**INTRODUCTION**

India is a country with immense social and cultural homogeneity and heterogeneity. India is a land of diversity in race, region, caste, language, mate, landform, flora and fauna and so on. From ancient time till day India has maintained this diversity. The fundamental diversity in India is gleaned from the geographical, racial, religious, linguistic and political diversity. The Indian culture, often labelled as an amalgamation of several cultures, spans across the [Indian subcontinent](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indian_subcontinent) and has been influenced by a history that is several millennia old.Many elements of India's diverse cultures, such as Indian religions, yoga, and Indian cuisine, have had a profound impact across the world.

**CULTURAL HETEROGENEITY IN INDIA:**

Racial Diversity in India

India possesses a rich variety of races. In view of this variety Prof. V.A. Smith says, "From the human point of view India has been often described as an ethnological Dr racial museum in which numberless races of mankind may be steadied." The vast population of India consists of the jungles tribe (Hence Bhils, Kols, Santhals), the Greeks, the Sakas, the Kushanas, the Hunas, the Mongolians, the Arabs, the Turks, the Afghans etc. The physical features and color of the Indian people also differ from region to region.

Religious Diversity in India

In the religious sphere also India possesses great diversity. Almost all the principal religions of the world like Brahmanism, Buddhism, Jainism, Islam and Christianity are found here. Most of these religions are further sub-divided into various sects and divisions. For example, Buddhism is divided into Hinayana and Mahayana; the Jainism is divided into Digambaras and Septembers and the Brahmanism is divided into the Vaishnavas, Shivas, Shaktis, Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj etc. In addition the primitive men have their own peculiar cults which are quite distinct from these major religions. Thus we can say India possesses completely diversity on religious sphere. In the social sphere also the general customs and manners of the people greatly different. People of different regions use different types of dresses. Their eating habits and customs are also quite different. Certain people are quite civilized while other are yet backward in their customs. Thus, we find as Radhakumud Mukherjee has put it, "India is a museum of cults and customs, creeds and cultures, faiths and tongues, racial types and social systems.

Political Diversity in India

The diversity in culture, races, language, religion etc. greatly stood in the way of political unity in India. As a result from the earliest times, India has been divided into several independent principalities. The rulers of these principalities were always engaged in wars with each other for supremacy. This disunity and friction was fully exploited by the foreign invaders to bring India under their subjugation. No doubt certain rulers like Chandra Gupta Maurya, Ashoka, Samudra Gupta, Ala- ud- din Khiliji and Akbar had subjugated these principalities and established strong empire but they were only handful of the rulers who could accomplish it. For most of the time India presented the spectacle of a divided country. Even under this mighty rulers a real unity could not be established both due to the lack of means of communication and transportation as well as national consciousness. In short, we can say that really speaking India could never be united politically.In this way diversity pervades on the whole of Indian subcontinent. This diversity is so much so that a foreigner will simply stare at this. Anyway, such diversities are not the hallmarks of Indian culture. The main theme of this culture is unity which absorbs all the diversities.

**CULTURAL HETEROGENEITY IN INDIAN CITIES WITH A CASE STUDY ON DELHI**

The cultural homogeneity and heterogeneity of India is reflected in its cities as well. Big metropolitan cities are the biggest examples of culturally homogeneous and heterogeneous cities as people belonging to diverse regions, religions, social, political and economic backgrounds travel and migrate to metros for business, livelihood, political events, legal chores etc.

Cultural Diversity in Delhi

Delhi being the capital of India, reflects the cultural diversity and religious unity of India. It is difficult to define the culture and religion of India. As there is a continuous inflow of people from all parts of India, the cultural diversity is very prominent. Being an ancient city Delhi has the shadows of its past. There are discos for youngsters, but still the Quwallies at the Nizamuddin Shrine floats in the air, the silence of the night is broken by the *Prabhat ferries* and the singing of Gurbani (the verses from the Granth Sahaib), the bells in the temples still tells about God being everywhere, the Sunday masses in Churches still attract the otherwise busy residents of India. People take a break from the hurried life during the ancient fairs and festivals like 'Phoolwalo-Ki-Sair which are still oraganised in traditional way.

Religious Diversity in Delhi

Delhi, with growing times has emerged as a cosmopolitan city, synthesizing people, language and culture from across the country. Delhi lives by its own beliefs and culture, but the endearment of its people to their religion and regions can be seen during festivals. Delhi is a state of diverse religions. Although the city has strong history of Persian, Tuglaq and Mughal rule which inspired Islam into the region, but present-day Delhi is Hindu dominated. Starting from Raksha-bandhan, Delhiites celebrate all the festivals from Id, Guru Purab to Christmas and New Year.

