Malaysian Internship: A Personal Report

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MALAYSIAN INTERNSHIP: A PERSONAL REPORT

by

James V. Loser

A Report
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment
of the
Specialist in Education Degree

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
April 1977
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James V. Loser
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CHAPTER I

Introduction

This report has been prepared in partial fulfillment of the Specialist's degree in Counseling and Personnel from Western Michigan University. The report discusses, in narrative form, my internship experience as a Peace Corps Vocational Counseling Consultant for the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from December 1973 to April 1975.

To afford the reader a better understanding of the situation encountered in Malaysia, the report begins with a brief description of Malaysia and its people. This section is followed with a history of the vocational guidance and counseling movement in Malaysia.

Malaysia

Malaysia is a federation of thirteen states which occupies two regions--the Malay Peninsula (West Malaysia) and the North-western coastal area of the island of Borneo (East Malaysia). West Malaysia shares its northern border with Thailand and its southern border with Singapore. The western portion of West Malaysia is bordered by the Indonesian island of Sumatra. The Phillippines lie to the northeast of East Malaysia.
Kuala Lumpur is the federal capital of Malaysia and is located in the southwestern section of West Malaysia (see Figure 1 and Figure 2, pp. 3 and 4).

Climate

Malaysia has a tropical climate consisting of the Southwest monsoon season (May-September) and the Northeast monsoon season (October-February). The average daily temperature throughout Malaysia varies from 70° F. to 90° F. Night temperatures in most places are between 70° F. to 80° F. Relative humidity is approximately 85%.

Inhabitants

Malaysia has a population of over 10.4 million (Malaysia in Brief, Note 1, p. 34). The three main races and cultures are Malay, Chinese, and Indian.

In order to survive as an independent nation, the government of Malaysia is attempting to overcome the diversities caused by ethnic differences by developing a common Malaysian nationalism. In this writer's opinion, their success thus far is very minimal. The internalization of this aim is far from being achieved.

From this writer's observation, the Malays continue to
Figure 1

Map of Malaysia
Figure 2

Map of Southeast Asia

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hold the political power, the Chinese stubbornly control the economic power, and the Indians continue to serve as the common laborers.

The resulting discontent coupled with Malaysia's geographic location provides a fertile breeding ground for Communist influence. These factors, along with the racial differences, are still sensitive issues in Malaysia.

**Government**

Malaysia proclaimed its independence from British rule on August 31, 1957. As a former British colony, their governmental system is very similar to the system found in Great Britain.

Malaysia has a King who figuratively acts as head of state and presides over the House of Representatives and the Senate.

The executive functions of the government are carried out by the Prime Minister and his cabinet. Government policy is implemented by ministries and departments with each state having its own governments to handle state affairs.

**History of Vocational Guidance and Counseling in Malaysia**

As early as 1950, the Ministry of Welfare began a case-work counseling program with probation officers providing the direct counseling services. They provided personal and vocational counseling aimed at rehabilitating public offenders.

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In 1956, the Kuala Lumpur Rotary Club formed a Vocational Guidance Committee and sponsored the first career orientation program in Malaysian secondary schools. School leavers who were potential job seekers were offered advice on how to apply for a job and how to appropriately conduct themselves during a job interview.

In the same year, the Ministry of Labor set up the Central Apprenticeship Board in Kuala Lumpur. This action resulted from the government's realization that as the Malaysian economy became more industrialized there would be a growing need for a pool of skilled manpower. With the assistance of the International Labor Organization, the Federal Ministry of Labor launched the National Apprenticeship plan in 1957. The first pilot program was carried out in Kuala Lumpur in selected mechanical and electrical engineering trades.

Two years later, the Ministry of Labor established the Youth Employment Services in various state labor offices with the following aims:

a. to suggest types of employment that will provide the best opportunities for the development of their capacities and interests.

b. to help to find suitable openings.

c. to help gather and collate information (Annual Report, Note 2, pp. 20-21).
The Youth Employment Section of this department started a Career Advisory Service early in 1961. This action brought into focus the need for greater cooperation among the various ministries concerned in the education, training, and welfare of youth and the necessity for establishing a Vocational Guidance Service. Cooperation was necessary in order to avoid duplication and overlapping of functions and to assist the various ministries involved in the adjustment of potential manpower. With cabinet approval, a Vocational Guidance Coordinating Committee was formed during the year 1961 with representatives from seven ministries and departments. The objectives of the Committee were:

a. to set up a standard procedure for Vocational Guidance.

b. to prepare career literature, e.g., booklets, films, materials for exhibition, etc.

c. to encourage government departments, commerce and industry and voluntary organizations in the country in the production of career literature and to set up a machinery for dissemination.

d. to carry out any other functions that the coordinating committee may from time to time deem necessary (Annual Report, Note 3, pp. 20-21).

The Kuala Lumpur Rotary Club in 1961 published a book entitled, Careers, in order to give the Malaysian students and job seekers a better understanding of the job market.
The Ministry of Education in 1962 began training personnel to serve as guidance officers and appointed Career Guidance teachers in secondary schools throughout Malaysia.

