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Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Identity Construction of Beginning Student Teachers: An Insight into the Making of Teachers

Dechen Tshomo[1], Khandu Dorji[2] and Amina Gurung[3]

Abstract

This paper reports the results from the self-efficacy scale, highlighting the similarities and more notable contrasts in individual perceived ratings of teacher self-efficacy beliefs centered on student engagement in the class; classroom management; and use of various teaching strategies. The study involving only quantitative method was administered on pre-service teachers enrolled in first year B.Ed Primary, B.Ed Secondary, B.Ed Dzongkha, Masters, PGDE and Diploma Studies of Paro College of Education (102) and Samtse College of Education (133). The findings from this study is quite hopeful for the learning of students as the self-efficacy beliefs of the pre-service teachers irrespective of the programme they have enrolled in and their gender are high for all three pertinent areas of teaching: student engagement in class; classroom management and use of various teaching strategies.

Key words: pre-service, self-efficacy beliefs, student engagement, classroom management, teaching learning strategies

Context of Study

When the first year student teachers enter the college in the beginning of the first year, they often arrive with pre-conceived notions of what they think teaching is. Often these preconceived notions are combined with a sense of highly perceived self-abilities. Informal classroom personal communications reveal that most student-teachers think of the teaching profession flippantly and see it as a piece of cake and are enrolled not out of choice but, as a last option. Their self–efficaciousness is at its highest at the initial stage when they set foot into the college with a feeling of seemingly high self-competence coupled with moderate levels of motivation. But so far no research has been carried out about the self-efficacy beliefs and identity construction of beginning student-teachers and the impact of educational programmes on the development of these attributes.

Teacher's self-efficacy beliefs are critical to the learning of children as it has direct influence on student engagement in the class; classroom management; and use of various teaching

strategies. Therefore, it is pertinent to find out the self-efficacy beliefs in the making of teachers so that the results from the study could inform the programme structure.

This article focuses on the findings of the survey results derived from using the self-efficacy scale with the first year student-teachers from all six programmes at the beginning of the first semester. The participating student teachers are taken from those enrolled in first year Bachelors in Primary Education (B.Ed Pry), Bachelors in Secondary Education (B.Ed Secondary), Bachelors in Dzongkha (B.Ed Dzongkha), Post Graduate Degree in Education (PGDE), Masters and Diploma in Physical Education and Sports Coaching (DPESC).
[1]

Literature Review

Self-efficacy beliefs operate as a key factor in a generative system of human competence (Bandura, 1997). Teacher self-efficacy relates to the beliefs teachers hold about their own perceived capability in undertaking certain teaching tasks. Bandura (1997, p.3) defines self-efficacy as "beliefs in one's capabilities to organise and execute the course of action required to produce given attainments". Self-efficacy, therefore, influences thought patterns and emotions that enable classroom actions. In the context of education, teacher self-efficacy is considered a powerful influence on teachers' overall effectiveness with students. Moran and Hoy (2001) suggest that supporting the development of teachers' self-efficacy is essential for producing effective, committed and enthusiastic teachers. Teacher self-efficacy is a motivational construct that directly influences outcomes in the classroom. It has been related to student achievement (Moore & Esselman, 1992; Ross, 1992); increased job satisfaction (Caprara, Barbarnelli, Borgogni & Steca, 2003); commitment to teaching (Coladarci, 1992); greater levels of planning and organisation (Allinder, 1994); and working longer with students who are struggling (Gibson & Dembo, 1984). Moran and Hoy (2001, p. 783) also defined "teacher efficacy as judgment of his or her capabilities to bring about desired outcomes of student engagement and learning, even among those students who may be difficult or unmotivated".

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Many studies have pointed out that there is a strong link between teacher's self-efficacy beliefs and children's cognitive achievement and success in the school (Moore & Esselman, 1992, 1994; Muijs & Rejnolds, 2001; Ross, 1992, 1998). Cousins and Walker (1995) stated that teachers with high self-efficacy beliefs are more likely than teachers with low self-efficacy beliefs to implement didactic innovations in the classroom, use classroom management approaches and teaching methods that encourage students' autonomy and reduce custodial control.

Ashton and Webb (1986) mentioned that high self-efficacy beliefs empower teachers to be more willing to explain than criticize when students make errors. Gibson and Dembo (1984) stated teacher's high self-efficacy beliefs offer diverse ways to help students who are struggling with study. Teachers with a higher sense of teaching self-efficacy display greater zeal for teaching (Allinder, 1994; Gusckey, 1984; Henson, 2001b; Woolfolk Hoy, 2001), stronger passion for teaching (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001), and are identified as more persistent in teaching (Burley, Hall, Willeme, & Brockmeier,1991).

The productivity and motivation is enhanced through teachers' self-efficacy beliefs during the teaching and learning process. It is also a requirement of teaching profession. A strong sense of self-efficacy enriches human accomplishment and personal well-being (Bandura,1997). Self-efficacy is what a person believes can be accomplished using his or her skills under certain circumstances. Based on social cognitive theory, teacher self-efficacy may be conceptualised as individual teachers' beliefs in their own plan, organise, and carry out activities that are required to attain given educational goals (Flores,2015). Self-efficacy in teacher education has been associated with constructs such as student achievement, and motivation, teachers' willingness to adopt innovative teaching strategies, time spent on teaching certain subjects and classroom management (Berg, & Smith, 2014). Consequently teacher education programmes have great responsibility for shaping the self-efficacy beliefs of pre-service teachers. Teachers' beliefs in their self-efficacy affect their general orientation towards the educational process as well as their specific instructional activities (Bandura, 1997).

Pre-service teacher preparation programmes may significantly influence the pre-service teachers' self-efficacy, for example self-efficacy of the pre-service teachers' are supposedly higher from a well-crafted field experiences as well as prior experiences (Flores, 2015., Berg, & Smith, 2014). Furthermore, the possibility of pre-service teachers' high self-efficacy could be

influenced by their own schooling leading to a belief that they were already capable teachers (Pendergast, garvis & Keogh, 2011).

Methodology

The study employed a questionnaire. Bandura's Self-efficacy scale mainly composed of Likert scale with a provision of space for extra information. The questionnaire was used for collecting data from the first year student-teachers from all six programmes at the beginning of the first semester. The participating pre-service teachers were taken from those enrolled in first year B.Ed Primary, B.Ed Secondary, B.Ed Dzongkha, Masters, PGDE and Diploma Studies from Paro College of Education and Samtse College of Education.

Participants

Total of two hundred and thirty five first year student teachers of Paro College of Education (102) and Samtse College of Education (133) participated in the survey. All hundred and thirty five student teachers were enrolled in first year of different programmes, B.Ed. Primary, B.Ed Secondary. B.Ed Dzongkha, PGDE, Masters and DPESC. Since the goal of the study was to find out the self - efficacy beliefs of student teachers, it was important to choose the participants from first year as they were newly enrolled into the programmes and were yet to be exposed to many new skills, strategies and knowledge in the colleges of education.

Data Analysis and findings

The data generated was analysed using SPSS. Factor Analysis and Principle Components analysis was carried out for further analysis. Where needed Anova Analysis was done.

i. Pre-service teachers' self-efficacy beliefs

The analysis of the data revealed student teachers of both the colleges (Samtse College of Education and Paro College of Education) have high self-efficacy beliefs for all three constructs. This is evident through the mean and standard as presented in table 1 and table 3.

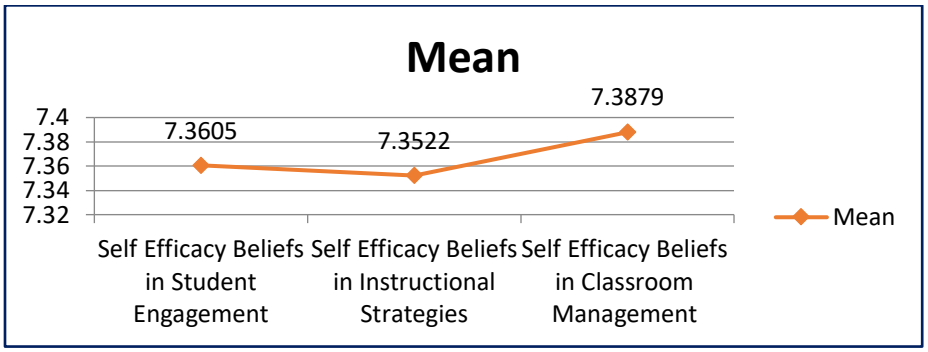
Table 1 reveals self-efficacy beliefs in student engagement (7.36), self-efficacy beliefs in instructional strategies (7.35) and self-efficacy beliefs in classroom management (7.38) of student teachers of Paro College of Education.

Table 1.Differences among the three constructs of student teachers of PCE

	N	**Mean**	**SD**
Self Efficacy Beliefs in Student Engagement	102	7.3605	0.92245
Self Efficacy Beliefs in Instructional Strategies	102	7.3522	1.05655
Self Efficacy Beliefs in Classroom Management	102	7.3879	0.98274

While examining the mean for the three constructs there is no significant difference. However, mean for the self-efficacy in classroom management is the highest, followed by student engagement and the lowest is for the instructional strategies. The slight difference in the three constructs is presented in table 2.

Table 2. Mean difference in the three constructs of student teachers of PCE



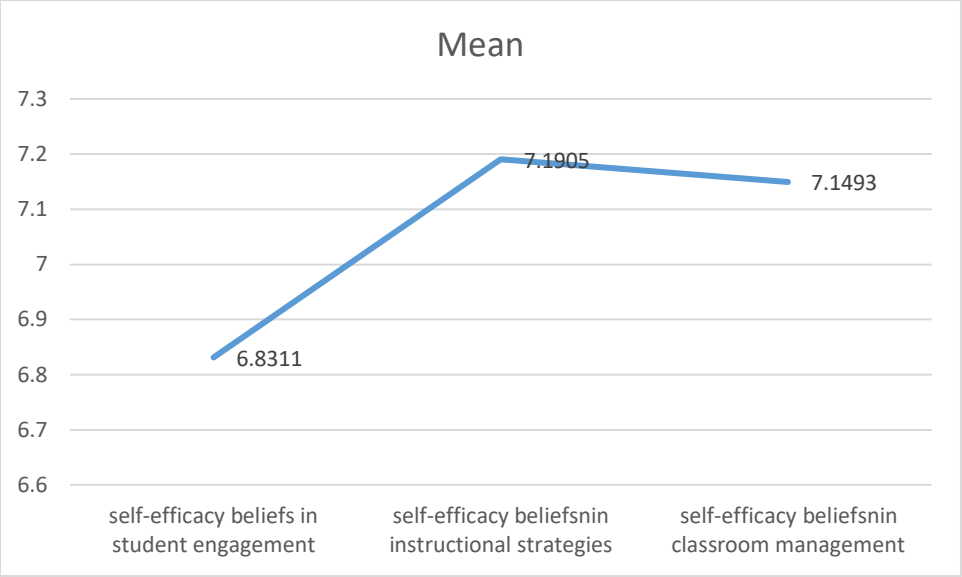
The analysis of data revealed a slight difference in the self-efficacy beliefs of student teachers of Samtse College of Education in relation to student engagement, instructional strategies and classroom management. The self-efficacy beliefs of student-teachers in student engagement (6.8311) seems to be lower than the self-efficacy beliefs in instructional strategies (7.1905) and self-efficacy beliefs in classroom engagement (7.1493). This is evident through the mean and standard deviation as presented in table 3 and table 4.

Table 3. Differences in three constructs of student teachers of SCE

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Efficacy_studentengagement	133	6.8311	.91739
Efficacy_instructionalstrategies	133	7.1905	1.12061

Efficacy_classroommanagement	133	7.1493	.98638
Valid N (listwise)	133		

Table 4. Mean difference in three constructs of student teachers of SCE



Detailed examination of all eight items under each construct also reveals high self-efficacy beliefs of the student teachers. The rating for each item starts at 1-2 (nothing), 3-4 (very little), 5-6 (some influence), 7-8 (quite a bit) and the maximum is 9 (a great deal). Maximum of the student-teachers have rated 7-8 (quite a bit) followed by 9 () a great deal. This pattern is repeated for all three constructs as shown below in table 5, table 6 and table 7.

Table 5. Rating of Self-efficacy beliefs in student engagement

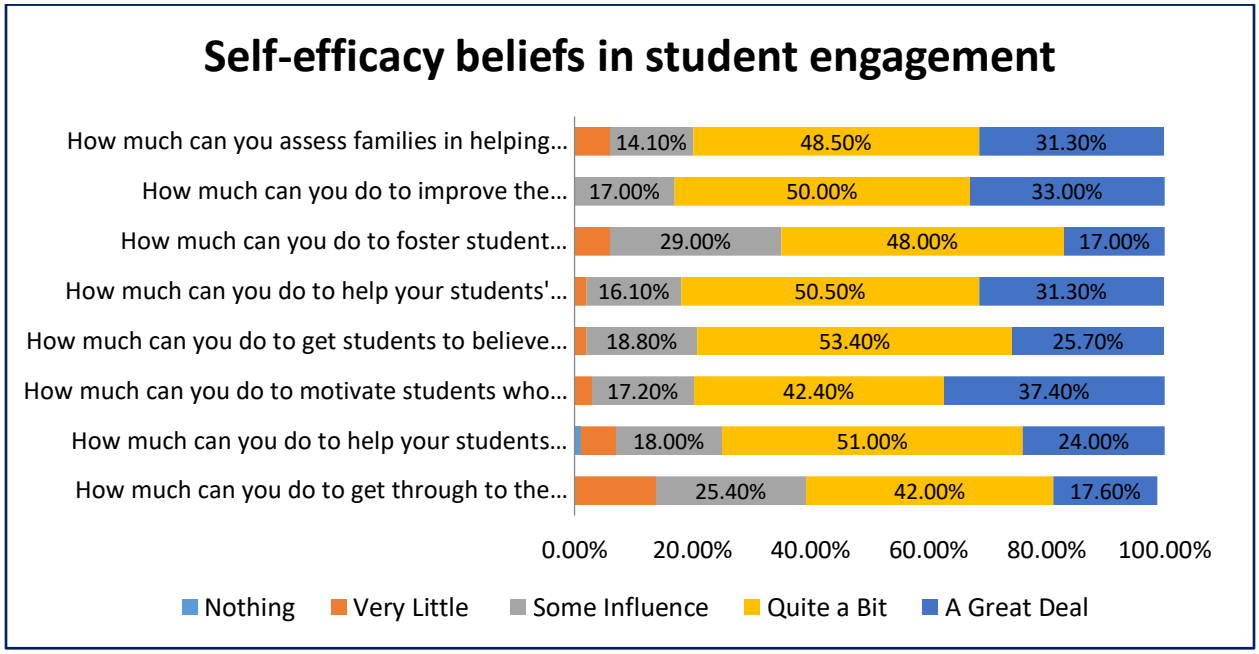


Table 6. Rating of Self-efficacy beliefs in instructional strategies

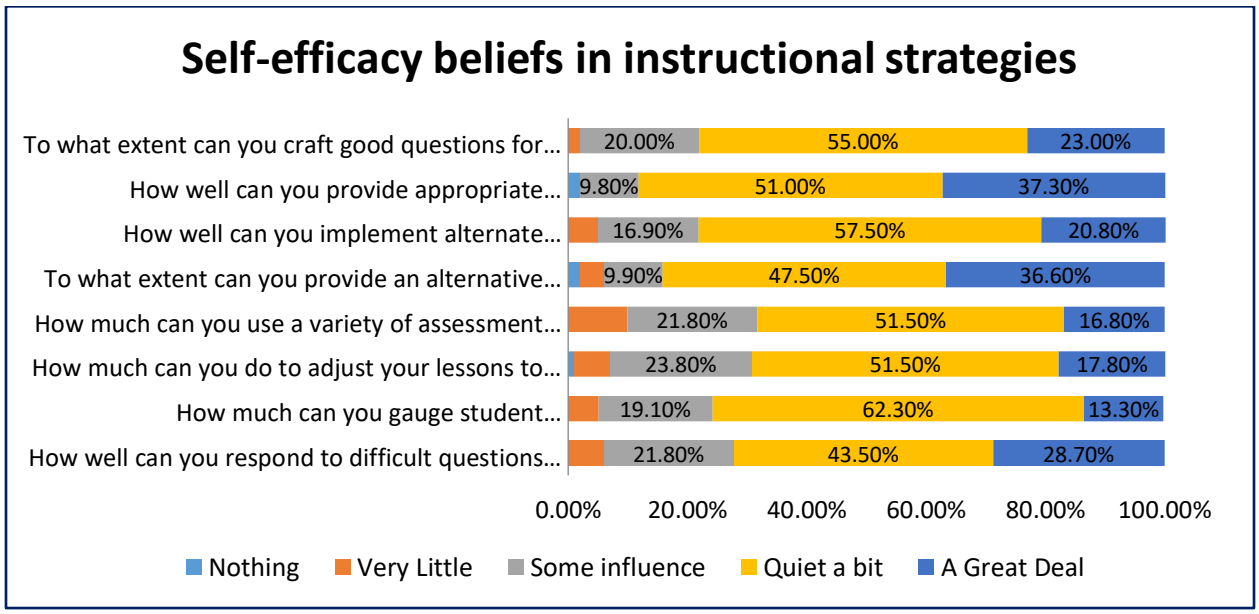
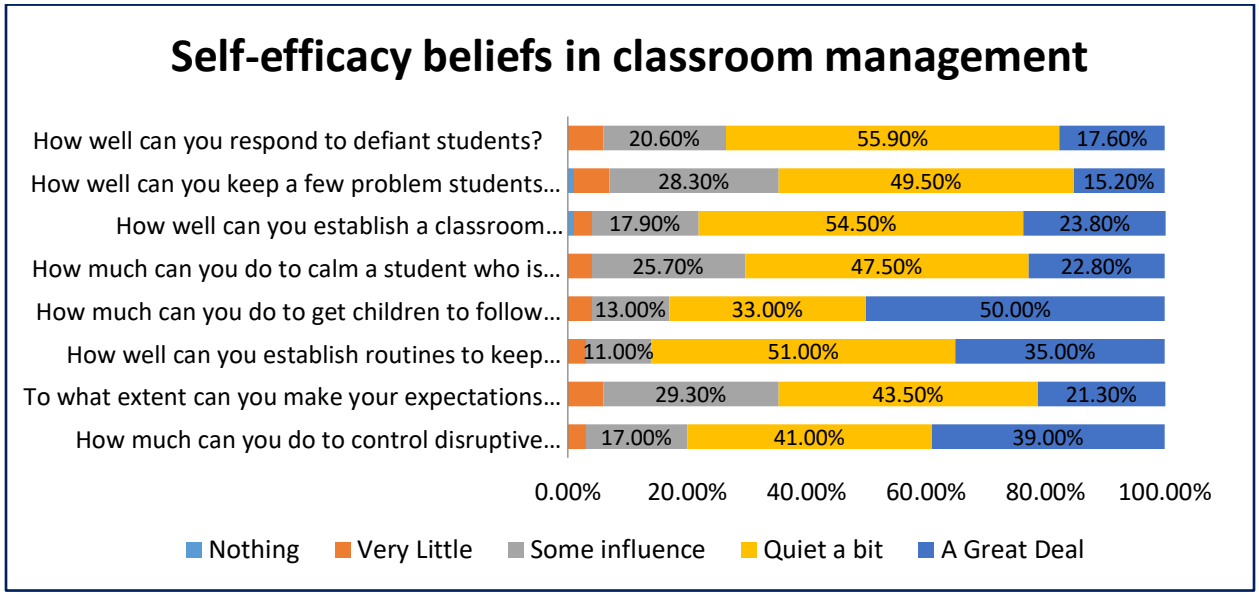


Table 7. Rating of Self-efficacy beliefs in classroom management



ii. Did gender determine the self-efficacy beliefs of student-teachers?

