

Influence of Study Abroad Experiences in Australia on Teacher Education in Bhutan's Education Colleges

Dolay Tshering
Jeanette Berman
Judith Miller
Adele Nye

University of New England, Australia

Abstract

Tertiary education in Bhutan has changed with the establishment of the Royal University of Bhutan in 2003, and the two constituent colleges of education have brought many developments in the education system in Bhutan. As the majority of the faculty members in the education colleges are Australian alumni, this case study was focused on how their Australian educational experiences have influenced professional practice in teacher education. This focus was part of a qualitative study which revealed influences in teacher education, research, and leadership as three critical changes that were attributed to the Australian educated faculty members of the education colleges. Inculcating international best practices in teaching pedagogy, curriculum development taking into account the Bhutanese context, and development of Early Childhood Care and Development curriculum are reported in this paper along with discussion of the implications for the Bhutanese education system.

Keywords: Bhutan; education colleges; teacher education; influence; study abroad

Introduction

Australia and Bhutan have a longstanding educational relationship (Tshering et al., 2020), and many faculty members from the two education colleges studied in Australia. They have returned to their colleges to contribute to teacher education in the small Himalayan country, Bhutan, which is situated between China to the north and India to the south. The Bhutanese modern education system started in the 20th century and prior to the first five-year plan in 1961 there were 11 schools throughout Bhutan accommodating approximately 400 students and 45 teachers (Powdyel, 2005). The number of schools

has increased and Bhutan currently has 704 schools with a student population of 185,757 and over 11,000 teachers (Kuensel, 2021a).

With the increasing number of schools and student population, demand for higher education led to the promotion of schools to colleges, and new colleges were established for teacher education. The Teacher Training Centre (TTC) was established in 1975 at Paro and the first Bachelor of Education programme was established in 1983 at the National Institute of Education (NIE) in Samtse. The Royal University of Bhutan (RUB) was established in 2003 to incorporate and direct colleges that were previously functioning under different ministries (RUB, 2017). The two teacher training institutes, at Paro and Samtse, then became constituent colleges of education within the RUB.

Almost all tertiary institutes in Bhutan offer undergraduate programs and limited masters or higher degree research programs. With less access to postgraduate programs within the country, Bhutanese academics continue to travel abroad to seek higher qualifications and Australia has been a preferred destination for decades. Australia's immigrant friendly regulations, proximity to the home country, quality of education, and job opportunities are the main attractions for Bhutanese students. However, what Bhutanese international students generally experience and how they contribute professionally to Bhutan after returning from study abroad (Tshering et al., 2020) has not been examined up to now.

Influence of study abroad experiences on professional lives of international students

Research into study abroad more generally has revealed that international students, regardless of the country from which they originate, have experienced a range of professional and personal challenges such as academic writing, English communication skills, and coping with host country cultures (Milian et al., 2015). Despite the challenges faced, international students have also developed academic and cross-cultural capabilities. The capabilities are an important asset as students become knowledgeable and gain valuable understanding of different cultures through their lived experiences abroad (Shah et al., 2020). It has been established that through the experiences of study abroad, either good or bitter, these challenges remained useful when they returned to their home country (Milian et al., 2015).

Improvement in English communication skills gave Vietnamese returning academics an added advantage in accessing jobs in non-public or foreign-owned universities which come with much higher salaries (Pham, 2016). As a result, academics were able to translate textbooks or academic sources from English to Vietnamese, and design and teach related courses. Returning academics experienced the importance of open teacher-student relationships through their educational practice in western universities, and consequently practised in this way in the non-public universities at home (Pham, 2016).

Saudi academics applied, critiqued, and reflected on pedagogy in their classrooms after returning from study abroad in western educational settings, and subsequently devised and created their

own pedagogical paradigm that was workable for their students (Barnawi & Le Ha, 2015). They noted that with the educational experience from abroad these Saudi academics were not merely reproducing the ready-made western ‘educational packages’ and were able to empower their students to think critically and independently. Similarly, graduates returning to Korean universities have developed new teaching programmes, established a research culture and international networking despite the lack of local support for them on their return (Namgung, 2008). In Japan, graduates with international educational experience were instrumental in promoting internationalisation of Japanese higher education, as the returning faculty members have been instrumental in connecting inbound international students and through teaching English as the medium of instruction for both international and domestic students in Japanese universities (Nonaka, 2020).