Under the Second Malaya Developmental Plan (1961-1965), it was proposed to establish a Central Training Institute, to provide training facilities for the following trades: mechanical, electrical, printing, and building (Annual Report, Note 4, pp. 20-23). Work on the proposed Institute was begun in early 1963. When the pilot plan was extended to all the states in the Federation, it was called the National Apprenticeship Board. The National Apprenticeship Board, with the cooperation of government, quasi-government, and private employers, provided training facilities for apprentice trades in Malaysia. The Federation Government, also in 1963, obtained the services of a Canadian expert on guidance and counseling. He conducted a six-month course for organizers and assistant organizers of schools. The aim of the course was to train the participants to organize and conduct in-service courses for their teachers in Vocational Guidance in their respective states.

In July 1963, the Twenty-sixth International Conference on Public Education concerning the organization of Educational and Vocational Guidance was held in Geneva. Malaysia was represented.
at this conference. The recommendations from this meeting became the embodiment of guidance services in Malaysian schools (Recommendations #56, Note 5, pp. 167-173).

In 1964, formalized in-service training courses on Vocational Guidance were offered by the Ministry of Education to a representative number of senior teachers from secondary schools in Malaysia.

Interest in Vocational Guidance continued to grow both in the private sector and in the government sector, and in 1966 culminated in the formation of the Selangor Vocational Guidance Association. The Association is an independent, voluntary organization sponsored by the Kuala Lumpur Rotary Club and other interested community organizations.

As a growing need for relevant occupational information became apparent, the Ministry of Labor, under their manpower unit, began work on a Dictionary of Occupational Classification in 1967 (Ministry of Labor, Note 6). The project was completed in 1969.

Guide to Careers in the Government Service, was published by the Selangor Vocational Guidance Association in 1968, and in 1970 the Association published another guidebook, Guide to Careers in the Private Sector. These publications proved invaluable to students, school leavers, parents, and teachers.
As a means of staffing schools with teachers trained in Guidance and Counseling, the Ministry of Education in 1969, with the cooperation of UNICEF, began the systematic training of Guidance Teachers by conducting in-service courses in Guidance and Counseling throughout Malaysia. At the university level, in the same year, Guidance and Counseling was made one of the options for the Diploma in Education and for a Masters in Education for postgraduate students.

In July 1973, the first intensive study on Vocational Guidance in Malaysian Secondary Schools was conducted by the Selangor Vocational Guidance Association (Loser & Nichols, Note 7). The results of this study were published in September 1973 and were instrumental in leading to the inauguration of the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association in December 1973. Two of the major objectives of the National Association are:

a. to study and direct attention to vocational guidance problems and to strive towards their solution.

b. to encourage, motivate, and assist in the formation of state vocational guidance associations (Constitution and Rules of MAVOGA, Note 8).

The Ministry of Education in 1975 obtained a grant of $40,000M\(^1\) for the initiation of a training program to supply

\(^1\)The exchange rate as of May 1975 was $1.00 U.S. equals $2.50M

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guidance teachers in the primary schools. Also, in the same year, the Vocational Guidance Section of the Ministry of Education submitted a proposal for the funding of guidance as its own discipline.

From the preceding history the reader can ascertain that although vocational guidance and counseling is still at a fledgling state in Malaysia, there is a growing interest and concern among government, quasi-government, and private organizations to further extend these services to a broader spectrum of Malaysians as soon as possible.
 CHAPTER II

Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association Internship

Background

On February 26, 1973, I arrived in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia as a Peace Corps volunteer and began a training program in preparation for my job as a vocational counseling consultant with the Selangor Vocational Guidance Association. After an intensive two-month training program with language and cultural components, I began working for the Selangor Vocational Guidance Association within the framework of the following Malaysian Peace Corps job description.

He will work cooperatively with the Organizing Secretary of the Association with whom they will be jointly responsible to the Chairman and the full membership of the respective Executive Committee.

Working together with the Organizing Secretary, the volunteer will have basically the following responsibilities:

1). Directing counseling of students and job-seekers in interview format.

2). Conducting programs of greater outreach, such as career talks in schools.

3). Organizing seminars and workshops to spread vocational guidance concepts among teachers and other interested parties.
4). Developing contacts with employers, studying the job market, and preparing materials regarding employment prospects for job-seekers.

5). Introducing and testing guidance concepts and practices not yet in use in Malaysia.

6). Applying research in fields of importance for development of Malaysian guidance methodology.

These responsibilities will be carried out jointly by the Organizing Secretary and the volunteer, and the specific emphasis of each one's work will be determined by consultation with the Chairman. It is expected that the volunteer will be more heavily involved in those activities of a more conceptual as opposed to operational nature, that is (3), (4), and (5) above. With respect to (5), while this is an important aspect of the volunteer's, he must approach the introduction of new practices in a sensitive and cautious manner, as some common elements of American guidance practice (aptitude and interest testing, personal counseling as an element of career guidance) may still be viewed as controversial in Malaysia. The main requirement is that all innovations be fully discussed with the Chairman prior to introduction (Job Description FORSVGA, Note 9, pp. 7-8).

