

Edexcel GCE Geography from 2008
Unit 4 Geographical Research: exemplar responses

- This is an exemplar response from the **June 2013** examination series.
- It is an example of candidate work which has been word processed and adapted to make it more suitable as a teaching and learning aid.
- Errors, including QWC errors, have in most cases been kept. The aim of these exemplar reports is to highlight good practice and areas of potential improvement. The marking levels and examiners comments given are indicative and should be used as a basis for discussion in the classroom, rather than indicating a specific grade.
- Comments and indicative marks are provided at the end of the exemplar.

Pre-release research focus:

OPTION 4: The World of Cultural Diversity

- Explore the attitudes and roles of a range of players towards cultural diversity, including its protection.
- Research different attitudes to cultural diversity and why these may vary from place to place.

Report Title:

OPTION 4: The World of Cultural Diversity

4 To what extent do different players have contrasting attitudes towards the protection of cultures and cultural diversity?

(Total for Question 4 = 70 marks)

Plan:

Intro- define culture /cultural diversity, players and the attitudes they can have

- UK Gov. 😊
- Japanese Gov. ☹️
- China in Tibet ☹️
- TNCs including Nissan 😊
- American westernization ☹️
- UNESCO 😊

Conclusion – contrasting attitudes shown effects the level of protection

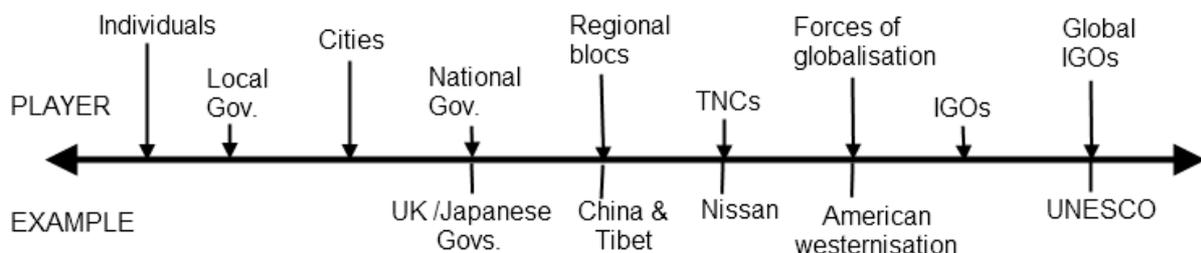
1. Introduction

According to Dunn et al (2009) “Culture is a system of shared values and beliefs in a society which influences lifestyle and tradition”. Cultural diversity refers to a melting pot of many different cultures which are respected and treated equally.

In some ways players (stakeholders in a particular issue) can have positive attitudes to cultural diversity and therefore protect it through legislation to ensure legal equality and prevent discrimination. These players will foster an atmosphere of respect and understanding as they see this as beneficial to their society. Other players work to protect one culture or impose it on others due to perceived superiority and this can lead to a negative attitude to cultural diversity. This attitude often results in legislation to prevent cultural diversity or even a more actively militaristic approach of suppressing minority cultures.

This report aims to assess to what extent different players have different attitudes to the protection of cultural diversity by examining a range of players and their attitudes towards the protection of cultural diversity. These case studies will be ordered in terms of scale from national to global (see Figure 1) and are detailed in the methodology section of the report (see Figure 2). The case studies are the Japanese and UK governments, China in Tibet, TNCs, American westernization and UNESCO.

Figure 1: Spectrum of players involved in cultural diversity



2 Research and methodology

The case studies have been carefully selected from core textbooks (Warn et al and Philip Allan), websites, magazines, newspapers and journals in order to give a balanced account of each ones attitudes to cultural diversity and the extent to which they protect or reduce diversity. More detail is provided in Figure 2.

Figure 2: resources and methodology

Case study	Scale	Overview	Source / reason included	Report section
UK Government	National	Has used legislation and education effectively to promote cultural diversity and protect it.	Warn et al A2 geography textbook included to show how a national government is protecting cultural diversity	3.1
Japanese Government	National	Has used legislation to reduce cultural diversity and increase ethnic homogeneity	Migration information source , a website about the immigration policies of many countries, included to show a national government against cultural diversity in contrast to the UK	3.2
China in Tibet	Regional	China is actively destroying Tibetan culture, therefore bringing about the reduction of cultural diversity in the region	An article in Le Monde Diplomatique an independent newspaper included to show the official destruction of cultural diversity	3.3
TNCs including Nissan	Regional	TNCs are beginning to appreciate cultural diversity in a new climate of global business and some TNCs are actively protecting and encouraging it	Nissan-global.com, the global policies of Nissan as a TNC included to show a global player using cultural diversity positively	3.4
American westernization	Global	The west, through globalization, is forcing its consumer capitalist culture on the rest of the world, reducing cultural diversity globally	An article in The Humanist and the A2 Philip Allan textbook. Included to show the reduction in cultural diversity globally.	3.5
UNESCO	Global	A global IGO trying to promote cultural diversity worldwide	Warn et al A2 geography textbook and the UNESCO website to examine both sides of the argument. Included to show a global player protecting cultural diversity through education.	3.6

3 Application and understanding

3.1 The effect of legislation on cultural diversity

In recent times the UK has experienced waves of immigration, first since the 1950s from the Commonwealth and now from the EU especially since 2004. This has created a rise in the number of different cultures in the UK and in the size of some cultural groups.

