

Secondary School Students' Reading Comprehension in Bhutanese History using of K.W.L Model: A Case Study of 7th Grade Bhutanese Students

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Abstract

Enhancement of 7th grade students' reading comprehension through K.W.L model brings a lot of positive changes as reading plays a pivotal role in writing, speaking and listening. This study was an attempt to examine how K.W.L model could improve 7th grade Bhutanese students' reading comprehension and learning satisfaction from it in teaching Bhutanese history. A total of 30 7th grade students from a school in Bhutan took part in this study. The research instruments were lesson plans, reading comprehension test, questionnaires, and students' reflective journals. Result of the reading comprehension test score analysis revealed that the posttest mean of the sample group was significantly higher than the pretest means in terms of reading comprehension. The $p < 0.05$ level of significance was 0.01. Likewise, a score of 4.55 (agree) and 4.09 (strongly agree) on Likert scale indicated that they were satisfied with the use of K.W.L model. On the other hand, the qualitative data which were collected through students' reflective journal was examined using coding system. This too revealed high level of satisfaction in using K.W.L model in teaching Bhutanese history. The result of the study implied that K.W.L model is effective for teaching 7th grade Bhutanese history and should be further investigated in future to see if it had the huge impact on reading comprehension.

Keywords: *K.W.L model, reading comprehension, students' learning satisfaction, Bhutanese history.*

1. Introduction

According to Mohammed (2013), studying of history is undeniably imperative, as people can learn the things from the past and take necessary steps to confront difficulties and threats to the mankind in near future. It helps to understand mysterious great human civilizations to simple yet rich culture and traditions of ones' own country. Likewise, Llewellyn (2014) defines history is an imperative subject, with a continuing story packed with prodigious characters, fight and sorrow, confusion and victory.

Despite its significance, the sub-standard learning outcome of students besides mandatory interventions by the government has been a big issue in the country Bhutan. Since, history is predominantly taught through lecture method students find it as a subject of monotony resulting into mediocrity in learning (BCSEA, 2016). To investigate the pedagogical approach in classroom teaching of history and its effectiveness, Centre for Educational Research and Development, CERD (2009) conducted a research which revealed that about 89% of teachers still use lecture method. Similarly, Trilling and Fadel (2009) point out that teachers use lecture method which doesn't allow learners' self-directed study-skills and later impede lifelong learning skills. Therefore, one primary reason why students score low marks in history is because of their inability to read and comprehend the Bhutanese history text through lecture method.

It is also supported when BCSEA (2016) found out that only 4.74% of grade X students scored mark in the ranges of 81-100 in history which was one of the lowest compared to other subjects. Commonly, teachers frequently use lecture method for history which is a conservative teaching method that includes mostly, an oral demonstration given by teachers. They simply command information to students, with no deep comprehension of the content (Sampson, 2012). Such practices led students not being able to write well in history exam. According to Paris (2014), lecture method is not only partial, one-way road, but people also find it as a completely inactive experience for learners. In line with that, continued spoon-feeding to students in higher education perpetuated the issue of stifling their creative thinking and independent learning (Samah, Jusoff, & Silong, 2009).

So, to sort out the abovementioned problems, one effective teaching technique to teach history for better reading comprehension can be the use of K.W.L model in teaching. And K.W.L chart is divided into three columns in which 'K' stands for "what you know", 'W' for "what you want to know" and 'L' for "what have you learned". Students write anything they know about the topic in "what you know column", then they write things they want to know about the topic in "what you want to know" column and lastly, they write what they learned in the third column "what have you learned". As they fill up the chart, they could connect the prior knowledge to new information which helps them to comprehend the concept of the text. El-khateeb (2010) reflects K.W.L as a bridging process between the new information and the former knowledge through reading. To incorporate this model, students are usually divided in teams of four to five with a K.W.L chart in each team or could be used individually.

The purposes of K.W.L model are more assorted. It supports readers recall previous knowledge of the topic in the text; set a goal for reading; survey their understanding; assess their conception of the text; and develop and discover ideas beyond the text (Fisher, Frey & Williams, 2002). Likewise, Sampson (2012) asserts the success of the K.W.L, because it stimulates students' prior knowledge and helps them set a resolution for reading and recording for what they have learned. In other words, it paves its way towards the concept of learner centered rather than monotonous lecture method used over the ages. In that way, students' reading comprehension in learning history improves significantly resulting into better academic achievement.

