

Issue 1 – Exploring Citizenship and Governance (Chapters 1 to 4)

Chapter 1: What does citizenship mean to me

Focus: Attributes shaping citizenship

- Legal status
- A sense of identity
- Shared values
- Civic Participation

Legal status

When a person has legal status as a citizen, he/she is recognised by law as a member of a country. The citizens will be granted rights, where they have the freedom and privileges that citizens have. These privileges such as voting rights are in the constitution and are protected by law. Citizens are also obliged to fulfil duties as members of the country. For example, 18-year-old male citizens are obliged to serve National Service (NS) and serve up to 40 days of Operationally Ready National Service per year until the age of 40 or 50.

A sense of identity

A sense of national identity comes from a shared belief of connectedness to other citizens belonging to the country. It could be shaped by common experiences, practices and spaces such as the use of Singlish, celebrating National Day, and having hawker centres as a common space that represent Singapore's multicultural heritage. Singaporeans may also share a common way of life, and experience common practices such as singing the National Anthem and taking the National Pledge as Singaporeans.

Shared values

Shared values shape citizenship as these principles and beliefs are embraced and seen as important by people. The values are shaped by a country's history, heritage and experiences which may change over time as citizens respond to challenges faced by the country. For example, in embracing the value of 'multiculturalism', Singaporeans generally believe in living in harmony in a multiracial and multireligious society. They make a conscious effort to understand and develop good relationships with people from different races and religions.

Civic participation

Civic participation refers to citizens taking part in public affairs which are matters of general interest or concern to most people in society. It involves citizens contributing their time, effort and money to address societal issues, specific needs in society, or interests that they are concerned with, either as individuals or as community groups.

Individual

For example, as individuals, a Singaporean family set up a free minimart offering some grocery products to people in need. The initiative received support from many individuals who came forward to donate cash and groceries. For community groups, there are informal groups that exist for a period of time needed to address specific objectives. A group of Singaporeans started a mobile application called GoodHood.sg to promote neighbourliness in Singapore by connecting their neighbours by asking for or offering help.

Formal and Informal Groups

Formal community groups have clear objectives and are officially registered with the government to cater to specific needs and interests of society. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and social service agencies (SSAs) are examples of formal groups. One example is the ZeroWaste SG where it aims to drive towards zero waste in Singapore through education and advocacy.

Chapter 2: What are the Functions and Roles of Government in Working for the Good of Society?

Focus: Functions of Government

- Makes and passes law
- Implements and enforces law
- Interprets and applies law

Make and passes law

The Judiciary performs the government function of making and passing law. It consists of the President and Parliament. Before a law is passed, the draft of the law which is called a bill is debated in Parliament and which must receive the President's agreement to become part of the law in Singapore. **This enables the government to carry out their roles in society in ensuring the safety of her citizens.**

Implements and enforces law

The Executive performs the government function of enforcing and implementing laws. It consists of the President and the Cabinet. They are supported by the various ministries and statutory boards to formulate and implement government policies in areas such as education, healthcare, housing and transport, and the day-to-day administration of the affairs of state. **This enables the government to carry out their roles in society in keeping Singaporeans safe.**

Interprets and applies law

The Judiciary fulfils the government function of interpreting and applying laws through the Courts. It consists of the Supreme Court, the State Courts and the Family Justice Courts. The head of the Judiciary is the Chief Justice. The Judiciary makes formal judgements on disputes between individuals and on those between individuals and the government. **This enables the government to carry out their roles in society in ensuring Singaporeans are treated fairly in the face of law.**

Focus: Roles in Society

- Maintains law and order
- Ensures the economic and social well-being of citizens
- Promotes and protects a country's national interests

Maintains law and order

The government maintains law and order in society such that people obey the law and behave in an organised and behave in an organised and peaceful way. This preserves safety and security by ensuring that citizens' lives are protected from harmful acts. They also ensure justice in society. **By ensuring justice, this ensures everyone is equal before law and treated fairly.** For example, the Singapore Police Force (SPF) aims to prevent, deter and detect crime.

Ensures the economic and social well-being of citizens

The government ensures the economic and social well-being of the citizens by providing goods and services to the public at no cost or at a highly subsidised cost so that all citizens have access to them. For example, education, healthcare, housing and transportation are highly subsidised. **As such, people's basic needs for food, water and shelter are met, and they have the ability to pursue their goals and enjoy a satisfactory quality of life.**

Promotes and protects a country's national interests

The government promotes and protects the country's national interests as these national interests influence the objectives of the country's foreign policy. Through diplomacy, an agreement between countries to cooperate in order to produce results that align with their interests can be obtained. Countries conduct **diplomacy** to promote common interests and to resolve conflicting interests in a peaceful manner. **For example, Singapore maintains strong bilateral relations with Malaysia for the 1962 Water Agreement for water security. / For example, Singapore's membership in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) allows Singapore to sign a trade agreement (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) with 14 other Asia-Pacific countries.* With strong and friendly bilateral and multilateral relationships with other countries, a small country like Singapore can safeguard and advance its interests. **Deterrence**, another way to protect Singapore's national interests is also practiced. Deterrence discourages potential aggressors by making it costly for them to attack. To deter potential aggressors, countries like Singapore build their air, land and sea capabilities and defences. **This ensures the county's security and well-being is being protected as this ensures Singapore is safe from attacks by another country.**

*Use one example to illustrate either bilateral or multilateral relations.

Depending on the question, use the relevant examples (Diplomacy or Deterrence) to illustrate the point.

Chapter 3: How do we decide what is good for society?

Focus: What are the challenges when deciding what is good for society?