In order to protect and promote this cultural diversity, the UK government has brought in legislation to prevent discrimination and promise legal equality to all cultures. Examples of this legislation include the 1976 Race Relations Act and the 1998 Human Rights Act and hate crime legislation which has recently been updated in 2013 to include subcultures such as goth or punk.

However this legislation is no guarantee of peoples individual attitudes to alternate cultures, so as shown by the recent rise of UKIP, a nationalist party. Therefore the UK has also used education to improve peoples attitudes to cultural diversity by making culture a feature of the school curriculum.

In conclusion the UK government has effectively used the dual method of legislation to enshrine protection of cultural groups in law and education to promote the idea that cultural diversity is normal and positive. This has been positive overall for the UK but does not remove the threat that some individuals and groups will be anti-immigration and even anti some cultural groups.

3.2 Using legislation to promote cultural homogeneity

In Japan negative attitudes to cultural diversity are common and Japan is one of the most culturally homogenous countries in the world – 98.5% of people in Japan are ethnically Japanese (CIA world fact book). This is partly a result of legislation of prevent unnecessary immigration into Japan, combined with withholding citizenship to anyone who is not ethnically Japanese. Generally people who want to become Japanese citizens have to renounce their original nationality and cannot be dual citizens. A 2005 UN report concluded that xenophobia and discrimination was very widespread in Japan, although it is an issue that is rarely discussed in the media. This has resulted in little acculturation (the adoption of cultural traits by another culture) and protected the Japanese culture from outside influence.

However, the recent need to boost immigration caused by labour shortages and the post-2008 economic downturn as well as the impact of Japan's very rapidly ageing population may change immigration policy. In conclusion Japanese government policy towards immigration and nationality as well as people's fears of foreigners has meant that a negative attitude towards cultural diversity persists in Japan.

3.3 China in Tibet

Is China to blame for the destruction of the Tibetan culture? Since China occupied Tibet in the 1950s it has used policies to reduce the Tibetan culture and impose Chinese culture of the area.

These policies include only teaching Mandarin in schools and discouraging higher education amongst Tibetans. This has helped create an underclass where only 40% of Tibetans are fully literate. Whilst oppression in the region is undeniable, globalisation is also partly to blame for this situation, not just the actions of China. China has also restricted the religious practices of Tibetan Buddhists and has also been accused of genocide in the region in the 1950s. It is important to remember that before 1950 Tibet was a country of harsh feudalism, poverty and civil war. Now Tibetans enjoy the highest quality of life they ever have due to Chinese investment in infrastructure and the economic system. Most of the inequality Tibetans suffer is due to the imposition of the western capitalist model by China which is influenced by the west. Thus the role of the west in eroding cultural diversity must also be explored (see Section 3.5). In conclusion, China has actively worked to reduce cultural diversity and increase cultural homogeneity in Tibet and clearly has a negative attitude towards the Tibetan culture, however, the march of globalisation affects Tibet as well as most places so the situation is not entirely the result of Chinese policy.

3.4 Positive global views of cultural diversity

Globalisation has contributed to the creation of a global culture since the 1950s. However, TNCs are now beginning to recognise that there are many different cultural demands and expectations in markets around the world. This requires a company that can employ people from different cultures who understand the needs of different groups and also respects different cultures and cross-cultural communications. Japanese TNC Nissan is an example of a company which actively promotes cultural diversity through sessions on cross-cultural communication and an e-learning programme on understanding other cultures in market countries as part of its 'Nissan Diversity' programme. It also aims to foster an environment where different cultures feel included and respected in order to make international employees feel welcome. In conclusion, TNCs such as Nissan are now embracing cultural diversity as a way to thrive in an increasingly global business environment. This means they have a positive attitude towards cultural diversity and aim to respect it amongst employees, although they have a less direct role in actually protecting cultural diversity than governments.

