

Chapter 7

Condition of Education from Primary to Tertiary level

Towards the beginning of the 19th century, the British Indian rulers were actively pursuing their ‘forward area policy’ in the Himalayan regions, particularly to develop trade relations with Tibet, in which Bhutan was destined to play its role. The Trongsa *Penlop*, Ugyen Wangchuck, who was the most powerful person in the country became a dependable British ally and helped the British during their Lhasa Expedition (1903-04) in various ways. Within a few years there were tremendous political ups and downs in Bhutan and Ugyen Wangchuck being selected as the first hereditary ruler on December 17, 1907. It was really a welcome development, which was anticipated, encouraged and promptly accorded recognition by the British. With the signing of the Anglo Bhutanese Punakha Treaty on January 8, 1910 Bhutan was effectively brought within the orbit of British sphere of influence with Charles A. Bell, the then Political Officer of Sikkim, appointed to look after the affairs of Bhutan. To develop better and faster communication system efforts were made to familiarise the Bhutan Durbar with English and Hindi. Moreover the King of Bhutan realized their linguistic hardship and took steps for teaching English and Hindi in his country. The King realized the advantages of western education and recognized the merit of *Gongzim* Ugyen Dorji, who was able to communicate in foreign languages with officers from British India at that time and thus was able to make meaningful interaction with them. To fill the vacuum to some extent Ugyen Wangchuck established the first western model school in Haa as early as 1914.¹ He also founded a mobile court school that moved with him around the country.² The second King Jigme Wangchuck, set up 7 to 10 Hindi medium schools in Bumthang, Haa, Wangdi, Tashigang, Damphu and Paro.³ This was the beginning period of modern education system but should we consider it under the broad canvas of the overall development status of Bhutan we can hardly consider its earlier system as modern, it was basically a makeshift immediate need-based effort. The real development started during the rule of third hereditary King, Jigme Dorji Wangchuck who believed that economic and educational development were essential to maintain links with other countries. The launching of Bhutan’s First Five Year Development Plan in 1961 is considered as a landmark in the modern development programme because before that Bhutan was devoid of minimum infrastructural facilities such as motor roads, structured

curriculum etc. So, real modern education system, within the framework of overall national development, could be identified as commencing from 1961. Despite this late start Bhutan is one of the very few countries among the least developed countries, which provides free education to all children irrespective of their socio-economic background.

The purpose of Education

The focus of education was dual: instrumental and integration, instrumental as it became necessary for the people to use new languages, get acquainted with new knowledge and acquire skills so as to be capable to take part in the country's developmental processes. Many schools were opened for the purpose of teaching the skills, languages and technology appropriate for the development of the country. It became a necessity for the people to be acquainted with modern developmental activities. Simultaneously, integration with the global community also became a necessity as Bhutan could no longer keep herself secluded in the period of globalization. The only way to improve the position was through education. In order to maintain links with the other countries and for a rapid development process English was selected as the medium of learning. The main boost to education came during the reign of the fourth King, Jigme Singye Wangchuck. Under his command, a National Education Policy committee was formed with the following members: ⁴

1. Lyonpo Dawa Tshering, Foreign Minister, Chairman
2. Dasho Lam Penjor, Vice Chairman
3. Rev. Father William Mackey
4. Lam Nado, Dzongkha Language Advisor
5. Dasho Nado Rinchhen, Director General, Secretary to the Committee

The first National Education Policy was completed and approved in 1976. It was mentioned here that, "In the process of educational development, the primary need is to prepare the type of educated manpower required for the all around development of our country".⁵ The second National Education Policy of 1984 stated that education should be "inculcate in students spiritual, cultural and traditional values and contribute to national and social cohesion; Meet the manpower requirements of the country and to avert, as far as possible, the incidence of educated unemployment; Base teaching methods on learning by understanding, by emphasising the relevance

and practical use of knowledge learned and by decreasing the emphasis on learning by rote.”⁶

School Administration

When development of education was included as a part of modern development plan, the post of Director of Education was introduced in the First Five Year Plan and it was implemented in 1960's. The Director of Education was in charge of the academic and administrative functions of all the schools. He was responsible to the Secretary General of the Development Wing in Thimphu, although the head office remained in Paro until 1975. Father Mackey in 1995 wrote of people most directly involved in the dissemination of education which included Prime Minister Jigme Dorji, Tashi Dorji (Officiating Prime Minister) and a list of devoted capable Directors as follows: ⁷

1. *Lyonpo* Dawa Tshering-the first official Director of Education
2. Dr. S.C. Mittal
3. Mr. R.S.James
4. Mr. A.N. Dhawan
5. *Dasho* Nado Rinchen, longest reigning Director
6. *Dasho* Jigme Thinley
7. *Dasho* Thinley Gyamtsho, renamed as Director General of Education

In 1980s decentralization policy was introduced heralding a fresh vision and practice in administration in general and the education system in particular. Jigme Singye Wangchuck, is universally credited for initiating not just the decentralization process but also to the beginning of many administrative changes in the country.

In the 1980s there were two Regional Education Officers (REO): at Trashigang and Sarpang. They were responsible for implementing “all educational policies and for proper administrative control of all teaching staff”.⁸ Each REO was assisted by a small group of inspectors to monitor teachers' performance in schools. In the late 1970s and early 1980's, some inspectors in the Head Office, Thimphu, were deployed to supervise school construction, as there was no engineering department to look after the construction of school buildings.

The First Education Conference to “identify the problems in the implementation of the National Education Policy and to raise the standard of education in the country” was held in Thimphu on May 25-26, 1977.⁹ Welcoming the delegates, Mr. Nado Rinchen, Officer on Special Duty, Department of Education, revealed that a conference of this kind was an important indication of the rapid strides education had made in the country and this was the result of wise and enlightened leadership of His Majesty the King. He said the success achieved was due also to the “most loyal and dedicated services rendered by all those deeply involved in the drafting of the national policy and its implementation”.¹⁰ In his speech, the Secretary General, Ministry of Development, *Dasho* (Dr.) T. Tobgyel, pointed out that education would always remain the backbone and foundation of all development activity in the country. He expressed his happiness on the decision of the Education Department to start the third Regional Education Office at Punakha for the efficient management of educational institutions in Central and Western Bhutan. He was delighted with the success in the field of education and pointed out that “it had been possible only due to the hard and dedicated efforts put in by all the concerned staff of these institutions and also due to good management of the administrative machinery”.¹¹

In 1987, the Department of Education closed down the regional offices and decided to divide the country into 4 administrative zones which was a step forward in the direction of decentralization of administrative functions. Each zone would contain 4 or 5 *dzongkhags* and the grouping of *dzongkhags* would be done on the basis of such common features as geographical contiguity which would facilitate easier and quicker communication within the zone. The *dzongkhags* within a zone were to work within the economic goals taking into account the special socio-economic feature of the zone with the minimum of manpower and resources and pursue such goals as laid down by the Zonal administration.

Zonal grouping was as follows-

Zone 1 or Western Zone: Samchi, Chhukha, Thimphu, Paro, Haa
(Headquarters at Chhukha)

Zone 2 or West Central Zone: Dagana, Chirang, Wangdi and Punakha
(Headquarters at Chirang)

Zone 3 or East Central Zone: Gaylegphug, Shemgang, Tongsa and Bumthang
(Headquarters at Gaylegphug)

Zone 4 or Eastern Zone: SamdrupJongkhar, Pemagatshel, Trashigang, Mongar
and Lhuntshi (Headquarters at Younphula)

The main objectives of establishing zonal administrations-¹²

1. To strengthen the decentralization process in the Fifth Five Year Plan and work towards achieving self-reliance.
2. To be able to plan on a zonal basis so that inter linkages between the various *dzongkhags* and potentials of the zone as a whole can be developed.
3. *Dzongkhags* can concentrate on development activities as co-ordination and many other functions of dealing with Ministries and Department would be carried out by zonal administration.
4. To ensure proper and smooth implementation of all plan programmes in the regions.
5. To provide a fair and efficient administration.

Organization of the zonal administration

Zonal administration was organized on functional lines. In each zonal administration there were six functional divisions: ¹³

1. Zonal affairs-administration, personnel and finance
2. Planning and co-ordination
3. Social services and culture
4. Agriculture and industry
5. Communication
6. Engineering

Social services and culture

This division consisted of three sections- education, health and culture

Education-

A direct relationship was established between the zonal education sector and the Education Ministry.

Education Ministry's responsibilities:¹⁴

Formulation of all education related policies, plans and programmes including those to be included in Five Year Plans.

1. Curriculum and textbooks development
2. Inspection and counselling of schools and ensuring relevance and quality of teaching and learning
3. Administration of All Bhutan Common Examinations, inter-zonal transfers and placements of outstanding candidates as boarders in high schools and junior high schools.
4. Training of teachers, headmasters, principals and *dzongkhag* and zonal education officers (pre-service and in-service).
5. Printing and supply of text books, purchase and supply of all stationeries and teaching aids.
6. Development of standard drawings and designs for educational buildings, furniture and other facilities and according technical sanctions for such constructions.
7. Administration of high schools and junior high schools located at Thimphu as well as all national institutes, such as Sherubtse College, the Simtokha Rigney School, the Teachers Training Institute, Royal Institute of Technology, etc.
8. Issuance of policy and administrative guidelines and instructions from time to time.

Responsibilities of the Zonal Administrators:¹⁵

1. To represent His majesty the King and the Royal Government in the region.
2. To provide a fair justice and efficient administration to the people of the region.
3. To look after the social, cultural and economic well being of the people of the region.
4. To provide for proper law, order and security within the region.
5. To plan for socio-economic development of the region and to ensure that there is an optimum utilization of the scare resources of manpower, finance and materials to meet the developments of the region as a whole.

The expectations of the Department of Education from the zonal administrative system were enormous. Construction, renovations, repairs and maintenance and supervision of the educational establishments were expected to receive a new boost with the establishment of Zonal Administration Office. One Zonal Education Officer (ZEO) was selected for each zone from amongst the available senior educationists who was made the representative of the Zonal Administrator. ZEO's were equipped with inspectors who were to be relieved from their previous duties of supervision of construction of schools and their duties were inspecting the schools in both academic and administrative matters. Till then the inspectors of schools were in a position to visit and inspect only the high schools, junior high schools and primary school located along the motor roads. The Department of education decided in 1989 to post a team of inspectors to each Zonal Administration under the respective Zonal Education Officer so that inspection of all primary schools could be carried out regularly.¹⁶ It was also expected that Zonal Education Officer would visit the schools under their respective jurisdiction at least twice a year. The main task of the Zonal Education Officers was to improve the co-ordination between the Department of Education and *dzongkhags*. They convened joint meetings with Ministry of Education and inspectors of schools and submitted the report of progress in the zone and they were also responsible for procurement and distribution of all materials supplied to the zone through educational stores at the zonal level and monitoring these activities.¹⁷ In the year 1990 the Government had decided to hand over the administration and financial aspects of all high schools and junior high schools to the respective zones with the exception of those located at Thimphu. A five day conference was held at Punakha High School from 12 February 1990 to 17 February 1990 where heads of the schools and zonal administrators were informed about this.¹⁸ In the middle of 1990 the Government proposed to strengthening the education sector in zones by appointing an Assistant Zonal Education Officer in each zone.¹⁹

In the late 1980s *dzongkhag* education offices were established in all districts.²⁰ Thus during the Fifth Five Year Plan decentralization of the administrative system, including the administration of the primary schools of all the *dzongkhags* had greatly improved. The posts of *Dzongkhag* Education Officers (DEOs) were created and they were given increased responsibilities as the local heads of school education under the administrative jurisdiction of the *Dzongda* (District Administrator)). DEOs were

selected from amongst the trained senior teachers and headmasters rather than deputing university graduate administrators.²¹ In the record of March 1989 we find that, in view of the shortage of people with necessary qualifications, the Department of Education was in a position to post only 11 DEOs.²² But at the end of September 1989 the Department of Education has completed appointment of DEOs to all the 18 *dzongkhags*.²³ The DEOs were expected to visit the schools under their respective jurisdiction at least twice a year.

