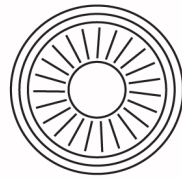


# Journal of Bhutan Studies

Volume 43, Winter 2020 \* ISSN 1608-411X



Centre for Bhutan & GNH Studies

## **Lepcha Chieftains of the 17th–18th Centuries, Based on Tibetan and Bhutanese Sources<sup>+</sup>**

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The ruler Gaeboo Achyok (*Rgyal-po A-mchog*) is undoubtedly the most highly celebrated Lepcha cultural hero. It was he who led a valiant attempt during the second half of the 17th century to assert the authority of the Lepcha people over their ancestral lands in the region of modern Kalimpong and the hill country near South-west Bhutan. Although his story has been told by previous authors,<sup>1</sup> much is still based on legend and conflicting secondary sources. So, it is worth reviewing the primary original, written documents in the context of broader events of his era.

In the mid-17th century, the newly formed nation states in Tibet, Bhutan and Sikkim were actively establishing their borders along the Himalayan chain. Bhutan, as a state founded by Zhabdrung Rinpoche Ngawang Namgyal on the basis of the Drukpa Kagyudpa form of Buddhism, was strongly opposed by the Gelugpa Tibetan government of the 5th Dalai Lama. The smaller and less powerful Sikkim state looked primarily to Nyingmapa Buddhist inspiration, although in the circumstances the 1st Sikkim Chogyal Phuntsho Namgyal and

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<sup>+</sup> This article was first printed in *Aachuley - A Bilingual Journal Illustrating the Lepcha Way of Life*, 16 November 2004. It is being re-printed with the kind permission of the publisher and the author.

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<sup>1</sup> See especially Shakabpa (1967; 1976); Aris (1979); D.C. Roy et al (1998); D.T. Tamlong (2010); Ardussi (2011), and articles and references in various issues of the journal *Lepcha Aachulay Magazine*.

his successors allied themselves with Tibet and became patrons of the Dalai Lamas.



Figure 1: A portrait of Gaeboo Achyok. Photo credit: *Aachuley - A Bilingual Journal Illustrating the Lepcha Way of Life*, 2004.

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The Zhabdrung Rinpoche died in 1651. But with Bhutan still in a state of war with Tibet, and in the absence of a clear line of succession, his death was concealed and his rule perpetuated by a series of civil regents called Deb Raja in British sources, or Desi (*Sde srid*) by the Bhutanese themselves. The spiritual authority of the Zhabdrung remained vested in various of his reincarnate successors, who with few notable exceptions never themselves held the reigns of civil power.

Gaeboo Achyok's story first comes to our attention at the onset of a major war launched in 1668 by the Mongol forces of the 5th Dalai Lama against Bhutan, in support of a minor Gelugpa Lama of eastern Bhutan named the Merak (*Me rag*) Lama who was also at war with the Bhutanese. However, this war was also touched off by alleged Bhutanese depredations in territories bordering Sikkim, between the lower Chumbi Valley and Darjeeling. At the time in question these districts do not seem to have been controlled by any larger state, and consisted largely of mountainous jungles, thinly populated by Indic tribesmen, Lepchas, Bhutias and Tibetan settlers, most or all of whom were loosely classed as *Mon pa* in the Tibetan racial scheme. The population mixture between lower Sikkim and southwestern Bhutan seems to have been fairly uniform. Intermigration was frequent and ties of kinship were only then being interrupted by newly emerging national borders described earlier.

The biography of the Tibetan monk of the Barawa sect named Kunchok Gyaltsan (1601-1687) sheds independent light on the Damsang area in the period just prior to the war of 1668 between Bhutan and Tibet. The Barawa (*'Ba'-ra-ba*) were a branch of the Drukpa school un-allied to the Zhabdrung Rinpoche of Bhutan. Having been driven out of Bhutan in about 1634, this monk constructed several small monasteries in the region near what is now Kalimpong and eastern Sikkim, including one named *Mon-lug* at Damsang. His monastery began to grow in prosperity, within a local community

dominated, as he says, by “*Lho-Mon* (i.e. Lepcha or Bhutanese) monks of crude behaviour,”<sup>2</sup> meaning presumably that they were not friendly to Choje Barawa. After many years at Damsang he returned ca. 1660 to his home monastery in Tibet. In 1663 he returned to Damsang, but in the interval certain Lamas from Bhutan had begun to encroach upon his territories while a Lepcha chieftain named Monpa Amchok (*Mon-pa A-mchog*) had risen to local prominence through depredations of a kind which incurred the wrath of both his local Drukpa and Barawa patrons. “It was a time of great strife,” Kunchok Gyaltshan’s biographer writes, and faced with the loss of patronage and the decline of his mission, he abandoned Damsang for friendlier districts to the north.<sup>3</sup> From the context of events we can be quite certain that the man known to Tibetans and Bhutanese as Monpa Amchok is none other than the Gaeboo Achyok of Lepcha tradition. Based on this text, we can probably date the rise of Gaeboo Achyok’s power to the period 1660-’63.

The ruins of the Lepcha fort of Damsang lie on a strategically located ridge about 20 miles North-east of Kalimpong, possessing a broad vista over the village of Pedong and the woodlands reaching northward towards the Tibetan frontier, and as far as the Haa valley of Western Bhutan. It would become the roadway taken in 1904 by the Younghusband expedition in its march against Tibet.

During the five years after Choje Barawa’s departure from Damsang, pressure mounted against the Lepcha from Bhutanese settlers supported from their new regional border

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<sup>2</sup> Rin-chen-bstan-pa’i-gsal-byed, *Grub thob chen po dkon mchog rgyal mtshan gyi nam thar mdor bsdus ngo mtshar bdud rtsi’i chu brgyun* (sic): 14.a-15.a.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid: 18.b-22.b. The first scholar to take notice of this text as a source of information about Monpa Amchok was Tsipon Shakabpa, in the Tibetan edition of his history of Tibet (See Shakabpa (1976) vol. 1: 448), written after he had moved to the Kalimpong area and become knowledgeable about Lepcha traditions.

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fortress of Daling/Dalingkha (*Brda-gling-kha*). Although there is no certain documentation, there is a strong possibility that Daling was originally another Lepcha fort, taken by the Bhutanese during their expansion of state territory towards the southwest during the late 1650's. We will soon see that it was in his attempt to retake Daling that Gaeboo Achyok or Monpa Amchok lost his life.

The 3rd Desi of Bhutan Mingyur Tenpa (r. 1667-1680) pursued vigorous expansionist policies in all territorial directions, which brought him into fierce conflict with Tibet on both the eastern and western border. Under this threat, in what I would consider a rather bold move, Monpa Amchok went to Lhasa where he gained an audience with the 5th Dalai Lama during the 9<sup>th</sup> month of 1668, as recorded in the latter's biography. As usual in such texts, the details of their conversation are not recorded, but two months later Tibet invaded Bhutan on behalf of both Monpa Amchok and the Merak Lama of eastern Bhutan.<sup>4</sup>

To the Dalai Lama, both men were Monpa, and he may have conflated their ethnic identities into one, even though Gaeboo Achyok was Lepcha and the Merak Lama a Sharchop from eastern Bhutan. In the centuries-old Tibetan world view, her southern frontier was an expanse dotted with clusters of uncivilized Monpa people. For sure, the Merak Lama was a Gelugpa follower, and perhaps Monpa Amchok convinced the Dalai Lama that he, too, was a supporter of the Gelugpa, or at least sided with his patron the Chogyal of Sikkim. One can speculate on the tactics and arguments advanced during their audience.

However, the war went badly for Tibet and a peace treaty was negotiated by officials from Tashilhunpo with an armistice

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<sup>4</sup> *L5DL*, vol. 2: 66.b, 70.b-71.a;

intended to last through 1675.<sup>5</sup> When the Dalai Lama learned early in 1675 that Bhutan was secretly preparing to launch an army against Monpa Amchok, even before the expiration of the 1669 treaty, he ordered a quick pre-emptive attack in which a small Bhutanese frontier outpost in lower Chumbi named Tengdung Dzong (*Steng-gdung-rdzong*) was burned down. After several months of unproductive negotiations, the Tibetan government sealed the southern border trade routes and prepared for a new war against Bhutan. Both governments ordered their state monasteries, in Lhasa and Punakha, to perform ritual propitiation of the wrathful deities, aimed to ensure victory over each other.<sup>6</sup>

But once again the Bhutanese were victorious along all its borders. By the 3<sup>rd</sup> month of 1676 Bhutan's south-western border fortress at Dalingkha was retaken from the Lepcha. Gaeboo Achyok (i.e. Monpa Amchok) was captured and put to death. Messengers returned to Bhutan reporting that his head and arms had been staked on a pole, information which caused the leading Bhutanese reincarnation and future 4th Desi Tenzin Rabgye (1638-1696) to compose a prayer of compassion in memory of the Lepcha warrior:

Wherever they reside in the six-fold wheel of existence,  
There are no beings unworthy of compassion.  
Especially must the hearts of monks.  
Bear even greater love for those who commit great evil.

The rebellious Mon-pa villages in the area Between Bhutan and Damsang were brought back under Bhutanese administration. The Bhutanese, believing victory had been won, recalled their

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<sup>5</sup> The treaty date is noted in *AIPC*: 27.a. Shakabpa (*Tibet*: 119) misconstrued the date to mean the Wood-Hare year of 1615. But there was no treaty in that year, and the error is corrected in the revised Tibetan version of his work (*Bod kyi srid don rgyal rabs*: vol. 1, pp. 447-48).

<sup>6</sup> *L5DL*, vol. 2: 275.b-276.b; *SDE-SRID* 4: 93.b.

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armies and performed the customary rites of thanksgiving to their protective deities.<sup>7</sup>

### **Monpa Adzin, Successor of Monpa Amchok**

Thus we can be quite certain of Gaeboo Achyok's death during the 3rd Tibetan month of 1676. When forced to take sides, he elected to go with Tibet, a decision that led to his death when Bhutan, against great odds, defeated the more powerful armies of her northern neighbour. Whereas to Choje Barawa and no doubt to the Bhutanese, he was "a southerner of crude behavior," to the modern Lepcha community of Kalimpong he became a cultural hero for standing up to the stronger armies of Bhutan, for directly assaulting and seizing for a time the fortress of Dalingkha, and no doubt also for his courage in making a personal appeal before the 5th Dalai Lama in Lhasa. But was he truly the last Lepcha king, as claimed in some modern writings?

Fighting between Bhutan and Tibet over possession of the lower Chumbi Valley and Kalimpong district did not end with his death. At first the Dalai Lama favoured negotiation, hoping to return Monpa Amchok's villages to the authority of Sikkim. By this time, it should be remembered, Sikkim's first king had acknowledged fealty to Lhasa, at least through religious ties of the "lama – patron" nature. The Sikkim Chogyal Phuntsho Namgyal had also paid personal respects to the Dalai Lama in Lhasa. Issues concerning Sikkim and Chumbi simmered with Bhutan, but over the next ten years or so, Tibet became preoccupied with a costly war in Ladakh and other domestic concerns. Thus, a treaty negotiated with Bhutan in 1679 held for several years, at least in the eastern sector.

In 1680 a new ruler came to the throne in Bhutan, the famous 4<sup>th</sup> Desi Tenzin Rabgye (1638-1696). In contrast to the harsh,

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<sup>7</sup> These events are described in the Bhutanese source, *SDE-SRID* 4: 94.b.

aggressive approach of his predecessor the 3rd Desi Mingyur Tenpa, Tenzin Rabgye preferred to use negotiation and conciliation in both domestic and foreign policies.

Among the Lepcha, there also emerged in the early 1680's another local leader, an apparent successor to Monpa Amchok. He is known in Bhutanese sources as Monpa Adzin (*Mon-pa A-dzin*).<sup>8</sup> His people inhabited the same general area as Monpa Amchok, and like his predecessor he found himself caught between aggressive postures of Tibet and Bhutan.

Unlike Monpa Amchok, however, Monpa Adzin seems to have played off both sides, for what rewards we do not know, and so in 1685 a major negotiation between Tibet, Bhutan, and Monpa Adzin's people began at southern Tibetan fortress of Phari, located at the head of the Chumbi valley. This negotiation over land rights in lower Chumbi wore on for more than two years. The lead Tibetan negotiator Grongnyer Gyalthagne was said by the Bhutanese to have acted in very bad faith, and once again state rituals against him were undertaken in Punakha.<sup>9</sup> Predictably, the Bhutanese protective deities came to their assistance and Gyalthagne died of smallpox at Gyantse early in the following year. The news was received in Bhutan with a large festival of thanksgiving, during which the *mgon-khang* or temple to the protective deities at the Bhutanese capital fortress of Wangdiphodrang was renamed "Celebration Temple of the Protective Deities" (*Gtang-rag-mgon-khang*) in commemoration of the event.<sup>10</sup>

Finally, Bhutan and Tibet hammered out a settlement relating to the lower Chumbi and Damsang lands early in 1687. The precise terms are unknown, but the Bhutanese claim that

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<sup>8</sup> The main source on his life is *SDE SRID 4: 187.b-188.b*.

<sup>9</sup> *SDE SRID 4: 188.a*.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid: 188.a-b*.

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Monpa Adzin had finally elected to side with them, and this may have been the turning point in the discussions.

The role of the Sikkim state in these events is quite obscure, and probably insignificant. The real issue had been between Tibet and Bhutan, and both countries dispatched over one hundred officials and retainers for the treaty-signing at Phari. As earlier, the Sakya hierarch Kunga Tashi and the Panchen Lama's treasurer mediated for Tibet, whose principal negotiator was the Lhasa Zhung Gronyer Changkhyimne Ngawang Lobzang Gyamtsho.<sup>11</sup> Signatories for Bhutan included the new Tashichhodzong Dzungpon Tenzin Norbu, the Paro Governor Ngawang Penjor, several lesser Dzungpon from the western valleys, and Bhutan's famous treaty writer named *Drung-yig* Tandin Wangyal (1646-1711).<sup>12</sup>

Following these events, competition over land rights in lower Chumbi continued between Bhutan and Tibet. During the 1690's Bhutan continued to gain territory encroaching on what is now Kalimpong and eastern Sikkim, in spite of Tenzin Rabgye's admonition to his frontier lieutenants that they not do so. During negotiations with a local ruler in the area (perhaps a Lepcha, but we do not know) Bhutan regained its position at Damsang and a border cairn was erected on the location.<sup>13</sup> Bhutanese incursions into Sikkim proper, as well as Chumbi, is asserted in numerous sources from this period,

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid: 191.a-b; *Shākya'i dge slong blo bzang ye shes kyi spyod tshul gsal bar byed pa ngor dkar can gyi 'phreng ba*: 101.b. On Chang-khyim-nas, cf. Petech, *Aristocracy and Government*: 105-106.

<sup>12</sup> Tandin Wangyal (*Rta mgrin dbang rgyal*) was regarded as the rebirth of a disciple of the 10<sup>th</sup> Black Hat Karmapa Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje. He may have been Tibetan by birth. He became a notable literary figure in Bhutan, the author of a commentary on the *Kāvyaḍarsha* among other works. His skills as poet and secretary (*Drung-yig*) were exploited on numerous occasions to draft diplomatic correspondence and treaties with Tibet, and he was one of Tenzin Rabgye's closest advisors and friends (cf. *SDE SRID 4*: 369.b-371.a).

<sup>13</sup> *SDE SRID 4*: 253.b, 291.b, 309.a-310.a.

apparently unstoppable by any of the responsible governments.

Beyond this, there are no further references to Lepcha local rulers in our sources during the 17th century, and so it could be a fact that the rather aggressive, persistent Bhutanese westward advance overwhelmed their small, independent communities at that time.

A note should be made here about the evidence from the *Denjong Gyalrab* or *History of Sikkim*, compiled in 1908 by Their Highnesses Maharaja Sir Thutob & Maharani Yeshay. Professor Per Sorensen and myself have been engaged for several years in preparing a new translation of this book, the existing text being only an English typescript translation by the famous Sikkimese scholar Kazi Dawa Samdup and several versions of a Tibetan language original. We have come to the conclusion that there exist a number of significant chronological errors in this work, in particular in the sections dealing with relations between Sikkim and Bhutan. We urge caution in using this source for dating the matters about Gaeboo Achyok, and refer readers to our discussion in the eventual book.

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# Luminaries and Legacies of Nenyingspa in Western Bhutan<sup>+</sup>

*Dorji Penjore\**

## Introduction

Nenyingspa (*gnas rnying pa*) was one of the schools of Tibetan Buddhism to spread in proto-Bhutan or Lhomon Khazhi (*lho mon kha bzhi*) as Bhutan was then known. Some of the other schools were Lhapa (*lha pa*) of Drigung Kagyu (*'bri gung bka' brgyud*), Kathogpa (*ka thog pa*) of Nyingma (*rnying ma*) school, Chakzampa (*lcag zam pa*) of Thangtong Gyalpo (*thang stong rgyal po*), Barawa (*'ba' ra ba*) school of Gyaltsan Palzang (*rgyal mtshan dpal bzang*), and Gaden Shingtapa (*dga' ldan shing ta pa?*). Several centuries later, the school, its lamas (*bla ma*) and their legacies are not known in Bhutan for various reasons. They were a member of the coalition of five lamas (*bla ma khag lnga*) who opposed Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal's (1594-1651) consolidation of political power under Drukpa Kagyu (*'brug pa bka' rgyud*) school in western Bhutan.<sup>1</sup> The coalition made troubles and allied themselves with the Tsangpa rulers

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<sup>+</sup> Primary information for this paper is a chapter from Pema Tshewang's (1994) *'brug gi rgyal rabs*, which itself is based on *gnas rnying pa'i gdung rabs skyes bu dam pa'i mam par thar pa rin po che'i gter mdzod*. I would like to thank Dasho Sonam Kinga (PhD) for reading and suggestions, and to Sangay Wangchuk for his information on and photographs of some of the ruins of Nenyingspa monasteries.

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<sup>1</sup> For convenience's sake, I have used 'Bhutan' to refer even to the regions of what is today western Bhutan, mainly Paro, Punakha (*Theḍ*) and Thimphu (*Wang*) although the unified national polity of Palden Drukpa was created in 1627 out of the western valleys, while the central and eastern regions of Lho Mon Khazhi (proto-Bhutan) were brought into the Drukpa fold only in the 1650s.

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of Tibet. They encouraged Tsangpa invasions of Bhutan and even joined forces, albeit unsuccessfully. They also allied with the Fifth Dalai Lama, who had displaced the Tsangpa rulers as Tibet's sovereign and continued the hostility against Bhutan. The Gaden Phodrang (*dga' ldan pho brang*) Government too tried to destroy Zhabdrung's Glorious State of Drukpa Kagyu (*dpal ldan 'brug pa*), partly fearing a problem that a strong independent state next to its southern border might potentially create for Tibet in future. Following the failure of the coalition of the lamas to stop Zhabdrung's consolidation of political power and also of the Tibetan invasions of the country, Nenying monasteries and their holdings were confiscated and their lamas and monks fled the country. More than three and a half centuries later, not much is known about this school.

This paper provides accounts of the founding of Nenying school and Nenying Gonpa in Lhatod in Tibet in the eighth century, its institutionalisation and conversions. It also looks at the school's advent into western valleys of Bhutan, its influence and monastic establishments, conflict with the new state of Palden Drukpa, the departure of its lamas to Tibet, its earlier monastic holdings, and of some of well-known monasteries such as Dzongdrakha (*rdzong drag kha*) and Chang Pelri Gonpa (*cang dpal ri dgon pa*).

### **The Gonpa**

Nenying Gonpa is today a Gelug (*dge lugs*) monastery in upper Nyang in Tsang, central Tibet, established during the reign of Ralpachen (806-838). According to Gyurme Dorje (2009), the Gonpa was founded as Kadampa (*bka' gdams pa*) in 750, converted into Zhangpa Kagyu (*shangs pa bka' rgyud*) in 1050, and then became a Gelug school in 1650. Lodro Tenpa (1402–1476), the 7th Gaden Thripa (*dga' ldan khri pa*) of the Gelug monastery of Gaden founded by Je Tsongkhapa Lobzang Drakpa (1357-1419) came from the Nenying tradition. Drukpa Kunley (1455–1529) is said to have taken his novice monastic vow from a Nenying abbot. Nenying Gonpa, also known as the Bodh Gaya of Tibet, was destroyed during the Younghusband

mission 1904 and later during Mao's cultural revolution (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Ruins of Nenyong Monastery in Lhatod, Tibet. Photo credit: Fitzgerald, 2018.

Nenyong Gonpa was established by the Go (*'gos*) and Gya (*rgya*) clans during the early diffusion of Buddhism (*bstan pa snga dar*) in Tibet. Thrisong Detsen (r: 755-797/804) awarded to his minister, Go Thrizang Yablhag, lands in different areas. Later these lands came into Gya clan's possession when Ralpachen (r.806-838) awarded some territories to Gya Jampal Sangwa, his Tantric teacher from Samye. At the same time, one of Go Thrizang Yablhag's sons enthroned Gya Jampal Sangwa as Gonpa's abbot, and the Gya clan thereafter started to provide successive Gonpa abbots. The Go clan was in charge of secular matters while the religious activity was the Gya clan's responsibility (Vitali, 2003).

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Figure 2: Fresco of Nenying Gonpa. Photo credit: *The Treasury of Lives*, 2020.

When Jowo Atisha (b.982-d.1054) arrived at Ü and Tsang provinces in 1045, Nenying Gonpa's spiritual head was Gya Josay Phurpa Phel. The clan ownership of the Gonpa changed after the coming of three Yol brothers who were Jowo Atisha's disciples. Following the re-consecration of Nenying Gonpa by Jowo Atisha, Gya Josay Phurpa Phel offered the Gonpa, along with its estates, to one of the Yol brothers, Yol Chowang. This was how the Gya's control over the Gonpa came to an end. After that, Nenying Gonpa became an important centre of Kadampa school stemming from Jowo Atisha. But before transferring the Gonpa, the authority over other temples and territories was transferred to Lho Khazhi (*lho kha bzhi*). This territorial entity, presently a part of Bhutan and Tibet close to the Indian border, partially corresponds to the land of the Goyul Todsum. Thus, temples in Nyangtod were owned by branches of the Gya as far as the 11th century (Vitali, 2002).