Hinduism is Delhi's majority religion, with approximately 82.7% of Delhi's population. The city has large communities of Muslims (10%), Sikhs (5%), Baha'i (0.1%), Jains (1.1%) and Christians (0.94%).Other minority religions include Buddhism, Zoroastrianism and Judaism. Punjabi and Hindi are widely spoken languages in Delhi. Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi in Devanagari Script or Gurmukhi Script & English are the principal written languages of the city. There is a sizeable Punjabi and Urdu speaking population. Punjabi and Urdu have official second language status in Delhi.

To understand this religious diversity in detail, we can focus on the population living in different areas in delhi. As we can see from above, Hindus are maximum thus there existence is also seen in almost every part of delhi. Rohini , Shalimar Bagh, Rajouri Garden, Pitampura, Tri Nagar etc.

Muslim Community is 10% of delhi’s population., It is seen that they live in a single area close to each other.Old Delhi- Chandni Chowk, Daryaganj, Jamia Nagar, Shaheen Bagh, Nizamuddin, Mehrauli and Hauz Khas Village, Ballimaran , see a strong presence of Muslim population in Delhi.

The amalgamation of various cultures, traditions, religions has painted Delhi in colour which are brought from all over India. This "Unity in Diversity" can be seen in social and cultural gatherings where people from all communities can be seen on one platform sharing one common view. Be it Holi, Diwali, Id, Guru Purab or Buddha Purnima; you will find the same vigor and bliss among people from different communities.

The Jama Masjid of the walled city is an excellent example of Indo-Persian art, whereas the Birla Temple and the Chattarpur Temple complex are considered as a blend of the North and South Indian architectural styles. Gurdwara Raquab Ganj, Sheesh Ganj and Bangla Sahib stand tall for Sikhism, whereas St. Thomas and St. Columbus toll their bells for Christians. The Bahai Lotus temple has introduced the Bahai way of worship in Delhi. Not to forget the ancient religions of Jainism and Buddhism whose genesis is in India. The monastery near the Interstate bus terminus is hub of Tibetan culture in India. Not only for the Monastery but the place has acquired fame as shopping mall. Though 'Parsies' reside mainly in western India, Delhi opens its arms for one and all.

India does not impose any official religion on its people. Through the ages Delhi has accepted, adapted and moulded itself to everything from Islam, rather from Aryan culture to Christianity. It adopted herself with the changing faces of history. It got the destroyed many times but it has retained the culture, heritage, religion and the tradition of its time for the generations to come.

Regional and Linguistic Diversity in Delhi

Delhi is a city with people belonging from various regions of the country speaking different languages. It is mostly dominated by Hindus so Hindi is most widely spoken. Also most of the schools in Delhi has Hindi as one of their main language course. Urdu is also spoken in Delhi especially in the Old Delhi regions of Chandni Chowk which is dominated by muslim Community. Punjabi is also a highly spoken in Delhi by nearly one third of population with many people coming to delhi during partition and finding their livelihood here. The percentage of Punjabi is high but people who are very fluent speakers are very less. Mostly Sikhs and old people have good command over Punjabi. This is due to the fact that most private schools do not have Punjabi in their course structures, hence the young generation is losing its grip on the language. One of the most prevalent language today in Delhi specially among the middle and upper class is English which widely spoken and taught in most of the schools. Some of the other languages spoken in Delhi are Marathi, Sindhi, Gujarati, Nepali, Tamil, Oriya, Malayalam, Konkani and more with people coming to Delhi from various parts of the country. Delhi mostly celebrates all the festivals of different regions like Ganesh Chaturthi of Maharashtra, Durga Puja of Bengal, Navratras and Dandia of Gujarat among many others.

Delhi is a hot destination for people from different parts of the country because of it being a city with good educational infrastructure base and universities like Delhi University, IIT-Delhi, National Law university etc. We see students from North East ,Punjab Haryana , South India coming here to study in the reputed colleges. Delhi shares its borders with Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab, which influence the life-styles and language of the people. Migrations from various parts of India has led to pockets of has diverse culture coming together in various parts of Delhi. For example, R.K. Puram has a concentration of South Indians, while C.R. Park has a concentration of Bengalies.

Delhi being so developed and urbanized is a also a location of employment opportunity. It along with NCR is a hub of lot of MNC’s from all over the world which provide jobs well educated people. People from other parts of the country who are skilled and unskilled both come to Delhi in huge numbers in search of jobs. We see a lot of Bihar people as in labour sites, rickshaw pulling and creative work of hosiery etc. People from north east and Nepal come and have their own some small street food shops. Delhi’s living standards are raising which increased the demand of the products in the market and hence created more job opportunities which is one of the major causes of attraction for people from around the country to come to Delhi and try to find some work which earns them a living for themselves and for their families.

