

## SPECIFICITY OF RELIGIOSITY OF STATUS-CONSISTENT AND STATUS-INCONSISTENT YOUTH

## СПЕЦИФІКА РЕЛІГІЙНОСТІ СТАТУСНО КОНСИСТЕНТНОЇ ТА СТАТУСНО НЕКОНСИСТЕНТНОЇ МОЛОДІ

*The article reveals how the status consistency or inconsistency of youth relates to different circumstances that directly or indirectly relate to religious life. It is noted that the modern world is called "post-secular", and therefore religion in it again gains significance, in connection with what everything, that one has to do with determining one's position on various religious phenomena and processes, is relevant for the study. It was emphasized that gender, age, upbringing, ethnicity, region, settlement type, denomination, values and lifestyles were examined as factors affecting religiosity and factors influenced by religiosity, but status consistency and inconsistency had not yet been explored. It has been found that young people with consistent low statuses, young people with consistent high statuses and youth with higher material and lower educational statuses are the most different. Young people with consistent low statuses tend to be more explicit about their attitudes toward God, less likely to read about spirituality and personal growth, less likely to be content with parental education, less likely to have friends with a different religion, more likely to find it more important to coincide with religious beliefs with partner, more likely to consider luck important in finding a job, more likely to see themselves as a "world citizen" and more likely to justify some sins. Young people with consistent high statuses tend to visit "religious services" more often, pray more often, meditate and do yoga more often, read about spirituality and personal growth more often, be more satisfied with different components of life and life in general, have friends with other religions more often, consider luck important in finding a job more often, be discriminated because of their religious views more often, see themselves as "European" more often and be less likely to justify tax fraud. Young people with higher material status and lower educational status are less likely to define God as important in their lives, less likely to believe and to belong to a religion, more likely to be satisfied with their education and their life in general, less likely to have religious parents, more likely to trust the Church and more likely to justify some sins.*

**Key words:** religiosity, religion, faith, status consistency, status inconsistency, youth.

*У статті розкрито те, яким чином статусна консистентність або неконсистентність молоді співвідноситься з різними обставинами, які прямо чи опосередковано стосуються релігійного життя. Відмічено,*

*що сучасний світ називають «постсекулярним», а отже, релігія в ньому знову набуває значущості, у зв'язку із чим актуальним для дослідження виявляється все, що має відношення до визначення своєї позиції щодо різноманітних релігійних явищ та процесів. Підкреслено, що серед факторів, які впливають на релігійність і на які впливає релігійність, були досліджені стать, вік, виховання, етнічність, регіон, тип поселення, конфесія, цінності та стилі життя, але ще не була досліджена статусна консистентність та неконсистентність. Найбільшою мірою різняться між собою молодь із консистентними низькими статусами, молодь із консистентними високими статусами та молодь із вищим матеріальним та нижчим освітнім статусами. Для молоді з консистентними низькими статусами властиво більш чітко визначати свою налаштованість щодо Бога, рідше читати про духовність та особистий розвиток, рідше бути задоволеними батьківським вихованням, рідше мати друзів із іншою релігією, частіше вважати важливим співпадіння релігійних поглядів під час вибору шлюбного партнера, частіше вважати удачу важливою за пошуку роботи, частіше бачити себе «громадянином світу» та частіше виправдовувати деякі гріхи. Для молоді з консистентними високими статусами властиво частіше відвідувати «релігійні сервіси», частіше молитися, частіше медитувати та займатися йогою, частіше читати про духовність та особистий розвиток, частіше бути задоволеними різними складовими частинами життя та життям у цілому, частіше мати друзів із іншою релігією, рідше вважати удачу важливішою за пошук роботи, частіше бути дискримінованими за свої релігійні погляди, частіше бачити себе «європеїцями» та рідше виправдовувати махінації з податками. Для молоді з вищим матеріальним статусом і нижчим освітнім статусом властиво рідше визначати Бога важливим у своєму житті, рідше вірити та рідше належати до якоїсь релігії, частіше бути задоволеними своєю освітою та своїм життям у цілому, рідше мати релігійних батьків, більше довіряти Церкві та частіше виправдовувати деякі гріхи.*

