

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Rationale of the Study**

The education sector all over the world is dynamic and rapidly evolving. The World Education Summit conferences held every year provides the forum to all the world leaders and those responsible to come together to deliberate, discuss and explore the new horizons for the education.

Now in this twenty-first century innovation and optimal deployment of scarce resources to make education more relevant and to achieve excellence in research has become the goal of governments and education hubs across the globe. Thus this 21<sup>st</sup> century is the “century of knowledge” as per World Education Summit, 2013 [1].

Education has the most powerful impact on determining the future of the children, youth and adults. The UNESCO sponsored World Education Forum [2] on Education For All (EFA) held in Dakar describes basic education as education that fulfills the basic learning needs of all children at the first level of education, youth who are out of school and adults requiring lifelong basic education support through a variety of delivery mechanisms.

The conference recognized the quality of education as a crucial component in the broad movement of achieving Education for All. These may be in the form of formal schooling, non-formal education for those with limited or no access to formal education, and informal modes. Development and many significant achievements have been realized in terms of both formal and non-formal education, but the world has still a long way to go to ensure good quality education for millions of children and youth both in and out of the school system.

Although increased investments in education is essential, it cannot guarantee efficiency and effectiveness unless education and other public institutions are accountable to the people they serve. To fulfill the goals of Education For All and to transform resource allocations into learning outcomes require sustained, intensive and coordinated action on several fronts and financial investments but also effective

education system; the right mix of resources (e.g. teachers, learning materials, physical infrastructure) and an overall national context of sound economic and social policies. Without significant policy changes, existing structural imbalances will hinder the attainment of the Dakar Goals on EFA [2].

The Bhutanese education system is in the transitional phase. The school leaders or principals and the teachers are transforming into instructional leadership to make the schools effective. Especially the school leadership phase in Bhutan is undergoing transformation to adjust scope and style to serve the modern needs where professionalism and competence are the orders of the day. The leaders have to widen and deepen understanding of what leadership really entails in the 21<sup>st</sup> century for the quality of education and the school effectiveness [3]. It is the personal initiative of the principal that can be the only reason why many schools perform, in spite of the steep challenges.

The principals being the custodian of the school need to develop a strong education system in their respective schools and make difference in the delivery of quality education to children through teachers in the students' outcome and to make school effective, it was therefore felt to transform as instructional leader. Instructional leadership is the focus of the leadership directly to teaching and learning. It also refers to the functions that contribute to managerial behaviors to strengthen teacher skills, systematizing of the curriculum, improvement of the organizational structures for effectiveness [4].

School effectiveness is the ability of a school to achieve or exceed its goals. The goals set should be reflective of students' academic ability. There is a need to take value added scores into consideration of prior achievement of pupils on entry to school [5]. However, in the effective school the principal acts as an instructional leader and effectively and persistently communicates that mission to the staff, parents, and students. The principal understands and applies the characteristics of instructional effectiveness in the management of the instructional program. In practice, School effectiveness is a very much broader concept. After reviewing the literature about school effectiveness, the following determinants have been identified. Leadership and management Practices, Green school: A. Physical Ambience B. Psycho-social Ambience, Curriculum: Teaching and classroom Management Practices, Continuous

and Holistic Students' Assessment (Formative and Summative), Co-curricular Dimensions: For Wholesome Education, School-Community Relationship.

The general education system in Bhutan consists of 336 public primary schools, 12 private primary schools, 91 public lower secondary schools, one private lower secondary school, 59 public middle secondary schools, two private middle secondary schools, 36 public higher secondary schools, and 17 private higher secondary schools. In addition, there are 111 extended classrooms (ECRs), and 165 ECCD centers. The primary school cycle in Bhutan consists of seven years from pre-primary (PP) to grade 6. The official age of entry for children into PP is six years and graduation from the primary cycle is at age 12. Secondary education in Bhutan follows a four year cycle (VII-X) comprising two years of lower secondary (VII-VIII), and two years of middle secondary (IX-X), followed by two years of higher secondary school (XI-XII). However, some of the schools have the education level as follows; Pre-Primary (PP) to grade six, Pre-Primary (PP) to Grade VIII, Pre-Primary (PP) to Grade X and pre-primary to Grade XII. The geographical location and the availability of facilities of the schools has led to the classification of the schools as very remote, remote, difficult, semi urban and urban schools [6].