People in search of job and good quality education leave their city in hope of better future and higher incomes which they can achieve in such a big city like Delhi which readily accepts people from different culture religions speaking different language and provide them ample opportunities to keep growing.

Many times cases of discrimination against outside Delhi students, especially students from north eastern parts of our country and south India, have been reported and highlighted in media. But often such crimes are strictly dealt with and all people protest again misdoings irrespective of their regional and linguistic background.

Economic Diversity in Delhi

Urban cities are an ideal example of the stark heterogeneity on the economic aspect as well. Not only the city of Delhi has 10 billionaires having a cumulative net-worth of USD 29.53 billion but also has more than half of it’s population living in urban slums where there is an inadequate provision of basic services. According to the study, titled “A situational analysis of the young child in India”, 52 percent of Delhi’s population resides in urban slums.

According to 2010 data from the United Nations Development Programme, an estimated 14.2% of Indians live below the country's national poverty line[2]. We know that there is a humongous difference between people, viewpoints, feelings etc. between the rich and the poor. But this income disparity is growing and at a rapid rate. In Delhi, spending of a rich person increased by 63% whereas this figure was just 33% for poor. In 2012, the average income of the richest group was 180-times more than that of the poorest. The richest 10% of Indian society have seen highest growth while the poorest 10% have seen the slowest increase in incomes. The remaining 80% of the people have seen roughly the same levels of growth ranging between 40% and 50% over 12 years. That means that for 90% of people, annual growth in income was just over 4% in India.

Clearly, economic policy that resulted in highGDP growth for most of this period has not trickled down to the neediest. Rather, it appears to be benefitting the already affluent sections more.

Delhi has people with every occupation ranging from rickshaw pullers to construction labours to small businessmen to MNC workers to big entrepreneurs.

There is a clear demarcation between the rich and the poor. This demarcation is not limited just to the wealth but also to the locations. Locations like Punjabi Bagh, Connaught Place have people from richest sections residing there. Similarly, there are areas like Seemapuri, Sultanpuri , slums of Yamuna Pushta where poor section of the society resides.

**INTERVIEWS WITH DIFFERENT PEOPLE IN DELHI**

**Interview with a Rickshaw Puller in Govindpuri: 300 words**

We interviewed Raj Kumar who is a rickshaw puller in Govindpuri area. He is a Hindu who hails from Darbhanga, Bihar. He is the sole bread earner in his family of 6. He barely earns 8K per month out of which considerable sum goes on to paying out the rent of the auto-rickshaw. He came to Delhi as conditions in his hometown were pretty bad and the paltry sum he earned was insufficient. However the conditions of his slum where he lives currently are appalling. One of the challenges that he face is that he has to fight most of the times with the passengers who pay him less than the pre-decided figure. He is discontented with the fact that he is ill treated most of the times by almost all his passengers including adolescents. Sometimes even constables also demand bribes from him. He complains that government does not provide facilities and concessions in healthcare, education etc.

**Interview with a NorthEast Student: 300 words**

We interviewed Biren. He belonged to Lachung Village of Sikkim. He was 34 years old and owns a chinese stall in corporate region of Okhla. He lives with his wife and 2 children in Shyamnagar Village in Okhla. He came to delhi in 2011 on the recommendation of his friend who also owned a momos stall in hauz khas to earn more in they city. After 4 months he called his family to Delhi. He earns around Rs 12000-15000 monthly.His wife helps him in preparing the food. His aim is to give his family a better life get his children well educated so that they don’t work like he does. Asked about the difficulties he faced in Delhi, he was very unhappy from the behavior of the police who would ask for money every week to keep his stall running. About recent incidents about discrimination against North East students he mentioned that some people have this racist mentality and are rude towards them as if they are not indian , but many people are good. He has many friends of other community in his neighbourhood.

**Interview with a middle aged-muslim:**

We also interviewed Mohd. Azharuddin. He has a big beard and usually wears a Kurta-pyjama. He lives in Okhla and has his own stationary shop. He is 48 years old and and lives in a joint family. Including him, there are 14 members of his family sharing the same roof. He and his brothers still give a share of their salaries to their father, who takes all the major decisions of the house. He was born in Aligarh (Uttar Pradesh) and came to Delhi when he was 7. he told us that while his family was shifting, none sold them the house in non-Muslim localities. While being interviewed, he explained that he was subject to a lot discrimination in various aspects of his life. He revealed that he has noticed that when other people are checked casually in Metro Stations, he is always checked very carefully, as if he is a terrorist. Most of his friends are Muslim too. He also said that he does not feel 100% safe and secure in areas where there is very less Muslim populations even in a place like Delhi.