- Differing needs and interests
- Differing priorities
- Unequal sharing of costs

Differing needs and interests

The needs and interests of different groups of people are varied in a diverse society. It may be difficult to agree on what is collectively good for society when society has limited resources. For example, Singapore's annual Budget will need to consider spreading a limited amount of financial resources to different aspects of society, such as in education, in healthcare, and in defence. At times, the different needs and interests may even conflict with one another. More resources allocated to one aspect will mean that another aspect receives less. **This means that the government has the responsibility to look after all citizens and to make decisions that consider everyone's needs and interests are met in the various aspects of life.**

Differing priorities

The priorities of different groups of people are varied in a diverse society. In a diverse society, it can be challenging to decide which needs and interests need to be addressed first. For example, in land-scarce Singapore, the government needs to plan the usage of land based on different needs. The elderly with higher medical needs may require more healthcare facilities, while the youth may require the same land for recreational and educational purposes. **This means that the government must balance these different priorities across different groups in society and ensure that these priorities are not a source for further resentment and conflict in the future.**

Unequal sharing of costs

In a diverse society, the various needs and interests across groups may lead to varying impacts on these groups of people. While a decision may benefit society in general, it can have a negative impact on certain groups of people. For example, tensions may rise when deciding to build foreign worker dormitories that are near residential areas. While the dormitories will benefit the workers who are essential for Singapore's rapid development, residents who may have to live near the dormitories may not welcome an increased population of foreigners in their neighbourhood. **This means that the government must consider the potential impacts across all different groups carefully when implementing actions that are intended for the good of society to minimise unhappiness within groups who have to bear greater costs to the action.**

Focus: Principles Shaping Governance

- Having good leadership
- Anticipating change and staying relevant
- Providing a stake for everyone
- Practising meritocracy

Having good leadership

Leaders must be honest and capable. Leaders must have the moral courage and integrity to do what is right, including making decisions that may not be popular with the people. Leaders of good moral character and who are incorruptible can win the confidence and respect of people. They also make decisions for the good of the country rather than for personal interest. **This means that with good leaders, decisions will be made based on the best interest of the country, resulting in economic growth and development in the long run.**

Anticipating change and staying relevant

A government needs to be forward looking and make decisions that will benefit the people of Singapore in the future. For example, the government decided to build two IRs at Marina Bay and Sentosa. Although there were tensions between economic costs and social costs, the government still decided to build the IRs. They were aware of the social consequences in terms of the higher gambling rates, hence they took measures to lessen the potential impact of gambling such as setting up the National Council of Problem Gambling as well as providing counselling services for problem gamblers. **This means that by being able to anticipate future challenges, the government is able to plan ahead to ensure that Singapore is prepared for future challenges so that Singapore would remain stable, to achieve continuous economic growth and development.**

Providing a stake for everyone

Having a say in decision-making can develop a greater sense of belonging in citizens. For example, Singaporeans can share their views, opinions and dreams about Singapore on Our Singapore Conversation. Home ownership also strengthens the sense of belonging. The Public Housing Scheme (PHC) enables many Singaporeans to own their own homes through provision of housing grants. **This means that Singaporeans will be willing to work and contribute towards the good of the society as they have a stake in Singapore's future.**

Practising meritocracy

Meritocracy is a system that distributes opportunities to enable future successes. People are rewarded according to the effort they put in rather than factors such as their race, religion or socio-economic background. For example, students who perform well in their studies and CCAs are rewarded in ways to help them excel further in their education. The Edusave Scholarship and Merit Bursary schemes reward the top 10 percent and 25 per cent of the school students respectively. This means that Singaporeans will be encouraged to work hard as they are fairly rewarded based on their abilities and effort. **This will ensure that people will do their part and contribute to Singapore's economic growth and development.**

Chapter 4: How Can We Work Together for the Good of Society?

Focus: Citizens and government working together for the good of society

- Addressing the needs of society
- Influencing decision-making in public affairs
- Strengthening citizens' sense of belonging

Addressing the needs of society (by individuals/community)

Citizens can offer their knowledge, skills and experiences and initiate new efforts and can use the resources, programmes and structures provided by the government to supplement their efforts to address the needs of society. (Individuals) For example, a 68-year-old person volunteered as an instructor for the Age Well Everyday (AWE) programme, which promotes active ageing and healthy lifestyles for seniors to reduce the risk of dementia. Individuals can thus help Singaporeans to experience a quality life. (Community) For example, RSVP Singapore, a social agency (SSA), is a community group organised by citizens and they engage senior citizens in volunteerism. **Community can thus help Singaporeans to experience a better quality of life.**

Addressing the needs of society (Government)

The government can create opportunities for the community to show care to those around them by setting structures and national programmes and providing resources in a targeted manner. For example, government agencies such as the National Council of Social Service (NCSS) develop resources to enhance the capabilities of SSAs, including those who are committed to meeting the needs of the elderly. **Government can thus address the needs of society as Singaporeans can look for support from various government agencies.**

Influencing decision-making in public affairs (by individual/community)

Citizens can influence decision making in public affairs by sharing their opinions with the government through engagement platforms and working with the government to craft recommendations based on rigorous discussions and consensus. For example, when Ministry of Health (MOH) launched a nationwide effort, the War on Diabetes, Singaporeans participated in the discussion and implemented some suggestions by the participants. **Citizens' participation helps the government to make better decisions that benefit Singapore when making policies.**

Influencing decision-making in public affairs (by government)

The government can provide citizens with equal and fair opportunities to participate in and influence public policy decision-making. For example, Reaching Everyone for Active Citizenry @ Home (REACH) is the national feedback and engagement unit under the Ministry of Communication and Information. It engages citizens' view on public policies, and listens to their concerns and issues. REACH will then share the feedback received with relevant government agencies. **This helps the government to make better decisions and citizens will provide feedback that is beneficial for Singapore.**

