

## Perceptions of Academics on the Potential Infusion of Educating for Gross National Happiness with Biggs' Constructive Alignment in Bhutanese Higher Education Institutions

Deki C Gyamtso  and Kinley Seden <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Samtse College of Education, Royal University of Bhutan

### Abstract

Using a qualitative research design, this study explores perceptions of academics in the Bhutanese higher education institutions regarding the infusion of Bhutanese and Western educational epistemologies. Specifically, it examines their views on infusing Educating for Gross National Happiness (EdGNH) values and principles into higher education classroom practices using Biggs' Constructive Alignment (CA) model. The significance of a constructively aligned curriculum is well understood in higher education. With increasing interest in well-being in education, this study provides insights into the infusion, challenges, and opportunities. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with 24 academics and an analysis of modules and lesson plans. The findings imply that infusing CA with EdGNH can facilitate a conceptual shift in teaching, from an input model (transmission/teacher-centred) to a learning-outcomes approach with students responsible for their learning. Based on these findings, it is recommended that Bhutanese higher education institutions consider adopting this infusion to promote a Bhutanese indigenous 'middle path' pedagogy.

### Keywords

Gross National Happiness  
Constructive Alignment  
Middle path  
Teaching and learning  
practices

Corresponding author:  
[gyamtsod@gmail.com](mailto:gyamtsod@gmail.com)

Received 21 October 2024  
Accepted 13 March 2025

### Introduction

Teaching and learning practices in higher education in Bhutan have been the focus of educational research for more than a decade, with endeavours to transform teaching learning practices to promote student learning (Gyeltshen & Dorji, 2020).

Educating for Gross National Happiness (EdGNH) is one such attempt to contribute to this growing body of research. Gross National Happiness (GNH) is the guiding philosophy of the Royal Government of Bhutan, and education in Bhutan is viewed as one of the fundamental ways to achieve GNH (Ministry of Education, 2010a, 2010b). This study explores academics' perceptions in Bhutanese Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) on the potential infusion of Educating for Gross National Happiness with the Constructive Alignment (CA) of Biggs (1996).

The infusion model shifts from a teacher-centred model to a learning-outcomes focus, empowering students to take charge of their learning. Grounded in Bhutanese values, EdGNH embodies the “middle path”, balancing modernisation with preserving Bhutanese traditions. The principles of Educating for Gross National Happiness thus support a transition from an academically oriented curriculum to one that prioritises happiness as a central goal in education and life (Gyamtso et al., 2017). Similarly, integrating EdGNH with Constructive Alignment would offer a culturally appropriate and innovative framework for teaching and learning. It could transform the learning experience by supporting critical and creative thinking, promoting lifelong learning habits, and enabling students to apply academic knowledge to real-world challenges. Additionally, EdGNH is designed to encourage educators to reflect on and adapt their teaching practices, cultivating mindful and meaningful interactions in the classroom. This shift ultimately creates learning communities that value care, creativity, and critical thought, fundamental to holistic education and lifelong learning. Corroborating this, Maxwell (2019) asserts that the most effective path to achieving GNH is education focusing on learning rather than teaching.

Although CA is widely accepted and successfully implemented in HEIs worldwide, studies reveal that its emphasis on cognitive learning often overlooks important human and socio-cultural dimensions (Colding, 2020; Loughlin et al., 2021; Millar & Bester, 2008). To address this, infusing EdGNH into CA in Bhutan's higher education system offers a pathway to fostering a more mindful learning environment. This infusion aims to enrich the educational experience by acknowledging these overlooked dimensions, ultimately enhancing the well-being of both students and teachers through deep, active engagement in academic, social, emotional, and spiritual aspects. EdGNH presents a ‘radical’ shift from a traditionally academic-focused curriculum to one that prioritises happiness as a fundamental goal of education and life (Gyamtso et al., 2017). This infusion aspires

to initiate meaningful changes in pedagogical practices, making its adoption desirable and necessary.

While Bhutan's schools have embraced GNH education (Ministry of Education, 2014), its integration at the tertiary level remains limited (Gyamtso et al., 2017). Studies on Bhutanese HEIs (Gyamtso, 2013; Gyamtso et al., 2017; Stacy & Bennett, 2017; Young, 2012) reveal that teaching is predominantly teacher-centred, with lecturing as the primary method. However, despite years of efforts, the much-needed shift from a teacher-centred approach to a student-centred approach has largely remained unmaterialised. Instead, the focus has been on student services and extracurricular activities, with EdGNH values being informally absorbed, rather than embedded in classroom practices (Gyamtso, 2020).

It is timely to explore university academics' perceptions of infusing EdGNH with Western models like the Constructive Alignment of Biggs (1996) in Bhutan's HEIs, assisting the shift from lecture-dominated to culturally relevant, innovative practices. Gyamtso (2013) highlights that adopting Western methods will not resolve Bhutan's tertiary education challenges. Blending EdGNH with CA, a Western pedagogy offers a balanced, culturally suitable approach, and this infusion of 'hard' and 'soft' pedagogies could create a valuable Bhutanese educational innovation that could be applied in similar contexts globally.

## Literature review

The development of higher education (HE) in Bhutan is a remarkable success story, demonstrating significant growth and progress in a short period. It enjoys a high level of support as "governments see universities as engines for social change and expansion of prosperity, and this is especially the case in developing countries" (Ramsden, 2005, p. 3). Bhutanese HEIs were initially established with these goals to meet sectoral human resource needs (Ministry of Education, 2020), but the growing demand for education emerged among the ever-increasing middle class. The Royal University of Bhutan (RUB) comprises 11 colleges, nine constituent public colleges, and two affiliated private colleges, each specialising in diverse fields such as science, technology, humanities, business, and engineering. In addition to RUB, Bhutan has three other higher education institutions (HEIs): Khesar Gyalpo University of Medical Sciences, which specialises in medical and health sciences; Jigme Singye Wangchuck School of Law, focused on legal studies; and Tango Buddhist University, dedicated to Buddhist philosophy and monastic education. Schofield (2016) notes that despite their robust growth, HEIs could still

be more innovative and fleet-of-foot in being societally, economically aligned, and future-oriented.

