



SHES-RIG PAGES

The Biannual Newsletter of Samtse College of Education

ཤེས་རིག་ རིག་དབང་། ལོ་བསྐྱར་བྱུང་འཕྲོན་གསར་དབང་།



In this issue

Welcome
Learning & Teaching
Campus Life & Experience

Research Initiatives
Events
People Infocus

Body-Mind Harmony
Kalapinka - The voice
Our Alumni

SHES-RIG PAGES

In this issue

Welcome	
Learning & Teaching	01
Campus Life & Experience	11
Research Initiatives	16
Events	21
People Infocus	27
Body-Mind Harmony	35
Kalapinka-The voice	38
Our Alumni	46

Editorial team

Dr. Sonam Rinchen, Dean of Research and Industrial Linkages
Ms Tshering Om Tamang, Lecturer, Department of Arts and Humanities
Education
Mr Dorji S, HoD, Department of Arts and Humanities Education

News Research and Writing Team

Yeshey Choden, MEd English 1st Year (Student Coordinator)
Yeshey Seldon, MEd English 1st Year
Pema Deki, MEd English 1st Year
Deki Choden Yezer, PgDCCP 1st Year
Kinley Wangmo, PgDCCP 1st Year
Phuntsho Choden Tenzing, BA in Social Work 4th Year
Tenzee Tshokie Tobgye, BA in Social Work 4th Year
Tandin Selden, BA in Social Work 3rd Year
Dechen Tshomo, BA in Social Work 3rd Year
Tshering Lhaden, BA in Social Work 3rd Year

Welcome



Dear Reader,

Samtse College of Education (SCE) is pleased to present to you the 2022, Spring edition of SHES-RIG PAGES, The Biannual Newsletter of SCE.

SCE was established and inaugurated on 29th May, 1968 as a Teacher Training Institute (TTI) by our beloved Late His Majesty Druk Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuck. The launching of this premier teacher education institution then marked a significant epoch and milestone in Bhutan's history of educational development and more particularly, in the history of teacher preparation. From a fledgling Institute that initially ran a primary teaching certificate programme with a meagre enrollment of some 41 students only, SCE today has close to seven hundred students including both full-time pre-service and in-service teacher candidates.

In the last 54 years of teacher education, SCE has educated close to almost two-thirds of the overall teaching population in the country. In fulfilling our mandate of educating teachers for the Bhutanese school system, we consciously seek inspiration in the wish and trust the founding Father of this College had entrusted in producing not only teachers that are professionally competent and dedicated but also immersed in our rich culture and heritage so that these timeless values can be transmitted to our younger generation.

As a teacher education college, SCE is committed to working with uncompromising commitment in crafting intelligent measures and interventions to transform the way we prepare teachers for 21st century education. We consciously strive to challenge our own existing practices to expand our horizons of learning and professional practice. Every teacher educator in the College is prepared to break away from the comfort zones that have chained them to the old knowledge and tools that no longer serve the purpose of preparing teachers for the 21st century.

The last two years with the COVID pandemic have been a tumultuous time where the usual teaching and learning in the College were disrupted on many occasions. Despite the disruptions and challenges, the COVID pandemic has also helped many of our teacher educators to push their usual boundaries to make their virtual lessons more interactive, engaging, and real-time. The promise technology offers in teaching and learning was optimally harnessed through the use of multiple online tools in VLE, a virtual learning environment that the colleges of RUB have been using for over a decade.

SHES-RIG PAGES is a special tribute to the most sacred gift and precious legacy our beloved Late His Majesty has left for the education system in the country. This newsletter provides a snapshot of the variety of activities the College initiates as part of learning and teaching; research and other events; guest lectures by academics, scholars, and eminent personalities; student experiences of campus life; creative literary compositions; and conversation with distinguished alumnus.

We hope you will find this edition of the Newsletter interesting and read-worthy. The e-copy of the same can be accessed at www.sce.edu.bt.

With warmest wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Rinchin Dorji".

(Rinchin Dorji, PhD)
President

SHES-RIG PAGES

© Spring 2022 Samtse College of Education. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored, or disseminated in any form, or by any means, without prior written permission from Samtse College of Education, Royal University of Bhutan, to whom all requests to reproduce material should be directed in writing.

BA in Social Work Students Attend First Aid Training

The third-year students of Bachelors of Arts in Social Work (BA in Social Work) attended training on basic first aid techniques at the college auditorium on 21st May 2022. The training was conducted by health officials from the Samtse District Hospital. The two-hour training was part of the module on Disaster Risk Reduction and Management.

The training covered fundamental topics such as how to perform cardio-pulmonary resuscitation on adults and children, dealing with fractures, wounds, bleeding, and choking. The training also demonstrated how to handle casualties from burns, fractures and snakebites.

Health officer highlighted the misconceptions of handling snakebites.

He expressed that many people tend to tie the bitten part to stop the circulation of venom to other parts of the body. He said that this practice would worsen the injury since it would completely stop blood circulation in the affected areas.

For Sherab Zangmo, a student of BA in Social Work, it was the first time she attended such a training after joining the college. This was the second practical in the module since they had attended the basic fire safety demonstration and practice carried out by the officials of the Royal Bhutan Police earlier that year. Sherab said, that the first aid session helped her connect theories and knowledge learned in the classroom to a real-world situation.



Health official demonstrating how to perform cardio-pulmonary resuscitation on adults and children

BA in Social Work Students Attends Civil Society Organisations Workshop



Dr. Will Parks sharing his experience with BA in Social Work students during his visit to Samtse in June 2022

A three-day Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) workshop was conducted from 6-8th June, 2022 at the Samtse College of Education by representatives from different CSOs. The workshop was attended by students of Bachelor of Arts in Social Work Year III and Year IV along with four lecturers.

Dr. Will Parks, a representative of UNICEF, Bhutan along with 12 CSOs representatives facilitated the workshop. The training was conducted to familiarise the students with the operation of CSOs. It is expected to help the students choose their own area of interest for their internship during the Autumn Semester 2022.

According to Tshering Dolkar, a student, the workshop enhanced her knowledge and understanding of the different CSOs. She is looking forward to working under the CSOs of her choice.

Furthermore, Pemba Tshering, a student, said that the three-day workshop was informative and enriched his understanding of CSOs. He expects to gain real-life exposure and hands-on practice in the real working world during his internship.

UNICEF has always been supportive of the BA in Social Work programme, and the students have been receiving tremendous support from UNICEF right from the inception of the programme.



Dr. Wills Park with representatives from Civil Society Organisations and BA in Social Work students

College Library Gets a New Look

The College Library got a major facelift to enhance academic life and experience of students and faculty at the college. The execution of an artistic, aesthetic, and creative work of library refurbishment began in June 2021 and completed towards the end of December 2022. The library developed a learning environment that is ideal for library users. The library has changed drastically from being a modest place to an attractive, exciting, and modern learning experience. Many college students expressed their appreciation and sense of satisfaction by glancing at the new library design, incredible interior decoration, and comfortable library furniture.



Newspaper and magazine reading space



Reading and discussion space for the students

With the new design, library users could avail the following facilities in the library:

- study space with suitable and customised library furniture with artistic and creative design;
- comfortable sofa in the library foyer which has 24 seating capacity;
- newspaper and magazine reading space with comfortable sofa;
- the Bodhisattva room for group activities or quiet study located on the library's first floor;
- the Manjushri room for a silent and quiet space for study/reading, suitable and ideal for personal contemplation, meditation, or reflection located on the library's first floor;
- open learning space located on the library's first floor with an attractive wave-designed interior office sofa and, strong and sturdy display racks;
- study area with Wifi and AC facility to suit independent study.



Display shelf for latest and popular books

Learning & Teaching

SHES-RIG PAGES

Spring 2022

This is the sole initiatives of the College President, Dr. Rinchen Dorji, who is a true academician and an ardent reader. He believes that a library is the life blood of any academic institution like SCE and investing in library would keep academic life in the college vibrant and alive. He always keep students' welfare at the top of his agenda and refurbishing library is one testimony to this. He was involved in the renovation exercise overseeing the work throughout the renovation period.



Manjushri hall for a silent study, personal contemplation, meditation, or reflection located on the library's first floor

Royal Audit Authority Sensitises SCE Staff and Students

Auditor General, Dasho Tashi sensitised the College staff and students on mandates of the Royal Audit Authority (RAA), fraud triangle and common lapses observed by the RAA on 6th June 2022.

Dasho Tashi began the sensitisation with the statement, “no one is born corrupt, it is the circumstances and situations that drag a person to become corrupt.” In the two-hour talk, Dasho shared the history of RAA, common audit observations, placing accountability and the disciplinary actions to be taken by the concerned agencies. He also said, amongst SAARC countries, Bhutan is the least corrupt country, however, in the world, the ranking of

Bhutan is 25th and all must strive hard to bring the ranking to a single digit. Dasho mentioned that findings keep repeating despite auditing and accountability measure. He also said leadership play an important role in reducing audit issues in any agency. “One of the ways to reduce audit observations is by bringing behavioural changes in people,” Dasho said. To bring this behavioural change, RAA has begun instituting integrity clubs in schools and colleges.

AG was accompanied by Mr Minjur Dorji, Deputy Auditor General and Mr Penjor, Assistant Auditor General.



Dasho Tashi, Auditor General, Royal Audit Authority speaking to the staff and students of SCE

Rural Social Innovation Practice: An Engrossing Experience

As a very young child, I was fascinated with people and wanted to make a difference in other people's lives, even if it was in a very small way. I remember wanting to be a teacher one day, a doctor the next, and a lawyer some other days because I believed these professions would help me bring change in others' lives. However, I am blessed to now have gotten the opportunity to study social work. While it is a journey to make my dreams come true, the rural practicum in the Autumn Semester of the year 2021, has added to the spark. As part of my degree in BA in Social Work, I had a semester-long field attachment in a village from August to November 2021. Four of my friends and I were placed at Sengdhyen, a village that is 3-hours drive away from Samtse Dzongkhag. The field practicum was a reality check; a real-life experiment by myself on everything I have learned in my programme so far. It was also to understand the lives, challenges of the villagers and social workers' role in the rural communities that may need help.

This placement of ours has proven to be the best experience to date. This was something new to me; it was neither monotonous teaching-learning in the class nor PowerPoint presentations. While I was looking forward to the placement, I was just as worried. Considering I have been born and brought up in a town, I was not sure if I would do well in the village. The most-feared happened. It was difficult to adjust; the bathroom did not have a sink and neither did the kitchen. We had to go outside to fetch water while cooking. I realised that was just a part of rural life. However, the place was serene and peaceful.