To determine the developmental level of vocational guidance in Malaysia, another Peace Corps counseling consultant and myself conducted a vocational guidance study (Loser & Nichols, Note 10). The primary purpose of this study was to define and analyze the current problems and needs of Career Guidance Teachers in Malaysian Secondary Schools and to recommend actions to alleviate these problems and to define the resources necessary to meet
these needs. The results of this study were published by the Selangor Vocational Guidance Association in September 1973.

After completing the study, I continued to assist the Organizing Secretary of the Association in developing and organizing programs and in providing personal and vocational counseling to Malaysian students. One of the major projects during this period (September-December 1973) was to gain enough support from both the government and the private sector to inaugurate a national vocational guidance association. On December 8, 1973, the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association became a reality.

The remaining portion of this report will deal with my experience while working for the National Association.

Unique Characteristics of the Internship

During my internship, from December 1973 to April 1975, I was working as a member of a team of Peace Corps volunteers assigned to the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association. My job title was that of counseling consultant.

The internship in Malaysia was unique due to the following factors:

a. Malaysia is an Asian society which is multi-racial and multilingual. The result of this fact is a society with unique cultural attitudes and behavior.
b. Malaysia has been strongly influenced by the British systems of administration and education.

c. The Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association is a voluntary organization with only four paid staff personnel (two clerical and two paraprofessional) thus posing problems of motivation and continuance of interest. There is a limited number of trained personnel qualified to assist the association in its development. These people serve in a voluntary capacity on Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association committees.

d. The vocational guidance movement is in a fledgling state in Malaysia. This situation offers the opportunity to experiment with, and adapt to the local Asian situation, one's ideas concerning vocational guidance and to test the extent of one's creativity by developing and implementing programs to carry out these ideas.

e. Most of the funding has come from the private sector increasing the difficulty of program development.

f. As a Peace Corps Volunteer, it was necessary to be concerned with the continuity of the program after termination of Peace Corps involvement and to assure that Peace Corps policy was understood regarding this matter.

Goals and Objectives of Internship

The goals and objectives of the internship are divided into the categories of Professional and Administrative.

Professional Goals

1. Synthesize data regarding vocational guidance in
Malaysia to determine the problems and needs of the country and of the program.

2. Develop programs of greatest impact on these needs and/or problems.

3. Plan, organize, and implement these programs or projects.

4. Assist in training career teachers in rural areas of Malaysia as well as in-service training of the Malaysian staff of the national and state associations.

5. Assist in forming and organizing state associations throughout Malaysia.

6. Study the problems and needs of career teachers in rural and urban schools in Malaysia and prepare a report on the findings.

7. Assist in the publication of the national association's professional journal.

8. Study the community resources available in Malaysia in areas of concern for vocational guidance.

9. Adapt counseling techniques and concepts learned in the United States to the situation found in Malaysia.

10. Assist Malaysian career teachers in developing their own counseling techniques and guidance programs with the objectives of raising the status of the profession.
Administrative Goals

1. Adapt Western management techniques for use in an Asian culture.
2. Adapt concepts of vocational guidance and administration through cross-cultural communication.
3. Write proposals for operating funds and special projects.
4. Learn techniques of fund raising and organization needed to put on a fund raising project.
5. Develop and operate a yearly budget for the national and state associations.
6. Learn the process of preparing a yearly plan of operations for program development and implementation.
7. Learn to delegate responsibility in order to accomplish objectives more efficiently.

Professional Internship Experience

Since the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association was still in its infancy, I had the opportunity, along with the other Peace Corps volunteers working for the association to not only suggest new ideas but to develop and implement them. Most of the projects and experiences mentioned below were developed from the idea stage and taken to completion. This means that I was
involved with writing the proposal, seeking funding, developing, organizing, and evaluating the projects.

**Mini-training Program for Career Teachers**

The mini-training program, funded by an Asia Foundation grant, provided an experiential learning introduction to guidance and counseling techniques in an outreach type program aimed at guidance teachers in rural secondary schools.

According to the results of a study conducted by the Selangor Vocational Guidance Association in June and July of 1973 (Loser & Nichols, Note 11):

Rural Career Guidance Teachers, on the average, have less guidance training, less vocational information, fewer audio-visual aids, and less frequently have the use of a special room for guidance. The urban schools' advantages in material and financial resources, and quality of teaching staff often have direct bearing on the effectiveness of the guidance programs. Although both rural and urban schools have similar needs regarding guidance problems, the rural needs are generally more critical (p. 5).

This need in the rural areas was felt to be more critical because, with the rapid change of the Malaysian economy from an agricultural to an industrial base, fewer youth will be able to find occupational slots in the rural areas, thus there will be increased migration to the cities and increased pressure for employment in the urban areas. As stated above, career teachers in the rural
areas have the fewest resources for professional development. Therefore, they are inadequately prepared to assist rural youth in making essential vocational decisions. The mini-training program sought to provide these guidance teachers with some of the basic tools and resources to upgrade their knowledge and skills dealing with the vocational problems of rural youth. Methods of accomplishing this called for active participation and involvement by the trainees, or learning through direct experience-experiential learning. This approach was particularly useful since there was a constraint on training time.

