

SPICE: The Characteristics of Civilization

Civilization is defined as a complex culture with five characteristics.

Social Characteristic

- Nature and complexity of social structure
- Potential for individual and group mobility
- Functions of family
- Roles and powers of family members
- Extent of urbanization
- Extent of links between elite and masses
- Population density
- Nature of leisure pursuits

Political Characteristic

- Degree of political centralization
- Extent and nature of bureaucracy
- Ideological foundations of government
- Degree and nature of contact between state & society
- Targets of loyalty: local vs. central governing authorities

Intellectual (Technological) Characteristic

- Level of education in society
- Role of the educated and their theories
- Available recorded information
- Importance of search for new discoveries
- Use of inventions to improve daily lives
- Modernization of infrastructure
- Levels of technology used

Cultural (Religious) Characteristic

- Dominant religious & philosophical systems
- Dominant artistic & literary styles
- Degree of cultural tolerance within society
- Degree of interest in foreign cultures & ideas
- Society's support of cultural pursuits
- Role of religion in society
- Role of religious figures within society
- Nature of cultural support of gender & social hierarchies

Economic Characteristic

- Role of agriculture in overall economy
- Role of merchants in society
- Labor systems [slavery, serfdom, etc...]
- Role of landlords in society
- Role of manufacturing
- Levels of internal and international trade
- Gender division in economy
- Available goods and resources

OPTIONAL ADDITION

Environmental Characteristic

- Location of places on earth
- Geographical feature of regions
- Human interaction with physical features
- Unique physical & human characteristics of place
- Human interaction with physical features
- Biodiversity and ecosystems

SPICE: The Characteristics of Civilization

Keys words defining the five characteristics.

Social Characteristic

- Class
- Community
- Discrimination
- Ethnicity
- Family Structure
- Family Roles
- Gender Roles
- Interaction
- Population
- Rank
- Nationality
- Segregation

Political Characteristic

- Alliance
- Citizenship
- Communism
- Democracy
- Enforcement
- Government
- Laws
- Leaders
- Power
- Rights
- Voting
- Warfare

Intellectual (Technological) Characteristic

- Education
- Theories
- Documentation
- Technology
- Communication
- Written Records
- Knowledge
- Inventions
- Communication
- Written Records
- Knowledge
- Inventions

Cultural (Religious) Characteristic

- Art
- Behaviors
- Customs & Dress
- Dance
- Ideas
- Language
- Literature
- Music
- Practice
- Restrictions
- Traditions
- Values

Economic Characteristic

- Business
- Capital
- Exchange System
- Goods & Services
- Inflation
- Investment
- Labor
- Market
- Money
- Production
- Supply & Demand
- Stock
- Trade
- Unemployment

OPTIONAL ADDITION

Environmental Characteristic

- Ecosystems
- Interaction
- Climate
- Landforms (Mountains, Rivers)
- Location (Habitat)
- Movement (Migration)
- Lifeforms (Plants & Animals)
- Pollution
- Population
- Resources
- Systems
- Transportation