Role and Functions of the ZEO's and DEO's-²⁴

1. Education Officers were the Department of Education's representatives in zones and *dzongkhags*, bridging the gap between the zones, *dzongkhags*, Ministry and the Department of Education.
2. Education Officers were expected to know the plans and policies of the Department. They were responsible for execution of Government policies and to encourage the target groups of students, teachers, parents and the community.
3. Education Officers as representatives of the Department of Education had to play an active role in mobilizing the resources for the schools under their jurisdictions.
4. Education Officers were required to demonstrate their professional efficiency in their day to day functions.
5. Guiding trained and untrained teachers.
6. Guiding experienced and inexperienced head teachers.
7. Effective implementation of the curriculum changes and
8. Acting as guardians in providing quality education to the students.

Along with administrative responsibilities of the schools the Department of Education also stressed upon the academic roles of the ZEOs and DEOs such as to provide necessary logistic support to the teachers and the students. Twenty-one Education Officers-four ZEO's and seventeen DEO's attended a two-week long seminar from 25 September to 4 October, 1989, the first of its kind, to work out and understand their roles better as those accountable for zonal and district education.²⁵ Director of Education, Dasho Thinley Gyamtsho, outlined several reasons for the seminar: the heavy enrolment problems, to make education more relevant to the national needs, the decentralization of the education system, the takeover of the

school administration by the zones and to strengthen the roles of the DEO's. The participants felt that this was a good opportunity to catch up with all the changes occurring in the education sector and also to exchange ideas on the broad experiences of all the officers. The annual one week's conference for the ZEOs and DEOs were held at Thimphu from 22nd to 31st October, 1990. The major emphasis of the conference was on academic rather than on administration.²⁶ To this extent, the Department had availed the services of two Swiss experts to augment the resource personnel of the Department of Education for the conference. In this context, it was possible to get some references of school inspection by ZEO's and DEO's, for example on August 10, 1991 the Zonal Education Officer of zone 1 and District Education Officer of Chhukha visited Chhukha High School, Phuentsholing Junior High School, nine primary schools and five community schools but Dungna Primary School and four other community schools could not be visited because of bad weather.²⁷ The main purpose of their visit was to know the day to day functioning of the school activities, both academic and administrative. Further references obtained was that nine DEOs from Bumthang, Tongsa, Sarbhang, Chirang, Chhukha, Samchi, Haa, Paro and Thimphu made a tour to Indonesia from 15- 23 February, 1992, which was sponsored by UNICEF to broaden their knowledge by exposing them to the education systems of that country.²⁸ The officials found that the Indonesian education system was similar to that in Bhutan and the small primary schools there could be compared with community schools in Bhutan.

Role of the inspectors

School inspections had started from as early as 1961, the responsibility being born mainly by the senior teachers who had taught in the 1950's. They were very strict disciplinarians and the inspection carried out by them was more a check on the teachers' performances and giving them professional support. They visited classrooms and asked questions to the students much to the worry of the teachers. Sometimes inspectors were mere secondary school graduates with no experience in teaching or in the methodology of pedagogy and naturally they gained less respect from the teachers of schools they visited. Regarding the inspection system of the 70s of the last century H.B. Vishwa, an eminent educationist of Bhutan mentioned that, "A handful of inspectors available in the Department were bagged down with the administrative works. The inspectors of schools used to visit schools for only the administrative

matters and collection of statistics.”²⁹ Teachers generally viewed inspectors as intervening watchdogs rather than academic auditors. It is a fact that the inspectors had to travel to different parts of the country during heavy rains, hot sun, up the steep hill sides and down the slopes and across torrential rivers often without bridges. Although they may have been accepted in the schools as rare visitors from the headquarters, their sincerest desire would have been to be most useful to colleagues in the schools. Often these desires were not fulfilled as they were simply expected to write report of the place resulting in a natural loss of all the interest in their work. In 1997, the traditional concept of inspection was replaced by the introduction of Education Monitoring and Support Division (EMSD) and the incumbent were to be known as Education Monitoring Officers (EMO). Their new responsibilities among other things were:

“1. Looking at the plans and programmes of the schools against a standard framework for an effective school

2. Discussing programmes and achievements with schools.”³⁰

They were expected to look after the relationship among the school staff, the general appearance of students, maintenance of school property and records. This system required the process to be transparent whereby the purpose of the visits, observations and reports were to be freely discussed in the visited schools so that the teachers would no longer be suspicious of the visitors’ intentions. Teachers were to get the feedback on their performances, what must continue, and what areas needed improvement.³¹ Main purpose of the visit was to see if the schools were following the syllabus and to check the academic content of the courses to make certain a uniform standard in all schools across the country. The inspectors also looked into the problem of teacher shortage faced by schools and inspect the buildings and classrooms.

Thus, we find that there emerged a policy of decentralization in the administration of the education system. There were officers at all levels who had various responsibilities to perform. For example, inspectors had to travel different parts of the country not only to check the performances of the teachers in various schools but also to advocate educational standards and do academic auditing.

The head teacher and the school

During 50's of the last century there were few modern schools in the country and their size was very small, ranging from thirty to one hundred students on roll and mostly run by a single teacher. Although these schools were state-run, absolute power was vested in the teacher and he was, therefore, the all in all in the school. These teachers, who were put in high esteem and respect, were called '*Lopon*' which supposedly means the King of learning. When a *Lopon* began to employ his assistants, he was referred to as '*Lopon Gongma*' which precisely corresponds to 'headmaster'.³² Those early headmasters were very authoritarian to the extent of a strict military officer. They were given the full authority and power to run the schools in the way they wished. Disruptive children were severely punished or expelled. However, as the schools began to grow both in size and number and with the advent of large number of Indian teachers after 1962, the role of the head began to change from rigid authoritarian to benevolent authoritarian. The Indian teachers were better qualified compared to the Bhutanese at that time and had the experience of managing schools in their own country though all of them did not have a professional training. In the middle of the 80's the Government decided to nationalize the education system in the belief that young Bhutanese teachers would be placed as the heads of schools nationwide, a procedure termed as 'Nationalization of Heads'.³³ The reason for this policy of the Government was that it had become imperative to utilize the schools and institutions to develop loyal and Bhutanese citizens to serve His Majesty the King and the country faithfully as well as ensure the kingdom's future well being. It was mentioned in the Country's first educational guidelines that "what the Government is looking for from our national teachers, particularly the heads of schools/institutes is--- love, loyalty, and dedication to His Majesty, the country and the people, and above all, to the causes of thousands of our students who are in their custody".³⁴

Till June 1988, of the 192 schools and institutions across the country five schools were headed by expatriates and in March 1989 all were replaced by national heads. The first year was a period of probation, those who would be found unable the Government would replace them and for this the Department of Education decided to do regular evaluation of the performances of all the heads on the basis of following criteria-³⁵

1. Initiative, dedication, and ability to effectively implement the Government policies and programmes
2. Good administration of their institutions
3. The ability to maintain a high degree of discipline amongst the students and teachers of the respective schools
4. The ability to install the highest standard of Bhutanese values in the students so that they develop into loyal and dedicated subjects of the king and the country.

The role of the head

The role of the head was that of a leader who had the responsibility to lead and make decisions in all aspects of achieving the school's objectives and educational goals. In addition to the prime role of academic leader and role model to others, the head was also the representative of the Department of Education in the school and was, therefore, the overall administrative head of the institution. As such, the head required to demonstrate high leadership qualities.

The academic leader was responsible for effectively implementing Government policy and programmes. In working to ensure that the students obtained the best education possible, he/she should-³⁶

1. Provide supervision to teachers to apply the new curriculum as provided at each class level.
2. Ensure that each teacher develops an overview of the syllabus material to be covered during the academic year.
3. Promote the use of Dzongkha.
4. Develop the teaching calibre of his staff by effective supervision.
5. Ensure proper supervision of all academic activities.
6. Encourage professional co-operation amongst teachers and towards the head.
7. Encourage individual teachers to show leadership quality and decision making when given responsibility.
8. Assess and evaluate all academic activities done by the staff and students e.g. examinations, promotion criteria, lesson plans, teaching-learning process etc.
9. Encourage the development and execution of a good co-curricular and extra-curricular programme.

As a role model, the head was required to exercise discipline in his/her private as well as his/her public life. This was particularly important since the head was actively working to preserve and promote the traditional customs and cultural values of the country. As the administrative head he had to ensure that school administration ran smoothly and adequately. In doing this he/she needed to: ³⁷

1. Delegate properly defined responsibilities to other staff members.
2. Supervise both teaching and non-teaching staff.
3. Plan and organise school activities i. e. daily routine, timetabling, programming etc.
4. Ensure proper usage and maintenance of the school's physical and educational facilities.
5. Plan and decide on financial matters pertaining to the school.
6. Maintain a high degree of discipline amongst the students and teachers by ensuring that the staff and students adhere to the set of rules and regulations of the school.
7. Work to promote positive community, staff and professional relations.

Teachings by heads of schools

In 1989 the Department of Education had been informed that many heads of schools did not engage themselves in any classroom teaching. No doubt that good administration of their respective schools was the most important responsibility of the concerned heads of the schools and the Department felt it paramount that the heads of schools should be involved in teaching of a limited number of periods a week due to the following reasons-³⁸

1. The education system in the kingdom was plagued by the shortage of trained national teachers. The existing heads of schools constituted the best group amongst the available trained national teachers and were accordingly elevated to the post of heads of schools. So it was not possible to exempt 195 of the best teachers from classroom teaching.
2. The concerned headmasters would be in a position to provide academic leadership only if they undertook certain amount of teaching load and keep themselves updated with the classroom scenario.

3. Certain amount of classroom teaching by heads of school was essential in order not only to gain necessary respect and co-operation from the teachers and the students, but also to keep them aware with the day to day life in the school campus.

So, the heads of schools and institutes were generally expected to teach a minimum of twelve periods a week and headmasters of smaller primary schools with less than 150 students were however expected to take almost full weekly teaching load.³⁹

Annual selection and Awards to outstanding schools and head teachers:

On February 10, 1991, the Minister for Social Services declared the system of annual selection of outstanding schools and headmasters and suitably awarding them. The Department of Education would establish appropriate criteria and procedures for the selection as well as the form of awards to the schools. Both academic and extracurricular performances by the schools, such as results of the common examinations, sports and cultural activities, school agriculture and forestry programmes, campus maintenance and beautification, relationship with the communities and the respective head teachers initiatives in these fields as well as in staff development would be included in the criteria for the annual selection of outstanding schools and head teachers for awards.

