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REPORT OF SHORT-TERM CONSULTANT
ON
COMMUNICATION SEMINARS AND ACADEMIC PLANNING
at the
INSTITUT PERTANIAN BOGOR

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by

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Communication Seminars and Academic Planning
at the Institut Pertanian Bogor, Summer 1984

I am pleased to submit a report on my academic activities at the Institut Pertanian Bogor for Summer 1984. These activities may be divided into the following; (1) a bibliographic search for development communication materials at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Stanford University and the East-West Center; (2) the acquisition of related communication materials at these institutions, either through purchase or photocopying; (3) conducting six two-hour long seminars on development communication theory and research for IPB faculty and students; (4) participation in academic planning for courses in the new IPB Rural Communications Program; and (5) professional visits to agricultural project sites and related government offices.

1. Bibliographic search. Although my formal appointment to the IPB project did not begin until June, I began research on possible IPB teaching and research materials on development communication at UW-Madison starting in mid-May, following the end of the academic spring semester. Prof. Maurice White, who was then in charge of communication program planning for the USAID team at IPB, provided me with specific guidelines. He sent me a description of the proposed IPB communication program as well as current library holdings in Bogor on communication theory and practice.

Based on Prof. White's assessment of IPB needs and my own experience in development communication and education in Southeast Asia, I drew up a list of communication books, reports and journal articles which would be of use to both IPB faculty and students. Until about mid-June, my bibliographic search was confined mainly to UW-Madison; On my way to Indonesia, I stopped over in both Stanford University and East-West Center to gather additional references. Stanford University's Institute for Communication Research is widely known for its research work in the third world, while East-West Center has a long-term project on satellite television in Indonesia itself. I met with Prof. Everett Rogers, who is known for his work on the diffusion of innovations, at Stanford, and with Prof. Wilbur Schramm, who has conducted cross-cultural research for many years, at East-West Center. Prof. Schramm is also participating in the long-term research on satellite television in Indonesia for LEKNAS/LIPI (Indonesian Institute of Sciences, National Institute of Economic and Social Research) and East-West Center. Having worked with both of them at different times in the recent past, I was able to solicit their advice about IPB's apparent needs on a somewhat more personal basis.

2. Acquisition of related materials. As part of USAID's assistance to the IPB Rural Communications Department, about 60 books on communication theory and research and 155 journal articles and reports were sent. Most of these books were purchased at UW-Madison, with a few other materials from Stanford and East-West Center. The seminars were based, in part, on these teaching and research materials.

Reference to these materials was also made during my meetings with IPB faculty and staff in planning IPB courses in communication. Some IPB faculty members suggested the possibility of photocopying some of these materials before being placed on reserve at the university library.

3. Seminars. The main purpose of my professional visit to IPB was to hold seminars on development communication theory and research for IPB faculty and students. The seminar topics were as follows; (1) Competing theories and models of communication; (2) Communication effects and the various hierarchies-of-effects and needs; (3) What the mass media do people; (4) What people do with mass media; (5) Organization theories and diffusion models; and (6) Feedback in national development projects and some communication research suggestions for IPB.

The first seminar discussed linear through convergent models of communication and various theories of the mass media since the 1940s, including the "bullet" or "hypodermic needle" theory, the "limited or no effects" theory and the interactive theory of mass communication. Their persistence in various forms was likewise discussed. The first seminar also identified the cognitive, affective and conative effects of communication and their applications in research.

The second seminar discussed Michael Ray's three orders hierarchy-of-communication effects. The conditions under which each hierarchy applied, particularly in relation to public information campaigns, were also examined. Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs, with reference to possible appeals to be used in communication campaigns, was analyzed.

The third seminar focused on "what the mass media do to people" based on research in industrialized and third world countries. It provided an overview of the following topics: (1) the agenda-setting functions of the mass media; (2) the media dependency model; (3) the cultivation/expectancy model of mass media; and (4) the ongoing debate on the "scary world" of television hypothesis.

The fourth seminar discussed "what people do with the mass media." Theories and research on the following topics were examined: (1) the communication effects gap; (2) the spiral of silence theory; (3) the theory of pluralistic ignorance; and (4) the uses and gratifications approach to mass media.

Since development communication campaigns are usually conducted in the context of organizations, the fifth seminar discussed various models of organizations, and their consequent effects on the flow of information. These perspectives were also compared to findings in diffusion research, particularly in relation to decision making processes by various participants. Opinion leadership in rural communities, adopter categories as well as lessons from social network research were also reviewed.

