

CANADIAN CULTURE AND ITS PECULIARITIES

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Abstract. This article explores the unique characteristics of Canadian culture and compares them with the cultural traditions and values of Uzbekistan. It discusses how multiculturalism, individualism, secularism, and social openness define the Canadian way of life. At the same time, it contrasts these aspects with the collectivist, tradition-based, and conservative nature of Uzbek culture. The article also examines cultural taboos, social norms, and communication styles in both societies. Through comparative analysis, the article offers insights into the challenges and opportunities faced by individuals engaging in cross-cultural interactions, especially for students, migrants, and professionals navigating between Canada and Uzbekistan.

Keywords: Canadian culture, Multiculturalism, Individualism, Cultural values, Social norms, taboos, Communication styles, Uzbek culture, Cultural differences, Intercultural communication, Tradition vs. modernity

Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqola Kanadaning o'ziga xos madaniyati va uni O'zbekistonning madaniy qadriyatlari bilan solishtiradi. Maqolada Kanadadagi multikulturalizm, individualizm, dunyoviylik va ijtimoiy ochiqlik kabi jihatlar yoritilib, ular o'zbek jamiyatining kollektivizmga asoslangan, an'anaviy va konservativ tabiatidan qanday farq qilishiga e'tibor qaratilgan. Har ikkala jamiyatda mavjud bo'lgan madaniy tabu, ijtimoiy normalar va muloqot uslublari tahlil qilinadi. Ushbu solishtirma yondashuv orqali, ayniqsa Kanada va O'zbekiston o'rtasida madaniyatlararo aloqada bo'layotgan talabalar, migrantlar va mutaxassislar uchun mavjud imkoniyatlar va muammolar ochib beriladi.

Kalit so'zlar: Kanada madaniyati, Multikulturalizm, Individualizm, Madaniy qadriyatlar, Ijtimoiy me'yorlar, Tabular, Muloqot uslublari, O'zbek madaniyati, Madaniy tafovutlar, Madaniyatlararo muloqot, An'ana va zamonaviylik

Introduction

Culture is one of the most complex and defining features of human societies. It encompasses not only art, music, and literature but also the values, beliefs, social norms, languages, and customs that shape the identity and behavior of a group of people. In an increasingly globalized world, understanding cultural differences is essential for fostering international cooperation, peaceful coexistence, and cross-cultural communication. One particularly interesting comparison lies in exploring the cultural distinctions and similarities between a Western multicultural society like Canada and a more traditional, collectivist society such as Uzbekistan.

Canada, located in North America, is often celebrated as a model of multiculturalism and inclusivity. Since the official adoption of multiculturalism as state policy in 1971, Canada has actively embraced cultural diversity, making it one of the most ethnically and linguistically diverse countries in the world (Government of Canada, 2022). English and French are the two official languages, but over 200 other languages are spoken by its population. This diversity is reflected not only in daily life but also in national policies, education, public services, and civic culture.

Discussion

One of the most distinctive features of Canadian culture is its emphasis on individualism, human rights, gender equality, and social justice. Personal freedom, privacy, and the autonomy of the individual are valued highly in Canadian society. For example, individuals are encouraged to express their opinions openly, live according to their beliefs, and make personal life choices without social pressure. This cultural orientation is evident in social customs, professional interactions, education, and family life.

In contrast, Uzbek culture is deeply rooted in collectivist traditions, with strong influences from Islamic values, Central Asian heritage, and historical customs. Social harmony, respect for elders, family ties, and community well-being are fundamental values that govern much of the social structure. In Uzbekistan, decisions are often made collectively, and individual expression may be moderated by community expectations. Hospitality, modesty, and moral conduct are essential aspects of daily life. Religion also plays a significant role in shaping ethical norms and gender roles in Uzbek society, which differs significantly from the more secular and liberal orientation found in Canada.

These cultural differences offer fertile ground for comparative analysis. For instance, the concept of personal space is treated very differently in both societies. In Canada, people generally maintain physical distance and value personal boundaries, while in Uzbekistan, close physical proximity during conversations is common and interpreted as a sign of warmth and trust. Similarly, in Canadian culture, direct communication is appreciated, and people are taught to express disagreement or criticism respectfully but openly. Meanwhile, in Uzbek culture, indirect communication and conflict avoidance are often preferred to preserve harmony and respect.

Taboos—actions or topics that are considered inappropriate or offensive—also vary significantly between the two cultures. In Canada, for example, it is taboo to make discriminatory remarks based on race, gender, or religion. Discussions about salary, personal wealth, or private life are often seen as intrusive. Conversely, in Uzbekistan, while social and religious taboos exist, topics such as marriage plans, family size, or age may be discussed more openly. Moreover, gender roles and expectations can lead to different social restrictions for men and women, especially in rural areas.

Understanding these nuances is crucial for intercultural communication, especially in an era when increasing numbers of students, professionals, and families are relocating across borders. Canada remains a popular destination for international students and immigrants, including those from Uzbekistan.

Results

Canada prides itself on being a mosaic of cultures, emphasizing inclusivity, individual rights, and social equality. Canada officially adopted multiculturalism in the 1970s, promoting the preservation of diverse cultural identities within a unified society. Canadians are often characterized by their courteousness, valuing respectful interactions and avoiding confrontational behavior. Personal freedom and self-expression are highly regarded, with an emphasis on individual rights and autonomy.

Uzbekistan's culture is deeply influenced by Islamic traditions and collectivist principles. Community and family are central, with decisions often made considering the collective well-being. Deference to age and experience is paramount, with elders holding significant authority in familial and social settings.

Generosity towards guests is a hallmark, reflecting the importance of social bonds and communal harmony.

Canadian communication tends to be indirect and non-confrontational. Messages are explicit, and clarity is prioritized to avoid misunderstandings. Demonstrating attentiveness and providing feedback are essential components of respectful dialogue. Subjects like religion, politics, and personal finances are often considered private and are approached cautiously.

In contrast, Uzbek communication is more high-context, relying on non-verbal cues and shared understanding. To maintain harmony, individuals may avoid direct refusals or criticisms, opting for more subtle expressions. Language reflects social hierarchies, with specific terms used to show respect based on age, status, and relationship. Oral traditions and proverbs are integral, conveying values and lessons through narratives.

Standing too close or unwarranted physical contact can cause discomfort. Raising one's voice or displaying anger publicly is frowned upon. Engaging in debates on religion, politics, or personal income in casual settings is often avoided. Uzbek society upholds several taboos rooted in cultural and religious norms: Displays of romantic affection in public are considered inappropriate. Contradicting or speaking loudly to elders is deemed disrespectful. Wearing revealing clothing, especially by women, is discouraged to maintain modesty.

Conclusion

The exploration of Canadian culture and its peculiarities, especially in contrast with Uzbek cultural values, reveals important insights into how cultural systems influence human interaction, identity, and societal functioning. Canada represents a unique example of a multicultural, liberal, and individualistic society where diversity is both a reality and a core value. The Canadian approach to

inclusivity, gender equality, freedom of expression, and secularism reflects the broader values of Western democracies, but with a distinctive emphasis on peaceful coexistence and mutual respect among various ethnic and religious communities. One of the key takeaways from this comparison is the importance of individualism in Canadian culture. Canadians are taught to value personal autonomy, privacy, and direct communication. This differs notably from the collectivist nature of Uzbek culture, where social relationships, family honor, and group consensus take precedence over individual interests. In Uzbekistan, traditions and community norms heavily influence behavior, decision-making, and even personal aspirations. While this reinforces a strong sense of belonging and social solidarity, it may also limit self-expression and challenge adaptability in diverse global contexts.

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