



Teacher's Instructional Strategies: Exploring the Lived Experiences of Teachers under Thragom Cluster Schools, Trashi Yangtse

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Abstract

This study adopted a qualitative method to explore the instructional practices of teachers in three primary schools under Thragom cluster, Trashi Yangtse Dzongkhag. The study was aimed at gaining an understanding of teachers' beliefs and how their attitude shaped their teaching strategies that impacted students' learning outcomes. The samples for this study included twelve participants (six teachers and six students) from the three schools. Findings from the study indicated that teachers were well acquainted with 21st-century skills. However, there were disparities between teachers' pedagogical philosophy and actual pedagogical practices involved in the teaching and learning processes. Teachers' teaching styles and behaviors were also found to have a significant impact on student's academic achievement. Students' preferences of learning through ICT-based lessons were found to be effective in improving their understanding.

Keywords: Instructional practices, teaching strategies, 21st-century skills, academic achievement, teacher's belief

Introduction

Teachers should know how students learn, and they should find out the best possible ways to facilitate learning. The use of varied instructional practices ensures the effective achievement of the desired objective. Instructional practices in teaching help the students to learn and understand the content. Teachers come across students with a diverse range of learning styles as well as characteristic behavior. As such, teachers must seek better instructional and classroom organizational tactics to deal with such learners (Tournaki & Cricitiello, 2003). Many teachers consider that poor academic performance is due to ineffective instructional strategies adopted by teachers to transfer knowledge to learners. Therefore, the effectiveness of various instructional practices on academic performances can happen only with the inner qualities of a teacher who strives for excellence, cares for, and has a deep commitment to providing the best possible opportunities for each pupil (Adunola, 2011).

Teaching at all levels of education is aimed at transforming learners to become useful and productive citizens (Tebabal & Kahssay, 2011). For teaching to be successful, teachers must use different instructional practices that can best transfer the information to the learners. Teachers are responsible to be equipped with the latest instructional practices and strategies to transfer the knowledge on the various topics or concepts that they may teach.

During the 3rd Convocation of Teacher Graduates on 17th February, 2009 at Paro, His Majesty Jigme Kheser Namgyel Wangchuck expressed the need to keep pace with educational changes and developments to meet the changing conditions in the modern world (Ariya 2009). In response to the King's concern, country-wide 5-day training was provided. The theme of the training was based on the concepts revolving around transformative pedagogy, during which pedagogical knowledge and skills were imparted to teachers across the country (Wangdi, 2016). Therefore, it is relatable to find out the effectiveness of transformative pedagogy in students' academic achievement so that the results from the study could inform the pedagogical status.

According to the student result analysis report for three years (2016, 2017, and 2018), the overall pass percentage of Class VII and VIII have considerably decreased (Thragom Lower Secondary School [TGLSS], 2018). TGLSS being the receiver of students from two feeder schools- Dukti PS and Melongkhar PS, also contribute to the overall percentage of the TGLSS. Despite the consistent efforts from teachers, not much improvement was seen in pass percentage. It was a great concern for the management of the school. Therefore, this study was designed to examine instructional strategies that the

teachers of Thragom cluster schools practiced. The entire study was guided by the following research question:

What teaching strategies do teachers habitually practice in order to help students improve in their academics? The question was further divided into four sub-questions:

- 1) What are the general approaches that teachers adopt for effective teaching in the classroom?
- 2) What teaching strategies contribute to an effective instructional learning environment in schools?
- 3) What kind of instructional approaches do learners desire?
- 4) What resources aid in making teaching and learning more effective?

Literature Review

The past studies have shown that developmental process and learning as two different concepts. The progress in the research revealed that children's developmental process and learning abilities are interrelated (Vygotsky, 1978). Erickson (1902-1994) developed one of the most popular and influential theories of development, i.e. the eight stages of psychological development in humans, each with different developmental needs. The kind of environment in which the child is raised affects their psychological development and also learning abilities. Furthermore, OECD (2015) asserts that early childhood development thrives through experiences and interactions with responsive adults and friends. In this regard, both parental practices, as well as the educators (teachers), play a vital role in enriching the learning abilities and psychological development of a child.

The Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) program is the first learning program a child may be exposed to before his/her schooling life. This program facilitates the development of the learning abilities of a child. ECCD plays a vital role in the preparation of children for school and ensures that the window of opportunity is not lost (National Education Framework, 2009; Special Committee for Education, 2016).

Piaget (1896-1980 as cited in Hammond et al., 2003, p.14) states that "learning is a developmental cognitive process and students create knowledge rather than receive knowledge." "Developmentally Appropriate Practices" (DAP) advocated by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) which is a large nonprofit association in the United States that supports child-initiated and hands-on activities, with teacher-guided instruction mainly arising in response to individual child's needs; be it in short interactions between teachers and children or short interactive whole group activities (Buchanan et al., 1998). Cople and Bredekamp (as cited in Brown & Lan, 2013, p.5) state that DAP deploys developmental theory to "promote instructional practices that focus on the growth and development of individual children across all of their

developmental domains." They further stress that educators use knowledge about "child development and learning," about the particular learning need of children, and "the social and cultural contexts" in which learners reside to make decisions on instruction and curriculum. Implementing developmentally appropriate practices assists in cognitive development and learning abilities of a child. These practices include encouraging the contributions of students in the class, encouraging students' persistence and effort, and raising questions that encourage students to quench their thirst for learning by exploring and being independent learners.

As asserted by Dorji (2009), teachers play a pivotal role in enabling societies to realize their educational aspirations. OECD (2015) stresses that the "quality of education cannot be better or worse than the quality of a teacher." Powdyel (2008) also stressed that quality is the function of personal integrity. On this note, one can safely say that the students' performances lie in the efforts of a teacher, although other factors that influence students' academic performance are equally important.

In order to improve students' learning and keep them motivated, Klieme et al. (2009, p.141) assert "...supportive teacher-student relationships, positive and constructive teacher feedback, a positive approach to student errors and misconceptions, individual learner support and caring teacher behavior" are important for the students. A positive attitude is an important professional characteristic of an 'effective' teacher (Walker, 2008). Walker (2008) also listed twelve professional characteristics of an effective teacher, i.e., being prepared, having a positive attitude, holding high expectations, being creative, being fair, displaying a personal touch, cultivating a sense of belonging, being compassionate, has a sense of humor, respects students, forgives, and admits mistakes.

Among all the factors that contribute to the quality of teaching and learning, according to Powdyel (2008), it is the teacher who is the most important school factor affecting student outcomes. Rivkin et al., 2005(as cited in Le Donne et al., 2016) explained that students who are exposed to a 'good teacher' tend to perform significantly higher than students exposed to an 'average teacher. Teachers' behavior is highly pivotal in bringing a positive change in students. Researchers claim that a major role in the learning of students is played by teachers. For instance, Nakpodia (2001) and Akomolafe (2004) (cited in Olaleye, 2011, p.510) found that teachers' positive behavior affects students' academic performance. The possible connection between teachers' negative behavior and students' behavior is quite strong. A teacher's behavior, whether unconscious or conscious, can affect the student's behavior. Vijayanet et al., (2016, p.208) found that when teachers do not want to learn, it is certain that the students are not going to learn either. Bashir et al., (2014) found that students viewed the negative behavior of teachers as being ineffective in the learning domain.

Adding to this notion, Sherab and Dorji (2013) assert that the quality of education largely depends on the type of pedagogical knowledge teachers have as well as the pedagogy they use. A review report on the quality of education prepared by the Special Committee for Education for submission to the 18th Session of the National Council of Bhutan (2016) mentions that teachers play an important role in the education system and the quality of education greatly depends on teacher's performance in the classroom and beyond. Gupta (2017) points out that although other variables impact the success of student achievement, the most important variable is the teaching method. Gupta (2017) identifies three teaching methods: teacher-centered, student-centered, and teacher-student interactive method. Le Donné et al., (2016) found that teachers have either used one strategy exclusively or the combination of three underlying teaching strategies referred to as active learning strategy, cognitive activation, and teacher-centered instruction with different frequencies.