The final seminar emphasized the importance of feedback in the communication process, and examined possible feedback flows again in the context of organization theories. Since research conducted by educational institutions provided one such feedback flow, a number of possible IPB research projects were suggested. The practical value of these projects was emphasized. Since most of them were rather modest in scope, they could possibly be conducted by students in IPB's Rural Communications Program.

The suggestions included the following: (1) research on the readership of various IPB agricultural extension materials; (2) research on the format (layout, use of color, illustrations and photographs, paper stock, etc.) of these extension materials by using split runs in IPB's own printing press; (3) research on mass media use in the rural areas, particularly radio and satellite television; (4) research on traditional media use, particularly shadow plays (wayangs) with development campaign messages; (5) research on the role of the mosques in the diffusion of social and political ideas; (6) research on feedback from rural audiences using local radio stations as well as extension offices; and (7) research on distance teaching, using the satellite communication system.

In all six seminars, research findings from third world countries were used as examples in discussions of various communication theories. The need to see these theories in their proper context was repeatedly emphasized, since most of them originated from the U.S. and Western Europe. As a result, the conditions which provided the research setting may not always apply. This is part of the reason why IPB's own communication research is so important: not only to contribute to day-to-day agricultural development activities, but also to communication theory construction in the rural third World.

While the series of seminars provided an overview of current theories and applications of mass media research, the rather limited amount of class time did not allow for more in-depth discussion of various issues. A reading list organized along topics discussed in

the seminar was provided to all interested participants at the last meeting, so that they could refer to some of the books, reports, and journal articles on their own time. Based on my own teaching experience in the U.S., however, many of these reference materials are rather difficult to understand, even for English-language speakers. Except for the IPB faculty, many students in the Rural Communications Program would probably find some of the readings, if adopted for their coursework, about as difficult, if not more so, than their U.S. counterparts.

The interest in the seminars appeared to be high for the most part. Each seminar was attended by about 15 to 20 people, many of them attending on a regular basis. Most of these participants were IPB faculty members and staff, along with a few graduate students. Discussions were quite lively, as participants tried to apply the theories to local issues and situations. The fourth through the sixth seminars generated the most debate among seminar participants. On my suggestion, the seminars were audiotaped for possible use as reference material by IPB students.

Given the English-language problem among IPB students and the need for a set of materials addressing the needs of the IPB Rural Communication Program, I suggested the possibility of writing a textbook based on the seminars to a number of IPB faculty members, including Prof. Amri Jahi, Prof. Dedi Fardiaz, and Prof. Gunardi. I mentioned the possibility of our collaborating on the project with these faculty members writing singly or jointly on certain chapters of

the Rural Communication textbook. All of them expressed their willingness to participate in such a project. I also mentioned the plan to Prof. John Murdock, the USAID Project Director at IPB. He mentioned the possibility of finding some research funding to help in the writing of the textbook. Prof. Andi Hakim, the rector of the university, also encouraged me to pursue the textbook project, and assured me that he could find a publisher in Jakarta for the book. Since IPB has its own printing press, publishing the textbook in the university itself was likewise mentioned as an alternative by some IPB staff members.

I am now in the process of drawing up an outline for the textbook, and will consult with Prof. Murdock on possible funding sources. As stated earlier, the main content of the book will be based on the seminars, with contributions by IPB faculty members on topics such as the Indonesian print media, the state radio and television network, the uses of traditional channels (wayang, mesjid, etc.) in development communication campaigns and case studies.

If funding can be located soon, a first draft of the manuscript in Bahasa Indonesia could be ready by July 1985. The textbook could be a major addition to IPB's Rural Communications Program.

4. Academic Planning. I met with a number of IPB faculty members in order to plan some courses for their Rural Communications Program. Prof. Amri Jahi, Chairman of the Magister (Master's level) Rural Communications Program, and I met a few times in order to plan a possible Communication Research course. I also gave him copies of my

syllabi for Agricultural Advertising (Agricultural Journalism 431) and for Publicity, Media and Methods (Agricultural Journalism 515) at UW-Madison. I met with Prof. Richard Lumintang on his course on print communications, with Prof. Abner K. Simanjuntak on how to improve agricultural extension materials, with Prof. Pang S. Asngari on his proposed study of educational administrators in Indonesian universities and with Prof. Hamdani Nasution on IPB's library holdings on communication theory and research.

In each of these meetings, I made references to some of the relevant teaching and research materials which I gathered for the USAID IPB/UW project and which they could possibly use in their planned activities.

