



Prevalence of Major Cultures, Rituals and Traditions among peoples in Indian Societies: A Study of Cultural Geography

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ABSTRACT:

India has a rich culture and that has become our identity. It is deeply rooted in the traditions, religions, language, arts and cuisines of Indian sub-continent. Indian culture is full of unique customs and traditions. Indian culture is characterized by its strong emphasis on the family values, respect for elders and close-knit social relationship. The prime objective of this research paper is to know about the various culture and traditions prevailing in Indian societies and to examine the various causes of disappearing Indian culture. The study is based on secondary sources of data. The researcher find out that there are numerous culture are prevailing such as joint family, community participation, caste system, Athithi Devo Bhava, Caring of Old Parents, prevailing of dowry system, respect of elders, fasting on the religious occasion, Unity in diversity, large family members, prevalence of superstitions, Patriarchal Society, etc.. The study reveals that Now a day the rich cultures of India society is disappearing in many ways like globalizations, adaptation of westernizations, modernization, industrializations, urbanizations, a majority of youths are not interested to carry or follow their ancient cultures.

Key Word (Index Term): Culture, Patriarchal Society, Fashion, Cuisines, Western Culture, Globalization

Introduction:

There is a proverb “East or West my country India is the best”.

My Country “India is Great”.

“India is not a country, but a home”.

“The true India resides in its villages”.

Culture is a reflection of the beliefs, values, customs and traditions of particular group of people. Our Indian culture is one of the oldest and most diverse cultures in the world. Every culture has its unique features and characteristic. India has a rich culture and that has become our identity. It is deeply rooted in the traditions, religions, language, arts and cuisines of Indian sub-continent. Indian culture is full of unique customs and traditions. The culture in India is everything from the people's living, rituals, social norms, values, beliefs, ideas, taboos, codes, works of art, habits, care, knowledge, fashion, music, dance etc. People from old generation pass their beliefs and cultures to the upcoming generation. Thus majority of the Indian peoples learned about their culture from their ancestors, grandparents and parents. Indian culture is characterized by its strong emphasis on the family values, respect for elders and close-knit social relationship. Rituals, festivals and religious practices play a significant role in the daily life and are celebrated with great enthusiasm and devotion. The concept of collectivism, family values and hierarchical plays an important role to Indian society. The North, South and North-East have their own distinct cultures and almost every state has curved out its own cultural place.

The English word “Culture” is derived from the Latin term “Cult” meaning “Cultivating or Refining and Worship”. This is practically the same as “Sanskriti” of the Sanskrit language. Culture is a way of life. The food you eat, the clothes you wear, the language you speak in and the God you worship all are aspects of culture.

Table 1.1 Major Cultural Regions/ Realms of the World

Sl. No.	Major Cultural Regions/ Realms of the World	Countries
1.	Occidental Cultural Realm / Western Culture	European Countries
2.	Islamic Cultural Realm	Middle-East, Central Asia, Islamic Realm
3.	Indian Cultural Realm	Indian Sub-continent
4.	East Asian Cultural Realm	China, Japan, Mongolia, Tibet, Korea

Source: Human Geography, Majid Hussian, Rawat Publication, pp. 162-167.

Review of Literature:

The review highlights the distinction areas covered by the many researchers and academicians which may be helpful to understand the issues relating to the present study and it also helps to find out the research gap. The basic sources of literature review of my study areas are- published research papers, articles in the journal of national and international repute, Government reports, Research agencies reports etc.

