

Promoting Racial Integration through Co-Curricular Activities

EIU Experiential Learning Programme 2006



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APCEIU

Asia-Pacific Centre of Education
for International Understanding

United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Foreword

How can we teach peace? How can the people represent the peace without experiencing it? Can the learners have an idea about peace if a teacher imposes the concept of peace on them? How many times of didactical lecture can be a success to teach it to learners? How can we teach ABOUT peace and FOR peace in a peaceful way?

From almost one hundred years ago, the psychologists and education scientists theorized that experiential learning is the most natural way of human being's learning: Jean Piaget, John Dewey and Carl Rogers are among them. Carl Rogers, a famous humanitarian psychologist, distinguished two types of learning: one is cognitive and the other one is experiential. He argued that the experiential learning is much more significant than the cognitive one. Because only the former correspond to the learners' needs and wants. Rogers lists these qualities of experiential learning such as personal involvement, self-initiated, evaluated by learner, and pervasive effects on learner.

In line with life long education, scholars in adult education propose the importance of perspective transformation as a way of learning a new concept. Transformation of the perspective is based upon the learner's experience. It also recalls the Freire's empowerment education as an opposite concept of banking education. To make learners confront social issues drawing them from desk and textbook and to make them think "why" and "how" about issues for themselves are essential components of learning.

To learn to live together, we usually emphasize the pedagogy of participatory methodology and critical way of thinking in order to change the world in conflicts into the world in peace and harmony.

The participatory learning and critical thinking can be facilitated by experiential learning. To avoid the misunderstanding, here I want to clarify that I do not mean only the first, direct experience should be confined to experiential learning. In reference to the autobiography of Leonardo da Vinci, the most extraordinary artist, scientist and philosopher, always emphasized that he was a “disciple of experience”, a man “without book learning.” Learning by experience strengthened his determination to understand the laws of nature.

The experiential learning can be understood in two ways: firstly, learning from experience by learners themselves as a natural way of learning. It is organized by learners themselves; secondly, principles of experiential learning are used to design the experiential education programme.

APCEIU has been seeking for best ways to teach/learn the international understanding toward a culture of peace in Asia-Pacific region since its launching. We believe well designed experiential education leads the learners to be exposed to the meaningful experiential learning. Asia-Pacific region has been struggling with ethnic, cultural and religious conflict for a long time. In order to enhance the culture of peace in the region, we must look into deep roots of our problems and find out the ways to transform the conflicts working in a negative way to the conflicts in a positive way. In this regard, this project of “Development of Experiential Learning Programme (ELP)” was launched in order to set the way to listen to the voices from various fields in this region on how to interplay with social and cultural context and learning experience of learners. I hope we can share the precious experiences of case studies on ELP with other educators, scholars and policy makers who are committed to enhance a culture of peace in the region. I expect this project can provide a forum to share and exchange our experience.

December 2006



Kang Dai-Geun
Director

ELP Project is...

APCEIU has been committed to the promotion of a Culture of Peace in the region with a pillar of education “Learning to live together.” From experiences of organizing teacher training and cultural exchange programmes, APCEIU believe that education for peace should not only focus on contents but also on environments where education takes place. Education for International Understanding (EIU) should be focused to increase the capacities of learners to deal with issues of day-to-day survival, to resolve community conflict and to enjoy human, political and civil rights to a greater extent.

In accordance with its mandate, APCEIU has been developing Experiential Learning Programmes (ELP) to collect Best Case Studies of ELP for Peace in the Asia-Pacific region. Through this initiative, APCEIU aims to refine the EIU pedagogy and to provide conceptual framework for optimal classroom conditions, classroom activities among students and teachers, school climate and social atmosphere towards a Culture of Peace. The theme of ELP for Peace is illustrated at four different levels as concentric circles, and they are Peaceful Classroom, Peaceful School Climate, Peaceful Community and Peaceful Society.

In selecting the Best Case Study, the following steps were conducted: first, announcement letters were distributed to all the National Commissions for UNESCO; then, the Screening Committee, which was composed by APCEIU reviewed all of the submitted applications and selected four best proposals of case studies with blinded review process. After the selection, APCEIU staffs conducted field visits to the respective winners to confer the award to the

selected applicants and at the same time conduct the field observation and interview the researcher.

The chosen best proposals were selected based on the following criteria: originality of case study; applicability and feasibility for the Asia-Pacific Region; creativeness and innovativeness; relevance to EIU; effectiveness and implications; feasibility of the programme; and personal capability to carry out the research.

ELP generally shares the five core themes of EIU namely: cultural diversity and intercultural understanding; globalization and social justice, human rights and human dignity, peace and equity, and sustainability. The research areas of concentration revolves around the classroom activities, programmes related to school climate, community based programmes, and programmes which are carried out in the society.

The favorable and overwhelming responses from the applicants, the support from the UNESCO National Commissions, as well as the overall success of the implementation of this programme on this launching year inspired and motivated APCEIU to continue this endeavor for the coming years.

The Centre encourages the educators, scholars and activists from the Asia-Pacific region to apply and share their successful experiences. In this way, the best cases will be shared and promoted in the whole region towards achieving a Culture of Peace.

