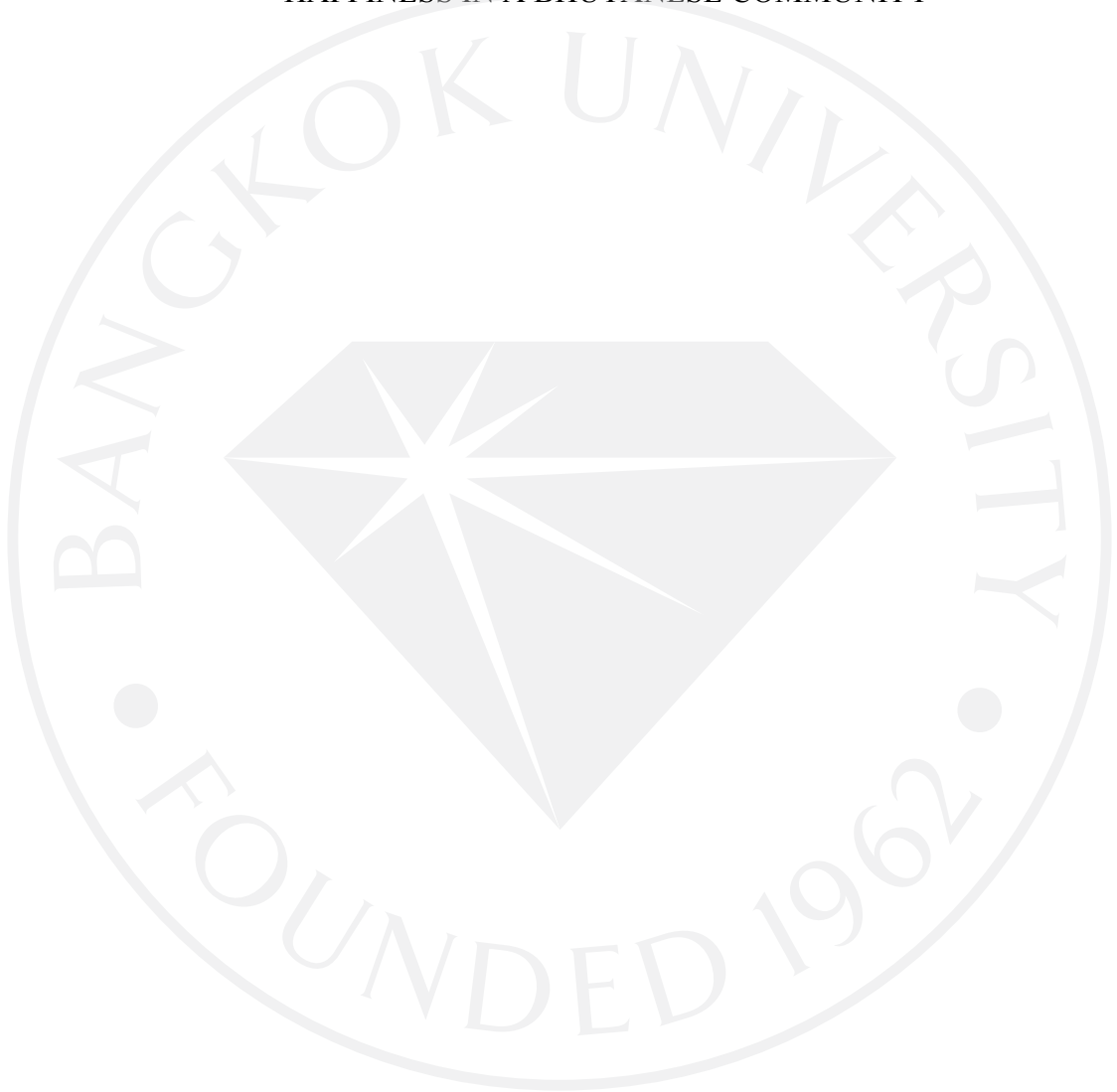


PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION AND PEOPLE'S
HAPPINESS IN A BHUTANESE COMMUNITY



PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION AND PEOPLE'S
HAPPINESS IN A BHUTANESE COMMUNITY

A Thesis Presented to
The Graduate School of Bangkok University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Communication Arts

by
Khampa
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ABSTRACT

Participatory development communication (PDC) has become a popular development model for many countries and development programs. This thesis proposes a communication perspective for furthering the policy of Gross National Happiness (GNH) of Bhutan. The people's happiness is treated on the model of participatory development communication based on Paulo Freire's theory of dialogical communication and action. Besides, the PDC is augmented by Jurgen Habermas's theory of communicative action (CA). While an assumption is also made that the level of socio-economic status of the people may have influence on relationship of communication and happiness. The research was conducted in a Bhutanese community of Khaling. 334 respondents participated in the survey research sampled by stratification method. The data analysis reveals that communication (PDC and CA) is significantly related to people's happiness. Although the level of socio-economic status is significantly related to people's happiness it is not related to communication variables. These results let to conclude that people's happiness is accounted for by communication (based on interpersonal communication) to some degree regardless of the level of socio-economic status of the people.

Approved: _____

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Writing a thesis is not only a tedious academic activity but also an eye-opening experience in learning. When I first thought of writing a thesis, no solid concept came to my mind. Rather my mind was shrouded by some broad imaginations. Moreover, I doubted myself over my ignorant stance to take on this challenge of dealing with the complexity of science and inferences. Despite being influenced by so many incredible works of scholars and students, I was totally lost on what particular idea to work on. Besides, the communication major contains vast scholarships that almost makes difficult for one to focus on a particular topic that would best express one's interest vis-à-vis the academic ability. Such confrontations bring you to a point: give up. But then I heard my inner voice trying to inspire me. It demanded the fire of commitment and to believe in myself. It was at that moment, I gathered my guts to push myself forward in writing a thesis. This thesis is the result of that conviction.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Research Problem

The trend of our civilization has been to evolve into an organized and developed society. In pursuit of material comfort, the development became largely an economic activity for many societies. In recent years there has been a considerable rethinking of the whole concept of development, including a growing awareness of its gender, cultural and environmental dimensions, and the impact of globalization. The problem of wellbeing is becoming the central issue amid the humanitarian crisis everywhere.

Communication has been in the spotlight of development for the last couple of decades. Many scholars contend that, first, it is communication then the development takes place. It is interesting to note, given the basic function of communication as the root of human interaction, that communication is not coincidental but planned. It is of considerable significance that communication has played vital role in the development of the society. Needs of the people motivates effective communication to reach the desired goal or end.

The concept of development changed when development practitioners in the underdeveloped and developing countries realized that it was not enough to imitate the rich and developed countries. Thus, the idea of development communication emanated from such realization. Within the short time, there have been several paradigm shifts in the models of communication in the developmental contexts. Communication for development has undergone several tests and, of late, evolved into a dynamic and

adaptable framework called participatory development communication (PDC). This model of PDC is all about involving the targets of development in the development processes. In order to share information, knowledge, trust, commitment, and a right attitude in development projects, participation is very important in any decision-making process for development (Servaes, 1996). This normative dimension of communication is well elaborated at a meta-theoretical level by Jurgen Habermas in his theory of communicative action. Given the paramount importance of the role of communication in development and social change, it may be wise to look into why communication for development is relevant for Bhutan.

A small Himalayan kingdom of just over half a million population, Bhutan's nation-state has thrived on a wise leadership of its kings. Like in the fairy tales, the nation prospered under the reign of good kings. It was in early 1960s when Bhutan opened its door to the outside world crack-opening from its cocoon of self-imposed isolation. The so called modern development was ushered into the kingdom which awed its barbaric people. Roads connected the distant Bhutanese hamlets perched on interlocking and difficult terrains and across mountains. People travelled on modern vehicles. They began to wear the imported clothes replacing most of their ancient invented wrappings and petticoats made of animal skins and plant linings. Economic was then a new concept people could hardly understand. All these basic modern amenities gave people the haven's comfort.

Throughout the development process, development ideas and experiences were trumpeted through available mass media. The traditional agricultural practice gradually gave into modern ways of growing. People's perception changed. Expectations grew. Quality of life occupied the minds of modern Bhutanese people.

Today, after five decades of national development, Bhutan has almost become like any other aspiring country whose development is measured by economic metrics and human development index. Yet, despite the landmark developments brought about by its far-sighted kings, Bhutanese society falls into the conventional social measures of haves and have-nots. Poverty is an issue. Sustainability is a big concern. Development has fallen short of people's needs. In view of the significant proportion of people living below the national poverty line and the incompatibility of such a situation with the principles of Gross National Happiness, the Government has decided that poverty reduction will be the main development goal for the Tenth Plan (Planning Commission, 2006).

Four-fifth of Bhutanese population are rural-based and farmers. The need for development is very. Bhutan's policies for development are rich in magnitude and unstoppable in ambition. Some structural changes to be noted are the policy for people's participation, good governance, five-year planned development, decentralization, and democracy. Encompassing all these policy frameworks is the overriding policy of Gross National Happiness (GNH). Yet, Bhutan is geographically landlocked and developmentally challenged. With structural and institutional policies favoring good development, the catalyst role of communication in development process must also equally be prioritized. The premise of participatory development communication is context-based and can be adapted according to the particular nation's situation. This theoretical basis gives good ground to argue Bhutan's development paradigm.

Perhaps, it is at the threshold of this backdrop that the concept of Gross National Happiness takes the center stage in Bhutan's development today. People

believe that this concept was conceived much earlier by the wise king, Jigme Singye Wangchuck (the fourth king of Bhutan), when modernization just brought material satisfaction to the people ignoring the inner pursuit of people's happiness. The people-centered development and the theme of "One Nation, One People," laid the foundation for GNH concept during the philosopher's reign as the king.

From what began as the top-down central development plan initially, Bhutan's development plan has trickled down to community-based. This structural change in the organization of the development planning invited the opportunity for people's participation in development decision-making process. People's views were to be communicated by their community representative to the national assembly which will eventually approve the desired development given the need and benefits of it. Although there exists the structural framework for development, yet, there is no clear framework of communication in Bhutan's development. The emphasis on the role of communication in development and in decision-making is inadequate or almost absent. Therefore, without the proper channeling of people's needs and not capitalizing on participatory development communication, Bhutan's goal of GNH is far from realizing it.

At a broader outlook, this thesis seeks to extend these debates to a more fundamental level, tackling such issues as the crisis of development as an intellectual and practical project, the need for a break with development as a top-down concept, and the viability of alternative, two-way forms of development communication model. A Bhutanese development paradigm is the background to this thesis which is to study the trends and patterns of communication in Bhutanese community development with people's happiness as the long term policy goal.

Community-based development offers good model of development to study the role of communication in decision-making. The research context for this thesis is focused on a Bhutanese community. The communication frameworks for this study will be based on participatory development communication and Habermas's communicative action. The level of socio-economic status (SES) of the people will be taken as antecedents to the study of communication and people's happiness. To put these variables into context, it will be worthwhile to get a little understanding of how an existing system of community development operates in Bhutan.

People aspire to live collectively and be happy in a welfare state. Interestingly, the Royal Government of Bhutan has adopted the idea of gross national happiness for its people. At community level, Bhutan's development is executed by local government under the praxis of Gewog Yargay Tsogchung (GYT) (block development meeting) instituted across the nation in 1991. This community convention calls a representative from every household in the community. Theoretically, the need of development for the community is laid on this convention table assuming mass participation and consensus on the decision-making. Given the mandatory for having to participate in the convention, there is no solid evidence to support that there exists a real participatory development communication process and further, the practice of communicative action.

There are several questions to ask when dealing closely with this model of Bhutanese community development. Has every household's representative actively participated in the decision-making process? Do people possess the communication competency to voice out their needs? How do local government leaders create suitable condition in which grassroots could ask what they need? Are there inherent political

and bureaucratic implications in decision-making? Is there a participatory development communication process in development decision-making?

There is no available data to answer such questions nor there is any attempt made to do so. However, there is an overwhelming goodwill between the government and the people in regard to development works. In other words, Bhutanese grassroots are entirely dependent on government's development initiative; the latter's purpose being to bring balanced and equitable development in the country. Bhutan's government has highlighted people's participation in decision-making processes, yet, there is hardly any empirical evidence to support the existence of participatory communication processes thereby. The presence of participatory structure alone is not the sole evidence to claim the existence of good communication processes in it.

The fact that Bhutan government's equitable development policy has not been realized in real terms is the evidence that there is something lagging inherently that is posing a barrier to realize such equitable development. Despite various pro-poor plans, programs and policy interventions, recent surveys and poverty studies indicate that regional imbalances in socioeconomic development exist between regions, Dzongkhags and Gewogs (Planning Commission, 2006). This points to the fact that bringing institutional changes alone cannot cater to balanced development. Communication must bridge the gap between the development motives and the targets of development.

Many communication experts agree that structural changes should occur first in order to establish participatory communication policies (Servaes, 1996). The democratization of the government and empowerment of the people officially through the Constitution of Bhutan (Constituted in 2007) lends good support to the preceding

statement and, therefore, becomes an important background for this study. The following excerpts from the Constitution of Bhutan substantiate the points:

Article 1; section 1:

Bhutan is a Sovereign Kingdom and the Sovereign power belongs to the people of Bhutan.

Article 1; section 2:

The form of Government shall be that of a Democratic Constitutional Monarchy.

These structural changes are of significance to the Bhutanese development paradigm, which allows inputs from various stakeholders of development unlike the unquestionable top-down totalitarian model. However, the ambiguity and absence of concrete frameworks of development communication in Bhutan, this thesis holds credible opportunity to conduct a research of facts-finding and uncover the underlying processes of Bhutanese development at a community level.

Purpose of the Study

There is so much to study on Bhutan as there is limited data or information on it particularly the area of the current thesis research. The current study looks closer at studying the communication characteristics in the Bhutan's development paradigm at a community level. Against this backdrop, the purpose of the study is set as follows:

1. The main objective is to study the relationship between communication (participatory development communication and communicative action) and people's happiness.
2. Further, this study also seeks to find a relationship between the level of socio-economic status and people's happiness, and

3. Given the socio-economic status, the study will further examine the actual relationship between communication and people's happiness.
4. Lastly, to study the trends and patterns of relationships among the communication, people's happiness and the level of socio-economic status.

Definition of Terms

The terms to be defined in this research are participatory development communication (PDC), communicative action (CA), the level of socio-economic status (SES), and people's happiness (derived from the concept of Gross National Happiness, GNH).

Conceptually, participatory development communication is defined as involving beneficiaries of development in decision-making with empowered role. The constructs of this variable are "conscientization, empowerment and power" (Chitnis, 2005).

These constructs are operationalized as follows:

Conscientization: What knowledge do people possess about their own social circumstances and their awareness of the need of development to solve their problems.

Empowerment: Refers to ability to have control over making decisions about issues and situations that affects ones lives (Chitnis, 2005).

Power: existing power structures in the given context that controls and intervene the development activities.

Habermas's theory of communicative action focuses on how individuals in a society exchange meaning based on shared, presupposed language norms in their everyday life (Chang, 2006). Communication as a special type of social action is presupposed to reach mutual understanding (ibid). The constructs for communication action theory are validity claims and speech conditions. Validity claims are made of truth,

appropriateness, and comprehension. Speech conditions are made of symmetric opportunities, free to raise any proposition, and equal treatment of propositions.

The level of socio-economic status (SES) is an economic and sociological combined total measure of a person's work experience and of an individual's or family's economic and social position relative to others, based on income, education, and occupation (Wikipedia, 2009). The constructs for SES will be operationalized as provided by Wikipedia (2009):

Income refers to wages, salaries, profits, rents, and any flow of earnings received. Income can also come in the form of unemployment or workers compensation, social security, pensions, interests or dividends, royalties, trusts, alimony, or other governmental, public, or family financial assistance.

A person's educational attainment is considered to be the highest level (grade or degree) of education they have completed.

Occupational status reflects the educational attainment required to obtain the job and income levels that vary with different jobs and within ranks of occupations. Additionally, it shows achievement in skills required for the job. Occupational status measures social position by describing job characteristics, decision making ability and control, and psychological demands on the job.

Finally, people's happiness is derived from the definition of Bhutan's development philosophy of Gross national Happiness (GNH). GNH is defined as considering emotional and spiritual well being of the people besides the material gain. There are nine indicators of GNH which are the standard of living, health of population, education, ecosystem vitality and diversity, cultural vitality and diversity, time use and balance, good governance, community vitality and emotional wellbeing.

Scope of the Research

This thesis is focused to study the role of communication particularly the participatory development communication and communicative action in people's happiness. The aim is to find evidence on the triangular relationship among the level of socio-economic status of the people, communication (i.e. PDC and CA) and people's happiness.

The research will be carried out in one of the Bhutanese communities. A Bhutanese community is chosen whose population will be approximately around 500 households. The target respondents are the people of this community. The research context will be the development and decision-making process in this community. The research will be conducted through survey for about a month.

Significance of the Research

This thesis research will provide a theoretical basis and empirical test of the use of communication in the processes of decision-making in development at the community level in Bhutan. The study would be first of its kind in Bhutan which will generate first hand information and data.