### **The Founder**

The chronicles of Nenyang Gonpa's 44 successive abbots begin with Koncho Khar (*dkon mchog mkhar*, 1036/1084-1171) of Nyangtod. He was an associate of Dri Sherab Bar (11th-12th century), Jowo Atisha's chief disciple. He was a student of Kunga Nyingpo (1092-1158), the founder of Sakya (*sa skya*) school, and one of the six main disciples of Chungpo Naljor who founded Zhangpa Kagyu (Gardner, 2020). Nenyang was Zhangpa Kagyu's earliest sub-school.



Figure 3: Koncho Khar. Photo credit: Himalayan Art Resources, 2020.

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Nenyingspa slowly became closely associated with the new Gelug school of Tsongkhapa. The Gelug presence in Bhutan began when Tsongkhapa's disciple Chimi Rabgay (*'chi med rab rgyas*) was its abbot in 1361 (Aris, 1979). The Nenyingspa-Gelug merger was completed after the third Gelug invasion of Bhutan in 1656-57. Following the failed invasion, Panchen Lama negotiated a treaty. One of the provisions was a prisoner exchange, and Nenyingspa Jetsun Drung, coincidentally Panchen Lama's disciple, was freed.

### **Nenyingspa in Bhutan**

Although Nenyingspa lamas arrived in Bhutan later than the Lhasas or Drukpa Kagyupas, they were able to establish firmly in the western valleys by the first half of the 15th century (Aris, 1979). After that, a series of Nenyingspa lamas visited Bhutan, founded several monasteries and propagated the school (Royal Education Council, 2018, p. 31).

Nenyingspa is best known in Bhutan through Dzongdrakha, a well-known monastery in Paro. It was founded by Gonpo Dorji (*dgon po rdo rje*) who was sent to western Bhutan to reveal a hidden treasure (*gter*) by Rinchen Samten Palzang (1262-1311), a descendant of Koncho Khar who also served as a Nenyingspa abbot. The Nenyingspa's influence in Bhutan began after the arrival of Drupthob Gonpo Dorji to find and open the sacred space of Dzongdrakha. He arrived at Paro, revealed Dzongdrakha, and discovered a treasure of a crystal stupa which today remains enshrined in a larger stupa. He settled in Dzongdrakha and the local people became his patrons. He established a link between Dzongdrakha monastery and Nyangtod. A line from one of his incarnations is said to have started the Dzongdrakha nobility (*chos rje*) family in Paro (Aris, 1979, pp. 191-94).

After Gonpo Dorji, several Nenyingspa lamas visited western Bhutan, including Rinchen Samten Palzang whose religious activities in western Bhutan benefited the sentient beings. He

mediated in a bitter feud between Dzongdrakha and villages farther up the valley and gave substantial gifts to the feuding parties in return for taking an oath to renounce fighting for 12 years (Aris, 1979, p. 193). The local people offered monasteries to him to reciprocate his service. He enjoyed close relationship with Phajo Drugom Zhigpo's descendant Drungdrung Gyalzom at Dechenphu monastery (Phuntsho, 2013). Drungdrung Gyalzom, the fourth abbot of Dechenphu monastery, was a grandson of Jop Kunzang Dorji, who in turn was Phajo Drugom's grandson.

Rinchen Samten Palzang's son, Jamyang Rinchen Gyaltshan Palzang (b.1364-d.1422), who was Je Tsongkhapa's teacher, established monasteries such as Tarakha (*rta ra kha*), Samar Zingkha (*sa dmar rdzing kha*), Nazhing Rama (*Na zhing ra ma*), Phudug (*phu gdugs*), and Chabcha (*skyabs cha*). It was he who sent Drubchen Rinchen Darpo to Bhutan, with a Buddha statue done in gold, a golden cloak, a vajra and bell, a conch, a drinking cup and thirteen-pointed staff, with the instruction to build as many monasteries as possible in Punakha (*Theḍ*), Thimphu (*Wang*) and Paro. Drubchen Rinchen Darpo was also Je Tsongkhapa's teacher.

Jamyang Rinchen Gyaltshan Palzang had two sons both of whom served as Nenyang abbots. They both came to western Bhutan and had large followings due to their close connections with the regions. They travelled throughout valleys of western Bhutan and extended Nenyang's influence deeper into the valleys. Both of them received teachings from Je Tsongkhapa's disciples.

The older son, Jamyang Rinchen Druba (b.1403-d.52) visited western Bhutan twice to look after Tsharkhang, Gonserkha and Dzongdrakha out of many monasteries offered to his grandfather. He gained patronage to support the monasteries and conducted innumerable religious discourses (Tshewang, 1994, p. 90).

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The younger son, Je Gyaltshan Rinchen (b.1405-d.68) visited western Bhutan on the invitation of Ama Seymo (sras mo) and Lama Pelchog (*dpal mchog*) of Tsharkhang (*mtshar khang*) monastery. When he was praying before the Buddha Maitriya at Kyichu temple, a rainbow parasol was known to have covered the temple and the Jowo Statue spoke to him. At Gonsakha (*dgon sa khar*), he gave away limitless blessed objects to the public of the three villages of Gepteng (*gad pa steng*). Unlike his grandfather, he avoided mediating in local disputes. People witnessed the stupa moving and shaking when he made offering before the white stupa in Dzongdrakha (Tshewang, 1994, p. 90).

Other Nenyng abbots and lamas who followed their masters or ancestors to western Bhutan were Drakpa Gyaltshan, Choki Gyaltshan, Rinchen Dorji, and Jetsun Drung. Their main monasteries of Gophog (*go phog*), Samargang (*sa dmar sgang*) and Parlingang (*spar gling sgang*) along with land and full authority was offered by Lama Genyen (*dge bsnyen*) and Lama Jampa (*byams pa*). Drung Drachom Ponlop (*drung dgra bcom dpon slob*) offered Zhagshul (*zhag shul*) Monastery while Ponpo Thogyam (*dpon po thos rgyam pa*) offered the monasteries of Sendeng (*seng ldeng*), Uma (*dbu ma*) and Shingdong (*shing sdong*) along with land and full authority to Rinchen Dorji after his arrival in western Bhutan (Tshewang, 1994, p. 90).

Over the generations Nenyng lamas established many centres and continued to expand even after the school began to follow the Gelug tradition in the 15th century. The reformed Nenyng school continued to spread in many parts of Bhutan until the 17th century. Later, various monasteries were maintained by keepers. When Zhabdrung arrived in the country, the Nenyngpa seat was held by Jetsun Drung.

### **The Conflicts**

While sources differ on the composition of the coalition of five lamas who opposed Zhabdrung, all sources are unanimous in including Nenyngpa and Lhapa. The other members were

Kathogpa, Chakzampa, Barawa, and Gadan Shingtapa.<sup>2</sup> As pioneers to come to Bhutan, Lhapa, Nenyng and Drukpa Kagyu schools controlled the parts of western Bhutan since the 12th century. While Drukpa Kagyu was old in Bhutan, Zhabdrung was new, and the five lamas challenged his effort to consolidate political power. They were against Zhabdrung's construction of Sangna Zabdon Dzong, also known as Simtokha Dzong. Fearing his growing power, they launched their first attack in 1629 when the Dzong was being built. Lama Palden of Wang Langmalung was their leader. The attack was repelled and Lama Palden died in the battle in 1630.

Taking advantage of the conflict between Zhabdrung and Tsangpa ruler, the five lamas sought the help of Tsangpa ruler Karma Tenchong Wangpo (r:1620-1642), and encouraged him to invade the country. The second Tsangpa invasion in 1634 also centred around the newly built Simtokha Dzong. Lama Dechog Gonpo of Shingtapa temple and his patrons who opposed Zhabdrung consequently fled to Tibet; the Kathogpa Lama was killed in action in Wang Langmalung; the Chakzampa monastery was destroyed by fire during the battle at Tachogang; a Nenyng Lama was imprisoned; Lama Lhapa, left alone and helpless, fled to Phari, Tibet (Phuntsho, 2013).

The third Tsangpa invasion took place, again at the five lamas' encouragement. Their combined force made a prolonged siege of Punakha Dzong. Once again, the invasion was defeated. Following that, most followers of the five lamas left western Bhutan. The Lhapa and Nenyng leaders in Bhutan left for Tibet in 1641 when Zhabdrung took over Do Ngon Dzong, today known as Dechen Phodrang, and renamed it Tashichho Dzong, which became the second seat of the Drukpa government (Ardussi, 1977). In the third Gelug invasion (1656-57) of

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<sup>2</sup> Gaden Shingtapa was a branch of Gelug (*dge lugs*) school, named after a monastery in Lingzhi (*gling gzhi*) in northern Bhutan founded by the followers of Palden Dorji of Phanyul who was a student of Je Tsongkhapa.

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Bhutan partly instigated by Nenyingpa and Lhapa lamas, a joint Tibetan-Mongol forces was defeated. As already mentioned, Nenying Lama Jetsun Drung, a scion of the Nenying household, was released as a part of the terms of the treaty negotiated by the First Panchen Lama. After defeating Nenyingpa, Zhabdrung also took over the Central Dung in today's Wangdi Phodrang previously controlled by Nenyingpa and appointed Lhawang Lodro as *lapon* (*bla ma dpon*) (Tshewang, 1994).

### **Nenying Monasteries in Bhutan**

According to Karma Phuntsho (2013), the Nenyingpa almost matched Drukpa Kagyu in terms of the number of monasteries. Several monasteries in western Bhutan either built by successive abbots or offered by local patrons constituted Nenying's main holding in the country. Nenying monasteries were of two types: Magon (*ma dgon*) and Gonlag (*dgon lag*). The former, meaning Main or Mother Monasteries, was distinguished as dzong (*rdzong*) while the latter were Branch Monasteries.

The following are some of the Nenying monasteries in western Bhutan enumerated by Aris (1979, p. 322).

1. Namochen Dzong (*nags mo chen rdzong*) in Paro
2. Galteng Gangma nang (*gal stengs sgang ma nang*) in Paro
3. Chang Palri Gonpa (*cang dpal ri dgon pa*) in Paro
4. Chagzamtokha (*lcags zam tog kha*) in Paro
5. Kabe Jasek Dzong (*dkar sbe bya sreg rdzong*) in Thimphu
6. Samar Zingkha (*sa dmar rdzing kha*) in Thimphu
7. Tshali Gonpa (*tsha li dgon pa*) in Thimphu
8. Babe Lhakhang (*bar pa lha khang*) in Thimphu
9. Wang Langmalung (*wang glang ma lung*) in Thimphu
10. Bardrong Jemai Dzong (*bar grong bye ma'i rdzong*) in Punakha
11. Jang Marpo (*gyang dmar po*) in Punakha

12. Bardrong Dangsa (*bar grong dwangs sa*) in Punakha.

There are several monasteries associated with Nenyng which are missing from the list, such as Dakha Dzong in Paro (REC, 2018) and Wangdi Dra Dzong in Wanakha (Dorji, 2020). While a couple of Nenyng monasteries are functioning today, most of them are in ruins. It is possible to identify some of the ruins through oral sources.

The ruins of Namochen Dzong (Figure 4), also called Donagmo Dzong, is located near Bjishingang village. Today, only the ruins of the monastery remain. Galteng Gangma nang monastery (Figure 5), also called Langma Tashicholing, is above Gepteng [*gal stengs?*] village in Wangchang Gewog. It was originally built by Nenyngpa but later it was rebuilt and expanded by the patrons Serdrup Dargye and re-consecrated by the 25th Je Khenpo Sherab Gyaltshen.



Figure 4: Ruins of Namochen Dzong. Photo credit: Sangay Wangchuk, 2021.

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Figure 5: Galteng Gangmanang. Photo credit: Sangay Wangchuk, 2021.

Built atop the Serigang Hill in Paro, Chang Pelri Gonpa (Figure 6) was founded in the 14th century by a Nenying lama Chimi Rabgay. According to some local accounts, the Gonpa is also associated with Vanaratna (*sgrub thob nags kyi rin chen*, 1384-1468), a Bengali Pandita and Mahasiddha. The Gonpa still has Vanaratna's statue and a rock bearing his name in old Bengali script.

According to the Pelri Gonpa's caretaker (*dkon gnyer*), in a bitter struggle between Zhabdrung and Nenying lama over the control of Chang Pelri Gonpa, the former asked Nenying lama to make a drawing to decide the victor. The latter drew the picture of himself 'riding a horse' while Zhabdrung was shown 'sitting under a tree' (Figure 7). Zhabdrung responded, "Since you are 'riding', your destiny is to leave this place, while my destiny, as shown 'sitting', is to stay." But Nenying lama refused and the fighting continued. Story goes that the Pelri

Gonpa originally had seven storeys. During the fight, Zhabdrung demolished one floor after another with the power of his mantra (*mthu*). When the last floor was about to be demolished, the Gonpa's deity Yamantaka (*gshin rje 'jigs byed*) is said to have pleaded to spare the last floor for him. Today, the Gonpa still has a single storey. A stone slab seat under the cypress illustrates Zhabdrung sitting under a tree (Figure 5). Remains of broken statues were found while digging foundations for house construction below the Gonpa. Yamantaka, a five-ox headed deity with 16 hands, is still the main deity of the Gonpa.



Figure 6: Chang Pelri Gonpa. Photo by Dorji Penjore, 2017.

Chagzamtokha (Figure 8) could be the monastery near Bodhi tree opposite Shaba across the Pachu river. The Bhodi tree is believed to have grown from the staff of Thangtong Gyalpo, but some elders say, it grew from the walking staff of Nenying lama. Today the monastery is in ruins.

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Figure 7: The stone slab seat. Photo by Wang, 2020.



Figure 8: The Bodhi tree at Chagzamtokha. Photo credit: Sangay Wangchuk, 2021.

Built as Nenyings' *ma dgon* (mother monastery) for the Wang region (Thimphu), Karbe Jaseg Dzong (Figure 9) is located in a forest on the left side of the Kabisa village in upper Thimphu. Only the ruins of wall remain today. The royal palace was initially planned to be built there in 1955 but it was shifted to Dechencholing after discovering the ruins. One has to walk about half an hour after crossing Kabisa to arrive at the ruins.



Figure 9: Karbe Jaseg temple. Photo by Sangay Wangchuk, 2020.

Located below Tandin Ney and Thimphu-Lungtenphu motor road, Samar Zingkha (Figure 10) was a Nenyingspa temple. Its main *nangten* is the statue of Buddha Shakyamuni which is said to have spoken to the 9th Je Khenpo Shakya Rinchen when he was a monk. The statue made a prophecy of him becoming Je Khenpo and his teachings flourishing in the country. It is one of the few Nenyings monasteries that remains intact today.

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Figure 10: Samar Zingkha Lhakhang. Photo by Dorji Penjore, 2021.

Tshali Gonpa (Figure 11), also known as Tshalumaphay monastery, is located across the Wangchu, the river which flows through Thimphu valley. The monastery is opposite to Babesa. Until recent years it was the least known and thus the least visited temple. Its fortune changed after 2015 when renovation began under the patronage of Her Majesty Gyalyum Tshering Yangdoen Wangchuck. It was originally called Tsholing Gonpa (*mtsho gling dpon pa*), named after a lake at Tshalumaphey village at the bank of Wangchu. After it was abandoned by Nenyngpas, the people of Tshalumaphey took over it as a community temple.



Figure 11: Tshali Gonpa. Photo by Dorji Penjore, 2021.



Figure 12: Babe Lhakhang. Photo by Dorji Penjore, 2021.

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Babe Lhakhang (Figure 12) is located below the Babesa express way adjacent to the flyover bridge at Bebesa near the entrance to Thimphu. Today it serves as a community temple. Wang Langmalung (Figure 13) was built at the lower end of Paga Labtsa on a hilltop above Chuzom.



Figure 13: Ruins of Wang Langmalung. Photo courtesy: Sangay Wangchuk, 2020.

Located above Bardong village in Wangdue, Bajo Lhakhang was built on the same spot where once stood Nenyng's *ma dgon*, Bardrong Jemai Dzong (Figure 14). Jang Marpo (Figure 15) was built nearby Bardrong Jemai Dzong. A portion of red wall on the sand bank between the motor road and Punatsangchu river is all that remains of Jang Marpo. Later, the village also came to be known as Jangmarpo, meaning Red Wall.



Figure 14: Bardrong Jemai Dzong. Photo credit: *Kuensel*.

The mountain slopes above Debtsi Phakha and left of Kuensel Phodrang was once a flourishing Nenyong monastic community. It is said that a Nenyong Lama arrived at the present site of Tshali Gonpa. At night, a wild dog came and carried off/stole (*rku*) his shoe. Finding his shoe (*lham*) missing in the morning, he started to search for it everywhere and found it above on the mountain slope. He interpreted it as a sign that he had to settle there. He built a temple there and named in Lham-ku (*lham rku: shoe stolen*) Gonpa, which later became corrupted to Hamku. Ruins (Figure 16) along the slope are of that temple as well as monks' living quarters (Tshering, 2021).

According to the village elders of Tsendonang the ruins (Figure 17, 18, 19, 20) found about an hour walk from Sangchokor, above Rinpung Gonpa in Lamgong Gewog, are of Nenyong dzong (Tshering, 2021). It is also said that Nemjo in Lugnyi, Paro, got its name after it was settled by highlanders (*bjob*) of Nenyongpa (Nemjob, *gnas rnying bjob: Nenyongpa's job*).

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Figure 15: A portion of red walls of Jangmarpo temple. Photo courtesy: Sangay Wangchuk, 2019.



Figure 16: Ruins of Hamku Gonpa. Photo by Dorji Penjore, 2016.



Figure 17: Ruins of a Nenyng Dzong, Lamgong, Paro. Photo courtesy: Phub Tshering, 2021.



Figure 18: Ruins of a Nenyng Dzong, Lamgong, Paro. Photo courtesy: Phub Tshering, 2021.

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Figure 19: Ruins of a Nenying Dzong, Lamgong, Paro. Photo courtesy: Phub Tshering, 2021.



Figure 20: Ruins of a Nenying Dzong, Lamgong, Paro. Photo courtesy: Phub Tshering, 2021.

## **Dzongdrakha**

Dzongdrakha (Figure 21) in Paro is a well-known Nenyng monastery in Bhutan, often referred to as second Taktshang. In his paper, “Narration of the sacred place of Dzong Drakha in Paro”, Phuntshok Tashi (2009) provides a rich account of the coming of Gonpo Dorji to Paro, the opening of the sacred Dzongdrakha, and the discovery of a hidden treasure (pp. 111-118).



Figure 21: Dzongdrakha; Photo courtesy: Herz et al., 2019.

It is said that Nenyng Abbot Rinchen Samten Palzang had a vision of Guru Rinpoche’s sacred place in Bhutan. So, he dispatched Gonpo Dorji to discover the place. Gonpo Dorji arrived at Paro to find and reveal the sacred place. He came to the right bank of a river flowing by a village and got lost after crossing the river. Suddenly, a fox appeared and walked before him as if to show the path. Both the river and the village took the name of Wuchu, a corruption of *’a chu*: fox’s stream. He followed the fox and came to a village where he was greeted by a dumb boy. To everybody’s surprise, the boy found his speech and began to talk. He informed his mother about Gonpo Dorji’s coming. The mother was so happy, and the place came to be

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known as Gadrang Nang (*dga' grags nang*). It is today called Gyeb Jag Nang. Led by the fox, Gonpo Dorji finally arrived at a place what is today Dzongdrakha. There he saw a baby goat by the pond walking towards him. As the animal sat on a flat stone, milk began to ooze out from her udder and fell on the stone. He interpreted it as an auspicious sign and inscribed *om mani pad me hum* mantra with his finger on the stone. Later, he built a reliquary stupa with that stone as its inner support of worship (*nang rten*), and named it Om Mani Stupa.

The oral account has it that when Guru Rinpoche came to Bhutan, he first came to Drakharpo and then Dzongdrakha before moving to Taktsang. His foot imprints can be seen today in Dzongdrakha. However, when Gonpo Dorji first arrived there the place was covered with thick forests. On arriving there, he was received by Damchen Dorji Legpa (Vajrasādhu), the main guardian deity of Dzongdrakha. He interpreted the reception as a good sign for his mission. While he was absorbed in deep meditation to bless the place, Guru Rinpoche appeared in his vision and gave him a glass dagger hard enough to cut the cliff. The dagger fell in front of him and a glass stupa of an arrow's length and three precious teeth (*ring bsrel*) of Kasyapa Buddha (*'od srung*) emerged out of the dagger. Two of the teeth disappeared while Gonpo Dorji could gather the third tooth and the glass stupa.

Carrying the stupa and the tooth, he descended to Bondey village. While resting in a house, people noticed something was moving inside his bag and they requested him to show it to them. On seeing the items, they claimed them (glass stupa and the third tooth) as theirs. Back at Dzongdrakha, Gonpo Dorji built a small stupa on a rocky cliff resembling claws of a lion and entrusted it to Damchen Dorji Legpa. Later, the local people named it Chorten Gulshey Karmo (*'gul shes dkar mo*), after seeing the stupa shake on its own such that a part of the cliff fell away. Without a roof or walls the people feared the stupa might one day fly away like the two other teeth; so, it

was saved with a roof and walls. Even today, the stupa can be seen shaking sometimes while making offerings.

Dzongdrakha is a complex of four temples built around the main temple built by Gonpo Dorji. The four shrines of the temple are devoted to Tara (*sgrol ma*), Tsheringma (Longevity Goddess), Guru Rinpoche and Maitreya (the Future Buddha).

