

BASIC SOCIAL MEDIA LITERACY TRAINING MODULE



Module Title	: Basic Social Media Literacy Training Module
Participants profile	: Illiterate and semi-literate audience

General objective:

This training module aims to provide the illiterate and semi-literate people of Bhutan awareness to appropriately address the digital challenges they face, and understand the opportunities it has to offer. It will provide them with a set of technical and emotional competencies that empower them to access, use, create and share information. The module looks at the basic concepts, required skills and case studies to be in control of online presence, understand both the advantages and disadvantages of new technologies and online platforms.

Learning outcomes - On completion of this module, participants will be able to:

- Be aware of various social media platforms available in Bhutan
- Understand the differences between different online platforms
- Be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of each of these platforms
- Evaluate the threats and opportunities of social media use
- Be aware of social media privacy, ethics and security
- Identify self-responsibilities toward children's online activities
- Understand the difference between mis- and disinformation and recognize them
- Be mindful of social media policy of Bhutan

MODULE OVERVIEW

DAY 1			
TIME	TOPIC	DESCRIPTION	ACTIVITY
9.00 - 9.30 AM	Introduction	-Welcome to participants -Introduction to the programme -Conduct Training Need Analysis (TNA)	-Welcome the participants and introduces himself/herself -Objective of the training -Activity-TNA
9.30 -9.45 AM	PHOTO SESSION		The trainer & participants will have a group photograph

9.45-10.15 AM	UNIT 1 Over view of social media usage in Bhutan	Overall situation of the social media usage in Bhutan	Discussion-social media overview
10.15 10.45 AM	UNIT 2 Various social media platforms	Different social media platforms	Activity –social media brand logos
10.45-11.00 AM	TEA BREAK		
11.00 -11.30 AM	UNIT 2 To be Continued		Activity to continue- social media brand logos
11.30 -12.00 noon	Discussion	Facilitate the discussion	Activity –participants sharing their experiences
12.00-1.00 PM	LUNCH BREAK		
1.00-1.30 PM	UNIT 3 Popular social media platforms in Bhutan	Advantages & disadvantages of Facebook, WeChat & YouTube	Activity –three groups to draw one logo of 3 popular platforms
1.30 -2.30 PM	UNIT 4 Opportunities & threats of social media usage in Bhutan	-Main opportunities of social media platforms in Bhutan. -Main threats of social media usage in Bhutan	Discussion-opportunities Case Appendix 1-Leki Tshewang Discussion-threats Case Appendix 2-Rescued from Baghdad
2.30-3.00 PM	UNIT 5 Dos and Don'ts: Use of messenger/ WhatsApp/ WeChat	Practical demonstration on the negative effects of the use of loud speakers in a group	Activity 1 –phone speaker ON
3.00- 3.15 PM	TEA BREAK		
3.15- 3.45 PM	Unit 5 To be continued	-Possibility of tracing chat history and the need to be ethical user	Discussion- possibility of tracing chat history Case Appendix 3-Social media

		-Risks in giving personal phone/e-mail or other online Ids to others and the associated risks	is a useful tool... Activity 2- risks on giving one's mobile phone to others
3.45 -4.00 PM	Home Work	Preparation for the 2 nd day	Discussion –for the next day
DAY 2			
9.00 – 9.30 AM	Recap	Participants will reflect on the previous day's discussion	Trainer will provide pictures, words or diagrams to encourage participants to actively participate in this recap session
9.30 – 10.15 AM	UNIT 6 Children and social media usage in Bhutan	-The children's current media usage situation in Bhutan -Parent's responsibilities	Discussion- children's current social media usage Discussion- parent's guide Case Appendix 4-Being better parents Case Appendix 5-We cannot avoid technology...
10.15-10.45 AM	UNIT 7 Ethical & Security Concerns	-The findings of the BMF (2021) Social media landscape survey	Discussion- security and anonymous concerns
10.45 -11.00 AM	TEA BREAK		
11 -11.30 AM	UNIT 7 To be continued	-Defamation/legal consequences	Activity- practical examples of defamation/legal consequences Case Appendix 6 - Court sentences...
11.30 – 12.00 PM	Self-Reflection	Oversee and guide the discussion	Discussion-group discussion
12.00-1.00 PM	LUNCH BREAK		