In the orientation, the trainees were given instruction in basic guidance principles that enabled them to put into practice (through role-playing) the techniques they were studying. Under observation and coaching from one of the trained counseling consultants, the trainees obtained the "feel" and experience of a simulated guidance interview. The trainees learned by doing, and interest and motivation were maintained because of their own personal involvement in the learning situation.

Techniques and insights gained from this approach were carried over to actual guidance interviews with students in their own schools.
Description of the Mini-training Program

1. The mini-training program was two and one-half days duration.

2. The medium of instruction was Bahasa Malaysia and English on a fifty-fifty basis.

3. The course began with a half-day orientation that covered the basic fundamentals of vocational guidance practice. Time was allowed for group discussion including questions and answers about the program. During the orientation, the trainees received written materials in both languages covering a basic approach to school guidance work and a general description of the training techniques that would be used in the program. The primary purpose of these materials was to serve as a "refresher" after completing the training program. These materials were prepared by the team of Peace Corps Counseling Consultants.

4. The first full day of instruction began with a series of demonstrations of guidance interviews (through interrupted role-playing by the instructors) in which the trainees were encouraged to ask questions and make comments. The demonstrations covered some of the more common problems in school guidance work such as vocational choice, student-parent relationships, personal and social concerns, and how to deal with the "silent" student.
5. The next phase of training was the direct participation of the trainees in small group role-playing of guidance interviews. In each group, one trainee assumed the role of the guidance teacher, another played the part of the student with a problem, and the others acted as observers. One of the Counseling Consultants sat in with each group to offer comments and advice during the interview. Trainees were given the opportunity to use the principles and techniques they had learned from the written material and demonstrations by the instructors. Participants were given direct feedback on their performance in the interview, enabling them to build on their strengths and reduce their weaknesses.

6. The final day included group discussion and questions and answers regarding the training program, followed by the presentation and analysis of selected training tapes on guidance interviews. During the discussion of the tapes, the instructors evaluated the progress of the trainees based upon the content of their observations and comments. Special time was allowed for individual consultation between each trainee and one of the instructors to discuss guidance problems and questions on a personal basis. The final hour was reserved for a summary and conclusion of the program.
Format of the Mini-training Program

1. The ideal size of each class was from twelve to fifteen career teachers. Although in some cases as few as nine or ten teachers were present.

2. The length of the session was two and one-half days with additional time available for individual conferences if desired by the trainees.

3. After making preliminary arrangements with the officials involved (headmasters and district guidance officers), the team of counseling consultants chose a training site in or near the rural community that was the most convenient for the career teachers invited to attend.

4. Attendance by the career teachers was voluntary although it was hoped that headmasters and district guidance officers would encourage their attendance.

5. The Career Guidance Teachers who participated in the program were requested to provide their own transportation to and from the central training site.

6. Tea breaks and lunches were provided to the participants in the training program by the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association.
Before the program began its full operation, two pilot projects were carried out in order to provide an opportunity to evaluate and change the program. Upon completion of the pilot projects, a few minor changes, i.e., more use of the Malaysian language, more role-playing sessions, and less time on the organization of a career program, were made in the format of the program. The results of these changes were tested in a formal program in February 1975, and the total program appeared to have been considerably strengthened.

Prior to my departure in April 1975, a Malaysian trained in guidance and counseling at Western Michigan University joined the training team so that the team consisted of two Malaysians and one American. At the time of my last correspondence with the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association in June 1975, the mini-training program was still being successfully conducted in the rural secondary schools in Malaysia.

Vocational Guidance Film

In order to create more awareness of the need for vocational guidance in Malaysia and the duties of the career guidance teacher, a sub-committee was formed by the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association to develop a film which would not only publicize vocational guidance but would also be useful as a teaching aid for career
guidance teachers. After three meetings, the sub-committee decided to prepare the following synopsis of the vocational guidance film.

**Synopsis of the Vocational Guidance Film**

1. Dramatize the need for vocational guidance and stimulate interest in the Career Guidance Teachers as a means to meet this need.
   a. Show an individual walking through town looking for a job, talking to shop owners.
   b. Reading job advertisements in the newspaper.
   c. Waiting in line at the employment office.
2. Depict confusion and frustration in the individual due to his inability to find a suitable job.
3. Show the Career Guidance Teacher functioning in a professional situation.
   a. Student and Career Teacher in a realistic counseling situation.
   b. The Career Teacher should have the necessary materials that are used in career guidance (books, pamphlets, etc.).
   c. The student decides on the general area of Science.
d. The student rules out university education.

e. The student considers four specific occupations within the area of Science.

f. Career Teacher begins to give specific information on the four occupations chosen. The Selangor Vocational Guidance Association's Guide to Careers (Note 12) is shown as a valuable resource.

g. The student decides on two of the occupations to explore further.

h. The Career Teacher gives the student a list of community resources (people, places, etc.) to contact to investigate these areas further.

i. The student leaves to begin his exploration smiling.