Oral accounts claim that Gonpo Dorji lived in Dzongdrakha and attained enlightenment. There was a prophecy that he would not have any direct descendants, but that his reincarnation line would build several religious centres. His reincarnations were Neten Jangchub Zangpo, Lama Rabten, Lama Phento, Lama Bachu, Lama Pema, Lama Kado, and Lama Dargo. The nobility of Dzongdrakha or *choje*, founded by the reincarnation of Gonpo Dorji's is one of the five such families in Paro. Others are those of Tachog, Gongka, Sha Radrag Go, and Hungrel.

A six-day annual Dzongdrakha tshechu, perhaps the most popular festival in Paro district after Paro tshechu, is the legacy of Nenyng Gonpo Dorji. It predates Paro tshechu by several centuries. There is a tradition for Paro tshechu to customarily start from and end at Dzongdrakha. By tradition and practice, it must begin a day after Dzongdrakha tshechu (the 8th day of the 2nd Bhutanese month), and it ends on the 10th day of the 2nd Bhutanese month, a day after the end of Paro tshechu. During the tshechu, the stupa of the past Buddha is opened to bless the devotees. The local people still hold to a belief that attending the Paro tshechu alone would be less meritorious if one did not attend Dzongdrakha tshechu.

## **Conclusion**

Historical narratives are fundamental elements of a country's cultural heritage and collective identity. But history making is mostly selective memorializing and convenient remembering. As one of several Tibetan schools of Buddhism which arrived quite early in the western valleys of Bhutan and persisted for

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centuries, Nenying school's influence in the country was inevitable. It was not alone to leave the country; other schools, Lhapa in particular, also met the same fate.

According to Aris (1979), Dzongdrakha Choje, claiming descent from the reincarnation of Gonpo Dorji and serving as a custodian of the main Dzongdrakha temple in 1970s, did not know that the temple was founded by a Nenying lama. Instead, he claimed Gonpo Dorji was a Drukpa Kagyu lama (p. 193). And he had the reason to forget. A popular story goes that Nenying Jetsun Drung who was imprisoned by Zhabdrung until 1657 is said to have made a fervent aspiration prayer, while dying, to take a rebirth to take revenge on Zhabdrung. The 8th Desi Druk Rabgay (r:1707-1719) was then considered to be Nenying Jetsun Drung's rebirth who poisoned Kunga Gyaltshen, the reincarnation of Zhabdrung's son Jampel Dorji. Kunga Gyaltshen is said to have interpreted this as a karmic retribution for the damages done to the Nenying school by Zhabdrung and the fulfilment of Nenying Jetsun Drung's malicious prayers (Phuntsho, 2013, p. 312).

When the Nenying lamas and monks fled to Tibet, they left behind their temples intact for the local people, their patrons, whose material supports had enabled the school and its teachings to spread and flourish in the land. The oral accounts have it that once they had left, the village-settlements where temples had been embedded and had sustained a reciprocal relation through a lama-patron (*chos yon sbyin bdag*) relation for centuries became responsible for their custodial care, including performing customary yearly rites and rituals. Few temples flourished while the most floundered and fell into ruins. Those temples which persist to this day were looked after by the communities. However, once their up-keeping became a challenge, the communities offered them to the central monastic body. Two of the three Nenying monasteries in Thimphu, or rather the monasteries with Nenying root or pedigree, are being expanded and renovated in 2021. The ruins of other Nenying monasteries do not clamour for repair or

renovation or for their revival as a religious tradition, but for recognizing its historical role and religious services to generations of Bhutanese forebears. Such acknowledgement will only make the country's history, heritage, tradition and identity heterogenous, diverse, richer and stronger.

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## **Welcoming a State That Possesses the Secret of Eternal Youth! A Reflection on Bhutan's UNO Membership<sup>+</sup>**

*Sonam Kinga\**

On 21 September 1971, Bhutan became the 128th member of the United Nations Organization during its 26th General Assembly. That same day, the Kingdoms of Bahrain and Qatar were also admitted as new members. It was one of the most important days in our journey to achieve international recognition as a sovereign nation. Our membership to this international organization is an enduring legacy of the far-sighted leadership and vision of our late King His Majesty Jigme Dorji Wangchuck. In this article, I will recall some important milestones on the political and diplomatic journey towards Bhutan's UN membership.

His Majesty the Late King first sent an application for our admission on 10th December 1970 to the UN Secretary General U Thant requesting him to place the application before the Security Council and the General Assembly.

His Majesty highlighted two points in the application. First, Bhutan endorses the purposes and principles stated in the UN Charter and accepts obligations incumbent upon members. Second, we 'are acutely aware of the proven value of the United

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<sup>+</sup> My main source of information for this article is *Kingdom of Bhutan at the United Nations, Vol.1*, compiled by Lyonpo Dago Tshering, 2015. I also draw from my earlier books and articles as well as official websites of the United Nations.

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Nations Organization to small and developing nations of the world...'

Two important events precede the submission of this application. One, Bhutan had already become a member of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) on 7th March 1969. The UPU, which was founded in 1874 was the second oldest international organization. It had 131 members by 1969. Becoming a member to this organization with the assistance of India was very symbolic in our journey to UN membership since the UPU had become a specialized agency of the UN by 1948. The Colombo Plan, which was the first international organization that Bhutan joined in 1962 was not such a UN agency. It had initially only 7 members which later increased to 27. It was also meant to be a time-bound organization with a life-span of six years but was renewed and later became a permanent organization. Bhutan became the 15th member with the sponsorship of Government of India. The Republic of Korea joined Colombo Plan the same year that Bhutan did.

Two, even before Bhutan became a member of the United Nations, Deputy Chief Secretary Sangye Paljor was appointed as Bhutan's Permanent Representative to United Nations as well as the Minister of Communications. This appointment followed the vote in the 32nd session of National Assembly on 5th May 1970. Although we were not a member of the UN yet, His Majesty the Late King was preparing us much ahead.

His Majesty's application was circulated twelve days later, i.e. on 22nd December. A Committee for the Admission of New Members was set up on 9th February 1971 during the 1565th meeting of the Security Council as required under rule 59 of its provisional rules of procedure. This was the first meeting of the Security Council that year as well as the first meeting after the circulation of Bhutan's application.

It recommended that the Security Council should accept Bhutan's application. The Security Council voted unanimously

the following day, i.e. 10th February to recommend the General Assembly that year to admit Bhutan as a member. Hence, it is important to note that an important milestone in our membership to UN took place more than seven months before 21st September.

Besides the five permanent members of the Security Council, the following were the ten non-permanent members which supported Bhutan's application. Argentina and Nicaragua represented the Latin American and Caribbean countries, Poland represented Eastern Europe, Italy and Belgium – Western Europe, Japan and Syria – Asia and, Somalia, Sierra Leone and Burundi – Africa. India and Pakistan were invited to participate in the discussions without voting rights.

Resolution 292 of the Security Council of 10th February 1971 reads,

The Security Council,

Having examined the application of Bhutan for admission to the United Nations,

Recommends to the General Assembly the Bhutan be admitted to membership in the United Nations.

The statements made by the members of the Security Council after the vote reveal how each country reflected strongly, amongst others, on the merit of Bhutan's culture, tradition, Buddhism and a democratic monarchy as the basis of their support for our application. I will quote a few relevant parts of the statements.

British Ambassador Sir Colin Crowe said, 'The other outstanding influence on the life of the people of Bhutan has been the Buddhist religion. Today, no less than in the past, it directs their lives as obviously as it inspires their beautiful architecture...' The reference to our architectural heritage was also made by the French Ambassador Mr. Kosciusko Morizet.

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He said, 'Until very recently few travelers, or at least few Westerners, have had the rare privilege of admiring these grandiose landscapes and these well-known monastery-fortresses, the dzongs, whose formidable silhouettes dominate the important strategic mountain passes.'

Belgian Ambassador Mr. Longerstaeey stated, 'True to the most noble of Buddhist traditions, it has preserved its cultural and religious development from foreign influence and thus consolidated its political independence. Its spiritual teachings have constantly inspired and oriented the beneficent action of the sovereign and of the Government, particularly the humanitarian field, in the emancipation of women and in agrarian reform.'

The Japanese Ambassador Mr. Tsuruaka recalled how two distant countries are closely connected and that our ancestors were already linked by the sixth century. 'The link was made possible through the religion and civilization of Mahayana Buddhism.'

The Italian Ambassador Mr. Vinci said, 'Bhutan (has) strongly asserted their independence throughout the centuries – a country respectful of its religious, cultural and national heritage.' He was very generous with his statement when he said, 'We think the world civilization can only gain from the riches of Bhutan's culture and tradition.' Similarly, the Argentinian Ambassador Mr. Ortiz de Rozas also spoke about how Bhutan 'based upon its tradition and culture, will spell a valuable contribution to the cause of peace in the world.' The same argument about UN benefiting from Bhutan's culture and tradition was made by Ambassador Morizet of France. 'For its part, the United Nations can benefit from a closer co-operation with a country that is imbued with the Buddhist spirit of tolerance and respect for life. Some contend that our Organization has aged prematurely. How should it fail to hasten to welcome a State possessing the secret of eternal youth?'

Ambassador Morizet goes even further by quoting a Bhutanese proverb. 'When a Bhutanese draws a sword, the entire valley trembles. We are nevertheless convinced that Bhutan is a peaceful country. It is true that this 'land of the dragons' carries on its flag the image of a redoubtable beast. But we know that the image is white, the colour of purity.' Ambassador Savage of Sierra Leone also made references to Bhutan as a 'small, peace-loving country.'

The Ambassador of USA Mr. Charles W. Yost, who was also the President of the Security Council said, 'Although Bhutan is a relatively small country, it has long prided itself on its cultural traditions and its strong sense of national identity. In recent years not less than three different United States ambassadors have visited Bhutan. They have all been impressed by the beauty of the country and by the determination which it is demonstrating in its efforts to achieve economic development while simultaneously preserving Bhutan's rich traditions and culture.'

Ambassador Crowe of the United Kingdom had also said, "Under a democratic Monarch and his accomplished Queen, the Bhutanese have already taken several important steps forward on the world stage." Likewise, Ambassador Morizet of France reflected on Bhutan's democratization process. 'But no one will regret that in the last few years Bhutan has made a spectacular step forward toward democracy and economic and social progress...'

Mr. Sen from India recalled the special ties of friendship between the two countries and how India supported Bhutan's membership to Colombo Plan as well as the UPU. He said that the Council's decision to support Bhutan's candidature for admission to the United Nations 'is a final manifestation of Bhutan's independent stature and nationhood. He also reflected on the natural beauty of Bhutan, the charm and gentleness of Bhutanese people as well as India's 'unqualified

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confidence in Bhutan's ability to fulfill the obligations of the Charter as a member of the United Nations...'

The significant element in most of these statements is the close relationship seen by the members of the Security Council between Bhutan's culture, tradition and Buddhism with our national identity, independence and sovereignty. We can never lose sight of such perspective, and hence must be guided by the vision of all our successive Kings which posit culture and tradition as key to our identity and survival. It is also noteworthy that the members were very mindful and appreciative as early as 1970s about Bhutan's democratic monarchy.

In its 1934th plenary meeting on 21st September 1971, the 26th General Assembly of the United Nations unanimously endorsed Bhutan's membership. There was no vote cast. It was a unanimous decision. Resolution 2751 of the General Assembly states,

The General Assembly,

Having received the recommendation of the Security Council of 10 February 1971 that Bhutan should be admitted to membership in the United Nations,

Having considered the application for membership of Bhutan,

Decides to admit Bhutan to membership in the United Nations.

The delegation to this General Assembly was led by His Royal Highness Prince Namgyal Wangchuck. In his address to the United Nations at 5 pm that day, he stated, 'This is a historic occasion for us and marks the realization of one of our most cherished dreams' and thanked all members particularly the Republic of India for supporting Bhutan's admission into 'this free association of sovereign countries.' He also highlighted our commitment for the 'importance of preserving our national identity by retaining the best in our culture and tradition,' even as we are committed to modernization. He also spoke about

democratization process in the country under the personal leadership of His Majesty the Late King. Likewise, he expressed Bhutan's confidence 'in its ability to participate as an active and useful member.' The first statement of Bhutanese delegation at the UN thus echoes the very basis on which the Security Council recommended our admission: culture, tradition, Buddhism, peace etc.

After Bhutan's admission, UN Secretary General U Thant came out in front of the UN building to raise our national flag as well as that of the Kingdoms of Bahrain and Qatar. His Majesty the Late King hosted a special reception in Thimphu to celebrate our membership.

True to the expectations then, Bhutan has taken its obligations seriously. For example, we served as Chairman of the Asian Group in 1976, and as Vice President of the 30th General Assembly in 1977. Under the leadership of His Majesty the King, we are already making significant headways to participate in peace-keeping missions. The blessings of the Triple Gem and tutelary deities, good fortune of our people and particularly the leadership of our monarchs have ensured that our smallness have not prevented us from fulfilling our huge international commitments as responsible members of the international community.

# **Evolution of the Meaning of Happiness in Modern Bhutan from 2008 to 2019\***

*Michael Givel<sup>†</sup>*

## **Abstract**

*Background: This paper will analyse the legal meaning of what constitutes Gross National Happiness (GNH) and happiness in Bhutan from 2008 to 2019. These legal definitions are then linked with whether they reflect balancing traditional cultural values with material needs of happiness through governmental and individual actions to become enlightened.*

*Results: Bhutanese legislative Acts from 2008 to 2019 have adopted and updated happiness requirements in five of nine GNH material domains including health, economic development, cultural resiliency, good governance, and ecological resiliency. One other Act in the area of disaster management has implemented the constitutional happiness provision for security. These Acts and constitutional provisions balance traditional values and material needs of happiness by government requirements and individual actions to become Enlightened.*

*Conclusion: The meaning of happiness in Bhutan while solidly grounded in foundational concepts of GNH and happiness continues to evolve as Bhutan progresses now and into the future.*

## **Introduction**

The definitive meaning of Gross National Happiness (GNH) and happiness in Bhutan occurred when His Majesty the Fourth King of Bhutan, Jigme Singye Wangchuck discussed and

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\* Appreciation is given to the Jigme Singye Wangchuck School of Law in Thimphu Bhutan for helpful assistance and guidance in my research related to Bhutanese statutory Acts from 2008 to 2019.

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defined GNH in the 1980s.<sup>1</sup> In a 1980 *New York Times* interview, King Wangchuck stated: "...that the country's "gross national happiness" should not be sacrificed in the pursuit of a greater gross national product." (Kaufman, 1980) In a 1986 interview with the *Weekend Financial Times of London*, the Fourth King further explained the overall meaning of GNH as balancing modern development with traditional values in Bhutan:

We are convinced that we must aim for contentment and happiness. Whether we take five years or 10 to raise the per capita income and increase prosperity is not going to guarantee that happiness, which includes political stability, social harmony, and the Bhutanese culture and way of life (Elliot, 1987).

More recently, as defined in a major national 2015 survey report on GNH and happiness in Bhutan published by the Centre for Bhutan & GNH Studies, a research institute created in 1998 by the Royal Government of Bhutan:

GNH can be both a development philosophy as well as a personal ethos and can operate at those two levels. As a personal ethos or personal program for shaping one's life-journeys and realizing wellbeing and happiness, GNH can be very helpful regardless of whether the government does or does not follow GNH policies. In our individual capacities, we can restructure our values and behaviour towards GNH to pursue wellbeing and happiness holistically; we can practice GNH independent of the government's stance.

However, individuals' behaviour and ethos, and the extent to which we can achieve wellbeing and happiness are substantially affected by a government's policies and legislations. A state frames so many aspects of people's lives;

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<sup>1</sup> Some scholars and others believe the Fourth King in 1979 on his way back from Havana, Cuba from a Non-Aligned Nation conference discussed GNH being more important than GDP with an Indian journalist at the Bombay airport, India. However, there is no authoritative citation or quotation confirming this. Some scholars and others also have stated that the Fourth King said in 1972 that GNH is more important than GDP. Again, there is no direct and written source citation of this.

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it can be GNH or some other principles that inform its development philosophy (Centre for Bhutan Studies & GNH Research, 2016)

As noted by these overarching and definitive definitions, GNH is directly linked with promoting and creating the conditions for happiness as a key personal and governmental goal. Underlining GNH and happiness as a modern goal are Mahayana Buddhist tenets to increase happiness for all including governmental laws and policies that balance material requirements with becoming enlightened (Givel, 2015).

Considering these guiding definitions and policies of the meaning of GNH and happiness in Bhutan a question arises from the perspective of formal laws and court rulings, what has been the governmental effort to promote GNH and happiness based on formal written constitutional provisions and Acts as well as written court decisions in Bhutan from 2008 to 2019? Constitutional provisions in this paper include all written provisions in the 2008 Bhutan Constitution that reference GNH and happiness. All non-constitutional provisions include Acts enacted by the Bhutanese legislature and Supreme Court rulings that have determined or provided in writing the meaning of GNH and happiness in Bhutan. For this manuscript, a written constitutional provision is further defined as:

In public law, The organic and fundamental law of a nation or state, which may be written or unwritten, establishing the character and conception of its government, laying the basic principles to which its internal life is to be conformed, organizing the government, and regulating, distributing, and limiting the functions of its different departments, and prescribing the extent and manner of the exercise of sovereign powers. In a more general sense, any fundamental or important law or edict; as the Novel Constitutions of Justinian; the Constitutions of Clarendon. (Garner, 2019; The Law Dictionary, 2020)

Additionally, for this paper, written Bhutanese constitutional provisions is a reflection that a constitution is the source of the ultimate authority and rule by the Bhutanese government. It is also a delineation of what government values, such as

happiness, are authoritatively embodied in the supreme law of Bhutan. Included in this supreme law of Bhutan is an expectation that all within Bhutanese jurisdiction are legally subject to these values of Bhutanese sovereignty and rule. (Bilder, 2008; Hamilton, 1931; Kay, 2001) Given this, legal Acts as defined in this paper are enacted by a legislature and are created within the legal meaning and intent of Bhutanese constitutional provisions. (The Law Dictionary, 2021) Court decisions as defined in this paper interpret the intent and purpose of Bhutan's formal and written Acts and constitutional provisions.

In 2008, Bhutan adopted its first written constitution with a specific provision for GNH as well as two other constitutional provisions that delineate happiness. For this manuscript, I will analyse any written 2008 Constitution, any legal statutory Acts, and Bhutan Supreme Court decisions that provide a meaning of GNH and happiness from 2008 to 2019. This will be conducted in order to ascertain the current constitutional provisions, Acts, and court formal written legal meanings in Bhutan of GNH and happiness as they relate to the authoritative definitions of GNH and happiness as provided by the Fourth King of Bhutan in the 1980s and the Centre for Bhutan Studies & GNH in 2015.

## **Methods**

For this paper, the plain meaning of direct written 2008 constitutional provisions referencing GNH and happiness will be analysed. The *plain meaning for this manuscript* will follow the primary premise of legal positivism,<sup>2</sup> as the ordinary or

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<sup>2</sup> "Legal positivism is the thesis that the existence and content of law depends on social facts and not on its merits. The English jurist John Austin (1790–1859) formulated it thus: The existence of law is one thing; its merit and demerit another. Whether it be or be not is one enquiry; whether it be or be not conformable to an assumed standard, is a different enquiry." as noted in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* at: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/legal-positivism/>

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literal meaning of the language of a legal constitutional provision, statutory Act, or Bhutan Supreme Court case. (US Legal, 2019) For this paper, the plain meaning of the constitutional provisions, Acts, and court decisions will be analysed using this conservative approach to determining actual and literal meaning and intent.

The year 2008 was chosen to commence this analysis as this is when the first Bhutanese written constitution was adopted. Included in a first table will be the name of the constitutional legal citation and the date it was created. Every 2008 constitutional provision directly delineating GNH and happiness will then be provided verbatim. Finally, an analysis of the literal meaning of what is defined and meant as GNH and happiness will be in the final column of each table.<sup>1</sup>

A second table will include the name of adopted Acts referencing GNH and happiness from 2008 to 2019 and the date they were created. Every 2008 to 2019 Act provision directly defining GNH and happiness will then be provided verbatim. Finally, a summary of the literal meaning of what is defined and meant as GNH and happiness will be in the final column of each table. And in a third table, each Supreme Court decision name, and the date it was decided will be provided. Every Supreme Court section in a decision directly denoting GNH and happiness will then be provided verbatim. Finally, a summary of the literal meaning of what is defined and meant as GNH and happiness will be in the final column of this table.

Next, an analysis will be provided of the relationships and linkages of each of the Acts and Supreme Court decisions as compared with each literal meaning of GNH and happiness in the constitutional provisions. Through this analysis, this paper will ascertain if each meaning of GNH and happiness in Acts and Supreme Court decisions are congruent with the

constitutional provisions or have new definitions of GNH and happiness definitions occurred since the adoption of the 2008 Constitution.

Finally, a summary and analysis will be provided on whether the GNH and happiness provisions in the constitution, statutes, and court decisions are congruent with a balance of protecting traditional cultural values with material needs by individual or government efforts. This analysis will be conducted by summarizing in the first column of a third table all the literal meanings of GNH and happiness in Acts and Supreme Court decisions. The second column of this table will indicate their congruency or not with the overarching constitutional provisions of GNH and Happiness. The next column of this table will denote if each of these literal meanings of GNH and happiness focus on cultural or material realms or both. Finally, the last column of the table will describe if this is primarily individual or governmental or both in implementation. In this way, this table will illustrate how GNH and happiness is being defined and implemented from 2008 to 2019 based on Acts, Bhutan Supreme Court decisions, and constitutional provisions.

For this paper, the data will be obtained on the Bhutanese 2008 Constitution and Acts from the Bhutan Office of the Attorney General's webpage entitled, "Acts." (Royal Government of Bhutan-Office of the Attorney General, 2020) The Supreme Court decisions are located on the Bhutan Royal Court of Justice, Supreme Court web page, entitled "Judgments." (Royal Court of Justice Bhutan-Supreme Court, 2020)

## **Results**

In 2008, GNH was officially codified in the first written Constitution of Bhutan as well as the written Constitution containing two other references regarding happiness (Table 1). (Royal Kingdom of Bhutan, 2008) One written constitutional provision includes generally promoting GNH. The two other

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written constitutional provisions that reference happiness include, collectively, promoting happiness through liberty, justice, tranquillity, unity, peace, security, and good governance. These three constitutional provisions provide the overarching written legal framework and context in which the Acts are enacted.

