

Hotel Handbook for Intercultural Competence

Matthew Childs

2128038

Rodrigo Aguilera

Cultural Awareness

BMIH5003

Executive Summary

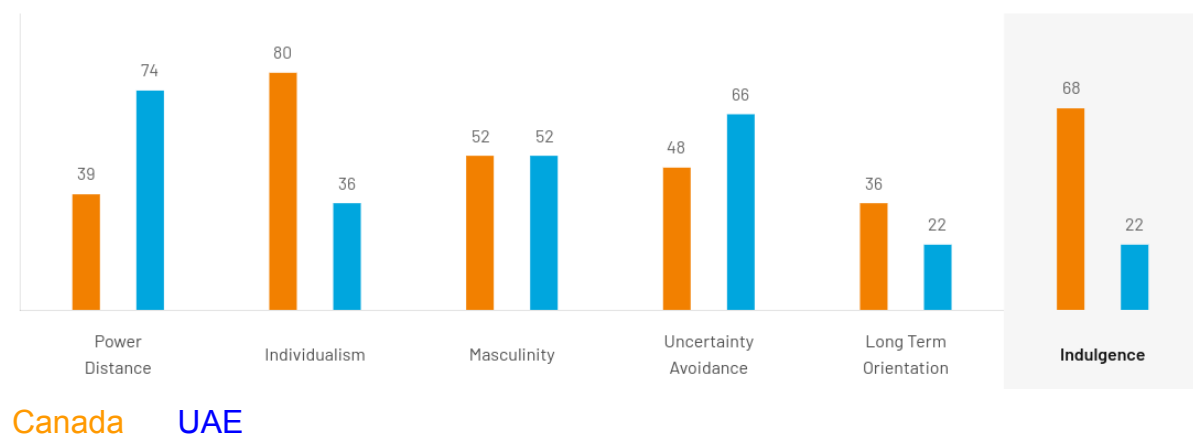
This report has examined the cultural differences between the cultures of Canadians and Muslims from Dubai (UAE). Upon examination it is apparent that cultures are largely varied around religion, as there are many more things within the muslim culture which would be considered offensive such as serving pork dishes or presenting guests with a bottle of alcohol. There are also personalised touches in which Arabic guests enjoy and friendliness and good service leads to a happy guest. Hofstede's Country comparison tool was used in order to recognise and highlight the differences between the two different cultures, this has allowed a more in depth knowledge of the stereotypical Arabic person who may visit the Canadian Hotel.

Introduction

This report will compare the cultures between two countries, these being Quebec, Canada and Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Quebec is a French speaking province of Canada whereas in Dubai the spoken language is Arabic. Both countries are widely visited by numerous different cultures and languages. Intercultural competence is the ability to function effectively with different cultures, to act appropriately and communicate and work with people from different cultural backgrounds.

Direct Comparison in Cultures

Diagram 1: Hofstede Country Comparison Tool



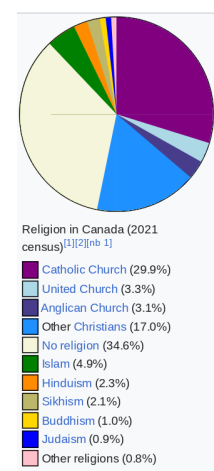
As examined within Hofstede Insights, there are clear differences in both Canadian and United Arab Emirates cultures. A significant variation between the cultures is the power distance which is much higher in UAE of 74 as opposed to only 39 in Canada, thus meaning that there is a larger gap within the UAE between upper class (typically emirati) and the lower, working class (typically migrant workers). This means that there is a significant gap from upper class to lower class with upper class having much higher decision making powers. Whereas Canada has a much lower power distance with classes being grouped together closely. It can be assumed that the middle and upper class account for the vast majority of visitors to Quebec, Canada whether it be for business or pleasure.

The table demonstrates that Canada has a much more individualist culture as opposed to a collectivist culture in UAE. This demonstrates that arabic families are much more closely knit, this is where families live together, elderly people would live with family and be cared for by family rather than living alone or within a care home which is more likely in Canada. For a hotel this would mean that arabic families are more likely to book family rooms or maybe adjoining rooms therefore automatically choosing rooms in a close proximity to each other would likely be appreciated and most appropriate.

Canada has a high indulgence score compared to the UAE. The UAE has a low score of only 22 in comparison to Canada's 68. This means that Canadians enjoy a more relaxed lifestyle including socialising more and maybe partying. Therefore for more reserved muslims this may cause discomfort therefore within the hotel a quiet area within hospitality areas may be appropriate so that there is no uncomfortable experience. In respect to this, it can be easy for a Canadian or French server to offer a wine menu for example which may be restaurant policy however careful consideration may be taken to remove this from the table where it is made known that the expected guests are muslim and do not consume alcohol.

A number which is relatively low for both countries according to Hofstede is based on Long term orientation which suggests that both cultures have a short term view and look to achieve quickly rather than working towards the future. This is demonstrated where the truth is very important and a 'straight to the point' approach is taken. This could be reflected by guests wishing for a smooth and quick experience in both reception and food and beverage to allow more time to focus on the now. This can be achieved by allocating extra check in staff on busy days such as a Monday or Friday for example and increased serving staff in restaurants at peak times, leading to a quicker and more personalised service.

Alongside the discussed points there are also various different facilities and courtesies which an Arabic person may expect or appreciate. One being a prayer room available as muslims are expected to pray 5 times a day, meaning that a prayer room should be available at all times. This can be a multi-faith prayer room therefore the hotel is catering for



all religions as specifically in Canada there are more than 9 different faiths which visit/ live in Canada therefore a multi-faith prayer room would be most appropriate.

Furthermore, a large part of the muslim religion is that all food and drink must be Halal. Halal is based on the meat, poultry, and seafood which are permissible to eat, as well as the method of slaughtering animals (E. Boğan, Ö. Saraç, V. Oğuz Kiper, O. Batman 2023). As this is a main factor of being muslim, it is important that the hotel offers a halal menu and avoids any cross contamination with haram produce. When booking a hotel it is likely that muslim guests will enquire whether halal options are available therefore front of house staff should communicate with authorities and chefs to ensure sufficient knowledge is available to assist halal eating guests.

Below is a table of basic do's and don'ts for the Arabic culture in order to remain respectful and provide sufficient service.

Do's and Don'ts- Arabic Culture

DO	DONT
Greet in local language and develop relationship with guest	Make assumptions based on race or gender
Greet male before female or children	Offer or serve pork products
Position rooms of family members close to each other	Offer or serve alcoholic beverages
Serve male and elderly before other people	Compliment arabic women as may be offensive to man
Have quiet area in restaurants open to all	Show public affection, eg, hugging or kissing
Have area open to all religions for prayer times	Refrain from discussing religion or politics with arabic guest

Treat guests with honour, respect and kindness	Shake hands with female guest unless she extend her hand
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Recommendations

As a result of this report there are two recommendations which are considered to be largely important in considering different cultures and respecting these cultures, specifically Arabic. The first recommendation is to have a separate area within hospitality areas, such as restaurants and bars, where muslims can be seated and or elderly people for example in order to avoid any uncomfortable experience around indulgence in alcohol or offensive language for example. Secondly, basic understanding in culture is highly important in order to understand basic respect and any offensive actions, therefore following the do's and don'ts listed above will develop a basic cultural understanding of Muslims. Both of these recommendations will lead to an enjoyable experience when visiting Canada and increase chances of repeat custom and word of mouth advertisement.

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