A Model for Quality Pre-Service Teacher Education in Bhutan

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Declaration

I certify that the content of this thesis has not been submitted for any degree and is not currently being submitted for any other degree.

I also certify that, to the best of my knowledge, any assistance received in writing this thesis and all sources used, have been acknowledged.

Signed:  

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Date: August 7, 2009
Acknowledgments

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The study involved the participation of questionnaire respondents and interviewees without whom the study would have been incomplete. I would like to offer my deepest gratefulness for their time and responses.
Dedication

To the celebration of 100 years of the institution of monarchy in Bhutan (1907-2007) for ensuring peace, prosperity and happiness,

&

To the teachers of the Kingdom of Bhutan for their continued selfless services and being guardians of the education system through its best and worst times
Abstract

This thesis explores pre-service teacher education models that assure quality education for the purpose of proposing a model for Bhutan’s Colleges of Education. Perceived decline in the quality of education has been a major concern in Bhutan in the recent decade. The study addresses the issue in question by first reviewing teacher training models at the colleges.

The study is positioned in the constructivist paradigm and employed the mixed method approach. Pre-coded 5 point Likert scale questionnaires were administered on a purposely selected sample of 300 respondents: school principals, officers, and lecturers, working in the Ministry of Education and Royal University of Bhutan. Semi-structured interviews and open comments collected qualitative data. Seven of the respondents also participated as interviewees.

Using SPSS, questionnaire data were analyzed but confined to descriptive statistics on the variables of: Age & Position and scales of Agreement & Preference items. Texts from open comments and interviews were analyzed to allow themes, ideas, and patterns to emerge. The major findings surrounding preference of pre-service teacher education models and quality assurance models are highlighted.

With regards to pre-service teacher education models all participants when divided as age groups, officers, lecturers and principals generally preferred two of the proposed Pre-Service B.Ed Models, 40/60 and 50/50 models. These models require bachelor degrees at the entry although not by an overwhelming majority. It appeared that young age group (26-35 years) and principals preferred that the status quo remain unchanged which is that the existing Three-Year B.Ed and a semester long teaching practice continue. However, the
older age groups (36-45 and 46 years and above) officers and lecturers reported their preference to embrace changes consistent with their understanding that the quality concept in education related to internal improvement and accommodate changes. The preference of these respondents was more aligned with the Four-Year B.Ed and progression model of Teaching Practice.

As far as the quality assurance model is concerned the study preferred the two Colleges of Education develop a mechanism for “Institution of excellence award focusing on teaching, research and community services” as preferred most by the principals and younger age group. Qualitative data supported the model as an important tool for colleges to become knowledge creation institutions as required of higher learning institutions. However, the older age group and officers reported that external reviews of specific disciplines or subjects could ensure quality. This is reflective of the importance of the visitation to the institution and encompasses reviewing internal self-study reports, benchmarks, and qualification frameworks which indicate experience the officers and older age group. Lecturers of the colleges appeared to be aware of internal and external quality reviews. They reported development of linkages with sister institutions within the country as well as in the region for peer-review as a worthwhile model to assure quality. They seem to have an understanding of its advantages and scope to encompass external, internal, whole institutions, specific discipline, and review tools. The study also reports that there is a need to institute a national monitoring agency to review the two Colleges of Education, in relation to quality of programmes, trainees and educators, as well as disciplines, and infrastructures.
Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

RGOB: Royal Government of Bhutan

NIE: National Institute of Education, erstwhile name for Colleges of Education, Bhutan

NSB: National Statistical Bureau, an autonomous organization, Bhutan

COE: College of Education

MOE: Ministry of Education,

RUB: Royal University of Bhutan, established in 2003 with 10 member colleges,

B.Ed: Bachelor of Education

PGDE: Postgraduate Diploma in Education

PGCE: Post Graduate Certificate in Education

NAPE: New Approach to Primary Education, an approach initiated in Bhutan in the 1980s