In the Bhutanese context, Gyamtso and Maxwell (2012) point out two kinds of teaching methods: teacher-centeredness and learner-centeredness which are frequently used in the classroom. Teacher-centered strategies emphasize the inclusion of knowledge and skills through lectures, practice, and repetition (Echazarra et al., 2016). Similarly, teacher-centered instruction is associated with the inculcation of knowledge and resolving routine problems (Bientenbeck, 2014). In a teacher-centered approach, teachers act as the center of knowledge selection and presentation, exercising the power to decide and control the students' learning and usually treating everyone alike.

Throughout the literature, one strategy that helps children learn is cooperative learning. According to Slavin (2011, p. 344) cooperative learning is defined as "instructional methods in which teachers organize students into small groups, which then work together to help one another learn academic content". According to the literature "cooperative learning" has been known as an effective learning approach in aiding children obtain the acquisition of practical skills, and practical competencies for effective communication (Slavin, 2019). It is also believed that cooperative learning methods enhance students' engagement in the classroom with the recognition of more productive problem-solving with the contribution of the whole group (Chen, 2018). Furthermore, it is claimed to promote more positive attitudes in students toward their own learning, enhance more collaborative relationships between students, develop self-esteem, and cohesiveness, and improve learning skills (Johnson, 2009; Tran & Lewis, 2012a, 2012b). For effective interaction, groups should be small so that students can learn from each other to develop learning skills (Slavin, 2011). Likewise, interpersonal and social skills could be enhanced in small groups when group members tend to communicate more frequently with each other. Frequent communication allows for more information utilized in making a decision

(Johnson & Johnson, 2009). Teachers in Bhutanese classrooms can facilitate an opportunity to gain such skills by children as the numbers of children in the classroom is manageable.

An additional factor that can impact student learning is the use of humor. Literature defines humor as life-affirming; a powerful coping mechanism employed to reduce fear, anxiety, and psychological stress (Kruse & Prazak, 2006). Humorous content was found to have better results than non-humorous content in a learning paradigm (Sambrani et al., 2014). Humor increases interest, attention, and motivation in the class, and increases student success (Unsal et al., 2018). Similarly, humor is found to be cognitively and pedagogically crucial. A study revealed that instructional humor has been adopted as an excellent way for students to learn vocabulary, accelerate critical thinking, practice semantics, and remember more information (Hackthorn et al., 2011). Humor can help increase motivation, and self-confidence and bridge the gap between teachers and students. Through humor, the students can maximize lessons by easy understanding and long-term retention (Al-Duleimi & Aziz, 2016). Therefore, humor can have additional beneficial effects on learning, such as the creation of a favorable atmosphere in the classroom which is related to better retention of content, a more pleasant social climate, and increased interest in subject matter for the students.

The audio-visual method is one method that can be used in the classroom to teach pupils in nursery and elementary school. It is opined as one of the best avenues through which knowledge and information can be transferred. According to Terrebonne Parish Library System (2010), audio-visual materials convey information mainly via sound and image instead of by text (cited in Bawa & Fakomogbon, n.d). As students become more accustomed to technology, audio-visual materials play an even more important role in classrooms. Students learn in a variety of different ways, which is why the use of audio-visual components helps to enhance the learning environment. The utilization of audio-visual media such as television, video, movie, projector, computers in the classroom helps in enriching pupils' understanding and stimulates their interest, and builds a creative environment (Bawa & Fakomogbon, n.d). Sinchuri, (2013) also asserts that teaching and learning materials play a critical role in making the lesson interesting and successful. He further believed that knowledge transfer and conceptualization become easier and faster with the aid of visual aids. The literature on the effectiveness of visual material in learning estimated that about 40% of what is learned is through visual experience, 25% through auditory, 17% through tactile, 15% on miscellaneous organization, and 3% upon taste smell (Mercedes & Amelia, 2017). Therefore, the need to use audio-visual materials is important in the teaching and learning processes.