As days passed by, I saw myself enjoying the cool breeze, the green environment, and the fresh air to breathe. The people were very accepting and kind. It was one of the important reasons I could adapt easily.

While the people were nice to us, initially it was difficult to have effective conversation due to the language barrier. My friends and I were not fluent in Lhotshamkha, and the people there did not speak Dzongkha. However, I became sufficiently fluent as time passed. This made me realise that we should not neglect other dialects just because we do not originate from there. Knowing their dialects and culture is one way to bring us closer as citizens of one country. The other challenge was walking. I was not used to hiking much so I could barely walk long distances. The steep slopes in Sengdhyen were extremely challenging for me. I had to take multiple rests and also felt guilty slowing down my group's pace. Even so, with practice, I got better at walking and now I am much faster than I initially was. As we were walking to the villages, I could notice the difference between the lifestyle of the Lhotshams and the Lhops. The village had disorganised houses and unattended children. This made me realise that I was indeed very lucky to have had a happy childhood with caring parents. The weather conditions were not very favourable too for the farmers when we first went there. There were heavy rainfalls, and frequent thunder and lightning destroying the crops. Seeing the effort and hard work that goes into putting the rice before us on our tables, I pledged to never take these things for granted. Since then, I have become more appreciative of everything around me.

Learning & Teaching

Overall, I believe that the field practicum has helped me showcase my capabilities and further strengthened them. Being exposed to an entirely different environment I was not familiar to has enabled me to exercise my skills and further develop on these skills and values through these experiences. In the past, I used to volunteer at various youth agencies and groups with hopes to change myself and those around me.



The group interviewing locals as a part of social research

However, now I am happy to be equipping myself to be in a profession where I can transform my dreams into reality, and the fieldwork has already provided me with a wonderful insight into the person I am becoming. I am grateful to have been a part of this field practicum, and I look forward to successfully implementing all the ideas, lessons, skills and values I have learned in my career in the future. Most of all, through all these reflections and realisations, I can confidently say that I am now an entirely new person than I was five years ago.



The group with the facilitator and students at Sengdhyen Early Childhood Care and Development



The group assisting Gewog RNR (Renewable Natural Resources) officials in teaching climate-smart agriculture techniques to the villagers

College Students Attend Journalism Training



Participants of the basic journalism training at the Samtse College of Education

A two-day basic journalism training at the Samtse College of Education (SCE) conducted by the Bhutan Media Foundation concluded on 23rd May 2022. Twenty-five participants, including members of SCE news writing team, literary club, and three staff attended the training.

Mr Needrup Zangpo, the executive director of Bhutan Media Foundation, and the team conducted the training. SCE is among the five RUB colleges to receive the training. The training is part of the foundation's media literacy for all sections of the population. It is expected to help students produce media content such as newsletters more professionally.

According to Mr Dorji S, a lecturer and focal person for Sherig FM SCE, the student members of the media team are not permanent, so the need for such training every year becomes necessary.

Ngawang Tenzin, one of the participants, said that this training was informative and useful for aspiring writers. 'I learned not just how to write news but also the ethical considerations of reporting,' said Dorji Choden, another participant.

Pema Deki, an MEd I student, keenly interested in writing, said the training had enriched her understanding of journalism, and it would be useful in teaching report writing to students in schools.

The college editorial team comprising the President, Dean of Research and Industrial Linkages, the HoD of Arts and Humanities Education, and the Research Officer hopes to conduct more such training to enhance the quality of news writing and reporting.

Training on Teaching and Learning Digital Content Creation for SCE Staff



Dr. Rinchen Dorji, College President speaking to the participants during the opening session of the College Multimedia Studio

A 12-day training of the trainers on creating and designing digital resources in teaching and learning at the college concluded on 29th June 2022. The training was attended by 10 faculty and two ICT staff. The venue for the training was SCE and was provided by Creative Solutions based in Samtse.

The key session of the training included handling camera and taking pictures, writing script, recording videos, and editing videos and sounds. By the end of the training period, participants were required to come up with a 5 minutes video on the topic that they teach incorporating all the tools learnt during the training.

The opening and closing ceremony was graced by the College President accompanied by Deans and Sector Heads. At the opening ceremony, the President shared that establishing a multimedia studio in the college is historic in many ways because it is the second studio within the Royal University of Bhutan colleges. The President also reminded the participants that technology has the power to drive education forward and this kind of trainings is timely. "Our students are mature enough to observe what

you will model in the technology integration in your class," he added. As a part of the closing ceremony, each participants shared their video clips developed during the training. The participants were awarded with certificate of completion by the guest of honour, College President.

The participants shared that the training was an eye opening experience. Sonam Zangmo, faculty in the Department of Arts and Humanities Education said, "The 12 days of training has been very effective for me both professionally and personally. It has given me a wide exposure to the areas that I have not explored before. Now, I am confident that I will be able to incorporate the knowledge gained through this training in my classroom teaching. I thank College President for the opportunity to attend this training." Similarly Dorji S, Head of Arts and Humanities Education Department expressed, "I wish I could have attended this training some 20 years ago as I had so much passion for it during that time. During the training period, we had so much of fun yet very challenging too. I never thought that it would be so tough. Everyday new things were taught and it was a great learning experience. I wholeheartedly thank our resource person Mr Pema Rinzin for the push and rigour that he has put us through."

Celebrating World Folktales and Fables Week in SCE

On 12th March 2022, Literary Club announced an online reading competition on Facebook. The competition held from 17th -23rd March was in celebration of 'World Folktale and Fables Week.' Folktale and Fable Week, celebrated in the third week of March each year, is dedicated to encouraging and inspiring children and adults alike to explore the multitude of lessons that can be learnt from folktale, fables and myths.

Acknowledging the effects the pandemic has had on the world around us and the numerous technologies that would allow for a lively and innovative spin on the competition, the open competition asked participants of all ages to record themselves reading a folktale and share it on social media. The online format was also a means to encourage literary discourse on a wider level and showcase the power of reading with the theme of "Healing with reading."



Reading folktales is a great way for children to explore different cultures and enhance their literary skills, and the organisers hoped to highlight reading indigenous folktales as a tool to preserve culture. Through the 7-day competition, participants read different Bhutanese folktales. Some readings included internationally popular L. Frank Baum's The Box of Robbers and the Grimm Brother's Snow White and Seven Dwarfs while others choose to look closer to home and read Bhutanese folktales. Bhutanese titles included The Princess with three Breasts by Azhi Kuensang Choden, The Monkey and the Old Couple by Kuenzang Dawa, The Right Thing by Karma Tshering and Exchanging Turquoise For Happiness by Dorji Penjor among others. In addition to reading, some participants shared lessons learnt from their reading while others discussed the stories literary significance.

One of the participants stated that the competition is 'inspiring the youths to read and participate in such competitions and hopes that she can be a part of similar competition in future, while a participant's parents commented that the event was enriching and have given their children opportunity to develop confidence.

The results were based on the numbers of likes on the video post combined with the judges' score. Pema Yetho Seldon of Zilukha Middle Secondary School with her endearing reading of A Bamboo by Kuenzang Choden bagged the first prize, followed by Sonam Wangmo of Kuzhugchen Middle Secondary School and Kinley Yangdon of Kabesa Central School.

Learning Fire Safety Skills and Procedures from Professionals



Dasho Sonam Wangchuk, RBP leading the session

On May 19, 2022, Personnel from the Royal Bhutan Police (RBP), Samtse carried out training on fire safety skills and procedures. The training was attended by third-year students of Bachelors of Arts in Social Work, non-teaching staffs and lecturers. The session started at 1:30 pm with a brief theory class in the college auditorium. Dasho Sonam Wangchuk of RBP gave a brief talk on fire disasters and the challenges faced by the RBP in advocacy and sensitisation of disaster risk reduction due to Covid-19 pandemic.

Dasho encouraged volunteers, students and everyone in the community to learn and be aware of fire safety skills and procedures to deal with fire disasters in the future. The team gave practical demonstration on different types of fire extinguishers such as water tap extinguisher, dry chemical powder extinguisher and CO₂ fire extinguisher and how to use them in case of a fire.

After the theory session, all students and staff gathered in the football ground to watch and participate in the practical demonstration of using fire extinguishers. The RBP team made a fire and asked students to use the extinguishers to douse the fire. It was a wonderful experience and all students, lecturers and non-teaching staffs learnt a lot through the interactive demonstration.

Tshering Zangmo, one of the student participants said, “As a social worker-to-be, we need such skills and knowledge to help and contribute to the communities and individuals during any fire disasters. It was an enriching experience and I look forward for more practical sessions like this in the future.”



Students partaking in the fire drill as a part of training on fire safety skills and procedures

SCE Observes World Environment Day

Student volunteers of Samtse College of Education (SCE) in collaboration with Australia Awards Office conducted a cleaning campaign to mark the World Environment Day on 5th June 2022.

This year Bhutan Australia Alumni Organisation (BAAA) decided to celebrate the day by organising a cleaning campaign in and around the College campus. For SCE, Mr Ramesh Chhetri, the Dean of Student Affairs and the student coordinator of Tarayana club took the lead in the campaign.

“It is a part of nation building in a small way, so instead of asking what a country can do for us, we have to contribute to our country for development,” said Ugyen Tenzin, the Tarayana club coordinator.

Sonam Wangchuk, a volunteer from Bachelor of Arts in Social Work (BASW) III year, said that this cleaning campaign would have helped create awareness for several people. He believes that celebrating the day in this way is a chance to pay back the kindness the earth has been providing to us to date.

The cleaning campaign was another way to create awareness in the community. This highlighted the importance of protecting the environment, starting with our wastes.

Sangay Chezom, another volunteer from Bachelor of Arts in Social Work III Year said that this was a great opportunity for her to be part of a community engagement. She also felt proud of being able to help in cleaning the community along with other friends.

Among other colleges under the Royal University of Bhutan, BAAA had identified SCE as one of the collaborators to celebrate World Environment Day.

BAAA with financial support from the Australia Awards Office sponsored 40 T-shirts and refreshments for the campaign. This year's theme was “Only One Earth – Living Sustainably in Harmony with Nature”



Student volunteers of Samtse College of Education after the cleaning campaign

Y-VIA Members and Bachelor of Arts in Social Work Students Observe Social Forestry Day



Students planting saplings around college campus to mark Social Forestry Day

Y-VIA members in collaboration with the students of BA in Social Work observed Social Forestry Day coinciding with the Coronation Day of our beloved Fourth Druk Gyalpo on 2nd June 2022 by planting fruit tree saplings.

The budget for the saplings was sponsored by the Y-VIA office as a part of their “Nurture a Tree” programme. A total of 14 saplings, comprising 10 litchis, 1 guava and, 3 passion fruits were planted inside the college campus.

