
FEATURES OF MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES IN KAZAKHSTAN SOCIAL RESEARCH RESULTS

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Abstract

The paper describes the missionary activities in Kazakhstan. The authors share their own opinions while analysing the work of missionary organizations. The paper is based on the research results in the form of surveys. The goal of the study is to discover Kazakhstan citizens' perspectives of missionary activities and to evaluate the impact of missionary organizations on society. Now missionary activities show a rising intensity, and different religious communities are spreading throughout the world. Various religious bodies attract people through their methods. The power of influence of the religion in society depends on its propagation. That's why it's necessary to conduct studies on determining the religious situation. The impact of missionary work on the forming of the religious awareness in society, and the features of missionary activity of current traditional and non-traditional religions are the framework for the urgency of the paper.

Keywords: missionary work, missionary, Kazakhstan, identity, religious organization

1. Introduction

Religion plays important role in the life of man and society. It was one of the factors affecting the worldview and lifestyle of the man and of the whole society throughout the development of human civilization. Belief in supernatural powers, worship of gods and idols, compliance with the norms and principles lie at the heart of all religions. Moreover, each of religions tries to spread its own truth, and for this they conduct missionary works.

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Major world religions are known to be spread by missionary activity while being established. According to the international statistical offices, of world population, 32% are Christians, 22% are Muslims and 6% are Buddhists [*Numbers of Adherents of Major Religions, Their Geographical Distribution, Date Founded, and Sacred Texts*, 2015, retrieved March 31, 2017, from www.religioustolerance.org/worldrel.htm]. So, a question may arise: what religions refer to missionary religions? The term 'missionary' derives from Christianity [1]. But Islam calls spreading one's own belief as 'Dawah' and does not prefer to be considered as a missionary religion [M. Hasan, *Islam Should Not Be Missionary*, July 2, 2010, retrieved March 30, 2017, from <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/belief/2010/jul/02/religion-islam-missionary-conversion>]. However, now Islam is frequently mentioned as a missionary religion. Famous religious scholar and linguist Max Muller divided religions, in his lectures at Westminster Abbey on December 3, 1873, into two categories as missionary and non-missionary. M. Muller initially attributed Buddhism, Christianity and Islam to the first category, and Zoroastrianism, Hinduism and Judaism were categorized as the second one [2]. That's why we will make analysis through the paper while agreeing with the fact that Islam is a missionary religion.

Now various religious organizations and groups are becoming more and more active in missionary activity and propaganda. That is especially the case in former Soviet countries, including Kazakhstan. Plenty of new religious streams emerged in the past twenty five years. The so-called 'new' trends are actually not new, but came to Kazakhstan only recently and considered to be new for us. New trends use some methods to increase the number of followers. For example, free language courses, seminars, trainings, charities and church services in Kazakh. In addition to the above-mentioned methods, religious organizations use radio, television, the Internet and social networks in their missionary activities. International missionary organizations pay increasingly greater attention to the use of telecommunication satellite technologies and global computer networks. They also establish schools, organize foreign language courses and various business seminars, found churches, translate religious books into local languages. They send students to study in foreign countries or invite foreign teachers to teach the youth. They help financially, provide support in difficult situations. And this, ultimately promotes the spread of religious movements. As a result, some events of religious nature involving so-called religious organizations and groups took place in our country [3].

There are traditional religions in Kazakhstan as Islam and Christianity with new beliefs. In the preamble to the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan 'On Religious Activities and Religious Associations' adopted in 2011, it is said that the Hanafi school of Islam and Orthodoxy Christianity have a recognized historical role in folk cultural development and spiritual life, and Kazakhstan respects other denominations that are in harmony with the spiritual legacy of Kazakhstan people, and understands the importance of **interfaith harmony, religious tolerance** and deference to the religious beliefs of citizens [*The Law of*

the Republic of Kazakhstan No.483-IV 'On Religious Activities and Religious Associations', 2011, retrieved March 24, 2017, from <http://adilet.zan.kz/eng/docs/Z110000483>]. At the same time, it emphasizes the need to control and sometimes restrict the foreign and non-traditional religious organizations and communities which may threaten our national security. For this reason, we assume that the study of missionary activities, the concept of missionary, its occurrence and development, attracting methods and technologies will become important in the process of the religious identification of Kazakh society. Religious conflicts lead to the need of reconsidering and studying the religion problems. Therefore, the considered problem of missionary activities by religious organizations in Kazakhstan defines the relevance of the paper. This study is based on the survey conducted for Kazakhstan citizens (N = 1000). Also through this survey we tried to find out the views and attitude of Kazakhstan citizens to missionaries, missionary activities and religion in general.