The second strategy employed was color coding. The highlighted texts were scrutinized for similar and repeated ideas. Concepts and keywords were identified by using the same color, with different ideas, concepts, and keywords using different colors. Coding methods employ processes that generate themes embedded in the data, in turn suggesting thematic directionality toward categorizing data through which meaning can be negotiated, codified, and presented (Mosar, 2019). Accordingly, major recurring themes and sub-themes were derived as specified in the following section(s). To maintain confidentiality, the participants are provided pseudonyms in the report (For instance, Teacher A, B, C... and Student I,II,III...).

Results and Discussion

Findings from this study are divided into two themes. The first theme presents teachers' positive attitudes, prevalent teaching strategies commonly practiced, and the inadequacy of teaching-learning resources in schools. The second theme highlights the learners' preferences of teaching pedagogies.

Teachers' positive attitude

The interview data revealed that the teachers in Thragom cluster schools, hold varying positive attitudes on their teaching principles or approaches. Many participants in the study shared their principles fundamentally based on creating a child-friendly learning environment to achieve optimum learning outcomes and providing a platform to explore and learn on their own (Teacher A & F). Furthermore, both these teachers believed that giving hands-on experience helps to retain what was learned. Teacher B expressed this opinion bit differently:

Learning meaningfully by children involves employing a range of teaching strategies keeping in mind individual differences and needs. Children learn in different ways. A teacher should be a genuine facilitator of students' learning. Students learn faster when they do it themselves, particularly through group discussion and role plays (Interview, 14/8/2018).

A positive attitude toward self or towards own profession is also one factor that stimulates effective teaching and learning. Teacher F conveyed, "I treat or consider myself as a nation builder...consider myself as an agent of change in the life of students...as one person who can be trusted, reliable and trustworthy. This belief in oneself makes me think twice in the class..." (Interview, 15/8/2018). Other Teachers D and E said that all children in the school are treated as their children and are open at all times. Thus, the above findings persuaded the researcher to conclude that teachers vehemently believed in student-centered teaching and learning.

Prevalent teaching strategies

Regarding the teaching strategies employed, half of the teachers interviewed said they use 'cooperative learning' and 'inquiry-based learning' in an attempt to improve the learning process and achieve a better academic outcome for the students. One common teaching strategy that all teachers used included an ICT-based teaching methodology. The teacher participants observed that ICT incorporated lessons, such as power-point presentations, videos, and animations, increased students' interest level and participation rate compared to other methods. This implication is evident from the following interview excerpt:

Regarding video lessons, I think children learn better because, children are more interested to watch videos, so when I teach them through videos, children get excited to watch and learn better. (Teacher A)

Especially for young children, storytelling and role-play play an important role in learning interest, and ICT stands the next... helps a lot in activating attention in students. (Teacher B)

When children are exposed to ICT, the level of interest is seen more and there is active participation from the students... (Teacher C)

Analysis of the data indicated that rather than just using textbooks as the sole teaching-learning resource, teachers tried implementing a range of teaching strategies and exploring new options for students to learn subject contents in the curriculum. On the contrary, classroom teaching observations and field notes revealed that most teaching-learning processes practiced were found to be dominated by teacher-centered instructions.

Inadequate Teaching-learning resources

Research claims that one of the main causes of degenerating quality of education in the Middle East and North Africa is the inadequate supply of teaching-learning resources (Heyneman, 1997 as cited in Sherab & Dorji, 2013). The interview data revealed one major challenge that teachers face is accessing audio-visual materials such as LED TV and projectors. For instance, Teacher B expressed concern about inadequate ICT facilities and less frequent use of ICT in the classroom lessons although its perceived effectiveness is high. She also added that students should be made more aware of digital tools and their uses in learning (Interview 14/8/2018). Teacher F said, "Our school [has] only one projector and LED TV supplied by the education office. Most of the time I don't get an opportunity to use it as they are booked most of the time" (Interview, 16/8/2019).

Teaching is also interrupted by a non-availability of the right learning materials, especially in far-flung areas. Some teachers during the interview expressed their concern about the consequences of a lack of proper teaching-learning materials during lesson delivery. One Science teacher remarked, "sometimes with the lack of some science lab equipment and chemicals for the experiment, the lesson is affected. I used different

equipment, and it confuses students” (Teacher A, 14/8/2018), therefore, making ineffective delivery of the lesson. The same Teacher revealed that “some schools have science lab equipment not required for their level and possess more than they require. It remains in the store unused for many years.”

