

Cultural Immersion as a Catalyst for Harmonious Relationships of Non-Indigene Students of Federal Polytechnic Wannune and Host Community

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Abstract

Between the internal and external environments of a higher education institution (HEI), various acts of engagements or interactions occur involving non-indigene students and members of the host community including market women, landlords/landladies, commercial motor-cyclists, artisans, food vendors etc. As a tertiary institution, students are drawn across various cultural and linguistic divides in Nigeria. There is bound to ensure conflict of interests bordering on communication connectivity with Tiv being the major and most widely spoken language of communication albeit having English Language as lingua franca. Tiv are the fourth largest ethnic group in Nigeria, domiciled in the middle-belt, nay north-central geo-political zone. Wannune, a town that is the administrative headquarters of Tarka Local Government Council is the host community of the Federal Polytechnic Wannune (FPW). Therefore, the challenge of language hampers seamless communication and collaboration between the parties. This paper explores the impact of cultural immersion on harmonious relationship involving non-indigene students of Federal Polytechnic Wannune and host community. Using qualitative content analysis approach and the adoption of contact hypothesis theory, the paper investigated the dynamics of harmonious relationships through cultural immersion programmes that can incubate or nurture mutual understanding, regard and collaboration or alliance among the parties. Purposive sampling was used to select non-indigene students of FPW, market women, commercial motor-cyclists and landlords as participants due to their regular interactions. Based on findings, this paper proffers that cultural immersion is a catalyst for harmonious relationships, encouraging cross-cultural competency, benevolence and social concord.

Keywords: Catalyst, Cultural Immersion, Federal Polytechnic Wannune, harmonious relationships, host communities and non-indigene students.

Introduction:

The influx of students nay non-indigene students most notably have problem of communication connectivity, adaptation of cultural norms and traditions. These challenges breed conflicts of interests between students and host community members with linguistic and cultural gaps further exacerbate the issue especially among the non-indigene students. Even though the exact number of languages in Nigeria is still subject to debate, studies by Bamgbose (1995,p.26); Essien, (2005 p.24); Agbede, (2005, p.23) indicate that there are more than 400 languages belonging to different ethnic-linguistic groups in the country. As a federal institution, Federal Polytechnic Wannune draws students across cultural and linguistic divides in Nigeria and beyond.

Language and culture are thus imperative to their harmonious relations with host communities. According to Obuh and Omenogor (2012, p.10), language can be used "to influence personality, to declare war, to oppose ideas, intentions, and actions; to scatter, to condemn, and to generate violence" when employed as a communication tool. It could also be used to build friendly relationships, resolve conflicts, inspire, educate, entertain, and bring people or communities together.

Language is therefore a vehicle for communicating the intended meaning for achieving effective harmonious relationships. It is an aspect of culture immersed in norms and mores of socio-political organisations. As an integral part of the host communities, the non-indigene students of Federal Polytechnic Wannune are burdened with the enormous task of communicating and familiarising themselves with the local culture and traditions of the host communities for harmonious relationships. This paper seeks to fashion out measures of mainstreaming the linguistic and cultural aspects of host communities through collaborative efforts involving the non-indigene students. Linguistic and cultural barriers have been an encumbrance to non-indigene students-host communities' harmonious relations for many years in Nigeria.

It is imperative to explore the possibilities of linguistic and cultural immersion among non-indigene students. This is to explore avenues of bridging the linguistic and cultural gap through cultural programme of activities and thus enhance harmonious relationships between them for speedy acculturation of the non-indigene students.

Literature Review

1. Several studies have been conducted on students' host communities, among these studies; Bakwai (2013, pp.35-43) assessed the role of school-host community relations in educational development. Bibire (2014, p.23) explored the challenges and prospects of community participation in education in Nigeria. Enyi (2006, pp.17-21) dwelled on lessons from community participation in the funding and management of educational institutions in Nigeria, Mitrofanova (2011, p. 24) examined the possibilities of building host community-school relations. And Oboegbulem (2004, p. 1) investigated language and communication as instrument of conflict resolution in Nigeria. From these studies, limited efforts are made towards developing language through cultural immersion towards harmonious relationships in host communities of educational institutions in Nigeria. Educational institutions must strive for community acceptance. It is obvious that educational institutions are often sought for by communities but notwithstanding, institutions are expected to maintain community relations to enable it get community support and to effectively operate. Good Community relations by an educational institution aid in securing what the institution needs from the community and in providing what the community expects. The ambience of a host community.

