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*THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION
IN UNIVERSITY ADULT EDUCATION
IN BIAFRA*

BY NJOKU AWA

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THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION IN UNIVERSITY
ADULT EDUCATION IN BIAFRA

By

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A SENIOR THESIS

for the degree of

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The former Eastern Region of Nigeria was proclaimed the independent Republic of Biafra on May 30, 1967. Throughout this work, Biafra, rather than Eastern Nigeria, will be used except where quotation from other works or logical presentation of historical events urge the use of the latter name. In any event, the author's reference to Eastern Nigeria does not imply recognition of the existence of such a region in Nigeria.

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THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION IN UNIVERSITY

ADULT EDUCATION IN BIAFRA

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

The purposes of the present thesis are (1) to compare the communication channels used by the University of Ibadan and those used by the University of Biafra¹ in their adult education programs in Biafra; and (2) to propose an ideal communication model that can help adult educators overcome the bottlenecks that reduce the effect of their messages in rural areas.

University adult education differs from ordinary adult education work in that while the former is concerned with university level courses, the latter is concerned with basic literacy training. Furthermore, university adult education is organized and run by a university as part of its commitment to the community supporting it.

¹Before Biafra's independence in May, 1967, the University of Biafra was known as the University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

Literacy classes, on the other hand, are conducted by the Ministry of Education in Biafra. Other adult education activities that take place in a developing country, such as Biafra, are those conducted by religious bodies and other voluntary agencies seeking to develop in their adherents an aptitude for reading. The purpose in this kind of adult education campaign is to develop a nucleus of literate "elite" within a religious organization so that the teaching of catechism and other religious literature will be decentralized. Usually, the university adult education department tries to coordinate the activities of all the other adult education agencies within its territory. In general, it does not duplicate or usurp the functions of these other agencies.

This thesis is concerned with university adult education in Biafra. It will be necessary to describe briefly the nature of the program as it was conducted by the sponsoring agencies. Between 1949 and 1962, the University of Ibadan conducted adult education work in the whole of the former federation of Nigeria. From 1962 till 1967, the University of Biafra, Nsukka, was responsible for this work in Biafra. Let us examine first the

University of Ibadan's extra-mural program and then that of the University of Biafra in an effort to provide a preamble for a more detailed consideration of the programs in later chapters.

The University of Ibadan

This university conducted extra-mural courses in Biafra for over 12 years. It is located in the densely-populated town of Ibadan in Western Nigeria, nearly 400 miles from Enugu, the capital of Biafra. For the period that it sponsored adult education work in Biafra, the University of Ibadan received an annual subsidy of \$11,200 from the Government of Biafra. A lean budget, and in particular, inadequate information about the program limited the University of Ibadan's extra-mural program to the urban areas where mass media facilities were concentrated.

On the whole, the number of extra-mural centers established by Ibadan fluctuated between 11 and 13. At the time that it finally gave up responsibility for adult education work in Biafra, it had 11 centers. There were 23 classes in these centers with an enrollment of 481

students. Announcement of the courses was usually made in national newspapers. Unfortunately these newspapers had a large circulation in the metropolises and a very scanty circulation in the rural communities where a great majority of elementary school teachers lived and worked. Even if these teachers read the announcement, they needed more information about the program, its goals and objectives.

The University of Biafra¹

It must be noted that the University of Ibadan had done a lot of spade work in arousing the intellectual curiosity of extra-mural students in Biafra. When the University of Biafra launched its adult education program in 1962, it had to take advantage of the experiences of

¹It may be advisable at this point to acquaint the reader with the credentials of the writer. He was involved in the extra-mural work of both universities. Under the University of Ibadan he was the regional president of Extra-Mural Students Association--an influential pressure group that used all the resources at its command to organize a systematic campaign for the expansion of the program to rural communities in Biafra. At the University of Biafra, he was the organizer of extra-mural courses in the whole country from 1963 till 1966 when he left Biafra for the U.S. for further studies. Upon his return to Biafra, he hopes to resume duty in the Extra-Mural Division of the University of Biafra.

Ibadan. For the University of Ibadan, some of these experiences had been frustrating, others rewarding. The University of Biafra was guided by the initial failures of its predecessor in developing a self-conscious program capable of overcoming the teething troubles which usually retard the success of a new undertaking.

With the same amount of subsidy from the Government of Biafra, the University of Biafra's Continuing Education Division had, by 1966 organized 167 classes in 36 centers with over 3,000 duly registered students. This phenomenal rise in the number of centers, classes, and students was due in part to the proximity of the university to the centers, and in part to the multiplicity of communication channels with which larger and larger audiences were reached.

Focus of the Thesis

One question that has always agitated people's minds and one which has not yet been adequately treated concerns the role of communication in university adult education. Why was the University of Biafra's Adult Education Program more successful than that of the

University of Ibadan? To what extent is the acceptance or rejection of an innovation determined by the amount of information that people have about it? This paper will describe in detail the communication channels that each university used, and relate their effectiveness to the degree of success achieved by each of the universities concerned.

It should be realized that the interest of adult educators in developing countries has never been limited to the sponsoring of educational activities per se. Their interest has always included the broader theoretical area of "education for modernization." If we accept the concept that education or even literacy is a key antecedent to modernization, then adult educators in developing countries would have to be more aggressive and more realistic in their campaign to eradicate illiteracy. Developing countries are no longer impressed with adult education programs designed for broadening the mental horizons of a privileged few. It is important that adult education planners in developing countries be conversant with the exposure habits of the audiences they intend to reach, so

as to select the right channels for their messages. For this reason, this paper will evaluate:

1. The degree to which an inadequate flow of information impeded the growth of adult education work in Biafra under the University of Ibadan.
2. The channels that the two universities used in transmitting their messages in order to find the relationship between channel and penetration of messages in rural communities.
3. The extent to which the two-step flow of communication enhances consumption of mass media messages through opinion leaders in the city and in villages.
4. The effect of mass media messages about university adult education programs upon an urban consumer on the one hand, and upon a village consumer on the other hand.

At the end we shall propose a communication model that could prove effective for reaching the different segments of the audiences for whom university adult education messages are intended.