G. Sai Mahesh Kumar Reddy (2017) examined that India culture is considered to be the oldest culture that people had followed. Whole World people will give respect to the Indian culture as we know that India defined the culture of the world. Their study reveals that Indian culture is greatly influenced by religious views. India indeed called a motherland of foods. There are various types of cuisines are made in India. Clothing is the most inseparable clothing in the world. Indian music's, dramas, handmade sculptures etc. are shown the identity of deep root of Indian cultures. **Manoj Prakash (2018)** insisted that Indian culture is one of the oldest and richest cultures in the world with varied languages, customs, beliefs, ideas, taboos, codes, instructions, works of art, architecture, rituals and ceremonies etc. The study reveals that Indian and Western both are different types of culture representing their own traditions and values. The Western culture has both positive and negative impact on Indian Culture. **Nisha Gautam and Krishna Kumar Sharma (2020)** observed that Indian culture is one of the most significant cultures in the 21st century and one of the oldest cultures in the world. Their study reveals that civilization is the cornerstone of culture, and culture is the reflection of civilization. Western Culture has most influence on Indian culture while due to globalization. The rich culture of India is disappearing from the society. **Areful Hoque and Mohammad Taufique (2018)** examined that in every 10 kilometers there is changing of language and food habits. Their study reveals that apart from celebrating numerous festivals India has different cuisines. Every nook and corner of the country has unique and delicious cuisines. Moreover Indian cuisines are greatly influenced by availability of local spices, variations of climatic conditions, variations of soil, tradition and food habits and culture etc. The result of the study shows that the cuisines of North India are quite different from the south in terms of method of cooking style and taste. The findings also shows that many of Indian Cuisines are occupied Geographical Index (G.I.) and also heavily influenced by religious taboos.

Objectives of Research:

The main objectives of this research are-

1. To know the various cultures and traditions prevailing in Indian societies.
2. To examine the major causes of disappearing Indian culture from the societies people.

Database and Research Methodology:

The current research work is analytical, descriptive and empirical type of research work. The study is based on secondary sources of data. The secondary data has been collected from Ministry of Culture, Government of India, Reports Books, Research Paper, Articles, Journals, Newspaper, Researchgate, Google Scholar etc

Result and Discussion:

Apart from numerous festivals, numerous cuisines of India, Indian peoples are following diverse culture. These are as follows-

1. **Joint Family Preferable:** Prevalence of Joint family among the family is the main features of Indian societies. A joint family consists of grandfather, grandmother, parents, uncles, aunts and cousins all live together. Joint family is best solution of living with care and love. The young kids can learn how to respect elders, love them and care for them. The elders would teach the kids stories and share their experience which will be useful to tackle the problems in life. When living in a joint family, all of the members will provide time with the family members and they understand each other gradually. There won't be communication gap among the people. They will help each other when there is an emergency. But now a day's joint family concept is slightly decreasing. Everyone wants to remain aloof from others an given rise to single nucleated families.



2. **Community Participation:** Community participation creating support groups among the people in the particular regions. In every Indian society the entire person of the area belongs to different religions are participated in marriage ceremony, death ceremony, and helping-hand attitude, volunteering in any occasion, among themselves.



3. **Caste System (Jatvaad):** Caste system in our country has been prevalent since the ancient times. The caste system is a division of people into distinct social groups based on occupation. Caste System is prevailing among Hindu religious beliefs groups. The caste system divides Hindus into four main categories- Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. Many of the social reformers considered it as a social evil.



4. **Subsistence Farming:** Majority of Indian farmers are marginal and small landholding. In this way farmers are promoting only subsistence farming of various food-grains crops. In Subsistence farming crops or livestock raised are used to maintain the farmers and the farmers family for self consumption and not to sell in the market.



5. **Guest is the Reflection of God (Atithi Devo Bhava):** Guest is considered as reflection of God. In Indian society guest are welcome with warm hearted. Guest are treated with the highest level of respect and care. It is great social values.



6. **Marriage is for lifetime (Saat Janmo Ka Bandhan):** Marriage is the social contract / bond between a man and a woman. According to Indian culture Marriage is consider as bonding of the souls which will be linked even after the death.



7. **Worship of Various God-Goddess (Polytheism):** As Majority of Indian peoples are belongs to Hindu religion, they are worship various God-Goddess according to their religious norms, custom and beliefs.
8. **Patriarchal Society:** The word patriarchy meaning rule of the father. Indian societies are male dominant society. The head of the family is Men (Kaarta). His decision will be final and obey every family member.