Table 1. Happiness provisions in 2008 Bhutanese written constitution

Name	Date	Text of legal provision	Summary of definition of happiness
Bhutanese Constitution	2008	In Preamble: “SOLEMNLY pledging ourselves to strengthen the sovereignty of Bhutan, to secure the blessings of liberty, to ensure justice and tranquillity and to enhance the unity, happiness and well-being of the people for all time.”	Happiness is liberty, justice, unity, tranquillity, and well-being of the people.
Bhutanese Constitution	2008	Article 9, Section 2: “The State shall strive to promote those conditions that will enable the pursuit of Gross National Happiness.”	Happiness is promotion of societal conditions for GNH.
Bhutanese Constitution	2008	Article 20, Section 1: “The Government shall protect and strengthen the sovereignty of the Kingdom, provide good governance, and ensure peace, security, well-being and happiness of the people.”	Happiness is good governance, peace, security, well-being and happiness.

### **Bhutan Legislative Acts Interpreting Happiness**

Of the 38 Bhutan Acts enacted nationally between 2008 and 2019, 13 have written provisions directly defining the meaning of happiness (Table 2): Anti-Corruption Act, 2011; Bhutan Education City Act, 2012; Child Adoption Act, 2012; Civil Service Act, 2010; Domestic Violence Prevention Act, 2013; Local Government Act, 2009 (and 2014 Amendment); Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances & Substance Abuse Act, 2015; Original Translation of Bhutanese 1652 Legal Code,

2014; Tobacco Control Act, 2010; University of Medical Sciences, 2012; Waste Prevention & Management Act, 2009; Water Act of Bhutan, 2011. These acts, collectively, define happiness as protecting environmental quality, encouraging economic development, protecting culture and traditions, promoting good governance, sponsoring equality and justice, ensuring quality disaster management approaches, and ensuring and providing proper quality health options for Bhutanese citizens. As of 2019, no written Supreme Court decisions (and no table is, therefore, required) addressed and interpreted from a constitutional perspective the meaning of GNH and happiness (Royal Court of Justice Bhutan, 2016).

Table 2. Happiness provisions from 2008 to 2019 in all Bhutanese enacted acts at national level

Name	Date	Text of legal provision	Summary of happiness definition
Anti-Corruption Act	2011	In Preamble: "Bearing in mind the pursuit of Gross National Happiness to fulfil the people's aspirations and needs and enhance transparent and accountable governance"	Good Governance
Bhutan Education City Act	2012	Section 20, (Education City, board of director's duties): "Promote the City consistent with the Laws, Policies, environmental issues, national heritage and gross national happiness"	Environmental quality, culture
Child Adoption Act	2011	In Preamble: "WHEREAS, it is expedient that for the full and harmonious development of a child's personality, a child must grow up in a family and social environment of love, care and happiness"	Child Development and Culture
Civil Service Act	2010	In Preamble: "Whereas, it is expedient to develop a "small, compact and efficient Civil Service" as an important agent for the realization of the vision of Gross National Happiness"	Good Governance

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Disaster Management Act	2013	In Preamble: "WHEREAS in pursuit of Gross National Happiness, the Royal Government of Bhutan deems it necessary to protect the lives and properties of the people, ensure safety and security of the public assets and services by reducing and managing risk arising out of disaster, which threatens or affects the nation as a whole or part thereof"	Disaster management
Domestic Violence Prevention Act	2013	Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Preamble: "WHEREAS in consonance with the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan towards the right to equality and to freedom and security of a person with the ultimate desire to realize happiness for all its citizens" "WHEREAS traditional means prevail to foster and promote family integrity and institution in the pursuit of Gross National Happiness"	Equality and family and culture
Local Government Act	2009; 2014	Paragraph 48: "(a) Promote conditions that will enable the pursuit of Gross National Happiness"	Promote good governance
Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances & Substance Abuse Act	2015	In Preamble: "WHEREAS, the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan provides for the promotion of those conditions that will enable the pursuit of Gross National Happiness; WHEREAS, the health and well-being of the people of Bhutan are important elements of the development principle of Gross National Happiness"	Health
Companies Act	2016	Section 163: "The Regulatory Authority shall establish a Code of Conduct for the governance of companies which shall promote those conditions that will enable the pursuit of Gross National Happiness in	Economic development and business

		accordance with Article 9, section 2 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan"	
Tobacco Control Act	2010	In Preamble: "Concerned with the physical health and well-being of the people of Bhutan which are important elements of the development principle of Gross National Happiness"	Health
University of Medical Sciences Act	2012	In Preamble: "WHEREAS, the people must have access to the high quality, wholesome health care services through holistic, patient centred, evidence-based and culturally appropriate approaches in harmony with the development paradigm of Gross National Happiness"	Health
Waste Prevention & Management Act	2009	In Preamble: "Protecting the environment and human health through sound management of waste in pursuit of Gross National Happiness and the age-old tradition of living in harmony with nature "Section 7: "The Middle Path and Gross National Happiness"	Environmental quality and health
Water Act of Bhutan	2011	In Preamble: "Being determined to protect the environment and human health through integrated water resources management in pursuit of Gross National Happiness and the age-old tradition of living in harmony with nature"	Environmental quality and health

### **Congruency of Acts and Supreme Court Ruling with Constitutional Provisions**

Overall, modern happiness as defined by written legislative Acts from 2008 to 2019 include: protecting culture and fostering traditions of Bhutan including Mahayana Buddhism and various Bhutanese customs. It also is living in harmony with nature, good governance, healthcare, disaster management, and proper economic development. When these are assessed and linked with the two constitutional

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requirements of promoting happiness by requiring: liberty, justice, tranquillity, unity, peace, security, and good governance. Only in the area of disaster management is there a link to the constitutional happiness provision of security.

The happiness provisions in these written Acts are, however and in part, congruent with the third constitutional goal of generally promoting GNH. GNH has nine general domains including: time, health, psychological well-being, time use, education, cultural diversity and resilience, good governance, community vitality, ecological diversity and resilience, and living standards (Centre for Bhutan Studies & GNH Research, 2016) In particular, the Acts from 2008 to 2019 provide new and expanded programmatic and policy descriptions on happiness in five of these nine GNH domains including health, good governance, economic development, ecological diversity and resilience, and cultural diversity and resilience.

### **Overall Happiness and GNH and Bhutanese Acts, Court Decisions, and Constitutional Provisions**

Related to the primary definitions of GNH and happiness by the Fourth King and the Centre for Bhutan & GNH Studies that GNH and happiness includes balancing material needs with traditional cultural requirements through individual and government approaches, the three constitutional provisions of GNH and happiness and the Acts that implement these constitutional provisions include requirements for material needs balanced with traditional culture (Table 3). This includes balancing the domain of cultural diversity and resilience with material needs in four of the other domains including the areas of health, good governance, ecological diversity, and economic development. While primarily emphasizing governmental approaches, the promotion of cultural diversity and resilience include providing the conditions through GNH adopted by government actions for individual pursuits to become enlightened and to preserve traditional culture.

Table 3. Overview from 2008 to 2019 of Bhutanese acts, court decisions, and constitutional provisions with general goals of GNH and happiness.

Summary of General Supreme Court and Statutory Definitions of GNH and Happiness	Congruency with Overarching Constitutional Defining GNH and Happiness?	Emphasizes Material or Cultural?	Implemented by Individual or Government Requirements?
Good Governance	Yes. GNH goal of good governance	Material	Government
Environmental Quality	Yes. GNH goal of ecological diversity and resilience	Material	Government
Cultural Protection Including Child and Family Development	Yes. GNH general goal of cultural diversity and resilience	Culture	Government and Culture
Disaster Management	Extends meaning of GNH and happiness to disaster management	Material	Government
Health	Yes. GNH general goal of health	Material	Government
Economic Development	Yes, GNH general goal of economic development	Material	Government

### **Conclusion and Analysis**

Enacted legislative Acts from 2008 to 2019 have in significant part adopted, expanded, and implemented happiness requirements in five of nine GNH domains. Additionally, Acts and constitutional provisions balance culture resiliency with material needs to obtain happiness. All have been enacted through government actions although protecting cultural diversity can be accomplished through governmental requirements to preserve cultural diversity along with individual efforts to become enlightened. One other Act in the area of disaster management has implemented the constitutional provision for security.

## *Evolution of the Meaning of Happiness in Modern Bhutan*

This paper reveals that while Bhutan has primarily adopted and implemented from a legal perspective, key general elements of GNH and happiness, recent changes in definitions in new programme areas like disaster management continue to extend the definition of what is meant by being happy. Given this development, any new formal and written legal developments in the definition of happiness need to be monitored and considered carefully in the upcoming years to maintain a current overview and context of what future happiness in Bhutan means. The meaning of happiness in Bhutan while solidly grounded in general and foundational policies and concepts of GNH and happiness continue to be updated and evolve as Bhutan progresses now and into the future.

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# **A Descriptive Analysis of Need Assessment of the Scouting Programmes for Nazhoen and Nachung Scouts in Thimphu District**

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## **Abstract**

*The scouting programme in Bhutan has been implemented as co-curricular activities in a non-formal setting to promote physical, intellectual, social, emotional and spiritual development, and to cultivate citizenship. This study is a need assessment conducted to evaluate the relevance of existing scouting programmes and recommend development of new programmes. We conducted a cross-sectional study using stratified random sampling. Data was collected using a leader-assisted structured questionnaire and was analysed using SPSS (Version 23) and MS Excel. Descriptive statistics such as frequency and mean were used to describe the result. A total of 193 respondents (71 Nachung Scouts, 72 Nazhoen Scouts, 30 CBS, and 20 Scout Leaders) participated in the study. Although there was a high level of agreement on the effectiveness of existing scouting programme, the finding shows that there is a need to align programmes towards intellectual development of both Nachung and Nazhoen scouts. Based on the specific item analysis, programmes on developing good personal habits, making sense of the data, applying scout laws and promises, maintaining meaningful relationship with others, being expressive with one's emotions, and more religious programmes are recommended for both Nachung and Nazhoen scouts. Further, we recommend programmes for Nachung Scouts on the significance and contributions made by monarchs in Bhutan.*

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**Keywords:** *Scouting, areas of development, impact, recommendations, character building.*

## **Introduction**

A universal call for education in the 21st century demands a wholesome education for learners. A holistic approach of the Bhutanese education system to provide wholesome education includes both core-curricular and extra-curricular activities for a child's development. Scouting programmes are integrated in school structure to promote the wholesome growth of students.

While the scouting in Bhutan started as early as 1960s (SCED, 2020), it took off only in 1996 after the Fourth Druk Gyalpo, while expressing concerns on a number of education-related issues, emphasized the need to adopt a systematic and comprehensive programme to address youth-related issues. Emanating from this wisdom and realizing the usefulness and potential of the scout programme for the all-round development of the youth, the Youth Guidance & Counselling Division of Education Department under the Ministry of Health and Education formally launched a school-based scout programme as channels to promote value education among the students.

Bhutan Scouts Association (BSA), aka Druk Scout Tshogpa, became a full-fledged member of the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) in 1999 during the 35th World Scout Conference in Durban, South Africa (SCED, 2020). The Scouting programmes began to be implemented in schools and communities covering all the 20 dzongkhags and four *thromdes*. In April 2013, under the Royal Command, the Scouting Programme got revitalized by injecting the values of *tha damtsi ley judre* to create a unique identity, and to unite and bond the younger generations.

The scouting programme caters to different age cohorts of the youth population, such as CheyChey Scout (Pre-Cub),

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Nachung Scout (Cub), Nazhoen Scout, Rover and Community Based Scout. CheyChey Scout is the first section in scouting for children aged between five to seven years for classes PP to III. Nachung Scout is the second section designed for children for ages eight to eleven corresponding to classes IV to VI. Nazhoen Scout is the third section for children in Secondary Schools, aged between 12 to 17 for classes VII to XII. Rover is the fourth section initiated in colleges and Institutes for adults of 18 to 24 years. Community Based Scouting (CBS) is the fifth section including out-of-school youths and scouts who wish to take up scouting as a lifelong education.

Scouting as an educational movement for and of young people to promote a holistic development of a child is considered necessary at this juncture of educational transformation. The Scout Movement is in accord with the purpose, principle and method conceived by Lord Baden Powell, the founder. Scouting in Bhutan contributes to the education of young people through a value-based system to help build a better world where people as individuals play constructive roles in society. The purpose of scouting is to encourage physical, intellectual, social, emotional and spiritual development of the young people so that they play a constructive place in the society as responsible citizen. World Scout Bureau (2017) maintains that the central element of scouting is youth programme, the vehicle to achieve the purpose of scouting. It argues that there is no scouting without the youth programme.

Ever since its inception, Thimphu Dzongkhag Scouts Association has been providing effective scout programmes in addition to the formal scouting activities in respective schools. The programmes initiated are Gyalsey Nachung Camps, Spiritual Retreat Camps, Youth Leadership Training Programmes, Scout Leadership Trainings, Campaigns, Mindfulness Programmes and Golden Youth Programmes and Volunteerism.

The main aim of the study is to conduct a need assessment on the youth programmes for scouts in Thimphu Dzongkhag. The finding will serve as a base line data and to strengthen scouting programmes in Bhutan and conduct future research.

### **Research Objectives**

The objectives of the study are to:

1. identify the needs of the scouts in Thimphu Dzongkhag for better implementation of the scouting programmes.
2. assess the achievements of Thimphu Dzongkhag scouts in the aspect of developmental domains.
3. evaluate the gap between the intended and the implemented scouting programme in the Dzongkhag.
4. analyse the perceptions between a camp attendee and non-camp attendee on different developmental areas.
5. study the impact of scouting programme in the holistic educational development for the youths in Thimphu Dzongkhag.

### **Research Questions**

The study sought to answer the following questions:

1. Which development areas is Thimphu Dzongkhag progressive?
2. What are the gaps in the scout programme of Thimphu Dzongkhag?
3. How are the perceptions between a camp attendee and non-camp attendee different on each development area?
4. To what extent has the scouting programme contributed towards holistic educational development of the youths in Thimphu Dzongkhag?

## **Literature Review**

### **Impact of Scouting Program**

Scouting in education system is a movement of self-educating, which is a rich and multi-faceted learning experience impacting wholesome development of the young people. Scouting helps young people to grow into constructive citizens in their communities (Scouts WA, 2020). According to Boy Scouts of America (2020) and a study by Tufts University, learning life skills, growing in self-confidence and gaining valuable leadership and team skills are parts of scout programme. Similarly, Proctor (2016) points out that scouts are more likely to embrace positive social values than non-scouts.

Teare (2016) found that sharing of values, helping people change lives and at times saving lives are effective for local groups of scouting. Scouting produces outcomes that no other organizations serving the youth can deliver (Boy Scouts of America, 2020). Parents felt that scouting gave their children more confidence, responsibility and a broader set of friends; in addition, the parents were of the view that scouting helped develop their child's social skills, encourage self-sufficiency, and gave their children access to activities and opportunities that may have been otherwise unavailable to them (The Scouts Association, 2020).

Similarly, Proctor (2016) reports higher character attributes in boys who spent more years in the scouting programme. The boys who attended the regular meetings reported higher character attributes than those with lower meeting attendance. According to Boy Scouts of America (2020), a person will be able to overcome obstacles, take advantage of opportunities, and be better equipped for life after completing the scout programmes.

A research on the impact of scouting on young people reveals that benefits of scouting go beyond the individual to offer social, environmental and economic benefits to its members and communities. It is clear from the research that those who have been involved in scouting as a young person, volunteer, employer, or as a beneficiary of community see scouting as a positive influence with tangible benefits to a wide range of groups and individuals (cited in The Scout Association, 2020).

On the benefits of scouting, Boy Scouts of America (2020) reports that youths learn to live independently. Prolonged exposure to clean air during outdoor activities increases their health. Outdoor learning encourages youth to spend more time in clean and safe environments. Problem solving activities helps scouts strengthen their mental fitness. Scout treks, cycling and backpacking activities enrich cardiovascular exercise. Moreover, the scouting programmes foster leadership skills.

A study by Harris Interactive shows scouting programmes help build boys mentally, physically, socially, and spiritually. The skills they learn in scouting help them overcome obstacles and challenges, give courage and form character throughout their lives (cited in MCC, 2020). The study indicates that men who had been scouts for five or more years as boys were more likely than men with no scouting experience in,

- Graduating from high school (91% -vs- 87%)
- Graduating from college (35% -vs- 19%)
- Earning higher annual household incomes (\$80,000 - vs- \$61,000)
- Having lifelong friendships (89% -vs- 74%)
- Attending religious services (87% -vs- 77%)
- Believing that helping others should come before one's own self-interest (92% -vs- 83%)

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### **SPICES**

The purpose of scouting is to make the social, physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual as fundamental basis of a person's character. This concept is called SPICES. It is about fostering personal growth in all the key components of development. These are the outcomes achieved through scouting (cited in Scouts Australia, 2018). According to Scouts Australia (2018), character development refers to the pursuit of personal best, and it includes positive attitude, responsibility, and respect, and making effort beyond what benefits the self. It encapsulates personal growth in five other components of SPICES. Individuals develop their character by being surrounded by different people who possess different characteristics (WOSM, 2014). Scouts Australia (2020) views character development as recognizing one's responsibility towards oneself and one's right to develop, learn and grow in search of happiness while respecting others. In the same vein, character development is learning to assert oneself, make one's own decisions, set aims, and identify the necessary steps to achieve them (Scouts Australia, 2011).

### **Social Development (Social Nature)**

According to Scouts Australia (2018), social development refers to group belonging, one's relationships with others, and understanding differences between people in small groups of peers as well issues of diversity and inclusion in larger communities. To Alley Dog.com (2020), social development refers to how people develop social and emotional skills across the lifespan, with particular attention to childhood and adolescence. SCAN (2020) defines a child's social development as a critical piece of the development puzzle and a child's ability to interact with other children and adults.

On the other hand, the Government of New Brunswick (2009) understands social development as improvement of the well-being of every individual in society so they can reach their full potential. The process of socialization begins very early in a

child's life (Martindale et al., 2013). On the same note, children learn the language, norms, values, behaviours, expectations and social skills which are appropriate in their world within their community (Lawson (2003). Children who have difficulties with such skills as attention, listening, hearing, language, and memory are vulnerable to social problems (cited in Lawson, 2003).

Healthy social development allows individual to form positive relationships with family, friends, teachers, and other people in his/her life (Alley Dog.com, 2020). On the significance of social skills, The Boot Room (2020) argued that children with strong social skills find it easier to establish good relationships which in turn has a positive impact on their wellbeing. Equally, SCAN (2020) claims that the ability to interact with other children allows for more opportunities to practice and learn speech and language skills. Social skills help children in acquiring the concept of interdependence with others and developing one's ability to cooperate and lead (Scouts Australia, 2020). Social learning can help students successfully resolve conflict, communicate clearly, and solve problems (Green, 2008).

Individuals need social skills to communicate, work in teams, and let go of the personal and family issues that get in the way of working and learning, and such skills add up to what is known as emotional intelligence, and they are even more important as educators realize that these skills are critical to academic achievement (Green, 2008). He holds the view that scouting's open atmosphere of learning is a perfect setting for emotional development and building social intelligence. Scouts could enhance not just one's characteristics but also one's view on life through conversing and communicating with others (WOSM, 2014). Developing the social dimension of his/her personality is a part to fulfil the journey of life. In order to develop social skills, The Boot Room (2020) advocates for the scout leader to provide guidance to the scouts on how to consider feelings and thoughts of others. Moreover, a scout

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leader must include activities which promotes constructive opportunity for 'self-focus'.

SCAN (2020) recommends scout leaders to model healthy relationships and stay connected with the scouts. The leader could help scouts relate to the people around them in positive ways. By encouraging scouts to engage with other children and adults, the leader is setting an environment for better social health, which may result in strong communication skills to foster trust and connection with those around them. In a similar fashion, Alberg (2020) suggests some activities on social skills such as direct instruction, role play and auditory practice.

### **Physical Development (Body)**

According to Scouts Australia (2018), physical development refers to one's understanding of their body, including active care for health, wellbeing, and pursuit of physical skills and fitness. Physical development takes place when an individual becomes responsible for the growth and functioning of one's own body. On the importance of physical development Novak Djokovic Foundation (2020) points out that physical activities promote healthy growth and development; helps to build a healthier body composition, stronger bones and muscles; improves the child's cardiovascular fitness; helps in developing better motor skill, concentration skill, and thinking skill.

Scouting is one of the non-formal education and co-curricular activity which contributes to a holistic development (WOSM, 2014). It has service-oriented activities for community development and outdoor-centred activities which promotes health of the youth and impacts different crafts and skills. CREC (2013) recommends scout leaders to encourage independence in the child, engage children in music and movement activities, foster fine motor skills through art and tactile experiences, play sports, and enjoy outdoor activities with the children to maximize physical development.

WOSM (2014) highlights physical development as a process through body regulation, health and personal hygiene. It also helps them learn time management through distribution of their time between studies, obligations and leisure activities.

### **Intellectual Development (Intelligence)**

Intellectual development refers to one's ability to think, plan, innovate, review and be creative, applying information, knowledge, and skills in new and different circumstances (According to Scouts Australia, 2018). Alberg (2020) cautions that children are bombarded with information throughout their day, and they must learn to sort and process which information is important and necessary to succeed in different situations. Bruner and Olver (1966) defines cognitive development as how children think, explore and figure things out. It is the development of knowledge, skills, problem solving and dispositions, which help children to think about and understand the world around them.

