

*e-text*Paper-CC12 (*U-III*)

Human and Social Geography

# Major Human races in The World

## (Classification of Human Races )

**Dr. Supriya**

Assistant Professor (Guest)

Ph. D: Geography; M.A. in Geography

Post Doc. Fellow (ICSSR), UGC- NET-JRF

Department of Geography

Patna University, Patna

Mob: 9006640841

Email: [supriyavatsa52256@gmail.com](mailto:supriyavatsa52256@gmail.com)

<b>Content Writer &amp; Affiliation</b>	<b>Dr Supriya, Asst. Professor (Guest), Patna University</b>
<b>Subject Name</b>	<b>Geography</b>
<b>Paper Code</b>	<b>CC-12</b>
<b>Paper Name</b>	<b>Human and Social Geography</b>
<b>Title of Topic</b>	<b>Classification of Human Races</b>
<b>Objectives</b>	<b>To understand the concept of race and Examined the different views about classification of human races in the World</b>
<b>Keywords</b>	<b>Races, Caucasoid, Mongoloid, Negroid</b>

# Classification of Human Races

Dr. Supriya

**Concept of Race:** A Race may be defined as division of mankind into classes of individuals possessing common physical characteristics, traits, appearance that is transmissible by descents & sufficient to characterize it as a distinct human type. Race is a biological grouping within human species distinguished or classified according to genetically transmitted differences. Anthropologists define race as a principal division of mankind, marked by physical characteristics that breed. According to Vidal de la Blache: "A race is great divisions of mankind, the members of which though individually vary, are characterized as a group by certain body characteristics as a group by certain body characteristics which are transmitted by nature & retained from one generation to another". Race is a biological concept. The term race should not be used in connection with those grouping of mankind such as nation, religion, community & language which depends on feelings, ideas or habits of people and can be changes by the conscious wishes of the individual. There is no pure race because of migration and consequent intermixing. Race cannot be changed and there is no pure race as the ecumene is spreading & non Ecumene contracting.

## Classification of Races

Different ethnologists have classified human races differently. Of these few most important are as follows:

The very first attempt to identify the physical features of some human populations Racial Classification is found in ancient Sanskrit literature. The dark complexion Nishads (Australoids) were distinguished from the yellow coloured Kiratas (Indo-Mongoloids). These two were again different from the light coloured Indo-Aryans.

In 200 B.C., the Chinese distinguished mankind into five groups on the basis of skin colour and Egyptians into four racial types.

Bernier's attempt to classify humans may be considered as the first attempt to classify human race in to four groups. In 1921 Bradley made another attempt to systematize the racial types using dichotomous method and distinguished into

three racial types, i.e., White (Bearded and Beardless); Negroes (Straight haired and Woolly Haired), Intermediates (Mulattoes).

*Linnaeus* (1758) introduced binary nomenclature and proposed a systematic classification of human species, *Homo Sapiens* into six subdivisions, viz., *Homo ferus* (Savage), *Homo Americans*, *Homo europeans*, *Homo asiaticus*, *Homo asser* (Negro) and *Homo monstrous* (abnormal).

In 1775 *Blumenbach*, a German scientist studied the craniological material and classified mankind into five types: 1) Caucasian, 2) Mongolian, 3) Ethiopian, 4) American, 5) Malayan.

In 1848 *Pickering* identified eleven human races, viz., Mongolian, MalayPolynesian, Australian, Papuan, Negrito, Hindu, Nubian, Hottentot, Abyssinian and White.

In 1870 *Huxley* proposed a classification of mankind including five principle races divided into fourteen secondary races. Later on *Haeckel Muller* (1879), *Topinard* (1885) and *Quatrefages* (1889) further slightly modified *Huxley's* classification.

**Deniker's Classification:** In 1889 *Deniker* proposed a classification and divided mankind into twenty one races depending on hair form and nose form and skin colour as secondary traits. This classification is classic and widely accepted scheme. The brief description of this classification is as follows:

**1) Woolly Hair, Broad Nose:** This group include Bushmen, Negrito, Negro Bantu, Melanesian-Papuan, on the basis of their skin colour they may be further classified into.

a) *Yellow skinned:* They are streatopygous, short statured and dolichocephalic like Bushmen.

b) *Dark skinned:* They may be further classified into three groups:

- Reddish Brown: They are very short statured, subbrachycephalic or subdolichocephalic like Negrito Negrillo.

