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BHUTAN JOURNAL OF RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

VOLUME 2   NUMBER 2   AUTUMN 2013

bjrd
Bhutan Journal of
Research & Development

BHUTAN JOURNAL *of*
RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

Volume 2   Number 2   Autumn 2013

bjrd
Bhutan Journal *of*
Research & Development

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Bhutan Journal *of*
Research & Development

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The Mangde language (མང་སྡེ་པའི་ཁ) in Bhutan

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Abstract

Mangde or, in Dzongkha, མང་སྡེ་པའི་ཁ Mangdebi kha, is a language of the East Bodish group spoken in the Mangde river basin, on the eastern slopes of the Black Mountains of west central Bhutan and also in adjacent parts of the western Black Mountains. The language is also spoken in several villages to the east of the Mangdechu between Trongsa and Zh'ämgang. The language is also known by the names 'Nyenkha, Henkha and a slew of loconyms whereby the language is named after one of the villages where it is spoken. The Mangde speaking area is bounded to the west by Dzongkha, to the east by the Bumthang language, to the north by the Lakha speaking area, and to the south by the Kheng and Black Mountain Mönpa languages. The author has been working under the auspices of the Dzongkha Development Commission of the Royal Government of Bhutan toward the completion of a grammar of Mangde. Initial results of ongoing fieldwork on the Mande variety spoken in Tshangkha, Tronsa will be presented as well as sociolinguistic situation.

Introduction

Before Linguistic Survey of Bhutan van Driem 1991was published, we did not have any comprehensive study on Bhutanese languages. According to van Driem 2001, Languages spoken in the kingdom of Bhutan are classified into five groups:

- Central Bodish : Dzongkha, Cho-ca-nga-ca-kha, Lakha, Brokpa,Tibetan, Brokkat

- East Bodish : Kheng, Bumthang, Dzala, Kurtöp, Mangde, Chali, Black Mountain, Dakpa

- Other Tibeto-Burman Languages: Tshangla, Lhokpu, Gongduk, Lepcha

- Indo-Aryan Language: Nepali

- Indo-Germanic Language: English

Distribution of Languages in Bhutan and estimated numbers of speakers of languages in Bhutan are shown below:

Languages of Bhutan
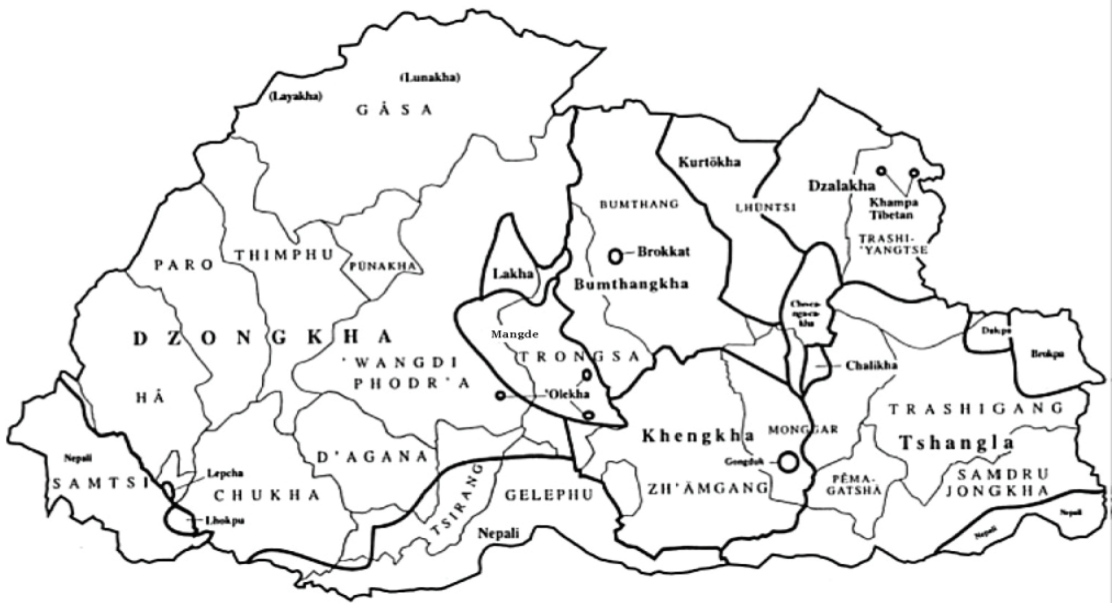
Distribution of Languages in Bhutan (van Driem, 1998: 37)

Dzongkha	160, 000
Cho–ca–nga–ca–kha	20, 000
Lakha	8, 000
Brokpa	5, 000
Tibetan	1, 000
Brokkat	300
Kheng	40, 000
Bumthang	30, 000
Dzala	15, 000
Kurtöp	10, 000
Mangdebi–kha	10, 000
Chali	1, 000
Black Mountain	1, 000
Dakpa	1, 000
Tshangla	138, 000
Gongduk	2, 000
Lepcha	2, 000
Nepali	156, 000

Estimated numbers of speakers of languages in Bhutan (van Driem 2001:871)

The Mangde language

Mangde or, in Dzongkha, མང་སྡེ་པའི་ཁ Mangdebi-kha, is a language of the East Bodish group spoken in the Mangde river basin, on the eastern slopes of the Black Mountains of west central Bhutan and also in adjacent parts of the western Black Mountains. The language is also spoken in several villages to the east of the Mangdechu between Trongsa and Zh'ämgang. It is also known by the names *'Nyenkha[1]*,

Nyenkha, Henkha, Mangdekha and a slew of loconyms whereby the language is named after one of the villages where it is spoken. The Mangde speaking area is bounded to the west by Dzongkha, to the east by the Bumthang language, to the north by the Lakha speaking area, and to the south by the Kheng and Black Mountain Mönpa languages. The Mangde speakers refer to Dzongkha as 'Ngalongkha' and to the Brokpas of Sephu Geo to the north as Lap 'inhabitants of the mountain passes', which is also what these Brokpas call themselves.

There does not exist any census on the population of the speakers of this language. Earlier literature, however, does show that the number of speakers is 10,000 (van Driem 1998). All of those who speak Mangde are regarded as members of the Mangde ethnic group, however, not all of the ethnic group speak Mangde. All ages and sexes use Dzongkha, and most people can talk about common topics in Dzongkha, the national language in Bhutan which is regarded as economically and politically advantageous.

Mangde is one of East Bodish languages in Tibeto-Burman stock. These languages are both considered the most archaic branch of Bodish, and considered more conservative in some respects than Old Tibetan. The genetic classification of Mangde within the Tibeto-Burman family is still unclear, but it is usually classified in the East Bodish branch, which comprises of languages such as Kurtöp, Kheng, Nubikha, Dzala and Chali. In early 1980s, a Japanese geologist Tetsuro Suwa once proposed the idea that these languages may be lexically and grammatically close to TGTM languages (Tamang-Gurung-Thakali- Manang)[2]. It is apparent that Mangde, TGTM languages and East Bodish languages share many features, but it is still unknown whether these innovations are due to chance resemblance, borrowing, language contact or genetic relationship. The investigation on subgrouping of Mangde, TGTM languages and East Bodish languages deserves further study.

Now with more access to Dzongkha schooling and to radio and television, small children in remote villages can even speak Dzongkha. The number of fluent Mangde speakers becomes smaller year by year. As van Driem (2007) claims, Mangde seems to be a potentially endangered language.

Typological overview

Mangde is an agglutinative language. Mangde can be said to be an SOV language, meaning that the basic constituent order of transitive sentences is subject - object - verb. However, strictly speaking, that statement is not accurate. The Mangde language obeys a strict grammatical constraint requiring that the sentence end with a verb. As long as the sentence obeys this constraint, a permutation of the major constituents in a sentence is permissible.

When a given sentence contains both direct object and indirect object, the most usual order is S IO DO V. Cases in Mangde are indicated by postpositions, which are a typical feature of Tibeto-Burman languages. (e.g. =nan 'locative', =ta 'dative', =da 'allative'). The case system is ergative-absolutive. Mangde also possesses a postposition that indicates topic, i.e. =ze and =bü. The genitive is indicated by mandatory postposition =k/=i (e.g. [H]nga=i 'my'). The genitive phrases precede the possessed noun.

There are two open lexical classes: nouns, those forms can take definite marking and number marking, and verbs, those forms can take the negative prefix and person marking. Adjectives are a subset of the verbs, and can be identified as a set by their semantics and their morphosyntactic behavior.

Closed lexical classes include pronouns such as demonstratives, interrogatives, and personal pronouns, classifiers, postpositions, definite/indefinite markers, clause-final particles, and adverbs. Of these the pronouns and classifiers are subsets of the nouns.

A demonstrative pronoun precedes the noun it qualifies. Mangde does not have any classifier. Therefore, when nouns occur with numerals, nothing is attached to the numerals. An adjective usually precedes the noun it qualifies. Mangde employs genitive maker to form relative clauses. The verb in a relative clause takes the modifier form, i.e. verb stem + genitive marker.

There are intransitive, transitive, and ditransitive verbs, plus some ambitransitive verbs where the single argument of the intransitive use corresponds to the actor of the transitive use. Transitives can be formed from intransitives, or ditransitives from transitives, by the addition of the causative suffix. There is no intransitivising marking other than the reduplication that marks the reciprocal. As in the case of verb complex, the verb can be preceded by an adverbial, a directional prefix, a negative marking prefix, and an aspectual prefix, and can be followed by the causative suffix, aspectual suffixes, and person marking suffixes. This complex can be followed by clause final particles marking illocutionary force, modality, mood, and evidentials.

Verbs can change the forms by means of suffixes, for tense, aspect, mood, style etc. Mangde does not have honorific forms, but it might be the case that style is expressed by means of particles. Verbs do not indicate the number, person, or gender of the subject.

Deletion of subject is allowable as long as subjects are recoverable from linguistic or non-linguistic context. Deletion of the first person and second person in Mangde is especially free. The proper noun precedes the common noun.

The Phonological System

Syllable canon

The syllable canon is given below:

(C₁) (C₂) V (G) (C₃) (C₄) / P
The Mangde Syllable Canon

The minimum syllable type is a single vowel, such as one of the forms for the word for /a/ 'interjection'. Although a glottal stop frequently appears at the beginning of a syllable beginning with no consonant, there is no phonemic contrast between vocalic onset and glottal onset.

e.g.[3]

V	/a/	'interjection'
VG	/ᴴseu/	'hail'
CV	/ᴴpu/	'body hair'
CVC	/ᴸdzong/	'Dzong'
CCV	/ᴴkra/	'head hair'
CVCC	/ᴴtisp/	'wall'

Consonants

Mangde has 41 consonants at six points of articulation, plus consonant clusters, both initial and final position. Unlike most Tibeto-Burman languages, Mangde has many consonant finals, including clusters, due to the collapsing of two syllables into one. The phonetic chracterisation of Mangde consonant phonemes is listed in Table 1:

Table 1 Phonetic inventory of Mangde[4]

		labial	alveolar	retroflex	palatal	Velar	glottal
plosive	unaspirated	p	t	ʈ	c	k	ʔ
	aspirated	pʰ	tʰ	ʈʰ	cʰ	kʰ	
	voiced	b	d	ɖ	ɟ	g	
affricate	unaspirated		ts				
	aspirated		tsʰ				
	voiced		dz				
fricative	voiceless	f~ɸ	s		ɕ		h
	voiced	v~β	z		ʑ		ɦ
nasal	voiced	m	n		ɲ	ŋ	
	voiceless	m̥	n̥		ɲ̊	ŋ̊	
liquid	voiced		l	r			
	voiceless		l̥	r̥			
semi-vowel	voiced	w			j		

The Mangde consonant phoneme inventory is listed in Table 2:

Table 2 Phononemic inventory of Mangde

		labial	alveolar	retroflex	palatal	velar	glottal
plosive	unaspirated	p	t	tr	c	k	ʔ
	aspirated	ph	th	trh	ch	kh	
	voiced	b	d	dr	j	g	
affricate	unaspirated		ts				
	aspirated		tsh				
	voiced		dz				
fricative	voicelss	f	s		sh		H
	voiced	v	z		zh		'H
nasal	voiced	m	n		ny	ng	
	voiceless	hm	hn		hny	hng	
liquid	voiced		l	r			
	voiceless		hl	hr			
semi-vowel	voiced	w			y		

e.g.

/p/ [p] : voiceless unaspirated bilabial stop /ᴴpu/ 'body hair'

/ph/ [pʰ] : voiceless aspirated bilabial stop /ᴴphynᴴtsho/ 'Phuntsho'

/b/ [b] : voiced unaspirated bilabial stop /ᴴbü/ 'topic marker'

/t/ [t] : voiceless unaspirated alveolar stop /ᴴten/ 'temporal marker'

/th/ [tʰ] : voiceless aspirated alveolar stop /ᴴthun/ 'see'

/d/ [d] : voiced unaspirated alveolar stop /ᴴde/ 'imperfective marker'

/ts/ [ʦ] : voiceless unaspirated alveolar affiricate /ᴴtsen/ 'here'

/tsh/ [ʦʰ] : voiceless aspirated alveolar affiricate /ᴴtshang ᴴkha/ 'Tshangkha

/dz/ [ʣ] : voiced unaspirated alveolar affiricate /ᴸdzongᴴkha/ 'Dzongkha'

/tr/ [ʈ] : voiceless unaspirated retroflex stop /ᴴtra/ 'reach'

/thr/ [ʈʰ] : voiceless aspirated retroflex stop /ᴴtrhomᴴkar/ 'city'

/dr/ [ɖ] : voiced unaspirated retroflex stop /ᴸdruk/ 'Bhutan'

/c/ [c] : voiceless unaspirated palatal stop /ᴴcap/ 'play'

/ch/ [cʰ] voiceless aspirated palatal stop /ᴴchu/ 'dog'

/j/ [ɟ] : voiced unaspirated palatal stop /ᴸjim ᴴbal/ 'cat'

/k/ [k] : voiceless unaspirated velar stop /ᴸkü/ 'must'

/kh/ [kʰ] : voiceless aspirated velar stop /ᴴkhen/ 'can'

/g/ [g] : voiced unaspirated velar stop /ᴴga/ 'interrogative marker'

/f/ [f] : voiceless labial fricative /ᴴser/ 'gold'

/v/ [v] : voiceled labial fricative

/s/ [s] : voiceless alveolar fricative /ᴴsen/ 'if'

/sh/ [ɕ] : voiceless alveo-palatal laminal fricative /ᴴsha/ 'meat'

/z/ [z] : voiced alveolar fricative /ᴸzu/ 'eat'

/zh/ [ʑ] : voiced alveo-palatal laminal fricative

/m/ [m] : voiced bilabial nasal /ᴸmi/ 'person'

/n/ [n] : voiced alveolar nasal /ᴴna/ 'perfective marker'

/ny/ [ɲ] : voiced palatal nasal /ᴴnyam/ 'physique'

/hny/ [ɲ̥] : voiceless palatal nasal /ᴸnyiᴴma/ 'sun'

/ng/ [ŋ] : voiced velar nasal /ᴸngeᴴrin/ 'tall'

/ng/ [ŋ̥] : voiceless velar nasal /ᴴnga/ '1st person singular pronoun'

/w/ [w] : voiced rounded labial-velar approximant /ᴴwe/ 'sentence final particle'

/y/ [j] : voiced palatal approximant /ᴴja/ 'interrogative marker'

/l/ [l] : voiced alveolar lateral approximant /ᴴles/ 'work'

/lh/ [l̥] : voiceless alveolar lateral approximant /ᴴlha/ 'god'

/r/ [ʐ~ɽ] : voiced unaspirated retroflex fricative, or voiced unaspirated retroflex flap /ᴴra/ 'hair'

/rh/ [ʐʰ~ɽʰ] : voiced aspirated retroflex fricative, or voiced aspirated retroflex flap /ᴴhra/ 'imperfective marker'

/h/ [h] : voiceless glottal fricative

/'h/ [ɦ] : voiced glottal fricative

The Mangde vowels are given below:

short vowels	long vowels	nasalised vowels
i[i] ü[y] u[u]	i:[i] u:[u:]	in[in] ün[yn] un[un]
e[e] o[o]	e:[e:] o:[o:]	en[en] on[on]
a[a]	a:[a:]	an[an]

e.g. : i[i] ^{L}ri 'mountain'   i:[i:] ^{H}khi: 'ice'
 ü[y] ^{H}ü 'rain'
 u[u] ^{L}Bru 'thunder'   u:[u:] ^{H}gu: 'wait'
 e[e] ^{L}se^{H}ke 'fog'   e:[e:] ^{H}se: 'gold'
 o[o] ^{H}pho 'cave'   o:[o:] ^{H}o:m 'come'
 a[a] ^{H}ka 'snow'   a:[a:] ^{H}ka:m 'star'

There are five diphthongs; iu, eu, ou, ai, and au.

e.g.: iu[iu] ^{L}yiu 'shake'
 eu[eu] ^{H}seu 'hail'
 ou[ou] ^{H}shou 'force'
 a[i ai] ^{L}go tai 'ash'
 au[au] ^{H}lau 'moon'

Pitch

Pitch Contrast of Tibetan loanwords in Mangde can be summarised as table 3:

high pitch: $C_1C_2C_3$(C_3 = nasal/w/l/r/j) or C_3[-vd]
low pitch: C_3 (= nasal/w/l/r/j) or C_3[+vd]

Table 3: Historical development of Pitch in Mangde

syllable initial consonant(s)	C_3[-vd]	C_3 = nasal/w/l/r/j	C_3[+vd]
	C_1C_2 -		#
syllable final consonant(s)	High pitch		Low pitch

Ongoing phonological phenomena

Cluster simplification is an ongoing process in many Mangde words. As Nishida (1983) pointed out, it can be summarised as follows:

$$\#C\square C\square C\square \text{-} \rightarrow \#C_3 \text{ - and } C_3 \text{ [+vd]} \rightarrow C_3 \text{ [-vd]}$$
Initial consonant clusters -> simple consonants
(Nishida 1983:18)

What follows are examples of monosyllabification in Mangde:

1. a. *-VC + pa/po > - V : p (C = s, ŋ)   rtsis + pa > ᴴtsiːp 'astronomer'
    b. *-VC +pa/po > -Vp (C = elsewhere)   rtsig + pa > ᴴtisp 'wall'

2. a. *-VC + ma/mo > -V : m (C = s,ŋ)   N/A
    b. *-VC + ma/mo > -Vm (C = elsewhere)   srin + mo > ᴴsim 'demon'

3. a. *-VC = + ba > -V : u (C = l/r)   dar + ba > ᴴdaːu 'buttermilk
    b. *-V + ba > -Vu   pho+ ba > ᴴphou 'belly'

Numerals

Mangde employs vigesimal system for numerals:

0	ᴴsheᴸmül	16	ᴸtsheᴴdro
1	ᴸthe	17	ᴸtsheᴴhni
2	ᴸzün	18	ᴸtshekᴴke
3	ᴸsum	19	ᴴtsheᴸdok
4	ᴸbre	20	ᴴkhyeᴸdi
5	ᴸlang	21	ᴴkhyeᴸdi ᴴthe
6	ᴸdru	22	ᴴkhyeᴸdi ᴸzün
7	ᴴnis	30	ᴴkhyeᴸdi ᴴkyapᴴtshe
8	ᴸgye	31	ᴴkhyeᴸdi ᴸtshouᴴde
9	ᴸdok	40	ᴴkhye ᴸzün
10	ᴴkyapᴴtshe	41	ᴴkhye ᴸzünᴸniᴴthe
11	ᴸtshouᴴde	50	ᴴkhye ᴸzünᴸni ᴴkyapᴴtshe
12	ᴸtshuᴴni	60	ᴴkhye ᴴsum
13	ᴴtshoᴸsum	70	ᴴkhye ᴴsum ᴴkyapᴴtshe
14	ᴴtshep	80	ᴴkhye ᴸbre
15ᴸ	tsheᴴlang	90	ᴴkhye ᴸbreᴸni ᴴkyapᴴtshe

100 ᴴkhye ᴸlang
200 ᴴkhye ᴸkyapᴴshi
300 ᴴkheᴸtshe ᴴlang
400 ᴸnish ᴴthe
500 ᴸnish ᴴtheᴸniᴴtsaᴸlang
600 ᴸnishᴴtheᴸniᴴtsa ᴸdru

700 ᴸnish ᴴtheᴸniᴴtsa ᴴnis
800 ᴸnish ᴸzün
900 ᴸnish ᴸzünᴸtsa ᴴthe
1,000 ᴴthongᴴtshaᴸthe
10,000 ᴴthongᴴtsha ᴸkyapᴴshe
100,000 ᴸbum ᴴthe

Sociolinguistic situation

Here sociolinguistic features of Mangde are analysed, and the major factors that caused Mangde to become potentially endangered are discussed.