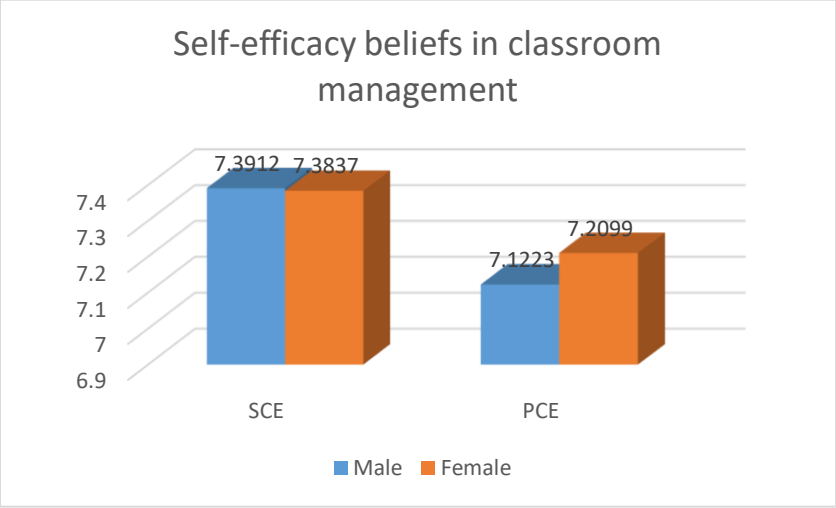
Gender and classroom management:

A one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare the self-efficacy beliefs in classroom management between male and female student-teachers of Paro College of Education. The results of this test indicated that there was no significant difference in self-efficacy belief of students in classroom management between male and female [F (1, 100) = .001, p = .970]. The post hoc comparison using the Tukey HSD Test also indicated that there was no significant difference between the gender; Male (M= 7.3912, SD=.85209, N=57), Female (M= 7.3837, SD=1.13702, N=45). The finding indicated that the student-teachers gender did not make any difference in the self-efficacy- beliefs in the classroom management.

Similarly, a one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare the self-efficacy beliefs in classroom management between male and female student-teachers of Samtse College of Education. The results of this test indicated that there was no significant difference in self-efficacy belief of students in classroom management between male and female [F (1, 131) =

.222, p = .638]. The post hoc comparison using the Tukey HSD Test also indicated that there was no significant difference between the gender; Male (M= 7.1223, SD=1.00662, N=92), Female (M= 7.2099, SD=.94872, N=41). The finding indicated that the student teachers gender did not make any difference in the self-efficacy- beliefs in the classroom management.

Table 8. Gender and Self-efficacy beliefs in classroom management



Though gender did not make difference in determining the self-efficacy beliefs of student teachers in classroom management, table 8 clearly indicates the difference in self-efficacy beliefs of student teachers (both male and female) of Samtse College of Education and Paro College of Education.

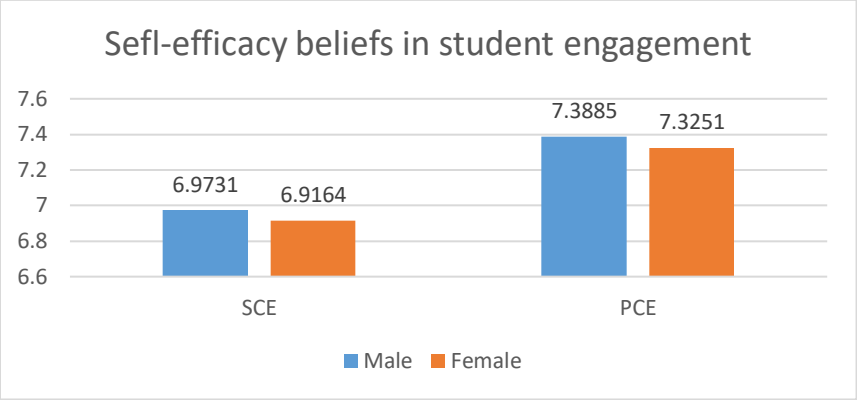
Gender and student engagement:

A one-way between subjects ANOVA was also conducted to compare the self-efficacy beliefs in student engagement between male and female student-teachers of Paro College of Education. The results of this test indicated that there was no significant difference in self-efficacy belief of students in student engagement between male and female [F (1, 100) = .118, p = .732]. The post hoc comparison using the Tukey HSD Test also indicated that there was no significant difference between the gender; male (M= 7.3885, SD=.89528, N=57), Female (M= 7.3251, SD=.96478, N=45). The finding indicated that gender did not make any difference in the self-efficacy- beliefs in the student engagement.

Similarly, a one-way between subjects ANOVA was also conducted to compare the self-efficacy beliefs in student engagement between male and female student teachers of Samtse College of Education. The results of this test indicated that there was no significant difference in self-efficacy belief of students in student engagement between male and female [F (1, 131) = .510,

p = .476]. The post hoc comparison using the Tukey HSD Test also indicated that there was no significant difference between the gender; male (M= 6.7931, SD=.95403, N=92), Female (M= 6.9164, SD=.83418, N=41). The finding indicated that gender did not make any difference in the self-efficacy- beliefs in the student engagement.

Table 9. Gender and self-efficacy beliefs in student engagement



Gender did not make any difference in determining the self-efficacy beliefs of student-teachers in student engagement as seen in table 9. However, there is a significant difference in the two colleges with regard to self-efficacy beliefs in student engagement with both male and female student-teachers.

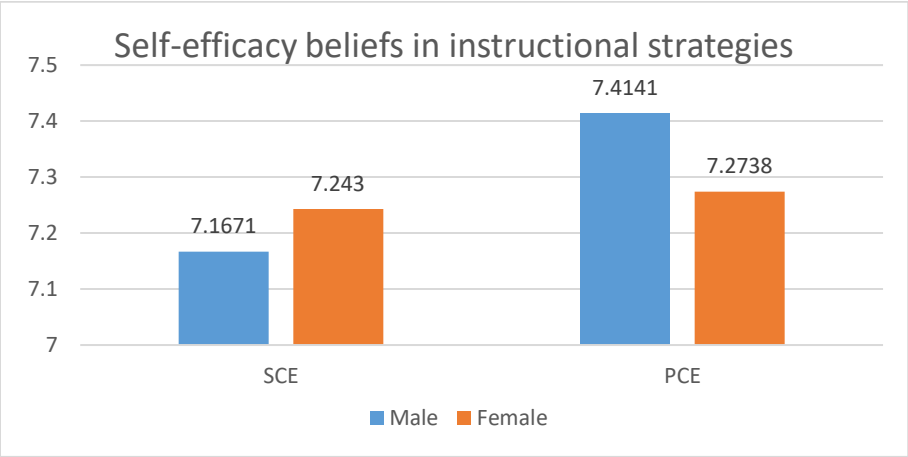
Gender and Instructional strategies:

Enrolment in different programmes did not impact the students' self-efficacy beliefs in instructional strategies as well. This was evident when a one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare the self-efficacy beliefs in instructional strategies between male and female student-teachers of PCE. The results of this test indicated that there was no significant difference in self-efficacy belief of students in instructional strategies between male and female [F (1, 100) = .441, p = .508]. The post hoc comparison using the Tukey HSD Test also indicated that there was no significant difference between the gender; Male (M= 7.4141, SD=1.03258, N=57), Female (M= 7.2738, SD=1.09278, N=45).

Similarly, a one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare the self-efficacy beliefs in instructional strategies between male and female student-teachers of SCE. The results of this test indicated that there was no significant difference in self-efficacy belief of

students in instructional strategies between male and female [F (1, 131) = .129, p = .720]. The post hoc comparison using the Tukey HSD Test also indicated that there was no significant difference between the gender; Male (M= 7.1671, SD=1.02598, N=92), Female (M= 7.2430, SD=1.32105, N=41).

Table 10. Gender and self-efficacy beliefs in instructional strategies



Comparison between the two colleges reveal as indicated in table 10 that the student teachers of PCE has higher self-efficacy beliefs in instructional strategies.

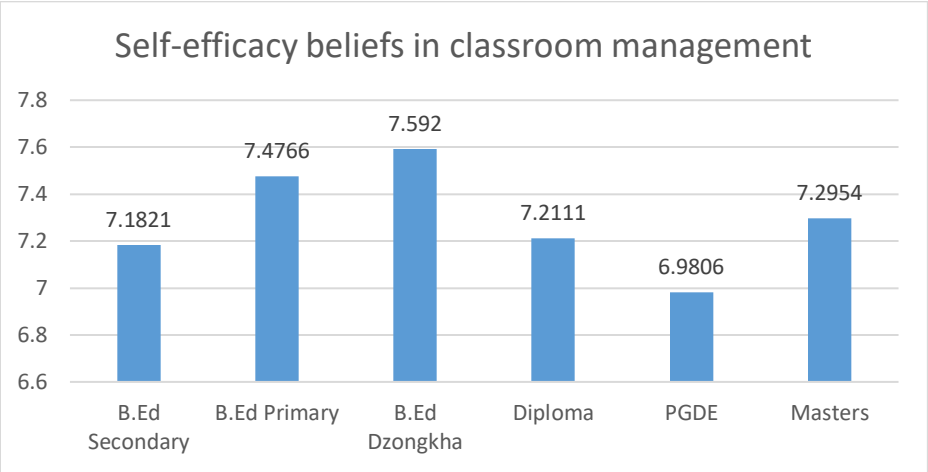
iii. Did programme impact the self-efficacy beliefs of student teachers?

Programme and classroom management:

A one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare the self-efficacy beliefs in classroom management among four different programmes; B.Ed Secondary, B.Ed Primary, B.Ed Dzongkha and Diploma in Physical Education and Sports Coaching. The results of this test indicated that there was no significant difference in self-efficacy belief of students in classroom management among the programmes [F (3, 98) = 1.070, p = .366]. The post hoc comparison using the Tukey HSD Test also indicated that there was no significant difference among the programmes; B.Ed Secondary (M= 7.1821, SD=1.326, N=25), B.Ed Primary (M= 7.4766, SD=.755, N=29), B.Ed Dzongkha (M= 7.592, SD=.9160, N= 29), Diploma in Physical Education and Sports Coaching (M=7.2111, SD=.8416, N=19), PGDE (M= 6.9806, SD=.99942, N=46), Masters (M=

7.2954, SD=1.0306, N= 45). The finding indicated that the student teachers enrolment in different programmes did not make any difference in the self-efficacy beliefs in the classroom management.

Table 11. Programme and self-efficacy beliefs in classroom management



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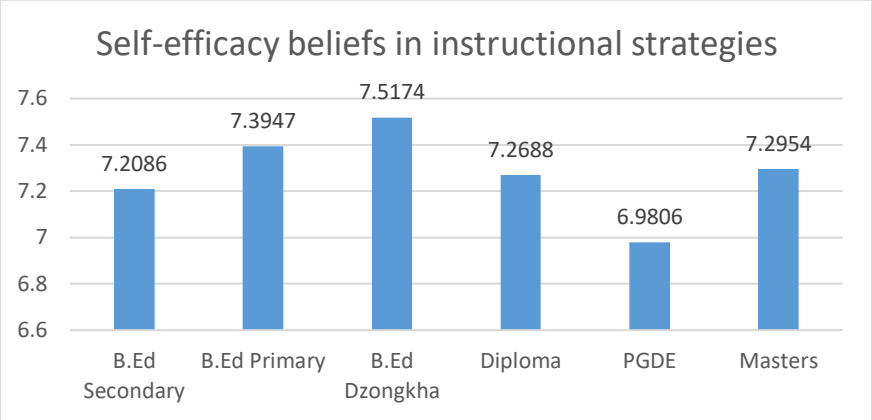
Programme and student engagement:

A one-way between subjects ANOVA was also conducted to compare the self-efficacy beliefs in student engagement among four different programmes; B.Ed Secondary, B.Ed Primary, B.Ed Dzongkha and Diploma in Physical Education and Sports Coaching. The results of this test indicated that there was no significant difference in self-efficacy belief of students in student engagement among the programmes [F (3, 98) = .574, p = .633]. The post hoc comparison using the Tukey HSD Test also indicated that there was no significant difference among the programmes; B.Ed Secondary (M= 7.2086, SD=1.045, N=25), B.Ed Primary (M= 7.3947, SD=.822, N=29), B.Ed Dzongkha (M= 7.5174, SD=1.007, N= 29), Diploma in Physical Education and Sports Coaching (M=7.2688, SD=.777, N=19), PGDE (M= 6.9806, SD=.99942, N=46), Masters (M= 7.2954, SD=1.0306, N= 45). The finding indicated that the student teachers enrolment in different programmes did not make any difference in the self-efficacy beliefs in the student engagement. However, student teachers enrolled in PGDE has lower self-efficacy beliefs comparing to other student teachers.

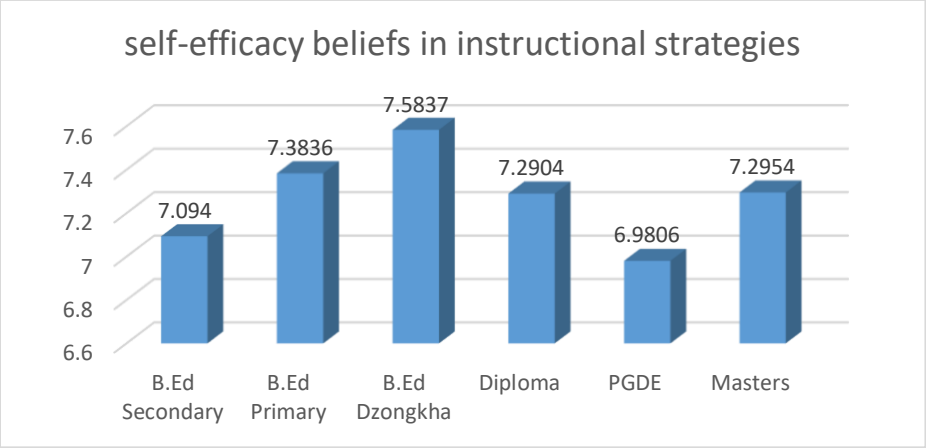
Table 12. Programme and self-efficacy beliefs in instructional strategies



Programme and Instructional strategies:

Enrolment in different programmes did not impact the students' self-efficacy beliefs in instructional strategies as well. This was evident when a one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare the self-efficacy beliefs in instructional strategies among four different programmes; B.Ed Secondary, B.Ed Primary, B.Ed Dzongkha and Diploma in Physical Education and Sports Coaching. The results of this test indicated that there was no significant difference in self-efficacy belief of students in instructional strategies among the programmes [$F(3, 98) = .992$, $p = .400$]. The post hoc comparison using the Tukey HSD Test also indicated that there was no significant difference among the programmes; B.Ed Secondary (M= 7.0940, SD=1.3322, N=25), B.Ed Primary (M= 7.3836, SD=.745, N=29), B.Ed Dzongkha (M= 7.5837, SD=1.195, N= 29), Diploma in Physical Education and Sports Coaching (M=7.2904, SD=.790, N=19), PGDE (M= 6.9806, SD=.99942, N=46), Masters (M= 7.2954, SD=1.0306, N= 45). However, even for the instructional strategies, the PGDE student teachers have rated lower than the other student teachers.