According to Sonam Zangmo, a member of Y-VIA “since it is social forestry day and the Coronation Day of His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo, the best I could offer today, as a social worker to be and a Y-VIA member was to dedicate my head, heart, and hand in planting saplings and commemorate the special day.

I felt really happy and satisfied that I could get an opportunity to plant saplings after a long time on this particular auspicious day.

More opportunities such as these must be provided in the future so that most of us will get a chance to show our respect and dedication towards the King and the country.”

A total of 20 volunteers geared up for the plantation and the saplings are to bear fruit after three years. One of the students of MEd sponsored refreshments for the volunteers. The plantation was coordinated by Y-VIA coordinator who is out in field work in collaboration with Y-VIA members in the college.

According to Y-VIA coordinator, Dechen Tshomo of BA in Social Work III, “It was a great initiative lead by Y-VIA and I am overjoyed to be a part of this Nurture a Tree project. I am overwhelmed by the support and cooperation I got from the members and volunteers in the college. I am looking forward to the same support in the future.”

Social Forestry Day is celebrated on 2nd June to commemorate the Coronation of His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo.

B.Ed Fourth-year Science B Lifts Tarayana Football Championship Trophy

The final match of the Tarayana Football League was held on the evening of 27th May 2022 in the college football ground.

The final was played between MEd second-year science and B.Ed fourth-year science B. 13 teams took part in the league which started on 4th May 2022. The college's Tarayana Club organises the league annually.

The finale was intense for both the players and spectators since the match was a draw with one goal each. The winning team was then decided by penalty kick, which was won by fourth-year science B team with 4-2 score.

Tandin Dorji, one of the players of B.Ed fourth-year science B, said, "I found the match interesting. The opponent was tough. However, we were very positive about lifting the trophy. More than winning, I felt that my classmates were able to come together creating a stronger bond. And there is nothing more we can ask after having been able to cherish the moment of togetherness with my classmates."

The winning team took over the rolling trophy along with a cash prize of Nu. 5000. The cash prize for the runner-up was Nu. 3000.

Gajendra Rai, MEd second-year science, said, "As a sportsman, reaching the final is a great pride because it is not easy to reach there. In a way, it is a learning experience where every player holds a responsibility during the match. The players give their best to stand and defend individual positions." He also added, "I would like to thank the organiser for providing an opportunity to take part and it was a wonderful experience."

According to Tenzin Lhendup, Assistant Tarayana club coordinator, Tarayana football league went well as planned. He hopes that the league remains an annual event of the Tarayana club and the college for all years to come.

The tournament is organised every year to raise funds for the club and to promote physical fitness in the College.



The finalists MEd in orange top and B.Ed in blue jersey pose for a close up before the kick off

National Conference on Higher Education Teaching-Learning in Bhutan

A two-day National Conference on 'Higher Education Teaching-Learning in Bhutan: Innovative, Adaptations, Opportunities, and Challenges' was held from 4th-5th July, 2022 in Royal Thimphu College. The conference was jointly organised by Royal Thimphu College, Samtse College of Education and Paro College of Education in partnership with the Department of Adult and Higher Education under the Ministry of Education.

The conference aimed to i). consolidate actual on-the-ground experiences and data on higher education teaching-learning in Bhutan, ii). provide a platform to share innovations, adaptations, and challenges in higher education in recent years, iii). create space for academics to engage in creative thinking on teaching and learning in higher education as a continuous curriculum enhancement and innovation process, and iv). discuss ways forward for the adoption of innovative and adaptive practices.



Conference participants and paper presenters with the guest of honour Hon'ble Sherig Lyonpo Jai Bir Rai

The conference had four keynote addresses by four distinguished speakers in Dr. Maureen Bell, University of Wollongong, Australia who delivered keynote on Thoughts on teaching and learning in higher education. Dr. Nick Hophood, University of Technology, Australia talked about Provocations and possibilities: Higher education for transformative agency. The third keynote speaker was Dr. Karanam Pushpanadham, Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, India, who spoke on Higher education management and quality assurance. The fourth speaker Dr. Audrey Low, President of Gyalpozhing College of Information Technology spoke on Convergence of AI and Blockchain technology.

The conference saw an array of papers presented by scholars from the Royal University of Bhutan (RUB) colleges, schools, Office of the Vice Chancellor (OVC), and Department of Adult and Higher Education (DAHE) under five themes: student learning experience, teacher experience, higher education management and quality assurance challenges, inclusiveness in higher education - learning difficulties and disabilities, and technology and higher education.

The highlight of the conference was the panel discussion on “21st century Bhutanese graduates” with panelist Dasho Nidup Dorji, VC, RUB, Aum Tashi Pem, Director General, Royal Civil Service Commission, Mr. N B Raika, Specialist, DAHE, Dr. Chencho Lhamu, Executive Director, Bhutan Centre for Media & Democracy and Aum Sonam Pelden Thaye, Director, Royal Institute of Management.

Four faculty members from SCE namely Dr. Ganeshman Gurung, Dr. Kinley Seden, Ms. Kesang Wangmo and Ms. Ugyen Pem presented papers at the conference. The opening ceremony of the conference was graced by Hon’ble Sherig Lyonpo.

SCE Launch Webinar Series

SCE in pursuit of providing a platform to the faculty members to share research findings to relevant stakeholders and provide perspectives on educational opportunities, challenges and potential solutions to overcome them launched a Webinar Series on 20th April 2022.

Two papers were presented during the inaugural session: Self-efficacy and Job Satisfaction of Women Employees: A Case of Royal University of Bhutan presented by Dr. Yangdon and Ms. Bijoy Hangmo Subba. The Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Wellbeing among Women Academics of Royal University of Bhutan presented by Ms. Kesang Wangmo.

The second webinar on Pay Raise for Teachers in Bhutan: Impact on Teachers' Morale, Motivation and Professional Practices was held on 25th May 2022 and was presented by Dr. Tashi Gyeltshen.

Dr. Kinzang Dorji, one of the attendees for the webinar series 2 expressed that;

Research on Pay Raise for the teachers was timely to allow larger audience to understand its impact. It was heartening to note that, Pay raise contributed a lot in terms of boosting teachers' motivation and commitment to their profession. However, looking at the current trend of teacher attrition rate, it is indicative that besides Pay hike, the concerned body should also focus on other areas such as PD for teachers, conducive working environment, etc to make teaching profession better so that our younger generation will have no hesitation in choosing teaching profession as their committed career in future.

The key objectives of the Webinar Series include:

- create space for academics to engage in creative thinking on teaching and learning in higher education as a continuous curriculum enhancement and innovation process;
- create awareness among stakeholders about research innovations, adaptations and to make inform policy decision or informed teaching; and
- provide platform to academics and professional practitioners to network, share ideas, create new ideas and to ignite motivation and expand their professional and personal development.

The webinars were attended by officials from the Office of the Vice Chancellor, Royal University of Bhutan (RUB), Officials from the Ministry of Education, lecturers from the colleges of RUB, teachers from the schools, and students from SCE.

20th April 2022, 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm (BST)

Webinar Series 1: Organized by Samtse College of Education

	Self-efficacy and Job Satisfaction of Women Employees: A Case of Royal University of Bhutan Dr Yangdon Lecturer in English, Samtse College of Education 4:10 pm-4:30 pm
	Ms. Bijoy Hangmo Subba Asst. Professor, Maths Education, Samtse College of Education 4:10 pm-4:30 pm
	The Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Wellbeing among Women Academics of Royal University of Bhutan Ms. Kesang Wangmo Lecturer in English, Samtse College of Education 4:50 pm-5:10 pm
	Dr Sonam Daker Asst. Professor, English, Samtse College of Education 4:50 pm-5:10 pm

Paper Presenters for the Inaugural Webinar Series

Bachelor of Arts in Social Work Students Attend Palliative Care Webinar

Students of BA in Social Work III attended a webinar on Healthcare system and Palliative care on 26th May 2022.

The webinar was resourced by Dr. Tara Devi, a faculty at Khesar Gyalpo University of Medical Sciences of Bhutan.

The webinar on Bhutan healthcare system and palliative care was mainly conducted as a part of the learning curriculum for the module, Community Health and Wellbeing for the BA in Social Work students.

Palliative care is care for the terminally ill and their families which is provided by an organised health services.

According to Sonam Wangchuk, a student, the healthcare system in our country have changed over the period of time and he was able to understand the need of the palliative care in the country and is aware of how social workers plays an important role in it.

Tenzee Tshokie Tobgye, another student said, “To-day’s session was very enriching to me. I believe that palliative care is an important area which should be practiced and focused more in Bhutan. In which we as a social workers-to-be will have a vital role to address the physical, mental, social and financial challenges faced by patients who suffer from serious illness and who have limited time to live in the future.”

A small home palliative care service at JDWNRH was established in Bhutan under the patronage of HRH Ashi Kezang Wangmo Wangchuck.



Dr. Tara Devi, a faculty at Khesar Gyalpo University of Medical Sciences of Bhutan talking to BA in Social Work students

Webinar on Geographical Education for the New Normal

On 5th May 2022, a webinar on Geographical Education for the New Normal was organised by Geography faculty. The webinar was specifically meant for Geography Students of SCE as the threads of Geography Education was disrupted by the outbreak of Novel Corona. Considering the importance of the talk, the invitation was extended to all Geography Teachers across the country including officials from the Royal Education Council.

The webinar was resourced by Dr. Chew-Hung Chang, Professor at the Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. In his talk, Professor Chang highlighted the trends of Geographical Education till 2019 by taking the context from the publication done in the International Research in Geographical and Environmental Education. He shared the focused given by world scholars in various topics relating it with trends of Geography Development.

Professor shared his concerns on some important concepts of Geography being missed while classes are delivered through virtual mode. For instance, the taste and touch of the related topics are missing through the virtual mode. However, on the lighter side, online teaching has opened new doors to enhance our teaching by integrating the use of ICT. Further, the aftermath of pandemic has generated some new topics where geographers can take a way forward to understand the problems in detail as Geography deals with spatial science.

He shared that some of the pertaining topics Geographers can make an attempt to study are:

- Geography of diseases and movement across state or international boundaries;
- Uneven access to resources during pandemic.
- Effects on fertility and mortality rates;
- Changes to physical environment due to lock down measures and the cessation of international flights.

In conclusion, Professor Chang cautioned that the National curricula does not translate into classroom practice magically but requires teachers to decide how lessons are sequenced; what activities need to be designed; which resources are to be chosen; what technology is used to support the learning and how they would assess learning.

Mr Tashi, Lecturer in Geography expressed that “the webinar was very insightful benefiting the Geography faculty and students of SCE and Geography teachers across different parts of the country.”