1.00-1.30 PM	UNIT 8 Misinformation and Disinformation: How credible is information on the web?	Difference between misinformation and disinformation and how to recognize them.	Discussion - Difference: misinformation & disinformation -Techniques to recognize them
1.30-2.00 PM	UNIT 9 Social media policy of Bhutan	-Royal vision of social media policy -Policy statement -Social media code of conduct	Discussion 1 –His Majesty’s message Discussion 2 –policy statement Discussion 3 –code of conduct
2.00-2.30 PM	Discussion	Trainer will guide the discussion.	Discussion - Participants will discuss among themselves
2.30-3.00 PM	Learning styles questionnaire	Provoke discussion in the class	Discussion & Activity- learning styles questionnaire
3.00- 3.15 PM	TEA BREAK		
3.15- 3.45 PM	Reflection and take away points	Summary of the training	Discussion- Reflection and take away points
3.45 -4.00 PM	CLOSING		Closing remarks by the trainer/guest

MODULE DETAIL

DAY 1

Time: 9.00-9.30 AM

INTRODUCTION

Objective

- Know the trainer and the background
- Understand the objectives of the training programme
- TNA to narrow the gap between training objectives and the expectations of the participants, thereby conducting a more fruitful training

Activities

- Trainer will welcome the participants and introduces himself/herself
- Introduction to the programme. The trainer will explain the objective of the training

Refer: Appendix A (Page 17)

- The trainer will conduct a short training need analysis (TNA)
- **Refer: Appendix B (Page 18)**

9.45-10.15 AM

UNIT 1: OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE IN BHUTAN

Objective

- Be aware of the current situation of social media usage in Bhutan as per the findings of the survey conducted by Bhutan Media Foundation (BMF- 2021), Social Media Landscape in Bhutan

Discussion

- The Trainer will summarise the points from the recent survey document - current situation of social media usage in Bhutan. The trainer should use the PowerPoint or it would appear just like a talk show. However, informal verbal explanation would be desirable as the participants are illiterate and semi-literate audience

Refer: Appendix-1.1 (Page 19)

10.15 -11.30 AM

UNIT 2: VARIOUS SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

Objective

- Be mindful of the various social media platforms available in Bhutan
- Understand the differences
- Identify each of these online platforms from the logo

Discussion

- Trainer will conduct an activity and in between describe and explain the difference of each social media platform.

Activity

- Trainer has a cut pin stacked brand logos of 13 social media platforms on a chart paper. Trainer asks one participant, at a time, to take one logo (e.g., Facebook logo) out from the chart paper. The chart paper with the logos is facing opposite to the participants, so that others will not be able to hint him/her to pull the right one, trainer will then explain. If he /she selects a wrong logo, the trainer will ask another participant to get the right one. This will happen for all the logo. The trainer will explain briefly each of them. This is to see in participants whether or not they could identify these logos, and the trainer will discuss the differences of each platform.

Refer: Appendix-2.1 (Page 20)

Discussion (11.30-12.00). Trainer will facilitate the discussion. Each participant in a training programme brings experience to the classroom. It will not only make trainees feel respected but their experiences can equally help to put theories into a practical light. Ask the participants to share their personal experiences, (negative /positive) of using these social media platforms.

1.00-1.30 PM

UNIT 3: POPULAR SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS IN BHUTAN

Objective

- Be mindful of the three popular social media platforms in Bhutan
- Understand the advantages and disadvantages of Facebook, WeChat and YouTube

Discussion & Activity

- Trainer will divide the participants in three groups. One member of each group will draw one logo as asked by the trainer (Facebook, WeChat & YouTube). The trainer will do this one after another, briefly explaining in between the advantages and disadvantages of each platform.

