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Comparing Examination Modes in Finland and Bhutan's Education System and Suggestions for Improvement

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ABSTRACT

This research paper delves into the assessment and examination systems of primary and secondary education in Finland and Bhutan. It analyzes Finland's exceptional performance in PISA and its assessment practices, emphasizing formative assessment and project-based learning. In contrast, Bhutan relies more heavily on standardized exams. The study identifies major similarities and differences, strengths, and weaknesses in both countries' examination modes. It investigates how these variations impact student learning outcomes in each nation. Through a qualitative comparative analysis research design, the paper focuses on exploring the examination methods in Finland and Bhutan's education systems. Based on the findings, the research proposes practical strategies for enhancing Bhutan's examination system. It suggests integrating formative assessment, introducing a blended approach in secondary education, and promoting research-based projects to improve the overall examination methods in Bhutan. While the study may not directly influence policy, it provides valuable insights into Finland's successful practices, which can be adapted to benefit Bhutan's education system.

INTRODUCTION

Finland and Bhutan have differing approaches to education and assessment, with Finland focusing on student-centered practices and Bhutan facing challenges in terms of educational quality and equity. In Finland, assessment is geared towards holistic student development and intrinsic motivation, employing formative methods such as observations, group projects, portfolios, and self-assessments to support learning and growth (Kelly, K., Merry, J., & Gonzalez, M., 2018). Conversely, Bhutan relies heavily on summative exams that emphasize rote memorization, hindering critical thinking and creating undue pressure (Fadhlullah & Ahmad, 2017).

To improve its assessment practices, Bhutan can draw inspiration from Finland and adopt a more balanced approach. Incorporating formative assessments, projects, open-ended questions, essays, and presentations can promote critical thinking and foster creativity, regular feedback, and open dialogue can encourage self-reflection and enhance learning outcomes. Integrating technology

into the assessment process can also be beneficial, allowing for adaptive and personalized evaluations, efficient feedback delivery, and increased student engagement (Bahati, B., 2019). In Bhutan, providing teachers with professional development opportunities is crucial to enhance their assessment literacy. This shift in focus aims to move away from merely assigning grades and, instead, empowers teachers to understand their students' learning processes by utilizing technologies.

Creating a supportive and inclusive environment is paramount in Bhutan's educational system. Valuing growth, effort, and resilience over grades and rankings can foster a culture of learning. Encouraging collaborative learning, incorporating peer assessments, and promoting self-assessment empower students to take ownership of their learning journey (Bozkurt, F., 2020).

In conclusion, Bhutan can learn from Finland's student-centered assessment practices to improve its educational system. Embracing formative assessment, diversifying assessment methods,

integrating technology, investing in teacher development, and fostering a supportive learning environment can enhance education quality, equip students with modern skills, and contribute to holistic development and economic growth.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to compare the assessment systems of Finland and Bhutan and identify ways to improve Bhutan's assessment system. By examining Finland's student-centered assessment practices, the study aims to highlight effective strategies that can be adopted in Bhutan's educational system.

METHODS

Research Design

The qualitative comparative analysis research design was maintained, with a focus on exploring the examination modes in Finland and Bhutan's education systems. The primary data collection technique involved utilizing document analysis. The emphasis was placed on examining relevant documents to gather information on the examination modes in both countries. This approach allowed for a comprehensive analysis of the examination systems, identifying similarities, differences, strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. The selected documents were thoroughly analyzed to extract key insights and recommendations. By conducting document analysis, a solid foundation for the comparative analysis was established, aiding in the identification of suggestions for improvement based on the findings from the documents (Bingham, Dean, & Castillo, 2019).

Data Collection Techniques

In this study, the primary reliance for gathering information on the examination modes was on document analysis. This technique involved conducting a thorough examination and interpretation of various relevant documents, including education policies, examination guidelines, curriculum documents, reports, research studies, and any other publicly available information about examinations in Finland. By engaging in document analysis, a comprehensive understanding of Finland's examination system was achieved, enabling the comparison and analysis of examination modes between Finland's and Bhutan's education systems.