US educators’ experiences in Botswana, Malaysia, and Singapore were reported to have broadened their global perspective of education, improved effectiveness of their teaching, and increased knowledge bases through real time and hands-on experiences that changed their world view (Biraimah & Jotia, 2013). Although the participants experienced numerous challenges including a language barrier, a greater understanding of educational realities positively impacted their cultural perspective which is consistent with the findings that the international education experience expanded their knowledge base owing to exposure to different cultures (Engstrom & Jones, 2007). It is indicated that teachers with study abroad experience are more effective in the increasingly diverse classrooms as they are able to teach from a culturally responsive perspective (Sharma et al., 2011). Evidently, study abroad experiences have had great influence on the professional development of returning graduates and their home countries across a range of cultural settings. Although faced with challenges of acceptance, returning graduates in different countries were able to exercise their new-found skills through the competencies that they built while studying abroad.

In the case of Bhutan, a survey conducted in one of the education colleges revealed that all of the lecturers received their primary and secondary education in Bhutan and 80% of them studied their undergraduate courses in the colleges in Bhutan where there has been a teacher-centred mode of learning (Gyamtso & Maxwell, 2012). For the Bhutanese education system, secular education since the 1950s has been influenced by teacher-centred practices and centuries of the cultural influence of monastic education (Gyamtso & Maxwell, 2012). Bhutan has two systems of education, the first being traditional Buddhist monastic education, which typically follows the rote methods of learning of memorisation, debate, contemplation, and exposition. It was predominant from the 8th century AD to the early 20th century (Phuntsho, 2000). The second is the secular, modern education system. The traditional practices of monastic education have long influenced the teaching pedagogies of Bhutan’s secular education, and the teaching is dominated by teacher-centred approaches. In addition, educators from teacher-centred Anglo-Indian schools in India were recruited to teach in Bhutan due to a lack of Bhutanese teachers (Gyamtso & Maxwell, 2012). Thus, most lecturers in the education colleges were graduates of the same system and only had traditional learning experiences. Consequently, the trainee

students of the education colleges also followed teacher-centred pedagogies over the six decades since the start of modern education in Bhutan.

The education system in Bhutan, however, demands major reform to develop competencies that are relevant to the 21st century. On 17 December 2020, His Majesty the King of Bhutan issued a Royal Decree on the need to reform education in view of the challenges and opportunities in a globalised world. Education experts have pointed out that curriculum, teaching pedagogy, and assessment are the three most important fundamental dimensions of quality education (Chang & Kidman, 2019; Main et al., 2020; Penney et al., 2009; Walker, 1998), and the Royal Decree pinpointed the requirement for transformation in curriculum, mastery in teaching and learning, and instructional alignment with assessment and desired outcomes. In view of the Royal Decree, the two education colleges have the most important role in the reformation process, as future educators will all be trained in these two colleges.

A previous study revealed that 70% of lecturers in one of the education colleges in Bhutan received their master's degree from abroad (Gyamtso & Maxwell, 2012), but there is a dearth of research regarding the influence of their study experience on teacher education in the country. Hence, this study seeks to explore how the Australian educated faculty members have contributed to the development of teacher education in Bhutan in the context of their international educational experiences.

Methodology

This case study is bounded (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) by the participants from the two colleges of education who have travelled to Australia for postgraduate study. The case study employed qualitative research methods to undertake an in-depth investigation (Cohen et al., 2018) of how the Australian postgraduate educational experience of the Bhutanese faculty members influenced professional practice in teacher education in the two colleges of education in Bhutan.

Using purposive sampling (Cooksey & McDonald, 2010) faculty members with Australian qualifications from the two colleges of education were invited to respond to a questionnaire and/or interview in order to seek insights into their experiences. The online questionnaire was distributed to 46 participants comprising 27 faculty members from Paro College of Education and 19 academics from Samtse College of Education. These participants had graduated in different fields such as counselling, science, mathematics, education, and social science, with 12 PhD graduates and 34 with master's degrees from Australia.

