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**COURSE NAME:**

**BACHELORS IN PSYCHOLOGY**

**Assignment Title:**

**Freedom of Religion and Belief**

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**Introduction**

In article number 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, puts it clearly that we as human beings, we all have the privilege and right to our own set of beliefs, to have a preferred religion, or have no religion at all, or actually to change from one religion to another without prejudice. This is very progressive for UDHR in asserting that believers of all world religions and even secularistic beliefs and notions, should be able to live with peace with their rights solidly guaranteed by their states, and that no state should impose a religion on its people.

**Body of Assignment**

The right to worship, religious grouping and belief systems must never be infringed upon by any state, or group to any person. These issues are personal convictions and people should be allowed to practice as the deem fit. The governments must not control and scuttle any effort by any person to express themselves in any manner they wish religiously, or in belief systems, worship of deity etc.

Everyone has the exclusive right to the freedom of thought, and conscience and religious inclination; this right includes but not limited to freedom to change his own religion or belief system, and the freedom, either while alone or in a community with the others and in private or public, to be able to manifest his religious duties and practice or belief system, either in worship, or teaching practice, or observance of the same. (United Nations, 2012).

Freedom to exhibit one’s religious statutes or belief systems, shall be inherently subjected only to such limitations as may be prescribed by the law and as are necessary in any democratically compliant society in the best interests of the public safety, and for the proper protection of public order, or health or societal morals, or for the sole reason of protection of the rights and freedoms of others. (Mbithi, 2009).

**I am I free to practice religions of my choice?**

Yes. I come from Kenya and Kenya is a country that has a working constitution. The constitution of Kenya does allow people to freely choose their religion of preference, worship freely without harassment or hindrance from the state.

The Kenyan constitution does require the parliament to enact reasonable legislation recognizing a system of

Both personal and family laws that must be adhered to by persons/people professing a certain religion.

The constitution also clearly and specifically does provide for the *qadi* courts to deal with certain types of civil cases that are based on the Islamic law, including but not limited to questions relating to personal status, or marriage, or divorce.

Although we don’t any penal law code projecting on blasphemy, a certain section of the penal code states that any one destroying, or damaging, or even defiling any holy place of worship or any object that is held sacred, with the core intention of insulting/defacing/looking down upon the religion of any group of persons is a

violation. This offense may attract a heavy penalty.

Though it is rarely reported of prosecutions using this law. Any Crime against the church property or infrastructure is considered as malicious destruction of property, and this too is also a grave misdemeanor.

According to the Kenyan law, any new religious grouping, or institutions or even places of worship, or even faith-based non-governmental organizations, commonly known as (NGOs), must register with the Kenyan Registrar of Societies, which in turn reports to the Main Attorney General’s Office. (Kenya Law, 2010).

The Indigenous and local traditional religious groups and sects are not required to do the registration, and many actually do not. To do the registration, the applicants present their valid identification documents, and part with a small fee, and may undergo mandatory security screening.

All the public schools in Kenya have religious education classes taught by the government-funded-teachers. The national curriculum assigns religious classes, and students are not encouraged to opt out. Some of the public schools do offer religious education options, majorly Christian or Islamic studies, but are not required to necessarily offer both. Covid -19 pandemic almost took away the freedom Kenyans enjoyed , when the government banned physical gatherings and night vigils, in both mosques and churches. (Munyao, 2022)

**Would I respect someone else with a different religion apart from mine**

Yes. Very human being is entitled to choosing his/her religion of choice. Discriminating, hating, looking down, prejudice or infringement of this right upon anyone is a misdemeanor. Religion is a personal inner configuration and as such, must be respected.

**How do people choose their religion?**

Religious beliefs and choices proliferate as conscious choices. People choose to follow certain religious inclinations maybe due to peer pressure, family traditions or religious culture, other just follow their inherent innermost aspirations regarding religion and follow through.

**Conclusion**

The current status of religious freedom in Africa do vary from country to country. Some States do differ based on whether or not they clearly guarantee equal treatment under the law for the followers of different religions organizations, and whether they do establish a common state religion, and the extent to which these religious organizations operate within that country are controlled and policed, and the true extent to which its religious law code is used. Kenya is a country known to abide by the constitution, and here we enjoy freedom of worship, one can choose religion as they wish, change into any form without discrimination or harassment by the state organs. Kenyans respect other people who have different religious ideologies from the, the level of tolerance is very high.

**Bibliography**

# Bibliography

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