



## SALIENT FEATURAES OF INDIAN CULTURE (UNITY IN DIVERSITY)

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**Abstract:** Indian culture is one of the oldest cultures in the world. It has come into being as a result of Indian History, Geography and variety of people. Today India is propagating its civilization and culture. Indian culture is bringing its people on right path who have gone astray. The world civilization, which is becoming extinct, the Indian culture has its deep rooted origin. A Sanskrit adage (subhashitam) goes like this, “Bharatasya Pratishthe Dwe Sanskritam Sanskritistatha”<sup>1</sup>, Sanskrit and Indian Culture are India’s pride. Main objectives are to observe different aspects of Indian culture, to state the salient features of Indian culture. In this paper the salient features of Indian culture will be stated more precisely.

**Keywords:** Indian Culture, Civilization, Religion, Sanskriti

### Introduction:

Indian culture is one of the oldest cultures in the world. It has come into being as a result of Indian History, Geography and variety of people. Today India is propagating its civilization and culture. Indian culture is bringing its people on right path who have gone astray. The world civilization, which is becoming extinct, the Indian culture has its deep rooted origin. A Sanskrit adage (subhashitam) goes like this—

**“Bharatasya Pratishthe Dwe Sanskritam Sanskritistatha”<sup>1</sup>**

Sanskrit and Indian Culture are India’s pride.

### Objectives:

- 1.To observe different aspects of Indian culture.
- 2.To state the salient features of Indian culture.

### Method:

This paper will be presented by descriptive method.

### Civilization and Culture

It is said that Civilization and Culture are two sides (observe and reverse) of a coin. Not only this, civilization and culture are the words of substitute. However, they are different despite being in solidified state. Civilization, we can say, is the body of a man and cultures its soul. Civilization is the external form of human life and cultures its soul. The soul cannot exist without the body likewise there is no meaning of the body without soul. This can perfectly be applied in case of civilization and culture.

### Civilization

India is a self-sufficient and self-sustained country. The people of this country, for making their lives self-sufficient and successful, have utilized different methods of lives and with the visible support of the thoughts and the new system and implements were searched. All these things relate to Civilization. The efforts put-in by the man to accomplish the necessities of life are known as Civilization. The meaning of civilization given in Oxford Dictionary is **“The process by which a society or place reaches a advanced stage of social development and organization.”** And the definition—Defining civilization MacIver and Page (1962) postulated “By civilization we mean the whole mechanism and organization which man has designed in his Endeavour to control the conditions of life.” We can say, in short, that humanity in the society is known as civilization.

### Culture

**Sanskrutirev                      Seturvidhutiresham  
Lokanamsabhedaya<sup>2</sup>**

Different ways of life of any society or country or social relations giving impetus and ideal may be collectivity called culture.<sup>3</sup>The pinnacle of entire social life is in the culture. Advancement and dis-advancement are gauged by culture only. The society is bound by the culture that is the reason why different religions, cults and coordination of behavior are based on culture only.

The Sanskrit verbal adjective Samskrit may be translated as "put together, constructed, well" from the root word "Samskar" to put together, compose or arrange. Sanskriti means make good or involve in research. Dr. Satyaketu Vidyalkar says, "A man, using his brain does new creation through thoughts in the field of Karma i.e. deeds called Sanskriti."<sup>4</sup> Civilization develops human life while sanskriti develops his virtues. Civilization is an external thing while sanskriti is internal. Dr. Sudha Mukherjee states, "Indian civilization is quite an old civilization. Despite foreign attacks the Indian culture still remains intact showing how strong it is! Unity of this country is evident in spite of different religions, different languages, different casts and creed likewise in the fields of geography, political, religious, social and culture, unity is seen."<sup>5</sup>

#### **Salient Features of Culture**

**Ancient:** It is the oldest culture of the world. The Indus civilization, Egypt, Sumer, Babylon were the contemporary culture. Those who were living in these countries had an interaction related to business. Period of these civilizations was about 3500 BC. Taking this clue, the Indian civilization is supposed to be 4,500 years old.

**Continuity:** Despite many foreign attacks the Indian culture could not be won-over. The Indian culture could be continuing unaffected for the last 5.5 thousand years. The original old doctrines are still in vogue without any change whatsoever.