**Ключові слова:** релігійність, релігія, віра, статусна консистентність, статусна неконсистентність, молодь.

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**Formulation of the problem.** Researchers working in the field of the sociology of religion note that, despite secularization, religious communities will remain capable of representing all the social interests of the individual [1]. And even more, the current world is declared as "post-secular", which characterizes the religious revival observed now not only in the Euro-American, but

also in the "third" world... Post-secular means the return of religion to the public space of modern society, which is considered as aggressive-secular, or, at best, as religiously neutral due to the fact that religion has been supplanted from this society" [2, p. 7–9]. This also applies to Ukrainian society, in which religion is turning into a significant factor in national and cultural mobilization

[3, p. 115], and churchiness “acquired features of a socially legitimized and encouraged characterization of a person that reinforces religious behavior and church activity” [4, p. 78], although strong “post-secular sociology” [2, p. 11] not yet observed. At the same time, among the urgent issues that require our fellow citizens to determine their own religious position there is an oligarchic project of world religion [5, p. 269], interfaith projects like the “Temple of all religions” [6], the need to balance between many worldviews [7], atypical for Ukraine religions [8; 9], the transition from one denomination to another [10], religious actions outside churches [11, p. 39], etc. Also important for study is the process of religious conversion and choice, to which scientists try to apply both sociological and economic theories and research methods [8; 10; 12; 13]. In this regard, sociological knowledge is needed that will help to describe and to explain the trends in religious behavior, depending not only on individual basic socio-demographic characteristics, but also on a complex social status.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** If we talk about large representative studies, religiosity in Ukraine fell into the focus of attention of such authoritative companies as Institute Sociology NAS of Ukraine, Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS), Taylor Nelson Sofres Ukraine (TNS in Ukraine) and “New Europe” Center and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung in association with GfK Ukraine [12, p. 9; 14; 15; 16]. Taking into account results of international research project “Region, Nation and Beyond. An Interdisciplinary and Transcultural Reconceptualization of Ukraine” [12, p. 10–14] and results of sociological survey among Ukrainian youth of Zaporizhzhya and Khmelnytsky region [17, p. 48–50], it can be summarized that religiosity was investigated in connection with gender, age, family upbringing, ethnicity, region of residence, type of settlement, denominations, values and lifestyles. However, a possible connection between religiosity and consistency or inconsistency of status positions in Ukraine has not yet become subject of study.

**Formulating the goals of the article.** We are going to find out if there are differences between status-consistent and status-inconsistent youth in their religiosity on the basis of a number of important circumstances, namely: 1) religious affiliation and activity, including faith in general;

2) factors that contribute to and fail to maintain the religion in general and the dominant religion of our society in particular; 3) attitudes towards the different sins.

**The main material.** Firstly, we determined what we meant by low, average and high statuses of youth in terms of education and income based on the data set by “New Europe” Center and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung in association with GfK Ukraine [16]. Low educational status meant that highest completed education level was “no formal education/incompleted primary school” or “primary school” (there were 14,8% all of them). Average educational status meant that highest completed education level was “vocational or technical secondary school” or «secondary school: university-preparatory type» (there were 48,8% all of them). High educational status meant that highest completed education level was “university-level education: bachelor degree or similar”, “university-level education: higher than bachelor degree (MA/MSC degree)” or “doctoral or post-doctoral degree” (there were 36,4% all of them). Low material status meant that young people don’t have enough money for basic bills and food or have enough money for basic bills and food, but not for clothes and shoes (there were 26,2% all of them). Average material status meant that young people have enough money for food, clothes and shoes but not enough for more expensive things – fridge, TV set, etc. (there were 58,3% all of them). And high material status meant that young people can afford to buy some more expensive things but not as expensive as car or a flat or can afford to buy whatever they need for a good living standard (there were 15,5% all of them). Thus, we have identified five categories of youth: 1) status-consistent youth with low educational status and low material status; 2) status-consistent youth with average educational status and average material status; 3) status-consistent youth with high educational status and high material status; 4) status-inconsistent youth with higher educational status and lower material status; 5) status-inconsistent youth with higher material status and lower educational status. In general, the condition of the majority of Ukrainian youth is closer to status inconsistency, in which income is outstripped by education (see Table 1).