Document Analysis

A thorough analysis of the selected documents was conducted, with careful attention given to the examination policies, guidelines, and other relevant materials. The aim was to extract information about the design, implementation, and evaluation, as well as any suggested improvements or changes in Finland's examination system. The documents were analyzed to identify key similarities and differences between the examination modes in Finland and Bhutan. This comparative analysis provided valuable insights into the examination systems of both countries.

Comparative Analysis

After the completion of the document analysis, the findings from Finland were compared with the existing data and insights gathered from Bhutan's examination system. The aim was to identify similarities, differences, strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement in both systems. Special attention was given to any recommendations or best practices mentioned in the documents from Finland that may apply to Bhutan's context. This comparative examination provided valuable insights to inform potential improvements and enhancements in Bhutan's examination system.

Data Display Process

Comparative tables were created to outline the different assessment modes in Finland and Bhutan, with a focus on highlighting the similarities and differences in terms of assessment methods, grading systems, emphasis on standardized tests, and the role of continuous assessment. These tables enabled a side-by-side comparison of the key features of the assessment systems in both countries, providing a clear and structured presentation of the findings.

Reliability Measure

When comparing Finland and Bhutan's educational systems, caution is necessary due to several factors.

Firstly, Finland lacks a specific system for high-achieving students within regular classrooms, potentially limiting challenges for gifted students. Although additional work can be requested, some advocate for special gifted programs. Secondly, cultural disparities between the two countries mean that Bhutan cannot simply replicate Finland's policies and expect the same results. Adapting policies to Bhutan's culture and education system is crucial. Replicating Finland's entire system may be

unfeasible due to its ties to Finnish politics and culture. Thirdly, TIMSS 2019 findings suggest declining performance among low-achieving students, emphasizing the need for support in subjects like science. Finland's success is linked to high standards, necessitating efforts to assist struggling students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021). Fourthly, attitudes towards learning, particularly in math and science, remain concerning in Finland, with low interest reported in these subjects. Attitudes affect learning outcomes, although Finnish students find their education in these subjects clear and experience less bullying. Finally, Finnish teachers express a desire for more in-service training, particularly in integrating technology into teaching. Mathematics and science teachers participate less frequently in such training compared to other countries. In-service training themes with high participation rates relate to technology integration, but teachers still desire more training in critical thinking, research skills, and addressing individual student needs. Bhutan can gain insights from Finland's system, but differences in context, culture, and specific challenges must be considered. Selecting and adapting relevant policies and practices that align with Bhutan's circumstances is crucial for educational improvement.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its contribution to the understanding of assessment and examination systems in different educational contexts and their impact on student learning outcomes and educational practices. Some of the key significances of this study are:

Comparative insights: By comparing the assessment and examination systems of Finland and Bhutan, this study provides valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of each system. It helps in understanding the different approaches and their implications for student learning.

Policy implications: The findings of this study can inform educational policymakers and stakeholders in Bhutan about the potential benefits of adopting certain aspects of Finland's assessment and examination practices. It can guide the development of more effective and student-centered assessment strategies.

Educational improvement: This study offers suggestions and recommendations for improving the examination system in Bhutan based on the

experiences of Finland. Implementing these recommendations has the potential to enhance student learning outcomes, promote critical thinking skills, and foster a more holistic approach to education.

Knowledge enhancement: This study adds to the existing body of knowledge on assessment and examination practices in different educational systems. It deepens our understanding of the relationship between assessment strategies and student learning outcomes, and it highlights the importance of context in shaping educational practices. Overall, the significance of this study lies in its potential to inform educational policies, improve assessment practices, and contribute to the broader discourse on effective assessment and examination strategies in diverse educational settings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Aims of Education

According to Biesta (2015), an education system serves three key purposes or utilities. These include qualification, which represents the symbolic manifestation of knowledge acquired; socialization, which involves teaching children to become part of society; and subjectification, which focuses on enabling children to develop a deeper understanding of their identities.