Researcher



Dr. Pumadevi Sivasubramaniam

Dr. Pumadevi Sivasubramaniam (Diploma in Education from University of Malaya; Bachelor of Science (HONS) from University of Malaya; Master's in Mathematics Education from The University of Leeds, United Kingdom; Ph.D in Mathematics Education from The University of Leeds, United Kingdom) has been working for about 23 years with professional experiences in the education field. She taught in a secondary school, Malaysia, from 1983 to 2001 and also had teaching experience in Britain from Jan. to Jun. 2000. At present, she is teaching as a mathematics lecturer in the Raja Melewar Teachers' Training Institute, Malaysia, since 2001. Her papers on mathematics education have been presented in many countries, such as Britain, United States, Japan, Singapore and Malaysia.

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EIU Experiential Learning
Programme 2006

Promoting Racial Integration through
Co-Curricular Activities





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PROMOTING RACIAL INTEGRATION THROUGH CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

1. Background

Malaysia is a multi-racial country. The three major races are Malays, Chinese and Indians. There are other races other than these three races living in Malaysia but the numbers are very small compared to the three major races. Hence, racial integration for a peaceful Malaysia is essential.

Our institute is a Teachers' Training Institute and conducts courses to prepare students to become teachers for schools in Malaysia. All courses involve two major components namely: the curricular component and the co-curricular component. The co-curricular component comprises of games, sports, uniform units and societies. Each sub-component of the co-curricular component forms a compulsory component of the course (which has assessment marks for each sub-component) because these components mirror the structure of the Malaysian school co-curricular syllabus.

The programme of this study was applied during the society sub-component of the co-curricular component. The society component provides the flexibility and the space for the experience of the students to enable them to appreciate other local cultures in Malaysia because the syllabus is less rigidly structured compared to the other components of the course.

The programme was planned to provide students the opportunity to experience other cultures. To achieve this plan, a major task was set. The task was an integrated dance. By allowing the students to experience the dance of other culture, this will provide the

opportunity for them to feel, appreciate and respect the other culture.

Respecting each other and appreciating other peoples' cultures are basic essential ingredients for a peaceful and harmonious community. The other activity required each race to explain about a cultural or religious festival or celebration. This aimed to enable students to better understand the other races' cultural or religious festivals and celebrations.

Although we may plan a programme with noble aims in mind, determining the impact is vitally important for the realization of the objectives. The study will also enable us to appreciate the strengths and to recognize the weaknesses and hence, enable us to improve the programme appropriately. Furthermore, the study would also enable us to modify the programme and thus serve as a reference to other multi-racial communities who would want to conduct a programme for racial integration.

This paper will use the narrative method in order to present the actual activities that took place during the programme. The result of the actual observation, the findings on the questionnaire and the outcome of the informal interview on the students will be presented. In the end, the conclusion, recommendation and further effectiveness of the study will be draw up from these methodologies.

2. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are as follows:

- (1) to evaluate the impact of co-curricular component, specifically multi-racial integrated dance, on the students; and
- (2) to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the co-curricular component through this programme.

To enable these objectives to be achieved, the programme was designed to provide the opportunity to experience, work, and understand other races and cultures. Hence, the group under

study was asked to prepare a multi-racial integrated dance within a stipulated period of time and to have weekly discussions about a particular cultural or religious festival or celebration.

3. The Methodology

The instruments used for data collection were observation, questionnaire (see Appendix 3) and informal interviews. Informal interviews were carried out from time to time.

The study aims to determine the extent of racial integration, appreciation and respect of local cultures promoted through the experiential learning programme conducted during co-curricular activity.

Racial integration in this study refers to the willingness to experience other races' culture and work together with other races. To be able to evaluate the extent of racial integration as defined in this study, cultural dances were used to provide the experience of other races' culture. Creating an integrated dance requires the students to work together and must have a give and take attitude. They must also be willing to agree on a common music which requires their cooperation.

4. The Setting and Timeline

The case study was based on the group under my supervision. The group composed of six Malays, four Chinese and four Indian students. This group is one of the eight groups from 118 students comprising of 39 Malays, 39 Chinese and 40 Indians. The students were divided into 8 groups (because eight lecturers were assigned to organize groups) comprising of all the three races.

Co-curricular activities started on 18 July 2006 and ended on 7 November 2006, consisting of 30 hours of interaction (2 hours per week for 15 weeks). A plan was drawn up for the weekly activities.

During the first week, the students were not divided into their

respective groups because several had gone for their medical check up and some had not yet registered for the course (these students are pre-Bachelor of Education first semester course students). In the first week, the students had to work in pairs (that is two students of different races) to solve an IQ test.

On the second week, the students were divided into eight groups and the students committee for the society was set up. Instructions for activities from the second to the fifth week were delivered simultaneously for all the eight groups but they had to work in their respective groups to complete the tasks in a common place (for details of each week's tasks refer to Appendix 1).

From the sixth to the thirteenth week students practiced the dance. On the thirteenth week they also answered the questionnaire. On the fourteenth week, the eight groups presented their dances. The judges are composed of were one Malay, one Chinese and one Indian lecturer. The criteria is related to the characteristics of the task that provided the opportunity for experiential learning (refer to Appendix 2 for specific details of the various criteria). On the fourteenth week, students shared their feelings and final reflection about the activities and then had a party.

5. Findings of the Study

The findings will focus on the first week's ice breaking activity and activities related to the experiential learning programme of the group under study.

Observation

The activity of the first week, required students to solve an IQ test in pairs comprising of two different races which forced the students to speak in the national language, Bahasa Melayu. Everyone can comprehend what the other was saying. Prior to the activity, there was racial polarization since the students from the same nationality

stood together and spoke their respective languages. Hence, this acted as an 'ice - breaking' activity and the beginning of racial integration.