Strengthening citizens' sense of belonging (by individual/community)

Citizens can play an active role from the ground up in strengthening the sense of belonging of fellow citizens by sharing and building common spaces, experiences and values. They can also build a sense of

identity and attachment to the history, people and places in a country. (Community) For example, 2 Singaporeans came together to form an informal community group for a project called Between Two Homes. They produced a multimedia website to document the rich heritage and community of Dakota Crescent which was to be redeveloped. **These actions help Singaporeans strengthen their sense of belonging as they help to preserve memories and heritage of Singapore.** (Individual) For example, various citizens participated in a project called Between Two Homes. They conducted interviews with the residents of Dakota Crescent and helped to preserve the memories of the place. **This helps Singaporeans strengthen their sense of belonging as preserving the heritage helps to develop an attachment to the history, people and places in the country.**

Strengthening citizens' sense of belonging (by the government)

The government can provide every citizen with a stake in the country's affairs, structures and funding to strengthen citizens' sense of belonging. For example, Our Singapore Fund, launched by the government supports ground-up projects that build national identity or meet social and community needs. They provide funding up to 80% of the costs. **This helps Singaporeans to start projects that will preserve the history, people and places in the country, thus helping Singaporeans to develop an attachment to the country.**

Issue 2 – Living in a Diverse Society (Chapters 5 to 7)

Chapter 5: What are the Factors that Shape the Identities of People and Contribute to a Diverse Society?

Focus: Factors that shape the identities of people

- Race and ethnicity
- Religion
- Socio-economic status
- Nationality

Race and ethnicity

Race refers to the classification of people which includes their physical characteristics such as the colour of the skin, hair and eyes. Ethnicity is based on the culture of a group of people who share the same ancestry, customs and traditions that distinguish them from other groups in society. For example, in Singapore, within the Malay community, there are different ethnic groups such as the Javanese and Bugis. Race and ethnicity can thus shape our identity as they influence his or her beliefs, values, practices and the way of life. **This contributes to a diversity as there are a variety of people with different identities, each with his or her beliefs, values, ways of life and practices.**

Religion

A religion refers to an organised collection of attitudes, beliefs, values and worldviews. An individual may follow a religion based on birth, by choice or their racial and ethnic group. It often involves the worship of a god or a group of gods, has a narrative or an account of events to explain the origins and meaning of life, and many religions promote values of compassion, love and respect. Hence, Religion shape our identity as a person's religious beliefs and practices may influence their thinking, the choices and decisions they make, and their interactions with others. These impact their way of life and their identities. **This contributes to a diversity as there are a variety of people with different identities, each with his or her beliefs, values, ways of life and practices.**

Socio-economic status

Socio-economic status refers to an economic situation shared by a group of people in society. In Singapore, an individual or household's income level is used as the indicator for socio-economic status. A combination of indicators such as income, education, occupation, housing type, can provide an idea of a person's socio-economic status. For example, families with lower income may face challenges in providing the resources to support their children's development. Hence, a KidSTART programme was introduced as and added support for children aged six and below to ensure children have a good start in life. Socio-economic status may influence a person's choice of housing, food, entertainment, activities and friends or people he or he interacts with. **This contributes to a diversity as people have different socio-economic backgrounds due to different levels of education, income and wealth.**

Nationality

Identity can be shaped by a person's nationality. Nationality refers to being a citizen of or belonging to a particular country. People of the same nationality are generally citizens of the same country and usually live together in a particular geographical area. People of the same nationality may feel connected with each other as they identify with and share a common history and language, as well as common experiences, practices and traditions. For example, Singlish is an informal way of speaking, used by most Singaporeans. It mixes English with words and phrases from the languages spoken by the various communities in Singapore. It has become a part of the Singaporean identity and culture. Nationality may thus result in a person feeling a shared sense of national identity and belonging to his or her country. **This contributes to a diversity as there are people of different nationalities living in Singapore.**

Chapter 6: What are the experiences and effects of living in a diverse society?

Focus: Experiences and Effects of Living in a Diverse Society

Addition concepts:

Common space allows people to forge ties and establish mutual understanding between people of diverse backgrounds and create shared experiences and memories. Common space refers to a physical location or a social space where different groups of people interact, cooperate or collaborate on projects or activities. For example, void decks provide opportunities for residents to meet, interact and bond. This allows people of different cultures and backgrounds to have the chance to understand each other.

An attitude of openness or being open-minded makes people more willing to actively listen, respectfully engage and appreciate the differences between each other. For example, Just an Extra Chair, an initiative organised by the Singapore Kindness Movement, encouraged Singaporeans to host foreign guests who are working or studying in Singapore during festive seasons. This allows Singaporeans to have the opportunity to understand people of different cultures and backgrounds.

Cultural exchange and appreciation

A diverse society provides Singaporeans with many opportunities to interact with people of different races and ethnicities, religions, socio-economic statuses and nationalities. Cultural exchanges can thus take place with the sharing of ideas, customs and traditions among people from different backgrounds. For instance, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Youth Fellowship (AYF) commit themselves to forge closer partnerships and strengthen connections with young ASEAN leaders from across the region. With cultural exchange, there will be deeper understanding and appreciation of the uniqueness, commonalities and differences among people, which can lead to building of meaningful relationships. People can learn from each others' ideas, experiences and cultures. **It can also result in a fusion of cultures, leading to interesting and exciting outcomes such as creation of new designs and products. (Positive)**

However, cultural exchange could result in cultural fusion. Cultural appropriation can occur when aspects of a culture such as the language, cuisine, music, dance or dress is used without permission or portrayed in an insensitive manner. For instance, a fusion chilli crab "praffle" that was made with chilli crab and wrapped with roti prata was sold at a bazaar. **The fusion of the culture could lead to dilution of culture and a loss of identity in communities. (Negative)**