1. Finland

According to the UNESCO World Data on Education report and the Finnish National Board of Education's "Learning and Competence 2020" report, a well-structured curriculum should have clear aims and objectives. These include enhancing learning capabilities, facilitating personal development, implementing a unified core curriculum, and promoting healthy growth. Finland specifically emphasizes critical thinking, work, and intention skills, individual strengths, and environmental awareness (Finnish Board of Education, 2020).

The overall aim of education is to prepare students to meet the demands of the modern world by providing a well-rounded education that goes beyond academic knowledge. It should nurture critical thinking, practical skills, individual talents, and awareness of global issues. By aligning educational aims with these principles, countries

can effectively prepare students to thrive and contribute to society.

2. Bhutan

The Bhutan National Education Policy of 2019 aims to establish an inclusive education system based on Gross National Happiness and Bhutanese cultural heritage. It seeks to equip citizens with knowledge, skills, creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship to meet national needs and global trends. Bhutan envisions an educated society rooted in its values, contributing to well-being and social equality. The policy focuses on preparing individuals for the present and future, cultivating the values, skills, and knowledge necessary for the 21st century.

In comparison, Finland emphasizes the growth and development of students, while Bhutan's objectives encompass broader societal goals. Both countries strive to improve educational standards, increase literacy rates, promote research-based learning, and ensure universal access to education. Ultimately, their shared goal is to provide a quality education that prepares individuals to thrive and contribute to the well-being of their respective societies.

In both Finland and Bhutan, structured education systems are in place, encompassing careful planning, clear guidelines, and specific criteria for students' progression to the next educational level. However, it is essential to note that these countries also acknowledge and address certain forms of discrimination and disparities within their respective systems.

Basic Principles of the Education System

1. Finland

The Finnish education system is built on the principles of equal access to high-quality education for all individuals, with education considered a constitutional right (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2022). Compulsory education is provided until the ninth grade, and education at all levels is free of charge. Unlike many other countries, Finland does not have mandatory or standardized examinations until the age of 19. Instead, assessments rely on teacher-based evaluations that are ungraded and focus on personal goals and study plans. A distinctive feature of the Finnish system is the strong emphasis on the teacher-pupil relationship, which is built on trust and contributes to a positive learning environment

(Finnish National Board of Education (FNBE), 2020).

Inclusivity is also a core principle, with special education teachers and school psychologists playing vital roles in ensuring that every child receives the support they need. The Finnish education system's commitment to equal access, teacher-student relationships, and inclusive practices creates a nurturing and empowering learning experience for all students. These principles contribute to Finland's reputation as a leader in education and have yielded positive outcomes in terms of student achievement and well-being.

2. Bhutan

The Ministry of Education and Skills Development in Bhutan is responsible for providing general education from pre-primary to Class 12. Primary education is offered free of charge for six years, aiming for universal access. However, financial constraints pose barriers for some parents, prompting the government to implement strategies to improve access and quality of primary education, such as the Bhutan Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. Despite efforts, challenges remain in education coverage, with a primary enrollment rate of around 81% and an adult literacy rate of approximately 54% (NSB, 2022). Factors like population growth, difficult terrain, challenging climate, limited communication links, and dispersed settlements further hinder access to education (National Statistics Bureau (NSB, 2022). In terms of the future of education and cultural services, it is crucial to establish frameworks that facilitate the provision of high-quality education and training across all regions of Bhutan. These structures should effectively address the fundamental goals of each educational level and sector, as well as cater to the diverse needs of learners.

Bhutan follows a 7-year primary education cycle, followed by 6 years of secondary education, ultimately leading to tertiary education. To ensure education is accessible to all, the government provides free tuition, textbooks, sports items, meals, and boarding facilities where necessary. In recent years, Bhutan has embraced a more responsive curriculum and progressive teaching-learning strategies, resulting in significant changes to student assessment and evaluation methods. Traditionally, the education system heavily relied on end-of-year examinations.