2. Background

The Republic of Kazakhstan started the way of secular and democratic state after gaining the independence in 1991. It glorified the civil rights and freedom and took care not to limit the freedom of conscience and religious belief. It was proven by the Law 'On Freedom of Religious Belief and Religious Associations'. That kind of freedom led to the increasing number of various religious organizations. For example, 4551 religious communities were registered in our country from 1991 to 2011. Then according to the above law, all religious organizations were to be reregistered at central or local authorities until the October of 2012. In October, 2012, the number of registered religious offices fell from 46 to 17, and religious civil groups decreased from 4551 to 3088. From 2014 to date, the number of religious denominations reached 18. Table 1 shows the quantity of religious denominations and communities registered in the period of 2011-2016.

As we see, after the reregistering of religious communities in 2012, their number is increasing. This tendency is particularly noticeable in 2016.

The Ministry for Religious Affairs and Civil Society was established on the 13th of September of 2016 by the order of the Republic of Kazakhstan as a consequence of the deteriorating religious situation. The new ministry was obliged to protect the civil rights in religion freedom, work with non-governmental sector and youth, and realize the youth policy [V *Kazakhstan* *sozdano Ministerstvo po delam religii i grazhdanskogo obshchestva*, September 14, 2016, retrieved February 24, 2017, from <http://www.kursiv.kz/news/vlast/v-kazakhstan-sozdano-ministerstvo-po-dela-religij-i-grazhdanskogo-obshestva/>]. According to the new ministry, the religious life situation can be evaluated as stable. Today, 3658 religious entities with legal registration act in Kazakhstan; they refer to 18 religious denominations that are considered appropriate to the religious needs of society. Most of them are Islamic religious entities: 2551. Orthodoxy constitutes the 331 religious communities, and Roman Catholic

Church has 85 religious communities. The number of Protestant communities among religious denominations in Kazakhstan is over 600. There are also 7 Jewish, 2 Buddhist and 18 non-traditional religious communities ('Mormon', 'Krishna', 'Baha'i', 'Moon Church') [Ministry for Religious Affairs and Civil Society of the Republic of Kazakhstan, *Din salası* (ReligionSphere), retrieved March 25, 2017, from http://www.din.gov.kz/kaz/deyatelnost/religioznaya_sfera/].

Table 1. The number of religious denominations and religious associations in the Republic of Kazakhstan [Committee for Religious Affairs of the Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Religious Associations Registered in the Republic of Kazakhstan, http://www.din.gov.kz/rus/religioznye_obedineniya/?cid=0&rid=1491].

No.	Religious denominations	As of January 1, 2011	As of October 25, 2012	As of January 1, 2014	As of August 10, 2016
1.	Islam	2811	2229	2367	2517
2.	Orthodoxy	304	280	293	329
3.	Pentecostals	400	189	230	217
4.	Evangelical Christian Baptists	364	100	185	181
5.	Catholics	118	79	84	84
6.	Jehovah's witnesses	70	59	60	60
7.	Presbyterians	229	55	92	108
8.	Seventh Day Adventist	67	42	42	42
9.	Evangelic-Lutheran Church	32	13	13	14
10.	Methodists	18	11	12	13
11.	New Apostolic Church	47	8	25	26
12.	Society for Krishna Consciousness	14	8	9	8
13.	Baha'i	20	6	6	6
14.	Judaism	26	4	7	7
15.	Buddhism	4	2	2	2
16.	The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons)	1	2	2	2
17.	Mennonites	6	1	4	4
18.	Unification Church (Moonies)	-	-	1	1
	Total	4551	3088	3434	3621

During our study, we tried to find answers to the questions as ‘How many missionaries are there in our country?’, ‘What are the legitimate requirements to conducting missionary work?’, ‘What do Kazakhstan citizens know about missionary activity?’ and ‘Should the government control missionary activities?’ We first paid attention to the requirements to conducting the missionary work.

