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Integrating EIU With the Curriculum for Gross National Happiness Education in Bhutan

Yebilaptsa Middle Secondary School, Zhemgang, Bhutan
EIU BEST PRACTICES 2012



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Foreword

Faithful to its mandate, the Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU) under the auspices of UNESCO has served as a regional centre to promote Education for International Understanding (EIU) towards a Culture of Peace in Asia and the Pacific region since its establishment in 2000.

As educators are faced with great challenges in the fast-shifting world of globalization, APCEIU is well aware of how collective efforts can form a greater force towards a Culture of Peace by learning from one another and from the past. On this account, APCEIU has been publishing the EIU Best Practices in order to provide a platform to share diverse experiences and perspectives among various professionals in the field of education.

The EIU Best Practices aims to promote a Culture of Peace by supporting local initiatives in 47 UNESCO Member States in the region and encouraging innovative EIU practices in different local contexts. The EIU Best Practices Programme advocates the idea of “Learning to Live Together” (LTLT), which encourages participatory learning and critical thinking to develop mutual understanding towards the relationship between selves and others. Thanks to continuous support from the National Commissions for UNESCO in the Asia-Pacific region as well as numerous efforts of EIU practitioners, APCEIU has published and disseminated a number of monographs of unique cases over the past six years. This year, four new cases are introduced with series number 27 to 30.



The following case from Bhutan introduces the practice of integrating EIU values into a school called Yebilaptsa Middle Secondary School, which is located in Zhemgang, one of the most remote districts in Bhutan. In line with the country's approach to reframe its philosophy of Gross National Happiness (GNH) by amplifying the aspects of EIU values into the current schooling system, Yebilaptsa Middle School initiated several school activities. In particular the case introduces the "Green School Project", which not only encouraged participation of the whole school and the community, but also evoked a tremendous impact in the lives of the rural youth to become global citizens.

May the cases in this year's publication continue to spread inspiration to construct further openness, equality and diversity in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. I also expect that through this endeavor, various EIU Best Practices can be shared among educators, scholars, policy makers and activists who are committed to promoting a Culture of Peace in the region.

December 2012



LEE Seunghwan
Director



EIU Best Practices is...

APCEIU has been committed to the promotion of a Culture of Peace since its inception, in line with one of the pillars of education “Learning to Live Together.” A Culture of Peace has been a key principle at the core of UNESCO’s ethical mission. It involves a set of values, attitudes and behaviours that can be taught, developed and improved upon to enhance mutual understanding and conflict resolution. Attaining a Culture of Peace requires transformation of institutional practices, as well as individual values and behaviours in which education plays a crucial role in the process. As a major educational tool aimed at promoting a Culture of Peace, EIU addresses issues related to cultural diversity, globalization and social justice, human rights, peace and sustainable development. It focuses on increasing the capacity of learners to deal with issues of everyday life, to resolve community conflict and to enjoy human, political and civil rights to a greater extent.

APCEIU launched EIU Best Case Studies in 2006 in cooperation with the UNESCO Member States in the region to encourage educators, scholars and activists to implement and share local initiatives on EIU. It is an outreach programme that invites them to share their efforts in promoting education for a culture of peace in different social and cultural contexts. Now renamed as EIU Best Practices in order to further encourage the participation of practitioners in the field, the programme seeks to promote and collect innovative practices based on optimal classroom conditions and activities, school climate, community and social atmosphere, and

disseminate them throughout the region.

The programme is conducted through the following steps: 1) Call for Applications: APCEIU sends announcement letters along with application forms and guidelines to the 47 National Commissions for UNESCO, UNESCO field offices, major National Institutes of Education in the region and APCEIU's MOU partners in the region; 2) Screening and Selection: Submitted applications are reviewed by the Screening Committee, composed of experts, who then select the best practices; 3) Field Visit: APCEIU staff undertake field visits to the programme sites of the selected cases to confer the EIU Best Practices awards, conduct field observation and interviews, and provide the selected applicants with the guidelines for the final report; 4) Submission of the Final Reports: Selected applicants submit the final reports to APCEIU based on the guidelines; and 5) Publication and Dissemination: Final reports are published as a monograph series and disseminated throughout Asia and the Pacific region.

Given the favorable and enthusiastic responses from the region, and support from the National Commissions for UNESCO, APCEIU wishes to expand the positive momentum built thus far and further its efforts for the coming years.

APCEIU encourages educators, scholars and activists from the Asia-Pacific region to apply and share their experiences and perspectives. The Centre expects that through the EIU Best Practices, diverse practices of EIU will be widely shared throughout the entire region and beyond, thus contributing towards achieving a Culture of Peace.

Author



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In the last seven years of his professional career as a teacher, Mr. Udhim has served as Head of Science Department, Staff Welfare Secretary, School Cultural Secretary and UNESCO ASPnet Coordinator at his work place.

As a member of the School Management Board, he works closely with the school administration in building a holistic schooling system so as to produce humble GNH graduates.

As the focal person for Education for International Understanding (EIU) and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), he already spent various huge efforts to implement these global models of transformative education in Bhutan's Gross National Happiness (GNH) based educational settings. He passionately believes that the outcomes of the integration of EIU, ESD and GNH in any curriculum would always have a phenomenal impact on the society in terms of producing quality citizens.

Integrating EIU with the curriculum for GNH Education is an enthusiastic project initiated by Mr. Udhim at his work place. Since the nationwide implementation of the GNH curriculum in the schools is at its early stages, he believes that the timely integration of EIU with the GNH curriculum functions as the leading bridge to connect the later educational model with the global Community.

Mr. Udhim participated in the 2011 UNESCO/ROK Co-sponsored Fellowship Programme - Capacity Building Workshop for Educators in Africa and Asia-Pacific organized by the Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and the Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU).

Later in the same year, on behalf of the Bhutan National Commission for UNESCO under the Ministry of Education, he worked with APCEIU in coordinating the 2011 Sub-Regional Workshop on EIU - *Education for a Culture of Peace and Sustainable Future* jointly organized by UNESCO Bangkok and APCEIU. The workshop was hosted in Bhutan by the Bhutan National Commission for UNESCO.

Mr. Udhim would like to consider himself as an EIU and GNH advocate aspiring to bring a positive societal change through education.

Acknowledgement

The 2011 UNESCO/ROK Co-sponsored Fellowship Programme organized by UNESCO APCEIU was an enriching experience to live in a group of huge diversity and still build a deep common understanding of the central issues of peace and conflict resolution. I would like to extend my deep gratitude to UNESCO, KOICA and most importantly to APCEIU for embedding in me a deep sense of inspiration to work towards making a better world together.

In my home country, I would like to thank the Bhutan National Commission for UNESCO and the Ministry of Education for their continued support and encouragement in my endeavor to work towards the common goal of GNH and EIU – a sustainable peaceful society.

At my work place, I have an immense pleasure to extend my most sincere gratitude to Mr. Namgay Wangchuk, Principal of the Yebilaptsa Middle Secondary School, for his unwavering administrative support and guidance that hugely contributed to the success of this programme. The Vice Principal of the school, Mr. Tshering Wangchen, has been a constant source of encouragement for carrying out all the EIU activities in the school for which I have my sincere appreciation.

Mindfully, I would like to extend my deep gratitude to all my teacher colleagues, supporting staffs and students who have believed in my line of work and assisted me in all aspects of the programme. Without their

invaluable cooperation and support, the programme would not have materialized.

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Media literacy is seen as a powerful factor for understanding and enhancing democracy and democratic culture in the school and society at large. I would like to thank our School Media Literacy Coordinator, Mr. Sherab Jigme, for allowing me to include his media literacy activities as a part of this case. The editing of this report was done by Mr. Norbu Lama, a veteran language teacher to whom I extend my sincere gratitude. I also would like to convey my special thanks to my Assistant, Ms. Dechen Pelden, for her continued support during the entire course of the programme.

Finally, I feel fortunate to have had this opportunity to work with Ms. Miyoung JIN (APCEIU), who has so graciously handled the documentation process of my EBP case. Working with her is an enriching experience. I would like to remain truly grateful for her immeasurable support and useful suggestions and feedback that actually gave the present shape to my report.

Lastly, I humbly remain thankful to my family members for their love and support. Their words of encouragement have always inspired me to move forward with my line of work as an educator and a peace advocate. Once

again, I would like to thank each and all who were involved in this programme.

'Thank you all beyond sky and earth.'