Since 2007, the author has been working under the auspices of the Dzongkha Development Commission of the Royal Government of Bhutan toward the completion of a grammar of Mangde. He has been undertaking a series of linguistic fieldworks at Tshangkha village, Tangsibji gewog, Trongsa Dzongkhag (ཀྲོང་གསར་རྫོང་ཁག), the kingdom of Bhutan. The author conducted interviews with local officials, teachers and community leaders to investigate their languages use and the language's functions. During the fieldwork, local administrators, teachers, ten families were interviewed[5] Along with elicitation data taken from the language consultant, the author also has collected a large amount of text and data on socio-cultural aspects of Mangde speakers. The fieldwork has been carried out in Dzongkha. The main objective was to find appropriate native speakers and to gather materials on Mangde speaking people.

The data[6] show that the vast majority of the Mangde people are bilingual or trilingual. In general, the younger generation has adopted Mangde or Dzongkha as their first languages (Need to make it clear what is meant by "first language"/"mother tongue?"). English is also an additional resource in their verbal repertoire among younger generation in a multilingual setting. It is worth noting that 20.8% of the Mangde people speak Mangde as their third language, as in the table 3:

Table   The language use of the Mangde people

Languages	First language	Second Languages	Third language
Mangde	77.6%	12.6%	20.8%
Dzongkha	22.4%	78.7%	33.9%
English	0.0%	8.7%	45.3%

During the fieldwork, the author has been involved in the participant observation. In the instances under examination, the results of this study show that code-switching is motivated by environmental rather than linguistic factors: although significant in some situation, the linguistic limitations of Mangde could not account for the vast majority of switches that occurred. The following data are the result of my preliminary survey on language use of Mangde speakers in Tshangkha village generation by generation.

Table 5: The difference between age and their language use

	Dzongkha	English	Mangde	Dzongkha	English	Mangde	Dzongkha	English	Mangde
Personal	8.0	6.7	85.3	38.9	15.7	45.4	52.5	37.2	10.3
Official	91.3.	3.0	5.7	79.7	20.3	0.0	59.4	30.6	0.0
Public	87.6	0.0	13.4	68.0	23.4	8.6	87.2	13.8	0.0
Written	89.2	10.8	0.0	76.3	23.7	0.0	51.4	48.6	0.0
Media	90.2	9.8	0.0	55.6	45.4	0.0	11.2	88.8	0.0
Education	84.5	16.5	0.0	10.0	90.0	0.0	16.0	84.0	0.0

1st generation   **2nd generation**   **3rd generation** *(1st generation: over 50 y/o, 2nd generation: 25-50 y/o, 3rd generation: below 25 y/o)*

The age group clearly illustrates the distinctive language shift from Mangde to Dzongkha and English. Most of the younger generation tend to count the numbers in Dzongkha and English. Not a single Mangde song was to be sung by them.

A number of factors have made Mangde become a potentially endangered language. Firstly, migration is the major factor. This has changed the previous social and economic isolation of the Mangde people. Secondly, through inter marriage, socio-economic contacts with Dzongkha speaking people, the Mangde language has gradually lost its language function and Dzongkha and English have become practical communication tools. Thirdly, this social contact has had a strong impact on family language use patterns.

Conclusion

Communication is the primary function of language, but it is far from the only one. Language is an integral part of a group's culture and social existence in the sense that culture holds a group's distinctive way of perceiving the natural, social and non-physical environment. Language is a part of culture, and simultaneously, a whole culture is enshrined in language, but the two entities are often considered in contrast to each other, in term of language vs. (nonlinguistic) culture. For one thing, the potential diversity of languages is, structurally speaking, wider and greater than that of culture.

When a language disappears from the face of the earth, however, the loss is not restricted to the individuals or the members of ethnic group who previously used it. If we consider that each language, in which a unique culture is filled with, represents a distinct system for creating as well as comprehending the world, then the disappearance of any language represents a loss of intellectual heritage for humanity as a whole, because Linguistic diversity not only offers a glimpse into a group's unique cosmology, but it also shows us that the human mind is capable of perceiving the environment in various and often surprising ways.

There are some ways in which we linguists can contribute to their preservation. We can work with the community based on scientific analysis, to create a writing system. We may cooperate, in compiling a dictionary and grammar, making educational materials of various kinds, training teachers, and developing a curriculum. Compiling linguistically accurate records of endangered languages is a

highly important work for linguistic researchers, and can also figure prominently in the preservation or revival of those languages. The work basically consists of producing a detailed account of that language, including a systematic description of the grammar based on adequate phonological analysis, compilation of a dictionary with as much detail as possible and the audio and video recording of stories. While interest in endangered languages is spreading internationally, considering the speed at which these living languages are declining and disappearing, time is very short for earnestly and effectively studying them.

Notes:

1.   It means 'language of yore', which is derived from the older term 'Ngenlung.

2.   Suwa (1981) suggests the possibility of genetic relation of TGTM and East Bodish languages. See the data set below:

3.   L indicates low pitch and H is high pitch respectively.

	two	four	six	seven
Mangde	zoen	bre	drok	nis
Kheng	zon	ble	do	ni~
Tamang	nhi	ble	tu	nis
Manang	nhi	ble	tu	nis

4.   The phoneme pairs of f~□, and v~β are in free variation respectively.

5.   Several other Mangde speaking people have also been generous enough to help the author. The information he obtained from them has been directly utilised in this work, and it is extremely significant for his understanding of Mangde in general. The author is pleased to record his warmest thanks to them.

6.   All of the statistical data in this paper are my own findings.

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University autonomy and sustainability: Faculty perceptions on the sustained growth of the Royal University of Bhutan

SAMDRUP RIGYAL

Abstract

A self-administered questionnaire survey was executed to study how the faculty in the colleges of the Royal University of Bhutan take up the challenges of the university autonomy at a time of gradual decline in government funding. A total of 189 samples from 10 colleges included faculty with ages ranging from 23 to 58 years. The study showed the faculty understood that autonomy meant greater independence in the operation of the university. There is scope for the new university to grow and prosper but opportunities have yet to be created to make a difference as a result of autonomy. Most respondents were also aware that the autonomy would demand harder work in business-like environment, improved performance efficiencies and the need to explore diversifying revenue sources. While there were faculty determined to make RUB the best university, it was perceived that the university needed to create greater prospects to enhance their future career within the university sector. The environment for teaching and learning needed to be improved to create enabling atmosphere for faculty to provide their best services. The junior group of the faculty appeared better prepared to work harder and excel in their performances. The technical colleges, as compared to humanities and education colleges, appreciated more, the idea of thinking business as an innovation to meet the emerging needs of the new university. The study also showed that the colleges perceived offering short term trainings and consultancy services as potential sources for generating revenue in the university.

Key words: university, autonomy, business initiatives, faculty, funding, competitive environment

Introduction

The *Bhutan 2020* vision document (Planning Commission, 1999) stated that Bhutan must take steps at the earliest feasible opportunity to establish a national university that could link Bhutan to the international world of learning. The Royal University of Bhutan (RUB) was established in 2003 through a Royal Charter by inducting extant 10 colleges distributed around the country. It is led from the office of the Vice Chancellor in Thimphu. Through an executive order issued by the government in 2010, the RUB was granted human resource management and financial autonomy by providing subsidies and transferring all land and infrastructure to the university. By June 2011, the RUB achieved full autonomy as a university. The faculty and staff of the colleges were completely delinked from the civil service. RUB entered into a separate mode of financing based on government subsidies, at the same time being allowed to enrol private students. In 2012, the RUB had a total of 7432 students with 486 faculty members.

Barely two years since achieving full university autonomy, the RUB was beginning to sense the gradual decline in government funding. This would put to test the future sustainability of the university. The present infrastructure and facilities in the colleges are not enough to support the increased intake of students to enhance revenue while the costs of teaching learning and providing student support would keep on increasing. The RUB cannot afford to increase student fees to cover increased costs as that would add to the current woes of exodus of students to cheaper universities across the border, particularly to India. The research culture has yet to be established and the capacity of the colleges and faculty to

seriously engage in research and generate revenue is going to take considerable time and resources (Maxwell, 2012). On the other hand, the infrastructure of most colleges of RUB is old and in dilapidated state where the costs for maintenance and operation would continue to grow in the coming years. Under such circumstances, RUB and all stakeholders within the university might consider other options and will "need to be creative, innovative and entrepreneurial in developing new sustainable business models suited to the future funding and market context," (UNE, 2012).

In a relatively new working environment created through the delinking of RUB from the civil service, it was discernible that faculty and staff in the colleges remained still confounded with the new practices and system. The 25th meeting of the University Council (2013) noted reports of lack of clarity on "autonomous status of the colleges and RUB," and "organisational vision and mission statements."

In carrying out its business and chores of managing a fairly new university, at least at this transitional phase, the autonomy, while opening up many opportunities, has also posed manifold challenges for the whole system and all stakeholders involved in it. A statement from the RUB Annual Report (2012) aptly elucidates the situation, by mentioning that we "became solely responsible for developing the university into a dynamic organisation for learning and research. We became empowered to be self-reliant, which meant we had to be imaginative, and be prepared to work hard."

By all means, an understanding is required to be established – understanding on the parts of stakeholders on, what university autonomy means and how people understood it; how people perceived and responded to the changes of operating an autonomous university, and; preparedness of the faculty to support business initiatives for sustained growth. This study attempted to answer some of the above queries.

Literature review

The RUB is gaining greater autonomy to set its own standards and priorities in teaching, curriculum development and research. However, there are also associated risks in the liberation, as exercising the autonomy to manage a new university could be altogether a daunting challenge, especially when the university remained almost entirely dependent on government subsidies. According to Anderson et al., (1998), "when discussing the autonomous university, we do not mean an institution that is completely free of state control or totally independent of public funds." Similarly, Wasser (1995) said that, "while autonomy may be described in relation to the authority of the state, all proposals when implemented appear to result in residual control by the state."

Within the RUB, establishing a clear understanding of the extent of autonomy among the stakeholders involved would be vital. According to Thorens (1998), "university autonomy is the degree of autonomy required to enable the university to best fulfil the role that society has assigned to it." Thus, there are expectations to be fulfilled and that is best done through a "strategy that develops distinctive competencies in the areas of staff expertise, innovation culture and the effective use of technology," Mazzarol et al., (1999).

The changes in the settings of RUB, "will demand ongoing innovation in policy and practice across all aspects of university operations, including employment and workplace arrangements," (UNE, 2012). Besides making the current workplaces suitable to the new settings, RUB also needs to instil a

sense of self-responsibility in the intellect of its people for enhancing the student learning experience and enabling them to concentrate their talents and energies on research and innovation.

To meet the challenges for future sustainability of the university, the RUB should also prepare itself and its people with the capability to generate innovative ideas to undertake business initiatives that could increase revenue and income. "Researchers and practitioners share the consensus that the economic future of an organisation depends on her ability to create and preserve wealth by continuously advancing creativity, fostering innovation, and promoting entrepreneurship," (Eshun, 2009).

Therefore, it can be suggested that "we should adopt a business model that would streamline our approach to the classroom and to budgetary conundrums," (Joseph, 2013). It may be mentioned that adopting business like models by universities could "generate ample funds to pay for ongoing construction of new facilities, expansion of the workforce and annual increases in staff compensation," (James et al.,2008). It is often mentioned that "a match between the culture of the organization and its business strategy is associated with superior performance," (Slater et al.,2011). The literatures also suggested that there was already a strong "pressure to change university governance to make it match the business model," (Evans, 2006).

There are, of course, arguments that in adopting a business approach, "dialectic takes place between two distinct purposes – the goal of business and that of educating students," (Thomas et al., 2012). "In higher education, the US is the unchallenged leader. And a major reason for this success has been that, until recently, the university has avoided the dominant business strategy of going for short-term gains, disinvesting in the future and relying on the quick fix," (Atherton et al., 1992). Over and above, it was pointed out that, "aggressive business model ill-suits university employees," (Card, 2007).

Notwithstanding these arguments, the RUB is set to stimulate people in the university to think business and expects colleges to generate innovative ideas to undertake business initiatives. Finding out the perceptions of the faculty in the colleges would be vital, to assess their rational acceptability and preparedness to think business and undertake business initiatives. Only if the faculty are mentally prepared to take up the new initiatives would RUB receive their active participation, role and dynamism that are critical in the success of implementing any innovative enterprises.

Research question and objectives

The study attempted to answer the following main question:

How prepared are the faculty in the colleges of RUB to take up the challenges of the university autonomy that faces gradual decline in government funding?

The following sub-questions are set to address the above question:
- 1.1.   How do the faculty members understand university autonomy?;
- 1.2.   How do the faculty members respond to the change as a result of autonomy?, and;
- 1.3.   What is the perceived capability of the faculty members to undertake business initiatives in a rapidly changing environment?

Methodology

All the 10 colleges under the RUB were included in the study. These colleges were grouped into academic disciplines of education, technical and humanities as shown in Column 4 of Table 1.

Table 1: Colleges in the various regions and number of respondents

Colleges	No. of respondents	%	Groups by Disciplines	Location
Sherubtse College (SC)	22	11.6	Humanities	East
Jigme Namgyel Polytechnic (JNP)	14	7.4	Technical	East
College of Science & Technology (CST)	15	7.9	Technical	South
Samtse College of Education (SCE)	24	12.7	Education	South
Gedu College of Business Studies (GCBS)	34	18.0	Humanities	West
Paro College of Education (PCE)	24	12.7	Education	West
Royal Institute of Health Sciences (RIHS)	12	6.3	Technical	West
National Institute of Traditional Medicine (NITM)	7	3.7	Technical	West
Institute of Language and Culture Studies (ILCS)	13	6.9	Humanities	Central
College of Natural Resources (CNR)	24	12.7	Technical	West
Total	**189**	**100.0**		

There are a total of 189 respondents representing 38.89% of the total faculty strength of 486 (Annual Report, 2012). To obtain the suitable number of sample size, the Taro Yamane (1967) formula was used as shown below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where:

n = number of samples

N = total number of faculty in all 10 Colleges

e = standard error of not more than .05 confidence level

Using the 2012 statistics where the total number of RUB faculty is 486, the following formula was applied to derive the sample size:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+Ne^2}$$

$$n = \frac{486}{1 + 486 \times (.05)^2}$$

Therefore, n = 219. This sample size was randomly apportioned to the 10 Colleges of the RUB. The actual number of respondents of 189 falls short by 13.70 % from the intended sample size; however, the samples are reliable representation of the colleges in proportion to the faculty strength where the standard error could be assumed to be minimal.

A structured questionnaire was designed and self-administered questionnaire survey executed. Data format from the samples were collected through personal hand delivery from July - August 2013.

Out of the 219 questionnaires distributed, 193 responded out of which four data formats were screened and a sample size of 189 retained. The data sets were created and analysed using statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS).

To obtain a quantitative measure of respondents' perceptions, the Likert-type rating scales used in the questionnaire included: Strongly Agree=5; Agree=4; Slightly Agree=3; Disagree=2; and Strongly Disagree=1. These rating scales were used as the basis for calculating the mean scores (M) and standard deviation (SD) of the various statements. To determine the overall ratings, the interval mean mid-scores were calculated, based on the number of interval levels each Likert-type rating scales were composed of, by using the following equation:

$$\text{Interval level} \quad = \quad \frac{\text{Highest level score} - \text{lowest level score}}{\text{Number of levels}}$$

The perceptions of faculty are described through interval mean mid-scores and differences of perceptions are presented using significance tests. The differences in perceptions for changes and new situations are presented by two age groups and differences of perceptions on business initiatives in operating the University are presented by groups of academic disciplines, viz., education, technical and humanities.

Percentage scores, mean scores, standard deviations, t-test and F-test statistics were used to analyse the data.

Results

Personal characteristics of respondents

The personal characteristics of the 150 male and 38 female respondents included faculty with ages ranging from 23 to 58 years. The weighted average age of all respondents was 39.62 and 135 of them were married. The faculty who have joined services were from 1971 to as late as 2013 where 54 faculty members which is equal to 28.6% continued to serve with RUB at the time of the university establishment in 2003. After the establishment, the highest number of 30 faculty members equal to 15.9% had joined RUB in the year 2008. For this study, the highest number of 34 respondents was from GCBS and the lowest seven respondents from NITM. From the total number of respondents, 113 (59.8%) had masters' degree qualification, 15 (7.9%) were PhD holders and 52 (27.5%) had an undergraduate degree.

Perceptions on university autonomy

The faculty perceptions on university autonomy based on the mean scores indicated that the three most agreeable perceptions on the statements presented were: university autonomy means independence in the operation of RUB (M=4.25); autonomy demands working in competitive environments (M=4.16), and; autonomy means having to generate our own revenue and income (M=3.98). The least agreeable perceptions were: opportunities have greatly increased (M=2.45); the operation of RUB is now different

from civil service (M=2.69), and; the impact of autonomy is felt by everybody in the RUB (M=3.17).

The overall agreement levels indicated that there is strong agreement on the statement, university autonomy means independence in the operation of RUB, while there is even disagreement on the statement, opportunities have greatly increased in RUB.

The standard deviations in most categories were only slightly ≥1, thereby showing there is less variations in the perceptions of the respondents.

