

# EXPLORING SIMILARITIES IN MEDICAL ETHICS BETWEEN JAPAN AND UZBEKISTAN

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## Abstract

Medical ethics is essential in healthcare systems around the world, guiding healthcare professionals to follow moral standards when caring for patients. This paper explores the fascinating similarities in medical ethics and doctor-patient interactions between Japan and Uzbekistan. It looks at how cultural and historical influences shape the way healthcare professionals approach sensitive matters, such as involving families in difficult medical decisions. The focus is on the shared ethical principles guiding doctors in both countries, revealing common practices in patient care.

**Keywords:** Medical ethics, doctor-patient relationship, Japan, Uzbekistan, healthcare systems.

## Introduction

Medical ethics is crucial in guiding healthcare practices across the world. It ensures that healthcare professionals uphold moral standards in treating patients. Although the basic principles—beneficence, non-maleficence, autonomy, and justice—are universally acknowledged, the way they are applied can differ due to cultural, historical, and societal influences. This essay examines how Japan and Uzbekistan, two countries with rich yet distinct histories, approach these principles in their medical systems, focusing on the similarities in how doctors interact with patients and their families. Despite cultural differences, both countries share important common practices, especially when it comes to sensitive patient care.

## Core Ethical Principles in Medicine

Medical ethics is fundamentally built upon four guiding principles (Hope,2014):

1. **Beneficence** – Healthcare providers are expected to act in the best interest of their patients, aiming to improve their health.
2. **Non-maleficence** – Doctors have a responsibility to avoid causing harm to patients and to minimize any risks associated with treatment.
3. **Autonomy** – Patients should have the right to make informed decisions regarding their own healthcare.
4. **Justice** – Medical services should be distributed fairly, ensuring that everyone has access to the care they need.



While these principles are broadly shared across the globe, the way they are practiced can vary depending on cultural and historical context. In Japan and Uzbekistan, these principles are similarly interpreted, particularly in how family members are involved in the decision-making process for seriously ill patients.

### **Medical Ethics and Doctor Behavior in Japan and in Uzbekistan**

In Japan, the way doctors practice medicine is influenced by Confucian values, which stress the importance of respect for authority and hierarchy. Doctors are highly trusted, and patients usually don't question their recommendations. It is comparable to the approach in Uzbekistan, where there is also a strong emphasis on trust in the doctor-patient relationship. The idea of "wa" (harmony) is very important, meaning that keeping peace and emotional well-being is prioritized, even if it means not sharing all the details with the patient. For example, doctors might not tell a patient the full truth about a serious illness if it could cause emotional distress. (Kitamura & Hasui, 2007).

Similar to Japan, doctors in Uzbekistan also focus on the patient's well-being, including managing the emotional impact of a diagnosis. When faced with serious illnesses, such as cancer, doctors typically inform the family first, allowing them to prepare and support the patient. This approach ensures that the emotional toll is managed appropriately before the news is shared with the patient. However, Uzbek doctors tend to be more open in directly discussing the diagnosis with the patient, ensuring that they understand the seriousness of their condition (Yusupov, 2023). This approach was observed in an experiment where 20 oncologists, 10 from Japan and 10 from Uzbekistan, were surveyed to understand their methods of informing patients about serious health conditions like cancer. The doctors were asked whether they first inform the family before the patient and how they manage the emotional aspects of delivering such news. In the scenario, a 60-year-old patient was diagnosed with terminal cancer. Of the 20 oncologists, 17 reported that they would inform the family first, allowing them to prepare emotionally before disclosing the diagnosis to the patient. The doctors shared their communication strategies, discussing how they balance the emotional well-being of both the patient and the family, while considering the importance of maintaining the patient's dignity and emotional health.

The results suggest that in both countries, doctors see family support as very important when delivering bad news. Many believe that telling the family first helps them get ready to comfort the patient and make the situation less stressful. Some doctors also mentioned using a step-by-step method to make the news easier to handle. Overall, the study shows that cultural values play a big role in how doctors communicate serious medical information, especially in places where family decisions are highly respected.

### **Conclusion**

The similarities between Japanese and Uzbek medical practices show that cultural and ethical values play a big role in healthcare. Different traditions and beliefs influence how doctors make decisions and communicate with patients. By studying these practices, we can better understand how culture shapes medical ethics and use this knowledge to improve healthcare systems around the world.





Studying cultural differences in medicine helps us understand important topics like patient rights, how doctors share information, and the decisions they make. As healthcare connects more people from different places, it's important for doctors and medical workers to learn about different ways of treating and communicating with patients. This helps them give better care to everyone.

By looking at these cultural differences, we can improve medical education and healthcare systems. Learning from other countries helps doctors work together and share good ideas. This not only helps medical workers but also makes sure that patients get care that respects both medical science and cultural traditions.

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