Exchange of knowledge and skills

People with different backgrounds, qualifications and experiences share their knowledge and skills. For example, Thermo Fisher Scientific, an MNC with over 2000 employees in Singapore trained Singaporeans in the company in leadership skills and encouraged them to collaborate with employees from different cultures and with different experiences and expertise. This helps them sharpen their skills by sharing and learning from one another. **This helps to create new ideas, methods and products that benefit the society as Singaporeans become more productive.**

Stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination

Living in a diverse society could produce stereotypes, which are generalised beliefs about a particular group of people. Prejudice refers to attitudes and feelings towards other groups that are not based on reason or fact could also be formed. This can take the form of xenophobia, which is directed against people of a specific nationality or from a particular country. Discrimination occurs when a person acts on his or her prejudiced beliefs and negative feelings against a specific group by hurting or excluding that group. If the feelings of prejudice and acts of discrimination is due to someone's race or ethnic group, it is also known as racism. For instance, in 2021, an interracial couple of Indian and Filipino-Spanish descent and his girlfriend of Thai-Chinese descent were confronted by a Chinese man. He accused the man of preying on a Chinese girl and ordered him to date people of his own race. **This act of racism due to the lack of understanding among different socio-cultural or socio-economic groups in a diverse society could lead to hurt, resentment and strained relationships among groups.**

Competition for resources

Singaporeans could be concerned over the heightened competition with foreigners over limited resources such as job opportunities and infrastructure such as housing and transportation. For instance, in a survey conducted by REACH, Singaporeans reflected that they were concerned about their job security and career opportunities with Singapore opening to foreigners. **This competition, whether real or perceived, can lead to tensions, unhappiness and negative experiences among groups of people in the country.**

Chapter 7: How can we respond to diversity in society?

Focus: How do governments respond to socio-cultural diversity?

- Assimilation (France)
 - How assimilation is implemented in France
 - Tensions arising from assimilation in France
- Integration (Singapore)
 - How integration is implemented in Singapore
 - Tensions arising from integration in Singapore

Assimilation (France)

Immigration has made societies increasingly diverse. To manage this, some countries have adopted a policy of assimilation, where immigrants are expected to adopt the beliefs and practices of the majority group in the host country. **By doing so, governments hope that the immigrants' cultural beliefs and practices will become the same as the majority group's over time.**

For example, France has a strong national identity based in secularism, which means that there is a clear separation of religious affairs from governance and that no religion is favoured over another. The French believe that harmony is maintained when individuals put differences in race, ethnicity, religion and socio-economic status aside in public. To help immigrants assimilate, the French government has implemented policies in three areas - education, employment and naturalisation processes. These policies ensure that immigrants interact as much as possible with other people in French society, become fluent in French, and adopt French attitudes and beliefs, thus helping them assimilate.

Education

The French education system is secular and aims to strengthen French national identity. There are no discussions on religion except in History and Philosophy classes. The children of immigrants attend adaptation classes to help them improve their French and eventually join regular French schools. **This will help these children assimilate and strengthen the French identity as they will be able to experience the secular French education system and receive equal treatment as French children.**

Employment

(Positive) Employment helps immigrants assimilate as they are committed to stay on in the country to make a living. Employed immigrants will also assimilate at a faster rate as they become part of social networks and have to pick up French to communicate with their French colleagues. To support greater diversity in the workplace and the assimilation of immigrants into French society, the government introduced the Diversity Charter, which allowed companies to express their support for discrimination-free workplaces.

(Negative) However, this policy has not been very effective. In 2007, the unemployment level of immigrant families in France was three times the national average. One of the reasons for this was discrimination in companies' hiring practices. As such, the assimilation of adult immigrants was negatively impacted.

Naturalisation processes

Naturalisation programmes help immigrants assimilate by developing basic knowledge about life in France and understanding the French national identity. Since 1998, all immigrants must attend French language courses and attend a four-day of civic education about life in France before gaining permanent residency. Immigrants also have to demonstrate knowledge of the history and culture of France, French language proficiency and pass a French cultural test to be eligible for French nationality.

Tensions arising from assimilation in France

There have been tensions between upholding the secular French identity and respecting the rights of individuals to practice their religion. For example, many immigrants displayed their religious identity prominently. In 2004, the wearing of religious symbols in public was banned. Muslim students could not wear their headscarves, Jewish students could not wear *kippahs*, Christian students could not wear large crosses, and Sikh students were not allowed to wear turbans to class. **This sparked tensions and protests between the secular French national identity and the individual rights immigrants felt they should have.**

Integration (Singapore)

Singapore makes use of integration to manage its diversity. This means that immigrants can retain their unique identities while forging common ground with groups already living in the host country. Singapore has always used integration to manage its socio-cultural diversity as this approach recognises and respects differences.

POLICIES IMPLEMENTED TO PROMOTE INTEGRATION

Bilingual policy

For example, the bilingual policy was introduced in schools in 1966. Students in Singapore are required to learn English and one of the official Mother Tongue Languages. English provided a common language for the different ethnic groups in Singapore to communicate with and forge a Singaporean identity. At the same time, learning a Mother Tongue Language allowed the different ethnic groups to retain their cultural identity and heritage.

Presidential Council of Minority Rights (PCMR)

Furthermore, the PCMR was established in 1970 to ensure that laws passed in Singapore did not discriminate against any racial or religious community. The Council also reports on matters affecting such communities that are referred to it by Parliament or the government.