Annual Selection of Outstanding Schools for the Year 1992:

The Department of Education announced the schools which were selected as the best schools in their respective categories for the all round performances during the year 1992as mentioned hereunder-

Table 7.1: Best schools in 1992

Classification	School /name of the head	Remarks
Best High School	Mongar High School (Thubten Jamtsho)	1. ICSE results for 1991- 100% 2. ICSE results for 1992 – 93% 3. Class VIII 1992 common examinations – 83% which was 3 rd best

		<p>amongst the high schools.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Team spirit amongst teaching staff resulting from the leadership of principal commendable. 5. Extra-curricular activities particularly the cooking club of girl students is good. 6. Above mentioned achievements made in spite of the fact that Monger was upgraded to high school only a few years ago.
Best Jr. High School	Wamrong Jr. High School (Wangpo Tenzin)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 93.75% in 1992 class VI common examinations 2. 94.12% in 1992 class VIII common examinations which was second only to Paro high school. 3. 2 Students, namely, Kencho Wangdi medals in painting and essay competitions respectively during the first SAARC festival. 4. They were the only Bhutanese Gold medallists which were awarded by the President of India in New Delhi on October, 1992. 5. One of the best schools in the Kingdom in folk songs and music. 6. The above mentioned achievements made by the school in spite

		of the fact that Wamrong JHS probably has one of the worst facilities amongst the Jr. High Schools.
Best 3 primary Schools		
1 st position	Lobesa Primary School Thimphu (Yeshe Wangdi)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 100% or 25 students passed in 1992 class VI common examinations. 2. Community participation in school affairs very strong. 3. Team spirit amongst teachers under headmaster's leadership good. 4. Nature conservation and social forestry commendable.
2 nd position	Phuentsholing Primary School Chhukha (Kinley Pem)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 90% or 25 out of 29 students passed 1992 class VI common examinations. 2. Team spirit amongst teachers under headmistress's leadership very good. 3. In spite of difficulties and being in urban area relationship between school and parents very good. 4. Above mentioned achievements made in spite of the fact that the school was closed after repeated bombings by Ngolops(anti-socialists) and reopened only after a year.
3 rd position	Deothang Primary School Samdrup Jongkhar (Jurney Kuenga)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 90.32% of 28 out of 31 students passed in 1992 class VI

		<p>common examinations.</p> <p>2. Campus maintenance very good</p> <p>3. Team spirit amongst teachers under headmaster's leadership very strong.</p>
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(Source-*Tenth Quarterly Policy Guidelines and Instructions*, Department of Education, Ministry of Social Service, Royal Government of Bhutan, Thimphu April 1993, pp.8-9)

The Department of Education congratulated all the teachers and students of the above mentioned 5 schools for their performances and being selected as the best schools for the year 1992. All the available information, mainly the reports of the inspectors of schools as well as feedbacks by the dzongkhags authorities were used for the final assessments.

Training Programmes for the heads of the schools:

The Department of Education started in-service training programmes for the head teachers from the 80s to develop necessary confidence and to increase their ability. Here are some examples of training programmes of the head teachers:

1. An education workshop was organised by the Social and Cultural Division of the Department of Education in Deothang for headmasters of different schools from January 1 to 15 to provide them an opportunity to interact, exchange views, and experiences and discuss various issues with department officials including new curricula, teaching facilities etc.⁴⁰
2. The headmasters of junior high schools, principals of high schools, head of institutions of higher learning and district education officers from all over the country met at Thimphu from September 23 to 25, 1986. The conference was inaugurated with a speech by the Director of Education, Dasho Jigme Thinley, who informed the participants on the structure, organization and workings of the directorate. Working sessions were held on the second and third afternoons where the participants separated into four groups discussed concerns and proposed resolutions. These groups were academic, administration, inspection,

counselling and direction. Under the chairmanship of Dasho Jigme Thinley the group reports were reviewed, revised and resolutions adopted. Participants felt the conference was an effective medium for information on the overall structure and policies of the Education Department.⁴¹

3. The Department of Education conducted an intensive 12 day training course at Samchi on school management and administration for the heads of primary schools starting from 26th December, 1988. According to the Deputy Director of Education, Zangley Dukpa, the objective of the in-service training was to improve the skill of the primary school headmasters in running a school. This was the first time that 150 heads of primary schools took part in such a programme. Future plans for the heads of schools were to have distance training using communication facilities like the radio and also to have a mobile training team which could visit schools from time to time.⁴² The Director of Education, *Dasho* Thinley Gyamtsho, in his inaugural speech said that, “It is hoped that you the headmasters of different schools would be in a position to fulfil the national objectives by instilling in our younger generations a deep sense of pride and respect for our traditional values”.⁴³

4. The head teachers from 3 junior high schools and 19 primary schools attended the conference in Samchi from August 25 to 28, 1989 which was coordinated by the *Dzongkhag* Education Officer. The conference was held to work out more effective ways to implement the national education policies, familiarise the headmasters with their responsibilities and the different aspects of school management.⁴⁴

5. A three day workshop was held at Teachers Training College in Paro in July 1991 which was attended by head-teachers, class teachers, officials and resource persons from the education field. The workshop exposed the participants to the link between teaching experience and teaching skills, introduction to the preconference format, lesson observation and introduction to evaluation format.⁴⁵

6. A two day workshop attended by more than 20 headmasters of primary schools and teachers in charge of the community schools in Mongar *Dzongkhag* was held on October 30-31, 1991. The workshop, organized by the education sector of the *dzongkhag* included discussions on administrative procedures, implementation of competitions both within the school and with other schools in

games, sports and essays, co-ordination between parents and teachers and the latest departmental policies for the promotion of a better education system in the country. According to the District Education Officer of Mongar, the main target of the workshop was to assess the headmasters and teachers in charge in terms of overall school administration and the academic contents covered so far.⁴⁶

7. A conference of the heads of schools was held at Teachers training College in Paro from 4 to 16 January 1993 which was attended by 16 heads of junior high schools, 144 heads of primary schools, 95 heads of community schools, 19 *dzongkhag* education officers and 5 inspectors of schools. At the end of the conference the Director of Education, *Dasho* Thinley Gyamtsho, pointed out that, “I am proud to stand before you to declare that the nationalism of the heads of our schools and institutes has been totally successful, all except one of our 268 schools and institutes are now headed by nationals” and he listed some success achieved in schools under the stewardship of national heads, “The growing knowledge and popularity of the country’s history, geography and environment, *dzongkha* and the growing confidence and ability of self-expression in both speech and writing and above all the pride of being Bhutanese”.⁴⁷ The seminar aimed at reviewing the education sector’s activities during the Sixth five Year Plan, familiarising the participants with activities of the Seventh Plan, particularly in the matters of primary education. The seminar was important because it gave the educators an opportunity to share their experiences, exchange views, and discuss common issues and problems faced in their respective institutes.

8. A conference of the head teachers of primary schools, junior high schools, DEO’s and other education officers was held at the NIE, Samchi from December 29, 1994 to January 12, 1995. The 220 participating head teachers and education officers discussed on many major issues and challenges related to the education system such as multi-grade teaching, teacher deployment and utilization, supervision, guidance and counselling, examinations, evaluation and promotion; non-formal education; school management board; matters relating to decentralization, cost effectiveness and sustainability of the education system. The conference provided not only important feedbacks but also made many important recommendations in Government endeavours to make education system more relevant according to the national needs and aspirations.⁴⁸

In fact the Government thought that the headmasters must assume all the responsibilities of being the focal point in their respective schools in bringing about all round improvements in the concerned schools particularly in enhancing the

qualifications and skills amongst their respective teachers through the school based in service training programmes. The head teachers must also be in position to provide necessary leadership to the teachers and students as well as to the members of the communities to fulfil the national goals and aspirations. In order to make them learn from each other, the Department of Education had arranged an all Bhutan tour for heads of the 7 tertiary institutes and 8 high schools during May, 1993. The group travelled, lived and studied together and visited all the institutes and high school in the country. Following was the purpose, schedule and name of the participants-⁴⁹

Purpose-

1. To review and assess secondary and tertiary level education programmes.
2. To provide avenue for discussions on issues of general concerns and briefing by departmental officials.
3. To provide opportunities to the heads to observe, listen and share each other's experiences in their own unique matters.
4. Other related matters.

Table 7.2: Programme for heads in all Bhutan tour, 1993

Day	Programme
1.5.93	Inaugural session
10.5.93	Visit Yangchenphug High School in Thimphu
11.5.93	Visit Motithang High School in Thimphu
12.5.93	Visit Punakaha High School in Punakaha
13.5.93	Visit Teachers Training College in Paro
14.5.93	Visit Paro High School in Paro
15.5.93	Visit Chhukha High School in Chhukha
16.5.93	Visit NIE in Samchi
17.5.93	Visit Royal Technical Institute in Phuentsholing
18.5.93	Tour from Phuentsholing to Shemgang
19.5.93	Visit Shemgang High School in Shemgang
20.5.93	Tour from Shemgang to Deothang
21.5.93	Visit Royal Bhutan Polytechnic in Deothang
22.05.93	Tour from Deothang to Khaling
23.5.93	Visit ZangleyMuenselling School in Khaling
24.5.93	Tour from Khaling to Mongar
25.5.93	Visit Mongar High School in Mangor
26.5.93	Visit Sherubtse College in Kanglung
27.5.93	Closing ceremony at Sherubtse College

(Source-*Tenth Quarterly Policy Guidelines and Instructions*, Department of Education, Ministry of Social Service, Royal Government of Bhutan, Thimphu, April, 1993, Annexure I)

Participants

1. Pema Thinley, Director, NIE, Samchi
2. Dorji Tshering, Director, TTC, Paro
3. Zangley Dukpa, Principal, Sherubtse College
4. Kezang Chhador, Principal, RBP, Deothang
5. Neten Zangmo, Principal, RTI, Phuentsholing
6. Singye Namgyel, Vice Principal, Simtokha Rigshung School
7. Gagey Lhamu, Principal, Motithang High School
8. Tshewang Tandin, Principal Yangchenphug High School
9. Namgey Wangmo, Principal, Paro High School
10. Pintsho Choden, Principal, Chhukha High School
11. Tshering Tenzin, Principal, Shemgamg High School
12. Tashi Norbu, Principal, Punakha High School
13. Thubten Gyatsho, Principal, Mongar High School
14. Sangay Tenzin, Principal, Jigme Sherubling High School, Khaling
15. Nawang Namgyel, Principal, Zangley Muenselling School in Khaling.

We find one remarkable change in the 90s when the designation of head teachers was replaced by the more respectable term of ‘principal’ as in the case of the heads of colleges and teacher training institutes.

Selection of heads of schools

When Government introduced the policy to appoint nationals as heads of the schools in late 80’s, many inexperienced and less matured teachers were placed in that position and by late 90’s there were experienced and matured teachers available within the country to fill the deficiency. In August 1997 the Department of Education declared that candidates who were interested and eligible for the post of head teachers might apply directly to the Education Division. The criteria required were: ⁵⁰

1. Applicants applying for the post of primary school/community school head teacher must have a minimum of 5 years of teaching experience.
2. Applicants applying for the post of junior high school/high school head teacher must have a minimum of bachelor degree in Education/University graduate with at least 3 years of teaching experience.
3. Applicants must be willing to serve in remote/difficult area.

Structure of Education system

The modern education system had a 7+4+2+3 structure, i.e. seven years at primary school, four years in high school, a further two years in senior high school, and three years in the basic degree course at Sherubtse College. Besides these there were technical education, special education, non-formal education and adult education system.

Primary Education:

In the 1960's, Bhutan introduced a 6-year primary schooling period of 'Infant to class V'. Later in 1970's, this evolved to a 7 year primary period of Infant, Kindergarten and up to class V, still later this was renamed Lower Kindergarten to class V. This system of two kindergarten grades required to admit the children in school at a younger age. In 1985 the Department of Education, aiming to reduce the twin problems of shortage of trained teachers and admission of very young children, raised the minimum admission age to six years and replaced the two-years of kindergarten by one year of Pre-Primary (class PP).⁵¹ Within the seven years of primary education, the first grade was designated Pre-Primary (PP) and the remaining six classes' I-VI. Despite the name PP, the first year was very much formal schooling. However, the Department recognized that some parents were able to bear the costs of the education of their children so one of the strategy of the Seventh Five Year Plan was to encourage private entrepreneurs to establish primary schools in towns.⁵² The 1993 Review of Primary Education commented that in most PP classes: "The aim of teachers seems to be to get (the children) onto the readers, formal arithmetic and book work as quickly as possible so that they will be ready for class 1. The Pre-Primary grade does not function as preschool (as intended) but seems to be already class 1 so that the primary education in Bhutan in fact lasts for seven years."⁵³

The primary education system, broadly defined, incorporated three types of institutions. Most obvious were the primary schools, but it also included community schools and junior high schools. Until 1994, some high schools also had primary grades.

