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An Analysis of the Clustering of American-born Indians

American-born Indians are often more inclined to associate and befriend other Indians, even in America’s diverse society today. Second generation Indians are born and raised in America by parents who were born and raised in India. They are popularly and satirically referred to as “American-born confused Desis” (or “ABCDs”). ABCDs have been recognized in pop culture through books such as *Born Confused* and *How Opal Mehta Got Kissed, Got Wild, and Got a Life*, as well as through movies such as *The Namesake* and *Bend it like Bekham*. These novels and movies portray American-born Indians as searching for a place where they belong and where they fit in. Although they employ generalizations and stereotypes, they are good examples of why, in general, American-born Indians are more comfortable with each other. Even when viewing these films or reading these books, Indians can relate, understand, and take more meaning from them than others.

The reason why American-born Indians are so naturally inclined to interact with each other is because they share common ground on how they were raised and on their culture. This is not to say that American-born Indians solely interact with other Indians, but that they tend to socialize more *easily* with each other. Many of them find it much more effortless to trust and befriend other Indians because they have been raised with similar morals. These morals are usually very conservative and often Indians will group with each other based on who abides by these morals and who does not. In these groups, people understand each other more easily because of their common ideas.

American-born Indians also believe that most other people will not understand the traditional and cultural practices that exist in India, such as touching the feet of elders, receiving items only with the right hand, and walking barefoot in sacred places or when performing on stage. These are only simple differences, but there are other distinctions that have a larger impact on how people live. For example, it is proper and very common for American-born Indians to live with their parents *and* their grandparents. They take their elders in, instead of putting them in nursing homes, which is a common practice in the United States.

Other Indians cluster into groups based on their native language or region of origin. There is a very rich and vibrant culture in Indian and it connects many people. There are hundreds of languages, many different dance styles, a vast amount of genres of music, and a populous that religiously follows the entertainment and movie business (Bollywood). Common language, dance styles, and music styles all unite different regions in India and because these are all such vital social tools, people who share them will naturally group together. Many American-born Indians also share religion and a community within their local society. This community physically brings Indians together through functions, prayers, and celebrations such as Indian Independence Day and Indian Republic Day that set a foundation and a place for Indians to socialize and be together.