From the second to the fifth week, students worked in their respective group. They got to know each other better and were at ease with each other. Working together required verbal communication using the national language. However, students continued to use their respective languages when they communicated with students of their own race. During this period, I asked the students to name the members of their group. During the second week, they are only familiar with the student from their own race. On the fifth week, every one of the 14 students knew the names of the other students in the group.

From the sixth to the fifteenth week, students were experiencing the culture of other countries. From my observation, during the sixth week when they are going to learn a new dance, students especially the boys who were out numbered by the girls, were reluctant to try the dances. Students thought that each race has to do their own cultural dance and hence, that is exactly what happened. So I stepped in and told all to do the steps together and I too joined in. I told them that Every Body should do the same dance. Once they started to try out the dance, a sort of bond and respect was obvious. Each week the group that was going to teach their cultural dance was just as eager as the others who are going to learn it. I made it a rule that nobody should laugh or criticize one another. A healthy atmosphere was created and they all enjoyed practicing the dance. The fun of learning and experiencing the dance of other culture created mutual respect from each other.

However, when it comes to communication, the Malay and Indian students were more vocal in this group, while the Chinese students had a tendency to cling to each other and communicated less with the rest of the group although they participated well in all activities.

On the other hand, when it comes to explaining their own cultures, the three groups faced difficulty trying to explain certain customs or

items, food eaten and the religious aspects used in their festivals because they only knew it in their own respective languages. This made me realized that I also have difficulty in expressing many aspects of my own culture.

The students performed on the thirteenth week. They performed with pride and confidence. The lecturers judging commented that it was the best prepared group and also a very unique group since it was composed by a multi-racial group. They also wore clothes according to the cultural dance that they performed. The Malay music served as one common factor for all the dances. It was the first time for the participants to witness such a unique performance.

Result of the Questionnaire

The age of the students' ranges from 18 to 20 years old. All 14 students studied in primary schools which used their respective mother tongues as the medium of instruction. For instance, Malays went to schools which use Malay as the medium of instruction (but it is common for other races to attend these schools), the Chinese went to Chinese schools and the Indians to Tamil (the language spoken by most Indians in Malaysia) schools which used their respective language. This shows racial segregation at a young age.

Students unanimously agreed that they knew about some of the culture of other countries and they even have friends from other nationality before they joined the society. Five out of six Malay students, three out of four Chinese students, and all Indian students agreed that they do not have any experience dancing another cultures' dance before joining this society. All students made new friends from every race after joining this society.

All students had knowledge of the various festivals especially the major festivals such as Hari Raya Puasa, Chinese New Year and Deepavali. Their sources of information are from the mass media, parents, friends and neighbours.

All 14 students agreed that they obtained a deeper and better

understanding of the various cultural and religious festivals after discussion with all the members of the group and the lecturer.

Five out of the six Malay students stated that they were happy to have an opportunity to participate with other races. One of these five students stated that she was shocked to do the dance. The student commented, "At first I was shocked because I have to do the dance. But when I saw the effort and enthusiasm of all the members, I enjoyed working with my new friends". One Malay student stated that in her secondary school she had friends from other races and hence it was not a new experience working with them.

Three out of the four Chinese students were comfortable to participate with students of other races. A quote from a student's response; "Enjoyable and I consider it a new experience". One Chinese student stated that the language barrier prohibited her to communicate with other students. A quote from this student's response; "I was worried because I am not so good in Bahasa Melayu and I face problems expressing ideas in Bahasa Melayu. This is the reason for my feeling of dissatisfaction".

Three out of four Indian students stated of discomfort in doing the activity. One student commented that it was a good opportunity to mix with other races and enjoyed himself. A quote from the student's response, "I felt happy and gifted to be given the opportunity to work with friends from other nationalities".

All six Malay students affirmed that they gained a better understanding of the other cultures and friendship was built among the group. They stated the happiness of working together to achieve a common goal. One student stated that, "Sometimes I felt it was difficult to work with other students from different nationalities but when I saw the commitment, I enjoyed working with them".

Two out of the four Chinese students acknowledged their difficulty in communicating in Bahasa Melayu. Not having to understand and to be understood caused dissatisfaction. The other two Chinese students stated that there were times disagreement arises because of their different views and ideas but oftentimes it was fun. A quote from a

student's response; "Sometimes I find it difficult to understand the culture and dance of the other races. This is probably because I rarely communicate with them". On the other hand, one student commented; "I feel happy and comfortable working with other races in the society. But I feel that sometimes I cannot agree with their views". A quote from another student's response; "I cannot express my ideas in Bahasa Melayu and this makes me feel sad".

All four Indian students stated that they were comfortable and felt at ease to talk with their friends from other races and even enjoyed working with them. One of them stated that he was proud to work with the other races and another one stated how happy and proud he was to participate in such activity.

Activities carried out during the weekly gatherings were as follows: discussion about the cultures of the various races; practicing the dance; and discussion about selecting the right music.

Thirteen out of the fourteen students stated that practicing their integrated dance was the only interaction they had with other races outside the formal two hours per week society gathering. Some stated that they had discussions about the dance. One student stated that he had discussions and participated in moral activities (but did not explicitly explain the activities). Hence, it appears that only the dancing activity provided them the opportunity to bring all the students together outside the society's formal hours of interaction.

According to the students, the activities that fostered better understanding of other races' cultures were the following: learning the dance of other race; discussion of cultural events; and weekly meetings and interaction with the other nationalities. Based on their comments, we can conclude that all the activities of the experiential learning programme did foster better understanding and appreciation of other cultures and practices.