4. Demonstrate the results of the vocational guidance process through visual representation of a successful outcome.

a. Use split screen to show student working at the job that he has finally decided on and the other individual still walking, still confused, looking for a job.

b. The type of job that can be used for the best visual effect could be an electrical worker. (MAVOGA may be able to obtain some financial assistance from the company we use to film this scene).
This synopsis was then tabled at the executive committee meeting and approval was granted to prepare a story outline for the film. Simultaneously, all committee members began contacting community resources in order to investigate possible avenues of funding. When the prospect of obtaining the necessary funding for the film looked dismal, I suggested to the committee that we attempt to sell the idea and the story to the Educational Television Department of the Ministry of Education. The committee thought that this was a feasible alternative and a letter was sent to the Educational Television Department explaining our situation and the proposed film on Vocational Guidance. The letter was followed up by a personal visitation by one of the top ranking Education officers on our sub-committee. After a few weeks, a letter was received from the Educational Television Department indicating that they had decided to produce the film on Vocational Guidance and make it available for use in the Malaysian secondary schools. The film is currently being used by the Educational Television Department as part of their programming to secondary schools.

Mobile Career Resource Unit

After completing the Vocational Guidance Study for the Selangor Vocational Guidance Association in September 1973
(Loser & Nichols, Note 13), I realized the tremendous need for useful occupational and vocational information in the rural Malaysian secondary schools. A mobile resource unit seemed to be the most feasible solution to this existing problem. Although it could not completely remedy the situation, it could provide the needed impetus in seeking a more long range solution to the problem.

On February 11, 1974, the staff of the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association met with the public relations officers from Esso Standard Malaysia Berhad for the purpose of discussing funding for the proposed Mobile Career Resource Unit. A proposal was submitted at this time outlining the costs of the project.

In July 1974, a grant of $15,000M\(^1\) was obtained from Esso Standard Malaysia Berhad for the provision of a Mobile Career Resource Unit to serve the needs of schools in rural areas of Malaysia. The executive committee of the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association then met to determine the arrangements necessary to procure the vehicle and obtain the occupational and educational information materials. After considerable discussion, the committee decided that the vehicle would be purchased from British Leyland and the occupational and educational materials

\(^1\)The exchange rate as of May 1975 was $1.00 U. S. equals $2.50 M.
would be donated by S. R. A., an affiliate of I. B. M.

In March 1975, the Mobile Career Resource Unit was fully operational and was used as a means of transportation for the instructors during the mini-training program.

**Formation and Organization of State Vocational Guidance Associations**

One of the first official functions that I performed as a Counseling Consultant for the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association was to obtain a grant of $5,000M from the Asia Foundation for the salary of a full time Assistant Organizing Secretary for the Selangor Vocational Guidance Association. It was not only fortunate for the Selangor Vocational Guidance Association that we were able to obtain the one year grant from the Asia Foundation, but it was even more fortuitous that we were able to find a young Malaysian woman who was highly motivated and concerned about her job and about the students she served.

As of July 1975, Siti Hawa continues to provide the leadership and motivation that is needed in running a voluntary service organization such as the Selangor Vocational Guidance Association.

At the time of the inauguration of the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association on December 8, 1973, there were only two
state vocational guidance associations, Selangor and Sabah. As of April 1975, there were a total of five, the additional three being Penang, Malacca, and Perak.

Besides being directly involved in the formation of the Perak and Malacca State Vocational Guidance Associations, I was also instrumental in defining the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association's relationship with the state associations and in proposing a plan to form the remaining six state associations.

**In-service Training of Malaysian Co-workers**

To help assure a continuity of service after the Peace Corps Counseling Consultants finished their assignments, an in-service training program for the Malaysian co-workers was of paramount importance.

An educational grant was obtained from the Asia Foundation to send the Organizing Secretary of the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association to Ohio University for a nine-month training program in Guidance and Counseling. The training the Organizing Secretary received and the contacts she made while in the United States proved to be very beneficial not only to her but also to the future of the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association.
Coordination of Vocational Guidance Resources

At the second executive committee meeting of the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association in March 1974, it was proposed that the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association should act as a coordinating body and as a clearinghouse for all occupational and/or vocational information and resources available in Malaysia. The committee realized that in order to accomplish this objective the Association would first have to identify the career guidance resources and career information currently available in Malaysia. The executive committee decided to appoint a coordinating sub-committee to further investigate this matter.

As a member of this sub-committee, it was my responsibility to determine the best method of identifying the career guidance resources. I suggested to the sub-committee that a questionnaire be developed to obtain this information and that it be sent, as a first step, to all ministries and departments in Malaysia. The suggestion was adopted, and I was given the task of developing the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was completed in February 1975 and included questions covering five main categories:

a. Training.

b. Scholarship and other financial assistance.
c. Occupational information.

d. Counseling services.

e. Self-employment services.

As of April 1975, all of the questionnaires were not returned and, therefore, the final report was unable to be completed prior to my departure.