Definition of Terms

Extra-Mural Courses: This is a British terminology for university extension courses. As the name implies, extra-mural courses are university courses offered outside the walls of the sponsoring university. In the United Kingdom, people enroll in these classes for "enrichment" courses. In some cases students attend the classes for the purpose of improving their professional competence through exposure to research findings in certain fields. In most developing countries in West Africa, extra-mural courses are regarded by the students as a means to an end--the end being the possession of a recognizable certificate. The difference is in orientation. While the British extra-mural students may be very gainfully employed in factories, schools, mercantile houses, etc., their West African counterparts would probably not be so employed. It is, therefore, ridiculous to expect a poorly-paid person to pay fees for "enrichment" courses which would yield neither material nor social benefits to him and his family.

Adult Education: Broadly speaking, adult education refers to the whole spectrum of part-time classes, from a basic literacy campaign to university credit courses given

to students who are technically described as adults.¹ University adult education means the same thing as extra-mural courses. The program attracts mostly post-secondary students who wish to satisfy university entrance requirements through the General Certificate of Education or those seeking promotion and social mobility by the possession of the same certificate. This is particularly true of the case in developing countries.

General Certificate of Education--G.C.E.: This certificate is issued by the University of London and other higher examinations syndicates in the United Kingdom. The West African Examinations Council has also started to issue the G.C.E. to candidates who meet the Council's requirements. The certificate is issued at two levels--the Ordinary (O) Level, and the Advanced (A) Level. A possession of this certificate at the 'A' level guarantees direct admission to universities in the United Kingdom and those in West Africa that are patterned after the British system.

¹"Adult Education is defined as any purposeful effort toward self-development carried on by an individual without direct legal compulsion and without such effort becoming his major field of activity." Floyd Reeves, et al., Adult Education (N.Y.: McGraw-Hill, 1938).

For purposes of direct admission, a candidate must pass in three subjects that are related to the degree program he intends to pursue. And, at least two of these subjects must be passed at a very high grade, A, or in some cases, B. The G.C.E. has come to be regarded as the magic key to the door of opportunities. With it promotion in the civil service is assured; admission to a university is possible; probability of in-service training or selection for a refresher course becomes high. Without it, the door to success remains literally locked forever.

Part-Time Tutors: Each university involved in off-campus educational activities usually finds that its regular staff cannot conceivably handle all of its extra-mural classes. As a result, graduates from the locality in which an extra-mural program is organized are usually hired by the university for part-time tutorial service. Part-time tutors receive equal allowance for an equal amount of time spent on university program, regardless of whether they are bachelor's or master's degree holders. Some part-time tutors, mostly Peace Corps Volunteers from the United States, were not paid allowances for their services.

Communication means the transmitting of messages from one person (source) to another person (receiver).¹ In short, communication means giving, or giving and receiving, information either thru interpersonal channels versus print or electronic devices. Communication can also take place when a source sends a non-verbal message through artifactual, contextual, gestural, or postural codes. In all, the purpose of the source is to affect the receiver.²

¹David K. Berlo refers to the ingredients of the communication process as (1) the communication source (2) the encoder (3) the message (4) the channel (5) the decoder (6) the communication receiver, The Process of Communication (N.Y.: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961).

²Weaver defines it as "all the procedures by which one mind affects another": Harold D. Laswell defines communication research in terms of "who says what in which channel to whom with what effect?" See Wilbur Schramm, Mass Media and National Development, the Role of Information in the Developing Countries (California: Stanford University Press, 1965), p. 180.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Literature on Adult Education

Educational planners in developing countries are sometimes the uncritical adopters of educational systems recommended by foreign advisers. Policies which have stood the test of time in other cultures are often introduced in a developing country without consideration to the cultural differences that may militate against the success of such policies. Besides, some foreigners are so ethnocentric that good or bad policies can be measured only by their own standards. Experience, however, has shown that the educational policy of one culture cannot be wholly satisfactory to another unless it is adapted to the specific needs of such other culture.

Dudley sharply criticized the extra-mural departments of some developing countries for their unrealistic approach to the problem of policy. He has served the University of Ibadan's Extra-Mural Department as a lecturer.

He holds that since about 90 percent of university adult education students are "examination oriented,"¹ the policy of the adult education department of the University of Ibadan should be changed to meet this demand. He maintains that Nigeria inherited her adult education policy from Britain where opportunities have always been provided for students to obtain the right certificates at an earlier age. On the contrary, "The majority of the population [in Nigeria] has not had this opportunity . . . there is thus an urgent need for help outside the schools and colleges at all levels."² This means that Nigeria should not "continue a policy which does not suit the country."³

Peers urges that more advanced countries should invest heavily in the adult education programs of the under-privileged people of the developing countries. This, he feels is necessary in order "to free these peoples

¹B. J. Dudley, Extra-Mural Studies in Nigeria--A Critique of Policy (Adult Education Journal of the National Institute of Adult Education, London, W. 1), p. 386.

²Ibid., p. 387.

³Ibid., p. 387.

from ignorance and therefore from the danger of unprincipled exploitation."¹ He is not overly critical of the extra-mural policies of West African universities. But he feels that West African universities have less justification in following the English pattern than those in the West Indies² where modifications were made.

Mawby attributes the failures of some university extension programs to lack of flexibility in their year to year development of policies. "A modern public institution," he maintains, must operate under a broad, flexible policy such that would enable it to "meet and adjust to and adapt to changing circumstances," with its programs, efforts and operations reflecting "today and tomorrow."³

Doyle, in an attempt to assess the scope and nature of the extra-mural work done by the University of Ibadan, stresses the fact that although that university made good progress, its work was "modelled after the pattern set up

¹Robert Peers, Adult Education: A Comparative Study (London: Rontledge & Kegan Paul, 1966), p. 324.

²Ibid., p. 324.