Outcomes of informal interview

Students were asked from time to time about how they felt doing

all the activities (dance and discussion of cultural religious festival). I always got the same response, “It is fun and a good experience”. When I observed and commented that they were getting nowhere with the preparation of an integrated dance they supported each other (irrespective of race) and claimed that they would come up with a final dance.

When they were given the clothes, all the students, guys and girls were very excited. I asked them if they liked the other race clothes and they replied, “Yes”. Even the guys tried on the ladies clothes and everyone had a lot of fun.

The informal interviews always drew positive responses. I believe because they felt that I would want a positive response and hence this instrument was not a good means of obtaining data for this research.

6. Final Reflection

The final reflection revealed the final impact of the process of the experiential learning programme. A student claimed that she studied in a multi-racial school but she stated the following experience:

“I am used to mingle with other races at school. The members of the society (the institute’s cultural society members) were shocked that we had to create an integrated dance as we did not have any dancing experience”. Her comment revealed that although she came from a multi-racial school she had never performed the other races’ dance. Several other students also expressed their apprehension about having to perform a dance. She also revealed that the activity of discussing about the culture of one race per week provided information for them to understand and appreciate it. This opinion was shared by all the members of the group.

Several students claimed that practicing the dance taught them the value of tolerance and cooperation. They experienced sweet and bitter memories that will remain with them for the rest of their life. A quote from a student’s reflection; “The society enabled me to

understand the different races better. I worked with other races and we helped each other. This memory will be a great memory forever”.

Another student commented that they cooperated closely to perform the best dance. It was the first time for him to dance in front of an audience and this gained him confidence. Most of them commented that this was the first time they ever tried this activity.

A quote from a Chinese student’s reflection; “The culture and clothes including the traditional dances was indeed an opportunity and experience which was very good and valuable to all of us. Although there are sweet and bitter moments when I participated in the cultural society, but I will not forget them”.

Hence the impact of the activities in the programme have indeed given the students the desired experience and made them realized that a give and take policy and tolerance were some of the major ingredients required to foster better understanding between races.

7. Conclusion

The programme achieved the objectives through co-curricular activities. The activities promoted racial integration and were able to foster appreciation and respect of local cultures and practices. It also produced the desired outcomes, that is, students made new friends from other races, worked together in harmony and learned to appreciate and understand different cultures. As such, providing this kind of activity fostered better understanding and integration among the fourteen students involved in this case study.

Hence, racial integration can be promoted through co-curricular activities but the programme must be designed taking into consideration the dos and don’ts of the different races and religions involved and then ensure the implementation of the programme in a systematic manner by a teacher or lecturer (a person of authority) who is committed to fostering racial integration.

8. Discussion and Further Effectiveness

The 14 students involved in this study started as strangers to one another. Their childhood background shows that there was limited interaction with other races. They attended primary schools which used their respective mother tongues as the medium of instruction. Although one student claimed that she had an interaction with other races in her secondary education, it is stated in her final reflection that she had not shared any of the other races' experiences nor had she understood their cultures. The experiential learning programme used during the co-curricular activity time had provided opportunity for these 14 students to experience and share information about each others cultures. The strengths of the programme used in this study are basically the experience of the other races' cultural dances and the sharing of information about the other races cultures. The students were able to interact and cooperate with each other even though they belong to different races.

The implementation however, has several weaknesses and this resulted in the exclusion of the seven groups initially intended to be part of this study. For the proper implementation of this programme, the teacher or leader of the group must understand the theory and importance of experiential learning. The programme used in this study had one major component and one minor component. The major component was the dance because it is the cultural dances that were used to provide the experience of the other races' culture. It is from this experience that a student will feel the impact of another races' culture. Experiential learning is based on the importance of providing experience. For example, if you told someone that a temperature of negative five degrees is very cold, that person can only imagine the extent of coldness but cannot explain the impact of the temperature of negative five degrees on him or her. However, if he or she had been to a country or in a room where the temperature was negative five degrees then they know the impact of the

temperature on them. The experience has an impact on the affective domain which strongly influences our actions. This is why the importance of experiential learning must first be understood by the teacher before participating in this programme.

When people experience other races' cultures with an open mind they often learn to appreciate it. I had an experience of learning a Malay traditional dance called Dikir Barat. It's a dance from the states in the East coast of West Malaysia. The first time I was exposed to it I thought that it was a boring dance because you just sit and do the movements. I'm afraid to hurt the feeling of my friend if I will inform my thoughts about it. So I decided to learn, participate and perform the dance. Today, it is one of my favourite dances and I have even performed it overseas. I realized that experiencing the dance made me feel the fun and joy of doing it. It changed my view of the dance and also made me realize that unless we are willing to experience other races' culture with an open mind; we cannot fully appreciate and respect the other race.

The minor component was the discussion about other races' cultures and practices and then keeping a written record of it (see Appendix 4). The discussion had several aims. One was to share and understand how and why a particular cultural activity was celebrated. The other aim was to encourage communication between the races. From the study it was realized that language is a barrier to effective communication and resulted in unknown dissatisfaction. In fact it is not because Chinese students could not speak the national language. From my observation, they assumed that the Malay students and the Indian students were more fluent than them. I stated this because their written responses in the questionnaire revealed that they are capable of communicating effectively in Bahasa Melayu. Hence, I do agree with the comment of one of the Chinese students who stated that she is unable to understand the other races sometimes because of language barrier and she rarely communicates with them. The implication of this is that more opportunity must be given for the

different races to communicate with each other on a regular basis.