PANDUAN--The Malaysian Vocational Guidance Journal

Following one of the recommendations made in the Vocational Guidance Study conducted by the Selangor Vocational Guidance Association (Loser & Nichols, Note 14), the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association submitted a proposal to the Asia Foundation for a grant to fund the initial issue of the first professional vocational guidance journal in Malaysia. After a grant of $5,000M was obtained for publication of the journal, a publications sub-committee was formed by the executive committee of the association to handle all publications. I was appointed as a member of this sub-committee.

The sub-committee decided that the theme of the first issue would be "Status of Vocational Guidance in Malaysia."

Articles were then requested from the members of the sub-committee and the three Peace Corps Counseling Consultants.
While the articles were being prepared, quotations were obtained from various printers estimating the printing cost for the issue. The first issue was published in June 1975.

**Guidance and Counseling**

As a Counseling Consultant for the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association, I had the opportunity to provide individual vocational and personal counseling to students, from junior high school to the university level, and with any person seeking assistance in deciding on a career. The individual counseling was done either in the offices of the Selangor Vocational Guidance Association or the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association or in the Malaysian schools.

Most of the group counseling that I performed was informational in nature although at times the giving of information was used as a transition into other areas of concern.

I also attempted to impart, through speeches and career talks to students and teachers, the steps necessary in making a decision and the importance of vocational guidance and counseling in the Malaysian schools.

Besides the training of Career Teachers during the mini-training program, previously mentioned, I also offered advice and instruction regarding counseling techniques to any teacher.
requesting such assistance. I also had the opportunity to make use of the videotape equipment at the University of Malaya to instruct Career Teachers in basic interviewing techniques and strategies.

Administrative Internship Experience

Although my primary duty was to serve the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association as a vocational counseling consultant, I also assumed many of the administrative responsibilities for the association. By becoming actively involved in program planning, program development, fund raising, and budgeting, I realized that I had a greater personal interest in the administration of services than in performing the actual counseling. The experience I gained in this area was, therefore, very meaningful to me in terms of my future career development.

Administrative Planning

As a member of the team of counseling consultants assigned to the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association, it was my responsibility to develop a program plan for the Selangor Vocational Guidance Association and for the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association. After considerable discussion with the other members of the consultant team, I prepared a plan outline with quarterly goals and objectives and submitted this to the
executive committee for approval.

Each quarter a report was submitted to the executive committee indicating the progress made toward achieving the goals set forth in the yearly plan outline. This approach proved to be very beneficial in providing a consistent development rather than a haphazard growth for the association.

I also assisted in providing the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association and the Selangor Vocational Guidance Association with a continual planning process and an organizational structure for their committees and sub-committees.

Financial Management

In order to assure the continuance of program development and implementation, it was necessary to devote a considerable amount of time to fund raising, proposal writing, and budgeting.

Fund Raising

The following is a listing of some of the funds I obtained or was instrumental in obtaining for the associations and some of the fund raising activities.

1. Assisted in increasing membership in the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association and in the Selangor Vocational Guidance Association in order to obtain more operating funds.
This was accomplished by means of personal visitation, telephone contacts, and letters.

2. Assisted in preparing and writing a publicity brochure for the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association to help raise funds through donations and/or membership.

3. Assisted in obtaining funds from the following sources:
   a. Esso Malaysia--$15,000M for the Career Guidance Resource Unit.
   b. Lee Foundation--$800M for training of a needy student.
   c. Asia Foundation--$16,000M for Malaysian counterpart training in the United States.
   d. Asia Foundation--$5,000M for the salary of the Assistant Organizing Secretary of the Selangor Vocational Guidance Association.
   e. Asia Foundation--$5,000M for the mini-training program in rural areas.
   f. Asia Foundation--$5,000M for publication of the PANDUAN, the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association's professional journal.
   g. Private individuals--$1,250M for operating costs of the Selangor Vocational Guidance Association.
h. Malaysian Government--$5,000M grant for operating costs of the Selangor Vocational Guidance Association and the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association.

i. Assisted in organizing and planning the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association's first Dinner-Dance which raised approximately $7,000M. As a member of the Dinner-Dance sub-committee, I was also responsible for all the arrangements and last minute details.


k. Malaysian Truck and Bus--printed appeal letters and brochures for the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association.

l. Assisted in procuring books and other materials from the Asia Foundation, High Commissions, Embassies, and other organizations.

m. Obtained cooperation from many of the committee members to donate their time and resources to the development of the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association and the Selangor Vocational Guidance Association.

**Preparation and Writing of Proposals**

I assisted in writing proposals for projects and grants,
e.g., high school students, mini-training program, Career Guidance Resource Unit, Community Resources Questionnaire, Film on Career Guidance, Poster Competition, FMM Career Talks Program, Panel of Advisers, PANDUAN, Asia Foundation grants, and inter-office proposals.

**Budgeting**

I assisted in preparing budgets for projects and for yearly operation of the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association and the Selangor Vocational Guidance Association. I was also instrumental in preparing a three-year budget for the Selangor Vocational Guidance Association and for the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association for the purpose of obtaining government funding.