Table 2. Number of missionaries in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

No.	Religious denominations	As of January 1, 2011	As of October 25, 2012	As of December 28, 2014	As of December 28, 2016
1.	Islam	6	8	5	12
2.	Orthodoxy Christianity	42	70	55	76
3.	Pentecostals	-	10	16	33
4.	Evangelical Christian Baptists	-	11	11	15
5.	Catholics	142	209	217	243
6.	Jehovah’s Witnesses	-	-	2	5
7.	Presbyterians	-	17	16	22
8.	Seventh Day Adventist	-	11	11	14
9.	Evangelic-Lutheran Church	-	3	-	2
10.	Methodists	-	-	1	-
11.	New Apostolic Church	-	26	16	40
12.	Society for Krishna Consciousness	-	3	6	19
13.	Baha’i	-	-	-	-
14.	Judaism	-	-	1	-
15.	Buddhism	1	1		2
16.	The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons)	-	10	30	28
17.	Mennonites	-	-	-	-
18.	Unification Church (Moonies)	-	-	-	-
	Total	255	379	387	511

Note: In 2011, 64 missionaries acted on behalf of Protestant religious organizations [<http://www.din.gov.kz/rus/index.php>].

The requirements to missionary activities conducted in the territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan are specified in Article 8 of the Law ‘On Religious Activity and Religious Associations’: “The citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan, foreigners and stateless persons may carry out missionary works after registering the missionary activities” [<http://adilet.zan.kz/eng/docs/Z1100000483>]. They should meet the requirements to register as a missionary; new law also obliges them to reregister annually. Their religious literature and materials are screened by theologians before they can be shared. The missionaries who failed the theological analyses and may potentially harm the constitutional structure of Kazakhstan, public order, human rights, freedom and

health are forbidden to be registered. They cannot conduct missionary works in the territory of Kazakhstan. The state does not interfere in the activities of religious associations if the activities of religious associations do not contradict the laws of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Therefore, the state does not apply any criteria for determining acceptable missionary methods. Propagating the religion a missionary is primarily guided by the charter of the organization where he/she works. In turn, the charter of the organization undergoes religious expert review when registering a religious association. In addition, a missionary in his/her activities uses religious materials and literature that also undergo religious expert review. Religious expert review is conducted in accordance with the rules for religious expert review [On Approval of the Rules for Conducting Religious Expert Review, Order of the Minister of Culture and Sports of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated December 30, 2014, No. 162, 2015, No. 10184, retrieved July 13, 2017, from https://tengrinews.kz/zakon/pravitelstvo_respubliki_kazahstan_premier_ministr_rk/kultupa/id-V1400010184/]. The expert opinion is advisory in nature.

Lenient conditions of the Law of 1992 caused the rise of many missionary services in society. According to the Ministry for Religious Affairs and Civil Society, as of January 1, 2011 there were 255 missionaries registered in Kazakhstan: 6 Islam, 46 Orthodoxy, 142 Catholic, 64 Protestant and 1 Buddhist missionary. And after the Law for Religious Affairs ‘On Religious Activity and Religious Associations’ was adopted in October 2011, the number of registered missionaries reached 379. The trends in the number of registered missionaries are given in Table 2.

At the time of writing this paper, the number of missionaries has changed, and the website of the Ministry for Religious Affairs and Civil Society showed the 531 missionaries registered, and most of them are Catholic Church members (257), and 84 missionaries refer to Orthodoxy [Ministry for Religious Affairs and Civil Society of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Committee for Religious Affairs, Letter No. 15-03-19/2378, December 29, 2016, retrieved April 5, 2017, from <http://www.din.gov.kz/rus/index.php>].

3. Methods

This study was conducted within the thesis work called ‘Missionary Work in Kazakhstan: Past and Present’ (theological analysis). The goal of the study was to discover the opinions of Kazakhstan citizens on missionary activities of religious organizations and their methods.

The survey was held in May, 2015 (N = 1000) and used random sampling. The survey population were individuals aged from 15 to 50 years, and all participants were the citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan consisting of different ethnic groups; 45.9% of them were men, and 54.1% were women. The survey consisted of open (semi-open) questions. Respondents were correlated by their sex, age, ethnicity, and place of residence. Table 3 shows the social and demographic characteristics of respondents.