For those who would like to carry out the activity like the discussion of the cultural/religious festivals, it is vital to understand the aims of carrying out this activity. Just downloading the information without discussing it defeats the purpose of this component of the programme.

This programme may be carried out by other communities with people from diversified cultures. The programme can be altered by using a different cultural experience or providing the cultural experience in a different setting. For example, using simulation of various cultural festivals instead of cultural dances during co-curricular activities is an alternative way.

Another suggestion is to experience the culture in the real situation. For example, students could stay with Malay families in the village (called kampung in Bahasa Melayu) for a Malay festival.

The simulation or real life experience will provide the experiential learning required to foster appreciation, understanding and respect for the other races' culture which would lead to better racial integration.

It is my hope that many more experiential learning programmes be conducted in the world to foster better racial integration which will enhance harmony and peace in the world.

Appendix 1

The Weekly Activities

The **first week's** activity was intended as an 'ice-breaking' activity. It aimed to enable students to get to know each other and also convey the intention of working with other races.

Activities from the **second to the fifth week** basically required the students to work together which were not part of the experiential learning programme. However, these four weeks (eight hours) allowed students to get to know each other within each group. These weeks were also used to inform students of the integrated dance that they were supposed to create. Students were instructed to make proper plans on the following: selecting the dance, person in-charge for the music, selecting the choreographer, clothes and equipments (radio, cassette player, etc.) to use were required to carry out their weekly practices. Students were observed to work well together. The experiential learning programme was implemented from the sixth week.

Week six

The students in the group used for this case study had brought the various music and video of cultural dances. The Malay students had downloaded the video of the steps to do the various Malay dances. The Indian students had brought their own videos and also borrowed videos from my collection of dances. The Chinese students had brought videos of Chinese dances. Everyone sat and viewed the videos of the various dances displayed through a LCD (Liquid Crystal

Display) projector. They selected sections that they agreed unanimously to perform. The Malay dance was taught and learnt.



▲ Malay dance

Week seven

For this week, the students learned the Indian dance. It was the most difficult dance as it required starting from the standing position then squatting and swaying the body and then returning to the standing position.

All the 14 students tried out the steps as they saw in the video. The students then tried out another Indian dance which required them to raise their second finger pointing in the air and hop around (the dance is called Banghra).

For this dance the Indian students did not have a video and so they did a demonstration which was followed by the others. Then they went on to learn another Malay dance which one girl in the group knew. So she counted and showed the steps and the others followed.



▲ Banghra dance

Week eight

This week the students learnt the Chinese dance. They were provided with some green scarves but since the number of scarves was insufficient they decided to imagine they had the scarves and did the Chinese dance.

They then went on to practice again the Malay and Indian dances that they had learnt in the earlier two weeks.



▲ Chinese dance



▲ Indian dance

Week nine

This week the group decided to choreograph the integrated dance based on the dances that they had learnt. They all did the Malay dance and then the Indian dance and finally the Chinese dance and used the respective music. The entire dance comprising the three dances was lengthy and they had not yet joined the music. However, the students were enjoying the practice. I advised them to use one type of music and do all the three dances and shorten the length of each dance. Mr. Alias a lecturer who teaches dancing for students in the Institute, was called in to give advice to the group and to show a few steps.

Between week nine and week ten

I obtained a suitable music from Mr. Alias. This lecturer also taught me a few steps of the Malay dance called Joget.

Week ten

I told the group that we will count the beats of the music. Then I divided the beats into three parts and then taught the students the joget. Then I asked four students to do the joget, three students to do the Indian dance and four students to do the Chinese dance. The guys in the group were required to act as the King and traders. One Malay boy volunteered to be the King, the Indian boy was to act as

the Chinese trader and the other Malay boy acted as the Indian trader (there were no Chinese boys in this group). The scene for the final integrated dance was that of a King's court. The King and his traders would be entertained by the dancers who would perform the three dances.



▲ Students in Costumes

Between week eleven and week twelve

The students met to practice the dance. This arrangement was encouraged by me



but done by the students themselves. They added another part to the dance where at the end the King, the traders and all the dancers would join together to do a short dance to end the show.

Week eleven

Students were given traditional clothes (Malay, Chinese and Indian costumes) to try on. The students tried on all the various clothes over their own clothes. They then practiced their integrated dance, while I commented on the movements.

Week twelve

Students answered the questionnaire given. They then went on to practice their dance

Another type of music was added on by the students for the entrance of the traders with their gifts for the King.

Between week twelve and thirteen

Students met to practice their dance for the final performance.

Week thirteen

Students did their performance on stage and were selected as the most integrated group by three neutral judges.

Week fourteen

Students did their final overall reflection and had a party with all the other groups.

Appendix 2

Assigned Tasks

1. Malay student dancing the Chinese dance
2. Malay student dancing the Indian dance
3. Chinese student dancing the Malay dance
4. Chinese student dancing the Indian dance
5. Indian student dancing the Malay dance
6. Indian student dancing the Chinese dance
7. All three races involved in the dance
8. Costumes of various cultures used
9. Display of working together with other races
10. Illustrates racial integration

Appendix 3

Questionnaire

Instruction: Answer all questions

30

APCERU

Unit: PPISMP _____

Date of Birth __/__/19__

Check ✓

the appropriate space.

