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## **SOCIAL FACTORS INFLUENCING RELIGIOSITY OF ADOLESCENTS: ROLE OF FAMILY, PEERS AND ENVIRONMENT**

This scholarly article meticulously investigates the myriad social determinants that indelibly shape the religious beliefs and practices of adolescents, while emphasizing the intricate and multifarious interactions among familial influences, peer associations, and the broader cultural milieu. This discourse underscores the immense importance of the family as a social system, in which parental beliefs and, especially, their particular parenting styles, deeply influence the religious identity of children in all stages of their growth. Besides that, the literature emphasizes that adolescents are greatly affected by their friends and the school environment where they study. Moreover, the paper points out that people at this stage tend to seek comfort and personal support from their social circle, which, eventually, plays a significant role in their religious development. Moreover, it examines significant effects of national and ethnic background in depth, especially in migrant families, where religion often serves as a major channel for the formation of identity and the strengthening of the bond with the community. The effects of social media are also carefully considered since this recent trend can have both positive and negative impacts on teenagers' religious views, thus adding to the overall complexity of their belief systems. As a result, the research highlights the critical need for a deep understanding of these complex and multilayered social factors since such an understanding is indispensable to appreciating the changing pattern of adolescent religiosity in the context of contemporary society.

**Keywords:** adolescents, religion, society, factors, identity

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### **Жасөспірімдердің діндарлығына әсер ететін әлеуметтік факторлар: отбасы, құрдастар және қоршаған ортандың рөлі**

Бұл ғылыми мақала жасөспірімдердің діні сенімдері мен тәжірибесін тығыз қалыптастырытын сансыз әлеуметтік дәтерминанттарды мұқият зерттейді, сонымен бірге отбасылық әсерлер, құрдастар топтары және кең мәдени орта арасындағы құрделі және көп қырлы өзара әрекеттесуге баса назар аударады. Бұл дискурс отбасылық динамиканың маңыздылығына баса назар аударады, мұнда ата-аналардың нағымдары өздерінің ерекше ата-аналық әдістемелерімен қатар, олардың үрпақтарының қалыптасу жылдарында дамыған кезде діни сәйкестіктеріне айтарлықтай әсер етеді. Сонымен қатар зерттеу құрдастарының қарым-қатынасы мен білім беру ортасының жасөспірімдерге сыны әсерін көрсетеді, олардың әлеуметтік контексте белсенді эмоционалды қолдау мен басшылыққа алуға бейімділігін көрсетеді, өйткені бұл бірлестіктер олардың діни әволюциясында шешуші рөл атқарады. Сонымен қатар мақалада ұлттық, және этникалық, тегінің терең әсерлері мұқият қарастырылады, әсіресе мигрант отбасыларына ерекше назар аударылады, мұнда дін жиі сәйкестікі қалыптастыру мен қоғамдық интеграцияның маңызды көзі ретінде пайда болады. Әлеуметтік желілердің салдары да мұқият қарастырылады, өйткені бұл заманауи құбылыс жасөспірімдердің діні бағыттарына он және теріс әсер етуі мүмкін, осылайша олардың сенім жүйелерінің жалпы құрделілігін арттырады. Демек, зерттеу осы құрделі және көп қырлы әлеуметтік дәтерминанттарды жан-жақты түсінудің өзекті қажеттілігін көрсетеді, өйткені бұл түсінік қазіргі қоғамдағы жасөспірімдер діншілдігінің дамып келе жатқан ландшафтың түсінін үшін өте маңызды.

**Түйін сөздер:** жасөспірімдер, дін, қоғам, факторлар, тұлға

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### **Социальные факторы, влияющие на религиозность подростков: роль семьи, сверстников и окружения**