Geography Students of SCE attending the session on Geographical Education for the New Normal by Professor Chew-Hung Chang, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.

SCE Celebrates 54th Foundation Day

Samtse College of Education celebrated the 54th foundation day on 29th May 2022.

The celebration commenced with the offering of butter lamps at the College Heritage Centre followed by a variety of programmes at the Namgay Khangzang.

In the welcome address, Dr. Rinchen Dorji, the President of the college paid tribute to the Third Druk Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuck for having established the college in 1968 as a Teacher Training Institute. The President highlighted success stories of the college since its establishment. In the last 54 years of service to the nation in preparing teachers, Samtse College of Education has trained close to 8000 teachers, who influenced the lives of young minds by imparting knowledge and skills. He reminded future teachers, counsellors, and social workers to be aware of the changes taking place around the world and respond to the demands of the current situation.

The guest of honour for the occasion, Dasho Kezang Choden, Drangpon of Samtse court talked about how the learning environment has transformed due to technology. Dasho advised the students to make optimum use of resources to enhance knowledge and skills for nation-building. She also praised the college for training individuals who can touch the lives of all young Bhutanese and wished the college continued success.

Dechen Wangmo of the Bachelor of Arts in Social Work said that the 54th foundation was celebrated uniquely this year with edutainment, a cultural variety show with Rigpa Jaysor (a panel discussion) on curriculum, pedagogy and the role of teachers in the 21st century, inserted after every dance items. She said, "It is the first time in my life that I have ever attended a programme where I was entertained and educated at the same time."

The celebration ended with the theatrical extravaganza coordinated by the literary club in the evening.



Rigpa Jaysor- a panel discussion on pedagogy and the role of teachers in the 21st century in progress



Dasho Kezang Choden, Drangpon of Samtse court graced the occasion as the chief guest

Graduation Ceremony: Honouring Academic Success of B.Ed Secondary Students



Dasho Dzongda sharing his words of wisdom with the graduates



Tutors felicitating graduates with Khadar on the graduation night

The graduation ceremony for the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) students was observed on 18th June 2022. This event was historic both for the college and the graduates as this was the last cohort of B.Ed secondary students graduating from SCE. The B.Ed secondary programme was stalled from July 2018 in accordance with the government directives of upscaling the qualification of teachers in the country.

The event was graced by Dasho Dzongdag of Samtse Dzongkhag. In his address, Dasho emphasised the significance and nobility of the responsibility the graduates have to shoulder. Dasho mentioned that teachers are second parents of the children and therefore, must be role models in behaviour, speech and values. “Teachers must not become obsolete and must continue learning, adopting reading habits, using technology to educate and prepare students for the 21st century.” Dasho added. Dasho reminded the graduates of His Majesty’s vision for education and the need for all to strive towards that common goal.

In the valedictory speech, Pemba Tshering of B.Ed secondary Arts acknowledged all faculty and staff for not only imparting knowledge and skills but also for teaching life-changing values. “I think it is very difficult to carry the name ‘teacher’, but I promise to serve the nation with Tha Damtshi,” he said. Another graduate, Neten Dema from B.Ed secondary Science candidly expressed that life is not always a linear growth and our degree does not define everything. “I learned many things by doing assignments, participating in college activities and also managing personal finances which are not reflected in our degrees” she added.

This year, a total of 175 B.Ed students graduated from the college. Prior to their departure from the college, students also attended the Bhutan Baccalaureate training for 10 days.

The graduates were awarded prizes and certificates for their outstanding performances in academics, literary activities, teaching practice, co-curricular activities, and sports. The college also recognised the contribution of graduating students for their leadership capacities and roles.

SCE awards for the graduating students consist of a number of prizes and certificates given to the most deserving students in two categories: Academic Awards and General Awards. The recipients of the awards are given below.

Award Winners of the B.Ed Graduating Students: Class of 2022

Sl No.	Awards	Awardees	Merit Certificates
1	Peter Hart and J.C. Goyal prize for Academic Proficiency (B.Ed Secondary Arts)	Nima Yangzom, B.Ed IV Arts	Ugyel Lekden, B.Ed IV Arts
2	V.K Khandaswamy - Academic Proficiency in Mathematics	Tshering Yangdon, B.Ed IV Sc	Choki Wangmo, B.Ed IV Arts
3	FL Gorospe - Academic Proficiency (B.Ed Secondary Science)	Sonam Changa, B.Ed IV Sc	
4	E. Prabhakar & T.N Davis- Academic Proficiency in English	Tshering Choki, B.Ed IV Arts	Ugyel Lekden, B.Ed IV Arts
5	S.C. Oswin – Academic Proficiency in Biology	Sonam Changa, B.Ed IV Sc	
6	L. Varalekshmy - Academic Proficiency in Geography	Sonam Choden, B.Ed IV Arts	Sonam Deki, B.Ed IV Arts
7	Best Teaching Practice (B.Ed Secondary)	Sonam Changa, B.Ed IV Sc	Karma Yangdon, B.Ed IV Arts
General Award, 2022			
1	BPL prize for best Sportswoman	Ugyen Pem, B.Ed IV Arts	
2	Best Performing Artist (Male)	Ugyel Lekden, B.Ed IV Arts	Dorji Tenzin, B.Ed IV Sc
3	College Prize for Valuable Contribution	Nidup Jamtsho, B.Ed IV Sc	Deagendra Acharya, B.Ed IV Arts
4	President's Award for an Outstanding Student Leadership	Nidup Jamtsho, B.Ed IV Sc	

Social Work Students Participate in a Million Fruit Tree Plantation Project

On 20th May 2022, students of Bachelors of Arts in Social Work had the opportunity to broaden their knowledge of project management cycle and the importance of each project phase. Thromde representatives and two Dessups were involved in “A Million Fruit Tree Plantation Project” - a project inspired by His Majesty's vision for sustainable food and security.

The session highlighted the phases of project management: The Initiation (first phase) of this particular project included the vision of His Majesty towards sustainable food and security. In the Planning phase (second phase), 32 Dessups were trained for 6 days on how to plant the saplings of different varieties of fruits. The session also highlighted the Execution (third phase) where Dessups were sent to different parts of the country to supply the saplings and demonstrate the plantation to different communities. In order to Monitor (fourth phase), the care and growth of the saplings was highlighted. Each sapling is geo-coded using Smart App MoDA (Mobile Operation and Data Acquisition).

In the Final phase (closure), the project is expected to produce diverse high value fruit crops that will have beneficial impact on the people living in rural areas.

After the session, two students were interviewed to share their experiences. Ugyen Lhendup said, "The ongoing million fruit tree plantation by Samtse Thromde officials and Dessups have helped me understand how projects are usually managed in a practical way. They have even emphasised the evaluation and monitoring process. They are using MoDA (Mobile Operation and Data Acquisition) to monitor the planted fruits and its growth and development. The hour-long practical session has given me ideas on how to plant fruit trees".

Another student, Sonam Dema said, "Since the learning is outside the four walls of the class, it is interesting and the lessons are easier to comprehend and retain. Besides, I also got to know the reality of the planning and execution of project phases".

B.Ed Final Year Students Attend 7-Day Scout Training

The College Management in collaboration with Samtse Dzongkhag Scout Association conducted a Basic Unit Leaders Training (BULT) from 1st - 7th of December, 2021. BULT course was offered to the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) final year students. "The main goal of this programme is to teach about the scouting programme's perspective, promote scouting, and engage the youths in more productive activities. Furthermore, this curriculum fulfils His Majesty's dream of making Bhutanese youth productive," stated Kinzang Wangchuk, the Course Director.

Some participants shared that the BULT programme provided them various life skills. Deki Wangmo of B.Ed Arts A said, "I think the BULT programme was meaningful since we gained numerous skills which are all important in our daily life." Similarly, several attendees expressed that before attending the BULT program, they had different perspectives about scouting.

"I thought scouting was all about giving social service to the community and school but after attending the programme, I found it different and it helped me to develop myself, build team spirit, and lashing skills, which I think are very important while venturing in the jungle", Sonam Chojay commented.

"I could see lots of changes in the students. For example, at the beginning they had a narrow concept of scouting; many were not punctual and lacked order but as the training progressed, they gradually improved and now they are fit to be scout leaders in schools," said Ratan Rai, Assistant Course Leader.

BULT was conducted on-campus in a self-contained mode and was funded by the College. A total of 188 students successfully completed the course and were awarded certificates.



Scouting session in progress for the B.Ed final year students



One of the scouts proudly displaying his bamboo product

Teachers' Day Celebration

SCE joined the nation in celebrating the National Teachers' Day on 2nd May 2022. The day also marks the birth anniversary of the King His Majesty Jigme Dorji Wangchuck, the Third King of Bhutan. His Majesty The Third King is fondly remembered as the Father of Modern Bhutan.

Professor Nandu Giri (PhD) was the Chief Guest. In his speech, Professor Giri shared that teaching is indeed a noble profession. This profession provide young minds with the precious gift of knowledge, skills and values. He further expressed that teachers have the responsibility to ensure that children receive the best education. Professor also shared that there is always a need to revamp our educational methodology to achieve excellence in teaching and learning.

During the celebration, both staff and students performed various cultural items for entertainment. According to Mr Dorji S, a lecturer in History, the celebration was fun to watch with the inclusion of exciting cultural dances and other performances by students from different cohorts in the college.

The celebration ended with lunch served to all SCE fraternity at the College dining hall.



Professor Nandu Giri, guest of honour cuts the cake, a customary ritual on teachers' day



B.Ed students performing dance as a part of teachers' day celebration



Dr. Rinchen Dorji, President of the college offering Taski Lekdhar to two new Deans

Appointment of New Deans

The college organised a Tendrel ceremony for the two newly appointed Deans of the College on 14th February 2022. The President, teaching faculty, and administrative staff offered Tashi Khadar to Dr. Sonam Rinchen, the new Dean of Research and Industrial Linkages and Mr. Ramesh Kumar Chhettri, the new Dean of Student Affairs. Dr. Rinchen Dorji, the President, welcomed both the new Deans and expressed his appreciations to the former Deans.

Dr. Sonam Rinchen joined Samtse College of Education in 1999 as a Lecturer. He served in various post such as Programme Leader of B.Ed Secondary Programme and Dean of Academic Affairs among others.

He has PhD in Science Education from Queensland University of Technology, Queensland, Australia.

Mr Ramesh Kumar Chhettri joined the college of 2015 as a Lecturer. He served as a Head of Department for Social Studies before assuming the post of Dean of Student Affairs. He has MA in History from Osmania University, Andhra Pradesh, India.