³Dr. Russell O. Mawby, "Extension Programmes in Agriculture, Home Economics, Community Development and Youth Work," Continuing Education Seminar Report, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, 1963.

in English Universities in the 1800's."¹ He feels that the adoption of the British model of extra-mural work was necessary because there had to be some starting point. But he laments that while there was a well-developed educational system in the former federation of Nigeria, the pattern was "borrowed from the British, [and while] it had served the needs of a colonial government . . . it fell short of meeting the needs of Nigerians as seen by themselves."²

Literature on Communication and Biafra's
Receptivity to Change

Cultural and social sanctions can deter traditional members of a community from exposure to the mass media or to modernization messages from change agencies. In other words, the social norms of a society can constitute a real barrier to both the giving and receiving of information. In spite of the preponderance of peasant farmers in Biafra,

¹Louis A. Doyle, "Continuing Education, Nsukka, A Program of University Extension aimed at Serving the Practical and Intellectual Needs of a Developing Nation,"-- End of Tour Report, M.S.U., 1968.

²Ibid., p. 6.

some studies have shown that the average Biafran, including the peasant farmer, is receptive to change.

Rogers and Neihoff analyzed Phase I of a series of communication researches conducted in Biafra. One of the objects of the research was to gather information which change agents may find useful when introducing innovations. Analysis of the Phase I data focused on the "Diffusion of Agricultural Innovations in Eastern Nigeria." The areas examined include the innovation characteristics, motivation, and communication bottlenecks in Biafra. The authors' conclusion is that villagers show sufficient motivation in accepting modernization messages and in adopting innovations.¹ Furthermore, they found that villagers adopt innovations when they perceive actual rewards even where such innovations are somewhat in conflict "with local cultural patterns."²

Traditionally, the people of Biafra are status-conscious. They have high achievement motivation,

¹Everett M. Rogers & Arthur H. Niehoff, "Diffusion of Agricultural Innovations in Eastern Nigeria." Paper presented at the conference on the Nigerian Economy and Rural Development, Lansing, Michigan State University, May 1, 1967.

²Ibid.

particularly in the economic sphere. So long as the legally-sanctioned "roads" to progress are open, the average Biafran is always motivated to try new methods of doing old things. The reason for this is that Biafra's openness provides a climate for self-development and the glorification of individual, as well as collective achievement. Ottenberg referred to this when he said that the "Ibo society is an 'open' society in which positions of prestige, authority and leadership are largely achieved."¹ This observation is not peculiar to the Ibos of Biafra. The study on the innovativeness of peasant farmers cited previously was conducted among Ibo and Ibibio villagers. Besides, ethnic communities in Biafra are not so isolated as to develop insular traits that could not be assimilated by neighboring communities after a well-sustained interaction.

Hursh, et al. analyzed the partial results of Phase III of the Communication research in Biafra.² Part

¹ Simon Ottenberg, "Ibo Receptivity to Change," in William R. Bascom and Melville J. Herskovits (Eds.). Continuity and Change in African Cultures (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959).

² Phase III was underway when the outbreak of the Nigeria-Biafra war terminated the research.

of the aim of Phase III was concerned with the analysis of the effects of different communication strategies in promoting rural development. Again, the findings show that the farmers who were exposed to radio-forum messages decided to adopt one or more innovations, and had indeed "taken steps to implement their decisions."¹ The report goes on to say that supplies of Aldrin Dust which the researchers had thought would last for the duration of the research period did not meet the demands of selected farmers in the villages chosen for the Diffusion Project--Phase III. As a result, "extra supplies had to be made available to keep up with the unexpectedly large demands by the farmers."²

Summary

Briefly recapitulated, this short review of selected pertinent literature shows that:

¹Gerald D. Hursh, et al., Communication in Eastern Nigeria: An Experiment in Introducing Change (Lansing: Michigan State University, Department of Communication, July, 1968).

²Ibid., p. 19.

1. The university adult education pattern of the University of Ibadan was borrowed from existing British systems.
2. Although the system was successful in Britain, it did not sufficiently serve the educational needs of the people of a developing nation.
3. Because of its British orientation, university adult education was, contrary to its stated aims, often a means of perpetuating the gap between the elite and the commoners.
4. There is research evidence to show that the people of Biafra are generally receptive to change. The society is an "open" one which permits individual achievement. A man's level of achievement is limited only by his own desire and motivation to rise.
5. Because of the absence of primitive or religious taboo, there are few cultural constraints affecting the flow of information in Biafra. Anyone who has the necessary receiver can pick up any information

disseminated by the electronic media. Similarly, literate persons can buy and read any newspapers and magazines.

6. Finally, it has been shown that people adopt innovations when the perceived results seem to satisfy their needs. In order for change to take place, new ideas have to be communicated to the prospective adopters in an atmosphere favorable to the acceptance of such new ideas.

In the following chapters, we shall relate these findings to the relative success or failure of the extra-mural programs of the Universities of Ibadan and Biafra from a modernization standpoint. We shall examine the communication patterns of the University of Ibadan and the University of Biafra, in that order, during the period that each of them conducted extra-mural work in Biafra. In this way, we can determine the relative effectiveness of different channels of communication in reaching the diverse segments of the public for whom university adult education in developing countries should be designed.

CHAPTER III
COMMUNICATION IN UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN'S
EXTRA-MURAL WORK

Because of its strong inclination to the British educational system, the University of Ibadan did not place much premium on the importance of extra-mural education in the development process. Britain is far more developed than any of her former colonies. University adult education in England is not designed to provide adults the opportunity to pursue a course of study which, for lack of educational facilities, could not be acquired at an earlier age. Nor is it designed to help accelerate the rate of development. Conversely, adult education in developing countries has a development or modernization overtone. If a developing country should invest all of its educational budget in the training of its youth, the rate of development of such a country would be substantially reduced. The social distance between the educated and the uneducated would get wider and wider. A new breed of intellectual elite that would emerge would probably

develop values and aspirations which would not be consonant with the norms of their society. And the country would thus be creating a monster that might destroy her social fabric in the course of time.

This brief characterization of the intellectual elite was in fact the dream role of a typical graduate of the University of Ibadan. He had assimilated the scornful attitude of his British or British-trained professor. It was difficult for him to communicate with non-university people except where such people were willing to assume the role of inferior partners in their interaction with him. Thus, interpersonal communication between a typical Ibadan graduate and a non-university trained person in the office, school, or in the street was to be on basis of "one up" and "one down" complementarity. In other words, the psychological disposition of our typical graduate from Ibadan would predispose him to dislike the idea of establishing a "pseudo-university program" outside the walls of the University of Ibadan. This attitude would be reinforced by the contempt with which the intra-mural lecturer at Ibadan would regard the extra-mural program. With this background, we shall go a step further and

consider the places in which extra-mural courses were organized in Biafra under the University of Ibadan.