Community Schools:

The community schools evolved from the ECR (Extended Classroom) initiative launched during the Sixth Five-Year Plan (1987-92). The concept of ECR was based on one teacher one classroom schooling system wherein multi-grade and class teacher teaching system were introduced. This system was formulated to improve the existing primary educational coverage in the kingdom in view of the resource and other limitations in establishing new primary schools and also the desire to start the early socialization process of the child at home and in the community itself. These schools provided education from classes PP to III in classrooms constructed by the community while the Department of Education took care of necessary staffing and provision of educational materials. The Department of Education concluded that the success of the concept of the Extended Classroom should depend on the availability of adequate number of national teachers with necessary trainings and pedagogical requirements as well as professional commitment to be posted in remote areas and manage the ECRs on his or her own with very little supervision though in the beginning most teachers were untrained and the postings were temporary.⁵⁴

In the beginning such schools were conceived as an extension to an existing primary school, 'Parent School' and hence the term 'Extended Classroom' meant that the administration and the supervision of the staff of ECR were entrusted upon the head master of the parent school. The concept also made provision for the students from these ECRs to be enrolled into the parent school or the nearest boarding school after passing class III. In 1991 the ECRs were separated and were referred to as 'community schools' with the name of the catchment village prefixed and numbers of teachers allowed were to be more than one on the basis of availability.

Conceptual guidance regarding establishment of community schools:⁵⁵

1. The establishment of any new community school had to be based on a proper demographic survey of the communities within a well defined area. The

location of the school had to ensure maximum coverage of households within easy walking distances. The minimum number of enrolment in the school was to be 30. A maximum walking distance of one hour was recommended for the beneficiaries.

2. All efforts to minimize the burden of the community were to be made in constructing the community schools by using locally available materials. The buildings were to be, however, reasonably durable and needed to meet the basic conditions required of a school building. Technical help from the concerned zone or *dzongkhag* offices were to be rendered to ensure that some of the basic norms were maintained.

3. The school needed to have basic facilities such as recreation space, drinking water supply, and toilet and also possess other scope for subsequent up-gradation to a full-fledged primary school, if necessary.

4. Squatting desks and other furniture were to be made by the local carpenters and, if necessary, a fund could be provided by the *dzongkhag* administration.

5. Necessary stationeries, books and other teaching materials were to be provided by the Central Stores of the Department of Education.

Roles and Responsibilities of the communities: ⁵⁶

6. The households that fell within the catchment area of the school needed to be responsible for the construction and maintenance of the school building and the campus.

7. The school was to form a management board with the senior-most teacher as the Chairman and 3 to 4 respected members of the community as well as other teachers (if any) as the Board members who would be responsible for the admission of the children and maintenance of works required for the school and they should meet twice a year.

8. The community was to also provide necessary accommodation to the teachers on payment basis. The teachers were to respond by installing amongst the community a sense of liability and contribution in educating their own children.

Administrative and Academic issues: ⁵⁷

1. The community schools were to form an integral part of the overall primary education delivery system. In fact these schools were to provide necessary

foundations on primary education to a majority of the children. It was, therefore, vital that utmost attention be given to the quality of education in these schools. To this extent, all concerned authorities were to ensure the followings-

- a) Appointment of only the best trained national teachers.
 - b) Provision of adequate teaching and learning facilities.
 - c) Regular visits by the DEO-at least twice a year.
 - d) Regular visits by the Inspectors of Schools-once a year.
 - e) Regular in-service/workshops for the community school teachers.
2. Admissions into the community schools were to take place at the beginning of each academic year. All children of 6 to 9 years age group were to be enrolled during the first year. Only children of 6 years were to be enrolled during the subsequent years.
3. The community schools could also be used for other community activities without disturbing the schools' routine functions.

Up-gradation: ⁵⁸

A community school began with one or more classes and depended on the number of children in the community. Most of these schools were expected to be upgraded class by class annually to class III level on the discretion of the concerned *dzongkhag* authorities and in consultation with school board. The powers to further upgrade from class IV to VI, that is, to a primary school level were vested with the Department of Education. The community schools that wanted to apply for primary schools status had to meet the following criteria:

1. The school had to have at least 60 students between classes PP-III.
2. The school had to be founded and existed as extended classrooms or community school for at least 2 years.
3. The building and other facilities needed to be appropriate for a full-fledged primary school.
4. The school required to exhibit high academic performance.
5. The community concerned was to have shown high sense of responsibility in the upkeep and maintenance of the school.

The qualitative judgement on the above mentioned criteria was to be made by the concerned head master, *Dzongkhag* Education Officers, and the Inspectors of schools and they were to report to the Education headquarters for necessary action.

Establishment of new community schools:

There existed great disparities from zone to zone and *dzongkhag* to *dzongkhag*, particularly between Northern and Southern *dzongkhags* in terms of schooling enrolment.

Table 7.3: Statistics for 1990 in the *dzongkhags* with 5 highest and lowest enrolments

Highest enrolments	Lowest enrolments
Chirang 99.88%	Lhuntshi 30.63%
Haa 96.12%	Mongar 36.40%
Gaylephug 95.09%	Tongsa 42.13%
Paro 91.37%	Tashigang 42.51%
Samchi 66.99%	Wangdue 43.89%

(Source-*Sixth Quarterly Policy Guidelines and Instructions*, Department of Education, Ministry of Social Services, Royal Government of Bhutan, Thimphu, March 1991, p.18)

In order to remove the above mentioned zone to zone and *dzongkhag* to *dzongkhag* disparities in enrolment, the Department of Education received necessary Government directives to improve the educational facilities in many of the *dzongkhags* with prevailing low enrolments. To this extent, following programmes were initiated on March 11, 1991:⁵⁹

- A) 29 of the existing community schools which had been in existence for last two years with enrolments of at least 60 students would be up-graded to full-fledged primary schools. These new schools were provided with WFP midday meals, full-fledged head masters and full teaching strength appropriate to primary schools.
- B) As 29 out of 55 community schools were up-graded to primary schools and only 26 schools remained as community schools. In addition 65 new community schools were established and the total number rose to 91.

Table 7.4: List of community schools upgraded to primary schools in 1991

Name of the ECRs Dzongkhag	No. Of students in 1990
1. Genekha,Thimphu	66
2. Bidongkha,Punakha	172
3. Rukupji, Wangdue Phodrang	95
4. Samey, Dagana	69
5. Leleygang, Shemgang	87
6. Edi, Shemgang	63
7. Gomphu, Shemgang	66
8. Tangsibi, Shemgang	60
9. Nimshong, Shemgang	63
10. Chaskar, Mongar	84
11. Bumpazor, Mongar	85
12. Kilikhar, Mongar	114
13. Zunglen, Mongar	77
14. Mikuri, Pemagatshel	105
15. Chhimung, Pemagatshel	124

16. Bartsham, Tashigang	135
17. Bikhar, Tashigang	91
18. Chaling, Tashigang	142
19. Changmey, Tashigang	62
20. Jamkhar, Tashigang	140
21. Lumang, Tashigang	63
22. Ramjar, Tashigang	121
23. Merak, Tashigang	70
24. Sakten, Tashigang	121
25. Tshachi, Tashigang	108
26. Tshangpo, Tashigang	96
27. Tarpel, Tashigang	62
28. Pasaphu, Tashigang	60
29. Yarphu, SamdrupJongkhar	70

(Source-Sixth Quarterly Policy Guidelines and Instructions, Department of Education, Ministry of Social Services, Royal Government of Bhutan, Thimphu, March 1991 Annexure I)

In 1992 which was the first year of the Seventh Five Year Plan, 95 community schools had come into existence and Government was planning to establish 20 more community schools with the aim to fulfil the vital role of providing the necessary foundations to basic education to a large majority of children, particularly to the far-flung communities.⁶⁰

The principal distinctions between primary and community schools were that:

1. Community schools were not supposed to go beyond class III, whereas primary schools covered up to class VI.
2. In primary schools, communities were not responsible for roofing materials, wages for skilled labour and items such as cement, nails, doors and window bolts, whereas in community schools all these items were supposed to be supplied by the communities.
3. Community schools were not eligible for WFP supplies.

However, these differences were rather marginal when compared to the similarities as some community schools had proceeded to class IV but were still called community schools and some that proceeded beyond were called community primary schools. Many community schools had even received external donations of roofing materials and also WFP supplies.

Community school programme was a successful venture in Bhutan because community contributions were easier because firstly they had a broader base and secondly because many contributions were in labour and kind rather than in cash. Community school programme being rural based substantial variation existed among schools of urban and rural areas. Urban schools seem to have fewer community contributions than rural ones because there it was difficult to foster a strong feeling of community spirit, and since towns had stronger cash economies it was easier to make a case for parental fees in lieu of community contributions. The success also depended on the enthusiasm and initiative of head teachers, *gups*, school management board and other community leaders. Sometimes the communities were enthusiastic because this system of education was a new idea to them which they understood would improve their standard of living and it would in future generate avenues of employment. So, the community schools' initiative made major contributions to expansion of schooling, particularly in far-flung areas.

The objectives of primary education system

Primary education covers a seven year period. Students entered at 6+ into Pre-Primary level. Successful students complete primary education after six more years (class I to VI). The main thrust of the primary education was to obtain a ‘basic literacy level’. Basic literacy level in their context at 1990’s was understood as hereunder-⁶¹

A. Academic:

Upon graduating from primary schools the students were expected:

1. To have developed basic skills in reading and understanding in English and *Dzongkha* whereby they would be able to read and understand documents, such as *Kuensel* (national newspaper), common notices and signs, posters, simple instructions, simple manuals and pamphlets in both languages.
2. To develop basic skills in writing in English and *Dzongkha* and be able to write simple letters, applications and reports in both languages.
3. To develop skills in speaking and listening in both languages and be able to speak and understand *Dzongkha* and English fluently.
4. To develop basic ability in arithmetic so that they become able to do addition, subtraction, multiplication and division and maintain everyday accounts.
5. To provide basic knowledge in science, particularly the importance of health and hygiene, and social studies, particularly the geography and history of Bhutan.
6. To provide a base to pursue higher studies as well as a parcel of knowledge and skills to serve them in their adult lives even if they opted out after the primary stage.

B. Non Academic:

1. To develop ideal Bhutanese citizens who have profound sense of pride for being Bhutanese and, as such, are loyal, dedicated and productive, contented and happy with a high standard of moral ethics and discipline along with a deep sense of respect for *Diglam Chogsum* or country’s code of conduct.
2. To make the children to understand, appreciate and support the social and political harmony that exists in the country.

3. To inculcate amongst the students a greater understanding of and appreciation for the predominantly agriculture based rural lives and as such, develop in them dignity of labour as well as the traditional values.

Secondary Education

Secondary education has three stages. Class VII and VIII was followed by class IX and X and then XI and XII. Junior high schools had classes VII and VIII but till 1990's nearly all of the junior high schools had to cover from Pre-Primary to class VIII. Similarly high schools had classes from VIII to X but till 1993 they had classes from Pre-Primary to X. During the Second Five Year Plan period two junior high schools of Thimphu and Tashigang of western and eastern Bhutan were upgraded to high schools. Sherubtse College was first established as a high school in 1968 and higher secondary education programme was provided there from 1976 which was known as junior college till 2001 when many high schools were upgraded to higher secondary level. Degree courses in Arts, Commerce and Science disciplines were introduced in the Sherubtse College in the year 1983 and it was upgraded to a degree college, with affiliation to the Delhi University. Honours courses in Commerce, Economic and English was introduced in 1991, followed by Geography and *Dzongkha* in 1996. It got rid of the classes XI and XII in Arts and Commerce in 1997 and Science in 2001. In Thimphu there was a Rigney school established in 1961 to provide learning in *Dzongkha* language and traditional arts. It was raised to the Institute for Language and Cultural Studies in 1997. While the initial enrolment was restricted to class VI passed students, it was upgraded to class X passed students from 1997.