В этой научной статье тщательно исследуется множество социальных факторов, которые не-разрывно влияют на религиозные убеждения и обычай подростков, и одновременно освещаются многогранные и сложные взаимодействия между семейными влияниями, группами сверстников и более широким культурным контекстом. В этом дискурсе подчеркивается первостепенное значение динамики семьи, в котором убеждения родителей, а также их особый стиль воспитания оказывают глубокое влияние на религиозную идентичность, которую развивают их дети в годы становления. Кроме того, исследование посвящено существенному влиянию отношений со сверстниками и образовательной среды на подростков, подчеркивая тенденцию подростков активно искать эмоциональную поддержку и руководство в своих социальных кругах, поскольку эти отношения играют решающую роль в их религиозном развитии. Кроме того, в статье тщательно рассматривается глубокое влияние национального и этнического происхождения, при этом особое внимание уделяется семьям мигрантов, где религия часто служит важным источником формирования идентичности и социальной сплоченности в сообществе. Также тщательно рассматриваются последствия социальных сетей, поскольку это современное явление может оказывать как положительное, так и пагубное влияние на религиозные взгляды подростков, тем самым усугубляя общую сложность их систем убеждений. Таким образом, в исследовании подчеркивается настоятельная необходимость всестороннего понимания этих сложных и многогранных социальных факторов, поскольку это необходимо для понимания меняющейся ситуации с религиозностью подростков в контексте современного общества.

**Ключевые слова:** подростки, религия, общество, факторы, идентичность

### **Introduction**

In recent years, there has been a notable surge in scholarly interest regarding the social determinants of religiosity, prompted by evolving religious preferences and practices across various age cohorts, particularly among adolescents. Research in the field of religion studies specifically on this topic has become significant only recently, but its importance is increasingly recognized due to the dramatic increase of religious feelings among young people. The thorough knowledge of the social determinants that influence the formation of a religious personality in adolescence can provide useful information to sociologists, psychologists, and educators, and at the same time deepen our understanding of the place of religion in modern society (Rodríguez-Yunta, 2016).

Adolescent religiosity is deeply rooted in various social factors that influence a young person's perspective on the world. Within the lens of sociology, the study of adolescent religiosity unveils the intricate and diverse phenomena, whereby the individual, social and cultural elements interact and negotiate to determine the adolescent's religious behavior.

### *Justification of the choice of articles and goals and objectives*

The family is certainly a very important factor in this complicated process. The parents' religious beliefs, as well as their participation in religious ceremonies and traditions, lay the foundation for the teenager to develop his/her religious identity. Children brought up in a religious family are more likely to be interested in religion and to follow the parents' religious views. However, the family is not the only factor. Schools, being important social institutions, also have an effect on the development of adolescents' religiosity. Depending on the curriculum, cultural milieu, and the attitudes of educators, schools can either reinforce or undermine religious beliefs (Muntaqo et al., 2024). Peers assume a distinctive role in shaping the religiosity of adolescents. The teenage years constitute a phase of vigorous self-exploration and the quest for one's position within society. The opinions of peers, alongside their religious convictions and behaviors, exert a considerable influence on the development of a teenager's views and values. If an adolescent is surrounded by religious peers, they are significantly more likely to align with their beliefs (Kohzadi & Shiri, 2014).

Media and the Internet further impact the religiosity of adolescents. They offer access to a myriad of religious doctrines, philosophical ideologies, and spiritual practices. An adolescent has the opportunity to independently investigate topics of personal interest, juxtapose diverse perspectives, and cultivate their own opinions (Vlasova & Chikurova, 2020). Thus, the religiosity of adolescents emerges as a product of a complex amalgamation of social factors. A thorough understanding of these factors facilitates a more nuanced comprehension of the processes involved in the formation of the adolescent personality, as well as the development of effective strategies for upbringing and education. This article will examine the influence of social factors on the religious behavior of adolescents. Those factors include family, friends, school, and media. The research on the impact of social factors on religiosity is still topical for specialists in the field of religion who try to find the connection between faith and society.

### Scientific research methods

This article explores a wide range of social elements that have a significant influence on the religious beliefs and practices of young people, thus revealing the complex dynamics at play. In order to achieve this aim, the authors apply case studies of specific families or communities to closely examine how different social factors such as family structure, parenting styles, and community support systems, among others, affect the religious development of teenagers during this pivotal period of their lives. This research method deepens our understanding of the social context in which the formation of adolescents' religious identity takes place and at the same time in some way throws light on the interaction of these influences. Besides that, an extensive review of adolescent religiosity literature, including earlier studies as well as theoretical models, effectively positions the results of this research within a wider context and reveals the areas where our scholarly knowledge of this complex issue is still lacking. All these approaches combined will give a comprehensive grasp of the various social factors influencing adolescent religiosity that allows the researchers to make important and impactful findings about the intricate interrelationships of family, peer, and larger social influences.