Group Representation Constituency (GRC)

The GRC system was created in 1988 to ensure that minority racial groups were represented in Singapore's parliament. At least one candidate from each team has to be from a minority ethnic group. This ensures that the concerns and needs of minority ethnic groups are addressed in parliament.

Ethnic Integration Policy (EIP)

The EIP was introduced in 1989 to prevent the formation of ethnic enclaves. HDB residents of different races are given a chance to interact with each other as neighbours, fostering racial harmony and

strengthening social cohesion in Singapore.

To help new immigrants integrate into Singapore society, Singapore has integration initiatives which include naturalisation programmes, the forging of common experiences, and the provision of community support for newcomers.

Naturalisation programmes

For example, new Singapore citizens have to go through a compulsory programme called the Singapore Citizenship Journey designed by the National Integration Council (NIC), People's Association (PA), and Immigration and Checkpoints Authority of Singapore (ICA). The programme includes the Singapore Citizenship e-Journey to help new citizens learn about Singapore's history and development, key national policies, Total Defence, and efforts in maintaining a harmonious society. It also includes a Community Sharing Session where new citizens meet each other and share their hopes and aspirations for Singapore, and learn about living in a multiracial and multireligious society. The last part of the programme is a Singapore Experiential Tour which brings new citizens to Singapore's historical landmarks and national institutions so they can learn about Singapore's history and the management of national challenges.

Forging Common Experiences

Common experiences between new immigrants and the larger Singapore society will help immigrants to better understand and integrate into society.

Singapore Permanent Resident (SPR) quota

In 2010, a SPR quota was introduced for non-Malaysian SPR households buying HDB flats. This quota was set at 5% for neighbourhoods and 8% for blocks and was added to the EIP. This quota aims to better integrate SPR households into society and prevent the formation of enclaves in public housing estates.

National Service (NS)

All male Singapore citizens and Permanent Residents are required to serve NS in the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF), Singapore Police Force (SPF), or Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF). This brings people from different backgrounds to train, live, and serve together, helping to create a strong national identity.

Community Support

Grassroots-organised events and activities also help new immigrants to integrate.

Community Integration Fund (CIF)

For example, the NIC launched the CIF in 2009 to support organisations interested in initiating integration activities. This fund supported projects such as "SG Sauce", a mobile application with information about the Singaporean way of life.

PA initiatives

The PA also organises block parties, festive celebrations, and home visits to help new immigrants adapt to life in Singapore. Some new immigrants have also volunteered to be Integration and Naturalisation Champions (INC) to help new citizens adjust to life in Singapore.

Tensions arising from integration policy in Singapore

Singapore is known as a welcoming society to foreigners and is home to many multinational companies (MNCs) and non-profit organisations operated by foreigners. However, some Singaporeans feel that new

immigrants have not integrated sufficiently and have become uncomfortable with the inflow of foreigners.

For example, immigrants have been blamed for threatening Singaporeans' job security as they compete for jobs. They have also been blamed for causing increases in prices, constant traffic congestion, and greater incidences of public infrastructure breakdowns such as the MRT breakdowns.

There have also been cases of conflict such as the Curry Incident in 2011, where a Chinese immigrant family complained about the smell of curry from an Indian household. New immigrants and Singaporeans will need to continue strengthening the understanding between the two groups to enjoy the benefits of a diverse society.

Response of Individuals and Community Groups

Initiatives and proactive responses of individuals and community groups help shape the attitudes and actions of the general public. They help to develop deeper understanding between different socio-cultural groups and mutual accommodation and trust. Insensitive comments on social media are amplified and have implications. Responding constructively helps others understand the impact of their actions. With this understanding of cultural differences, it could strengthen cohesion in a socio-culturally diverse society. An example of an organisation that helps foster strong social-cultural relations is the Inter-Religious Organisation, Singapore (IRO). They aim to build religious harmony and peace and often gather together to perform joint prayers at national and public ceremonies. They organise programmes such as seminars, lectures and talks to help communities know each other from different faith communities. This will deepen the understanding and appreciation of different religions, thus building more meaningful interactions between members of different faiths.

Focus: How do government respond to socio-economic diversity

- Shared responsibility approach (Singapore healthcare system)
 - Keeping healthcare affordable in Singapore
 - Challenges faced by the healthcare system in Singapore
- Government-financed approach (Swedish healthcare system)
 - Keeping healthcare affordable in Sweden
 - Challenges faced by the healthcare system in Sweden

Societies have also become more complex socio-economically. Governments have tried to manage socio-economic diversity by making basic services such as healthcare affordable to all citizens.

Shared responsibility approach in Singapore

The shared responsibility approach means that both the government and individuals are responsible in ensuring that healthcare is accessible for everyone. The healthcare system consists of both public and private healthcare service providers, and heavy government subsidies keep public healthcare affordable. The government also sets aside part of Singaporeans' Central Provident Fund (CPF) savings in Medisave to help them pay for healthcare.

Keeping healthcare affordable in Singapore

Singapore has multiple tiers of subsidies to provide more support to lower income groups. This ensures that all Singaporeans have access to healthcare.

Healthcare subsidies

In public healthcare institutions such as polyclinics, public hospitals, community hospitals and nursing homes, heavy government subsidies are available to all Singaporeans. Lower income groups can also receive additional subsidies at public hospital outpatient clinics and selected private GP and dental clinics under the Community Health Assist Scheme (CHAS).

In 2014, higher outpatient subsidies were introduced for lower to middle income families. The Pioneer Generation also received Medisave top-ups and special subsidies.

Medisave

A compulsory individual medical savings account scheme for Singaporeans to pay for healthcare without financial difficulty. Working Singaporeans and their employers contribute part of their monthly salary to save for future medical needs.