Table 13. Programme and self-efficacy beliefs in instructional strategies



iv. Did previous teaching experience impact self-efficacy beliefs of student teachers?

Teaching experience and classroom management:

A one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare the self-efficacy beliefs in classroom management between student-teachers with teaching experience and student-teachers without teaching experience from SCE. The results of this test indicated that there was no significant difference in self-efficacy belief of students in classroom management between participants with previous teaching experience and participants without previous teaching experience [F (1, 131) = 1.840, p = .177]. The post hoc comparison using the Tukey HSD Test also indicated that there was no significant difference made by the experience; with previous experience in teaching (M= 7.2750, SD=1.05495, N=61), without experience in teaching (M= 7.0429, SD=.91832, N=72). The finding indicated that the student teachers with previous experience in teaching and without any experience did not make any difference in the self-efficacy beliefs in the classroom management.

Teaching experience and student engagement:

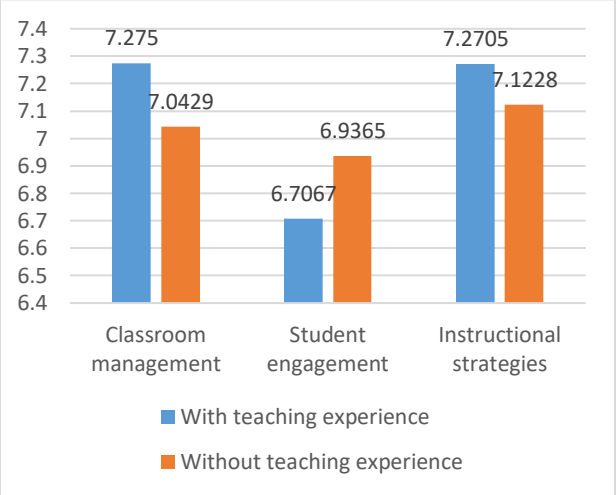
A one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare the self-efficacy beliefs in classroom management between participants with teaching experience and participants without teaching experience. The results of this test indicated that there was no significant difference in self-efficacy belief of students in classroom management between participants with previous

teaching experience and participants without previous teaching experience [F (1, 131) = 2.090, p = .151]. The post hoc comparison using the Tukey HSD Test also indicated that there was no significant difference made by the experience; with previous experience in teaching (M= 6.7067, SD=.98156, N=61), without experience in teaching (M= 6.9365, SD=.85200, N=72). The finding indicated that the student teachers with previous experience in teaching and without any experience did not make any difference in the self-efficacy beliefs in the student engagement.

Teaching experience and Instructional strategies:

A one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare the self-efficacy beliefs in classroom management between participants with teaching experience and participants without teaching experience. The results of this test indicated that there was no significant difference in self-efficacy belief of students in classroom management between participants with previous teaching experience and participants without previous teaching experience [F (1, 131) = .572, p = .451]. The post hoc comparison using the Tukey HSD Test also indicated that there was no significant difference made by the experience; with previous experience in teaching (M= 7.2705, SD=.95666, N=61), without experience in teaching (M= 7.1228, SD=1.24543, N=72). The finding indicated that the student teachers with previous experience in teaching and without any experience did not make any difference in the self-efficacy beliefs in instructional strategies.

Table 14. Teaching experience and three constructs



As indicated in table 14, previous teaching experience of student-teachers does not impact the self-efficacy beliefs of student-teachers. The difference noted is not consistent. Self-efficacy beliefs in classroom management and instructional strategies seem to be higher for those with teaching experience. Whereas self-efficacy belief in student engagement is lower in those with teaching experience.

Discussion and Recommendations

In examining the self- efficacy beliefs of the first year student-teachers prior to micro-teaching and teaching practicum, turned out to be high for all three constructs, self-efficacy beliefs in student engagement, self-efficacy beliefs in instructional strategies and self-efficacy beliefs in classroom management. This could be because of their experiences as students. As students, one tend to think that engaging students, providing instructional strategies and classroom management are simple as that is got to do with teacher having the authority and students having to submit. The high self-efficacy could also be because of their positive relationship with their teachers in the schools as suggested by Oh (2010) that high teacher self-efficacy has consistently been found to relate to positive student and teacher behaviours. Bhutanese culture also demands students to be respectful to elders and teachers. This culture is imposed from the home as a child only. Hence, when students, irrespective of the teachers' effort turn out to be obedient, makes them believe that the job of a teacher is a piece of cake, hence high self-efficacy beliefs in all three constructs. For many student-teachers, choosing teaching as a profession is not out of choice but lack of choice. Therefore, students who have opted for teaching as a profession are not the brightest lot. The pressing demand for teachers in the country has led to the system to accept any candidates fulfilling the minimum criteria set for the selection of teacher trainees. This is a concern in terms of bringing out learning in children in the classroom because it is believed that teacher self-efficacy is a motivational construct that directly influences outcomes in the classroom. According to Moore and Esselman (1992), Ross (1992), teacher's self- efficacy belief is related to student achievement; greater levels of planning and organisation (Allinder,1994); and working longer with students who are struggling (Gibson & Dembo, 1984).

The concern here is, would students who have opted teaching as a last option be able to bring out the desired needs in children. However, the findings are comforting, as the teachers have high self-efficacy beliefs in all three constructs: self-efficacy belief in student engagement; self-

efficacy beliefs in classroom management; and self-efficacy beliefs in instructional strategies. According to Weinstein, (1988) novice teachers often enter the profession with high hopes about the kind of impact that they will be able to have on students' lives, but encounter a painful reality shock because they are often faced with all the role demands and expectations encountered by experienced teachers. Student-teachers in their first year haven't undergone, teaching practicum, hence they lack the actual experience of teaching in a real classroom and therefore their self-efficacy belief is not hampered. Hoy and Spero (2005) found that teaching efficacy rose during teacher preparation programmes and student teaching, but fell with actual experience as a teacher because novice teachers often underestimate the complexity of the teaching task and their ability to manage many agendas at the same time. This explains the high self-efficacy beliefs of all student teachers irrespective of gender and programme. However, research suggests that teacher self-efficacy tends to increase during teacher education enrolment (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1990; Wenner, 2001) but decrease after graduation to the end of the first year of teaching (Moseley, Reinke & Bookour, 2003; Woolfolk Hoy, 2000). However, the findings from this study indicate a slightly different story, the student-teachers pursuing Master degree who have previous teaching experience also have high self-efficacy beliefs and have rated higher than the student-teachers without previous teaching experience on classroom management and instructional strategies and have rated lower than the student-teachers without previous teaching experience on student engagement. This could be because of their experiences encountered in real classroom situations. Whereas the student teachers without previous teaching experience could have purely based their rating on the content they are learning from the programme they are enrolled in.

Another finding from this study that needs discussion is the self-efficacy beliefs of PGDE student-teachers having rated lower than the student-teachers enrolled in other five programmes. The low rating is consistent irrespective of gender or the programme for all three constructs, self-efficacy beliefs in classroom management, student engagement and instructional strategies. This calls for an in-depth research to look at the programme structure and content offered for different programmes to find out the gap and address it.

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Compassionate classroom teaching: Bhutanese teacher educators' perspectives and practice

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[2]Abstract

This article reports a small scale survey study which examined Bhutanese teacher educators' perspectives of compassionate classroom teaching, encapsulating its five key dimensions of Academic Performance, Role Modelling, Communication, Relationship Building and Self-Consciousness. The practice of compassion in teaching profession is crucial in ensuring a safe and caring environment for learners, while teacher educators must model values such as love, humility and care to their student-teachers. The data was gathered through administration of a newly developed instrument called the 'Compassionate Teaching Survey Questionnaire' (CTSQ) to a sample of 42 teacher educators. The factor structure of the instrument was validated using the principal component factor analysis for the given sample.

Findings of the study revealed that the participants in general perceived practice of compassion in their pre-service classrooms favourably as indicated by the mean values for all the five scales, which were calculated above 4 with standard deviation of less than 1. It was also evident that there is little difference in their views about practice of compassion in the classroom teaching in terms of gender and age groups. The study is significant in providing insights to teachers, teacher educators and educational leaders that how the practice of compassion in classroom teaching implicates in creating a positive learning environment to learners.

Problem Statement, Objectives and Significance

Teaching is a very humanistic profession that requires genuine values like compassion and care. Compassion is one of the core values of Gross National Happiness (GNH). Genuine compassion allows teachers to nurture authentic connection with the students that positively impacts students' learning. If teachers are to be compassionate in their teaching, teacher educators must model this professional conduct in their education courses. In this way, pre-service and in-service teachers experience first-hand how compassion supports the development of a positive and caring classroom learning environment for learners.

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Hence, this study proposed to investigate Bhutanese teacher educators' perspectives and practice of compassionate classroom teaching to bring about improved student learning and personal well-being. More importantly, this study examined how Bhutanese teacher educators infused compassion into their classroom teaching to enhance holistic learning in students by creating an emotionally safe and productive learning environment. Furthermore, this study investigated the challenges that the Bhutanese teacher educators are facing in creating a compassionate classroom atmosphere that models right values and attitudes to student teachers. The objectives of the current study were two-folds:

i. to investigate Bhutanese teacher educators' perceptions and practice of compassion in their pre-service classroom teaching.
ii. to examine the influence of participants' gender and age groups on their perceptions of the compassionate classroom teaching.

The study is significant because through teaching, we can foster deep love and care among students within the classroom environment. Teacher educators need to role model these values so that the prospective teachers might get first-hand experience. It is noteworthy from the perspective of Bhutan's development philosophy of Gross National Happiness (GNH) because compassion forms one of the core elements of universal happiness and peace. In addition, the study might create awareness among Bhutanese educators, field teachers, and prospective teachers regarding the practice of compassion in classroom teaching. It might further provide avenues for future research on compassionate classroom teaching in various subjects in the context of Bhutanese schools, colleges and higher institutions

Literature Review

Education is a means to empower individuals to change their behaviours and become active participants in the transformation of their societies through sustainable development. Quality education requires participatory teaching and learning methods that are focused on the values, attitudes and behaviours which enables individuals to live together harmoniously and make decisions in a collaborative way. One such teaching-learning method as advocated by Hart and Hodson (2004) is called 'Relationship Based Teaching and Learning' that takes place in the classroom. This teaching-learning model encourages the educators to bring relationship to the center of the classroom concerns.

The genuine relationship between the teacher and students thrives in an environment that fosters a culture of care and compassion that focuses on students' well-being. Day (2004) pronounces compassion as the most vital skill that lies at the heart of any successful teacher-learner relationship. It is a skill that helps teacher to look at students as human beings and not as test scores. Compassion helps teacher to develop a true understanding of the students (Chodron, 2003) and is the basis for nurturing relational trust in the classroom (Palmer, 2007). Similarly, Kernochan, Mccormick & White (2007) argue that teaching is a very humanistic profession that provides opportunities for the teacher to practise compassion and care to create supportive learning atmosphere. This kind of supportive learning atmosphere allows students to be more engaged and motivated to learn academically.

Compassion is a cornerstone to the national initiative in Bhutan, *Educating for Gross National Happiness*. This clearly indicates that compassionate teachers are needed more than ever to inculcate compassionate values in students to promote true happiness and well-being of the individual and society. Compassionate teachers nurture authentic connection with the students (Day, 2004) that positively impacts students' learning though increased physical and mental wellbeing. This is because compassionate teachers always nurture a feeling of connectedness and commitment, a willingness to reach out to students (Dalai Lama & Cutler, 1998).

Compassionate teachers involve feelings for students who are suffering and being motivated to act to help them (Goetz et al. 2010; Lazarus, 1991 cited in Strauss et al, 2016).The caring attitude of the teachers nourishes emotionally safe learning environment by building trust and respect that safely open students' hearts and minds to learning and growth where academic excellence thrives (Weaver & Wilding, 2013; Feldman, 2006; Glasser, 2005). Similarly, Serife

(2008) in his work titled "A Conceptual Analysis of Approach to Learning" clearly discussed deep learning approach which is associated with higher quality learning outcomes powerfully depends on a safe learning environment. A safe emotional, intellectual and social learning environment that fosters academic success and mental stability is likely to flourish in a compassion-centered classroom.

Discussing the importance of instilling compassion in students, Lhamo (2017) rightly argues that if students are to be compassionate in their lives, teachers must model this professional conduct in their professional lives and classroom practices. In this way, the students can experience first-hand how values of compassion can promote an ethical and ecological outlook that has the potential to make our world a better place for all its beings. Furthermore, Biggs and More (1993) clearly advocate teachers' role to optimise the chances of making students to learn effectively in the most desirable ways. In the classroom environment, students acquire value of compassion and behaviour from the teachers and the teacher must always model a clear set of values and act in ways that support these values.

Thus, considering the importance of cultivating compassion in pre-service teachers in their education programmemes and training period, this study proposed to study Bhutanese teacher educators' perspectives on practice of compassion in their classroom teaching.

Methodology

Methods

The study was guided by the positivist ontological, epistemological and methodological framework (Cohen, Manion & Morris, 2000). Thus, it employed a survey method, as it is advantageous in terms of drawing views from a large group of participants, and quick process of data collection. According to Namgyel (2001), survey is a method of collecting information about a human population in which direct contact is made with the units of study (individuals, organizations, communities, and the like) through systematic means such as questionnaires and interview schedules. Stangor (2011) argues that surveys are the most widely used method of collecting descriptive information about a group of people. Thus, the advantage of a survey is that we can gather data at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature of existing conditions. In addition, it is argued that the use of survey is economical, time-saving, and provides a rapid turnaround in data collection for a study (Creswell, 2009).

Sample and Data Collection

The study employed a sample of 42 lecturers from one of the colleges of education in Bhutan comprising both male and female, and of different age-groups. A new survey questionnaire called 'Compassionate Teaching Survey Questionnaire' (CTSQ) was developed, pilot tested and finalized for its administration to teacher educator participants. The survey questionnaire was administered only once because the study was guided by the limited timeframe and funding.

Data Analysis

The data gathered through the survey questionnaire was analyzed and interpreted using descriptive statistical tools of mean and standard deviation, which was supported by the SPSS software. The data analysis also involved the use of principal component factor analysis in order to confirm the factor structure the survey instrument for the given sample. In order to compare teacher educators' perspectives on compassionate classroom teaching in terms of gender and age groups, the F-test and ANOVA eta^2 statistics were also calculated.

Ethical Considerations

Researchers are obliged ethically to anticipate what will be done in data collection, analysis and reporting, and to explain to those studied why it will be done that way rather than in some other ways (Erickson, 1998). Since the responsibility of ethical research ultimately lies in with the individual researcher (Anderson, 1998, p.17), it is important to take care of ethical issues which would impact on our research subjects. Respect participants' individual time, rights, privacy and confidentiality in the process of study (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018) were considered in the process of this study. The approval to conduct the research was obtained from the College Research Committee (CRC), and informed consents were sought from all our participants involved before the conduct of the data collection.

The Results

The results of the survey data analysis are presented at three levels: the demographic information, the principal component factor analysis, and general perceptions of the compassionate classroom teaching. In addition, participants' perspectives are compared in terms of gender and age groups.

Demographic Information

The sample data was collected based on participants' gender and age groups as two independent variables. This was aimed to compare their views in terms of means and standard deviations. The study targeted for around 68 teacher educator participants, but the actual rate of return of the questionnaire was 42 out of 68, which accounted for approximately 61.76% of the total rate of return.

Table 1 presents the sample size of the study in terms of gender. The result shows that male teacher educators constituted of 69% of the sample (29), whereas the female teacher educators constituted 26.2% of the total sample, while the 4.8% of them could not participate in the study.

Table 1

Sample distribution in terms of gender

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
0	2	4.8	4.80
Male	29	69.0	69.00
Female	11	26.2	26.20
Total	42	100.0	100.00

Table 2 indicates that 14.3% of the sample was from the age group of 20-30 years, 23.8% was from 3-40 years, 42.9% was from 41-50 years, and 14.3% was from 51+ years. The majority of teacher educator participants were from the age group of 41-50 years.

Table 2

Sample distribution in terms of age group

Age-groups	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
0.0	2	4.8	4.8
20-30yrs	6	14.3	14.3

31-40 yrs	10	23.8	23.8
41-50 yrs	18	42.9	42.9
51+yrs	6	14.3	14.3
Total	42	100.0	100.0

Factor Analysis

In order to analyze data, first of all the psychometric properties of the instrument were confirmed, and then teacher educators' perceptions of compassionate classroom teaching and practices were examined using mean and standard deviation as statistical tools. Principal component factor analysis (PCFA) with the 'varimax rotation' method conducted for the sample resulted in acceptance of the instrument after removal of some items (Item 11, 12, 20, and 21).

The factor analysis indicated that 21 out of 26 items in the CTSQ have a factor loading of at least 0.40 and above, which meets the conventionally-accepted minimum value in order to maintain loadings for each scale as meaningful (Fraser, Aldridge & Adolphe, 2010). Thus, the validity and reliability of the research instrument was confirmed using the results of the factor analysis for the given sample of the study.

For the final factor structure of the CTSQ, approximately 63.38 % of the variance was accounted for by the five factors with the percentage of variance ranging from 9.20% for the theme 'Self-consciousness' to 14.85% for the theme 'Academic Performance.' Overall, the pattern of factor loadings provided a satisfactory support for the CTSQ structure indicating overlaps in some of its items, which resulted in modification or removal of some of its items for the given sample. Table 4.5 provides the item-wise factor loadings, and the theme-wise % of variance and the internal consistency reliability (α) of the CTSQ.