Globally, HEIs face similar challenges in offering contextually relevant, high-quality programmes. These challenges have intensified following the COVID-19 pandemic, which demands greater creativity and adaptability. Additionally, there is a growing emphasis on well-being in education (Govorova et al., 2020). Studies (Macaskill, 2012; Mikalajūnaitė, 2019; Riva et al., 2020; Yangdon et al., 2021) highlight the importance of fostering caring and compassionate relationships in universities. As Kahn (2005) argued, universities should function as ‘caregiving organisations’ to stimulate student development and contribute to their communities.

Accordingly, Bhutan’s HEIs should utilise this window of opportunity to promote well-being in education by leveraging the potential of EdGNH. With EdGNH, the educational experience of the learners can be strengthened by addressing the multiple dimensions of their life beyond the intellectual element, enhancing sustainable well-being and happiness in teaching and learning. The urgency is sensed in the 2020 Royal Kasho (decree) on education reform in Bhutan, calling for a comprehensive review of current educational practices to ensure they are modern, relevant, and adaptable, aligning with the demands and opportunities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Royal Government of Bhutan, 2020). Implicit in the decree is that education should promote the development of well-rounded citizens with sound values and principles who will lead purposeful lives.

### **Educating for Gross National Happiness**

Educating for GNH is central to Bhutan’s education reform, designed to promote holistic development and balance societal needs with sustainable strategies (Gyamtso et al., 2017; Hayward et al., 2009; Tshomo, 2016). This approach aligns with Bhutanese cultural values and Buddhist practices, shifting academic curricula towards happiness-focused education (Ministry of Education, 2010b; Thinley, 2012). HEIs play a pivotal role in embedding GNH values to create a GNH-inspired society through education reform. The tertiary education policy (Ministry of Education, 2010b) and the RUB Strategic Plan 2030 (Royal University of Bhutan, 2022) rightly emphasise the importance of developing socially responsible, culturally grounded citizens.

Academics in Bhutanese HEIs are encouraged to enhance the relevance and quality of education by integrating EdGNH, fostering cultural connections, and

improving learning outcomes. While Western initiatives focus on economic growth, Bhutan emphasises GNH values, promoting interconnectedness and holistic development through the Educating for GNH initiative (Powdyel, 2010; Sherab et al., 2014). The initiative sought to instil in Bhutan's future citizens that a meaningful, happy life depends on protecting all beings and recognising the interdependence of everything on Earth (Zangmo, 2014). This philosophy promotes mindfulness and self-awareness, enriching students and teachers, and aligning with the 'hidden curriculum' for deeper, more engaged learning (Sherab, 2013a). The Ministry of Education further supports GNH schools by focusing on leadership, green schools, holistic assessments, co-curricular activities, and strengthening school-community relationships (Sherab, 2013b).

Adler's (2016) study on *Positive Education: Educating for Academic Success and a Fulfilling Life* highlights the impact of the 'hidden curriculum' in shaping a supportive learning environment. It emphasises that perseverance and self-control enhance academic achievement, while well-being, defined by positive emotions, relationships, engagement, and purpose, fosters holistic growth and success. Positive teacher-student interactions foster motivating and personalised learning experiences (Margolis et al., 2001). EdGNH, aligned with Bhutanese cultural values and Buddhist practices, can be effectively integrated into classroom practices in higher education institutions.

While substantial work was done on promoting the values of GNH in the Bhutanese Education system (Ministry of Education, 2014), studies on EdGNH (Sherab, 2013b; Utha et al., 2016) observed that there has been little initiation in terms of "infusion through regular curricular [in-class] programmes" (Sherab et al., 2014, p. 1). There was little evidence of any school classroom practice change. Both studies have shown that there are some problems with the implementation in schools. Further, the findings from a recent study by Sherab and Schuelka (2023) clearly show that there is little space to foster happiness in the classroom, further corroborating the evidence of the earlier studies. According to Utha et al. (2016), little is known about EdGNH implementation in the two Colleges of Education and the Royal University of Bhutan. A 2017 study revealed that teacher educators needed to upgrade their knowledge and skills about GNH values and practices, and develop the idea of tacit learning associated with EdGNH (Gyamtso et al., 2017). Seven years later, progress has been slow. It would be beneficial to make EdGNH an essential component of HEI programmes for sustainability and long-term benefit. If graduates are well prepared, much of the effort to implement

EdGNH would be achieved. EdGNH offers a promising path, promoting education as it should ideally function (Powdyel, 2011).

Several studies align with EdGNH values by emphasising academic proficiency and nurturing cultural and moral grounding. Keeling (2014) advocates for developing “a whole, integrated person” (p. 144), a core goal of EdGNH. Barnett (2012) highlights the importance of preparing students for an uncertain future (p. 65), which resonates with EdGNH’s focus on resilience. Similarly, Sabri (2011) stresses the role of teaching in promoting personal growth and agency, which are essential for well-being, reflecting EdGNH’s aim to nurture well-rounded, capable individuals. Thus, the current context presents a favourable moment for infusing EdGNH into higher education.

### ***Constructive Alignment***

Constructive Alignment (CA), developed by Biggs (1996), represents a marriage between a constructivist understanding of the nature of learning and an aligned design for outcomes-based teaching education. The constructive theory argues that students build their knowledge by applying previously taught structures and concepts to interpret new information (Biggs et al., 2022). Biggs draws on Tyler’s (1949) observation that what the student does is more important for learning than what the teacher does (Kandlbinder, 2014). Accordingly, the emphasis is on students constructing knowledge through active engagement (Biggs, 2014), with the teacher aligning curriculum, teaching methods, and assessments to support this process. As Biggs (2014) notes, CA encourages students to take responsibility for their learning, fostering deeper cognitive engagement rather than surface learning. Studies argue that CA ensures learning activities and assessments directly target intended outcomes, promoting transparency and coherence in the educational process (Biggs & Tang, 2011; Entwistle, 2000).

Constructive alignment begins with identifying intended learning outcomes (ILOs), defined by specific action verbs such as explain, analyse, or demonstrate to clarify what students must do (Biggs et al., 2022). Teaching and learning activities (TLAs) are designed to engage students with these verbs, fostering critical thinking and exploration. For instance, to ‘analyse’ a case study, TLAs may involve group discussions or problem-solving exercises. Assessments (ATs) are directly aligned with ILOs, allowing students to demonstrate their understanding by applying learned skills, ensuring coherence between teaching, learning, and assessment. The

assessments tell teachers whether and how well each student has met the criteria set out in the ILOs (Biggs et al., 2022).