Overall, Bhutan's Ministry of Education and Skills Development strives to provide inclusive education and overcome barriers to access by implementing policies and initiatives that enhance educational opportunities for all students (Policy and Planning Division, 2019).

Despite their geographical and population differences, Bhutan and Finland have comprehensive education systems that cover early childhood education, preschool education, comprehensive education, upper secondary education, and higher education. Both countries prioritize equal educational opportunities and active citizenship, offering tuition-free preschool and comprehensive education in Bhutan. Higher education is also largely accessible without charge in both countries. While there are distinct characteristics and learning environments in each system, the commitment to providing education and fostering equal opportunities is evident in both Bhutan and Finland.

Finland's education system exhibits a noteworthy characteristic, with a low impact of student's background on their educational achievement when compared to Bhutan's (OECD, 2013). It follows a five-tier structure:

- Early education (0-7) without books, homework, or written examinations;
- Basic education (7-16);
- Upper secondary or vocational education (16-19);
- Bachelor's education (4 years);
- Master's education (5 years) specializing in a particular field.

Compulsory education in Finland is mandated for students between the ages of 7 and 16, and it is successfully completed by 99% of pupils. Following this stage, students have the option to further their education for an additional year to enhance their skills and knowledge. Alternatively, they can choose to progress directly to the next step, which involves enrolling in high schools/grammar schools (comparable to Gymnasium or lycée) or vocational schools. Upon completion of the secondary stage, school leavers have the opportunity to pursue higher education at universities or polytechnic schools. It is important to note that individuals have the flexibility to transition between these different educational paths

at any point and all levels throughout their lives (Rusitoru, 2018).

Class sizes are small, and public education, including higher education, is free. Finnish education emphasizes equality, with no private schools or tuition fees. The curriculum is skill-based and nature-oriented, and teachers have autonomy in tailoring it to students' needs. School days are relatively short, with a focus on practical learning. Students in Finland spend only three hours and forty minutes in school, with a 15-minute break after every 45 minutes. Finland allocates around 7.8% of its GDP to education, reflecting its commitment to investing in high-quality education for all students (OECD. Education Policy Outlook, 2020).

In Finland, students in grades 1-6 are taught by class teachers, while subject specialists teach grades 7-9. National tests are not mandatory, and instead, teachers assess students based on the curriculum covered throughout the year. Verbal and numerical evaluations are given to students, focusing on individual progress rather than comparison. Formative assessment is important for improving instruction, evaluating student progress, and providing feedback. The only high-stakes examination, the matriculation examination, takes place at the end of upper secondary education and determines admission to higher education (Soby M., 2015).

In summary, while Bhutan and Finland have contrasting educational systems, understanding their unique approaches and practices can provide valuable insights for both countries. Bhutan can benefit from Finland's equitable and student-centric model, which emphasizes practical learning, teacher-student relationships, and comprehensive support systems. The school education system in Bhutan aims to provide a formal learning environment for students from pre-primary (PP) to Class XII, to enable them to reach their full potential and become productive citizens. The education policies are designed to create a dynamic and responsive system that can adapt to local, national, and global needs (Ministry of Education and Skills Development (MoESD), 2020).

The Bhutanese education system consists of five tiers: early education, primary education (PP-VI), secondary education (lower, middle, and higher levels), tertiary education (offered by community colleges, polytechnics, and universities), and

vocational/continuing education. Certificates such as Bhutan Certificate for Secondary Education (BCSE) and Bhutan Higher Secondary Examination Certificate (BHSEC) are awarded at the secondary level. Tertiary education leads to certificates, diplomas, and degrees, with bachelor's degrees typically requiring three to four years and master's degrees an additional two years. The system ensures equitable access to free, quality, and inclusive basic education for all school-age children. The entry age for pre-primary is six years, and promotion to the next level follows set standards. Schools involve parents in matters related to their children's academic progress, learning achievements, promotion, and repetition (Gyeltshen, & Zangmo, 2020).