### Discussion and results

*Impact of the family on the adolescents' religiosity.* The family constitutes the primary and essential milieu for the cultivation of a child's personality, particularly in the realm of religious orientation. It serves as an institution adept at fulfilling both fundamental physiological requirements and more intricate socio-psychological needs. The family represents one of the initial social frameworks that an individual faces and magnitude of its influence on the development of adolescent religious convictions is exceedingly significant. From a young age, parents transmit their perspectives, traditions, and beliefs to their offspring. This process establishes the foundational bedrock upon which subsequent relationships with religion are constructed (Divisenko, Belov & Divisenko, 2018). From a psychosocial standpoint, the family executes several pivotal functions: 1) it ensures safety and protection not only for the child but also for other members of the familial unit; 2) it acts as a wellspring of physical comfort and psychological well-being; 3) it imparts a sense of affection, unconditional acceptance, and love; 4) it provides the child with appropriate behavioral models necessary for successful societal integration; 5) it directs and shapes socially sanctioned behavioral paradigms; 6) it aids the child in developing problem-solving capabilities and adapting to life's challenges; 7) it offers guidance in the acquisition of motor, verbal, and social skills essential for autonomous living; 8) it encourages the pursuit of success in educational and social endeavors; 9) it assumes the role of a mentor in the establishment of life goals and aspirations; 10) it functions as a source of companionship, camaraderie, and recreational activities during childhood, extending into marital stages (Mikhaleva, 2020).

The sociologist Schneiders describes ten distinguishing features of exemplary families. Criteria for distinguishing an exemplary family. First, one of the most distinguishing features of an exemplary family is having little or no conflict between family members. Second, family members are given the freedom to express their wants and feelings. Third, the family has a warm, caring environment. Fourth, education occurs through the use of appropriate discipline. Fifth, every family member is free to be independent. Sixth, love and respect form the basis for a relationship between family members. Seventh,

specific issues are dealt with together through discussion. Eighth, families work together to strengthen the bonds of unity and cooperation amongst their members. Ninth, parents are emotionally stable and provide financial security for their families. Finally, tenth, families follow the same religion and moral values (Schneiders, 1963). Occasionally, when a family experiences serious turmoil and the role of religious principles in their lives gets weakened, teens may come out with different problems. These problems can be deviant behavior, depression, aggression and criminality, as well as alcohol and drug abuse. Besides that, the growth of a religious nature in adolescents in the family environment is to a great extent impacted by the different types of parenting that their parents use.

Diana Baumrind deeply studied the impact of different parenting styles (authoritarian, liberal, and authoritative) on the social, emotional, and intellectual growth of children. She was at the forefront of research on bringing to light the relationship between parenting styles and the child's personality development. She made an analysis in which she represented that the harsh parenting style is identified by a very high level of control and very little emotional support (Panyushkina 2022). The influence of parenting styles in the family setting on the formation of the adolescent's religiosity is a very intricate and multi-layered issue. An authoritarian style of parenting, which is characterized by strict rules, high control, and low support, can significantly shape the religious beliefs and practices of adolescents. On the one hand, such parents, who often follow the traditional religious views, might force their children to adopt their beliefs through strict monitoring and dominating religious norms. Within such familial structures, participation in religious rituals and compliance with prescribed practices may be obligatory, with deviations subjected to strict punitive measures. This dynamic may result in the superficial assimilation of religious doctrines devoid of profound comprehension and personal conviction. Adolescents nurtured in such environments may exhibit heightened religiosity, motivated by a fear of retribution or an aspiration to fulfill parental expectations. Conversely, an authoritarian parenting style may incite adolescents to rebel against and renounce their parents' religious convictions. Continuous pressure, the absence of choices, and critical scrutiny may culminate in the development of a negative disposition towards religion, which is per-

ceived as a mechanism of control and limitation. In such instances, adolescents may reject their parents' religious beliefs and pursue alternative value systems or may identify as atheists or agnostics (Denton, 2012).

