



## MIRRORING THE INDIAN TRADITION, CUSTOM AND CULTURE

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### ABSTRACT

*The word culture itself defines that it is a social phenomenon that reflects the characteristics of a particular society. Cultural is something that is acquired and it also consists of a lot of traits such as habits values believes are music language knowledge and rituals. Culture is a concept and not a concrete one. It generally speaks of food, clothing, rituals, art and so on. Where a custom is defined as a traditional way of behaving or doing something that is unique to a specific society, location or time. When we speak of Indian marriages we have a lot of traditional practices, gesture, behaviour, event or act and as time passes it becomes a custom. Agriculture and society on the planet as its own set of customs and traditions that have evolved over time. A religious or social custom passed down through generations becomes a tradition. A tradition is a practice that has been passed down through generations and it is observed by the majority of people in the society or culture where is a custom can be short left and observed only at the family or individual level.*

**Keywords:** Tradition, Culture, Custom

#### AN OVERVIEW ON INDIAN TRADITION

Indian tradition is a rich and diverse tapestry of customs and beliefs that have been passed down from generation to generation. India is a land of many different religions, languages, and cultures, and each one has its own unique tradition and way of life. Hinduism, Buddhism,



Jainism, and Sikhism are some of the major religions practiced in India, each with its own set of traditions and rituals.

One of the most important traditions in Indian culture is the concept of family and community. Family is considered to be the cornerstone of Indian society, and extended families often live together under one roof. Festivals and celebrations are an integral part of Indian tradition, and are often centred around family gatherings and community events.

Another important aspect of Indian tradition is the concept of hospitality and respect for guests. Guests are considered to be a representation of God, and are treated with the utmost respect and kindness. Food also plays a key role in Indian tradition, with a wide variety of regional cuisines that reflect the diversity of the country.

Indian tradition also includes a rich history of art, music, dance, and literature. Classical Indian dance forms like Bharatanatyam, Kathak, and Kuchipudi are known for their grace and precision, while Indian music is characterized by its use of intricate rhythms and melodies. Indian literature is also celebrated worldwide, with works like the Ramayana and the Mahabharata considered to be among the greatest epics ever written.

Indian tradition is a vast and vibrant tapestry of customs, beliefs, and practices that reflect the diversity and richness of the country's culture. From family and community to art, music, and literature, Indian tradition is a testament to the enduring spirit of a people who have prevailed through thousands of years of history and adversity.

### **Evolved Indian Tradition**

Indian tradition is known to be one of the oldest and diverse cultures in the world. The unique and evolving customs and beliefs have been passed down from generations to generations, making the Indian culture rich in history and tradition. However, as the world keeps advancing, so does the Indian tradition.

One way the Indian tradition has evolved is through technology. In the past, people would send letters or communicate verbally to their loved ones. Nowadays, with advanced technology, people can easily reach out to their friends and family members across the globe, thanks to social media platforms and instant messaging services.

Another way Indian tradition has evolved is through its cuisine. Indian cuisine today has been revolutionized to different Flavors and tastes that leave an indescribable experience. There are various Indian restaurants globally that offer individuals the opportunity to try different traditional Indian food.



Lastly, the Indian tradition has evolved through fashion. The Indian sari, which is a significant symbol for Indian dressing, has evolved to unique designs that are appealing to young women while maintaining the originality of the traditional dress.

Indian tradition's evolution has led to an ever-changing but fascinating culture that continues to fascinate the world.

### **Custom**

The word custom is used to apply to the totality of behaviour patterns which are carried by tradition and lodged in the group, as contrasted with the more random personal activities of the individual. It is not properly applicable to those aspects of communal activity which are obviously determined by biological considerations. The habit of eating fried chicken is a custom, but the biologically determined habit of eating is not.

Custom is a variable common-sense concept which has served as the matrix for the development of the more refined and technical anthropological concept of culture. It is not purely denotative and objective a term as culture and has a slightly affective quality indicated by the fact that one uses it more easily to refer to geographically remote, to primitive or to bygone societies than to one's own. When applied to the behaviour of one's own group the term is usually limited to relatively unimportant and unformalized behaviour patterns which lie between individual habits and social institutions.

### **Characteristics of Indian Customs**

Indian customs encompass a wide range of traditions and practices that have been passed down over generations. From the vibrant celebrations during festivals like Diwali and Holi to the importance placed on hospitality and respect for elders, Indian customs are deeply rooted in the country's culture and history. Customs also vary greatly depending on the region and religion, making for a diverse and colourful tapestry of traditions. Some customs include wearing bright colours and intricate designs for weddings, performing puja (worship) rituals at home, and sharing food and sweets during festivities. Overall, Indian customs play a significant role in defining the country's identity and enriching the lives of its people.

Indian customs are diverse and varied, reflecting the country's rich cultural heritage and history. From traditional wedding ceremonies to religious festivals, Indian customs are steeped in symbolism and ritual. They provide a glimpse into the depth of India's social and cultural fabric and make the country truly unique. Whether it's the colourful clothing, the mouth-watering cuisine, or the majestic architecture, Indian customs are sure to make a lasting impression.

### **Out-turn of Indian Customs**



Indian customs hold great significance in shaping the Indian society, culture, and traditions. Some of the important effects of Indian customs are:

**Strong community bonds:** Indian customs are known for promoting strong community bonds. The customs of celebrating festivals, weddings, and other important occasions together, help in fostering a sense of unity and togetherness among people.

**Preservation of culture:** Indian customs have played a major role in preserving the rich cultural heritage of India. Many customs and rituals have been passed down from generation to generation, and they continue to be an important part of Indian culture.