### **Cultivating Citizenship**

The citizenship curriculum aims to develop student's ability to participate in communities and wider society as informed, critical and responsible citizens. Citizenship education provides people knowledge and skills to understand challenges, and to participate in a democratic society, including politics, media, civil society, economy, and law (Young Citizens, 2020). Democracies need active, informed and responsible citizens, citizens who are willing and able to take responsibility for themselves and their communities and contribute to the political process. Citizenship is now the central concept for scholars and practitioners who engage in educational task. Citizenship education refers to how education can support students' development of identity (as cited in Veugelers and Groot, 2019).

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Young Citizens (2020) contends that cultivating citizenship helps young people to develop self-confidence and a sense of agency, and to successfully deal with life changes and challenges such as bullying and discrimination. Citizenship education is said to give youth a voice to their schools, their communities and society at large. It enables them to make a positive contribution by developing knowledge and experience needed to claim their rights and understand their responsibilities. It prepares them for the challenges and opportunities of adult and working life. Further, Young Citizens (2020) points out that for schools and other educational organisations, cultivating citizenship helps to produce motivated and responsible learners who can relate positively to each other, to staff and to the surrounding community.

Citizenship education helps to equip young people to deal with situations of conflict and controversy knowledgeably and tolerantly, and to equip them to understand the consequences of their actions and those of the adults around them (Scouts Australia, 2011). According to Marshall's Theory of Citizenship, there are three elements (civil, political, and social) which helps illuminate the depth of citizenship. Good citizens have the right and responsibility to recognize and overcome contradictions of ideals that concern equality of rights for all citizens (cited in Study.com, 2020).

To Humanism (2018), the purpose of scouting is to contribute to the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potential as individuals, responsible citizens and members of their local, national and international communities. Study.com (2020) claims citizenship helps produce motivated students who are responsible and show positive interactivity. Without citizenship, society could not build active and responsive citizenry that takes part in the democratic process and global relations.

The former chairperson of the Anti-Corruption Commission of Bhutan has underscored the importance of trust as an important capital for the society. From trust emanate other values. Loyalty is not based on what one has to gain from anyone or anything; loyalty to tsa-wa-sum is service to others and self, which in turn is service to the king (ACC, 2016). The Scout Law is in fact similar to Buddha's Eight-Fold Noble Path and the fundamental duties of Bhutanese citizens. Scouts distinguish themselves from others as they have very important responsibilities. Scouting programme was about building a responsible society, which was critical to building a strong democracy and thus a strong nation (Dasho Neten Zangmo, cited in ACC, 2016).

Bhutan Scouts Association claims that scout programme is geared towards promoting citizenship education and self-development through attractive (joyful), meaningful and challenging activities focusing on the value of sharing, community living, strengthening of brotherhood (sisterhood) and making the youth understand their role in the nation building (as cited in SCED, 2020).

Hopkins (2017) suggests five themes under which good citizenship can be advocated such as honesty, compassion, respect, responsibility, and courage. A person must be honest with others and with oneself in order to be a good citizen. Compassion gives a person an emotional bond with the world. An important aspect of respect is self-respect, whereas compassion is directed toward others. Responsibility is about *action*, and it includes much of what people think of as good citizenship. Courage enables people to do the right thing even when it is unpopular, difficult, or dangerous.

### **Emotional Development (Emotions)**

Scouts Australia (2018) defines emotional development as understanding of one's own emotions and the emotions of others. It includes awareness of how a person is feeling,

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expressing emotions in a positive manner, as well as respecting and supporting the emotional needs of others. It is about recognising one's own feelings and learning to express them in order to attain and maintain an inner state of freedom, balance and emotional maturity (Scouts Australia, 2020).

Emotionally intelligent individuals stand out above the rest due to their ability to empathize, persevere, control impulses, communicate clearly, make thoughtful decisions, solve problems, and work with others to earn friendship and success (Green, 2008). They tend to lead happier lives with more satisfying relationships. At work, they are more productive and they spur productivity in others; at school, they do better on standardized tests and help create a safe and comfortable classroom atmosphere that makes it easier to learn.

Higher-level thinking is more likely to occur in the brain of a student who is emotionally secure than in the brain of a student who is scared, upset, anxious, or stressed (World Scout Bureau, 2017). People in good moods are better at inductive reasoning and creative problem solving. People high in emotional intelligence are expected to progress more quickly through the abilities designated and to master more of them. All learning has an emotional base. According to WOSM (2014), the learning process in scouting aims to maintain a state of emotional freedom, expressing both positive and negative feelings, yet being sensitive with other peoples' emotions. Emotional maturity could be shown by the ability to express your feelings and emotions without being mean or rude to other people and without infringing their rights.

### **Spiritual Development (Soul)**

Scouts Australia (2018) defines spiritual development as development of a person's beliefs regarding their purpose in life, connection to others, place in the world around them, while respecting the spiritual choices of others. It is about

acquiring a deeper knowledge and understanding of the spiritual heritage of one's own community, discovering the spiritual reality which gives meaning to life, and drawing conclusions for one's daily life, while respecting the spiritual choices of others (Scouts Australia, 2020). Spiritual development is the process of figuring out the meaning of life, death and the reason for existence, according to Marcot (2017). WOSM (2014) cautions that while scouts are taught to put god above all things and to have a strong faith and believe in their religion, yet at the same time they are taught to respect other people's religion.

Gorman (2019) recommends contemplation to enrich spiritual development, which involves thinking continuously about something, studying and musing over it, usually something worthwhile and important pertaining to life and meaning. Contemplation dissolves ego, and solutions to life's problems sometimes appear spontaneously. Marcot (2017) supports that meditation and contemplation are pathways to spiritual development. However, Parachin (2020) suggests spending time in nature as one of the best spiritual activities for self-care that one can do to help achieve optimal well-being. A study shows that spending time in nature dramatically reduces stress and is also anti-inflammatory.

Being non-judgmental helps in spiritual development since being judgmental can be a toxic way to live and would not help achieve emotional and mental health (Gorman, 2019). Gorman (2019) further claims that regular acts of compassion can help develop spirituality, for when we are kind, we feel our soul opening, expanding and embracing the world. And it is in this state of being we feel transformed and we can as well help transform the world.

Parachin (2020) on the other hand recommends reading an inspirational book as a spiritual activity that will help one get more connected with one's soul. He quoted Karen Swallow

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Prior: “What good literature can do and does do, far greater than any importation of morality, is touch the human soul.”

Gorman (2019) mentions silence as an activity for spiritual development. Everyone needs space and silence to create an opening for inspiration, for guidance and for something new to happen. The silence gives space for the universe to provide in extraordinary ways that one could not have imagined. It is worth mentioning that Parachin (2020) believes that prayer is one of the main ways to practice spirituality. It is an effort to communicate with the creator or god. However, Marcot (2017) claims that healing other people with compassion is one of the greatest stepping stones for spiritual development. Here, one does not have to say a word; just listen to what the person has to say.

### **Research Methodology**

This paper employed the cross-sectional quantitatively focused descriptive approach. Tutty & Rothery (2010) observed that “...need assessments is used to develop new services to evaluate the relevance of existing programmes,” and noted that the quantitatively oriented surveys, particularly those employing questionnaires are the most frequent method of assessing needs.

### **Sampling**

Stratified random sampling was employed for this study since the stratified random sampling allows the researchers to use information that the researchers have about the population (Nugent, 2010). In 2019, there were 833 Nachung Scouts, 764 Nazhoen Scouts, 55 CBS members and 39 scout leaders. From the total population, participants for Nachung Scouts were selected from 7 schools: 10 each from Bjemina primary school, Hongtsho primary school, Khasadrapchu middle secondary school, Kuzhugchen middle secondary school, Tshaluna primary school, Wangbama community school, Yangchen Gatschel middle secondary school, and 11 from Genekha lower

secondary school. For Nazhoen scouts, the respondents were selected from five schools: 10 each from Kuzhugchen middle secondary school and Yangchen Gatshel middle secondary school; 12 from Genekha lower secondary school, and 20 each from Khasadrapchu middle secondary school and Wangbama community school. 10 members each from three CBS group were also selected. The selections of the participants were done based on their level of attainment in each scouting section. In total, 71 Nachung scouts from seven schools, 72 Nazhoen scouts from five schools, 30 Community based scouts from three centres and 20 scout leaders of the participating schools were included in the study. The sample representation in percentile is 51% male and 49% female.

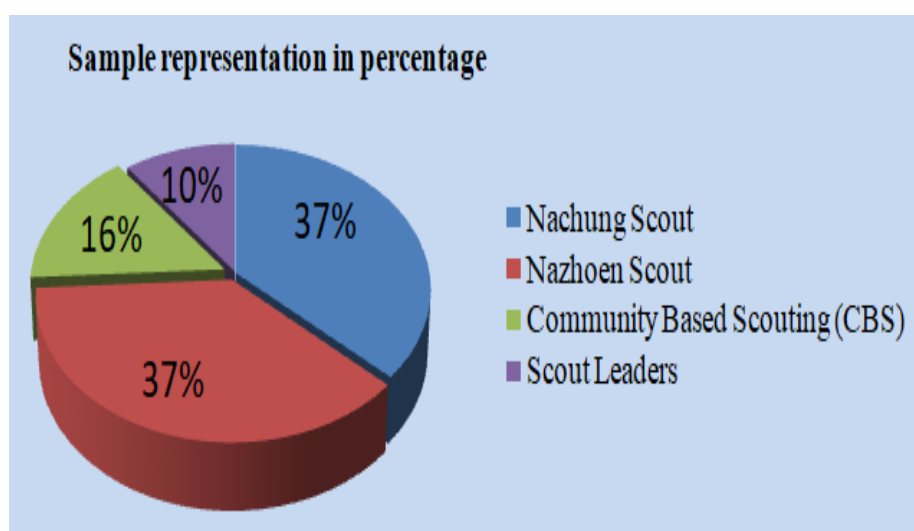


Figure 1: Sample representation in percentage

### **Instrument**

Data was collected using 78-items scout leader assisted survey questionnaire. The 78 items were categorized under six theme-specific areas of development with a number of statements:

1. Physical development - 11 statements
2. Intellectual development - 10 statements
3. Social development - 15 statements

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4. Emotional development - 11 statements
5. Spiritual development - 17 statements
6. Cultivating citizenship - 14 statements.

The questions are in Likert-Type rating scale with 5 levels of agreements. Respondents were asked to rate their agreement as strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree (abbreviated in the tables as SD, D, N, A, SA) with each statement.

On average, calculated Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient to determine the reliability of the scale is 0.807 for Nachung scouts, 0.839 for Nazhoen scouts and 0.823 for Leaders and CBS. The reliability statistic test indicated high level of reliability and internal consistency. The survey items were adapted and contextualized from the SPICES "I Statements" (Scout Australia, 2018).

### **Data Analysis**

Data were analysed using SPSS (version 23) conventions and MS Excel. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage and mean were used to describe the demographic variable of the participants. In order to determine the rates given to each item of different themes, descriptive analysis of the responses was shown in terms of percentage (%) calculations.

### **Result**

Results for Nachung scouts, Nazhoen scouts, and Adults (Leaders and CBS) are provided below.

#### **Nachung Scouts**

The score of Nachung scouts in the six different areas of development is presented in Table 1. The overwhelming 51.68% of the respondents strongly agreed that scouting programmes have helped them to develop in six areas of

development. More than 50% strongly agreed that programmes were useful in developing physically, emotionally, and spiritually and in cultivating citizenship, whereas over 46% agreed strongly that programmes helped them in intellectual development and developing social skills. More than 80% agreed or strongly agreed that programmes have been helpful in developing all five areas.

Table 1: Descriptive analysis of response by Nachung Scouts in six areas of development

Areas of Development	Percentage				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
A. Physical development	0.89	1.78	7.68	37.65	51.85
B. Intellectual development	0.56	2.24	10.15	40.56	46.48
C. Social development	0.28	1.97	9.79	41.33	46.49
D. Emotional development	0.51	2.04	9.36	36.87	51.21
E. Spiritual development	0.49	1.73	9.04	37.78	50.86
F. Cultivating citizenship	0.10	1.00	6.33	29.21	63.19
Overall agreement	0.47	1.79	8.73	37.23	51.68

Cultivating citizenship has the highest strongly agree (63.19%) score while intellectual development has the lowest strongly agree (46.48%) score. Intellectual development has the highest respondents with neutral score, with 10.15% in other developmental areas. Nachung scouts' agreement level on each area of development is presented below.

Table 1.1 shows the respondents' level of agreement against each item of **physical development**. While all items shared common trend, with majority of the participants opting strongly agree or agree, the trend is little different with the items "I have good personal habits" and "I practice cleanliness for myself and the surrounding". In the statement "I avoid all sorts of abuse to my body", 5.6% of the respondents strongly disagreed, disagreed or were neutral. 4.2% disagreed while 16.9% were neutral to the statement "I have good personal habits".

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Table 1.1: Level of agreements in physical development

Item	Percentage				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
I understand the way my body functions.	0	0	1.4	40.8	57.7
I am aware about the changes in my body.	1.4	2.8	7.0	33.8	54.9
I can respond well to the needs of my body (oxygen, balanced nutrition and sleep).	1.4	1.4	11.3	28.2	57.7
I can recognize the relationship between myself and the environment around me.	0	0	12.7	43.7	43.7
I appreciate my physique.	0	1.4	12.7	33.8	50.7
I avoid all sorts of abuse to my body.	5.6	5.6	5.6	18.3	64.8
I have good personal habits.	0	4.2	16.9	54.9	23.9
I practice cleanliness for myself and the surrounding.	0	2.8	2.8	47.9	46.5
I like adventurous, challenging and new physical activities.	0	1.4	0	35.2	63.4
I would like to develop my motor skills (pioneering, cooking, dancing, craft designing etc).	1.4	0	5.6	35.2	57.7
I understand the importance of safety while participating in activities.	0	0	8.5	42.3	49.3
Average	0.89	1.78	7.68	37.65	51.85

Levels of agreements in each item for the growth of **intellectual development** is shown in Table 1.2. While 46.48% strongly agreed and 40.56% agreed, there are some variations in responses to some items. For instance, to “I believe that exploration leads to discovery”, 1.4% strongly disagreed, 1.4% disagreed and 5.6% were neutral. For the statement “I can interpret data and information correctly”, 1.4% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 4.2% disagreed and 14.1% were neutral. In the statement “I can plan and organize ideas systematically”, 18.3% of the respondents were neutral, 5.6% disagreed and 1.4% strongly disagreed.

Table 1.2: Level of agreements in intellectual development

Item	Percentage				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
I am curious about the things happening around me.	0	1.4	8.5	45.1	45.1
I believe that exploration leads to discovery.	1.4	1.4	5.6	56.3	35.2
I have good observation skills.	0	5.6	11.3	46.5	36.6
I can plan and organize ideas systematically.	1.4	5.6	18.3	46.5	28.2
I like to be a creative person.	0	0	11.3	35.2	53.5
I can interpret data and information correctly.	1.4	4.2	14.1	52.1	28.2
I can recollect concepts, procedures and applications.	0	2.8	16.9	36.6	43.7
I am better at sorting and classifying materials.	0	1.4	8.5	32.4	57.7
I support experimentation as a process in learning.	1.4	0	5.6	36.6	56.3
I believe that reading can enrich my learning.	0	0	1.4	18.3	80.3
Average	0.56	2.24	10.15	40.56	46.48

Table 1.3 represents the respondents' level of agreement against each item of **social development**. While all the items shared almost similar trend, with majority of the participants opting strongly agree or agree, the trend was little different for few items. The statement "I consistently demonstrate appropriate behaviour in different situations" has 1.4% responding strongly disagree and disagree, and 19.7% of the respondents opted neutral. Similarly, 1.4% strongly disagreed while 11.3% were neutral on "I apply the promise and law in my everyday life". In the statement "I can share my feelings and emotions with others", 12.7% of the Nachung scouts responded neutral whereas 8.5% disagreed and 1.4% strongly disagreed.

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Table 1.3: Level of agreements in social development

Item	Percentage				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
I have a high regard for myself.	0	1.4	11.3	42.3	45.1
I consistently demonstrate appropriate behaviour in different situations.	1.4	1.4	19.7	49.3	28.2
I apply the promise and law in my everyday life.	1.4	1.4	11.3	42.3	43.7
I appreciate team work.	0	2.8	0	23.9	73.2
I make new friends through kindness and care.	0	1.4	2.8	38.0	57.7
I have respect for others.	0	0	12.7	38.0	47.9
I have a sense of fair play in games.	0	2.8	8.5	47.9	40.8
I can share my feelings and emotions with others.	1.4	8.5	12.7	35.2	42.3
I am mindful of other members of the local community and the role they play.	0	2.8	11.3	42.3	43.7
I build and maintain meaningful relationships within diverse communities.	0	4.2	8.5	43.7	43.7
I am aware about my personal safety and the support system.	0	1.4	8.5	42.3	47.9
I have the skills and attitudes to build friendships.	0	1.4	8.5	39.4	50.7
I am resourceful and a helpful person.	0	0	8.5	43.7	47.9
I believe in serving my community.	0	0	9.9	45.1	45.1
I helped out in my neighbourhood.	0	1.4	12.7	46.5	39.4
Average	0.28	1.97	9.79	41.33	46.49

The level of agreement in each item for development of the participants' **emotion** is shown in Table 1.4. Contrary to other trends in managing their own emotion, 7% of the respondents disagree while 16.9% chose neutral in (I can manage my emotions). In "I respect and accept other's point of view", 1.4% strongly disagreed, 2.8% disagreed, and 11.3% responded neutral. 1.4% each strongly disagreed and disagreed while 9.9% opted neutral on "I feel optimistic about the future". Similarly, 12.7% responded neutral and 2.8% strongly disagreed or disagreed to the statement "I talk to my friends and family about my feelings".

Table 1.4: Level of agreements in emotional development

Item	Percentage				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
I understand my feelings.	0	0	4.2	18.3	77.5
I have empathy for others.	0	1.4	8.5	49.3	40.8
I can manage my emotions.	0	7.0	16.9	40.8	35.2
I can identify different feelings and share how I'm feeling with others.	0	0	15.5	40.8	43.7
I respect and accept other's point of view.	1.4	2.8	11.3	45.1	39.4
I am happy because I am a scout.	0	0	0	11.3	88.7
I try to do my best even in difficult times.	0	0	12.7	46.5	40.8
I have been experiencing good spirits after joining the Scout.	0	1.4	1.4	35.2	62.0
I feel optimistic about the future.	1.4	1.4	9.9	47.9	39.4
I talk to my friends and family about my feelings.	2.8	2.8	12.7	39.4	42.3
Mindfulness practices would help me to become more aware of my emotions.	0	5.6	9.9	31.0	53.5
Average	0.51	2.04	9.36	36.87	51.21

Table 1.5 represents the level of agreement against each item for **spiritual development** due to Nachung scouting programmes. On average, 50.86% of the respondents responded strongly agree and 37.78% agreed that scouting programmes helped in spiritual development. However, few items showed notable variations. In “I experience religious belief system through scouting programmes”, 1.4% strongly disagreed, 2.8% disagreed and 4.2% responded neutral. 14.1% of the respondents were neutral, while 1.4% disagreed, and 2.8% strongly disagreed to the statement “I recite prayers at least once a day”. 1.4% each responded strongly disagrees or disagrees while 15.5% opted for neutral for “I take part in religious activities frequently”. Finally, in the statement “I

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understand how common religious beliefs can be applied in daily life”, 2.8% disagreed while 16.9% chose neutral.

Table 1.5: Level of agreements in spiritual development.

Item	Percentage				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
I appreciate the world around me.	0	1.4	4.2	25.4	69.0
I understand that people have different beliefs.	0	0	8.5	22.5	69.0
I have a purpose in life.	0	1.4	14.1	29.6	54.9
I experience religious belief systems through scouting programmes.	1.4	2.8	4.2	47.9	43.7
I experience religious belief systems through family and community activities.	0	1.4	9.9	47.9	40.8
I recite prayers at least once a day	2.8	1.4	14.1	45.1	35.2
I take part in religious activities frequently.	1.4	1.4	15.5	49.3	32.4
I understand how common religious beliefs can be applied in daily life.	0	2.8	16.9	46.5	33.8
I appreciate that the scout promise and law guide my life.	0	0	1.4	38.0	60.6
I can contribute more being a scout than being just me.	0	0	9.9	36.6	53.5
I know that there are right and wrong ways of doing things and I should use my spiritual beliefs to guide my actions.	1.4	1.4	9.9	38.0	49.3
I express thanks to my family and other people in my life for the things they do for me.	0	0	1.4	23.9	74.6
The rich Bhutanese cultural and spiritual heritage has shaped my life.	0	0	4.2	36.6	59.2
I understand that others may not have the same opportunities as I have had.	1.4	4.2	14.1	40.8	39.4
I consider the impact of a destroying natural environment on those around me.	0	1.4	5.6	26.8	66.2
I have the ability of forgiveness.	0	5.6	8.5	45.1	40.8
I have the strength of acceptance.	0	4.2	11.3	42.3	42.3
Average	0.49	1.73	9.04	37.78	50.86

Table 1.6 shows the level of agreements in **cultivating citizenship** for each item. On average, overwhelmingly 63.19% of the participants strongly agreed on scouting programmes having positive impact on cultivating citizenship. However, for the statement “I know the significance of the institution of monarchy in Bhutan”, 7% disagreed while 12.7% chose neutral. Similarly, 18.3% were neutral and 2.8% disagreed on the statement “I am aware about the contributions of my Monarchs in nation building”.