There were no significant gender differences between the five categories (see Table 2), but

Table 1

**Status ratios of youth by education and income**

	Low material status	Average material status	High material status
<b>Low educational status, %</b>	24,7	57,3	18
<b>Average educational status, %</b>	33,4	54	12,6
<b>High educational status, %</b>	17,7	64,3	18

generational differences played a significant role. Among youth with consistent low statuses there were 16,2% of generation Y and 83,8% of generation Z; among young people with consistent average statuses there were 79,9% of generation Y and 20,1% of generation Z; among young people with consistent high statuses there were 100% of generation Y and 0% of generation Z; among young people with higher educational status there were 94% of generation Y and 6% of generation Z; among young people with higher material status there were 35,2% of generation Y and 64,8% of generation Z. And this means that in addition to status differences we should take into account those reasons that are associated with age-related characteristics and belonging to a certain generation.

Starting from the first steps of our study, we find a difference that contrasts one of the status-inconsistent categories of youth with all other categories – wealth, significantly separated from education, makes young people forget about God, faith and religion (see Tables 3-5). At the same time, youth with consistent low statuses often express extreme points of view regarding the importance of God in life. Thus, it is confirmed that material comfort, not balanced by knowledge, contributes to concentration on momentary pleasures and further immersion in them without a search for the meaning of life. Also, an extremely poor state due to its extremeness and due to the dominant age of the low statuses' category leads to more intense confidence – either that there is always reason for joy,

Table 2

**Distribution of status-consistent and status-inconsistent youth by gender**

	Men, %	Women, %
<b>In general in the array</b>	48,8	51,2
<b>Consistent low educational and material status, n = 63</b>	51,5	48,5
<b>Consistent average education and material status, n = 461</b>	47,1	52,9
<b>Consistent high educational status and material status, n = 117</b>	45,1	54,9
<b>Inconsistent statuses: educational is higher, n = 817</b>	51,3	48,7
<b>Inconsistent statuses: material is higher, n = 300</b>	48	52

Table 3

**Status and importance of God in life**

Statues	No matter, rather unimportant, %	Medium importance, %	Important, very important, %
Consistent low	16,6	<b>37,1</b>	46,3
Consistent average	11,4	44,6	43,9
Consistent high	10,7	41,8	47,5
Educational is higher	13,6	43,3	43,1
Material is higher	16,3	47,3	<b>36,4</b>

Table 4

**Status and belonging to confession of faith**

Statues	Those who belong, %	Those who do not belong, %
Consistent low	87,7	12,3
Consistent average	89,3	10,7
Consistent high	89,2	10,8
Educational is higher	88,1	11,9
Material is higher	81,8	<b>18,2</b>

Table 5

**Status and belonging to religious denomination**

Statues	Orthodox (Russian/Greek/etc.), %	Other, %	Do not belong to a denomination, %
Consistent low	83,5	4,2	12,3
Consistent average	81,0	8,3	10,7
Consistent high	79,2	10,0	10,8
Educational is higher	79,1	9,0	11,9
Material is higher	73,0	8,8	<b>18,2</b>

or that “there is no God” or “God is unfair” in relation to existing social stratification.

The analysis of religious activity becomes the basis for drawing attention to the difference of new category of youth (see Tables 6-7). It is logical that without a fortress in the faith young people with the highest income and education that does not correspond to it are much less likely to attend the Church. However, contrary to the stereotype that only stupid and / or poor people need the Church, young people with consistent high statuses are most active. The only grievous detail in this case is that high-status youth are more often more active in relation to such religious practices that are not combined with the dominant religion of our society. Low-status youth differs from the rest in fact that they are less interested in acquiring bookish general knowledge about spiritual formation, which may be due to the inaccessibility of the opportunity to purchase appropriate books, and in fact that praying activity in this category of youth is often average, as in high-status youth' category.