The study will offer insights into the practicality of the models of communication for social change such as participatory development communication especially in development context. It will enable to test the theoretical framework of Harbermas's theory of communicative action concepts.

The findings from this study will provide potential information for development practitioners, agencies, actors and communities in Bhutan. While Bhutan government is strenuously seeking to find ways to bring about the goal of Gross National Happiness, this study will be a significant contribution towards it.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW, THEORETICAL ORIENTATION & HYPOTHESES

Literature Review

The study of communication for development and social change has been through several paradigmatic changes during the past years (Servaes & Liu, 2007). The concept of development communication traces its origins in the aftermath of World War II stretching to this day. This period witnessed the political emancipation of most of the Third World from colonization as well as the birth of the United Nations (UN) and its various executing agencies (Melkote, 1991). Towards the beginning of the second half of the 1900s the attention turned to the need for development in the underdeveloped Third World countries. The idea of development was then to adopt the Western ways of progress and advancement that outstripped the traditional way of survival in the underdeveloped worlds. Therefore, 'it made unquestionable sense that the Third World Peasantry discard unconditionally their primitive ways and embrace the technologies which had wrought such extraordinary progress in the advanced countries of the *West*' (Melkote, 1991; italics added). Communication has been a key element in the West's project of developing the Third World (Servaes & Malikhao, 2007). This paradigm of development was called modernization model in that 'the introduction of media and certain types of educational, political, and economic information into a social system could transform individuals and societies from traditional to modern' (ibid). This mainly economic-oriented view, characterized by endogenism and evolutionism, ultimately resulted in the modernization and growth theory (Servaes & Malikhao, 2007).

As a concept, development communication stems from the belief that telephones, radio, television, the Internet, or group media can support the overall betterment of less privileged people in underdeveloped countries (Srampickal, 2006). Development communication generally refers to the planned use of strategies and processes of communications aimed at achieving development (Srampickal, 2006). Development communication can also make development initiatives scalable by employing different communication techniques and devices that address varying spatial requirements for local, regional, national and international levels of action (Inagaki, 2007).

The greater interest towards communication as facilitator of development is reported in Daniel Lerner's classic study "*The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East*" in 1958. In this classic study of modernization, Lerner found a key concept, empathy, defined by him as the capacity to place oneself in the roles of others, as the most important "psychic mobility" caused by mass media exposure that had a great characterological transformation in modern history (Supadhiloke, 2008).

The modernization incident that led to adoption of western ways for development is perhaps well elaborated by Everett M. Rogers's theory of diffusions of innovation. "Diffusion is the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of the social system" (Rogers, 1995, p 5). This theory literally helped design the communication strategies for adopting the idea of modernization among the underdeveloped countries. Mass communication was a means by which 'modernization' was carried across countries. The communication media are, in the context of development, generally used to

support development initiatives by the dissemination of messages that encourage the public to support development-oriented projects (Servaes & Malikhao, 2007).

National leaders, bureaucrats, and experts broadcast passionately from the cities about the wonderful differences which the adoption of new and foreign ideas would bring to the lives of the people (Yoon, 1996). They talked at length about farming methods, cures for diseases, the importance of sending children to school, the advantages of having fewer children, the desirability of having a stable government, and so on (ibid).

The showing of urban fantasies and lifestyles brought about by modernization through mobile van cinemas became common sight in villages. The dramatic phase of how mass communication carried the message of modernization is nicely put forth by Yoon (1996, p.38):

It showed the beautiful homes and cars of rich Western farmers, and projected the image, voice and charisma of aspiring political leaders. The private sector soon followed suit and sent its own vans to entertain with other cartoons and comedy shows, and most importantly for the companies, to show the advertisements for their wares. Government extension workers trained in the towns became the front-line communicators, repeating to farmers in their fields what they had just been taught in the towns. Posters, leaflets, and other publications made up another important instrument used as a part of this approach. It became known as “development support communication,” a term coined by the FAO.

Communication theories such as diffusion of innovations, the two-step flow and the extension approach are quite congruent with the above modernization theory (Servaes & Malikhao, 2007). However, towards the last quarter of the 20th century, the

modernization model severely failed in explaining the idea of development. This theory sees development a unilinear evolutionary process and defines the state of underdevelopment in terms of observable quantitative differences between so-called poor and rich countries on the one hand and traditional and modern societies on the other (Servaes & Malikhao, 2007).

The communication of modernization to rural and indigenous people didn't serve to bring the real change needed. Because the development had been centrally planned without any consultation with people, the wrong solutions were often pumped down to startled communities (Yoon, 1996). Lerner's modernization model became largely irrelevant in the sense that it did not cater to bring true development among the people. Instead the most frequently used theoretical framework was participator development, an optimistic post-modern approach that is almost the polar opposite of Lerner's, who viewed mass communication as playing a top-down role in social change (Servaes & Malikhao, 2007).

The question of who initiated a communication, and how the decisions leading up to the communication were made, became more important than what was being communicated (Yoon, 1996). Communicators were no longer neutral movers of information, but were intervening actively to trigger changes aimed at encouraging people's participation. In many ways, the "techniques" of communication had not changed (Yoon, 1996). What had changed profoundly were the ideologies and philosophies behind the practice of the techniques. In contrast to the expert knowledges of normal development, participatory development communication stresses the necessity of local knowledges (Mohan, 2008).

Participatory model, on the other hand, incorporates the concepts in the framework of multiplicity (Servaes & Malikhao, 2007). However, there is no limiting definition of participatory development communication as was for the modernization. A widely held view of participation is that it is *instrumental*, facilitating the ‘formal’ development programmes making it efficient and effective. On the other hand, participatory is also viewed (although at a lesser stance) as *transformative* in that it disregards the formal development system and demands empowering other, non-hegemonic voices as a means for meaningful social changes to occur. Participatory communication model “stresses the importance of the cultural identity of local communities and of democratization and participation at all levels – international, national, local and individual (Servaes & Malikhao, 2007).

Generally, four different ways of participation can be observed in most development projects claiming to be participatory in nature (Uphoff, 1985; Yoon, 1996):

- Participation in implementation — People are actively encouraged and mobilized to take part in the actualization of projects. They are given certain responsibilities and set certain tasks or required to contribute specified resources.

Participation in evaluation — Upon completion of a project, people are invited to critique its success or failure.

Participation in benefit — People take part in enjoying the fruits of a project, such as water from a hand pump, medical care (from a barefoot doctor), a truck to transport produce to market, or village meetings in the new community hall.

Participation in decision-making — People initiate, discuss, conceptualize and plan activities they will all do as a community. Some of these may be related to more common development areas such as building schools or applying for land tenure. Others may be more political, such as removing corrupt officials, supporting parliamentary candidates, or resisting pressures from the elites. Yet others may be cultural or religious in nature — organizing a traditional feast, prayers for an end to the drought, and a big party, just to have a good time.

It is to be noted that very few development policies adopts these participatory approaches. Many restrict participation to one or two ways.

In 1970s, the idea of Participatory Action Research (PAR) was advocated to be instituted into development process. Even organizations like World Bank advocated developments that concerned the Basic Needs and women-centered, targeting the marginalized group. Added to this were academics, most notably Robert Chambers (1983), who argued that ‘putting the last first’ was the only way to achieve rural development (Mohan, 2008). Since then the acceptance of participation has become widespread.

However, experts and practitioners agree that the fourth approach – participation in decision-making – is the effective and important approach to follow. This approach literally empowers local people in decision-making and derives the benefits of developments through it. At the same time, the people acquire problem-solving skills and acquire full ownership of projects — two important elements which will contribute towards securing the sustained development of their community (Yoon, 1996).

In order to foster information and knowledge sharing, trust and commitment, and a right attitude in development projects, participation is very important in any decision-making process (Servaes & Malikaho, 2007). Therefore the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, chaired by the late Sean MacBride, argues that “this calls for a new attitude for overcoming stereotyped thinking and to promote more understanding of diversity and plurality, with full respect for the dignity and equality of peoples living in different conditions and acting in different ways” (MacBride, 1980, p. 254; Servaes & Malikhao, 2007).

There are two major approaches to participatory communication. The first is the dialogical pedagogy of Paulo Freire (1970, 1983, 1994), and the second involves the ideas of access, participation and self-management articulated in the UNESCO debates of the 1970s (Berrigan, 1979; Servaes, 1996). Although most of the literature in participatory communication is concerned with the nature of communication through the use of mass media as main communication tools, this thesis draws heavily on the Paulo Freire’s “theory of dialogical communication and action” (Servaes, 1996). Freire’s entire philosophy of education and its orientation towards participation are based on the notion that the historical vocation of human beings is to be free from the shackles of material and psychological oppression, and from the patterns of life that are imposed from above and do not provide for the involvement of people in the processes of change (Thomas, 1994). And the liberation of both the individual and the community comes through a self-sustained effort through growth in individual awareness and community consciousness evolving through a process of learning (ibid).

This model of participatory communication “argue that the point of departure must be the community” (Servaes & Malikhao, 2007). It is at the community level that the problems of living conditions are discussed and interactions with other communities are initiated (ibid). Within marginalized communities, there is tremendous untapped potential to use communication for collective good (CFSC, 2008). When people most affected by social inequity have the confidence and abilities to access, manage and control the processes, tools and content of communication, development efforts are more sustainable and effective (CFSC, 2008). It is also indicative of an urgent need to deal with the consequences of underdevelopment and to involve citizens in meaningful interactions with message makers and governments (Legakane 1997; Kasongo 1996; Tomaselli, 1997).

Servaes and Malikhao (2007) state that the most developed form of participation is self-management. They argue that this principle implies the right to participation in the planning and production of media content. However, they add that one of the fundamental hindrances to the decision to adopt the participation strategy is the threat to existing hierarchies. Yet, participation must prevail in the sense that the “viewpoint of the local people is considered before the resources for development projects are allocated and distributed and that their suggestions for changes in the policy are taken into consideration” (Servaes & Malikhao, 2007).

Participatory communication for development is based on the premise that development programs would be relevant, effective and sustainable, provided people are actively involved in the programs (Chitnis, 2005). Servaes (1996, p.78) mentions in his work that the Freirian argument works by a dual theoretical strategy. Servaes then explain these two theories as follows:

Freire insists that subjugated peoples must be treated as fully human subjects in any political process. This implies dialogical communication and action.

Although inspired to some extent by Sartre's existentialism - a respect for the autonomous personhood of each human being, the more important source is a theology that demands respect for otherness - in this case that of another human being. The second strategy is a moment of Utopian hope derived from the early Marx that the human species have a destiny which is more than a fulfillment of material needs. Also from Marx is an insistence on collective solutions. Individual opportunity, Freire stresses, is no solution to general situations of poverty and cultural subjugation.

According to Chitnis (2005), Paulo Freire's theory of participatory communication is drawn on constructs such as conscientization, empowerment and power. In simple words, development must include the knowledge of the beneficiaries, distribution of power, and empowering actors through the use of communication. Freire believes that individuals have the capacity for reflection, for conceptualizing, for critical thinking, for making decisions, for planning and social change (Servaes, 1996). It is the consciousness and the action on consciousness that was emphasized in conscientization. This idea evolved from Paulo Freire's (1970/1998) theory of education for liberation that both the subject (teacher) – object (student) dualism needs to be replaced with a subject-object duality, that is both the teacher and the student can learn from each other through a process of dialogue (Chitnis, 2005). This leads to contend that actors or the people who are considered passive targets of development, indeed, do possess and create knowledge about their own situation and development. However, these people are one way or other not

allowed to exercise their agency by the prevailing systems of the particular country or community. Thus, the principle of actors as knowledgeable agents and understanding the co-existence of agency and structure as a duality, and not as a dualism can explain the centrality of the assumption of knowledge as used in the participatory approach.

In order to realize the significance of conscientization, people need to be empowered to do so. Therefore for Freire, empowerment comes in the form of liberation through education, which allows people to overcome the oppression they face from subjects who are more powerful (Chitnis, 2005). Empowerment is often understood in the context of power. Chitnis (2005) elaborates on this by stating that it refers to the ability to have control over making decisions about issues and situations that affects ones lives. He further delineates that empowerment in participatory communication has been operationalized as the process of sensitizing people, especially the marginalized and the oppressed, of their circumstances.

And the third construct of Freire's participatory communication is power. Power is the transformative capacity held by collectives or elites to bring about some change which is in the interest of the collectives (Giddens, 1984; Chitnis, 2005). Participation involves the more equitable sharing of both political and economic power, which often decreases the advantage of groups in power (Servaes, 1996). Due to the complex nature of power, the need to control and the structures of dependency true participation or equal sharing of resources has not been seen even in most participatory social change interventions (Melkote, 2000; Chitnis, 2005). Though the participatory communication emphasizes on the dual process of decision-making and empowering the targets of development, yet in doing so it has to work within the existing power structures that actually operates in the system.

Today communication for development is a well contended subject in development studies. The debate seems to boil down to the fact that development paradigm such as participatory communication can be applied differently according to the given context and situation. Servaes (2007, p.5) calls this “a multiplicity of approaches based on the context and the basic, felt needs, as well as the empowerment of the most oppressed sectors of various societies at divergent levels.” He further notes that in contrast to the more economically and politically oriented approach in the traditional perspectives on sustainable development, the central idea in alternative, more culturally oriented versions is that there is no universal development model which leads to sustainability to all levels of society and the world, that development is an integral, multidimensional and dialectic process that can differ from society to society, community to community, context to context. This means that each society or community can have their own way of development for sustainability.

However, communication has stood out to be a major stimulus for many development projects. Although the idea of using communication for development itself went through several changes in its paradigm, the evolving models of communication keeps bettering the development initiatives. The emphasis now is more on the process of communication (i.e. the exchange of meaning) and on the significant of this process (i.e. the social relationships created by communication and the social institutions and context which results from such relationships) (Servaes, 2007). The exchange of meaning in communication is becoming more and more a two-way process between the development entities and the targets of development. As a result, the focus moves from a communicator-centric to a more receiver-centric orientation, with the resultant emphasis on meaning sought and ascribed rather than

information transmitted (Servaes, 2007). Communication is seen as fundamentally two-way rather than one-way, interactive and participatory rather than linear (Servaes, 2007).

Where typically top-down approaches were used to in the past to communicate directions and even obligations for change, it is now generally recognized that change can be installed sustainably when all stakeholders are involved and have a say in the planning process for strategies to be applied (Fliert, 2007). For instance, a sustainable land project in a community would entail the participation of various stakeholders of the community otherwise one farmer's way of managing his/her land would constrain the management of the neighbour's field. Therefore, empowering the various stakeholders especially the sidelined actors in development like peasant farmers is important. Empowerment has become increasingly crucial for farmers who face a variety of contending forces related to technology, politics, world markets, and society, which can marginalize them if they are not proactive (Fliert, 2007). In a review of current trends and models aimed at sustainability used in rural Asia, Fliert (2007) draws on the concept of farmer field school (FFS), designed based on the principles of non-formal education, which builds on the concept that adults learn optimally from real-life experiences through observation, experimentation and analysis under circumstances that are relevant to them. Fliert also found that FFS emphasizes group learning as the basis for local problem solving – building on farmers' own experiences and experimentation – and further collective decision making and action. Fliert stresses that the effectiveness of FFS model towards its capacity to increase knowledge, enhance critical skills, and serve as a platform for

collective action. Such is an example of participatory development communication applied in particular context.

Ritchie (2007) draws on a case study of a community development project in Thailand to assess the presence of participatory communication among the various stakeholders of the project. The Community Organizations Network Support (CORNS) Project was an institutional strengthening and community development initiative. Surprisingly, Ritchie found that, towards the end of the first year of the project, it became apparent that key project stakeholders did not possess a shared understanding of the goals and objectives of the program. As a result, one of the communication strategies used to improve stakeholder understanding and participation was appointing a communications officer who went and stayed in project communities trying to connect people with goals, objectives and initiatives of the project. Ritchie reports that the interpersonal communication between the communications officer as the carrier of motives of development agents and the community was two-way: the communications officer could use it as a way of disseminating information about project directions and expectations of the pilot sites, while the communities could communicate their experiences and concerns.

In a historical account of a participatory communication use, Mezzana (1996, p.187) narrates the following story:

The town of Rufisque, in Senegal, has been experiencing for many years an acute problem of beach erosion produced by an advancing sea. To cope with this hazard, the population of the most severely threatened quarters mobilized themselves with the financial and logistical support of three NGOs (two Italian and one Senegalese). Contrary to a consolidated practice in the sphere of

international cooperation for development, the three organizations, instead of planning and coordinating the work on their own, decided to seek out local traditional leaders to discuss the problems and their solutions.

Having decided on the general lines of action, local communication networks were put into action; the traditional leaders convened appropriate meetings with the population to discuss alternative courses of action. In a relatively short time, a simple but efficacious dam was constructed using stones and metal gabions provided by the three NGOs.

