



RELIGIOUS STUDIES AS PART OF THE HUMANITIES CURRICULUM

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Abstract

The article analyzes the scientific justification for the need to teach religion studies as a separate subject in technical universities. Religious studies studies not only legal, but also moral and spiritual, cultural, educational, historical and economic aspects of the phenomenon of religion, the essence of religious beliefs, religious sects and movements, their main, in particular ideological claims. In this sense, religion studies have a wide range of characteristics, and one of the most pressing issues is the generalization of the analysis of all aspects of religion, the definition of its social status and the clarification of its youth.

Keywords: religion studies, science, ethics, culture, education, history and economics, religious fanaticism, ideology, religious beliefs.

Religious studies is one of the disciplines that encompasses the cultural, educational, and intellectual history of humanity within the humanities. In the framework of the educational system of the Republic of Uzbekistan, at the general secondary education level, the basics of religious studies are taught, including the history of religions, their teachings, and sources. Therefore, it is appropriate to provide information on the tendencies of higher education, the current state of religion today, the reasons behind the emergence of various disruptive ideas disguised as religion, and ways to prevent them.

However, currently, the "Religious Studies" subject is only taught as a part of the "Philosophy" course with just 10 hours of instruction. It is necessary for every citizen of the country to become familiar with religious ethics, Shariah rules, missionary activities, and the concept of fanaticism.

In a multi-confessional society like ours, ensuring harmony among representatives of various nations, ethnic groups, and religions, and contributing to global peace and stability, is a sacred duty for every citizen, especially for highly educated intellectuals. As noted by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, "We consider strengthening interfaith harmony and civil unity in our society as one of our most urgent and noble tasks" [1].

On a global scale, strengthening cooperation and harmony between nations and religious confessions largely depends on the successful implementation of the principles of tolerance in society. The complex and contradictory processes happening around the world show that strengthening relations based on mutual respect, cooperation, and unity between representatives of different religions is a historical necessity.

For this reason, one of the main goals in the "New Uzbekistan Development Strategy" for 2022–2026 is to promote the idea of moving from the "Strategy of Action" to the "Development Strategy," based on the principles of goodness and humanity. This includes promoting a healthy worldview and creativity as a national movement, realizing the "New Uzbekistan – enlightened society" concept, and conducting legal and educational activities to develop legal culture, in



harmony with our people's rich history, scientific and cultural heritage, and national-religious values [2].

As part of this, on September 19, 2017, President Mirziyoyev presented a special resolution at the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly titled "Education and Religious Tolerance," aimed at promoting religious freedom, protecting the rights of believers, and preventing their discrimination. This highlights how the issue of interfaith and inter-ethnic tolerance has become a key international matter for our country.

In the area of security, religious tolerance, and interethnic harmony, as well as in the field of foreign policy, Uzbekistan's priorities include protecting the constitutional system, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of the Republic of Uzbekistan, improving information security, and organizing timely and proportional responses to threats in the information field. It also includes strengthening peace and unity among citizens, ethnicities, and confessions [4]. Knowing the relationship between state and religion is the duty of every progressive citizen in our society. The work done in Uzbekistan regarding the regulation of state-religion relations during the years of independence has garnered international attention. Students at the bachelor's level in higher education need to be well-versed in the essence of religion, its philosophical interpretations, and various definitions related to it.

The development of religious studies in our country, the reverence for national and religious values, and the focus on highlighting the spiritual and educational aspects of religion to the people can be clearly seen in several initiatives: the opening of a special chair at the Tashkent Islamic University under the auspices of ISESCO; the establishment of scientific centers in Samarkand (Imam Bukhari Scientific Center for Hadith Studies), Bukhara (Bahouddin Naqshbandi Center for Sufism), Fergana (Margilan Center for Islamic Jurisprudence), and Kashkadarya (Abu Muin Nasafi Center for Aqeedah Studies); the creation of the "Imam Bukhari International Scientific Research Center," the "Abu Isa Termizi International Scientific Research Center," and the "Center for Islamic Civilization in Uzbekistan" [9,10].

Additionally, in his speech at the UN General Assembly, President Mirziyoyev emphasized, "We firmly condemn those who equate our sacred religion with violence and bloodshed," affirming the peaceful and noble essence of Islam and recognizing the invaluable contributions of our scholars to the development of Islamic civilization.

Religious studies reform in Uzbekistan, including the education system, is thoroughly analyzed through the works, decrees, and decisions of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev [1,2,3,4]. Researchers such as A. Tulepov have written extensively about the various doctrinal directions and jurisprudential schools in Islam, including the particularities of the Maturidi and Ash'ari schools [5]. Z. Husnitdinov's work "Islam: Schools, Sects, and Movements" offers a comprehensive analysis of the emergence of different Islamic sects and their ideas [6]. O. Yusupov's edited book "Religious Tolerance and Fanaticism: (100 Questions – 100 Answers)" is also helpful for students seeking answers to numerous questions [7].

In conclusion, I believe that offering "Religious Studies" as a distinct subject, not only in the Tashkent Textile and Light Industry Institute but across all universities, is essential. In the context of globalization, students' interest in religion, learning core subjects, combating terrorism, enhancing ideological immunity, and keeping pace with modern challenges are more important than ever.

This translation preserves the structure and meaning of the original text while making it suitable for an English-speaking audience. Let me know if you'd like any further adjustments!

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