- Black, tall statured, dolichocephalic like Negro Bantu.

- Brownish black, medium statured, dolichocephalic like Melanesian - Papuan.

**2) Curly or wooly hair:** This group includes people with dark skin grouped into three categories:

- i) Reddish Brown, narrow nose, tall statured, dolichocephalic represented by Ethiopians.
- ii) Chocolate-brown, broad nose, medium stature and dolichocephalic represented by Australians.
- iii) Brownish Black, broad or narrow nose, short stature, dolichocephalic like Dravidians. In addition to these another group with tawny white skin, narrow hooked nose with thick tip, brachycephalic represented by Assyroids are also included in this group.

**3) Wavy Brown or black hair and dark eyes:** This group of people includes:

- i) Indo-Afghan having brown skin, black hair, narrow nose, which may be straight or convex, tall stature and dolichocephalic.
- ii) Another group of people have tawny white skin, black hair, tall stature, elongated face represented by Arab or Sinite, Berber, Littoral European, Ibero-Insular and Western European and Adriatic.

**4) Fair, wavy or straight hair, light eyes, reddish white skin:** This group of people includes Northern Europeans and Eastern Europeans.

**5) Straight or wavy hair, dark black eyes:** This group includes Ainu, Polynesians, and Indonesians.

**6) Straight hair:** This group includes diversified people such as South Americans, North Americans, Central Americans, Patagonians, Eskimos, Lapps, Ugrians, Turks and Mongols.

### **Hooton's Classification**

In 1931, American anthropologist, E.A. Hooton has suggested a four fold classification of composite races, which is the result of cross breeding amongst the primary races. In 1947, however, he modified his classification

1) White (European, Eur-African, caucosoid): This group includes six primary and two composite sub races. The primary sub-races include Mediterranean,

Ainu, Keltic, Nordic, Alpine and East Baltic while composite sub races include Armonoid and Dinaric.

**2) Negroid:** This group includes African Negro, Nilotic Negro and Negrito (Pygmies) belonging to the primary sub-races.

**3) Mongoloid:** This group include Classic and Arctic Mongoloid (Eskimoid), Primary sub-races.

**4) Composite Races:** This group further classified into three categories:

*i) Predominantly White* – This group includes Australian, Indo-Dravidian and Polynesians.

*ii) Predominantly Mongoloid* – This group includes American Indian and Indonesian Mongoloid or Indonesian-Malay.

*iii) Predominantly Negroid* – This group includes Melanesian Papuan or Oceanic Negroids, Bushmen - Hottentot and Tasmanians.

Hooton's classification has been criticized for the inclusion of Negrito or Pygmy Racial Classification element into the formation of Indo-Dravidians, Tasmanians, Bushman and Indonesians inclusion of Archiaic types, viz., Tasmanians and Bushman as hybrid group and the origin of Dinaric and Armenoid sub-race.

#### **Coon, Garn and Birdsell's classification**

In 1950, Coon, Garn and Birdsell set up six putative stocks. In fact, they realised that the existence of three major races (Negroid, Mongoloid, and Caucosoid) is proposed by the most anthropologists. However, some preferred to add the Australoid as a separate group and felt that American Indians and Polynessias should thus be the other group. On a detailed consideration the three investigations preferred to have a "functional classification" and while doing so they considered the following anthropological observations:

1) Differences in tooth and jaw size, skull thickness, brow-ridge size and other archaic features.

2) Body built as adaptation to environment.

3) Special surface features like skin colour, flatness of face, hair distribution, etc., which are adaptations to heat, light and cold.

On the above basis, Coon, Garn and Birdsell were able to distinguish 30 racial types. Though in terms of methodology, this attempt was certainly a positive advance but a determination of primitive or adaptive nature of particular feature was not easy, which give rise to criticism.

### **Ottenberg's classification**

Ottenberg's was the first scientist to attempt racial classification based on blood group, ABO system. In 1925, he classified mankind into six groups, viz., Europeans, Intermediate, Hunan, Hindu, Manchu, Afro-Malaysian and Pacific American. Later Snyder (1926) proposed a new classification with seven groups, viz., European, Intermediate Hunan, Hindu-Mancho, Afro-Malaysian, Pacific American and Australian.