Chitnis (2005) conducted a case study to assess participatory communication in the Comprehensive Rural Health Project (CRHP) in India. His investigation drew on using Freirean principles of dialogic communication and problem posing. His study found that by rendering collective knowledge creation and peer learning people can become learned and conscious about their own conditions. As in the project, the repetition of health information on a weekly basis during training ensured that even illiterate people, women in this instance, can become health promoters. At another level the researcher also found that rendering the community organizing through active participation created an enabling environment for change. The study reported that the communities were formed by breaking caste barriers and by using social organizing during events such as sports and weddings. He further adds that it is through such dialogue that community needs are assessed and the facilitators are able to actively seek participation by all concerned people.

Studies on participatory communication and communicative action are also carried out by researchers. One such study that draws much on both the theories of participatory communication and the communicative action is conducted by Jacobson

(2004). He administered a survey study to test the communicative action variables like validity claims and speech conditions to predict an outcome of democratic legitimacy. In a context where students were surveyed to assess their positions on the legitimacy of the state's decision to raise tuition, it was found that communicative action conditions did predict the outcome.

Puri and Sahay (2003) conducted a study to assess the need for integrating disparate knowledge systems around GIS-based applications to mitigate land degradation, and the facilitating role of participation in achieving such integration. They argued that such participatory processes can be effectively enabled through communicative action whilst taking into consideration the historically existing power asymmetries. The Habermasian Ideal Speech Situation (IDS) provides a conceptual framework to argue how such communicative action can be enabled. They found significant correlation between the communicative action and the outcome that was being studied.

The above evidences and research builds much ground to contend that Bhutan's goal of gross national happiness which aims to bring real development coupled with spiritual and emotional wellbeing of the people could use participatory communication in implementing the goals.

Theoretical Orientation

Applied to Bhutanese context, the theory of participatory development communication holds very relevant method to realize the Bhutan's goal of Gross National Happiness. Decades of historical changes and institution building makes appropriate ground for participatory development communication to come into play. Bhutan embarked on the path to modernization and development by initiating the first socio-economic

development plan in 1961 (GNH Commission, 2009). In 1971, the Planning Commission was instated as an independent body to formulate overall development strategies and coordinate sectoral activities, policies and programs, and formulate Five-Year Plans and programs. These structural framework for development was top-down and at macro-level.

Down the line, the fourth King Jigme Singye Wangchuck commanded several institutional and structural changes of decision-making “to ensure greater decentralization in decision-making process” (GNH Commission, 2009). Reaching right to the heart of grassroots was the policy of local development program called Gewog Yargay Tsogchung (GYT) (block development committee) instituted in 1991. Such structural changes in decision-making created the room for people’s participation in addressing their needs without any institutional barriers.

Decades later, in 2008, the planning commission was renamed as Gross National Happiness Commission. Its main function is “to ensure that GNH is embedded firmly into policies and that proper coordination is undertaken to ensure proper implementation of plans and programs” (GNH Commission, 2009). By declaring the ambitious pursuit of happiness as the goal of national development, the conventional development paradigms radically based on extensive economic activities are challenged. In such case the structural changes of development processes alone cannot suffice to achievement of the overarching goal of happiness. As stated in the policy framework, “the GNH-ization of plans and policies will be focused on the immediate tasks of promoting the following objectives” (GNH Commission, 2009):

- Our people - investing in the nation’s greatest asset
- Harmonious living - in harmony with tradition and nature

- Effective and good governance
- Developing a dynamic economy as the foundations for a vibrant democracy

The challenge is ever more and demanding. And Bhutan must consider every means possible to achieve the desired goal of development. The fact that the difficult terrains of Bhutanese landscape have placed the people's settlement to become rural and remote has challenged the development efforts. For instance, the Household Income and Expenditure Survey undertaken in 2000 revealed that there is significant gap of poverty incidence between rural and urban areas. The overriding reason is, of course, "because reaching development policies to these far-flung remote places is tough" (Acharya, 2006). In a sense, rural development should not be seen as welfare programme. It is an integral part of the broad based economic growth, sustainable management of natural resources, employment generation, infrastructure building and developing rural areas as production centre for the increasing number of urban consumers.

Although there has been good strengthening of government institutions, the core issue of strengthening and energizing the effective participation of targets of development (people) in development processes is not supported by any evidence of sort. In this context, the role of communication that would integrate the motives of both the government and people can be of strategic importance. The integrated mechanism at national and local levels can help the government to facilitate, coordinate and regulate these institutions in participatory development and solving several rural problems like self employment generation, product development and marketing of products.

The dynamics of communication between government and people can help to improve accountability, transparency and good governance in public development programs. The two-way communication processes can cater to constant and timely flow of information which in turn will help the policy makers to address the problems and achieve targets.

In a consultation meeting leading up to the preparation of the 10th Five-Year Plan, development agents identified “three main issues - priority and strategies, the new planning approach and monitoring and evaluation mechanism to be adopted for the Tenth Plan” (Choden, 2006). Such issues seek better ways of development. From various approaches deliberated, an “important aspect of the new planning approach was full autonomy given to the dzongkhags and gewogs to set their own needs and priorities without interference from the centre” (Choden, 2006). This calls for the direct participation of the targets of development themselves into the decision-making and development implementation processes. In keeping with the Royal Government’s participatory approach to development, the Tenth Plan shall be formulated through a consultative and participatory process with relevant stakeholders (Planning Commission, 2006).

One of the strategic tenets of the 10th Five-Year Plan states to build institutional and human capacity of dzongkhags and gewogs through transfer of competent and qualified human resources, equipped with necessary mandates, authority, and incentives. Yet, the participatory development must also consider the empowerment and involvement of people who are the main targets of development. People must be given ample freedom and power to raise their needs and issues concerning their welfare and quality of life. People are best judge of themselves to see

what they need for development. The point is, there should be a two-way communication process between the change agents and the people for better development strategies.

In the latest move towards empowering local government, the civil servants' pay raise laid importance on the raising salaries of local leaders. The Prime Minister of Bhutan was quoted saying, "we gave 45 percent (raise) to local government since we attach importance to supporting decentralisation and raising local governance" (Lamzang, 2009). Such moves points to the government's desperate measures to find the best approach to development.

In all the evidences spread into bits and pieces, one palpable thing to be noted is the direction of Bhutan government's development mechanism that is building up to people-centered development. And the anticipation is ever growing amongst the people. One challenge, (prime minister of Bhutan) added, was that now the boss was not an understanding King but an impatient public (Dorji, 2009).

While attempting to use participatory communication for development in Bhutanese context, it also appears relevant to engage Jurgen Habermas' theory of communicative action. Thus, this study seeks to employ communicative as another communication variable to be tested in relation to people's happiness and socio-economic status. In communicative action, the objective is to achieve mutual consensus, common understanding of norms, meanings and values and to maintain social relationships through formal or informal communication (Puri & Sahay, 2003). It focuses...on facilitating participatory communication (Jacobson, 2004). In communicative action, actors are conceived as seeking an understanding in regard to

some practical situation confronting them, in order to coordinate their actions consensually (White, 1988; Polanyi, 2002).

According to White (1988) the process of communicative action requires that (Polanyi, 2002):

1. Each subject is allowed to *participate* in discourse.
2. Each is allowed to *introduce* any proposal, or express any attitude, wish or need.
3. Each is allowed to *question* any proposal or position.
4. No speaker is hindered by *compulsion* from making use of the rights above.

Puri and Sahay (2002) draws on the typology of human actions categorized by Habermas is: purposive-rational (which may be instrumental or strategic), communicative and discursive. These various aspects of human actions are then nicely defined by them in the following:

Instrumental action is aimed at the object (agent) to act as per sender's (actor's) dictates and needs, agent being assumed as passive or inanimate recipient. The success of this type of action is derived from empirical technical knowledge. The top-down, externally-driven approaches to participatory development, and also to systems development, conform to this type of action. Open strategic action aims at controlling another rational actor's response but provides a certain degree of leeway to the recipient actor to act otherwise. It is based on the knowledge of social settings and values, and the degree to which the desired outcome is achieved. Participatory development modes in which the beneficiaries/ end-users are actively involved in defining the agenda of development fall under this type of action. In communicative action, the objective is to achieve mutual consensus, common understanding of norms,

meanings and values and to maintain social relationships through formal or informal communication. Discursive communication aims at undertaking cooperative efforts among communities to unveil the pros and cons of an action based on the criteria of clarity, veracity, sincerity and social responsibility.

Habermas's theory of communicative action provides a framework that matches the principles of dialogical communication of Paulo Freire. The communication and, thereby, the subsequent actions taken through it enables the mutual understanding and consensus in a communication process. It is the action oriented towards understanding which form the major aspect of participatory communication.

Theory of communicative action has several constructs that apply in a dialogical process. Validity claims and speech conditions are two main aspects of communicative action. Jacobson (2004) elaborates concisely the conceptual framework of Jurgen Habermas's theory communicative action in his work:

Validity Claims. Action oriented toward understanding, communicative action strictly speaking, is understood in relation to reciprocal expectations that underlie human communication. These are claims to the assumed validity of communicative behaviors, or utterances, and are called validity claims. On Habermas's view, speech acts are exchanged with the presumption that utterances are: 1) true, 2) normatively appropriate, 3) sincere, and 4) comprehensible. And they are received with this expectation. These expectations are usually of an unconscious nature, and such unconscious expectations are what make possible the coordination of behavior among individuals.

Speech Conditions. The theory analyzes acts of reaching understanding at length, with particular regard for speech conditions that must obtain for action to be communicative. Habermas explains that participants in communication must be free to “call into question any proposal” ... to “introduce any proposal” ... and to “express any attitudes, wishes, or needs.” There must be a “symmetrical distribution of opportunities to contribute” to discussion. There must be adequate time to arrive at agreement. Outcomes must be determined through “good reasons,” or the “force of the better argument” (Habermas, 1990, pp. 88-89).

Based on the above theories of participatory development communication and communicative action, Bhutan’s massive development goal of Gross National Happiness will be studied. People’s happiness and their level of socio-economic status will be related to these two communication theories. In the following arguments, the role of participatory communication is put into appropriate context of development by gathering the historical evidence and the current practices of development that considers the important role of participatory communication for development.

Hence, this study also poses some research hypothesis based on the participatory communication and communicative action in relation to people’s happiness and socio-economic status.

Research Hypotheses

- H1: The participatory development communication has a positive relationship with people’s happiness.
- H2: Communicative action has a positive relationship with people’s happiness.

H3: The level of socio-economic status has a positive relationship with people's happiness.

H4a: The level of socio-economic status has a positive relationship with participatory development communication.

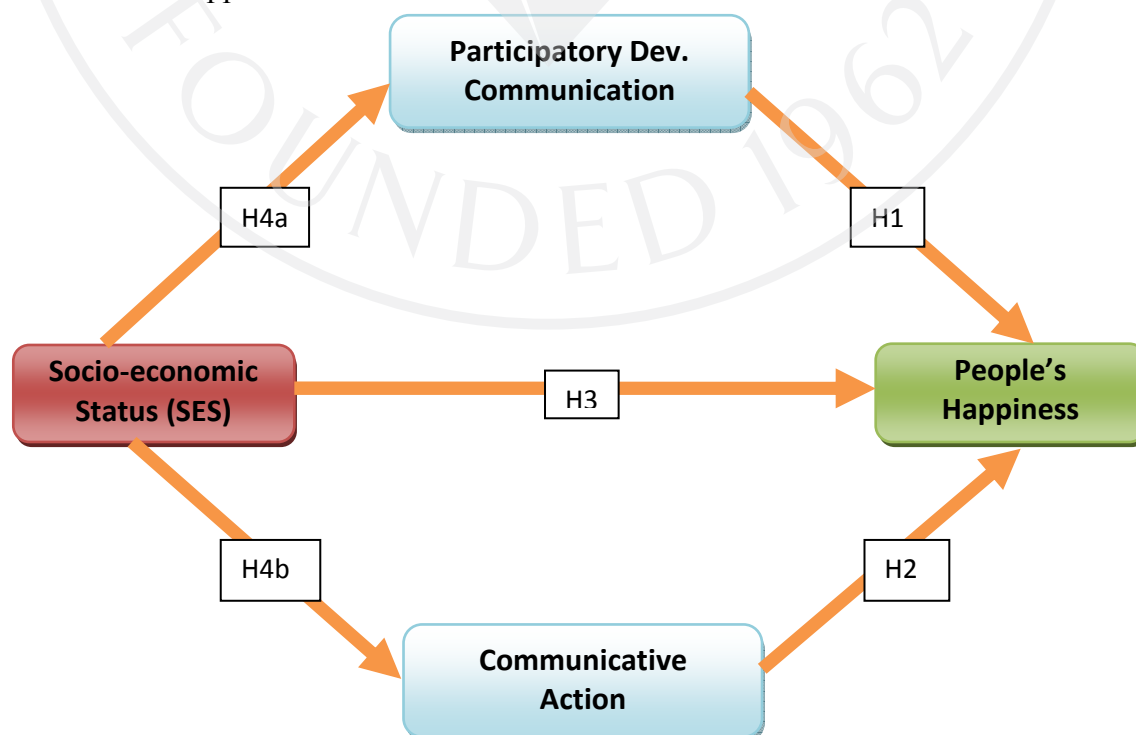
H4b: The level of socio-economic status has a positive relationship with communicative action.

H5a: Controlled for the level of socio-economic status, participatory development communication has a significant relationship with people's happiness.

H5b: Controlled for socio-economic status, communicative action has a significant relationship with people's happiness.

H6: Controlled for participatory development communication and communicative action, the level of socio-economic status has a significant relationship with people's happiness.

Figure 1: The Conceptual Model of Communication, Socio-economic and People's Happiness



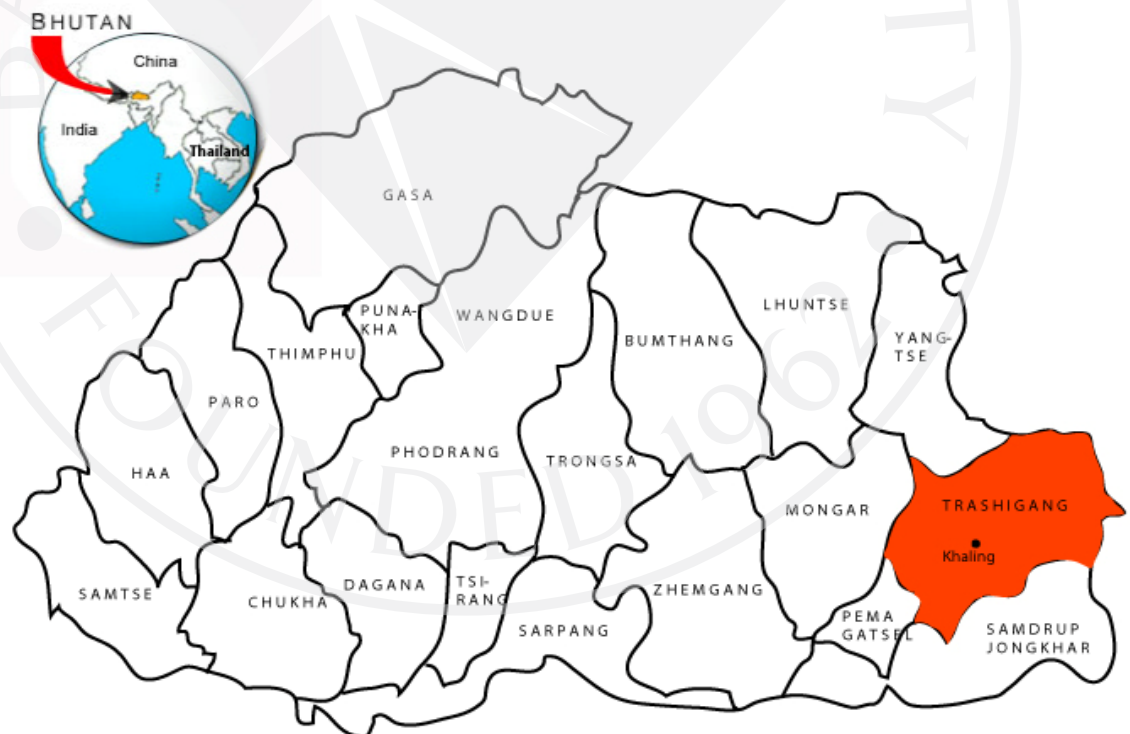
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Location of the Research

The study will be conducted in Bhutan. The study is concerned with studying the participatory development communication (along with the communicative action) and people's happiness in a Bhutanese community. Therefore, the researcher has chosen a community in Eastern Bhutan.

Figure 2: Map Showing the Study Site in Bhutan



The highlighted area on the map is Trashigang District in Eastern Bhutan where the study site is located. The study place will be the Khaling Gewog (block) community roughly dotted on the shaded area as shown in Figure 2..

Population and Sampling

Considerations were made with preconceived characteristics of population of the current study and the context. The target respondents of the study will be entirely the rural populace of the particular Bhutanese community. A larger community of Khaling Gewog will be chosen. Rural Bhutanese are often considered the illiterate and farmers. A decision to choose the research field was based in the view of such characteristics of the respondents.

Given the geography of the research site and the population thereby, a stratification sampling method will be used. Weisberg, Krosnick & Bowen (1996) describes stratifying as dividing the population into small, manageable chunks and randomly sampling from each chunk. They further notes that stratification requires knowing all population members' status on the stratifying variable prior to the sampling. Therefore, the population of this research will be stratified into three various groups of socio-economic status: high, medium and low. The sample will be chosen randomly from such levels of socioeconomic status of the people. An estimated 400 samples will be interviewed.

