Chapter 4: Understanding Diversity

Shaping of identity
1. Nationality
2. Race and ethnicity
3. Religion
4. Socio-economic status

Nationality

[El]   People of the same nationality share a common history, traditions, practices, language, and living together in a geographical area. This builds a sense of belonging and can shape one's identity. People feel more comfortable with other members of the same nationality as they can identify with the common experiences, attitudes and beliefs shared by other citizens.

[Eg]   For example, New Zealanders identify themselves as 'Kiwis' and rugby is their national sport. Most Kiwis would watch the games when the national team, the All Blacks, plays against other countries.

[Ex]   Expressions of national identity can be reflected through lifestyle choices such as types of sports played and appreciated, preference for certain cuisine & choice of music; country's beliefs, values and practice. This influences one's action and interaction with others. Therefore, nationality shapes one's identity.

Race and ethnicity

[El]   Race refers to classification of people according to physical characteristics that are biological in nature, such as skin, hair and eyes. Ethnicity refers to one's ancestry, cultural practices, language, customs, food and dressing.
In Singapore, 'race and ethnicity' are sometimes used interchangeably. Most Singaporeans have their race on their IC – CMIO. This categorisation has been revised to reflect increasing diversity in Singapore as the government implemented the registration of double-barrelled race option for Singaporean children born to parents of different races.

[Eg]   For example, members of the Miao and Hui communities in China may have physical features of the Chinese race, but they are of a different ethnicity, with unique costumes, practices and customs.

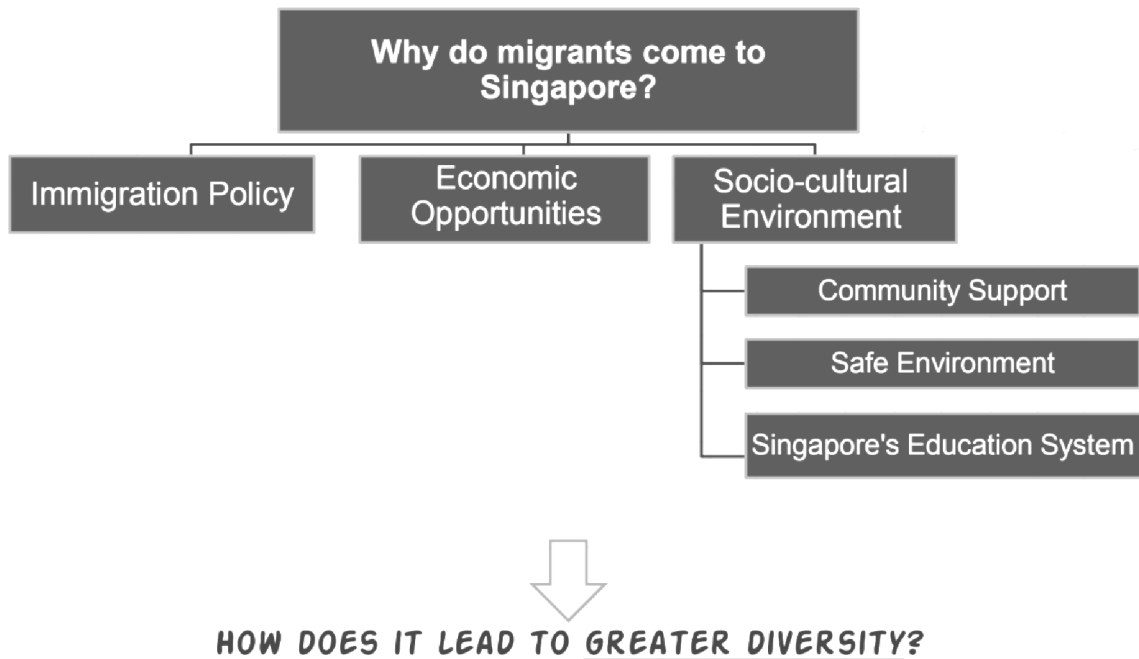[Ex]   Practices and beliefs help to shape our way of life, thus influencing and shaping our identity.

Religion

[El]   Religion is an organised collection of attitudes, beliefs, practices, world views and often worship of a single or multiple gods. The religion that individuals believe in may be determined by birth or by choice. Most religions embody a set of shared core beliefs and practices. Believers keep to these beliefs and practices regardless of their nationality and ethnicity.

[Eg]   For example, Taoism is a religion founded by Celestial Master Zhang Daoling based on the teachings of the Dao preached by Laozi and the Yellow Emperor. Taoists follow the fundamental values of compassion, frugality and humility, and strive to build a harmonious and peaceful relationship between man and nature.

[Ex]   These beliefs and practices would then shape the way we interact with others, the choices we make and our thinking. Religions thus play an important role in shaping our identity as they influence our way of life in many ways.

Socio-economic status

[El]   Socio-economic status refers to an economic situation shared by a group of people and some determinants are occupation, income, education and ownership of wealth. In Singapore, an individual or household's income level is used as the indicator for socio-economic status.