Learner preferences:

The teaching strategies that students indicated they liked, that engaged them as learners, and which helped them the most to learn more easily, are revealed in the following two sub-themes:

a. Teaching Approaches

Analysis of students’ interview data revealed that the majority of the students preferred teachers who used humor in their teaching along with approachable and frank personal traits. Reasoning that such an approach to teaching tends to result in less boredom and helps them to concentrate more (Student II).

These students showed a dislike and disapproval of serious teachers and physical punishments. The following extracts provide examples:

Through physical punishment, I cannot understand. When teachers scold us and teach very fast, I do not understand too. I also feel unhappy. (Student I)

...when they beat us, when they scold us, [it does not help us in learning lessons]. (Student II)

It does not help us when teachers teach in an angry and serious mood. Sometimes, they also walk out of the class when they are angry. (Student IV)

When teachers are strict and when they do not explain while teaching, it does not help us in learning lessons. (Student V)

When teachers show anger and seriously beat us, it does not help us, we do not understand, we are afraid, and we do not understand the lessons. (Student VI)

When the teacher uses jokes, I feel a bit happy, and then I can remember the lessons. When the teacher uses severe physical punishment, I cannot understand what is taught. (Student VI)

The prevalence of aggressive behavior by teachers is also agreed upon by teachers themselves. For example, Teacher E stated, “with regard to this, the gap between the teacher and the students is still existing, say about, 50% of the teachers in the field are still authoritarian and strict disciplinarian which gets in the way of student’s learning”.

On the contrary, few of the students preferred teachers who were strict and conducted tests now and then. For instance, Student III states, “teachers should give us questions and do quiz competition, then give us a class test.”

b. Teaching strategies

When it comes to teaching strategies like ICT-based presentations, explanation, and cooperative learning (i.e., group-based activities) topped the list (as expressed by Students II, III, IV, and V). The responses from both students and teachers indicated that the interest of the learner is boosted and makes learning easier when the teacher deploys a range of teaching methods. One such common response given by both the teacher and student participants, as previously mentioned, was the use of ICT in the classroom. This is evident when Student III said, “when teacher [makes] us do a presentation using projector [I learn easily].” Furthermore, according to Teacher A, “students tend to get excited about learning when they are taken out of the classroom, especially with science subjects. Students get excited when they are taken on a field trip. It was also suggested that “audiovisual programs be encouraged too. “Teacher C suggested another strategy, i.e. learning through role plays for English and history subjects. He reasoned out that “role play and demonstration help in learning the topic because...role-play requires students to practice the dialogue time and again thereby helping them to retain it for a longer period in their minds.” Thus, students’ responses also synchronize well with what teachers declared on teaching strategies, i.e., teaching strategies as an effective method in enhancing students’ academic achievement.

c. Use of audio-visual aids

The teachers' interview data revealed that more learning in students occurs when the lesson is taught through using audio-visual materials, particularly projectors and LED TVs. According to Teacher D, students show more interest in learning when taught through a projector (Interview, 14/8/2018). The same teacher asserted that “Students are happy when they see teacher coming to the class with laptop and projector” (Interview, 14/8/2018). Similarly, Teacher E pointed out that students prefer more activities that require presentations by students using a projector (Interview, 15/8/2018). Findings from the students' interviews also indicated that retention of what they have learned through audio-visual aids is high than learning through the traditional approach. Student VI claimed that “I like doing a presentation and when I present I learn fast. I can remember better (Interview, 15/8/2018). Classroom observation of Teacher C showed that students were eager to present their works to the class, and also saw active participation from children when the teacher delivered lesson using LED TV.