Table 2: Scores of agreement levels on university autonomy and what it means to the Faculty (n=189)

Sl. No.	University Autonomy Indicators	SA (%)	A (%)	Sl.A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	SD	OA-level
1.	University autonomy means independence in the operation of RUB	47.8	38.1	8.2	3.0	3.0	4.25	0.945	SA
2.	The impact of autonomy is felt by everybody in the RUB	8.2	35.8	27.6	17.9	9.0	3.17	1.106	Sl.A
3.	Autonomy means having to generate own revenue & income	29.1	47.0	17.2	3.7	2.2	3.98	0.908	A
4.	Autonomy demands working in competitive environments	39.6	42.5	11.2	5.2	0.7	4.16	0.878	A
5.	In competitive environment, the best are always rewarded	23.1	32.8	21.6	13.4	9.0	3.48	1.237	A
6.	I am motivated to work harder as a result of RUB autonomy	11.2	30.6	23.9	16.4	17.2	3.41	1.287	A
7.	Opportunities have greatly increased	4.5	12.7	30.6	27.6	24.6	2.45	1.128	D
8	The operation of RUB is now different from civil service	6.7	19.4	32.1	20.1	21.6	2.69	1.203	Sl.A
9	Autonomy allows flexibility to improve academic quality	7.5	35.1	29.9	13.4	13.4	3.40	1.131	Sl.A
10	Sense of research culture has improved in colleges	10.4	33.6	38.8	13.4	3.0	3.35	0.947	Sl.A

Note. R = rank; SD = standard deviation; OA-level = overall agreement level.
Mean scores: 4.21 – 5.00 = strongly agree (SA); 3.41 – 4.20 = agree (A); 2.61 – 3.40 = slightly agree (Sl.A); 1.81 – 2.60 = disagree (D); 1.00 – 1.80 = strongly disagree (SD)

Responses to the new situation

The responses to the change and new situation created by the university autonomy, based on the mean scores indicated that the three most agreeable perceptions on the statements presented were: RUB needs the best; I am prepared to work harder and excel (M=4.04); there is much scope for RUB to grow, prosper and provide opportunities to many (M=4.03); and, I can make a difference for RUB (M=3.90). The least agreeable perceptions were: what I am now is because of RUB (M=2.98); my destiny lies with RUB (M=3.14) and; the environment is set right to enjoy teaching in the colleges (M=3.23).

The overall agreement levels indicated that there are no strong agreements; neither are there any disagreements. With the exception of only one statement, the standard deviations in almost all categories are only slightly ≥1. Therefore, it can be assumed there is less variations in the perceptions of the respondents.

Table 3: Scores of perception levels on how faculty see things and respond to the new situation created by university autonomy (n=189)

Sl. No.	Perceptions and responses on the new situation	SA (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	SD	OA-level
1.	Changes that occurred in the RUB is always for the better	11.2	36.6	38.1	9.7	3.0	3.44	0.927	A
2.	What I am now is because of RUB	6.7	29.9	29.9	20.9	11.9	2.98	1.128	Sl.A
3.	My destiny lies with RUB	13.4	26.1	30.6	17.9	10.4	3.14	1.186	Sl.A
4.	RUB is my parent organisation; I feel at home with RUB	11.9	35.8	32.1	13.4	6.7	3.33	1.067	Sl.A
5.	The environment is set right to enjoy teaching in the colleges	8.2	35.1	36.6	10.4	9.0	3.23	1.015	Sl.A
6.	I can make a difference for RUB	20.9	53.7	20.1	4.5	0.7	3.90	0.807	A
7.	I find many scopes that I can benefit from RUB in future	14.9	35.8	33.6	9.0	3.7	3.73	2.759	A
8	RUB needs the best; I am prepared to work harder and excel	30.6	47.0	18.7	0.7	2.2	4.04	0.856	A
9	There is much scope for RUB to grow, prosper and provide opportunities to many	39.8	35.8	15.7	4.5	3.7	4.03	1.041	A
10	As a faculty, I will never swap my job for another	19.4	23.1	29.1	14.9	9.7	3.29	1.239	Sl.A

Note. R = rank; SD = standard deviation; OA-level = overall agreement level;
    Mean scores: 4.21 – 5.00 = strongly agree (SA); 3.41 – 4.20 = agree (A); 2.61 – 3.40 = slightly agree (Sl.A); 1.81 – 2.60 = disagree (D); 1.00 – 1.80 = strongly disagree (SD)

Business initiatives in operating the university

The perceptions of faculty on the business initiatives in operating the university, based on the mean scores indicated that the three most agreeable perceptions on the statements presented were: I will do all that needs to make RUB the best (M=4.27); a good university imparts good education and generates good revenue (M=4.26); and, RUB is not only a university; it is my university (M=3.98). The least agreeable perceptions were: I think business (M=3.26); the poor performance of RUB will reflect my performance (M=3.63) and; thinking business is an innovation for a university (M=3.65).

        The overall agreement levels indicated that there are two strongly agree statements. I will do all that needs to make RUB the best and a good university imparts good education and generates good revenue. The statement, I think business scored only slightly agree rating. With the exception of two statements, the standard deviations in almost all categories were ≤1, thereby showing there is less variations in the perceptions of the respondents.

Table 4:   Scores of agreement level on the business idea in operating the university (n=189)

Sl. No	Perceptions on business initiatives	SA (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	SD	OA-level
1.	The poor performance of RUB will reflect my performance	25.4	31.7	25.4	12.2	4.2	3.63	1.121	A
2.	I will do all that needs to make RUB the best	36.5	54.0	6.9	1.6	0.00	4.27	0.658	SA
3.	A good University imparts good education and generates good revenue	45.0	40.7	11.1	2.1	1.1	4.26	0.821	SA
4.	Thinking business is a good strategy to raise income	25.4	40.7	25.9	5.8	1.6	3.83	0.932	A
5.	I THINK business	10.1	34.3	30.7	15.9	5.8	3.26	1.056	Sl.A
6.	Thinking business is an innovation for a University	18.0	43.9	24.3	10.1	2.6	3.65	0.979	A
7.	Thinking business also means hard work and honesty	31.2	40.2	21.7	5.3	1.6	3.94	0.941	A
8	There are many facilities and potentials in RUB to generate good income	25.4	41.3	23.3	6.3	3.2	3.80	0.998	A
9	Instilling a sense of ownership of RUB would be another way of thinking business	20.6	50.8	19.6	5.3	2.6	3.82	0.913	A
10	RUB is not only a University; it is MY university	31.7	41.3	18.0	4.8	2.1	3.98	0.950	A

Note. R = rank; SD = standard deviation; OA-level = overall agreement level;
Mean scores: 4.21 – 5.00 = strongly agree (SA); 3.41 – 4.20 = agree (A); 2.61 – 3.40 = slightly agree (Sl.A); 1.81 – 2.60 = disagree (D); 1.00 – 1.80 = strongly disagree (SD)

Comparison of perceptions by age on changes and new situations

Table 5 shows the perceptions differences of groups by age. The differences were measured between those who are 36 years and above (n=88, senior) and 35 years and below (n=93, junior), on the changes and new situations created.

Results showed that there were two significant differences (P$\square$.05) in the mean scores of the two categories of respondents for the statement, what I am now is because of RUB (t=2.063) and for the statement, RUB needs the best; I am prepared to work harder and excel (t=2.199). It also observed that the standard deviation from the mean for all the statements were ≤1 which indicated that both the groups' individual scores as regards to their perceptions on the changes and new situations, did not differ much from the mean score. The mean score of the junior group of faculty (M=3.24) for the statement, what I am now is because of RUB, was significantly higher than the senior group (M=2.90, t=2.063) indicating that the junior group has far more agreeable perceptions to the statement than the senior group. Similarly, the mean score of the junior group of faculty (M=4.22) for the statement, RUB needs the best; I am prepared to work harder and excel, was significantly higher than the senior group (M=3.94, t=2.199) indicating that the junior group were motivated to work relatively harder to excel. There were no significant differences between the perceptions of the two groups in the remaining eight statements as presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Comparison of perception levels on how faculty see things and respond to the new situation created by university autonomy(n=189)

Sl. No.	Items	Age				t-value
		35 and below (n=88)		36 and above (n=93)		
		Mean	S.D	Mean	SD	
1.	Changes that occurred in the RUB is always for the better	3.53	0.839	3.48	0.996	0328
2.	What I am now is because of RUB	3.24	1.099	2.90	1.100	2.063*
3.	My destiny lies with RUB	3.23	1.201	3.15	1.144	0.419
4.	RUB is my parent organisation; I feel at home with RUB	3.49	0.994	3.35	1.060	0.875
5.	The environment is set right to enjoy teaching in the Colleges	3.31	1.010	3.18	1.018	0.864
6.	I can make a difference for RUB	3.94	0.889	3.90	0.667	0.341
7.	I find many scopes that I can benefit from RUB in future	3.57	1.069	3.42	1.012	0.973
8.	RUB needs the best; I am prepared to work harder and excel	4.22	0.706	3.94	0.987	2.199*
9.	There is much scope for RUB to grow, prosper and provide opportunities to many	4.29	0.888	4.09	1.045	1.379
10.	As a faculty, I will never swap my job for another	3.36	1.280	3.20	1.182	0.885

Note: *Significant at 0.05 level

Comparison of perceptions on business initiatives in operating the university

This comparison was made among the three groups of faculty in the academic disciplines of education (n = 72), technical (n = 48) and humanities (n = 69). The variations in academic disciplines were likely to impact on the perceptions of the faculty and this comparison was aimed to record these varied perceptions.

Differences of perceptions by academic disciplines

Table 6 shows that statistically significant differences were found among the three levels of academic disciplines on: thinking business is an innovation for a university, $F=(2, 184)$ 6.869, $p=0.001$; and thinking business also means hard work and honesty, $F=(2, 186)$ 8.489, $p=0.000$.

Except for the humanities group, the standard deviations for most categories were only slightly ≥ 1, indicating there were no significant deviations of opinions from the mean.

Post-hoc comparison on groups with differences of perceptions

Scheffe′ post hoc comparison indicated that education and humanities significantly differed from technical on, thinking business is an innovation for a university ($p=0.001$) and significant difference on, thinking business also means hard work and honesty ($p=000$). No significant differences were observed between education and humanities groups on any of the statements.

Based on the means of the items, these statistical significance differences indicated that particularly, those faculties in the technical institutions do think that, for sustained growth, the university should generate innovative business ideas to create diversified revenue sources. As compared to the education and humanities groups, the mean scores also indicated that the faculties in the technical institutions believed that venturing into business initiatives would also mean greater input on time, hard work and demonstration of honesty by people.

Table 6: Comparison of perceptions on the business idea in operating the university (n=189)

Sl. No.	Items	Education (n=48)		Technical (n=72)		Humanities (n=69)		F-value
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	
1.	The poor performance of RUB will reflect my performance	3.62	1.11	3.39	1.13	3.87	1.08	3.220*
2.	I will do all that needs to make RUB the best	4.17	0.61	4.28	0.72	4.32	0.63	0.681
3.	A good university imparts good education and generates good revenue	4.27	0.77	4.31	0.87	4.22	0.82	0.203
4.	Thinking business is a good strategy to raise income	3.60	0.92	3.99	0.99	3.82	0.86	2.457
5.	I THINK business	3.07	1.10	3.49	1.02	3.17	1.04	2.614
6.	Thinking business is an innovation for a university	3.36[b]	0.94	3.97[a]	0.89	3.52[b]	1.01	6.869***
7.	Thinking business also means hard work and honesty	3.83[b]	0.78	4.28[a]	0.88	3.67[b]	1.01	8.489****
8.	There are many facilities and potentials in RUB to generate good income	3.53	0.95	3.92	0.99	3.86	1.02	2.324
9.	Instilling a sense of ownership of RUB would be another way of thinking business	3.80	0.75	3.94	1.03	3.71	0.88	1.175
10.	RUB is not only a University; it is MY university	3.70	0.89	4.07	0.99	4.07	0.92	2.766

Note: M = mean; SD = standard deviation;***significant at .001 level; **** significant at 0.000   level; Scheffe′ post hoc comparison represented with superscript [ab]: means followed by same   letters are not significantly different from each other

Extremes of 30 statements' mean scores

Table 7 shows that from the total of 30 statements measured, the highest mean scores were recorded on the statement, I will do all that needs to make RUB the best (M=4.27) followed by the statement, a good university imparts good education and generates good revenue (M=4.26). There were also high positive responses on the understanding that, autonomy means independence in the operation of the university.

The least agreeable mean scores is on the statement, opportunities have greatly increased (M=2.48) followed by the statement, the operation of RUB is now different from civil service (M=2.81). These two were the only statements in the entire perceptions that measured weighted average mean scores of M≤3.

Table 7: Highest and lowest mean scores on the overall perceptions of University autonomy by RUB faculty (n=189)

Rank by levels of mean scores	Perceptions	Mean	SD
1	I will do all that needs to make RUB the best	4.27	0.658
2	A good university imparts good education and generates good revenue	4.26	0.821
3	University autonomy means independence in the operation of RUB	4.15	1.012

	24 other statements		
28	What I am now is because of RUB	3.05	1.106
29	The operation of RUB is now different from civil service	2.81	1.222
30	Opportunities have greatly increased	2.48	1.142

Potential sources of income

Table 8 shows the result of the study on the potential sources of income to support future sustainability of the university. The faculties in the colleges perceived that offering short term trainings and consultancy services could have the greatest advantage in generating more income for the university.

Table 8: Perceptions on the potential sources of income

Colleges	Infra-structure	Consultancy Services	Research grants	Conference / w/shops	International Students	Short Trainings	RGoB Grants	Frequency
SC	0	4	4	2	4	7	0	21
JNP	0	5	1	0	0	5	3	14
CST	2	6	1	0	3	3	0	15
SCE	2	5	1	0	8	5	2	23
GCBS	3	11	1	4	3	10	1	33
PCE	1	11	1	7	1	2	0	23
RIHS	0	3	0	3	2	4	0	12
NITM	1	0	0	0	0	4	2	7
ILCS	0	1	4	2	1	5	0	13
CNR	0	3	7	1	7	4	1	23
Total scores	9	49	20	19	29	49	9	184

Discussion

There is general understanding among the faculty in the colleges that RUB's autonomy meant greater independence in the operation of the university as compared to what it was in the civil service system. At the same time, there is agreement that the autonomy would demand for everybody to work in competitive environments, be able to explore diversifying revenue sources and improve performance efficiency. It was also felt that opportunities in the university have yet to grow to make a difference as a result of autonomy.

The changes brought by the university autonomy have encouraged the faculty to work harder and attempt to excel in their performances. There was sense of ownership for the university and many see scope for RUB to grow, prosper and provide opportunities to others within and beyond the university. People are confident to make a difference for RUB with their presence. At the same time, there were also respondents who perceived that their future do not belong with RUB alone.

Regarding the business initiatives in operating the university, the faculty felt a good university not only provided good education but also generated good revenue. This encouraged them to work harder to make RUB the best university. However, there were very few who really think of taking up business initiatives.

While comparing the perceptions of the faculty by age groups across the 10 colleges, it was observed that the junior group of faculty felt that what they are now is because of RUB. The younger group of faculty also perceived that RUB needs the best and that they are prepared and motivated to work harder and excel in their performances.

In comparing the perceptions of colleges on business initiatives in operating the university, it was found that the faculty in the technical colleges, as compared to humanities and education colleges, thought thinking business is an innovation for a university and that venturing into business initiatives also meant greater input on time, hard work and greater demonstration of honesty by people.

Overall, it was found that there were people who would do all that needs to be done to make RUB the best university while many are also of the opinion that opportunities in the RUB have yet to grow and changes as such, to make it different and be conspicuous, have not set in as a result of the autonomy.

In measuring the various sources of income that already existed within the RUB to support future sustainability, the colleges perceived that offering short term trainings and consultancy services could have the greatest advantage in generating more income for the university.

Conclusion and recommendations

There are faculty who are prepared to make RUB the best university while at the same time, RUB needs to create greater opportunities to enhance people's future career within the university sector. These included improving the environment for teaching and learning that could enable the faculty to decide to choose RUB as their final destiny. The people in the university also need to be more aware that the autonomous status demands to work in business-like and competitive environments to ensure future sustainability.

The junior group of the faculty have joined RUB with full of expectations and new ideas. They were also motivated to work harder and excel in their performances. The RUB should strive to keep these young spirits alive and burning as they are the future of the university.

The variations on the perceptions of colleges on business initiatives indicated that the colleges with humanities and education disciplines were less likely to take up business initiatives. They should, however, appreciate the idea of thinking business as an innovation to fulfil the emerging needs of the new university. Taking up business initiatives would require more hard work and demonstration of honesty by the faculty in the colleges.

The colleges perceived offering short term trainings and consultancy services as potential sources of income for the university. They should be encouraged to come up with innovative proposals for new programmes and services that could lead to generating increased income for the university.

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Teaching, Learning and Planning Practices in Five Colleges of RUB: A Cross Case Analysis

DEKI C. GYAMTSO AND T.W. MAXWELL

Abstract

This study, which examined the nature of planning practices of lecturers in select colleges of RUB, employed a mixed-methods approach based on interpretivist principles using case study design. About one half of lecturers, and these from three of five colleges, prepared written plans for their lessons; the other half did not. There was a combination of teacher-centred and learner-centred planning of lessons. The former academics had clearly reflected on their proposed teaching. Lecturers who did not have written lesson plans appeared not to have reflected on plans yet they demonstrated their mental preparation for teaching the lessons. The results suggested that although the policies and regulations of RUB were used to guide the teaching and learning practices in the colleges, there were gaps in their planning practices partly explained by personal and institutional histories.

Introduction

This paper is based upon Gyamtso's (2012). The study was conducted to gain greater insights on how conceptions of teaching and learning have impacted on the practical application in the planning, implementation and evaluation phases in the classrooms of select colleges of the Royal University of Bhutan (RUB). While the study of teaching and learning practices at different levels of education have been a focus of educational research for quite some time now, studies in higher education teaching and learning do not have a long research history and tradition (Kandlbinder & Peseta, 2011). In the Bhutanese context research at this level and in this area has not been attempted previously and thus, breaks new ground.

This study, therefore is extracted from a wider study on the nature of teaching and learning practices in the Royal University of Bhutan (RUB). This first paper presents the nature of planning practices among the RUB lecturers and the second paper will make known the implementation practices of the same set of lecturers (Gyamtso & Maxwell, 2013). The findings from the two papers will be beneficial to the lecturers and students in Bhutan and beyond who are interested in learning about change to their practices.

Studies by higher educational researchers (Biggs, 2003; Entwistle, 2008; Marton & Säljö, 1976a; Prosser & Trigwell, 1999; and Ramsden, 2003) have provided insights on the deep to surface teaching approaches and on teacher-centred/transmission-of-knowledge conceptions to learner-centred/facilitative conceptions. The core findings indicate that there is a relationship between how lecturers teach and how students learn: although not always the case, when lecturers focus on traditional teacher-centred ways, students tend to adopt surface learning strategies. Generally, learning can be promoted when effective learning outcomes are developed that promote deep learning. Such an approach reinforces the value of a paradigm shift from a teacher-centred transmission approach to a learner-centred facilitative

approach to teaching and learning. The articulation of learning outcomes also influences the way the teaching and learning strategies and assessment in the classrooms are employed by the teachers. All these have an influence on planning.

Despite the criticisms of the deep-surface learning approaches (Hall, Ramsay & Raven, 2004; Ballantine, Duff, & Larres, 2008; Haggis, 2009), the concepts continue to be a popular and much researched area in higher education. Entwistle (1997) argued that the reason for the popularity of the deep/surface metaphor is that it describes a 'recognisable reality', while critics argue that it is more to do with the attractiveness of a theory which supports the deepest prejudices and common sense opinions of the education development community. This could be why the conception is potentially useful in Bhutan at this time.

In the past half-century, higher education, and the planning of learning therein, has been profoundly affected by the evolution of the knowledge-based economy (Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2009, p. 18). It has brought about dramatic changes in the character and functions of higher education in most countries around the world (Skelton, 2008) such as the processes of globalisation and internationalisation (Maringe & Foskett, 2010) and a shift from a élite to a mass system (Trow, 2000). These processes have only just begun in Bhutan.

Context

The socio-cultural history of Bhutan has, to a considerable extent, shaped education as it is today in Bhutan. Three major factors have played significant roles in determining the current state of education of Bhutan:

- Influence of monastic education;

- Dependence on education curricula and teaching styles from India; and

- Western influences on education.

From the eighth to the early 20 mid-twentieth century monasteries exerted the greatest influence on education in Bhutan (Phuntsho, 2000). Towards the end of the 1950s, a new chapter in the history of learning and scholarship began in Bhutan where a secular education system was introduced largely supported by materials and personnel from India whose influences in pedagogy have largely remained at all levels. Tertiary colleges attached to ministries began to appear in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Teaching was their focus (Maxwell, 2012). Most of these colleges formed the RUB in 2003. RUB is a mandala of colleges with campuses spread throughout the country with the Office of the Vice Chancellor established in Thimphu.

In terms of this paper, the key document, which elaborated what might be called progressive policies and procedures for RUB, was *The Wheel of Academic Law* (*Wheel*, RUB, 2010). The *Wheel* represents a crucially important document because it intends to guide the RUB in its effort to establish itself as an internationally credible entity (Maxwell et al., 2006). The *Wheel* advocates learner-centredness and declares that RUB academics must become familiar with it and incorporate it into policies and practices. An effect of these policies and procedures has been that RUB academic staff have been required to make a conceptual shift from their use of the input model (transmission/teacher-centred) to a learning outcomes model, with students becoming responsible for their own learning (constructivist/

learner-centred). For the vast majority this shift was contrary to their experience. It involves a re-conceptualisation of teaching in which the student and student outcomes take priority over the needs of the teacher to transmit knowledge. Exploration of this shifting focus from input to output model is a significant aspect of the current study.

Added to this institutional imperative, concerns raised by the government and some commentators (e.g. Dorji, 2005) about the quality of education in Bhutan add to the importance and timeliness of this study. In the context of political changes in Bhutan, the Royal Government of Bhutan (RGOB) has expressed the goal of providing gainful employment to all Bhutanese. A focus on quality education is viewed as the primary vehicle to achieve this goal (RGOB, 2006). Moreover, since the RUB became autonomous in July 2011, the University has a significant responsibility for the achievement of this goal. Planning in higher education

Successful teaching depends on effective planning. The whole notion of planning in preparing to teach is crucial for the classroom teacher. Effective teachers carefully plan their lessons to teach. They decide *what to teach* and *how to teach* it. They also *communicate their expectations* for learning to their students. These are central ideas in planning.

Lesson planning can be defined as a systematic development of instructional requirements, arrangements, conditions, and materials and activities, as well as means for testing and evaluation of teaching and learning. The planning of lessons involves teachers' purposeful efforts towards the development a coherent system of activities that facilitate the development of students' cognitive structures and processes (Panasuk & Todd, 2005). The quality of those decisions and efforts depends on the creativity of teachers and on their ability to apply learning and instructional theories. Kauchak and Eggen (2010) draw a clear association between good lesson planning and good teaching.

It has been established that planning the material is much more difficult than it would seem (Calderhead, 1984; 1996). Decisions are to be made concerning the subject matter to be covered, sequencing, the materials to be used, the pupils who are to be included in each activity, how the class is to be organised and what the teacher will expect from the pupils in terms of both behaviour and achievement during the course of each activity. Decisions such as these occupy a lot of less experienced teachers' thoughts during the planning they do at various times of the day even when they are not interacting with their pupils (Calderhead, 1984). McCutcheon (1980) found that, in most cases, experienced teachers plan their lessons mentally. This can be the richest form of planning: teachers engage in mental dialogues before writing plans or before the lesson (see Jensen, 2001).

Researchers have not determined whether particular types of planning formats are more effective than others (which may explain the diversity of forms used by different education systems). There is general agreement, however, that planning is an activity in which teachers should engage. Teacher-centred lesson planning relies heavily on behavioural and cognitive learning models and focuses on the material or content to be taught (Postareff & Lindblom-Ylänne, 2008). This type of planning is greatly influenced by Gagne (Kauchak & Eggen, 2010) regardless of variations in developmental levels of the students. The students' interests are considered only after the content requirement is established. On the other hand, student-centred planning focuses mainly on what the students do and can be tuned to achieve individual learning goals (Kember & Kwan, 2000). It relies heavily on constructivist learning (Postareff & Lindblom-Ylänne, 2008). Yinger (1980) cogently argues that planning requires thoughtful,

purposeful consideration at least five levels, namely, yearly planning, unit/module planning, weekly planning, and daily (lesson) planning. Planning at these different levels should be congruent and expressed progressively in greater detail.

This study will be a significant endeavour in promoting awareness of the nature of planning practices among the lectures in select colleges of RUB. In this paper planning practices in select colleges of RUB will be examined through the research question: *What is the nature of the planning that lecturers engage in as they prepare for their lessons?*

The findings will be beneficial to the lecturers and students in Bhutan and beyond who are interested in learning about change to their planning practices.

Frameworks for analysis

Seven categories were selected because they assist in in the examination of planning and implementation practices in some detail in the lessons (Table 1). The framework was largely guided by the conceptions of student-centredness, active and deep learning to analyse the core practices of the lecturers. They were *Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education* (Chickering & Gamson, 1987), *The Queensland School Reform Longitudinal Study, Classroom Observation Manual* (The School Reform Longitidinal Study Team, 2001), *Metropolitan State University, Urban Teacher Programme, Minneapolis* (Center for Teaching and Learning, 2009), *Emmanuel College School of Education, Georgia, USA* (School of Education, 2009), and *Kentucky Department of Education, Highly effective Teaching and Learning* (Department of Education, 2009). Although literature was referred to, the final framework for analysis evolved from the collected data.

Table 1 The Seven categories and their associated Indicators

Categories	Indicators
Learning Outcomes (LOs)	*Focus on what the student should know/understand and/or realistically be able to do at the end of a period of learning (lesson/module).* *Specific Measurable Achievable Relevant Time-Scaled (SMART)*
Teaching and Learning approach	*Approaches to teaching that influence, motivate and inspire students to learn.* *Organises active/passive engagement with learning tasks.* *Provides opportunities for interaction amongst students and with the lecturer.* *Initiates vigorous and critical interaction with knowledge content (invokes deep learning)*
Content Knowledge	*Knowledge of discipline- specific content and curriculum appropriate for his/her teaching field.* *Communicates depth and breadth Links content to other subject areas and everyday life of students (relevance)*
Assessment	*Assessment that measures students' learning/expected learning outcomes.* *Selects, constructs and utilises appropriate assessment strategies (formative and summative) which are aligned with the learning outcomes.* *Assesses prior knowledge of student learning.*
Resources	*Resources to support students' learning. Use of appropriate and variety of resources to enrich learning*
Role of Teacher	*Helps the student to learn. Creates conducive learning environments.* *Encourages students to accept responsibility for their own learning and accommodates the diverse learning needs of all students.* *Demonstrates an understanding and in-depth knowledge of content and maintains an ability to convey the content to students*
Role of Student	*Accepts responsibility for learning* *Actively participates in the class.* *Collaborates/teams with other students.*

A well-developed analytical framework is particularly important for cross –case analysis of multiple case studies as used for in this study. The seven categories were selected because of their significance and potential for application to the study. The indicators describe the categories in specific details. For example, the SMART Criteria were used as indicators to analyse planned learning outcomes. This was because the definition of LOs in the *Wheel* clearly reflected the SMART criteria (RUB, 2010, p. 81). Additionally they were chosen because they represent a change in emphasis from 'teaching' to 'learning'. The indicators directed the focus of the analysis of data and assisted in addressing the research questions.

Methods

This study is based on interpretivist principles using the multiple case study design. The selected research design of using multiple case studies (Stake, 2000) allowed the investigation of the nature of a range of teaching and learning practices in situ. Investigation of several cases within the one institution (RUB) could be expected to yield more robustness to the findings and thus add strength to the conclusions (Yin, 2009). Mixed-methods (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003), mainly using qualitative methods, were adopted. Triangulation was employed. Further, as the data collection participants and sites were familiar to Gyamtso, she remained aware of the risk of losing perspective. Against such a possibility, she kept field notes to maintain 'analytic distance' as advised by Woods (2006).

Data gathered included: (1) twenty-six lesson observations (using an observation guide) randomly selected from the subject departments in the five colleges; (2) in-lesson questionnaires completed by students after the observed lessons; (3) standardized open-ended interviews before and after the lessons with each lecturer; (4) informal conservational interviews using stratified sampling with the teaching staff, students and administrative staff for additional information on teaching and learning practices in the colleges; and (5) field notes were also used. The field notes were meticulously maintained throughout the research to record observations, thoughts, and questions as they happened (Newbury, 2001). Participants for lesson observations and in-lesson questionnaires were academic staff (n=26), and students (n=800); and interviews (N=15), lecturers (N=10), and academic support staff (N=15) for collection of additional information on teaching and learning practices in the colleges. To further strengthen the data, analysis of policy documents and of cultural writings was undertaken as well as gathering data on background characteristics of staff. The research learning and management matrix (Maxwell & Smyth, 2010; Smyth & Maxwell, 2008) was used as a guide throughout the project, providing a framework for monitoring ongoing progress.

Data Analysis Procedures

Manual analysis of the data was most appropriate as the data was 'thick' with descriptions, and required thinking through to make meaning out of them by examining the content of the texts. Therefore, thematic analysis was the appropriate technique to employ in order to analyse the data. There are three aims of thematic analysis across the cases: i) Examining commonality; ii) Examining differences; and iii) Examining relationships (Gibson & Brown, 2009, pp. 128-129). Additionally, the different settings of the Colleges were used to show how the interplay of factors such as resources in the colleges impacted on the teaching and learning planning.

Assuring Quality: Trustworthiness

Establishing the trustworthiness of interpretivist research is critical. Reid and Gough (2000) recommend that the credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability of research must be considered in qualitative research studies. In this study, as Gyamtso was the 'instrument' of data collection and analysis and as there were multiple realities in this research, it was essential to establish credibility. Triangulation served as a powerful tool to strengthen credibility as were thick descriptions (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In addressing the dependability issue, the research processes were reported in detail (Gyamtso, 2012). Finally, confirmability was supported by triangulation of data gathering and analysis. In the pilot study, Gyamtso (see Gyamtso & Maxwell, 2012) ensured that methods and instruments were tried and tested and refinements made. This study was conducted under the University of New England's Human Research Ethics Committee requirements.

Self as researcher

Gyamtso's background includes about twenty years experience as a teacher and teacher educator which provided considerable familiarity with the classroom setting and experience in interpreting the planning, implementation and evaluation practices of the lecturers in RUB. Furthermore, as the member of the Programme Quality Committee and Academic Board of the RUB has allowed Gyamtso to be intimately involved with academic developments in the university. Maxwell had more than two decades experience in teaching and learning in Australian universities and over 15 years had become knowledgeable about teaching and learning in Bhutanese schools and at RUB. This afforded expertise and extensive experience in interpreting and analysing the data.

Results: the cross-case analysis

Exploration of phenomena across cases can provide improved understanding (Bazeley, 2009). The cross-case analysis will provide further insights how planning practices have been influenced by the different histories, settings and purposes of the Colleges. Throughout the discussion, links will be made to the available literature. This analysis is organised around the seven categories of planning identified above. In the case studies, the planning practices were diverse.

Only those from the two Colleges of Education, a lecturer from Sherubtse and two lecturers from the College of Natural Resources had written lesson plans (N=14). The other 12 lecturers did not. However the latter group of lecturers talked about the lessons during the pre-conference interviews. They referred to *what* they were to teach though they did not give a great deal of detail about how. As discussed in the literature on planning, these lessons were apparently guided by mental constructs (Livingston & Borko, 1990). A mental map (McCutcheon, 1980) of the lesson, based on the lecturer's memory of past lessons, previous teaching experience and the success or otherwise of earlier lessons on the same topic may have been enough to allow the lecturer to decide if changes were needed, and therefore constituted an informal but appropriate lesson plan (Calderhead, 1984). However not all of these 12 were experienced teachers. In three of the Colleges, lesson plans were rarely written. Here, those inexperienced staff could be following the practices of the experienced lecturers.

The second issue that emerged was a failure of some lecturers to recognise levels of planning. They provided module plans when they were asked for lesson plans. Burden and Byrd (2010) have pointed to the significance and the difference of planning at the module and lesson levels.

Planning Learning Outcomes

There were similarities and differences across cases with respect to the general framework and structure of the LOs. The similarities have resulted from the *Wheel*'s mandate on framing LOs that were to be observable, specific, assessable and inclined to higher levels of thinking (RUB, 2010, p. 81). Differences in writing LOs emerged due to the different subjects of study as well as the varying levels of experience and competency among the lecturers in the five Colleges. These are discussed below.

A significant similarity was the consistent practice of developing LOs for lessons (written or oral) in all the Colleges. This was consistent with the mandate of the Module Descriptor in the *Wheel*. 60 % of all LOs were in written form and these were mainly from the two Colleges of Education and College of Natural Resource (CNR) LOs. The College of Science and Technology was the only college that did not have any written LOs. A large number of LOs (11) were communicated verbally by the regular lecturers of Sherubtse College.

The differences amongst colleges were in the types of LOs developed by the lecturers based on the SMART criteria - subject-specific or personal-generic. The LOs produced by lecturers in Sherubtse College were strongly subject-specific with negligible attention given to the creation of personal-generic LOs. In the professional Colleges, such as the College of Natural Resources and the two Colleges of Education, the LOs were mostly focussed on practical workplace skills and the essential content of that discipline/profession. The LOs of the College of Science and Technology (training engineers) had a greater content focus and lesser personal/workplace focus.

Anderson and Krathwohl's revised version of Bloom's taxonomy (2001) was used as to tool to explore LO levels of thinking. A large 62% of the LOs indicated lower levels of thinking. This is a matter for concern. The LOs produced by lecturers in CNR, CST and Sherubtse College indicate a higher concentration of lower levels of thinking while in the two Colleges of Education there is evidence of modestly higher levels of thinking. LOs may, however, need to merely tap into lower levels of thinking at times, for example, when students are expected to achieve a basic level of knowledge or competency in the lesson. The concern, however, is the preponderance of lower level of thinking in the LOs.

The other contentious issue that emerged in this study was the language of LOs. Language that used action verbs that were specific and active language that makes expectations clear (Adam, 2008) did not predominate. Non-specific language, including such action words as understand, see, study, give, was used in 20% of the LOs across the Colleges, with the greatest share in Sherubtse College.

Planning of teaching and learning approaches

All the Colleges were subject to the academic guidelines endorsed in the *Wheel* (RUB, 2010) which clearly mandated a student-centred approach with active and deep learning at the forefront. However, the engagement with these ideas has been slow.

A significant observation was that in three colleges the 'lecture' was the most commonly planned teaching and learning approach. There were, however, variations in the way the lecture was planned. Some had a conventional lecture approach. Moderately interactive lectures were also planned with questions, demonstrations, problem-solving and class discussions. In considerable contrast, in the two Colleges of Education a range of teaching and learning approaches such as group activities and individual activities were planned in order to engage the students. In these two colleges lesson plans

focussed on student learning, and not on what the teacher will do with the idea to facilitate learning (Weimer, 2002).

In summary, lectures predominated. They varied along a continuum with conventional 'lecture' at one extreme, 'lectures' embedded with activities that invoked some deep and active learning midway, and lectures that were somewhat student-centred at the other.

Planning content knowledge

It is significant that although lesson content was closely guided by the module plans, in individual lessons it was left to the lecturers to decide. Content knowledge in the written plans was explicitly stated in some detail in the eight lesson plans in Samtse College, three plans in Paro College of Education, two plans in College of Natural Resources and one plan in Sherubtse College. Three plans in the education colleges lacked depth and made little demand on students, thereby promoting 'surface learning'. Paek, Ponte, Sigel, Braun & Powers (2005) argue that teachers who strike an appropriate balance between depth and breadth of content coverage are more effective in facilitating successful performance by students. In the seven oral lesson plans in Sherubtse College, three in the College of Science and Technology and two in the College of Natural Resources, content knowledge was only mentioned by the lecturers as lesson topics. We assumed that the academics involved in teaching had relevant and adequate content knowledge and this was based upon the required module descriptors.

Planning of assessment

Written plans in the two Colleges of Education, two lesson plans in College of Natural Resources and one lesson plan in Sherubtse College had assessment strategies listed such as checking prior learning and summarising the lesson. On the other hand, the lecturers did not mention assessment as an important aspect of their plans in the remaining 12 plans, which were orally communicated.

A key argument is that assessment carries enormous potential for providing useful and helpful teacher feedback so that students can engage in further learning and/or revise what has been learned (Bell and Cowie, 2001). Since in 12 out of 26 lessons, assessment was largely missing, this important aspect was overlooked.

Planning of Resources

A range of current and relevant resources is an excellent way to enhance the learning atmosphere in the lessons as they can be used to help reinforce new information or skills (Harden and Crosby, 2000). A reasonable variety of resources/teaching aids was planned for use in most lessons across the Colleges. These ranged from PowerPoint presentations, chalkboard, CAD software, Manuals on seismic engineering, textbooks, laboratory apparatus and materials, mathematical games' materials, activity sheets, multimedia such as video clips, insect boxes, objects such as a chainsaw and were engaged at differing levels in the lessons. There was differential access to teaching/learning resources amongst the Colleges.

The role of the teacher in planning

Looking at the roles of the lecturers in planning shows a range of practices from teacher-centred to student-centred. While lecturers assumed roles of knowledge expert in all the Colleges, they played this role in differing degrees and not always consistent with that set out in the *Wheel*. The lecturers supported student-centredness in varying degrees. Apart from lecturers in the two Colleges of Education, two in College of Natural Resources and one in Sherubtse College, most of the lecturers were not very clear about the different levels of planning (Yinger, 1980) and hence their role. When asked for lesson plans, some provided module plans. This indicated that some of the lecturers were not very clear about their role as lesson planners. Although it is conceded that the module plans to a large extent guided the lesson plans, the module plans are at a higher level, that is, the level from which lesson plans can be derived.

Conclusions

Evidence from this study demonstrates that understanding and acknowledgement of the importance of planning varies markedly amongst lecturers and colleges. The implications are first of all that lesson planning should be considered as an important part of the teaching-learning process in all the colleges as it is an effective way of ensuring student learning. Associated with this is the importance of understanding the role and functions of different levels of planning. Perhaps the *Wheel* should have more information on planning and/or this may be something that the colleges could take up in the future.

There were some misconstructions about *Wheel*-mandated learning outcomes in the lessons. There are implications for both the students and lecturers. This is because well developed LOs can be used to express learning and make learning intentions explicit. For students the implication is that well articulated LOs clarify for them what is expected as well as the skills/competences, understanding and abilities that they will acquire on successful completion of their study. For the lecturer, the implication of learning outcomes can clarify exactly what the lesson will deliver and connect this with the appropriate mode of delivery *and* assessment.

The results of this study indicate that assessment used in the lessons was often not aligned to the learning outcomes of teaching. As noted by Adam (2004) the dynamic process of marrying outcome and learning with assessment is not simple but it can lead to better learning. In the case studies, some evidence of 'marrying learning outcomes and learning with assessment' was seen in a few lessons only but especially from the two Colleges of Education. In general, therefore it seems that assessment is a sticking point and a challenge that needs to be addressed by the colleges in particular and the university in general.

To conclude, the lecturers in five colleges of RUB were engaged in a combination of teacher-centred and learner-centred practices in the planning phase. Fourteen lecturers prepared written plans for their lessons, the other twelve lecturers did not. Most of the former were from the two Colleges of Education and College of Natural Resources. These academics had clearly reflected on their proposed teaching. Lecturers, who did not have written lesson plans were not so definite about their lessons, yet did not indicate lack of forethought. However, the latter appeared not to have reflected on plans and

provided evidence that demonstrated their mental preparation for teaching the lessons. RUB policy and HE literature indicates that lesson planning, including the different levels of planning, and the *Wheel*-mandated learning outcomes, should be considered as an important part of the teaching-learning process in all the colleges.

A limitation of the research is that while the study was a major work with far reaching consequences for the enhancement of teaching and learning practice in higher education in Bhutan, it was not representative of all the ten Colleges of RUB.

The key to good teaching lies in effective planning. Good preparation is essential in enabling all classroom teachers to ensure that learning can take place. Research about the importance of planning and the effect it has on students' learning reinforces this concept. While planning, teachers should plan their lessons in ways that reflect the interests and needs of students. In doing so teachers incorporate best practices to help students learn. The data presented here indicate that many RUB lecturers need to understand and incorporate RUB's policies and practices into their planning practices.

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Exploring University Students' Plagiarism Experiences: A Phenomenological Study

PHUNTSHO DORJI, NAWANG PHUNTSHO AND NIMA

Abstract

Given the increasing number of plagiarized assignments that students submit, a study was conducted in the member colleges of the Royal University of Bhutan to understand their experiences and stories. The study was phenomenological in nature and the data were collected through interviews conducted with university students. The findings suggest that students have conceptual misunderstanding of the term plagiarism and that they lack knowledge of citations and referencing systems, particularly when there is less academic support. Further, the findings show that inadequate resources, the students' lack of writing skill, and lack of seriousness on the part of academic tutors encourage plagiarism. The study points to the need for consistent pedagogical support and implementation of the policy of plagiarism and improving the resource resource situation in the colleges.

Key words: plagiarism, assignment, copying, misconception, academic writing

Introduction

Plagiarism is becoming an issue not just in the Royal University of Bhutan but also in the whole of the Bhutanese society. In the colleges, whether the work is a written assignment or a presentation in the class, students don't hesitate to plagiarize the works of others. The situation has worsened after the introduction of the Internet. The students also rely a lot on website materials and take a short-cut to writing their assignments. Given the seriousness of the problem, Dema (2010) says that literary plagiarism has affected many academic institutions in the country. Allowing such practices not only harms the system and the individuals themselves, but it also impedes academic institutions from producing competent and ethical citizens. Such practices will be unfair and disheartening to students who write their assignments without resorting to plagiarism. Further, allowing students to continue such practices may sow the seeds of corrupt practices in the society. This study aims to highlight the practices of plagiarism by our students and some solutions to prevent such practices.

Literature Review

Writing was born independently in different parts of the world and had no unique origin (Carboni, 2006). It continued to evolve overtime, resulting in many different genres, namely, academic writing; creative writing; professional writing; business writing, etc. (Melly, 2006). Academic writing is a type of formal writing and its purpose is to inform (Gyeltshen, 2010). In academic writing and scholarly works, it is presumed that due credit will be given to the authors of new ideas and inventions (Ramzan et al, 2011). However, there are many academics and students who carry out their works without acknowledging the source.

Plagiarism is defined as taking someone else's work and passing it off as one's own (Graham-Matheson & Starr, 2013; Ramzan et al, 2011). It literally means to copy and use someone's thoughts, writings, inventions, literary or artistic work and claim them as one's own (Martin, 2006) or it is deliberately writing someone else's language, ideas, or other original material without acknowledging its source (Council of Writing Program Administrators, 2003). It is the act of using somebody else's work without attribution (Wang, 2008). The Royal University of Bhutan (2008) defines plagiarism as "the unacknowledged use of another's work as if it were one's own" (p. 112).

Students' understanding of plagiarism may differ from place to place and from culture to culture. Breen and Maassen (2005) say that it "...is further complicated by their cultural and linguistic backgrounds" (p. 2). Corroborating Breen and Maassen (2005), Sugiharto (2010) states that "a number of studies on plagiarism have suggested that plagiarism is culturally rooted, and that understanding plagiarism under the framework of culture can provide useful insights into how it is perceived differently by different cultures" (p. 2). How do Bhutanese researchers, scholars and consumers of knowledge products generally view plagiarism? How is intellectual propriety right understood and recognized? Answers to these questions often feature in media, indicating serious concerns among the Bhutanese. However, the question of intellectual property right concerning published works began to be addressed only a decade ago.

Dema (2010) notes that though the copyright act of Bhutan came into force in 2001 to protect creative intellectual works, public awareness of copyright is dismal even after a decade of its enactment. Further, according to Dema (2010), literary works are taken for granted and not given due recognition and acknowledgement in Bhutan, indicating tolerance of plagiarism in the Bhutanese society. Further, Carrol et al (as cited in Breen & Maassen, 2005) point out that different cultural understandings concerning the sharing of knowledge can further complicate studying in western universities, implying that cultural settings either discourage plagiarism or encourage plagiarism. For instance, in the past two years there have been several newspaper reports on copyright issues (Tshering, 2004).

Students in the colleges plagiarize works of others for several reasons. The University of Pretoria (2004) in its guideline for students mentions a lack of understanding of academic integrity, lack of time, school plagiarism and poor language skills as the major causes of plagiarism. A study using quasi-experimental design conducted on how to teach students not to plagiarize found that the lack of knowledge in proper documentation and paraphrasing is a primary reason why some students plagiarize, albeit perhaps inadvertently (Chao, Wilhelm, & Neureuther, 2009). Implications from this study point to the need for a consistent in-depth instruction in quotation, citation, and paraphrasing techniques (Chao et al, 2009). Chao et al, (2009) point out that merely telling the students not to plagiarize is not enough. A similar study conducted by Egaña (2012) on academic plagiarism in universities also found that the students did not understand the importance of citing and referencing the information for their academic works. A similar situation is likely to prevail in Bhutan.

Generally, Bhutanese students are not taught the concept of plagiarism until they complete high school. Even teachers are not strict enough to restrain their students from using the ideas of different people in their project works and assignments. In this way a culture of reproduction is being instilled in the students when they are in school (Dema, 2010).

People have developed a range of strategies to minimize and address the issue of plagiarism. According to Martin (2006), all major search engines can be used to detect plagiarism and he recommends software such as *Turnitin, Eve*, and *MyDropBox*. A study by Graham-Matheson and Starr (2013) on the use of turnitin to help students avoid plagiarism suggests that the software is seen as a useful tool by students and it may help students to avoid plagiarism. Further, they add that if it is used formatively, turnitin is a valuable tool for teaching students to make them understand and avoid plagiarism. Also, Chao et al (2009) note that instructions on avoiding plagiarism and hands-on paraphrasing practice increase students' knowledge about correct documentation techniques, improve their paraphrasing skills, and help them to apply the knowledge and skill in writing assignments. This suggests that lecturers should give students hands-on paraphrasing practice, which unfortunately is rare. Further, a case study conducted at a United Kingdom university focusing on international postgraduate students' experiences of plagiarism education found that in addition to the different understandings students and tutors had on plagiarism definition, students reported that support from tutors was limited (Davis, 2012). Accordingly, the study emphasized the need for more attention to plagiarism definitions and continuous pedagogical support. In an effort to curb plagiarism in the colleges of the Royal University of Bhutan, plagiarism as a form of academic dishonesty has been defined specifically mentioned in *The Wheel of Academic Law* (2008), though its use may differ from college to college given the federated nature of the university. However, no studies have been carried out on any aspect of plagiarism until now in Bhutan. This study seeks to fill the gap.

Research Design

This study employed a phenomenological design. Here the researcher describes the common experiences of participants in relation to a phenomenon and reduces these experiences to a description of the universal essence (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 1998). Patton (as cited in Marshall and Rossman, 2011) says that phenomenology seeks to explore, describe and analyze the meaning of lived experiences of participants.

As suggested by Mustakas (as cited in Creswell, 2007), this study mainly used the following two broad questions to collect data on participants' experiences (textural description) and, on the contexts and situations that influenced their experiences (structural description):

1. What are students' experiences related to writing plagiarized assignments and class presenta-
    tions?

2.   What contexts or situations influence university students to embrace plagiarism as an easy op-
    tion in assignment writing?

A total 39 students, purposively sampled, from all 10 colleges of the Royal University of Bhutan, were interviewed by using semi-structured interviews. Data were analyzed thematically by developing themes from the clusters of meaning that were based on significant statements, sentences, or quotes spotted in the students' responses (Creswell, 2007). As emphasized by Creswell (2007), the themes were then separated into textural and structural descriptions before generating a composite description that eventually resulted into the essence of this study.

Findings and Analysis

The first part of this section will focus on different types of lived experiences of students in the colleges. The second part will discuss contexts or settings that influenced how the participants experienced plagiarism. The last part will focus on the essence of the study.

Different Types of Lived Experiences

The following were the different types of lived experiences of the participants.

Experiences relating to different forms of plagiarism

This study showed that students in the university had experienced or practiced different kinds of plagiarism. These experiences were: presenting someone's materials that were presented earlier; submitting assignments by copying from senior students' assignments; writing assignment by directly copying from electronic sources; and submitting assignments by copying the works of classmates. Some other experiences included the use of soft copies of assignments left undeleted on computer desktops and the use of assignments of colleagues with minor modification in terms of their style and format. An insight into the responses of the student participants in this study will highlight these points.

Participant 28 said, "... last time we did this presentation on anatomy and we did not give any reference. Some gave [references] but not properly. So the teacher made us to redo [the assignment]." From experiences such as these, we understand that if a teacher is strict, the students will hesitate to plagiarize. Another participant shared her experience in the following words:

> I did my assignment in the college general lab. I left my copy in the desktop which is shared amongst three students. It happened that one of the students who did the same assignment got a copy. Then he printed the same copy that I wrote and submitted it as his assignment. The teacher in-charge gave a zero and later when I proved that it was my assignment, he considered my mark but not his. (Participant 13)

The above experience gives us a sense of how some students resort to easy work. Participant 15 also shared his experience in the following words:

> Actually there is no difficulty as we have internet resources and library. Our difficulty is that we are bit a lazy. If there is time, we go to hostel and watch movies. At the last moment we collect assignments from friends. Sometimes the teacher is not so strict and we directly copy-paste and submit it. And if the teacher is strict, we collect assignments from others but we edit them before submitting.

Assignment writing practices and time constraints

Procrastination and easy-going attitude seemed to be fostering plagiarism among students. Some student participants admitted that they had plagiarized because of their laziness even when they knew that doing so carried punitive measures. Some participants said that they did not do assignments when there was time but rather rushed to complete the work towards the end. This forced them to copy other's works. Participant 3 said that students failed to start off early and rushed to write the assignment in the last minute. This situation forced them to either copy from other works or cite the sources inadequately. Participant 34 said, "People are lazy and leave their assignments towards the end. They just copy."

Students also shared lived experiences relating to time constraints. Participant 4 said that plagiarism was carried out when students had inadequate time. Further, Participant 34 too said that he did it when there was no time. The same participant further said, "It is important to avoid plagiarism but when there is no time and resources, we are compelled to do so."

Academic work practices of lecturers

Lecturers' habit of not acknowledging the reference sources appeared to role model students into plagiarism. Some participants had experienced that in some cases there were lecturers plagiarizing. One participant said, "Yes ... a lecturer who is teaching is using the material [developed by] the other" (Participant 1). Participant 7 said that lecturers were not acknowledging the sources. Further, one participant boldly shared his view about modelling of plagiarism by a lecturer:

> Since this is a research work, it will benefit so many academic students. I think I have seen it a bit. If you don't ask me to name the person ... I have seen one saw doing [plagiarizing] la. Actually the paper was presented by another person. This work I saw him presenting. I read the paper. This was the same paper presented in the class. (Participant 1)

On the other hand, many students reported that many lecturers were very serious with the issue of plagiarism. For example, Participant 26 said, "Obviously I must say yes (advocacy) as far as possible they check our assignment. They they even compare our assignments and ensure that we don't copy and paste. So in some ways, they really make us feel that we shouldn't do it."

Inadequate support and help from tutors

The lack of alternatives to doing assignments in the form of tutor assistance and reinforcement seemed to encourage plagiarism among students. A participant said, "…I don't have much idea. Teachers don't tell…Teachers simply say I got it from somewhere" (Participant 19). According to Participant 23, some of his friends in other colleges also did it as their lecturers had not taken plagiarism seriously. Participant 6 said, "Some of the lecturers tell them that marks will be deducted if the work is plagiarized, but some lecturers don't care." Lack of seriousness was also evident in the comments of some other participants. For instance, Participant 37 said that plagiarism could be reduced only if lecturers were strict in the use of citation and referencing when correcting their assignments.

Further, some students presumed that their tutors didn't have tools to detect plagiarism. They also thought that university lecturers didn't have adequate time to correct each assignment. In this regard, Participant 39 said, "May be teachers have no time to assess each and every body's assignment … I am not sure if they have tools to detect plagiarism."

Experiences related to resource challenges

The lack of resources seemed to encourage plagiarism among students. Most of student participants said that they faced challenges in the course of writing their assignments. Participant 15 said, "Here, when we are writing assignments we can't find resources. Our internet speed is low." Some participants expressed that given fewer resources, most of the students had to refer the same resources which were considered as academic dishonesty by the tutors. Students also expressed their views that they faced difficulty with

regard to actually writing assignment in the first semester. One of the main causes for this was reported to be lack of exposure while they were studying in high school.

Experiences related to students' difficulty of writing assignments in their own words

Students' substandard language led them into plagiarism. Participant 7 said, "We can't understand the concept, so we may have to copy the whole thing from the book." Some participants believed that their difficulty with language forced them to rely either wholly or partly on other's works. Further, the lack of support from their tutors in resolving the challenges associated with their language also encouraged plagiarism. On informant said:

> .... because your language is not good you have to plagiarize. On top of that, in a technical institute, language itself is not considered very much. That is why, we tend to forget everything. We tend to forget our language and we take the language of others. (Participant 6)

Contexts or Situations that Influenced the Participants' Experiences

This study found that there were several contexts and situations that led to student plagiarism. Each of these is discussed as under:

Students' misconception of plagiarism

Many participants were able to say what plagiarism is in their own views. However, not many participants could give a proper definition of plagiarism. Some participants even thought that just mentioning the authors and related texts in the end (reference) was alright. Those who claimed that they knew about plagiarism said that it was: "copying something from others and stealing from others without permission" (participant 19), "copying what others have done without acknowledging" (participant 20), and "stealing other's work without authority..." (participant 12).

Views expressed along these lines point to the fact that students have a good understanding of the concept of plagiarism. But there was another group of informant who had conceptual misunderstandings about the concept of plagiarism. One of the informants said, "I think as long as we acknowledge we can plagiarize but ... Basically you are trying to get some ideas from others' works and present them in your own words. (Participant 1). Some participants even believed that borrowing a little bit of other's ideas was not plagiarism. Many students seemed to have such kind of views when they were writing their assignments.

Lack of clarity in the policy on plagiarism and referencing system

Many student participants were not sure if there was a policy in place pertaining to plagiarism. Further, many participants had a shallow understanding about citation and referencing. Participant 7 said, "…I have copied from some of the book but I never forget to acknowledge the author and the name of the book. … I write in the end." Echoing a similar view, Participant 7 said that students plagiarised "because of not having proper idea about citation, lack of proper ideas". Therefore, the students need to be guided especially in the first semester. A study by Egaña (2012) also found out that the students did not understand the importance of citing and referencing information.

Students' lack of academic writing skill

Many students had low self-esteem about their language skill. Participant 34 said that owing to poor language students tended to copy from the book. For reasons such as these, most students said that development of language skill should be given importance. Similarly Participant 19 said, "Usually we get lost trying to put our ideas together and actually putting them in writing. Sometimes we are lost in the topic; we don't know how to describe …we are lost in words and ideas."

Despite students' aspirations to score good marks, their poor language adversely affected their performance. As such, they were forced to plagiarize the materials which were easily available. Participant 23 said, "We don't have very good English language and it is very difficult to find alternative words." Earlier studies also found that poor language was one of the causes of plagiarism (University of Pretoria, 2004).

Inadequate resources and facilities

Many student participants shared their experiences relating to lack of resources and other facilities. According to some participants, lack of resources this forced them to copy other's work. Resources included computers, library books, and internet facilities. Some of the participants also said that given fewer resources, many students tended to rely on the prescribed books only. Eventually, each student seemed to copy from each other.

Sharing resources like computer amongst students makes it easier for them to copy each other's works, as evident in the following statement:

> I did my assignment in the college general lab. I left my copy in the desktop which is shared amongst three students. It happened that one of the students who did the same assignment got a copy. Then he printed the same copy that I wrote and submitted it as his assignment. The teacher in-charge gave a zero and later when I proved that it was my assignment, he considered my mark but not his. (Participant 13) (Participant 13)

If students share resources like computers, it will be difficult to curb the practice of plagiarism particularly if it has become a habitual tendency.

Many participants said that lack of resources forced them to indulge in academic cheating. For instance, participant 15 said, "Here when we write assignments, we can't find resources. Our internet speed is low." Clearly, if students get frustrated because of non-availability of resources they are bound to pick up the practice of academic cheating.