**Interview with a South Indian:**

We interviewed mr. Pandarsamya Arjunan. He is 21 years old and hails from Vijaywada, Andhra Pradesh. Although the had done his schooling from his hometown, he came to Delhi for doing his bachelors from a reputed college. He is 21 year old, and lives in hostel of the college, which consists 85% of the people from Delhi. During the interview he told us that he was not subject to any such discrimination from his colleagues. He found it very tough to adjust to the new city initially, primarily because of the language barrier. With time he picked up the Hindi language and mixed up very well with others. He also has a subgroup with other Telugu speaking students and they often visit Andhra Bhawan together. He told us that being with educated people he wasn’t subject to any discrimination but he admitted that he heard some of the South Indians being called “Madrassi” casually. He is often compared to the likes of Rajnikanth for anything he does and finds it very annoying.

**HOMOGENEITY IN DELHI**

Inspite of all the differences that persist in our society on the lines of caste, creed, linguistic lines and religion, the citizens are bound together by the common bond of nationality i.e. feeling of belongingness to the same country.There is a basic feeling unity which runs through the Indian mainstream of life and thought. Indian culture has been a traditional culture which is truly oriental and which conforms to the teachings and precepts of our saints and sages.It is the dynamism and the flexibility that have enabled Indian culture to survive despite its many diversities and heavy odds. Through these di­versities runs a common stream, as it were, and the similarity and unity of outlook can be noticed from North to South and East to West. Indian culture is actually a continuous synthesis, and has absorbed many external influences in the course of history.The real strength of Indian culture lies in basic unity, vigour and the ability to contain an amazing diversity within itself. In this country there are people who belong to opposite schools of thought and who never seem to agree on anything. And yet, the concepts of one basic culture and one nation have continued. Our Indian culture which is the source of the homogeneity has its strength embedded into the basic principles of basic unity, vigour and the ability to contain an amazing diversity within itself. Another notable characteristic of Indian culture is that it has always been based on moral and religious values; on these values the outlook shows an amazing similarity, almost throughout the country. Although there are groups which seem to be always on the warpath, and there are dissidents who question the basic framework on which the Indian polity is based, yet they constitute a very small fraction of the total population. There has always been a feeling of acceptance in our culture that has helped in inculcating the feeling of togetherness, harmony and mutual co-existence. This remains inspite of our differences on various ideologies and opinions on various issues. People share their common differences and unite together on various fronts despite of their differences. For example, during an international cricket match featuring Indian Cricket Team, from all corners of the city and the country, comes a uniform voice that cheers India. Also the political parties have representation from almost all sections of the society who share a common ideologies. This helps them raising the common concerns of the society on the political front that don’t cater to a particular section of a society but affect all. Some of the keys issues are rampant corruption, persistent unemployment, rising terrorism etc, The same pattern could be seen in the various fields and industries like music, art, sports, film industry etc where there is no sole representation from a particular group. Even a small section-Paris that represent less than .01 % of the country’s total population have huge representation in the economic front. Many major industrial houses like The Tatas are owned by them. The city of Delhi has welcomed people cutting across all the other social barriers and making them citizens of Delhi. These citizens often unite on to common grievances like. corruption, electricity,gas etc and atrocities that they face a citizen. As a citizen of the city and a country , people from all sections unite to raise voice against atrocities committed against a single group. For example, in the recent case of a murder of a student from North-East region, the protesters who protested against the government’s inaction not only included the students and people of North-east origin but also included citizens from other sections as well. Young India has broken away the various social barriers and brought uniform thinking that sees all only through one vision of nationality. Pillars of the social barriers are slowly and slowly plunging away. With the boom in the private sector, young entrepreneurs and multinational companies are providing bulk of the jobs primarily on the criteria of merit and discarding other social parameters of caste, creed, colour, race, gender and religion. This has brought homogeneity in the society not only in terms of bringing social and political changes but also bringing out changes in the mindset of the residents of the cities and across the nation.

Bibliography

[1] These are collected by the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO).

[2] http://www.undp.org.in/whatwedo/poverty\_reduction

http://daily.bhaskar.com/article/DEL-unity-in-diversity-a-glimpse-of-delhis-hazrat-nizamuddin-shrine-4441586-NORhtml

============================================