Measurement of Variables

This thesis employs the analytical survey study to measure the variables and infer the relationships among them. There are three variables to be measured. The independent variables are socio-economic status and participatory development communication. Happiness is the independent variable. The data will be collected through a survey questionnaire consisting of closed-ended questions. These questions are divided into four parts as the following:

People's Happiness

The concept of happiness has taken on various meanings across various scholarships. This thesis defines the happiness deriving from the definition of Bhutan's development philosophy of Gross National Happiness (GNH). GNH is made operational by identifying nine indicators of happiness. They are: Standard of living, health of an individual, education, eco-system diversity and vitality, cultural diversity and vitality, time use and balance, good governance, community vitality and emotional wellbeing.

Two items measure standard of living. Asking the respondents to describe their status of family, in terms of wealth, in the community and how their household income meets their family's needs, gives the required data.

Two items measure health of an individual. A respondent is asked to rate his/her health status on the scale of excellent/very good, good, or fair/poor. Another question posits their feeling that the health of an individual is important for the wellbeing of the society.

Education aspect of happiness tries to find out whether the education his/her children get is applicable in their day-to-day life. On the contrary, the respondent is asked to give their opinion on the relation of education with their community status and wellbeing.

Eco-system diversity and vitality measures the relationship of man with the nature and how that connection brings harmony and happiness. The first item of this scale asks the respondents to give their opinion on the benefits of the forests surrounding them in the community. The next item measures their opinion to protect the environment for the harmonious wellbeing of both men and other species.

Four items measure the cultural diversity and vitality of the happiness. The items measure the importance of upholding one's traditions, valuing parent-children relationships, marital ethics, and participation in one's cultural festivals.

Time use and balance is operationalized by asking the respondent's use of time between work-related and leisure and the proper management of time able to full the important works.

Good governance is measure by assessing the respondent's ratings on the performance of their local leaders and their opinion on the new system of democratic government instituted a year ago.

Two item scale measures the community vitality. The feeling of care by the members of the community towards an individual and the communal resolution towards common problems are used to operationalize the scale.

And lastly, emotional wellbeing is measured by three item scale. These items assesses the general emotional mood swings and the spiritual take on life.

The questionnaire is given at the end.

Participatory Development Communication

The section two of the questionnaire operationalizes the participatory communication. Twelve items make up this section under three sub-categories. Conceptually, participatory development communication consists of constructs like conscientization, empowerment, and power.

Conscientization concerns what knowledge people possess about their own social circumstances and their awareness of the need of development to solve their problems. Five items measure conscientization. The knowledge of people is operationalized by asking their ability to know what problems their community faces,

their ability to have solutions to the problems, their ability to relate development to their needs, their ability to say how their community resources could be good for development, and their understanding to hold their views important while government makes development decisions.

The next construct for participatory development communication is empowerment. This construct is measured based on the bestowed rights and appropriate power for the people to raise their issues and have a say in the development decision-making. Three items measure this construct which stretches from assessing people's view of whether they are given due to say anything in decision-making to being empowered to make decisions over the matters concerning their community.

A three-item scale measures the power. Power is the third construct of participatory communication. This scale is quite subtle in the sense it tries to measure inherent power play in the decision-making process. To some extent, this might assess the bureaucracy and hierarchical forces in the process of decision-making. The scales assesses the influential powers of leaders in decision-making, the inferiority-feeling of the grassroots, and the feeling that government decides almost everything for the community.

These items are measured on the 5-point Likert scale ratings. These are: 5-strongly agree, 4-agree, 3-neutral 2-disagree, and 1-strongly disagree. A completed questionnaire is given at the end.

Socio-economic Status and Demographics

As defined earlier, the "socio-economic status (SES) is an economic and sociological combined total measure of a person's work experience and of an

individual's or family's economic and social position relative to others, based on income, education, and occupation" (Wikipedia, 2009). Besides this, the demographic information will help provide the clear information on respondents.

This section is operationalized by providing seven items in the questionnaire. Three items will gather demographic data like sex, age and marital status.

Another four items will report their socio-economic status (SES). The education aspect of SES data will be gathered by asking, what is the highest level of education the respondent completed? The typical Bhutanese educational experiences are given for respondents to match their status or provide the information if not included. These educational experiences are: Non-formal education, monastic education, vocational, class, diploma, degree and above, and not applicable.

The next component of SES, that is, income is measured by asking the question: What is your monthly income? A choice of income ranges are given to be matched with the respondent's earning. A general range of income of the target samples are estimated to be: Below Nu. 1,000; Nu. 1,000 – 5,000; Nu. 5,000 – 10,000; Nu. 10,000 – 15,000; Nu. 15,000 and above.

Next, data on respondent's current occupation will be collected. A list of occupation is provided for respondents to match with their status, such as: Unemployed, farmer, trader (trading/shopkeeper/businessman), student (including vocational training institutions, trainings), civil servant, party worker, gomchen/anim, monk, or others (respondent is requested to specify their other occupation).

The last item of this section is question asking the strength of respondent's household. This would provide the data to analyze the number of people in a household at par to their living standard.

A completed questionnaire is given at the end.

Communicative Action

Section three measures the communicative action. Habermas's theory of communicative action emphasizes the importance of communication in reaching towards the mutual consensus.

These constructs are operationalized as follows:

Validity Claims

Truth: The degree to which the respondents felt the other person was correct or right.

The two-item scale measures people's believability in their local leaders and the trust based on speaking truth.

Appropriateness: The degree to which the respondents felt the other person was sincere. This construct is measure by two items that assess the image of local leaders in a manner appropriate to the people and the appropriateness of people's view during decision-making.

Comprehension: The degree to which the respondents felt that they understood what the people's ability to understand the development policies conveyed to them by their leaders and the discussions and decisions made for the development. This is measure by two items on the questionnaire asking whether the person understood the development policies communicated to them by their leaders and whether they understood whatever is being discussed in a community meeting for development decision-making.

Sincerity measures the degree to which the development leaders acts sincerely in the process of decision-making. This is measured by two questions asking whether

an individual thinks that his/her local leaders were sincere in their act and also whether the people of the community where he/she belongs were sincere too.

Speech Conditions

Symmetric opportunities: The degree to which the respondents felt free in having equal opportunity to raise questions. This is measured by two items asking whether an individual got an equal opportunity to attend any community meetings and whether he/she thinks that the authority gives equal opportunities to all the people of the community to participate in decision-making.

Free to raise any proposition: The degree to which the respondents felt free in raising any proposal or idea they wish for discussion. This is measure with two items asking whether an individual was allowed to say whatever he/she wanted to say in the community gathering or meeting and also whether people in the community could suggest anything that comes to their mind in a decision-making.

Equal treatment of propositions: The degree to which the respondents felt their proposal would be treated equally to others' viewpoints. This is measured by two items asking whether an individual felt his/her views were considered equally with others and whether the members of community felt equal to speak in decision-making.

A completed questionnaire is given at the end.

Data Collection

The data collection is perhaps the difficult task of this research given the presupposed characteristics of the target respondents. A great deal of interpretation and translation of questionnaires will have to be done for the target respondents to get the best of their responses. People of all sample villages are mostly ethnic Sharshop,

which is the native dialect of eastern Bhutan and the most spoken dialect in the country.

At the official level, data collection for any kind of research must comply with the directives of the National Statistical Bureau, Royal Government of Bhutan. The researcher will obtain the written permission from NSB for conducting the research data collection. Such consent can only be possible after submitting the details of the research to the authority. At another level, the researcher must also seek consent of Home Ministry of Royal Government of Bhutan to conduct research on the chosen community of Bhutan. Given the bureaucracy and protocol of the Bhutanese government, the researcher has to obtain the written permission to conduct the research in the given community. Such consent will further direct the local leaders and the target respondents to cooperate with the researcher.

Once at the field, a proper orientation on the research has to be conducted with local leaders and target respondents alike substantiated by the approval documents attained from the government and concerned authorities. The data collection is expected to last for about a month.

Data Analysis

Validity

The validity of the instrument will be determined by the degree and direction of correlation across the scoring items used to measure the variables. The responses, after scoring, will be converted to standard scores as stated before. The standard score will then be used to compute the Pearson's product-moment by SPSS formula. But before any such statistical validity test is rendered, the instruments will be submitted to the research advisor for necessary face validity.

Reliability

The reliability or internal consistency of the partially new scale of the current research will be determined by Reliability Analysis computed by SPSS program. The reliability coefficients will be stated in terms of Cronbach's alpha denoted by symbol (r).

Hypotheses Testing

The main purpose of this study is to find if there exists any positive relationship between participatory communication and people's happiness. Yet, the main hypothesis is supported several other alternative hypotheses. Since the analysis of the data will be explanatory: "to understand the cause of people's beliefs, attitudes and behavior" (Weisberg, Krosnick & Bowen, 1996). Therefore, causal hypotheses are posited to find the relationship between the variables. The testing of a causal explanation requires four steps (ibid):

1. Checking to see whether the variables are associated with one another,
2. Verifying that change in the presumed cause precedes change in the presumed effect,
3. Eliminating alternative explanations, and,
4. Generating a plausible causal mechanism.

These systematic checking of hypothesis will be rendered by conducting correlation tests between the variables.

For hypothesis one: The participatory development communication has a positive relationship with people's happiness. To test this hypothesis, Pearson's simple correlation coefficient will be conducted through SPSS.

For hypothesis two: Communicative action has a positive relationship with people's happiness. This relationship will also be tested by using Pearson's simple correlation analysis.

For hypothesis three: The level of socio-economic status has a positive relationship with people's happiness. This correlation will be also analyzed by using Pearson's correlation analysis.

For hypothesis 4a: The level of socio-economic status has a positive relationship with participatory development communication. This hypothesis will be analyzed by Pearson's simple correlation.

For hypothesis 4b: The level of socio-economic status has a positive relationship with communicative action. This hypothesis will also be analyzed using Pearson's simple correlation coefficients.

For hypothesis 5a: Controlled for socio-economic status, participatory development communication has a significant relationship with people's happiness. This hypothesis will be analyzed to remove the effects of the intervening variable on the main relationship that this study seeks to find, i.e. between communication and people's happiness. Having removed the effects of the control variable (socio-economic status) from both main variables, we recalculate the correlation between communication and people's happiness. Therefore, a partial correlation analysis will be conducted to test this situation.

For hypothesis 5b: Controlled for the level of socio-economic status, communicative action has a significant relationship with people's happiness. The partial correlation will be used to analyze it.

For hypothesis six: Controlled for participatory development communication and communicative action, SES has a significant relationship with people's happiness. The partial correlation will be used to analyze this situation.



CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

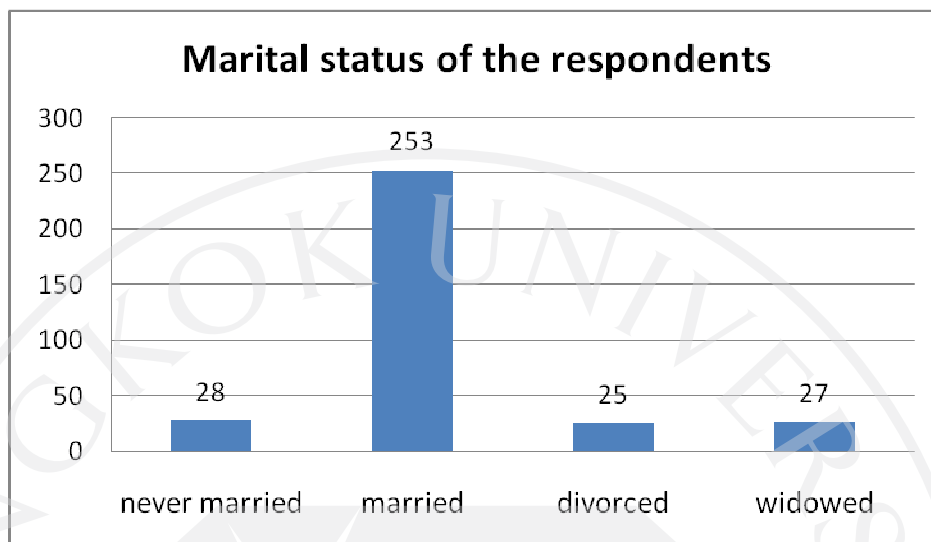
Part 1

Descriptive Analysis

A total of 400 questionnaires were administered for this survey research. However, only 334 were collected. The net percentage of sample size attained was 83.5% of the expected sample size. Among the 334 respondents, 66.1% were females and 33.9% were males. The gap in respondents' gender was accounted for varied reasons. It should be noted that the research site is set in one of the semi-rural areas of eastern Bhutan. Agriculture was a dominant occupation of the people living there. The data collected revealed that 91% of the respondents were farmers. Therefore, during the time of survey administration most of the males were out to work in their fields or not available. As a result, most respondents turned out to be women who stayed back home culturally stereotyped to handle the indoor chores.

The interesting fact about demographics of the respondents is their marital status as shown in Figure 3. Most respondents were "married" and rest belonged to the small percentage of categories that were "never married", "divorced" or "widowed".

Figure 3: Frequency of the Respondents' Marital Status



The age of the respondents also revealed interesting result as shown in Figure 4. The pattern of age is nicely distributed with the mean age at 43.36 and standard deviation of 15.43. In other words, most respondents fell between the age range of roughly 28 years and 59 years.

Figure 4: Frequency of Respondents' Age Group

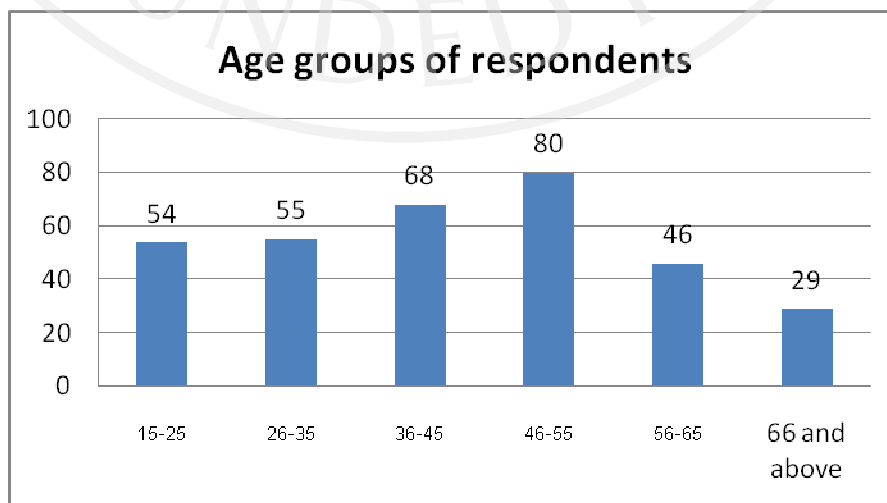


Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of People's Happiness, PDC, CA and SES

	Mean	Std. deviation
People's happiness	63.691	3.318
Participatory Dev, Communication	42.769	4.651
Communicative action	45.610	5.388
Socio-economic status	4.201	1.196

The Table 1 gives a comprehensive result on the four main variables of this study. The standard deviation of the people's happiness is 3.32 which is less than participatory development communication (4.65) and communicative action (5.38). The standard deviation of the level of socio-economic status is 1.19. The data set with the smaller standard deviation has a narrower spread of measurements around the mean and therefore usually has comparatively fewer high or low values (Statistics Canada, 2009).

A selective frequency analysis was conducted for some of the nine dimensions of happiness. The dimensions that showed significant difference in frequencies compared to other dimensions are reported as follows.

The Figure 5 shows the frequencies on an item assessing standard of living which is one of the dimensions of people's happiness. The item asked the respondents

to rate their opinion on the question of how well does their total household income meet their family's everyday needs. The item was rated on three-point scale: not enough, just enough and more than enough. The result shows that majority of respondents (73.9%) reported that their household income is “not enough” to meet their everyday needs.

