

This diversity in languages and thus ethnic groups form a firm foundation upon wh...

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Multicultural day initiative is relevant to many communities such as academic institutions such as schools, colleges and universities, public libraries, religious centers as churches and mosques.

I was once a volunteer in one of the Universities of Australia and I found out that this initiative was appropriate in a University community (Bell, 1993).

Explain how the project fits a " community development definition".

Community development is a process of promoting conditions that enable the whole community to progress economically and socially by encouraging the community members to participate actively. The process relies much on the community's initiative (Banks et al., 1993).

Multiculturalism is a doctrine that encourages different cultures in the country to coexist peacefully and equitably and allow people in the country to respect and allow diverse groups of religions and cultures to exist in one area (Bell, 1993).

Multicultural day initiative, therefore, fits well in the definition of community development in that the project tries to instill a sense of togetherness among people irrespective of their cultural and religious background. When people embrace each other and appreciate their diversity, they will find a common ground of converging their diverse abilities, perspectives and skills to create long-lasting conditions that will enable mutual progress among individuals of the community and the community at large. This progress would be seen in terms of development in a community's economic level, social wellbeing and mature political perspectives (Banks et al., 1993).

The multicultural day initiative would go a long way towards instilling in

people a sense belongingness in the community of Australia. People from minority cultures or social background would feel that they are part of Australia and their contribution towards the development is much needed, the same way that contribution of people from major cultural and social backgrounds is needed. When such contributions are pooled together, the resultant effect will be an informed community that is well developed in all walks of life (Bell, 1993).

The members of any University in Australia consist of people from different races, religions, tribes, economic level and political stands. All these people need to develop a common ground in order to coexist harmoniously in the University.

The multicultural initiative responds to these needs by informing the members about the different ethnic, racial and other social groups that are present in the University. The initiative encourages members to display their unique cultural backgrounds through activities such as dancing, songs, plays and other activities that would bring out the uniqueness of a particular society. The members of the University (students, lecturers and subordinate staff) would thus appreciate the backgrounds of each other.

Explain how community strengths are harnessed to support the initiative

Australian Universities are made up of people from all walks of life and cultures. The diversity in cultures is one single most factor that will strengthen the initiative.

Language is the main determiner of membership of ethnic groups. Although

English is the most spoken language, many people speak one or more of other languages within their families and communities.

In total, there are more than 200 languages spoken in Australia (Romaine, 1991). Out of these, indigenous languages are about 50. The rest are immigrants that came to Australia in search of a conducive environment for life (Bowen, 1977).

Apart from English, Australia is rich in languages such as Italian, Greek, Arabic, Cantonese, Mandarin and Vietnamese and the list is endless.

Explain how a facilitator/community development worker may have worked to support/drive the initiative.

A community development worker is responsible for planning and organizing the activities that would take place throughout the day.

During the phases and accompanying steps prior to preparation for the day, facilitators work with participants from various cultures. As an example, the facilitator registers groups that would participate in the event. She/he helps them to train and rehearse on the various roles.

The facilitators come up with strategies and processes that will enable participants to effectively demonstrate specific norms and common cultural practices such as respect, hence assisting culturally diverse teams to achieve their goals (Tierney, 2007). The facilitators thus encourage them to harness their diversity through stimulating the teams to describe their cultural values, such as individualism, collectivism and time orientation (Tierney, 2007).

The facilitators help the teams to come up with metaphors, stories, music

and dances which are appropriate to their culture and translate across cultures.

The facilitator organizes and set up appropriate visual techniques such as pictures, cartoons, mindscapes, picture card packs, participatory video and posters in different cultural and linguistic groups. The facilitator design, pre-test and produce these materials and use them to teach visual literacy to participants (Day, 1994).

The facilitators would also work to monitor and evaluate all the activities of the day.

2. A person that is well versant with a particular culture should be engaged to inspire and teach the team in that culture.
3. All multicultural works and arts should be built on prior to the event by consulting the experts in each culture.
4. Avail a lot of artifacts to facilitate the appreciation of a maximum number of cultures.
5. After a day, facilitators may show DVDs and organize for exhibitions of the complete range of the participant's activities. Snacks and drinks that are from diverse cultures can be served during and after the day.

Identify the barriers that may have inhibited the project and discuss how those may have been overcome

Some of the hurdles and how to overcome them can be outlined as follows:

1. Language barrier- can be overcome by using interpreters (Bell, 1993).
2. Low turnout of participants- creating awareness of the event among the University community via adverts through posters, notice boards, and other

media bills.

3. Other conflicting events in the University- the program should be embedded in the University calendar and focus should be dedicated towards it by all the stakeholders.

A satisfactory questionnaire could be given to all participants after the event to inquire from them their level of satisfaction, what was missing in the event and what they needed to be improved or included into the program for better results in the future (Bell, 1993).

It may ask whether the participants are ready to embrace oneness despite the diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Results could then be evaluated and appropriate action taken for better future performance of the program.

2. Holding a forum with the participants

The program facilitators would arrange for a forum after the event to assemble the University members and discuss the event: success, failures, gaps and satisfactions of the multicultural day.

3. Checking for changes among the University members

After the program, the facilitators could assess whether university members have embraced diversity in their daily life in the institution (Healey, 2000).

They could do this by interacting with people, asking questions to gauge overall multicultural perseverance and to monitor how people relate to each other irrespective of their languages and cultures.

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