The major education challenges for Bhutan in general are in improving school enrolment and retention of students'. Ensuring the availability of schools within easy reach of children and expanding access to education are considerably constrained by the difficult terrain and the widely dispersed/scattered nature of settlements. The increase in enrolment at the primary education level is also now placing enormous pressure on secondary schools, resulting in overcrowded classrooms. This has caused a strain on the limited resources of teachers, facilities and finances. It has severely tested the capacity of the system to fulfill Bhutan's commitment to provide quality education for all [7]. Teachers' shortage is a constraint in improving educational access. It has been observed that teachers do get satisfaction from teaching and are willing to give their optimum. But these positive feelings of the Bhutanese teachers are best seen against certain disadvantages, for example, the lack of instructional resources and the feeling that attitudes towards teachers in the country have changed in ways that make teaching more difficult and less inspiring. This has caused an impact on the work culture that is prevalent in the teaching community. Thus, many

are reluctant to take teaching as their profession and automatically results in teacher shortage. It is now hoped that with the introduction of the Teacher Human Resource Policy 2014, it will create an enabling environment to enhance the morale and motivation of teachers. This will also attract and retain the best and the brightest into teaching profession. A research on Education system in Bhutan conducted by iDiscovery Education from India with our Bhutanese counterparts recommended complete revamp of the Education system of Bhutan [8]. Although the findings are not out officially, some of the findings that are reflected in the National Education Framework (NEF), 2012 give brief information on the school effectiveness and the progress made in the school. Thus it indicated the requirement of the principals as instructional leaders who can make the schools effective for the learners.

In the learning of our school children there are gaps of understanding intermediate concepts across subjects though they learn the basic concepts well. The Overall learning system in 2011 was 49.3% and the performance Compact was signed between the Ministry of Education and The Royal Government to raise the level to 60% in 2013. There is a major gap in levels of understanding too as the students are not able to understand core concepts and apply their knowledge to real life situations across grades and subjects. For example, the learning output scores for Mathematics were in the range of 40-51% and the target was set in the performance compact to increase between 60-70% by 2013 [9]. Even after graduation from school the students still lack basic analytical and communication skills and attitudes needed as entry-level professionals. Every graduate who is under-prepared for college and the workplace represents a lost opportunity for the nation, given Bhutan's aspirations and the intense competition in the global economy [7].

The repetition rate, on average, stands at 8.5 per cent per grade annually, indicating the proportion of students who cannot master the curriculum. A high level of grade repetition is a sign of a dysfunctional school system, exacerbating the dropout rate and resulting in overcrowded classrooms. By 2013 the Ministry of Education plans to bring down the overall repetition to 5% [10]. The National Education Framework, 2012 states that the quality of learning is not at par with both the expansion of the Education system or modern trends. The current school curricula were found to be particularly weak in terms of providing clear definitions/

specifications for the standards of educational performance, the attainment of which can be monitored with a view to revision and upgrading. The school culture is predominantly “a culture of passivity” where students are simply recipients of knowledge. The survey conducted by the Centre for Bhutan Studies (CBS) in 2008 found the textbooks content-heavy and promoted memorization of facts rather than generating understanding in students. As a result both teachers and students, who are already reliant on textbook content, got into the pattern of ‘coverage’ of large volumes of content. Even on the validity of textbooks has revealed some glaring facts that are hard to ignore [11].

The results among schools in Bhutan also vary as private schools students tend to perform better and students in community primary schools tend to perform poorly. Thus, the effectiveness of the educational processes in a significant proportion of schools remains a matter of concern. The transfer of teachers added to the concern with the continuity of the teachers program for the students being interrupted. Further the related challenge is to enroll and retain children who, for various reasons, have been unable to enter school or who drop out before completing basic education [7]. The performance compact between the Ministry of Education and Royal Government of Bhutan proposed to achieve 100% for primary school enrollment and 70% for Secondary school enrollment by 2013. The Ministry of Education felt the need for the principals to shift their paradigm as an Instructional leader who will spend about 80% of their responsibilities on the teaching and learning processes [10]. The transition of principals’ roles from administrators and managers to instructional leaders is one of the ten charters under compact agreement signed by the Ministry of Education with the Royal Government of Bhutan. Instructional leader makes instructional quality the top priority of the school and considers teaching and learning as the core business of schooling. Even in the Performance Management System (PMS) it is mentioned that maximum time of principal should be spent on instruction and to ensure that our principals deliver best instructional practices to their fellow colleagues to uplift the school effectiveness [10].

