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Management Techniques for Developing Libraries: Teaching Library Management Techniques to Indonesian Librarians

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MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES FOR DEVELOPING LIBRARIES: TEACHING LIBRARY MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES TO INDONESIAN LIBRARIANS

Group participation and individualized assignments were used to give the managers of Indonesian libraries a hands-on experience that they could apply to their own libraries.

Zainuddin H.R Lenggang; Chan Sirdi; and Antoinette Paris Powell

ABSTRACT: In 1981 the University of Kentucky became involved in a ten year project to improve agricultural education in the Western Islands of Indonesia. Part of this project was library improvement. In 1985 and in 1989 a library consultant was sent to Indonesia to work with libraries as part of this project. A Library Network was formed in 1985 to provide training and in 1989 the network sponsored a management short course for directors and other senior staff of the BKS-PTN-B Libraries. The course was taught by the consultant and two Indonesian librarians and lasted for 5 1/2 days. This article details the methods used in constructing and teaching a management short course in the local environment.

“Students need problem solving skills and also management training so they can bring about change on their return home.” (Rochester, p. 178)

THE NEED FOR A MANAGEMENT SHORT COURSE

In 1981, the University of Kentucky signed a contract with the US Agency for International Development (USAID) to help improve agricultural education in ten public Indonesian universities on the island of Sumatra and one situated on West Kalimantan. This development project is known as the Western Universities Agricultural Education (WUAE) Project.

Library improvement was one area targeted by the WUAE, and in 1985, a library consultant from the University of Kentucky visited the ten libraries on Sumatra. The consultant's mission was to survey existing library collections; discuss library problems with library personnel; and help establish a library network, which would promote the sharing of ideas and resources among the participating libraries.

The BKS-PTN-B Library Network was formed in March of 1985, under the leadership of three Indonesian librarians. At the first meeting in 1985, the directors of the BKS-PTN-B libraries discussed the lack of formal training of their personnel. It was reported that 86.7% of all personnel working in the BKS-PTN-B Libraries had received no library education, and very few of the eleven directors had any solid training in library management. During the four network meetings, all BKS-B library directors repeatedly expressed concern for improving library services, but they were at a loss as to how to train and motivate their staffs to do it. This need was assigned priority and through the network, training programs for all levels of staff were implemented.

THE CONTENT AND STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE

In early 1989, a library automation course and a library management short course were conducted. The management short course was attended by 34 participants, nine of whom were directors of their respective libraries. The course was intensive, running for five and one-half days from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily.

The course was organized in such a way that one topic was covered on each of the five days. Participants were asked to prepare administrative documents for their respective libraries. Lectures and activities covered planning, personnel management, use of statistics and report writing.
Throughout the course professional conduct and image were stressed, as were the mission and importance of the library within the university structure.

The group assignments represented practical applications of the lectures. The assignment for the first day was to practice the planning techniques presented by planning an interlibrary loan service. The concept of interlibrary loan and resource sharing was new to the participants, so smaller groups with representation from several institutions were formed to work on developing a proposal. This allowed for different perspectives on offering the service.

The second day incorporated personnel management and participants were asked to write a job description for a circulation clerk. Once the description was written, they were asked to write job procedures, and then training exercises for the staff member. Groups were formed with all participants from the same institution to facilitate formulation of procedures.

The third day introduced a concept which was totally new to the participants—the marketing of the library and its services. The lecture included a discussion of how to market services to faculty and students. Techniques for marketing were discussed along with preparing orientation materials and faculty handouts. Participants were asked to write a general library brochure for their libraries. The second assignment of the day was to develop a faculty handout detailing services of interest to the faculty based upon those services described in the general brochure.

On the fourth day, marketing the library to the central administration was stressed with emphasis on report writing and gathering of supporting statistics. Participants were advised to bring data from their libraries and to formulate these into monthly statistics. A discussion was held on reporting library activities on a routine basis and a monthly report was written.

The afternoon session on the fourth day centered around writing proposals. The elements of a good proposal were presented and the participants were once again broken up into groups with representation from each institution. The group was asked to prepare a prototype proposal for presentation to the Rector for recurring funds for journals.

The fifth day concentrated on presenting the librarian and the library to the Rector in an annual report. The participants were given guidelines for statistical representation for the year and were asked to develop written explanations of their statistics. Elements to be included in their report were covered in lectures and the participants were then asked to write an annual report for the past year for each of their libraries.

On the final day of the short course participants were allowed to finish up their assignments and a short session on planning a library building was held.

The course on library management combined classroom instruction with practical exercises. Some of the issues discussed in the classroom were illustrated by the consultant recounting personal experiences in preparing reports and other administrative documents.

Throughout the short course, professionalism was stressed along with the importance of the librarians role within the university. This coupled with the need for good planning for library development, exposed participants to skills and techniques in managing a library and tried to instill in them the confidence to accomplish it. The materials were presented in terms that librarians could relate to and discussion centered around environmental factors that might inhibit planning.

**The Use of Group Work and Discussion as a Training Tool**

In the discussion session participants discussed applying these practices to their own situations and then they were instructed, in groups, to prepare the administrative tool being discussed that day. The assignments were exhausting, but participants put much effort into them. This method of using practical assignments along with class instruction suited the time allotted for the short course.

During the course six topics were analyzed in two different types of groups. The first type of group consisted of 5-6 persons, chosen at random. Work done in this sort of group included planning interlibrary loan, job procedures and training exercises, and developing a proposal for journal subscription. The second type of group was made up of participants from each university or institute. Work done in this sort of group included the general library brochure, a monthly report, and an annual report.