How and Where Extra-Mural Courses
Were Organized

It is important to point out here that following the British tradition, the intra-mural staffs of the University of Ibadan considered themselves infinitely superior to their extra-mural counterparts. Before 1939, extra-mural staffs in England were usually appointed on special conditions and on salary scales which did not correspond to those of the intra-mural staffs of comparable qualifications.¹ A senior administrative officer of a British university expressed his mistrust of the qualification of extra-mural tutors in a succinct way when, in a letter about an applicant for an extra-mural teaching position, he said:

I have less knowledge of Mr X's academic potential but from what I do know I would be inclined to say that, while it is not sufficiently high to qualify him for membership of the ordinary

¹S. G. Raybould, Adult Education at a Tropical University (London: Longmans, Green, 1957), p. 84.

teaching staff of the university, it is probably fully adequate for an Extra-Mural Department.¹

Although the status of university adult education staffs has improved considerably in the United Kingdom, the extra-mural staffs of the University of Ibadan were still looked down upon by their intra-mural colleagues. In fact, a senior administrative officer of the University of Ibadan told Professor Sidney G. Raybould that "Extra-Mural posts should not be regarded as academic appointments."² But he knew that Professor Raybould was himself the head of the University of Ibadan's Department of Extra-Mural Studies, on secondment from the University of Leeds in England. The agony of the Ibadan experience is that some extra-mural tutors held higher degrees and from more reputable universities than some of the intra-mural lecturers.

It is easy to see why extra-mural centers were established in urban areas. As we have seen, some of the problems that the extra-mural lecturer faced were, to some extent, "ego involved." They knew (even if their

¹Ibid., p. 46.

²Ibid., p. 46.

intra-mural colleagues did not acknowledge it) that their degrees were not in any sense inferior to those of other lecturers. In order to validate this view, extra-mural tutors probably felt that they had no business in extending work of a university standard to people in rural communities. For the level of cosmopolitaness of an individual was regarded as a rough measure of his knowledge level, including knowledge about university activities.

The University of Ibadan had 23 classes organized in 11 centers in the 1961-62 session--the last session in which that university conducted adult education work in Biafra. The centers were Aba, Awka, Calabar, Enugu, Eziachi-Orlu, Port-Harcourt, Umuahia, and Uyo. Without exception, these centers were the semi-urban or urban areas in which access to mass media was relatively easy. Not only were mass media facilities and primary industries concentrated in these centers, there were higher schools and teacher training colleges in the neighborhood. The existence of several secondary schools, major government departments and industries together, indicated the presence of a nucleus of university graduates with whom extra-mural tutors could interact.

Communication Channels and
Audiences Reached

Extra-mural courses were announced in a few national newspapers. By Nigeria's standards, these newspapers had a large circulation and would be classified as prestige newspapers. Although there is no valid study on the exposure habits of the average Nigerian or the average Biafran literate adult, it is the writer's view that the level of exposure to the mass media in both countries is shockingly low. Mass media messages are consumed largely by intellectuals. Penetration of media messages into the rural community is difficult particularly where there are no provincial newspapers to give a synopsis of the major news and events contained in national newspapers.

University adult education messages are usually directed to those literate adults who have acquired enough education as to be able to do work at a standard that is appropriate for university sponsorship. This kind of people are found both in urban and in rural areas. Generally, qualified students living in rural areas are more studious, and somewhat more serious, with their work than

those living in urban areas. They have fewer distractions and a limited public entertainment to compete for their leisure. They are by far more interested in raising their social status through education than their urban counterparts. The man who succeeds in getting an appointment in a city is seen as possessing more knowledge and more power than the man living in the village, their qualifications notwithstanding. It is partly for this reason and partly for the purpose of improving his financial position that the village teacher or clerk would sacrifice his leisure and savings to gain the kind of education that would qualify him for white collar jobs in the city. The moral of this is that the person in a rural community, more than the one in the city, is more likely to expose himself to adult education messages if both had equal access to mass media.

We have seen that adult education messages from Ibadan did not infiltrate sufficiently into the villages because they were sent via channels which reached only a segment of the assumed receivers. The few teachers who traveled to the urban areas more frequently were privileged to learn about the Ibadan courses from people with whom

they came in contact in the cities. These were the teachers who registered in the extra-mural center nearest to their village school and covered up to 30 miles one-way to attend classes. So conscientious were these village teachers that they traveled long distances every day of the week--returning at night to do their extra-mural assignments as well as prepare for the next day's teaching program. Most of these teachers were simultaneously registered in extra-mural classes and in overseas correspondence courses. To the extent that extra-mural courses supplemented correspondence courses, there was no attempt by university extra-mural authorities to develop a goal-directed program of study such as was developed by the correspondence colleges. While the extra-mural program aimed at producing a well-informed, mentally alert student, the correspondence college had a definite program designed to prepare the student for the General Certificate of Education--the coveted prize that goes to the man or woman who invests in education for self-development.

These correspondence colleges were operating from their headquarters in England. They demonstrated confidence in the efficacy of repetition of communication

messages. The courses that they offered, the individual instructors of the college concerned, and the benefits that students would derive from a successful completion of their program were repeatedly published in newspapers, magazines, and folders. They knew their competitor, but their competitor, the Extra-Mural Department of the University of Ibadan, did not at any time consider the programs of the English correspondence colleges as a threat to the success of extra-mural work. The message from Ibadan was so brief that it was incomprehensible to someone who had not known about the program before reading of it in the press. But messages from the English correspondence colleges were so complete and explanatory that no G.C.E. aspirant needed additional information from a more informed person in order to determine the relevance of the message to his educational problem.

We are using the phrase "more informed person" to mean opinion leader. The role of the opinion leader is crucial to an understanding of the characteristics of the consumers of mass media messages in urban and rural areas. Usually, urban areas attract more educated and more westernized people. These people are generally more informed

than their less-educated, less-westernized compatriots. They read local and foreign journals and are thus able to give information on a wide range of topics. Because of their relatively high level of knowledge and greater number of units of identification, the well-educated people know about many things and about many people. Even where they do not know about a particular person or thing, chances are that their guess would be better than that of a less-informed person.