**Administrative Leadership Experience**

As a member of the Peace Corps Counseling Consultants team assigned to the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association, I was given the responsibility of coordinating and implementing the programs and projects developed by the team. In order to accomplish this duty, I reorganized the physical setting of the office and instructed the clerical staff in planning their time more efficiently.
Besides organizing the base of operations, the team of Peace Corps Counseling Consultants also attempted to motivate the volunteer committee members and to elicit interest in guidance from government, business, and industry. When the Counseling Consultant team first began working for the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association, the general attitude of the Malaysians involved in the vocational guidance movement was either negative or defeatist. After analyzing the situation, it became apparent that the reason for this poor attitude was the lack of follow up and the incompletion of projects and programs. The team of counseling consultants, by their continual involvement, dedication, and work, provided the vocational guidance movement with the direction and drive it needed to gain momentum. By the time the term of service for the consultants was completed, the attitude of the Malaysians in the vocational guidance movement was positive and constructive.
CHAPTER III

Benefits Received from the Internship

The benefits I gained from my internship experience with the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association are discussed under two headings: Professional and Personal.

Professional

The internship provided me with the opportunity to learn and to develop professional skills necessary for attainment of my career goals in education.

Communication skills. As a Peace Corps Volunteer, I not only learned to verbally communicate in another language but also to communicate non-verbally in another culture. In comparison to Americans, the Malaysians, and in general most Asian, are more sensitive to aggressive behavior. The cultural difference in perception and interpretation caused many frustrating moments until personal relationships were established. During the initial period of getting acquainted with the Malaysians,
I had to continually evaluate and analyze each personal and professional interaction in order to determine what exactly was communicated. I was thus able to learn a great deal about my own style of communication, not only verbally, but non-verbally.

Malaysians, in general, are very concerned about "saving face." It, therefore, became essential to select words and phrases very carefully in order not to offend their "personage." This fact made me more cognizant of the feelings and perceptions of others in personal and professional relationships.

Since "saving face" was one of the most important ingredients in personal and professional relationships, it became necessary to speak indirectly and to circumvent sensitive issues. This characteristic is generally not found in America. Since my return to the United States, I have more than once been asked to "stop beating around the bush and get to the point."

In order to accomplish some of the goals and objectives defined by my Peace Corps job description, it was necessary to motivate and influence the Malaysians involved in the vocational guidance movement regarding concepts of vocational and career development. I thus was able to obtain practice in the art of gentle persuasion.
Counseling skills. To provide meaningful counseling to the Malaysians, I had to adapt the techniques I learned in the United States to the Malaysian culture. I found that non-directive techniques, although somewhat effective, were definitely not direct enough for the authoritarian society present in Malaysia. Techniques used in Rational Emotive Counseling, Transactional Analysis, Reality Counseling, and Gestalt Counseling achieved greater results in providing insight and direction to the Malaysians.

In general, I think that my counseling skills became more polished and my sensitivity and appreciation for individuals and their differences increased.

Teaching skills. By assisting in conducting the mini-training program for career teachers and by providing personal instruction to the Malaysian staff, I was able to experiment with different teaching methods and strategies. My teaching experience also assisted in developing my counseling and administrative skills since most of my teaching assignments dealt with those subjects.

Administrative skills. Although I had some basic skills in administration prior to my internship experience, I never had the opportunity to effectively use these skills in an
unstructured situation. During my internship, I was able to use and develop my administrative skills in assisting to establish and organize an association from its conception, without being confined by a previous structure. I was, therefore, not only able to develop my present administrative skills but was also able to learn and practice new skills.

While performing administrative duties such as yearly program planning, development and implementation, writing proposals, fund raising, and budgeting, I realized that my future career goals would definitely be in the area of administration rather than counseling. I, therefore, feel that my internship experience as a vocational counseling consultant helped me formulate my own vocational goals.

**Personal Benefits**

Personally my internship experience made me more cognizant and accepting of differences not only in people but in methods. I feel that I became more open minded toward different attitudes and opinions. I was thus able to become more considerate and sensitive to the feelings of others and to gain a better understanding of myself and my own needs.

By working in a different culture and in an unstructured
setting, I was able to use my creativity and to determine the extent of my flexibility and adaptability.

My internship helped me to integrate my academic experience with actual work experience. As a result of this, my own career goals began to crystallize.

While serving as a vocational counseling consultant for the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association, I was fortunate to be supervised by Dr. Marie Shepardson from whom I learned a tremendous amount regarding administration, organization, and counseling. I was also able to gain a deeper understanding of myself and of the way others perceived me.

Summary and Conclusion

My internship experience as a Vocational Counseling Consultant for the Peace Corps in Malaysia was divided into two major areas: (a) Professional and (b) Administrative.

The professional area consisted of experience in writing reports, project planning and development, training other counselors, and vocational and personal counseling.

The administrative area provided me with experience in program planning and development, fund raising, budgeting, and decision making.
Besides achieving the goals and objectives of the internship, I was also able to enhance my skills in communication, counseling, teaching, and administration. I was able to gain insights into my own behavior and the way my behavior is perceived by fellow professionals and friends.