[Eg]   For example, activities such as polo and golf, fine dining and travelling to distant destinations for vacations are usually activities carried out by people with higher socio-economic status.

[Ex]   The socio-economic status of an individual may shape one's life experience as it affects the choice of housing, food, entertainment and activities. This in turn can influence the circle of friends that one interacts with as one typically mixes with people of similar socio-economic status. Therefore, socio-economic status shapes one's identity.

Chapter 5: Greater Diversity in Singapore

Why do migrants come to Singapore?

- Immigration Policy
- Economic Opportunities
- Socio-cultural Environment
  - Community Support
  - Safe Environment
  - Singapore's Education System

HOW DOES IT LEAD TO GREATER DIVERSITY?

Key terms

Migrant: move to another country <u>temporarily</u>, often for economic reasons / education

Immigrant: move to another country, often for economic reasons / to be with family, and settle there <u>permanently</u>

New citizens: immigrant <u>take up citizenship</u> and integrate in the new country

Reasons for greater diversity

1. **Immigration policies**
2. **Economic opportunities**
3. **Socio-cultural environment**
   1) Community support
   2) Safe environment
   3) Education system

Immigration policies

[EI]   Currently, SG's open-door immigration policy welcomes highly-skilled foreign manpower to support our knowledge-based economy. Due to SG's low birth rate and highly mobile population who do not always stay rooted in SG, the government adopts an open and welcoming immigration policy that allows eligible foreigners to easily live and work here.

[Eg]   For example, various expatriates came to SG's burgeoning petrochemical industry under the S-Pass scheme and decided to remain as Permanent Residents, eventually naturalising into citizens.

[Ex]
- With open-door immigraton policies, foreign manpower is attracted to SG as they feel welcomed by the government to come to SG. Those who are eligible face little difficulty and hassle entering the country as there are no lengthy procedures to complete.
- More migrants and immigrants from different backgrounds come to Singapore.
- They bring with them distinct national identities that can also include ethnic practices unique to their countries of origin, therefore adding to our diversity.

Economic opportunities

[EI]   In Singapore, employment opportunities are readily available due to the large number of businesses that operate here. The ease of doing business, growth potential, stable political environment and well-established judiciary system attract global investors such as multinational corporations (MNCs) by providing a conducive environment to do business.

[Eg]   For example, Singapore was ranked first for its ease of doing business by the World Bank in 2014. Singapore is also known as a business hub, where its world-renowned efficiency has attracted aboutu 7,000 MNCs to set up their operations here.

[Ex]
- With economic opportunities, migrants will be attracted to Singapore as these opportunities may not be available in their own countries.
- More migrants come from different backgrounds, thus bringing with them their distinct culture and national identities.
- They also bring along their skills set, knowledge, valuable experiences and business networks to contribute ideas and expertise to Singapore's economy, therefore adding to our diversity.

Socio-cultural environment

[El] [Eg]   Community support, safe environment and quality education contribute to Singapore's attractive socio-environment.

- Community support in Singapore allows foreigners to mingle with people of the same ethnicity and experience their own culture, thus maintaining their sense of national identity and belonging and allowing them to feel more at home in Singapore. For example, the Korean community in the Bukit Timah area organised a K-pop singing contest at Square 2, where many Koreans and locals took part.
- A safe environment in Singapore gives foreigners a sense of assurance when living in Singapore, so that they do not have to worry for their personal safety and security. The low crime rate in Singapore is proven by the declining crime rates since 2005 and public assistance in solving major crimes.
- Quality education in Singapore is well-known for its effectiveness and high standards. Singapore's public schools are popular with foreigners due to their high education quality and standards, ranging from primary schools to tertiary institutions.

[Ex]
- With a good socio-cultural environment, migrants will be attracted to Singapore as it gives them a sense of security in a conducive environment.
- More migrants come from different backgrounds.
- They bring with them distinct national identities that can also include ethnic practices unique to their countries of origin, therefore adding to our diversity.

Community support

[El]   In Singapore, the many ethnic communities gather in certain districts, where they mingle with people of the same ethnicity. This allows foreigners working in Singapore to experience their own culture, thus feeling more connected to their ethnic identity and maintain their sense of identity in multi-ethnic Singapore.

[Eg]   For example, many young Koreans work in Singapore. The Korean community in Singapore centres around the Bukit Timah area where the Singapore Korean International School is located. Koreans operate many Korean eateries, fashion boutiques and beauty salons in Square 2 shopping mall in Novena. They have organised K-pop singing contests at Square 2 in the mall for Koreans and locals so that Koreans can get together and experience their own culture.

[Ex]
- With strong community support, migrants and immigrants can socialise and interact with people from their same community, thus continuing to maintain their sense of identity in multi-ethnic Singapore. This allows foreigners to feel more at home while working or studying abroad in Singapore, thus attracting more migrants and immigrants to come to live or work in Singapore.
- More migrants come from different backgrounds, thus bringing with them their distinct culture and national identities.
- They also bring along their skills set, knowledge, valuable experiences and business networks to contribute ideas and expertise to Singapore's economy, therefore adding to our diversity.