Table 3

Factor loadings, total extraction sums, % of variance and reliability

Item No.	Factor 1 (ACP)	Factor 2 (ROM)	Factor 3 (COM)	Factor 4 (RBL)	Factor 5 (SCO)
Item_22	0.55				
Item_23	0.75				

Item_24	0.45				
Item_25	0.82				
Item_26	0.86				
Item_01		0.87			
Item_02		0.63			
Item_09		0.65			
Item_16		0.78			
Item_05			0.59		
Item_06			0.81		
Item_13			0.79		
Item_14			0.69		
Item_04				0.52	
Item_07				0.56	
Iem_10				0.64	
Item_15				0.64	
Item_17				0.87	
Item_03					0.73
Item_08					0.54
Item_18					0.52
Item_19					0.76
Total extraction sums	3.86	3.52	3.48	3.22	2.39
% of variance	14.85	13.55	13.39	12.39	9.20
Reliability (α)	0.87	0.84	0.79	0.82	0.81

Notes: *Items which have factor loadings of < 0.40 or items which loaded on two or more factors were omitted.* Acronyms: *ACP -Academic Performance; ROM - Role Modeling; COM - Communication; RBL- Relationship Building; and SCO – Self Consciousness*

In order to ensure how each item in a scale measures the same construct, the Cronbach alpha coefficient (α) was used to estimate the internal consistency of each CTSQ scale (Ching-Tse, 2013, in Tshewang, 2015). It is based on the average inter-item correlation. Despite differing views among many other scholars, So and Swatman (2010) and Chandra and Fisher (2009) argue that a

Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.60 and above to be acceptable for a scale to be reliable in social science research. The Cronbach alpha (α) coefficient for the five CTSQ scales using the individual mean as the unit of analysis ranges from 0.79 for factor 3 (i.e., Communication) to 0.87 for factor 1 (i.e., Academic Performance). This confirms reliability of the instrument supporting its validity when used with the given sample.

General perceptions of compassionate classroom teaching

The survey data analysis was conducted using the mean and standard deviation as the key statistical tools in order to gain an overall understanding of teacher educators' perceptions of the compassionate classroom teaching in Bhutanese pre-service classrooms. Accordingly, the descriptive statistics (i.e., mean and standard deviation) for each CTSQ scale was calculated. The items were placed under five scales as sorted out by the process of '*principal component factor analysis*.' The average inter-item means and standard deviations were calculated for each scale and presented accordingly as shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Perceptions of compassionate classroom teaching

Scales	Valid N	Mean	SD
Academic Performance	42	4.43	0.73
Role Modeling	42	3.51	0.61
Communication	42	4.36	0.67
Relationship Building	42	4.37	0.68
Self-Consciousness	42	4.47	0.65

The results depict that the 'Self-consciousness' scale has the highest mean (M=4.47; SD=0.65), while the 'Role Modelling' scale has the lowest mean (M=3.51; SD=0.61) for the sample. The means for all other scales lie in between these values. The results suggest that across the items in all the scales, the participants responded with either an 'Agree' or 'Strongly' response. In other words, the means obtained for each of the CTSQ scales was very close to four, indicating that the participants perceived their practice of compassion in classroom teaching favourably. The data were further analysed and compared in terms of gender and age groups of the participants.

The mean for all the five items was 4 and above for the Academic Performance scale, indicating the fact that all the respondents were of the view that compassionate classroom teaching has positive effect on their student teachers' academic performance. The standard deviation value for all the five items was less than 1, revealing those participants' views was consistent on the scale.

Role Modeling is the second scale which was used to measure how Bhutanese teacher educators practice it as a part of their classroom compassionate teaching. Four items of the CTSQ loaded on the theme, which accounted for 13.55% of total variance explained. The mean value for four items under this scale was calculated 4 and above, indicating that the teacher educators perceived their practice of role modelling favourably. In addition, the standard deviation for all the four items was less than 1, revealing that the participants' views on their practice of 'role modelling' were consistent.

Communication is the third scale which was used to measure how Bhutanese teacher educators' practice of it as a part of their compassionate classroom teaching. Four items of the CTSQ loaded on the scale, explaining 13.39% of the total variance. The mean value for those four items was 4 and above, indicating that the teacher educators perceived their practice of communication favorably. The standard deviation for all the four items was less than 1, revealing that the participants' views were consistent.

Relationship Building forms one of the key elements of compassionate classroom teaching, which teacher educators practice it in their classroom teaching. There were five items of the CTSQ loading on the theme, which accounted for 12.39% of the total variance explained. The statistic value for all items ranges from (M=4.19; SD=0.67) for the item_17 to (M=4.50; SD=0.67) for the item_04. This indicates that the participants perceived their practice of Relationship Building favourably. Meanwhile, the standard deviation for all items was less than 1, revealing that the participants' views were consistent

Self-consciousness is the emergent theme which was used to measure how Bhutanese teacher educators practice it as a part of their classroom compassionate teaching. There were four items of the CTSQ which loaded on the theme, accounting for 9.20 % of the total variance explained. The mean value for those four items was calculated 4 and above, indicating that the teacher educators perceived their practice of self-consciousness positively. In addition, the

standard deviation for all the four items was less than 1 revealing that the participants' views on each item were consistent.

Thus, the means of all five scales were calculated above 4 with the standard deviation of less than 1, the results of the study revealed that the participants generally perceived their practice of compassion in the classroom positively. However, it is also evident that their perceptions of the compassionate classroom teaching might have been influenced by other contextual factors.

Gender difference in perceptions of compassionate classroom teaching

Table 5

Mean, SD, F-test and partial η^2 values

	Male		Female		Difference		
Scales	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	F	p	η^2
ACP	4.35	0.62	4.62	0.67	1.53	0.25	0.07
ROM	4.46	0.65	4.64	0.48	0.24	0.65	0.02
COM	4.25	0.72	4.55	0.59	0.89	0.50	0.04
RBL	4.30	0.69	4.46	0.66	0.98	0.44	0.05
SCO	4.40	0.66	4.60	0.61	1.45	0.45	0.06

Acronyms: *ACP -Academic Performance; ROM - Role Modeling; COM -Communication; RBL- Relationship Building; and SCO – Self Consciousness*

To compare teacher educators' perceptions of the compassionate classroom teaching on the five CTSQ scales in terms of gender; the mean, standard deviation, F-test and partial eta squared (η^2) values were computed (see Table 4.8). For the given sample, the findings reveal that both the male and female teacher educators perceived their practice of compassion in the classroom favorably, since the mean value for all the five CTSQ scales is above 4.

The statistic values range from (M=4.25; SD=0.72) for the Communication scale to (M=4.46; SD=0.65) for the Role Modeling and the standard deviation for each of the CTSQ scales is computed less than 1, which indicates consistency in their views. The F-test and ANOVA eta^2 statistic was calculated to provide an estimate of the degree of difference between male and female teacher educators' perspectives. The partial η^2 statistic for the five CTSQ scales indicates the

insignificant difference; hence, gender has little influence on their perceptions of their compassionate classroom teaching practice.

Age-group difference in perceptions of compassionate classroom teaching

In order to compare teacher educators' perspectives of the compassionate classroom teaching on the five CTSQ scales in terms of age-groups, the mean, standard deviation, F-test and partial eta squared (η^2) values were computed (see Table 5). For the given sample, the results revealed that the teacher educators perceived their practice of compassion in the classroom favourably, since the mean value for all the five CTSQ scales in terms of age group is above 4. While, the standard deviation for the five CTSQ scales is computed less than 1, indicating the consistency in their views.

Table 5

Scale-wise mean, SD, F-test and partial η^2 values

	20-30 yrs		31-40 yrs		41-50 yrs		51+yrs		Difference		
Scales	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	F	p	η^2
ACP	4.60	0.57	4.20	0.72	4.30	0.80	4.07	0.20	1.87	0.26	0.20
ROM	4.63	0.53	4.50	0.65	4.48	0.68	4.59	0.52	0.29	0.88	0.03
COM	4.12	0.61	4.23	0.70	4.49	0.70	4.40	0.56	0.70	0.62	0.07
RBL	4.20	0.71	4.18	0.73	4.43	0.66	4.53	0.65	0.80	0.55	0.08
SCO	4.50	0.50	4.43	0.60	4.43	0.71	4.54	0.69	0.38	0.80	0.04

Acronyms: *ACP -Academic Performance; ROM - Role Modeling; COM -Communication; RBL- Relationship Building; and SCO – Self Consciousness*

The F-test results indicate no statistically significant difference in the means in terms of age groups on any of the CTSQ scale. The ANOVA eta^2 statistic was calculated to provide an estimate of the degree of difference in teacher educators' views in terms of age groups. The partial η^2 statistic for the five CTSQ scales indicates the insignificant difference; hence, age group has a little influence on their perspectives of compassionate classroom teaching.

Thus, the findings of the study indicate that the study respondents generally believed that the practice and definition of compassion in their classroom teaching was favorable. This is indicative from the fact that the mean of all the items under five scales of the CTSQ was rated above 4, and also the overall mean of each scale was above 4. In addition, the scale-wise as well as item-wise standard deviation values were all rated less than 1, indicating consistency in their views**.**

Discussions

Many past studies pertaining to compassionate classroom teaching focused on qualitative designs, while the current study employed a survey method to examine the teacher educators' perceptions of compassion in their pre-service classroom teaching. The instrument, CTSQ encapsulated five dimensions of Academic Performance, Communication, Role Modeling, Relationships and Self-consciousness. It exhibited strong factorial validity (most item having factor loadings ranging from 0.60 to 0.87) and the internal consistency reliability (i.e., the Cronbach apha coefficient ranging from 0.79 for Communication to 0.87 for Academic Performance).

Interestingly, very a few studies defined compassion in relation to classroom teaching contexts. This may be explained by the difficulty of defining the concept of compassion itself and its practice in the actual classroom situation. According to Chodron (2003), compassion is the process of building trust and basic goodness of what we have and who we are, and developing a true understanding of other people as well. In addition, Feldman (2006) and Glasser (2005) claim that the compassionate classroom fosters positive relationship between the educator and the students through empathic awareness by building trust and respect that nourishes emotionally safe learning environment where academic excellence thrives. The findings of the current study indicated that the scale of 'Relationship Building' (M=4.37; SD=0.68) in their pre-service classroom was favourably perceived by Bhutanese teacher educators.

The study revealed that practice of 'Role Modeling' (M=4.52; SD=0.61) and 'Communication' (M=4.36; SD=0.67) as elements of compassionate classroom teaching were also favourably perceived. This is supported by the claim made by Kernochan, Mccormick and White (2007) that teaching is a profession that provides opportunities for practicing compassion. A compassionate teacher is able to see goodness and potential even in the most challenging student and treats each student with respect that makes a positive difference in the lives of their students. He or she is always mindful of his/her responsibilities, obligations, and wellbeing. The teacher not only takes care of his/her own wellbeing but takes care of the students' wellbeing in the classroom.

Further, findings of the study revealed that practice of 'Self-Consciousness' (M=4.47; SD=0.65) by teacher educators was also favorably perceived. However, there was inconsistency in participants' views in terms of gender and age groups. It is argued that compassion nurtures a feeling of connectedness and commitment, a willingness to reach out to others (Dalai Lama & Cutter, 1998). Such insightful claims suggest that compassion is an essential teacher quality that nourishes genuine relationship with the students. Compassion involves feelings for others who are suffering and being motivated to act to help them (Goetz et al. 2010; Lazarus, 1991 cited in Strauss et al, 2016).

Finally, the study was indicative of the fact that practice of compassion in the classroom teaching had a strong influence on their perceptions of the scale of Academic Performance (M=4.43; SD=0.73). When a teacher practices compassion in the classroom, the classroom setting experiences a positive interaction supported with genuine care and respect for each other. Most importantly, the teacher is encouraged to become non-judgmental to students' behaviours. Similarly, Kernochan, Mccormick and White (2007) note that "Practicing compassion involves putting aside self-righteousness and judgments that others are less than oneself" (p.64).

Conclusion and Future Directions

Although it is important to define the concept of compassion in relation to classroom teaching and impact of compassion-related issues in order to identify their contribution to changes in teaching service offered by teacher educators to their students, the study reveals that there was generally a good practice of compassion by Bhutanese teacher educators. However, what information provided was just derived from self-completed surveys, and consequently subject to bias. In addition, the sample was small and there was no triangulation of data and methods, which could

have provided more comprehensive findings than these. Hence, it is suggested for using a study design which captures well-defined concepts and practices of compassion, and triangulation of information from student teachers, teacher educators, and educational leaders.

In so far, efforts have been made in many countries to highlight the practice of compassion by lecturers and teacher educators, but very less in Bhutanese context. It may be argued that defining compassion and therefore, the practice of compassion is important to steer classroom learning environment. This recommends that practice of compassion by teacher educators in the classroom may be considered to provide sufficient assurance that student teachers will be able to model such attributes later in their career.

Studies explicitly describing the compassionate classroom teaching and its impact on student learning were limited, particularly in Bhutanese classroom contexts. Despite the growing attention for improving the quality of student learning and the country's education in Bhutan, such studies as the current one is limited. Finally, the current study could not consider contextual factors and challenges, which can be crucial in determining whether teacher educators are able to apply their compassionate practices and improve the quality of student learning. We recommend that studies which can redress these contextual factors, as we believe such studies will be able to reveal teacher educators' perspectives authentically.

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Written Corrective Feedback: Comparing Bhutanese Middle Secondary ESL Student and Teacher Perspectives

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[3]ABSTRACT

Numerous studies have investigated and advocated the effectiveness of written corrective feedback (WCF) on L2 students' writing. The researchers are presently more interested in uncovering the perceptions that the teachers and the students have about the usefulness of WCF. A large number of studies have focused on students' perspectives about WCF, whereas, very few studies accounted for teachers' perspectives and compared the former with the latter. In the Bhutanese context, there is a paucity of WCF research altogether. This study, conducted in a Bhutanese Middle Secondary School, investigated the perceptions of ESL students and teachers on (1) amount of WCF, (2) types of WCF, and (3) types of errors to be marked. This study also attempts to gauge the differences in the students' and teachers' perceptions about WCF and the reasons thereof. Six English as Second Language (ESL) teachers and 42 ESL students were selected using purposive, and stratified random sampling respectively. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected by means of parallel written questionnaires. The quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics such as percentages and means, whereas the qualitative data were analysed using thematic analysis. The findings reveal that there are areas where both the students and the teachers share common preferences and views but also areas where they express disagreements. Pedagogical implications and the limitations of the study are discussed.

Keywords: written corrective feedback, errors, perspectives, Bhutanese students and teachers

INTRODUCTION

A considerable amount of research has examined the effectiveness of corrective feedback for L2 writing. The perception of learners and teachers about the usefulness of written corrective feedback (WCF) is a crucial area of focus for many researchers (e.g., Diab, 2005; Leki, 1991; Schulz, 2001). Understanding teachers' and students' perceptions about written corrective feedback as a teaching and learning tool is crucial as any discrepancy in their perceptions can affect learning. Many

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previous studies already have investigated teachers' and students' perceptions about WCF. However, most of them investigated students' perspectives, with fewer studies cross-examining students' and teachers' perspectives. Particularly, there is a paucity of studies that explored students' and teachers' choices for various types of WCF and their reasons for the stated preferences. This study examines and compares Bhutanese ESL students' and teachers' perceptions of different types and amounts of WCF, and also investigates the reasons thereof.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Many studies on the effectiveness of WCF on errors in ESL context revealed varying results (Truscott, 2010). The scholars are divided into two schools regarding the value of WCF – one supporting WCF for second language teaching (Bitchner & Ferries, 2012; Bitchener & Storch, 2016) and another questioning its value, are against the use of it (Truscott, 2010; Truscott and Hsu, 2008). Some early research found WCF to be in effective in language learning, while some found it useful in L2 writing.

However, there is recent research evidence in support of written corrective feedback. The effects of different types of WCF (e.g., error identification, direct and indirect error correction, comments on errors, metalinguistic feedback, comments on content) have been studied by various researchers (e.g., Chandler, 2003; Bitchener & Knoch, 2008; Bitchener, Young & Cameron, 2005; Hartshorn, 2008; Sheen, 2007; Sachs & Polio, 2007). While WCF research worldwide has shown some positive effects in a general sense (Ferries, 2004), they have also presented conflicting findings regarding which WCF strategy is most effective. Sheen (2007) for instance, found that WCF targeting a single structural feature improved learners' accuracy. While, Bitchener, Young, and Cameron (2005) found that a combination of WCF and conference feedback improved accuracy levels in some structures, but found no overall effect on accuracy improvement. Another study (Hartshorn, 2008) found that WCF helped improve overall structural accuracy. While there are numerous studies (e.g., Ferris, 2006) which found indirect WCF more effective than direct WCF, there are also studies (e.g., Van Beuningen, Jong, & Kuiken, 2012) which concluded otherwise.

Since there are evidences both for and against the use of WCF, researchers also have explored different ways to explain why different types and amounts of WCF might be ineffective. Research hints that the incongruity of the findings springs from the issue of perspectives held by

the practitioners – teachers and students. For instance, a teacher corrects learners' language and provides WCF according to what they presumably perceive learners want to or should say, but often there is a mismatch in the ideas and language-use between what learners' perceive as correct and that which teacher assumes is correct (Ferris, 1995). Further, in some cases, students fail to comprehend the WCF provided and therefore, the interpretation and use may mismatch the implied expectations of the teachers. Students' preferences for different types and amounts of WCF may also determine how effectively they use it for their learning. For instance, a student's strong conviction over one type of WCF may result in him or her investing more attention and effort in using the WCF for learning as he or she prefers and believes in its usefulness (Schulz, 2001).