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Integrating EIU With the Curriculum for Gross National Happiness Education in Bhutan

1. Introduction

1.1 Description of the Programme



▲ *Bhutan Map, a Himalayan country between China and India*

Bhutan is a small Himalayan kingdom in South East Asia. As a constitutional democratic monarchy, it is striving hard to face modernity with a very strong sense of humanitarian approach to development and education. Bhutan's development philosophy of Gross National Happiness (GNH) in many ways anticipated the idea of 'human development' and upholds strong human principles such as equality of all human beings, the interconnectedness of all sentient beings and the human rights and responsibilities that must guide human conduct. The four pillars of GNH are:

- Balanced and equitable socio-economic development
- Conservation of the natural environment
- Preservation and practice of culture
- Promotion of good governance

GNH has been included in the constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan, where it states, “The State shall strive to promote those conditions that will enable the pursuit of Gross National Happiness”, and thus, it sets the quality of aspirations for development or progress of the country. It is, therefore, mandatory rather than optional to pursue GNH due to the legally binding aspect provided by the constitution itself.

In line with the GNH philosophy, the country’s Education Ministry has reframed the curriculum with the effective infusion of human values in the schooling system. The curriculum is now called *Educating for GNH*. The GNH approach to education has been implemented since 2010, and it evidently follows the noble principles of Education for International Understanding (EIU) in its own capacity. The essence of the GNH curriculum can be summarized as follows:

“Knowing how different our vision and goals are, we know with certainty that what we want to see is nothing less than transformative graduates who are genuine human beings, realizing their full and true potential, caring for others including other species, ecologically literate, contemplative as well as analytical in their understanding of the world, free of greed and without excessive desires; knowing, understanding, and appreciating completely that they are not separate from the natural world and from others; in sum manifesting their humanity fully.”

(Concluding remarks by the Prime Minister Jigme Y Thinley, GNH workshop, 19 January - 12 February 2010)

In its effort to infuse the GNH values in the school curriculum, the Ministry of Education has developed the concept of Green Schools for

Green Bhutan. The following are the features of the ideals of Green Schools for Green Bhutan, which are very much in line with the principles of EIU:

- **Natural or Environmental Greenery:** Celebrating the vital link between human and nature.
- **Intellectual Greenery:** Cultivating the gifts of our minds.
- **Academic Greenery:** Discovering the grace of great ideas.
- **Social Greenery:** Learning to live together and learn together.
- **Cultural Greenery:** Releasing the best of what we are and what we have through our body, speech and mind.
- **Spiritual Greenery:** Looking into ourselves and connecting our mindsets to a higher level of consciousness.
- **Aesthetic Greenery:** Appreciating the beautiful, the graceful and the tasteful.
- **Moral Greenery:** Fostering goodness over cleverness, cooperation over competition and fair play over victory at any cost.

Considering the inspiring ideals given above, Bhutan is determined for a unique transformation of its national education system by infusing holistic human values in the main school curriculum. LEE Seunghwan, the Director of APCEIU also states, “Bhutanese educators have favorable settings for the implementation of EIU in its educational framework of the Gross National Happiness that sets conditions for EIU to easily fit into the existing curriculum and thus, flourish in the school settings.” (Wangmo, EIU Based Initiatives in Bhutan, 2010).

This case provides possible strategies of integrating the principles and values of EIU with the curriculum for GNH Education. It documents a selective range of EIU activities that are being carried out in Yebilaptsa Middle Secondary School. The author has been making a keen effort to work with the school administration and all faculty members in promoting the noble values of EIU. The features of Green Schools for Green Bhutan are widely incorporated in this integrated programme. EIU and GNH complement

each other and work towards a common goal of creating a just and a sustainable society.

1.2 Social/Community Context of the Programme

Yebilaptsa Middle Secondary School is located in Zhemgang, one of the remotest districts in Bhutan. Currently, there are 380 students (166 females and 214 males). The faculty consists of 20 teachers and 20 members of supporting staff. It is a boarding school, and most of the students come from far-flung villages of the district for their secondary education which runs until 10th grade. Owing to its very remote setting, the children remain unaware of the EIU issues that concern the peace and security of the society and the world at large.

The registration of the school as a member of the UNESCO Associated Schools Network in 2010 led to exploring and implementing meaningful activities in the school for the promotion of EIU. Yebilaptsa Middle Secondary School today is a certified participating institution in the UNESCO Associated Schools Network, engaged in a programme for International Cooperation and Quality Education for All. The school has already begun its journey of following the GNH approach to education. Therefore, Educating for GNH has already given a very firm setting for EIU to make way towards achieving its noble goals and aspirations in this small rural community. The integration of EIU with the curriculum for GNH Education has not only made the students aware of the principles of EIU and GNH, but has also brought positive changes in their mindset and the way they see the world today.

1.3 Initiation of the Programme

The integration of EIU with the curriculum for GNH Education in the Yebilaptsa Middle Secondary School was initially proposed with the aim to instill a global awareness into the young people of this community on how the present world and its natural environment are undergoing changes due to not sustainable human activities. The introduction of EIU in the school

was welcomed as a global supplement for the GNH curriculum. Therefore, today, the school aspires to become a pioneer institution in the region for implementing and inculcating the noble values of EIU in children. Besides working towards academic excellence, the school's mission of producing GNH graduates is significantly prioritized by the institution.

1.4 Resources Needed to Make the Programme Possible

i) Human Resources

This programme is in its second year of operation. Various forms of resources were inevitable for the programme to succeed and gain a firm footing. Human resources mainly consisted of the UNESCO ASPnet coordinator as the main EIU focal person to coordinate the programme. The principal of the school was the chairperson for all activities. All the teachers, supporting staff and students of the school have equally contributed to organize various EIU activities in the school.

ii) Financial Resources

The Bhutan National Commission for UNESCO has played a pivotal role in providing constant feedback and guidance for carrying out the activities. Financial assistance for conducting school-level EIU seminars was also provided by the National Commission. This support highly contributed to the success of the programme. In terms of financial aid, the school administration was also very much supportive in aiding the minor EIU activities in the school.

2. Description of the Programme

2.1 Goal & Purpose

Goal: To develop an exemplary educational model on how the ideals of EIU can be integrated with the curriculum for GNH Education.

Purpose: The main purpose of the programme is to provide young children with a value-based quality education, in order to prepare them for a

peaceful and sustainable society.

2.2 Specific Goals and Objectives of the Programme

The specific goals and objectives of the programme are well designed to address the six principle themes of EIU as follows:

- 1) To impart the values of living with compassion.
- 2) To dismantle the culture of fighting, bullying and ragging among students.
- 3) To promote local, regional and national culture, and at the same time, build intercultural respect, solidarity and reconciliation among children.
- 4) To provide education for inner well-being through various school level initiatives.
- 5) To build a spirit of living in harmony with the earth.
- 6) To inculcate the values of respecting human rights, and to make students aware of individual responsibilities for promoting a culture of peace in the society.

2.3 Relevance to EIU

Bhutan is known to the outside world for its development philosophy of GNH. Though it is a small country, the government is highly sensitive in terms of promoting its indigenous culture and preserving its natural environment. Where happiness is a top national priority, it can be endorsed that Bhutan is a peace-loving country, and its people are unaccustomed to conflicts and wars.

However, peace does not necessarily mean the absence of war. Like other developing countries, the new culture of modernization in disguise of economic growth has already entered Bhutan. This has driven the outlook of the people in favor of a materialistic society. They started to come out of their usual shell of contentment to join a more self-centered way of consumerism. This has already sown the seeds of thirst for power and

money, insecurity and jealousy as well as discontentment and frustration in the minds of the people. The society, therefore, is unconsciously waiting for these socially vicious seeds to grow. In the long run, it can upset the existing tranquility of the nation. Education remains as the only hope to play an instrumental role for the gradual transformation of the society. The activities which are documented in this report are geared towards fulfilling the goals of EIU. It is an educational movement towards a Culture of Peace and sustainable future.

Moreover, as an educator deeply apprehensive about this deteriorating planet, a genuine urgency is felt to integrate the core values of EIU with the emerging ideals of GNH through this project. EIU supplements the GNH curriculum by giving it a broader understanding of this weakening world, thereby justifying the genuine need for a positive societal change. The change that we want to see in the society has to begin within each individual, and by doing so, education is the only driving force. This project describes an educational programme that brings down the noble task of creating a better world to the level at which young children can understand and try to accomplish this task at school. Through this project, various school level are redesigned as well as also newly innovated to synchronize with the principles of EIU.