Refer: Appendix-3.1 (Page 22)

1.30-2.30 PM

UNIT 4: OPPORTUNITIES & THREATS OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE IN BHUTAN

Objectives

- Understand the opportunities that social media platforms have
- Be aware of the possible threats/consequences of social media usage

Discussion & Activity

Activity 1

- Trainer will highlight the main (5) opportunities of social media platforms in Bhutan. Fundraising to help needy people, most effective platform for marketing and communication, government connects with people on key issues, attractive for business promotion, relationship, video chat

Refer: Appendix-4.1 (Page 25)

- The trainer will, in between, provoke discussions to make the session lively and interactive. The trainer will support the idea of opportunity by using the case study. (Leki Tshewang will be studying in Class II this year, and his friends who will be in class III and IX used their parents' phone to study through WeChat)

Refer: Case Appendix 1 (Page 37)

Activity 2

- Trainer will explain threats (4) of social media from the document. People developing anxiety when unable to check their social media for some time, Bhutanese people spend BTN 936/month on the internet, used to spread material which defame, abuse or threaten others, Bhutanese people spend more time on social media than the global average, privacy, fake profiles, addiction, failed relationship

Refer: Appendix-4.2 (Page 27)

- The trainer will support the argument by using a case study (Rescued from Baghdad)

Refer: Case Appendix 2 (Page 39)

2.30-3.45 PM**UNIT 5: USE OF MESSENGER/WHATSAPP/WECHAT: DOS AND DON'TS**

Objective

- Spot the disadvantages of using loudspeaker in a group
- Be aware of social media chats and chat history record
- Identify the risks on giving personal phone/ email ID or passwords to others

Discussion & Activity**Activity 1**

Trainer will demonstrate the negative impact of having speaker **ON** and talking (sensitive issues, e.g. party support during elections/family issues and etc.) to someone from the group

- Trainer has to discuss this activity with the key participants for it to happen smoothly.
Step 1. The trainer will divide the participants into four groups (2 groups will perform the task while the other will observe and vice versa).
Step 2. One group will remain at one corner of the room while the other on the other end.
Step 3. Two mobile phones (one each from the group) will connect to each other via messenger and the speaker of the phone will be **ON**.
Step 4. Two people will start talking to each other assuming that there is nobody around. If asked, by the other, one would lie and tell that he is the only one present.
Step 5. In the process, it so happens that they will start talking about somebody in the group, assuming that he/she is not present there (Of course one side will know, but deceive).
Step 6: Surprisingly, the speaker from one end says many bad things of the person assumed absent at the other end. However, he/she listens in the process.
Step 7. He grabs the phone and attacks the speaker on the other end, challenging and threatening him/her.
Step 8. The trainer will explain what happened in the process. The disadvantages of talking on loud speakers.
Step 9. The other 2 groups will do the same thing (may choose a different topic) while the previous team observes the act.

Discussion

The trainer will highlight the possibility of tracing the chat history, if demanded by the court of law in any court cases. This allows the person to be caught by the police for any unethical activities.

- The trainer will talk about the uninterrupted signals between the phone and the server in the telecom and thus an online activities recording is possible.

- Trainer will emphasize the need for every citizen to abide by the code of ethics or face legal consequences.
- Trainer will use a case to support the discussion (Social media is a useful tool but it needs to be used wisely)

Refer: Case Appendix 3 (Page 42)

Activity 2

- The trainer will demonstrate how giving one's mobile phone to others can be risky. The trainer will discuss about activity with two participants before it happens. Only these two persons know the process in advance, otherwise the demonstration will lose the charm.
Step 1. The trainer will ask a phone from one of the participants, in the pretext of playing with the phone, sends an insulting message via any online platform to another participant (trainer should have the arrangement well in advance for this purpose).
Step 2. Trainer gives back the phone. However, the person who received the message comes and challenges the owner of the phone (the receiver assumes that he was the one to send the message).
Step 3. Trainer now explains about the misunderstanding that he has created between the two participants. He explains about the possibility of such misunderstandings in the community if we are not careful with our personal phones/emails. The trainer will also talk about how they can keep their phone secure by using lock numbers/codes and patterns on the screen. This is just one example; the trainer may add relevant ones in support of this case.