According to Wong (2014), students learn much through reading with good comprehension, they uncover themselves to different things, effective ways to resolve a problem, and new ways to understand. In addition to that, Daniel (2011) states that it is significant to trigger children's schema before, during, and after reading. The reading skill is also important as text plays a dominant role in teaching and learning as they are the building blocks of all subjects (Davis, 2016). As with the K.W.L model, it helps learners to read and relate their previous knowledge to the new information making them comprehend the real concept through reading. This study is to find out whether the incorporation of K.W.L model can make learners improve their reading comprehension and be satisfied with the use of K.W.L model in learning Bhutanese history. Furthermore, it would also make learners more inclined towards learning Bhutanese history as it ensures social interaction and cooperation during the class activity doing away lecture method.

2. Objectives

1. To enhance the reading comprehension of 7th grade students after using K.W.L model in teaching Bhutanese History.
2. To enhance 7th grade students' learning satisfaction using K.W.L model in teaching Bhutanese history.

3. Research Methodology

The research methodology of this study was a mixed method which aimed to find out the reading comprehension and learning satisfaction of 7th grade students towards the use of K.W.L model in teaching Bhutanese history. Mixed methods research is the combination and integration of qualitative and quantitative methods in the same study. According to Creswell (2007), the overall purpose and central premise of mixed methods studies is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems and complex phenomena than either approach alone. Better understanding can be obtained by comparing one set of results with another and thereby enhancing the validity of inferences.

3.1 Population

The population of this study consisted of 60 students in two sections of 7th grade. Each section comprised of 30 students with mixed gender and of different academic abilities. The students were within the age range of 12 to 15 years. A cluster random sampling was used to choose one section for the study. There was a total of 14 boys and 16 girls. The scores of the history examination of the previous year were collected which showed that students in both the sections had equal standard in learning history revealing that the sample selection was not biased. To relieve the anxiety during the study, the researcher informed the students regarding the rules of the study and told them that the achievement test conducted would not affect their school grades.

3.2 The research hypotheses are as follows:

1. The reading comprehension of 7th grade students will be improved using K.W.L model in teaching Bhutanese history
2. 7th grade students' learning satisfaction will be enhanced using K.W.L model in teaching Bhutanese history.

3.3 Research Instruments

All research instruments were designed to meet purposes of different tasks. After reviewing several literatures, the researcher had intended research instruments to attend different purposes of the study. Three research instruments namely lesson plans, learning satisfaction questionnaires and reading comprehension test were rated and evaluated by using IOC (Index of Item-Objective Congruence). The items with value of 0.5-1.00 were acceptable to be applied in the study. Quantitative instrument like reading comprehension test was used to collect quantitative data to examine reading comprehension whereas satisfaction questionnaires (quantitative instrument) and students' reflective journal (qualitative instrument) were used to examine learning satisfaction.

The pilot test was conducted at the same school with another group of 30 students studying in 7th grade. They studied the same subject and had the same Bhutanese history background with the sample group. For the study, the researcher selected a different section of 7th grade that consisted of 30 students and of same learning ability. They were asked to sign a consent letter followed by a pretest and lesson of 8 classes within a duration of 4 weeks. At the end posttest was conducted and satisfaction questionnaires were distributed.

3.3.1 Pretest and Posttest (Reading Comprehension Test)

This instrument was designed to answer Research objective 1 and Research Hypothesis 1. The purpose of this instrument was to examine students' reading comprehension before and after the treatment. A total of 15 questions with four multiple choices, worth one mark each and took 30 minutes to complete it.

3.3.2 Satisfaction Questionnaire

This instrument was developed to answer Research Objective 2 and Research Hypothesis 2. The use of this instrument was to examine students' learning satisfaction regarding the use of K.W.L model in teaching Bhutanese history for 7th grade. The questionnaires items were adapted from (Choden,2012). In total there was a set of 20 items in the questionnaires. Each item was rated on a five-point Likert scale anchored at 1=Strongly disagree, 2 =Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4=Agree and 5= Strongly Agree.