The findings reflected above provided the evidence that all was not well with the education system of Bhutan. Although there were considerable improvement in terms of access and enrollment, at different points the research findings, various

reports and public reactions gave the evidence that there were low student performances at all levels, lack of effective management practices, over centralization of decision making, a feeling of powerless and low self esteem among school leaders and teachers. There was over all culture of passivity entrenched in the education system. Thus, the transition of the principals as instructional leadership has been deemed necessary to promote learning, over all development of the child and the school effectiveness and its relationship [7]. Through this we would be able to modify, redefine and leap forward the instructional leadership.

Thus, the study focused on the relationship between Principal's Instructional Leadership and School Effectiveness in the urban schools. It was to find out the effectiveness of the dimensions of principal's instructional leadership in the school. This would also explain what works well and what needs to be done to further improve the principal's instructional leadership and school effectiveness. Further it would serve as a guide to overcome the problems mentioned above to achieve success in providing quality education and in making the schools effective [3]. It would give the complete picture of our school principals in the schools as instructional leaders.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the dimensions of principal's instructional leadership and its dimensions in the urban schools of Bhutan?
2. How is the relationship between principal's instructional leadership and school effectiveness in the urban schools of Bhutan?

### **Research Objectives**

1. To study the dimensions of principal's instructional leadership in the urban schools of Bhutan.
2. To study the relationship between principal's instructional leadership and school effectiveness in the urban schools of Bhutan.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study provides school principals' whose role has been shifted to Instructional leaders and teachers with feedback to consider and reflect upon their

practices on the School effectiveness. It focused on what the principals' as instructional leadership can do to improve the educational quality. It provides the relationship between principal's instructional leadership and the school effectiveness. This would further enhance the school leaders and teachers to develop their professionalism in providing quality education through instructional leadership to attain school effectiveness. It would also help the Ministry of Education to plan for the schools in Bhutan [3].

## **Scope of the Study**

### **1. Population and Samples:**

1.1 The key population for the quantitative approach in studying the relationship between principal's instructional leadership and school effectiveness comprised of 53 urban schools.

1.2 The samples were 53 urban schools of Bhutan.

1.3 The key respondents of this study comprised of 106 (53 principals and 53 teachers) for principal's instructional leadership. The secondary data for school effectiveness was filled by the 53 principals' only. The responses were further appraised through in-depth analysis.

**2. Variables:** This research consisted of two variables: principal's instructional leadership (X) and the school effectiveness (Y).

3.1 Principal's instructional leadership consisted of 4 dimensions [12]:

3.1.1 General Roles and Responsibilities ( $X_1$ )

3.1.2 Curriculum ( $X_2$ )

3.1.3 Assessment ( $X_3$ )

3.1.4 Professional Development ( $X_4$ )

3.2 School effectiveness consisted of six dimensions [13]:

3.2.1 Leadership and Management Practices ( $Y_1$ ).

3.2.2 Green School A: Physical Ambience

B: Psycho-Social Ambience ( $Y_2$ ).

3.2.3 Curriculum: Teaching and Classroom Management Practices ( $Y_3$ ).

3.2.4 Continuous and Holistic Students' Assessment (Formative and Summative) (Y<sub>4</sub>).

3.2.5 Co-curricular Dimensions: For Wholesome Development (Y<sub>5</sub>).

3.2.6 School-Community Relationship (Y<sub>6</sub>).

## **Definition of Terms**

**1. Principal's Instructional Leadership:** It was the perception of the teachers' and principals' for the principal's instructional leadership. The principal's instructional leadership was the leadership characteristics of the principal to involve the teachers and staff to support the school in the general roles and responsibilities, curriculum, assessment and to facilitate professional development by following the Principals' Instructional Leadership dimensions of the Ministry of Education, Bhutan [12].

**1.1 General Roles and Responsibilities:** The role of the principal to involve all the teachers and staff for framing school vision and mission, planning a well set achievable school goals for excellence and facilitating implementation in the school. Maintain strong relationship, allocation of appropriate time for instruction as well as for all other activities. Assigns clear roles and states the responsibilities to the staff.