Therefore, EIU and GNH integrated educational innovation can be used by any educational institution that is interested in preparing their students for creating a more peaceful and sustainable world. The programme can extensively contribute to the realization of EIU's objectives and goals. The project can also be used as a guide by the upcoming UNESCO ASPnet coordinators in carrying out GNH and EIU related activities in their schools with certain flexibility. Relevance to EIU of each activity is presented in the latter part of the paper. The following sub-themes of EIU are integrated in the activities carried out in the programme:

- 1) Living with justice and compassion.

- 2) Dismantling the culture of war.
- 3) Building cultural respect, reconciliation and solidarity.
- 4) Cultivating inner peace.
- 5) Living in harmony with the earth.
- 6) Promoting human rights and responsibilities.

2.4 Understanding EIU

EIU is a value-based approach to education where children are placed in an educational setting in which they learn to uphold the values of cultivating peace, respecting the essence of sustainable development, globalization, cultural diversity and human rights. The world has become a global village where all humans are global citizens. EIU works towards developing and following a common holistic approach to Education. In today's rapid phase of globalization, it has become immensely important to inculcate in the minds of young children the values of 'learning to live together peacefully despite differences.' The Culture of Peace comprises a set of values, attitudes, modes of behaviour and ways of life that reject violence and prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation among individuals, groups and nations. It is, therefore, important to prepare children to head their future life with understanding, compassion and love.

A sustainable progress of EIU in schools, colleges and any educational institutions and organizations can certainly make positive impacts on the attitudes and mindsets of the individuals. In the long run, EIU can undeniably lead the society towards a safer, greener, happier and more sustainable future.

2.4.1 Ways to Incorporate Holistic Nature of EIU into the Programme

The vision of Educating for GNH clearly states “[...] an educated and enlightened society of *gyalyong gakid pelzom*, at peace with itself, at peace with the world, built and sustained by the idealism and the creative

enterprise of our citizen”, which was endorsed during the Bhutan’s 14th Annual Education Conference, December 2010. The vision clearly harmonizes with the principles of EIU. This gives Bhutanese schools a huge platform on which to implement the principles of EIU that are very much in line with the ideals of GNH. All of the activities carried out in this programme are rooted in EIU’s principles, like sustainable development, cultural diversity, human rights and globalization.

2.5 Pedagogy/Teaching Methods

Integrating EIU with the curriculum for GNH Education being the prime focus of the programme, its mandates and objectives were fulfilled through various school-based co-curricular activities and community-involved initiatives. Therefore, it is a participatory approach of understanding the world and humanity in a holistic way, addressing all of the teachers, the students and the community people. The six sub-themes of EIU and the four principle domains of GNH are the basis of all activities carried out in the school through which the inculcation of the human values in children is expected to be carried out. The development of the UNESCO EIU Park which consists of a large-sized EIU garden with flowers and trees (with hanging quotes and phrases on peace themes) and the centrally located Peace House is a beautiful place on the school campus today where children are exposed to the culture of learning to live together in peace. Some of the relevant examples of EIU ideals that are integrated with the curriculum for GNH Education in this programme are as follows:

- 1) Promoting democratic culture and human rights.
- 2) Respecting cultural diversity and promoting intercultural understanding.
- 3) Promoting Education for Sustainable Development (ESD).
- 4) Understanding the causes of war and ways to resolve conflicts.
- 5) Strategic techniques to build inner peace.
- 6) Enhancing community relationship and promoting the values of indigenous culture and heritages.

- 7) Making the students responsible for disseminating and promoting the values and principles of EIU to the people who are unaware of these issues.

2.5.1 Pedagogical Principles of the Programme

Through school-level short seminars, teachers are first equipped with the pedagogical concepts of EIU. It is also during these workshops that new ideas, innovations and creativity are explored. It is an initial process of inspiring and transforming the teachers as EIU advocates. Thereafter, in order to maximize the educational effects, the team is reminded and made to integrate those core noble principles in every possible activity that they coordinate in the school.

The UNESCO ASPnet coordinator (author), who is the EIU and ESD focal person of the school, conducts the School Based In-service Programmes (SBIP) on EIU themes for the teachers at certain regular intervals of time. With continued support from the school administration and an immense cooperation from all the teachers, the SBIPs have been a huge success.

Such capacity-building workshops for the teachers are made mandatory and very much in line with the school management policy. Through these programmes, teachers awareness of present global issues concerning a shared future is being raised. Furthermore these workshops enhance teachers to feel more reassured that through their work as educators they are able to positively influence society. All of the teachers, through such motivating programmes, are well oriented to impart the EIU values to children. Inculcating such values through education is significant to ensure a secure and sustainable future for everyone in the society. These teachers in turn have a multiplying effect on the programme by infusing the possible values of EIU in all of their educational activities. Similar programmes are also arranged for all students on some of the weekends, when they are taught on themes like the causes of war and conflict resolution, environmental

sustainability, intercultural understanding, essence of learning to live together peacefully, importance of literacy, etc.

2.5.2 Effective Teaching Methods in Achieving the Goals/ Objectives of the Programme

Based on the above-mentioned pedagogical/teaching methods, the following activities are carried out to achieve the specific goals of the programme:

- 1) Values of democratic culture and human rights in the school are inculcated through activities such as election of student leaders through the casting of votes, abolishment of corporal punishments, and students' involvement in framing school rules and regulations. Weekly news broadcast programmes hosted by the students on local, national, and international issues also guarantee their rights to speech and information.
- 2) To promote cultural integrity and intercultural understanding, activities such as the EIU Cultural Nite, an event organized by the school, where students and the community people learn about different cultures around the world and learn to celebrate cultural diversity. Inter-school quiz competitions and morning speeches on EIU themes are also organized to promote cultural resilience.
- 3) To impart the values of sustainable development and living in harmony with the earth, practical hands-on experiences are provided for sustainable agricultural practices. Other activities such as campus greening programmes, organizing a tree-planting day and conducting waste management seminars for the students and also for the community, are found to be very effective to address these issues.
- 4) In order to promote dismantling the culture of war, various initiatives including the police-youth partnership programme and EIU seminars for the students are found to be effective in creating a happier learning

environment.

- 5) To meet the needs of emotional, mental, spiritual and inner well-being of the students, the most important activity that is carried out every day is about prayer and meditation. Meanwhile, counseling programmes are also simultaneously conducted to help students cultivate inner peace.
- 6) Mass-briefing sessions on EIU themes are done through PowerPoint presentations, lectures, group discussions and Q & A sessions. Informative educational documentaries are also shown to make the programme enjoyable.

2.6 Main Activities of the Programme and their Relevance to EIU

2.6.1 Activities for Promoting Human Rights and Responsibilities in the School

The following practices of the school are aimed at promoting human rights and responsibilities amongst the school children:

i) Democratic Practice of Electing Student Leaders

Bhutan has been a democratic country since 2008. Therefore, the promotion of democratic values and human rights is given a prime concern in the school. The school's student leaders and group leaders are all elected democratically through students' voting, so that these leaders will be the choice of the general mass. It contributes to the satisfaction of all students to know, that the election is carried out fair and rightful, so to demonstrate that these actions are consequently contributing to a Culture of Peace at their school. Through this democratic culture, the school aspires to inculcate the values of democracy and human rights in the students.

ii) Student Involvement in Framing the School Rules and Guidelines

As a major function in the school organized at the beginning of the academic year, the teachers and the school administration orient the



▲ Above: Involving students in framing school rules and regulations.

students to various rules and regulations of the school for making the learning environment conducive. It is also carried out to start the academic year with clear, realistic and acceptable disciplined guidelines. At the end of the session, students are given freedom to comment on the rules which they think would hamper their social and mental well-being. This way, the school strives to work towards the interest of the children. The school respects the views of the students and makes it possible to change the system in order to create good teacher-student relationships that would contribute to a culture of peace in the working environment.

iii) Abolishment of Corporal Punishment



▲ Students freely approaching the teachers in the staff room for any educational discussion.

The school is very much aware of the Global Initiative to ‘End All Corporal Punishment of Children’ across the world. The Global Initiative, launched in 2001, works within the context of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child to pursue children’s equal human rights to be protected from violence and humiliation.