9. **Animal Husbandry:** Animal husbandry is traditional profession. Majority of Indian peoples are rearing animals such as Cow, buffalo, Goats, Sheep, horse, donkey, Dog etc.



10. **Festival for all the People:** An Indian society there is proverb that in twelve months there are thirteen festivals. All the festival like Holi, diwali, Dushera, Ganesh Puja, Makar Sankranti, Eid, Christmas are celebrating all the peoples of India.



11. **Cottage Hand-made Products:** India is very much famous for its handmade products such as pottery, basket, bamboo made products, furniture, metal crafts, paper crafts, stone and wood work etc.



12. **Caring of Old Parents:** Caring of old parents is the rich cultures among the Indian peoples. It is amoral duty of us to take care of the elderly. The elders spend the major part of their life in the building and shaping our life and carrier.



13. **Respects to Teacher, Spiritual Guru, Saints, Religious Leaders, Elderly Persons is deeply ingrained in the culture:** Respect to the Teacher, spiritual guru is the social norms among the Indian peoples.



14. **Large Family Members:** A family is large when it has three children or more. In almost every family there is large number of family members due to no adopting of family planning.
15. **Prevalence of Superstitions:** Superstitions are as old as the mankind. Superstition is defined as a blind belief in the supernatural powers. Superstition is mainly prevalent among illiterates, uneducated and scientifically less advanced people and societies. There are many superstitions prevailing such as health related, death related and common superstitions.



16. **Outdated and Strict followers of Religious Norms:** Majority of the peoples is following strict religious and outdated in terms of religious rituals.
17. **Indian Brother Attitude:** All the Indian citizens have common brotherhood attitude among themselves.



18. **Unity in Diversity:** The term Unity in diversity refers to harmony, greater tolerance, national integration, recognition in the world, development and growth of the country and peace. The term diversity here emphasizes collective difference that is one group of people is different from another. Caste, creed, race, religion, language, nationality, cultures are all examples of diversity. Apart from numerous religious beliefs, casteism, language difference there is Unity in Diversity cultures among the Indian societies.



19. **Education and Knowledge is influenced by Vedic Cultures:** Sanatan dharma (Hindu) is the oldest religions of the world. The religious holy books such as Vedas, Ramayan, Mahabhart, Bharvad, Geeta etc. are flourish the knowledge among the Indian peoples.
20. **Foodie or Gourmet Peoples:** Traditional Indian food is renowned worldwide for its wonderful use of herbs and spices. India is the motherland of different cuisines. Indian are consumes various spices and herbs for making tasty foods in breakfast, lunch and dinner. Indian food not only tastes good, bit is also quite healthy.
21. **Natural Lovers:** Majority of the Indian are natural lovers. They are protect the Jungle, Jal, Jammeen. Many natural event has occurs such Chipko movement, silent valley protection etc.



22. **Child Marriage Prevailing:** Child marriage is still prevailing in rural and extreme backwards societies. Child marriage is illegal and it is a crime. Child marriage has many harmful effects. It increase illiteracy and parent do not educate their daughters. This alos increases domestic violence's and girls become a victim because they are very young. It also affects the health of the girls because they become mothers very early.



23. **Beggars (Viksha / Fakiri):** Today begging is a major social problem in our country India. India is a home of beggars. In no other country of the world you will find so many beggars. The main reason is that begging is a profession in India. “Beggars” or “*Fakir*” are poorest of the poor, most disadvantages, most backward and marginalized section of the society, living in such a pathetic condition that they are unable to full fill the basic needs of life. The popular term “bhiksha” in Hinduism, Jainism, and Buddhism are very well known. Even having emerged as unorthodox religious, philosophy, Muslim peoples also believed in “Zakat”. However, besides the fact that beggary has its root in religious mendicancy.
24. **Salutation / Greetings with Namaska & Namaste:** “Namaskar” and “Namaste” are used to convey respect love and well-wishing and important cultural expression in India. “**Namaste**” is a more casual and simple greeting usually used among friends and family while “**Namaskar**” is more formal and respectful greeting. When two Indian are meeting each others, it’s our ritual that they will greet with namaskaar.