Findings and Discussions

First, findings from this study reveal that there is strong evidence to show that all teachers possess a positive attitude towards their students and their profession in order to have effective teaching in the classroom. Teachers' beliefs in providing a platform to learn through hands-on experience are a great idea. Sinchuri (2013) asserts that learning occurs when the learners observe, think, feel, and interact with others, especially through hands-on experiences. The study also showed that some teachers treat children as their own children and care for them. Tshewang & Lhamo (2020, p.24) claim that "teaching is a very humanistic profession that requires genuine values like compassion and care" which is one of the core values of Gross National Happiness (GNH). Moreover, meaningful learning is ensured if teachers possess these qualities (Sherab & Dorji, 2013). However, teachers' belief in creating a child-friendly atmosphere often contradicted their actual practice in the classroom. Finding from this study revealed that teachers sometimes exhibited aggressive actions such as scolding, use of physical punishment, serious mood, anger, and shouting at them. The study also found that teachers not only showed aggressive behaviors but also used passive actions such as walking out of the class in the middle of teaching. Teachers' negative behaviors were confirmed in classroom observations. It was revealed that teachers lacked control over their temper and used authoritative language. To this, students viewed it as an obstructor that impeded their learning process. This study is in tandem with the findings of Sandholtz (2011) who claimed that a lack of a positive attitude towards students affected students' motivation and engagement in learning. This has been further reinforced by Walker (2008); Sherab & Dorji (2013) that a positive attitude is an important professional characteristic of an 'effective' teacher.

Second, the issue of teachers being 'authoritarian' still prevails in the school system. Findings from the study and anecdotal records in the school indicate the existence of punishments. Punishments include scolding and beating. However, this consistent pattern was perceived to be a negative behavior by teachers that hampered the creation of emotionally safe learning classrooms for learners. Findings also suggest that the application of punishments has impeded students from learning, leading to poor performance in their examinations. This result is consistent with the findings of Owuor (2012) who asserted that strict punishment in school leads to beating and prevents children from effective learning, and argues that punishment also exposes children to physical and psychological dangers. However, implementation of the zero-tolerance policy in schools is expected to imbibe a safe and secure learning environment in school where parents are on the same page as proactive partners in educating children (MoE, 2012). The erstwhile Education Secretary Sangay Zam, also stressed that the policy of zero-tolerance is embedded to nurture and help children realize their full potential rather than punishing children (BBS, 2012). The existing school-level discipline policy which is an inclusive,

positive, and proactive behavior management approach in nature is vehemently in place (Thragom Lower Secondary School [TLSS], 2020). The only thing is to seriously implement it by all stakeholders.

Third, the student's preferences over certain types of teaching styles have a significant impact on students' learning. The findings from this study indicate that majority of learners prefer their teacher to be humorous along with approachable and frank personal traits as those traits help learners to become more active and enhance concentration levels. This is consistent with the findings of Unsal et al., (2018) who stated that humor increases interest, attention, and motivation, and increases student success. This finding is also in agreement with the findings of Sherab & Dorji (2013) where they claimed that traits such as approachability and frankness is one of the important characteristics of good teaching, and argue that it is crucial for all teacher to possess such qualities to ensure meaningful learning.

Fourth, lack of sufficient teaching/learning materials was reported by science teachers as contributing to ineffective delivery of science lessons. Materials include science lab equipment and chemicals. Research by Special Committee for Education (2016) also found that schools face significant challenges in the implementation of school curricula and achieving desired outcomes for children's learning. Moreover, overwhelmingly all teachers reported that lack of ICT facilities such as overhead projectors, portable speakers, and LED TV were significant factors leading to ineffective teaching and learning. This leads to teacher behaviors, such as lecturing, use of chalk and talk, chalkboard, and textbooks. These results correspond with the findings of Unal & Ozturk (2012) who argue that inadequate resources are a constraining barrier to any integration effort and will be very difficult to achieve a meaningful integration. Findings from this study also indicate that inadequate resources have adversely affected student enthusiasm for learning as they believe their learning happened fast and easier through these mediums. This is consistent with the findings of Ratminingsih et al., (n.d.) who found that the use of ICT in the teaching and learning process not only made the lesson more effective and efficient, it also made it more interesting, challenging, and stimulating for students' creativity (p.191). Hence, the meaningful integration of ICT will only happen if teachers have access to sufficient equipment, time, training, and support.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are made that might be of use to other schools and stakeholders.