To promote vocational skills, Bhutanese schools offer technical and vocational education and training subjects and programs. Collaboration between schools, Technical Training Institutes (TTIs), and the Institute of Zorig Chusum (IZCs) aim to enhance the quality of technical and vocational education. Class sizes are limited, with 24 students for primary levels and 30 for Similar to Finland, Bhutan aims for a skill-based and nature-oriented curriculum. However, teachers lack the freedom to tailor the curriculum according to students' needs. Bhutanese students spend long hours in school with minimal breaks. While the education system promotes phenomenon-based and practical learning, it still needs improvement. Teacher-student-parent meetings are held annually to discuss issues and progress reports. Rural and boarding schools in Bhutan provide free meals and education for all students. In contrast to Finland, Bhutan allocates about 5.6% of its GDP to education, (Policy and Planning Division, 2019). The curriculum follows a uniform structure developed by the Department of School Curriculum. Overcrowded classrooms and a lack of sports, arts, music, poetry, and entertainment facilities are common in Bhutanese schools. The education system struggles to meet the demands of the 21st A notable difference between Finland and Bhutan is the quality and perception of teachers.

In Finland, teachers are highly qualified, holding master's degrees that are fully subsidized, and they are selected from the top graduates. Teaching is regarded as a prestigious career. In contrast, Bhutan faces a shortage of teachers,

possibly due to high expectations of students. The education systems also differ in terms of entry requirements for teacher education programs and the grading system. Finland emphasizes professional experience and incorporates hobbies

Secondary levels, although they may exceed 35 students. While schools cannot collect fees beyond those approved by the Ministry of Education, some private sector initiatives require payment of fees and cater primarily to more affluent families. Free textbooks and readers are provided to every child, and schools are required to have a library with a minimum of 5,000 books. Efforts are being made to provide additional learning resources and ensure full internet connectivity in schools. Sports and extracurricular activities are offered to all students.

In higher education, merit-based admission is prioritized, aiming for intellectual excellence. The focus is on achieving academic, vocational, social-civic, cultural, and personal goals to prepare students for an evolving society. A combination of traditional and flexible courses, enhanced by modern technologies, is emphasized. Higher education is self-sustainable through fees, but scholarships are provided to support deserving students. The goal is to establish an international reputation for related programs outside Bhutan.

Unlike the Finnish education system, Bhutan does not have subject specialists for grades 1-10, and students face heavy books, homework, and written examinations. Home and board examinations are conducted at various grades, leading to societal pressure and an "all or nothing" mindset among young children. The Bhutanese education system faces challenges such as rote learning, excessive subjects, language diversity, and the presence of high-fee private schools. These issues hinder the improvement of the system and impact student well-being, including mental depression resulting from low exam scores. Additionally, the focus on profit in some aspects of education has overshadowed the noble goal of providing quality education.

Bhutan faces significant skill shortages and mismatches in the labor market. The majority of employed individuals lack formal qualifications, with a small percentage holding primary, lower/middle secondary, or bachelor's degrees and above. The agriculture sector employs the highest

number of people, while the industry sector has the lowest employment rate. The service sector holds a moderate share of employment. Age-wise, the highest percentages of employed individuals fall within the 30-44 age range (NSB, 2022).

In Finland, the curriculum undergoes revision approximately every 10 years, and the process is collaborative, inclusive, and interactive. Teachers and educators are involved in the curriculum development committee alongside the administration or curriculum bureau. There are no punishments or sanctions for deviating from the curriculum, allowing flexibility and adaptation. The Finnish curriculum emphasizes holistic growth encompassing social, economic, and psychological aspects. Assessments and evaluations are clearly defined in the curriculum (FNBE). (2020).