1. Race: Malay Chinese Indian

2. My primary school: Malay medium Chinese medium Tamil medium

3. Select the most appropriate number for each of the items below.

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3= Agree 4= Strongly agree

No.	Item	1,2,3, or 4
A	Before I became a member of this society I knew about the culture of other races in Malaysia.	
B	After I became a member of the society I learnt about the culture of other races in Malaysia.	
C	Before I became a member of this society I had friends of other races.	
D	During our society gatherings I speak in Bahasa Melayu.	
E	Before I became a member of this society I have worked with friends from other races	

No.	Item	1,2,3, or 4
F	While I was a member of this society I have worked with friends from other races	
G	Before I became a member of this society I have danced with other races	
H	While I was a member of this society I have danced with other races.	
I	Before I became a member of this society I have danced the dance of other races	
J	While I was a member of this society I have danced the dance of the other races.	

4. (a) State the number of new friends that you have made since you became a member of his society. _____

(b) State the number of (i) Malay friends: _____

(ii) Chinese friends: _____

(iii) Indian friends: _____

5. In the space provided, state what you know about the culture of other races before becoming a member of this society. Also stated the source of your information.

6. In the space provided, state what you know about the culture of other races after becoming a member of this society. Also stated the source of your information.

7. Express your feelings during your first few weeks of having to work with students of other races.

8. Express your feelings today about having to work with students of other races.
9. State the activities that you did with other races during the co-curricular time.
10. State the activities that you did with other races after the co-curricular time.
11. State the activities of the society that helped you to better understand the other races.

Appendix 4

Cultural and Religious Festivals

Malay / Muslims Festivals

Hari Raya Puasa

The most significant celebration for Muslims, is the celebration called Hari Raya Puasa. It signifies the end of the fasting month of Ramadan. The sighting of the new moon on the day, before the next month on the Muslim calendar (called Syawal) determines the beginning of the celebration. 'Hari Raya' means 'day of celebration' and 'Puasa' means 'fasting'

The fasting month is the month of Ramadan. Muslims fast from dawn till sunset. During the period of fasting, apart from eating and drinking, Muslims are expected to avoid lying, breaking promises or cheating during the month of Ramadan. It is to remind them of the plight of the poor and to cleanse themselves by exercising abstinence and self-control.

The Muslim community ushers in the first day of Hari Raya Puasa by congregating at mosques for morning prayers. Then it is breakfast with the family, followed by a visit to the cemetery where deceased loved ones are remembered; graves are cleaned and cleared of overgrowth, and prayers are offered to Allah.

Although the first two days of Hari Raya Puasa are public holidays Muslims hold open house throughout the month of Syawal. Friends and neighbours who are Muslims or non-Muslims are invited to join

in the celebrations.

The greeting that is uttered is “Selamat Hari Raya”, which means “Wishing you a joyous celebration day”. Gifts of money, in small green packets are given to children during this celebration.

Hari Raya Aidiladha

This is also a Muslim festival. It is celebrated on the 10th day of the month of Zulhijah, of the lunar Islamic calendar. This is approximately 70 days after the end of the month of Ramadan.

Muslims believe that Prophet Abraham wanted a son. He prayed to Allah (Arabic for God) and he was blessed with a son who he named Ishmael. Then one day after several years Prophet Abraham had a dream. In the dream Allah revealed to the prophet that he should sacrifice his son. The prophet and his son set off to Mina, Mina (Saudi Arabia) for the sacrifice. As Prophet Abraham prepared to sacrifice his son, Allah stopped him and gave him a sheep to sacrifice instead. This is the story behind Aidiladha or Eid-ul-Adha. Muslims celebrate Aidiladha as it marks the end of the Pilgrimage or Haj for the millions of Muslims who make the trip to Mecca each year.

Muslims sacrifice domestic animals, usually a sheep, as a symbol of Prophet Abraham’s sacrifice that was determine by Allah; this sacrifice is called “Qurban.” The meat is distributed amongst neighbours, relatives, and the poor. However, such a sacrifice is not compulsory unless the Muslim can afford it.

Hari Raya Aidiladha is also known as Hari Raya Haji or Hari Raya Qurban in Malaysia.

Chap Goh Mei Festival

Fifteen days after the Chinese New Year, Chap Goh Mei is celebrated to mark its end. It is usually celebrated on a grand scale where special prayers will be held together with the lighting of giant sized joss-sticks and family feasts. There will be fireworks and lantern

displays to celebrate Chap Goh Mei.

Chap Goh Mei is also the night where young maidens dressed resplendently, will go to the temples to pray for a suitable suitor. There is also the practice of throwing oranges into the rivers or seas with the hope of getting the right partner.

Cultural activities are also held that night as part of the celebration. This includes lantern processions, lion dances, Chinese opera and the balancing of giant banners or “Chingay”.

Hungry Ghost Festival

The Hungry Ghost Festival falls in the month of July in the Chinese Lunar Calendar. The festival is celebrated for a whole month with a lot of activities.

According to legend, during the month of July all the ghosts are released from their world to come into this world in search of food. The ghosts have been kept hungry in their world and therefore the name ‘Hungry Ghost festival’.

The Chinese believe that they have to respect and take good care of the ghosts for their own security, prosperity and posterity. Therefore a lot of food is prepared for the hungry ghosts so that they would not trouble them.

Apart from the food, the Chinese will also present gifts in the form of paper houses, paper cars and other necessities which will be burnt during the festival. It is believed that these gifts when burnt will be received by the ghosts in their world.