Figure 5: Frequency of Standard of Living Item

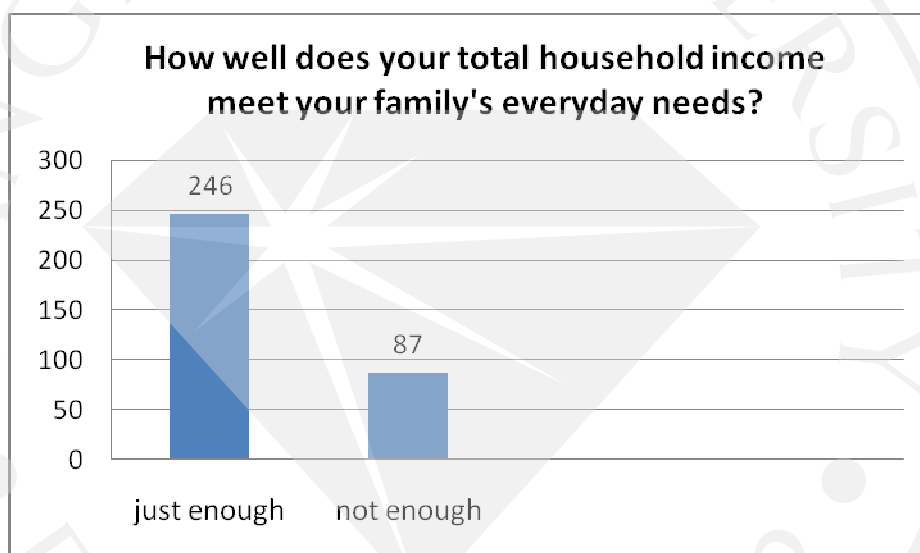
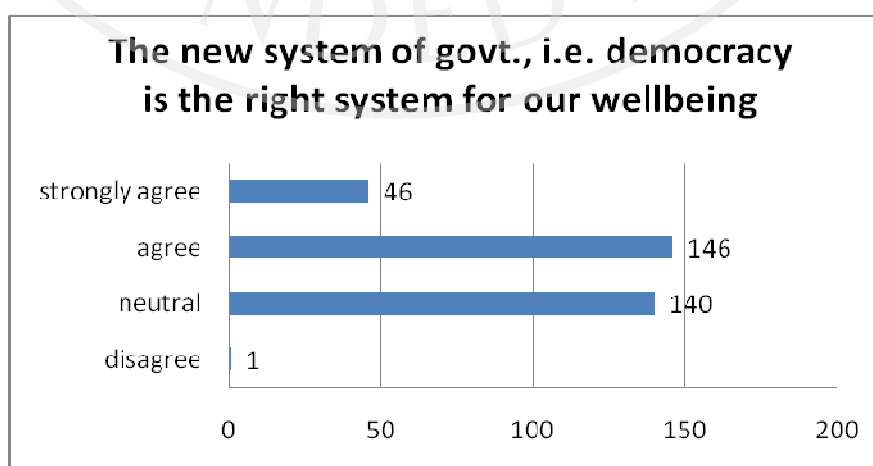
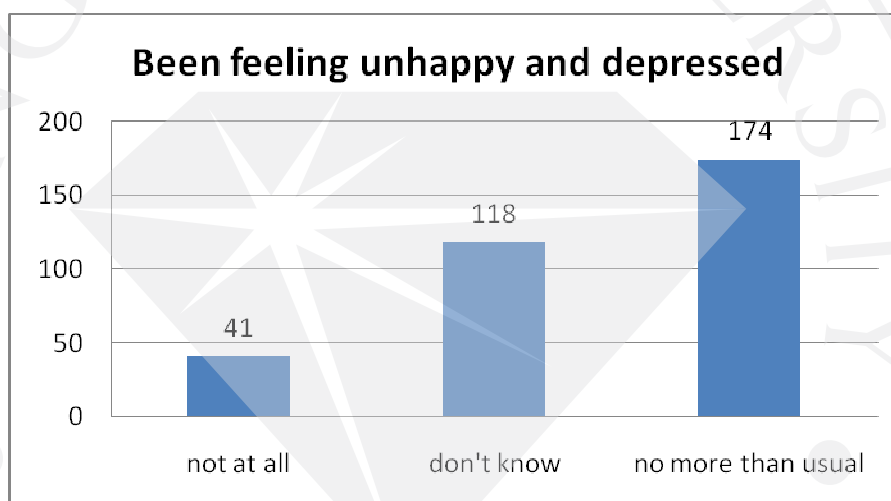


Figure 6: Frequency of Opinion on Democracy as the Right System



Another item that deserves attention for analysis is on good governance which is not only one of the nine dimensions of people's happiness but also is one of the four pillars of gross national happiness. The item analyzed and displayed on Figure 6 asked the respondent to give their opinion of whether the democratic system of governance is a right system for their wellbeing. The responses varied.

Figure 7: Frequency on Respondents' Emotional State



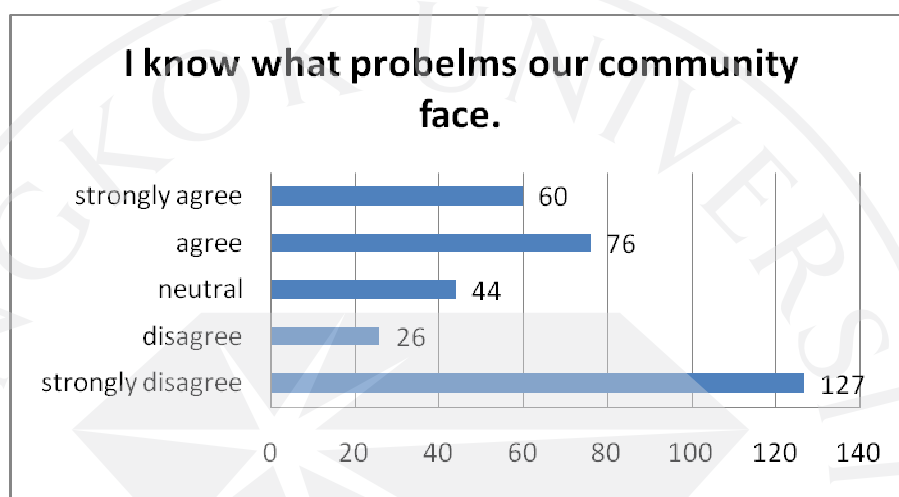
The frequency analysis of an item that assessed the respondents' emotional state revealed significant result as shown in Figure 7. The majority of respondents (52.3%) reported that they haven't been feeling unhappy and depressed. Another notable portion (35.4%) of respondents reported that they "don't know" if they are happy or unhappy.

A frequency analysis was conducted for an item measuring conscientization as the dimension of participatory development communication as shown in Figure 8.

This item asked respondents to rate their opinion on a statement, "I know what

problems our community faces.” Most of the respondents (38.1%) reported that they strongly disagree with the statement.

Figure 8: Frequency of Conscientization Item Measuring PDC



A frequency analysis was conducted for an item measuring empowerment as the dimension of participatory development communication as shown in Figure 9.

This item asked the respondents to rate their opinion on a statement, “the government lets us to decide over issues concerning our community.” The majority of respondents (55%) reported neutral in their opinion.

Figure 9: Frequency of Empowerment Item Measuring PDC

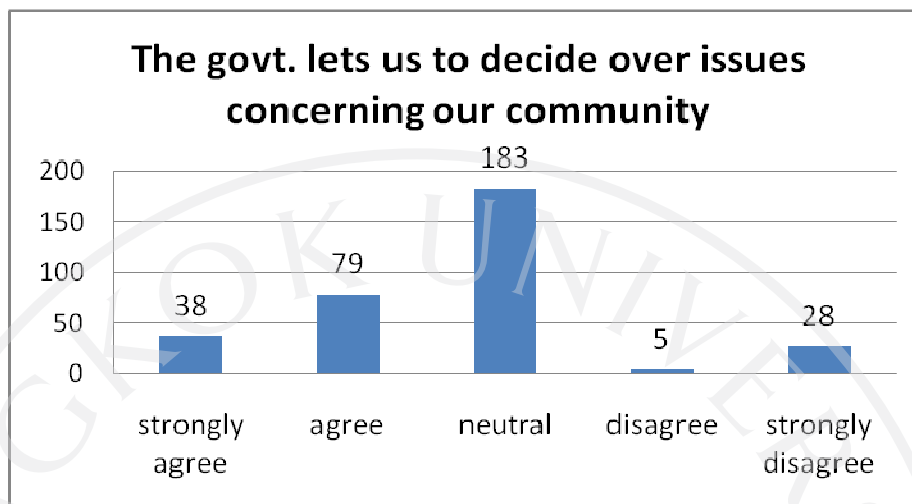
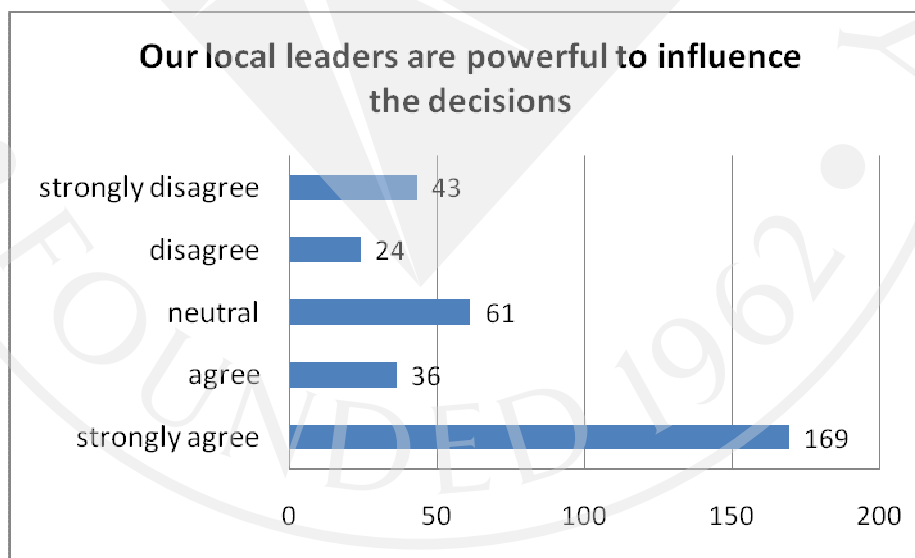


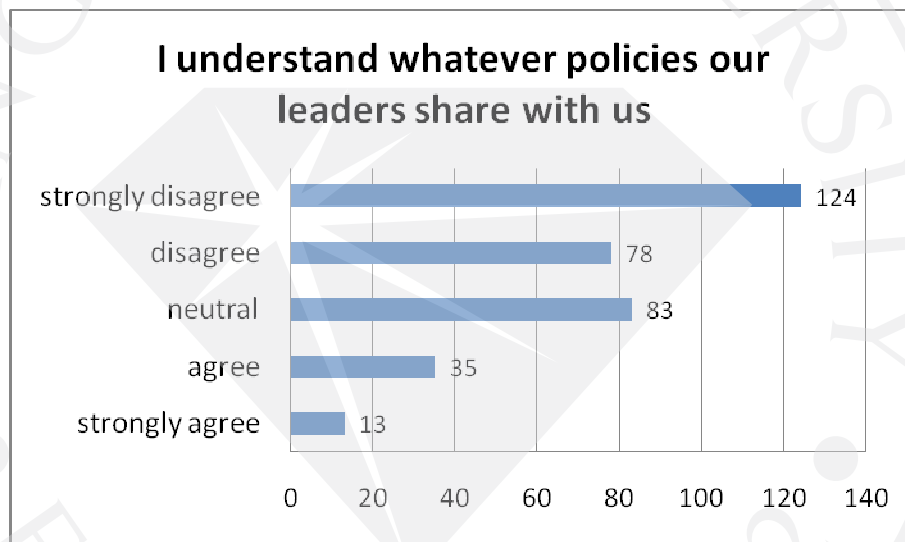
Figure 10: Frequency of Power Item Measuring PDC



The Figure 10 shows the frequency on an item measuring power as the dimension of participatory development communication. The item asked the respondents to rate their opinion on a statement, “our local leaders are powerful to influence the decisions.” Majority of respondents (50.8%) agreed to this statement.

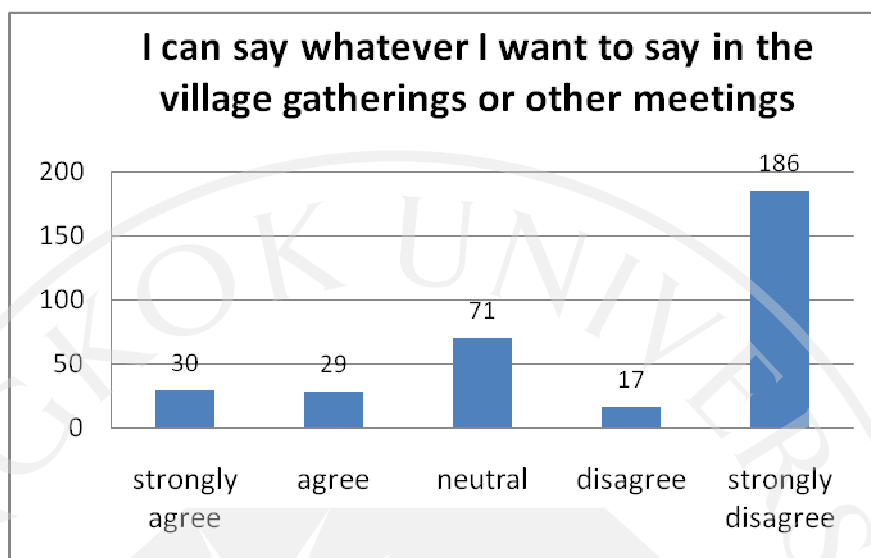
In another frequency analysis as shown in Figure 11, respondents were asked to rate their opinion on the statement, “I understand whatever policies our leaders share with us.” The majority of respondents (37.2%) reported they strongly disagree with the statement. Another notable portion (23.4%) of respondents also disagreed with the statement.

Figure 11: Frequency of Validity Claims Item Measuring CA



A frequency analysis was conducted on an item under the construct of “free to raise any proposition” measuring speech condition which measures communicative action as shown in Figure 12.

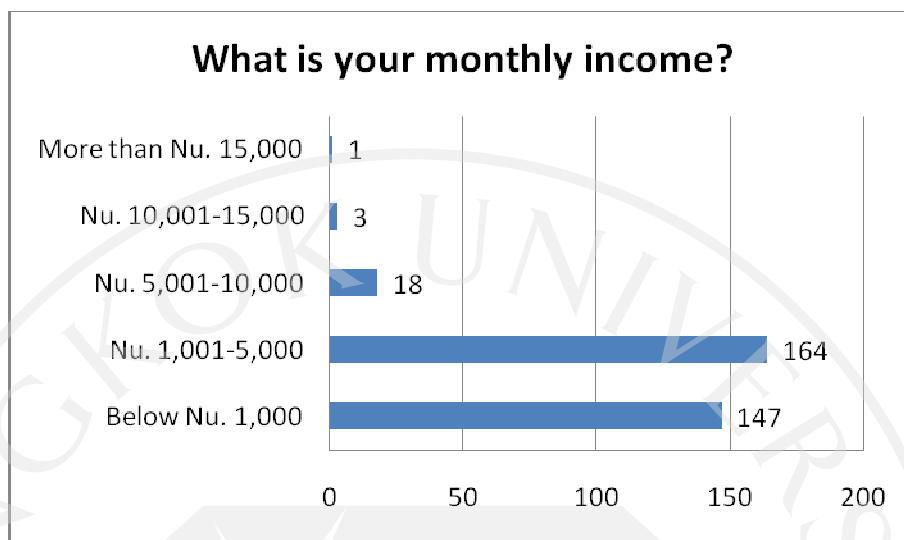
Figure 12: Frequency of Speech Condition Item Measuring CA



The item asked the respondents to rate their opinion on a statement, "I can say whatever I want to say in the village gathering or other meetings." Majority of respondents (55.9%) reported that they strongly disagree with the statement.

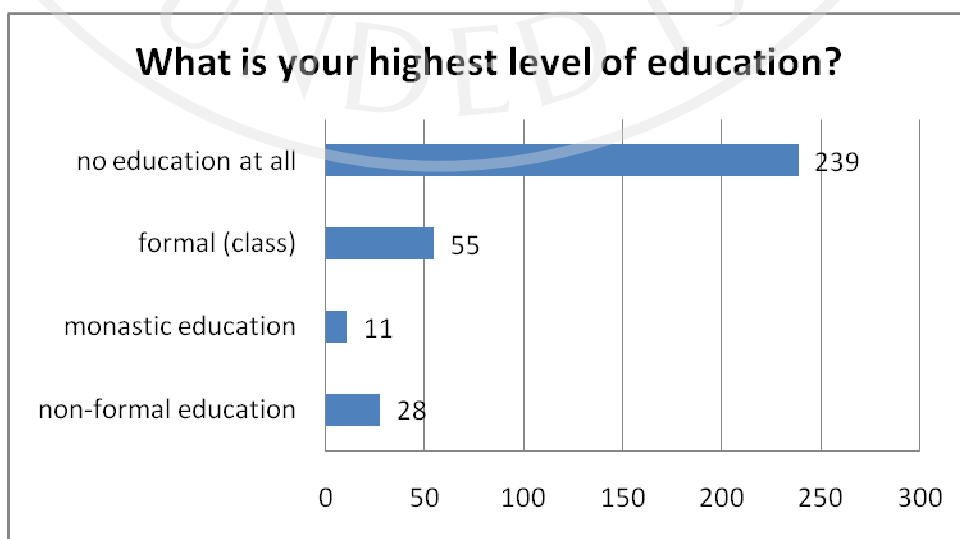
A frequency analysis was also conducted for socio-economic status of the people. Amongst the measures of socio-economic status, the monthly income variable offers good insight regarding income status of people in that Bhutanese community. The result is shown in Figure 13.

Figure 13: Frequency of Monthly Income of the Respondents



The frequency of education level analysis also provides distinct trend in respondents' education as shown in Figure 14. Most of the respondents have no education at all. Some of them who claimed to have got formal education had studies the lower primary levels of schooling.