Given the preponderance of this class of people in cities and their willingness to share their knowledge with opinion seekers who are academically inferior to them, the average elementary teacher in the city is by far more informed than his counterpart in the village. In some developing countries, despite the significance of ascriptive values such as age and inherited title, the educated person commands more respect in society. If an older person reads about extra-mural courses in a local or national newspaper, he would not hesitate to seek additional information from a younger person who is more educated, if he (the older person) is interested in the program. It means that there are more opinion leaders in the cities than there are in the villages.

Let us then turn to the village receiver of the same message. Let us assume that the message from Ibadan was read by teachers in the cities as well as those in the villages--and some teachers in fact subscribed regularly to some of the national papers. As noted previously, the message from Ibadan did not define the objectives of the courses. The village teacher whose aim was to improve his status through the G.C.E. was shown no apparent reward in doing what the message suggested. Thus, the source believed in the "hypodermic needle" effect of media messages. Besides, the term "extra-mural" was strange to many people in Biafra, for instance. The channel used in disseminating information about extra-mural courses was adequate for the urbanites who took advantage of the two-step flow of information that the message stimulated. Audiences in rural areas had no university graduates in their midst. The absence of opinion leaders in the villages rendered the message from Ibadan ineffective--even where it was read but partially understood.

In Britain, the expansion of university adult education work was intensified largely in response to pressures exerted from Adult Education Associations.

These associations know their rights and privileges. They knew the duties that a responsible university owes to the people who live within its territory. The Workers Educational Association of Britain has, among other things, served to create awareness as to the nature and scope of extra-mural courses. The rapid expansion of British extra-mural education since its inception at Oxford in 1907¹ cannot be said to be fortuitous. Since organizations similar to the Workers Educational Association were still in their embryonic stage in 1960 in Biafra, and since they were not sufficiently encouraged by Ibadan, they did not fully play their informational role. If the Extra-Mural Students Association of Biafra had received sufficient encouragement from Ibadan, it would probably have intensified its pressure upon the government of Biafra to increase the annual grant paid to Ibadan for extra-mural work. The Association would also have helped in transmitting the messages from Ibadan to the audiences in rural communities by interpersonal channels.

¹Raybould, op. cit., p. 105.

CHAPTER IV
COMMUNICATION IN UNIVERSITY OF BIAFRA
ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM

The University of Biafra took over responsibility for extra-mural work from the University of Ibadan in September, 1962. That year witnessed a transition not only in regard to the change from one university to another, but also from one extra-mural tradition to another. Hitherto the British extra-mural pattern had been adopted as faithfully as the British model of democracy was. In 1962, the new director of extra-mural studies, Dr. Louis A. Doyle, was not going to accept the pattern that had been set. Nor was he going to superimpose a new pattern on an existing tradition. Coming from the United States, he had his own biases. He had been involved in university extension work at Michigan State University prior to his appointment as senior advisor on the M.S.U. team that worked at the University of Biafra. Since he was not a green hand in the field of adult education, he knew what to do.

Communication Channels Used and
Audiences Reached

Shortly after he arrived at Nsukka, Dr. Doyle visited his counterpart at Ibadan for a briefing. Following this visit, the new director contacted the officers of the Extra-Mural Students Association of Biafra (including the present writer). On his own initiative, Dr. Doyle undertook a regionwide tour of Biafra. During his tour, he had the opportunity of meeting some of the people who were to form part of his adult education clientele in the immediate future. He discussed freely with all the people he met and was able to know something of their aspirations and expectations. It may be necessary to mention in passing that from the time he started making his adult education plans, the new director enlisted the cooperation of the Extra-Mural Students Association of Biafra. His tour was announced by the University of Biafra and by the Extra-Mural Students Association--each source using different channels. Penetration of the messages was so complete that each of the meetings was attended by students from both the cosmopolitan area and the rural countryside. This was the first practical testimony of the effectiveness

of multiple media and channels in reaching audiences in rural areas.

From that time extra-mural messages were sent from one major source--the University of Biafra--to all the existing centers. Each of these extra-mural centers had a local chapter of the Extra-Mural Students Association--EMSA for short. The local chapter of the EMSA served as receiver of the message from Nsukka, and then as source of the same message to people in village schools. In other words, the local chapter of the EMSA performed a relay function between the University of Biafra's Extra-Mural Department and its widely scattered audiences.

Before the beginning of each extra-mural session in February of each year, the Department would make a newspaper announcement in which the courses, the centers, the tutors and their credentials would be fully described. The name and address of the chapter secretary was also included in the newspaper. At the local level there were additional newspaper announcements in those places served by a provincial press. Large, attention-getting posters were also mounted on bulletin boards in churches, at street corners, recreation grounds and schools. Finally the

chapter executives printed handbills, which were distributed in churches, schools, county council offices, hospitals, and factories.

It was not enough merely to bombard the assumed audiences with messages about extra-mural courses. There was reason to suspect that some people would expose themselves to the messages and yet fail to make the response that the source expected. It was further feared that out of a feeling of inadequacy, some village teachers who required additional information about the program would probably not feel free to seek this information from fellow teachers. For these reasons, a two-way flow of communication was subtly urged by asking an anonymous audience to "call on the secretary of the extra-mural center nearest you for further information regarding the above courses."¹ In this way, status was inadvertently conferred upon a local secretary of EMSA. He became an opinion leader in his own right. But this was not an easy

¹Both the printed handbills and the large posters suggested a face-to-face communication between prospective students and the chapter secretaries. The statement quoted above is similar to the one suggesting a two-way communication usually inserted at the end of the poster or the handbill.

role even though the position of a local secretary seemed enviable. Each extra-mural secretary was himself a student. The fact that he was elected secretary of his branch did not make him any more knowledgeable than the rest of the students in his chapter. But his new role placed him in the position of primus inter pares, and he was compelled to seek information from time to time from university cadre.