The online questionnaire asked the participants to respond to open ended questions which were presented and recorded through Qualtrics software. A total of 25 participants responded to the questionnaire, 24 of whom came to study in Australia on scholarships. Subsequently, a semi-structured interview (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) was used as an additional data-gathering tool to gain an in-depth understanding of how the Australian postgraduate educational experience influenced the teacher

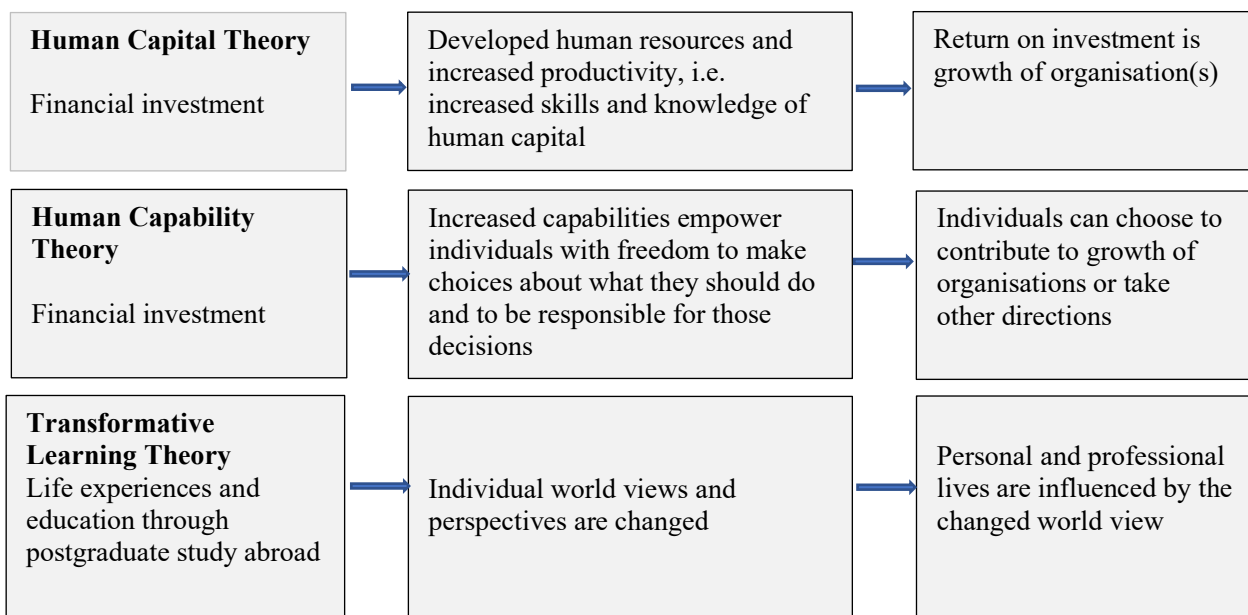
education in Bhutan. A group of 12 participants including presidents, deans, head of departments, course coordinators, and lecturers participated in interviews. Ethics approval was provided by the university human research ethics committee and the two colleges of education in Bhutan prior to conducting the study, and all ethical requirements were fulfilled.

Descriptive statistical analysis was followed by manual thematic coding (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and the use of computer assisted qualitative data analysis (CAQDA) software, Leximancer Text Mining Software (Smith, 2000). Initially, both the questionnaire and interview data were put in a tabular form for manual coding from which themes and sub themes were derived. Subsequently, Leximancer was then used after the manual coding was finalised to generate concepts and themes to complement the manual coding and check against preconceived expectations within the manual coding (Smith & Humphreys, 2006).

Three theories provided the explanatory framework for this investigation (Figure 1): human capital theory (Becker, 2009; Schultz, 1963); human capability theory (Robeyns, 2005; Sen, 1993); and transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 1991).

Figure 1

Theoretical Framework for the Study



Human capital theory has a focus on the return on investment from the faculty members who are scholarship recipients whereas human capability theory emphasises the freedom to practise what scholars have learned, and for students to decide what they want to do and be. In addition, transformative learning theory encapsulates the personal shift for the individuals in their understanding of the features of the culture, language, and education when faced with a new cultural context. As such, the three theories together have the potential to interpret the outcomes of the study abroad experience

after faculty members return to their home country that provide a holistic view of the changes that have occurred in the area of teacher education.