Students' preferences for type and amount of WCF have differed over time. Semke (1984) found that students prefer WCF in the form of comments on content and ideas rather than on grammatical and structural errors. However, Leki (1991) found that students prefer comments on content and ideas as well as direct WCF on their grammatical and structural errors. Lee (2005) found that students preferred comprehensive WCF rather than selective WCF, and that students approved of direct correction as well as indirect WCF such as coding.

Another issue is whether or not students' expectations are met by the teachers' WCF. While some studies showed agreements between students and teachers in a number of areas, others have found significant variance. For example, Montgomery and Baker (2007) found that ESL teachers' and students' perceptions of the use of local and global WCF actually matched. Whereas, Diab (2005) compared beliefs about the effectiveness of various types of WCF and found that the students' views on the effectiveness of teachers' feedback strategies conflicted with that of the teacher's.

This incongruity in students' and teachers' perceptions regarding the usefulness of different types and amounts of WCF are pedagogically challenging. For example, a teacher may provide a particular kind of WCF intending to help the students, but actually rendering more harm as students may not agree with it. Therefore, it is important for both teachers and students to explicitly communicate their expectations regarding the type and amount of WCF that works best for them. Thus, researchers advocate the need of mutual agreement between teachers and students and perhaps negotiate students' expectations with what is most effective for improving their writing competency (e.g., Diab, 2005; Schulz, 2001). One way that can possibly alter the students' inadequate perceptions is conducting studies that not only cross-examines students' and teachers'

opinions about WCF, but also investigate teachers' and students' reasons for preferring particular types of WCF.

What aggravates the problem further in the Bhutanese context is, teachers' tendency to hide behind the inadequacies of the education system, such as, overcrowded classroom, vast syllabus, exam oriented curricula etc. as an excuse for not administering any kind of feedback on student's writing. There is also evidence of incorrect implementation of feedback processes. Therefore, understanding their perspectives, opinion and beliefs about the use of WCF is crucial to set forth any kind of change in the mindset of the teachers as well as the students. The purpose of this present study is embedded in the following research questions:

Research questions

1. What amount of WCF do Bhutanese Middle Secondary ESL students and teachers think is most useful, and why?
2. What types of WCF do Bhutanese Middle Secondary ESL students and teachers think are most useful, and why?
3. What types of errors do Bhutanese Middle Secondary ESL students and teachers think should be corrected?
4. Are there differences between students' and teachers' preferences and reasons regarding the usefulness of different amounts of WCF, types of WCF, and types of errors to be corrected?

METHODOLOGY

A five-item questionnaire was used to collect both quantitative and qualitative data drawing participants' opinions about the usefulness of different types and amounts of WCF and also the reasons for their choices. Item one used a multiple choice question with six options to determine the different amount of WCF teachers and students preferred. Item two used a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (not useful at all) to 5 (very useful) to determine the value teachers and students place on seven different types of WCF. Item three elicited open-ended reasons for the choice of different types of WCF in item two. Item four elicited a "Yes or No' response for the requirement of marking an error every time it occurs and the reasons thereof. Item five used 5-point Likert scale from 1 (not useful at all) to 5 (very useful) to determine the students and teachers preference of seven different types of errors to be marked. Parallel questionnaires were constructed in order to compare the perspectives of the two groups. The questionnaire items were based on items from

questionnaires used in previous studies that examined similar research questions (Ferris, 1995; Leki, 1991; Amrhein & Nassaji, 2010).

Participants

This study involved 48 participants: 42 middle secondary ESL students and six ESL teachers from Yangdon Middle Secondary School (pseudonym), Punakha, Bhutan. The school offers general English curriculum for six to seven hours per week. English is the medium of instruction in the school which is the norm in Bhutan. The student participants ranged from grades seven to 10. The teacher participants are trained English teachers holding qualifications like Bachelors of Education and Post Graduate Diploma in Education. The students have 8 to 11 years of in-the-school exposure to English as it is the medium of instruction. All teachers have field experience of 4 years and above.

Analysis

The questionnaire responses were recorded in an excel spreadsheet for statistical analysis. For the quantitative data, the frequencies of responses on the questionnaires were calculated, converted into percentages and then compared. As the participants comprised of two groups with different cohort sizes, percentages were used for comparative analysis of perspectives between the teachers and students. For the questionnaire items that included Likert scales, the means of participants' responses were calculated for comparison between two groups. The participants' explanatory responses (from the open-ended questions) are analysed using qualitative 6-step analytic method called Thematic Analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) define Thematic Analysis as a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. The responses were 'read repeatedly' to search for 'meanings and patterns'. Any interesting features were annotated with codes manually on the questionnaire. The codes then were collated into potential themes and compared between teachers and students.

RESULTS

The questionnaire results are presented in three sections corresponding to the first three research questions. The findings for the fourth research question pertaining to differences in preferences of the students and the teachers are highlighted under each section.

RQ1 - *What amount of WCF do Bhutanese Middle Secondary ESL students and teachers think is most useful, and why?*

Item one asked the participants whether they think that teachers should mark all errors, just some, or none at all and respond only to the ideas and content. The participants were permitted to check more than one option. As Table 1 shows, the option *Mark all errors* was the most popular choice for both students (100%) and teachers (50%). The second most popular option for students was *mark all major errors but not minor ones* (42.9%). The remaining teachers were divided equally over option B, C and D (16.7%). All these three options B, C and D refer to the marking of major errors to different degrees*: all, most* and *only a few* respectively. No students chose these options. Both the students and the teachers did not agree with the idea of *marking only the errors that interfere with communication* (E) and *responding only to the ideas and content, and mark no errors* (F).

Table 1

Participants' Responses to Different Amounts of Written Corrective Feedback

Options	Students		Teachers	
	n	%	n	%
Mark all errors	42	100	3	50
Mark all the major errors but not the minor ones	18	42.9	1	16.7
Mark most of the major errors, but not necessarily all of them	0	0	1	16.7
Mark only a few of the major errors	0	0	1	16.7
Mark only the errors that interfere with communication	0	0	0	0
Mark no errors and respond only to the ideas and content	0	0	0	0
Total Responses	60	143	6	100.0

*Participants were allowed to choose as many options as they like. Therefore, total responses add to more than 100%.

The teachers' and students' explanations for their preferences are shown in Table 2. The majority of the students (85.7%) considered it important to see all of their errors marked, so that the WCF acts as both a learning tool and an aid in avoiding the errors in the future. Most students explained that "students must see all of their errors in order to improve their writing." Only two students pointed out that, marking only some errors will provide students with opportunities to do self-correction, hinting towards student autonomy. The majority (50%) of teachers corresponds to the

students, in their opinion of marking all errors to instil awareness in the students, while a segment of teachers (33.3%) also explained that "marking only few major errors will not confuse the students."

Table 2

Explanations for Different Amounts of Written Corrective Feedback

	Explanations	Category	Students		Teachers	
			n	%	n	%
A	It's very important for students to see all errors to avoid them in the future.	Exposure	36	85.7	3	50
B	Marking only some errors will provide students with opportunities to work on their own.	Student autonomy	6	14.3	0	0
C	Marking only few major errors will be effective as it will not confuse the students	Procedure	0	0	2	33.3
D	Mark only major errors as they interfere communication.	Purpose	0	0	1	16.7
	Total Responses		42	100	6	100

Item four also on the amount of WCF further asked, "If an error is repeated in a writing assignment more than once, do you think it is useful for the teacher to mark it every time it occurs?" It was found that comparatively more students (57.1%) and teachers (66.7%) perceives that a repeated error should be marked every time it occurs (Table 3).

Table 3

Participants' Responses for Correction of Repeated Errors

		No	Yes	Total Responses
Students	n	18	24	42
	%	42.9	57.1	100
Teachers	n	2	4	6
	%	33.3	66.7	100

The participants' explanations for this item is shown in Table 4. The majority of both students (57.1%) and teachers (67%) consider WCF to be a learning tool when they explained that a repeated error should be marked each time it occurs "as several reminders can provide deeper realization of the error and avoid repetition." Some teachers (17%) also explained that marking all errors will discourage students and prohibit self-correction. An equal percent (17%) of teachers advocated student autonomy and suggested to "… mark initial ones and provide instruction to enable student self-correction."

Table 4

Explanations for Correction of Repeated Errors

		Category	Students		Teachers	
			n	%	n	%
A	Yes, as several remainders can provide deeper realization of the error and avoid repeating it.	Learning tool	24	57.1	4	67
B	No, Marking all errors will be discouraging for students as well as it won't provide the opportunities for self-correction	Educational psychology and Learner autonomy	12	28.6	1	17
C	No, the teacher should mark initial ones and provide instruction to enable students to do self-correction	Procedure	6	14.3	1	17
	Total Responses		42	100	6	100

RQ 2 – *What types of WCF do Bhutanese Middle Secondary students and teachers think are most useful, and why?*

Item two on a 5-point Likert scale format seeks to examine participants' views on the usefulness of different types of WCF. The types of WCF were represented by an example of each and participants rated them (1= not useful at all, 2 = not useful, 3 = doesn't matter, 4 = quite useful, and 5= very useful). Table 5 shows students' and teachers' overall mean ratings for each type of WCF.

For *clues or directions on how to fix an error* (e.g., direction to a certain section of a grammar text), both students (4.3) and teachers (2.8) demonstrate an overall positive rating, however, students' opinion was more positive. For *error identification*, both students (2.3) and teachers (2.2) demonstrate an overall negative rating. For *error correction with a comment*, both students (4.3) and teachers (4) demonstrate overall positive ratings. For *overt correction by the teacher*, both students (3.6) and teachers (4.2) demonstrate an overall positive rating, however, teachers' expressed their opinion more strongly. For *comment with no correction*, the mean response from teachers was negative (2.3), while, students demonstrated a positive (3.7) rating. For *no feedback* on an error and for *a personal comment on the content* of the writing, the mean response from students (1.3), (1.9) respectively and from teachers (1.0), (1.2) respectively, were unfavourable.

Table 5

Participants' Responses for Different Types of Written Corrective Feedback

Item	Feedback type	Means	
		Students	Teachers
2A	Clues and directions on how to fix an error	4.3	2.8
2B	Error identification	2.3	2.2
2C	Error correction with a comment	4.3	4.0
2D	Overt correction by the teacher	3.6	4.2
2E	Comment with no correction	3.7	2.3
2F	No feedback	1.3	1.0
2G	Personal comment on content	1.9	1.2

Tables 6 to 10 presents explanations provided by the participants for the above feedback types. Table 6 shows explanations provided for *clues or directions on how to fix an error*. The majority of students (71.4%) supported student autonomy and explained that clues or directions are useful because "it is important for students to know how to self-correct so they remember their errors." In contrast, the majority of teachers (50%) expressed clues are not useful and students need specific feedbacks for proper follow-up. Likewise, a number of students (28.6%) also expressed that clues are not useful. Many teachers (33.3%) agreed with the majority of students on the importance of

student autonomy in correcting errors stimulated by the teacher's clues and directions. Few teachers believed that clues are useful only for high-level students.

Table 6

Explanation for Clues or Directions on How to Fix an Error

	Explanations	Category	Students		Teachers	
			n	%	n	%
a)	Clues are not useful. Students need specific advice. Only few students may do the follow up.	Teacher responsibility	12	28.6	3	50
b)	It's important for students to know how to self-correct by referring to sources, so they remember their errors.	Student autonomy	30	71.4	2	33.3
c)	Clues are useful only for high level students.	Student competency	0	0.0	1	16.7
	Total Responses		42	100	6	100

Table 7 shows explanations provided for *error identification*. The majority of students (85.7%) expressed that it is teachers' responsibility to correct and provide constructive feedback as error identification does not help. However, all the teachers (100%) considered that students are not competent enough to understand the errors identified and rectify themselves. They asserted "Error Identification leaves students confused not knowing what to do." None of the students provided this explanation

Table 7

Explanation for Error Identification

	Explanations	Category	Students		Teachers	
			n	%	n	%
a)	Error identification is not useful. Correction is best.	Teacher Responsibility	36	85.7	0	0

b)	Guides student in self correction, which allows students to better remember the errors.	Student-autonomy/ Learning tool	6	14.3	0	0
c)	Error identification leaves students confused not knowing what to do.	Student Competency	0	0.0	6	100
	Total Responses		42	100	6	100

Table 8 shows explanations provided for *error correction with a comment*. Students regarded this type of WCF as a learning tool. They explained that "comments are useful for students to see why the error exists and how to fix it" (57.1%), and that "students will remember better with comments" (14.3%). Whereas, some students (28.6%) believed that this may not help in learning because all work is done by the teacher. All the teachers (100%) believed that "Comments are useful for students to see why the errors exist and how to fix it."

Table 8

Explanation for Error Correction With a Comment.

	Explanations	Category	Students		Teachers	
			n	%	n	%
a)	May not help in learning as all work is done by the teacher	Learner autonomy	12	28.6	0	0
b)	Comments are useful for students to see why the error exists and how to fix it.	Learning tool	24	57.1	6	100
c)	Students will remember better with comments	Learning tool	6	14.3	0	0
	Total Responses		42	100	6	100

Table 9 shows explanations provided for *overt correction by the teacher*. About half of the students (42.9%) regard this type of WCF as a learning tool and explained that "teacher correction is important so that students see their errors and learn". Almost half of the students (42.9%) also demonstrated that they believe it is the teacher's responsibility to provide correction accompanied by comments, as correction alone is inadequate. Some students (14.3%) asserted that "Students don't pay attention to teacher correction." The majority of the teachers' (67%) correspond with the

students', in their opinion of importance of teacher correction to make the students see the errors and cause learning. Also, some teachers believe that teacher correction should be followed by comments to make the errors more explicit (17%) and teacher correction will be more effective only to low achievers (17%).

Table 9

Explanation for Overt Correction by the Teacher

	Explanations	Category	Students		Teachers	
			n	%	n	%
a)	Teacher correction is important so that students see their errors and learn	learning tool	18	42.9	4	67
b)	Teacher correction should be accompanied by comments to cause learning.	Teacher responsibility	18	42.9	1	17
c)	Students don't pay attention to teacher correction.	Student competency	6	14.3	0	0
d)	Teacher correction will be more effective only to the low achievers.	procedure	0	0	1	17
	Total Responses		42	100	6	100

Finally, Table 10 shows explanations provided for *comment with no correction*. Majority of students (71%) expressed that this kind of WCF can make students curious to look for errors and self-correct it, whereas, none of the teachers expressed this view. Some students (28.6%) expressed that '*comment with no correction'* can be confusing.

However, the majority of teachers (66.7%) expressed *comments without error correction* can confuse students. Some teachers (33.3%) believe that comments alone can only work with committed students.

Table 10

Explanation for Comment with No Correction

Explanations	Category	Students	Teachers

			n	%	n	%
a)	Comments with no correction can make students curious to look for errors and self-correct it.	Learning tool	30	71.4	0	0
b)	Comments are confusing, students don't understand them.	Student Competency	12	28.6	4	66.7
c)	Comments only work with committed students.	Student Competency	0	0.0	2	33.3
	Total Responses		42	100	6	100

RQ 3 - *What types of errors do Bhutanese Middle Secondary students and teachers think should be corrected?*

On item five, participants rated (1= not useful at all, 2 = not useful, 3 = doesn't matter, 4 = quite useful, and 5= very useful), the usefulness of WCF on six different types of errors. Table 11 shows students' and teachers' mean ratings for each type of WCF.

Table 11

Participants' Responses for Correction on Different Types of Errors

Item	Feedback Type	Means	
		Students	Teachers
A	WCF on Organization Errors	4.3	4.3
B	WCF on Grammatical Errors	4.7	4.8
C	WCF on Content and Ideas	4.0	4.3
D	WCF on Punctuation Errors	3.9	4.5
E	WCF on Spelling Errors	4.4	4.5
F	WCF on Vocabulary Errors	4.3	4.7

For all feedback types the means of the responses from both the students' and teachers' demonstrated overall positive responses. However, for WCF on punctuation, the teachers' (4.5)

mean rating is comparatively more positive than the students' (3.9) rating. All teachers demonstrate that all feedback types are important.

DISCUSSIONS

The first research question explored what amount of WCF students and teachers think is most useful, and the reasons thereof. The findings reveal that the students consider it most useful for teachers to purvey WCF on as many errors as possible. The students disregarded the options like; teacher marks only a few errors, marks only errors that interfere with communication or responds only to content and ideas. Students surmised that greater the amount of feedback, more beneficial it would prove for learning. Likewise, teachers also viewed that WCF should be provided on all errors. Similarly, in a study by Amrhein and Nassaji (2010) majority of the students and teachers expressed the view of marking all errors. However, in the current study, around 50 % of teachers shared the idea of marking the major errors only. They expressed that teachers should gauge if an error is a major one impeding communication or not.

The findings show that the students and the teachers disagree regarding the amount of WCF. While the students desired WCF on all types of errors, most teachers proposed using WCF selectively only on major errors. Most of the students reasoned that marking all errors will help them avoid the errors in the future. It is worthwhile to note that a good percentage of teachers also stipulated the same reasoning. Some teachers based their responses on the fact that fewer is better as it is less confusing to the learners while the others thought marking the major errors as they interfered with communication. This shows that teachers were divided on the amount of correction they identify as necessary and they were divided on their reasons as well.

