

Analysing the culture of the united arab emirates



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

“ In this research, I will analyze the culture of the United Arab Emirates. I will analyze also aspect of the contemporary U. A. E culture and some challenges that this culture is facing. In this paper, I will give importance on 5 cultural aspects. First, I will discuss the problem of weak identity and heritage collapse. Second, I will discuss social stratification system. Third, I will discuss changes in role of women in the UAE contemporary society. Fourth, I will discuss issues of marriage, and lastly I will discuss family structure in U. A. E.”

“ Historically, gender roles and family relationships in Middle Eastern culture have been very Traditional and steeped in beliefs and customs stemming from Islam. With rapid economic development and modernization, changes may be occurring among younger generation”. (Questa 1). However, UAE society over the last decade, had experienced a number of social problems, but it has shown more problem in the UAE contemporary society. However, the most important example that sociological and cultural theory can help interpreting them are (1) Social stratification system (2) lost of UAE Identity and culture (3) change in the roles of women in UAE society and (4) marriage (5) family structure.

One example of contemporary UAE Society example is social stratification system in UAE society. The UAE or Emirates society consists of two social categories, the UAE National and Foreign immigrants. The UAE nationals are subdivided into four main social classes: (1) The Ruling family, (2) the merchant or business people, (3) the professionals like teachers, engineers are middle class people and (4) Bedouin nomads and pearl divers. On the other hand, the immigrants are also divided into groups. (1) Comes the top

professional like doctors and professor at universities , (2) middle class like school teacher , skilled technicians, and other professional (3) semi skilled laborers who mainly work in construction sites, however , this form of classing system in UAE is changing dramatically to a meritocracy system . A classing system that give importance to personal merits, and achievement rather than inequality in society. This dramatic change is mainly due to the notion that meritocracy system will definitely increase productivity, efficiency and, thus economy becomes better. Social mobility will be common in a meritocracy Society. For example, A Bedouin Nomads, who was mainly classified as a low income group, is now one of the ministers in UAE. This proves that equality and reward based on individual effort had motivated all low income groups to study and learn new skills, so that social mobility could happen. In addition to this , immigrants also benefited and felt of this dramatic change in classing system , they also have been more productive , efficient , and UAE economic success story is the prove of this . As to link this contemporary example of social stratification in UAE society to structural functional approach, we can know that social stratification is a must in the operation of society, and meritocracy system is a must in the success of the operation of society and economy in a country like UAE. Further , a manifest function of meritocracy system is that every level of professional need a different knowledge and skills , so meritocracy system has unrecognized and unintended function , which is the Latin function of social stratification or meritocracy system is that it help people link their performance to reward and not social class categories . Finally, in my point of view, Social Stratification has no dysfunction, because it is common in all

societies around the world, and has to be there for appropriate function of society.

Another example of UAE contemporary society is the lost UAE national identity and lost of culture and heritage. “ American cars and fast-food, British universities, European stores, the fact that it’s not compulsory to learn Arabic in many private schools, and some expatriates are encouraged to live in certain areas. If this is the case, then inevitably, elements of the Dubai’s Arab culture and traditions will be lost”(Gulf News 1). The UAE population structure consist of the following percentage of each foreign nationalities (Asian Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, and Sri Lankiness) account for about 45 percent of the population of the UAE, followed by Arabs (about 33 percent), and Iranians (17 percent). Westerners (Americans and Western Europeans) account for about 5 percent. Jordanians, Palestinians, Egyptians, Iraqis, and Bahrainis are employed throughout the government bureaucracy. As the number of foreigners increases tremendously, making UAE national only 15% percent of the total population, it is worth debating on this phenomenon. (Every culture 1). Multiculturalism and globalization has been encouraged in UAE, and the result is lost of UAE identity. Restaurants, Churches, malls, and all other infrastructure have been designed to accommodate all culture, but not UAE culture. In addition to this, social integration is completely nil; people from every nationality prefer to socialize with their mates from the same nationality, this result in the creation of sub cultures in society. According to Hanna Shaman, a French citizen who lived in UAE has said that this problem was once in French and most Europe country in the industrial revolution, however, government in Germany has forced all

foreigners to learn Dutch in the first 2 years they are in Germany, or residence visa will not be given. Such an action, in my point of view, is a must to be implemented in UAE to solve this issue. As a matter of fact, all post - industrial societies have faced this problem of globalization and multiculturalism. As to link this example of lost of UAE identity and culture to Durkheim theory, as social integration in people of a society is strong, they are likely not commit suicide and die. On the other hand, as member of society strength their social integration, social norm, mores, and culture they are most likely not to commit suicide and live a better life than those, who have less socialization and integration in their society. This theory further illustrates that if social integration in a society is forgotten, the consequences may be hard to the member of that society. As a result of this, I would like government agencies to take this contemporary problem of UAE society in a very serious way. Because as late sheikh Zayed “ said, who don’t know his past is dead for the future”.

A third example of UAE contemporary society is the change in gender roles of men and women in UAE. Although statistics proven that women are performing better in schools, they are still discriminated in work place. In 1990, only 6% of labor force was women, however, in 2000, it has jumped to 42%. This shows that women in UAE society began to given more importance in work place. But the problem is from men side they believe that women should work in a place where there is no mixing with men, however, in 2006; we can see more 50% of women labor force work in a not segregated work place. This shows further that the cultural point of view of women in UAE society has changed. On the other hand according to feminist movement,

working women have double burden in their life. A work at morning, and afternoon being a domestic servant at home. This notion of double burden is spread in UAE, but as matter of fact, most of working women now have an Asian female servant to do the main domestic work at home. As a result, the contemporary UAE society has successfully proven to the world that UAE society is clear from any Social or Gender conflict.