This device paid high dividends. By the end of the second year of operation, the Department of Extra-Mural Studies found that there were more qualified students in Biafra than its meager staff could cope with. It had made repeated but unsuccessful appeals to the Government of Biafra for an increase in the amount of subsidy paid for extra-mural work. Although the government seemed to be impressed with the growing interest that Biafrans showed in continuing education programs, it was not sufficiently far-sighted to relate this interest to the concept of modernization. Rather, individual members of the Biafran Parliament started to agitate for the creation of extra-mural centers in their constituencies.¹

¹Parliamentarians are fond of asking for impossible amenities for their constituencies even where they

Meanwhile the director of the program, Dr. Doyle, was concerned with finding a practical solution to the problem of providing tutors for classes in the new centers which were springing up like mushrooms in all corners of Biafra. Fees had been increased in a futile effort to find a surplus with which to pay honoraria to a few more part-time tutors. Despite initial resistance to fee hikes, students paid the fees and demanded that more courses be offered in their centers. Since the fee hike did not solve the problem, one of two alternatives had to be taken. The first alternative was for the Government of Biafra to accept its full responsibility regarding the education of adults. The second alternative was for the University of Biafra to reduce the degree of its involvement in the program to the point where its commitment would correspond with the grant provided by the government. The second alternative was more feasible since the government was still advancing plausible arguments to defend its position on the question of subsidy.

know that there are no provisions for such amenities. However, constituents like to know that their representative is conscious of his obligations to them and this consciousness is sometimes expressed by way of making vague requests on the floor of the House of Assembly.

There was a dilemma. The program had been adequately publicized. Tentative arrangements had been made for the establishment of new centers in some rural districts. The hopes and aspirations of the village teachers had been raised and they expected immediate implementation of the program. It should be remembered that about 85 percent of the non-graduate teachers in Biafra were G.C.E. candidates registered with correspondence colleges in Britain. Every one of them needed additional guidance because the correspondence programs were so commercialized that the instruction lacked the personal approach that the students needed. Besides, correspondence courses seem to be preferred by students prepared to learn by rote. For the first time in their lives, these village teachers were to have had university adult education service extended to them in rural districts. Their intellectual appetite had been whetted by promises which the extension staff of the Extra-Mural Department had made to them. The Department was prepared to provide the courses if given the tools with which to work. But the government had failed to live up to its responsibilities. This was the dilemma--a dilemma that is more aptly described by the

biblical saying, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

To resolve this "crisis," the Department of Extra-Mural Studies got in touch with the Director of the U.S. Peace Corps volunteers in Biafra, Mr. Warren Ziegler. Mr. Ziegler was requested to encourage Peace Corps volunteers to assist the Department in extending higher education to qualified students in Biafra. All that was required of a volunteer was a willingness to serve the Department in his or her spare time in the evening without remuneration. Accordingly, Mr. Ziegler circulated a letter in which he asked interested Peace Corps teachers to indicate whether they would be willing to accept the additional responsibility of teaching extra-mural courses at least once a week. Shortly after the circular was received by the volunteers, many of them indicated willingness to teach more than once a week. Some of them actually initiated plans to establish extra-mural centers in the areas where they lived and only wanted the approval of the Department.

By the end of 1964, the Department had had more part-time tutors than it needed. This was the case

because the overwhelming response of the American volunteers had generated a spontaneous reaction on the part of volunteer groups from other parts of the world. By the beginning of the 1965 session, there were British, Canadian, and indeed a few Biafran volunteers. All of these people were university graduates induced by the example of the American volunteers to offer free tutorial service to the University of Biafra.

By the middle of 1966, when the second director of the program, Dr. Melvin Buschman, was preparing to return to the United States, the Department had established twice as many centers as it took over from the University of Ibadan. At that time, there were 36 centers. In fact, there were to be 37 had one center not been closed down for failure to satisfy registration and other requirements.¹

¹It was the policy of the Extra-Mural Department to discontinue classes which had less than 15 duly registered students. In a few instances, however, classes which did not meet the registration requirement were allowed to continue by the director if (1) the part-time tutors teaching the courses were volunteers who expected no financial reward, and (2) the subjects were so important as to justify administrative expenditure by the university.

Altogether, there were 3,650 students in 167 classes conducted in 36 centers.²

²These figures were obtained from an "End-of-Session Report" submitted by the writer to the Department of Extra-Mural Studies, University of Biafra, in June, 1966. At that time, he was Extra-Mural Studies Organizer at the University of Biafra.

CHAPTER 5

MODEL OF COMMUNICATION FOR UNIVERSITY

ADULT EDUCATION WORK

The aggregate level of the development of a country is somewhat proportional to the level of the individual development of a majority of its people. If a large section of a country is primitive, the country itself will be primitive. The fact is that every country, no matter what may be its level of development, can be said to have a mixed population of haves and have-nots, ultra-modern and modern, educated and uneducated, etc. In developing countries there may be other classifications along the continuum from primitiveness to modernity. But we are concerned here with countries in the transitional stage, such as Biafra. These are the developing countries in which a small percentage of the population has been educated, modernized, westernized, and therefore, socially mobilized. Per capita income in these countries usually ranges from \$100 to \$400. Although they cannot

be called developed or modernized countries, they are not under-developed in all respects. They are called "developing countries" because they are gradually witnessing the social and economic transformations that mark the development process.

In developing countries, the flow of information from central and regional sources to villages varies from country to country. In some countries, governments seem to give the impression that people in rural communities are to be remembered only when it is time for them to pay their taxes or cast votes. At such times, villagers are saturated with information concerning the prompt payment of taxes or the importance of casting votes. Usually, messages about taxation contain threats of punishment for false declaration of income or tax default. Messages about voting are encoded in such a purposive manner that villagers seem to perceive a reward in taking the action suggested by the source. Thus, villagers are reached at such times that their political participation will serve to consolidate the political leadership of their country.

Since our concern is not with what governments do with their subjects, we shall proceed to propose a model

of communication that could prove effective for reaching adult education audiences in rural districts. Our model is being proposed for adult educators who would be willing to face the realities of development problems in less-advanced countries. As development planners, adult educators should aim at modernizing a society through education, for illiteracy is one of the concurrent barriers to development. If the problems of poverty, disease, fatalism, etc., are seen in their true perspective in the modernization syndrome, development planners would be more willing to accord education the priority it deserves. Once a developing country is willing to take steps to modernize its people, efforts should be made to reach the villagers in just the same way that the urbanites are reached.