Regarding repeated correction of errors each time they occur, both the majority of teachers and students saw WCF as a learning tool and thought that a repeated error should be consistently marked each time it occurs, and several students and teachers proposed a common explanation that "…several reminders can provide deeper realization of the error and avoid repeating it." These findings are not in line with the previous research findings that suggest benefit of allowing students to correct at least some of their own errors (e.g., Ferris & Roberts, 2001), and if a teacher marks a repeated error every time it occurs, students are deprived of autonomy to self-correct. However, a very small fraction of both the teachers and the students were of the view that marking all errors

will be demotivating and wouldn't provide opportunities for self-correction, postulating the theme of learner autonomy.

The second research question explored the types of WCF students and teachers think are most useful, and the reasons thereof. The vast majority of students in this study thought that it was very important for them to receive clues and directions to self-correct errors positing student autonomy and freeing teachers from the tedious labour of marking all errors. This aligns to the findings of some previous studies which found self-correction to be useful (e.g., Ferris & Roberts, 2001). But the majority of teachers believe otherwise, they disapprove of the use of clues and directions asserting 'only few students may carry out the follow-up on the directions'.

Both teachers and students disapprove error identification and propose a similar reason. They claim that error identification alone is not useful and it can be confusing to the students as it doesn't provide the what-next directions. Both parties are positive pertaining to error correction with a comment. However, all teachers think that comments are useful for students to see why the error exists and how to fix it, while some students believe that correction with comments may not help, as all work is done by the teachers disparaging learner autonomy. They also share a favourable outlook on the overt correction by teacher and claims it to be a learning tool.

A major contradiction occurred between the two groups regarding the comment with no correction. The students were favourable to this as they think it will foster learner autonomy, claiming that 'comments with no correction can make students curious to look for errors and self-correct it'. Whereas, the majority of teachers think that comments are confusing and students don't understand them and some think that comments only work with committed students. This also contradicts the previous research which found self-correction useful for student learning (Ferris & Roberts, 2001).

The third research question explored what types of errors students and teachers think should be corrected. Both students and teachers were excessively favourable on all kinds of errors. Students preferred all the kinds of errors to be addressed. This finding is consistent with what was found by Leki, (1991) that 'students equate good writing in English with error free writing and that they expect and want all errors in their papers to be corrected.' However, even the teachers approved correction of all errors leaving no avenue for student autonomy. These findings indicate that teachers as well as the students wish and attempt to make learner writing error free. However,

teachers as practitioners should consider if this is practically possible. There is a place here for the teacher and the students to negotiate and identify focus areas for WCF administration.

Overall, participants' responses and explanations showed several differences between the opinions of the two groups. Although students' explanations showed that they understand and value some student autonomy, for the most part their responses showed that they value large amounts of WCF from the teacher. The majority of the teachers disapproved throughout to entertain student autonomy in learning which contradicts with many of the contemporary educational beliefs and viewpoints which propose learner autonomy for better teaching and learning.

CONCLUSION

The contradiction in the perspectives of the teachers and the students found in this study should probe if WCF should be provided in line with what is proven to be beneficial, what teachers think is beneficial, or what learners prefer. This mismatch in the perspectives can stand as a hurdle for WCF practice. For example, the difference between the students and teachers on their preference for learner autonomy portrays that the teachers are lagging behind in what students see as an opportunity to be more student-centred. As the contemporary pedagogy recommends learner autonomy, the teachers could forge a strategy to foster learner autonomy and experiment to see if it works, instead of assuming that learners are not ready to indulge in self-learning. Thus, more research is needed to find out how the differences between teachers' and students' expectations can be best addressed for optimal pedagogy.

Pedagogically, the findings suggest that teachers need to make the WCF process more student oriented by giving more opportunities for students to self-correct their work. Moreover teachers also need to openly discuss the use of WCF with students, and ensure that students understand the purpose of WCF and shoulder responsibility for error correction and not just keep on believing that they will not do any follow up on the feedback. Students and teachers must negotiate any viewpoint differences about what constitutes a useful WCF, and accordingly change their expectations (Leki, 1991).

It is also crucial to take into account students' preferences for a particular type of WCF; however, teacher should also gauge contextual setting and practicality in WCF implementation and effect on learning. For instance, it will not be feasible to mark all errors all the time or provide

comprehensive WCF where class sizes are large. It can be a tedious affair for the teacher as well as overwhelming for the students to attentively attend to all the corrections at a go. While students' preferences should not be idealized as they may not necessarily be more effective for being preferred (Brown, 2009), completely ignoring them may also demotivate the students (Leki, 1991). Thus, it is necessary for teachers to demonstrate and explain the use of effective types of WCF, including those types which initially may not be preferred by students.

However, as this study investigated students' and teachers' perceptions regarding WCF and not the effectiveness of WCF, we must acknowledge that error correction is a complex issue. Many variables such as the nature of the WCF, type of error, how and when it should be corrected needs to be considered for any WCF strategy to be effective. Besides, factors such as sociocultural context, individual learner needs and differences, and learner motives should also be considered.

There are also some limitations to be considered for this study. The number of participants was limited and drawn from only one school. Therefore, further research with larger sample size drawn from different instructional contexts can enhance the generalizability of the findings to diverse contexts. As this study dealt with complex notion of errors, participants understanding of errors may have been varied and inconsistent. For example, the participant may have failed to differentiate between the different types of errors. The open-ended answers revealed that some participants considered major errors to be the same as errors that interfere with communication. Moreover, some participants hinted that they considered errors pertaining to ideas and content not as errors requiring WCF. Therefore, to establish clear, consistent and uniform understanding of errors, future research should define the errors clearly and make participants aware of it.

In addition, the current study gathered perceptions of teachers and students about the usefulness of WCF and their preferences. These findings on perceptions held by teachers and students may not align exactly with what happens in the classroom. For instance, although the majority of the teachers believe that error identification alone will confuse the students, yet in reality most of them just identify the errors without further directions. Thus, studies that investigate the (mis)alignment of teachers' opinions with their actual practices would be more helpful.

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Women Leadership in Bhutanese Schools

Jigme Choden

Abstract

This paper looks at the lives of women leaders in Bhutanese schools at a time when male dominates many spheres of society such as in governance, management and education. The number of women in leadership positions, especially in schools has not improved much over the years. Even for the few in leadership positions, there are various challenges due to inherent gender biases, cultural practices and societal norms. Many of these challenges are attributed to women's traditional role in family such as raising children, balancing household work and career. Considering these issues and preconceived biases, taking up leadership roles in a male dominated society is a challenge to women leaders in schools.

This study was carried out qualitatively with roots in phenomenology in which participants' experiences were studied to get in-depth understanding of women leadership in Bhutanese schools. A total of 20 respondents were interviewed to find out perspectives and experiences of women principals and vice principals to highlight their unique strengths, contributions and inherent barriers in taking up leadership roles in schools. Four broad themes emerged including perspectives on women leadership status in Bhutanese schools, women leadership style as compared to men's leadership, barriers to women leadership in schools, and support mechanisms for women leadership at different levels.

In line with the key findings, several recommendations have been made for creating an equitable and just society, the most notable being a call to relook into plans and policies related to the transfer of women leaders in Bhutanese schools. The recommendations suggested are based on the principles of gender equality and empowerment of women in playing important roles in an evolving society. [4]

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Keywords: Women Leadership, Barriers, family, society, male dominance, posting, support mechanism.

Context of the problem

Modern education started in Bhutan with the launch of the first five-year plan in the early 1960s with borrowed curriculum and teachers from India (Zangmo, de Onis, & Dorji, 2012). The management of the schools was entrusted to them as Bhutanese were not qualified enough to manage schools yet. It was only in 1988, that the Ministry of Education (MoE) started appointing nationals as school head teachers (Dukpa, 2013). With the increasing number of schools in the last decade, the appointment of principals and their roles in schools have become greater. In spite of the progress, only 0.2 percent of school leaders are women (MoE, 2019). According to the Annual Education Statistics (MoE, 2019) women leadership in Bhutanese education system is represented by only ten women school principals compared to more than 400 male principals. Factors that inhibit women from aspiring for leadership positions in education needed to be identified and understood for women to be represented in all walks of lives to make greater contribution to nation building.

Therefore, this research intends to find out the challenges associated with poor representation of women in education leadership roles and to highlight the practical challenges related to policies, practices and attitudes associated with women leadership in schools. For this the researcher sought to answer to the following questions:

i. What is the status of women leadership in the schools in Bhutan?
ii. What are some of the factors that impede women to pursue leadership roles?
iii. What are some of the advantages of women leadership in schools?
iv. How do we support women in acquiring adequate knowledge and skills to take up leadership roles in the school?

Literature Review

With the increasing number of schools in the last decade, the roles of the principals in the schools have become greater. There are around 476 schools all over the country with 8824 teachers and approximately 470 principals leading the schools (MoE, 2019). However, there are only ten female principals in the schools though women teachers comprise 41 percent of the total number of teachers.

Hudson and Rea (1996) state that the most common reason for underrepresentation of women in school administration in United States is because of negative perceptions of the way women lead. Furthermore, they point out that there is a distinct difference in the way women and men manage schools. Men are authoritative, decisive, controlling, and unemotional and traditionally these attributes are given more respect. Such an outlook to women leadership may no longer be true as gender roles in many aspects of society have changed dramatically over time, and attributes of women such as emotional and social competencies are recognized as important leadership competencies.

Eagly and Carli (2007) point out that female leaders, in general are slightly more transformational than male leaders, especially when it comes to providing support and encouragement to subordinates. They believe that women also engage more in rewarding and supportive behaviours, whereas men exceeded women in the aspects of transactional leadership involving corrective and disciplinary actions. This finding is further supported by Eagly, Johannesen and Van Engen (2003) that the only demonstrated difference between female and male managers is that women adopt a somewhat more democratic or participative style and a less autocratic or directive style than men do. As per Growe and Montgomery (1999) in United States of America, good school administration is more attuned to feminine than masculine modes of leadership behaviour. Female attributes of nurturing, being sensitive, empathetic, intuitive, compromising, caring, cooperative, and accommodative are increasingly associated with effective leadership.

Hudson and Rea (1996) believe that there is a distinctive difference between the way men and women manage. For instance, men are traditionally associated to be authoritative, decisive, controlling and unemotional and these traits seem to be respected more than the management of women due to a series of myth such as (a) women do not have what it takes, and (b) women lack

support of teachers and the community. Therefore, they state that the most common reasons presented in the literature for the underrepresentation of women in school administration is negative perceptions of women's ways of leading. However, as per this study there are other barriers such as family obligation, social responsibilities, cultural and societal norms which hinder women from taking up leadership roles in schools.

Methods

This study was carried out qualitatively with roots in phenomenology in which participants' experiences were studied to get an in-depth understanding of women leadership in Bhutanese schools. Among the four paradigms, the study of women educational leaders' lived-experiences suited well with social constructivism. This study examined the lives of women principals in Bhutanese schools to find out their lived experiences as women leaders. Creswell (2007) also points out that research on women leadership is generally pursued from a feminist point of view. This matches the researcher's passion as a feminist researcher as this research was carried out to highlight the strengths of women leadership and inherent barriers to it. Furthermore, women leadership in education is an issue and barriers to women's leadership in Bhutanese schools have not been previously studied.

Creswell (2007) further asserts that qualitative approach is best used to study a research problem when the problem needs to explore a complex issue, which needs detailed understanding of the issue. This study looked into the lives of the women principals in Bhutanese schools and examined their life experiences and challenges.

Participants

For this study, five principals (three male and three female principals) from Thimphu and Gelephu were selected for the interview along with ten students from two different higher secondary schools in Thimphu (five male and five female) who have the experience of being with both male and female principals. Five teachers (two males and three females) who have worked with both male and female principals were also interviewed from primary and higher secondary schools in Thimphu. Four women vice principals from middle and higher secondary schools in Thimphu who have been serving as vice principals for more than five years were interviewed to understand their

interest and challenges in taking up the role of principal. There were a total of 20 participants. To maintain confidentiality, the participants are provided pseudonyms in the report.

Instruments

To collect data on women leadership in Bhutanese schools, semi-structured interview guide was developed and used as it involved a series of open-ended questions based on the topic the researcher intended to cover. This structure provided opportunity to the interviewer and interviewee to discuss the topic in great detail by providing cues and prompting to encourage the interviewee. The interviews were recorded, with the consent of the interviewee and transcribed later for further analysis.

Data analysis

Creswell (2003) asserts that the process of qualitative data analysis involves making sense of the text and image data. Qualitative data analysis primarily entails classifying things, person, and events and the properties, which characterize them. This involves transcribing interviews, sorting and arranging the data into different themes through in-depth study. The researcher collected data in natural settings protecting the privacy and rights of the informants and the people being studied and further analysed the data inductively to establish patterns or themes; a coding process was used to generate a description of the setting as well as categories or theme; the actual data from the field were used to generate the themes.

Accordingly, five themes emerged namely, perspectives on women leadership status in Bhutanese schools, how women leaders lead distinctively from man and their advantages, barriers to women leadership and support mechanism for women leadership in Bhutanese schools.

Findings

Findings from this study are divided into two sections. The first section presents status of women leadership, how women leaders lead distinctively from male leaders and advantages of women leaders in Bhutanese schools. The second section highlights the challenges of women leaders in schools.

The Annual Education Statistics (MoE, 2019) report shows that 41% of the total government teachers are females but only about 0.2 percent of the female teachers are at the leadership

positions serving as principals across the country. Most of the participants of this study felt that the number of women leaders should be proportionate to the ratio of men and women teachers. In the words of one of the male students (Student5 [S5]), "I am surprised to know that there are just few female leaders, I never expected that the number would be that few". Another female student (S3) adds, "I feel sad and surprised to know about the inequality in the number of women and men leaders in our schools." A student respondent (S6) commented, "This small number shows that women are still behind in Bhutanese society." A male principal (Principal4 [P4]) said, " women are not good at problem solving and decision making", which according to him is an important skill of a leader in schools. His statement proves that stereotype on women's leadership ability still exists amongst well-educated and qualified Bhutanese men. According to Thinley et al. (2014), similar findings were reported about the existence of some elements of prejudice regarding women leadership performance and abilities in Bhutanese society. An earlier research (Pem, 2015) has also underscored that male leaders have the perception that women generally do not make good leaders. These findings tell us that stereotypical prejudice about women leadership does exist strongly in Bhutanese society and workplaces. In the words of one male student (S3), "Women leaders in the school will contribute to inspiring and motivating our girls to become women leaders in future", Teacher participants (T1, T2, T3, T4, and T5) were also of the view that women leaders can be effective role models for girl students to take up leadership roles when they grow up. From these perspectives, it is clear that women leadership in Bhutanese schools is an issue which has not got its fair share of discussion and attention. Therefore, this study provides a reason to probe the question further about women leadership in Bhutanese schools, looking at specific skill sets and leadership competencies.

Women Leaders Lead Distinctively from Male Leaders

It has been observed by all the participants that there are differences between the management style of the male and female leaders as per their lived experiences. Many of the participants saw that women leaders apply democratic principles, whereas men seem to apply more autocratic approach in dealing with their students and teachers. For instance, one of the female teachers (T1) opined that she found it difficult to deal with a male a principal to the extent that she could not even ask for leave when her child was seriously ill. However, she mentioned that her life as a teacher changed and became better and comfortable when she started working with a woman

principal. Most respondents (S1, S2, S4, T1, T2) expressed that women leaders portray motherly figures and are more understanding and compassionate with their teachers and students. In an interview by NDTV on 12 June, 2020 the Dalai Lama said, "If more women were world leaders, there would be fewer problems". This according to Dalai Lama is because females have a better sense of concern for others, are more compassionate and less aggressive, and therefore if world leaders were predominantly female then problems in the world would be fewer. Dema (2017) also found that the exceptional qualities of female educational leaders are their expression of emotions like love, care and compassion for their school, students and staff. Growe and Montgomery (1999) assert that good school administration is more attuned to feminine than masculine modes of leadership behaviour. Female attributes such as nurturing, being sensitive, empathetic, intuitive, compromising, caring, cooperative and accommodative are increasingly associated with effective administration. Some respondents (VP1, T1, T3 & S3) are of the opinion that women leaders are more approachable as they can easily connect with students and teachers. One of the female vice principals (VP1) argued that, "Women leaders are more passionate about their job and that they understand the needs of students and teachers better". Furthermore, Dotzler (1993) in a study on women leaders in Canada found that women administrators' greatest values were concerns for children and their positive learning experiences. Similarly, there is a general agreement that these attributes are important leadership competencies.

Advantages of Female Leaders in Bhutanese Schools

Respondents (S5 & S6) assert that women leaders in schools can connect easily with their students which help to build better relationship. One female student (S3) also added that female leaders bring in that motherly care and compassion from home and leads the school with principles of care, compassion and kindness, which can make a lot of difference to the ambience of the school. Another male student (S1) observed that, "Female principals focus on academic development of the students; they work with integrity, hard work and determination, whereas male principals are more concerned about the physical development of the school and in the process they do not care much about the other development of the students. Another female student (S5) said that some male principals use force as their weapon to instil fear in their students, which do not help to develop strong relationship with them, whereas female leaders are more caring and understanding. This finding is also supported by the earlier study by Dema (2015) where she says that the special

care and love that women leaders bring into the school emanate from her experiences of being a daughter and a wife, which adds value to her leadership character.