Figure 14: Frequency of Education Level of the Respondents



Part 2

Index Construction

People's Happiness (GNH) Index Construction

The measurement of people's happiness variable in this study is based on idea of Gross National Happiness (GNH) developed by the Center for Bhutan Studies. GNH is measured by nine dimensions developed by CBS. These nine dimensions are: standard of living, health of an individual, education, eco-system diversity and vitality, cultural diversity and vitality, time use and balance, good governance, community vitality, and emotional wellbeing. Although administering 52-page questionnaire (designed by CBS) was beyond the time frame of this study, the current study picked some important items to measure the nine dimensions of GNH. A factor analysis was conducted to see whether the given dimensions of GNH did actually measure the specific forms of happiness or traits thereof. Moreover, the researcher's discretion to administer questionnaires with few items on each dimension of happiness demands to ensure that the questions asked relate to the construct that the study intends to measure.

In the preliminary analysis, the correlation matrix of the nine dimensions of happiness allowed to observe the patterns of relationships among the dimensions. This part of analysis helped to avoid the problem of singularity in the data. In other words, the analysis helps us to generate a determinant of correlation matrix of happiness dimensions which help us again to eliminate one of the two variables causing the problem. The determinant value of the correlation matrix given at the bottom of the matrix output is found to be .004 which somehow says that multicollinearity is not a problem for the data of this study.

One of the important preliminary guides to conducting factor analysis is determining the values of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO)'s measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity. The KMO value obtained is .734 which is pretty good indicating that patterns of correlations are relatively compact and so factor analysis should somehow yield distinct and reliable factors. On the other hand, Bartlett's measure helps us to obtain a significance value to find if there is any relationship among the dimensions. The significance value obtained is .000. Bartlett's test is highly significant ($p < 0.001$) and, therefore, factor analysis is appropriate.

So, the factor analysis was conducted using principal component method and then varimax method was applied to improve the interpretability of factors. The Kaiser's criterion extracted eight factors. This extraction is based on the Eigen values (Kaiser's criterion) more than 1. The rotated component matrix (varimax method) offered the factor loadings for each variable on each factor. The loadings are illustrated by the SPSS output in Table 2.

Table 2: Varimax Rotation for People's Happiness (GNH)

Items measuring nine dimensions of happiness	Factors							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
GNH 8: Protect environment for wellbeing	.788							
GNH 7: Forest benefits community	.785							
GNH 10: Love & respect parents; do best for children	.640							
GNH 6: Education uplifts community	.630							
GNH 5: Kids' education applicable in life	.541							
GNH 9: Importance of tradition in life	.506							
GNH 15b: Performance of Gup		.875						
GNH 15c: Performance of Tshogpa		.850						
GNH 15a: Performance of Mangmi		.843						
GNH 16: Democracy right for wellbeing			.734					
GNH 15d: Performance of MP			.691					
GNH1: Family wealth status comparison with others			.509					
GNH 19: Feeling of unhappiness & depression				.718				
GNH 3: Individual's health status				.643				
GNH 21: Believe in karma in life					.691			
GNH 20: Able to enjoy day-to-day activities					.678			
GNH 13: Most time spent work-related						.800		
GNH 14: Proper use of time to manage important works						.624		
GNH 2: Household income meeting family's needs							-.697	
GNH 4: Importance of individual's health for community wellbeing							.597	
GNH 17: Community treat individual fairly								.779

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy: .734

Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: $X^2 = 1746.72$, significant 0.000

Total Variance explained: 59%

Eight Dimensions for People's Happiness (derived from GNH)

The factor analysis revealed eight dimensions concerning people's happiness (GNH). These factors are renamed to better describe the character of dimensions:

Factor 1: Social Context of Happiness (former "education")

The reliability for factor 1 as measured by Cronbach's alpha is .715 with 16.6% variance explained. Six items are loaded under this factor. These six items belonged to three dimensions of happiness scale (derived from GNH scale). These are education, eco-system diversity and vitality and environmental diversity and vitality. The items that measured eco-system diversity and vitality had the strongest loadings in the factor (GNH8 & GNH7). Therefore, the new factor is leveled as "social factors of happiness."

Factor 2: Impact of governance on happiness (former "good governance")

The reliability for factor 2 measured by Cronbach's alpha is .866, which is highly reliable with 10.1% variance explained. Three items which measured good governance dimension of happiness were loaded into this factor. These questions evaluate the performance of local leaders like Mangmi (community representative), Gup (head of the gewog/block) and Tshongpa (head of the association/union). Therefore, factor 2 is leveled as "impact of governance's on happiness."

Factor 3: Socio-political Impact on Happiness (former "standard of living")

The reliability for factor 3 measured by Cronbach's alpha is .493 with 6.5% variance explained. The three items that were loaded into this factor were about the performance of the constituency representative of a political party, the opinion on the new democratic system of governance on wellbeing and comparison of respondents'

family status with others under the standard of living. Therefore, factor 3 is leveled as “socio-political impact on happiness.”

Factor 4: Health-mood impact on happiness (former “health”)

The reliability for factor 4 measure by Cronbach’s alpha is .348 with 6.2% variance explained. Two items were loaded into this factor. These items asked the respondents if they are unhappy and depressed at the time of survey and their health status. Therefore, factor 4 is leveled as “health-mood impact on happiness.”

Factor 5: Impact of Emotional Wellbeing on Happiness (former “emotional”)

The reliability for factor 5 measured by Cronbach’s alpha is .316 with 5.7% variance explained. The two items that were loaded into this factor belonged to emotional wellbeing dimension of the happiness scale. These items asked the respondents whether they have been enjoying their day-to-day activities and whether they believed in karma in the course of their life. Therefore, factor 5 is leveled as “impact of emotional wellbeing on happiness.”

Factor 6: Time Use and Balance (former “time use and balance”)

The reliability for factor 6 measure by Cronbach’s alpha is .385 with 5.4% variance explained. The two items loaded into this factor measured the time use and balance dimension of happiness scale. These items generally asked the respondents whether most of their time spent was work-related or leisure and whether using time properly could help them manage important works. Therefore, factor 6 is leveled as “time use and balance.”

Factor 7: Impact of Need Satisfaction and Health Status on Happiness (former “cultural vitality”)

This factor had 4.4% variance explained. The items that loaded into this factor are those concerning whether household income meets the needs and the importance of individual's health for communal wellbeing. Therefore, factor 7 is leveled as "impact of need satisfaction and health status on happiness."

Factor 8: External Influence on Individual's Happiness (former "community vitality")

Finally, the question that loaded on factor 8 is an item that asked the respondent whether he/she is treated fairly by the community. The variance explained is 4.4%. Therefore, factor 8 is leveled as "external influence on individual's happiness."

The factor analysis generated new set of indicators in measuring people's happiness compared to the original nine indicators developed by Center for Bhutan Studies. This new index of people's happiness will be summed and correlated with other variables in the hypotheses testing.

Participatory Development Communication (PDC) Index Construction

The current measurement of the PDC is built on the concepts offered by Chitnis (2005). According to Chitnis, participatory development communication can be measured by concepts such as concientization, empowerment and power (2005). The author of the current study constructed various indicators under these three broad dimensions of PDC. Five items were created to measure concientization. The empowerment and power dimensions are measure with three items each. Therefore, a total of 11 items measured the PDC in whole. The factor analysis is conducted to see if the indicators designed to operationalize the three dimensions did actually measure the concept of PDC.

The *R*-matrix (or correlation matrix) produced using coefficients and significance levels helped to avoid the problem of singularity in the data. A prerequisite to conduct a factor analysis is to have variables that correlate fairly well, but not perfectly. Also, any variable that correlate with no others should be eliminated (Field, 2000). The three items in the correlation matrix had significant values greater than .05. An item from empowerment dimension and the two items of power dimension got eliminated. Therefore, these three items are excluded from being considered for factor analysis. Thus, the total items to be analyzed drops to eight out of 11.

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO)'s value obtained is .753 which is pretty good indicating that patterns of correlations are relatively compact and so factor analysis should somehow yield distinct and reliable factors. This is substantiated by Bartlett's measure which helps to obtain a significance value to find if there is any relationship among the dimensions. The significance value obtained is .000. Bartlett's test is highly significant ($p < 0.001$) and, therefore, factor analysis is appropriate.

The factor analysis was continued using principal component method and then varimax method was applied to improve the interpretability of factors. The Kaiser's criterion extracted eight factors. This extraction is based on the Eigen values (Kaiser's criterion) more than 1. The rotated component matrix (varimax method) offered the factor loadings for each variable on each factor. The loadings are illustrated by the SPSS output in Table 3.

Table 3: Varimax Rotation for Participatory Development Communication

Items measuring PDC	Factors	
	1	2
Conscientization 2: If govt. helps us we can come up with good solutions to the problem.	.702	
Conscientization 1: I know what problems our community faces.	.642	
Conscientization 5: Govt. should consider our views while making development plans	.623	
Conscientization 3: I think development should be suitable to our needs.	.616	
Conscientization 4: From our community resources we can have good development programs.	.570	
Empowerment 3: People can take important decisions over the matter concerning our community.	.504	
Power 2: During meetings, I fear that I might be offending or talking against leaders.		-.774
Empowerment 1: I can have enough say in the development decision-making.		.722

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy: .753
 Bartlett's Test of Sphericity: $X^2 = 266.473$, significant 0.000
 Total Variance explained: 43.44%

Factor 1: Conscientization-empowerment (former “conscientization”)

The reliability for factor 1 as measured by Cronbach's alpha is .623 with 29.2% variance explained. The first factor is loaded with six items. These six items comes from conscientization and empowerment. Therefore, the new factor is leveled as “conscientization-empowerment.”

Factor 2: Power-empowerment (former “power”)

The reliability of factor 2 as measured by Cronbach's alpha is -.253 with 14.2% variance explained. Only two items are loaded under this factor each of which belongs to power and empowerment. Therefore, the new factor is leveled as “power-empowerment.”

A participatory development communication index is constructed based on this new set of indicators established through factor analysis. This resulting index will be used for correlation analysis with other variables of this study.

Communicative Action Index Construction

The measurement of communicative action is fully based on Jurgen Habermas's concepts in his book, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, (1986). The communicative action aims to create a communication situation where actors come to mutual understanding and builds fair consensus. According to Habermas, communicative action is measure by two overarching dimensions: validity claims and speech conditions. Validity claims is then measured by four sub-dimensions. Based on these concepts, the author created two items each under the four sub-dimensions totaling to eight items measuring the validity claims.

The Speech conditions construct is measured by three sub-dimensions. Two items each were created under these sub-dimensions totaling to six items measuring speech conditions. A factor analysis is conducted to see if these indicators did actually measure the concepts.

A correlation matrix presented in Table 4 helped asses the problems of singularity within the data. Four items had to be deleted which did not correlated much with other items. Therefore, the total items were reduced to 10 out of 14 items. These remaining items will be used for factor analysis.

Table 4: Varimax Rotation for Communicative Action

Items measuring communicative action	Factors			
	1	2	3	4
Truth 2: I trust only those people who speaks truth about our situation and development	.829			
Symmetric opportunity 1: I have equal opportunity like my other friends to say anything in a village gathering or other meetings	-.708			
Appropriateness 2: People propose and suggest development ideas appropriate to discussion subject		.819		
Equal treatment 1: My views are equally accepted like others		.738		
Appropriateness 1: The local leaders convey the development policies in a manner appropriate and suitable to us.			.792	
Truth 1: I believe in what our leaders say.			.616	
Free to raise proposition 1: I can say whatever I want to say in the village gathering or other meetings.			-.554	
Comprehension 2: I understand what is discusses throughout the meeting or village gatherings.				.738
Symmetric opportunity 2: I think our govt. gives equal opportunities to all the people to raise any doubts and express ourselves.				.613

Factor 1: Truth-Symmetric Opportunity (former “truth”)

There are two items loaded under this factor. Each item is from truth and symmetric opportunities which are sub-dimensions under validity claims. Therefore, this factor is leveled as *truth-symmetric opportunity*.

Factor 2: Appropriateness-Equal Treatment (former “appropriateness”)

Two items were loaded under this factor. These items belong to appropriateness and equal treatment sub-dimensions. Therefore, this factor is leveled as *appropriateness-equal treatment*.

Factor 3: Appropriateness-Truth-Free to Raise any Proposition (former “freedom to raise any proposition”)

Three items loaded under this factor. Each item is from three different sub-dimensions of communicative action. Therefore, this factor is leveled as *appropriateness-truth-free to raise any proposal*.

Factor 4: Comprehension-Symmetric Opportunity (former “comprehension”)

Two items were loaded under this factor. Each item is from comprehension and symmetric opportunity which are sub-dimensions of communicative action. This factor is leveled as “comprehension-symmetric opportunity.”

Based on these four factors, a communicative action index will be created. This index will then be used to test relationships with other indexes.

The Level of Socio-economic Status Index

The level of socio-economic status is a very common variable used in social research. SES is generally based on the concepts of social indicators of an individual like the level of education, income and occupation. A correlation matrix of SES is shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Correlation Matrix of the Level of Socio-economic Status

		Education	Income	Occupation
Correlation	Education	1.000		
	Income	-.050		
	Occupation	-.156		
Sig. (1-tailed)	Education		.181	.002
	Income	.181		.017
	Occupation	.002	.017	

Reliability of Scales

A reliability test was conducted for scales measuring the intended variables of the study. The scale reliability is calculated using Cronbach’s alpha (α).

The Happiness scale is made of 24 items under nine dimensions of the happiness (derived from the Gross National Happiness scale; refer appendix on GNH scale). The reliability analysis for the happiness scale showed the Cronbach's alpha of .742, which is pretty good.

The Participatory Development Communication (PDC) scale comprised of 11 items measuring three dimensions of the construct. However, the factor analysis helped to eliminate three items that brought down the total items to eight. The reliability analysis of PDC scale showed the Cronbach's alpha of .559, which is pretty acceptable.

The 14 items on the Communicative Action scale were categorized under seven dimensions of the construct. The factor analysis helped to eliminate five items making the total items at nine. The reliability analysis revealed the Cronbach's alpha of .426, which is quite acceptable.

An overall reliability analysis was conducted to see if the entire questionnaire did measure the constructs it is measuring. Interestingly, the Cronbach's alpha was .737 which is pretty good. In other words, the scale scores are reasonably reliable for respondents like those in the study.

Part 3

Hypotheses Testing

Testing of the research hypotheses was made based on the significance of the Pearson correlation coefficients calculated for pairs of variables. The test for correlation was done for every independent variable component with the dependent variable. When interpreting the results of SPSS output, the author has taken note that correlation coefficients give no indication of the direction of causality. In any

bivariate correlation, causality between two variables cannot be assumed because there may be other measured or unmeasured variables affecting the results, known as the third variable problem (Field, 2000). The correlation coefficients and the significance values in SPSS correlation output indicate the degree of probability that a correlation coefficient would have occurred by chance in the sample of respondents' surveyed (Field, 2000). If the significance value is less than 0.01 ($p < 0.01$) or less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$) it means that the probability of this correlation being not genuine is low. Therefore, we can infer that there is significant correlation between the two variables tested.

H1: Participatory Development Communication (PDC) is significantly correlated to people's happiness.

Table 6: Relationship between Participatory Development Communication and people's Happiness

(r)	r^2
.289*	.089

* Correlation is statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The correlation between participatory development communication and people's happiness is positively correlated and the correlation coefficient is .298, with significance value of .000 ($p < .01$) as shown in Table 6. This result indicates that there is less than .05 probability that a correlation coefficient of .298 would have occurred by chance. Since the relationship is positive, it must be quite apparent that the positive changes in participatory development communication are associated with

the higher levels of people's happiness. Thus, the hypothesis 1 is accepted. To see how much of variability is accounted for by participatory development communication in the correlation with people's happiness, the correlation coefficient is squared (known as the coefficient of determination, R^2). Participatory development communication and people's happiness had a correlation of .240 and so the value of R^2 will be $(.298)^2 = .089$. If we convert this value into a percentage $(.089 \times 100 = 8.9)$ we can say that participatory development communication accounts for nearly 9% of the variability in people's happiness.

H2: Communicative Action (CA) is significantly correlated to people's happiness.

Table 7: Relationship between Communicative Action and People's Happiness

(r)	r^2
.234*	.054

* Correlation is statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The communicative action and people's happiness is positively correlated with the correlation coefficient of .234, with significance value of .000 ($p < .01$) as shown in Table 7. Therefore, it can be inferred that positive changes in communicative action are associated in higher levels of people's happiness. Thus, the hypothesis 2 is accepted. Communicative action and people's happiness had a correlation of .234 and so the value of R^2 will be $(.234)^2 = .0548$. Therefore, communicative action accounts for nearly 6% $(.0548 \times 100 = 5.48)$ of the variability in people's happiness.

H3: Socio-economic Status (SES) is significantly correlated with people's happiness.

Table 8: Relationship between Socio-economic Status and People's Happiness

(r)	r^2
.211*	.045

* Correlation is statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The socio-economic status of the people and people's happiness is significantly correlated with the correlation coefficient of .211 ($p < .01$) as shown in Table 8. This can be interpreted as the better socio-economic status is associated with higher levels of happiness. Thus, the hypothesis 3 is accepted. Socio-economic status and people's happiness had a correlation of .211 and so the value of R^2 will be $(.211)^2 = .045$. Therefore, socio-economic status accounts for 5% of variability in people's happiness ($.045 \times 100 = 4.5$).