Tertiary Education

During the period of our study there were two colleges for teachers' education- one was Paro College of Education, established in 1975, and another one was Samchi College of Education, established in 1968. Both the institutions offered three years Bachelor of Education degree course and also two-year certificate course for the primary school teachers. The Bhutan Board of Examinations awarded the certificate. For general degree programme there was the only single college, Sherubtse College and it enrolled its first degree students in 1983. Sherubtse College offered a Bachelor

of Science (General) degree course and Bachelor of Arts (General) degree course in Arts and Commerce. The degrees were awarded by the Delhi University.

Technical Education

From the sixties of the last century when Bhutan moved towards achieving socio-economic goals aimed at self-reliance, many new challenges of technological nature cropped up in the process. To overcome these problems the need of trained technical personnel was felt. So the country made a beginning towards the development of technical training facilities in 1965, when Don Bosco Technical School was founded in 1965 at Kharbandi, Phuentsholing which was later renamed as Royal Technical Institute. The school had been able to provide from time to time technical workers of lower and some middle categories. With the setting up of Royal Bhutan Polytechnic in 1972 at Dawathang in Samdrupjongkhar which was later renamed as Royal Bhutan Institute of Technology and shifted to Chhukha *Dzongkhag*, more technical personnel of middle level were available to meet the country's increased manpower requirement. In 1976, a seminar, jointly organized by the Royal Government of Bhutan and Colombo Plan Bureau, was held in Thimphu on 'National Planning of Technical Education and Vocational Training'. The seminar focussed importance on technical education and training and the need for setting up of a separate authority for overall planning, coordination and execution of various programmes in this field. As a result, a Technical Education Cell was established in the same year.⁶² A three day work shop on technical and vocational education was held in Thimphu in May, 1987, attended by 50 delegates, where the fourth King, Jigme Singye Wangchuck said that young people need to be encouraged by every means to see that the path of technical and vocational education led to worthwhile, satisfying and rewarding careers. The King also said that he hoped officials in curriculum development for technical and vocational education would give special importance to instilling in young people a sense of discipline, dedication, pride in one's profession and a greater sense of responsibility to serve the country. *Lyonpo* Dawa Tshering, Minister for Foreign Affairs, in his address, emphasised the need for young people to be encouraged to take up technical careers.⁶³ But even in the year 1995, only 15 to 20 percent of the whole students opted for technical and vocational programmes as they did not enjoy the same status and esteem as in general education. So a workshop was held in November, 1995 in Royal Technical Institute where

discussion took place regarding the key to the relevance of technical and vocational education and job security of the trained personnel.⁶⁴

Adult Education

Adult education was started by the Manpower Department at the Royal Commercial Institute, Thimphu from August 10, 1981. Of the hundred and eight applicants, thirty four had been selected to attend the classes which were held every morning from 6 to 8 a.m. The teachers from Yangchenphug Central School volunteered to conduct the classes. Only English was taught. The adult education was started with a view to improve the career of those Government employees who were interested in learning English language as most of the official correspondence was carried out in English. *Lopen Nado Rinchen*, the chief guest in the inauguration ceremony pointed out that in the past many clerks and civil servants had gone for intensive English course outside the country, but this had not proved very beneficial and also involved a lot of expenditure.⁶⁵ Constructed in 1980, the new school building had 12 classrooms, a library while 322 students were studying there including 200 boarders taught by eight teachers.⁶⁶

In late 80's some adults had joined the formal education system by taking admission in formal primary schools. For example in 1987, 80 adult people started attending classes at Gonichawa Primary School in Paro from the surrounding villages to read and write. The instruction was arranged for the evening so as not to conflict with the daily routine of the school. The lessons were given under the guidance of the head teacher Mr. K. B. Pradhan and Lieutenant Colonel Mr. D. B. Chhetri.⁶⁷ In 1991 a new adult education programme was implemented by UNICEF in close collaboration with the education sector of the *dzongkhag* administration. In 1991 we found that forty women were attending the adult education programme in a *lhakhang* in Rukubji village in Wangduephodrang. The teachers who were conducting the programme were volunteers. A seven women's delegation from Wangduephodrang Women's Association in December 1991 found that the villagers could write their names, read *Kuensel* (national newspaper) and do simple calculations.⁶⁸

Non-formal Education

This system of education was first initiated in 1980 in Deothang and Pemagatsel by the National Women's Association of Bhutan (NWAB) for the development of

women. The concept, however gained momentum from 1992 after the Dzongkhag Development Commission (DDC) established five non-formal education centres in Dechencholing, Pemagatsel, Trashiyangtse, Rukubji and Phobjika. The centres were set up with Nu. 9,07,125 given by the UNICEF, UNESCO and the Royal Government.⁶⁹ Under the scheme, two hour classes were conducted for interested people, irrespective of gender and regardless of age, in the evenings after normal schools closed for the day. The timings were flexible and adjusted in accordance with the convenience of the students. The curriculum which covered six months was divided into three levels and concerning subjects were environment, child care, health and hygiene, culture and the attainment of self-sufficiency through cottage industries. Songs and pictorial illustrations were also used as part of teaching method to make the sessions more interesting and easier. Gradually the centres were also established in other villages. Thus we find that in 1993 in Merchenmo village under Bongo Gewog, Chhukha *Dzongkhag*, 39 villagers enrolled for the non-formal programme which were run by the two female instructors assigned by the Dzongkha Development Commission and in Trashigang *Dzongkhag* 30 people were enrolled in the Trashigang non formal centre and 33 joined in Khaling non formal centre.⁷⁰ The non-formal education scheme was a welcome opportunity for illiterate villagers. Many flocked to the non-formal classes, some out of sheer curiosity and other determined to learn to read and write. They could also acquire knowledge about relevant issues like family planning and child care. There was a growing response from the womenfolk to take part in this education system as classes were held mostly in the evenings which was convenient for them to attend and the course bridged the gap of women lagging behind men in formal education and we found that in 1994 among all the pupils engaged in non-formal education 69% were women.⁷¹

However, non-formal education was not without constraints. Qualified instructors were reluctant to work in remote areas; therefore, most of the centres were managed by school dropouts and other experience less instructors. There was problem on the part of students also. As most of them were involved in agricultural activities and they had very little cultivable land so they had to move to other places for their livelihood which disrupted six months schedule. For the women, the obstacles included family pressure and early marriage practices. Still a UNICEF report in 1994 recorded that the adult literacy rate in the country had reached 54% as compared to

the 38.4% in a 1990 UNESCO survey.⁷² The report quoted the non-formal education scheme as one of the possible reasons.

In 1994 the non-formal education system was formally transferred to the Department of Education. Until early 1996, non-formal education centres provided only basic literacy course, after that the centre started providing post literacy course.

Table 7.5: Number of centres and enrolment, NFE, 1992-1997

Year	Enrolment	No. Of centre
1992	300	06
1993	1355	35
1994	1359	35
1995	944	26
1996	1271	34
1997	1462	42

(Source-General Statistics, Ministry of Education, Policy and Planning Division, Royal Government of Bhutan, Thimphu, 2003, p.31)

Special Education

There were two types of institutions and schools where special education was provided during the period of my study-

1. The National Institute for the Disabled

It was the sole institute in the country to cater to the special needs of the disabled and provided education to the visually handicapped only. There was no institute catering to children with other disabilities.

Table 7.6: Enrolment of students in the National institute for the Disabled, 1992-1997

Year	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Boys	20	22	24	21	19	18
Girls	07	08	09	09	08	10
Total	27	30	33	30	27	28

(Source-*General Statistics*, Ministry of Education, Policy and Planning Division, Royal Government of Bhutan, Thimphu, 2003, p.31)

2. Sanskrit *Pathsalas*

As Bhutan initially followed the Indian system of education there were two Sanskrit schools for young children during the period of my study. One of them was Jigmecholing (Surey) Sanskrit *Pathsala*. Another one was Dhoban Sanskrit *Pathsala*.

Table 7.7: Enrolment of students in Sanskrit *Pathsalas*, 1994-1997

Year	Jigmecholing			Dhoban			Total		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1994	14	07	21	0	0	0	14	07	21
1995	12	09	21	0	0	0	12	09	21
1996	40	20	60	0	0	0	40	20	60
1997	26	16	42	45	0	45	71	16	87

(Source-*General Statistics*, Ministry of Education, Policy and Planning Division, Royal Government of Bhutan, Thimphu, 2003, p.31)

Curriculum at various levels

From the early 1960s the Royal Government had initiated a variety of development programmes throughout the country. Amongst these, the education sector always received the highest priority with a view to providing elementary education to the greatest possible number of children in the kingdom. But till the 1970s children were learning contents irrelevant to their everyday life, since the contents related to matters that were foreign and ancient. For example, class III students of Bhutan learned about India, England and America but hardly knew anything of the geography and history of their own country. The system also depended mostly on rote learning and memorization of facts, and mostly suited students who had developed these skills. Classrooms scenes were mostly dominated by ‘chalk and talk’ limiting children’s self-expression. As a result the application of

knowledge in the required situation was limited. A 1975 report stated “There is nothing like a syllabus, let alone a curriculum, of primary education in the strict sense of the term. The only syllabus, if one can call it a syllabus, prepared for Grade V common examination contains outlines of course of studies, distribution of marks in various units, and list of books for the Grade V common examination. For other grades, the only item available in the name of a syllabus is a list of textbooks”.⁷³ In 1980s Royal Government of Bhutan considered that this type of curriculum was not reflecting the Bhutanese social, cultural and historical values. Therefore, the Royal Government constantly supported and encouraged the Department of Education to bring about an education system that suited to the country’s needs.

Although the Department had published text books for primary classes in 1970s, most of these books had been written and developed without adequate overall syllabus/ curriculum guidelines to meet the national needs and aspirations. In fact, the textbooks were fundamentally the syllabi. As a result, degrees of difficulty, in the syllabi and textbooks varied greatly from one class to another. Only the *Dzongkha* textbooks which were mostly developed and written by the Department of Education were found more appropriate in terms of culture and values. So, the curriculum which is the core of any education system remained neglected until the early 1980s. National Education Policy in 1984 first desired to develop a suitable education policy that would enable the provision of a sound education system in line with Bhutan’s needs and values, which envisaged the necessity of developing their own curriculum for educational institutes of the country. To quote from the Policy, “ The major thrust of the objectives of the National Education Policy is on a qualitative improvement, reorientation of curricular content to make education relevant, efficient and responsive to the emerging national needs of the country; enhancing the capacity of the population to acquire knowledge, information, skills and healthy attitudes, improving the quality of teaching and administrative personnel; meeting the requirements for trained and technical personnel, and developing suitable and administrative structure for effective planning, management and monitoring of the education system”.⁷⁴ Policy strongly emphasized that a relevant and effective curriculum needed to be developed. The psychological method followed in the curriculum was that the children would learn more if taught from known to unknown, concrete to abstract.⁷⁵

Establishment of Curriculum Division

Considering the aims and objectives of the current National Education Policy, it was vital to establish a Curriculum and Textbook Development Division (henceforth CTDD) within the Department of Education to analyse both policy goals and needs of the country and then develop suitable curriculum, syllabi, textbooks and other relevant literature and teaching aids and to field test the materials produced. Consequently, the division was established in 1985-86 and given a major task which, according to the Sixth Five Year Plan, should be accomplished by 1992.