Findings

There are three key findings derived from this study: using international best practice in teaching; input into curriculum development; and major development of the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) curriculum.

Questionnaire respondents ($n=17/25$) contributed extensively to the influence of their educational experience in Australia on their teaching. The findings revealed that the Bhutanese scholars felt that their overall teaching skills improved, and they became more confident in delivering their lessons. The participants also stated that they were able to use innovative ways of teaching; what they now knew to be international best practices. Supporting this emphasis derived from the manual analysis, teaching was ranked as one of the most dominant themes during the Leximancer analysis.

International best practices in teaching

The returning faculty members changed their teaching style and are now focused on international best practices of teaching and learning. What works in other countries in teaching and learning is now followed in the education colleges and requires working in groups, carrying out fieldwork, making presentations, having hands on practise, and developing group research projects. As one of the college Presidents mentioned in the interview “there is less of top-down lectures but more of autonomous learning and connection with the reality, the real world, which is quite international.” New teaching practices identified included student-centred teaching, cooperative learning strategies, and increased use of ICT in teaching as well as a focus on deeper learning.

Participants agreed that their teaching pedagogy has changed after their return from studies and there was a shift in teaching strategy from traditional methods to more student-centred and innovative approaches. Participants claimed that they became more of a facilitator, promoting child-centred classroom environments and being more child-friendly. One participant stated, “I was able to reflect on my own educational practices and various teaching strategies to enhance student-centred teaching and develop critical thinking and problem solving.” They mentioned that international best practices such as these had changed the teaching and learning in the college.

Four of the interview participants reported a vast difference between what they have seen in teaching in their country and what they experienced in Australia. The experience of being taught in Australia revealed that contemporary teachers were expected to put in additional effort to facilitate the independent learning of their students. These student-centred learning experiences have now been translated to Bhutanese classrooms by those who have had the exposure to western pedagogies.

The findings revealed that ECCD centres are currently following a formal teaching style which was what these early childhood teachers were taught, but which is now in contrast to best practice. Because of the international experiences pedagogies taught to the ECCD facilitators are now child

centred and consequently, the facilitators are expected to follow the same practice while in their classrooms. One participant stated,

We are trying to adopt a very child centered approach to teaching and learning. Many community centres at the moment are following formal teaching style which is teacher directed. We are trying to look at it from the point of view of real ECCD, where it is play based and at the same time, guided play.

Innovations in teaching practice such as cooperative learning were also introduced in the education colleges by the returning faculty members. One participant mentioned that they never used such strategies before travelling to Australia. They found that there are lot of aspects that need to be considered while implementing cooperative learning in the classroom. The faculty members are also convinced that using good assessment tools help students receive the best feedback and bring about improvement in their learning, and emphasis which these teachers were not taught and did not use prior to going for study abroad. She explained,

When I was a teacher trainee, I was not very clear with the assessments. When I was pursuing my master's degree, I learned those assessment techniques and used it when I taught my teacher trainees. I started using assessment formats to make sure that learning outcomes of the students are well achieved.

Information Communication Technology (ICT) is now used as a teaching tool for effective delivery and better learning outcomes. Participants ($n=4/25$) mentioned that their exposure to educational experiences in Australia had influenced their classroom teaching as they now use more ICT tools, online forums, research articles and improved flexibility with student tasks. Two participants acknowledged that they were just beginning to use a laptop computer when they came to Australia for higher education where everything was technologically driven.

Currently, virtual learning technology (VLE) has increased and is widely used in the college instruction with classes now being conducted through virtual technology. VLE was first initiated by a returning faculty member from Australia and was introduced to the distance education learners and gradually rolled over to the regular full-time students. They mentioned that this technology was later adopted more broadly by the Royal University of Bhutan, and that now virtual learning has become a platform for online teaching and learning in the university education system in Bhutan.

Other aspects of the study abroad which were identified as having supported these faculty members' use of best practice in teaching revealed both building of capabilities and transformed mindsets. Participants ($n=8/25$) responded that they acquired in-depth knowledge in their subject, became more confident and were able to teach more effectively after returning from studies. A participant stated, "I became more confident on my subject knowledge. In terms of teaching learning process, I believe I obtained strong and in-depth content knowledge in my subject which helped me deliver quality classroom teaching." In addition, participants stated that their perspectives in teaching and learning had broadened, and they had learned to give enough learning space to their students.