The highlight or the climax of the festival is on 15th July. On this

day, many activities are carried out to welcome and entertain the ghost on a make shift stage. All the Chinese temples and Chinese religious organization will contribute a lot of cash to host this celebration.

There will be songs and dances and prayers . Many people will gather to watch the performances. The first row of chairs is left empty-presumably for the ghosts-the guest of honour. There will be a lot of noises and festivity during the Hungry Ghost festival.

In conclusion, the Hungry Ghost Festival is one of the important festivals of the Chinese community in Malaysia.

Moon Cake Festival

Moon cake festival falls on the 15th August of the Chinese Lunar Calendar. It is one of the most important festival for the Chinese as it signifies the unification of family members. The Chinese will celebrate the festival on a big scale on that day.

One of the stories/legends related to the moon cake festival is a romantic and sad one about a fairy and her husband. The fairy, Chang Er, had to take a powerful medicine belonging to her husband to prevent it from falling into the hand of a unscrupulous man. After taking the medicine, she flew to the moon. She was very sad as she had to separate from her husband and had to live alone on the moon. Today, during the festival, the Chinese will observe the moon to see Chang Er's shadow.

The Chinese will return to their villages to celebrate the festival with their families on the eve of the festival, each family will prepare special dishes. The children will play with lanterns. Many activities such as lantern-making competition and 'cross-tea pots' competition are held during the festival. Nowadays moon cake has many flavours

like moon cake with egg yolk and nuts.

To conclude, the moon cake festival meant a lot to the Chinese society.

Chinese New Year

The Chinese New Year which falls on the first day of the Chinese Lunar Calendar is celebrated by Malaysian citizens of Chinese descent. On the eve of this New Year, all members of the family will gather around the main table for a family dinner. A special delicacy that could not be missed is the “Lao Sheng” which signifies the welcoming of luck for each New Year.

During this festive season, everyone is required to put on coloured apparels but, black is a taboo. Most Chinese will wear red, as it is widely believed that red will bring in luck for the in-coming year. According to a popular Chinese legend, ancient Chinese armed with red cannons successfully chased and defeated a man-eating creature called, “Nian” who had been terrorizing the village. They jubilantly celebrated this success by wearing red garments and handed-out “angpaos” (monetary gift in red packets) to children and young unmarried relatives and visitors. This tradition is still widely practiced today. There are certain taboos that the Chinese must avoid during the New Year. Sweeping is strictly prohibited on the first day of the Chinese New Year as it is believed that this act will drive away all the luck from the family. The Chinese too, is not allowed to utter any unpleasant word and in return they will wish each other with four-worded greetings like “Gong Xi Gong Xi”, “Fa Cai Ru Yi”, “Sheng Yi Xing Long” etc.

The Dragon Boat Festival

The 5th day of the 5th month of the lunar year is an important day

for the Chinese people. The day called “Duan Wu” is observed everywhere in China. This unique Chinese celebration dates back to earliest times and a number of legends explain its origins.

The best known story centers on a patriotic court official named Qu Yuan, of the state of Chu during the Warring State Period more than 2,000 years ago. Qu tried to warn the emperor of an increasingly corrupt government, but failed. In a last desperate protest, he threw himself into the river and drowned. The state Of Chu was soon annexed by the state of Qin.

Later Qu Yuan's sympathizers jump into the boats, beat the water with their oars and made rice dumplings wrapped in reed-leaves “zong zi” and scatter them into the Mi Luo River in the hope that fish in the river would eat the rice dumplings instead of the body of the deceased poet.

The custom of making rice dumplings spread to the whole country. Today, people eat glutinous rice cakes to mark the occasion.

At the news of the poet's death, the local people raced out in boats in an effort of searching his body. Later the activity became a boat race and the boats gradually developed into dragon boats. In many places along the rivers and on the coast today, the holiday also features dragon-boat races. In these high-spirited competitions, teams of rowers stroke their oars in unison to propel sleek, long vessels through the water.

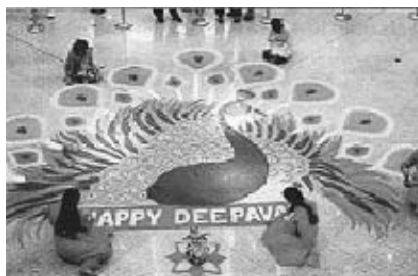
Deepavali / Dewali

The Hindu Festival of lights falls on the 14th day of the Tamil month Aippasi (between October and November). To Hindus everywhere, Deepavali is their most important festival. The celebration is to commemorate the victory of light over darkness, of

good over evil. The word Deepavali is a combination of the words *Dipa* (meaning light) and *Gavali* (meaning a row). Hence the word Deepavali means the 'lighted path'.

According to legend, in India some 5000 years ago, an evil monarch Narakasuran was killed by Lord Krishna. Narakasuran was the ruler of a kingdom but his pride and quest for pleasure turned him into an evil man. Because the people suffered under his rule, they prayed to Lord Krishna for help. Lord Krishna felt pity and so descended to earth and fought a fierce battle against Narakasuran. In the ensuing battle, the evil Narakasuran was defeated and killed.

