

What are the Factors That Shape the Identities of People and Contribute to a Diverse Society?

Race and Ethnicity

In general, **race** refers to the biological classification of people, in which includes their physical characteristics.

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, each ethnic group has its own beliefs, values and practices that shape its identity and way of life.

In Southeast Asia, different groups have their unique customs, traditions and languages. For example, in Singapore, within the Malay community, there are different ethnic groups such as the Javanese and the Bugis.

Chinese, Malay, Indian, Others (CMIO) Categorisation

The government uses the CMIO categorisation to make decisions regarding policies to race and ethnicity in Singapore.

Group Representation Constituency (GRC)

The GRC system was established in 1988 to ensure that the minority races in Singapore are represented in Parliament.

A group of Members of Parliament (MPs) represents the interests of residents in the constituency. At least one of the MPs in the group representing a GRC must belong to the Malay or Indian community, or another minority racial community.

Ethnic Integration Policy (EIP)

The EIP was introduced in 1989 to promote interaction and harmony among ethnic groups in Singapore. Its aim was to prevent the rise of ethnic **enclaves**.

The EIP ensures that there is a mix of various ethnic groups in each HDB block, based on the ethnic make-up of Singapore. Since different ethnic groups live in the same block, they have opportunities to interact with one another.

Social Economic Categorisation

Socio-economic status refers to an economic situation shared by a group of people in society. It is measured based on a combination of social and economic factors.

Families with lower income may face challenges in providing the resources to support their children's development. To ensure children have a good start in life, the Singapore government introduced the KidSTART programme as added support for children aged six and below.

KidSTART equips parents with relevant knowledge and skills to nurture their child's early development. KidSTART is offered to families that need it most, such as those with a household income of \$2,500 or less, or a gross monthly per capita income of \$650 or less.