Participants ($n=13/25$) stressed that one of the greatest advantages of studying abroad was the improvement in their English communication skills and consequently, the level of their confidence in teaching improved.

Curriculum Development

Curriculum was ranked as one of the top three dominant themes during the Leximancer analysis. Remarkably, 24 out of 25 online questionnaire respondents have either initiated or participated in curriculum reformation and/or development since their return from Australia. This is consistent with the insights from the interview participants ($n=9/12$). Two participants highlighted that since existing programs are revised and new programs are developed annually in the colleges, the curriculum development is an iterative process. In the two education colleges, the faculty members agree that they were fully responsible for reforming and developing the curriculum and their study abroad experience in Australia has made them proficient in taking up that task.

The participants have designed and developed a number of curriculum and programme-specific modules for both pre-service and in-service programmes. This includes development of economics module for a postgraduate diploma in education and review of mathematics curriculum for primary and secondary modules taught at the colleges of education. Two participants responded that they revamped primary science modules and revised history modules. Another participant was engaged in development of social studies curriculum for a bachelor program in education for primary teachers and has further developed a new module. He stated,

With the change of time, we see that there are a lot of new information about social studies. Now we think that we need to have one more module and we have developed it for B.Ed primary teachers. There is also change of school curriculum in social studies and we need to align our curriculum with that of school curriculum.

Two more participants conceptualised and initiated the development of the Diploma in Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) program and validated that diploma curriculum offered by one of the colleges of education. Another participant developed a module for a postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education after completing a graduate certificate in education studies in Australia. A participant responded that they took charge of reviewing the Master of Educational Leadership and Management program. Three respondents reported that they have brought changes in primary science modules and another respondent specified that they developed a Master of Education research module and research handbook, and developed a new school immersion and teaching practice handbook for postgraduate teacher students.

Returning faculty members stressed that any reformation of curriculum at the college is expected to align with the school curriculum in order to prepare the teachers to teach effectively in the Bhutanese school setting. Such alignment is crucial; however, participants emphasized that a lack of coordination between the Ministry of Education and the education colleges was evident with ECCD curriculum that is discussed later. Participants ($n= 9/12$) also talked extensively about making the

curriculum relevant to the Bhutanese context by indigenising and aligning with the school curriculum. One explained:

When we write a curriculum in Bhutan, we have to align with what is happening in the schools and ensure we prepare our teachers to teach in the Bhutanese schools. I have learnt in Australian university on different standards to design the curriculum, the elements, the aspects. So, those really helped me to develop a curriculum for B.Ed primary.

A careful approach is important to ensure what is culturally appropriate in Bhutan and one participant suggested that the curriculum cannot be imported entirely as it may not be relevant to the Bhutanese context. It was emphasized that curriculum indigenization is required, although reference to a western approach is important. Hence, the colleges continue to update and develop their curriculum in line with the school curriculum and with the changes taking place in the country. The participants explained that their knowledge of curriculum design gained from their educational experience in Australia helped them to consciously achieve this result.

Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Curriculum & Practice

A specific curriculum and practice focus has been the ECCD program, which is a national educational initiative of the Ministry of Education in Bhutan. Amongst the multidisciplinary participants, two of them reported that the ECCD diploma curriculum was developed with professional support from the University of New England and was designed using a socio-cultural framework. They claimed that this particular basis was carefully chosen considering the Bhutanese context and was customized; accordingly, the socio-cultural model blends very well with Bhutan's Gross National Happiness (GNH) philosophy.

However, there exists a mismatch between the college of education curriculum for ECCD facilitators and the curriculum adopted by the Ministry of Education (MoE). While the Diploma curriculum in the college is developed based in socio-culturalism, the curriculum for ECCD under the MoE administration is a Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) model. The participants agree that challenges arise when the facilitators educated in socio-cultural models have to follow a DAP curriculum in their classroom delivery. This has been a point of contention between the two key organizations which needs to be addressed immediately.

Overall, teacher education in Bhutan, through the two colleges of education, is evolving through the increase in higher qualifications, inclusion of international best practices in teaching, and curriculum development. There has been visible progress in human resource development and in capabilities in teacher education.