A teacher (T5) observed that female principals stay on with their job for longer period of time compared to male principals. This longer stay in the school helps to develop the school better with clear vision and mission. One of the vice principals (VP3) stated that if the school has a female leader, it might help to curb the many sexual abuses and harassments happening in the Bhutanese schools. One of the incidents of sexual abuse cases reported by Tshomo (2018), the perpetrator was the vice principal of the same school. Another sexual abuse incident reported by Dema (2018) that happened in one of the schools in Gelephu, the perpetrator was also a male teacher. If these schools had female principals, the incidents could have been avoided as girl students would report about their problems to female leaders. Unfortunately, these schools did not have female leaders. National Commission for Women and Children (2008) reveals that there is a need to actively promote women's participation in the teaching profession in rural communities as there is a lack of role models for girl students in such areas. The lack of models may have an impact on girls' overall development. Most of the student respondents and teachers (S1, S2, S4, T1, & T2) feel that women leaders will be able to empower girl students to become stronger and more sensitive to their vulnerabilities and threats.

Barriers to Women Leadership in Bhutanese Schools

The barriers to women school leaders identified are: 1) Demands of family life; 2) Male dominated society; and 3) Place of posting for women leaders.

1. Demands of Family Life

Most of the respondents felt (P1, P2, VP1, VP2) that women do not opt to become school leaders because of family obligations although women are equally qualified. Almost all the respondents agreed that Bhutanese society is still dominated by men and consider them as breadwinners, whereas women are seen to have the role of raising family and taking care of the house. According to the study carried out by Tshomo et al. (2012, p.25), that "Bhutanese women enjoy relatively higher status compared to their counterparts in the neighbouring countries in terms of access to education, yet more subtle inequalities exist stemming from culture and traditions." This finding

is supported by one of the lady principals (P1) who said that Bhutanese society still regards fathers as the breadwinner of the family and this has the bearing on women when they take up leadership roles. Another female principal (P2) asserts that her husband gets more leisure time than her as he is not concerned about housekeeping and other chores at home. Dema (2017) is also of the view that women at high ranking leadership positions are also not spared from their duties of taking care of old parents, raising children and carrying out a huge part of daily chores and family responsibilities. This dual role of juggling between family and career deprive women of advancing their career. In the words of one female vice principal (VP3), "I opted out to become a principal as I was posted in [a] remote place and had to sacrifice for my family." Another female vice principal who had opted to step down as a vice principal from principal's position also mentioned that she made the choice because of her family obligation as she did not get her transfer to be with her family. These findings tell us that for most women, career is not their priority but their family and spouse become their priority in life, which hinders their career progression. According to the study carried out by Thinley et al. (2014) on the local government election, they also found that the double burden of looking after the family and taking up leadership roles in the community is not an option for many women at the village level. It is perceived to be challenging for women to take up the leadership positions as they have to shoulder family responsibilities.

2. Male Dominated Society

Most of the women principals and vice principals agree that they live in a male dominated society and it is challenging to work in such a society, when most male counterparts feel threatened by their position. One female principal (P2) asserts, "Even as a husband they feel inferior to have their wives holding higher position compared to their own positions. Similarly, Pem (2015) argues that leadership model in Bhutan is a male model and women are not encouraged to take up leadership roles. Likewise, Dema (2017) also maintains that due to the lack of women role model, she had to mimic the male leadership secretly during her early phase of becoming a school leader. She further explained that women need more females as role models to inspire other women and craft their own leadership path. Another woman leader (P1) said that men have poor image of women leadership. This statement was also supported by (VP1) who added, "Most men feel that women would not make a good principal because of their generalized views." One of the male principals (p4) expressed that women leaders are not capable of working in poor environment and another

male principal (p3) is also of the view that women are not capable of making good decisions. Thinley et al. (2014, p.111) confirms that stereotypes about women leadership do exist in Bhutanese society. One of the vice-principals (VP1) argued that during interviews, the panel members are typically dominated by male and it becomes difficult for the female candidate to prove her abilities. Moreover, the selection criteria has always been the same for all the candidates. According to Pem (2015, p. 33), "Policy makers are generally men and this leads to having work environment suited to only male and the policies mostly benefiting them." This proves that Bhutan still has weak gender sensitivity mechanism in many workplaces. Therefore, most respondents found that the criteria for principal selection are too harsh on women. In the words of one teacher respondent (T6), "Our policy is so rigid." They feel that leadership ability is not given due consideration as criteria such as rural posting and related factors are more dominant. She also said (Dema p.15) having more female leaders in schools can help empower girls and in doing so can help Bhutan engage as a more equitable democracy. Therefore, with the rising number of girl students and female teachers in schools, there is a need for more women role models.

3. Place of Posting for Women School Leaders

Almost all the respondents felt that the place of posting for female leaders has not favoured women to take up roles of the school principal. Women leaders opting to take up principal's roles are measured at par with male leaders and posted in places which compels them to stay away from their family as many schools are located in far flung places. This has hindered the growth of leadership in many women working in schools. According to VP2, "place of posting should be given to women considering her family interest too" Other respondents (S4 & T5) also agree that priority should be given to women leaders to choose the place of posting. According to one respondent (VP3), "Most of the lady vice principals have husband[s] working in urban areas, as such when they do not get their preferred place of posting, they opt out from taking up leadership roles." They feel that women are equally confident and qualified to take up the role of the school principals. In all the interviews with the teachers and principals, the place of posting for women school leaders has come up as a strong factor that discouraged women from being school leaders. Pem (2015) asserts that the government does have policies which state that transfers should be considered for marital cases, however she strongly feels that this policy benefits mostly working men instead of working women (p.33).

4. Support Mechanisms for Women Leadership

All the interviewees responded that women leadership in schools is a necessity and that Bhutanese society should support women to take up leadership roles in schools. Training is one of the areas that have emerged as a suitable intervention to support women. If there are separate trainings for lady teachers to help them grow, more women might apply for leadership positions in schools. In the words of one of the teacher respondents (T3), "training, workshops and exposure trips are necessary to encourage lady teachers to take up leadership roles." One of the vice principals (VP2) mentioned that impact study of women leadership in the schools should be carried out to find if there is a need to support women leadership in the schools. She further added that women leadership quota should be considered so as to encourage and promote women leaderships in the schools.

One student (S2) suggests that the selection announcement for principals in few schools could be done only for women candidates, so that there would be good chance for women candidates to become school leaders. Few teachers (T2, T3 & T5) also felt that some form of quota should be kept for women leaders in the school as to promote and motivate women to take up school leadership roles. Dema (2017) posits that Bhutanese women are genuinely interested in taking up leadership roles but the lack of good women role models impedes their transition into leaders.

Recommendations

Equitable representation of women in educational leadership is important for numerous reasons. It provides role models for female students and teachers. There is a need to seriously review the current situation of women leadership in schools if gender equity is to be achieved in leadership and management especially in Bhutanese schools. Therefore, the following recommendations are made in line with the findings of the study:

There is an urgent need to relook into the policy of transfer and placement of women leaders. It is recommended that some consideration and flexibility be put in place for the placement of women school leaders, as it is evident that the number of women principal is much higher during the time when there was some flexibility in the placement rules. In between 2005 and 2012, there were about 15 women leaders, whereas in 2019, there were only 10 women Principals across the country.

It is also recommended that regular training and mentoring be provided to encourage women vice principals to take up the role of principals. Most often, plans and policies for women are made by men who are in power rather than involving women in developing policies and plans for the cause of women. If this practice continues, achievement of gender equality in school leadership could be challenging.

As this study found that the data related to women leaders in many of the educational documents such as educational statistics and policies are vague or incomplete, it is recommended that clear data of women school leaders be documented and highlighted in educational statistics and other documents to help carry out further research and studies. Furthermore, clear statistics could reveal the real need for women leadership in Bhutanese schools which would benefit gender mainstreaming and promotion of gender equality in public offices and educational institutions.

This study revealed numerous advantages of women leaders in Bhutanese schools Therefore, there is a need to assess and highlight the impact of such leadership types in national discussions and policies to encourage and motivate women teachers to take up leadership roles. This could have a positive effect on girl children in their overall growth and development.

Future studies could be undertaken to understand women leadership in Bhutanese schools and its advantages focusing more on specific impacts and strengths of women leadership, including case studies of effective women leadership.

Conclusion

This study highlighted the advantages of women leadership in schools. Generally, it has been found out that women make good school leaders especially in term of nurturing children with strong care, love and compassion, which are critical competencies in the 21st century. These skills also contribute to stronger relationship and bonding in work place, resulting in heightened effectiveness and efficiency as a leader.

The study has also found that there are inherent barriers to women leadership in schools, including weaknesses in policy, system, environment and actual implementation of policies. There are also challenges related to traditional perspectives and gender roles that are perceived to be impeding

effectiveness of women as school leaders. However, many of these challenges as this study established are attributable to gaps in effective implementation of policies and generalized assumptions related to women's role in the society.

More specifically, it is clear from the findings of this study that the need for women to balance home and work is not the sole reason for not taking up the leadership positions even though this consideration definitely seems to affect women's decision to take up leadership role as found in this study. In spite of these challenges, women are ready to take up leadership positions as principals if there were flexibility and consideration in the place of posting for them. The place of their posting away from their family emerged as one of the most significant barriers to women taking up leadership positions as principals. Over the years, the number of women in principal's positions has decreased as per the statistics of Ministry of Education which is affected by rigidity in the place of posting. The policies on transfer and placement have not changed much. In fact, when the number of women principals was large in late 2000s, the placement policies were much more flexible as most of the women principals were placed with their spouse. However, as the placement policies became more rigid for women, the number of women principals have decreased over the years.

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Inclusion of Bhutanese folk culture in the B.Ed Primary English modules and the upper primary school English curriculum: A comparative study

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Abstract

This study was conducted to find out if there was any congruity in terms of the inclusion of Bhutanese folk culture in the English modules of the B. Ed (Pry) programme and the English textbooks of classes IV – VI. The study also examined the perceptions of English lecturers of the two teacher training colleges (Paro and Samtse), B. Ed (Pry) pre-service teachers, primary school English teachers and students from classes IV – VI with regard to the inclusion of Bhutanese folk culture in the English syllabuses. The study adopted the mixed methods approach. Some of the key findings of the study revealed that neither the English modules of the B. Ed (Pry) programme nor the primary school English syllabuses from classes IV – VI included much of Bhutanese folk culture. The findings also indicated that English lecturers, B. Ed (Pry) pre-service teachers, primary school English teachers, and primary school students welcomed the inclusion of Bhutanese folk culture in the English curricula at the B. Ed (Pry) programme and at the primary school English curriculum.

Introduction

[5]It is said that if teachers are to teach well in the schools, they must be adequately trained, failure of which, might result to not teaching well in schools. Addressing the congregation of student-teachers at Samtse College of Education, His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuk stressed that teachers simply cannot give what they don't have (16th November, 2012).

The Constitution of Bhutan (2008, p.10) states, "the State shall endeavour to preserve, protect and promote the cultural heritage of the country". The Constitution further states that it is the fundamental duty of a Bhutanese citizen "to preserve, protect and respect the environment, culture and heritage of the nation" (2008, p.16). However, to learn to protect and promote one's culture, one must be able to appreciate it. But teachers cannot truly teach about 'culture' if their teacher training curriculum talks nothing about Bhutanese culture.

In December 2009, the workshop on 'Educating for GNH' established that, among others, Bhutan's entire educational system would effectively cultivate GNH principles and values, including deep critical and creative thinking, ecological literacy, practice of the country's profound, ancient wisdom and culture (Worcester, 2004, p.6). Accordingly, 'Educating for GNH' was introduced in the schools. Nevertheless, whether or not English curriculum at the school level incorporated the elements of GNH was yet to be ascertained. Bhutan indeed enjoys an assortment of varied culture, the diversity of which is manifested in "forms of language, traditional arts and crafts, festivals, events, ceremonies, drama, music, dress and etiquettes and more importantly spiritual values that people share" (Ura, Alkire, Zangmo & Wangdi, 2012, p.21). While Bhutan is a showcase for

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cultural diversity, studies on how curriculum at the school level incorporates local culture has never been conducted.

Studies indicate that "centrally prescribed textbooks tend to provide insufficient flexibility in integrating local resources including local 'texts' and culture with the teaching-learning process, and inadequately sensitized teachers add to the problem" (Committee of Central Advisory Board of Education Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2005, p.6). Study by Barnes (2006, p.86) also indicate that "many pre-service and in-service teachers view culturally responsive teaching as an abstract and theoretical process" and in the process they fail to fully understand students' learning needs. All of these indicate that a thorough study must be conducted to examine if some form of Bhutanese culture is taught at the formal classroom setting.

Therefore, based on the aforementioned premise, the central question: *To what extent do the B. Ed primary English modules offered in Paro College of Education and English curricula of the upper primary classes include Bhutanese folk culture?* drove the research. And based on the central question, the following sub-questions were used to seek answers to the problem posed.

- Does the B. Ed (Pry) English curriculum in Paro College of Education incorporate Bhutanese folk cultural elements?
- What are the perceptions of English lecturers about the inclusion of Bhutanese folk culture in teaching English language at the teacher training college?
- What are student-teachers' perceptions regarding the inclusion of Bhutanese folk culture in English modules?
- Does the upper primary English curriculum incorporate Bhutanese folk cultural elements?
- What are the perceptions of English teachers about the inclusion of Bhutanese folk culture in primary school English curriculum?
- What are students' perceptions regarding inclusion of Bhutanese folk culture in English curriculum at the primary school level?

Literature review

There is no denying the fact that culture is one of the most commonly used strategies to teach language. History reveals that great literary figures often drew inspirations from culture to compose their own masterpieces. Boccaccio, Chaucer and Shakespeare all incorporated culture into their work. Even Tagore was attracted to "Baul songs by their distinctive aesthetic qualities and it helped him to discover his poetic gifts" (Islam, 1970, p. 181).

Viewed from linguistic standpoint, cultural-friendly materials help learners to learn language faster. Krashen's affective filter hypothesis theorises that 'motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety' play a major role in language acquisition. These factors become crucial in the process of language acquisition. Learners who are highly motivated and have high self-esteem are much more likely to be successful language learners than those who are not. Krashen's acquisition-learning hypothesis also purports that learners learn the second language (L2) better with the creation of a culturally authentic environment.

Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) which stresses the fundamental role of social interaction in cognitive development and 'meaning making' process also comes into vogue. Since learners are familiar with the culture, they will not hesitate to make queries, seek clarifications or ask questions where they fail to understand something and this will develop their confidence and ability to interact with others.

Even from the socio-cultural point of view, learners can easily associate themselves with the common situations from everyday life. Hinkel (1999, p. 2) is of view that "second language can rarely be learned or taught without addressing the culture of the community in which it is used". If topics or lessons are predominantly based on foreign/target language culture, this would lead to "cultural shock and language shock for non-native speakers" (Lokho, 2010, p. 92).

However, normally what happens in the classroom is that the knowledge-based view of culture often takes the form of teaching information about another country, another people, other belief systems, and so forth. Language classes seldom make use of the culture of the learners to teach the second language. Sarroub (cited in Porto, 2009, p. 47) states, "the significance of cultural factors in foreign language education is reflected in the notion of 'in-betweenness', which refers to the locality of culture". As learners try to relate text to their own experiences, beliefs systems and values, it becomes easier to learn a second language.

Kramsch (1998, p. 8) believes that "language and culture are inseparable and constitute a single universe or domain of experience" in a given society. Not only that, "culture serves teachers and learners in the classroom as a highly natural means of teaching" (Silva, 2010, p.2). Thus, two important things have to be taken care of if English language education is to be imparted to the learners. Favourable teaching and learning conditions have to be created followed by "the adoption of suitable pedagogic processes" (Mahanand, 2013, p. 21). Bhutanese culture in general and folk culture in particular provide both the conditions necessary not only for the enhancement of English language education, but also for inculcating deep sense of values in their later lives. Therefore, it is helpful to consider how cultural background might influence approach to both learning and school performance (Lynch, 2016).

Further, it has been found that folk songs and fairy tales which form the major chunk of folk culture "often employ magical elements in the forms of words and they directly connect people with nature and their own communities" (Haratyk, 2017, p.33). In the language classroom context, culture-laden content acts as a stepping-stone towards the success of learning a second language. Language and culture are "inextricably interwoven" (Dorji, 2002, p. 7) indeed. Nevertheless, to what extent folk culture is included in pre-service B. Ed (Pry) programme and in upper primary school curricula has never been found out. Hence it was paramount to conduct a thorough study to this effect.

Methodology

This study employed a 'Mixed Methods' approach to researching – a "methodology that advances the systematic integration of quantitative and qualitative data within a single investigation or sustained programme of inquiry" (Wisdom & Creswell, 2003, p.2).

'Mixed methods' was chosen since it had advantages over a unitary method of researching. For instance, the researcher could build a study based on the strength of both quantitative and qualitative research methods, and by doing so, it provided a complete picture of the research problem. Since schools were closed due to the covid-19 pandemic, conventional administration of survey questionnaires, observations and face-to-face interviews were not feasible. Therefore, all the questionnaires and interview questions were administered online using google forms.

Simple random sampling technique was used to determine the respondents of the survey questionnaires, and purposive sampling was used for the selection of the interview participants. The samples included primary school English teachers (N = 128) of which some were interviewed (n = 15), and 10 English lecturers from the two colleges of education of which eight were interviewed. The samples also included B. Ed Primary pre-service teachers of Paro College of Education (N = 199) of which 26 were interviewed. Seven students from classes IV – VI from the Paro valley were also interviewed.