Ideally, a communication model for university adult education should be charted with the audience of a specific country in mind. But the information problems in all or most of the non-communist developing countries appear to be about the same in some respects. Generally, mass media facilities are concentrated in the cities while a majority of the people in the rural areas remain

ignorant, primitive, and fatalistic in their beliefs. These people should be reached by university adult educators through the use of a combination of the channels of communication. Schramm pointed out that

the great battles of development are continuing ones, and the results come less from the impact of single messages or single media than from a succession of impacts of related messages and reinforcing channels.¹

Information about adult education programs should be given in the following media and channels:

1. Newspapers.--City dwellers get most of their information from newspapers. To them, this medium is as important as their breakfast. For the town dweller, the newspaper is a bulletin board, market directory, defender of the rights of citizens, and the promoter of community welfare activities. Nelson P. Poynter is quoted to have described the modern press as "a composite, omnibus vehicle, carrying a variety of loads."² Because he turns the pages of the daily newspaper to seek information on a

¹Wilbur Schramm, Mass Media and National Development (California: Stanford University Press, 1967), p. 145.

²Frank W. Rucker and Herbert Lee Williams, Newspaper Organization and Management (Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1966), p. 3.

wide variety of matters, the urban dweller is very likely to read adult education messages published in newspapers.

2. Television and Radio.--Following a newspaper announcement (or simultaneously with it) there should be television and radio broadcasts. Radio and television broadcasters should mention a recognizable certificate as a reward to be perceived by prospective students. This is important because, in a developing country the number and kind of certificates a man possesses are a rough predictor of his social status.

3. Handbills.--Because of a dearth of reading materials in the rural areas, literate adults in villages treasure handbills. Posters and handbills are very effective media for reaching literate villagers. In those districts where there are no extra-mural centers, handbills and posters can be sent to the education officer or the divisional officer of the area. Experience in working with these officers has shown that they can be trusted with modernization programs. Their enthusiasm in disseminating modernization information is such that they can carry posters and handbills to all corners of their division in person or deliver them to the intended

receivers through their subordinates in county council headquarters.

4. Face-to-face communication.--We already mentioned that government gets its message across to the people when the peoples' taxes and votes are needed for the continued existence of government. Whenever the villagers' cooperation is needed, efforts are made to reach them as swiftly as possible by interpersonal communication, and through government representatives. Word-of-mouth or face-to-face communication is quite an effective way of introducing a change. It provides opportunity for a two-way flow of communication. Because of the instant feedback that interpersonal communication generates, a source is in a better position to persuade a receiver. A well-informed graduate should talk to audiences in villages and explain the objectives of the program to them.

In summary, we can say that adult education messages should be sent in different media and by a combination of channels. Town dwellers are more exposed to mass media--print and electronic. They are likely to get the information from one of the several media of mass communication. For the people in the villages, handbills,

posters, face-to-face communication, and pamphlets, or even folders, are more effective.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In the previous chapters, we have been exploring the proposition that inadequate flow of information from a university to the villages, and the use of a single medium, could impede the progress and success of university adult education work. We attempted an analysis of the communication systems used by both the University of Ibadan and the University of Biafra in their adult education programs in Biafra. We found that penetration of information disseminated by newspapers alone is usually limited by poor circulation. Until newspaper publishers in developing countries recognize the importance of building circulation, people in rural areas can hardly feel the urge to read papers. To create reader interest, newspapers must devote some sections to tidbits from all parts of the territory in which they circulate. Since national newspapers in some developing countries do not cover events which occur in remote villages, their contents will have limited appeal to a rural population.

We have seen that messages from Ibadan were channeled through the printed media, namely newspapers. Their source over-estimated the potency of the printed media by equating their penetration potential with what is known in communication jargon as the "hypodermic needle" effect. The University of Biafra, on the other hand, used more than one medium and one channel. It also sought to increase the two-step flow of information by conferring status upon a part-time extra-mural secretary in the village. Although the town dweller has different opinion leaders on different issues, the village teacher or clerk has few or none at all. In order to provide the necessary climate for opinion leadership, status conferral upon an "early adopter"¹ is of great importance.

It is not difficult to find an "innovator"² in the village. Oftentimes, adult education departments

¹Early adopters are said to be (Rogers, 1968, p. 169) the men from whom potential adopters get information about new ideas.

²Innovators are described by Rogers as people "eager to try new ideas." This eagerness "leads them out of a local circle of peers and into more cosmopolite social relationships." Among the several prerequisites for being an innovator are "venturesomeness (and) the control of substantial financial resources to absorb the loss of an unprofitable innovation . . ." Everett M. Rogers, The Diffusion of Innovations (N.Y.: The Free Press, 1968), p. 169.

receive letters from inquisitive village teachers seeking information about continuing education programs. Such inquirers usually travel to the university or to an extension office of the Continuing Education Department of the university to try to persuade adult education personnel to establish extra-mural centers in their school district. Generally such people are responsible for the defrayal of the initial expenditure incurred by them in the campaign for the establishment of an adult education center.

A case in point is the successful adventure of Joseph, a teenage teacher from one of the cluster of villages surrounding the university town of Nsukka in Biafra. His village was plagued with problems of child care, nutrition, and sanitation. Joseph knew that the University of Biafra's Adult Education Department was likely to help his village if contacted. As a result, he consulted the head of the Department of Home Economics, Mrs. Mirriam Kelley, a veteran advisor on Home Economics and Family Living problems. A few weeks later, Mrs. Kelley and her colleagues launched a pilot project in home management training in Joseph's village. This project which was supervised by Mrs. Uzoaru Mba--also of the Department of

Home Economics, University of Biafra--was so successful that it was later named "Experimental Village Programs in Human Resource Development."¹

We are not concerned with details of the project. What concerns us here is the side-effect of its success. By his association with a reputable institution (University of Biafra) Joseph was seen by fellow teachers and villagers as a very important person. He had had status conferred upon him by working with university professors. Henceforth Joseph became an opinion leader for villages seeking enlightenment education in their communities. The success of the project in Joseph's village was the result of both the young teacher's altruistic adventure and the receptive and sensitive audience he found in the University of Biafra's Department of Home Economics. There are many teachers in the villages with Joseph's missionary drive, initiative, and adventurous disposition. Adult educators should try to seek them out in village schools.