Safe environment

[EI]   The crime rate in Singapore is low compared to many parts of the world. It is one of the safest and least corrupt places in the world. By providing a safe and secure environment for migrants and immigrants to work and live in, this has led many of them to consider Singapore as a working and living place for them.

[Eg]   For example, almost 40% of all major crimes are also solved with assistance from the public. With an effective, efficient and fair judicial system, this has kept crime rates low in Singapore. In 2014, Singapore was ranked the second safest country in the world based on social order and security.

[Ex]
- With a safe environment, this gives migrants and immigrants a sense of safety and security when living in Singapore, thus attracting foreigners who may be from less safe countries to come to Singapore.
- More migrants come from different backgrounds, thus bringing with them their distinct culture and national identities.
- They also bring along their skills set, knowledge, valuable experiences and business networks to contribute ideas and expertise to Singapore's economy, therefore adding to our diversity.

Education system

[EI]   Singapore is a well-known hub for quality education. Singapore's education system is well-recognised and admired for its effectiveness and high standards. Singapore's public schools are becoming increasingly popular with foreigners due to their high education quality and standards.

[Eg]   For example,
many primary schools, secondary schools and junior colleges accept international students. Tertiary institutions such as polytechnics and universities have also been popular with international students as they offer high standards of certification and a wide range of courses. The various options available have made Singapore a well-known hub for quality education, which attracted about 76,000 international students in 2017.

[Ex]
- With a quality education system, migrants will be attracted to come to Singapore to seek quality education either for themselves or for their children so that they can pursue higher education, thus attaining better academic performance and having a better career and future.
- More migrants come from different backgrounds, thus bringing with them their distinct culture and national identities.
- They also bring along their skills set, knowledge, valuable experiences and business networks to contribute ideas and expertise to Singapore's economy, therefore adding to our diversity.

Problems leading to immigration policy (SRQ Q6)
1. **Declining birth rate**
2. **Ageing population**
3. **Brain drain**

Problems	Reasons	Effects	Solutions

Declining birth rate	● High costs of raising children
	● Lack of caregiving options / caregivers
	● Later marriages (have children later)
	  ○ result of higher education - spend longer time in education system - likely to prioritise career over marriage
	● Fewer marriages (mindset / lifestyle changes)
		● Declining age-dependency ratio
		  ○ Sandwiched families
		  ○ Increased stress (individual / personal level)
		  ○ Increased tax burden
		● Shortage of manpower
		  ○ Higher cost of manpower
		  ○ Fewer customers
		● Older workforce
		● Leads to ageing population
		● Weakened defence force → more vulnerable
			● Babybonus
			  ○ Cash gifts
			  ○ Tax incentive / rebates - reduced for women
			  ○ Lower costs of raising children
			● Subsidies
			  ○ Healthcare
			  ○ Childcare (education, take care of baby)
			● Increase accessibility / availability of child / student care centre near home
			● Campaign
			  ○ advantage, joy of having kids
			  ○ appeal to public
			● Defence force
			  ○ use technology to replace manpower

Ageing population	● Declining birth rate
	● Longer life expectancy
	  ○ Better medical care / healthcare
	  ○ Better nutrition
		● Similar to that of declining birth rate
		● Greater demand for healthcare services
		● Greater demand for social sectors to support elderly (e.g. community activities to engage them)
		● Increased spending to ensure infrastructure / public transport is elderly friendly	

| Brain drain | • More educated – more exposed to overseas opportunities
• Other countries may attract our "brains"
• Lack of opportunities in Singapore (area of interest / industry not found in SG)
• No sense of belonging
• Personal reasons (family, other countries perceived to have better living environment) | • Shortage of skilled labour (top talent) - not attractive to MNCs / business - loss of tax revenue
• Less innovative economy
• Loss of confidence - citizens may leave | • Foster national identity
• Attract foreign talents - boost manpower, economy
• Develop niche sectors (arts, aesthetics)
• Scholarships - work, contribute to SG's economy + technology (replace fewer talents) |

Manage challenges of ageing population:

Effects	Solution (manage effects)	Explanation
Shrinking workforce	Raise retirement age	Keep more seniors in the workforce → leverage experience of seniors → lessen negative economic impact of decrease in manpower
	Automated systems (e.g. self-ordering kiosks, self-checkout stations at supermarkets)	Address manpower crunch, especially in service industries → keep economy vibrant and competitive
	Promote active ageing (e.g. activities at senior activities centres)	Help slow down increase in healthcare costs from an ageing population
Greater economic burden	Tax subsidies for dependents (e.g. Parent Relief)	Reduce financial burden on working population (sandwiched families)
Smaller defence force	Invest in artillery / defence tech requiring fewer men to operate	e.g. High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) which needs only 3 men to fully operate the system compared with 12 men needed for other artillery systems with less precision and destructive effects.