Implementing CA in the HEIs in Bhutan is feasible, as the key policy document, *The Wheel of Academic Law* (Royal University of Bhutan, n.d.), advocates the principles of CA. CA helps EdGNH by strategically infusing its values into the learning process, ensuring that students receive a holistic education aligned with GNH. When constructive alignment is effectively implemented, it increases the quality of learning events and experiences (University of Wollongong, 2022). CA supports EdGNH by integrating GNH-based learning outcomes, fostering student-centred approaches, and aligning teaching with GNH values. It also promotes holistic assessment and cultural relevance in Bhutanese education, encouraging educators to prioritise learning quality and process over mere content coverage.

### ***Understanding the Middle Path***

The ‘middle path’ corresponds to a Buddhist belief that there should be a balanced or ‘middle path’ in all aspects of life. In the context of GNH, it emphasises that while material well-being is important, the ultimate goal of development should be to provide internal peace or spirituality (Wangmo & Valk, 2012, p. 55). GNH represents a middle path that balances modernisation with preserving unique culture and tradition, which should be reflected in the country’s educational pursuits.

Advocates recommend a conceptual shift from an academically driven curriculum to one that incorporates happiness as a central goal for education and life (Gyamtsso et al., 2017). As a ‘radical’ policy, EdGNH can help students develop habits of lifelong learning, value hard work, and apply academic knowledge to real-world challenges through critical and creative thinking, largely guided by the principles of mindfulness. It will also encourage academics to be reflective of their teaching practices, mindful of their actions in the class, changing the culture of teaching learning interactions amongst the students and academics, creating learning communities that model the caring, creative and critical-thinking processes necessary for holistic education and lifelong learning leading to the middle path in classroom practices which maintains the rigour of learning in a conducive environment.

The middle path involves mindfulness practices like ‘*Sem Gochoep Zoni*’ (directing energies to benefit others), which teachers should prioritise (Thinley, 2015, p. 97), practising the four immeasurable qualities of loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity (Chodron, 2011) in classroom



interactions. Incorporating EdGNH values would help preserve and promote Bhutanese culture in education. The need identified here is that if a *change* is to take place, then it has to be in the classroom practices, and CA offers the opportunity to change them in a consistent manner.

The CA model looks at how “knowledge is constructed through the activities of the learner” (Biggs, 2014, p. 7), somewhat different from the current practices in universities where academics largely use their personal experiences to decide what students should learn (Kandlbinder, 2014) which may be the case in Bhutan too. When academics are mindful in designing activities for deeper and active student learning at the forefront, both GNH education and CA would be addressed.

The application of CA encourages students to take more responsibility for their learning, as they are essentially ‘trapped’ and find it difficult to escape without learning the intended outcomes (Biggs, 2003). CA provides a structured reflective framework for teaching decisions to align with learning outcomes (Biggs & Tang, 2011), which provides significant benefits. It would oblige academics to rethink and improve their classroom practices for the students’ benefit.

As explained earlier, studies on CA (Colding, 2020; Loughlin et al., 2021; Millar & Bester, 2008) highlight its cognitive focus while often overlooking human and socio-cultural dimensions. Infusing EdGNH into CA in Bhutanese higher education fosters a holistic, mindful learning environment that enhances well-being and inspires pedagogical innovation.

## Method

The study embraced a qualitative research design approach based on an Interpretivist paradigm to answer the research question: How do academics in Bhutanese higher education institutions perceive (opportunities and challenges) the infusion of Educating for Gross National Happiness with Biggs’ Constructive Alignment in their classroom practices?

Purposive sampling was employed for the interviews; in some cases, the interviews were conducted by email because of the distance. A total of 24 academics participated from the HEIs (n=10, including one private HEI), which is considered satisfactory for the researchers’ specific needs (Cohen et al., 2017). A simple categorisation was employed to include academics across the levels of their teaching career. They were – early career defined by 1- 5 years, mid-career between 6 – 14 years, and senior career academics with 15 plus years. Of the 24 participants, 10 were women and 14 were men.



An in-depth interview of twelve questions was developed to collect information about academics' current classroom practices, including planning, teaching, and assessment. The questions explored their perceptions of implementing the middle path framework, its relevance and usefulness, anticipated challenges, and the support needed for its implementation. A handout outlining the research's concepts was provided to ensure consistency and minimise any influence on their responses, offering basic information about the two pedagogical models.

Additionally, the analysis of documents from the interview participants, such as the semester module descriptors, lesson plans, and daily lesson PowerPoint presentations, was examined. A checklist was used to assess how Constructive Alignment and Educating for Gross National Happiness elements were incorporated in these academic documents and to verify the data obtained from the interviews.

The credibility of the interviews and document analyses was ensured by minimising bias and using the same format and sequence of words and questions for all participants. The study adhered to the ethical requirements of the Royal University of Bhutan, obtaining necessary approvals from the HEIs and participants.

## Results and Discussions

Qualitative data analysis employed a thematic approach, involving reading interview transcripts, memo writing, and developing coding categories (Clarke & Braun, 2018). Documents were analysed using a checklist to assess the quality of CA and EdGNH elements incorporated within them.

Three main components were identified to address the research questions and gain insights into academics' perceptions: (1) perceptions of the two pedagogical models; (2) views on the potential benefits of infusing the two approaches; and (3) anticipated challenges and support needed for their implementation.

### *Academics' Perceptions of the Two Pedagogical Models*

The interview findings revealed varied insights from participants, with senior academics demonstrating a deeper understanding, as illustrated by the following statements:

*Both have the potential to produce highly competent graduates. There is plenty of evidence to show that education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century should be*

*guided by these pedagogical models, learner-focused and educating the heart. (P1)*

*... in the classrooms means that teachers, while planning their lessons, must create space for student collaboration on how they will learn certain things and determine how these things will be of value not only to themselves but also to others. (P4)*

The mid-career academics showed that they recognised and understood the two models relatively well:

*I think these are very apt for our current scenario. Our students need to know how to learn and construct their own knowledge. I think they have become too dependent on teachers. Hence ... constructive alignment will greatly benefit making the students ready for the world today. Likewise - Educating for GNH, the very essence of Bhutanese will be kept which is so pivotal as I fear the youth today are losing it. (P7)*

*Educating for GNH in an engineering college, students learn the aesthetic design of the Bhutanese house or artefacts, thereby connecting and exploring Bhutanese culture, tradition, and historians thus upholding culture. While CA connects the outcomes with the activities and assessment tasks, and learning beyond the prescribed texts. (P 6)*

The early career academics appeared to have a limited depth of understanding of the two models as most commented that they found the models ‘interesting’ but admitted that “I know very little about this so I doubt my ability to either comment on it or apply it in a classroom setting” (P 11). The newness to the profession and lack of experience could be the reasons for this limited understanding and reservation about applying the models.