Table 1.6: Level of agreements in cultivating citizenship

Item	Percentage				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
I am a proud Bhutanese.	0	0	0	9.9	90.1
I love my King.	0	0	0	2.8	97.2
I follow the words of my King.	0	0	4.2	32.7	63.4
I know the significance of the institution of Monarchy in Bhutan.	0	7.0	12.7	38.0	42.3
I am aware about the contributions of my Monarchs in nation building.	0	2.8	18.3	32.4	46.5
I know that the forms of governance in Bhutan is Democratic Constitutional Monarchy	1.4	1.4	11.3	36.6	47.9
I would like to be a responsible voter when I grow up	0	0	5.6	29.6	64.8
I can recognize our national identities (flag/anthem/language/dresses/emblem etc.)	0	0	2.8	9.9	87.3
I have a deep sense of patriotism.	0	0	5.6	29.6	63.4
I dedicate my selfless service to the nation	0	1.4	5.6	42.3	50.7
I believe in the leadership of the self	0	0	5.6	46.5	47.9
I accept duties respectfully and courteously	0	0	5.6	33.8	60.6
I believe in my ability to complete a task.	0	1.4	9.9	35.2	53.5
I believe in volunteerism.	0	0	1.4	29.6	69.0

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Average	0.1	1.0	6.33	29.21	63.19
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### **Nazhoen Scouts**

The overall level of agreement by Nazhoen scouts in the six different areas of development through scouting programme is presented in Table 2. The overwhelming 51.58% of the respondents strongly agreed that existing scouting programmes have helped them to develop in six areas of development. More than 50% strongly agreed the programmes have helped them to develop physically, emotionally, spiritually and in cultivating citizenship in them. However, 45.01% agreed strongly that the programmes have helped them in intellectual development and 34.72% strongly agreed on social skills development. More than 85% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that the programmes have been helpful in development of all the six developmental aspects mentioned. Similar to that of Nachung scouts, cultivating citizenship scored the highest, with (71.43%) strongly agree, while intellectual development has the lowest score (34.72% strongly agree).

Table 2: Descriptive analysis of response by Nazhoen Scouts in six areas of development

Areas of Development	Percentage				
	SA	D	N	A	SA
A. Physical development	1.01	1.27	8.46	35.85	53.15
B. Intellectual development	0.56	3.61	16.37	44.45	34.72
C. Social development	0.84	2.70	12.59	38.80	45.01
D. Emotional development	0.38	2.03	8.25	37.38	51.89
E. Spiritual development	0.25	1.40	9.16	35.94	53.26
F. Cultivating citizenship	0.0	0.10	4.46	23.50	71.43
Overall agreement	0.51	1.85	9.88	35.99	51.58

The agreement levels of Nazhoen scouts on each area of development are provided below.

Table 2.1 represents level of agreement against each item of **physical development**. Majority of Nazhoen scouts (53.2%)

strongly agreed while 35.85% agreed that they are enjoying physical development programmes provided by Thimphu Dzongkhag. However, there are some variations with their agreement on “I appreciate my physique,” “I avoid all sort of abuse to my body”, “I have good personal habits” and “I can respond well to the need of my body.”

Table 2.1: Level of agreements in physical development

Item	Percentage				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
I understand the way my body functions.	0	0	9.7	44.4	45.8
I am aware about the changes in my body.	0	0	4.2	34.7	61.1
I can respond well to the needs of my body (oxygen, balanced nutrition and sleep).	1.4	5.6	15.3	30.6	47.2
I can recognize the relationship between myself and the environment around me.	0	0	6.9	38.9	54.2
I appreciate my physique.	0	1.4	13.9	38.9	44.4
I avoid all sorts of abuse to my body.	6.9	2.8	12.5	16.7	61.1
I have good personal habits.	1.4	1.4	13.9	58.3	23.6
I practice cleanliness for myself and the surrounding.	1.4	0	8.3	36.1	54.2
I like adventurous, challenging and new physical activities.	0	1.4	1.4	25.0	72.2
I would like to develop my motor skills (pioneering, cooking, dancing, craft designing etc).	0	0	4.2	34.7	61.1
I understand the importance of safety while participating in activities.	0	1.4	2.8	36.1	59.7
Average	1.01	1.27	8.46	35.85	53.15

On **intellectual development**, 34.72% of the respondents strongly agree and 44.45% agree that they are able to think, plan, innovate, review and be creative, apply information, knowledge and skills in new and diverse environments (Table 2.2). It shows that the programmes conducted by Dzongkhag has catered to the development of intelligence of the Nazhoen scouts. In addition, 58.3% of the respondents strongly agree

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and 36.1% agree on the statement, “I believe that reading can enrich my learning.” However, for statement “I can plan and organize ideas systematically”, 1.4% strongly disagreed, 6.9% disagreed and 31.9% were neutral. Correspondingly, 1.4% strongly disagreed, 9.7% disagreed and 19.4% were neutral on the statement “I can interpret data and information correctly”. Nazhoen scouts also aspire to have literary activities in the future.

Table 2.2: Level of agreements in intellectual development

Item	Percentage				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
I am curious about the things happening around me.	0	1.4	8.3	48.6	41.7
I believe that exploration leads to discovery.	1.4	1.4	20.8	29.2	45.8
I have good observation skills.	0	9.7	20.8	50.0	19.4
I can plan and organize ideas systematically.	1.4	6.9	31.9	45.8	13.9
I like to be a creative person.	0	1.4	5.6	38.9	54.2
I can interpret data and information correctly.	1.4	9.7	19.4	54.2	15.3
I can recollect concepts, procedures and applications.	1.4	1.4	22.2	55.6	19.4
I am better at sorting and classifying materials.	0	1.4	22.2	37.5	37.5
I support experimentation as a process in learning.	0	1.4	8.3	48.6	41.7
I believe that reading can enrich my learning.	0	1.4	4.2	36.1	58.3
Average	0.56	3.61	16.37	44.45	34.72

The respondents’ level of agreement against each item of **social development** is shown in Table 2.3. While all the items shared common trend with majority opting strongly agree or agree, the trend is little different with “I consistently demonstrate appropriate behaviour in different situations” in which 5.6% of the respondents opted to disagree and 18.1% were neutral. Nevertheless, 45.01% of the respondents strongly agreed and 38.8% agreed that scouting programmes have developed their social skills like sense of belonging to a group, one’s relationships with others and understanding differences

between people in small groups of peers, as well as issues of diversity and inclusion in larger communities. A staggering 76.4% strongly agreed and 18.1% agreed with the statement, “I have respect for others”. Nazhoen scouts aspires to have cleaning campaign, community services and exchange programmes.

Table 2.3: Level of agreements in social development

Item	Percentage				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
I have a high regard for myself.	0	5.6	11.1	54.2	29.2
I consistently demonstrate appropriate behaviour in different situations.	1.4	5.6	18.1	50.0	25.0
I apply the promise and law in my everyday life.	0	4.2	19.4	41.7	34.7
I appreciate team work.	1.4	1.4	4.2	26.4	66.7
I make new friends through kindness and care.	1.4	1.4	4.2	31.9	61.1
I have respect for others.	0	0	5.6	18.1	76.4
I have a sense of fair play in games.	0	1.4	12.5	26.4	59.7
I can share my feelings and emotions with others.	1.4	8.3	25.0	30.6	34.7
I am mindful of other members of the local community and the role they play.	0	1.4	16.7	44.4	37.5
I build and maintain meaningful relationships within diverse communities.	1.4	2.8	15.3	45.8	34.7
I am aware about my personal safety and the support system.	0	0	9.7	36.1	52.8
I have the skills and attitudes to build friendships.	1.4	2.8	8.3	44.4	43.1
I am a resourceful and a helpful person.	1.4	1.4	19.4	51.4	26.4
I believe in serving my community.	1.4	0	8.3	38.9	51.4
I helped out in my neighbourhood.	1.4	4.2	11.1	41.7	41.7
Average	0.84	2.70	12.59	38.80	45.01

Table 2.4 shows the level of agreements in each item for the development of participants’ emotion. 1.4% strongly disagreed while 4.2% were neutral in “I understand my feelings,” but the majority (52.8% strongly agreed and 41.7% agreed) responded

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that Nazhoen scouts are able to understand their own emotions. They are aware of how a person is feeling, expressing emotions in a positive manner, as well as respecting and supporting the emotional needs of others.

Table 2.4: Level of agreements in emotional development

Item	Percentage				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
I understand my feelings.	0	1.4	4.2	41.7	52.8
I have empathy for others.	0	0	6.9	52.8	40.3
I can manage my emotions.	0	4.2	13.9	37.5	44.4
I can identify different feelings and share how I'm feeling with others.	1.4	4.2	18.1	36.1	40.3
I respect and accept other's point of view.	0	5.6	4.2	40.3	50.0
I am happy because I am a scout.	0	0	1.4	11.1	87.5
I try to do my best even in difficult times.	1.4	0	4.6	33.3	59.7
I have been experiencing good spirits after joining the Scout.	0	0	2.8	27.8	69.4
I feel optimistic about the future.	0	0	8.3	58.3	33.3
I talk to my friends and family about my feelings.	1.4	6.9	20.8	43.1	27.8
Mindfulness practices would help me to become more aware of my emotions.	0	0	5.6	29.2	65.3
<b>Average</b>	<b>0.38</b>	<b>2.03</b>	<b>8.25</b>	<b>37.38</b>	<b>51.89</b>

What the result meant was that programmes run by Dzongkhag has helped develop the scouts emotionally. Further, 87.5% of the strongly agreed and 11.1% agreed on the statement, "I am happy because I am a scout." This also indicate that the programmes conducted by schools under Thimphu dzongkhag was able to meet emotional development of the scouts. It further validates that the programmes have provided opportunities to participate in challenging educational activities in a progressively self-directing environment aimed at developing confidence and self-esteem. They also aspire to have mindfulness session in the future.

In the level of agreement against each item for spiritual development (Table 2.5), 53.26% strongly agreed and 35.94%

agreed they have great spiritual development through scouting programmes under Thimphu Dzongkhag. 2.8% strongly disagreed, 4.2% disagreed and 18.1% were neutral with the statement “I recite prayers at least once a day”. 4.2% disagreed while 27.8% were neutral with the statement, “I take part in religious activities frequently.” A significant number of the respondents (73.6%) strongly agreed and 22.2% agreed with the statement, “I express thanks to my family and other people in my life for the things they do for me,” whereas 72.2% strongly agreed and 25% agreed with the statement “I appreciate that the scout promise and law guide my life.”

Table 2.5: Level of agreements in spiritual development

Item	Percentage				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
I appreciate the world around me.	0	0	6.9	37.5	55.6
I understand that people have different beliefs.	0	1.4	0	29.2	69.4
I have a purpose in life.	0	0	4.2	31.9	63.9
I experience religious belief systems through scouting programmes.	0	0	4.2	31.9	63.9
I experience religious belief systems through family and community activities.	0	0	12.5	37.5	50.0
I recite prayers at least once a day	2.8	4.2	18.1	47.2	27.8
I take part in religious activities frequently.	0	4.2	27.8	34.7	33.3
I understand how common religious beliefs can be applied in daily life.	0	2.8	9.7	48.6	38.9
I appreciate that the scout promise and law guide my life.	0	0	2.8	25.0	72.2
I can contribute more being a scout than being just me.	0	0	5.6	36.1	58.3
I know that there are right and wrong ways of doing things and I should use my spiritual beliefs to guide my actions.	0	0	13.9	43.1	43.1
I express thanks to my family and other people in my life for the things they do for me.	0	0	4.2	22.2	73.6
The rich Bhutanese cultural and spiritual heritage has shaped my life.	0	0	5.6	34.7	59.7

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I understand that others may not have the same opportunities as I have had.	1.4	2.8	6.9	43.1	45.8
I consider the impact of a destroying natural environment on those around me.	0	2.8	11.1	25.0	61.1
I have the ability of forgiveness.	0	1.4	13.9	36.1	48.6
I have the strength of acceptance.	0	4.2	8.3	47.2	40.3
Average	0.25	1.40	9.16	35.94	53.26

On **cultivating citizenship**, majority of the respondents (71.43%) strongly agreed and 23.50% agreed that scouting programmes have positive influence on cultivating citizenship (Table 2.6). The respondents' perception of the scouting in cultivating citizenship is significant. A staggering 98.6% of the respondents strongly agreed and 1.4% agreed to the statement, "I love my King," and overwhelming 90.3% strongly agreed and 8.3% with the statement "I am a proud Bhutanese". According to their suggestions, they also wish to have social service, volunteerism and youth empowerment programmes in the coming days.

Table 2.6: Level of agreements in cultivating citizenship

Item	Percentage				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
I am a proud Bhutanese.	0	0	1.4	8.3	90.3
I love my King.	0	0	0	1.4	98.6
I follow the words of my King.	0	0	2.8	19.4	77.8
I know the significance of the institution of Monarchy in Bhutan.	0	0	5.6	36.1	58.3
I am aware about the contributions of my Monarchs in nation building.	0	0	8.3	33.3	58.3
I know that the forms of governance in Bhutan is Democratic Constitutional Monarchy.	0	0	6.9	25.0	61.1
I would like to be a responsible voter when I grow up.	0	0	4.2	11.1	84.7
I can recognize our national identities (flag/ anthem/ language/ dress/ emblem etc.)	0	0	0	8.3	91.7
I have a deep sense of patriotism.	0	0	5.6	31.9	62.5
I dedicate my selfless service to the nation	0	0	8.3	29.2	62.5

I believe in the leadership of the self.	0	0	4.2	30.6	65.3
I accept duties respectfully and courteously.	0	0	6.9	36.1	56.9
I believe in my ability to complete a task.	0	1.4	8.3	34.7	55.6
I believe in volunteerism.	0	0	0	23.6	76.4
Average	0.0	0.10	4.46	23.50	71.43

### **Scout Leaders and CBS**

The overall level of agreement by Scout Leaders and CBS in the six different areas of development through scouting programme is shown in Table 3. The overwhelming 53.72% of the respondents strongly agreed the existing scouting programmes helped the Leaders in six areas of development. More than 50% strongly agreed the programmes have helped them to develop socially, emotionally, spiritually and in cultivating citizenship. 47.43% agreed strongly the programmes have helped them in physical development and 43.3% strongly agreed it has helped in their intellectual development. About 90% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that the programmes have been helpful in development of all the six developmental aspects mentioned.

Table 3: Descriptive analysis of response by Scout Leaders and CBS in six areas of development (SD: strongly disagree; D: disagree; N: neutral; A: agree; SA: strongly agree).

Areas of Development	Percentage				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
A. Physical development	0.57	2.29	7.14	42.29	47.43
B. Intellectual development	0	2.0	3.75	29.25	64.75
C. Social development	0.29	0.57	4.86	41.14	52.86
D. Emotional development	0	1.33	9.67	44.0	43.3
E. Spiritual development	0.22	0.44	6.67	35.56	55.11
F. Cultivating citizenship	0	0.44	6.44	32.22	58.89
Overall agreement	0.18	1.18	6.42	37.41	53.72

Contrary to the response of Nachung and Nazhoen scouts, leaders and adults have the highest strongly agreed score on social development (64.75%) while intellectual development has the lowest score of 43.30%.

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Below are agreement level of Scout Leaders and CBS on each area of development.

The score of Leaders and CBS on each of the item for the growth of **physical development** is as shown in Table 3.1. Majority of the respondents (47.43%) strongly agreed and 42.29% agreed that adult scouts facilitate the understanding of the body, including active care for health, wellbeing and the pursuit of physical skills and fitness. This means that the scout leaders are teaching all the required physical development programmes to the scouts. A significant number of leaders and adult scouts scored 72% strongly agree and 26% agree on the statement, “I take responsibility for making good lifestyle choices to ensure physical wellbeing.” There are notable variations in some of the responses. In the statement, “I am efficient in leading psychometric activities,” 2% disagreed and 16% were neutral.

Table 3.1: Level of agreements in physical development

Item	Percentage				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
I take responsibility for making good lifestyle choices to ensure physical wellbeing.	0	2.0	0	26.0	72.0
I role model good lifestyle choices to other members.	0	0	4.0	34.0	62.0
I protect my health and accept physical capabilities.	2.0	2.0	2.0	38.0	56.0
I lead physical expeditions and adventurous activities.	0	6.0	10.0	48.0	34.0
I actively assess and mitigate risks associated with activities.	0	2.0	8.0	54.0	36.0
I support and practice the principles of minimal impact activities.	2.0	2.0	10.0	36.0	50.0
I am efficient in leading psychometric activities.	0	2.0	16.0	60.0	22.0
I support social safety and conducive environment for the learners.	0	2.0	0	26.0	72.0
I practice and promote equality.	0	0	4.0	34.0	62.0

Average	0.57	2.29	7.14	42.29	47.43
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Table 3.2 represents the respondents' level of agreement against each item of **social development** by Leaders and CBS on existing scouting programmes. While all the items shared a common trend, with majority opting strongly agree or agree, it is a little different for "I avoid unaccompanied and unobserved activities with scout," where 6.0% of the respondents disagreed and 14.0% were neutral.

Table 3.2: Level of agreements in social development

Item	Percentage				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
I practice and promote equality.	0	2.0	0	20.0	78.0
I promote environmental awareness.	0	2.0	0	36.0	62.0
I abide by legal and ethical responsibilities.	0	2.0	0	32.0	66.0
I avoid unaccompanied and unobserved activities with scout.	0	6.0	14.0	36.0	44.0
I believe in being a role model for my scouts.	0	0	4.0	26.0	70.0
I support young people in their development and achievement.	0	0	2.0	24.0	72.0
I support preservation of culture and tradition through various programmes in the community.	0	4.0	2.0	30.0	64.0
I support social safety and conducive environment for the learners.	0	0	8.0	30.0	62.0
Average	0.0	2.0	3.75	29.25	64.75

As shown in Table 3.3, the majority of by Leaders and CBS (52.86%) strongly agreed and 41.14% agreed that they facilitate self-discovery and awareness of the scouts: recognizing and accepting one's emotions, and discovering oneself. Adult scouts also helped in expressing one's feeling using various creative means. This also shows that they are able to control their own feelings and emotions in order to respect one's integrity and that of others. Further, it means that they were able to respond in a responsible manner to feelings directed towards oneself and controlling aggression. An overwhelming number of respondents 70% strongly agreed

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and 24% agreed to, “I am sensitive about the need of my scouts.”

Table 3.3: Level of agreements in emotional development

Item	Percentage				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
I am able to manage my emotions at all times.	0	2.0	6.0	60.0	32.0
I demonstrate empathy and offer suitable assistance when others need emotional support.	0	0	10.0	44.0	46.0
I support the development of emotional and social maturity in others.	0	0	4.0	48.0	48.0
I give and receive constructive feedback and know when to ask for and provide, assistance.	0	0	8.0	36.0	54.0
I support others in accepting, empathizing, respecting and understanding others feelings.	0	0	2.0	42.0	56.0
I am sensitive about the need of my scouts.	2.0	0	4.0	24.0	70.0
I believe that mindfulness practices strengthen resilience in scouts.	0	2.0	0	34.0	64.0
Average	0.29	0.57	4.86	41.14	52.86

Table 3.4 shows the levels of agreements in each item for the growth of intellectual development on existing scouting programmes. 43.3% strongly agreed and 44% agreed on the average. Here too, there are notable variations in some of the responses. For instance, in “I respond creatively to diverse situations through demonstrating capacity for thought, innovation, adventure and resourcefulness,” 2.0% disagreed and 14.0% were neutral. Similarly, 2.0% disagreed and 12.0% chose to be in neutral for “I provide challenging developmental opportunities to empower young people.”

Table 3.4: Level of agreements in intellectual development

Item	Percentage				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
I update myself with new skills and knowledge to assist personal	0	2.0	2.0	40.0	56.0

development and education of the learners.					
I provide challenging developmental opportunities to empower young people.	0	2.0	12.0	48.0	36.0
I respond creatively to diverse situations through demonstrating capacity for thought, innovation, adventure and resourcefulness.	0	2.0	14.0	46.0	36.0
I entrust individual responsibility.	0	0	10.0	34.0	54.0
I facilitate the review of projects and activities, and adapt them in response to change.	0	0	8.0	52.0	38.0
I undertake systematic planning and procedures to support others in scouting.	0	2.0	12.0	44.0	40.0
Average	0.00	1.33	9.67	44.0	43.3

The majority of Leaders and Adult scouts (Table 3.5), 55.1% of the respondents strongly agreed while 35.56% agreed that they are acquiring a deeper knowledge and understanding of the spiritual heritage of one’s own community, discovering the spiritual reality which gives meaning to life and drawing conclusions for one’s daily life, while respecting the spiritual choices of others. This shows that the adult scouts under Thimphu Dzongkhag are exploring beliefs, stopping for reflection, respect for others and being thankful (Scouts Australia, 2018). A majority of respondent strongly agreed (74%) and agreed (22%) to the statement, “I exhibit understanding and respect towards societies and cultures.”

Table 3.5: Level of agreements in spiritual development

Item	Percentage				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
I see pride in my scouts being a Bhutanese.	0	0	2.0	16.0	80.0
I share the ideologies of His Majesty the King with scouts.	0	0	4.0	20.0	74.0
I include contributions of the Great Monarchs in scouting lessons.	0	2.0	10.0	26.0	60.0
I reinforce the concept of nationalism and unity with my scouts.	0	0	4.0	42.0	52.0

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My scouts are aware about the national identities.	0	0	2.0	38.0	58.0
I promote the concept of leadership of self among the scouts.	0	2.0	8.0	28.0	60.0
I foresee my scouts becoming loyal and patriotic citizens.	0	0	12.0	36.0	50.0
My scouts are responsible in doing assigned task well.	0	0	8.0	46.0	44.0
I have instilled in them the sense of volunteerism.	0	0	8.0	38.0	52.0
<b>Average</b>	<b>0.22</b>	<b>0.44</b>	<b>6.67</b>	<b>35.56</b>	<b>55.11</b>

The score on each item for the development of the participants' **cultivating citizenship** is as shown in Table 3.6. 58.9% strongly agreed and 32.22% agreed that the scouting programmes have facilitated the development of knowledge, skills, attitude and bond amongst the scouts to become a responsible citizen. This shows that adult scouts participated and helped in activities that assisted in creating their world a better place to live. A significant 80% of the respondents strongly agreed and 16% agreed with the statement, "I see pride in my scouts being a Bhutanese." In addition, the statement, "I include contributions of the Great Monarchs in scouting lessons," none of the respondent opted strongly disagree, merely 2% opted to disagree and 10% were neutral.

