

Atheists of UAE

1. Introduction:

Background and problem statement:

Atheists are those who don't believe in God or gods. Recent reports show that only 4% of UAE's population consists of atheists and they are mostly foreigners or foreign expats and only very few local youth. They are very little of the whole population. UAE and Arab have a long history of Islam. Since the start, Islam is the majority religion in the UAE. According to recent data, 67% of the population of UAE is of Muslims. It is a common thinking that Atheists face inequality and it is the issue with UAE government is unable to provide them their expected rights as a citizen. In UAE they are not allowed to apply for some government officer's seats because of being atheists. They are unable to take part in legislation and decision making for the country. Atheists of UAE also consider that they are being mistreated in UAE. Is every atheist considered blasphemous too?

2. Analysis of the Findings from other researchers:

Many researchers and scholars think that many functional benefits are attached to religion (Durkheim, 1912/2001; Marx, 1844; Pals, 2006) evolutionary researchers and theorists consider that adopting a religion may be costly but it comes with many benefits. According to theorists adaptive benefits that are attached to religion include benefits or health. Your spiritual health becomes better with religious activities. (Koenig, 2005). It increases cooperation between people who follows the same religion. (Norenzayan & Shariff, 2008; Wilson,2002) People focus more on avoiding social misdeeds (Johnson & Bering, 2006). As different researchers commented that atheism is just an idea. It is just a result of human psychology and ideas. Atheism got a rise in Europe after the reformation there.

3. Research question/ Hypothesis:

1. Do atheists face inequality in the UAE? Is the UAE government maltreat them because of being atheists?
2. Is every atheist considered blasphemous too?
3. It's better to have a religion. (Hypothesis)
4. Having a religion is beneficial whereas being an atheist is deleterious. (Hypothesis)

UAE allows freedom of religion but they cannot provide atheists full freedom of speech because things can get worse. They can get killed by zealots because of saying something. That's why it is better for their sake. It is necessary for maintaining the country's peace. But except this UAE welcome all sorts of people means everyone who has beliefs or who does not have any.

4. Discussion of Methodology: *

My group mates and I have used two methods one is an online interview. I took this interview with 5 people I used the zoom app for this interview. I asked them the same questions we used in the survey. It was a group live meeting. and the other one is the survey method in which I made a survey which includes 18 questions. Because I was given the task of preparing the survey but we as a group took responses. For the survey method Google.form was used.

The survey incorporates these questions.

1. What is your name?
2. What is your age?
3. What is your nationality?
4. What is your religion?
5. Are you an atheist?
6. Being an atheist do you think people consider it to be one?
7. Being an atheist what do you think of Muslims who believe in one God?

8. Being an atheist what do you think of other religions like Christians and Hinduism?
9. Do you think that being an atheist put your life in danger?
10. As an atheist did you face any harassment?
11. Is government supportive of your belief?
12. Do you think that people create problems for you?
13. Do you think people treat you differently after knowing that you are an atheist?
14. Do you think that you cannot enjoy the rights as Muslims do?
15. Do you think that you cannot enjoy the rights as people of other religions do?
16. What do you think that the government provides you with enough facilities?
17. What major right and facility you think you are being deprived of?
18. How do you know that God does not exist?

We were 6 people in a group. To get the response we further split this group into two sub groups. We took 8 areas. My group went to 4 and the other one went to the other four. Surprisingly the other found that there lived 7 atheists in 4 areas. And my group found 3 of them in the other 4 areas. I found 4 of them and the other group found 6 of them. We got these responses on 3 and 4 December in the morning and noon.

5. Analyze the data: *

The two methods of qualitative research method were being used. It was an online interview and survey. Following are the findings and outcomes of our research.

38 people participated in our survey 10 of them were atheists rest of them were from other religions. 23 of them were Muslims 2 Christian and 1 from Hinduism and two did not care to respond properly. 2, 3 atheists of 10 of them think that those people who believe in God or Gods are being silly. But the rest of them are okay with other religions including Muslims, Christians, and Hinduism. Most of these don't believe in God or Gods because this is the idea they got from their forefathers or some of them consider this idea is absurd. These atheists

think that they are not having a major right that is freedom of speech. Good thing is that these atheists don't feel threatened or harassed by people of other religions around them especially with Muslims which shows that Islam is the religion of tranquility and peace. Those atheists were supportive of our research because as such they can get heard. They thought that their problems can get solved through this research. UAE government supports everyone to practice their religion freely in their synagogues. Muslims can preach to atheists and people from other religions about Islam and God so they might start believing in God but they can not force them to do that. Muslims can become a great example for atheists and non-believers by their behaviors to show why one should believe in God.

6. Discussion:

This research is necessary and can be helpful for further investigation or research. This could be used as a type of starting point or main point for further research and for other researchers. It was necessary to be done to get real information about how the UAE treats Atheists. After this research, my group mates and I came to know that situation is not so bad for the atheists in UAE the way it has been portrayed. This is necessary to remove the misunderstanding and to make things totally better and to give them equal rights as a citizen. This is the duty of the government and the government can be the only one who can deal with this. The government should provide them with all the facilities the way other citizens enjoy. They should have freedom of expression but they should not be allowed to do blasphemy like anyone else in the UAE is allowed. So they will be able to enjoy rights like other citizens and should fulfill their responsibilities. UAE government can use their abilities if they are capable of and meet the expected criteria for government officer's seats. As UAE is a democratic country everybody is allowed to practice whatever religion they have. UAE government does support the idea of freedom of Religion. The theme or technique we have chosen for this method, the qualitative technique is useful. The two methods of online interview and survey give us vast information

about our topic and atheists of the UAE. It helped to understand them. They were helpful too. Because they want to get heard, they want their issues to get heard.

7. Summary/abstract:

Atheists in the UAE comprised only 4% of the total population. They are spread in all the emirates of the country. While UAE has a huge majority of Muslims in its 193 states and 7 emirates. 67% of the population consists of Muslims. As their official religion is Islam. Islam is a tranquil country. Atheists are those people who have no belief, they don't believe in any God, gods, and goddesses. UAE is a welcoming country towards expats even though who they are whether they are Muslims, Christians, Hindus, Jews, and non-believers. There is a total misconception about UAE that they ask a person's religion at the Airport. Which is not true. That's why this research was important to get real information from atheists themselves. The government of UAE is also supportive of their idea not like supportive that they follow this idea but in a way, the government doesn't ask them to leave the country because of being an atheist. My group and I researched this topic using 2 methods of qualitative techniques. 1 is the interview method and another one is a survey method.

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