Overall, the interview responses were promising, demonstrating that senior and mid-career academics understood and experienced the two models well, while early career academics would likely develop a comprehensive understanding with experience over time.

### ***Views on the Potential Infusion of the two Models, the Potential Benefits and Advantages***

Almost all participants expressed a positive and open attitude to the idea of a potential infusion of EdGNH with CA, believing that merging the two ideas could reduce the reliance on traditional approaches in colleges. They identified CA as an effective pedagogical model that ensures alignment between learning outcomes,

teaching materials, and assessments, promoting consistency and coherence in the learning process. A senior career participant (P15) stated:

*A combination of Constructive Alignment (CA) with EDNH will provide a new shift to teaching learning and assessment in the colleges (by) firstly, keep students at the centre of teaching and learning and secondly, will facilitate the wholesome development of the learner as opposed to just developing them cerebrally, as students will be taught in a more holistic manner.*

Further a mid-career participant (P2) expressed, “It would drive me to think about my subject as well as about my students and their potential from a new perspective”.

Another mid-career participant (P16) also indicated that the:

*Infusion of two as an innovative approach to classroom teaching and learning will help address the gap between overly-dependent students’ learning and spoon-feeding teaching approach. This if implemented with right sense of direction and assistance from the lecturers can encourage students to explore and regulate their own learning.*

The advantages of infusing CA and the four immeasurable qualities of Buddhism representative of EdGNH values are powerfully captured by a senior participant (P1):

*Infusion of these two pedagogical models would be a perfect option. If successfully infused, it is likely to create an education system that is much cherished elsewhere- producing all-rounded individuals/graduates. Someone who is not only critical and analytical but also trained in the four boundless qualities.*

The essence of the infusion was articulated by a senior participant (P15), who opined that:

*The ‘middle path’ will ensure alignment of the teaching and assessment approaches with the learning outcomes as well as allow tutors to plan activities by infusing values and principles of EdGNH leading to more fair and transparent learning process. It prepares students to take care of their minds and use their mind, body and speech for the benefit of others ... helps promote holistic development, encouraging students to develop a sense of purpose, meaning, and well-being which is important for student mental health.*

Most participants believed this infusion offers a clear structure for teachers to plan lessons and a logical progression for students, making teaching, learning, and assessment more student-friendly, benefiting both the students and academics. It would create a favourable learning atmosphere where students take responsibility for their learning, enhancing students' critical and creative thinking skills while allowing academics to reflect on their teaching practices.

An early career participant (P18) aptly declared that “this would keep teachers on their toes because it demands lesson planning, feedback, and regular progress checks, all of which facilitate students' growth”. Senior participants believed that the infusion is useful as:

*EdGNH would prepare students capable enough to handle the socio-cultural aspects of the country while CA prepares students to be more critical thinkers, mindful workers, and creative citizens. In this way, it would enhance traits such as being independent, productive, creative, critical and good human beings. (P15)*

*... will prepare students for 21<sup>st</sup> century and equip them with values such as compassion, honesty, and sincerity. (P24)*

These findings suggest that the benefits observed are not inherent in conventional approaches; rather, when applied by infusing CA and EdGNH, they could lead to positive outcomes and quality teaching and learning experiences for both students and academics.

The interviews also revealed that some participants were already implementing the infusion in their modules and lessons in a variety of ways:

*I have been always in subtle ways trying my best to infuse these pedagogical models in my teachings. Through research experiences, I have learned that students should be always given opportunities and freedom to learn based on their own exploration. (P1)*

*It is already happening in my classroom in many ways as I try and plan my lessons to focus on the intellectual, social, emotional and spiritual areas of learners. I try by understanding the experience, culture and existing knowledge base of the students... (P8)*

When asked about implementing the middle path approach, participants provided insightful responses:

*After completion of each unit of the module, students will be asked to write a brief reflection and it should be critical and analytical based on their understanding of the contents covered in the unit. (P18)*

*Initiating different learning activities to develop a positive attitude and foster positive relationships among learners, initiating active and collaborative learning, mindful sessions, and initiating value-based cultural activities. (P6)*

*One such strategy can be whereby students are exposed to real working environment and challenges. In this way values and attitude of learning can be enhanced. (P18)*

*Laying clear goals and classroom ground rules at the beginning of the semester/value education class and focusing on a 'feeling and caring classroom environment'. Also using humour/anecdote, energizer, task-based activities in between the lessons helped establish positive relationships and open communications. (P10)*

A mid-career participant listed the following simple but effective strategies, which would promote EdGNH as well as ensure CA in his classroom:

- a. *Sharing and caring while performing a group task*
- b. *Listening and appreciating when friends present their ideas in class.*
- c. *Engaging in productive debate without showing anger or inappropriate behaviour/language, being polite in response, soft in words.*
- d. *Respect differences, appreciate similarities.*
- e. *Learn to appreciate diversity and their values, cultures. (P20)*

Further analysis of the documents, including module descriptors, lesson plans, and PowerPoint presentations, further validates the above findings of infusion and alignment as depicted by the following examples (see Table 1):

**Table 1**

*Example of Infusion and Alignment in Module PSA 101 Sport Studies I (Introduction to PE and Sport)*

Learning Activities	Assessment
Think-Pair-Share, ACID, Weaving the Web, Lego Communication game, Six Thinking Hats	<p>As a future sports coach plan topic - Olympic Movement promotes important values such as– Excellence, Friendship, and Respect.</p> <p>Marking criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to operationalise these values 5 %</li> <li>• Ability to link these values to GNH 5 %</li> <li>• Clarity of the discussion 5 %</li> <li>• Overall effectiveness of the writing style 5 %</li> </ul>

The learning activities in Table 1 promote critical thinking, collaborative learning, decision-making, and GNH values, such as teamwork and idea sharing, while the assessment task reinforces these values through its marking criteria.