Theoretical Frameworks

This paper identified Allport's "Contact Hypothesis" theory which postulates that different groups in a community can curb or eradicate prejudice and improve relationships. The theory is a guide to the investigation of the role of cultural immersion in encouraging harmonious relationship between non-indigene students of Federal Polytechnic Wannune (FPW) and the host community of Wannune.

Contact Hypothesis: Gordon Willard Allport (1954)

Born on 11 November, 1897 in Montezuma, Indiana, United States of America (USA), Gordon Willard Allport is known as the “patron saint” of personality psychologists, (Eysenck, 1990, p3):

Allport was a major figure in American “personality” psychology. His 1937 textbook *Personality: A psychological interpretation* is widely viewed as an important landmark in the establishment of “personality” as legitimate subdiscipline in psychology. Intellectually wide ranging. Allport also wrote extensively on the topic of social psychology and his work on the history of social psychology, prejudice and religion were widely cited. A critic of both psychoanalysis and behaviourism, Allport championed an eclectic psychology that would respect the scientific method while honouring human potential and individual uniqueness-an approach that contributed to the development of humanistic psychology in the 1960s. Although he never established his own “school” of psychology, Allport exercised considerable influence within the field and in a 1951 survey of clinical psychologists he placed second only to Sigmund Freud as a theorist of most direct value in day-to-day clinical work (cited in Encyclopedia.com)

Allport was intrigued with moral potential: psychology which was introduced to him at Harvard University by Hugo Munsterberg, a famous German psychologist. But Floyd, his elder brother, was more the important influence whom he regarded as inspirational figure on whose word he held on to on psychological issues. Floyd was Munsterberg’s assistant, a graduate student in psychology at Harvard. The question: Could human nature be completely understood through the methods of natural science? Dominated much of Gordon Allport’s subsequent work in psychology. Munsterberg postulated that there was a “purposive” angle of human existentialism that goes beyond the determination of natural science and therefore could only be examined philosophically. Floyd having no regard for philosophical discussions advocated for the removing of psychology “interims of behaviour complex” (Munsterberg, 1914, p.300 cited in Encyclopedia.com). Rather Floyd posited that human existence hinged on experience could be predicated in the physical world and basically subject to scientific scrutiny (Encyclopedia.com). Allport was an ardent critic of psychoanalysis but a proponent of a psychology that illuminates the human potential to go beyond sexual and environmental sources. He has been garbed as the “Chief pioneer in development of psychology of personality” (Jenness, 1979, p.12 cited in Encyclopedia.com). Allport’s first and enduring love in psychology is “personality”. In a nutshell, “Contact Hypothesis” was introduced in “The Nature of Prejudice” which was written in 1954 by Allport Gordon. According to his hypothesis, it suggests that intergroup contact, under conducive ambience or conditions can curb prejudice and foster intergroup relations. His work hinged on social psychology and his theories are of great value in the field. In terms of cultural immersions to improve harmonious relationships between non-indigene students and host communities, four vital conditions for effective contact were identified:

- I. **Equal Status:** There is no one that is superior in status than the other participants and so all interacted as equals.
- II. **Common goals:** The one thrust of the research is moving together to achieve the objective(s) of the work.

- III. Intergroup Cooperation:** Cooperation and collaboration with each other as participants is key to the success of achieving the set goals.
- IV. Institutional Support:** The Federal Polytechnic Wannune must encourage and support intergroup interaction or contact.

In the ambient of cultural immersion, Contact Hypothesis proffer that non-indigene students and Wannune, the host community of Federal Polytechnic can cultivate harmonious relationships through structured interactions such as cultural events, social functions, respect and empathy, deliberate language learning for communication connectivity. No school can operate in a vacuum without the community it serves. Oboegbulem (2004, p. 1) defined a community as, "a body of people living in the same locality and having a common cultural and historical heritage and the willingness to work together. The definition implies that people in a community are bound to one another, have common interest and work together for a common goal. According to Ibiam (2015, p. 34) educational institutions are social system with semi permeable boundary that allows interactions and exchange of resources with its external environment. Hence the concept of school-community relationship can be described as cooperative and beneficial relationship and interactions between the school and host community which aim at promoting mutual co-existence.