Felicitations and Tashi Lekhdar Offerings to Academics on Completion of Higher Studies

The College felicitated and offered Tashi Lekhdar to two academic staff for completing their higher degree studies. Dr. Dechen Doma, a faculty of counseling completed her Doctor of Philosophy from The Graduate School of Integrated Human and Social Welfare Studies, Shukutoku University, Japan and Mr Tashi, a faculty of Geography completed his Masters in Geography from the Gauhati University, Guwahati, Assam, India.

Dr. Dechen completed her PhD research on, Dealing with Addiction in Bhutan: Exploring Western and Buddhist Approaches. The study was supported by the Asian Research Institute for International Social Work, Japan.

Dr. Dechen expressed that this study has helped her to grow personally and professionally. Personally, she said that, “it helped me to recognise my own ability to withstand the various emotional turbulences and develop coping mechanisms to

stay focused and determination to complete the study taken.

I have also learnt that the quest of learning never seems to cease. Further, staying alone has also prepared me to enjoy my time being alone without having to feel lonely and appreciate the preciousness of life.”

Professionally, “this study has enhanced my research skills and heighten my curiosity in searching for answers. In addition, this study has strengthened my knowledge in the field of counselling and addiction”. Dechen expressed.

Mr. Tashi pursued Masters in geography with a major in Geographical Information System and Remote Sensing with funding support from RUB. His master dissertation is on Land Use and Land Cover Change and Forest Fragmentation in Phibsoo Wildlife Sanctuary, Sarpang, Bhutan.



Faculty and Staff offering Tashi khadar to Dr. Dechen Doma (R) and Mr Tashi (L)

Interview with Nidup Jamtsho, the Winner of President's Award for an Outstanding Student Leadership

Nidup Jamtsho, B.Ed IV Science student received the President's Award for Outstanding Student Leadership on 18th June 2022 during the graduation ceremony. The President's Award for Outstanding Student Leadership was instituted in 2018 to encourage and motivate student teachers to develop and demonstrate extraordinary leadership qualities characterised by values of positivity, dynamism, perseverance, determination, punctuality and leadership of the self.

Shes-Rig PAGES (SP) interacted with Nidup Jamtsho (NJ) to understand his feeling and experiences after winning the award.



Nidup Jamtsho, B.Ed IV Science receiving President's Award for an Outstanding Student Leadership from DASHO DZONGDA, SAMTSE DZONGKHAG

SP: Congratulations on winning the President award for 2022. How did you feel after having received this award?

NJ: I felt honored and thrilled to have been awarded the President's Award.

SP: Did you expect to receive this award? If yes, what preparations did you undertake to achieve this feat?

NJ: No, I didn't expect to receive the award. Not as a preparation to get the award, but I served my roles in the capacity of a councillor with the best of what I could do with other student leaders.

SP: Were you aware of the criteria that one needs to fulfill to be eligible for this award?

NJ: I knew about this prestigious award, but I wasn't aware of the specific criteria required to fulfill for the winning candidate.

SP: Who would you dedicate this award to?

NJ: I dedicate this award to everyone who has rendered support for the numerous small initiatives that I have taken. I am a strong believer in interdependence and the award is a result of the collaborative efforts of an endless list of individuals.

SP: Is there anybody who played a critical role in taking you closer to this award?

NJ: Indeed, an endless list of individuals, as mentioned earlier, has played a critical role in taking me closer to the award. Student leader friends would always seek my suggestions for any kind of decision. I believe it is not because I was powerful among them, but I guess it is fair enough to say that they knew my experience of taking leadership roles since my primary school. This way, I was almost always

involved in making the decisions of student-led events. Friends from various courses were the source of encouragement for everything I did. Faculty members and other staff members always supported me. Above all, the love of my love, my mom has always guided me to the present track throughout my life. Therefore, I dedicate this award to everyone who gave me the strength to walk on this path.

SP: You were also the recipient of the award for Valuable Contribution. What did you do differently to achieve this?

NJ: I would like to iterate that I did not expect any award for any initiative taken. Even if I have made an impact differently, I cannot say that I have done things differently. I am someone who likes to solve practical problems, whether it is small or big. I love keeping legacies. I remember a few initiatives that I have taken in the college such as; coming up with 'Concern Portal' on the college website to hear the voices/concerns/issues from the students in promoting the wellbeing of the students, book drive, creating the SCE Announcement Channel on Telegram which became very useful and effective. So, I did nothing more than what I was passionate about.

SP: What are your feelings about being a recipient of the President's award?

NJ: Being the recipient of the President's Award, I feel honored. However, the award does not define me as an epitome of a leader. It will be a guiding light for me to be a better human being in the future.

Interview with Deki Choden on her Short Tenure as an Adjunct Lecturer in SCE



Deki Choden, counselor at Changangkha Middle Secondary School, Thimphu was at Samtse College of Education on a fixed-term appointment for the Spring Semester 2022 to teach counselling students. Shes-Rig PAGES (SP) interviewed her to get an understanding of her experiences of teaching at SCE.

SP: Can you talk about yourself?

Deki: My name is Deki Choden, I currently work as a counselor in Changangkha Middle Secondary School, Thimphu. I have a BSc in Psychology and Postgraduate Diploma in Guidance and Counseling. I am also an Internationally Certified Addiction Counselor by the Global Centre for Credentialing and certification (GCCC), Colombo Plan and a certified National trainer for Mental Health Facilitation through BBCC (Bhutan Board for Certified Counselors- NBCC). I was drawn to the helping profession through my love for understanding human connections, embracing experiences and a deep desire to understand emotional processes and healing. Of course, I didn't comprehend all that as Psychology when I was younger, so my dad was my biggest motivation towards pursuing my degree. And I wouldn't have it any other way.

Growing up around extremely supportive family and friends, I am a very outspoken and expressive person who enjoys making new connections and loves adventures. I am a very good listener and that just doesn't come because of my profession I swear.

SP: What inspired you to come to SCE though the duration of the tenure was short?

Deki: I did my Post graduation from Samtse College Education in 2015. So coming back to the college was like coming home. I felt fortunate to receive such an opportunity to learn and grow further

among my people (lecturers) who taught me beyond what was there in the syllabus. It also evoked in me a chance to contribute a little to the amazing college that groomed me into the person I am today by sharing my field experience of 6 years to young aspiring counselors.

SP: How was your work experience at the college?

Deki: Honestly it was "Ah-may-zing"; throughout my stay in the college, I was constantly inspired and reminded that learning has no boundaries. Every day I was grateful for the fact that I chose to come to a college where I was given opportunities to grow beyond my classroom experience. In addition to having kind, supportive and incredible set of colleagues, a visionary leader added to the charm of my experience. The involvement in a number of college-wide programmes, meetings and discussions provided opportunities to develop my professional experiences both in the dynamics of theory and practical knowledge, which were one of the highlighted expectations I had while joining the college.

SP: What differences did you notice between working as a school counselor and a counselor educator?

Deki: Becoming an educator from being a counselor was indeed a different journey for me. Especially when it came to the classroom teaching and other administrative roles. However, both roles share an intention and ultimate goal of developing a good human being so that, definitely made it easier for me.

Firstly, the level of comprehension and understanding was higher among the students in the college whether it was in terms of the classroom teaching or counseling sessions. And that was expected because of the difference of developmental stages they are in.

Secondly, as an educator, I had to focus more on the classroom lessons and academic growth of the students with vigorous assessments and ratings. These were completely different duties from my role as a counselor in the school. However with support from my Programme Leader Dr. Dechen Doma, things turned out to be a great learning experience.

SP: Apart from your professional experience, what are some of the personal insights you gained from this experience?

Deki: Among the many lessons and wonderful memories that I have come back with, one of the most cherished insights I gained is that kindness is free, and we should sprinkle it everywhere. Since day one everyone, I interacted with, showered me with nothing but kindness. And I shall continue to emulate that wherever life takes me.

I was also reassured a lot of times on my belief that, learning happens from both sides. My students, the young aspiring counselors gave me more insights on life through the stories they shared, for which I

SP: Is there anything from your experience at SCE that you would/might implement in your school?

Deki: I would definitely be embodying a lot of experiences that I gained from the college; however, one of the most inspiring sights to see was the enthusiasm, zeal and dedication to learn, relearn and grow that was shared among the colleagues. It has motivated and moved me more to grow professionally and personally.

SP: Any departing message for the SCE family?

Deki: Thank you SCE family for adding another reason for me to be grateful in life. The memories, experiences and learnings I received from you shall always be something I cherish deep in my heart. I definitely miss being surrounded by such lovely, brilliant, diverse and dedicated group of people. However, I know when the Wheel of Karma blows we shall meet again. Until then, you all shall always be in my prayers.

SP: Any other comments.

Deki: Thank you, team for giving me this wonderful opportunity. It has brought back amazing memories and gave me a nostalgic feeling.

With gratitude and love.

Farewell to Staff



Dr. Rinchen Dorji, President giving farewell gifts to Mr Damce Dorji (L) and Mr Tandin Tshering (R)

On 13th June 2022, Samtse College of Education bade farewell to the Information Communication Technology (ICT) Officer and Assistant Administrative Officer.

In a simple farewell dinner, the President of the College shared that their appointment in the new agency will give them new learning and experience and help them grow professionally. The President also thanked them for their contributions to the growth of the college. “There could have had both hard times and unpleasant moments while working together, I hope two of you will remember us with good times and not with unpleasant moments,” the President added.

ICT Officer Damche Dorji expressed that he is deeply touched by the gesture. He also said, he is connected to the place because he started his career in this college and has learnt a lot because of the support and effort given by the College staff.

Tandin Tshering, the Assistant Administrative Officer who joined State Mining Corporation Limited said, he is overwhelmed by the gesture. He also thanked the President for supporting him and helping him improve his communication skills which are helping him in his new place of work.

Both outgoing staff have served the college for more than a decade.

The College also bade farewell to two fixed-term faculties on 6th July 2022 with a modest dinner at the college guesthouse.

In the final parting words, the President of the college thanked both out-going faculties for their dedicated services and commitment to the college.

Deki Choden, who taught counselling modules expressed her gratitude to the college for giving her the opportunity to gain classroom teaching experience. She also said it felt like homecoming for her as she studied counselling in the college. Binita Pradhan, another fixed-term faculty for Geography, also shared her gratefulness for getting the experience of teaching at the tertiary level.

Both fixed-term faculties were recruited for a semester.

Mr. Hari Subramaniam, Lecturer in Geography left the college in December 2021 after serving for over two decades. He joined SCE on 19th September 2002. Prior to his transfer to SCE, he served as a Geography Teacher in Damphu High School, Tsirang. Mr. Hari was known for his simplicity, hard work and jovial personality. During his span of two decades, he taught Geography and Educational modules to undergraduate and postgraduates students. He served as Exam Secretary for seven years and was very diligent in discharging his responsibilities.