In connection with the status consistency we will check one more hypothesis, which is based on the popular stereotype: more religiously active people are less satisfied with life, therefore they seek solace in religion. And this hypothesis does not stand the test – the young people with consistent high statuses who, as we recall, are the most active in religious life, are also the most satisfied with various aspects of their lives (see Table 8).

Now let's look at the factors that, according to our assumptions, affect religiosity: attitude to parenting, having friends with another religion, relying on luck [18] in finding a job, attitude to religion as a criterion for choosing a marriage partner, experiencing discrimination because of religions, religiosity of parents and trust in the Church. As can be seen from Table 9, not the status-consistent youth in relation to the status-inconsistent youth has the greatest differences, but two separate categories of the status-consistent youth and one separate category of the status-inconsistent youth in relation to all the rest. If we accept the basic principles of the dominant religion of our

Table 6

**Status and attending religious services apart from weddings and funerals**

Statures	Practically never, less than once a year, %	About once a year, only on special holy days, %	About once a month, about once a week, more than once a week, %
Consistent low	20,5	61,5	18
Consistent average	22,3	57,5	20,2
Consistent high	21,3	51,7	<b>27,1</b>
Educational is higher	22,9	58,9	18,2
Material is higher	<b>32,7</b>	48,7	18,6

Table 7

**Status and involvement in religious activities**

Statures	Never, rarely, %	Sometimes, %	Often, very often, %
<b>Praying</b>			
Consistent low	73,3	<b>17,5</b>	<b>9,2</b>
Consistent average	72	13,2	14,8
Consistent high	62,4	<b>20,7</b>	16,9
Educational is higher	71,1	14,9	14
Material is higher	72,2	12,6	15,2
<b>Meditating, practicing yoga or something similar</b>			
Consistent low	95,3	2,8	1,9
Consistent average	92	4,5	3,5
Consistent high	82,2	<b>10,4</b>	<b>7,3</b>
Educational is higher	92,8	4,4	2,8
Material is higher	89,6	5,9	4,5
<b>Reading about spirituality and personal growth</b>			
Consistent low	90,6	7,7	<b>1,8</b>
Consistent average	85,7	10,0	4,4
Consistent high	76,3	<b>16</b>	<b>7,7</b>
Educational is higher	87,4	8,3	4,3
Material is higher	83,1	12,6	4,4

society, we can argue that: 1) among young people with consistent low statuses the positive feature is a more frequent desire for religious homogeneity in the family and among friends; 2) positive traits in young people with consistent high statuses are a rarer recognition of the role of luck in job search and a more prominent religiosity, which is why they are more likely to experience discrimination on this basis; 3) among young people with higher material status the positive feature is a more frequent high trust in the Church.

One of the undesirable factors from the point of view of Orthodoxy is also the self-identification of young people with the whole world, since this can mean an increased risk of loyalty to interfaith initiatives and global government, and, besides this, self-identification with Europe, because it implies more often Catholic and Protestant than the Orthodox order of things. As can be seen from Table 10, the greatest risk of this circumstance falls on the status-consistent youth.

A curious situation develops with the justification of some of the possible sins – among those who are most often on the loyal side these are young people with consistent low statuses and young people with higher material status, and in half of the cases these two categories of young people coincide in much more willingness to always or almost always justify sin (see Table 11). It is appropriate to recall that both of these categories of youth belong to generation Z, which means that most likely we are observing the moral of the new generation, divided by only a few specifications: those who live in better conditions more often justify homosexuality because it is a social disease of “rich and saturated” [19], and those who live in worse conditions are less likely to justify bribes, because they will not be able to give them on their own if the need arises, and more often justify abortions, because they more often face the causes and consequences of unwanted pregnancy.