**Table 2**

*Example of Infusion and Alignment in MGT307 Strategic Management Module*

Learning Task	Learning Outcomes	Assessment
Students will prepare a group-based (5 students) project on a company or organisation where they can apply their consultancy skills and make a strategic plan for the CEO. The report will be 2500 words long and students should use the various analytic tools discussed during the module. In a follow-up 10–15-minute presentation (followed by 5 min Q&A), students will develop and demonstrate teamwork and proficiency in communication skills	<p>Upon completion of this assignment, students will be able to:</p> <p>LO2. Apply independent learning and research to strategic problem definition and resolution.</p> <p>LO3. Critically evaluate alternative theories and approaches to strategic business problems.</p> <p>LO4. Outline the importance of good corporate governance and broad ethical issues as they relate to international strategy, decision-making and operations management.</p> <p>LO5. Identify and critically appraise alternative strategies and their implementation.</p> <p>LO7. Critically assess the real and potential implications of strategic decisions.</p> <p>LO8. Anticipate and suggest a range of management techniques to assist in corporate decision-making.</p> <p>LO9. Explain the importance of business or organisational functions and their contribution to a successful business strategy.</p>	<p>The written report and presentation will be assessed as follows:</p> <p>10% Report:</p> <p>3% Identification of main issues/problem</p> <p>2% Construction of the strategic plan</p> <p>2% Interpretation of findings</p> <p>3% Reflection on solving problem/recommendations</p> <p>4% Presentation group mark:</p> <p>2% Content, Consistency and Structure of the presentation</p> <p>1% Sharp focus on the objective of presentation</p> <p>1% Time Management</p> <p>6% Presentation individual mark:</p> <p>1% Involvement of audience and adequacy in handling Q &amp; A</p> <p>2% Demonstrates understanding of the material presented</p> <p>3% Clarity, tone and delivery.</p>

Another useful example of infusion and alignment is as depicted by the MGT307 Strategic Management module taught by a mid-career participant (P20) for a Bachelor of Business Studies course (See Table 2):

Table 2 exemplifies that the elements of CA are effectively articulated, with learning tasks and assessment criteria aligned to achieve the desired outcomes. The infusion of EdGNH values woven into the task promotes good corporate governance, conflict management, and decision-making. The plan includes activities encouraging collaboration and creativity, with assessments involving observation, questioning, immediate feedback, and rubrics.

Similarly, several module descriptors and work plans were provided, with specific and measurable learning outcomes, relevant activities that linked content to real-life situations, and activities that required students to construct their own meaning, as depicted in Table 3, which illustrates an effective example of a learning task that requires students to think and construct meaning.

**Table 3**

*Learning Task for Module ENE501 English Education*

---

Watch the animated video provided below, and try to answer the following questions:

1. Does the animated video take any liberties when interpreting Poe's text?
  2. Is any information added/removed/edited for the purpose of the video?
  3. Does the video's 'reading' of the text align with your understanding of the Poe's story?
- 

These examples illustrate how the CA approach recognises “the activities of the learner construct knowledge” (Biggs, 2014, p. 9) rather than being directly transferable from teacher to student. “Learning takes place through the active behaviour of the student: it is what *he* does that he learns, not what the teacher does” (Tyler, 1949, p.63). CA ensures achievement of the desired learning outcomes, making students take responsibility for their learning (Biggs, 1996, 2014) and establishing trust between student and teacher, which satisfies an important element of EdGNH. These findings are consistent with what Biggs asserts: encouraging students to take more responsibility for their learning, ‘traps’ (into activities but free to construct the knowledge in their own way), the learner finds it difficult to escape without learning what s/he is intended to learn (2003). It directly addresses the intended learning outcomes not typically achieved in traditional lectures, tutorial classes, and examinations (Biggs & Tang, 2011).

Conversely, some module descriptors and lessons exhibited a lack of constructive alignment. For instance, some descriptors provided only the overall



module goal without detailing intended learning outcomes (ILOs) or assessments, while others merely listed topics along with assignment due dates (see Table 4).

**Table 4**

*Module XXXX (for ethical reasons, details not revealed)*

Week	From	To	Content	Remarks
1	23 Jul	29 Jul	1.1 xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx 1.2 xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx	Assignment 1 - Date of Submission
2	30 Jul	05 Aug	2.1 xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx	
3	06 Aug	12 Aug	1.1 xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx 1.2 xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx	
4	13 Aug	19 Aug	4.1 xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx 4.2 xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx	
5	20 Aug	26 Aug	5.1 xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx 5.2 xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx	Class Test -1
6	27 Aug	02 Sept	6.1 xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx 6.2 xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx	

Several lesson plans lacked consistency, without clear learning outcomes and well-defined learning and assessment tasks. These plans were heavily theory-based, focusing solely on content coverage.

While some lessons and work plans may appear constructively aligned, they did not explicitly mention the elements of EdGNH but included certain aspects such as collective responsibility and mindful action in the learning activities, which allude to EdGNH.

Interestingly, participants noted that the absence of these elements does not imply they are not present in classroom practices; in some cases, the elements of EdGNH may be implicitly highlighted through the content or activities of the lesson plan. For example, “A lesson plan that incorporates group work or community service activities may implicitly address the element of community vitality, which is one of the domains of GNH” (P1). Another mid-career participant (P16) expressed, “A lesson plan that focuses on mindfulness or stress reduction may implicitly address the element of psychological well-being, another domain of GNH”.

The document analysis of module descriptors, lesson plans, and PowerPoint presentations revealed that some participants struggled to align teaching, learning, and assessment with the desired goals. As Biggs (2003) explained, an imbalance

will occur when each of the components does not work towards common goals, leading to poor teaching and surface learning.

The findings suggest that infusing CA and EdGNH can facilitate the transition of HEIs from a conventional to a student-centred approach. Within this framework, students actively construct knowledge through meaningful activities, while teachers ensure alignment between these activities and learning outcomes (Biggs & Tang, 2011). Mindful planning that accounts for classroom diversity can deepen learning by emphasising understanding over content coverage, thereby reflecting EdGNH values. Notably, some colleges have already begun implementing the ‘middle path’ in their practices.

The data also revealed that the early career academics struggled with implementing CA and the values of EdGNH. This lack of coherence may stem from insufficient understanding and skills related to Biggs’ CA and EdGNH due to gaps in training, preparation, and conceptual clarity.