Other ethnicities living in Kazakhstan called as ‘Others’ in the given table make up 9.0%. This shows the representativeness of the general population of ethnic groups residing in the territory of the country (according to the Statistics Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kazakhs make up 66.48%, Russians constitute 20.61%, other ethnic groups: Uzbeks, Ukrainians, Uighurs, Germans, Koreans, Tatars 12.91%) [Committee on Statistics of the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, The Population of the Republic of Kazakhstan for Individual Ethnicities as for the Beginning of 2016, 2016, retrieved February 28, 2017, from stat.gov.kz/getImage?id=ESTAT118979].

Table 3. Social and demographic characteristics.

Social and demographic characteristics	Feature	Percentage
Sex	Men	45.9
	Women	54.1
Age	15-25	41.2
	26-35	31.1
	36-50	19.5
	50 and above	8.2
Ethnicity	Kazakh	79.2
	Russian	11.8
	Others	9.0
Region of residence: Locality	City	58.4
	Village	29.9
	Town	11.7

4. Results

Respondents were asked at what age their religious views were established in order to find out the period when their attitude to religion formed. Most of respondents gave the time between 12 and 18 years. Figure 1 displays the replies orders.

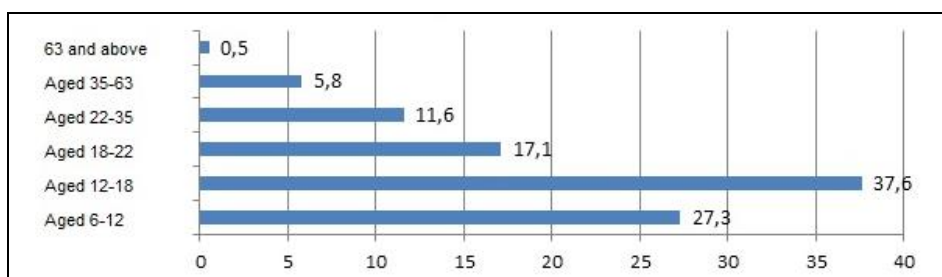


Figure 1. The age when attitude to religion formed (%).

To the question ‘What influenced your attitude to religion?’, 52.7% of men and 55.6% of women answered ‘parents, family traditions’. When analysing their age, we see that ‘parents, family traditions’ answer was given by 59.7% of

respondents aged 15-25 years, 54.7% of respondents aged 26-35 years, 47.2% of respondents aged 36-50 years, and 42.7% of respondents aged 50 and above. We should note that there were other answers too. For example, mass media and books, mosque, own choice, current situation in the world (Table 4).

Table 4. What influenced your attitude to religion?

	Gender (%)		Age (%)			
	Men	Women	15-25	26-35	36-50	50 and above
Parents, family traditions	52.7	55.6	59.7	54.7	47.2	42.7
My environment: friends, colleagues, neighbors	34.6	30.5	31.3	34.1	33.3	29.3
Spouse	6.1	7.8	3.9	4.5	13.8	15.9
Communication with missionaries	2.8	4.1	2.2	4.2	2.6	9.8
Mass media and books	0.2			0.3		
Mosque	0.2			0.3		
Own choice	0.6		0.2		0.5	
Current situation in the world	0.2				0.5	
No answer	2.4	2.0	2.7	1.6	2.1	2.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

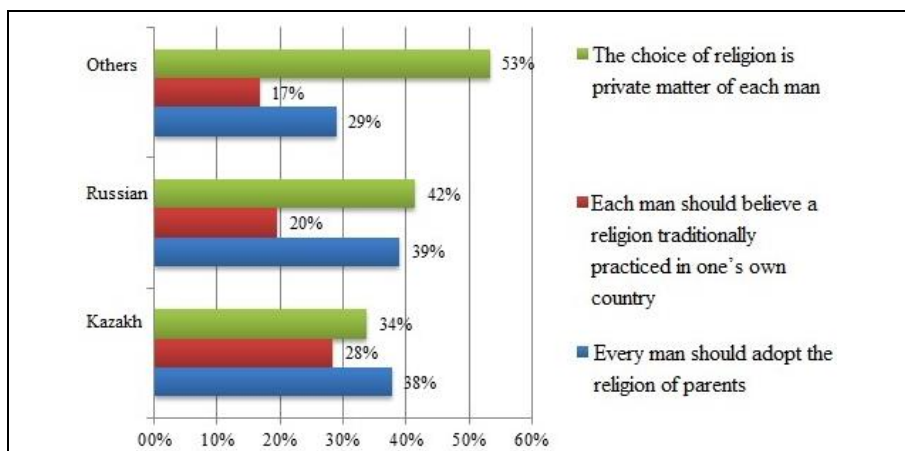


Figure 2. Opinions of representatives of different nationalities on religious identity.