MediShield Life

A health insurance plan for all Singaporeans to handle large hospitalisation bills for life. All Singaporeans share the responsibility of paying large bills by co-paying for MediShield Life.

Medifund

An endowment fund acting as a safety net for needy Singaporeans who cannot afford to pay their medical bills even after government subsidies, MediShield Life and Medisave.

Challenges faced by the healthcare system in Singapore

Singapore faces challenges in balancing healthcare affordability with rising healthcare costs in the face of a rapidly ageing population.

Managing the growing demand for healthcare

The demand for healthcare will grow as the population ages due to the elderly's need for more intensive medical care. As more Singaporeans lead less active lifestyles, there will also be a greater need for chronic disease treatment. To cope with this, the focus of healthcare has shifted away from hospitals and specialists towards primary care provided by family doctors who understand their patients' needs better.

Rising healthcare costs

The government has made improvements to healthcare policies by including more subsidies to low and middle socio-economic groups. Healthcare professionals and patients also need to embrace healthcare that is cost-effective. The government also encourages Singaporeans to lead healthy lifestyles to reduce personal healthcare costs.

Government-financed approach in Sweden

The Swedish healthcare system believes that all citizens should have access to healthcare services regardless of background or SES. As a result, the Swedish healthcare system provides substantial financial support and is known as the government-financed state approach.

Universal access to healthcare

Every Swede has equal access to healthcare services regardless of social class, income or place of residence.

Public healthcare is largely owned and financed by the government

The majority of hospitals are publicly owned, whereas GPs are privately owned. Both public and private providers are largely financed through public funds. Citizens pay a nominal sum for healthcare services as part of co-payment. Most of these public funds come from the higher tax rates that people in Nordic countries pay.

Choice of having private insurance

The Voluntary Health Insurance (VHI) allows faster access to medical services at GPs and hospitals. This is usually offered by employers as an optional part of employment packages.

Keeping healthcare affordable in Sweden

With strong intervention from the government, healthcare in Sweden is kept affordable for all socio-economic groups, especially the lower income groups.

For example, the maximum sum charged for prescribed drugs and healthcare visits is 122 Euros for adults. The ceiling for patients' fees for medical services including hospitalisation is 220 Euros. A children's protection scheme also provides a maximum of 244 Euros a year for prescription drugs.

Challenges faced by the healthcare system in Sweden

The Swedish healthcare system ensures that no one is left uncared for in terms of healthcare. However, there are possible challenges to the system in future.

High taxation for low healthcare costs

The healthcare system is sustained by a high level of taxation. The amount of tax paid is linked to one's income level, with higher income earners paying more tax. High income groups earning more than US \$88 181 per year pay a personal income tax of 56%. There is also an additional Value Added Tax (VAT) of 25%, which is similar to GST in Singapore. While the Swedes have been willing to pay high taxes thus far, the ageing population means that this tax burden will increasingly fall on a smaller group of working citizens.

Growing number of people needing healthcare

In addition to an ageing population, more people are migrating to Sweden. Furthermore, citizens of the European Union are also eligible for some aspects of Sweden's heavily subsidised healthcare. This will put a strain on the system as these groups consume healthcare services without paying taxes.

Response of Individuals and Community Groups

Formal and informal community groups can provide support such as financial aid, guidance and resources. For example, Keeping Hope Alive (KHA) is an informal group whose volunteers help the less privileged. They help with cleaning of homes, fixing appliances, providing haircuts; seeking to improve the quality of life of low-income families. As for individual efforts, ground-up initiatives that mobilise to distribute food to those in need E.g. Free Food for All (FFFA) adopts an attitude of grit and perseverance that will strengthen individual's resilience and motivation to overcome the economic challenges.

Issue 3: Being Part of a Globalised World. (Chapters 8 to 11)

Chapter 8: What does it mean to live in a globalised world?

Focus: Driving Forces of Globalisation

- Developments in transportation
- Developments in digital technology
- Growth of Multinational Corporations (MNCs)

Developments in transportation

Over the years, technological advancements have led to improvements in land, sea and air transportation. Improvements have been made in terms of speed, capacity and costs. Different modes of transportation such as trains, ships and aircraft can now travel faster and cover longer distances. They have also improved in capacity and more people and goods can be carried per trip to different parts of the world. For example, container ships use the method of containerisation to transport cargo to reduce cost. All these developments in transportation led to a “shrinking world” as people, goods and services are able to move around the world more quickly, in larger volume and lower costs. **Thus, business activity and ideas become more interconnected and interdependent, this contributed to the process of globalisation.**

Developments in digital technology

Digital technology refers to the electronic tools, systems, devices and resources that generate, store or process data. It also helps to facilitate communication between people, businesses and countries. The invention of computers and the Internet are two key developments in digital technology. For example, the smart phone has brought together computer and the Internet in a powerful way and transformed our lives. In the 21st century, developments in digital technology have rapidly improved communications and accelerated globalisation. They have enabled people to stay connected, share information and ideas, and do business across the world. **With information and ideas moving faster and wider, this promotes the interconnections across the world and contributed to the process of globalisation.**

Growth of Multinational Corporations (MNCs)

MNCs are large corporations that operate in various countries. Their supply chains are global in scope, thus linking numerous people and activities across different places in the world. MNCs usually set up subsidiaries or acquire other companies. An example of such MNCs is Starbucks. Starbucks started in America and today their outlets are spread over the world. This links people and activities across different places in the world through its supply chain. This has created global interconnections and interdependence. **With MNCs facilitating the exchange of goods, services and ideas across the globe, this contributed to the process of globalisation.**

Chapter 9: How do we Respond to the Economic Impacts of Globalisation?

