



# INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURE

Bob Shrode, Chairman  
NACTA International Committee

The two papers included in the International Section of this March issue of the **NACTA Journal** are excellent examples of the kind of papers which it is hoped many NACTA members will submit. One paper presents a convincing case for University involvement in international programs. The other deals with the practical psychological considerations to which faculty must give attention in relationships involving international students who may come from greatly diverse cultures in which contrasting value systems apply.

Any NACTA member who has something in the international area to share with **NACTA Journal** readers is cordially invited to do so by means of a peer-reviewed published article. Please mail manuscripts to:

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Review and submission for publication will be coordinated with the **NACTA Journal** editor.

## Fulbright Senior Scholars

The Council for International Exchange of Scholars announces The 1984-85 competition for Senior Scholar Fulbright awards for university teaching and postdoctoral research. Awards are offered in all academic fields for periods of 2-10 months, in over 100 countries.

After April 15, 1983, interested applicants may obtain application forms and information on college and university campuses in the Office of the Graduate Dean at graduate institutions or the Office of the Chief Academic Officer at 2- and 4- year institutions. On some campuses, material is available from the Office of International Programs.

Prospective applicants may also write for applications and additional details on awards, specifying the country and field of interest to: Council for International Exchange of Scholars, 11 Dupont Circle, Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20036. All applicants must be U.S. citizens and have had college or university teaching experience and/or a Ph.D. or the equivalent.

**Applications deadlines** in effect for 1984-85 awards:

June 15, 1983, for American Republics, Australia, and New Zealand

September 15, 1983, for Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East

The Fulbright program is funded and administered by the United States Information Agency.

## 1984-85 Advanced Research Fellowships In India

Twelve long-term (six to ten months) and nine short-term (two or three months) research awards, without restriction as to field, are offered for 1984-85 by the Indo-U.S. Subcommittee on Education and Culture. Applicants must be U.S. citizens at the Post-doctoral or equivalent professional level. The fellowship program seeks to open new channels of communication between academic and professional groups in the United States and India and to encourage a wider range of research activity between the two countries than now exists. Therefore, scholars and professionals who have limited or no experience in India are especially encouraged to apply.

**Fellowship terms include:** \$1,200 - \$1,500 per month, depending on academic/professional achievement and seniority, \$350 per month payable in dollars and the balance in rupees; an allowance for books and study/travel in India; and international travel for the grantee. In addition, long-term fellows receive international travel for dependents; a dependent allowance of \$100 - \$250 per month in rupees; and a supplementary research allowance up to 34,000 rupees. This program is sponsored by the Indo-U.S. Subcommittee on Education and Culture and is funded by the United States Information Agency, the National Science Foundation, the Smithsonian Institution, and the Government of India.

**The application deadline is July 1, 1983.** Application forms and further information are available from the Council for International Exchange of Scholars, Attention: Indo-American Fellowship Program, Eleven Dupont Circle, Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20036, Telephone: (202) 833-4985.

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## Training Foreign Students: Implications for Teachers And Agricultural Programs

H. Gene Peuse  
**Abstract**

*This case study examines the consequences of a large influx of foreign students into an agricultural mechanics program at a community college. More specifically, it describes and analyzes how these students caused the teachers to refocus their attention on non-traditional school and classroom management issues. The article concludes by recommending two basic guidelines for agricultural institutions involved in the training of foreign students.*

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## Introduction

In September 1977 the Nigerian Manpower Project was inaugurated as the first intergovernmental placement of large numbers of foreign students into vocational programs at U.S. community colleges through the United States Agency for International Development. The project began with the assignment of 489 Nigerians to 68 community colleges, proprietary schools, and state technical institutes in 30 states and the District of Columbia (2). These students, as well as the succeeding three contingents of project trainees, were placed in two-year programs of agriculture, construction, land surveying, electro-mechanics, and paramedical sciences.

This article reports one of the major observations from an evaluation of the Nigerian Manpower Project at an Illinois community college where 39 project trainees were enrolled in an agricultural mechanics program (5). The Nigerians arrived as separate groups of students in January 1978 (N - 12), August 1978 (N - 13) and August 1979 (N - 14), and during the 1979/80 academic year comprised almost 70% of the total agricultural mechanics student population. Except for a few courses especially designed to meet Nigerian student educational needs, Nigerian and American students were integrated as much as possible into joint class sections.

## The Research Question

Five general questions guided the research study. The question for consideration here is: In what ways did the presence of the Nigerian students affect the agricultural faculty in performing their teaching duties?

## Research Methods

From August 1979 to June 1980 the author collected and analyzed data as a participant observer at the school. Data were collected and recorded in a daily log of (a) statements made by various persons (e.g. instructors, American and Nigerian students, school administrators and staff, off-campus employers and co-workers) and (b) descriptions of American-Nigerian interactions and activities in various settings (e.g. in the classroom and laboratories, at off-campus employment sites, in different social situations). Notes were ritually recorded, sometimes in the presence of subjects and at other times discreetly written in a private office, empty classrooms, the library, the lavatory, immediately after overhearing a discussion or observing an activity. At the completion of the field work, the author had produced 700 pages of notes in nine stenographer notebooks.