Assignment pressure

Many students said that they had many assignments to write in a semester. Participant 21 said, "In each module [course] we have to do 3 to 4 assignments and presentations are very frequent." Further, Participant 27 said, "We do around 7 to 8 assignments. At the same time, lecturers also tell us to presentations." Participant 32 said, "We plagiarize when we have many assignments and presentations. We can't finish the works in the given time." These experiences show that they live in a learning environment where they are constantly under pressure to complete assignments. However, some students did their works in the last minute. Many students shared their experiences of deferring their works to the next day because of their laziness. For example, Participant 15 said, "We feel quite lazy ... that's why we tend to copy."

Easy access to senior students' assignments and presentations

One of the main sources of plagiarism is the senior students' works. Generally students used it either because the tutors failed to detect malpractices or that there was system to track the   works. This is what many participants said regarding the source of plagiarism. In the absence of a system to track senior student's works, students will have the freedom to use any assignments and presentation materials from senior students. A participant also expressed his opinion that colleges did not have any software to detect plagiarism in assignments. Given this mindset, some students may resort to an easy way of writing assignments. Further, some students may try to modify the assignments especially if they have access to electronic copies of an assignment.

Essence of the study

This section will present the essence of this study. Creswell (2007) says that in a phenomenological study, the informants' experiences and contexts constitute the essence of the study.

Student informants generally seemed to engage in academic writing in an environment where there was little academic support. Yet, some of the participants believed that with academic writing support, they would be able to avoid academic malpractices. Further, as discussed in the literature review section, Chao et al's study found that instructions on avoiding plagiarism and hands-on paraphrasing practice can not only increase students' knowledge about correct documentation techniques but they can also improve their paraphrasing skills.

Many participants in different colleges were not sure if the colleges had standing rules or policies on plagiarism. Moreover, existing bad academic practices among academic tutors also seemed to encourage students to plagiarize. In some cases the lack of seriousness in tutors and resource constraints in the colleges led to serious acts of plagiarism. On the one hand, the students seemed to have too much work pressure. On the other hand, they had poor assignment writing habits and time management skills, as was evidenced by the participants' responses. Further, lack of adequate academic writing skill among the students also contributed to the increasing instances of plagiarism.

The study also showed that the students had conceptual misunderstanding of the term plagiarism and that they did not understand the American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines for citation and referencing. Learning to cite sources seemed to be a challenge for students because of inadequate support from tutors. In fact, many of the student informants had little or no understanding of plagiarism. Further, they believed that citation and referencing were difficult to learn.

The students who plagiarised published works can be grouped into three categories: 1) students who plagiarised due to the lack of knowledge about writing assignments; 2) students who plagiarised due to sheer laziness; and 3) students who plagiarised due to the belief that they could not be caught. Categorizing students in this way may help us to devise strategies to curb bad academic practices.

In sum, a host of factors were cited by the participants as the main reasons for plagiarism in the colleges, including laziness, inadequate time, poor language skill, conceptual misunderstanding, accessibility to seniors' works, scheduling writing assignment towards the end of the semester, lack of interest in academic works, lack of support from the lecturer, and sense of competition.

Recommendations

A number of remedial measures can be deduced from this study as follows.

Giving students adequate guidance and resource support: Giving adequate guidance and resource support in the different colleges of the Royal University of Bhutan may help curb plagiarism. The study suggests that one of the key factors of plagiarism is the lack of adequate guidance and resource support. The colleges may have to work out suitable ways and means to ensure that adequate guidance and other kinds of support are given particularly to those students who have poor assignment writing habits and time management skills.

Create more awareness on the existence of policy on plagiarism: The colleges have to create more awareness on the existence of plagiarism policy by using appropriate strategies. The colleges can use "curbing plagiarism" as a theme for a semester or two so that all students and faculty are aware of it. Further, each college may ensure that all faculty members are on board to curb plagiarism.

Use of software to track plagiarism: A few colleges in the Royal University of Bhutan already use tracking softwares to detect plagiarism. If the university is seriously thinking of curbing plagiarism, lecturers will need to be educated in the use of reliable software packages to track plagiarism in students' works.

Improving students' writing skill: Colleges may find ways to bring improvement in students' English language skills through remedial classes and other similar approaches.

Track senior students' assignments: Colleges may find ways and means to track both soft and hard copy of senior students' works. A copy of senior student's works may be kept with the lecturers to help make tracking easier. Lecturers can keep a soft copy each of both the presentation materials and other assignments submitted in the printed. Colleges can also make a standing rule to change assignment questions from time to time.

Conclusion

This study explored students' experiences with regard to plagiarism in the colleges of the Royal University of Bhutan. The study revealed that students have conceptual misunderstanding of the term plagiarism and that they don't understand citations and referencing systems properly, which is further aggravated by the lack of resources, students' poor language command, and lack of seriousness in tutors. Consequently, the study recommends the colleges to devise measures to address the issues related to rampant practices of plagiarism by students, with the aim of not only fostering scholarly research practices among them but also of making them aware of academic writing as part of citizenship training.

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Perception of Local Residents of Paro on Socio-Cultural Impacts of Tourism

UMESH JADHAV, TANDIN CHHOPHEL, MANOHAR INGALE, PAWAN KUMAR SHARMA, KARMA DRUKPA, ELANGBAM HARIDEV SINGH, AND NAMRATA PRADHAN

Abstract

Within the purview of sustainable tourism development, this article specifically focuses on the perceptions of local residents of Paro, a tourist destination in Bhutan, about the socio-cultural impacts of tourism. The survey-based cross-sectional research brings forth an understanding of the perception of the local residents of Paro which is evidently a high impact tourist destination in Bhutan. The survey was carried out in January and February, 2013. In all instances, both secondary and primary data sources were used to justify the conduct of the study and logically present the empirical-based findings. The findings assert that the local residents positively perceive the impacts of tourism in terms of preservation and promotion of socio-cultural values through religious practices, *Tshechus*, traditional arts and handicrafts. The negative impact of tourism includes changing habit towards western food, music, dress code, and non-Bhutanese names for children. This article argues that tourism needs to be sensitive to local culture and beliefs for the acceptance of tourism by local residents and the promotion of sustainable tourism development. The empirical findings firstly contribute to the understanding of the perception of local residents on the socio-cultural impacts of tourism and secondly, it has a practical implication on the sustenance of cultural values and practices as tourist products with due respect to the sentiments of the local residents. Future research is recommended for an in depth understanding of the degree of socio-cultural impact of tourism on individual variables.

Keywords: Social-cultural impacts, perceptions, sustainable tourism development

Introduction

Globally, tourism is one of the fastest growing economic sectors (Schroeder & Sproule-Jones, 2012). Tourism is defined as "activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes" (UNWTO, n.d). Tourism is characterized by its intricate relationship with socio-cultural values of a tourist destination and it is emerging as the world's largest growing industry (Reinfeld, 2003). Despite periodic setbacks by devastating terrorist attack in the US in 2001; Iraq crisis, SARS outbreak and persistent weak global economy in 2003 and the global economic recession which resulted in 3.8% decline in 2009 (Travel & Tourism, 2011), international and domestic tourism is expected to boom over the next decades ("The future", n.d). In the least developed countries, tourism is growing faster than the world average, holding the promise of prosperity for many (Kandari & Chandra, 2004).

However, the paradox of tourism lies in minimizing the negative impacts on socio-cultural values and practices, and maximizing economic returns (Nyaupane & Timothy, 2010). Burns & Holden (1995) remarked that tourism provides socio-economic benefits at one extreme and reinforcement of social discrepancies at the other extreme. Like any other economic development, tourism brings changes which also affects the quality of life. Changes in the host community's quality of life are influenced by two major factors: the tourist–host relationship and the development of the industry itself (Ratz, 2002).

Social and cultural changes to host societies include changes in value systems, traditional lifestyles, family relationships, individual behaviour or community structure (ibid).

Therefore, tourism needs to be studied in the light of all its ramifications on the socio-cultural milieu of a destination. Bhutan, a small land-locked country focuses on development with particular emphasis on the preservation of Bhutan's unique culture and tradition. Therefore, the country is concerned about the vulnerability of its socio-cultural heritage with rapid development. Consequently, the government has adopted the concept of sustainable development, which has become a central theme of Bhutan's tourism development policy "high value-low impact" ("Tourism Council of Bhutan", 2011). However, Bhutan is experiencing socio-cultural transition with the political and economic reform measures (Rinzin, Vermeulen, & Glasbergen, 2007) especially within the last few decades.

The Socio-Cultural Impacts of Tourism

A country or a community benefits from tourism industry in terms of earning of hard currencies, infrastructural development, balanced regional development, preservation of cultural and social values, promotion of local handicrafts, employment generation, mutual understanding among different people of cultures and nations etc. It helps in keeping native culture and tradition alive, and increases visitors' appreciation of socio-cultural heritage.

With an industry which is estimated to double from 2009 (880 million tourists) until 2020 to 1.6 billion tourists ("Tourism 2020 Vision", 2010), it is most likely that tourism will make even greater impacts on our societies. In the recent years, festivals and events are becoming more important to localities where the available sources of income are limited as compared to the people in the metropolis (Felsenstein & Fleischer, 2003; Jackson, Houghton, Russel, & Triandos, 2005). Tourists visiting developing countries introduce and display a foreign ways of life to host populations, especially when tourists come from different cultural backgrounds (Oppermann & Chon, 1997). Jafari (1974) states that native people often tend to imitate the seemingly rich tourists which impact their socio-cultural values. Socio-cultural impacts may be 'real' or 'perceived' and measures must cope with both the dimensions. The 'real' impact can be measured with objective data that verifies its existence. An example of this is the level of traffic congestion which is a quantifiable outcome, although attribution to a particular cause of the traffic congestion may be difficult to make. By contrast, a 'perceived' impact is purely a personal view of that impact (Ap & Crompton 1998). There is a concern that tourism development may lead to destinations losing their cultural identity and diluting social values by catering to the desired needs of tourists – particularly from international markets ("The social", n.d). However, the tourism industry is highly visual and it often becomes the scapegoat for socio-cultural change (Crick 1989).

There is a growing antipathy to mass tourism among the Europeans where the European Press has termed foreign tourists as "New Invaders" (Seth, & Bhat, 2000). Although developing countries have competitive advantage in terms of appealing cultural variety to the Western world in the form of festivals or hand-woven rugs, the intangible heritage is getting lost to the global consumerist culture (Reinfeld, 2003). The social impacts include co modification of cultures; disruption of traditional economic activities through wage labour and marginally higher incomes in tourism; increasing prices of land and food for locals; and the spread of disease, prostitution and other social ills (Jules, 2005).

However, the advocates of tourism assert that besides economic contribution, tourism can lead to socially sustainable development (WTTC & IHRA, 1999). Socially, tourism is credited for its potential impact on employment; income redistribution and poverty reduction; contribution to native craft revival, festivals and traditions; and improvements to the physical and social infrastructure, enhancing overall health and social welfare (UN, 1999). Therefore, there is a tussle between tourism promotion and preservation of societal and cultural values (Kandari & Chandra, 2004). It is important that the unique wisdoms of any culture must be protected; tradition must adapt with modernity and create a space for cultural evolution and preservation (Reinfeld, 2003).

Owing to these concerns of tourism impacts, the research continues on social and cultural impacts of tourism (Deery & Jago, 2010). Bhutan is known for its slow emergence into the modern world with distinct values; attempts to preserve cultural heritage and market to the international community as unique tourist destination (Reinfeld, 2003) which makes Bhutan an interesting context for the research on perception of locals on the impact of tourism.

Tourism Trend in Bhutan

Tourism development in Bhutan is a recent trend which commenced with the coronation of the fourth king on 2nd June 1974. This was the first time that the international media were allowed to enter the kingdom, followed by the first group of paying tourists who arrived later that year ("Excursion to Bhutan", n.d). It was a modest beginning with only 287 visitors which gradually increased. Since then tourism sector has observed steady growth. Bhutan received 37,479 tourists in 2011 with an earning of USD 47.68 million (Nu. 2226.66 million) (Tourism Council of Bhutan, 2012) excluding earnings from other sectors such as airline, handicrafts and other personal spending. In 2012, the targeted tourist arrival was 100,000 and in the first quarter of the year from January to April 2012, the tourists arrival was 12,289 (RGoB report, May 2012). The year 2012 recorded the highest number of 105,407 tourists in the country which was an unprecedented growth of 64.62% more than in 2011 (ibid). The figure includes 54,685 international visitors and 50,722 regional visitors. Out of the total, 77,700 visitors were tourists who solely visited Bhutan for holidays (Bhutan tourism annual report, 2012). The following table explains the number of tourist arrivals from 2007-2011 (exclusive of Indian tourist).

Tourists Arrival by Regions and Year

Region	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
North America	6488	7931	5467	6141	7511
South America	165	309	276	365	545
Asia and Pacific	5429	7514	7800	8692	15,119
Europe	8777	11698	9697	11751	13886
Africa	66	77	66	101	92
Middle East	169	107	172	145	326
Total	**21,094**	**27,636**	**23,480**	**27,195**	**37,479**
Revenue US $ (million)	**29.85**	**38.83**	**31.88**	**35.98**	**47.68**

Source: Department of Tourism, 2012

In light of its importance and potentials to contribute to the economic development, tourism was recognized as the key to boost the private sector in 9ᵗʰ Five Year Development Plan (2002-2007). However, Dorji (2002) asserts that still sustainable tourism in Bhutan is marred with problems of seasonality, regional imbalance, insufficient product diversification, non-involvement of local community, lack of substantive tourism research and deterioration in pricing integrity. Therefore, it requires the government to consistently play a supportive role to achieve sustainable tourism development.

The Socio-Cultural Aspects of Bhutan

Bhutanese culture is reflected in its religious practices, music, national dress code, names, religious festivals, social life, traditional sports, cuisine and traditional arts and crafts. The Bhutanese tradition and culture is preserved through the system called *Driglam Namzha. Driglam Namzha* connotes a comprehensive Bhutanese etiquette which encompasses from a day-to-day life to partaking in various ceremonial functions. It also includes etiquette pertaining to hierarchical structure of position, power and respect. The well preserved cultural aspects of Bhutan always provide a greater curiosity to tourists. An archaeological evidence suggests that Bhutan was inhabited possibly as early as 2000 BC ("Excursion to Bhutan", n.d).

Religion – Introduction of Buddhism in Bhutan was commonly credited to the first visit of Guru Rinpoche in the 8ᵗʰ century (Lhundup, 2002) and Guru Rinpoche is amongst the most revered religious and historical figures who is regarded as the second Buddha ("Know Bhutan", n.d). Bhutan is the country which maintains *Mahayana* Buddhism in its *Tantric Vajrayana* form as the official religion ("An Overview…" n.d).The main practicing schools are the *Drukpa Kagyupa* and the *Nyingmapa* and Buddhism transcends all strata of society (ibid). Religious beliefs are observed in all aspects of life in Bhutan. Prayer flags flutter on hillsides and people pray for the benefit of all sentient beings ("Bhutanese prayer flags", n.d). The other major religion is Hinduism.

Music - Music in Bhutan is played with popular traditional musical instruments such as *Dramnyen* (comparable to hollow guitar), *Lim* (flute), *Chiwang* (comparable to violin) and *Yangchen* (metal-stringed instrument like harp). The melody of Bhutanese music is always synchronised generally with the three types of songs and dances: *Rigsar* (modern songs with western influence), *Boedra* and *Zhungdra* which are traditional songs and dances. Music, songs and dances in Bhutan are significant firstly, as a medium of entertainments and secondly, as a spiritual significance of accumulating merits at two levels: being reborn in the god's realm and serves offerings to gods (Kinga, 2001). Kinga (2001) states that Bhutanese music can be classified into religious and ordinary songs, while some can be sung, others can be danced. Beyond the classification of Bhutanese music and songs into *'Rigsar', Boedra* and *Zhungdra,* there are songs such as *Yuedra, Zhey, Zheym* which can be danced while *Tsangmo, Alo, Khorey* and *Ausa* are only sung (Kinga, 2001).

National Dress Code - All Bhutanese citizens are required to observe the national dress code and they wear their traditional dress in all formal places, gatherings and while in public during daylight hours.

The fabrics for these colorful traditional clothes range from simple cotton checks and stripes to the most intricate designs woven in silk. Men wear *Gho* which is a heavy knee-length robe tied with a belt and women wear colorful large rectangular cloth called a *Kira* with colourful silk or brocade blouse-like called *Tego*.

Names - Bhutanese parents take their children to a *Lama* (priest) or a *Tship* (astrologer) or to a revered *Gomchhen* (lay priest) who names a child usually with two traditional auspicious names. The tradition of naming children by their parents or grandparents also continues in some cases. The first names generally give no indication of whether a person is male or female; but the second name generally helps in understanding the sex. Except for royal families, Bhutanese names do not include a family name.

Religious Festivals – Religious festivals with elaborate mask dances called *Tsechu* are amongst the most important parts of Bhutanese spiritual life. *Tsechu* are held at a district head quarters -*Dzong* or in important village *Lhakhang* (monastery). Villagers from the surrounding areas come for several days for the religious events, socialize and also make generous offerings to the *Lama* or monastery of the festival. The central activity is a fixed set of religious mask dances, held in a large courtyard. Normally, each individual dance lasts at least for half an hour to complete and the entire set takes five days. Some local *Tshechu* are conducted for one day or three days and in some places, it is held once in every three years. On the final day of the *Tsechu,* a huge tapestry, *Thongdrel* or *Thangka* is unfurled in the courtyard of the *Dzong* or *Lhakhang* for several hours.

The Society - Bhutanese society is predominantly a collectivist and both men and women are equal legitimate heirs to their ancestral property of land and household belongings. They lead a simple life according to their cultural and spiritual values. Their day begins with prayer, water and incense offering in an alter room. Old grandparents are idolized figures in a family and they devote much of their time to chanting prayers. They also spend time with their grand children orally transmitting values through stories where the bond between grandparents and children is strong. Both men and women involve in agricultural work but commonly women head home affairs while men engage in strenuous work. Women weave cloths but some men do too. However, there isn't a strict division of daily tasks as both men and women involve in sharing household chores.

Marriages are simple affairs with arranged as well as love marriages, but elaborate rituals are performed for the lasting unions of the bride and the bridegroom ("Marriage", n.d). In western Bhutan commonly, husband goes to live in wife's house while in eastern Bhutan; it is wife who goes to live in her husbands' house or the newlyweds may choose to live on their own (ibid). Divorce is also an accepted norm and carries no ignominy or disgrace within the country (ibid).

Sports - Archery is the national sport in Bhutan and it is played at most occasions. The archery competitions are held annually amongst villages where the contest is tougher in the final match. It is an occasion of rejoice where people of all ages witness the match and it is believed to ward off misfortunes, bring happiness and bountiful harvest in the villages. Every family comes to witness the match with Bhutanese cuisine, tea and home brewed wines, which are profusely shared with everyone. Women sing

and dance while archers may partake occasionally. Attempts to distract an opponent archer while aiming at the target include women standing near the flag poles and making fun of the shooter. *Khuru* (darts) is an equally popular outdoor team sport, in which players shoot a heavy wooden dart with 10 cm metal tip at a wooden target fixed at a distance approximately 20 meters away. Another traditional sport is the *Degor*, which resembles shot put.

