**Chapter 10: Cultural Impact of Globalisation**

**1a. Spread of Culture**

**Description:**  
Globalisation has led to the spread of popular and consumer culture across the world. This is mainly driven by multinational corporations (MNCs), digital technology, and social media. As cultures mix and influence one another, people across different countries are exposed to new lifestyles, traditions, and entertainment.

**Example 1: American Influence on Fast Food and Media**

* **Fast Food:** Many American fast-food chains, such as McDonald's and KFC, have expanded globally. McDonald’s has more than 38,000 outlets worldwide. These chains promote a Western-style dining experience that has become common in many countries.
* **Media & Entertainment:** Hollywood dominates the global entertainment industry. American movies, TV shows, and music are widely consumed, influencing fashion, language, and social behaviour.

**Example 2: The Korean Wave (Hallyu)**

* South Korean culture has spread worldwide through K-pop, K-dramas, beauty products, and fashion.
* K-pop groups like BTS and BLACKPINK have global fanbases, influencing fashion, language, and entertainment choices.
* Korean dramas on streaming platforms have gained popularity in many countries, shaping international perceptions of Korean culture.

**Impact:**

* The spread of culture enriches people’s lives by exposing them to new ideas, products, and lifestyles. For example, people around the world now enjoy Korean dramas or American fast food, creating shared experiences.
* Increased familiarity with Western and Korean culture, as people adopt the values, beliefs and lifestyles of these new ideas.
* Encourages cultural diversity by introducing new music and fashion trends to global audiences.

**1b. Dilution of Culture**

**Description:**  
While globalisation spreads culture, it can also lead to the dilution of local traditions and identities. As people embrace global consumer culture, they may move away from their own cultural practices, causing a loss of traditional customs over time.

Younger generations, influenced by global trends, may find it harder to relate to older generations rooted in local cultures.

**Example 1: Impact on Traditional Clothing – The Hanbok in Korea**

* The traditional Korean hanbok was commonly worn in the past but has become less common due to Western-style clothing.
* Modern adaptations of the hanbok incorporate Western fashion elements for convenience and practicality.
* The hanbok is now mainly worn on special occasions like weddings or cultural celebrations.

**Example 2: Decline of Local Music in Singapore**

* In **Singapore**, the local music scene (e.g., Xinyao, a genre of Mandarin ballads) has been overshadowed by international music from artists like Taylor Swift or K-pop groups.
* Local artists struggle to gain recognition as international music dominates radio stations and streaming platforms.

**Impact:**

* Cultural dilution can lead to the loss of unique traditions, languages, and customs. For instance, younger Singaporeans may struggle to connect with local music, while older generations may not appreciate global pop culture. This would lead to a gap between generations.
* Over time, this can result in the erosion of cultural identity and heritage.

**2a. Responses by Countries**

**Description:**  
Different countries have responded to the cultural impacts of globalisation in different ways.

Some governments reject foreign cultural influences to protect their local culture, while others regulate or embrace aspects of cultural globalisation that are considered valuable.

**Example 1: Singapore’s Regulation of Foreign Cultural Influences**

* In 2019, Singapore’s Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA) cancelled a concert by an overseas band after public backlash.
* The band’s performances were seen as offensive to religious values, and concerns were raised about promoting violence and hateful sentiments.
* The government intervened to protect societal harmony and uphold national values.

**Impact:**

* Prevents exposure to controversial cultural content that may go against societal values.
* Shows the government’s role in balancing global cultural influence with local sensitivities. This protects local customs, values and beliefs.
* Some individuals may feel restricted in their personal cultural choices due to government regulations.

**Example 2: France’s Quotas on Foreign Media**

* France has imposed rules to protect its cultural identity from the dominance of English-language media.
* A law requires at least 40% of TV programs and 35% of radio songs to be in French.
* This policy was introduced to counter the rising influence of American and British media.

**Impact:**

* Helps preserve French language and culture by ensuring local media remains relevant.
* Limits the impact of global entertainment industries on local culture which thus protects local culture and industries.
* However, some French artists have adapted by producing music in English to gain international recognition to compete with popular platforms such as Spotify which was offering popular American music.

**Example 3: China’s Restrictions on Foreign Films**

* The Chinese government limits the number of foreign films screened in the country.
* Strict censorship laws and state control over cinemas ensure foreign media does not overshadow local productions.
* Around 83% of films shown in China are locally produced, while foreign films contribute only 15% to box office revenue.

**Impact:**

* Encourages the growth of China’s domestic film industry.
* Reduces foreign influence on Chinese media and entertainment.
* Limits consumer access to global cultural content which protects their local culture and industries.

**2b. Responses by Individuals**

**Description:**  
Individuals also react differently to the spread of global culture. Some embrace foreign cultural influences, while others resist them to protect local traditions.

**Example 1: Consumer Influence on Cultural Trends**

* Films and TV shows can shape consumer preferences and cultural interests.
* The movie *To All the Boys I’ve Loved Before* increased global interest in Yakult, a Japanese drink featured in the film.
* The documentary *Blackfish* sparked public outcry against SeaWorld’s treatment of killer whales, leading to an end of its killer whale breeding programme.

**Impact:**

* Shows how entertainment can shape global trends and consumer behaviour.
* Encourages social activism based on cultural influences from media.
* Demonstrates how individuals can drive change through consumer choices.

**Example 2: Backlash Against Korean Culture in Japan**

* While K-pop and K-dramas are highly popular in Japan, some Japanese individuals resist Korean cultural influences.
* Protests have been staged against Japanese media broadcasting too many Korean shows over concerns that it is diluting Japanese culture and cultural businesses. -> In 2011, a protest was held in Japan against Japan’s Fuji Television for airing Korean shows.
* Some Japanese consumers refuse to buy Korean products to preserve local culture.

**Impact:**

* Highlights tensions between cultural acceptance and national identity.
* Shows how individuals can reject globalisation to maintain cultural traditions and prevent diluting of local culture.