In Bhutan, the curriculum is rigidly implemented, relying heavily on textbooks and lacking flexibility for revisions or changes. The curriculum designers and implementers often lack field research and experience, resulting in a curriculum that does not meet practical demands. Outdated content is still taught, raising questions about the authenticity and relevance of certain

subjects. While the curriculum outlines global objectives, detailed implementation plans are neglected, and there is a lack of guidance on achieving the stated aims. The involvement of stakeholders in curriculum development is evident, but there is a lack of assessment of the curriculum's effectiveness, leading to its failure in practice (FNBE, 2020).

Education System at Glance

Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)

Pre-primary (optional)/part of ECEC

Basic education/Comprehensive schooling

Upper secondary OR vocational

Bachelor's (Higher education)

Master's/Doctoral (adult education)

Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD)

Adult Literacy and Continuing Education (CE),
(Ministry of Education and Culture, 2017).

The management structure within the education sector will be adapted to meet the diverse demands of a continuously growing network of schools and institutions. This restructuring aims to align with the evolving needs and incorporate new elements introduced through comprehensive reform initiatives.

Table 1. Comparative System of Education

Finland			Bhutan		
Level	Age Group	Particular	Level	Age Group	Particular
ECEC	0-7year	optional	ECCD	0-5yr	optional
Pre-primary	7yr	mandatory	Pre-Primary	6-12yr	mandatory
Basic education/ comprehensive schooling	7-16yr	compulsory	Secondary education	13-18yr	mandatory
Upper secondary/vocational	17-19yr	optional	Tertiary education	19yr above	compulsory
Bachelor's (higher education)			Vocational/CE		optional
Master's/Doctoral (adult education)			Master		

Comparison of an Education System (Focusing on Examination System)

As stated by Mogapi (2016), the examination system plays a vital role in education systems as it offers a standardized approach to evaluate the knowledge and skills of students. However, the

approaches to examinations can vary significantly across different education systems worldwide. This comparison aims to explore the similarities and differences in examination systems between Finland and Bhutan.

Table 2. The Grading System of the Two Countries

Finland			Bhutan		
Scale	Description	Grade	Scale	Description	Grade
4	Fail		80-100	Outstanding	A
5	Passable		70-79.9	Very Good	B
6	Fair		60-69.9	Good	C
7	Satisfactory (average)		50-59.9	Satisfactory	D
8	Good		00-49.9	Fail	E
9	Very Good				
10	Excellent				

Table 3. Comparative Analysis of Examination Modes

Finland	Bhutan
The examination system in Finland demonstrated a strong emphasis on formative and authentic assessment methods.	The examination system in Bhutan exhibited a more traditional approach, with a greater emphasis on summative assessments and standardized tests.
The grading system was often criterion-referenced, focusing on individual progress and mastery of skills rather than ranking or competition.	The grading system often utilized norm-referenced methods, leading to competition and ranking among students.
Continuous assessments, such as teacher evaluations, self-assessments, and portfolio-based assessments, played a significant role in evaluating student progress.	a combination of both continuous assessments, including teacher evaluations, self-assessments, and portfolio-based assessments, as well as summative assessments, to evaluate student performance.
Recommendations for improvement included enhancing the clarity of assessment criteria, providing more targeted feedback to students, and incorporating more diverse assessment methods to capture a broader range of skills and competencies.	Suggestions for improvement involved diversifying assessment methods to include more formative and authentic approaches, reducing reliance on high-stakes examinations, and providing more opportunities for student reflection and self-assessment.

The examination modes in Finland and Bhutan were thoroughly analyzed and compared by examining their respective examination policies, guidelines, and other relevant documents. This analysis revealed key similarities and differences in assessment methods, emphasis on standardized tests, and the role of continuous assessment.

Table 4. Similarities and Differences in the Assessment Systems

Similarities	Differences
Emphasis on Assessing Student Performance: Both Finland and Bhutan place importance on evaluating student performance through various assessment methods.	Assessment Approach: Finland focuses more on formative and authentic assessment, while Bhutan leans towards a more traditional approach with a heavier emphasis on summative assessments.
Standardized Tests: Both countries utilize standardized tests as a component of their assessment systems to measure student achievement.	Grading Systems: Finland often utilizes criterion-referenced grading, focusing on individual progress and mastery of skills, while Bhutan relies more on norm-referenced grading, resulting in competition and ranking among students.