In addition, the penal code of Bhutan 2004 also protects children from violence of any form. The teachers as well as the students in the school

know that everyone is signatory to the Conventions of the Rights of the Child. Therefore, the issue now is not about corporal punishment, but about giving children their inherent rights to education and general well-being at home, school and community. It is also about upbringing the children by making them responsible for their actions. The school has taken initiative in having a punishment-free morning assembly by dropping the traditional way of punishing the students in front of the assembly for their misconducts in the school. Non-violent approaches and positive disciplining techniques such as counseling are introduced to correct those troublesome students. The principles of a child-friendly school have now made a firm footing in the school.

iv) Gender Equality

The school strives to strike a balance between girls and boys, believing in the principles of gender equality. Every single activity of the school is aimed at achieving the goal of narrowing the gap between men and women. Girls enjoy equal privilege as boys in any respect, such as in the fields of games/



▲ Boy & girl student leaders 2012

sports or literary activities. Both sexes have impartial access to participating in academic opportunities and excelling on their own merit. To boost the morale of women/girls who perceive themselves as the weaker sex of the society, the school empowers them to be at par with men in the leadership field. The school has an equal number of boy and girl student leaders despite the imbalance in the male-female ratio (214:166).

v) Weekly News Broadcasting Programme



▲ Students broadcasting weekly news on the Saturday morning assembly.

The school initiated several activities for students to be introduced to the accessibility and wide range of information. Every week, children of different classes take turns in collecting the news and events of the bygone week, which consist of local, national and international issues, and then they broadcast what they think is worth in their collection, on Saturday mornings during the assembly in a stipulated time of 20 minutes. The news is broadcast both in English and Dzongkha (national language) alternately. Through this, the school aims to fulfill the following objectives:

- To keep the students informed about the current happenings in the school and the local community.
- To develop awareness amongst the students on various issues and problems occurring within the school, in the nation and also in the international community.
- To enrich the students' skills of collecting factual news, so as to inculcate in them the ethics of unbiased and fair journalism.
- To broaden and empower the perspective of the entire society for a culture of peace.
- To make the students realize the importance of media responsible for a vibrant democracy.

2.6.2 Activities for Building Cultural Respect, Reconciliation and Solidarity

GNH recognizes that the moral and ethical framework of thoughts

and actions are shaped by one's culture. Preservation and promotion of culture is one of the four principle domains of GNH. This pillar aims at strengthening the institutions of family and community, the spirit of voluntarism, tolerance and cooperation, and the virtues of compassion, altruism, honor and dignity. At the school level, efforts have been made to get students as well as people in the community to be aware of the importance of preserving and promoting culture. The school, embracing the principles of EIU, gives utmost interest in developing the values of respecting the diverse cultures of different regions of the country and of the world at large. The following activities practiced in the school are found to be effective in promoting intercultural understanding, reconciliation and solidarity:

i) EIU Cultural Nite



▲ Participants entertaining the audience with diverse cultural dances.

The EIU Cultural Nite is an important event of the school where students perform various cultural dances of different regions of the country. The students and the entire community share an enjoyable time, witnessing

various cultural items performed by the students. It is in fact the best of time for the school to make the community better recognize the beauty and importance of cultural diversity. The participants learn cultural dances of different parts of the world and perform them for the enthusiastic audience. This programme brings a joyous moment in the school to celebrate cultural diversity in a big way. The programme is found to be very informative for the students and the community at large. It is a special moment to entertain the audience with skits on important EIU themes like war and conflict resolution. Such events are found to be extremely effective in imparting the values of cultural diversity and intercultural understanding to the students as well as to the community. The most beautiful thing about this programme is that the fund raised through this cultural event is directly sent to the world UNESCO through the Bhutan National Commission for UNESCO. This event helps in inculcating the values of showing solidarity and reconciliation in children to the people around the world. The programme is coordinated by the school's UNESCO club every year.

ii) Inter-School UN-Bhutan Quiz Competition with the Theme Friendship through Quiz



▲ *UN-Bhutan Inter-School Quiz Competition.*



▲ *Secondary schools of the Zhemgang District participating in the programme.*

The awareness about cultural diversity is also addressed by the conduction of the quiz competitions on EIU themes. In 2011, the UNESCO club of

the school hosted the United Nations (UN) quiz competition amongst the secondary schools in the district, which aimed at promoting the goals of the UN. The quiz mostly covered EIU themes like human rights, cultural diversity and interdependence and coexistence of communities and nations. Awareness of global issues such as poverty, literacy, HIV/AIDS, climate change, etc. was also largely covered in the programme.

Therefore, it was a big opportunity for the school to disseminate the values and principles of EIU to the schools within the district. It was also a good platform for the students from different remote schools to come together, share their ideas and learn from each other about the world they live in. For the participants from different regions, it was an enjoyable experience of learning to live together in peace and union.

iii) Assembly Speeches on EIU Topics



▲ A 10th grade boy student delivering his speech on gender equality.

Every morning from Monday to Friday, students take turns to deliver speeches during the assembly on various EIU themes, both in English and in Dzongkha (national language). It encourages them to explore more about the world and share it with their friends in such gatherings. It also helps to strengthen their confidence while

speaking in public, which at long sight will help them to become more open-minded and competent citizens. The following days are allotted for speaking on various EIU themes:

- Monday - Human Values
- Tuesday - Importance of Literacy and Choice of Career
- Wednesday - Science and Culture (Cultural Diversity)
- Thursday - Poverty and Health Issues

- Friday - Environment and Sustainable Use of Resources
- Saturday - Weekly News Broadcasting Programme

2.6.3 Activities for Dismantling the Culture of War

i) Police-Youth Partnership Programme

Once a year, the school invites police officials from the District Police Station to speak to the youth on various youth-related issues. The police officials sensitize students on provisions of laws and consequences of coming in conflict with them. They also talk on issues such as main causes of common conflicts among young people and gang fights, and provide necessary life skill education for conflict resolution at their level. In addition, they brief the students on the existing convention of child rights, the essentials of child rights, policing work such as traffic, fire and jail services, youth and HIV/AIDS and drugs and legal provisions on them. Furthermore this programmes aims at building a partnership between police and youths to prevent any forms of conflict and create a harmonious society. Through this programme, children learn to accept their differences and live with mutual understanding. The school believes that it is a way towards preventing conflicts by dismantling a culture of war.

ii) Building Community Relationship



▲ Community people and students performing a traditional dance together.



▲ Students performing a play on causes and prevention of conflict.

The school's UNESCO club, Scouts and the health club take turns in carrying out various awareness campaigns in the communities on the causes



▲ *Students visiting the community monastery to offer prayers for the well-being of all sentient beings.*

of conflict, conflict resolution, solidarity and reconciliation, waste problems and environmental sustainability, etc. The campaign is carried out in various forms like skits, songs, dances and speeches. It is also an opportunity for the school to educate the community on the importance of indigenous values and traditions

and encourage the natives to preserve and keep practicing those important indigenous cultures. By doing so, the students as well as the school educates the illiterate people with rich information on HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), personal hygiene and sanitation. They also gather information about the history of certain indigenous practices that the people have been following over the years and also interview elderly people about local heritages, cultural sites and monuments. This way, the people in the community are encouraged and motivated to take care of the indigenous values that they have been preserving for many years. The campaigners return to the school and share their trip experiences with the rest of their friends. A representative of the group prepares a written report and delivers it during the morning assembly. Through such campaigns, the school aspires to build a very strong relationship with the communities. Students as well as the community both learn more about the world they live in and realize the importance of learning to live together in harmony. The school rates this programme as an effective way of preventing conflicts, dismantling the culture of war and progressing towards a happier society.

iii) The School's Every Day Culture of Learning to Live Together Towards a Culture of Peace

A strong sense of value of learning to live together is inculcated in the minds of the children by giving them group tasks in the classrooms and encouraging them to cooperate and learn from each other. Most of the

students stay in a hostel and therefore, they are advised very often by their warden and the matron to respect the differences amongst themselves and to live in peace and harmony with each other. The students are made to spend their time together even during the morning, evening and



▲ *Students doing the morning SUPW.*

night study hours, so that they can discuss, share their views and ideas, and learn from each other. It is mandatory for all students to take their meals together in the dining hall, where they learn to show and practice good table manners in front of their friends. Every morning before the academic classes begin, students, again in groups, are engaged in carrying out Socially Useful and Productive Work (SUPW) in the school campus like cleaning the footpaths, weeding the flower gardens, emptying the dust bins, cleaning the toilets, etc. The SUPW culture is practiced throughout the year in the school in order to inculcate a prime human value of living together by sharing our responsibilities.