Cordial relationship between the educational institutions and the community is a pre-requisite for achieving a meaningful educational objective (Gital, 2009, p. 23). Generally, community has a vital interest in how institutions operate and how they function smoothly. Sadker (2008, p. 23) asserts that community transmits its culture and view to institutions of learning, Bibire (2014, p. 24) maintains that schools and communities work closely with each other for their mutual goals. Pawlas (2005, p. 24), Mitrofanova (2011), and Bakwai, (2013) asserts that the sharing of information creates better school-community relationship which ultimately enhances general development of education.

If there is any activity that human beings perform every day, it is the use of language to communicate for connectivity. As a matter of fact, many of man's means of living are intricately connected to the use of language. Dada (2004, p.2) defines it as "an arbitrary vocal system of communication used among members of a speech community" while Osisanwo (2003, p. 23) defines it as "human vocal noise or the graphic representation of the noise, used systematically and conventionally by members of a speech community for purposes of communication". Essentially, language is a set of contextual codes intelligible and meaningful to those who share the codes. The basic function of language is communication. Professionals and artisans all deploy language to perform or enhance their occupations and status. Adedun (2014, p. 32) asserts that "human activities are diverse and complex and all involve a system of meaning making through language". Through language, people are able to live and work together, pursue individual and societal goals, settle conflicts, design socio-economic and political plans that would cater for the present and the future.

Stubbs (1995, p. 22) identifies seven functions of language. The functions include (1) expressive/emotive function, (2) directive/cognitive or persuasive function, (3) poetic function (4) contact function (5) metal-linguistic function (6) referential function, and (7) contextual/situational function. Osisanwo (2003, p. 28) explains that the expressive function occurs when language is used to express the inner state of mind of the speaker. It may be an instantaneous reaction to an ongoing football game e.g. hurrah! It's a goal! The directive or cognitive or persuasive function of language allows the speaker to direct the hearer to carry out an action. It may also be used to persuade or plead with the hearer for an action to take place or not.

The poetic function of language allows language users to use it creatively for aesthetic purposes while the contact function of language, also regarded as 'phatic' function allows people to use language for brief social or psychological interaction e.g. for greetings or in an attempt to open a channel for communication. The metal lingual function is performed when language draws attention to itself for the purpose of clarification on any of its levels. The referential function ensures that the denotative meaning of a word or expression is the physical object which the language user has used it for, while the contextual/ situational function of language allows language user to relate his experience to others with regard to the immediate environment.

The contextual/situational function of language is very relevant to this study as it allows language users to employ language in solving contextual and situational problems of higher educational institution host communities which may be cultural, religious, political, educational, socio-economic, etc. In this sense, the acquisition of language is of particular importance for the process of communication, humanization, socialization and societal development.

Cultural immersion is a process of engaging in authentic cultural experiences that enable non-indigene students to interact with native speakers, learn about the culture, and develop cultural competence (Furnham & Bochner, 1986; p. 4; Jackson, 2011, pp. 55-58). This approach emphasises the importance of context and culture in language learning and recognises that language cannot be divorced from culture (Kramsch, 1993, p. 22). Furthermore Kramsch (1993, p. 22), opines that cultural immersion is based on the socio-cultural approach to language learning, which emphasises the role of social interaction in language acquisition.

In addition, cultural immersion is a process of experiencing and learning about the culture of a target language of the host community in a manner that is more engaging and active. It goes beyond the classroom setting where learners can participate in activities and interact with native speakers of the target language in their natural environment. According to Olatunji (2016, p. 12), cultural immersion is essential in language learning as it facilitates the acquisition of not only the linguistic aspects of a language but also the cultural components. It is a concept that has been widely debated in literature. Olatunji (2016, p. 12) defines cultural immersion as a process that involves living and experiencing a new culture as part of a learning experience. It encompasses activities such as attending cultural events, visiting historical sites, staying with host families, and participating in local traditions. Cultural immersion enables learners to interact with native speakers of the target language and understand their cultural norms and values.

Area of the study

Wannune is the headquarters of Tarka Local Government Area of Benue State. The Local Government lies between longitude 8045' and 9000'E and latitude 7030' and 7045'N. Tarka Local Government Area was created on December 8th, 1996 by the Late Gen. Sani Abacha's administration with a presidential proclamation. The area was part of the present Gboko Local Government Area and administered as Mbakor District.