**Spirituality:** This feeling is there in every field of Indian life. Therefore, the Indians have given more importance to extra-mundane pleasure rather than family pleasure. The Almighty is the main source of running the whole world. Not a single leaf can move without his permission. Such is the firm thinking of Indians. Therefore the God is worshipped for the successful life of humans. Spirituality is at the root of life of Indian saints. Veda, Upanishads, Sanskrit literature is full of spiritual feeling. Civilization of the west is based on Materialism, whereas Indian civilization is based on spiritualism. India has given the advice of experience instead of family pleasure.

**Importance of religion:** The think tanks have given equal importance to four achievements emancipation earned by men, viz., Dharma (religion), Artha (money), Karma (actions or deeds) and Moksha (emancipation). For fulfillment of these principles, human life is divided into four parts; and four Ashram stages have been applied. It is written in Mahabharat that 'Dharma' and 'Kama' should be taken sparingly so as to save 'Dharma' from blame. 'Dharma' is of paramount importance in Indian life. 'Dharma' means karma (Kartavya). The human, while executing karma in his life desires for lhaloukik and Parloukik pleasures. Dharma gives inspiration to a man to do right and legal Karma in all walks of life.

**Aayamnijahparovetigananalaghuchetasam**

**Udarcharitanamtvasudhaiva kutumbakam<sup>6</sup>**

Means– "The whole universe is our family; likewise"

**SarveBhavantusukhinahasarvesantuniramayaha**

May all become happy and may all be healthy (i.e. free from illness).

This is the rootmantra of Indian culture.

**Coordination strength:** This strength is the greatest one. The capability to absorb outside principles is the virtue of Indian culture. The foreigners gained victory but they could not achieve cultural victory. The gurus by loosing the social ties included the foreign castes. The Yahudi king, Mivdida accepted the Buddha religion. By this way Shak, Kushala, Hoon, etc., foreign castes were included in India. The Hoon king, Mihirkul adopted Hindu religion. Dr. Dodwell says about the coordination strength that Indian culture is just like a vast sea and many rivers and tributaries are submerged in it.

**Belief on global brotherhood:** The main pillar of Indian culture is joint family, global brotherhood, love, calmness, bearing capacity. Equality have been given utmost importance by Indians. To lead the life on this ideal support, is the duty of Indians. The whole Indian society is divided into four principles of work (Chaturvarna) viz., Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra

on the basis of the work they do. The Indian life is also divided into four stages called ashrams, viz., Brahmacharyashram, Grihasthashram, Wanaprasthashram and Sanyasashram, This system further turns into case system. Every man will work as per his choice and taste. Such a system was developed for the benefit of one can lead pre-planned life.

**Religious tolerance and freedom of thought:** Due to freedom of thought the volume of religious thoughts that took place in India has not been done anywhere in the world. On accepting the Boudha religion by Samrat Ashok, he tried vigorously to spread this religion in foreign countries. He never forced his thoughts on his subjects. He treated all religions as equal.

Samrat Ashok said that a man should honour other's religion. The man who worships his religion and criticizes others'. While doing this causes damage to his own religion. The ideals of Samrat Ashok related to religious tolerance guide us even today. The religions- Boudha' Jain, Bhagwat, Shaiva etc., joined together and made a world of different opinions. However, respecting all religions including self is an important aspect of Indian or the Hindus religion .The first reference of this fact is found in Rigveda.

***Ekamsadviprabahudha vadanti***<sup>7</sup>

Means truth is one. But the scholars have interpreted this differently. In other words we can say that wise people explain the same truth in different manner.

**Conclusion:**

Regulator of the world, doctrine of work, dogma of reincarnation, omniscient and belief on the existence of God, etc all these doctrines have been accepted by all religions. All religions have given utmost importance to 'Satya', Asthya', 'Brahmacharya', Aparigriha, etc. Due to religious tolerance the cruelty is void. India has guided the world in respect to spiritual experience rather than 'wordly pleasure'.

***Sarvepisukhnahasantusarvesantuniram  
ayaha |  
Sarvebhadranipashyantu ma  
kaschindukhabhaghavet ||***

May all become happy, may all be healthy (free from illness), may all see what is auspicious, may no one suffer in any way.

The Indian culture taking care of the pleasure of all living animals, satisfying all is the ground stone of present world. The Indian culture, praying peace for all can save the world from third world war is a definite fact.

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