### **Wiener's classification**

Wiener (1946 and 1948) proposed another classification on the basis of ABO blood groups, MN Blood type and Rh blood factor into six groups, viz. Caucasoid, Negroid, Mongoloid, Asiatic sub group, Pacific Island and Australian, Amerindians and Eskimos.

### **Boyd's Classification**

In 1958, Boyd modified Wiener's classification and proposed six groups comprising thirteen races as follows:

- i) **European Group** - (1) Early European (2) Lapps (3) North-west Europeans, (4) Eastern and Central Europeans, and (5) Mediterraneans.
- ii) **African Group** - (6) The African races, excluding inhabitants of North Africa, which belong to European group.
- iii) **Asian Group** - (7) The Asian races (8) Indo-Dravidian.
- iv) **American Group** - (9) American Indians 60 Biological Diversity
- v) **Pacific Group** - (10) Indonesian race, (11) Melanesian race and (12) Polynesian race
- vi) **Australian Group** - (13) Australian aborigines.

### **Ashley Montagu Classification**

In 1951, Ashley Montagu proposed a classification, which was accepted by many anthropologists. He used skin colour, hair form and head form. He

classified mankind into three main groups, viz. 1) Negroid 2) Mongoloid and 3) Caucasoid. He further pointed out that another division which is larger than an ethnic group may be distinguished as Australoid, who is in fact archaic. The physical characteristics of the three major races are as follows:

S. No.	Characteristics	Caucasoid	Mongoloid	Negroid
1.	Skin Colour	Light reddish white to olive brown. Some are brown	light yellow to yellow brown, some reddish brown	Brown to brown-black, some yellow brown
2.	Head hair	Light blond to dark brown in colour, fine to medium in texture, straight to wavy in form	Brown to brown black in colour, coarse in texture, straight in form	Brown-Black in colour, coarse in texture, curly to frizzly or woolly in form
3.	Head Form	Dolichocephalic to brachycephalic, Height is medium to very high	Predominantly brachycephalic height is medium	P r e d o m i n a n t l y dolichocephalic, Height is low to medium
4.	Body Hair Quantity	Moderate to profuse	Sparsely distributed	Slight
5.	Face	Narrow to medium broad	Medium broad to very broad. Cheek bones are high and flat	Medium broad to narrow. Prognathism is very often present
6.	Eye	light blue to dark brown;	Brown to dark brown. Mongoloid eye fold is very often present	Brown to brown black
7.	Nose	Leptorrhine to mesorrhine, usually bridge is high	Mesorrhine to platyrrhine, usually bridge is low to medium	Platyrrhine, usually bridge is low
8.	Chin	Usually projecting	Medium	Slight
9.	Lip	Very thin to medium, small aversion	Medium thickness with aversion of membranous often heavy integumented lips	Thick, much aversion
10.	Stature	Medium to tall	Medium to short	Very short to tall
11.	Body build	Linear to lateral; Slender to rugged	Tends to be lateral; some linearity evident	Tends to be lateral and muscular
12.	ABO Blood Group	Relatively high incidence of A2	High incidence of A1, very low frequency of A2	Relatively high incidence of A2, comparatively high incidence of B
13.	Rh. Factor	Highest frequency of Rh negative	Rh negative is rare	Moderate frequency of Rh negative

15	<i>Dermatoglyphics pattern intensity</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Great dispersion ranging from higher to lowest</i>
	<b>Main Line Formula</b>	<b>11.9.7</b>	<b>9.7.5</b>	<b>7.5.5</b>
	<b>Main line</b>	<b>Marked transversally type-ii of D line termination quite frequent</b>	<b>Longitudinal alignment</b>	<b>Longitudinal alignment</b>

Source: Haddon, A.C. 1925 & Krogman , W.M. 1945

### UNESCO STATEMENT ON RACIAL CLASSIFICATION

The definitions related to race strike a note of discord and there is no opinion expressed in them. Experiencing this difficulty UNESCO organised a conference of all the prominent and eminent anthropologists, sociologists and psychologists in order to determine a single conception of race. The conference proposed the following recommendations related to race:

Fundamentally, the entire human species has one origin and all men are Homosapiens. National, religious, geographical, cultural and linguistic groups are entirely unconnected with and unrelated to race. These groups do not give indication of any race. Distinctions can be made between different races on the basis of differences in physical features but not on the basis of cultural characteristics.