3.5 American westernisation – the ultimate player?

The developed west, consisting of Europe and North America, tends to view its own capitalist culture as modern and progressive due to its high levels of technology, money, consumerism and democracy. This has led some to argue that it has led to cultural superiority and cultural imperialism as the west, particularly America, try to impose their culture on others. This can be done directly through the media such as Disney films and Hollywood films that perpetuate the 'American Dream' idea and bring it to a global audience. The spread of western culture is creating a global consumer culture which erodes cultural diversity worldwide by homogenising music, food tastes, clothing, language and the arts. As more people in more cultures take on the American model it spreads globally. There is no single player in this but western TNCs, media, governments and even tourists play a role in its spread. For example Saudi Arabia now boasts huge shopping malls packed with US designer brands'

However, there is also an argument that globalisation, although it can lead to the spread of western consumer culture, can also help protect cultural identity. Increased migration and communication allows people from different cultures to spread around the world, yet maintain contact with the traditional ways of life and languages in the home country or region. This increased cultural mixing might help preserve traditional cultures but can also lead to new hybrid cultures through cultural mixing – which might be said to actually increase diversity. In conclusion, the spread of western consumer culture aided by globalisation has a negative impact on cultural diversity as it is seen as superior. Although there might be some elements of preservation and new hybrid cultures the overall impact is negative. This factor is not a player in itself but it is an attitude held by many players because they are part of it.

3.6 Global protection

UNESCO is an IGO which is part of the UN. It aims to increase global co-operation in the protection of cultural landscape and the people who inhabit them. Its department of culture uses the designation of World Heritage sites to protect important cultural landscapes and therefore promote the diversity of cultures. Local governments are often involved in order to educate local communities and the global community of the value of particular landscapes. The overall aim is not just to protect cultural artefacts but also to protect the wider culture. By 2013 UNESCO had protected 980 World Heritage sites of which 750 are cultural ones. However, UNESCO is limited by its own worldview. Almost 500 of its sites are in Europe and North America which reflects their regions wealth, political influence and tendency to protect ancient cultural sites rather than living cultural landscapes. Developing world cultures are under-represented even though these are often under the most threat. UNESCO has no power to protect sites as shown by the destruction of the Buddhas of Bamiyan in Afghanistan in 2001. These Buddhist monuments were destroyed by the Muslim Taliban. In conclusion UNESCO has a positive attitude to cultural diversity and actively seeks to protect it, however it suffers from a lack of resources and actions and so has to rely on the goodwill and cooperation on national governments so it is less effective than other players.

4 Conclusion

Different players have very different attitudes towards the protection of cultural diversity. Some, such as the UK government, TNCs such as Nissan and UNESCO display a positive attitude towards cultural diversity and work to protect it through legislation and also education, although they may be limited in what they can achieve due to the strength of globalisation and the march of a dominant western consumer culture. Other players such as China in Tibet and the Japanese government have less positive attitudes. However whereas China has attempted to crush the Tibetan culture Japan is merely less open to other cultures and determined to protect its own culture. These attitudes have the outcome that societies will be less culturally diverse than in other places, or in the case of China a region with a unique culture is becoming increasingly Chinese and less Tibetan. There is a significant difference between attempting to maintain cultural homogeneity in Japan and reducing heterogeneity as with China in Tibet.

The attitudes of different players are complex and shaped by many factors. For instance in the UK history, public opinion and the current economic climate all effect the way the government views cultural diversity. The UK is known for its relative tolerance towards different cultures and this is partly a result of its history of global trade and colonialism which has created an awareness of and eventual acceptance of diverse cultures. The UK is also politically stable compared to other countries and this political and economic stability may make people more willing to accept the need to protect diversity than in other countries. It must be remembered that all players attitudes and actions take place in an increasingly globalising world and it is debateable whether the spread of a more homogenous global consumer culture can be resisted by any of them.

Mark scheme section	Strengths	Areas for improvement	Mark scheme level
Introducing, defining and focusing on the question (10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound definitions • Explore different facets of the question, briefly • Scope and range made clear; some consideration of examples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argument / direction of the report could more up-front • Cultural diversity could have been considered further 	6-8 marks (Level 3)
Researching and methodology (15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed methodology table and valid comments / explanations • Wide range of relevant material at different scales • Factual and topical • Accurate detail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could extend comments on reliability and add dates 	12-15 marks (Level 4)
Analysis, application and understanding (20)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers case studies / examples from more than one perspective so is evaluative • Applies examples / case studies to the question • Good explanations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Might have considered using diagrams • Lacks theory / concepts in depth 	17-20 marks (Level 4)
Conclusions and evaluation (15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good ongoing evaluation • Thorough recall in main conclusion • Recognises complexity; makes judgments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses on some players more than others in the conclusion 	12-15 marks (Level 4)
QWC (10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good terminology • Logical structure and sections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tends to mix place-based sections with thematic ones • Does lack referencing in the main body of the text 	9-10 marks (Level 4)