Table 8

**Status and satisfaction with various components of life and life in general**

<b>Statuses</b>	<b>Missing and low, %</b>	<b>Average, %</b>	<b>High and very high, %</b>
<b><i>With your family life</i></b>			
Consistent low	4,7	16,6	78,8
Consistent average	5,9	12,5	81,6
Consistent high	0,0	8,3	<b>91,7</b>
Educational is higher	2,3	16,9	80,7
Material is higher	5,4	13,5	81,1
<b><i>With your circle of friends</i></b>			
Consistent low	3,8	13,3	82,9
Consistent average	2,7	11,9	85,4
Consistent high	2,8	8,6	<b>88,6</b>
Educational is higher	2,5	14,7	82,9
Material is higher	2,1	10,4	<b>87,5</b>
<b><i>With your education</i></b>			
Consistent low	<b>11,6</b>	22,1	66,3
Consistent average	5,2	26,4	68,4
Consistent high	3,5	15,7	<b>80,8</b>
Educational is higher	3,4	21,6	<b>75</b>
Material is higher	4	23,7	<b>72,3</b>
<b><i>With your job, if relevant</i></b>			
Consistent low	<b>12,1</b>	27,7	60,1
Consistent average	6,6	25,8	67,6
Consistent high	3,2	14,4	<b>82,4</b>
Educational is higher	7,4	21,8	70,8
Material is higher	4	24,2	71,9
<b><i>With your life in general</i></b>			
Consistent low	2,8	21,4	75,8
Consistent average	2,4	16,6	81
Consistent high	0,8	13,2	<b>86</b>
Educational is higher	2,6	15,4	82
Material is higher	1,1	11,3	87,6

Table 9

**Status and factors influencing religiosity**

<b><i>“Would you raise your children like your parents raised you, or would you do it differently?”</i></b>			
<b>Statures</b>	<b>Totally differently, differently, %</b>	<b>The same, almost the same, %</b>	
Consistent low	<b>33,7</b>	66,3	
Consistent average	23,9	76,1	
Consistent high	25,6	74,4	
Educational is higher	28,5	71,5	
Material is higher	27,2	72,8	
<b><i>“Do you have friends with different religion?”</i></b>			
<b>Statures</b>	<b>Yes, %</b>	<b>No, %</b>	
Consistent low	30,2	<b>69,8</b>	
Consistent average	40,4	59,6	
Consistent high	<b>59,9</b>	40,1	
Educational is higher	41,0	59,0	
Material is higher	47,6	52,4	
<b><i>“In your opinion, how important is luck when it comes to finding a job for a young person in your country?”</i></b>			
<b>Statures</b>	<b>No matter, rather unimportant, %</b>	<b>Medium importance, %</b>	<b>Important, very important, %</b>
Consistent low	2,5	10,6	<b>86,9</b>
Consistent average	6,7	17,6	75,7
Consistent high	10,9	27,3	<b>61,8</b>
Educational is higher	6,9	15,4	77,7
Material is higher	11,1	18,4	70,5
<b><i>“How important, in your opinion, are religious beliefs for choosing a marriage partner?”</i></b>			
<b>Statures</b>	<b>No matter, rather unimportant, %</b>	<b>Medium importance, %</b>	<b>Important, very important, %</b>
Consistent low	28,5	14,6	<b>56,9</b>
Consistent average	39,4	26,9	33,7
Consistent high	38,0	30,5	31,5
Educational is higher	35,1	26,0	38,9
Material is higher	42,1	25,6	32,3
<b><i>“Have you ever experienced discrimination because of religious beliefs?”</i></b>			
<b>Statures</b>	<b>Never, %</b>	<b>Sometimes, %</b>	<b>Often, %</b>
Consistent low	92,8	5,8	1,4
Consistent average	93,8	5,4	0,8
Consistent high	87,1	<b>9,4</b>	<b>3,5</b>
Educational is higher	96,4	3,2	0,4
Material is higher	92,1	5,0	2,9
<b><i>“How religious would you say are your parents?”</i></b>			
<b>Statures</b>	<b>Not religious at all, predominately not religious, %</b>	<b>Moderately religious, %</b>	<b>Predominately religious, very religious, %</b>
Consistent low	20,1	53,5	25,4
Consistent average	22,3	57,8	19,9
Consistent high	28,7	<b>47,2</b>	24,1
Educational is higher	22,3	55,7	22
Material is higher	30,5	53,9	<b>15,7</b>
<b><i>“How far do you trust Church, religious institutions?”</i></b>			
<b>Statures</b>	<b>Missing and low, %</b>	<b>Average, %</b>	<b>High and very high, %</b>
Consistent low	28,2	29,9	41,9
Consistent average	31,9	34,5	33,6
Consistent high	35,2	23,2	41,6
Educational is higher	35,3	31,4	33,3
Material is higher	28,8	24,7	46,5

