services will not be able to fully and qualitatively satisfy their desires and needs, and it is possible that the requirements that certain religions set for their adherents will decrease their attractiveness to future applicants and respectively, the income of universities.
3. There is a high probability of increasing tension in an active, freedom-loving, non-formalized student environment with its nihilism, peculiar values and leadership, which complicates the life of believing students and creates problems with the external financing of their education.
4. Administrative and reputational risks, which are more and more characteristic of universities. They can create conditions for the redistribution of financial resources intended for the needs of religious students to more important ones, according to the opinion of university management.

A detailed study and assessment of these situations have allowed the authors to determine the main directions of the research which are as follows:

1. Create a comprehensive system of collective opposition to the efforts of liberal, gender and feminist structures in their attempts to humiliate and destroy national history, traditions, family life, values, ethical and moral principles, customs and religion.
2. To develop the system of criteria to admit religious boys and girls from the standpoint of both the universities themselves and future applicants.
3. To develop recommendations for the creation within the universities of both administrative departments and public organizations to ensure equal inclusion of religious students into the student community.
4. To develop a proposal to introduce the number of performance indicators as separate parameters of control, monitoring, evaluation, the ratings of items on the availability, number, religion of students, and, possibly, teachers belonging to different religions or denominations.

5. Conclusion

The study, connected with the identification of factors and conditions that influence the size and sources of financing the costs of providing educational services for students of different religions and denominations, has allowed the authors to obtain the following results and form several conclusions and suggestions.

1. There are fundamental differences between supporters of historical, national, patriotic views and modern liberal-democratic positions describing the role and relevance of religion in the life of society and the state.
2. Strict prohibitions and restrictions dictated by the tenets of various religious denominations, are seemingly negative. Compared with the complete individual freedom declared by gender philosophy, political correctness and tolerance, they at the same time form a more disciplined, compulsory, loyal member of society in the context of student environment.
3. The inclusion of students practicing different religions among those enrolled in universities and academies is not an innovation. It is a consequence of long-standing historical traditions and is confirmed by the existence in many countries of purely religious universities or belonging to religious organizations (e.g. Georgetown University in the USA belongs to the Jesuit Order).
4. The behavior, demands and requirements of a believing student largely depend on the degree of his religiosity, which can vary from the extremely rigid positions of fanatics to the practically few noticeable wishes of sympathizers.
5. The abilities of believing students to fulfill their religious duties and the level of expenses required for this are dependent on the place of residence of the student, ranging from the house or apartment of his parents, family to the student dormitory.
6. To meet the needs of believing students, it is necessary to consider the location of temples and places where religious ceremonies are arranged. This is very important and relates directly to funding problems.
7. To a greater or lesser extent, many religions and religious denominations set the rules, priorities, restrictions or prohibitions in nutrition. Kashrut in Judaism, fasts in Orthodoxy, Halal among Muslims and the cost of enforcing their rules depends on the place and catering for believing students.
8. Additional sources of funding for teaching religious students may be associated with the need to wear special clothes for both boys and girls. These requirements are especially vividly implemented in Islam and Judaism, to a lesser extent in the confessions of Christianity.

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