The differences that exist between the physical characteristics of men are due both to heredity and to environment. Differences in heredity arise due to the processes known as mutation and inbreeding.

Some race may claim of purity but this not true. Today pure races cannot be found anywhere in the world. The process of mixing of races originated long back.

Human races can be classified but these classifications are based solely on physical traits. They have no relation of any kind with mental or intellectual superiority or inferiority. The inner capacity for the development of mind and culture is found equally in every race. Hence distinction between races cannot be based on cultural differences and levels of intelligence. It is possible that in one nation the degree of racial difference may be greater while in another nation lesser degree.



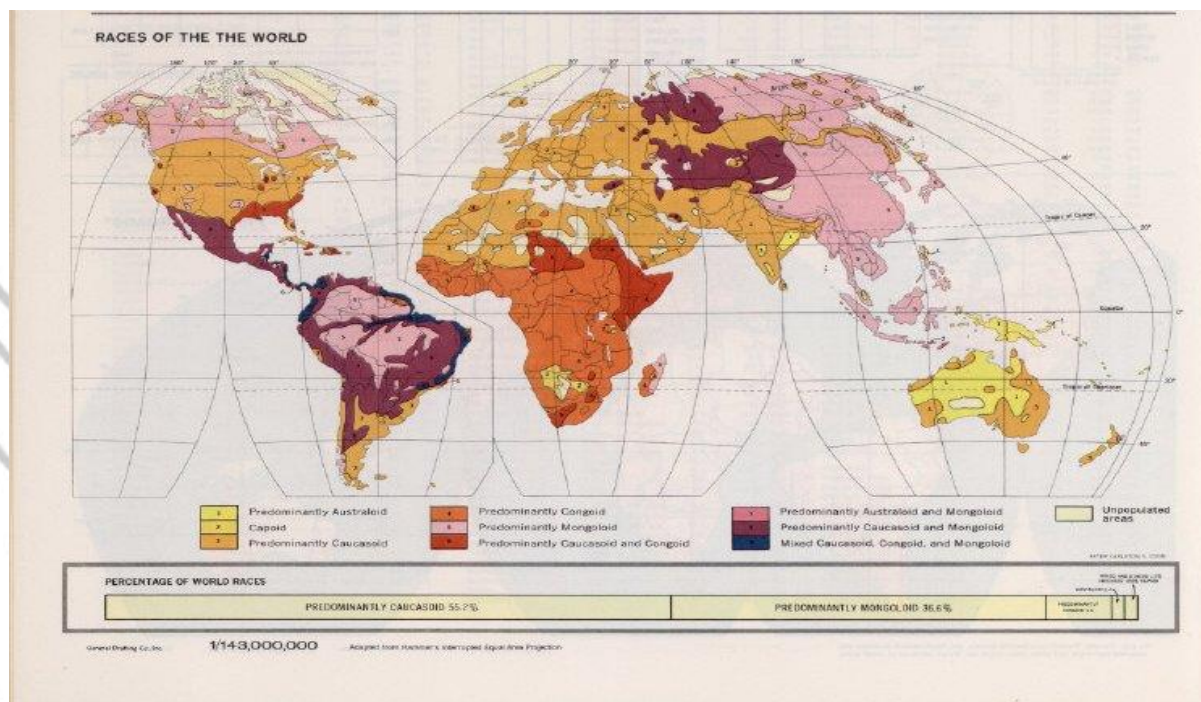
Evidence in support of the fact that the race has no important effect in the social and cultural differences between various human groups has been found in historical and sociological studies – By no stretch of imagination can one conceive of any relation between changes in racial form and social changes. That from the biological view point, mixing of races in deleterious, is an essentially incorrect and invalid belief.

In this way, the race is a group of intermarrying individuals, born to common ancestors that possess similar physical traits and a ‘we feeling’. Inbreeding renders permanent the physical characteristics of the race and due to them one race can be distinguished from another. One major cause of inbreeding is geographical isolation. Beside geographical isolation a race originates due to mutation, migration, selection and adaptation.