AS: Accreditation Scheme

QA: Quality Assurance

OECD: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

ITT: The Initial Teacher Training

ITE: Initial Teacher Education

ATS: Articles Teacher Scheme, initiated in the UK

LTS: Licensed Teacher Scheme, initiated in the UK, US

QTS: Qualified Teacher Status, initiated in the UK in the 1990s

QUAN-QUAL: QUANTITATIVE-QUALITATIVE, a concurrent mixed method

    signifying both quantitative and qualitative are given equal importance,

HE: Higher Education

HEI: Higher Education Institution
TE: Tertiary Education,
TEI: Tertiary Education Institution
WIL: Work Integrated Learning, vocational or on the job training in place in South Africa
QF: Qualifications Frameworks
BS: Subject Benchmark Statements
PS: Programme Specifications
QAA: Quality Assurance Agency, UK
VSNU: the Association of the Universities in the Netherlands
HBO Council: the Association of Hogescholen, the Netherlands
VLIR: the Flemish inter-university council, Belgium
VLOR: the general Flemish education council, Belgium
SERV: the Flemish social and economic council, Belgium
VLHORA: the Flemish council of Hogescholen, Belgium
HEFC: Higher Education Funding Council, UK
AUQA: Australian Universities Quality Agency
AVCC: Australian Vice-Chancellors’ Committee, changed to Universities Australia
AQF: Australian Qualifications Framework
ALTC: Australian Learning and Teaching Council
DTE: Department of Teacher Education (of the Lao Ministry of Education)
TEED: Teacher Education Evaluation Division (of the Lao Ministry of Education)
TTA: Teacher Training Agency, UK, changed to Training and Development Agency for School
HEQC: Higher Education Quality Council (UK)
CATE: Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (UK)
HEFCE: Higher Education Funding Council for England
HMI: Her Majesty’s Inspectorate (UK)
NCERT: National Council for Educational Research and Training (India)
NCTE: National Council for Teacher Education (India)
DIET: District Institutes of Education and Training (India)
UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organization
DETYA: Department of Education Training and Youth Affairs (Australia)
End-on model: ITT model in which academic and professional studies are separated.
Concurrent model: ITT model, have both academic and professional studies programmes, represented as 2+2 model, e.g. Four-year B.Ed leading to double degree
UNE: University of New England, a university in Armidale, NSW, Australia
MCEETYA: Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (Australia)
TQELT: Teacher Quality and Educational Leadership Taskforce (Australia)
NCLB: No Child Left Behind (US), an educational
EPLC: Education Policy and Leadership Center (US)
MAT: Master of Art in Teaching. A 5-Year Integrated Programs, ITT model in the US
NCATE: National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (US)
INTASC: Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium
A period of …izations and …nesses: Terms coined for this study to denote the evolution of education system in Bhutan
Dzongkhag: A district in Bhutan. Bhutan has 20 Dzongkhags
Gewog: The smallest political unit of Bhutan. Several Gewogs make a Dzongkhag,
DEO: District Education Officer (Bhutan)
ADEO: Assistant District Education Officer (Bhutan)
VTI: Technical and Vocational Institutes (Bhutan)
VET: Vocational Education and Training (Australia)
TAFE: Technical and Further Education (Australia)
FET: Further Education and Training Colleges (South Africa)
ILCS: Institute of Language and Cultural Studies, a member college of the RUB
Guru Padma Sambhawa: An Indian saint who visited Bhutan in the 8th C A.D. and is responsible for the propagation of Buddhism in Bhutan
Drukpa Kagyupa: A sect of Buddhism and is the state religion of Bhutan
Nyingmapa: A sect of Buddhism, also practiced in Bhutan
The Desis: Temporal rulers who succeeded one after another from 1651-1907), were the head of secular wing of the country
Je Khenpo: The Chief Abbot and religious head of Bhutan.
A Shedra: A monastic centre, equivalent to a college or a university in a secular system, offers higher education courses (4-year higher secondary, 2-year BA, and 3-year MA)
Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal: The most revered personality of Bhutan, who was responsible for not only uniting the country but also for bringing law and order and laying foundation for a stable system.
PCE: Paro College of Education
SCE: Samtse College of Education
QS: Quality Status, term coined in his study to determine status of quality of ITT at COE,
QF: Quality Factor, term coined in this study to review the factors that affect the quality of ITT at COE
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