**Promotion of spirituality:** Indian customs have a deep connection with spirituality. Various customs like the practice of yoga, meditation, and visiting temples, mosques, and other religious places, help in promoting spirituality and inner peace.

**Respect for elders:** Indian customs teach respect and reverence for elders. Touching the feet of elders as a sign of respect and seeking their blessings is a common practice in India.

Overall, Indian customs have a profound effect on the Indian society and culture, and they continue to be an integral part of the Indian way of life.

### **Cultural beliefs**

Cultural beliefs are beliefs that are learned and shared across groups of people. Because the amount of information in a culture is too large for any one individual to master, individuals know different subsets of the cultural knowledge and thus can vary in their cultural competence. The first, and perhaps most crucial, elements of culture are its values and beliefs. Values are a culture's standard for discerning what is good and just in society. Values are deeply embedded and critical for transmitting and teaching a culture's beliefs. Beliefs are the tenets or convictions that people hold to be true. Individuals in a society have specific beliefs, but they also share collective values. To illustrate the difference, Americans commonly believe in the American Dream—that anyone who works hard enough will be successful and wealthy. Underlying this belief is the American value that wealth is good and important.

Values help shape a society by suggesting what is good and bad, beautiful and ugly, sought or avoided. Consider the value that the United States places upon youth. Children represent innocence and purity, while a youthful adult appearance signifies sexuality. Shaped by this value, individuals spend millions of dollars each year on cosmetic products and surgeries to look young and beautiful. The United States also has an individualistic culture, meaning people place a high value on individuality and independence. In contrast, many other cultures are collectivist, meaning the welfare of the group and group relationships are a primary value.



Living up to a culture's values can be difficult. It's easy to value good health, but it's hard to quit smoking. Marital monogamy is valued, but many spouses engage in infidelity. Cultural diversity and equal opportunities for all people are valued in the United States, yet the country's highest political offices have been dominated by white men.

Values are not static; they vary across time and between groups as people evaluate, debate, and change collective societal beliefs. Values also vary from culture to culture. For example, cultures differ in their values about what kinds of physical closeness are appropriate in public. It's rare to see two male friends or coworkers holding hands in the United States where that behaviour often symbolizes romantic feelings. But in many nations, masculine physical intimacy is considered natural in public. This difference in cultural values came to light when people reacted to photos of former president George W. Bush holding hands with the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia in 2005. A simple gesture, such as hand-holding, carries great symbolic differences across cultures.

### **Indian Cultural Beliefs**

India is a country with a rich cultural heritage. It is a land of diversity where people of different religions, languages, and customs coexist. Indian cultural beliefs are rooted in ancient scriptures and sacred texts. Here are some of the most prominent cultural beliefs of India:

**Dharma** is the ultimate code of conduct in Indian culture. It represents righteousness, justice, and duty. It is believed that one's dharma is determined by their birth, gender, and profession. The ultimate goal of every individual is to follow their dharma and attain salvation.

**Karma** is the law of cause and effect. It is believed that every action has a consequence, good or bad. Therefore, every individual should perform their actions with a sense of responsibility and awareness of their impact on others.

**Reincarnation** is the belief that after death, the soul is reborn in another body. It is believed that the quality of one's present life is determined by their past actions (karma). Therefore, every individual should strive to accumulate good karma for a better future.

**Ahimsa** is the principle of non-violence. It is believed that every living being is interconnected and should be treated with compassion and respect. Therefore, violence in any form is condemned in Indian culture.

**Vedas** are the ancient Hindu scriptures that serve as the basis of Indian culture. They contain hymns, prayers, and philosophical discourses that guide the spiritual and moral life of Indians.



These are some of the cultural beliefs that shape Indian society and its people. They reflect the wisdom and depth of Indian philosophy and provide a unique perspective on life and existence.

The novel called the god of small things speaks about a lot of social values of the Indian society. It is set in a small town near Kottayam in Kerala, this novel describes clearly about the culture of Indian society and it is also was story of cast exploitation at the centre of which the forbidden love between Ammu, a character in the novel and the untouchable Velutha. Arundhati Roy in the novel the God of small things is aiming to portray the differences in the Indian society caste upon its people due to different born under different circumstances. The rights you are supposed to have as a human no matter the gender for the class you are from and for the sole reason of being a human. In the novel the God of small things its peaks that the religion is portrayed as a source of traditional society conventions and even a conflict. Since the novel is set in Kerala a state in India there are two main religious forces present in the novel: Christianity and Hinduism.

The Palace of Illusions is a brilliant piece of novel that aims to browse the agony, domination, sufferings, cultural crisis, identity crisis faced by women in contemporary society. In the novel, Divakaruni focuses on the consciousness and strength of the protagonist Draupadi who is well aware about her responsibility, duty, interest, and the rights. In the novel, Divakaruni rewrites the story of the Mahabharata through Draupadi's perspectives in order to foreground her subjectivity and individuality which has been ignored by Vyasa in the original epic. Through the narration of Draupadi herself, Divakaruni wants to show her self-consciousness, awareness, power, agency, subjectivity, and resistance against the patriarchal notions and the traditional role assigned for the women in the Third world countries, specifically in Hindu Indian culture. She belongs to the Third world Indian society where women are given subordinated position and are bound within the family reputation and honour. That is why their rebellion against this male-centred notion is considered as against the dharma of a woman. In this challenging situation, Draupadi has taken a stance, in balance, to subvert the position of a woman given by patriarchal Third world Hindu society.

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