There are many models of parenting styles that can have various impacts on the religious beliefs of adolescents. In straightforward terms, if parents actively engage in their faith, partake in religious rituals, and deliberate on spiritual matters, the probability that their offspring will regard these practices as standard increases markedly. Empirical studies indicate that adolescents whose parents consistently attend places of worship, engage in communal religious activities, and converse about spiritual issues are frequently observed to possess elevated levels of religiosity. Conversely, should the family espouse exceedingly liberal perspectives or, more conspicuously, undertake a series of intentional measures to dissociate from religion, the adolescent is less inclined to cultivate a robust faith. In such instances, adolescents may experience an internal discord between their individual beliefs and the expectations imposed upon them by their familial context. This occasionally culminates in a complete disengagement from religious practices (Zhou, 2023).

Sarbu posits that the religiosity exhibited by parents significantly impacts the religious beliefs and practices of their progeny. Adolescents who maintain a strong rapport with their parents tend to display heightened levels of religiosity. Moreover, she argues that teenagers who build good connections with their parents tend to be more religious. In other words, the quality of family relationships is one of the main factors influencing the religious beliefs and practices of young people (Sârbu et al., 2021). Hamzah is another researcher who, while recognizing the association between parental attachment and positive youth development, emphasizes the important role of family in religious socialization (Hamzah et al., 2018).

Speaking openly about religious matters within the family is very important. Adolescents are better able to understand their feelings, and ask important questions, when parents and children discuss the religious beliefs, their importance, and the ways in which they are expressed in everyday life. Religion is often thought of as a vague and complicated idea; therefore, having a talk with their parents gives teenagers more assurance about their own understanding.

A family that does not communicate about religion may struggle when the young people in the family start looking for answers outside the family. Most probably, they will ask their friends or the media, which, in some cases, can lead to them having a distorted view of religion. Moreover, religious ceremonies have a great impact on the religiosity of teenage children. Getting involved with family traditions, celebrating holidays, and attending rites can, in fact, help deepen one's religious self-identification (Bano & Ferra, 2018). For instance, the commemoration of religious holidays can render the concept of religion more tangible and relatable. Such practices cultivate adolescents' sense of belonging to a specific religious community, which may also exert a lasting influence on their faith.

*Environment and religious society.* Environmental conditions and religious society. In this framework, the community environment pertains to the social conditions, which encompass socio-religious and socio-cultural dimensions, that may significantly affect an individual's religious development or worldview. In societies where interpersonal interactions are characterized by mutual consent, and socio-cultural existence is grounded in religious tenets and moral standards, a civil society emerges that upholds humanistic ideals, as well as the principles of justice, integrity, equality, and tolerance. Conversely, a deviation from religious values and ethical standards fosters the emergence of materialistic and hedonistic sentiments within society, along with a hypocritical lifestyle, neglect for the individual, discrimination, intolerance, and the prioritization of worldly possessions (Possamai et al., 2020).

The character traits that promote religiosity among the youth are manifested in: 1) adherence to religious canons both in private life and in social engagements, and 2) abstention from actions that contravene religious principles and moral standards, including aggression, mistrust, duplicity, theft, bribery, and other base and cruel behaviors. Conversely, personality traits that impede the development of a religious worldview are characterized by: 1) an emphasis on material values, pleasures, and a secular lifestyle, 2) behaviors and perspectives that contradict religious dogmas, and 3) a self-centered and indifferent disposition towards the issues of poverty, lack of education, and immorality prevalent in society (Schnitker et al., 2021).

The phenomenon of socialization emerges in the context of everyday existence as a consequence of social interactions facilitated by specific media or the social environment. Consequently, the living conditions within the environment predominantly determine and influence the inputs and knowledge acquired. One theoretical framework elucidates the prevalence of criminal activity in urban areas, as elevated crime rates in urban communities are frequently concentrated in economically disadvantaged segments of the city, attributable to inadequate housing, overcrowding, poor health conditions, and unstable demographic circumstances (Etzen, 1986).

Consequently, a social environment that fosters the enhancement of adolescent spirituality is characterized by the existence of a residential system that meets sanitary regulations, easily accessible social amenities, and resources dedicated to the management and advancement of religious practices. This society observes religious obligations both vertically and horizontally, refrains from behaviors that contravene religious doctrines and ethical principles, such as hostility, mutual distrust, duplicity, theft, corruption, and other reprehensible and inhumane forms of conduct, and ensures rigorous social control founded on humanistic and spiritual values (Cornwall, 1987).