Respondents' answers to the question about religious identity were analysed by their ethnicity groups:

- 38% of Kazakhs, 39% of Russians, and 29% of other ethnic groups answered that every man should adopt the religion of parents;
- 28% of Kazakhs, 20% of Russians, and 17% of other ethnic groups chose the answer 'each man should believe a religion traditionally practiced in one's own country';

- ‘The choice of religion is private matter of each man’ was chosen by 34% of Kazakhs, 42% of Russians, and 53% of other ethnic groups (Figure 2).

The following question was asked to evaluate the religiosity of respondents: ‘Do you consider yourself religious?’. The 43.3% of respondents aged 15-25 years consider themselves as believer, and 40.9% practice religious ceremonies. If to compare with 36-50 age group, 16.2% of them consider themselves as believer, and 20.7% practice religious ceremonies. 8.1% of the group above 50 years are believers, and 6.5% of them practice religious ceremonies. Here we see the high religiosity level among young men. Also it was found that respondents of 36-50 and above 50 age groups still feel the impact of the Soviet ideology.

We tried to find out which religions are practiced by respondents with the following question. There are two traditional denominations in our country: Sunni Islam and Orthodoxy. That’s why Sunni Islam and Orthodoxy were suggested among answers to the question ‘What religion or religious trend member do you consider yourself?’ However, other religion members also had opportunities to pick up their own versions. As for their sex, 75.4% of men and 71.3% of women chose Islam. Orthodoxy was chosen by 10.7% of men and 10.4% of women. 11.5% of men and 11.3% of women answered that they were believers, but didn’t refer themselves to a particular religion. 0.4% of women declared themselves as Buddhists. 2.4% men and 3.7% women refrained from answering. This question was correlated by ethnicity. 84.5% of Kazakhs, 12.7% of Russians and 54.4% of other religion groups chose Islam. Orthodoxy was picked up by 2.5% of Kazakhs, 61.0% of Russians, and 14.4% of other ethnicity groups. The answer ‘I am a believer, but don’t refer myself to particular religion’ was selected by 11.3% of Kazakhs, 19.5% of Russians, and 18.9% of other ethnic groups. 0.3% of Kazakhs and 0.1% of others practice Buddhism. 20.5% of respondents refrained from answering.

Table 5. Reasons of conversion to religion.

	Age (%)			
	15-25	26-35	36-50	50 and above
Parents	53.4	43.7	41.0	29.3
Spiritual search	24.5	27.7	24.1	25.6
Misconception in thoughts	16.5	22.8	25.6	29.3
Unfavourable situation	2.7	4.5	7.2	8.5
Frequent visits to the mosque, listening to the sermon	0.2	-	-	-
No answer	2.7	1.3	1.5	7.3
I don’t know	-	-	0.5	-
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Then we defined the reasons why respondents converted to religion. 53.4% of 15-25 age group, 43.7% of 26-35 age group, 41.0% of 36-50 age group answered ‘parents’. All age groups equally answered as ‘spiritual search’. Table 5 shows that respondents of 15-25 age group frequently visit mosques

and listen to the sermon. Generally, we admit the important role of family as social institute in Kazakhstan society.

Religious identity became an urgent matter in former Soviet Kazakhstan. People replaced the Soviet ideology with religion. One group chose the religion of their parents. Another one did not practice any religion. Others converted to religions different from ancestors' one. For this reason, we asked respondents the following question: 'What do you think is the reason of converting of some people from traditional religions to new ones?' In Table 6, we see that 40.8% of Kazakhs, 39.7% of Russians, and 37.5% of others pointed out missionary activities as the reason. Also 36.9% of respondents selected financial situation. Also there were answers as 'illiteracy', 'every man decides at own discretion', 'interests', and 'human condition'.

Table 6. What do you think is the reason of converting of some people from traditional religions to new ones?