The use of group activities allowed for broad interaction and exchange of ideas among the participants. The group sessions required three to four hours daily, with the last hour or two of the day being spent on discussion.

There was no final exam. This helped to reduce the competitive spirit and fostered a cooperative atmosphere. Each member was observed and his/her performance in the group work and discussion evaluated. During the class discussion, members of each group were asked to come to the front of the class and speak. One person from each group was designated to read the group report.

An exchange of ideas and opinions was invited during the discussion and the group was expected to meet again in the evening at the dormitory to review
and revise their report, and to consider all criticisms and suggestions made during the class discussion.

Individuals approached their assignments with enthusiasm and zest. Report writing is not part of the routine for most Indonesian librarians, and it was a difficult task. They worked hard to produce accurate and clear reports and asked many questions in order to grasp the principles.

The materials produced by the students were turned in on the last day of the class in final form. The committee photocopied the reports and distributed them to each institutional group so that they could be used as models or adapted for their own management activities at their home institutions.

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN PREPARATION OF THE SHORT COURSE

Preparation for the short course was difficult because of the heterogeneous nature of the participants, their varying levels of experience, and the difference in the perceived needs of the participants. Management basics had to be stressed in terms which would be meaningful to them.

Some of the participants were library directors, who among themselves showed varying educational backgrounds. Some were graduates of recognized library schools, while others held degrees in certain subjects but had no significant library training. Most of the participants had attended short library training courses and had some practical library experience but none had any management training. Material presented was often beyond the participants' personal experience.

The varying levels of education and experience caused some unnecessary concern about the success of the group work. Participants helped one another in the true spirit of networking and cooperation. The differing status of individuals in the group posed no barrier to group work.

The development of course content was further complicated by the varying levels of English language comprehension. Approximately 20% of the group had studied abroad and had an excellent command of the language. The rest of the class had moderate to weak English comprehension, making translation necessary.

On the first day of class the consultant read from notes in English, which the participants had previously received, and the Indonesian instructors repeated this information in Indonesian. This approach proved cumbersome. On the subsequent days the Indonesian instructors translated the course outline from English to Indonesian, and the consultant elaborated on the outline and offered explanations using visual aids. This procedure speeded up the presentation allowing participants more time to work on group assignments.

EVALUATION OF PARTICIPANTS

Participants were evaluated on the basis of their active participation during group work and discussion. Two instructors observed the groups at work. They encouraged members of each group to take part in the discussion, and at the same time they evaluated the performance of the participants. Each of the two instructors stayed with a group for about 30 minutes, which gave the instructor ample time to evaluate individual performance during the group work and discussion. The performance of the participants was judged on the basis of the number of contributions which each made towards completion of the group's task and the quality of these contributions. To help ensure that the evaluation was objective and valid, each instructor made individual evaluations at least four times.

At the end of the fifth day of the course, the scores of the two instructors were combined and after some negotiation, letter grades were assigned in the form of A,B,C,D,F. Forty percent of the participants received A's, 24% received B's, and 36% received C's, with none failing.

EVALUATION OF THE SUCCESS OF THE SHORT COURSE

Participants were also asked to evaluate the management short course for content, clarity, and usefulness. In relation to the very short time allotted to this course it was felt that it was quite successful in meeting its objectives. Verbal feedback by participants also indicated that the short course was a success.

The short course was also assessed through an evaluation of participants' written responses to a questionnaire distributed at the conclusion of the course. The questionnaire consisted of five items and participants' responses...
were positive. Without exception, participants agreed that the course had been useful.

Thirty-two of the 33 participants responded that the course material was clearly presented. When asked whether the material of the course was good, their comments varied: 60% of them rated it was good; 30% excellent and 10% mediocre. The participants rated the instructors in much the same way as they did the materials: 60% said that the instructors were good; 27% excellent; 13% mediocre. When asked what material might have received greater emphasis, 31 participants made suggestions.

The instructors felt that the varying levels of competency of the participants presented a significant limiting factor and that any subsequent short course should be so organized to achieve greater homogeneity of levels of position and education. Such an approach would use the allotted time more effectively, and less time would be spent by stronger participants helping the weaker ones. Some of the participants expressed similar opinions.

**CONCLUSION**

The success of this short course in strengthening library services may not be evident in the immediate future. Throughout the course it was stressed that the students needed to apply what would work in their respective situations. The objective of the course was to provide them with problem solving and management skills to enable them to analyze their own situations. At the conclusion of the short course, the consultant made follow up visit to all 11 institutions participating in the WUAE project. In some instances, before the instructor arrived, the librarians had been analyzing their situations and had collected materials to put together a proposal or to prepare a long range plan for the library. The library personnel did the writing and the planning, and the consultant acted as a facilitator.

One key to success will be the response of the respective university administrations to the efforts of the librarians. If administrators respond in a positive fashion, librarians will be willing to put forth the effort to plan and improve.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


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Table 1. Participants' assessment of the library management section of the BKS-B short course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you think the Library Management Section of the Short Course was useful?</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think the materials of the course were clearly presented?</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you think of the course materials?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT GOOD</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOOD ENOUGH</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>GOOD</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VERY GOOD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you think of the instructors?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT GOOD</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOOD ENOUGH</td>
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<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOOD</td>
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Additional topics which participants would have liked to cover during the short course:

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<th>TOPICAL AREAS</th>
<th>REQUESTS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Budgeting</td>
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<td>Library building</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer retrieval</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library lay-out</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>How to lead the employees</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book preservation</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>More materials of leadership</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>How to solve lending problems</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reference service</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indexing and abstracting</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor psychology</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to do research in library science</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>How to use information tools</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation for automation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No comment</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Participants' assessment of the library management section of the BKS-B short course