Evaluation of Subject-Specific Knowledge: Both systems assess students' subject-specific knowledge and understanding of various academic disciplines.	Weightage of High-Stakes Examinations: In Finland, the weightage of high-stakes examinations is relatively low, while Bhutan places more significance on these examinations for student progression and evaluation.
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When comparing the examination modes in Finland and Bhutan, it is evident that there are both similarities and differences in their assessment methods. Here are some key points to consider for evaluation.

Table 5. Strengths and Weaknesses of Assessment System

Finland	Bhutan
Strengths: Emphasis on formative and authentic assessment, focus on individual progress and mastery of skills, incorporation of diverse assessment methods, comprehensive teacher evaluations, and personalized feedback.	Strengths: Utilization of standardized tests for standardized measurement, focus on subject-specific knowledge, structured assessment system.
Weaknesses: Potential challenges in ensuring consistency in assessment practices across different schools and regions, need for clearer assessment criteria and rubrics.	Weaknesses: Overemphasis on summative assessments, limited scope for formative assessment and personalized feedback, potential negative impact on student well-being and creativity due to heavy reliance on high-stakes examinations.

When comparing the assessment systems in Finland and Bhutan, it becomes apparent that both possess strengths and weaknesses that impact their ability to effectively evaluate student performance. Here are some key points for comparison.

It is important to note that these strengths, weaknesses, and areas of improvement are based on a comparative analysis of the assessment systems in Finland and Bhutan and should be considered in the specific context of each country's education system. Assessments fulfill diverse purposes for stakeholders across different levels of the state education system. Given their crucial role in learning, teaching, and accountability, policymakers can greatly benefit from acquiring a comprehensive understanding of the assessment landscape (Woods, J., 2017).

Impact of Different Assessment Modes

Assessment can be defined as a decision-making process that involves gathering information through the measurement of learning outcomes using various instruments, including tests or non-test methods. It goes beyond simply seeking answers to questions and instead focuses on determining the extent to which a person or program has achieved a particular process or outcome. The assessment aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the level of attainment, progress, or effectiveness to inform

decision-making and improve educational practices (Harris and Clayton, 2018) & (Lincoln and Riza, 2018).

In Finland, where there is an emphasis on formative and authentic assessment methods, the impact is often positive. Formative assessments, such as continuous teacher evaluations and self-assessments, provide students with regular feedback and opportunities for reflection, enabling them to monitor their progress and make improvements. This approach fosters a deeper understanding of the subject matter, promotes critical thinking skills, and encourages active student engagement, resulting in enhanced learning outcomes.

On the other hand, Bhutan relies more heavily on summative assessments and standardized tests. While these assessment methods can provide an overall evaluation of student's knowledge and skills, their impact on learning outcomes may be less favorable. The emphasis on high-stakes examinations and norm-referenced grading systems can create a competitive environment that may limit students' focus on deeper learning and hinder their overall growth. This approach may lead to increased

stress and anxiety, potentially affecting student motivation and negatively impacting learning outcomes.

By recognizing the impact of different assessment modes and considering improvements specific to each context, Finland and Bhutan can enhance their assessment systems, leading to more positive student learning outcomes. Considering the distinct educational interests and goals in Finland and Bhutan, conducting a comprehensive investigation into the potential benefits and drawbacks of different examination formats would be valuable for the study. This would provide

deeper insights into the specific advantages and disadvantages of various examination modes and their alignment with the unique educational contexts of Finland and Bhutan.

Al-Tayib Umar (2018) argues that marks or grades alone do not yield learning benefits. Instead, there is evidence suggesting that students gain the most learning value from assessment when feedback is provided without marks or grades. When marks are given, they often tend to occupy students' thinking and are perceived as the ultimate goal of the assessment.