Cuisines **-** The staple food crops of Bhutan are red rice, buckwheat, millet, barley, wheat and maize. The diet includes chicken, yak meat, beef, pork and mutton. Soups and stews of meat, rice, ferns, lentils, and dried vegetables, spiced with chilies and cheese are a favorite meal during the cold seasons. *Emadatshi*, made very spicy with cheese and chilies is a popular dish.

Traditional Arts – Bhutan's unique culture is depicted through thirteen types of arts ("Zorig Chusum", n.d): (i) *Dezo* - Paper Making: handmade paper mainly from the Daphne plant and gum from a creeper root; (ii) *Dozo* – stonework or the masonry: the stone arts are used in the construction of the walls of *Dzong, Lhakhang,* stupas, and some other buildings; (iii) *Garzo* - blacksmithing: the manufacture of iron goods, such as farm tools, knives, swords, and utensils; (iv) *Jinzo* - clay arts: the making of religious statues and ritual objects, pottery and the construction of buildings using mortar, plaster, and rammed earth; (v) *Lhazo* - painting: from the images on *Thangkas* (religious wall hangings), walls paintings, and statues to the decorations on furniture and window-frames; (vi) *Lugzo* - bronze casting: production of bronze roof-crests, statues, bells, and ritual instruments, in addition to jewelry and household items using sand casting and lost-wax casting. Larger statues are made by repoussé; (vii) *Parzo* - wood, slate, and stone carving: In wood, slate or stone, such items include printing blocks for religious texts, masks, furniture, altars, and the slate images adorning many shrines and altars; (viii) *Shagzo* - woodturning: making a variety of bowls, plates, cups, and other containers; (ix) *Shingzo* – woodworking: employed in the construction of *Dzongs* and *Lhakhangs*; (x) *Thagzo* - weaving: the production of some of the most intricately woven fabrics produced in Asia; (xi) *Trözo* - silver and goldsmithing: working in gold, silver, and copper to make jewelry, ritual objects, and utilitarian household items; (xii) *Tshazo* - cane and bamboo work: the production of such varied items as bows and arrows, baskets, drinks containers, utensils, musical instruments, fences, and mats and (xiii) *Tshemzo* – needlework: working with needle and thread for embroidery on clothes, boots, or the most intricate of appliqué *Thangkas*.

Research Method

In line with the research aim, research method essentially proceeds to elicit perceptual information from the participants to meaningfully determine the socio-cultural impacts of tourism. This study adopts convenience sampling which is based on the ease of access (Kothari, 2004). In reference to the National Statistical Bureau (2010), population of Paro district was 39,806. The target population for the research was estimated at 5000 residing in the high impact tourist zones such as commercial centers, communities within the vicinity of heritage sites and residential areas adjacent to the roads at Paro. The choice of sites was based on the rationales that firstly, local residents in the high impact zones have seen and felt the socio-cultural changes of tourism over the years and secondly, it saves time as population in the selected

areas is clustered facilitating data collection. Considering 3% of margin of error and 95% confidence level, the total sample size estimated was 880 (Taylor, 2008). A pre-structured survey instrument was designed in reference to a number of literatures (Okech, 2010; Mbaiwa, 2005; Kariel, & Kariel, 1982) where similar studies were conducted. Broadly, the questionnaire was divided into two parts: Part-A included 5 items based on the personal profile of participants and Part-B included 42 items seeking participants' responses on the variables. Thirty copies of the questionnaire were pre-tested involving both faculty members of the Royal University of Bhutan and the final year undergraduate students of the business college. The questionnaire was reviewed in light of the comments from the respondents. The final version of the questionnaire had nine variables with forty eight items. Options of open ended questions were also provided for every variable to the participants if they had additional information to share. The questionnaires were personally distributed to the participants in the pre-identified areas. Three faculty members and six undergraduate final year students were involved in the survey for two months of January and February, 2013. At an average, every participant took 15 minutes to fill in the self administrated questionnaire. The filled in questionnaires were either collected on the spot or within the next few days. Besides the local residents, the participants included tour operators and civil aviation staff who were in Paro for 5 years or more. Out of 880 sets of questionnaires distributed, 681 were returned and were useable for the analysis and accordingly, the response rate was 77.3 %. The primary data collected from the survey were entered into SPSS version 21 and statistical analyses were conducted to find out the locals' perception on every variable concerning socio-cultural impact of tourism.

Findings and Discussion

The sample profiles consist of 54.2 % male and 45.8 % female and show balanced representation of both male and female. The age profile of the respondents was classified into five categories and it was found that it consisted of mainly adults (40%) and youth (31.5%). The education status of the respondents has been categorized into five i.e., illiterate (15.8%), below Class X (28.7%), Class XII (28.8%), graduate (23.6%), and postgraduate (3.1%). Regarding the professional profile, the respondents have been categorized into students (13%), employees (44.3%), Businessmen (16.2%), tour operators (9.8%), and self employed (16.3%). As per the characteristics of the respondents, the sample was heterogeneous and valid.

The descriptive statistics (Table 1) presents means, standard deviations and correlational values of all nine variables and the Cronbach's Alpha reliability value is 0.835 indicating a reliable measurement instrument. The bivariate correlational values between all variables are significant at $p<.01$. For example, the correlation between the "impact on religious practices and *Tshechu"* and "impact on traditional music" is 0.410** which shows a significant correlation at $p<.01$. The result explains that the local residents who perceive that tourism has been helping to promote religious practices also perceive that tourism has positive impact on promotion of traditional Bhutanese music. The correlational value of "impact on traditional sports" and "impact on traditional arts and handicrafts" is 0.445** which is significant at $p<.01$. It indicates that local residents who perceive that tourism has positive impact on traditional sports also perceive a positive impact on traditional arts and handicrafts. Similarly, "impact on social life" and "impact on traditional arts and handicrafts" bears a correlational value of 0.229 which is significant at $p<.01$. It explains that local residents who perceive positive "impact on social life"

Table 1: Descriptive data for focal variables

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Variables	Mean (SD)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Impact on religious practices & *tshechu*	3.89 (0.50)	1								
2. Impact on traditional music	3.47 (0.66)	0.456**	1							
3. Impact on Bhutanese National dress code	3.68 (0.89)	0.412**	0.463**	1						
4. Impact on naming ceremony of child	3.60 (0.89)	0.249**	0.393**	0.283**	1					
5. Impact on society and status of women	3.29 (0.49)	0.214**	0.439**	0.273**	0.453**	1				
6. Impact on traditional sports	3.90 (0.75)	0.184**	0.330**	0.442**	0.269**	0.328**	1			
7. Impact on Bhutanese food	3.25 (0.79)	0.163*	0.152*	0.093	0.536**	0.403**	0.237**	1		
8. Impact on traditional arts and handicraft	4.05 (0.66)	0.238**	0.280**	0.311**	0.148**	0.229**	0.588**			
9. Impact on physical facilities	3.66 (0.69)	0.115	0.137*	0.303**	0.092	0.256**	0.488**	0.122		

Note: Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient is 0.835, *P<.05; **p<.01

also perceives a positive "impact on traditional arts and handicrafts". A less number of correlation coefficients between the variables indicate insignificant relationship between the variables. For example, the correlation between "impact on naming ceremony of child" and "impact on physical facilities" is insignificant with correlation coefficient of 0.092.

Religious Practices and Tshechus: Majority of respondents (55.1%) hold strong opinion on visiting religious sites in proper traditional costumes. Strong opinion (80% of the respondents) is indicated that the respondents attending *Tshechus* will help in retaining religious dances in original forms while tourists paying respect towards *Tshechus* is expected to reinforce the religious practices in the society by 53 % of the respondents. The respondents do not perceive that visiting religious sites has become more of pleasure trip; rather 43% of the respondents feel it is more of devotion. Almost equal number of respondents (40.7%) perceives that visiting religious sites has become more of pleasure trip while 16% is indifferent.

Traditional Music: The finding (52% of the respondents) supports the view that tourism promotes Bhutanese traditional songs and dances while only 19.5 % of the respondents disagrees. Further, the respondents perceive that traditional music will continue to thrive in future. However, it is found that growth of tourism in Bhutan is responsible for generally improving the taste of western and modern music by around 40% of the respondents while 22% of the respondents are indifferent. The respondents are of the strong view (86.4% of the respondents agree) that fusion of western music and *Rigsar* is becoming more popular

Bhutanese National Dress Code: The respondents (75.4%) perceive that the employees in the tourism sector adhere to Bhutanese national dress code strictly; however 52.9% perceive that people tend to adopt dressing styles of tourists. Therefore, as high as 90.3% of the respondents strongly feel that respect for traditional dress code has to be increased and continued to maintain as a unique Bhutanese identity.

Naming Ceremony of Child: Majority of the respondents (80.4%) invariably believe that naming ceremony of newly born children must be held as per tradition and religious practices. Around 57% of the respondents perceive that some people are into practices of giving Western names to their children and such practices will result in changing attitudes of children.

Social Life: The findings do not support the negative impact of tourism on Bhutanese social life and the respondents (41.9%) perceive that tourists taking photographs do not necessarily cause personal offence while 30.2% of the respondents are indifferent. However, 65% of the respondents feel that marriages with tourists are increasing because of tourism.

Traditional Sports: The respondents (79%) agree that traditional sports of Bhutan such as archery, *Khuru* and *Degor* got a new lease of life by way of tourists taking keen interest in witnessing the matches and/ or taking part in games. Nearly 71.8% of the respondents favour organizing traditional sports events for tourists. On the other hand, 82.9% of respondents perceive that Bhutanese youth prefer more of touristic events such as trekking, biking, skiing etc. rather than traditional games.

Bhutanese Food: The respondents (65%) perceive that because of tourism, restaurants serving non-Bhutanese dishes promote taste for such food amongst the Bhutanese but they (50%) disagree with the statement of Bhutanese food loosing identity because of tourism while 17% remains indifferent.

Traditional Arts and Handicrafts: One of the benefits of tourism is that it patronises traditional arts and handicrafts. The 68.2% of the respondents perceive that tourism has given stimulus for the preservation and growth of traditional arts and handicrafts related business in Paro; consequently, it is assumed that tourism has enhanced employment opportunities with other accompanying artisans and craftsmen in various parts of the country.

Physical Facilities: The 68% of the respondents perceive that government, as facilitator of tourist activities, has taken special care to provide access to better roads in and around Paro. The 61.8% of the respondents perceive the influence of non-Bhutanese architecture in future because of tourism sector endeavouring to meet the comfort and lifestyle requirements of tourists.

Conclusions and Future Research

Tourism development in Paro has both positive and negative socio-cultural impacts on local communities. Its positive socio-cultural impacts include infrastructural development in and around Paro, preservation and promotion of religious practices and *Tshechus*, increasing interest of tourist in playing and/ or watching traditional sports, and the growth of traditional arts and handicrafts business. The local residents of Paro perceive the negative impact of tourism on the Bhutanese music, i.e. increasing the popularity of western music in the form of *Rigsar* which threatens the preservation of traditional songs and dances, wearing non-Bhutanese dresses, changing child ceremonies and developing taste for non-Bhutanese food. To avoid the negative effects of growth in tourism, a national master plan for sustainable tourism development with special emphasis on culture has to be mapped out, supported by international agencies such as UNESCO, WTO and ILO working closely with relevant government departments. Moreover, *Dzongkhag* (district) level master plan for tourism development which assesses socio-cultural impacts of tourism is advisable for high impact zone like Paro.

Future research should explore each variable separately for greater clarity and understanding of the phenomenon. For example, the current research lacks scholarly explanation of   the impact of tourism on Bhutanese food. Perhaps, advertisement, access to variety of processed food, exposure to the taste of non-Bhutanese food overseas are possible reasons for the change of taste from Bhutanese to non-Bhutanese food amongst the Bhutanese people. Similarly, the respondents' views about maintaining the Bhutanese architectural structures and beauty may not be solely attributable to tourism. The government's role and effort in the preservation of this cultural heritage could possibly be the major influencing factor more than tourism. Therefore, future research could study the degree of impact of tourism on the many socio-cultural variables not covered in this study.

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Bhutanese Teachers' Perceptions about Gross National Happiness in Education for Sustainable Development

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Abstract

The global community has shown much interest in Bhutan's development policy of Gross National Happiness (GNH). The reasons for the interest are primarily world leaders' efforts to develop ways of pursuing sustainable wellbeing and happiness. The sustainable wellbeing movement includes initiatives by educators to develop models of education that will nurture future citizens who are able to create holistic development paths. This paper examines how Bhutan is implementing the GNH-based development principles in its education system. The paper is drawn from Päivi Ahonen's preliminary PhD work on the strategies used in Bhutan to implement GNH policies in its educational system for promoting sustainable development. In doing so, it analyses Bhutanese teachers' perceptions of GNH and sustainable development education. Data for the study were gathered through qualitative case study interviews conducted in 2012 with teachers and principals of five schools in Bhutan. Among others, the study showed that Bhutanese culture and GNH philosophy are consistent with sustainable development values. It also showed that teachers were able to develop strategies for promoting affective and social learning skills through more student centric strategies in their classroom practice. The study concludes that Bhutan's educational system has made notable progress in its efforts in recent years to infuse GNH values into school curricula and classroom practice and that the Bhutan model may well serve the needs of the larger global community in its effort to develop alternative models of education for sustainable development.

Introduction

The concept of "Gross National Happiness" (GNH) was first articulated in 1972 by Bhutan's Fourth King Jigme Singye Wangchuck, who introduced Bhutan to the modern world. The young monarch declared that "Gross National Happiness is more important than Gross National Product" (see RGOB, 1999, p. 10; Thinley, 1998, pp. 12-13). As a development philosophy, GNH acknowledges firmly that inner spiritual development is as important as material prosperity and comfort (e.g. see RGOB, 2013, p. 2; RGOB, 2012, p. 23). GNH thus presents an alternative to Gross National Product (GNP) as a measure of development. His Majesty declared that "Happiness is the ultimate common end and everything else is a means to or instrument for fulfilling this wish that every human being has" (Thinley, 2007, p. 3). Continuing his father's legacy, His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, Bhutan's present King, has said that "GNH acts as a national conscience guiding us towards making wise decisions for a better future" and that it will be "the key to Bhutan's success in maintaining our unity and harmony - indeed our character as a nation" (REC, 2012, p. 5).

As a result of its efforts to transform its education system through GNH values and principles, Bhutan is in many ways leading the global discourse for a more holistic development paradigm and its implementation. After the first parliamentary elections in 2008, when Bhutan moved into the era of democratic constitutional monarchy, the new government promoted GNH as an alternative development paradigm among the global community, including the United Nations. Among others, the GNH model emphasized "ecological sustainability, fair distribution, and the efficient use of resources" and a "healthy balance among thriving natural, human, social, cultural, and built assets" (RGOB, 2012, p.

8). In 2009, Bhutan initiated the process of infusing GNH values into its education system. The then Prime Minister, Jigme Y. Thinley, promoted the goals of educating for GNH and emphasized the need to nurture "Graduates who are genuine human beings … ecologically literate … contemplative as well as analytical in their understanding of the world … free of greed and without excessive desires", and who know, understand, and appreciate "completely that they are not separate from the natural world and others" (Thinley, 2010, p. x).

The question posed by the classical economic theories of the western world is how to measure happiness, assuming that if something cannot be associated with economic values, it cannot be used as a decision-making criterion. On the contrary, the GNH-based development model gives full attention to the well-being and happiness of its citizens. Supported by centuries-old cultural and spiritual values inspired by Buddhist teachings of compassion, interdependence, peaceful co-existence, the concept of "happiness" conforms to present day knowledge and application of the concept of "sustainable development" (Ezechieli, 2003, p. 15).

Bhutan's GNH development framework consists of four pillars and nine domains that are considered vital for creating the conditions for human wellbeing and happiness. The four pillars include sustainable and equitable socioeconomic development, conservation of the environment, preservation and promotion of culture, and good governance (RGOB, 2013; Ura et al, 2012, pp. 9-10). The nine domains consist of psychological well-being, standard of living, good governance, health, education, community vitality, cultural diversity and resilience, time use, and ecological diversity and resilience (RGOB, 2013; Ura et al, 2012, pp. 9-10).

In 2011, Bhutan's GNH policy gained international recognition when the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 65/309, 'Happiness: towards a holistic approach to development'. The resolution showed UN member states' concern about the global phenomenon of unsustainable patterns of production and consumption. In a historic meeting on 'Wellbeing and Happiness: Defining a New Economic Paradigm' on 2nd April 2012 in the UN Headquarters, eight hundred distinguished persons comprising of government ministers, diplomats, economists and scholars, acknowledged the urgent need for a new global economic system. The present GDP- based system, they concluded, was devised prior to any knowledge of climate change or the limits of the earth's resources (New Economic Paradigm, 2012).

This study explored Bhutanese teachers' understanding of the concept of GNH and sustainable development, and the challenges, strengths and limitations of teaching according to GNH policies. The key research question asked in the study was: *How do teachers view, experience, and implement GNH-based education and sustainable development?* The purpose of the study was to understand the teachers' views about GNH-based education and how they thought the GNH education programme could improve further. The conclusions from Bhutan's experiences may benefit the promotion of activities for global sustainable development education.

The Context of Sustainable Development and Happiness

Theoretically, the concept of happiness as understood in the Bhutanese context is inspired by the Buddhist teachings of compassion, interdependence, cause and effect, and the truth that all beings desire happiness. Sidhartha Gautama Buddha taught the profound wisdom of how "Suffering and happiness

are mainly determined by one's state of mind, rather than by the presence or absence of goods" and how "we gain happiness by our compassion towards others" (Sachs, 2013, p. 82). According to Sachs (2012, p. 2209), Bhutan has inspired the world with its effort to assess national development through a holistic understanding of the people's experience of wellbeing and happiness. He is of the view that "Human happiness, life satisfaction, and the freedom from suffering depend on many things in addition to meeting of material needs, including social trust, honest government, health services, and a high level of civic participation". According to the   World Happiness Report (2013), in pre-modern traditions, happiness was not determined by an individual's material conditions but by their inner moral character. Over the course of several centuries, the virtue of ethical life declined, and was replaced by the economists' doctrine of utility and consumerism (Sachs, 2013).

For over a decade already, several international initiatives have raised the importance of promoting sustainable development. The idea of ever-increasing economic growth, using Gross National Product (GNP) as its indicator, has dominated the goals and strategies of the consumption driven modern development cultures. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) developed the Human Development Index (HDI) in the 1990s in order to present a broader method of understanding national development than the ones provided by GNP (Ulvila & Pasanen, 2009).