The local government area is named after Late Chief (Dr.) Joseph Sarwuan Tarka, a renowned Mbakor born front-line Nigerian nationalist and fighter for minority rights. This development was intended to immortalise the name of the senator. The original inhabitants of Tarka Local Government Area are the Mbakor of Tiv ethnic extraction. They are of Jemgbagh parental lineage. The creation of the local government attracted other ethnic groups to the area, who

have come mainly for trade and public service jobs like the police, immigration, the State Security Service, as well as other state jobs. The local government area is divided into ten council wards namely: Shitile, Tongov, Mbakwakem, Mbaajir, Mbaigba, Mbachaverikyondo, Mbaikyo/yia, Mbaayo, Mbanyagber and Mbaikyaa. Student's concentration will be more in Wannue where the polytechnic is situated. The major spoken language is Tiv and English Language as national lingua franca.

Methodology

This paper opted for qualitative research design than mixed-methods which was equally appropriate. This was based on the use of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) to collect data through interactive sessions of goaded questions like interviews.

Population

There are so many micro groups that exist across Wannune, the host community of the Federal Polytechnic including religious, political, cultural, social, economic strata. The paper selected participants from the macro groups that have in its membership two or more persons from the micro. Thus, the FGDs comprised non-indigene students (10), landlords/landladies (8), commercial motorcyclists (12) and market women(10).

Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling was adopted to select participants for the Focus Discussion Groups (FDGs). This technique of a sampling enwraps selecting participants hinged on their characteristics or experiences that conform to the research objectives (Palinkas et al., 2015). These criteria were adopted to select the participants:

- Non-indigene students are those who have been studying at the Federal Polytechnic Wannune for at least a year since the institution commenced academic exercise in the 2022/2023 session coming from its establishment in 2021. Within this period, they have had considerably significant interactions with the people of Wannune.
- Landlords/landladies are those who owned properties especially for accommodation that are rented to non-indigene student for at least a year or two and who have a great understanding of the culture which is synonymous to every Tiv locality.
- Commercial motorcyclists who are popularly called "Hire" are those who have cultivated regular interactions with the non-indigene students whom they transport from home to school to market to places of worship and the entire environment. The "Hire" riders have indept knowledge and understanding of the local culture.
- Market women are those who have been in the market (which booms every five days that make each or every market day) either as the homestead (those who reside in Wannune) and/or migrants (those who come from neighbouring environs). They sell products that non-indigene students to purchase for their upkeep. Market days are more vibrant with varying degree of activities than any other day in Wannune. The market women who have put in at least three years and have understanding of the culture of the host community were those selected.

Data Collection

This paper engaged in interactive sessions prompted by question-like interviews which were an interactive and open-ended approach with each selected focus group discussion to collate data. The FGDs comprised non-indigene students, landlords/landladies, commercial motorcyclists and market women. The participants consented to audio-recordings of the interactive sessions which were 15-25 minutes. These groups were selected hinged on their

significant interactions with non-indigene students and their prospects to give premium perception into the dynamics of harmonious relations.

Data Analysis

Collected data from the Focus Group Discussion based on thematic analysis was employed to identify, code categories patterns and themes in the data.

Table 1: FGD Participants

S/No	Participants	No	Average Age Range (Years)
1.	Non-indigene students	10	18-24
2.	Landlords/Landladies	8	55-82
3.	Commercial Motorcyclists	12	22-68
4.	Market Women	10	20-70
	Total	Total	Total
4.	4 FGDs	40	18-82

Interactive questions-like interview for Focus Group Discussion (FGDs)

The researchers drew out six questions that were administered to all the selected FGDs. Exception of the non-indigene students whose question-like interview was conducted in English Language, the others were in Tiv Language being the dominant language spoken in Wannune. The researchers did not need translators as both of them are Tiv by birth and proficient in the language and very knowledgeable of the Tiv culture. The interactive questions are:

1. Coming in contact with indigenes in Wannune, what are some common challenges that crop up when non-indigene students interact with them?
2. To promote desired harmonious relationship between the parties, how can cultural immersion programmes assists?
3. What is the function of language in facilitating or inhibiting communication between non-indigene students and host community?
4. How do you respond when you feel respected or disrespected by a non-indigene student?
5. No doubt there are social events or activities that abound in Wannune that can promote interaction and understanding between the parties. What types would you recommend?
6. How can Federal Polytechnic Wannune promote a culture of inclusion and respect for diverse ethnicity among non-indigene students and the host community?