In order to engage students in meaningful and productive activities, various games and sports are organized throughout the academic session. Teachers also participate in many of the games and sports along with the students to make them feel the importance of such activities in making us more understanding and social human beings. Bullying, fighting and ragging in school are prohibited and well monitored by all the teachers and co-existential values like respecting elders and loving younger fellow students are highly encouraged. Such culture in the school has drastically helped the school inculcate the values of learning to live together in mutual solidarity.

2.6.4 Activities for Promoting ESD - Living in Harmony with the Earth

Equitable and sustainable socio-economic development is one of the four

principle domains of the philosophy of GNH. Therefore, the school gives importance to inculcating respect for the idea of sustainable development and living in harmony with the earth. The school makes every effort to instill the core values of sustainability through a wide range of activities:

i) School Agriculture Programme



▲ Students engaging in learning agricultural farming practices.

There is a saying “if you give a child seeds, tools, a small plot of land and a little help, s/he will make a garden.” The school has a reserved land space identified as the students’ agricultural field. The field is used to impart the skills of organic farming to the students. The agriculture field is equally divided to all the thirteen divisions of students where they learn farming every Friday and Saturday for a duration of two hours after class. The respective class teachers guide and encourage their members in carrying out the farming works. The farm products are supplied to the school canteen for sale. The income earned is used to buy supplementary diets for students with special nutritional needs. Teachers place importance on promoting the indigenous knowledge of farming that causes minimum harm to the environment. It is in fact used as a tool to develop concern and appreciation of the environment in the minds of the children. The school farm is also found to be important in developing social skills, since many activities in the farm require cooperation among the group members. To summarize, the school agriculture programme is carried out in the school with the following objectives:

- To inculcate a value of dignity of labor in children.
- To teach students the importance of agriculture, as it is one of the components of GNH (sustainable development).
- To equip future generations with sound knowledge on agriculture.
- To create awareness and sensitivity among individuals and social groups regarding the environment and its allied problems.
- To supplement children's diet through the sale of agricultural products in the school kitchen.

ii) Greening Programme in the School

According to the perspective of GNH, nature is a partner in existence; a provider of sustenance, comfort and beauty; and home to millions of life forms in our timeless existence. The traditional beliefs and customs underpinned by a strong reverence for all sentient beings and the environment



▲ *Students getting ready for planting trees in the campus.*

promote tolerance, compassion and respect, which are fundamental values for harmonious co-existence between humankind and nature. Environmental preservation, therefore, is a way of life in Bhutan. Currently, 72% of the country's area is under forest cover, 26% of the area is declared as protected areas and the state has declared to maintain 60% of its area under forest cover for all times to come, as mentioned in the constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan. Conservation of forest is, therefore, one of the main pillars of GNH. The idea of Green schools for Green Bhutan initiated by the Ministry of Education is given a paramount concern by the school. The entire school campus is again divided amongst different grades of students led by a teacher who is solely responsible for greening and beautifying the particular area. Students plant saplings, hedges and flowers in their respective areas and keep the area clean and ecologically sound. This is to encourage the students to become a responsible contributor to

the world's greenery. The school believes that this greening movement demonstrates respect for the earth by conserving natural resources. It is a way to learn about the earth by bringing nature into the classroom and the classroom closer to the nature.

iii) 2 June - Social Forestry Day

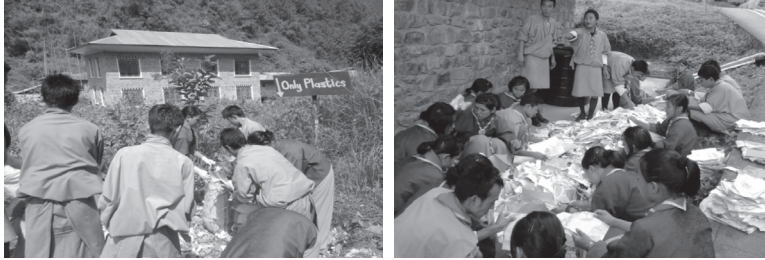


▲ A 7th grade student planting a tree sapling on Social Forestry Day.

The second day of June is observed as a Social Forestry Day in Bhutan with different ecological themes every year. In 2011, the theme for observing the day was “Grow Plants and Make a Positive Difference to Climate Change.” On this day, the schools, colleges, institutions and communities across the kingdom

observe the day by planting trees in the identified areas. The school also takes genuine interest in arranging saplings from the nurseries in consultation with the District Forestry Office. The day's programme begins with a formal gathering of teachers, students and also forestry officials from the district office, followed by speeches delivered on the importance of forest, climate change and sustainable development. In this way, students are well inculcated with the values that forests are crucial for the well-being of humanity and intricately linked to the survival of all nations in the world. The programme concludes by handing over the plant saplings to the students, teachers and all the guests and by finally planting them in the designated areas. It is an activity which gives a great satisfaction to the school and the community for at least contributing a little greener land to the world.

iv) School Waste Management System



▲ Plastics and papers being safely segregated for sale in the market (for recycling).

Effective waste management strategies are put in place to keep the surrounding area clean and green. The school has come up with initiatives of inculcating the values of reducing and managing the wastes. The school follows the system of segregating wastes into things such as the bio-degradable and the non-degradable. Plastic bottles and papers are separately collected and sold to the concerned dealers in downtown, who buy those wastes for recycling. All classes are involved in managing the waste.

The school has also come up with the following rules on managing wastes:

- Students are to consciously save electricity and water by turning off lights and water taps whenever they are not in use.
- No one should waste any food in the dining hall. Students should take only the right amount of share that they can consume, to prevent unnecessary wastage of food.
- No one should drop any litter on and around the school campus in order to maintain a litter-free environment.
- Everybody in the school should pick up any litter they see around and dispose them in the proper place.



▲ The packed wastes are sold to the correspondent dealers.

- All classes should have separate bins for collecting paper and plastic wastes inside the classrooms.
- No one will use plastic bags in the school, and the school will reduce the purchase of individually wrapped candies, which are a huge source of waste.

v) Environment Online (ENO)



▲ Social network site for Bhutan ENO programme (Authors' initiative)

The school has also shown a great interest in working collaboratively with the local as well as the international community to create awareness of the world's forest and the environment. The school has already been registered for the Environment Online Movement, ENO. ENO is a global

virtual school and network for sustainable development. ENO studies environmental themes and arranges campaigns simultaneously around the world (source: www.enoprogramme.org). The author of this EBP case is the National Coordinator for ENO who has a network of schools across the country in sharing issues and news on the world's forests and environments. Students are made aware of being a member school of the ENO and their role of being extra-conscious and deeply concerned about the world's dying forests.

2.6.5 Activities for Helping Students to Cultivate Inner Peace

According to the holistic framework of a culture of peace proposed by Mr. Swee-Hin Toh, an EIU expert, one of the six main components which promote serenity and tranquility within one's self is the development of natural inner peace (APCEIU, Teacher Training for Learning to Live Together). It is cultivated through effective counseling programmes and practice of prayers and meditations.

i) Counseling Programmes



▲ *A teacher counselor talking to a student.*

The school strongly believes that a child has the right to a safe, caring, respectful and healthy learning environment. Therefore, it has guidance and counseling programmes to promote peaceful living and coexistence within the school community. Counseling is an offshoot of child-friendly

policies that the school adopts, which fosters positive disciplining in a non-punitive approach. To curb disciplinary problems in the school, counseling provides an excellent alternative unlike corporal punishment and detentions. Counseling and guidance enhances physical, emotional and intellectual aspects of a child's development, thus contributing to his/her psycho-social and inner well-being. Therefore, students who need help are identified and directed to a trained teacher counselor. A helping relationship is built between the client and the counselor based on the ethics of the counseling process - confidentiality, trust, self-motivation and commitment. The counselor provides help necessary for the client to cope with emotional stresses, indecisiveness, resistance to drug addiction, etc. Through this practice of counseling, children who have experienced depression receive emotional support to nourish the inner peace or inner well-being.