Overall analysis of English textbooks from classes IV – VI (Reading and Literature)

English textbooks for class IV, V and VI are divided into six units with a different theme for each unit. While class IV English textbook has main texts followed by varying numbers of supplementary texts in each unit, only Unit 1 and Unit 5 of class V English textbook and Unit 4 and Unit 6 of class VI English textbook contain supplementary texts. The three textbooks have an aggregate of 154 titles including the supplementary texts.

The units consist of informative essays, narrative essays, poems, short stories, folk tales, non-fiction, plays and a few fictional texts as shown in the table below:

Class	Informative Text/Essay	Poem	Short Story	Folk Tale	Fiction	Narrative Essay	Play	Non-fiction	Total
Class IV	18	17	12	10	0	0	2	0	59
Class V	4	17	10	0	1	3	0	7	42
Class VI	8	21	12	1	0	6	0	5	53
Total	30	55	34	11	1	9	2	12	154

The maximum titles come under poems (55 titles), short stories (34 titles) and informative texts/essays (30 titles). The 'narrative essay' section has nine titles while 'play' has two titles and 'fiction' has only one text. However, 11 titles come under folk tales category.

The entire 154 titles are written by four type of authors: Bhutanese authors, foreign authors, CAPSD as an author and unknown authors. Of the 154 titles in English textbooks from classes IV – VI, 135 titles are authored by foreign writers, followed by 14 unknown authors. CAPSD has authored only three titles followed by another two titles by Bhutanese authors.

Overall, Bhutanese authors constitute a meagre 1.29% against 87.66% of foreign authors, and 9.09% by unknown authors (1.95% by CAPSD). Of the 15 titles written by anonymous authors, two titles discuss something about culture in Bhutan. In fact, Kusum Kapur's two folktales that are included in class IV English textbook are the folk tales from Bhutan, although the writer herself hails from India. An overview of number of titles and author types are illustrated in the table given below:

Genre	Informative Text/Essay	Poem	Short Story	Folk Tale	Fiction	Narrative Essay	Non-fiction	Play	Total
Unknown Authors	7 (1 Bhutanese culture),	4	0	2	0		1 (Bhutanese culture),	0	14
CAPSD	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
No. of Bhutanese authors	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
No. of Foreign authors	21	51	33	9	1	8	10	2	135
Total	**30**	**55**	**34**	**11**	**1**	**9**	**12**	**2**	**154**

In terms of cultural friendliness, the three textbooks have only nine titles (two authored by Bhutanese authors, three authored by CAPSD, two titles by a foreign author and two written by unknown authors) and translates to just 5.8% against 94.1% of foreign content.

Analysis of B. Ed Primary English modules

Out of 40 modules spread over the four years, five modules deal with language education, viz. ENG101 (Theory and Principles of Teaching Children a Language), ENG102 (Listening and Speaking), ENG203 (Reading and Writing in Lower Primary), ENG304 (Reading and Writing in Upper Primary), and ENG405 (English Across the Curriculum). The programme also consists of a non-credited module ENG101 (Sound and Speech).

The general objectives of ENG101 states that the module deals with the theories of second language acquisition and their link between choosing suitable methodologies to teach children a foreign language. It also states that this module will ensure social, linguistic and cultural influences in acquiring a second language (PCE, 2010, p.23). While it is possible that some form of cultural elements must be covered while discussing the theories of second language acquisition, there is neither a prescribed text (by a Bhutanese author or text on Bhutan) in the reading list, nor is there any evidence to indicate that Bhutanese culture is used in teaching the theories.

One of the objectives of ENG102 is to "provide students with experiences in selecting and using appropriate methods, strategies, activities and resources for teaching specific language use with particular relevance to age/class" (p.44). Learning outcome number 7.4 states that students will be able to 'execute various activities for oral language development'. One of the subject matters of the module titled under "Development of Listening and Speaking" identifies 'home and family influence' and 'social linguistics and cultural influence' (p.45) as factors for enhancing children's listening and speaking skills. However, there are only six texts prescribed under the Reading List, and none of them have anything to do with the Bhutanese culture.

The general objectives of ENG203 is quite silent on the inclusion of Bhutanese culture in the module. However, learning outcome number 7.5 states that students will be able to 'assess the suitability of reading materials' (66) upon the completion of the module. The module recommends a series of websites, journals and a couple of reading lists. But apart from the manuals (PP-III), Textbooks (PP-III), and Readers and Big books, there is no separate text that students are recommended to read.

ENG304 deals with teaching of reading and writing in upper primary classes. Of the thirteen learning outcomes, two objectives i.e. 'use a range of genres for teaching writing' and 'use literature circle in teaching reading and writing' are specifically relevant in the inclusion of Bhutanese culture. However, apart from the manuals (IV-VI) and (textbooks (IV-VI), and a list of titles for further reading, there is no evidence to indicate that this module pays attention to Bhutanese culture to teach the language.

The ENG405 module's main objective is to familiarise students with the concepts and theory of English across the curriculum, and promote knowledge that their repertoire of language skills and how they can be used in other subjects. Like other modules, this module too, has nothing written on the inclusion of Bhutanese culture.

ENG101 is a non-credited module and it deals with 44 English sounds systems that students have to learn. This module also has no evidence of incorporating Bhutanese cultural aspects in teaching the module. And since this module is not even taught, inclusion of Bhutanese culture in the module is immaterial.

Analysis and Findings of Primary School English Teachers' Questionnaire

Of the 128 primary school English teachers who participated in this survey, 64.3% were females, and 35.7%, males. About 30% of them had the 10 – 14 years of teaching experience and nearly 30% of them had the experience of teaching for more than 15 years. More than 70% of them liked

Bhutanese culture and 99.2% of teachers felt that some of the lessons in English should represent learners' culture and heritage. Around 51.2% said that up to 50% of the lessons should be cultural friendly to the learners. However, 17.5% of teachers 'very much' felt and another 51.6% felt 'to some extent' that contents prescribed English textbooks are unfamiliar to students and therefore difficult to grasp the content. Around 89% said they encounter problems while teaching English with 15.7% and 67% saying, they 'very often' and 'sometimes' come across problems. More than 74% of them think some of the problems are related to lack of folk materials the English textbooks.

While nearly 30% of the respondents feel that current English syllabus fulfils the needs and requirements of the learners from classes PP – VI, more than 68% of them think it fulfils only up to some extent and 27.4% find topics in English textbooks culturally unfamiliar and interesting. In fact, 8% of them say it is culturally unfamiliar and uninteresting. However, an overwhelming 95.2% think that their students would like to study Bhutanese folk culture since they are already familiar with the context and can make real-life connections. The study reveals that 79% of teachers feel students would be most interested to learn legends and folk tales followed by rituals and festivals and songs and dances. Given a chance, a huge majority of 70.6% would like to change the present English syllabus and cite reasons of bulky syllabus, minimal Bhutanese-based text, irrelevant content, and syllabus based on western culture, among others.

Analysis of Primary School English teachers' Interviews

On the question of whether or not English can be taught through Bhutanese folk culture, all the 15 interviewees affirmed that English can be taught through Bhutanese folk culture. They pointed out that folk literature can be used to teach writing skills and enhances their creativity since "they already have more background knowledge on culture" (Tr14).

Their perceptions on the inclusion of folk culture in the English curriculum of the B. Ed (Pry) programme indicate that inclusion of the same is paramount. The participants reasoned out that "teachers need a thorough understanding of what folk culture is and how it could be effortlessly infused in the lessons in the schools" (Tr6). It will better prepare the undergraduates before they actually teach lessons in the class. Others are of view that it is the sole responsibility of teachers to teach their students about Bhutan's folk culture. And these teachers need to be trained on how to teach folk cultures to the students.

However, on the issue of the inclusion of Bhutanese folk culture in the current primary school English curricula, majority of them are of view that very few topics are included in the current English syllabi. The interviewees pointed out that they use Bhutanese folk culture to teach their lessons wherever relevant.

All in all, teachers feel that their students enjoy their lessons when folk culture is incorporated. Its inclusion not only helps students to "recall what they already know, it brings a clear image of the particular topic and helps them to understand the lessons far better than lessons based on other cultures" (Tr14).

Many of them feel that there are only a handful of folktales introduced into English curriculum despite the availability of diverse range of folk literature. The participants argue that Bhutanese

students struggle to learn something which they are never familiar with (referring to foreign content).

Analysis of English Lecturers' Questionnaire

Ten English lecturers were selected for the survey (70% female; 30% male). All of them agreed that some of the topics in English modules should represent learner's culture.

When it comes to the question of whether or not inclusion of learners' cultural components would motivate the learners to learn English, 20% strongly agree and 80% agree that learners culture would motivate them. While 20% strongly agree and 60% agree to some extent that current B. Ed (Pry) English syllabus fulfils the needs and requirements of the pre-service teachers, 10% feel that it 'not at all' fulfils the needs. Around 56% of the English lecturers find the current B. Ed (Pry) English syllabus culturally neutral and interesting while 22.2% find it culturally familiar and uninteresting. Only a little over 11% find it culturally familiar and interesting. However, all the respondents feel that students would be most interested to learn 'legends and folk tales' followed by 'songs and dances' and 'rituals and festivals'.

In terms of whether or not they use any teaching learning materials other than English modules, 60% of them said 'yes', while 40% said 'no'. When it comes to the question of whether lack of the culturally familiar materials in English modules are some of the causes of the problems, 62.5% do not attribute the problems to lack of cultural materials. More than 33% attribute to students' poor proficiency in English as the lack of interest in learning English lessons. However, unfamiliar contents (22.2%) and absence of locally available folk materials (22.2%) also add to the causes of learners' lack of interest in learning English lessons. An overwhelming 100% agree that their students actively participate in the teaching-learning activities.

Although 10% of the lecturer are aware of 100% of leaners' cultural backgrounds, the same number (10%) are not at all aware of it. Some 40% of the lecturers are aware of 75% of learners' cultural background, and 20% aware of 50% of the learners' cultural backgrounds. However, all the lecturers often use cultural references in the English classrooms. If given the opportunity, 80% of the lecturers would like to change the present English syllabus and reason that curriculum should be built on real life practices rather than dominating it with theories. Some respondents feel that inclusion of folk materials, materials related to teaching literature and sounds would be more useful. But many feel that inclusion of using Bhutanese folk culture in the language classes can enhance students' language skills.

Analysis of Primary English Lecturers' Interviews

All the participants (n = 8) are of view that English can be taught through Bhutanese folk culture. They premise that "…if we have folk culture in our syllabus, it will enhance the language of our students. Students will be more confident because they will know more about their culture, and when they know more, they talk more and that will enhance their language" (EL1). Hence, topics like *tsangmo* (quatrain), *lozay* (ballad), folk tales should be included instead of teaching the lessons through regular topics.

On the question of whether or not current English syllabus of the B. Ed Primary programme includes Bhutanese folk cultural elements, a majority of them indicated that it does not. However, almost all of them indicate that it is important to incorporate folk culture in the pre-service B. Ed (Pry) English curriculum. They reason out that these days "we are overpowered by the popular culture of the world, and unless we include our own culture, time might come when our young students might think that ours is not important as long as they know the popular culture" (EL1).

Considering the importance of inclusion of Bhutanese folk culture in English lessons, many of the English lecturers incorporate Bhutanese folk culture in their lessons whenever appropriate. For instance, using Bhutanese folk tales to teach students how to simplify and create picture books for young children, making connections and relating our culture to traditions of other cultures to teach the lessons. They all agree that their students enjoy their lessons when Bhutanese folk elements are incorporated in their lessons. However, they point out that there should be a good blend of our culture and cultures from other countries explicitly stated in the curriculum, failure of which, may lead to teachers not talking anything about the cultures not prescribed in the curriculum.

Analysis of B. Ed Primary Pre-service Teachers' Questionnaire

Of the 199 respondents who took part in the survey, more than 57% of them liked Bhutanese folk culture 'very much' followed by 41.4% who said they like it to 'some extent'. Only a negligible number either didn't like it or were not sure if they liked it or not. To the question of whether English modules should represent learners' culture and heritage, an overwhelming 97.5% felt that lessons should incorporate learners' culture' with majority of them interested in 'legends and folk tales'. About 87% of them admitted they encountered problems while learning English modules and attributed problems to the lack of culturally familiar materials in English modules. However, 33.8% of them admitted that their poor proficiency in English as the cause of their poor interest in English lessons.

On the question of whether or not English curriculum at the B. Ed (Pry) level lacked anything, many voiced out that it lacked materials by Bhutanese authors and materials on Bhutanese culture. A majority of the respondents felt that using Bhutanese folk culture in language lessons could enhance their language.

Analysis of B. Ed (Primary) Pre-service Teachers' Interviews

All the 26 participants were of view that English can be taught through Bhutanese folktales, and attributed it to the familiarity of context. Almost all the respondents are in favour of the inclusion of the folk culture in the English syllabus rather than learning about other cultures. In the same vein, participants were of view that B. Ed (Pry) student-teachers lacked history aspect of Bhutan. They were of view that if it is included in the curriculum, it will help them not only to promote it, but will also have an 'unchanged culture and tradition' to hand over the future citizens.

Analysis of Upper Primary School Students' Interviews

All the seven participants suggested that it will be good to include Bhutanese folk culture in the primary school English syllabus since it will be familiar to them. Some of them also justified that it will give them the opportunities to compare Bhutanese culture with foreign cultures.

The interviewees also said they enjoyed folk culture being taught through English lessons since it helped them to connect themselves to the days when their grandparents told them stories. They also indicated some of the reasons of liking folk culture since they understood and enjoyed Bhutanese folk tales more than foreign stories. They were of view that folk tales, songs, legends, and *tsangmo* (quatrain) are entertaining. All the participants suggested that their English textbooks should contain more Bhutanese folk stories, not only because they want to learn something about Bhutanese culture, but also because it would be more interesting to learn English through Bhutanese folk culture.

Results and Discussions

Of the five English modules in the B. Ed Primary Programme, three modules i.e. ENG101, ENG102, AND ENG304 include learning objectives that deal with some aspect of Bhutanese culture. Nevertheless, apart from the manuals (IV-VI) and (textbooks (IV-VI), and a list of titles for further reading, there is no evidence to indicate that these modules pay any attention to Bhutanese culture. Therefore, when it comes to the question of whether or not the B. Ed (Pry) English curriculum in Paro College of Education incorporates Bhutanese folk cultural elements, the answer is a resounding 'no'. In fact, there is neither a prescribed text (by a Bhutanese author or text on Bhutan) in the reading list, nor is there any evidence to indicate that Bhutanese culture is used in teaching the theories.

Going by the analysis of the English lecturers' questionnaires and the lecturers' interview transcripts, a huge majority of the English lecturers agree that the current B. Ed (Pry) English curriculum does not contain Bhutanese folk culture. However, they propound that inclusion of Bhutanese folk culture in the language classes can enhance students' language skills. The English lecturers premise that "…if we have folk culture in our syllabus, it will enhance the language of our students…" (EL1).

The B. Ed (Pry) student-teachers perceptions regarding the inclusion of Bhutanese folk culture is not very different from that of their English lecturers. Analysis of both the interview transcripts and the questionnaires indicate that English can be taught through Bhutanese folk literature, and given a choice student-teachers would rather enjoy studying English lessons through Bhutanese literature such as folk tales and *tsangmos* since the context is familiar to them. But, of course, almost all of them agree that the current English modules prescribed in the B. Ed (Pry) programme almost include no text that has a bearing on Bhutanese folk culture.

One of the Standards for Reading and Literature reads thus: "Through their reading, graduates have studied and reflected on the cultural values of Bhutan and other countries, particularly the

different ways in which people discover meaning in their lives; different expressions of fundamental values like Truth, Goodness, and Beauty…and have found directions and models for their own aspirations" (CAPSD, 2007, p. xv; CAPSD, 2007, p. xiv & CAPSD, 2007, p. xiv). In the same vein, Introduction to English Class V and VI: Reading and Literature, claims that among other considerations, "a fair blend of both Bhutanese and international writing in English" was taken into account while writing the new English curriculum.

However, the analysis of the three English textbooks from class IV – VI indicate a startling contradiction. Of the 154 titles in English textbooks from classes IV – VI, 87.66% of the titles are written by foreign authors, and only a meagre 1.29% titles are penned by Bhutanese authors. In fact, titles authored by unknown writers far exceed the titles authored by CAPSD, which stands at 9.09% against 1.95%. In terms of cultural friendliness, the three textbooks combined have only nine titles that are culturally friendly to the students and translates to just 5.8% of local content against 94.1% of foreign content. Therefore, the goal that the primary school graduates of classes IV – VI would have studied and reflected on the cultural values of Bhutan is not only farfetched, it is impossible to achieve. Similarly, it is also not true that the English textbooks from classes IV – VI contain a "fair blend of both Bhutanese and international writing in English". In sum, the upper primary English curriculum does not incorporate Bhutanese folk cultural elements contrary to its bold claims.

Analysis of the interview transcripts and survey questionnaires of the primary school English teachers (with a range of experiences) reveal that the English teachers very much like to incorporate elements of Bhutanese folk culture, be it folk tales, folk songs, legends, dances, rituals and festivals in the primary school English curricula. Analysis of the interview transcripts of the primary school students from classes IV – VI also indicate that they would like to study and learn Bhutanese folk culture in the English lessons. While English teachers cite the reason of cultural friendliness as a motivational force to make students learn their lessons, students like it as it helps them to connect their lessons to the days when their grandparents told them stories.

In brief, the current 4-year B. Ed (Pry) English modules do not incorporate Bhutanese folk cultural elements. And only a small percent of the upper primary English curriculum incorporates Bhutanese folk cultural elements.

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RABSEL – the CERD Educational Journal

Guidelines for Manuscript

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