	Ethnicity (%)			Total
	Kazakh	Russian	Others	
Missionary activity	40.8	39.7	37.5	40.4
Financial situation	36.9	36.2	37.5	36.9
Deep knowledge	20.5	21.6	23.9	20.9
New religions suggest the thing that cannot be found in traditional religions	0.4			0.3
Illiteracy	0.6			0.5
Misconception in thoughts, rethinking	0.4			0.3
Every man decides at own discretion	0.1	1.7	1.1	0.4
This is due to the changes of the time and epoch	0.1			0.1
Interests, curiosity		0.9		0.1
Depends on the human condition and who supports at that moment	0.1			0.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

The importance of researching missionary activities is connected with active work of new religious organizations and communities in attracting believers in our country. At the same time, defining the content of missionary work increases the relevance of the research work. While questioning, we asked to choose the most accurate definition of missionary activity in order to know their view on the concept of missionary. The following question was about the impact of missionaries in Kazakhstan on the society, so it was necessary to know the opinion of Kazakhstan people on missionary activity. The answer 'Conversations on religious topics' was chosen by 35.1% of respondents. 'Activities oriented at attracting to religion' answer made up 48.4%. 'Charity by religious organizations' was chosen by 15.4% of respondents. 1.1% of respondents refrained from answering. Respondents stayed within given answers. The percentage of given answers are shown in Table 7.

The religious organizations seamlessly conducted their missionary work before the Law on ‘On Religious Activities and Religious Associations’ (2011). That kind of activity was common to new religious organizations. They tried everything that could to involve more and more followers. Missionary organizations establish free language courses, seminars, trainings, self-improvement centres; and run radio, TV, internet attractive ads additional to methods such as talks about God in streets, spreading religious literature, coming home to conduct religious talks. They spread religious literature in streets and tickets calling to visit them. That’s why we asked ‘Did you have experience of communicating with missionaries, if so then what kind of?’ to define in what circumstances the respondents faced missionary activities. The results are shown in Table 8. The fact that ‘They tried to talk about God outside in streets’ made up 42.8% is due to the active missionary works.

Table 7. Choose from the followings the most accurate definition of missionary activity.

	Valid percentage
Conversations on religious topics	35.1
Activities oriented at attracting to religion	48.4
Charity by religious organizations	15.4
No answer	1.1
Total	100

Table 8. Did you have experience of communicating with missionaries, if so then what kind of?

	Number of respondents	Valid percentage
They tried to talk about God outside in streets	427	42.8
They phoned and came to my home	120	12.0
They offered religious literature	269	27.0
They wrote me on social media	67	6.7
No experience	43	4.3
No answer	72	7.2
Total	998	100.0
Skipped by system	2	
Total	1000	

When asking ‘Do you face any actions of attracting you to religion?’ we wished to evaluate the impact of society on respondents. The respondents were correlated by their age. 68.0% of respondents aged 15-25, 61.4% of respondents aged 26-35, 63.4% of respondents aged 36-50, and 62.2% of respondents aged above 50 said ‘No’. This fact is due to that strange men in streets are regarded with suspicion by respondents. The answer ‘Yes’ made up 19.2%. 15.8% of respondents said that they experienced such situations long ago. 0.3% of respondents refrained from answering. 0.1% of respondents say that their

friends advise to pray namaz. The percentage of this answer is obviously low, but it shows the impact of friends among youth.

We know that mass media, TV, and the Internet play a great role in human life and worldview. The development of social view is especially closely related with mass media. The question ‘Do you feel any pressure by media to form a specific attitude to particular religion?’ was asked to evaluate the impact of mass media as fourth power on respondents’ opinion. Table 9 shows that the answer ‘No’ makes up 64.1% of all answers by all aged respondents.

Table 9. Do you feel any pressure by media to form a specific attitude to particular religion?

	Age (%)				Total
	15-25	26-35	36-50	50 and above	
No, I do not	68.4	61.1	60.0	63.4	64.1
Yes, obviously	20.4	23.5	24.1	18.3	21.9
Not sure	11.2	15.4	15.9	18.3	14.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 10. Missionaries of religious organizations the respondents face more often (by gender and location).