The impact of the sociocultural environment on an individual's religious convictions constitutes a topic of considerable inquiry within the fields of sociology and psychology. The important feature of this effect is that people brought up in a religious community or country tend to be more religious than those brought up in secular ones. This phenomenon highlights the importance of the context in which personal beliefs and values are formed, and also the key role of social and cultural factors in the socialization process.

*Peer Influence on Adolescent Religiosity.* Adolescence is often seen as a time when young people are looking for social integration and acceptance among their peers. The peer group that a young person has can greatly affect the religious views and behaviors of that adolescent. The peer's impact is especially important during this period of self-development when one's identity is being formed. Religious beliefs, as part of a person's value system, are influenced by the social environment as well. Going to church with friends and talking about spiri-

tual issues and reading the bible together help to create an atmosphere that keeps and even deepens the faith. If the adolescent's environment is dominated by non-religious or atheistic views, it will probably make the adolescent doubtful about his or her own faith. The need for acceptance by a group and the desire to conform to the expected norms often lead an adolescent to hide his/her religious views and, in some cases, to reject them altogether. Peer pressure, as well as mockery or criticism of religious practices, can have a strong impact on the formation of religious identity (Chandra et al., 2022).

Typically, adolescents tend to compare their thoughts and behaviors with their peers as they grow up. In case the peers are fervent in their religious practice, the adolescent will most probably feel pressured to conform to such norms. Conversely, if the majority of friends espouse more liberal perspectives or repudiate religious practices, the adolescent may perceive their own religious convictions as antiquated or erroneous. Such peer influence can either reinforce the adolescent's religious beliefs or diminish them. For instance, an adolescent immersed in a group where religious topics are vigorously discussed may cultivate an interest in faith and seek their place within this collective. In contrast, if their circle of friends distances itself from the subject of religion, the adolescent may experience discomfort and gradually withdraw from religious observances (Czech & Florist, 2024).

*Alternative Groups and Their Influence.* At times, adolescents may pursue alternative groups, which can significantly affect their religious beliefs. Adolescents in search of their identity may become involved in subcultures and movements that challenge traditional religious systems. Psychologically, it is often seen as an adolescent's search for autonomy and distinctiveness. To be sure, it is not always a negative thing. In fact, some teenagers might use it to question their faith deeply thus, after the whole process, they are able to make a well-thought-out and mature decision about their religion. They might revisit the doctrines, throw difficult questions, and eventually either go back to their original beliefs or find new ones that fit their values and experiences (Russell & Alderman, 2022). Nevertheless, there is also the other side of the coin. By getting involved with radical or harmful groups, one can face alienation from family and friends, loss of moral compass, and even psychological trauma. Teenagers

who are in a fragile state may be easily misled by the leaders of such groups who take advantage of their natural need for a sense of belonging and identity (Trip et al., 2019).

It is crucial that parents and educators understand this situation and watch for signs that a teenager might be in a dangerous group. Having open and trusting communication, as well as giving support and understanding, may help a teenager feel that their feelings are acknowledged and accepted, thus reducing their need to find comfort and acceptance in other, possibly dangerous, communities. It is crucial not to judge or criticize the teenager; instead, the focus should be on trying to understand the reasons for their wish to be part of the alternative groups. Most of the time, this is in the form of a call for help a desire to be recognized and accepted. Building strong self-esteem, providing avenues for self-expression, and encouraging critical thinking can help teenagers become responsible decision-makers and stay away from the negative influences of harmful groups (Haghish et al., 2023).

*Influence of social media.* Over the past couple of years, social media has been a major driver in shaping the world view of teenagers, including their religious attitudes. Several social media platforms provide an opportunity to discuss religious topics and even create and share different pieces of content that may inspire, provoke, or even shake their religious beliefs. Confusing information or trolling on these platforms can have a great impact on people's perception of religion, which in many cases, might be at variance with its true nature. As a staple of modern life, social media has a diverse impact on all aspects of teenage culture, including religiosity. The blending of the digital and spiritual worlds creates intricate and ambiguous phenomena that call for thorough investigation (Wood, Center & Parenteau, 2016). On one hand, social media gives teenagers broad exposure to religious information and communities practically without limits. Digital platforms become places where people can share and discuss religious issues, give their views, and find those with the same faith. Religious groups use social media extensively to spread their message, get more members, and deepen the relationship with the current congregation. However, social media can also harm the religious growth of teenagers by making them vulnerable to false information and radical ideologies. Online platforms often turn into places

where radical ideas and sectarian teachings are spread, resulting in a misunderstanding of true religious values. In addition, over-indulgence in online communication can lead young people away from real interactions with religious communities and practices, thus their spiritual ties and understanding of religion may be weakened (Kurmanaliyev et al., 2024).