▲ *Students meditating for a minute before the start of their exam.*

ii) Prayers and Meditations

Prayers and meditations are an integral part of the school culture. The very first thing that students do in the morning before the start of the academic

learning is praying. The culture of praying with a pure heart and soul gives children a great sense of hope and happiness in life. It also boosts their morale and self-esteem. The Morning Prayer is followed by a short meditation for around three minutes. Meditation is deemed as a scientific approach to train the mind and awake the soul in a conscious effort, which in Buddhist philosophy is termed as ‘mindfulness’. The meditation techniques are taught to the students by a teacher who has been trained professionally. Teachers are also trained on different meditation techniques during the GNH Professional Development workshops in the country.

iii) Special EIU Classes for Helping Students to Cultivate Inner Peace

Special EIU classes are often organized in the school auditorium to impart various forms of life skill education to all students. Students are briefed about the ill effects of ATOD (Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs) and awareness is created to refrain from such ATOD indulgence. The school firmly believes in a drug- and tobacco-free society. Students are given a feeling of being cared for and loved through such sessions, which boost their self-esteem. Career education classes are provided to help the students to trace their future career pathways. During such EIU classes, children are also taught and well reminded about how the six sub-themes of EIU contribute to the well-being and happiness of a society, thereby preparing them to become more humble and understanding citizens of the world.



▲ The author conducting a special EIU class for the entire group of students in the school auditorium.

Decision-making life skills are imparted to help students to make realistic choices of careers based on their academic performance, ability, skills, interest and aptitude. Students get valuable information about the job market and about the need for preparations to face the competitive world of employment. The school places more emphasis on development of the students' personal qualities and values in becoming a globally conscious citizen. Consumption of any form of drugs and alcohol is strictly banned in the school. The sale of tobacco, drug and alcohol within the periphery of the school community is strictly forbidden, especially to students. The community works in partnership with the school by respecting the school policy.

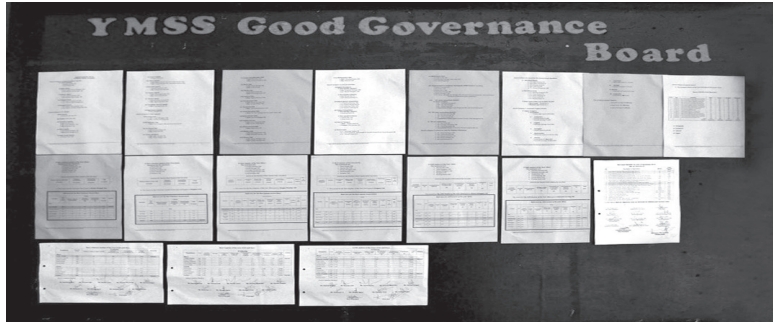
2.6.6 School's Culture of Living with Compassion and Justice

Some of the school practices that promote the values of living with compassion and justice are as follows:

i) Staff and Student Welfare Committee

The staff and student welfare committee works towards creating an excellent social ambiance for both the staffs and the students. The author of this EBP case has been functioning as secretary of the committee for the last two years and is guided by certain rules as stated in the school policy document. The committee practices the culture of visiting the staffs that fall ill, to convey a strong message of solidarity. In times of serious misfortunes like losing one's parent or relatives, the bereaved staff member or student gets as much moral and financial support as needed from all members of the institution. The welfare committee organizes monetary donations made by the staffs and the students during such exceptional times and offers the collected amount to the concerned individual. Through this act, students basically learn the values of showing solidarity and expressing condolences to the people in need. It is seen as a great act of living with compassion and justice in the society and as a beautiful way of learning to live together in any given situation.

ii) School's Good Governance Information Board



▲ The school's Good Governance Information Board.

Good governance is one of the four principle domains of GNH that is inevitable for enhancing the well-being of the people. Governance in Bhutan has always been an integral part of the governing system, which internalizes GNH values. According to the GNH philosophy, the main thrusts of good governance are professionalism, efficiency, transparency, accountability and motivation. All of these universal factors can enhance good governance in any country. Therefore, in order to inculcate these values in children, the aforementioned principles are followed in all of the administrative practices of the institution. It is also a model strategy to teach children the importance of compassion and justice in the society. The school's Good Governance Information Board contains the following:

- Biannual account details of the school's financial record.
- Expenditure details of all school activities.
- Account details of the income generating activities such as cultural shows, tournaments, etc.
- Fair selection of students for certain awards with all the evaluation sheets (containing appropriate criteria) verified by the jury.
- Fair time tables and rosters for all of the school activities.
- Result declarations of all school activities (inter-class or inter-house competitions) with their details signed by the jury.
- Any important announcements and notification for both the staff and the students.

The above practice of maintaining the Good Governance Information Board in the school inculcates in students the values of being transparent, accountable and efficient in one's professionalism. It also motivates students to improve their conducts and aptitudes and stops them from becoming corrupt citizens. Through such practices, students learn to have a strong stance for justice in the society.

iii) Annual Student Appreciation Day

The school organizes a special day for the senior outgoing students at the end of the academic year. All student leaders, school club coordinators and all other responsibility holders are awarded with a khaddar (traditional white scarf) and a certificate of appreciation by the school on this day. It is a way to



▲ A student receiving a certificate and cash prize on the Student Appreciation Day for winning the EIU essay competition.

make those students feel appreciated and to help them see that they are making a difference by carrying out their responsibilities judiciously and sincerely. Children who aren't good in academics are the prime target for these awards and certificates. Students who are not able to excel in academics are rewarded for things that they do succeed in, so that they too feel appreciated and don't feel neglected. The school has also come up with an initiative of conferring the 'GNH Class of the Year Award' and the 'GNH Student of the Year Award' to the most deserving class and student respectively. Therefore, the main intention of organizing this function is to encourage everyone in the school to become humble, caring and understanding citizens of the society. Such practices are found to be encouraging the students to cultivate good values and attitudes during their stay in the school.

2.7 Participants of the Programme

Integrating EIU with the curriculum for GNH Education is a special programme basically meant for the teachers and students to learn to live together. Therefore, students and teachers are the main participants of the programme. However, the people in the community also take part in many of the school's activities, like parent-teacher meetings, games, cultural shows, etc. Students also reach out to the communities to involve the people in various educational activities like management of wastes, learning about the causes and prevention of diseases, preservation of local heritages, etc.

2.8 Description of Other Aspects with Distinctive Features

Besides integrating EIU in the above co-curricular activities, the UNESCO ASPnet of the school has taken a range of other initiatives in disseminating the knowledge on principles and values of EIU in the school and the community at large. Following are some of the prevalent examples of such initiatives:

i) School Based In-Service Programme (SBIP) for Teachers

According to the school policy, every teacher in the school should have attended a professional development programme of at least 80 hours in one academic session. To fulfill the mandates of the policy, teachers who have attended the national and



▲ Teachers during a photo session after the SBIP on the pedagogical concepts of EIU.

international educational workshops take turns in sharing their expertise to other fellow teachers. The professional development programme policy of the school has provided a very good platform to disseminate the pedagogical concepts of EIU to the rest of the teacher colleagues. All professional development programmes on EIU for teachers are resourced

by the UNESCO ASPnet Coordinator.

ii) School EIU Information Board



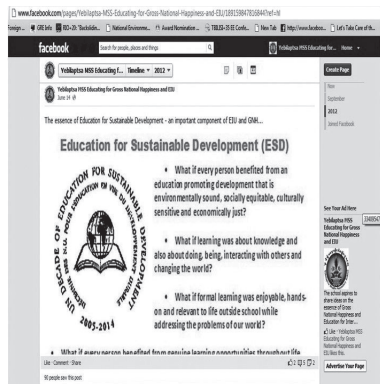
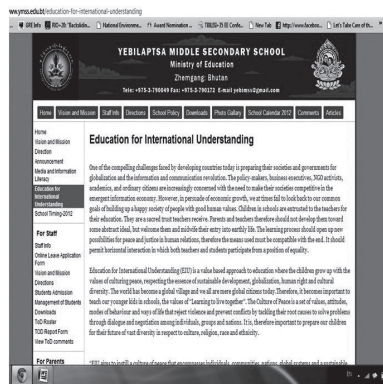
▲ *The EIU Information Board (inside the school's Peace House).*

The EIU Information Board is the EIU resource center in the school for all students and teachers, where the latest updates on EIU issues on local, national and international levels are made available. Besides the latest news and issues on EIU, the board also has a reserved space for the children to display various forms of their creativities, like paintings, essays, poems, stories, etc. possessing the core values of EIU. Every Wednesday, the contents of the board are replaced with the latest updates. All of the articles contributed by the students are stored for compiling into a book called the EIU Reflection of the Year, which are published at the end of the year. The best articles are awarded with attractive prizes on the Annual Appreciation Day. The selected articles are also sent to the Bhutan National Commission for UNESCO to be published in the Bhutan UNESCO's Annual Newsletter.

iii) Use of the School Website and Social Networking Sites to Promote EIU

Despite its remote location and poor Internet speed, the school has launched its new school website www.yms.edu.bt to adapt to the present trend of information and technology in sharing the good practices of EIU with the world. The main aim of the school for entering into the

cyber world is to share its schooling culture with other schools around the country and with the world. The website also has a global forum to collect feedbacks and suggestions from the international community, so that it can help the school administration and the teachers in reflecting on their shortcomings and areas of improvement. Similarly, the school also has an official page in Facebook. Various forms of EIU information on gender education, human rights education, sustainable development, etc. are shared through the school's homepage and the social site.