Four months after commencement of the research, the existing 400 pages of chronological notes were reviewed in terms of predominant topics of conversation. For example, faculty frequently raised the issue of Nigerian attitudes toward the study and practice of agricultural mechanics. Closer analysis of the record

suggested that Kazanas' Affective Work Competencies Inventory might be useful in organizing the data (3). Thus, statements made by faculty and students and descriptions of activities involving the Americans and Nigerians were transferred onto 3 x 5 cards and filed into respective affective work categories described by Kazanas as valued behaviors in agricultural mechanics.

## Research Findings

What evolved from this process of organizing the data into more refined units of analysis (i.e. data samples which numbered 450) was a more focused attention to aspects of Nigerian behavior that often conflicted with American expectations. It became evident that the Nigerians tended to exhibit a different set of behaviors than those preferred by the agricultural teachers. A few data samples, each sorted according to one of Kazanas' categories, follow:

**Punctuality:** "I like to give ten minute quizzes at 8:00 a.m. sharp so we can get into the shop," the mechanics instructor explained. "And I've had some of the Nigerians regularly come in late, barely in time to get their names on the paper before I'd collect them. I don't have many problems with the American students, but my policy tends to upset the Nigerians. But that's the way it is in industry, and that's what I'm preparing my students for."

**Orderliness:** "Boy, I don't know what to think of some of those Nigerians," the drafting instructor commented as he entered the office. "They can be militant and boisterous at times. Some days they are so noisy coming out of class that I can't even carry on a conversation in my office with the door closed."

**Courtesy:** "And sometimes they'd argue among themselves and call each other names. One guy told another that he didn't have the intelligence to take my course. That was a bit too much for me." Dillinger took a sip of coffee before adding, "I told him that I wouldn't stand for such insults and that I'd be the judge of someone's intelligence."

These and other data samples suggested that the Nigerian students did not subscribe to many of the norms of American school culture. Much of the data on Nigerian behavior revealed that their value structure, as perceived by the American instructors, was not immediately congruent with that expected of students in U.S. agricultural programs.

This interface between the two different sets of behaviors created a situation in which the teachers found themselves trying to maintain control of Nigerian conduct through various rewards and punishments. For example, the matter of student tardiness in attending classroom and laboratory/workshop activities emerged as the number one irritant and the focus of continuous faculty attention. To cope with the situation, faculty installed a timeclock in the workshop and issued the Nigerians timecards which had to be punched prior to specified periods (e.g. each workshop period and those classroom sessions scheduled for early morning when certain individual Nigerians often failed to arrive on time). Those students who displayed tardy behavior

received a reduction in course grades, and those who demonstrated prompt behavior were allowed to use workshop facilities after school hours.

In some instances teachers were less successful in controlling the Nigerian students. The following episodic account is one of several similar scenes witnessed by the author. The occasion here is a general assembly of twenty-six American students, nine faculty and twenty-one Nigerians. The event illustrates communication problems related to word meanings and problems related to communication behavior.

Chondo was the first to answer the question, "I think it's 74 naira to the dollar." Nduwadi quickly exclaimed from the rear of the room, "No! It's 69," Chondo swung around to face his countryman sitting four rows behind him, "What! How can you say that?"

As the two exchanged comments, Ojo, sitting beside Nduwadi, projected over their ongoing debate, "I think it's 62 naira to the one dollar." Beda, sitting beside Ojo, said something to his classmate. Ojo clicked his tongue, "Come ut. No talk nonsense." Smiling, Beda made another comment and Ojo retorted loudly, "Do you know better than me? . . . Watch what you say or you will be in trouble, I promise you. . . I can beat you. No dey begin vex me, hear?" At this point six or seven Nigerians were conversing among themselves across the room.

Henders, the American teacher who had posed the original question, asked over the debate, "Well, whatever the rate of exchange is, how much does an average laborer earn per week?" His query went unnoticed as Nduwadi, shaking his index finger at Chondo, declared, "Na lie. You no dey talk true. Idiot!" Nduwadi smiled broadly, "You best keep quiet. . . Sit down, Hear. . . and stop saying stupid things." Chondo, laughing, turned to face the front of the room where Henders stood surveying the audience.

American students, faculty, and some community citizens alluded to the rudeness of the Nigerians. Words such as idiot, stupid, liar, and fool were not uncommon in exchanges among the Nigerians and, on occasion, in exchanges with Americans. The word, liar, particularly caused misapprehensions for this word when received by an American is interpreted as a charge of personal dishonesty whereas when received by a Nigerian, it is accepted as notification that the sender believes that there has been an adroit side-stepping of the truth or that the other person simply is unaware of the truth. In fact, "Na lie" (i.e. "It is a lie") is often used as a signal of that sort of Pidgin English (1), the language interspersed in the dialogue above. The distinctive cultural meaning of the word, liar, and other words interpreted out of Pidgin English context frequently made Americans uncomfortable and created the general impression that the Nigerians were a rather discourteous group.