President, on behalf of the government of Bhutan and RUB, thanked Mr Hari for his selfless service for the good cause of Bhutanese education and wish him all the luck and success in his future endeavour.

In his parting speech Mr Hari thanked the President, faculty and staff of SCE for all the support and guidance rendered to him during his stay in the college. He said Bhutan is his second home so much so that he feels he is now more Bhutanese than Indian.



President giving parting gifts to Ms Deki Choden (L) and Ms Binita Pradhan (R)

His Eminence Namkhai Nyingpo Rimpoche Visits Samtse College of Education

His Eminence, Namkhai Nyingpo Rimpoche made a holy presence in the College on June, 17th blessing the staff, students and number of residents living around the campus.

On his way back from Yoeseltse Samtse, His Eminence visited SCE blessing the gatherings with Tag Cha Chung Sum Wang and offering mountain smoke (Riwo Sangcho) in campus to purify the environment, clear obstacles and increase auspiciousness, harmony and peace. His Eminence in his spiritual discourse highlighted key human values such as loyalty, faithfulness and love to uphold human morality for sanctity and peace.

The spiritual aura remained undeterred as people remained seated on the ground despite the heavy down-pour till the end of the spiritual programme. “Never had rain ever felt more auspicious,” said Yeshey Seldon, a student from MEd I English who attended the spiritual discourse.



His Eminence Namkhai Nyingpo Rimpoche blessing students and residents of Samtse

Postgraduate Diploma in Contemplative Counselling and Psychology Students' Attend Mindfulness Retreat



PgDCCP students practicing sitting meditation

Students of Postgraduate Diploma in Contemplative Counselling and Psychology (PgDCCP) Year I and II engaged in a weeklong mindfulness retreat from 3rd to 7th May 2022. The retreat took place in the Meditation Hall located at the counselling block.

The retreat began at 8.30 am and continued until 4.00 pm everyday with each day introducing a new concept of Contemplative Counseling. The mindfulness retreat is an essential part of Contemplative Counselling course.

Students were taught correct sitting postures and were required to practice mindfulness in intervals of 10-20 minutes every day, while practicing skills such as gentleness, letting go and loving-kindness.

Students were given teachings on concepts such as how to be kinder to oneself and others and were encouraged to explore their basic goodness, a core principle of contemplative counselling and the belief that there is goodness in each and every single individual. They were introduced to topics such as the four immeasurable, impermanence, the four foundations of mindfulness in a practical setting and were required to practice what they learnt.

Students were also provided with lunch and snacks throughout the entire retreat and were encouraged to practice mindful eating. The art of mindful eating is one that eludes many. It includes full awareness of what attendee are putting in our body, the sensation and taste that follows and physiological reactions to it. Along with mindful eating, students were also engaged in other activities such as aimless walking, a practice which required students to walk mindfully without a specific destination in mind and walking meditation, wherein students had to walk in a circle, mindful of not only their steps but steps of those in front and behind them.

Each day of the mindfulness retreat ended with group discussion where students were divided into four groups and assigned to a lecturer. During this time, students were encouraged to share their imitate learnings and experiences of the day. The attendees of the retreat would start each day by bowing in and end it by bowing out as a way of thanking each other for their presence.

The conclusion of the weeklong excursion brought about praises for the students. Many students asserted that the person who walked in is not the same person who walked out the retreat. Students described their experiences as 'transformational, challenging, and inspiring'.

Commemorating Zhabdrung Kuchoe at Samtse College of Education



Faculty and students reciting Jigten Wangchuk prayer in the Rigsum Gonpo Hall to mark Zhabdrung Kuchoe

Coinciding with Zhabdrung Kuchoe and the 400th Anniversary of the establishment of Dratshang Geydoen, Jigten Wangchuk prayer was recited in the Rigsum Gonpo Hall. Bhutan commemorates the day on 10th day of the third Bhutanese month every year to pay homage to Zhabdrung Rinpoche.

According to the organisers, the team received good amount of monetary contribution from the College fraternity this year. Volunteers comprising of faculty, staff and students recited Jigten Wangchuk prayer for almost five hours. It is said that Jigten Wangchuk is a Bodhisattva who embodies the compassion of all Buddhas. The recitation will offer blessings that will benefit the country and the people.

Further, the organisers shared that programmes such as this in particular are organised for students to understand the significance of Zhabdrung's visit to Bhutan. The organisers were also happy to see a larger head count for the recitation than expected. One of the students who was a part of the recitation shared that she was fortunate to have been given this opportunity to pay her respects and gratitude to Zhabdrung Rinpoche for bringing peace in the country.

The day is declared a government holiday in Bhutan for the citizens to engage in prayers. Zhabdrung Kuchoe marks the day when Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal passed away at the Punakha Dzong in 1651.

This event is one of the many prayer events initiated in the college on auspicious days.

An Acrostic Poem for Samtse College of Education

Sagacity of an individual is exhibited in dynamic forms in an institution called Samtse College of Education.

Armoured each member with contemplative mentality, moralistic behavior and synchronised representations.

Magnanimity is the quality that every member possesses, even after leaving the institution.

Tethered with loyalty, equipped with devotion and wrapped with dedication to save our tender nation.

Salvage the power of education; all are predetermined to transform the complexity to simplicity.

Everyone endures the heat of the weather to revolutionize the old static education with the new.

Commitment to research is the core component to explore and expand knowledge.

Outshines with inspirational standards and enlightens with an essence of accomplished perennial love.

Learning new knowledge and living with discipline are the key ingredients of our life style.

Lettered people are gathered, aiming for better quality of education that needs to be acknowledged.

Extensive learning resources are available, bounteous and unrestrained.

Gathering up oneself with motivation to snatch the wisdom from qualified lecturers with no inhibition.

Explore every field of knowledge from wise people and great books through the art of research.

Orchestrated regulations of the college may enshrine prosperity and happiness in every future builder.

Founded as an institute of teaching by King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck, to sustain wisdom for eternity.

Education is an endowment for every Bhutanese from the golden throne, to ladder up as, "we are one".

Decency is the accessory that everyone wears; illustrating that simplicity is a gateway to a story of success.

Ultraist in conserving and preserving the identity of the nation and to pass it down to the next generation is our duty.

Champions are gathered to disseminate imperishable knowledge to blossoming and enthusiastic learners.

Aesthetic in teaching truth, catalogued with administrative qualities, and woven with leadership wisdom.

Transformation of ignorant minds into interrogative souls is a thrilling thirst of every individual in the college.

Illuminating only cheerful agility and intellectuality, signifying that true human beings authentically exist.

Ordinary is the physical outward appearance but extraordinary is the invisible and powerful values within.

Naturalistic in teaching profession, solicitous in globally movements, and determined in lifelong learning.

Thinley Zangmo
PgDE English

Buddhist Teaching for Living Life

Sonam Changa
B.Ed IV Science

Education is determinably one of the contributing factors to human civilization since its distinct establishment in the 16th century. Education practices around the globe have undergone numerous reformations with contemplation of its disparate ideologies. Yet, education remains one of the impetuses to bring about healthy change, notwithstanding the differences in its perspective. One such convictions of education that aims to bring out the good in people is Buddhist education. Buddhist education originated from Buddhism, which was founded by Siddhartha Gautama, widely known as “Buddha” which means “the enlightened one”. The teachings of Buddha are centered on the truths pertaining to life, which makes it more than just a theoretical view. It proselytizes discipline, assists a healthy society, and enkindle happiness.

Some argue that the school distinction made for men (monk) and women (nun) in receiving the Buddhist education can lead to transgender or homosexuality issues (Tan, 2014). However, Rahula (2015) asserted that Buddhist education induces discipline, resulting in personality molding. The discipline includes the mind, moral and intellectual priming. Its teachings embrace the incon-sequential nature that the earthly desires hold through the concept of birth, death, and rebirth (Steve, 2012). The knowledge one receives eventually affect one’s morals (Demerath, 1993). Hence, the fascination for earthly desires can be greatly reduced if such intellection about life is instilled. The pupils as well as the teachers of Buddhist education system live by those cogitations which help them dispel desires. Moreover, Buddhist education does not give attention to occupational, industrial, and technical learnings which are the core causes of materialistic thoughts (Chakma, 2020). If people are governed by such discipline, it will ultimately fruit to a healthy society.

Many express that the Buddhist education inversely affect the social development since pupils are bound to seclude from socialisation (Chakma, 2020). On the contrary, this system of education strains to bring out the humanity set within the people (Khakhlary, 2019). The principle of humanity is a need for the existence of harmonious community (Slim, 2019). If humanity prevails, the issues of poverty, war and greed will instinctively cease. Furthermore, the pupils of Buddhism are not literally remoted from the rest of the people. The dissemination of Buddhist knowledge is associated with the ethics on social relations with different walks of humans (Dong, 2003). This scaffolds that the way they portray their behavior is determined solely with whom they deal with. In addition, Kung (n.d.) interpreted that “Buddha is our true nature of mind” and that we don’t realise it until we practice Buddhist education. If every individual real-ises the Buddha in self, the world will prosper into an aesthetic dwelling which is fundamentally the root of happiness.

One may posit that Buddhist education does not concern with social and political affairs which make the monks and nuns vulnerable to corruption, sexual assaults, and frauds (Tan, 2014). This in turn causes an adverse effect on the tranquility of the people’s mind. Nonetheless, Lokamitra (2004) contended that Buddhist education centers around the development of happiness. Attesting to the veracity of this view, Mullen (1994) stated the core objective of Buddhism as to receive wisdom prevailing the reality and attain nirvana. Nirvana, as articulated by Chansomsak and Vale (2008), is the only real happiness since it’s the liberation from the cycle of birth and death. Liberation from the cycle of birth and death signifies the liberation from the sufferings which the earthlings confront. Waterhouse (2015) interpreted the apprehensions of Buddhist education as the driving agent to alleviate the desires which in turn oust the sufferings. A life without sufferings brings about inner peace which is in fact happiness.

Buddhist education sets one's sight on achieving the extreme form of humanity. It is the first education system to be made available for spheres of life. It is an education which aid in prompting virtuous discipline. This ultimately produce a humane society without greed and lust for materialistic articles. A society without hassle develops happiness in every being. Buddhist education is associated with numerous merits that the western scholars also took keen interest in it and even considered a "revival paradigm" for it (Travagnin, 2017). Persuading someone to practice an education goal sounds like going against their moral beliefs. Nevertheless, it's a need for the humans to be compassionate as taught in Buddhist education. Perhaps, the world would be a better place if Buddhist education is not perceived as a religion but rather a way of living.