25. **Pardaah or Gunghat among Womens:** Women’s have very respectable position in Indian society. In North Indian states especially Himachal Pradesh Punjab, Haryana Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, states women’s have prevailing pardaah or gunghat rituals.



26. **Folk and Classical Music:** Majority of Indian people are very fond and interested to listening folk and classical music in every rituals and ceremony.



27. **Arranged Marriages are Preferable:** Arranged marriage is a tradition in Indian societies. Many families have embraced the concept of arranged marriage because as we all know “Parents Know Best”. Majority of Indian society are still preferred arranged marriage without any coercion, only because they could live in peace and harmony and matchmakers, trusted matrimonial sites, newspaper advertisement relatives and parents play a very important role.
28. **Yoga and Meditation Practices for promoting Physical and Mental Well-being:** Majority of Indian society people are practicing Yoga and meditations for physically healthy and mental well-being.



29. **Traditional Medicines and Ayurveda, Herbal Practices:** In Indian society traditional medicines and Ayurvedic herbal medicines are prevailing from illness.
30. **Emphasis on Karma and the concept of rebirth in religions like Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism:** India is a secular country. Indian societies people are emphasis on Work (Karma) and the concept of rebirth in religions like Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism.
31. **Hindi and Regional language widely recognized:** Hindi is the national and official language of the country India. Hindi and other regional language is widely recognized.
32. **Wearing of Traditional Sari, Bindi on Forehead by women's and Wearing of Dhoti and Turban by Men's:** Majority of Indian Women's are wearing silk sari, Bindi on forehead and turban by means.
33. **Fasting or Vrats or Upvas on religious occasion:** In Indian societies majority of peoples among different religious beliefs are performs Fasting or Vrats on the occasion of festival Navratri, Maha shiv ratri, Diwali, Kaarva-Chauth, among Hindu peoples and Ramadan and Moharram among Islam religions followers.



34. **Dowry rituals prevalent:** Dowry system entails giving huge amount of cash, jewellery and others gifts to the groom's family by the bride's parents as condition at the time of marriage. It has been prevalent in India since centuries. Dowry system is one of the evil systems prevalent in the society.



Prime Causes of Changing Indian Culture:

- ❖ Globalization
- ❖ Urbanization
- ❖ Modernization or Westernization
- ❖ Higher Educated People
- ❖ High Standard of Living
- ❖ Improvement of Technology and Invention
- ❖ Travelling
- ❖ Feminism
- ❖ Nucleated Family
- ❖ Secularization
- ❖ Sanskritization
- ❖ Speaking English Language
- ❖ Changing the mindset of Youths

Conclusion:

Now a day the rich cultures of India society is disappearing in many ways like globalizations, adaptation of westernizations, modernization, industrializations, urbanizations, a majority of youths are not interested to carry or follow their ancient cultures. The Western culture is impacting on the Indian culture all around such as dressing style, festival, food, language, lifestyle, music, education. Today many of peoples are not celebrating their festivals, in Indian like Holi, Diwali, but instead, they are celebrating more western cultures such as Christmas, New Year and Halloween. Moreover now a days, Indian are eating and prefer Pizza, burgers, steak,, cutting the cake in every occasion of life, etc while Indian food like Golgappa, Curry are becoming less popular. Both Indian and Western cultures are going to be mixed especially in India. India got major transformation under western cultures but forgetting our traditional values is also a matter of concern. The Western culture has positive aspects such as Adoption of modern education, abolished of Sati Traditions, Abolished of Untouchability and negative impact on Indian culture such as use of Mummy, Daddy words for parents, joint family system decreasing etc. People of our country are adopting the foreign cultures. They should not forget their own culture as India has a great remark of its culture around the world and now a day's people are spoiling it by adopting western culture there by forgetting the basic culture of their mother country.

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