Missionaries of religious organizations	Gender		Locality			Total
	Men	Women	City	Village	Town	
Orthodoxy Christianity	48.0	52.0	52.0	32.2	15.8	100.0
Sunni Islam	43.9	56.1	48.7	38.0	13.3	100.0
Society for Krishna Consciousness	46.1	53.9	65.2	27.8	7.0	100.0
Jehovah’s witnesses	46.7	53.3	67.8	22.9	9.3	100.0
Dawahist (tablighi jamat)*	100.0	0	100.0	0	0	100.0
Wahhabi	100.0	0	0	100.0	0	100.0
Never seen	92.5	7.5	57.5	32.5	10.0	100.0
No answer	30.2	69.8	69.8	19.8	10.3	100.0
Total	45.9	54.1	58.4	29.9	11.7	100.0

* ‘Tablighi Jamat’ organization was found extremist according to order by Saryarka district court of Astana [4].

There are 18 religious denominations in the Republic of Kazakhstan. All of them have missionaries registered to disseminate religion according to the laws of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Missionaries spread own religious beliefs in foreign countries and continents in human history. But not everyone can be permitted for the mission. Every missionary should be a wise and gifted man

who effectively propagates the religion and can address all problems for missionary goals. A missionary needs support (government, religious orders, and various organizations) to realize mission goals. Financial assistance also should not be ignored. Many developed countries are making great contributions. Missionary activities are mostly financed by well-developed countries with imperial ambitions. During our survey, we wanted to know the missionaries that respondents frequently face. The results are given in Table 10. Respondents, as shown in the table, were analysed by their age and location.

The following question helped us to determine the missionary activities intensity. Respondents were asked to characterize the of missionary activities intensity in localities. In Table 11, 60.1% of urban community, 28.3% of villagers and 11.7% of townspeople said ‘active’.

Table 11. Characteristics of missionary activities intensity in localities.

	Locality			Total
	City	Village	Town	
Moderately active	60.1	28.3	11.7	100.0
Very active	52.6	38.8	8.6	100.0
Weak	56.9	28.7	14.4	100.0
Absent	62.4	28.5	9.1	100.0
Not sure	100.0	-	-	100.0
No answer	60.0	20.0	20.0	100.0

Table 12. What is your attitude to foreign religious missionaries acting in your region?

	Ethnicity (%)			Total
	Kazakh	Russian	Others	
Negative	82.3	10.1	7.6	100.0
Neutral. They may spread their own religion	69.9	17.5	12.7	100.0
Positive	69.3	17.3	13.3	100.0
Not seen	90.0	-	10.0	100.0
Positive if the they profess our religion, and negative if they profess another religion	100.0	-	-	100.0
No answer	57.1	14.3	28.6	100.0

We asked a question ‘What will you do, if someone wants to talk about God with you?’ to define the social opinion on foreign missionaries. Table 12 shows the answers ‘Negative’, ‘Neutral’, ‘Positive’, ‘They may spread their own religion’, ‘Never seen foreign missionaries’, ‘Positive if the they profess our religion, and negative if they profess another religion’.

Through the following question, we tried to know the social views on propagating religions by missionaries. When asked ‘what will you do, if someone wants to talk about God with you?’, 16.1% of Kazakhs said that they talked with missionaries, and another 66.1% politely declined, 16.8% reported law enforcement agencies and religious affairs administration about illegal

missionaries, and 1.0% of respondents refused to answer. 28.8% of Russians agreed to talk, and another 42.4% politely declined, 28.8% of respondents reported law enforcement agencies and religious affairs administration about illegal missionaries. As for other ethnic groups, 26.7% of them agreed to talk, 60.0% politely declined, and 13.3% reported authorities.

In spite of secular country that keep government and religion separate, the religion takes a very important place in social life. Religion has great influence on human worldview. We assume that all attracting methods, religious propaganda and content of literatures used by religious organizations must be controlled by government, because religious organizations may use rules conflicting with state politics. This may lead to the disintegration of society. For this reason, the government should keep religious offices under control. It is obvious that believers' rights should be protected while providing national security. While studying a question 'Should the government regulate the missionary activities?' was asked in order to know the respondents' attitude to this problem. Table 13 shows that 62% of them said 'Certainly', 25.8% chose 'More likely than not', 11.2% picked 'No', and 0.6% said that they didn't know. Also there were the ones who gave own opinions or refused to answer.

Table 13. Should government regulate the missionary activities?