### **Challenges and Support Needed to Promote the Middle Path**

Changing teachers’ mindsets and moving them out of their comfort zones to adopt more active and current practices is challenging, as research shows that changing behaviour is difficult (Fullan, 2015). Besides, implementing the ‘middle-path’ poses challenges related to a lack of knowledge, content focus, preparation, mindset, comfort, and even the nature of students enrolled in the programmes. Consistent with these observations, some of the foreseeable challenges are shared by the participants:

*Implementation of EdGNH and CA is still in its theoretical stage ... most of the modules taught at the RUB colleges are content-oriented and I rarely find the infusion of values and principles of GNH. ... thus, necessary to infuse these values and align constructive pedagogical models to give a better understanding and experience both theoretically and practically. (P9)*

*Theoretically, the idea sounds welcoming. However, it will depend on the learners. Usually, transitions are difficult. Given the used-to-ness of the Bhutanese students to traditional transmission-type teaching practice, it may be difficult for the learners to consider the aspects of constructive alignment. In terms of GNH values and principles, it has already been in the Bhutanese education system and needs rigorous implementation. (P16)*

Early career participants opined that focusing on the practicality of the infusion:

*As there is no model as such, it would be difficult to gauge its impact. (P19)*  
*As of now, I do not have a clear understanding of what the entire EdGNH and CA model will include. The preparedness to infuse these two pedagogical models will depend on the comprehensive understanding of the entire framework. (P 11)*

Focussing on assessment, a middle career participant (P6) pointed out that:

*At the moment, one of the key challenges was assessing a student's progress based on conventional design. Applying a 'middle path' will provide a good alternative in assessing the progress based on generating a tangible learning outcome anchored on a relevant conceptual framework.*

This confirms Entwistle's (2000) observation that the process of CA must let students know upfront what competencies they have to achieve and according to which criteria they will be assessed.

As observed by Sherab (2013a), a rigid and bulky curriculum burdens school teachers, and academics in HEIs likely face similar challenges, with a focus primarily on content delivery and assessment. Resistance from academics and students may hinder the adoption of the model, especially if it is not effectively designed, aligned with 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, and integrated into the modules.

Interestingly, a participant voiced, "Values are already embedded in the curriculum, so by virtue of that, they get highlighted in the classroom" (P13). Thus, raising doubt that making them more explicit in the classroom may not be effective due to the nuances and multitudes of values embedded in teaching. Nevertheless, it would be more effective to explicitly promote EdGNH values rather than simply assuming that they are 'there' and not consciously doing anything about them. It aligns with Ura's (2009) perspective that the Bhutanese education system should emphasise values central to the cultural framework, which Buddhism deeply influences. Incorporation of the practice of mindfulness, based on the essence of Bhutanese values - *sem dagzin thab tshub zogo* [to take care of the mind] and *sem gochoep zogo* [be mindful of actions in body, speech, and mind] (Thinley, 2015) in the classrooms and the module and lesson plans would have a positive impact on student learning and overall teaching-learning practices.

The study also revealed that the activities evident in the lessons and module documents did not embed the values of EdGNH as required by the educational system to fully transform to embody and reflect GNH values and principles

(Hayward et al., 2009). These observations suggest that colleges need to re-evaluate their current lesson and work plans, ensuring that they incorporate the values of EdGNH where possible and are mindful while planning, teaching, and assessing students. By doing so, they can ensure that the elements of EdGNH are being given appropriate attention and are not overlooked or undervalued.

Then again, the results reported that some lessons and activities addressed the GNH aspects implicitly, so they are highlighted in the classroom. Unless there is a bold and upfront pedagogical transformation requiring the implementation of EdGNH, it will perhaps always remain on the periphery of classroom practices.

Although all the participants agree that EdGNH and CA are well-practiced phenomena in education, they point out problems such as academics' and students' lack of awareness of the terminologies and contextualisation. Thus, they felt that advocating terminologies might help them communicate and contextualise the principles of EdGNH with CA in the modules and lessons.

They also voiced concern over the difficulties in formulating appropriate methods and assessments aligned to topics to meet the intended learning goals. The document analysis of the module descriptors and lesson plans also shows that while a few of the colleges have prepared their descriptors and lessons incorporating the elements of CA and EdGNH, the majority of the modules and lesson plans have failed to do so.

While the participants believed that adopting a middle path would add considerable value, they also felt it might not be feasible for specific modules, particularly in engineering colleges, due to their technical nature (P10). Nonetheless, they acknowledged that integrating both approaches could significantly enhance student learning and positively influence their behaviour, including engagement, adaptability, and critical thinking skills.

As mentioned earlier, while it is evident from the interviews and document analysis that an implicit infusion of EdGNH and CA is taking place in the two colleges of education, it may not be happening in other HEIs. Thus, the findings suggest that a policy framework mandating all faculties to embrace the infusion and conduct professional development to support adopting the middle path as a pedagogical innovation should be instituted. Participants, especially from the teacher education and engineering colleges, opined that:

*Before any approach is applied, training teachers on what each of these approaches actually means would be useful. And this could extend beyond*

*a conventional workshop, but take a rather observation and practice approach. (P1)*

*A specific PD and mass advocacy for relevant stakeholders: educators, parents, leaders, policymakers, and the community. (P6)*

This finding supports the idea that knowledge and training are important for higher educationists to be able to effectively integrate Biggs' CA and EdGNH into their teaching. As also recommended in earlier research on EdGNH in which teacher educators said they need to build EdGNH into their modules, upgrade their knowledge and skills about GNH values and practices, and develop the idea of tacit learning associated with EdGNH (Gyamtso et al., 2017; Sherab et al., 2014).

Thus, to effectively implement these concepts and find the middle path approach, the findings indicated that educators need to understand the theories and practices involved and the skills to apply them in the classroom through training and workshops.

The interviews revealed that support from modern teaching technologies, such as smart classrooms, computer labs, and skilled teachers, could facilitate the adoption of the infusion. A participant noted, "World-class infrastructure with good facilities may help to make the environment suitable for such teaching innovation and creativity" (P10).

Overall, participants across all three levels affirmed that combining CA with EdGNH would transform colleges' teaching, learning, and assessment, creating conducive learning environments. Using CA as a pedagogical model ensures effective alignment of learning outcomes, teaching materials, and assessments, while EdGNH would help do education's job the way it ought to be done (Powdyel, 2011).