Some days before Deepavali, the shops sell many lamps and toys as Hindus prepare to celebrate. Women clean out their houses and cakes and other food are prepared. Parents hurry to buy new clothes for the family. On Deepavali, the day starts very early. Hindus wake up at about five in the morning. They rub oil into their hair and bodies and allow it to soak for half an hour. A powder is used to remove the oil and they then have a bath with soap and water. A drop of oil is dabbed on the head of the individual before the bath is taken. This symbolic rite in purification marks a new beginning. After the oil bath, new clothes are worn and a visit to the temple follows. Devotees offer prayer to the gods. Sometimes the symbolic act of breaking coconut on the temple grounds is carried out to remind the Hindus that they must fight against their ego and pride (represented by the hard shell of the coconut) so as to achieve rebirth and humbleness and purity (represented by the white flesh of the fruit).



▲ A Kolam (picture above)

The entrance of Hindu homes during Deepavali is often decorated with the *kolam*. This is a beautifully designed floral item on the ground. The Hindus believe that this will invoke the blessings of the deity *Lashimi* (The goddess of wealth). To invite the *Goddess Lashimi* to enter their homes, the Hindus light oil lamps around the compound and skillfully draw a *kolam* at its entrance during Deepavali using rice flour or grains of rice. *Kolam* designs can depict flowers, animals or even geometric forms. Patience and skills are needed in making the *kolam* as it is believed to bring happiness and prosperity. As the celebration continues, traditional Indian dances are performed in theatres and cultural centers in towns and cities.

Hindus hold 'open house' for relatives and friends who join in the festivities. Among the favourite dishes and delicacies that are served are Chicken Curry, Mutton, *Achar*, *Jebebi*, *Muruku*, *Oomapoddi* and *Tosai*.

Thaipusam

Thaipusam commemorates the day Lord Siva's consort, the powerful goddess Parvathi, gives her son, Murugan, the vel (lance) to vanquish three demons and their large army which were plaguing the world.

Thaipusam falls on a full moon day in the auspicious 10th Tamil month of Thai when the constellation of Pusam, the star of well-being, rises over the eastern horizon.

To many Thaipusam is the day of thanksgiving or atonement for wrongs. It has been claimed by many that the thanks is to Lord Muruga who had granted them their wishes.

Spectacular edifices or *kavadis* are often carried or pulled by the devotees with chains and ropes anchored in the skin of their backs or

chests.

After ritual cleansing at a stream at the foothills, the devotees walk up the 272 steps to the Batu Caves (Malaysia) Temple accompanied by family and friends.

But *kavadi* carrying need not be so arduous. Just carrying a small pot of milk up the steps to be poured on the *vel* is enough. Most devotees do this.

Some parents carry newborn babies slung in a cloth-cradle hung on a pole shouldered at both ends by the mother and the father as thanks for a safe birth. Some also carry *kavadis* made of wood or metal adorned with pictures or statues of Hindu deities, flowers and peacock plumes.

Others shave their heads bald as a symbol of humility and atonement. Many observe a strict vegetarian diet for about 40 days and renounce all forms of comfort and pleasure-giving activities. The 40 days are spent in meditation and prayer.

Varsha Pirappu - Tamil (Hindu) New Year

The new year is not Deepavali. The New Year starts in the month of Chitthirai (in March/April) and is called Varsha Pirappu. Greetings of “Puthandu Vazthukal”, (Happy New Year), are exchanged with fervour on this day, which is supposedly the day when Lord Brahma (The Creator of the world, according to Hindu mythology) started creation.

Varsha Pirappu usually falls in the month of March / April. The Tamil Calendar, which has 12 months from Chitthirai (April - May) to Panguni (March - April), has a 60-year cycle.

On New Year eve, Hindus of Tamil origin, go to temple to collect water prepared by boiling special herbs. The water is dabbed on everyone's head by the mother or oneself on New Year morning and then they have their head bath. The new clothes are marked on the inner side with a dot from a paste of ground turmeric on New Year Morning, as an indication of thanks to god for such gifts.

Everyone rises early on Varsha Pirappu's (New Year) morning and take their bath. When New Year is born everyone gather at the household altar for a special religious ceremony. God worshipped on New Year is offered fruits, sweets and flowers. They have a feast of grains as New Year occurs at harvest time (in India and Sri Lanka).

Traditionally Panchangam (almanac) reading has been a part of the New Year festivity. So everyone goes to temple to listen about their faith and fortune for the New Year according to their respective horoscopes. Horoscopes are read by the priest at a specific time on New Year day.

The rest of the day is spent visiting various relatives, friends and exchanging New Year greetings. Money placed on betel leaves with areca nuts and rice (with its husk) is given as gift.

Business people might start new account books for the New Year on this day. Bonuses are often paid on the eve of the New Year.

Field Visit

As a representative of APCEIU, Mr. Kim Jong-hun, Chief, Publication & Information Team took a field visit on 9-14 November 2006 to Malaysia to carry out missions such as : 1) to award the researcher as a winner of 2006 Best Case Study of EIU Experiential Learning Programmes; 2) to give a guideline on finalizing the report of case study; and 3) to interview teachers, headmasters, scholars and students involved in the research and encourage them to continue and enhance further activities related to EIU.

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APCEIU

- Students' Cultural Dance Performance



- Director of Institute giving congratulatory remarks to the winner of ELP prize





◀ ELP Best Case Study Prize
Awarding Ceremony



◀ Malaysian ELP Best Case
Winner Dr. Pumadevi
(right) and APCEIU field
visitor Mr. Kim is discussing
the motivations, contents
and the importance of the
ELP programmes.

► Students' traditional
Malaysian walk to lead the
field visitors to the school
auditorium for the ELP
prize awarding ceremony



► Interview with the IPRM's
students participating in the
ELP programmes





▲ The co-lecturers in front of the IPRM main office