	Number of respondents	Valid percentage
Certainly	620	62.0
More likely than not	258	25.8
No, should not	112	11.2
I don't know	6	0.6
I think nontraditional religions should be restricted by government	1	0.1
It depends on religion	1	0.1
No answer	2	0.2
Total	1000	100.0

5. Discussion

This research was held to define the attitude of Kazakhstan citizens to missionary activities and religion in general. However, we could not involve all Kazakhstan citizens. Only 1000 people (N = 1000) took part in our survey. The previous scientific research was held to analyse religious identity [4, 5], religiosity level [6] and religious situation in country [M. Asanbayev, *Sovremennaya religioznaya situatsiya v Kazakhstane: faktory riska i potentsial religioznoj konfliktnosti. Chast 1 (Modern Religious Situation in Kazakhstan: Risk Factors and Potential of Religious Conflict. Part 1)*, 2008, retrieved April 3, 2017, from <http://www.sarap.kz/index.php/kz/pol-ob/religi-i-obshestvo/138-sovremennaya-religioznaya-situatsiya-v-kazakhstane-faktory-riska-i-potentsial-religioznoj-konfliktnosti-chast-1/138-sovremennaya-religioznaya-situatsiya-v-kazakhstane-faktory-riska-i-potentsial-religioznoj-konfliktnosti-chast-1.html>].

We first tried to define the period when respondents' opinion religion formed. Most of them said that it was the period of 12-18 ages during adolescence. These answers are given in Figure 1. The next question was 'What influenced your attitude to religion?' We analysed the respondents' sex and age. Table 4 shows the high level of the answer 'Parents, family traditions' and 'My environment: friends, colleagues, neighbours', and 'Spouse, communication with missionaries, mass media, mosque, own choice, current situation in the world' answers were not so popular. Here we see that parents, family, friends, relatives have a great impact on the life of Kazakhstan people. As for religion affairs, Kazakhstan people place family and relatives very high.

In Figure 2 on religious identity we analysed respondents by ethnicity. We discovered that 38% of Kazakhs thought that every man should adopt the religion of parents, and 42% of Russians and 53% of other ethnicity groups said that choice of religion was private matter of each man.

Here we admit the important role of parents and family for Kazakhs. Respondents' answers were summarized, and the results were as follows: 43% of them thought 'The choice of religion is private matter of each man', and 35.3% selected 'every man should adopt the religion of parents', and 21.6% chose 'each man should believe a religion practiced in one's own country'. It was concluded that respondents were tolerant as for religion choice and recognized others' rights.

There were plenty of questions asked in order to know the respondents' opinion on missionaries and missionary services. One of them was 'The missionaries that you frequently face' and answers 'Sunni Islam', 'Orthodoxy', 'Jehovah's Witnesses', 'Society for Krishna Consciousness', 'Wahhabi', and 'Dawahist' were given. In Table 11, we can see that urban population considers missionary services as 'active' when answering the question on missionary works activity. Villagers and people of small towns answered 'weak' or 'no'. The difference between city and village population is first due to the active participation of urban people (Table 3), and the second reason is that religious organizations are more concentrated in cities.

Most respondents answered 'certainly' to the question 'Should the government regulate the missionary activities?' (Table 13). The conclusion is that respondents think the government should regulate the missionary activities, because society is suspicious of religious propaganda. We cannot say that the study results involve all Kazakhstan people opinion on missionary activities. But we hope it will trigger other similar research in the future.

6. Conclusions

The following conclusions were drawn after analysing the social research on defining the opinion of Kazakhstan citizens on missionary activities:

- Respondents who consider themselves as believers were converted to religion by education within family. The family institute was found to have

important place in human life. Also, most of respondents accept religions under the influence of parents.

- As for the matter of religious identity, respondents agree that each man should confess the religion of ancestors. Nevertheless, respondents agree with that each man should decide at one's own discretion regarding the choice of religion.
- Respondents explain the reason of converting from one religion to another with 'missionary activities', 'financial situation', 'illiteracy', 'interest'.
- Respondents do not feel the pressure by mass media in the matter of religion.
- Respondents negatively treat the religious propaganda and do not prefer talks about God with strangers. They even may report law enforcement authorities about such illegal cases.
- Respondents mostly consider that government should control the missionary activities and believe it must provide protection for civilians.

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