First, findings from this study revealed that all teachers have a positive attitude towards their profession as of important profession as a nation builder, high perceptions of the

importance of providing hands-on experience in order to make meaningful learning experiences to children, caring as parents and safe learning atmosphere to every individual child. Such perceptions and characters shown by teachers indicate that the Ministry of Education's aim of realizing the mission of infusing Gross National Happiness (GNH) values and principles in the education system through creating GNH-minded teachers and a GNH-infused learning environment has taken strong root in schools (Lhendup et al., (2018). Genuine compassion, according to Tshewang & Lhamo, (2020, p.24) allows a teacher to "nurture an authentic connection with students that positively impacts student's learning". Such values are worthy to be emulated by other teachers in schools considering the profound impact on the learning of students.

Second, ICT facilities such as projectors and LED TV seemed to have the potential to raise the interest in students' learning. It was noticed that meaningful learning occurred in students when audio-visual aids were employed in the process of teaching and learning. It is recommended that teachers focus more on using audio-visual aids while delivering a lesson.

Third, in schools, particularly the management needs to play a proactive role in addressing the issue of inadequate teaching-learning resources. This has a negative impact on teaching. A good support system such as a "Resource sharing culture" within schools needs to be instituted upon consulting Chief Dzongkhag Education Officer to pump in the required resources left idle in other schools. Furthermore, schools could organize different programs such as variety shows, school feteday, open Khuru tournament so forth. Schools could also seek external support from Kholongchu Hydropower Energy Limited (KHEL) Trashy Yangtse, Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), and business firms rather than waiting for government funds.

Fourth, we are living in the 21st century, driven by a rapid technological revolution and modernization. Therefore, it is critical that teachers must understand that 21st-century children must be dealt with 21st-century skills. Teaching through corporal punishment, the use of abusive language such as scolding and shouting so loudly, and walking out of the classroom angrily in the middle of class is obsolete strategy, and it is typically a traditional approach. Such practice is not expected in GNH-infused schools.

Conclusion

The focus of this study was to explore the lived experiences of teachers' teaching pedagogy in schools of the Thragom cluster. In general, it has been found that teachers in three schools have positive outlooks toward their profession, especially in terms of nurturing children in a child-friendly environment. Such an environment contributes to a favorable

learning atmosphere for children resulting in effectiveness in learning. Pedagogically, the study suggests the prevalence of application disparity between the philosophy they possess as a teacher and what they practice in the classroom. Such a mismatch in the pedagogical aspects can withstand as a stumbling block in the teaching-learning process. For instance, frequent usage of teacher-centered pedagogy coupled with aggressive behaviors exhibit teachers hinder the process of learning which students viewed as an opportunity to be more student-centered. The study has also found there are learning barriers posed by inadequate teaching learning resources in schools including science lab equipment, projector, LED screen, and lack of humor from teachers that are perceived to be impeding the effectiveness of teaching and learning in schools. Students perceived that through these mediums, they tend to learn effortlessly, help to boost their learning and retain a longer period in their mind.

It is vital to consider students' preferences, particularly the use of humor as a motivating tool during the transfer of learning; however, the teacher should evaluate the context of using and gauge the effect on learning. For example, it would not be appropriate and advisable to use humor at all times. While students' preferences are idealized as they facilitate learning but are used too often to make a teacher look like a clown in the class (Ali et al., n.d). Thus, teachers need to know appropriate situations and times while considering the need for humor. However, as this study explored lived experiences of teaching pedagogy and students' preferences over teaching pedagogy and not the impact of the teaching pedagogy, we must accept that teaching is a complex profession. Myriads of variables such as the nature of the topic, availability of learning aids, and capacity of students should be considered for any teaching pedagogy to be effective. Besides, other factors such as cultural context, learner's needs, gender differences, and learner's interests should also be taken into consideration (Bhutan Professional Support Division, 2020). The findings of this study cannot be speculated to the highest level owing to the limited sample. The numbers of participants were from only three schools. Hence, further research with more samples size can surge in generating accurate findings.

Competing interests

No competing interests exist.

Authors' Biography

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