Narrative Description of Codification

Cultural Immersion: Participants Experiences

Experiences of participants as narrated unveiled a substantial theme of cultural immersion which played a pivotal function in encouraging harmonious relationships between non-indigene students of Federal Polytechnic Wannune and host community. This theme was further unbundled into:

- Participation in cultural events to obtain in-depth grasp of the culture of the Polytechnic's host community. Participants (non-indigenous students) stressed that partaking in events, such as marriage ceremonies and other traditional ceremonies is very vital. Some of the participants recalled their experiences at the traditional marriage of their landlord's

daughter that they were invited. They witnessed the process from start to finish which culminated to a traditional dance performance by the local dance troupe. There is also the Kwagh-hir puppetry performance that invokes nostalgia by the viewer; learning of Tiv dance and instruments like “gbande”, “gido” being drum and trumpet respectively helping immensely in putting non-indigene student on the right pedestal of communication connectivity.

- **Learning of Language (Tiv):** In order to achieve communication with the host community, non-indigene students had to learn Tiv which is the dominant language of communication. At least the nuances of Tiv language or key phrases as first measure of communication was identified as a vital aspect of cultural immersion as effective communication connectivity between parties. Most participants acknowledged the civility of the host community who rather than use abusive language to deceive the non-indigene students to mean “greetings” or “endearment”, they were taught the day-to-day greetings and responses. This includes “U nder ver?” meaning “good morning”, “U nder nana?” meaning “How are you this morning” and “kwagh er ga” meaning “fine” as response. Another and most common greeting is, “U pande ver?” meaning “good afternoon” or “good evening” and adds a rider that “U pande nena?” meaning “how are you doing?” The non-indigene student responds by saying “M pande dedoo” which literary means “I am very well”. In some other climes, albeit not a norm, non-indigene students are pranked by being taught abusive words to mean greetings and endearments. The embarrassment of misused key phrases can best be imagined. Language plays a very vital role as tool for communication, connectivity and cultural immersion. Its role is central in all aspects of human life, from relationships and identity formation including economic, growth, education and cultural exchange.
- **Homestay Programmes:** As non-indigene students most of them stay in compounds with the landlords and their families. This is illuminated as an effective means to promote or nurture cultural immersion as the non-indigene students enjoy experiencing the culture and language of the host community through the host families firsthand. Tiv folklore and storytelling would have been of immense help but it is fast eroding if not already gone into extinction. There are Tiv cosines learnt to cook by the non-indigene students including traditional crafts and artisan skills. Tiv songs to learn. All of these forged seamless and smooth relations between the parties.

Language Barriers: Toxic of Communication Connectivity

Language is very important in facilitating communication and connectivity among people of the world, nay Wannune as host community of Federal Polytechnic Wannune. It cropped up as a huge challenge for non-indigene students who as first timers in the community could not speak Tiv with the host community members thereby hindering effective communication connectivity. The following barriers were noted by the participants

- **Language barrier** was a major setback for the non-indigene students to whom Tiv language is bane and struggling to understand it as the local dialect which is the mainstream language of the host community.
- **Strategies of Communication:** Too many of them getting interpreters were near non-existent as even non-indigene members of the host community were not much to form a group to access them in such matters. Only about two of the non-indigene students who were lucky enough to have had interpreters on one occasion each to come to their rescue. It was noted that using interpreters or learning appropriate key phrases was important of developing communication connectivity strategies.

Respect and Empathy:

An intermittent theme emphasised by participants is respect and empathy shown to the culture of host community brought about harmonious relationships that is hinged on:

- Cultural sensitivity was deemed the nerve centre for fostering harmonious relationships by being aware and upholding the customs and traditions of the host community. One of the non-indigene students who was living in a compound that the landlord and family too lives said he made it a point of duty to always greet the landlord and his wives by prostrating to them which at most times embarrassed them. And when he was asked to stop, he felt very uncomfortable until he came to the realisation that he was from another ethnic group. So he learned to be bowing to them and sometimes followed them to farmlands.
- Open-mindedness is very crucial an aspect and desire to willingly learn about the culture of the host community. It breeds harmonious relationships between the parties. Participants highlighted its importance than being aloof.