3.3.3 Students' Reflective Journals

This research instrument was designed to answer Research Objective 2 and Research Hypothesis 2. The reason of using students' journal was to let students write their opinions and reflections on the use of K.W.L model so that researcher could examine their learning satisfaction with the integration of K.W.L model in teaching Bhutanese history.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Summary of the Major Findings

Regarding reading comprehension test, students' posttest scores were higher than that of the pretest, all research participants were able to do better in posttest which showed that they improved their reading comprehension. Since the probability (p) values or the Sig, (2-tailed) was lower than (.05), it can be accepted that there was a significant difference between the pretest and posttest.

Table 4.1 Pretest and Posttest Comparison within the sample group

Group	Pretest		Posttest		Mean Difference	t	P value
Sample Group	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD	13.47 -5.93 = 7.53	- 22.280	0.01
	5.93	.868	13.47	1.525			

Paired Samples T-Test Showing Significant Differences between Participants’ Pretest and Posttest Reading Comprehension Test Scores

Regarding learning satisfaction questionnaires, the figure below shows that for all the 20 statements of the learning satisfaction questionnaire, the mean of students who agreed with the use of K.W.L model was 4.55. Likewise, the mean of students who strongly agreed was 4.09 on Likert scale. This was a clear indication that the learning satisfaction for learning Bhutanese history with the integration of K.W.L model was rated as satisfied or agreed. Therefore, the data analysis indicated that the students experienced high level of satisfaction when the K.W.L model was integrated in teaching Bhutan history. A total of eight questionnaires were rated at “Strongly agree” and twelve were rated at “Agree.”

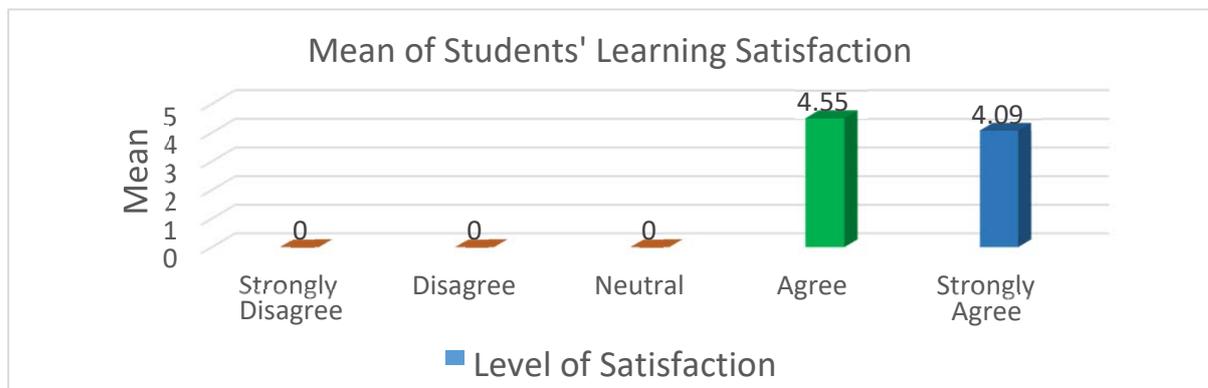


Figure 4.1 Mean of Students’ Learning Satisfaction towards K.W.L model

Another instrument used by the researcher to collect data which aimed to study the learning satisfaction of the students was students’ reflective journal. Students were asked to maintain two reflective journals from the start of teaching session till end based on five core themes: 1) Motivation for learning, 2) Challenges of using K.W.L model, 3) Encouragement for group participation, 4) Exciting parts of K.W.L model and 5) Learning through collaboration.

All the five core themes interpreted, supported that the K.W.L model facilitates conducive learning environment which made learning exciting, got rid of monotony and helped learners remain attentively focused in the classrooms. Thereby, researcher

concluded by saying that, the participants were satisfied with the integration of K.W.L model in the Bhutanese history lesson.