### **Conclusion, Limitations, and Recommendations**

The research findings indicate that participants perceive the infusion of Constructive Alignment with Educating for Gross National Happiness as a means to shift teaching from a traditional input-based model to a learning-outcomes approach, fostering greater student responsibility for their learning. This infusion can strengthen the quality of education in Bhutanese HEIs by promoting deep, active learning that supports intellectual, social, emotional, and spiritual development. Merging these two approaches offers students a more comprehensive and practical educational experience.

While the findings demonstrate the applicability of the ‘middle path’, they also reveal that many current lessons and work plans in colleges lack proper alignment and integration of EdGNH elements. This highlights the need for a more holistic approach to education, incorporating CA and EdGNH, and a clear framework applicable across all HEIs. Additionally, there is a pressing need for professional development programmes to promote understanding and implementation of the ‘middle path’.

One limitation of this research is that it was conducted in a specific context, with a small sample of academics, and may thus not be generalisable to other settings. Additionally, while HEI academics share core pedagogical principles, discipline-specific applications may introduce subtle variations in how they perceive and implement the research topic, presenting an opportunity for further study. Additionally, implementing a new approach to education can be challenging and require significant resources, such as time, funding, and training.

Nevertheless, based on the research findings, it is recommended that HEIs adopt the ‘middle path’, an infusion of Constructive Alignment with Educating for Gross National Happiness. However, HEIs should assess their specific needs and available resources before implementation. Adequate training and support for faculty are crucial to ensure they understand and can effectively apply this approach. Finally, further research should be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of this model in diverse contexts and settings.

## Acknowledgement

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Royal University of Bhutan for funding this study through the Annual University Research Grant (AURG). We also extend our heartfelt appreciation to the academics from Bhutanese Higher Education Institutions for their generous contribution of time and for sharing valuable insights that significantly enriched our research.

## References

- Adler, A. (2016). Positive education: Educating for academic success and for a fulfilling life. *Papeles del Psicólogo*, 38(1), 50–57.  
<https://doi.org/10.23923/pap.psicol2017.2821>
- Barnett, R. (2012). Learning for an unknown future. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 31(1), 65-77.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2012.642841>

- Biggs, J. B. (1996). Enhancing teaching through constructive alignment. *Higher Education*, 32(2), 347-365.
- Biggs, J. B. (2003). *Teaching for quality learning at university: What the student does*. SRHE and Open University Press.
- Biggs, J. B. (2014). Constructive alignment in university teaching. *HERDSA Review of Higher Education*, 1, 5-22.
- Biggs, J., & Tang, C. (2011). Train-the-trainers: Implementing outcomes-based teaching and learning in Malaysian higher education. *Malaysian Journal of Learning and Instruction*, 8, 1-19.
- Biggs, J., Tang, C., & Kennedy, G. (2022). *Teaching for quality learning at university* (5th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.
- Chodron, V. T. (2011, November 18). *An explanation of the Four Immeasurables*. Thubten Chodron.  
<https://thubtenchodron.org/2011/11/love-compassion-equanimity-joy-explained/>
- Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2018). Using thematic analysis in counselling and psychotherapy research: A critical reflection. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research*, 18(2), 107-110.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morison, K. (2017). *Research methods in education* (8th ed.). Taylor and Francis.
- Colding, J. (2020). A critical reflection on constructive alignment in theory and practice. *Reports on Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 9, 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.17045/sthlmuni.11535786.v1>
- Entwistle, N. (2000, November). Promoting deep learning through teaching and assessment: Conceptual frameworks and educational contexts. Paper presented at *Teaching and Learning Research Programme (TLRP) Conference*, Leicester.
- Fullan, M. (2015). *The new meaning of educational change* (5th ed.). Teachers College Press.
- Govorova, E., Benítez, I., & Muñiz, J. (2020). How schools affect student well-being: A cross-cultural approach in 35 OECD countries. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 431. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00431>
- Gyamtso, D. C. (2020). Teacher education in Bhutan. In *Teacher education in the global era* (pp. 81–97). Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-4008-0\\_6](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-4008-0_6)
- Gyamtso, D. C. (2013). *An inquiry into the nature of teaching and learning at*



- the Royal University of Bhutan* [Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of New England]. Armidale, Australia.
- Gyamtso, D. C., Sherab, K., & Maxwell, T. W. (2017). Teacher learning in changing professional contexts: Bhutanese teacher educators and the Educating for GNH initiative. *Cogent Education*, 4(1), 1-19.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186x.2017.1384637>
- Gyeltshen, K., & Dorji, R. (2020). Higher education in Bhutan. *Handbook of Education Systems in South Asia*, 1, 28. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-3309-5\\_58-1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-3309-5_58-1)
- Hayward, K., Pannozzo, L., & Colman, R. (2009). *Educating for gross national happiness in Bhutan developing curricula and indicators for an educated populace: A literature review* 1(OF 2). GPI Atlantic.
- Kahn, W. (2005). *Holding fast: The struggle to create resilient caregiving organizations*. Brunner-Routledge.  
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203324066>
- Kandlbinder, P. (2014). Constructive alignment in university teaching. *Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA) News*, 36(3), 5-22.
- Keeling, R. P. (2014). An ethic of care in higher education: Wellbeing and learning. *Journal of College and Character*, 15(3), 141-148.  
<https://doi.org/10.1515/jcc-2014-0018>
- Loughlin, C., Lygo-Baker, S., & Lindberg-Sand, Å. (2021). Reclaiming constructive alignment. *European Journal of Higher Education*, 11(2), 119-136. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21568235.2020.1816197>
- Macaskill, A. (2012). The mental health of university students in the United Kingdom. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 41(4), 426-441. <https://shura.shu.ac.uk/6449/>
- Margolis, E., Soldatenko, M., Acker, S., & Gair, M. (2001). *The hidden curriculum in higher education*. In E. Margolis (Series Ed.). Routledge.
- Maxwell, T. (2019). Looking at education in Bhutan: A view from afar [Review of looking at education in Bhutan: A view from afar]. *The Druk Journal*, 5(1), 43–49. <http://drukjournal.bt/educating-bhutan/>
- Mikalajūnaitė, U. (2019). *Rising mental health crisis in China's universities*. EdSurge Independent.
- Millar, B., & Bester, M. (2008). Moving beyond constructive alignment to