A fourth example of UAE contemporary society is Marriage. marriage in the community of the UAE traditions and values, derived from the customs authentic Arab and Islamic concepts of tolerance was characterized by the marriage in the past and free from the complexities and difficulties that were dictated by social and economic conditions present that made the marriage problem and the dilemma facing young couples and threaten the stability of family and social system. Which is the duty urged by Islam religion, is the highest social relations between spouses and in-laws and strangers also within the same society, it is characterized by the status and sanctity of the private in terms of the nature of the procedures and stages of completion. When held parents intention to marry their son, they look to him for a girl belonging to the family of decent folk who show characteristics of religion and morality and a good reputation and the task of searching for the girl sought rests with the matchmaker or the Prophet, a woman with a mind and thought, tact, have the ability to assess the girl and shown her qualities that the community was still giving special consideration, the ratio of the girl, the beauty, creativity, and religion, Recipes are essential to young people going to get married, and that the reputation of the girl's family and lineage, authenticity, and social status of the father or to his creation of decent and

good behavior are also the qualities you're looking for the groom's family and require the availability

It may not be the matchmaker, a role in the process of the marriage to happen or if the marriage between relatives, the keenness of people formerly on the relative affinity, as his sons married the father of the daughters of his brother, sister or cousins and an increase in family bonding and family cohesion

In the case of the use of katapa, they're a friendly visit to the house of the people of girls, and may you see the girls by surprise because it is difficult to meet the daughter when entering a foreign woman to her family and if I go back matchmaker informed all of the opinions of the people of the groom and the light of that, they make their decision, either to apply for a sermon girl or search for other

In the past, the bride price does not exceed in the desert seven twin whereas in the amount of the dowry when the people of the cities between 40 dirham's, and a hundred dirham's and ensures the bridegroom pay (Alqtuap) and it was money specific pay for a daughter of the clothes and decorations and vary according to the case of the people the physical and social status. Also provides for the groom requirements. At the forefront of the wedding banquet.

The different marriage customs and manifestations when compared to the people of the desert cities and villages in some of the details.

Another example of UAE contemporary society is family structure. Arranged endogamous marriage within the kinship (tribal) units was the preferred pattern in the period, but this pattern has changed somewhat. Individuals now have greater choice, yet many nationals still prefer arranged marriages. Emiratis are strongly discouraged from marrying non nationals, and a young man receives \$19, 000 from the Marriage Fund if he marries a national. As prescribed by Islam, a man is allowed up to four wives, but most men have only one wife.

In UAE the conventional family used to live in extended form of family. But with the development in the economy, this form of family is declining. Recent research found that around 80% of Emirati families live in small family with one or two child (Nuclear). However, due to imbalance population structure in the country. Nuclear families are discouraged and instead government wants their people to have large family with many members. Also, some changes in the role of women as discussed above in this research have changed the role and power of husband in the house. Husband power and authority is declining. In addition to this, due to increase power of women and her responsibly in her work. “ On average, each household employs two live-in domestic servants, usually Asian. In addition to this, Family and tribal connections form the basis of Emirati social structure. The family and tribe are highly influential and play a role in shaping a person’s values and behavior” (every culture 2). In UAE culture, tribe and family play an important role in shaping the behavior and customs of the society. It is believe so because “ It serves to support its members both financially and emotionally and as such, the family comes before anything else and its

honors are protected by doing whatever necessary”(every culture 2).

Furthermore, UAE society and family support kinship too much because many business are run by family members and also same tribe like to live near to each other since they believe that they will support each other.

As a result, I will summaries below the changes that might occur in the UAE family structure in the coming decade:

1) One will see the configuration built for the family the UAE has changed in the future in terms of style, size, number of children, and is this change in the predominance of the pattern of the nuclear family (small) on the extended family, and the direction of family size to the average number, and the direction of families to reduce the number of children.

2) One will occur on the marriage process in the future some of the changes is the disappearance of the traditional methods of marriage and was accompanied, to be replaced by modern methods, with the attendant arrangements.

3) One will occur on the network of social relations within the family group of changes, is to chill the relationship between spouses, and the predominance of selfishness, love of self to the members of one family.

4) changes in roles of women within the family in the UAE society, where the wife will put a lot of roles that go beyond the traditional form in parenting and care of home affairs, and exercise of women within the family and the UAE in the future to participate more in decision-making process within the family.

5) There would be some changes in the functions carried out by the Emirati family in the future, especially those related to emotional and psychological function and reproduction.

6) There would be the format of the Family Values in the UAE society in the future to some changes, especially those relating to the value of cooperation and solidarity and obedience, as well as the system of religious values and ethics, and values of consumption.

7) Family in UAE society will face some social problems, some of them did not know before, such as: saturation of Western values, and the entry of innovative patterns of crime, and some other extension of the old problems, but it will worsen in the future, such as family disputes.

8) One will see the Emirati family in the future escalation to divorce.

These above changes might occur in the near future. If you open the news paper on daily basis you will see that some of these issues are being discussed. I think there shall be some huge reform from government side and also people to minimize these problems. I would prefer government to establish a strategy to face these problems.

In Conclusion, the UAE contemporary society is more likely to face a numbers of social problem and issues due to imbalanced population structure and over speedy construction boom the country is experiencing. As a Solution, government agencies should pay attention to their society and try the limits those issues. In this research paper, I discussed many important aspect of one of the most growing countries in Middle East. I discussed

issues that have relationship to cultural studies in Middle East. First, I spoke about the contemporary UAE culture and discussed some of its problems. In that context, I spoke about the national identity issue; also I spoke about how the western society has affected UAE culture. Further, I spoke about marriage in UAE in the past, and the end I spoke about family structure and how that structure is changing from nuclear to extended family. Finally, I gave some recommendation and changes that might occur in UAE society in the near future.

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