Focus: Economic impacts of Globalisation

- Economic growth experienced by countries
- Employment opportunities experienced by individuals

Economic growth experienced by countries

A country experiences economic growth when it increases its gross domestic product (GDP) over a period of time because it produces more goods and services. Being part of the global economy allows a country's goods and services to be sold locally and other countries as the country will increase their production of goods and services to meet the larger market demand. **Countries can also experience economic growth as a result of receiving foreign investments to build production facilities or raise the productivity of businesses and workers.** For example, Singapore experiences economic growth as Singapore is able to attract FDI (Foreign Direct Investments) from China, Japan and the United States.

Employment opportunities experienced by individuals

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Focus: Economic impacts of Globalisation

- Economic vulnerability experienced by countries
- Employment challenges experienced by individuals

Economic vulnerability experienced by countries

Interconnections and interdependent relationships in a global economy can make countries economically vulnerable as what happens in one country can affect other countries. Events in countries, such as economic and political crises, or social unrest, can affect other countries' economies. For example, the impact of the Russia-Ukraine crisis affected positively and negatively globally. Some benefitted by expansion of international trade and investments while some faced sharp increases in prices. **This means that globalisation can cause economic disruptions beyond the country of the origin as countries may experience economic vulnerability due to their degree of participation in the global economy.**

Employment challenges experienced by individuals

MNCs may relocate their operations to other countries to save costs or access expertise available elsewhere. When this happens, individuals who are employed in these operations may lose their jobs. Advancements in technology can cause some industries in the country to decline. Individuals working in these industries may thus lose their jobs. **With greater movement of labour as individuals relocate to work in other countries, local workers in those countries may face greater competition from foreign labour in the job market.** For example, Amazon retrenched many Singaporeans as their growth slowed. This affected the livelihood and lifestyles of Singaporeans as they lost their jobs

Focus: Responses to the economic impacts of globalisation

- Government support
- Acquisition of skills and knowledge by individuals

Government support

Countries may cooperate with other countries by pursuing policies that promote free trade, for example, by signing free trade agreements (FTAs). For example, the Singapore-Australia FTA (SAFTA) was signed to ensure all tariffs on imported goods are removed. **This allows foreign imports and exports to be traded more freely and at lower costs, thus facilitating trade and helping gain economically.**

Countries may attract and make foreign investments to sustain their economic growth. For instance, the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) ensures low and stable inflation which helps to attract foreign investors. It also manages and invests the country's foreign reserves. **This helps to ensure Singapore remains an attractive place to invest in.**

Governments may also provide financial support to cushion the negative economic impacts on various sectors in the short term and set up agencies to provide resources and advice to help businesses innovate, develop their expertise and talent, and even expand abroad. For example, the Singapore government provided \$1.6 billion care and support packages which include cash for adult Singaporeans, utilities rebates and supermarket vouchers for the lower-income. **This helps to support the economic impact on Singaporeans.**

Acquisition of skills and knowledge by individuals

Individuals can continually acquire new knowledge and skills throughout their life to remain relevant in the job market. Individuals can have a flexible and open mindset about exploring employment and careers in different fields. They can also save and invest appropriately to ensure they have sufficient financial resources when they job switch or take time to develop new skills. For example, individuals could seek assistance from Workforce Singapore's Career Connect to get help in looking for job opportunities or learn new things by enrolling in courses provided by SkillsFuture. **By doing so, individuals can respond appropriately to the economic impacts and sustain their current living standards.**

Chapter 10: How can we respond to the Cultural Impacts of Globalisation?

Cultural influences: Ethnic culture and Popular culture

Ethnic Culture:

- Traditions, language, clothing, art and music together with beliefs, values and practices shape one's cultural identity. For example, the Korean ethnic costume for females, hanbok, has 1600 years of history. It is easily identifiable with its unique design. Traditionally, it is also used in depicting their social background, rank and occupation.

Popular culture

- Popular culture includes Entertainment, Food and Beverage, and Fashion, that influences people's behaviour and preferences as a consumer. This will shape people's way of thinking and viewing the world and how it connects their lives.
- An example of popular culture in the F&B industry is the coffee chain, Starbucks Coffee Company. It has over 21,000 near identical stores in over 65 countries, which serve near identical coffee. It has changed coffee culture in many countries.

Spread of Culture

American Influences - Entertainment

Entertainment industries in many parts of the world are dominated by the USA. In fact, 30% of worldwide entertainment revenue is generated by American companies. American films and television shows dominate box offices of more than 150 countries and provides home entertainment for millions of people. Some accept it as they feel that American entertainment **promotes** ideas of freedom and individuality. This in turn, allows consumers to develop their identities. For example, Asian middle-class women see the possibility of marrying for love or living independently of the extended family when they watch American soap operas.

Korean Influences - Entertainment

Since the mid-2000s, South Korean entertainment has become popular through television dramas, popular music, food and language. This is known as the Korean Wave or **Hallyu**. Some have welcomed Hallyu and accepted it as it provides them with more choices of entertainment. **For example, in terms of music**, K-pop groups, such as TWICE, Blackpink, BTS, Super Junior, are gaining fan bases across the world. Film and drama have also become part of free-to-air and satellite TV stations in many countries. Electronic devices, such as Samsung, are widely used in many different countries.

Dilution of Culture

However, some have resisted the homogenisation of food landscapes as it is perceived as a threat to local culture. It is seen as reducing cultural diversity between countries and diluting local cultures. For example, some resisted McDonald's expansion as they saw it as an **extension** of American culture. In 1986, Italians

protested against McDonald's plans to open its first branch in Italy, as they were against the 'Americanisation' of Italian culture. In addition, as there is a need for large-scale production, it also threatens and changes traditional agricultural practices. For example, KFC. In 1996, a group of farmers in Bangalore, India, demanded that KFC leave India. Farmers were unable to afford the Western farming methods introduced by KFC, which required large amounts of investment in fertiliser, pesticides and water. These farmers were thus unhappy because they risked losing out to bigger agricultural businesses and losing their farms altogether.