References

- Chakma, D. (2020). *Buddhist educational system*. https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=http://uafulucknow.ac.in/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/BUDDHIST_EDUCATION_SYSTEM_m.a._sem_2nd_by_ayoosh_mishra.pdf&ved=2ahUKEwi61NGGudjsAhUv5nMBHQSYAWUQFjAaegQIAhAB&usg=AOvVaw3HiPoZzK_AchElkwISGxKX
- Chansomsak, S., & Vale, B. (2008). The Buddhist approach to education: An alternative approach for sustainable education. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 28(1), 35-50.
- Demerath, L. (1993). Knowledge-based affect: Cognitive origins of "good" and "bad". *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 56(2), 136-147.
- Dong, Y. (2003). Buddhism: Education for a modern world. *Journal of Humanistic Buddhism*, 4, 284-293.
- Khakhlyar, M. (2019). *The importance of Buddhist education system*. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/330799064>
- Kung, C. (n.d.). *Buddhism as an education* [eBook]. <https://www.buddhanet.net>
- Lokamitra, D. (2004). *The centrality of Buddhism and education in developing gross national happiness*, 472- 482.
- Mullens, J. G. (1994). *Principles and practices of Buddhist education in Asnga's Bodhisattvabhumi*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, McMaster University, Ontario, Canada.
- Rahula, K. (2015). *Buddhist studies as a discipline and its role in the education, Expansion in the field of Pali and Buddhist education*. Keynote address of the 10th International Conference on Buddhist Studies, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka. <https://www.sjp.ac.lk/news/buddhist-studies-as-a-discipline-and-its-role-in-the-education/>
- Slim, H. (2019). *The power of humanity: On being human now and in the future* [blog post]. <https://blogs.iarc.org/law-and-policy/2019/07/30/power-of-humanity-being-human-now-future/>
- Steve. (2012). *Earthly desires are enlightenment. Buddhastate Journal: On a Mission for Happiness in this Life*. <https://www.buddhastate.com/2012/06/earthly-desires-are-enlightenment/>
- Tan, P. B. (2014). *Buddhism for the global benefits and its challenges in modern times*. International Conference for Cooperation among Buddhists in ASEAN Economic Community, Bangkok, Thailand.
- Travagnin, S. (2017). Buddhist education between tradition, modernity and networks: Reconsidering the 'revival' of education for the Sangha in twentieth-century China. *Studies in Chinese Religions*, 3 (3), 220-241.
- Waterhouse, H. (2015). *The Buddha: Ancient teachings for the modern world* [blog post]. <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/history-the-arts/culture/philosophy/thinkers/the-buddha-ancient-teachings-the-modern-world>

The Step of Whirl

It's funny how it's different these days
Funny our minds can turn lives over
Two months ago, things were all tangled
Simple thought for change readjusted the tortuous

Been lost in a haze for coon's age
Consciousness took a break for way too long
Entering that Smokey space should be a crime
The further you go, the more it goes wrong

Yet, through the way you'll find time to pause
A promising time to reset your mind
There you'll find your new purpose crushing the dark walls
The feeling you get is one of a kind

Life indeed is a rollercoaster ride
Reset the mind and face it with delight
Coming out from the safe comfort zone
Ignore the fault finders and embrace the flash

Tenzee Tshokie Tobgye
BA in Social Work III

We are Made to Feel Our Emotions

As a part of innovative teaching pedagogy sharing of emotions was implemented in two sections of PgDE's Educational Psychology modules during Spring Semester, 2021. For an entire semester, the students were encouraged to share their emotions either at the beginning or end of the class. The aim of sharing emotions was to help the students to be in touch with their emotions and to develop emotional intelligence. The term "emotion" comes from the Latin "emovere" which means "to put in motion". According to the American Psychological Association, emotion is defined as a complex reaction pattern, involving experiential, behavioral and physiological elements. Similarly, an emotion is also defined as an "organism's reaction to an external event, which has physiological, cognitive and behavioral aspects" (Jacques Lecomte's Les 30 notions de la psychologie). Emotional intelligence is the ability to identify and regulate one's emotions and understand the emotions of others.

The rationale behind incorporating sharing of emotions in my teaching was to acknowledge the greater influence of emotion on students' cognitive processes. Emotion has a substantial influence on the cognitive processes in humans, including perception, attention, learning, memory, reasoning, and problem solving. Emotion has a particularly strong influence on attention. Attention is said to have positive correlation with the learning processes.

As an educator, my firm belief on emotion is that there is no such thing as too much or too less. We are emotional beings. We were not given feelings to conceal them rather we are made to feel them. So, the more in tune we are with our emotions, the more human we will be. We are not machines. What sets us apart from other species is our ability to feel. The way we interact with everything around us is how we know that we are alive. When I interact with my students by emphasising on sharing of emotions, I am constantly reminded that I am dealing with living beings with valid emotions. We, both students and tutor in the class, feel emotions at varying degree and intensity.

As rightly said by Mahatma Gandhi, "Be the change you wish to see in the world." I did not focus solely on my students' emotions. To set an exemplary model to the students, I initiated the processes of sharing of emotions in the classes by sharing my own emotions. While doing so I was able to embrace my emotional vulnerability. I could validate my own feelings through acceptance. From my past experience as a student, I silenced and hid my feelings and emotions since expression of emotions was considered unimportant. But as an educator, I don't want my students to block and suppress their feelings and emotions. Avoiding negative feelings and pretending that we don't feel the way we do will always backfire. Hilary Jacobs Hendel in her book titled, *It's Not Always Depression*, wrote that "thwarting emotions is not good for mental or physical health. It's like pressing on the gas and brakes of your car at the same time, creating an internal pressure cooker."

Kalapinka - The voice

SHE-S-RIG PAGES

Spring 2022

The intended objectives for initiating the practice was to openly feel, listen, and talk about our emotions sans shame and judgment. It helped me stay in good mental health, given my history of struggling with depression for the past couple of years. I learned that talking about my feelings and emotions in the class is not a sign of weakness. It helped me build strong relationships with my students. I found out that some students were naturally more in touch with their emotions than others. The practice of sharing emotions for a semester helped students to be aware of their emotions with their mates, with the added instance of the tutor talking openly about their feelings and emotions. Emotional awareness is recognising, respecting, and accepting one's feelings as they happen.

Following are some of the feedback provided by students on their overall experience and benefits of sharing of emotions sessions:

The sharing of emotions during our class has helped the classmates to come up on one and build good relationships. We could understand each other properly and the emotions that our friends expressed was relevant to ourselves. I personally felt close and connected with the classmates. I was able to lend my ears and engaged them to share their thoughts and emotions.

2. Benefits of this session:

1. It helped us to stay connected to each other and helped in communication skills.
2. It gave us the opportunity to speak up and listen to others despite our busy schedule.

— Ronan Chhetri
— 08210195
— PODE (1st year)

Sonam Pema 08210208

One of the most comfortable features of our Psychology class was sharing of emotions by students towards the end of class. That was done during the last 10 minutes of each psychology period.

During the session, students could share anything they were feeling, some experiencing or discuss any issue that was bothering them.

The session was inclusive and considerate of the students' feelings and emotions. It was non-academic and informal, thus a very comfortable session.

The students could not only share their feelings and emotions but could get to know each other well and bond well over the session. It also helped in bridging the gap between the tutor and the students by making them close. The session well-aligned with the nature and scope of the module because it was beyond the didactic teaching and syllabus centered education system. This session should be continued and encouraged further.

One of the most interesting part of PSY03 class was the sharing of our emotions during the last 10 minutes of every period. Sharing of my emotions with my tutor and my friends in the classroom made me feel relieved and it also gave me great satisfaction. It was a great experience that I got during the journey of my education and I found it very useful for a person like me who tend to think a lot. I always need somebody to listen to what is going on in my mind. Whenever I get a chance to share my emotions with others, I feel better as if all my problems are solved. Since the module itself was about an educational psychology, such session stands as a practical implication of what we are learning. Such session helps us to share our emotions and when others listen to us, we feel valued, respected and accepted. We even get to understand each other. It also makes us feel close and comfortable with our tutor which adds to the conducive classroom environment. It gives an individual an opportunity to practice public speaking which helps in long run.

(Name: Sumita Gurung)
PODE A
Signature: Gurung

The value of emotion is felt more effective when one shares with another person. To the value that we had ten minutes session of sharing emotion during our psychology period for the academic year of 2021. This session not only helped me to express my emotion but it let me hear different stories from different person.

I am someone who keeps things to myself but with that session I learnt emotions if shared makes you lighter rather than being bottled inside. From the day I shared to the class about my mental health I realised the importance of telling my emotions out and now I can share about it without any hesitation to people around. From the day I shared there are more people who understood me than having negative comments for that I am and will always remain grateful for our tutor for initiating this type of session.

Scanned with CamScanner

The ten minutes session not only made me stronger makers of my mental health but it gave me opportunity to listen to different stories from my friends which actually helped me to understand them better.

When we have such session we get to hear stories from different person like when Yashvi shared about her panic attack I could relate her feelings. I could understand what she must be going through not because she had issues like that but I could connect myself with her. Thus I was willing to help if need.

Different people have different stories with them and all in all this session personally helped me to open up myself to another person and helped to understand my friends better.

— Karma Chakri Pema
(08210144)

Scanned with CamScanner

Thinley Zangmo PODE A
English 08210226

Emotion are medicine if it is beautiful and lovely to feel it. But emotions are poison if it is hurtful and negative feelings associated with it. Negative emotions are never deleted but just left to aside within us. It eat us slowly, draining us to have nothing but just broken dreams. Therefore, when negative emotions are shared with friends, when the pain is known by friends around us, we feel light. When the pain is made known to our friends, we feel like I have achieved some great dream. Psychology is hard to learn when we had to learn theories but when it deals with behaviors and emotions, I feel it's very important to learn. We get to know about us and people around us and about each other's feelings. 10 minutes of sharing have helped me to get free from my own prison of embarrassment.

With the alarming rise in mental health issues in the country, I would recommend every individual to talk it out and listen without any judgment. Talking can do wonders, give it a try!

Sonam Zangmo, Lecturer
Department of Arts and Humanities Education

Reminiscence

Little things do make sense when looked closely. This is the joy of being an artist. You take time to find beauty in the creations of the world when others walk over them.

Fifty six years old Kota smelled of experiences, wisdom and art. The graying of the hair and loosening of teeth didn't matter to him for he was content with the exuberant youth days, flashing in his mind over and over again. When the crystal dew appeared on the edges of the leaves, Kota was seen holding a cup of hot water and words flooded to his old companion:

How did I start sketching? Actually, the right question is: How was I inspired to pick up the pencil and never stop drawing it? I am drawn towards its rhythm, every single day. You see, the Goosebumps my Ama's tears gave me that endless night, strike me even today. The slamming door of the blue Alto was the last I heard of my Apa. What can a ten year old do? I hid behind the forlorn calls of my Ama. My cries were marked with silence.