Main Goals

1. "To make the content relevant to Bhutanese life, culture, tradition and the needs of the nation.
2. To develop a curriculum which will augment the children's ability to apply their knowledge in the present as well as in their later lives.
3. To enhance the academic standards through more efficient processes of teaching and learning".⁷⁶

Functional Objectives

1. "Develop a relevant and comprehensive curriculum for lower-primary sections (first four years of schooling) and implement it through the New Approach to Primary Education Programme (NAPE) project.
2. Write appropriate and detailed syllabuses for upper-primary and secondary levels of the school system.
3. Write the necessary textbooks for all levels of school education.
4. Develop manuals and reference books for teachers.
5. Design and develop teaching resources.
6. Field test the materials developed in the division.
7. Hold workshops for teachers to introduce new materials in collaboration with teacher-education colleges, inspectorate and other concerned divisions.
8. At all times make constant effort to monitor and review the content of education, so as to keep it in line with the aims and objectives of the education policy and international standards.

9. Initiate educational studies so that the findings can augment the curriculum work.”⁷⁷

The CTDD, after establishing the goals and functional objectives, took up various educational activities in the mid 1980s. It was crucial to formulate a national curriculum and consequently the CTDD began the task immediately. The initial task was to produce a new lower primary syllabus covering languages, mathematics and the new subject of Environmental Studies (EVS). The new subject integrates history, geography, cultural education, health, agriculture, science, physical education into one so that learning takes place through and about the children’s environment and was more effective and related to their needs. The NAPE projects included relevant syllabi and manuals, better trained teachers, class and classroom size, better furniture, appropriate stationery supplies, improved monitoring and evaluation systems etc.

New Approach to Primary Education

Initially in 1986 NAPE started in 13 schools which were called pilot schools. In 1989, 36 schools were named as pilot schools and were under the NAPE scheme. In 1990 a nationwide programme was initiated where NAPE covered all the classes of primary schools, extended classrooms, Primary section of Junior high school and high schools within 1997.

Table 7.8: Programmes of New Approach to Primary Education, 1990-1997

Yea	Pilot schools(Group-a)	Group-b	Group-c	Total schools
1190	36(PP to III)	50(PP)		86
1991	36(PP to III)	50(PP to I)	88 PP	174 or all schools
1992	36(PP to III)	50(PP to II)	88(PP to I)	Do
1993	36(PP to IV)	50(PP to III)	88(PP to II)	Do
1994	36(PP to V)	50(PP to IV)	88(PP to III)	Do
1995	36(PP to VI)	50(PP to V)	88(PP to IV)	Do
1996	Do	50(PP to VI)	88(PP to V)	Do
1997	Do	Do	88(PP to VI)	Do

(Source-Fourth Quarterly Policy Guidelines and Instructions, Ministry for Social Services, Department of Education, Royal Government of Bhutan, April 1990 , p.8)

In 1989 the NAPE programme was reviewed by a team of educationists headed by a consultant from UNICEF and the result they found was encouraging. All agreed

that NAPE was an appropriate curriculum for the primary education system and they mentioned the following advantages of NAPE over the traditional system-⁷⁸

- i) NAPE has reduced rote learning and encouraged learning through activities and discoveries. It encouraged actual life experience of being able to solve one's problems and paved the way for developing 'thinking children'.
- ii) NAPE had encouraged learning from the local environment and the development of appreciation for local history and geography, culture and values, such as resourcefulness, dignity of labour etc.
- iii) NAPE had greatly facilitated meeting country's educational objective of providing 'a wholesome education' to the children, no matter at what level of education they left it served them well and adequately in their adult lives.
- iv) NAPE made the teaching and learning process more interesting for both teachers and students. The teachers were bound to work hard both inside and outside the classroom and thus NAPE created amongst them necessary opportunities for continuing the education process, constantly enhancing their professionalism.
- v) NAPE required development and utilization of more self made teaching aids from locally available materials and thus instilled amongst the students greater creativity as well as essential virtues of self resourcefulness and dignity of labour.
- vi) NAPE system required the Education Headquarters to annually prepare and make available to the schools teachers manuals and detailed syllabus for every class greatly facilitating the task of the headmasters and the teachers.

With the adoption of NAPE as a national primary education curriculum the Department of Education issued the following directives to be followed in all the primary schools as well as in junior high schools with primary sections as an integral part of New Approach to Primary Education-⁷⁹

- i) The children in the junior classes of the primary sections were at their most tender age and at the formative stage of their values, beliefs, behaviour and the overall personality of their own. The aim of the country's education system was to mould children to become ideal

Bhutanese citizens possessing the highest degree of Bhutanese virtues. According to the view of the Government it was the trained national teachers alone who could understand their own children best and could meet the sacred responsibilities. Therefore it should be mandatory for all NAPE classes to be taught by trained Bhutanese national teachers only.

ii) Previously the normal practice in the schools was to give more importance to higher classes and less importance to junior classes. Often the untrained teachers were deployed in the lower classes and best trained teachers were reserved for the senior classes. The NAPE system had reversed this system. It was declared that dealing with the younger children required the attention and skill of the best teacher available in the school. So the best national teacher too would be responsible for the Pre-Primary class in the school. The Department of Education would give the necessary preference to the teachers involved in teaching in the lower classes in terms of selection for promotion and training within the country as well as in abroad.

iii) With the introduction of NAPE as a programme all primary classes will be switched over from the existing subject teacher system to class teacher system. Because studies carried out by the Department of Education had proved that the class teacher system was far better for meeting psychological and social needs of the children studying in the primary sections.

iv) All head teachers would go through a series of intensive training programme during the winter vacations on NAPE to develop necessary skills on academic leadership. Assistant head would be posted in bigger high schools.

Training programmes on NAPE

We can cite various examples of training programmes and other programmes on NAPE continued throughout the country-

i) Monger Junior High School celebrated parent teacher conference on August, 1986 on NAPE programme. Head teacher and other teachers focussed on the history, practice, and future directions of NAPE. It was followed by discussions between parents, students and teachers on the

attitude and participation of students in class. The role of parents in developing the child at home was also stressed.⁸⁰

ii) A two week NAPE training programme was commenced on February 16, 1987 at Punakha High School by the Curriculum Development Division, Department of Education. The training included developing the use of oral English and the introduction to the use of phonics in teaching and reading.⁸¹

iii) A workshop on NAPE was held at Deothang, Samdrupjongkhar on February, 1987 to enhance the teachers' conceptual understanding of NAPE and improve their teaching skills and to give them knowledge of general plan and policies of the Department of Education.⁸²

iv) Pre-Primary teachers and head teachers under Samdrupjongkhar *Dzongkhag* attended a special workshop on NAPE programme on August, 1987 where the teachers were familiarised with the new methods of teaching English, Mathematics and Environmental Studies.⁸³

v) About 350 teachers from 36 NAPE schools attended a workshop at Sarbhang High School from 9th February to 25th February, 1989 organized by the CTDD, Department of Education. The main aim of the workshop was to enhance the knowledge and skills of teachers, head teachers in NAPE schools. It was hoped that the workshop would enable the NAPE school head teachers to learn the role they had to play in the academic administration i.e. helping the teachers to teach in the best possible way.⁸⁴

vi) The primary school teachers of Pemagatshel attended a course on the NAPE programme at Pemagatshel Junior High School on August 15, 1990. The three-day course was aimed at familiarising participants with the NAPE system of teaching in order to maintain uniformity in teaching. The course was intended to provide an opportunity to share experiences and ideas and to solve problems through discussions and co-curricular activities.⁸⁵

vii) More than 200 head teachers, *dzongkhag* and zonal education officials and school inspectors all over the country took part in a seminar on the education policies and programmes of the Royal Government on February, 1991 in Thimphu. The Director General of education said that the Department of Education had appointed national heads for all schools

and institutions by 1988. Emphasis was given in the seminar to make the head teachers able to co-ordinate and monitor teachers' performance in the classroom.⁸⁶

viii) Curriculum and Textbook Development Division conducted four parallel in-service programmes for the teachers of Social Studies (class IV), English (class VI), History (class VIII), Geography (class VIII) in Punakha on February 18, 1991 which was attended by 160 teachers from different schools in the country. The programme aimed at familiarising the teachers with the new manuals and teaching techniques prepared by the Department of Education.⁸⁷

ix) A three week NAPE workshop began in Paro on February, 1991 which was conducted jointly by the National Institute of Education in Samtse, Teachers' Training College in Paro and the CTDD and attended by 435 teachers from around the country. Dasho Paljor Dorji, Deputy Minister for Social Services in his inauguration speech said that "The NAPE has many advantages over the previous school curricula as it encourages real life experience and the ability to solve one's problems by developing the ability to think. It also taught subjects like history, geography, environment and cultural value relevant to Bhutan".⁸⁸ Lyonpo T. Tobgyel, the Minister for Social Services, concluded the workshop by saying that, "It is through the NAPE we hope that our children receive a better education, a more relevant education to our national needs and aspirations, and an education which will ultimately pave the way in developing ideal Bhutanese citizens".⁸⁹

x) A four day workshop on the NAPE was held in Mongar *Dzongkhag* from April 24, 1991. Forty one teachers from primary schools and extended classrooms attended the work shop. The main objective of the workshop was to provide a bilingual (*Dzongkha* and English) approach that would help to integrate *Dzongkha*, English, Maths and Environmental studies.⁹⁰

xi) Sixty two teachers from Tashigang *Dzongkhag* attended a six day workshop on NAPE held in Tashigang from June 24, 1991. The main target of the workshop was to provide an understanding of NAPE and to give them ideas to facilitate the implementation of the NAPE system.⁹¹

- xii) A total of 56 teachers from Samdrup Jongkhar attended a five day NAPE workshop for classes Pre-Primary to I. The workshop was aimed at familiarising the teachers with the NAPE programme.⁹²
- xiii) A four day workshop on the NAPE held at the Pemagatshel Junior High School, concluded on July 13, 1991. It was attended by 30 class I and Pre-Primary teachers from the various schools in the *Dzongkhag*. Besides training on English, Maths, Environmental Studies and Dzongkha, the training also covered on standard evaluation, daily lesson planning and identifying obstacles to the NAPE programme.⁹³
- xiv) An exhibition on the NAPE was held at Mongar Primary School on September 28, 1991 which consisted of different charts, models, scientific experiments and teaching aids. Each class, starting from Pre-Primary to VI, displayed their exhibitions in class rooms. The main aim of the exhibition was to instil in students the concept of ‘learning by doing’, encourage their creative talent, highlight salient features of the NAPE programme to the parents and the guests, to inculcate among the students a spirit of team work and to develop the students’ self confidence.⁹⁴
- xv) A NAPE workshop was held from September 30 to October 3 in Mongar *Dzongkhag*, the main aim of which was to strengthen the foundation of the NAPE programme. Discussions were held on evaluation, lesson planning, classroom management and discipline and in making books in Dzongkha and English.⁹⁵
- xvi) A 10 day NAPE workshop was held from December 10, 1992 in Paro at Teachers’ Training Centre and also in Paro High School. It was attended by 150 Dzongkha language teachers and 80 general subject teachers and the objective of the workshop was to familiarize untrained teachers with the concept of NAPE.⁹⁶
- xvii) Teachers of seven primary schools in Chhukha were trained on NAPE programme on October 1992. The training provided the teachers necessary knowledge and skills on planning and class management. The teachers were motivated to make their teaching creative and interesting to children.⁹⁷

Thus we see that with the decision to implement the NAPE as a nationwide programme in all schools, accelerated in-service orientations for teachers and head

teachers who were Bhutanese nationals. Workshops and trainings were organised almost in all the *dzongkhags* where most of the teachers of primary level were given various in-service trainings. It might be the policy of the Government that they could not improve the quality of education in the schools without enhancing the quality of the teachers. So teacher education programmes had emphasized the most vital components of the Education Department's plans and policies. It could be the fact that In-service training programmes were used as a means to not only provide opportunities to acquire new ideas, but also to offer teachers a golden chance to discuss curriculum and get together to share and learn informally.