Table 3.6: Level of agreements in cultivating citizenship

Item	Percentage				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
I see pride in my scouts being a Bhutanese.	0	0	2.0	16.0	80.0
I share the ideologies of His Majesty the King with scouts.	0	0	4.0	20.0	74.0
I include contributions of the Great Monarchs in scouting lessons.	0	2.0	10.0	26.0	60.0
I reinforce the concept of nationalism and unity with my scouts.	0	0	4.0	42.0	52.0
My scouts are aware about the national identities.	0	0	2.0	38.0	58.0
I promote the concept of leadership of self among the scouts.	0	2.0	8.0	28.0	60.0
I foresee my scouts becoming loyal and patriotic citizens.	0	0	12.0	36.0	50.0

My scouts are responsible in doing assigned task well.	0	0	8.0	46.0	44.0
I have instilled in them the sense of volunteerism.	0	0	8.0	38.0	52.0
I build and maintain meaningful relationships within diverse communities.	0	4.2	8.5	43.7	43.7
I am aware about my personal safety and the support system.	0	1.4	8.5	42.3	47.9
I have the skills and attitudes to build friendships.	0	1.4	8.5	39.4	50.7
I am resourceful and a helpful person.	0	0	8.5	43.7	47.9
I believe in serving my community.	0	0	9.9	45.1	45.1
I helped out in my neighbourhood.	0	1.4	12.7	46.5	39.4
Average	0.0	0.44	6.44	32.22	58.89

### Data Triangulation

The triangulation of level of agreement on six development areas by Nachung, Nazhoen and Leaders are provided below:

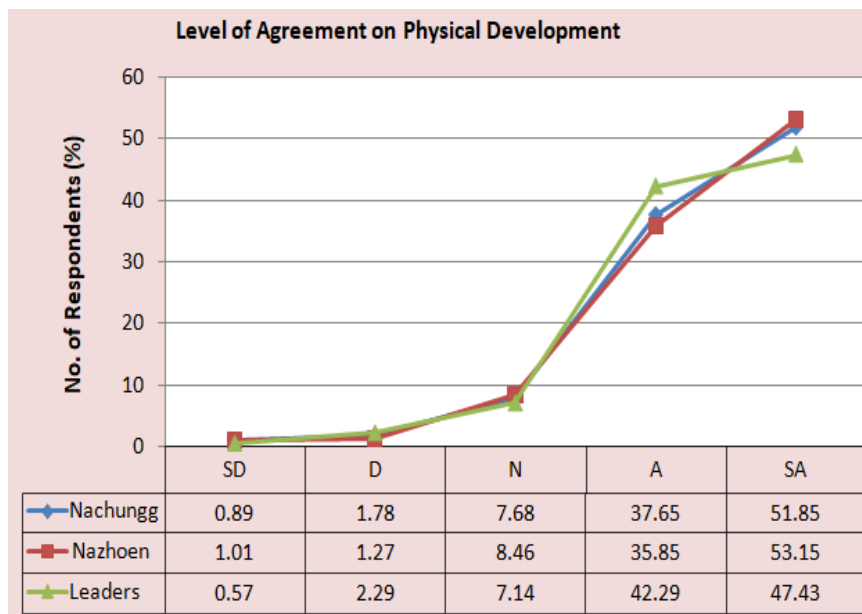


Figure 2: Level of agreement on Physical Development by Nachung, Nazhoen and Leaders

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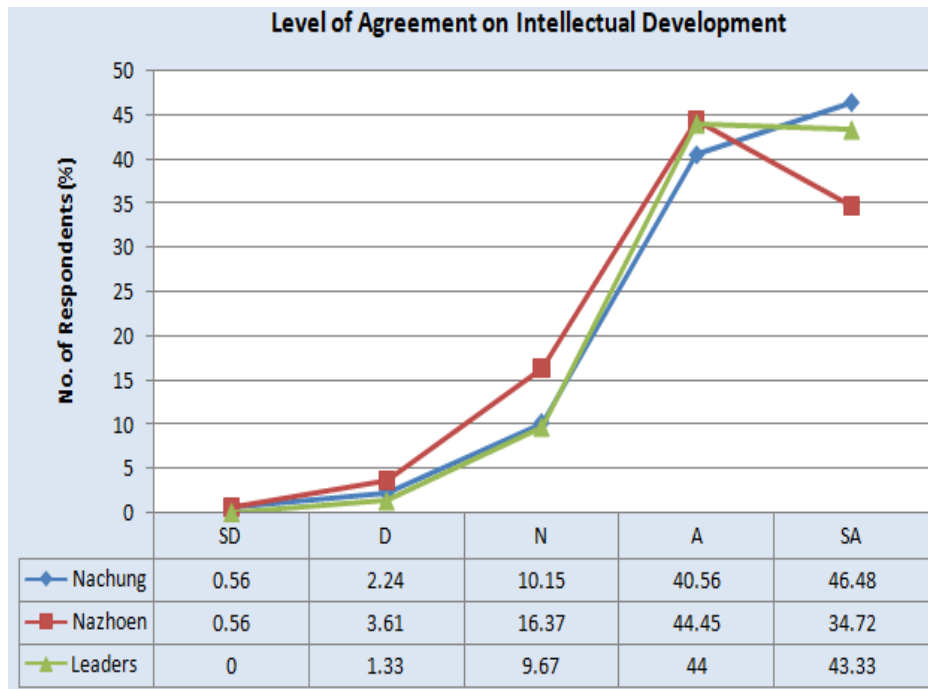


Figure 3: Level of agreement on Intellectual Development by Nachung, Nazhoen and Leaders.

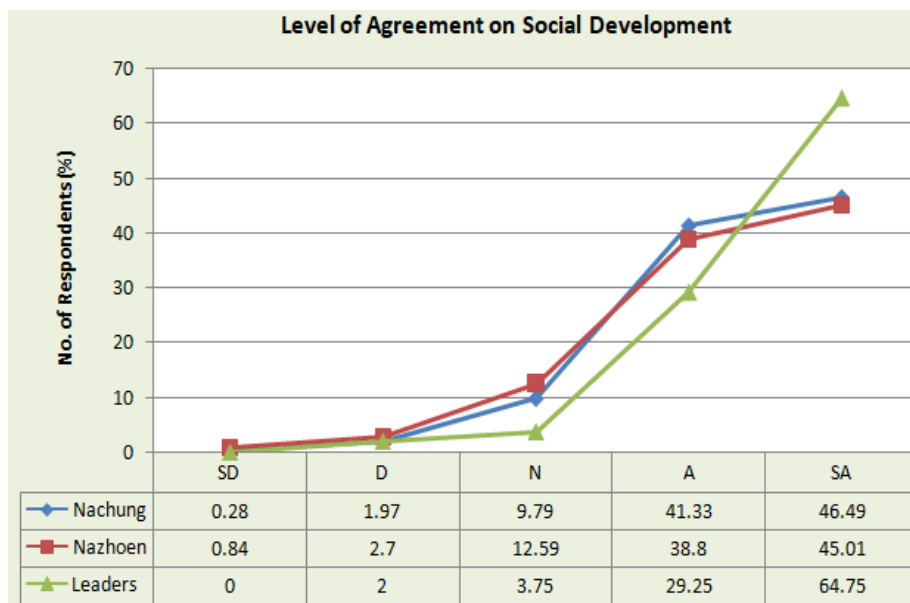


Figure 4: Level of agreement on Social Development by Nachung, Nazhoen and Leaders

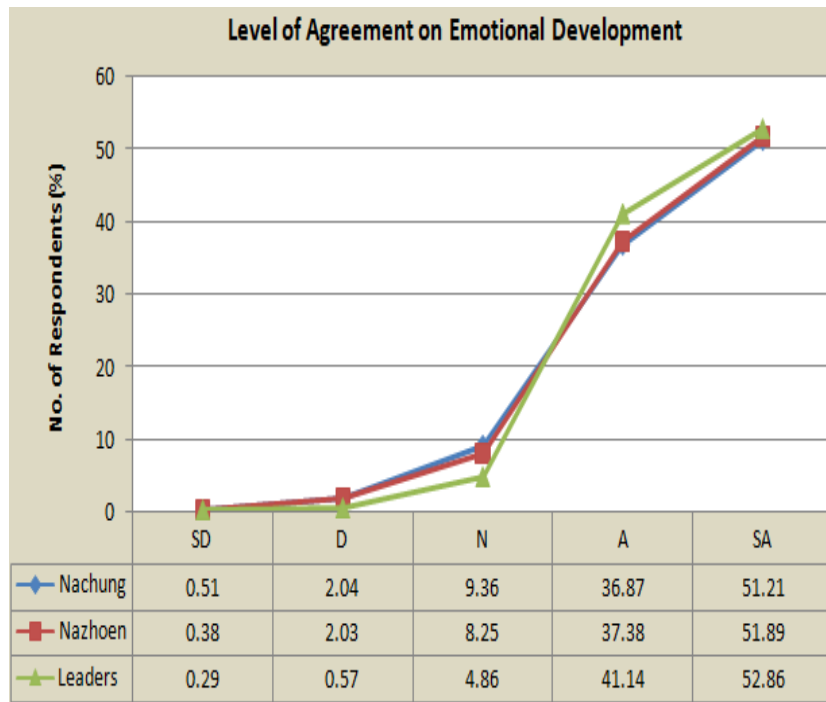


Figure 5: Level of Agreement on Emotional Development by Nachung, Nazhoen and Leaders.

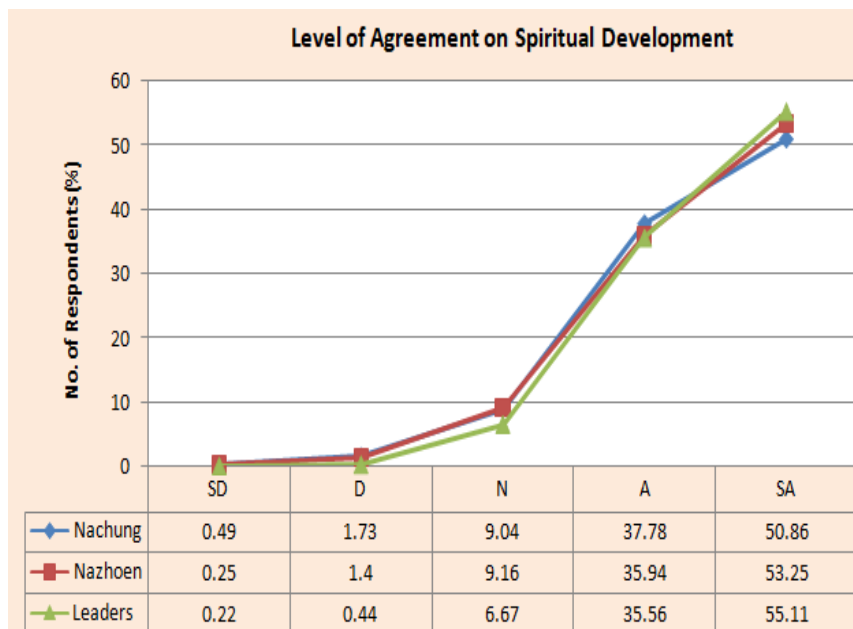


Figure 6: Level of Agreement on Spiritual Development by Nachung, Nazhoen and Leaders

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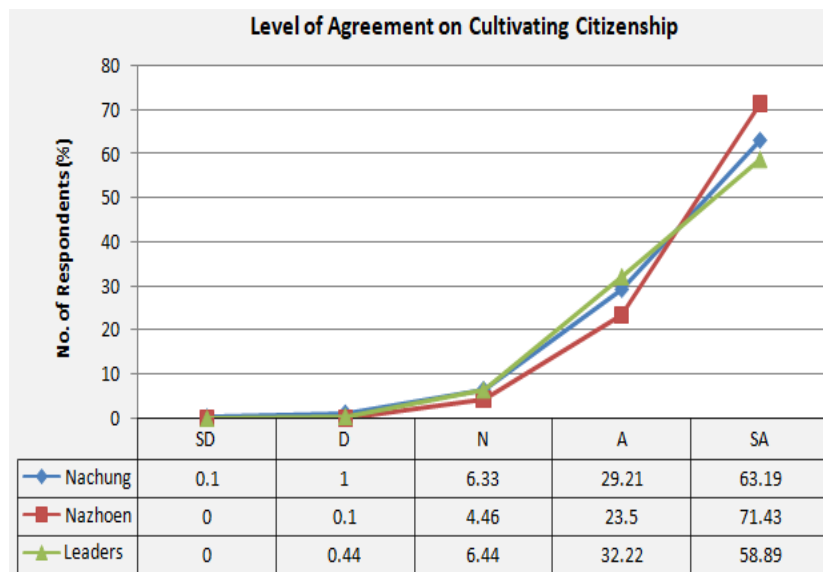


Figure 7: Level of Agreement on Cultivating Citizenship by Nachung, Nazhoen and Leaders

Figure 2-7 show the level of agreement on six developmental areas by Nachung, Nazhoen and Leaders. In physical development, 51.85% of Nachung, 53.15% Nazhoen and 47.43% of Leaders strongly agreed that the existing scouting programmes have helped in physical development of scouts. There are notable variations in the level of agreement in intellectual and social development. On intellectual development, 46.48% of Nachung, 43.33% of Nazhoen, and only 34.72% of Leaders strongly agreed in intellectual development due to existing scouting programmes. On social development, only 46.49% of Nachung and 45.01% of Nazhoen strongly agreed while 64.75% of Leaders strongly agreed on it. For Emotional development and Spiritual Development all the three categories of respondents have almost similar level of agreements. In cultivating citizenship, 63.19% of Nachung, 71.43% of Nazhoen and 58.89% of Leaders chose strongly agree.'

Agreement level for camp attendees and non-camp attendees (Nachung and Nazhoen Scouts) are as follows.

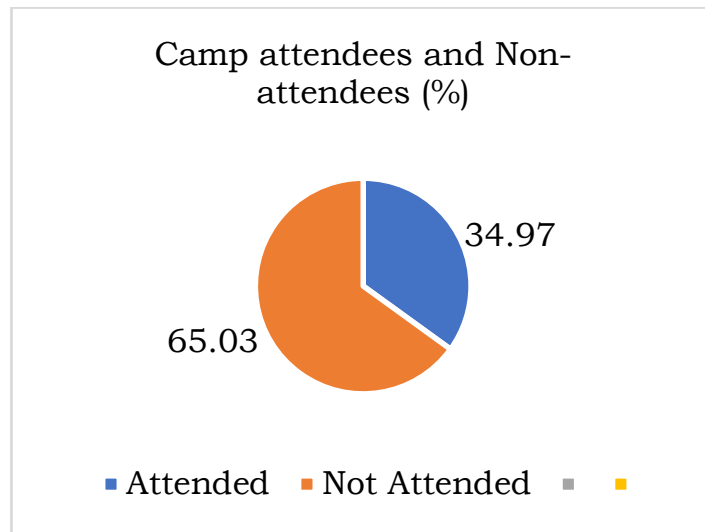


Figure 8: Camp attendees and Non-attendees

According to Figure 8, 34.97% of the respondents attended camps and 65.03% have not attended the camp. There were 50 scouts who have attended camps whereas 93 scouts who have not attended any camps.

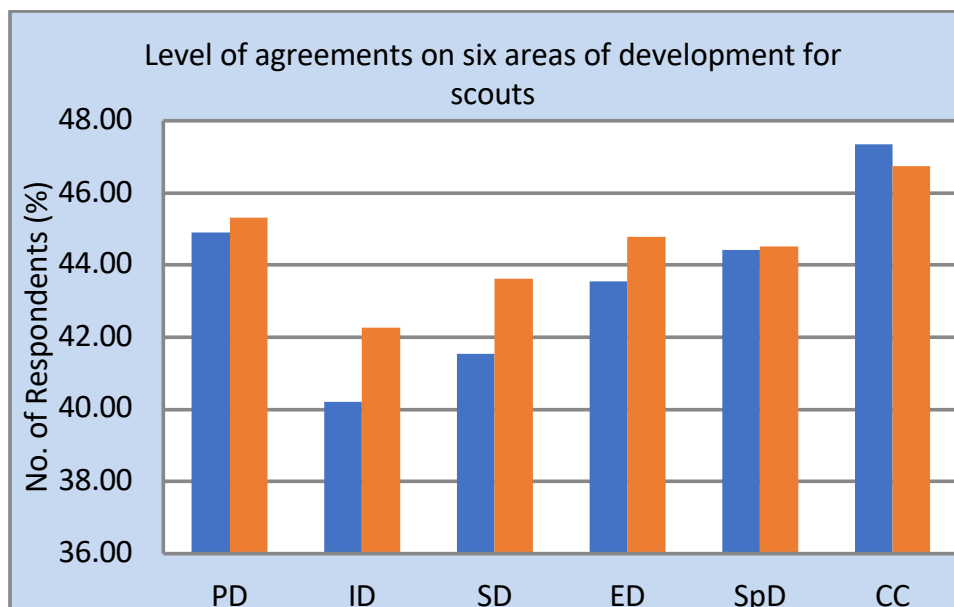


Figure 9: Level of agreements on six areas of development for scouts (Nachung and Nazhoen)

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Level of agreements in the six different areas of development based on camp-attendance and non- attendance through scouting programmes is shown in Figure 9. Non-camp scouts show higher level of agreements than camp scouts on 5 of 6 areas of development, with the largest group differences in intellectual and social developments. The data (Figure 7) validates that camp has the maximum score on the areas of cultivating citizenship.

### **Discussion**

The existing scout programmes scored highly on cultivating citizenship, with Nachungs and Nazhoens scoring strongly agree (63.19% and 71.43% respectively). Intellectual development has the lowest average score on strongly agree compared to other development domains. The findings indicate that scouts have succeeded in instilling values of loyalty, patriotism, justice and governance. Scouts hold immense love for the King and they are aware about the contributions of the beloved monarchs. It complements the Study.com's (2020) finding that citizenship education provides background knowledge necessary to create an ongoing stream of new citizens participating and engaging with creating a civilized society.

There is a variation in the level of agreement in intellectual development amongst Nachung, Nazhoen and Leaders. This shows that existing youth programmes are inadequate in intellectual development. The result correlates with World Scout Burea's (2017) findings that higher-level thinking is more likely to occur in the brain of a student who is emotionally secure than in the brain of a student who is scared, upset, anxious, or stressed. For intellectual development, Nachung scouts need new programmes to develop emotional skills. If the Nachung scouts have the emotional skills, they will acquire the skills of higher order thinking by developing intellectually. The study shows that intellectual development in particular is comparatively low as compared to the other developmental aspects and the finding is supported by World Scouts Bureau

(2017), which found that people in good moods are better at inductive reasoning and creative problem solving. People with high emotional intelligence are expected to progress more quickly.

Intellectual development is dependent upon learning, and learning itself originates from an emotional base. If the emotional status of a scout is good, then he or she will be in good mood, which will in turn enable creativity, inductive reasoning, and problem solving, which can heighten his or her intellectual capacity.

Amongst the six developmental areas, intellectual development is low for all scouts. Intellectual development has a proportional relationship with the domain of social development. Green (2008) holds that social skills are vital factors that influence positive learning outcomes. We argue that social skills add up to what is known as emotional intelligence, and they are even more important as educators realize that these skills are critical to academic achievement. The scouting programmes henceforth should focus on developing emotional intelligence (EQ) rather than intelligent quotient (IQ) since EI can naturally support cognitive development.

Researchers believe that having healthy relationships with peers (from pre-school up) allows for adjustment to different school settings and challenges. Studies show that children who have a hard time getting along with classmates as early as preschool are more likely to experience later academic difficulties (as cited in SCAN, 2020).

Although, the paper rules out the need for intellectual development, it can be deduced that the scouts need the support in social development. As they lack social skills, they are not able to understand concepts, follow procedures correctly and infer fundamentals and applications. It is due to the lack of social skills such as effective communication and

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interpersonal skills they delay peer bonding and team efficiency which is a major drawback for team exploration and discovery. The decrease in intellectual development as compared to the other five developmental areas can also be attributed to the weakness in physical development. The findings do not confirm high achievement in physical development area. Intellectual development and physical development have direct correlation. If there was a positive impact of physical development in the scouts, they should be developing reflexes, be more sensible, hold a high degree of perception and be equipped with learning skills as asserted by Tulsa Educare (2014). The scouts lack the learning skills such as data analysis, inferring and exploration.

We affirm that the vitality of physical activity for a child's development since it lays the foundation for a healthy and active life. The ability to be physically active influences social and mental well-being, and it is linked to children school performance. Not only does regular physical activity help children build and maintain a healthy lifestyle, it is also imperative to their overall well-being and brain development. Physical development as mentioned above supports cognitive growth and development. If the scouts are supported effectively with regular physical activities to maintain a healthy life style, the scouts will become prudent intellects.

The research findings are in line with the findings of Center for Research in Early Childhood (CREC, 2013). The scouts in Thimphu Dzongkhag depicts both fine and gross motor skills, they display appropriate physical coordination, control and movements. The scouts are aware of the importance of physical activity and understands healthy choices in relation to food they consume.

On the contrary, in the physical domain, the scouts were found to lack the understanding on good personal habits and avoiding abuse on one's body (Table 1.1). The finding on the two items in physical development area is worth noting. The

staggering result on not being able to interpret whether they practiced good personal habits and the scouts being deficient on perceiving whether they avoided abusing their own body, can be attributed to their low intellectual ability. The developmental areas are interdependent and the deficiency in a developmental area can affect the personal growth in the other domain.

The respondents are not able to understand the functioning of one's own body. They are not able to conceptualize healthy life style and apply the benefits in their daily life. The findings indicate the developmental support in the intellectual area. A scout with intellectual abilities would be aware about the good personal practices one must habituate for better personal growth. He/she would be sensible to differentiate between abuse and use.