The negative effects of social media on religiousness of adolescents should not be underestimated. Constant exposure to secular content, the advertising of consumer values, and the spreading of misinformation can gradually wear down one's religious beliefs and practices. Besides, the development of one's identity in a digital space that emphasizes images and shallow interactions may be at odds with the depth and genuineness of religious experience. At the end of the day, it is quite a few factors that determine the effect of social media on the religiousness of an adolescent, such as the individual's features, family upbringing, religious denomination, and the cultural setting. It is paramount to recognize that social media serves merely as a tool that can either enhance or diminish spirituality (Rahmawati et al., 2024). A key role in this process is played by adults – parents, teachers, religious leaders, who must help teenagers critically evaluate information, find a balance between the virtual and real worlds and form stable religious beliefs.

*Role of educational institutions in shaping religiosity.* The impact of educational institutions on the religious perspectives of adolescents can manifest in both direct and indirect manners. Direct influence is applied through curricula that encompass the examination of religious histories, ethics, and moral philosophies. Indirect influence is revealed through the environment within the educational institution, the interactions between students and educators, and the values that are espoused within the school or university setting. Educational institutions can strengthen or weaken the religious beliefs of young people. For example, the study of different religious traditions can broaden students' horizons and help them make a conscious choice about their religious identity. On the other hand, teachings of science and critical thinking may challenge the established religious beliefs (McFarland et al., 2011). The educational system promotes critical thinking. The curriculum with philosophy, ethnopsychology, and sociology among other subjects can give teenagers a chance to look at

religion from various angles, and some ideas may become the focus of classroom discussions. This involvement can lead to a deeper understanding of faith and religion in general. For example, studies in comparative religion can help teenagers get to know different religious systems, which in turn may influence their personal understanding of religion. Such understanding can increase the capacity for tolerance and respect for different views, thus supporting or changing their own beliefs (Fahreza & Sa'dullah, 2024).

Educational institutions may also host religious clubs and organizations that afford avenues for comprehensive study and practice of religion. Involvement in such organizations can provide adolescents with a forum to articulate their faith with individuals of similar beliefs and assist in deepening their comprehension of religious practices. However, it is crucial to recognize that not all educational institutions endorse such initiatives (Kavadias et al., 2023). Depending on local legislation and cultural context, religious clubs may encounter limitations. This may adversely affect adolescents' access to resources that could facilitate their religious development.

*Community and governmental norms.* Community values together with government policies can be a source of affecting the religiosity of adolescents as well. In societies where the religious tradition is strong, the requirements for religious practice may be very strict. There, teens may be heavily pressured to follow the expectations of the society and this can have both good and bad effects. At the same time, public policies on religion, education, and freedom of expression may have an impact on adolescent religiosity as well. For example, in countries where religious education is mandatory, students may be more likely to claim a religious affiliation. It is essential to recognize that the impact of societal values and public policies on adolescent religiosity may differ based on individual circumstances and personal beliefs. Some adolescents may resist societal norms, while others may endeavor to conform. Familial values and religious upbringing also significantly contribute to the formation of adolescent religiosity (Williams, 2017).

*Impact of national and ethnic factors.* National and ethnic factors can indeed exert a significant influence in the development of adolescent religiosity. Within migrant and minority families,

religion frequently emerges as a cornerstone of identity and social cohesion. Adolescents hailing from such familial backgrounds may encounter pressure to uphold familial traditions and customs, which can result in both the fortification of faith as well as conflicts with the external environment. The impact of national and ethnic identity on adolescent religiosity is not confined solely to migrant families. Even within societies that have a prolonged history of harmonious coexistence among diverse ethnic groups, religion may function as a salient marker of identity and a mechanism for the preservation of cultural heritage. Religious rituals and traditions that are transmitted across generations assist adolescents in establishing a connection to their ancestral lineage and in feeling integrated within a broader community (Csáji, 2023).