Teachers by Level and Nationality

After the implementation of the NAPE system there was a qualitative improvement in the education system particularly the primary education. Strong efforts had been made to localise the teaching profession, especially at the lower levels as we have seen that since 1989 only the Bhutanese nationals had been posted as heads of institutions. From almost a total dependence on expatriate teachers (mostly the Indians) since the beginning of modern education, the Bhutanese education system had moved towards self sufficiency in its priority need.

Table 7.9: Proportion of national and non-national teachers from the period 1989 to 1997

Level Of Schools	1990		1991		1992		1993		1994		1995		1996		1997	
	NAT	N/ NAT														
Community Schools	80	5	135	13	195	19	190	15	205	18	218	10	222	3	247	3
Primary Schools	972	700	929	524	960	464	984	365	1037	351	1049	307	1127	247	1100	212
Junior Schools	208	215	192	146	175	123	191	134	212	135	230	112	276	104	368	105
High Schools	103	136	97	117	108	102	107	98	105	92	153	93	188	86	208	108
Private Schools									45	7	45	6	54	7	66	5
Sub Total	1363	1056	1353	800	1438	708	1472	612	1604	603	1695	528	1867	447	1989	433
Institutions																
Sherubtse College	9	23	12	24	13	31	13	34	13	39	13	32	13	30	15	28
National Institute Of Edn	16	9	16	9	17	5	22	5	22	5	21	4	21	3	37	9

Teachers Training College	11	5	11	4	11	1	14	2	15	1	19		20		32	2
Royal Bhutan Of Polytechnic	19	13	16	9	14	9	19	10	24	13	24	14	30	14	43	31
Royal Technical Institute	21	14	23	16	30	17	30	11	28	14	25	14	28	11	46	13
Simtokha Rigzhung Institute	24	2	24	2	27	2	27		27		24		25		23	
T/Yangtse Rigney Institute	-----THIS INSTITUTE IS BEING ESTABLISHED BY JUNE 1997-----														3	
National Institute for the Disabled	8	0	9		10		10		9		9		6		8	
Surey Sanskrit Pathshala									1		1		2		2	
Dhoban Sanskrit Pathshala															1	
Sub Total	108	66	111	64	122	65	135	62	139	72	136	64	145	58	210	83
Grand Total	1471	1122	1464	864	1560	773	1607	674	1743	675	1831	592	2012	505	2199	516

(Source-*General Statistics*, Department of Education,, Ministry of Social Services, July 1991, p.7, *General Statistics*, Education Division, Ministry of Health and Education, Royal Government of Bhutan, Thimphu, June 1997, p.9)

The table shows an impressively high increase in the proportion of Bhutanese teachers by 1997 as opposed to expatriate teachers. The existence and practical operation of the NAPE system had considerable relevance to this report. Though there were still high proportions of non-national or non-Bhutanese teachers in the junior high or high schools they were in negligible numbers in the community schools or in primary schools.

Syllabi

In 1989, a team of consultants from UNICEF along with officers from Department of Education reviewed the NAPE programme and worked on the detailed contents of syllabus of all the classes. Being deeply concerned over having too many subjects in most of the classes, these were reduced.

Table 7.10: Changes in syllabus in schools, 1988 to 1989

Class in 1989	Old Syllabus up to 1988	Revised Syllabus
PP	Dzo, Eng & Maths	Dzo, Eng & Maths
I	Dzo, Eng, Maths and Science	Dzo, Eng, Maths & EVS
II	Dzo, Eng , Maths and Science	Dzo, Eng, Maths & EVS
III	Dzo, Eng I & II, Maths, Sc, Hist, Geo	Dzo, Eng, Maths, EVS
IV	Dzo, Eng I & II, Maths, Sc, Agri & Health Edn	Dzo, Eng, Maths, Sc., Social Studies
V	Do	Do
VI	Dzo, Eng I & II, Maths, Sc, Agri, Health Edn	Dzo, Eng, Sc, Maths, Hist, Geo, Health Edn

(Source-*Second Quarterly Policy Guidelines and Instructions*, Department of Education, Ministry of Social Services, Royal Government of Bhutan, Thimphu, March, 1989, pp. 12-13)

Nepali continued to be taught as an additional subject in classes PP to V in schools located in southern Bhutan. Social Studies for class IV and V included History and Geography consisting exclusively of Bhutan History and Bhutan Geography. The component of both Bhutan History and Geography in class VI increased to over 60 %. Department of Education took the steps to prepare the course books for Social Studies, History and Geography of classes IV, V and VI to deliver these to schools by 1990. Likewise Bhutan History and Bhutan Geography would consist of 60% of the both Class VII and VIII syllabus whereas the remaining 40% would continue from world History and world Geography. For this, textbooks were developed and delivered to the schools by April 1989. The syllabus of classes IX and X was affiliated to ICSE system of India, in order to introduce Bhutan Certificate of Secondary Examinations (BCSE) the Department decided to revise the courses of History, Geography, Economics and Arts with a special focus on Bhutan so that they may be introduced in class IX during the year 1990. An ambitious project on English textbooks and readers was launched in August 1989.

Changes in syllabus for 1991 academic year

Due to the ant-national activities in the southern districts of the country 76 schools in Southern Bhutan were closed down in 1990. Teaching of Nepali language

in southern schools was stopped in 1990 as it was alleged that this was impeding the national integration policy.⁹⁸

The Department of Education accorded top priority on the Bhutanization of the education system and for this there were following changes in the syllabus of 1991-⁹⁹

- i) Detailed Readers and Work Books were introduced for English subject in classes Pre-Primary to Dzongkha.
- ii) New Dzongkha Readers were introduced up to class VIII during the 1991 academic year.
- iii) An improved and modified version of Biology course book was introduced for class VIII.

Changes in syllabus for 1992 academic year

Following changes took place in the syllabus of 1992 from that of 1991-¹⁰⁰

- i) Course books on Bhutan History and Geography, which were introduced in classes VI and VII during the year 1990, had been revised and re-edited. The new editions of the 4 course books were despatched to the schools
- ii) Course books on Bhutan History and Geography for class VIII were introduced on trial basis only partially during the year 1991.
- iii) A separate book titled 'Druk Gyalpo Jigme Singye Wangchuck and Twenty Years of Development' formed an integral part of course book on Bhutan History for class VIII. The book was supplied to all the high schools and junior high schools as textbooks as well as to primary schools as reference books.
- iv) New course on Science and Social Studies for upper primary classes were experimented in 29 pilot primary schools during the year 1991. They were subsequently reviewed and introduced in all the primary schools and junior high schools with similar primary classes.

Changes in the syllabus in 1993

The syllabus from Pre-Primary to class VIII remained mostly unchanged during the academic year 1993. The only change in these classes is the class VII Biology

textbook which had been re-edited with updated information. The Biology text in class VIII was accompanied by a revised edition of the teacher manual. The changes in the secondary level was that the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations had bifurcated the class IX and X syllabus. All the high schools were, therefore, directed to start the new syllabus with immediate effect with the class IX students of 1993. Decision was taken to introduce new textbooks on Bhutan History, Geography and Civics.¹⁰¹

Changes in the syllabus in 1994

It was a matter of great success that by 1994 NAPE had been introduced from Pre-Primary to class III uniformly in all the 174 schools. The syllabus from Pre-Primary to class VIII remained unchanged from the previous year. The writing and publication of textbooks for classes IX and X Geography and IX History had been completed and these were despatched to schools by the end of April, 1994. Work on writing class X History was in progress and was expected to be despatched to schools during the year 1995. But there were some problems in finalizing the Bhutan Civics textbook so decision was taken to continue Indian Civics in the schools.¹⁰²

Changes occurred in syllabus in 1995

Since the beginning of modern education a major stride had been made by the Government in the promotion of the national language i. e., *Dzongkha*. Decision was taken that in addition to the existing textbooks following books would be introduced in all the schools beginning with the 1995 academic year-¹⁰³

- i) 10 issues of Readers from Pre-Primary to III.
- ii) 1 book on *Dzongkha* nursery rhymes.
- iii) 30 issues of *Dzongkha* literacy booklets as Readers from classes II to VI.

The introduction of the above mentioned Readers and reference materials with colourful illustrations was expected to popularise and promote the learning of *Dzongkha*.

Under the NAPE system many earlier school subjects such as History, Geography and Social Studies from Pre-Primary to III had been merged as one subject, namely the Environmental Studies (EVS). The EVS dealt mostly with contents about Bhutan and its people, religion, history, culture and traditions, socio

economic development planning etc. It was felt that the EVS should be taught in Dzongkha. CTDD was later renamed the Curriculum and Professional Support Section (CAPSS)¹⁰⁴ and Board for the CAPSS in its meeting held on September 19, 1994 resolved to introduce EVS in *Dzongkha* on trial basis starting with the Pre-Primary class during the 1995 academic year.¹⁰⁵ 26 schools were selected as pilot schools for this purpose. It was hoped that, if the experiment proved successful, the programme would be expanded to class III in all the schools and accordingly humanity subjects such as History, Geography and Civics might be taught in *Dzongkha* gradually. It was also expected that the teaching of EVS in *Dzongkha* would end the tendency to differentiate the teachers into two broad groups-*Dzongkha* language teachers and general teachers as both these groups of teachers henceforth would teach EVS in Dzongkha.

Following were the changes introduced for the 1995 academic session-¹⁰⁶

- i) In *Dzongkha*, a revised syllabus for classes Pre-Primary to III had been introduced. This was more detailed as compared to the earlier syllabus.
- ii) The textbook for Pre-Primary had been fully revised; a teacher's manual and two student work books also for Pre-Primary had been newly developed.
- iii) The mathematics textbooks for classes II to V had been changed. Existing mathematics textbook series had been discontinued and was replaced by Systematic Mathematics textbook series which were found to be more up to date in terms of presentation of ideas and current information.
- iv) Decision was taken to despatch History books for class X, mostly covering the syllabus of Bhutan history to all the high schools within July 1995.

Changes occurred in syllabus in the year 1996

A number of changes were affected in the syllabus for the 1996 academic year¹⁰⁷

- i) The text books for classes I-III had been revised and new teachers manuals for these classes had been written. Two student workbooks for class I had been completed. A new Reader for class III had also been completed.
- ii) A revised mathematics syllabus for classes IV to VIII was introduced with the 1996 academic session. A section on Statistics for both classes VI and VIII were included in the revised syllabus.

- iii) Syllabus of Economics for class IX and X was revised and was introduced for class IX in the year 1996.
- iv) In addition to 26 pilot schools where teaching EVS in *Dzongkha* had already been implemented, additional 27 schools were brought under this system.
- v) The syllabus was compiled for all subjects in two booklets, one consisting those for classes from IV to VI and the other from VII to VIII and were sent to schools in current academic session. Further, the work on compiling the syllabus for classes Pre-Primary to III had been started.