An individual equipped with intellectual skills would have a better understanding about one's own body and its functions, and to adapt to a healthy lifestyle. Therefore, this study recommends the need to focus on enriching good personal habits and taking care of oneself and strengthen physical development in scouts.

### **Recommendations**

From the findings, following recommendations have been made:

1. Overall, the existing scouting programmes in the Dzongkhag has high level of agreement on six areas of development.
2. There should be more intellectual development programmes for both Nachung and Nazhoen scouts.
3. In physical development, both Nachung and Nazhoen scouts need programmes on good personal habits and avoiding the abuse of one's body.
4. In intellectual development, both Nachung and Nazhoen scouts need programmes on exploring,

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interpreting data, planning and organizing ideas clearly.

5. In social development, both Nachung and Nazhoen scouts need programmes that will help them to translate promise and law to real life situation, maintain meaningful relationship with diverse community.
6. In emotional development, both Nachung and Nazhoen scouts requires programmes to help them express their emotions to others.
7. In spiritual development, both Nachung and Nazhoen scouts need more religious programmes.
8. In cultivating citizenship, Nachung Scouts requires sessions on significance and contributions made by the Monarchs in Bhutan.

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## **Attitude of Students of Gedu College of Business Studies Towards Reading Dzongkha**

*Chencho Wangchuk<sup>+</sup>*

### **Abstract**

*This study examined the attitude of Gedu College of Business Studies towards reading Dzongkha, their reading choice between Dzongkha and English, and attitudinal difference between the two groups. Descriptive analysis of the survey responses found respondents' attitude positive towards reading Dzongkha. No statistically significant attitudinal difference was observed between the two groups, however. In contrast to their positive attitude towards reading Dzongkha, majority of the respondents' preferred choice of reading was English owing to reasons such as access to and availability of reading materials, employability, and its widespread usage as a lingua franca. The mismatch observed between attitude and reality implies a need to increase both accessibility and availability of Dzongkha reading resources in school libraries. One way to fulfil them could be reintroduction of teaching subjects such as environmental studies and Bhutan history in Dzongkha. Enforcing a requirement to produce Dzongkha proficiency test results, like the ones in English, for any scholarship and employment purposes could possibly increase usage and assist in promoting Dzongkha as the national language. Otherwise, excessive usage of and reliance on English may result in loss of Bhutan's ethno-linguistic and socio-cultural attributes which are symbolisms of her sovereignty.*

**Keywords:** College students; attitude towards reading Dzongkha; Dzongkha language.

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## **Introduction**

Dzongkha, the national language of Bhutan, is one of 19 languages spoken in Bhutan (Phuntsho, 2013; Tashi, 2003; van Driem, 1994, 2003). Of these languages, only Dzongkha which is native to Bhutan existed in both spoken and written forms. Except Lhotsampakha (Nepali) and English which belong to the Indo-European family, all other languages spoken in Bhutan belong to the Tibeto-Burman language family (van Driem, 1999). Because of its nativity, socio-cultural significance, and existence in both spoken and written forms, Third Majesty Jigme Dorji Wangchuck declared Dzongkha as the official language of Bhutan in 1961 (van Driem, 1994) although, according to Dzongkha Development Commission [DDC] (2013), it has been the official language in all district headquarters since the 17th century. As such, it was officially announced as one of the national identities of Bhutan in 1971 at the time of her admission to the United Nations Organizations (DDC, 2013; Tashi, 2003). Today, as it is widely spoken among all Bhutanese irrespective of their social, educational, or economic backgrounds, it is spoken as a lingua franca whenever people from different linguistic backgrounds meet. In addition to English, it is used as a medium of communication in all formal or informal settings.

However, with the expansion of modern English medium education in the country and use of English for trade, business, education, technology, recreation, and diplomacy, Dzongkha is losing its footing mostly among youths and educated adults. Concerned with such a situation, the 45th National Assembly passed a resolution that required all official correspondences, circulars, notifications, and rules and regulations be written in Dzongkha (National Assembly of Bhutan, 1976). Further, Fourth Majesty issued two decrees in 1988 and 1993 which commanded the cabinet, senior bureaucrats, and all other public officials to use and promote Dzongkha as a main medium of communication. These edicts declared national language as one of the important identities of a sovereign country and, therefore, accentuate its promotion

in schools through education. Also constitutionally, besides Section 8 of Act 1 and Section 1 of Act 4, Section 3(c) of Article 6 of the *Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan 2008* specifically mandates all Bhutanese citizens “Be able to speak and write Dzongkha” (Parliament of Bhutan, 2008, p. 12). Despite these tall orders, most Bhutanese still take pride in speaking English more than Dzongkha even when the audiences are all Bhutanese.

Wangchuk, Dorji, Lhadon & Jamtsho (2013) examined the usage of Dzongkha in 4073 signboards of Thimphu municipality. From that total, they observed 42% (N=1698) of the signboards contained mistakes in Dzongkha against 25% (N=1039) which had no mistakes. Thirty three percent (N=1336) of those signboards, on the other hand, were written only in English. Such irregularities in those public displays suggest carelessness, incompetency, or ignorance. Norbu and Namgyel (2019) also noted extensive use of English in official platforms while disseminating information. For example, from a total of 308,277 correspondences, DDC (n.d.) found only about 10% (30,640) of them written in Dzongkha against around 90% (277,013) of them were written in English. Less than one percent (i.e., 624) of them were written in both English and Dzongkha. Even in schools, with the exception of Dzongkha, all other subjects including history are taught and studied in English. These evidences show increasing influence of English in public, administrative, and educational spheres. This trend is worrisome for Bhutan since Dzongkha is the backbone of all her ethno-linguistic and socio-cultural attributes of her sovereignty. More so that Dzongkha has strong relation with her religious and social values, traditions, and cultures. Although van Driem (1999) distinguishes language and culture as independent entities, he, however, warns that the death of a language leads to loss of socio-cultural aspects (van Driem, 2013) and so a nation’s unique identity that distinguishes it from others.

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Still, despite studying Dzongkha as a mandatory subject from pre-primary through grade 12, fewer students choose Dzongkha as a major field of study in colleges or read Dzongkha books. For example, from a total of 11,496 students studying in 12 in-country colleges in 2020, only 453 (293 males and 160 females) were studying master, post-graduate, or bachelor degrees in Dzongkha while 348 (140 males and 208 females) were enrolled in double degree programmes with one of them in Dzongkha. A total of 991 (397 males and 594 females) were admitted in bilingual diploma and bachelor degree programmes. The remaining 9,704 students were enrolled in different English-medium programmes in these colleges (Royal University of Bhutan [RUB], 2020). Perhaps, this is an indication of numerous advantages English-medium tertiary programmes offer over those Dzongkha-medium programmes. Similarly, a total of 375 participants participated in *10 pages a day reading journey* between 25th November and 11th December, 2020. In this campaign, they were obligated to read only those books which were authored by Bhutanese. Of the total participants, 320 (85.3%) of them have read English books while 55 (14.7%) of them have read books written in Dzongkha (10 Pages a Day Reading Journey, 2020). Both these evidences suggest English as a preferred choice of language among Bhutanese for education, writing, and publication.

Although Dzongkha Development Commission, the premier governmental agency, is tasked with the promotion of Dzongkha, it alone cannot fulfil its objective to “Enhance Dzongkha usage in public service delivery” (Norbu & Namgyel, 2019, p. 236) unless the general public take this same responsibility. One group that is critical in this endeavour is students and their attitude towards Dzongkha. Their attitude towards Dzongkha would either facilitate its promotion or decline. The latter, as warned by Dorjee (2007) and van Driem (2013), would result in the loss of native socio-cultural identities. This study, therefore, surveyed college students’ attitude towards reading Dzongkha as “emotional response to reading ... is the primary reason most readers read, and probably the primary reason most non-readers do not read”

(Smith, 1988, p. 177). Also, it investigated respondents' preferred choice of reading between English and Dzongkha and relationship between gender and attitude towards reading Dzongkha. Findings from this study would inform the Dzongkha Development Commission and the Ministry of Education to introduce additional curricula including reintroduction of teaching of history of Bhutan in Dzongkha so that the students get ample opportunities to read more Dzongkha texts. It would also advise schools to initiate programmes that would encourage extensive use of Dzongkha among students and train them to "... participate meaningfully [and confidently] in a knowledge-based society" (REC, 2012, p. 38).

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the attitude of the students of a college towards reading Dzongkha?
2. From the reading materials written in English and Dzongkha, which one is a preferred choice of language for reading among the college students?
3. Is there a difference in attitude towards reading Dzongkha between males and females?

### **Research Methodology**

#### **Research Design**

To fulfil the research objectives, this study adopted a cross sectional survey design. It is one of the two survey designs used to select individuals at a particular given time unlike in longitudinal survey (Creswell, 2012; Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012; Stockemer, 2019).

#### **Respondents**

The population for this study was 539 freshmen pursuing bachelor's degree at Gedu College of Business Studies, the Royal University of Bhutan. Of this total, 24 of them refused to

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respond to the questionnaire. The main reason for selecting this cohort as respondents for this current study was that they to study Dzongkha module, *Dzongkha for communication* (Dzo101) in their first semester after which no Dzongkha module is offered as business students. The other secondary reason was that this cohort's attitude towards reading Dzongkha could be surveyed again in their second and final years at the college as a longitudinal survey. It would then be possible to observe this cohort's attitudinal reading trend towards Dzongkha over a three-year period. Of the total 515 responses received, 277 (53.8%) of them were females while 238 (46.2%) of them were males.

### **Data Collection Tool**

The survey questionnaire used in this study was adapted from McKenna and Kear (1990). It comprised of 20 items, 10 items each for recreational and academic reading. In all these items the term Dzongkha was inserted as it intended to examine attitude of college students towards reading Dzongkha.

In addition, the researcher added three additional questions. The first question asked their choice between Dzongkha and English. The other questions demanded reasons for choosing books written in either of them. Data were collected by e-mail since the in-person data collection was not possible due to Covid-19 pandemic.

### **Data Analysis**

Responses to the survey questionnaire were analysed by using SPSS version 25. Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were used to analyse the respondents' attitude towards reading academic and recreational books written in Dzongkha. Attitudinal variations among the respondents were interpreted as per the interpretation of scale values shown in Table 1. An independent *t*-test was also done to examine attitudinal variations between males and females.

Table 1 Interpretation of the Scale Values

Scale	Range	Attitude
4	3.26-4.00	Very Positive
3	2.51-3.25	Positive
2	1.76-2.50	Negative
1	1.00-1.75	Very Negative

Further, responses to two additional open-ended questions were analysed using summative content analysis technique. It is a technique that quantifies occurrences of words or content in those responses (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

## **Results and Discussion**

This section presents the results of the analyses of data collected from undergraduates pursuing bachelor's degree in business at a constituent college of the Royal University of Bhutan.

### **Respondents' Attitude towards Reading Dzongkha Books**

Table 2 shows the respondents' attitude towards reading books written in Dzongkha. It answers the first question: *What is the attitude of the students of a college towards reading Dzongkha?* As per the interpretation of the scale values shown in Table 1, the respondents' overall attitude towards reading books written in Dzongkha was *positive* as the mean value of respondents' attitude towards reading books written in Dzongkha fall between the range of 2.51 to 3.25. In other words, the respondents felt *little happy* when reading Dzongkha books. This finding is consistent with the findings of DDC (2011), Namgyel (2003), and Tenzin (2003).

Table 2: Respondents' Attitude towards Reading Dzongkha Books

Reading Attitude	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Academic	515	2.97	0.62
Recreational	515	2.91	0.63
Total	515	2.94	0.62

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Specifically, from the two types of reading attitudes, the respondents' attitude was found slightly more inclined towards academic reading ( $M=2.97$ ,  $SD=0.62$ ) than recreational reading ( $M=2.91$ ,  $SD=0.63$ ). This means the Bhutanese college students preferred reading more of academic books written in Dzongkha than those Dzongkha books written for recreational purpose. As evident in Bhutan Council for School Examinations and Assessment [BCSEA] (2016), this finding suggests that they read those Dzongkha academic books which proved relevant in passing Dzongkha examinations. It also implies no or little access to recreational Dzongkha reading materials (see 10 Pages a Day Reading Journey, 2020) as most Bhutanese authors publish their writings in English for two purposes, to gain widespread readership and to generate additional incomes from the sales. Unless issues of accessibility and availability of Dzongkha reading materials are addressed, many Bhutanese students, as shown in Table 5, are likely to choose English over Dzongkha. As a result of no or limited Dzongkha reading, they would continuously find difficulty in acquiring Dzongkha language skills (BCSEA, 2016; DDC, 2011).

### **Respondents' Attitude towards Academic Reading in Dzongkha**

Table 3 presents the respondents' attitude towards academic reading in Dzongkha. All 10 items of academic reading fall between 2.51 to 3.25 as per the interpretation of the scale values shown in Table 1, which means the respondents' attitude towards the academic reading items was *positive*. In other words, the respondents were *little happy* doing these academic activities.

Table 3 Respondents' Attitude towards Academic Reading

Academic Reading Items	N	M	SD
How do you feel about Dzongkha stories you read in reading class?	515	3.25	0.77
How do you feel about using a Dzongkha dictionary?	515	3.14	0.85
How do you feel about learning from a Dzongkha book?	515	3.09	0.81
How do you feel when you read out loud in Dzongkha class?	515	2.99	0.89
How do you feel about reading Dzongkha books in school?	515	2.98	0.77
How do you feel when it is time for reading a Dzongkha book in class?	515	2.93	0.81
How do you feel about reading your Dzongkha school book?	515	2.90	0.77
How do you feel when a teacher asks you questions about what you read in Dzongkha?	515	2.86	0.80
How do you feel about taking a Dzongkha reading test?	515	2.82	0.87
How do you feel reading Dzongkha workbook pages and worksheets?	515	2.71	0.73
Total	515	2.97	0.81

Among the items was the item – ‘How do you feel about Dzongkha stories you read in reading class?’ ranked first (M=3.25) while the item ‘How do you feel reading Dzongkha workbook pages and worksheets?’ received the lowest rating (M=2.71). However, they must be interpreted cautiously as there were differences in standard deviations between the items. For example, the SD (0.77) of the item – ‘How do you feel about Dzongkha stories you read in reading class?’ whose mean was the highest - was higher than that of ‘How do you feel reading Dzongkha workbook pages and worksheets?’ whose SD (0.73) was the lowest. In other words, agreement towards the items which received higher ratings was more spread out than those items which received lower ratings.

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### Respondents' Attitude Towards Recreational Reading in Dzongkha

As can be seen in Table 4, ratings for all ten items fall between 2.51 to 3.25 as per Table 1, which means the respondents were *little happy* doing these activities. In other words, the respondents' attitude was *positive* towards these items.

Table 4 Respondents' Attitude towards Recreational Reading

Recreational Reading Items	N	M	SD
How do you feel about reading a Dzongkha book for fun at home?	515	3.19	0.83
How do you feel about reading different kinds of Dzongkha books?	515	3.09	0.78
How do you feel about getting a Dzongkha book for a present?	515	3.02	0.90
How do you feel when you read a Dzongkha book in school during free time?	515	3.00	0.79
How do you feel about spending free time reading a Dzongkha book?	515	2.92	0.80
How do you feel about starting a new book written in Dzongkha?	515	2.90	0.89
How do you feel reading a Dzongkha book during summer vacation?	515	2.87	0.80
How do you feel when you read a Dzongkha book on a rainy Saturday?	515	2.83	0.80
How do you feel about buying a Dzongkha book from a bookstore?	515	2.75	0.84
How do you feel about reading a Dzongkha book instead of playing?	515	2.53	0.89
Total	515	2.91	0.83

Of these items, 'How do you feel about reading a Dzongkha book for fun at home?' received the highest rating (M=3.19, SD= 0.83) and the item which received the lowest rating was How do you feel about reading a Dzongkha book instead of playing? (M=2.53, SD= 0.89). However, as there were variations in respondents' opinions, they may need careful interpretation. For example, the SD of the highest ranked item was higher than the item which received the third least rating.

### Choice between books written in Dzongkha and English

Table 5 illustrates the respondents' choice between reading materials written in Dzongkha and English, and it answers the second question: *From the reading materials written in English and Dzongkha, which one is a preferred choice of language for reading among the college students?*

Table 5 Choice Between Books Written in Dzongkha and English

Language	N	Percent
Dzongkha	71	13.8
English	444	86.2
Total	515	100

Interestingly, despite their *positive* attitude towards reading books written in Dzongkha (see Table 2), most respondents preferred reading English books more than those books written in Dzongkha. As can be seen in the table above, 444 respondents, which is 86.2% of the total respondents, chose English over Dzongkha whereas, only 71, which is 13.8% of 515 freshmen, opted Dzongkha over English. This finding therefore confirms widespread usage of English (DDC, n.d.; 10 Pages a Day Reading Journey, 2020; Wangchuk, Dorji, Lhadon, & Jamtsho, 2013) among Bhutanese.

Content analyses of their responses to question *If you choose English, then, state reason(s) for not reading books written in Dzongkha* offer three insightful reasons. First, most respondents label Dzongkha as a difficult subject owing to its *unique* script, spelling and grammar despite its linguistic similarities to their first language. Another is its fewer employability scopes in either public or private sectors without an acceptable proficiency in English. Lastly, English language proficiency has a multitude of advantages over Dzongkha in business, education, employment, and diplomacy. These reasons substantiate the findings of Dorjee (2014) who established inadequate Dzongkha references and reading materials and limited terminologies for scientific and technical subjects, and extensive promotion of English in school

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campuses as reasons why English has become a preferred language in schools. If this corroboration is any indication, then, Dzongkha is losing its status as the national language of Bhutan and other meanings associated with it.

Yet, as in Tenzin (2003), 71 responses (13.8%) to question: *If you choose Dzongkha, then, state reason(s) for not reading books written in English* revealed two reasons why they chose Dzongkha over English. First, they identified themselves as responsible individuals who would use and promote Dzongkha as the national language. The other one was their understanding of its relational role in preserving and promoting art and humanities, language and literature, songs and dances, and religion and culture, for instance. These reasons affirm the findings of DDC (2011). In spite of these reasons, BCSEA (2016), on the other hand, found nearly 32% of grade 10 students not being able to read Dzongkha at all.

Like these respondents, many other college students who major in humanities, English language, science, and engineering, for instance, have no or little exposure to Dzongkha in academic setting (see RUB, 2020). It may be due to this academic detachment that most Bhutanese seemingly acknowledge acquisition of Dzongkha language skills more difficult than those of English. This attitude has serious implications for preserving and promoting native socio-cultural identities if this obsession for English language continues (see Dorjee 2007; van Driem, 2013).

### **Relationship between Gender and Reading Dzongkha Books**

As shown in Tables 6(a) and Table 6 (b) (see at the end of the paper), an independent *t*-test was conducted to compare attitudinal reading scores between males and females. It answers the third question: *Is there a difference in attitude towards reading Dzongkha between males and females?*

As the *p* value for recreational reading score between the genders was above the required cut off of .05 (i.e.,  $p = .05 > 0.783$ ), there was no significant difference between the two groups. Similarly, the sig. value for academic reading between males and females was larger than .05 (i.e.,  $p = .05 > 0.133$ ) indicating no significant difference between the two groups either. In brief, as the *p* values in both the reading scores were above .05, there was not statistically significant attitudinal difference towards reading Dzongkha between males and females (See Table 6 at the end of this paper).

Table 6(a): Relationship between gender and reading Dzongkha books

Reading	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Recreational Reading _ Score	Male	238	2.90	0.70	0.05
	Female	277	2.92	0.56	0.03
Academic Reading _ Score	Male	238	2.98	0.68	0.04
	Female	277	2.95	0.57	0.03

### **Recommendations**

Generally, as respondents' attitude towards reading was positive, both schools and colleges may introduce additional Dzongkha subjects or Dzongkha modules to increase student-subject contact time in formal settings. Particularly, as language acquisition is quicker during children's formative years, the ministry may reintroduce teaching of subjects such as environmental studies and Bhutan history in Dzongkha in schools. Other Dzongkha literary texts such as aphorism (*legs bshad*) and hagiography (*rnam thar*) may be reintroduced to promote reading of Bhutanese literature. Further, as most Bhutanese authors appear to publish their writings in English, the relevant governmental agencies could support their publications in Dzongkha so that there are more Dzongkha materials available for reading.

As the respondents' choice for English over Dzongkha seemed to be because of social status, employment, and educational

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opportunities, the stakeholders may frame policies that mandate a requirement of a standard proficiency in Dzongkha. Perhaps, they may request applicants to produce Dzongkha proficiency test results, like those language testing systems in English, for any scholarship or employment purposes. Otherwise, because of excessive use of English as an administrative language and impacts its usage has on other native ethno-linguistic and socio-cultural aspects, Bhutan may lose her languages and other socio-cultural identities which are symbolism of her sovereignty.

### **Conclusion**

Despite showing positive attitude towards reading materials or books written in Dzongkha, most respondents preferred English over Dzongkha owing to the former's advantage in the areas of education, business, employment, and diplomacy. Other reasons include difficulty associated with acquisition of Dzongkha language skills and higher employability benefit English has over Dzongkha. As youths such as these respondents are detrimental in preserving and promoting Dzongkha, they need enough training in acquisition of its skills especially during their formative years so that other associated socio-cultural meanings are naturally preserved. Otherwise, slow deterioration and eventual loss of it as a result of acculturation and linguistic imperialism would bring changes in ethno-linguistic and socio-cultural features.

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Table 6(b): Relationship between gender and reading Dzongkha books

Independent Samples Test		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Recreational Reading Score	Equal variances assumed	10.500	0.001	-0.280	513	0.779	-0.016	0.055	-0.124	0.093
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.276	453.051	0.783	-0.016	0.056	-0.126	0.095
Academic Reading Score	Equal variances assumed	2.265	0.133	0.527	513	0.599	0.029	0.055	-0.079	0.137
	Equal variances not assumed			0.520	464.817	0.603	0.029	0.056	-0.081	0.139