

Elements of Culture and the United Nations

Student's Name

Institution



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### **Part One**

Culture can be defined as the features of a specific group of individuals living at a particular place at a particular time. Culture is everything that concerns that group of people, such as etymology, faith, cuisine, social tendencies, songs and arts, among other things (Andreatta & Ferraro, 2013).

There are seven elements of culture with relation to a society. The seven elements are customs and tradition, religion, language, arts and literature, the types of government, social organization, and the economic systems.

### **Language**

The official language of the United Arabs Emirates, as in all other Arabic countries, is Arabic. The other languages that are widely spoken, apart from the official language, are Hindi, Urdu, Farsi, and Filipino, which is usually spoken by the immigrant population. English is the language that is mainly used for commercial transactions in the country. Farsi is mostly spoken in Dubai, while Urdu is used by the huge populations of Pakistani immigrants living in Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

### **Cuisine**

The traditional food in the UAE is Middle Eastern fare of fuul, falafel, houmos, and shwarma. Soft drinks are available, although alcoholic drinks are only served in bars and restaurants affiliated with big three star hotels or hotels of higher status, and the prices are cheaper in comparison to other parts of the world. Alcohol is, however, not sold at all in Sharjah.

### **Religion**

The religious practices in the UAE are relatively accepting and relaxed, although the country is firmly rooted in Islam. The majority of the Emiratis adhere to the Sunni sect. All matters concerning marriage, divorce, inheritance, governance and individual conduct are influenced by the Sharia law (United Arab Emirates yearbook, 2006).



### **Arts and Literature**

The country sponsors arts and literature by offering financial support to authors, portraitists, performers, and traditional dancers. Sharjah is specifically vigorous in progressing culture and was selected by the UNESCO as the capital of Arab culture in 1998. Poetry and storytelling remains a strong part of the oral tradition. Most official events feature poetry readings. The popularity of written literature is also on a steady increase.

### **Family**

The conservative family unit of the extended family has been diluted, considering that more than 70 per cent of national families exist as nuclear households in their own homes. The government encourages the formation of a large family as a national strategy, and a typical family has between six and eight children. While the authority of a husband is continually being challenged, that of a mother continues to grow as a family manager. The majority of families employ the services of two live-in domestic workers who are usually Asian.

### **Social Classes**

The Emirati culture is separated into two social classes: the citizens and the foreign immigrants, also referred to as the incomers. The nationals are further divided into four key social categories. The first class is the ruling class households, whose members control key political positions and authority and have enormous wealth and privileges. The second subdivision is of business persons who vendor global consumer products. The third class is of increasing middle class who have been schooled freely by the system, while the last subdivision is that of low wage earners.

### **Form of Government**

The UAE has a central government composed of several units: the president and his vice, the Supreme Council, the Cabinet, the Federal National Council, and a self-governing judiciary with a central Supreme Court. The Supreme council wields both judicial and administrative authorities and is comprised of the leaders of the seven states. The Cabinet is made up of ministers selected from the ruling households of the UAE (Spraggon, Bodolica & Palgrave, 2014).



### **Economic System**

The UAE offers some of the highest incomes in the world, given its oil reserves in Abu Dhabi, Dubai, and Sharjah. With declining oil reserves, the government has diversified its investments leading to the emergence of tourism, construction, commerce, transportation, farming, fisheries, and communications. The result has been less dependence on oil reserves.

### **Customs and Traditions**

An Islamic greeting is usually men shaking hands and females kissing each other on the cheeks. Men and women do not shake hands publicly. Refreshments are typically first served before serious discussions start. The citizens refrain from using first names and instead use "father or mother of". It is also customary to take off shoes before entering the house of strangers (Spraggon, Bodolica & Palgrave, 2014).

### **Part Two**

A society can be defined as a group of people, who have common interests and may have unique culture and institutions.

The western society can be referred to as a body of knowledge originating from reason. This basis has made it possible for the accumulation of comprehension associated with realism. Realism is expressed in numerous essential values such as individualism, rights, capitalism, and technology. A society can be regarded as a progressed society considering that its values encourage the growth and maintenance of advanced civilization. Continued development of the Western society led to the discovery of the scientific revolution, the industrial revolution and the modern revolution. Culture has expanded to numerous countries but was predominant in Western Europe and North America. The society is founded on reality and global human nature, thus making it open to several other societies. The culture transcends race and region since some aspects of it originated in different parts of the world (Diamond, 2013).

Both Australia and New Zealand have a distinct combination of customs and influences brought about by the initial inhabitants. Today, it is estimated that approximately 30 per cent of people of the two countries were born abroad. Immigrants have influenced life in the two countries



in significant ways and have similarly been impacted by the tolerant, unofficial and widely democratic society. The cultural diversity of the two countries creates unity allowing them to freely express their culture and take part in the domestic life. The society is egalitarian implying that there are no class divisions, and everyone has the opportunity to prosper. A majority of the populaces reside in urban centres and are true lovers of sports. Though English is the national language, other common languages are Italian, Greek and Mandarin. The countries are mainly Christian though societal diversity allows for other religions (Griswold, 2008).

The South American society has its unique culture, tradition and heritage though it has been significantly influenced by other cultures. The Incan Empire is the most recognized culture though it was greatly impacted by the African culture. The society observes a unique religion that is an integration of traditional beliefs from Africa. The Carnival is an instance of a distinct festival held yearly in the South America drawing many citizens and tourists. Portuguese and Spanish are widely spoken in the regions due to colonization. Marriages between the locals and colonizers led to the emergence of Mestizo, who fought for independence.

Judeo-Christian refers to certain sets of principles and ethics upheld by Judaism and Christianity. The values include free will, which is the ethical responsibility of the person and not of the group, the spiritual importance of being just and acting accordingly, the being of the true ethical ruling in the lessons of Jesus and the prophets from Jerusalem. Together with the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, they form a political and cultural foundation of the founding fathers (Fassbender, 2009).

The term "United Nations" was used for the first time during the Declaration by the United Nations in 1942 when agents from 26 countries guaranteed their administrations to push on the battle against the Axis Powers. The organization was formed with the objective of finding peaceful solutions to conflicts thereby preventing wars and classifying guidelines of the war. The United Nations Charter was drafted and signed by representatives from 50 countries in 1945 and officially became binding on the 24th of October. The United Nations Day is held every year on the 24th of October.



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