¹Miriam J. Kelley, End of Tour Report, M.S.U.-University of Biafra Program. Mrs. Kelley was M.S.U. Advisor at the Continuing Education Center and Acting head of the Department of Home Economics, University of Biafra, 1965-1967.

Much has been said about the widening socio-economic gap between the university graduate and the high school graduate. The task of bridging this gap by a carefully planned adult education program is the inescapable responsibility of adult educators in developing countries. Given the communication problems in rural districts, adult educators may have to combine mass media with interpersonal channels to reach both their urban and village clientele. Newspaper circulation in rural areas is very poor, and the desire to subscribe to a newspaper is often mediated by economic, political, and religious considerations. Urbanites can afford to subscribe to a newspaper because credit privileges are extended to them as regular workers enjoying a security of tenure. Such privileges are rarely extended to villagers. Furthermore, when a religious organization or a political party prohibits its followers from reading a particular newspaper, city dwellers may flout the instruction while the fundamentalists in the villages will adhere to the order with a ritualistic sense of duty. To predict the degree of message penetration into rural communities from the circulation graph of a national newspaper is merely an exercise in self-deception.

It is advisable that adult educators in developing countries should assess the educational needs of the communities in which they work. Several methods are open to the adult educator for determining the educational needs of his assumed audience. Perhaps the best approach would be the questionnaire method. The next method would involve a sustained instructor-students interaction whereby the instructor could have an opportunity of knowing something of the perceived goals of his students. Those who lack the patience to make empirical observations may have to rely on their intuition. The danger lies in making policy decisions in one country on the basis of experiences gained from another.

Extra-mural traditions of the more technologically and economically advanced countries should not be introduced in developing countries without modifications or adaptations to their needs. Adult education leaders should collaborate with other modernizing agencies to plan a well-balanced development program capable of producing simultaneous results in education and literacy, mass media consumption, and economic development. Human beings are the "tools" with which adult educators help

to modernize a society. The individual members of a society have to be modernized first because they are the ones that will use modern facilities when provided. To this end, communication between the adult educator and his anonymous audience is of great importance, and choice of channels is of greater importance.

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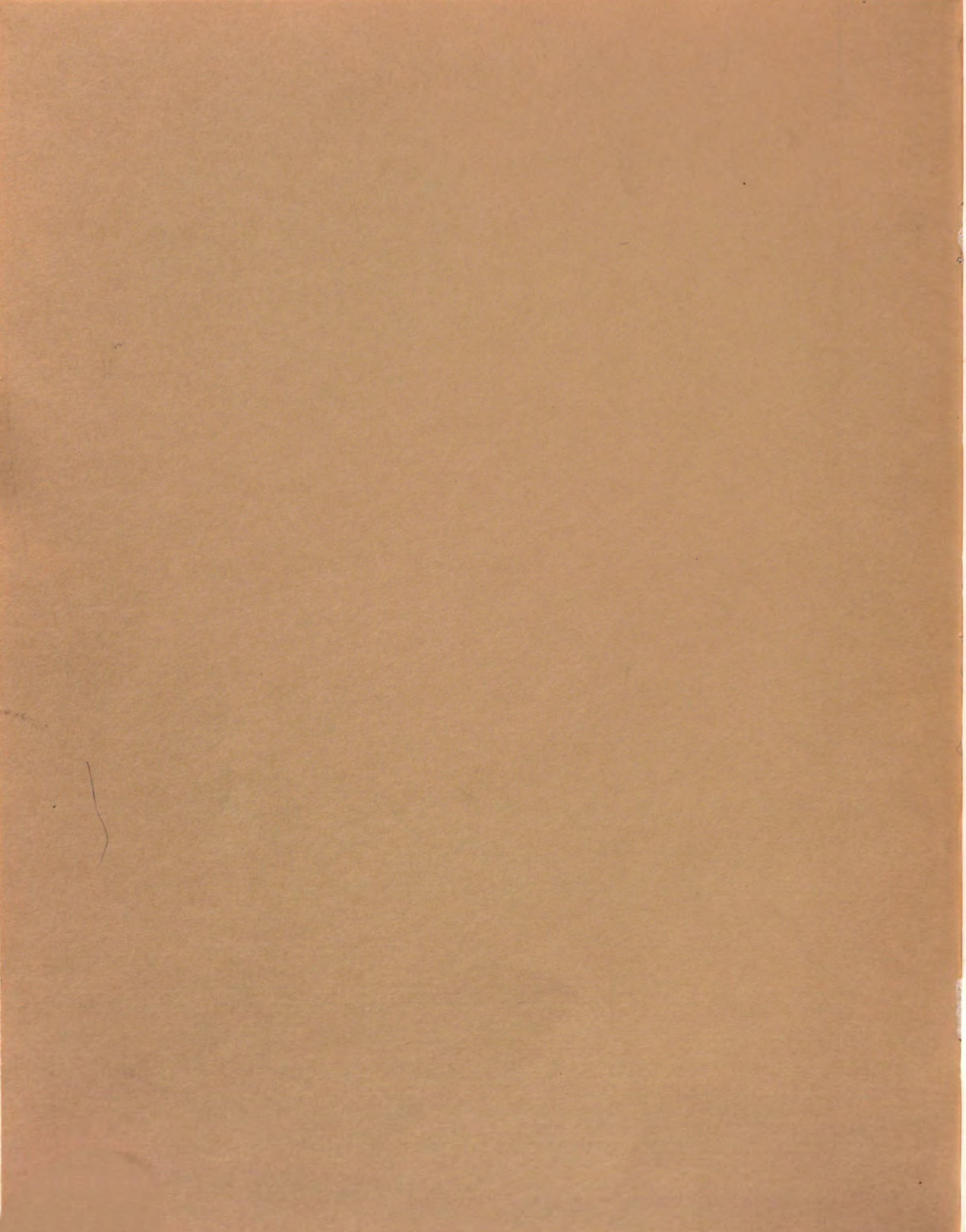
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