H4a: The level of socio-economic status has a positive relationship with participatory development communication.

Table 9: Relationship between Socio-economic Status and Participatory Development Communication

(r)	r^2
.106	.011

The correlation between the level of socio-economic status and the participatory development communication is not significant. The correlation coefficient value is .106 ($p > .01$) as shown in Table 9. Thus, the hypothesis 4a is rejected. The differences in socio-economic status will not have any relation with the variation in participatory development communication.

H4b: The level of socio-economic status has a positive relationship with communicative action.

Table 10: Relationship between Socio-economic Status and Communicative Action

(r)	r^2
.058	.003

The correlation between the level of socio-economic status and communicative action is not significant as shown in Table 10. The correlation coefficient value is .058 ($p > .01$). Thus, the hypothesis 4b is rejected. The variation in the level of socio-economic status will not see any variation in communicative action.

H5a: Controlled for socio-economic status, participatory development communication is significantly correlated to people's happiness.

The previous correlation analyses showed that participatory development communication is positively related to people's happiness. On the other hand, the level of socio-economic status is also positively correlated to people's happiness. Therefore, this section of hypothesis testing takes account the influence of the socio-economic status in order to obtain a pure relationship between participatory development communication and people's happiness. Using the values of R^2 for these

relationships, it was revealed that participatory development communication accounts for nearly six percent of the variance in people's happiness and that socio-economic status accounts for five percent of the variance in people's happiness. If socio-economic status accounts for almost the effect size of the variance in people's happiness compared to participatory development communication, then it seems feasible that at least some of the six percent of variance in people's happiness that is accounted for by participatory development communication is the same variance that is accounted for by socio-economic status. As such, some of the variance in people's happiness explained by participatory development communication is not unique and can be accounted for by socio-economic status. Thus, a partial correlation is conducted to see the actual relationship between participatory development communication and people's happiness by holding the effects of socio-economic status constant.

Table 11: Partial Correlation between PDC and People's Happiness Controlling for SES

(r)	r^2
.283*	.080

* Correlation is statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results displayed in Table 11 shows the first-order partial correlation between participatory communication and people's happiness with the coefficient value of .2832, when controlled for socio-economic status. This is slightly more than the correlation when the effect of the level of socio-economic status is not controlled

for ($r = .298$). The correlation is statistically significant ($p < .01$). If the associations in the separate control tables are considerably reduced but are still above approximately .10, it is safe to conclude that some, but not all, of bivariate relationship is spurious (Weisberg, Krosnick & Bowen, 1996). In terms of variance, the value of R^2 , i.e. $(.2832)^2$, for partial correlation is .080 meaning that participatory development communication can now account for 8 % of the variance in people's happiness.

H5b: Controlled for socio-economic status, communicative action has a significant relationship with people's happiness.

People's happiness was significantly correlated with communicative action. On the other hand, the level socio-economic status was also significantly correlated with happiness. Communicative action accounted for almost six percent of the variance in people's happiness, while the level of socio-economic status accounted for five percent in people's happiness. Therefore, a partial correlation analysis will allow to see how much of pure relationship does exist between people's happiness and communicative action when controlled for level of socio-economic status.

Table 12: Partial Correlation between Communicative Action and People's Happiness

Controlling for SES

(r)	r^2
.227*	.052

* Correlation is statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The partial correlation analysis presented in Table 12 shows that there is significant correlation between communicative action and people's happiness with

coefficient value of .227 ($p < .01$), when the level of socio-economic status is controlled. When the level of socio-economic status was not controlled the correlation between communicative action and people's happiness was .234. Therefore, there is no significant change in the correlation value between communicative action and people's happiness when the level of socio-economic status is controlled. The variance accounted for is .052 ($[(.227)^2]$) meaning communicative action accounts for 5.2% ($.049 \times 100$) which is slightly more than five percent. Thus, the variance accounted for by communicative action in people's happiness remains same even after the level of socio-economic status is controlled.

H6: Controlled for participatory development communication and communicative action, the level of socio-economic status will have significant relationship with people's happiness.

The level of socio-economic status is significantly correlated with people's happiness. On the other hand, the results also showed that participatory development communication and communicative action also had a pure relationship with people's happiness. This hypothesis will allow one to see if there exists any pure relationship between the level of socio-economic status and people's happiness when controlled for participatory development communication and communicative action.

Table 13: Partial Correlation between SES and People's Happiness Controlling for PDC and CA

(r)	r^2
.188*	.035

* Correlation is statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The partial correlation analysis presented in Table 13 shows that there is a significant relationship between the level of socio-economic status and people's happiness with the value of .188 ($p < .01$), when controlled for participatory development communication and communicative action. Therefore, the hypothesis six is accepted. However, when the communication variables were not controlled the correlation coefficient between the level of socio-economic status and people's happiness was .211. The variance accounted in people's happiness by the level of socio-economic status after partial correlation analysis is 3.5% ($[.1888]^2 \times 100$) which is slightly lower than the value when communication variables were not controlled. Keeping in mind the significant relationship of communication variables with people's happiness, an attempt is made to see if there is any relationship between the two communication variables (participatory development communication and communicative action). The result is presented in the following table.

Table 14: Correlation between PDC and CA

<i>(r)</i>	<i>r²</i>
.438*	.192

* Correlation is statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The result reveals that there is a significant correlation between participatory development communication and communicative action with correlation coefficient of .438. Meaning that variation in participatory development communication is

positively associated with the variations in communicative action. The variable accounted for is 19.2 percent ($[.192]^2 \times 100$)

Therefore, the overall result reveals that communication variables are related to people's happiness. Moreover, the level of socio-economic status is also associated with people's happiness. Interestingly, the level of socio-economic status does not show any relationship with participatory development communication and communicative action. Although the correlation analysis does not tell the cause and effect relationship, the variables seem to be associated with one another. However, the interpretation of the results will be done in the next chapter that will make sense of the data.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, SUGGESTIONS & CONCLUSION

This study set out with an aim to relate people's happiness with communication from participatory development communication perspective. This research is first of its kind in studying happiness in relation to communication variables especially with regard to Bhutan. The results revealed through data analysis in preceding chapter offer valuable insights and findings on such attempts.

The demographic analysis provided vital information about the respondents' characteristics. There's a significant gap in gender responding to this research survey. This is because most respondents were females who stayed at their homes during the time of the survey. It happened so that women in Bhutan are stereotyped to stay home and do the chores while males deal with the outside works. During the time of survey most of the males in community were out in their fields working and not available for interview. Moreover, females are inferior to men when it comes to giving opinions on the matters pertaining to their household. Such disparity may bear notable influences in the overall response patterns of this study.

Another demographic information that helps to shed light for this study is the respondents' level of education. Nearly 72 percent of the respondents said that they don't have any level of education. It is apparent that absence of educational level may hinder the respondent's understanding of how their lives and state of wellbeing is affected by development policies and other social factors. This fact is very important for this study before it makes any inference from the overall data.

The analysis of the marital status of the respondents found that most respondents were married. This explains that the value of matrimony is still intact in that Bhutanese community.

The age of the respondents revealed interesting pattern. The majority of the respondents belonged to the age group of 46-55 years, followed closely by the age group of 36-45 years. This indicates that adults within these age groups are active in giving opinions pertaining to their household. The next notable chunk of age groups was 26-35 and 15-25 years. This information tells that younger generation is next to their adults in giving opinions regarding issues pertaining to their household. The third age portion of age groups is 56 years and older. This indicates that older generation is less participative in issues relating to their household compared to other age groups.

A descriptive analysis of the variables reveals interesting trends and patterns in responses. The happiness variable showed lower standard deviations while participatory development communication and communicative action had higher standard deviations. Therefore, it is apparent that respondents varied significantly in their responses in participatory development communication and communicative action. However, the respondents were close to consistency while responding on happiness and level of socio-economic status. This points to the emerging patterns and trends in respondents behavior in their responses across the variables which should be apparent in further discussion of results.

A selective frequency analyses of constructs across the variables helps to interpret the patterns and trends of responses in a build up to more solid statistical inferences of the data. The frequency analysis of an item measuring standard of living which in turn measures people's happiness revealed interesting information. Majority

of respondents said that their total household income does not meet their family needs. This indicates that the standard of living of the people in that particular Bhutanese community is poor. At this stage, the material happiness of the people is at stake. However, associating this poor standard of living with the goal of GNH will be unilateral and biased when GNH is a holistic approach.

In another frequency analysis, most of the respondents agreed that democracy is the right system for their wellbeing. Next to agreeing, some respondents chose to remain neutral in their opinion. It should be noted that democracy is a new system in Bhutan instituted in 2008. The trend in responses indicates mixed feelings of the people towards the new system while diverting from the old system of absolute monarchy. Moreover, given the lack of education of the respondents as disclosed earlier their responses on the system of governance is surely to lack strength and deeper analysis.

An interesting result was revealed by the frequency analysis on an item measuring emotional state of the people. Majority of the respondents reported that they are feeling unhappy and depressed. This seems to be a major blow to the goal of GNH. Although emotional state is unpredictable and transitory, generalization of this result must be avoided or done with care. This may indicate that respondents may have been not in a positive emotional state while this research survey was administered to them.

The frequency analysis of an item measuring concientization as a measure of participatory development communication revealed significant result. Concientization concerns what knowledge people possess about their own social circumstances and their awareness of the need of development to solve their problems. Surprisingly,

majority of the respondents said that they don't know what problems their community face. This is a direct threat to the idea of participatory development communication. The prerequisite for participation is instantly disabled in this case. People seem to be unaware of their circumstances.

Empowerment is another dimension of PDC. A frequency analysis on an item measuring this construct revealed that most of the respondents chose to stay neutral in giving their opinion on whether their government lets them to decide over the issues affecting their community. This neutrality does not point any direction to draw conclusion. Rather the respondents feel that they are either empowered to decide on issues affecting their community or they are not otherwise by the government. Therefore, empowerment lacks clarity.

Power seems to be top-down in the decision-making process in the Bhutanese community. This fact is revealed by a frequency analysis on an item that asks respondents to give their opinion on whether their local leaders are decisive and powerful in over decisions on the matters affecting their community. Majority of the respondents said their local leaders make decision over most of issues affecting their community. This analysis gives exposes the presence of inherent power-structure in the decision-making processes in the Bhutanese community.

A frequency analysis was conducted to see if people comprehended whatever policies their leaders conveyed or shared with them. Most of the respondents said that they did not understand or comprehend what their leaders say. This lack of comprehension will result in the biases of the general function of the speech and the modes of communication as characterized by Habermas in terms of claims to validity: comprehensibility, truth, appropriateness and sincerity. Habermas' communicative

action is proposed as an approach to improve the conditions for communication especially in the decision-making processes that this study calls to attention. The lack of not fulfilling these conditions of communication will lead to reveal the distortions that shape the institutional environments of development decision making processes.

In addition to the validity claims, bizarre trend of communication is also revealed under the speech conditions which also measure of communicative action. In an analysis of an item that measured the speech condition, most respondents said that they cannot say whatever they want to say in village gatherings and meetings pertaining to their community. By speech condition Habermas meant the democratic process of communication. Respondents are aware that some internal factors do restrict them from saying whatever they would like to say in village gatherings.

The demographic and descriptive analysis so far helped to gather preliminary evidences in the trends and patterns across variables. In the discussion that follows will discuss the issues more specifically resulting from the test of hypotheses. All hypotheses were tested by using Pearson product moment correlation analysis which helps establish relationship among the variables. It should be noted that correlation does not predict the cause-effect relationships.

A strong need of analyzing happiness scale was felt. This is because the people's happiness scale developed by this study is based on original GNH scale developed by Center for Bhutan Studies (CBS). The modification of GNH scale for the purpose of this study immediately poses validity threat to happiness measurement. Since the original GNH questionnaire developed by the Center for Bhutan Studies is 51-page long, it was beyond the scope and time of the current study to administer the original scale. It takes "7-8 hours to interview one respondent" (Ura, 2009). Therefore,

the author decided to rather hand-pick some items under each dimensions of GNH. To keep pace and finish the study on time, the author picked two items each for the nine dimensions of GNH to be measured.

The factor analysis which was conducted to see the case of multicollinearity and check the validity of GNH scale yielded interesting results. The analysis of results shed some light on discussing the measurement of GNH. One of the significant findings was that people's happiness scale (redesigned for the purpose of this study) did lack validity in measuring the construct. In other words, the analysis revealed that people rated their opinions on indicators of happiness (GNH) in the context of that particular indicator domain. It appears that respondents did not rate their opinion on indicators in relation to their state of happiness. Such drawback in happiness measurement impedes the attempt to find the actual relationships between happiness and other development variables such as participatory development communication and communicative action.

Although the GNH index is developed by Centre for Bhutan Studies, it is not evident how "it stands up to analysis" (Cayo, 2005). GNH index is based on the holistic approach of combining the subjective and objective indicators of happiness and wellbeing, yet it somehow suffers to come under quantitative scrutiny. It is not measured directly, but only the factors which are believed to lead to it (Wikipedia, 2009).

The factor analysis thus revealed new set of factors or constructs that measured the people's happiness. The factor analysis grouped the original nine dimensions of GNH scale into eight new factors. These new factors are: social context of happiness, impact of governance on happiness, socio-political impact on happiness, health-mood

impact on happiness, impact of emotional wellbeing on happiness, time use and balance, impact of need satisfaction and health status on happiness, and external influence on individual's happiness.

The deeper analysis of these new factors offers insights to the happiness study. The new set of happiness dimensions are in sharp contrast to the original dimensions set by CBS. To qualify as a valid indicator of GNH, an indicator with respect to any variable has to have either a positive or a negative influence on well-being and happiness (Ura, 2009). The new set of dimensions builds on the combination of factors and their relative impact on happiness, whereas, the CBS scale is totally independent of any combination and are specific domains of measure of happiness. Thus, the factor analysis helped significantly to regroup the indicators of happiness.

In a factor analysis conducted for participatory development communication, the result helped to improve the reliability of the measures significantly. Interestingly, only two factors were revealed after factor analysis from the initial three dimensions.

The empowerment dimension of PDC is integrated with the other two. The first factor that was renamed as conscientization-empowerment had items asking people about their situation and whether they possess the right to make decisions and given to do so by the system. This factor in deed revealed the clear situation of grassroots. In other words, this factor seems to suggest that people are not aware (conscious) of their own situation and that of their community because they lacked empowerment to do so. This fact contradicts the principles of participatory development communication. The second factor which was renamed as power-empowerment had items asking people whether they posses certain rights to make decisions regarding their situation and who's got the power to actually influence the

decisions. This factor offers better insights concerning the power play in the system of that Bhutanese community. The inherent power structure can easily affect the process of empowerment. This fact also contradicts the principles of participatory development communication.

The first hypothesis revealed that there is a significant relationship between participatory development communication and people's happiness. Any changes in participatory development communication will be associated with changes in people's happiness. Therefore, the main objective of this study is fulfilled. Although the presence of communication in societal interaction may seem natural and obvious yet goals set by development policies can only be achieved if the communication processes are appropriate and channeled.

The second hypothesis also showed that there is a significant relationship between communicative action and people's happiness. Any changes in communicative action will be associated with changes in people's happiness.

The in-depth analysis of people's happiness and communication variable give rise to new complexity between variables. In other words, the descriptive analysis of variables showed that respondents are quite consistent in their opinions on happiness scale while significantly deviating in their responses in participatory development communication and communicative action scales. This does not make sense.

Theoretically, happiness precedes any other social variable. Meaning, if respondents display consistency in happiness measurement they are also assumed to display similar behavior while being measured on other social variables. But the result of this study doesn't say so.

The difference in responses to happiness and communication measures creates a new paradox: people seem to be reporting consistent scores on happiness measurement but they seem to deviate significantly on communication measurement. This complexity in outcomes unleashes inherent problems that may be embedded within the social system. Such complexity in respondents' variation across variables renders any attempt to relate happiness with other social variables complicated.

The preceding argument also gives ground to suggest that while people may report their state of happiness at a given time yet it cannot be said that they don't have problem with the system that prevails in their society. Just as this study reveals, people are not satisfied with the system despite reporting to be experiencing quite high level of happiness. This takes us to the deeper issues of participatory development communication and communicative action. Scholars and practitioners in development communication builds on the point that the 'inherent system' of the given society poses an immediate problem in realizing free and fair course of participatory communication in development decision-making processes. This problem is explicit in the works of Habermas in his theory of communicative action. (cite some sources on The complexity of power in societal communication & Habermas on communicative rationality).

The oxymoronic situation revealed by this study can also be assessed by applying Michel Foucault's "The Discourse on Language." Foucault's hypothesis: in every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organized and redistributed according to a certain number of procedures, whose role is "to avert its powers and its dangers, to cope with chance events, to evade its ponderous, awesome materiality" (Lye, 2008). Foucault's reasoning points to the problem this study has

generated. Based on Foucault's proposition, there may be some intrinsic factors that may be prohibiting the respondents of this study to deviate in their experiences in participation and communication in decision-making process despite being happy. One suspicion looms at large from this paradoxical situation. It is the transitory happiness that people seem report while surveyed on their state of happiness or is it the sustained goal of happiness that GNH is trying to bring upon the society?