Varying degrees of rejection of globalisation of culture

Responses of countries - Rejection of Korean Influences in Entertainment

Some have not welcomed Hallyu due to **cultural** reasons such as the perception of "invasion" of Korean culture to **political** reasons such as political tensions with Korea. For example, in 2011, thousands of Japanese protestors rallied in front of the headquarters of Fuji TV, a Japanese television network as they were unhappy about the number of Korean programmes being shown. This was due to underlying political tension between the two countries.

Responses of countries - Rejection of American Influences in Entertainment

However, some do not welcome it as they feel that American entertainment **threatens** the local culture, language and local entertainment industry. **For example**, in France, 40% of television programmes must be in French and television programmes of non-European origins cannot exceed 40% of the programmes screened in the country. Another example is that in 2014, China had a restriction of 34 foreign films that could be imported in the country, with periodic cultural blackout days where these films could not be shown.

Responses of individuals

Individuals can make their own choices when faced with the influence of cultural globalisation. TV and films can be a great source of influence. For example, the documentary film *Blackfish*, increased the awareness of poor treatment of killer whales in captivity in SeaWorld, a United States marine park. It led to an end to its killer whale breeding programme. Another example is the teen comedy film *To all the Boys I've Loved Before* caused an increased interest in Yakult that was featured in the comedy.

As consumers, individuals may choose to embrace these cultural influences, and these could lead them to take action in addressing societal issues.

Chapter 11: How can we Respond to the Security Impacts of Globalisation?

Focus: Security Impacts of Globalisation

- Transnational Terrorism
- Cyber Threats

Transnational Terrorism

Terrorists launch violent attacks beyond their country's borders to achieve their social or political objectives. They take advantage of communications and digital tools to spread terrorist propaganda and/or extremist ideologies and recruit members from all over the world. With advanced communications and digital technologies, terrorists from different places can communicate with each other to organise and coordinate their operations globally. For example, the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) seeks to establish an Islamic state with authority over Muslims throughout the world. They made use of social media, such as Twitter and Facebook, to spread terrorist propaganda and recruit members. This also led to individuals becoming influenced by the extremist ideologies of terrorist groups through the Internet. These self-radicalised individuals operate on their own, with little or no instruction from transnational terrorist organisations.

Cyber Threats

Cyber threats refer to unauthorised access to online information systems and data. With improvements in technology, many of our daily activities are carried out online and it is easier for people to access and store information online. The digital connectedness causes certain groups, such as the elderly, to become targets of cybercrimes. They are likely to have money and are perceived as easier prey as they may not be aware of ways to keep themselves safe online. Governments, organisations and individuals in advanced countries face a higher risk of cyber threats as greater proportions of their activities are conducted online.

Focus: Responses to the security impacts of globalisation

- Vigilance by individuals
 - Threat of transnational terrorism
 - Cyber threats
- Security measures by governments within their countries
 - Threat of transnational terrorism
 - Cyber threats
- Cooperation among countries
 - Threat of transnational terrorism
 - Cyber threats

Vigilance by individuals - Threat of transnational terrorism

Individuals can exercise vigilance by watching out for tell-tale signs of self-radicalisation in others. They can also take action to inform relevant authorities when there are sufficient grounds for suspicion. For example, a parent shared her regret at not picking up signs of her child's radicalisation and seeking help at an earlier stage. By doing so, individuals can save their loved ones from harming themselves and others.

Vigilance by individuals - Cyber threats

Individuals can take action to protect themselves online, collectively contributing to the security of Singapore's cyber landscape. This is because more people are engaged in activities online. Crimes and threats have thus gone virtual as well. For example, individuals can maintain social media hygiene such as controlling the information posted on social media through the settings. By doing so, individuals can avoid being the target of scammers.

Security measures by governments within their countries - Threat of transnational terrorism

Governments can implement border-management measures such as using biometric data to ascertain the identity of individuals at land, sea or air checkpoints to prevent identity fraud. Laws can be implemented as well. For example, the Internal Security Act (ISA) enables the Singapore government to act decisively and swiftly against dangers to the security of Singapore and its people. This enables the countries to prevent potential terrorist attacks from occurring within their country.

Security measures by governments within their countries - Cyber threats

Governments can set up dedicated agencies with the expertise and resources needed to investigate and handle cyber threats. For example, the Cyber Security Agency of Singapore (CSA) was established as the national agency to oversee and coordinate all aspects of cybersecurity for the nation. One strategy is to develop and sustain a strong cybersecurity workforce to meet our security and economic needs. This enables the countries to protect and respond to cyber threats effectively.

Cooperation among countries - Threat of transnational terrorism

Governments can cooperate to share information on terrorism threats and participate in international and regional counter-terrorism cooperation. For example, the defence ministers from ASEAN member states adopted the "Our Eyes" Initiative (OEI) to enhance strategic information-sharing on terrorism and radicalism so that countries are able to respond swiftly during terrorist incidents. This enables the countries to prevent potential terrorist attacks from occurring within their country and respond to any attack swiftly.

Cooperation among countries - Cyber threats

Governments can participate in international or regional cooperation to tackle cyber threats. For example, the Asia Pacific Computer Emergency Response Team (APCERT), an organisation in the Asia-Pacific region that promotes regional cooperation on information security shares cyber threat data among countries in the region. APCERT maintains a cooperative network of computer security experts in the region, thus improving the region's awareness and competency in responding to cybersecurity challenges. This enables countries to protect and respond to cyber threats effectively.