Table 6. Impact of Different Assessment Systems on the Learning Outcome of Students

Advantages of Different Examination Formats	Disadvantages of Examination Format
<p>Traditional Written Examinations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Standardized and efficient for assessing knowledge and recall. - Allows for a direct comparison of students' understanding of the subject matter. - Can be administered to a large number of students simultaneously. 	<p>Traditional Written Examinations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - May not fully capture students' understanding due to limited time and pressure. - May promote memorization rather than deeper understanding. - Can lead to increased stress and anxiety among students.
<p>Practical or Performance-Based Assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assesses practical skills, problem-solving abilities, and application of knowledge. - Provides a more authentic representation of real-world tasks. - Encourages critical thinking and creativity. 	<p>Practical or Performance-Based Assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can be time-consuming and resource-intensive to administer and evaluate. - Subjectivity in assessment may vary between evaluators. - May require specific facilities and equipment for practical tasks.
<p>Oral Examinations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allows for direct interaction between the examiner and the student. - Provides an opportunity to assess communication skills, articulation, and depth of understanding. - Can be more flexible in evaluating complex concepts and theories. 	<p>Oral Examinations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessment may depend on the subjective judgment of the examiner. - Limited time may restrict the depth of inquiry and assessment. - May induce additional stress and anxiety for students during the oral examination.

These advantages and disadvantages should be considered within the specific educational contexts of Finland and Bhutan when evaluating the suitability and effectiveness of different examination formats.

CONCLUSION

Bhutan, as a nation aspiring to develop a knowledge-based economy, can draw inspiration from the Finnish education system. However, achieving a similar status will require substantial educational reforms and a shift in cultural and societal mindsets. Implementing such reforms will

be a long-term endeavor that demands patience and persistence. There are several aspects of the Finnish education system that Bhutan can learn from. These include the educational philosophy, school entry age, curriculum design, assessment methods, and teacher motivation. Bhutan has already initiated

some reforms, offering hope for a departure from its excessively pragmatic education system.

While Bhutan has made commendable progress in the Global Competitiveness Report, ranking 82nd in 2017-18, skills shortages and mismatches persist, hindering the country's ability to meet labor market demands. The World Economic Forum (2017) points out that despite the development of comprehensive educational policies and curricula, certain critical issues remain unaddressed. The success of these policies relies on their faithful and effective implementation.

In conclusion, Bhutan has the potential to learn valuable lessons from the Finnish education system. By embracing reforms, addressing skills gaps, and diligently implementing policies and curricula, Bhutan can make significant strides toward enhancing its education system and nurturing a competitive and knowledgeable society. The quality of education in Bhutan holds paramount importance to the Royal Government, as it directly impacts the nation's health, prosperity, happiness, and overall progress. In pursuit of this goal, the Ministry of Education and Skills Development has implemented numerous reform initiatives aimed at enhancing access, equity, and system efficiencies. These efforts are focused on improving the overall quality of education across the country (BCSEA, 2019).

However, achieving this goal will require sustained effort and a transformative shift in various areas. Based on the findings from the study, it is evident that Finland's education system demonstrates effective student-centered assessment practices. Bhutan can learn valuable lessons from Finland's approach, such as embracing formative assessment, diversifying assessment methods, integrating technology, investing in teacher development, and fostering a supportive learning environment. By adopting these important aspects and policies, Bhutan can enhance its assessment system, leading to improved educational outcomes and holistic development for its students. With determination and a focus on quality education, Bhutan can pave the way for a brighter future.

This study aimed to compare the examination systems in Finland and Bhutan, analyzing their assessment practices and suggesting improvements for Bhutan's education system. However, it is essential to acknowledge certain limitations that may have influenced the scope and depth of the

research. These limitations include the reliance on secondary data through document analysis and the potential bias in document selection. Additionally, the study's findings may not be directly generalizable to other educational systems. Understanding these limitations will provide a balanced perspective on the study's outcomes and guide future research to address these challenges effectively.

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