Table 10

## Status and self-identification

Statures	Missing and low, %	Average, %	High and very high, %
<b>Ukrainian</b>			
Consistent low	1,6	11,3	87,1
Consistent average	4,8	7,1	88,1
Consistent high	4,6	7,2	88,2
Educational is higher	4,7	11,1	<b>84,2</b>
Material is higher	4,2	5,9	89,9
<b>European</b>			
Consistent low	27,4	17,3	55,2
Consistent average	20,7	26,1	53,2
Consistent high	18,0	16,7	<b>65,3</b>
Educational is higher	24,9	22,8	52,3
Material is higher	21,7	20,7	57,6
<b>World citizen</b>			
Consistent low	14,4	17,5	<b>68,1</b>
Consistent average	21,1	21,9	57,0
Consistent high	15,6	23,1	61,3
Educational is higher	22,9	20,7	56,4
Material is higher	18,8	22,7	58,5
<b>Citizen of own region</b>			
Consistent low	1,1	10,6	88,4
Consistent average	1,5	6,6	91,9
Consistent high	1,6	7,9	90,5
Educational is higher	2,5	6,8	90,7
Material is higher	4,1	10,1	<b>85,8</b>
<b>Citizen of own home town</b>			
Consistent low	2,7	6,2	91,1
Consistent average	1,8	5,0	93,2
Consistent high	1,6	4,9	93,5
Educational is higher	2,1	6,0	91,9
Material is higher	2,9	6,8	90,3

Table 11

## Status and justification of sins

Statures	Never, almost never, %	Moderate position, %	Almost always, always, %
<b>Abortion</b>			
Consistent low	43,1	23,2	<b>33,7</b>
Consistent average	43	36	21
Consistent high	48	34,8	17,2
Educational is higher	44,5	40	15,5
Material is higher	39,3	37,3	23,3
<b>Homosexuality</b>			
Consistent low	62	23,3	14,8
Consistent average	64,6	21,2	14,2
Consistent high	58,4	26	15,6
Educational is higher	64,2	23,3	12,5
Material is higher	53,4	24,4	<b>22,2</b>
<b>Cheating on taxes if you have a chance</b>			
Consistent low	50,8	31,6	<b>17,6</b>
Consistent average	44,7	43,8	11,5

Table 11 (continuance)

Consistent high	<b>54,3</b>	35,5	10,2
Educational is higher	49,4	39	11,6
Material is higher	40,3	42,4	<b>17,3</b>
<b>Accepting/giving a bribe</b>			
Consistent low	<b>55,9</b>	32,8	11,2
Consistent average	44,3	<b>46</b>	9,7
Consistent high	51,5	37,6	10,8
Educational is higher	50,1	38,3	11,6
Material is higher	50,4	35,7	13,9
<b>Using connections to find employment</b>			
Consistent low	37,3	35,2	<b>27,5</b>
Consistent average	23,7	55,7	20,6
Consistent high	31,3	51,9	16,8
Educational is higher	28,9	49,1	22
Material is higher	23,4	49	<b>27,6</b>
<b>Using connections to 'get things done' (e.g., in a hospital, at different offices, etc.)</b>			
Consistent low	34,3	37,3	<b>28,4</b>
Consistent average	22,1	53,4	24,5
Consistent high	30,9	47,6	21,4
Educational is higher	27,7	47,3	24,9
Material is higher	24,4	44,5	<b>31,1</b>

**Conclusions.** Thus, status inconsistency affects religiosity, but this is noticeable when material status exceeds educational status, and this inconsistency creates a mainly negative impact in the sense of estrangement from religion and approaching sins. Religiosity also markedly differs among separate categories of status-consistent youth. Young people with consistent low statuses are more inclined to a vestige of paganism (faith in luck) and more often justify sins, but more often they seek to preserve religion in their inner circle. Young people with consistent high statuses are more often inclined to religious practices from different cultural contexts, but it is they who are characterized by the least faith in luck and the highest religious activity.

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