▲ The Literary Wall Magazine on peace themes.

iv) Promoting EIU Values through School Literary Activities

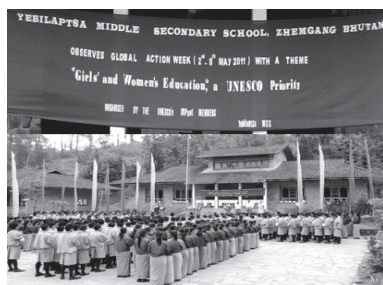
The school's UNESCO club and the literary club work hand-in-hand in conducting and coordinating various literary activities in the school. Activities include essay writing, extempore, debate, quiz, poetry recitation,

speech competition, declamation, preparing wall magazine, writing a book review and many others which are conducted amongst the different grade levels. EIU themes are incorporated in all of these activities. Such activities help the participants to develop their abilities of critical thinking and enhance their confidence. It also makes a greater impact on the minds of the audience and the observers who learn by listening to the views and opinions of their participating friends. Organizing such activities has a multiplying effect in spreading the message of EIU. Awards and certificates are given to all the winners. This is to encourage the students to learn and explore more about EIU and cultivate its principles and values in their daily life.



▲ EIU inter-class Quiz competition

v) Observing International Days/Events



▲ The school observing the 2011 Global Action Week.

The UNESCO club actively takes initiative in observing international days like the World Health Day, World Water Day, International Women’s Day, International Literacy Day, International Day of Democracy, etc. by delivering speeches in the assembly and engaging students and teachers in carrying out relevant activities to

observe the day. Other events like the Global Action Week, Reading Week, etc. are also observed as a symbolic representation of the community in working with the international community. Through such events, students and the community are made to realize the importance of being a conscious and well-informed global citizen of the world.

vi) International Exchange Programme

The UNESCO ASPnet has adopted a sister-school in the Maldives as its network partner to promote the principles of EIU. The main objectives for internationally connecting with this school in the Maldives are as follows:



▲ The principal and staff of Seenu Atoll Madharsa, (school) Maldives: Sister-school of Yebilaptsa MSS

- To share various ideas of promoting EIU in both schools through e-mails and sharing photographs and YouTube videos online.
- To learn about each others culture and develop intercultural understanding between the pupils of the two schools.

vii) Media Literacy Programme



▲ A banner designed by students on how media helps strengthening democracy.

A good democracy can only flourish if the present media is fair, just and reliable. At the same time, citizens also have to be critical consumers of the media and media messages. According to the Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy (BCMD), media literacy is a combination of skills, knowledge and attitudes that provides valuable support in enabling individuals to search, analyze and communicate in various forms of media. It includes the

abilities to judge the credibility of information, to express one's views and to consume media mindfully. The Yebilaptsa Media Literacy club (YML) of the school benefits the students by imparting the following skills and knowledge on how to become a media literate citizen in the era of rapid globalization:



▲ A class representative explaining his group's creativity that connects the media, democracy and people.

1) The club helps in developing creative thinking during the classroom teaching and learning process through constructive decoding of media and media products.

2) The club helps in creating awareness in teachers and students about the importance and negative impacts of media on one's life. This

widely covers the issues of advertisements, consumerism and their impacts in the society.

3) The club also teaches students to use media and media messages to their advantage and for the benefit of society.

ix) The School's UNESCO EIU Park



▲ The School's UNESCO EIU Park-spreading the message of peace.

It is with the author's initiative that the school has developed an EIU park for the children, a serene place for learning more about the world. The park consists of beautiful flower gardens, lawns and trees. It also has a centrally located Peace House where children can learn more about the world they live in. The inside wall of the Peace House has different sections representing different parts of the globe with the pictorial display of its food culture, costumes and any other special feature of the region.

The Peace House is a hexagonal structure with the six themes of EIU inscribed on its six outer sides. The four principle domains of GNH are inscribed on the interior walls of the construction. As a symbol of respect and solidarity, the national flags of all nations of the world are placed inside the Peace House. It is also used by the teachers as a classroom to teach formal lessons on nature, environment, biodiversity, places, culture, etc. It is now a resource center for the students to explore and learn more about GNH and EIU.

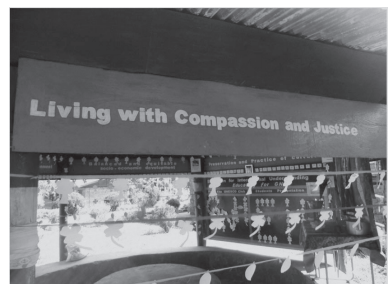


▲ The front view of the Peace House.



▲ ▼ Two of the six sides of the hexagonal Peace House (outside view).

The house has a mini shelf containing books, magazines and newsletters on peace themes that are freely accessible to the students all the time. The EIU Park contributes to the beauty of the school campus with additional



greeneries and has made the learning environment more conducive and nature-friendly for the young learners.



▲ ▼ Above and below: The inside view of the Peace House.



▲ Resources on EIU and GNH inside the Peace House.

3. Impacts & Reflection

3.1 Main Impacts of the Programme Made on the Target Group and Larger Community

a) Impact of the Programme on the Teachers

- They have become more responsible themselves in taking care of the natural environments after getting to know the global environmental issues through the EIU School Based In-service Programmes.
- They have started coming up with their own little initiatives of contributing towards the promotion of EIU in their own capacities.
- They have given up the practice of using corporal punishment and have started handling disciplinary problems of the students, using non-violent approaches and positive disciplining strategies.
- Their belief in the strength of education in creating a happier society

at long sight is reinforced.

- They have started looking at children more closely, giving more attention to their learning needs with increased compassion and justice, which indirectly enhances the quality of education.

b) Impact of the Programme on the Students

- Students have become less problematic, which indicates more peace in the school.
- Senior students have formed a 'conflict-resolving team' without being suggested by teachers.
- Students have started following all the waste-management rules sincerely.
- Bullying habits of the senior students have drastically been reduced.
- Children are now willing to take part in activities which require team spirit. It shows that they have learned how to live together by respecting cultural and racial differences.
- Children also have developed good habits of fencing and watering the plant saplings, which shows their increased love and care towards nature and the environments.
- Students now show their interest in exploring more about other cultures of different regions of the world, which shows their enhanced level of intercultural understanding, solidarity and reconciliation. They have stopped criticizing and making fun of the different cultures which used to be apparently strange to their eyes.
- The health and hygiene of the students have also improved, as they come to believe in the concept that happiness comes from healthy living.
- Students share their social and domestic problems with their friends and teachers to feel better and regain their inner peace.

c) Impact of the Programme on the School and the Community at Large

- A strong bond is developed between the community and the school.

- The school often receives invitation from the community for awareness programmes on various issues such as HIV/AIDS, waste management, etc. which indicates that the community awareness campaigns have contributed to the well-being and happiness of the people.
- The school campus has become a greener and happier place to educate students in. The littering of the school has enormously been reduced.
- The social environment has also immensely improved. Students have become more cooperative and less troublesome than before, making the learning environment homely and conducive for all the learners.

3.2 Evaluation of the Programme with Honest and Critical Reflection

The behavioral patterns of children are deeply rooted in the surrounding cultural environment they grow up. Children are already conditioned at home with many daily practices that might be unsocial and immoral when seen through the eyes of GNH and EIU. Therefore, in the beginning, it was difficult to streamline their ways of thinking towards a more holistic, amicable and peaceful living culture.

When the introduction of EIU took place for the first time in the school, the students and the staff were skeptical about its concept. It was understood more as a theory lesson on peace that sounded impractical to them. Therefore, it required time to firstly make people understand the pedagogical principles and concepts of EIU. Series of sessions on EIU for the staff and the students had to be conducted to make them first realize the noble goals and aspirations of the programme. Ideas and strategies then had to be planned and developed to find out possibilities of infusing these values in the schooling culture of the institute. Gradually, the theories were put into practice. Teachers started placing importance on the integration of EIU values in every possible school activity, including their daily classroom teachings.