My internship with the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association not only provided me with the opportunity to learn and grow professionally and personally but also to form new and lasting friendships for which I will always be grateful.
REFERENCE NOTES


APPENDIX I

Prospectus of Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association Internship
MALAYSIAN INTERNSHIP: PROSPECTUS

Submitted by James V. Loser, Department of Counseling and Personnel

A. Identifying Information

Organization: Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association

Supervisor: Dr. Marie Shepardson

Time Period: December 1, 1973 to April 30, 1975

Description: As a Peace Corps Volunteer, I worked 40 hours per week (Monday through Saturday) as a Counseling Consultant for the Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association. My work was divided into two major areas: (a) Professional and (b) Administrative.

B. Goals and Objectives of Internship

1. Professional Internship Goals and Objectives

   a. Synthesize data regarding vocational guidance in Malaysia to determine the problems and needs of the country and of the program.

   b. Develop programs of greatest impact on these needs and/or problems.

   c. Plan, organize, and implement these programs or projects.

   d. Assist in training career teachers in rural areas Malaysia as well as in-service training of the Malaysian staff of the national and state associations.
e. Assist in forming and organizing state associations throughout Malaysia.

f. Study the problems and needs of career teachers in rural and urban schools in Malaysia and prepare a report on the findings.

g. Assist in the publication of the national association's professional journal.

h. Study the community resources available in Malaysia in areas of concern for vocational guidance.

i. Adapt counseling techniques and concepts learned in the United States to the situation found in Malaysia.

j. Assist Malaysian career teachers in developing their own counseling techniques and guidance programs with the objective of raising the status of the profession.

2. Administrative Internship Goals and Objectives

a. Adapt Western management techniques for use in an Asian culture.

b. Adapt concepts of vocational guidance and administration through cross-cultural communication.

c. Write proposals for operating funds and special projects.

d. Learn techniques of fund raising and organization needed to put on a fund raising project.

e. Develop and operate a yearly budget for the national and state associations.

f. Learn the process of preparing a yearly plan of operations for program development and implementation.

g. Learn to delegate responsibility in order to accomplish objectives more efficiently.
C. Program Outline

1. Professional Internship Experience

   a. Program Development

      i. Mini-training program for career guidance teachers in rural areas. The program will be primarily concerned with vocational counseling techniques and will emphasize experiential learning through demonstrations by the trainers and role-playing by the Career Teachers attending the sessions. Time will also be scheduled for individual conferences between trainers and career teachers to assist in solving problems encountered by individual career teachers.

      ii. Film on vocational guidance in Malaysia. This film would dramatize the need for vocational guidance and stimulate interest in the career guidance teacher as a means of meeting that need. It would also demonstrate the process of problem solving through vocational counseling by showing the guidance teacher functioning in a professional capacity and demonstrating the results of the vocational guidance process. It is hoped that the necessary funding can be obtained to complete this project prior to April 1975.

      iii. Mobile Career Library to serve the needs of schools in rural and urban areas. A small van will be equipped with occupational and educational information materials and will visit schools accompanied by a trained counselor.

      iv. Formation and organization of state vocational guidance associations throughout Malaysia.

      v. In-service training of Malaysian staff.

      vi. Investigation of available community resources in vocational guidance in Malaysia.
b. Research and Publications

i. Panduan--Malaysian Vocational Guidance Association's professional journal. This is the first professional journal on vocational guidance in Malaysia.

c. Guidance and Counseling

i. Individual student counseling with students from junior high school to university level and with school leavers and job seekers.

ii. Group counseling with students and career teachers.

iii. Training of career teachers in interviewing and counseling techniques and strategy.

iv. Conduct programs of greater out reach such as career talks in schools.

2. Administrative Internship Experience

a. Administrative Planning

i. Yearly program planning, program development and implementation.

b. Financial Management

i. Fund raising

ii. Preparation and writing of proposals

iii. Budgeting

c. Administrative Leadership

i. Serve as change agent

(1) Motivate volunteer committee members.

(2) Stimulate interest in government and private sector.
ii. Decision Making

(1) Participation in team approach to administration of program.

(2) Delegation of responsibility.
APPENDIX II

Application for Permission to Elect Professional Field Experience
DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELING AND PERSONNEL
Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49001

Date: July 11, 1975

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO ELECT

712 Professional Field Experience 6 hours

Fall 1975

Name: James V. Loser
Student Number: 385-46-0470

Address: 1161 Fifth St., N.W., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49504

Degree Program: Specialist/Counseling and Personnel

Description of Independent Study:

My field experience is divided into two main areas: (a) Professional and (b) Administrative. The Professional area is subdivided into (a) Program Development, (b) Research and Publications, and (c) Guidance and Counseling. The area of Administration is subdivided into (a) Administrative Planning, (b) Financial Management, (c) Administrative Leadership, and (d) Decision Making.

William A. Carlson
Signature of Faculty Sponsor

James V. Loser
Signature of Student

Under Whom is Study to be Completed

William A. Carlson
Signature of Faculty Advisor

William Martinson
Signature of Department Head