I was served something bitter before I attempted to taste it. I had my Ama who cared me for years to repay the same. Ama's soft hands soon became rough. The red and green strips of bamboo were seen no more in the bangchungs my Ama sold. She hid the despair, but it was clearly depicted in the plain brown bangchungs she wove. I had my share to hide. I never uttered a word about Apa not just to Ama, but to anyone in school too.

The fake mask I wore in my new world protected me from floating gossips that had the ability to destroy lives. However, the drooping smile reflected it to all, but no one had a minute to care for the reason behind. Hatred towards Apa had been repeatedly echoing in the mind. The tiny flame soon turned to a conflagration. Time did its trick by flying swiftly.

I was in seventh grade when things started to form into a new bud. "Close your books everybody. Let's go outside. Today, we'll take a break from our usual lesson. You'll write about a dream you wish to see come true, on a dried leaf. It'll be you, talking to yourself. Be honest. Then, you'll mix it with the other dried leaves. Let it be," said Mr. Mindu, the new teacher with an innovative mindset. This hardly made me care since new ones lose their spark soon and turn grumpy.

Why dream when the nightmare has already turned into actuality? I threw the dried leaf with nothing written on it. That's when Mr. Mindu came with a dried leaf and started sketching on it. I observed the whole process. I was amazed to see a single pencil producing different shades of black. The mystic left hand gifted the golden brown leaf with a portrait of an eagle.

Kalapinka - The voice

SHES-RIG PAGES

Spring 2022

"Kota, I was once a lost boy. I ended up in an education college and found my passion for art. Luckily, I was good at it too. Maybe, this scrappy sketch of eagle might help you with your dream. Think about it. Everything's worth a shot."

He patted on my shoulder and went to guide others. Few moments later, I wrote, 'My Dream' on the leaf with the eagle and tossed in the air. I quickly ran towards Mr. Mindu and told him, "Sir, I want to try sketching." He smiled. "That's great!"

After that, it sure was the sweetest turning point of my life. Out of all the memorable days with him, the first Saturday felt the warmest with freedom. He began teaching me about arts with the words, "Kota, it's alright to express your emotions at times. After all, we are just human beings. We have issues; we fail and still we survive. That's life. So, don't die before your death. Life has jewels treasured for you. Sometimes, you can get stones. Don't worry, let go and move further."

Tears rolled down my cheek. The fake mask peeled itself off. I cried the loudest cry in my life, and it echoed in the empty classroom. My mind kept ringing the thought, 'That's it. That's all I dreaded to hear for a long time.' He gave me the coziest hug, just the one I needed.

Did he know about my situation? I don't know. Maybe he did, maybe he didn't. What mattered was his spark, which kept shining and helped me believe in teachers as the soul inspirers. He even told me that I could try something different if sketching wasn't my cup of tea. Fortunately, it was and it still is. I travelled around the world a lot thanks to this skill. Though, Mr. Mindu is long gone, he still lives in me.

Once, I asked him if all teachers were same as him and he replied that everyone is unique and amazing in their own ways. His shared-secret was the TTI of Samtse. Today, it stands with the name Samtse College of Education. He said that the institute bears rich-flavored fruits of teaching qualities. Many has harvested from that mother tree. Today, it turns fifty four. It would be unfair on my part if I don't take a moment to pay gratitude towards it. Like me, countless may have been benefited from it. What do you think Kota?

Neither a question nor a nod was the reply from the friend. The old Damkhi dog passively listened with its eyes closed. Kota laughed. "Apa, come have breakfast! We may get late for the programme," called Choeden. They were to attend the fifty-fourth foundation day of Samtse College of Education. Choeden served as a lecturer in the college. "Coming!" replied Kota. He went in, lit a butter lamp and prayed for the goodwill of the college. He never missed to do this ever since he knew the foundation day of the college.

In Conversation with Madam Tshering Dolkar, Executive Director, RENEW, Thimphu Bhutan



Question: You started your career as a teacher and then progressively moved into different positions such as Teacher, Joint Director, and now as the Executive Director, Respect Educate Nurture Empower Women (RENEW). Please tell us about yourself and some of the salient milestones of your professional journey.

Executive Director: I have 28 years of experience working in the social sector. I started my career with the Ministry of Education in 1992. As a pioneer in the field of counseling in Bhutan, I have worked towards instituting guidance and counseling systems in the schools of Bhutan and also in the establishment of Bhutan Board for Certified Counselors (BBCC) under the patronage of Her Majesty Gyalum Sangay Choden Wangchuck for certification of counseling professionals in Bhutan. I have also been instrumental in developing counseling services and programmes in RENEW in 2005.

I am a certified Mental Health Counseling Professional. I received my certification in counseling as the National Certified Counselor (NCC) from the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) in the US in 2008. I am also a recipient of the Hubert H. Humphrey fellowship in John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, US, in Mental Health and Substance Use and Abuse – prevention, treatment, assessment and policy from July 2011- June 2012.

Question: Tell us briefly about your experience as a student teacher in Samtse College of Education, the erstwhile National Institute of Education during your time.

Executive Director: I completed the 9 months Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) training in Samtse College of Education (then National Institute of Education) as a part of the teacher training after my graduation. There were 9 of us, and I think we were the 2nd batch of PGCE then. It was like replaying our school days. We had so much fun learning to be students and teachers at the same time. The stint at the college was hectic, but learning to become a teacher was so rewarding.

Question: Please give a brief description of your experiences at the Department of Youth and Sports (DYS).

Executive Director: The Department of Youth and Sports (DYS), under the Ministry of Education was a newly formed Department. The DHS was mandated to provide comprehensive programmes for youth development. One of the Divisions under the Department was the Career Education and Counseling Division (CECD) which I headed then. Working in an agency for Youth was challenging as well as rewarding: challenging, because you had to be innovative and creative to engage youth and always be ahead of them. Rewarding, because helping them to become better, responsible and productive individuals was fulfilling.

In 1996, His Majesty the 4th Druk Gyalpo issued the Royal Decree to establish a systematic guidance and counseling system in schools of Bhutan. I was fortunate to have availed a scholarship to pursue Masters in Counseling in 1998 from the University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, Canada. Counseling then was a new and misunderstood concept to many in Bhutan. I struggled to make people understand and accept it as a

helping profession. It indeed was a lonely journey since I was then seen as a person with the right qualification to bring in the change to address the emerging youth issues in the schools. I was given the task to develop a workbook on the “Light on your Career Path” to help students of Grade 8 to 10 learn about their career development. I had to develop training manuals and conduct training for teacher counselors in schools. When the job titles of school counselors were recognised and incorporated in the occupational group, it was a moment of bliss for the effort and hard work that has been put into this initiative. This initiative was also crucial for the development of the 1-year counseling Postgraduate diploma programme in Samtse College of Education, which has now grown into the Postgraduate Diploma in Contemplative Counseling Psychology course.

Question: How is your current position as the Executive Director at RENEW different from being a teacher and counsellor? How do you make use of the knowledge and skills acquired as a teacher and counsellor to perform the duties in your current job?

Executive Director: Since both fall under the social sector, it isn’t much different from each other except for the teaching part. As the saying goes “once a teacher, always a teacher” and I don’t think I will ever cease to be a teacher. Even at RENEW, I am always learning and teaching every day. However, at RENEW, it is more fulfilling since you are providing direct services to the most vulnerable people and changing their lives.

Question: Your views of Samtse College of Education as the erstwhile NIE then and today?

Executive Director: SCE as an institute for learning must adapt itself to the changing times. Innovation and creativity must be encouraged. I observed the college has produced exemplary teachers.

Question: How do you see the role of Samtse College of Education in the overall development of Bhutan’s education system?

Executive Director: The college is contributing to the education system in multiple ways, like producing teacher graduates, updating knowledge and pedagogy, researching and staying at par with international university.

Question: What is your advice to Bhutanese youths who aspire to become teachers?

Executive Director: Be passionate about what you do and always be a good human being.

Question: Our society is changing and we are becoming a knowledge-based society. From your wide experience as a counseling professional and administrator, how should our teaching learning in the Bhutanese education system be designed to address this fast-changing Bhutanese society?

Executive Director: I think mental health should be given priority and curriculum should move along the changing world. Everybody in the education must be well-read and well-informed.

Question: What aspect of Bhutanese education system concerns you as a parent and a Bhutanese citizen who has a stake in education? What opportunities and challenges do you see for Samtse College of Education in addressing these concerns?

Executive Director: Complacency of some teachers and not learning beyond their training days. Updating your knowledge is a must in the modern world. As a college, you have the forum to address these issues.

Question: Our current youth are challenged with issues such as (low self-esteem, low self-efficacy, low emotional intelligence, etc). Is there a way where RENEW and SCE can come together and combat these challenges?

Executive Director: These softer skills are believed to be addressed in Life Skill which is now call Comprehensive Sexuality Education. If this subject is adapted as a module, these issues can be addressed. And yes, RENEW can collaborate and work with SCE on training your Lecturers on the subject.

Question: Following the Royal Kasho on education reform, major transformation is taking place in the Bhutanese Education system. What can RENEW contribute to materialise this reform initiative?

Executive Director: As Civil Society Organisation, we can collaborate and contribute wherever required. We already have MOU with the Paro College of Education and likewise, SCE and RENEW can work together to address societal issues.

Tshering Dolkar is the Executive Director of RENEW. She has a Master's degree in counseling psychology from the University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, Canada. She also studied Advance Course in Counseling Psychology from the University of Phoenix, USA specialising in youth, families and gender. She is a Certified Mental Health Counseling Professional.

She is a recipient of the Hubert H. Humphrey fellowship in John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, US, in Mental Health and Substance Use and Abuse – prevention, treatment, assessment and policy in July 2011-June 2012.

Before resigning from government service in 2008, she served in various capacities such as teacher in a high school, counsellor in the Department of Youth and Sports of the Ministry of Education and as the Joint Director of the Career Education and Counseling Division of the same Department.

News Research & **WRITING TEAM**



Dechen Tshomo



Tandin Selden



Tshering Lhaden



Phuntscho Choden
Tenzing



Tenzee Tshokie
Tobgye



Deki Choden Yezer



Kinley Wangmo



Yeshey Seldon



Pema Deki



Yeshey Choden



SAMTSE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
Royal University of Bhutan
Samtse: Bhutan
PO Box : 329, Phone : 00975-05-365273

www.sce.edu.bt



Royal University of Bhutan