Thus we see that even at the end of the twentieth century education system at various levels were not in a concrete shape and changes and modifications were going on in the existing syllabus. But it has been envisaged that the CTDD was carrying out various educational activities in order to make school education more relevant to the time. It was the aim of the government to nationalize the syllabus particularly the humanities subjects which would enable the students to think not only for themselves but also for others, be self-disciplined and responsible, appreciate and practise age old cultural and traditional values, develop into mature and humane persons by developing their innate talents, to use them for the good of the society in which they lived, and be capable of applying their knowledge and skills in their everyday lives. It was also thought that appropriate science and mathematics syllabus should be made so that the educated population became more comfortable with problem solving by using technological equipment and machines. Primary course in science was nationalized by the year 1995. It was also planned to develop and complete a valid science course for the secondary schools so that it could be implemented by 1996.¹⁰⁸

From the above findings it is apparent that Bhutan wanted to develop its own syllabus at all levels of education and underlying principle being that education should not just serve the needs of the students but also of the country. Subjects such as history geography, civics or social sciences had to concentrate more on Bhutan rather than on neighbouring countries or international topics. It can be noticed that the process was slow, errors often cropped up, but the Royal Government persisted and was able to attain a degree of success. But was still far away from the national goal of Bhutanese subjects in Bhutanese language for Bhutanese students remained an unfulfilled dream. It might be appropriate to add that over the years the notion of total

Bhutanization of education in Bhutan gradually faded. In fact, during the last years of my research period for this thesis English was the dominant medium of education.

Evaluation system

There was system of examination at the end of the academic session for promotion from one class to next higher class till the beginning of the modern education system. The common examination at the national level for passing out of primary education was introduced in 1972. From 1972 to 1985, end of primary class was up to class V and from 1986 it was up to class VI. The prime object for instituting this system was to bring about uniformity among the different schools. The examination was also used as a screening process for entry into the next level of general education. The next national level examination was at the end of class VIII, introduced in 1975 to serve the purpose of screening as well as assessing and ensuring uniform standards among the schools. A fresh system of awarding special certificates known as CARTS (Certified and Recommended for Training), to students failing in one of the core subjects (English, *Dzongkha* or Mathematics) but doing comparatively well in the total marks was adopted. Between 1973 and 1976, the staff of the Department of Education managed two common examinations. In 1977 an examination cell was created, which was later upgraded to Bhutan Board of Examinations. Class X and XII examinations were conducted by the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations, New Delhi, with the help of the Bhutan Board of Examinations.

From the very beginning of modern education the system had been relying on rote learning and memorization of facts and figures for the purpose of examinations. When NAPE programme was implemented in 1985 the emphasis was given on learning through participation and active involvement rather than by the memorization and repetition of facts spoon-fed to the pupils by the teachers. The new approach had lead the teachers away from the notion that the only form of evaluation was an examination and the only purpose of examination was to pass, to allow promotion to the next higher class. The main reasons for evaluation that the teachers were given are-¹⁰⁹

- i) To see if the teachers had been successful and whether the students had actually learnt what the teachers were trying to teach them.

- ii) To judge the success of teaching methods used by the teachers.
- iii) To get information on where the teachers need to modify or re-teach parts of the syllabus and for further planning of lessons.
- iii) To find out where the children were having special problems.
- iv) To ensure that individual students had not been neglected.
- v) To encourage students to work better and learn better.
- vi) To motivate students by giving them useful and constructive feedback on their work.
- vii) To have information on hand so as to be able to give professional advice concerning a student's performance to the head teacher, parent or another teacher who takes the class.
- viii) To decide whether a student is ready for promotion to the next higher class.
- ix) Teachers were accountable to the Department of Education which demanded that testing took place periodically.

The fundamental principle of the NAPE was to relax the control upon the learners through examinations, but enable them to master lessons through continuous assessment. The essence of continuous assessment was to mark the progress each child made in the class based on teachers' feedback. The able students would perform increasingly well while the less able students would make reasonable progress throughout the year.

But in 1989 the Department of Education had observed a lot of discrepancies amongst the schools as well as amongst the dzongkhags pertaining to the annual examinations and promotion system. So, the Department of Education declared necessary guidelines on examination and evaluation process for classes other than common examination classes-¹¹⁰

- i) Annual examination and promotion should not be compared to the common examinations conducted on a nation-wide basis but should be based on

continuous evaluation on the performance of individual students during the year.

ii) In schools where regular tests and review were conducted, it was suggested that 40 % be based on the mid-term reviews and 60% on the annual review.

iii) Oral examinations should be emphasized while evaluating a student's performance especially in the language subjects.

iv) Approximately 70% of the students were expected annually to pass from the respective classes and promoted to the next higher class.

The Bhutan Board of Examinations had resolved following changes on issues relating to common examinations of classes V and VIII-

i) Oral examinations with a weightage of 10% of the total marks was introduced in English and *Dzongkha* subjects in class VI and VIII common examinations from the year 1991. From the same year a uniform 3 term system in a year was introduced for all schools each ending with a term test.¹¹¹

ii) In 1992 the Boards of Examinations, in order to increase the number of pass outs from both class VI and VIII common examination and to join many of them to technical and vocational education promoted the students who had secured 40 % in aggregate but less in English, *Dzongkha* or Mathematics. Those students were expected to join the technical and vocational programmes under various Governments Departments who continued to have the shortage of the required candidates.¹¹²

iii) In 1994 Bhutan Board of Examinations declared that from that year the Primary School Certificate Examination (class VI common examination) would consist of 50% internal assessment or school based and 50% external examinations to be conducted as usual by the Bhutan Board of Examinations. The system of assessment would be as follows-¹¹³

Non-language subjects:

a) External assessments to be conducted as usual by the Bhutan Board of Examinations with weighting of 50%

b) Internal assessment to be conducted by the school authorities with aggregate weighting of 50%, of which-

- i) 25% weighting from the term tests.
- ii) 25% weighting from the other forms of assessments such as class works, home assignments, project works, experiments, co-curricular activities etc.

Language subjects i. e., *Dzongkha* and English

- a) External examinations to be conducted as usual by the Bhutan Board of Examinations with weighting of 50%.
- b) Internal assessments to be conducted by school authorities with aggregate weighting of 50% of which-
 - i) 25% weighting from the term tests.
 - ii) 15% weighting from the other forms of assessments
 - iii) 10% weighting from the oral assessments.

But it was observed in the new evaluation system that internal markings by the schools were generally very high and fluctuated from school to school. It was also found that most of the internal markings were based on term tests and the end of the year exams rather than on continuous assessments. In order to overcome these shortcomings the Department of Education published 'Guidelines for internal Assessment for classes VI and VIII' in December 1994.¹¹⁴ The Guidelines were expected to assist in solving the discrepancies in the internal assessment of not only class VI and VIII common examinations but provide catalytic improvements to all aspects of examinations, evaluation and promotion also to the non-common examinations.

So we can notice that the continuous assessment system as was introduced as a part of the NAPE system varies according to the individual understanding of the concept and sometimes there was confusion rather than improving the evaluation system.

The following tables show the results of the common examination of different years depending on the data available.

Table 7.11: Class V results, 1979-1984

Year	1979	1980	1981	1984
No of Students Appeared	1034	1234	1643	1698
No of Students Passed	855	721	931	1059
Pass (%)	82.6	58.5	56.6	62.25

(Sources-“Common exam results”, *Kuensel*, Vol. XV, No.5, February 3, 1980, p.1, “All Bhutan class V examination result”, *Kuensel*, Vol. XVII, No.5, February 7, 1982, p.1 and “All Bhutan class V and VIII results”, *Kuensel*, Vol. XX, No.8, February 30, 1985, p.2)

Table 7.12: Class VI results, 1987-1997

Year	1987	1988	1989	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No of Students Appeared	2563	2860	3129	2652	3321	3907	4234	4688	5598	6157
No of Students Passed	1229	1479	1776	1726	2464	3346	3942	4396	5360	5563
Pass %	47.95	51.71	56.75	65.08	74.19	85.64	93.10	93.77	95.74	90.35

(Sources-“Class VI common examinations at a glance”, *Kuensel*, Vol. V, No.5, February 3, 1990, p.1 and *General Statistics*, Ministry of Education, Policy and Planning Division, Royal Government of Bhutan, Thimphu, 2003, p. 18)

Table 7.13: Class VIII results, 1979-1997

Year	1979	1980	1984	1987	1988	1989	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No of Students Appeared	341	379	680	966	1076	1185	1164	1326	1631	1890	2746	3600	4249
No of Students Passed	239	212	374	642	723	853	771	988	1443	1789	2462	3042	3579
Pass %	70.09	55.93	55	64.4	67.2	71.9	66.25	74.5	88	95	90	85	84

(Sources-“Common exam results”, *Kuensel*, Vol. XV, No.5, February 3, 1980, p.1, “All Bhutan class VIII exam result”, *Kuensel*, Vol.XVI, No.7, 15 February, 1981,p.3, . “All Bhutan class V and VIII results”, *Kuensel*, Vol. XX, No.8, February 30, 1985, p.2, “Class VIII common examination results”, *Kuensel*, Vol. V, No.5, February 3, 1990, p.1, “ Common examination results declared”, *Kuensel*, Vol.VII, No.3, January 18, 1992, p.1 and *General Statistics*, Ministry of Education, Policy and Planning Division, Royal Government of Bhutan, Thimphu, 2003, p. 19)

From 1996 class X examination and certification was jointly carried out by the Council for Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) and Bhutan Board of Examinations while Bhutan Board set the papers for Dzongkha, Economics and Social Sciences with the remainder left in the care of CISCE.

Table 7.14: Class X results, 1979-1984

Year	Pass (%)
1979	89.7
1980	89.2
1981	85.9
1982	85
1983	85
1984	65.7

(Sources-“1979 ICSE batch”, *Kuensel*, Vol. XV, No.17, April 28, 1980, p.2 and “ICSE results”, *Kuensel*, Vol. XIX, No.28, July 8, 1984, p.4)

Table 7.15: Class X results, 1986-1997

Year	1986	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
No of Students Appeared	227	332	481	515	505	570	619	599	719	1146	1476
No of Students Passed	199	295	441	475	419	488	579	547	680	945	1285
Pass (%)	87.77	88.86	91.68	92.23	82.97	85.6	93.53	91.31	94.57	82.46	87.05

(Sources-“National ICSE results”, *Kuensel*, Vol.1, No.27, July 6, 1986, p.2, “295 students pass ICSE exams”, *Kuensel*, Vol.3, No.23, June 11, 1988, p.1, “ICSE results out”, *Kuensel*, June 17, 1989, p.3, “ICSE results: improved overall percentage”, *Kuensel*, Vol. V, No.25, June 30, 1990, p.6, “ICSE results”, *Kuensel*, Vol.VI, No.25, June 29, 1991, p.1, and *General Statistics*, Ministry of Education, Policy and Planning Division, Royal Government of Bhutan, Thimphu, 2003, p. 19)

Commensurate with the growth of the secondary education sub-sector, the total students sitting for class X examination increased from only 20 in 1968 to 75 in 1974 and thence to 1476 in 1997. The pass percentage swung between a low of 65.7% to a high of 94.57%. In this context I want to mention that for a large number of students, class X was the culmination of formal general education.

Table 7.16: Class XII results, 1992-1997

Year	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
sNo of Students Appeared	175	205	189	262	262	252
No of Students Passed	170	188	186	257	261	250
Pass %	97.14%	91.70%	98.41%	98.09%	97.38%	99.20 %

(Source-*General Statistics*, Ministry of Education, Policy and Planning Division, Royal Government of Bhutan, Thimphu, 2003, p. 20)

The first class XII examination (Indian School Certificate) was held in March 1978 and of the 34 candidates 25 (74%) passed.¹¹⁵ The numbers had gradually increased showing the progress at the higher secondary level and the pass percentage also improved greatly. The entire set of papers for the class XII examination were set

and administered by the CISCE in the period of my study. After higher secondary level the best students were selected for either engineering or medicine studies in India or abroad.

Others either continued their studies in the Sherubtse College or got enrolled in one of the training institutes within the country.

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