- significant learning, Cape Peninsula University of Technology. Paper presented at the *Higher Education Teaching & Learning Southern Africa (HELTASA) Conference*, Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa.
- Ministry of Education. (2010a). *28th Education policy guidelines and instruction*. Ministry of Education. Retrieved from <http://www.education.gov.bt>.
- Ministry of Education. (2010b). *Tertiary education policy of the Kingdom of Bhutan, 2010*. Tertiary Education Division, Department of Adult and Higher Education.
- Ministry of Education. (2014). *National education policy*. Ministry of Education. Retrieved from <http://www.education.gov.bt>.
- Ministry of Education (2020). *State of higher education of Bhutan, 2020*. Retrieved March 18, 2023, from [http://www.education.gov.bt/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/State-of-TE-2020-30.12.20\\_2.pdf](http://www.education.gov.bt/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/State-of-TE-2020-30.12.20_2.pdf)
- Powdyel, T. S. (2010). Nurturing green schools for green Bhutan. In *14th Educational Conference*. Phuntsholing HSS, Chukha. Bhutan.
- Powdyel, T. S. (2011). Keynote address on educating for gross national happiness: Green schools- one year on. Paper presented at the *Educating for Gross National Happiness: Stories from schools and classrooms*, Paro.
- Ramsden, P. (2005). *Learning to teach in higher education*. Routledge.
- Royal University of Bhutan. (2022, June 8). *Strategic Plan*. <https://www.rub.edu.bt/index.php/key-documents-2/strategic-plan/>
- Royal University of Bhutan. (n.d.). *The wheel of academic law*. <https://www.rub.edu.bt/regulation/>
- Royal Government of Bhutan. (2020). *Royal Kasho on education reform*. Royal Government of Bhutan. <https://thebhutanese.bt/royal-kasho-on-education-reform/>
- Riva, E., Freeman, R., Schrock, L., Jelacic, V., Ozer, C.-T., & Caleb, R. (2020). Student wellbeing in the teaching and learning environment: A study exploring student and staff perspectives. *Higher Education Studies*, 10(4), 103. <https://doi.org/10.5539/hes.v10n4p103>
- Sabri, D. (2011). What's wrong with the student experience? *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 32(5), 657-667. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2011.620750>

- Sherab, K. (2013a). Strategies for encouraging behavioural and cognitive engagement of pre-service student-teachers in Bhutan: An action research case study. *Educational Action Research*, 21(2), 164-184.
- Sherab, K. (2013b). *Gross national happiness education in Bhutanese schools: Understanding the experiences and efficacy beliefs of principals and teachers* [Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of New England], Armidale, Australia.
- Sherab, K., Maxwell, T. W., & Cooksey, R. (2014). Implementation of Gross National Happiness Education in Bhutan: The case of an efficacious 'Zhabdrung' Primary School. *Bhutan Journal of Research and Development*, 3(1), 1-16.
- Sherab, K., & Schuelka, M. (2023). Happy students in Bhutan: The land of Gross National Happiness and paradoxes. In G. W. Fry & H. Chun (Eds.), *Happiness education: Holistic learning for sustainable well-being* (pp. 56–75). Routledge. <https://10.4324/9781003037262>
- Schofield, W. J. (2016). Higher education in Bhutan: Progress and challenges. In Scheulka, M. J. and Maxwell, T.W. (Eds.), *Education in Bhutan: Culture, schooling, and gross national happiness (2016)*. Springer Publishing, pp. 87-102.
- Stacy, I., & Bennett, C. B. (2017). From reproduction to construction: Bhutanese higher education students' attitudes towards learning. *Cogent Education*, 4(1).  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2017.1305712>
- Thinley, J. (2012). *What is gross national happiness?* Centre for Bhutan Studies.
- Thinley, P. (2015). Embracing heaven on earth: Refocusing education for GNH. Paper presented at the *Fourth International Conference of Universal Human Values Education*, Gaedu College of Business Studies, Royal University of Bhutan.
- Tshomo, P. (2016). Conditions of happiness: Bhutan's educating for gross national happiness initiative and the capability approach. In Matt S. J. and Tom M. W. (Eds.), *Education in Bhutan: Culture, schooling, and gross national happiness*, Springer Publishing, 139-152.
- Tyler, R. W. (1949). *Basic principles of curriculum and instruction*. The University of Chicago Press.
- University of Wollongong. (2022). *Constructive alignment*. Learning,

Teaching & Curriculum.

<https://ltc.uow.edu.au/hub/article/constructive-alignment>

- Ura, K. (2009). *A proposal for GNH value education in schools*. Gross National Happiness Commission.
- Utha, K., Giri, K., Gurung, B., Giri, N., Kjær-Rasmussen, L. K., Keller, H. D., & Keller, K. D. (2016). *Quality of school education in Bhutan: Case studies in the perspective of gross national happiness and assessment practices*. Aalborg Universitetsforlag.
- Wangmo, T., & Valk, J. (2012). Under the influence of Buddhism: The psychological well-being indicators of GNH. *Journal of Bhutan Studies*, 26, 53-81.
- Yangdon, K., Sherab, K., Choezom, P., Passang, S., & Deki, S. (2021). Well-being and academic workload: Perceptions of science and technology students. *Educational Research and Reviews*, 16(11), 418-427.
- Young, D. (2012). How we teach versus what we teach: Why a contemplative critical pedagogy is central to Bhutan's success as a GNH democracy. *Bhutan Journal of Research and Development*, 1(2), 13-22.
- Zangmo, S. (2014). A gross national happiness-infused curriculum: The promise of a more meaningful education in Bhutan [Unpublished Master's Thesis, Western Michigan University]. USA.

### About Author

**Dr. Deki C. Gyamtso** is an independent higher education and Educating for Gross National Happiness (GNH) professional. She has taught courses in curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, and research methods, with scholarly interests in teaching and learning in higher education, particularly psychological well-being, teacher professional development, and curriculum design at the Royal University of Bhutan. Her research focuses on pedagogy in higher education, teacher education, and the integration of GNH principles into education.

**Kinley Seden**, (PhD) is the Dean of Research and Industrial Linkages (DRIL) at Samtse College of Education. She earned her Ph.D. from Masaryk University in the Czech Republic and Eötvös Loránd University in Hungary. Her research interests cover diverse areas, including the psychology of teaching and learning, assessment practices, gender and education, social inclusion, teacher education, and professional development.