Discussion

This study examined how Australian postgraduate educational experiences of the faculty members has influenced teacher education in the two colleges of education in Bhutan. Firstly, the

findings revealed that the Bhutanese scholars were able to bring international best practices in teaching and learning into their classrooms as they became familiar with the learner-centred pedagogy and innovative approaches of teaching while studying abroad in Australia. One of the transformations in their teaching approaches was promoting a child-centred classroom environment by becoming a facilitator and being more child friendly. These faculty members have been able to explore various teaching strategies to enhance student-centred learning and develop critical thinking and problem solving by reflecting on their own learning experiences abroad. Their experiences as learners within the learner-centred education system abroad helped them to reflect on their previous teaching approaches and implement these strategies for their own students. Many developing countries have been attempting to bring about a paradigm shift in teaching approaches from teacher-centred to learner-centred (Aksit, 2007; Brinkmann, 2015; Chapman et al., 2005; Schweisfurth, 2011), and the Bhutanese education colleges are no exception. Previous study on teaching approaches in the education colleges in Bhutan discovered that the trainee teachers found presenting to classmates helpful in building their confidence (VanBalkom & Sherman, 2010). Similarly, a study has found that strategies such as student-centred learning, team and collaborative research projects, group discussions, and freedom to share personal views help the students expand their perspectives (Kumi-Yeboah, 2014). Evidently, the postgraduate study experience of the education faculty members of Paro and Samtse had several influences in the evolution and transformation of teaching pedagogies by introducing international best practices in teaching and learning.

Secondly, all but one of the returning faculty members have either initiated or participated in curriculum development since returning to Bhutan. The Bhutanese education system, both school (elementary and secondary) and tertiary, used to follow borrowed curriculum from India (Namgyel & Rinchen, 2016). In 2001, the Bhutan Board of Examinations took over the conduct of year 10 examinations and subsequently the year 12 examinations since 2006, from the Indian Examination Council (Maxwell et al., 2010). Furthermore, curriculum design, assessment, award of degrees for tertiary education in Bhutan was through Delhi University, India, before this process was taken over by RUB in 2008 (HEPD, 2017). Since then, Bhutanisation of the curriculum was aimed to establish relevance with changing needs and integration of Bhutanese values and principles into the education system. Some study has identified that there were structural defects when only the contents of the curriculum are changed without indigenizing the cultural aspects of the curricular materials (Gumbo, 2012), and the Bhutanese education faculty members are aware of this requirement. Integrating traditional knowledge in modern curriculum however, may continue tensions as curriculum too heavily saturated with traditional content may hinder students from transitioning into a modern job market (Robles, 2016). Hence, a middle path is chosen for Bhutanese curriculum by bringing traditional and modern knowledge and world views together. The findings from this research are in agreement with Robles (2016) who showed that the Bhutanese education system has not brought in external educational practices in large scale but adapted educational ideas from the West.

Currently, inclusion of ICT in delivery of curriculum in the education colleges is a daily practice and the findings here have revealed that the faculty members were better in using ICT tools after their return from studies. ICT is a bridge in fostering learning (Aksal & Gazi, 2015), and using the ICT tools in the learning process is now essential for professionally competent graduates from the colleges. While it is necessary, affordability of ICT devices such as laptops for trainee teachers is a social justice issue as many students come from low socio-economic family backgrounds. To mitigate such situations, the education colleges must continuously develop and update their information technology laboratories and provide uninterrupted internet connectivity which is a challenge in addition to the high cost of internet data.

Finally, one of the most important national contributions in curriculum development is in Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD). The Ministry of Education considers access to ECCD programs for 3-5 year-old children an important long-term approach to building a foundation for quality education, and has developed ECCD centres since the early 2000's (Pisani et al., 2017). Although, the ECCD program in Bhutan started in 2004, there were only a few centres established with initially predominantly private providers of day care centres (Sims & Pedey, 2015). ECCD however, became a flagship program of the Royal Government of Bhutan in the 11th Five Year Plan and, as of July 2021, there are 495 ECCD centres across the country with 8,026 students and 947 facilitators (Kuensel, 2021b). The government of Bhutan has committed to increase access for 50 percent of 3 to 5-year-old children by 2024 and 100 percent by 2030.