The third hypothesis revealed that there's a significant correlation between the level of socio-economic status and people's happiness. Any variation in the level of socio-economic status will be associated with the people's happiness. This nature of relationship was evident in the descriptive analysis. Most of the respondents of this study were uneducated and farmers by occupation. These characteristics fall under the lower rung of socio-economic status which cripples the pursuit of happiness. GNH is by far a holistic measure that aims to bring happiness not at the cost of modern way of life but by complementing it. Several studies have shown that socio-economic status is necessary prerequisite for wellbeing.

The first part of the fourth hypothesis showed that there is no significant relationship between socio-economic status and participatory development communication. In other words, regardless of their socio-economic status people will communicate or not communicate in the decision-making processes. This result offered an important insight to this study. The concept of communication for this study is founded on human communication based on interpersonal and group communication. These concepts were then built on specific communication frameworks like participatory development communication and communicative action. Therefore, it is apparent that the level of socio-economic status of the people

doesn't count much for these communications to take place. An antithesis to this argument could be comparison to communication based on mass media. To communication by the means of mass medium would require considerable level of the socio-economic status. Meaning the people who can afford to possess the mass media channels like TV, radio, internet, etc., can have better access to communication than those who don't have such facilities.

The second part of the fourth hypothesis also revealed that there is no significant correlation between level of socio-economic status and people's happiness. It means that people can communicate in decision-making processes notwithstanding their socio-economic status. The explanation to such result is given in the discussion of preceding hypothesis.

In the first of the fifth hypothesis, it is found that there's significant correlation between participatory development communication and people's happiness when the level of socio-economic status is controlled. This points to the fact that the relationship occurring is pure not coincidental or attributed by intervening variable, the level of socio-economic status. This indicates that changes in participatory development communication is directly associated with the changes in the people's happiness without effect from level of socio-economic status. This trend was evident from hypothesis 4a.

The second part of fifth hypothesis also revealed that there is significant relationship between communicative action and people's happiness when controlled for the level of socio-economic status. It says that the effect of communicative action on people's happiness is genuine without any effects from the level of socio-economic status. This trend was evident from hypothesis 4b.

Finally, the last and the sixth hypothesis of this study revealed that there is a significant relationship between the level of socio-economic status and people's happiness when controlled for participatory development communication and communicative action. Any variation in the level of socio-economic status will be associated with changes in people's happiness. Thus, it is apparent that socio-economic status also exerts certain degree of influence on people's happiness independent of the communication variables.

One of the important findings is that the two communication variables (PDC and CA) are correlated to each other. This confirms that the two communication variables are not separate but have a combined effect on people's happiness. As already evident, the participatory development communication is based on the interpersonal or dialogical communication, as put by Paulo Freire. Moreover, Habermas's communicative action is truly a dialogical communication concept that helps to generate consensus among the actors. It then coordinates action towards social integration and solidarity (Wikipedia, 2009). Therefore, the two communication variable can be combined to be taken as one variable.

All in all, the overall hypothesis very much supported the aims of this study. Based on results and discussion of the study following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The GNH happiness index created by Bhutanese govt. may not be actually measuring the quality of wellbeing and happiness; rather the index may be just measuring the independent domain of the dimensions of GNH that is supposedly related to measure happiness. For instance, the cultural dimension of gross national happiness asks the questions to respondents which are specific to preservation and upholding the culture and traditions but in no way

asks whether upholding culture does actually makes them happy or leads to their happiness. This problem gives rise to the inherent validity of the scale. Therefore, the respondents just provided their opinions strictly in the sense of the subject of that particular domain being asked to them. Such fallacy in opinion generation may cause difficulties in relating happiness index with other measures of development variables.

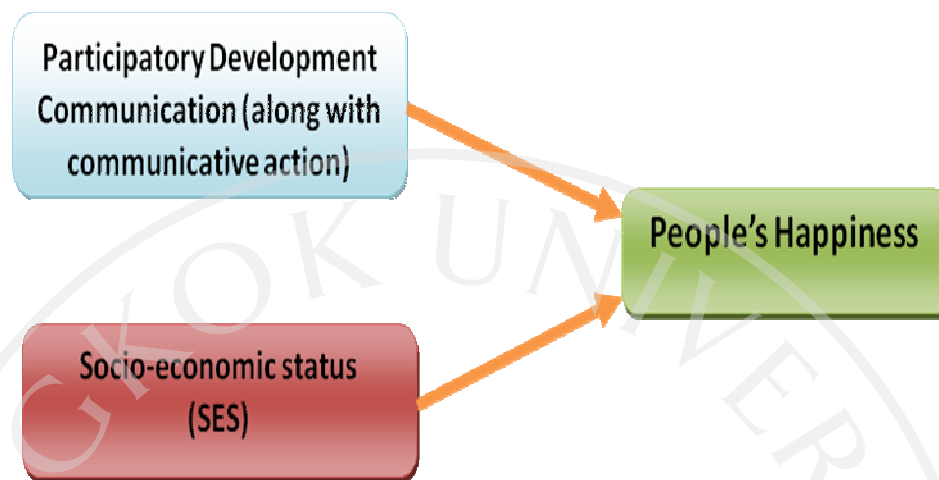
2. The fact that there's a stark difference of means between happiness and communication exposes the state of communication in the development context in Bhutan. The significant deviation on communication scales of the respondents gives ground to suggest that there is no appropriate communication taking place to realize the development policies geared towards bringing happiness by the Bhutanese govt. Although the correlation between communication and happiness is quite weak, yet, the analysis of responses on communication variable is astounding. For instance, when respondents were asked if they agreed in comprehending or understanding the development policies conveyed to them in community gatherings and decision-making, most of them said they didn't understand at all.
3. The analysis of data on communication variable makes room to suspect that there are some intangible factors affecting people's communication. By looking at the respondents' scores on some of the PDC and CA constructs like freedom to speak, opportunity for proposition, freedom to make decisions and their opinion on the credibility of their leaders, the respondents seem to be implying an inherent power structure complexity in the community.

4. Finally, the incongruence between the government's effort to familiarize people on public policies and people's ignorance of them renders the whole process of communication to be questionable. Although there seem to be good structure of decision-making in the governance system, there's a serious lack of genuine communication taking place. This directly affects the whole effort of participatory communication model and the communicative action. And in turn, it poses as a biggest obstacle on the road to achieving GNH. For instance, the current democratic system may just be an electoral democracy for people to actively participate only during elections. They cast their votes to elect a government and later become passive observers. If such is the scenario, the very notion of real democracy which means good governance, transparency and responsibility becomes unrealistic. And ironically, good governance is one of the pillars of GNH.

Modification of Conceptual Model

The conceptual model proposed earlier in the study based on the theoretical concepts went through several changes as revealed during the analysis of results of the study. The level of socio-economic status did not relate to any communication variables. Besides, the communication variables (participatory development communication and communicative action) were correlated that makes them a single variable. The new model for the study is presented in Figure 15.

Figure 15: The Modified Conceptual Model of the Study



Limitations and Future Research

One of the drawbacks taken into consideration by this study is downsizing the measures of happiness in the GNH scale. The reason being that the original questionnaire was too lengthy which was beyond this study to administer. GNH is measured by nine dimensions developed by Center for Bhutan Studies. So, the researcher took few selective items under each dimension that offered convenience for the research.

The other problem with the study is dealing with the participatory development communication (PDC) as a variable. PDC is a process. The participatory development communication research is concerned with the idea of studying the participation of various stakeholders in decision-making process in a given community or society. Therefore, most of the research in this field is descriptive, ethnographic or qualitative. The attempts to study participatory communication from the point view of quantitative study are rare and limited. However, this research has

attempted to explore the possibilities of studying participatory communication as a wholesome variable with measurable constructs.

The demographics of respondents revealed that most of them were illiterate. This characteristic of the respondent could have attributed to overall validity of the study. This is because this study entails the examination of self in their socio-political setting. The measurement of participatory development communication (PDC) and communicative action (CA) variables is strictly based on the experiences of respondents in decision-making process. Given this condition, the respondents needed some experiences of having participated in some form of community meetings or in the decision-making process of policies affecting their own lives. Unfortunately, most of the respondents generated by this study were females. Bhutanese females, especially in the research site chosen by this study, are confined in their homes. They are stereotyped to be housekeepers and lesser mental faculty than men. As a result, most men go to community meetings and other official gatherings concerning their household participation. However, during the time of survey most men were out in their fields working and not available for the interview.

One major constrain that this study faced is the difficulty of interpreting questionnaire in the respondents' native language. The respondents of this study speak a dialect called Sharshop which does not have written language. So, it was difficult for the researcher to translate most of the English terms into their dialect. It is the personal belief of the researcher that most of the terms and concepts asked to the respondents baffled them and were taken at a face value.

Keep in mind the above limitations, the study recommend that an attempt to study the same variables should be taken by combining quantitative and qualitative

research (triangulation) approaches. An in-depth study of the participatory development communication is needed to come up with the measurable constructs. Since, variables like participatory development communication and communicative action are related to grassroots, every effort should be made to translate the concepts and constructs into simple ideas so that respondents can understand and respond truthfully. This way the issue of validity can be avoided.

Since all the variables (happiness and communication) in this study are context and experiences based, the generalizability of the research is limited. Any attempt to duplicate the study in other contexts or cultures must be done so with proper and careful modification.

Conclusion

Participatory development communication and communicative action is related to people's happiness. In addition, the level of socio-economic status also significantly accounts for people's happiness. This finding will be very important for consideration especially when happiness is set as the development goal. Although respondents seem to be quite bipolar in their responses towards happiness and communication variables, it can still be taken as a basis for further study.

This study reveals several problems of studying social variables. Perhaps, it is an indication that social variables are multicollinear and cannot be treated disparately. This was evident from the new set of eight measures of happiness generated by this study.

Although achieving happiness through development policies in real terms may seem far-fetched, communication is key to link concept of happiness with development policies. Putting better communication practices along with favorable

structural developments of decision-making can have substantial impact on realizing grassroots project like GNH. As Bhutan undergoes historic changes in its political and to some extent the social changes, the role of communication to steer and stabilize its society should be noted. Social change is ever evolving. It is complex, changing and pervasive among all aspects of society. Given the nature of this change, the goal of creating the scenario of gross national happiness is daunting.

While the aim of government policy might be socially massive what need to be really taken into consideration are issues affecting people at grassroots and individual levels. The way people make sense of their situation will determine the direction to which their community is heading. Communicating the issues and agreeing on collective measures to overcome social problems will significantly contribute to the general wellbeing. The experiences at these levels in deed will have direct relationship to the massive social goals.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire

Part 1: Happiness (derived from Gross National Happiness)

Q1. These are questions about your state of happiness. Please read the following statements and rate your answer in the given scale to the right side.

GNH – Standard of Living

Q1 Within your community, do you consider your family to be:

1	Wealthier than most families	About the same as most families	Poorer than most families	Don't know

Q10.2 How well does your total household income meet your family's everyday needs:

2	Not enough	Just enough	More than enough

GNH – Health of an individual

Q2 In general, would you say your health is:

3	Excellent/very good	Good	Fair/poor

Q10.4 What do you think of the following statement?

		Very important	important	Neutral	Not important	Not at all
4	I think the health of every individual is important for the wellbeing of the community.					

GNH – Education

Q3 Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	What your children learn in the classroom is applicable to their day-to-day life?					

Q10.6

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
6	I think having education will uplift the status and wellbeing of our community.					

GNH – Eco-system diversity and vitality

Q4 What is your opinion about the following statements:

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
7	Our community is greatly benefited by forest surrounding us.					

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
8	We should protect our environment for our wellbeing as well as that of other species.					

GNH – Cultural diversity and vitality

Q5 Express your opinion of the following:

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
9	How important is it to you to maintain Bhutanese traditions within your everyday life?					

To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
10	One must always love and respect parents, while the parents should do their best for their children even at the expense of their own-wellbeing.					
11	Both husband and wife should maintain faithful and happy marriage.					

Give your opinion:

		Always	Sometimes	Not at all
12	Do you take part in local festivals and community events (<i>mongi rimdro, lha soe bon soe, other types of festivals</i>) in your village or community?			

GNH – Time use and balance

Q6 Answer the following:

		Always	Sometimes	Never
13	Most of time spent are work-related than the leisure.			

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
14	Using time properly can help us manage many important works.					

GNH – Good governance

Q7 In the past 12 months, how would you rate the performances of the following leaders?

	Local leaders	Very good	Good	Neutral	Poor	Bad
15	Chimi					
	Gup					
	Tshogpa					
	Demngo					

Give your opinion.

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
16	The new system of government .i.e. democracy is the right system for our wellbeing.					

GNH – Community vitality

Q8 Give your opinion.

		Always	Sometimes	Never
17	People in this community treat you fairly.			

Give your opinion

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
18	People of our community agree common solution to the problem facing our community.					

GNH – Emotional wellbeing

Q9 How would rate yourself on the following statements:

		Not at all	Don't know	No more than usual
19	Been feeling unhappy and depressed.			
20	Been able to enjoy your normal day-to-day activities.			

		Always	Sometimes	Never
21	Do you consider Karma in the course of your daily life?			

Part 2: This section is about the Participatory Development Communication.

Q10. Please read the following statements and rate your answer in the given scale to the right side.

	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	Conscientization					
22.	I know what problems our community faces.					

23.	If government helps us we can come up with good solutions to the problems.					
24.	I think development should be suitable to our needs.					
25.	From our community resources we can have good development programs.					
26.	Government should consider our views while making development plans.					
Empowerment						
27.	I can have enough say in the development decision-making.					
28.	The government lets us to decide over issues concerning our community.					
29.	People can take important decisions over the matter pertaining to our community.					
Power						
30.	Our local leaders are powerful to influence the decisions.					
31.	During meetings, I fear that I might be offending or talking against leaders.					
32.	I think government decides most of what we need.					

Part 3: Communicative action

Q11. Please read the following statements and rate your answer in the given scale to the right side.

	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	Validity claim - TRUTH					
33.	I believe in what our leaders (Gup/chimi/mangmi/tsogpa/demngo) says.					
34.	I trust only those people who speak truth about our situation and development.					
	Validity claim - APPROPRIATENESS					
35.	The local leaders convey the development policies in a manner appropriate and suitable to us.					
36.	People propose and suggest development ideas appropriate to discussion subject.					
	Validity claim – COMPREHENSION					
37.	I understand whatever policies our leaders share with us.					
38.	I understand what is discussed throughout the meeting or village gatherings.					
	Validity claim - SINCERITY					
39.	I think our local leaders are sincere.					
40.	I think the people in our community are sincere.					
	Speech condition – SYMMETRIC OPPORTUNITIES					
41.	I have equal opportunity like my other friends to say anything in a village gathering or other meetings.					
42.	I think our government gives equal opportunities to all the people to raise any doubts and express ourselves.					

	Speech condition – FREE TO RAISE ANY PROPOSITION					
43.	I can say whatever I want to say in the village gathering or other meetings.					
44.	People can suggest anything that our community needs.					
	Speech condition – EQUAL TREATMENT					
45.	My views are equally accepted like others.					
46.	I feel all members of our community can speak equal to others.					

Part 4 Socioeconomic status and demographic s:

Q47. Are you male or female? (Please mark [✓] on the appropriate answer)

Sex	Male	Female

Q48. What is your age?

Age		← Please enter your age in years.
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Q49. What is your current marital status? (Please mark [✓] on the appropriate answer below)

Marital status	Never married	Married	Divorced	Separated	Widowed

Q50. What is your highest level of education?

Education level	Non-formal education	Monastic education	Vocational	Class	Diploma	Degree and above	Not applicable
Class	What class did you study up to?.....						

Q51. What is your monthly income?

Monthly income	Below Nu. 1,000	Nu. 1,000 – 5,000	Nu. 5,000 – 10,000	Nu. 10,000 – 15,000	Nu. 15,000 and above

Q52. What is your current occupation?

Unemployed	
Farmer	
Trader (Trading/shopkeeper/businessman)	
Student (including VTI, Trainings)	
Civil servant	
Party worker	
Gomchen/Anim	
Monk	
Others (Please specify)	

Q53. How many people live in your household?

Total household size		← Record how many people live in your household including yourself.
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Biodata

Khampa is currently working as a researcher and strategist in a newspaper and publishing company in Bhutan. He started his career as a reporter and continues to write on various subjects. He bagged the award of the “Best Employee of the Year” in 2007 from the company he works for. He is also an aspiring filmmaker and therefore also writes screenplays. He first wrote a television series which was broadcasted on the national television, BBSC, in Bhutan in 2006-2007.

He graduated from Sherubtse, the then only college in Bhutan, in 2005, where he earned B.A. honors in English Literature. This thesis is the testimony for his Master’s degree in Communication Arts. With such qualification, he hopes to become a professional in applied communications research and in marketing and advertising.