

How Climatic Conditions Shape Human Life and Development

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Climatic conditions contribute to a certain way of living in various regions. If the climate is hot, the people have a different set of requirements as well as plantations, and vice versa. Similarly, climatic differences encourage or discourage certain economic activities. For instance, if a region has favorable soil and environmental conditions, the region would focus on agriculture, but if a region has many minerals and natural resources, mining and refining work would be preferred. This was the case for the Chesapeake and lower southern colonies as well as the Mid-Atlantic and New England colonies. They developed distinct economic bases due to differences in climate and environment, which also contributed to changes in social life and economic trends in the regions.

Northern Colonies, also known as New England colonies, had a very cold climate with rocky lands and little fertile soil supporting only subsistence farming. It consisted of Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island. The long winters and difficult conditions for farming restricted agricultural activity in the region. Although Maize was produced in the regions, wheat and other cash crops were unlikely to be grown in the region's cold weather. The main crops of the regions were pumpkins, corn, beans, and squash, which were produced to meet their families' needs. Therefore, the economy depended heavily on production and trade. Fisheries, Shipbuilding, Rum exports, and lumbering were the main economic and trade resources, as crops such as wheat and tobacco could not grow in the region. Moreover, the seaports made it a suitable place for trade activities. Hence, they focused on building ships and other goods such as shoes, coaches, and leather goods to sell in Europe. Rum was also manufactured and sold in Africa, and it was sold in exchange for slaves, and the slaves were sold in the West Indies. This was known as the famous triangle trade. Due to the available raw materials in the Northern colonies, they were industrialized and focused on manufacturing and trading, unlike their Southern counterparts, which focused on tobacco and other cash crops to earn money(Coclanis). The harsh geographic and climatic conditions in the North had helped the colonies of the South, Middle, and North connect via trade links to fulfill their food and other requirements. Thus, their source of trade was either raw materials or finished goods.

However, the colonies of the Mid-Atlantic had a moderate climate with fertile soil, which was suitable for crops. It consisted of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware. Middle colonies had farming and the trading of manufactured goods. They had many shipmakers, coopers, shoemakers, and carpenters to help the economy with their talent. They also had papermaking and textile products that were an integral part of the economic activities. The geography and climate conditions made it suitable for farmers and traders. The main crops included grains, fruits, vegetables, wheat, barley, corn, and rye. It was also rich in water resources, providing easy access to ports and fish(Williamson).

In contrast to the Middle and Northern Colonies, the South had hot climates and fertile geographic land that supported cash crops such as tobacco, rice, indigo, cotton, and wheat. It included Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. Due to the long summers and hot weather, the South was suitable for farming, and the economy of the region depended on farming and the production of tobacco, sugarcane, cotton, indigo, and rice. As the main economic resource was agriculture, they sold it and earned from it(Hughes).

Hence, the geographic and climatic conditions in the North, Middle, and Southern colonies shaped the people's social lives. For instance, the people living in the North lived in small villages and towns and had castles and other livestock. They also had talent in fishing and shipmaking. They focused on advancing industries and farming towns. They used indentured servants brought in from England to work in industries in Southern cities. Indentured slaves were crucial for the economic growth of the colonies. The cities in the North were near seaports or rivers, which allowed them to gain easy access to ports and fish. However, due to the cities, people mostly lived in the cities, unlike the South, where people lived in the villages and farms. North colonies did not encourage mixing with other people and religious backgrounds, although they had religious freedom for Christians(Hughes; Coclanis; Williamson).

The Middle colonies were made up of farms and big cities, as the climate and economic activities made it easier for the people. The climate was warmer than in the North, with longer growing seasons, but colder than in the South, with shorter growing seasons. They had more immigrants coming from outside for economic reasons(Williamson). Due to this, society was mixed with fewer restrictions on religion, and people accepted the religious beliefs of others. They also had slaves of African origin, but the intensity was lower than in the North and South. The women and men worked together and helped each other in the Middle Colonies(Coclanis). The people had a rich culture of gathering, dancing, and partying. It was diverse compared to the two other colonies.

In the Southern colonies, agriculture and farming were the main economic activities. It also needed hard work to plant and grow tobacco, rice, and other cash crops in the Southern colonies; they started using cheap labor, indentured and African Slaves to gain economic benefits. They relied mainly on African slaves due to their availability and cheap labor. Tobacco was the driving force of the Southern economy. They lived on farms, mostly in the Middle and North Colonies. However, the Southern colonies suffered from diseases such as malaria and others due to hot summers. Unlike the Northern colonies, religion was not essential for the Southern colonies, although they had churches. The people lived far apart from each other, which had little impact on their religions. There was no industrial growth, as it was an agricultural economy. They sold their crops in European Markets(Coclanis; Hughes).

Although most of the social and economic trends in the region are different, they are similar in some ways. The people in the North, Middle, and South all had a similar civic system with a social hierarchy. In all the colonies, the rich had slaves, and they relied on them to advance their financial status in society. Moreover, all the colonies had some form of education for the elite or talented people to

advance the economy of the colonies, and mostly boys and male members of the society used to study, and female members were restricted to the housework. Although the South and North had many differences, the Middle Colonies shared many features with the North as well as the South. Middle and Northern colonies were similar regarding the freedom of religion in their colonies, but the Southern colonies had religious freedom only for Christians. Comparatively, the Middle and Northern colonies were diversified. Moreover, the three colonies had democracy, but women were not included in the democracy of the time(Hughes, Coclanis, Williamson).

To conclude, the three colonies were different from each other in their economic trends and resources, climate and geography, and social lives. However, they shared certain features. The climate and geography contributed to certain living styles in each colony.

Works Cited

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