**1.2 Curriculum:** Principals' role in understanding of the curriculum, pedagogy, modeling of curriculum implementation, instituting a decentralized effective monitoring system, fair and democratic practices in nominations for various nominations, supporting the use of pedagogical skills and to use ICT in teaching, spending time with teachers and availability of enough resources.

**1.3 Assessment:** The school principal ensures that there is a clear written policy of formative and summative assessment. Presence of effective use of test blue print, fair assessment and development of indicators for all subjects. Proper documentation of records and assessment, feedback given to teachers and students, and the availability of different programs for student development.

**1.4 Professional Development:** The role of the principal in Identifying, supporting and instituting various professional development programs to enrich teachers to enhance teaching and learning processes in the school. Maintain positive



relationship, encouraging staff for participation in PD programs, updating on various teaching methods, implementation and supporting action research and journal writing.

**2. School Effectiveness:** It was the scored rating of the school. The existing score for 2013 academic year of the schools was used for this study. The assessment was carried out twice in a year by the principal, teachers, relevant students, office staff and members of the School Management Board (SMB) individually and later come to consensus to one. The ratings were justified by the school and later confirmed by the Dzongkhag/District Education Officer (DEO) and Assistant Dzongkhag/District Education Officer (ADEO) and Education Monitoring Officers (EMO) by visiting the schools. For all the key indicators, ratings were given as 4, 3, 2 and 1. Then the ratings for each indicator were added and the final rating was calculated in percentage or as numbers. The dimensions were; Leadership and Management Practices, Green school (Physical and Psycho-social ambience), Curriculum-Teaching and Classroom Management Practices, Continuous and Holistic Students' Assessment (Formative and Summative), Co-curricular Dimensions for Wholesome Development and School-Community Relationship [13].

**3. Urban Schools of Bhutan:** The government owned urban schools of Bhutan having the primary level of education in the school from PP-VI, PP-VIII, PP-X and PP-XII. There were 53 urban schools included in this study.

**4. Dzongkhag (s):** It means province or district.

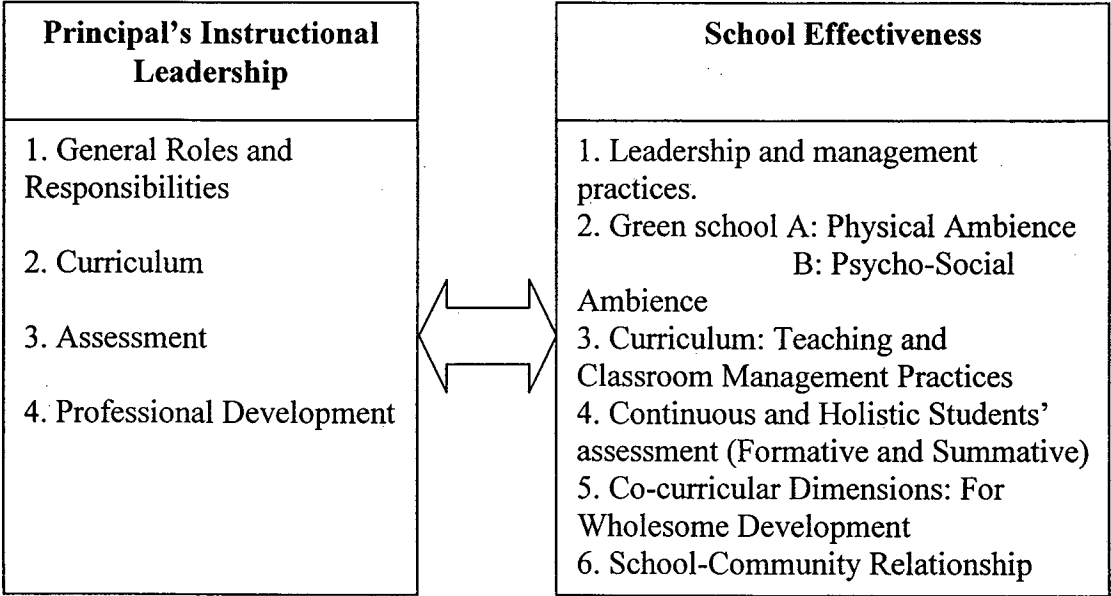


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework