

CH.1

UNDERSTANDING DIVERSITY

Diversity:

Difference among people on the basis of religion, language, eating habits, etc. is called diversity

another person may follow another religion. Different people speak different languages. Even if they speak the same language, different people among them may be speaking the same language in different accents. People show diversity in their eating habits as well. Some people eat non-vegetarian food, while some others eat vegetarian food. For example; majority of the people from Gujarat are vegetarians. On the other hand, majority of people from West Bengal are non-vegetarians.

.

Diversity gives many benefits in our life.

Diversity adds variety to the way we live.

We learn to understand and respect different types of culture because of diversity.

We learn to think from different angles because of diversity.

Had there been no diversity, it could have been a boring life for us.

Reasons of Diversity

Influence of Geography on Diversity

Geography has great influence on various aspects of our life. Geography influences the way we look, the food we eat and the clothes we wear. India shows great diversity; in terms of geographical features. Following are some examples of diversity which resulted because of difference in geographical features.

proximity to the Himalayas.

So, people of Jammu and Kashmir are fair-skinned and generally tall.

Because of the cold climate, people usually wear warm clothes.

The southern India experiences hot and humid climate. Majority of people in the south India are dark skinned and are usually of medium height. Most of the men in south India wear vesti (lungi) which is comfortable for the hot and humid climate. People eat lots of rice and coconut is used in most of the dishes

People in West Bengal also experience hot and humid climate. Hence most of the people in the eastern part of India are either brown skinned or dark skinned. They primarily eat rice and fish.

Ladakh

Ladakh is a cold desert in the eastern part of Kashmir. Since this place is covered with snow for most parts of the year, very little agriculture is possible. People are mainly herders of sheep, goat and yak. They use milk and meat of these animals as food. They also use hairs of these animals to make wool. They weave pashmina shawls and sell them to traders in Kashmir.

Ladakh was on the important trade route since ancient times. Due to this, many travelers from different parts of the world always came to this place. People of Ladakh interacted with those travelers. Due to that, Islam was introduced in this region hundreds of years ago. Even today, there is a sizeable population of Muslims in this region. There is significant number of followers of Buddhism as well in this region.

Kerala

Kerala is on the southern tip of India. Kerala has been an important centre of trade since ancient times. Traders came here to trade in spices. Because of travelers, Christianity was introduced in Kerala about 2000 years ago. Similarly, Islam was introduced through the traders from the Arab world. Vasco da Gama; who was a Portuguese traveler was the first to discover the sea route between Europe and India. He landed his ship in Kerala. The European culture came to India after that. People of Kerala follow different religions; like Jainism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism.

Diversity in India

India is a highly diverse country. Followers of almost all major religions of the world live in India. Followers of different religions are different in many aspects; like customs, festivals, beliefs, eating habits and traditional costumes. The huge diversity makes out country rich in terms cultural differences.

Unity in Diversity

The term 'Unity in Diversity' was first coined by Jawaharlal Nehru. Nehru coined this term because diversity proved to be the strength for our country. When the British came in India, they thought it easy to rule a diverse country like India. They even tried the 'Divide and Rule' policy. But our struggle for freedom proved them wrong. Most of the people of India opposed the British rule irrespective of religious or cultural differences. It was because of our unity in diversity that we could be successful in getting rid of the British rule.

Even today, we continue to imbibe various cultures. We continue to assimilate cuisines from around the world. We continue to assimilate new costumes from around the world. Today, India is a vibrant country because of its diversity.