With the passage of time, the impacts of the EIU integrated schooling system could be seen through the change in the attitudes, behaviours, and daily practices and conducts of the students. Gradually, students started becoming more concerned about the environments. Disciplinary problems related to bullying and ragging got minimized. Children started becoming more responsible. Today, they take initiatives in forming peer helping groups to solve fights and conflicts amongst them. The earlier trend of criticizing each other on the basis of their religion, race and ethnicity has gradually subsided. They seem to have learned to accept each other and live together happily despite the diversity that prevails. These positive impacts are, of course, seen in a long duration of its implementation, with continuous efforts of the teachers and good administrative support.

4. Suggestions and Conclusion

4.1 Suggestions for Educators Interested in Implementing a Similar Programme

Integrating EIU with any education curriculum will not be a predicament if we can work with a little more creativity and innovative techniques to harmonize the EIU concepts with the existing curriculum. It is a personal opinion of the author that integration of EIU with the existing curriculum can be much easier than introducing EIU as a complete new curriculum package.

EIU, ESD, GNH or any other holistic model of transformative Education should be seen as educational ideals, which in the long run can have a positive impact on the society if practiced sincerely in the educational institutions. The fact cannot be denied that it is not easy to bring out any change overnight. Education is a slow process of changing the society towards the EIU goals. However, societies can always have faith in the strength of the transformative educational model such as EIU and Educating for GNH. If children are handled with love and care, considering their fragility and areas of learning, their ways of perceiving

the world will gradually change with the passage of time. With continuous efforts of the educators and practitioners in the field, such noble approaches to education can always make an immense difference in the lives of the students and the society at large. The implementation of such a programme demands like-minded individuals who can work together and dedicate themselves fully for the well-being and betterment of the schooling system. A strong administrative support is another crucial factor for the success of such educational practices. A strong team spirit and cooperation from all the faculty members can really bring such programmes into reality.

4.2 Conclusion

Having had the experience of integrating the principles of EIU with the curriculum for GNH Education, a comprehensive conclusion can be drawn that there are many commonalities between the concepts of EIU and GNH. Both place an emphasis on the inner goals of education that address the needs of rapid globalization. EIU aspires to focus on the importance of education in promoting cooperation, fairness, respect for people and the environment and well-being and happiness of humanity and so does the curriculum for GNH Education.

Yebilaptsa Middle Secondary School has seen a tremendous impact of the integrated programme in the lives of the rural youth. The programme has brought a deep understanding that an individual is, each and all, a global citizen. This ignites a strong sense of responsibility in the minds of the individuals to work towards building happier local and global communities. The success of the programme also gives a strong conviction that peace is a conceivable concept. The school would like to believe that it has built a very good foundation for EIU to progress in the coming years amongst the school children. EIU has already made a special space in the minds of the students, which would remind them about the beauty and joy of living together in harmony. However, sustainability of the programme in the years ahead can surely be a topic for discussion. For the author, involvement in such substantial programmes has opened new doors to learn more about

peace possibilities. The world's quest and desire for creating a better world together should be entrenched deep within the soul of every individual at a very young age. Providing quality education to the present youth is the only way towards creating happier and more sustainable societies across the globe.

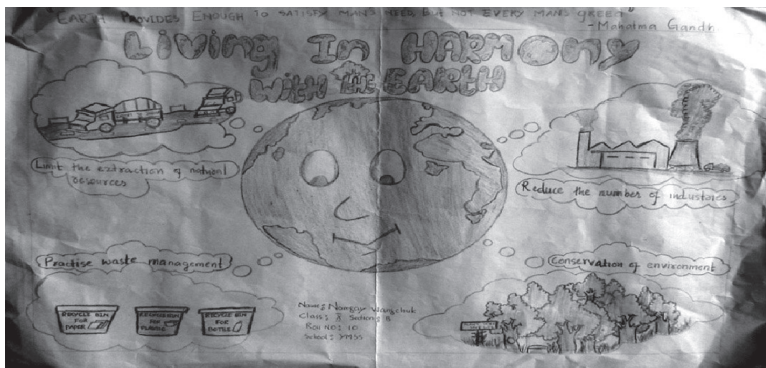
Now, the programme has a long way to go in inspiring other schools in the country. In the third year of its operation, the programme is expected to extend its network with other schools in the district and finally across the country. The author aspires to continue the programme with more enthusiastic and innovative EIU and GNH initiatives in the coming years, so as to make this school a pioneer learning institute for global education. The curriculum for GNH Education will be able to make an extra-mile progress if it is supported by the ideals and principles of EIU. Integrating EIU with the curriculum for GNH Education could be a simple, but effective model project for those educational institutions aspiring to follow a new holistic curriculum, with a long term goal of bringing a global societal change.

Appendix

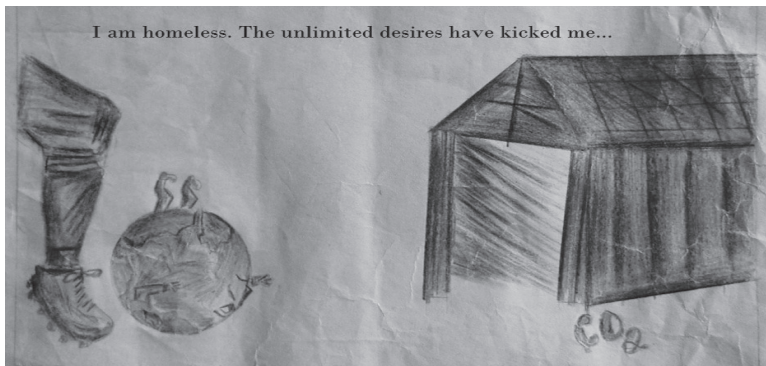
Appendix A: Sample of Essay on EIU Theme

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APCEU



▲ Art By: Namgy Wangchuk 10B (above)



▲ Art By: Nim Dorji 10B (above)



▲ Art By: Sangeeta Rai 9C (above)

Appendix B: Sample of Essay on EIU Theme

Cultivating Inner Peace

The opening of the UNESCO's preamble states, "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed. " World's peace will begin when each and every individual puts an end to the war within oneself. The true sense of peace will grow when every man controls his infinite desire and sees the world with compassion and justice. The selfless way of living a life actually earns the prized possession, the peace of mind which is otherwise known as 'Inner Peace.

Human beings are a common race, though different in appearance - they all come to life by birth, grow to love, share common problems and ultimately face the common fate, the death. So, there's not a bit of cause to battle amongst us and to curse each other. But why is there war? The ignorance, the infinite desire, the uncontrolled jealousy cause the brutal war: It just devastates others and ruins the self that has waged it. To accept the realities and appreciate life, being contented with what we have in our hands can dismantle the culture of war and would bring peace in everyone's life. If we want to feel rich, we should just count all the things we have that money can't buy. This makes life more enthusiastic. 'Peace' is the only thing that

brings the world to a complete union and builds egalitarian human society. The moral summary of every religion is to have flourishing peace in society and eradicating violence. It is all about practicing tolerance, patience, tact, sympathy, generosity and consideration for others. Being selfless and sacrificing our needs for others' welfare reflects purity of our mind and gives immense happiness in life. Meditation gives us strength to concentrate, develop positive thoughts and realize the importance of being an individual. It exercises our power and decision- making ability to mold our mind to a perfect shape. Ray Lyman Wilbur said, "Unless we think of the others and do something for them, we miss one of the greatest sources of happiness," "When a man finds no peace within himself, it is useless to seek it elsewhere," said L.A Rouchefolicauld, and, true to what he pointed out, the cause of happiness or sadness is what our thinking makes and solely depends on how we act in the course of living. Happiness embraces our soul when we are emotionally strong to defend the obstacles that would otherwise distort the peace of mind. Friendship is the bond that multiplies happiness and divides sadness of our life. Life becomes zestful when we explore our talents and look at the sunny side of everything. Martin Luther King. Jr. made his famous saying:

"Do not believe everything you hear.

Do not do everything you desire.

Do not tell all you know.

Do not buy everything you see

Do not use all you have.

Then you will probably be happy."

Peace grows when there is limitation set to man's wants and when there is more of sharing and less of hoarding. Let us all live to love. That is the true meaning of cultivating peace at heart and peace in the society.

By Somnath Gurung 10B
(EIU Essay Contest Winner 2012)