While curriculum is one of the fundamental dimensions of quality education (Main et al., 2020), and despite the ECCD program being prioritised in the national plan, there are issues of mismatch between the curriculum developed by one of the education colleges for ECCD facilitators and the curriculum adopted by the MoE for the child learners. In the most recent report released by UNICEF on the ECCD program in Bhutan, gaps such as low access to centre-based ECCD programs and requirements of more professional development opportunities for ECCD facilitators were flagged (UNICEF, 2020). The report, however, failed to recognise the discrepancies in the ECCD curriculum.

Findings of this study have revealed that the Early Childhood Care and Development program which aims for a critical, inquisitive, and innovative future generation has inherent contradictions in practice with ECCD facilitators trained to follow socio-cultural curriculum whereas, the ECCD centres throughout the country have been mandated to follow the Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) model. This is a clear indication that the two organisations responsible for education in the country failed to agree on this important national project. Thus, the main concern is how effectively the facilitators who are year 12 graduates interpret these two different approaches and be able to make the learning process innovative, critical, and inquisitive for the children.

Conclusion

This study has explored what postgraduate students generally experience and how they contributed professionally to Bhutan after returning from study abroad in Australia through a focus on the faculty members of the two education colleges. These returned teacher educators have brought back international qualifications and experiences from their Australian study abroad. Apart from the building of human capital for the two colleges of education through postgraduate qualifications, this study abroad process has supported faculty members to build their capabilities as teachers and to transform their perspectives on teaching. This research has highlighted the influence of returning academics to the Bhutanese Education Colleges through transformed teaching pedagogy and curriculum development. Pedagogies that are more student centred and ICT supported have been adopted and there have been extensive contributions in curriculum development both in the colleges in teacher education, and within the school education system. The faculty members are playing a critical role in indigenizing curriculum and making it culturally relevant for the Bhutanese learners. While the changes brought by the returning faculty members have contributed to building the education system thus far, there is no dispute that further reformations are desired.

One of the key issues that has been revealed in this study is the non-alignment of Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) curriculum for the child learners and ECCD Diploma curriculum for the facilitators. Hence, it is recommended that the two nodal agencies of the Ministry of Education and the education colleges of the Royal University of Bhutan must work together to align the ECCD curriculum with a shared philosophical underpinning that is suitable for Bhutanese children. Limitations of the study include that this investigation was centred on only two of the education colleges of Royal University of Bhutan and therefore may not be generalisable to other educational settings in Bhutan. Furthermore, the findings are relevant to the participants who travelled to Australia and these may not be generalisable to returning scholars from other countries.

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Authors

Mr. Dolay Tshering is a research student with the School of Education at University of New England, Australia. Prior to joining the university, he worked for the Ministry of Education in Bhutan for 14 years and as a news reporter with the Broadcasting Service Corporation from 2002-2004. Dolay graduated with Master of Human Resources from Curtin University in Australia after completing his bachelor's degree from the Institute of Language and Culture Studies and postgraduate certificate in education from the National Institute of Education in Bhutan.

Dr. Jeanette Berman is a psychologist and teacher who has been involved in building teacher and school psychologist capacity in Australia, New Zealand and South America. She has worked in inclusive teacher education at the Universities of Canberra and Melbourne and New England. Her

interests are broad, involving child and adolescent development, sustainable learning, psychoeducational assessment, responsive classroom teaching, learning intervention for students with learning difficulties or disabilities, professional practice in school and educational psychology, and Indigenous educational psychology.

Dr. Judith Miller has been actively contributing to preservice teacher education, teaching and researching for three decades at the University of New England. Judith has contributed to both collaborative research and curriculum development in Bhutan, establishing and leading study programmes for young UNE teachers to experience education in Bhutan through the support of the Australian Government New Colombo Plan Scholarship scheme. Judith transitioned to retirement in June 2021.

Dr. Adele Nye is a Senior Lecturer and the Higher Degree Research (HDR) Coordinator within the School of Education at the University of New England. Her research focus is the teaching of history in universities. Adele's latest co-edited book; *Teaching history for contemporary world: Tensions, challenges and classroom experiences* (2021), foregrounds the urgency, agility and value of historical work in precarious times. Adele's teaching and research are centred on collaboration and emergent scholarly practices in higher education.