### Classification and Characteristic of Major Races in the World:

#### Races and Sub races

Primary Race/ Region	Sub-Races	Composite Races	Residual Mixed Type
I. Caucosoid-White (Europeans, Euro-Africo-Asian)	1. Mediterranean 2. ainu 3. Celtic 4. Nordic 5. Alpine 6. East Baltic	7. Armenoid 8. Dinaric  Predominantly white a) Australian b) Indo-Dravidian c) Polynesian Predominantly Negroid a) Tasmanian	9. Nordic Alpine 10. Nordic-Mediterranean
II. Negroid (Africa, Asia, Pacific Islands)	1. African Negro (Niguri Forest Negro) 2. Nilotic Negro 3. Negrito	Predominantly Negroid  4. Malanesians 5. Papuans Secondary Subrace 6. Bushman 7. Hottentot	
III. Mongoloid (Asia, Pacific Islands North and South)	1. Classic Mongoloid 2. Arctic Mongoloid (Eskimos)	Predominantly Mongoloid 3. Malaya Mongoloid 4. Indonesian Mongoloid 5. American Indians	



### Characteristic of Major Races:

	<b>Caucosoid</b>	<b>Mongoloid</b>	<b>Negroid</b>
<b>Skin Colour</b>	Pale reddish white to olive Medium to Tall. green	Saffron to Yellow Brown, reddish brown.	Brown to black brown yellow brown.
<b>Stature</b>	Medium to Tall.	Medium tall to Medium short	Tall to very Short.
<b>Head Form</b>	Long-broad and Short Medium, high-very high.	Medium height, predominantly broa	Predominantly long, Low height.
<b>Hair Color</b>	Light blonde to dark brown, straight to wavy.	Brown to brown black, Straight.	Brown black light curl and wooly.
<b>Body Build</b>	Latear to lateral slender to refuged	Tend to be lateral, some linearity evident	Tend to be linear and muscular
<b>Nose</b>	Usually high, narrow to medium board.	Low to medium form, medium broad.	Low, medium to very broad.
<b>Blood Group</b>	More A than B.	High in B.	High is Rhe

**Conclusion:** To sum up that the word 'race' is applied for human classification on the basis of biological characteristics. Race is genetically divergent among human populations, which is marked by common phenotypes. It refers to those human groups, which exhibit heritable physical differences from other human populations. The various ethnologists have classified human races differently

and out of these Deniker's classification, Hutton's classification, Coon, Garn and Birdsel's classification, Ottenberg's classification, Wiener's classification, Boyd's classification and Ashley Montagu classifications are most important. The physical characteristics of the three major races (Caucasoid, Negroid and Mongoloid) vary in respect of skin colour, hair form, head form, face, eye, nose, lips, stature, blood group and dermatoglyphic features.

The UNESCO statement on racial classification stated that fundamentally, the entire human species has one origin and all men are Homo sapiens. The national groups, religious groups, geographical, cultural and linguistic groups are unrelated to race. The variation found to exist between the physical characteristics of men has both the features, i.e. heredity and environment. In short, it may be stated that race is a group of intermarrying individuals, who are born of common ancestors, possess' similar physical characteristics and primarily heritable physical differences from other human populations.

### **Suggested Readings**

- Brace, C.L. 2005. Race is a Four-Letter Word : The Genesis of the Concept. Oxford;Oxford University Press.
- Dobzhansky, T. 1968. Discussion, pp.165-166. In : Science and the Concept of Race. Eds: M. Mead, T. Dobzhansky, E. Tobach and R.E. Ligh. New York; Columbia University Press.
- Hussain, M. 2001: Human Geography, Rawat Publication, New Delhi
- Mohar, S. 1998. Human Variation: Race, Types and Ethnic Group. Upper Saddle River; Prentice Hall.
- Montagu, A. 1964. The Concept of Race. New York; Free Press.
- Shukla, B.R.K. and Rastogi, S. 1999. Physical Anthropology and Human Genetics: An Introduction. Delhi; Palaka Prakashan, pp 374-450.
- Wolpoff, M.H. and Caspari, R. 1997. Race and Human Evolution : A Fatal Attraction. New York ; Simon and Schuster.