Nevertheless, such influence is not invariably straightforward. The aspiration to safeguard religious traditions may stand in opposition to the values and norms prevalent within contemporary culture, particularly in secular societies. Adolescents raised in an environment characterized by globalization and the exchange of information may begin to question established religious dogmas and practices, leading to internal discord and discordance with parents and older generations. Furthermore, the religiousness based on ethnicity may be a reason for discrimination and isolation (Kenney et al., 1977). Youths performing the religion which is considered “non-traditional” in the society where they live may suffer from discriminative attacks of peers as well as adults thus, it lowers their self-esteem and makes them less socially integrated. Also, it is important to be aware that the ethnic religious identity can contribute greatly to positive socialization. Religious communities and groups highly rely on supporting young people by providing them with education, leadership training, and involvement in community activities. Such support is especially the case of young people who are living hard conditions or having a problem with changing the culture around them.

#### *Social determinants of religiosity in Kazakhstan*

##### *Historical consciousness and cultural legacy:*

Islam is deeply embedded in the historical and cultural fabric of the Kazakh people. A large number of ceremonies, folk customs, and traditions are strongly linked with Islamic principles and values, which have been handed down from one generation to an-

other. Being identified with a religion is a major element of one's personality and ethnic belonging.

*Social cohesion and reciprocal support:* Over the years, religious communities have been at the forefront of providing social support and mutual aid among their members. Most of the time, mosques and different religious groups plan charity events, help the needy and hence, raise the spirit of the entire community.

*Search for existential meaning and spiritual sustenance:* In a time when fast-changing societies and unstable economies are the main features of the life, religion can be a source of comfort, meaning, and hope. Belief in God helps people to overcome stress, gives answers to difficult life questions, and promotes peace of mind.

*Mitigating adverse social phenomena:* Often people turn to religious precepts and values as a line of defense against such unfortunate trends as drug abuse, alcoholism, crime, and moral degradation. Through their preaching and the various programs they conduct, religious leaders and organizations have become the most active agents of these preventive steps as well as the promotion of a healthy lifestyle (Akhmetova, Nuradinov, and Baizakova, 2024).

Therefore, different social factors significantly influence adolescents' religiosity. Family, friends, school, and the cultural environment together form a complex background where adolescents test and develop their religious beliefs. One must understand that these factors do not work separately but are closely interrelated. Adolescents, in their search for a place in the world, may encounter helpful as well as harmful influences from their environment. Besides, such studies are useful for parents, teachers, and sociologists to understand better the process of spiritual development in youth. Considering the diversity of dynamics involved, it is necessary to create a setting that is open to religious discussion, thereby making adolescents feel listened to and appreciated. This will return to the young the power of their faith choice, which is one of the significant elements of their personal and social development.

## **Conclusion**

Summing up, it is quite clear that changes in the religious beliefs of young people represent a very complex and complicated development which is un-

der the influence of various social factors, among which the main ones are the family, friend peer groups, and the cultural milieu. The family, being the most important social institution, sets the stage for the child's first contact with religious values through the process of their conferring, transference, and later inevitable internalization thus building a basic understanding of faith that is most probably going to be retained throughout one's lifetime. Significantly, the use of a strict and rigid parenting style can be associated with a mere superficial and outward observance of religion, while a warm and kind home environment, on the other hand, may lead to a genuine heartfelt commitment to the faith thus encouraging the personal religious discovery and comprehension of the teachings. Peer influence is certainly one of the main elements that are at the core of this developmental process, as it is quite common for teenagers to publicly declare their faith and religious stand to their friends and peers, thus highlighting the great significance of social networks in the formation and confirmation of religious identity

at the time of adolescence. Besides that, the school setting where these youths are being educated can work either as a support to their faith or as a stimulus upsetting their faith, depending mainly on what the curriculum and the teachers' point of view are, which is adding another layer of complexity to their religious growth.

The article underlines the pressing need for a free and positive dialogue about religious topics in families and communities that help teenagers discover and deal with their faith in a nurturing and empathetic atmosphere. Such a thorough insight into these complex relational issues is a must for teachers, parents, and decision-makers at different levels, as it equips them with the necessary tools to facilitate the healthy spiritual growth of young people, rendering their influence effective, and, in the long term, to the building of a more united and understanding society. The interaction of these various elements points to the multifaceted nature of teenage religiosity against the background of our present-day world being fast and drastically changed.

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