

Cuban American Family

In the United States, it is common for individuals to believe that their way of life is the correct way of life. Individuals with this frame of mindset often look at other cultures and ethnic groups as strange and can even label them as outsiders. This way of looking at other cultures can lead to the idea of superiority, which is the belief that one's culture and way of life is better than another. When a racial group of people does not understand someone else's culture, there is a lack of communication. We have found that just because we do not understand another person's way of life does not mean they are seen as threats. This paper will discuss the origins, subgroups, values, communication patterns, and religious beliefs of the Cuban American family.

According to Pew Research Center, the term “Cuban” is used for those who identify themselves in relation to Hispanic or Latino origins. This may include individuals born in Cuba and those born elsewhere who identify themselves as being of Cuban origins like the Cuban parentage born in the U.S. “Cubans are far more likely than other Hispanics to identify themselves as white when asked about their race. In the 2004 Census data, about 86% of Cubans said they were white, compared with 60% among Mexicans, 53% among other Central and South Americans and 50% among Puerto Ricans” (Pew Research Center, 2006). The terms “Hispanics” and “Latinos” may refer to non-Cubans as well. The years 1959 to 1962 marked the beginning of Cuban immigration to the United States. From here on, many Cubans began to travel to the United States increasing the Cuban population. Many individuals packed up their lives and headed to the U.S. in hopes of finding better work to provide for their families.

Families with Cuban roots value the aspect of extended family. Extended families may include people who are not of blood relation, such as friends and neighbors. Male supremacy in the household, submissive women, and specific roles are significant characteristics to the Cuban

family. “The resilience of Cuban gender norms is not only a matter of entrenched misogyny; it is encoded into the Revolution itself” (Cuba, N.A). The male's honor, respect, and dignity are significant. The father must provide for their household and to keep the family together. In today's age, tension within Cuban families may rise due to women wanting to find work. “Men continue to expect women to perform housework and maintain child-rearing responsibilities even if they have full-time careers outside the home and participate in FMC and PCC activities” (Cuba, N.A). A woman having a job could cause the man to feel less powerful. Although men may feel less powerful due to women working, Cuban women always stick to traditional beliefs in acknowledging the role men play in the household, even with their sons. Cubans value the aspect of respect, worth in the individual, and individualized, warm, and personal relationships. Cubans are strong on the belief that every individual deserves personal one to one attention.

Communication is seen as a hierarchy in Hispanic origin families. Men and elders are at a higher status than women and children. There are primitive roles assigned to different individuals in the family. For example, young men are taught to be providers and protectors, while young women are to be the ones who are protected and submissive. Parent to child communication is put before marriage communication, as is it a strong belief that children are the validation of marriage. Aggression and anger are not accepted in the Hispanic community and family. “Cubans prefer to settle issues openly instead of simmering discrepancies. However, displays of anger qualifies as a negative public behaviour”(Canada Global Affairs, 2018). They are often taught not to express their anger and aggression, which can lead to internal stress. While some Cubans may be taught not to express themselves, many are very open. “Cubans usually show their emotions openly. Displaying affection is very common and frequent.

Someone coming from another country may be shocked to observe how openly those displays occur in public sometimes” (Canada Global Affairs, 2018). Hispanic families tend to have close bonds and relationships. Cubans take family very seriously and love to extend love and care to outsiders as well.

The family may turn to their religious beliefs in times of stress, which is the Catholic church. “The popular religiosity which did develop among white and creole Cubans was a local version of Catholicism enriched with African influences” (Cuba, N.A). Prayer plays a significant role in the family and is a focal point for social and inspirational engagement. Although many Cubans do follow Catholic beliefs, it is common for some to have no faith in religion at all. “There is no common pattern of belief regarding the afterlife. Santería maintains a belief in the survival of ancestor spirits, and the Christian faithful have a theology of heaven. Funerals are celebrated and may invoke religious imagery, but more common is a secular ceremony in which the deceased is remembered for their contributions”(Cuba, N.A). Godparents play a significant role in the life of Hispanic children, and children are often spoiled. Godparents are seen as part of the family and are often considered part of the extended family. Godparents can be members within the family already or outside friends. Most of the time those who are chosen to be godparents are married couples.

References

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