4.2 Discussion

The study had two major questions. The first question examined the impact of the intervention of K.W.L model on students' test scores. The second question looked at the effects of K.W.L model on learning satisfaction of students. This study revealed that the K.W.L model can foster academic achievement of Bhutanese 7th grade students in Bhutanese history. In addition to that, the strategy provided high level of learning satisfaction as well.

The data analysis of pretest and posttest both indicated that the posttest reading comprehension test score was significantly higher than the pretest. This study has shown a significant improvement in reading comprehension when the K.W.L model was incorporated in Bhutanese history lesson in 7th grade. The study was supported by the findings of Stahl (2011) and it asserted that K.W.L helped the students to enhance reading comprehension skills. Likewise, Shayee (2000) has investigated that K.W.L model has significant improvement on secondary students' reading comprehension compared to the traditional method. Correspondingly, it also coincided with the research works of Haboush (2010) and Adams (2013) which revealed that the K.W.L model was an efficient tool to improve reading comprehension in the classroom. Furthermore, Al Khateeb (2010), Sitti, Rahman and Atmowardoyo (2016), Utami (2015), Backman and Klinglammer, (2006), and Stahel (2011) also found significantly higher mean in students' test score after they were treated with K.W.L model in teaching. Thus, very much like the former research, this study also showed that the integration of K.W.L model enhanced reading comprehension in the learners.

The data analysis of both the instruments (4.2.1 and 4.2.2) revealed high level of learning satisfaction in the learners when the K.W.L model was integrated in Bhutanese history lesson. To examine second objective of the study, researcher administered learning satisfaction questionnaire and students' own reflective journal were asked to be maintained. According to Conner (2010), the K.W.L model aids with self-monitoring of understanding since it permits the students to recognize what they understood. Therefore, the findings of this study coincide with those in the studies conducted by Al-Khateeb (2010), Utami (2015), Zouhor (2016), Stahel (2011) and Rakhmawati (2015), which indicated the significant role of K.W.L model in improving the students' learning satisfaction. Incorporation of K.W.L model in Bhutanese history lesson in 7th grade in my country Bhutan had positive effect as it gives higher learning satisfaction for the learners which is like many other past researches conducted.

Like survey questionnaire, students' reflective journal was to determine 7th grade Bhutanese students' learning satisfaction in Bhutanese history after employing K.W.L model. Students were made to write two reflective journals. It revealed that the students were satisfied with K.W.L model. This is also supported by the findings of Al-Khateeb (2010) that he observed K.W.L model as a connecting procedure between the new information and the earlier information. As a result, it helped students to improve their reading comprehension skills and satisfaction too. It also helped them to explore beyond the text and deepening the content knowledge. Students learn more when they work under cooperative conditions because interacting and sharing thoughts with one another is a learning skill that can be applied beyond the four walls of the classroom to strengthen

learning. (Khan & Akhtar, 2017). Therefore, reflections of the students clearly depicted that K.W.L model gives them learning satisfaction at the end of the day.

5. Conclusion

According to Mohammed (2013), studying of history is of paramount importance as people could learn the things from the past and take necessary steps to confront difficulties and threats to the mankind in near future. Similarly, Llewellyn (2014) defines history as a remarkable, a continuing story packed with prodigious characters, fight and sorrow, confusion and victory. He states that history is a subject that studies particularly people, events and problems of the past. It gives a sense of identity, helping people to understand who they are.

Finally, the findings of the study showed that the K.W.L model played an important role in the enhancement of students' reading comprehension and learning satisfaction. It is due to use of K.W.L chart that is divided into three columns with the headings "what you know", "what you want to know" and "what have you learned", which helps learners connect the prior knowledge to new information helping students comprehend the concept of the text. However, the study has found out limitations like, students making a bit of noise and sharing irrelevant things while discussing in the group. It was negligible as teacher managed the limitations with some interferences. Therefore, in the teaching and learning of Bhutanese history, history teachers need to integrate K.W.L model in teaching Bhutanese history in 7th grade as it helps the learners to enhance reading comprehension and improves their learning satisfaction. As a result, future studies should be carried out on the use of K.W.L model toward the success of learning Bhutanese history. Besides, this study also sheds some light on how future phases of the study can be developed and operated more effectively.

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7. Author(s)

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