



1. What is meant by cultural diversity? Why is India considered to be a very diverse country?

Ans:

The term diversity implies differences rather than inequalities.

- When we say that India is a nation of great cultural diversity, we mean that there are many different types of social groups and communities living here.
- Different types of social groups and communities live here. There are communities with different cultural markers like language, religion, sect, race or caste.
- India is a pluralistic society. There is unity in diversity but its excessive diversity is becoming a challenge.
- When diverse communities (linguistic communities, religious communities, sects and so on) are, also, a part of a larger entity like a nation, then difficulties may be created by competition or conflict between them.
- Cultural diversity can present challenges which arise from the fact that cultural identities are very powerful-they can arouse intense passions and are often able to mobilize large numbers of people.
- Sometimes, cultural differences are accompanied by economic and social inequalities and this further complicates things.
- Measures to address the inequalities or injustices suffered by one community can provoke opposition from other communities. The situation gets worse when scarce resources like water, jobs or government funds have to be shared.
- 1632 different languages and dialects, different religions, diversity in climatic conditions and topography are causing serious challenges to the country.

2. What is community identity and how is it formed?

Ans:

1. Community identity is based on birth and belonging rather than on some forms of acquired qualifications or accomplishments.
2. These kind of identities are called ascriptive i.e. they are determined by birth and individual's choice is not involved.
3. People feel a deep sense of security and satisfaction in belonging to communities.
4. Ascriptive identities such as community identities are difficult to shake off; even if we choose to disown them, others may continue to identify us by those very markers of belonging.
5. Expanding and overlapping circles of community ties like family, kinship, ethnicity, language give meaning to our world and gives us a sense of identity.
6. Ascriptive identities and community feelings are universal. Everyone has a motherland, a mother tongue, a family, a faith. And we all are equally committed to our respective identities.
7. Our community provides us with our mother-tongue and the cultural values through which we comprehend the world. It, also, anchors our self-identity.
8. The process of socialization involves continuous dialogue with our significant surroundings such as parents, kin, family and community. Thus, community is a very important part of our

identity.

9. Community conflicts are very hard to deal with since each side thinks of the other side as a hated enemy and there is a tendency to exaggerate the virtues of one's own side as well as the vices of the other side.

10. It is very hard for people on either side to see that they are constructing matching but reversed mirror images of each other.

11. At times, both sides are indeed equally wrong or right; at other times, history may judge one side to be the aggressor and the other to be the victim.

12. But this can happen long after the heat of the conflict has cooled down.

13. Some notion of a mutually agreeable truth is hard to arrive at in situations of identity conflict.

3. Why is it difficult to define the nation? How are nation and state related in modern society?

Ans: A nation is a peculiar sort of community that is easy to describe but hard to define.

- We can describe many nations founded on the basis of common cultural, historical institutions like a shared religion, language, ethnicity, history or regional culture. But it is hard to come up with any defining features for nation.
- For every possible criterion there are exceptions and counter examples.
- For example-there are many nations that do not share a common language, religion, ethnicity and so on. On the other hand, there are many languages, religions or ethnicities that are shared across nations. But this does not lead to the transformation of a single unified nation.

Nation at the simplest level, is a community of communities.

Members of a nation share the desire to be a part of the same political collectivity. Nations are communities that have a state of their own.

- In modern times, there has been a one-to-one bond between nation and state. But this development is new.
- It wasn't true of the past that a single state could represent a single nation or every nation must have its own state.
- For example, Soviet Union explicitly recognized that the peoples it governed were of different nations.
- Also, people constituting a nation may actually be citizens or residents of different states. There are more Jamaicans living outside Jamaica than in Jamaica.
- Dual citizenship could, also, be a possibility. These laws allow citizens of a particular state to also simultaneously be citizens of another state. Example, Jewish Americans may be citizens of Israel as well as the USA.
- Thus, nation is a community that has been able to acquire a state of its own. It's, also seen that states are finding it more and more necessary to claim that they represent a nation.
- A feature of the modern era is the establishment of democracy and nationalism as dominant sources of political legitimacy. This implies that nation is the most accepted or proper justification for a state, while people are the ultimate source of legitimacy of the nation.

4. Why are states often suspicious of cultural diversity?

Ans:

- States try to establish their political legitimacy through nation-building strategies.
- They sought to secure the loyalty and obedience of their citizens through policies of assimilation or integration.

- This is because most states have generally been suspicious of cultural diversity and have tried to reduce or eliminate it. The states fear that the recognition of varied culturally diverse identities such as language, ethnicity, religion will lead to social fragmentation and prevent the creation of a harmonious society.
- Also, apart from the fear of fragmentation, accommodating these differences is politically challenging.
- Thus so many states have resorted to either suppressing these identities or ignoring them in the political domain.

5. What is regionalism? What factors is it usually based on?

Ans:

Regionalism in India is rooted in India's diversity of languages, cultures, tribes and religions. It is encouraged by the geographical concentration of these identity markers in particular regions, and fuelled by a sense of regional deprivation. Indian federalism has been a means of accommodating these regional sentiments. From Presidencies to States After Independence, initially the Indian state continued with the British-Indian arrangement dividing India into large provinces, called Presidencies. Madras, Bombay and Calcutta were the three major presidencies. Soon after Independence and the adoption of the constitution, all these units of the colonial era had to be reorganized into ethno-linguistic states within the Indian union in response to strong popular agitations. Language coupled with regional and tribal identity and not religion has provided the most powerful instrument for the formation of ethno-national identity in India. But this does not mean that all linguistic communities have got statehood. For example- Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand and Jharkhand. In their formation, language did not play any role. A combination of ethnicity based on tribal identity, language, regional deprivation and ecology provided the basis.

***** END *****