Furthermore, the Nigerians could easily sustain simultaneous, multiple conversations at a rather noisy level and engage in much tongue clicking and accusative gesturing. These exchanges often were nothing more than moments of light-hearted repartee (7). A somewhat aggressive jocularity typified much of the interaction among the Nigerians. However, most of the

American instructors did not quite understand these bantering exchanges and generally were helpless in mediating the Nigerian bursts of repartee.

## Discussion

Kelman's theory of compliance and identification proved useful in interpreting Nigerian behavior and faculty reaction to the behavior (4). **Identification**, as defined by Kelman, occurs when individuals accept another person's or group's influence because conforming is intrinsically satisfying. The attractiveness of the influencing person or group is the guiding force, and the attractiveness is potentially stronger when the individuals share congruent sets of values, norms and meanings. **Compliance** is a state in which individuals relate to one another through a medium of rewards and punishments. Preferred behavior is induced by persons who devise rules and regulations and attempt continual surveillance for unacceptable behavior.

Kelman's theory postulates that a compliance mode of interaction arises when an authority figure such as a teacher is not a person with whom the group can adequately identify. This appears to have been the case with the agricultural instructors, especially in contrast to the stronger competing attractiveness displayed within the Nigerian group itself. In the classroom one could most easily witness the process of group identification with Nigerian social behavior and oral exchanges dominating the environment. In such instances it was clear that instructors lacked sufficient influence to capture Nigerian student attention and therefore frequently had to allow the moments of repartee to subside somewhat before intervening.

The predominant mode of faculty-Nigerian student relations in the agricultural mechanics program was one of compliance inducement. Faculty attempted to induce desired behavior through several rules and regulations, with violation of the norm of punctuality being the most outstanding target of faculty concern. These measures represented a significant redefinition of traditional educational objectives as most American students behaved in accordance with the norm of punctuality which therefore had not been an explicit criterion in the standard grading scheme prior to the arrival of the Nigerians. The focus on such matters was a redirection of instructors' attention to what previously had been considered non-academic, minor school and classroom management issues.

Research in laboratory decision-making situations has shown that conformity may be increased by enhancing the status or attractiveness of the authority figure or by increasing the relative size of the counter-norm group (6). The latter option would seem to be the more immediate and manageable solution for most schools. Through admission policies and careful allocation of foreign students, the proportion of American students can be kept at a level whereby their behaviors

would set the norm and counteract the behavior of the foreign students who should exhibit more yielding responses to the more dominant American influence.

The other alternative — that of enhancing the status or attractiveness of teachers — presumes an active institutional commitment to international training. Through the purposeful selection and development of faculty who can recognize and relate to students with different values and patterns of social interaction, an institution would be able to provide credible models with whom foreign students, in turn, can better relate and respond.

The above two courses of action — establishing limits on foreign student enrollment and developing a faculty with cross-cultural awareness and skills — can be pursued together in order to strike a balanced approach to international training. The first line of action would aim at preserving the integrity of the local program while the second would aim toward expanding program capacity to absorb foreign students. This study suggests that neither course of action should be ignored.

### Summary

Although the institutional characteristics and educational purposes of a community college may differ somewhat from those of a four-year institution, this study illustrates certain constraints in training foreign students in agricultural programs at either type of U.S. institution. If the number of foreign students becomes a sizeable segment of a program or classroom population, one may expect teachers to be confronted with students able to sustain different social behaviors from those expected of American students. Furthermore, it is likely that teachers will have to make certain adjustments in managing the school and classroom environment. In order to minimize these difficulties, faculty should be prepared with some understanding of the anticipated behaviors of the students and, as a protective measure, should be exposed to a limited number of foreign students until a cross-cultural awareness and experience base is established in the agricultural program.

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7. From February 1971-May 1973 the author worked as an agricultural teacher and extension agent in Cameroun and intermittently travelled to Nigeria. This provided a background in Pidgin English and a first-hand exposure to West African social behavior that proved helpful in understanding interactions among the Nigerians at the college.

## The International Dimension As A Valid University Function

Jerry B. Eckert and  
Kenneth C. Nobe

Several recent developments highlight the importance of international development to the agricultural economics profession. Among the more significant are 1) the award of the 1979 Nobel Peace Prize to Theodore Schultz and Sir Arthur Lewis for their efforts in development; 2) emphasis given to the field by the American Agricultural Economics Association (AAEA) meetings in 1980 and 1982; 3) the recently completed global study of the International Committee of the AAEA (Feinup and Riley) demonstrating the priority accorded internationally to education and training in our profession; 4) the rapidly growing respect for, and professional contribution of the International Association of Agricultural Economists (IAAE), especially as a result of the Nairobi and Banff meetings and the one scheduled for Jakarta this year; and finally 5) continued increases in the number and size of multidisciplinary development programs abroad which mandate a partnership between agricultural scientists and agricultural economists.

These events and others have led the profession, its members and their departments into an increasing involvement in world development. To some this is only logical and necessary. Others view the trend as competitive and unbalancing to traditional activities in research, teaching, and extension. Very real faculty concerns exist with respect to the uncertainty of long-term funding from non-state sources and the presumed immiscibility of an international focus with conven-

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