According to Schor (2011), sustainable development concerns "system innovations that require an integrated redesign of lifestyles, processes, and structures" (cited in Wals & Corcoran, 2012, p. 25). Wals and Corcoran (2012, p. 26) argue that "Most education around the world today focuses on preparing people for playing their roles in the global economy. Only at the margins of education are there still spaces for citizenship, democracy, arts and humanities, philosophy, ethics, and transformation". They propose a major shift towards to a more just, fair, and sustainable world that does not rely on consumerism, growth and materialism, but (re) discovers humanism, dynamic equilibrium and spirituality. Wals and Corcoran (2012) also alludes to Martha Nussbaum's concern about the consequences of using business models for organizing public education. According to Martha Nussbaum, such a model unintentionally contributes to un-sustainability. A very basic question is how to maintain current human capabilities so that future generations will have the same capabilities and freedom as we have, or even more (Sen, 2009, pp. 249-252). Salonen's (2010) study on sustainable development as a challenge of global well-fare society showed that education presents an opportunity to increase sustainability, but there are challenges in understanding the transition towards sustainable everyday life. In it he argues that the implementation of sustainable development should be focused on the planetary ethics covering humans, animals, plants and the ecosystems.

What Supports Education for Sustainable Development?

Since the beginning of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD, 2005-2014), a number of research studies have been conducted to understand how education for sustainable development could build sustainable societies. These studies involve early childhood education as well as higher education, and they have generally emphasized the importance of affective and social teaching methods for achieving key learning competencies for sustainable behaviors and sustainable ways of life. These studies have recommended the inclusion of sustainable development issues into all subjects and

grades of school and higher education curricula. The importance of distinguishing between sustainable development education and environmental education and the need for interdisciplinary learning are emphasized.

Recommendations from research on higher education have generally emphasized the importance of non-cognitive teaching, as the following studies showed:

- Sustainable development education should be taught by affective and social learning methods, with a problem based approach, (Dale & Newman, 2005)

- It is fundamental to include the non-cognitive, affective and social learning methods in the pedagogical toolbox, (Barth et al, 2007)

- Plan the assessment of the outcomes of the courses using affective and social learning methods, Kerry (2008).

Similarly, Anderberg et al (2009) flag the importance of developing an effective competence-based curriculum for Global Learning for Sustainable Development (GLSD), which is useful for educational policy and practice. The concept of 'Green School' that has been promoted in the educational system of Bhutan since 2010 parallels this move. Through the Green School programme students develop knowledge of "eco-literacy" such as "climate change", "resource conservation", "impact of pollution", "waste management", "organic farming", promotion of "local products", avoiding "junk food", "conservation ethics", among others (MOE, 2011, p. 26).

The Research Method

This study was based on information gathered mostly through qualitative case study interviews conducted in Bhutan in July 2012 with the support of the Royal Education Council (REC). The teachers interviewed were employed in five schools in urban areas. The schools were selected in cooperation with REC personnel. Semi-structured interviews were held with seven teachers in five urban schools in Paro and Thimphu. Four of the interview participants were Principals while the rest were teachers. Of the seven informants, four were lower secondary teachers, two were primary school teachers, one of them was a higher secondary school teacher. Four of the informants were men and the rest were women. Ethical principles of research, such as respect for voluntary participation, confidentiality, and anonymity were discussed and agreed before the interviews. All the semi-structured interviews lasted 45 to 90 minutes and were audio recorded.

The qualitative case study interviews (Creswell, 2007) focused on teachers' perceptions of the GNH policy, its implementation in school, and its connections with education for sustainable development ideas and initiatives. Primary data were gathered mostly from the teacher interviews, while documentary evidences were also gathered from the GNH training manual and other educational publications. The qualitative data analysis software package NVivo was used to analyze the interviews and to build thematic and purposeful categories. The analysis used the descriptive, classification and interpretive methods typical of qualitative studies. The interviews are reported anonymously in this

paper. Classifications were made of the challenges, strengths and limitations of the GNH approach that teachers expressed, of teacher's opinions on sustainable development, and of the teaching methods they used in their classrooms. Each teacher's response was further analyzed on the basis of the pedagogical method or approach they used in their teaching.

Qualitative content analysis techniques were applied to both the GNH training manual and the teachers' responses. The focus of the analysis was to identify the contents that reflected nations of education for sustainable education, and cognitive and non-cognitive teaching methods evident in the training manual and in the informants teaching practices. Recommendations from international studies on sustainable development education emphasized the importance of non-cognitive teaching and learning methods for achieving competences for sustainable behavior. These conclusions, closely linked to the theme of the study, guided the study in its analysis of the contents of both the GNH training manual and the teaching methods the teachers used following the training they received for educating for GNH. The teachers' responses were analyzed in relation to the pedagogical methods they were trained to apply and the methods they actually used in their classroom teaching. Although different pedagogical dimensions could have been part of the teaching of all six units of the educating for GNH curriculum, two or three learning approaches recurred in the interviews (see Tables 1 and 2 below). Conclusions about the pedagogical dispositions of the training manual were drawn with the aim to deepen the study's understanding of the interview data.

Key Findings and Discussion

A number of useful insights and perspectives emerged from the study. These include, for example, the teachers' positive views about the GNH approach to education and their motivation to employ teaching methods that are consistent with the values and principles of the new approach. The study showed that teachers were getting oriented to new teaching and learning methods and that they are encouraged to use them in their classroom practice. They also reported the use of innovative teaching methods that promoted student centered learning. These perceptions match the Ministry of Education's report in the 30th Education Policy Guidelines and Instructions (EPGI, 2012) that the implementation of the educating for GNH initiative was making good progress. A significant finding from the study was the teachers' understanding that sustainable development principles were closely connected with the principles of the GNH-inspired approach to education. An important recommendation that emerged from the study was the teachers' proposal that humanistic values be applied as the foundation of the global educational initiatives for sustainable development. The key findings from the study are discussed as three separate themes in the following sections.

Teachers' Perceptions about GNH and Sustainable Development

Concerning the relationship between GNH and sustainable development, the study showed that teachers emphasized the role of Bhutanese culture as an important source of both the GNH and sustainable development principles. The emphasis on culture is closely connected with the vision of His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, who said that GNH acts as "a national conscience guiding us towards making wise decisions for a better future". The four pillars of the GNH-based development

philosophy (see above) represent directly sustainable development values. As such, the concept and practice of sustainable development are highly prioritized in the current school curricula. The GNH training manual has been used in the in-service training of teachers in all the districts of Bhutan during 2010-2013. The manual includes indicators for values and principles that are important to be practiced in the teachers' and students' professional and personal lives. The teachers interviewed in this study viewed the GNH–based educational practice to be a natural part of their cultural psyche as the GNH philosophy is actually strongly related to the Bhutanese cultural heritage. One informant said:

> Bhutanese culture and way of life is based on sustainable values. We have a unique culture and we believe in all forms of life and life after death. Mountains around us have local deities. People and communities respect sustainable way of living. We need to consider carefully the resources we have, we had, and we will have. Humanistic values and understanding of the importance of saving the resources is needed." (Informant 3M)

Teachers were concerned about the imbalance between global over-consumption habits and unsustainable global development. For example, one informant (Informant 1M) said, "It is important to limit people's greed and avoid consumerism". Some of the informants also suggested the need to include the values of sustainable consumption education into their teaching practice. For example, one informant said:

> We want to hear examples of other countries - from the areas where natural resources were lost - to learn lessons from. Awareness of the diminishing global resources among all the children of the world, and need the for an educational approach to preserve natural resources for safeguarding the life of future generations on this planet, is necessary". (Informant 6F)

Conservation of the environment and preservation of culture are part of the GNH-based curriculum. The informants generally said that these contents were aimed to increase the students' knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the values of sustainable ways of life, conservation ethics, eco-literacy, and the impact of pollution and consumerism (also see Education for Gross National Happiness, p.55). For example, one of the informants said:

> Students are active in waste collection, and classes adopt rivers and mountains to protect them. They also travel to parks and temples with the money they have collected and clean the areas. Waste collection is managed by schools and bottles are re-cycled to India. (Informant 1M).

The study showed that the values that Bhutanese teachers practice would represent the desired change from consumerism and materialism to humanism and equilibrium (see Wals et al, 2012, p. 3). Although Bhutanese culture and the way of life are traditionally based on values of conservation and sustainability, according to the teachers, effective GNH-based pre-service and in-service trainings will be required for teachers to practice GNH-based, sustainable values in their professional and personal lives.

Teachers saw consumption habits based on "greed" as a main reason for unsustainable global development patterns visible today. The informants' comments resonate with the former Prime Minister of Bhutan Jigme Y Thinley's wish that the educating for GNH programme should aim "to educate graduates free of greed and without excessive desires". The informants, therefore, proposed humanistic values as a good foundational philosophy for promoting global education for sustainable development. This calls for the need to critically assess the values that shape education systems in different countries in light of emerging discourses that challenge the current models that prepare people for life according

to materialistic values instead of humanistic values (see e.g. Wals & Corcoran, 2010).

GNH-inspired Pedagogical Contents and Teaching Methods

In 2011, the Ministry of Education (MOE) published the 'Educating for Gross National Happiness' training manual for promoting GNH values across the entire school education sector in Bhutan. Organized in six units of learning (see Table 1 below), the manual was prepared in collaboration with Bhutanese and international education experts. It provides guidance for teachers on how to apply GNH-based teaching methods in primary and secondary schools. The need for students to develop knowledge and understanding of and the reasons for the vulnerability of the natural environment and creative solutions are part of the contents of the manual. Teachers have applied the GNH principles in their teaching in various ways. According to MOE, the school curriculum includes the different learning pathways such as meditation and mind training, critical thinking, and media literacy, among others (EPGI, 2012, p. 3).

Teachers are trained to infuse the contents of the four GNH pillars (mentioned above) and the nine domains in the different subjects they teach in different Classes (grades). For example, meditation and mind training are introduced with the aim to increase concentration and compassion. The broader learning environment emphasizes the role of family, community and media, as important contexts to learn about culture and society. To be carried out as part of the continuous learning process that the students engage in, holistic assessment develops teachers' pedagogical skills for effectively employing formative and continuous assessment strategies along with summative assessment methods.

Analyses of the pedagogical approaches and the different learning pathways suggested for the six units of the manual (see Table 1) showed that if these are practiced in the classroom as recommended, the students' learning outcomes will improve significantly as a result of the interaction of improved curricula, teaching practice, and the learning environment. As evident in the manual, the broader learning environment unit can be regarded as an important approach to learning both GNH and sustainable development values.

Table 1 Use of cognitive, affective and social learning methods in the GNH training manual

Units in GNH training	Contextualizing GNH education UNIT 1	Infusing GNH into school curriculum UNIT 2	Meditation/ mind training UNIT 3	Broader learning environment UNIT 4	Holistic assessment UNIT 5	Critical thinking/ media literacy UNIT 6
Cognitive	GNH philosophy; pillars/ domains	GNH values to be infused into different subjects	Understanding the concept	Culture, history, local wisdom,	Towards continuous assessment	Critical media consumer
Affective	GNH values at school and home		Methods of meditation	Child rights	Inclusion of affective learning domain	Critical thinking, skills to analyze and evaluate media
Social	GNH values in the community	Games, songs		Cultural activities, organic farming, no plastic policy		

Pedagogical analyses of the six units of the educating for GNH training manual (see Table 1) and teachers' pedagogical practices (see Table 2), showed that the GNH training of teachers in Bhutanese schools has led to improved classroom practice in a relatively short period of time. The units on the "broader learning environment", and meditation and mindfulness training can be regarded as new non-cognitive teaching methods that can potentially orient traditional classroom practice towards developing sustainable habits and conscientious living. Here, as some of the informants indicated, there is a need to monitor the progress of the new educational initiative and document best practices that can inspire innovation in curricula and classroom practice. This study suggests the need to develop a framework for monitoring and documenting developments in classroom practice as a result of the country's educating for GNH policies and programmes.

The interviews of the teacher informants were analyzed in the context of how the GNH training manual units were taught using different learning pathways. The teachers' answers are classified (see Table 2) based on how the pedagogical contents in the GNH training manual reflected cognitive, affective and/or social learning.

Table 2   Intended pedagogical approaches in GNH training manual and teachers' experiences

	GNH Training Manual	Teachers' classroom practices
Cognitive Learning	UNITS 1,2,6	Knowledge about pillars and domains – all seven teacher informants "Connections of happiness and sustainability" (Informant 1M) "National forest and clean water resources policies, connections with Bhutanese culture. Humanistic and environmental values" (Informant 3M) " Speakers from outside school to be invited on different topics" (Informant 6F)
Affective Learning	UNITS 3,5	"Students feel that after meditation they learn better" 5F Teachers encourage GNH- based behavior- " school should be like a temple and teachers should act as parents" (Informant 1M) "Students help poor people in paddy plantations" (Informant 2M) "Students participate in waste collection" (Informant 1M)
Social Learning	UNITS 4,6	"Student plant trees for learning to respect nature" (Informant 7M) "Students attend farm work and harvesting to learn happiness of all people" (Informant 2M) "Active participation in waste management" 4F, 5F "Packed lunches from home contain healthy food" (Informants 1M, 4F, 5F)

Table 2 shows the three domains of learning (cognitive, affective, and social), the units where these learning can occur, and the different pedagogical approaches teachers used and their comments about the students' learning experiences. The teachers' comments in the table can also be viewed as examples of the contents of the different units of the GNH manual. The specific experiences of the teacher informants are discussed in the following section.

Teachers' Perceptions about GNH-based Teaching

Teachers who were interviewed reported that as a result of the GNH-based education trainings they received since 2009, they saw important changes in their pedagogical practice, especially in relation to student-centered teaching. One reason why this change occurred was their ability to adopt a holistic approach to assessment of student learning, which comprises one unit in the GNH-based training manual for teachers. In holistic assessment the three domains of cognitive, affective and psychomotor learning are taken into consideration in lesson planning and student assessment. Teachers said that as a result of the new pedagogic approach, their capacity to assess the students' learning achievements improved. They said that they planned their teaching to target the specific learning needs of the children.

The general perceptions of the teachers interviewed in the study regarding the GNH-based teaching approach were for the most part positive. They said that apart from the few challenges they faced in the beginning, they were pleased with the positive impact of the GNH training they received on their classroom practice which encouraged them to develop GNH education further. New pedagogical practices such as meditation, mindfulness practice and other student-centered instructional methods improved the quality of students learning outcomes and increased their level of awareness concerning the values of sustainable living.

Many of the informants stressed the importance of 'non-cognitive teaching methodologies' (e.g. see Dale & Newman, 2005; Barth et al, 2007 & Kerry, 2008). These teachers said, "Teaching modalities have changed. Previously teachers gave lectures. Now children participate" (Informants 4 F and 5F). Informant 6F said, The GNH-based education encourages methods such as writing essays and speeches and debating on the topics". Similarly, Informant 1M said, "Children learn and like to be at schools and their feelings are respected". Other informants reported that the educating for GNH initiative not only improved the teaching methods but it also brought respect to the teaching profession. For example, Informants 4F and 5F said, "New teaching methods, such as meditation and media literacy, will improve the quality of teaching". Regarding respect, informant 1M said, "The teachers' profession become more respectable after the instruction of GNH-based teaching approaches were introduced [2010], and the teachers' pedagogical practices have improved"

As a suggestion for developing GNH education further, it was proposed that "Teachers need continuous re-training for sharing their experiences and for developing new pedagogies and teaching methods. Some teachers have less confidence and skills to implement although they know the concept" (Informant 7M).

Regarding the improvement of the quality of education through the GNH approach, two of the informants suggested: "It is important to analyze the effects of the language used by teachers and continue the discussion on the importance of pedagogically best medium of instruction in different grades and subjects" (Informants 4F and 5F). They said, "Children from the villages feel more comfortable asking questions in the national language Dzongkha, rather than in English" (Informants 4F and 5F). Teachers point out that children can learn more if mother tongues can be used in teaching. The concerns related to the medium of instruction may suggest the need to examine classroom language in relation to student's emotional wellness even though the issue was mentioned only by a few teachers. Clearly, this calls for the need to study the intimate relationship between classroom language and students' wellbeing and happiness.

The importance of opportunities beyond basic education was also raised. "Are there enough vocational education opportunities after the graduation?", asked Informants 2 M and 3M. Efforts for changing the long educational tradition of only white collar jobs attracting educated students are urgently needed. "Counseling and career guidance are needed to develop traditional ways of living in farming and agriculture", said Informant 3. This phenomenon resonates with the Ezechieli's (2003) study on sustainable development and GNH in Bhutan, which showed that education is automatically associated with white collar jobs, which are not always available.

The findings from Ezechieli's study have another parallel with GNH-based education. This study found that western economic and cultural models, especially the media, can even outpace the formative action of schooling (Ezechieli, 2003). The GNH–based education training manual includes teaching about critical thinking and media literacy. Emphasizing the value of critical thinking, Informant 6F said, "We need to know how the children are guided by parents in media literacy and share our understanding on the role of media".

Many international studies on education for sustainable development today emphasize the importance of non-cognitive teaching and learning practices for developing human values, behaviors and competencies in the immediate milieus of sustainable everyday life. The Bhutanese context in this regard is encouraging.

Conclusion

The main objectives of this study were to analyze how teachers' views and experiences of GNH-based education can contribute in developing the GNH education initiative further and how Bhutan's GNH inspired educational initiatives supported global initiatives in developing methods for education for sustainable development. This is consistent with and complements the conclusions that many international studies (e.g. see Dale & Newman, 2005; Barth et al, 2007; Kerry, 2008) have drawn regarding the need to develop values, behaviors and competencies through the creative use of non-cognitive teaching methods.

According to the study, the education system in Bhutan has developed and increased the capacity of teachers to integrate GNH policies into the teachers' classroom practice. Implementing the new GNH education policies and strategies in the classrooms has helped the teachers to innovate and adopt new methods of teaching. Teachers saw the importance of extending their teaching into the community life. They felt increasingly comfortable practicing mindfulness, engaging in more critical thinking habits, and appreciating the role of media literacy in the teaching of different subjects.

Education for sustainable development has been discussed and promoted for decades (e.g. UNESCO, DESD, 2005-2014) and the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (RIO + 2012). There is a growing corpus of research on the role of early childhood education and sustainable development education (see Hägglund et al, 2009). Further research about GNH –based education practices and global initiatives on education for sustainable consumption will be necessary for generating fresh knowledge, new insights and perspectives on the growing number of global initiatives with regard to sustainable development education curricula in school education.

Although the number of interviews conducted in this study was small and the diversity and range of experiences captured were rather limited, the findings from the Bhutan model may well serve the needs of the larger global community in its effort to develop alternative models of education for students. The alternative model of education should aim to foster the values of sustainable development, conscientious understanding of all human beings' fundamental need for happiness and peaceful co-existence. The Ministry of Education's educating for GNH training manual's emphasis on the broader learning environment suggests practical values that encourage children to "reduce", "refuse", "replace", "recycle", "reuse" and "re-educate" (the 6 Rs). The values taught through the GNH-infused school curricula for schools in Bhutan and the teachers' concerns about how unsustainable global consumption patterns is causing environmental unsustainability, are well connected.

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