5. Professional Visits. A number of IPB faculty members assisted me in making professional visits in Jakarta, Bogor and nearby communities. Prof. Pang S. Asngari and I visited the Ministry of Agriculture in Jakarta. I also introduced him to Dr. Alfian, a research director at LEKNAS/LIPI (Indonesian Institute of Sciences, National Institute of Economic and Social Research), who is conducting long-term research on satellite television in Indonesia along with Prof. Wilbur Schramm and Prof. Godwin Chu at East-West Center. I knew Dr. Alfian from my former affiliation with East-West Center. He told us that his next report on satellite communication in Indonesia will be completed sometime in December. I suggested to Prof. Pang Asngari that IPB should invite Dr. Alfian to talk about his research at about that time. Dr. Alfian indicated his willingness to help IPB in any way he can.

I also visited agricultural extension offices in Cihea and the rural training center in Cianjur with Prof. Pang Asngari.

Prof. Dedi Fardiaz provided me with an overview of the IPB satellite communication facility at the IPB Darmaga campus. He also showed me some of the lessons he has prepared for distance teaching his course on food science. I indicated to him my interest in studying the courses to be prepared by IPB for satellite teaching, pending the availability of research funds. He also expressed interest in helping me conduct such research.

Prof. Edi Guhardja, dean of the IPB graduate school, invited me to a tour of the kampungs near the Darmaga campus and familiarized me with the day-to-day life of rural Indonesians. This visit was highly informative and gave substance to otherwise clinical reports of the government's rural development efforts.

Shortly before my scheduled departure from IPB in early August, Prof. Andi Hakim, the rector of the university, invited me to join him on an official visit to Jambi, a major transmigrasi (transmigration) site in Sumatra. This was an excellent opportunity to witness firsthand IPB'S participation in this major development effort. IPB juniors and seniors are teaching about 20,000 farming families soil conservation techniques. Unfortunately, I was unable to extend my visa and had to decline his invitation at the last minute. Prof. Andi Hakim was hopeful that I could make such a visit in the near future.

Some Recommendations. While the teaching and research materials which I selected for the IPB Rural Communications Program will enable

its faculty and students to gain some knowledge of the present "state of the art" in development communications, IPB has to make an effort to keep this level of knowledge current. This may be accomplished, to some extent, by subscribing to the major communication journals as I recommended during my meetings with the IPB library staff and again upon returning to Madison. IPB should also establish closer linkages with institutions within Indonesia doing related research, such as LEKNAS/LIPI through Dr. Alfian, and the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Jakarta. During our visit, Dr. Alfian indicated his willingness to speak in IPB about his joint research with the East-West Center on satellite television in Indonesia. Other regional organizations, such as the Asian Institute of Mass Communication in Singapore and the Press Foundation of Asia in Manila, and other Southeast Asian educational institutions, such as the Universiti Sains in Penang, Malaysia, which has a strong communications program, as well as the Diliman and Los Baños campuses of the University of the Philippines (UP) may also be tapped. In particular, the Development Communications Department in UP Los Baños publishes a journal on current rural communication research entitled "DevCom Quarterly". A number of IPB faculty members are UP Los Baños alumni and this link could easily be established by themselves. At UW-Madison, the Land Tenure Center and the Department of Agricultural Journalism could also help IPB on a continuing basis.

Joint research could also be conducted by IPB and UW-Madison faculty. depending on research funding availability from other

sources, I plan to follow my own advice as well, first in writing the Rural Communications textbook and second, in conducting distance teaching research on IPB courses using the Indonesian satellite system. I feel confident that other UW faculty who have previously visited IPB may be able to come up with other joint research ideas pertinent to their field.

Joint research by IPB and UW-Madison, aside from responding to practical needs, would also assist in theory-building, particularly in rural development. Perhaps IPB can call an annual conference of scholars working on Indonesian rural problems within the country and enable them to learn from each other's experiences. Outstanding papers delivered in the conference could possibly be published in book form by the IPB press.

Other Observations. While a little knowledge of some very basic Indonesian enabled me to communicate at the pasar level, the IPB faculty and staff, particularly those cited in this report, aside from Prof. John Murdock and his very able assistant, Mrs. Fatma Rahardjo, helped me overcome this serious handicap and enabled me to learn more of Indonesian society and the rural development agenda in so limited a time. The graciousness of our Indonesian hosts, including those not cited here, made the long hours and little or no weekends seem to be worth the effort.

In part, the realization of the challenges of rural development in Indonesia and IPB's role has given me the impetus to work on a textbook on rural communications. Prof. Maurice White, with his long

experience in working with the third world, also helped me in understanding cross-cultural communications at a very practical level. My guesthouse-mates, Ms. Nancy Brendlinger, Ms. Linda Krueger and Ms. Joan Schroeder, with their collective wit and wisdom, made my stay in Bogor that much more memorable.