Social Interactions:

A very critical factor in cementing harmonious relationships the participants highlighted was social interactions predicted on the following aspects:

- Shared activities involving cultural programmes of Tiv heritage that could be appropriate for cultural immersion. The participants complained that there are lack of cultural events to participate that would have speedily facilitated parties' harmonious relationships. At best they identified burial wakes that Tiv contemporary bands are hired to perform which gets the so called mourners to dance to their delight and sing along with the band's rendition of songs. There are also sports, especially football competitions that also help to nurture social connections and a sense of acceptance or integration.
- Respect and empathy towards the Polytechnic host community is paramount an aspect. The culture and customs was highlighted as essential for deepening harmonious relationships between both parties which must be respected. The participants noted that a non-indigene cannot force his own culture and custom on his host community even as a visitor or a settler of several years standing, the host community's customs, culture and traditions supersedes his. His can only be practiced in his closet or when the occasion demands that it has to be showcased. The participants highlighted respect and empathy for the culture and customs of the host community as panacea for harmonious relationship for both parties.

Results: Qualitative findings

Using interactive question-like interview on selected Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) that include, non-indigene students, landlords/landladies, commercial motorcyclists and market women, the participants identified themes that encouraged harmonious relationship between non-indigene students and host community of Federal Polytechnic Wannune. These themes included:

1. **Cultural Immersion:** One of the most vital aspect in encouraging or nurturing harmonious relationships is cultural immersion which is basically the process of spirited involvement and tasting of a different culture, with the ultimate aim of acquiring an in-depth understanding and grasping of it. For its application, non-indigene students of Federal Polytechnic Wannune can absorb themselves in the host community's culture through participating in cultural events, living and imbibing traditions and customs, and interacting with the members of the host community. As of immense benefits, non-

indigene students can forge much more refined disposition of the host community's norms and customs while curtailing generalisation and encouraging harmonious relationships.

2. **Social Interaction** as an identified theme refers to communication connectivity through interaction between non-indigene students and host community. By simply striking up conversations with members of host community and engaging in social activities through interactions it helped built harmonious relationships. Most prominent of events is either traditional marriage and wedding receptions or burials where local bands perform and people join in dancing to the pulsating beats and sing-a-long popular songs.
3. **Respect and Empathy** is one theme that is about according value and honour to host community's traditions, customs and beliefs or values, while empathy is about appreciating and partaking in the feelings of others. Non-indigene students must be mindful of difference in cultural background by illuminating respect, putting up best behaviours and demonstrating understanding of the host community's way of life. And they must imbibe the culture of spirited hearkening to and appreciating the viewpoints and bothers of members of the host community. The benefits of this theme are that it can generate trust and promote harmonious relationship between the parties.
4. **Language:** Language is the form or fashion of communication used by a community or specific culture. It plays an important role in facilitating communication and connectivity among non-indigene students and host community, nay among individuals and groups. Languages ease communication by conveying thoughts and ideas as well as nurture relationships. Furthermore, language promotes economic growth and development connects cultures; magnifies and deepens education and knowledge participation; and supports identity and belonging. In a nutshell, language is an important vehicle for communication connectivity and cultural swap, handling a major role in different shades of human existence from economic and education development to identity formation to fostering relationships.

Non-indigene students can strive on learning Tiv language in order to assist them communicate very well with the other party being members of host community and show their commitment to cultural immersion. And the benefits are enormous as language skills can entrench in-depth connections and much more substantial interactions between the parties.

Discussion and Interpretation of findings

The findings of this study throws up four themes that the participants highlighted as vital tools in cementing harmonious relationships between non-indigene students of Federal Polytechnic Wannune and host community. The identified themes include cultural immersion, social interactions, respect, empathy and language. These themes form the fulcrum that gives vent to healthy relationships in a community as Wannune, Benue State, Nigeria that is hosting the Federal Polytechnic where students from all parts of the country are admitted to achieve their academic pursuits.

Implications for Practice and Policy

The paper's findings have implications for non-indigene students of Federal Polytechnic Wannune seeking to foster harmonious relationship with members of the host community. Participants highlighted the themes of cultural immersion, respect and empathy, language, and

social interactions as panacea for building harmonious relationships between the parties, cultural immersion programmes, social events and language classes facilitated by the Federal Polytechnic Wannune can help immensely in encouraging interaction and understanding between non-indigene students and host community.

Limitations

This paper was limited to Federal Polytechnic Wannune and may not be the same manner or generalisable to other higher education institution (HEI). Further studies can as well explore the experiences of non-indigene students in other HEI and settings.

Conclusion:

Promoting cultural immersion, respect and empathy, language and social interactions can nurture much more inclusive and harmonious relationships for everybody. Therefore, cultural immersion is a critical catalyst for harmonious relationships between non-indigene students of Federal Polytechnic Wannune and host community.

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