Home work (3.45-4.00 PM). Discussion for the 2nd day

- Trainer will discuss with the participants if the class was up to their expectation. Also ask them to reflect /discuss with their colleagues on what they have discussed in the class while they walk home.

DAY 2

9.30-10.15 AM

UNIT 6: CHILDREN AND SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE IN BHUTAN

Objective

- Understand children's current social media usage in Bhutan
- Realize parent's responsibilities toward their children's online activity at home

Discussion

- Trainer will talk about children's current social media usage in Bhutan
Refer: Appendix-6.1 (Page 28)
- Trainer will discuss on how, as parents, they can monitor their children's online activity at home. Trainer will discuss some 12 points from the document- Parent's Guide by OnGuard Online
Refer: Appendix-6.2 (Page 30)
- Trainer will discuss two case studies to support the discussion (Being better parents & we cannot avoid technology (ICT), but use it effectively)
Refer: Case Appendix 4 (Page 43)
Refer: Case Appendix 5 (Page 44)

10.15-11.30 AM

UNIT 7: ETHICAL & SECURITY CONCERNS

Objectives

- Be aware of security concerns and anonymous online users in Bhutan
- Be mindful of defamation/legal consequences over unethical use of social media

Discussion

Trainer will talk on security concerns and anonymous online users in Bhutan-the current situation, the findings of the BMF (2021) Social media landscape survey

Refer: Appendix-7.1 (Page 32)

Activity 1

Trainer will demonstrate practical examples of defamation/legal consequences

- **Step 1.** Trainer will show/reflect on some past unpleasant actions/photographs posts from Facebook page, possibly very relevant to the participants of that particular place and discuss the consequences. Show to the participants.
- **Step 2.** Discuss how they felt, do they think it is ethical? Have they ever come across such situations? Do they now realize it was unethical? Will they do this again or allow people to do this? Discuss.
- Trainer will further discuss the negative impact of sharing online videos/photographs using a case (court sentences 74-year old businessman for harassment)

Refer: Case Appendix 6 (Page 45)

Self-Reflection (11.30-12.00 PM)

- Trainer will oversee and guide the discussion. Participants in groups of 4 will discuss the above cases and examples among themselves. This is to give them a chance to reflect on some of the unethical issues discussed or faced by them anytime in the past.
- Trainer will ask some leading questions for the discussion such as:
 - Q. Have you now realized that some people in your community have posted others mourning/family/rituals/private picture-videos and etc. in the past? Ask them to reflect.
 - Q. Do you think it is right?
 - Q. Do you know you can be summoned to court for breaching other's privacy?
 - Q. Once you post something and even delete from your phone, it could still remain in the server somewhere. Are you not scared?

1.00-1.30 PM

UNIT 8: Misinformation and Disinformation: How credible is information on the web?

Objective

- Understand the difference between misinformation & disinformation
- Realize how to spot mis- and disinformation online to avoid spreading falsehoods and to be critical consumers of online news

Discussion

- The trainer will explain the difference between misinformation and disinformation with examples. The trainer will also highlight the techniques to recognize them.

Refer: Appedix-8.1 (Page 32)

1.30-2.00 PM

UNIT 9: SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY OF BHUTAN

Objective

- Be conscious of Bhutan's social media policy and code of conduct

Discussion 1

- The trainer will highlight the message of His Majesty, the fourth King on social media policy in Bhutan

Refer: Appedix-9.1 (Page 34)

Discussion 2

- Policy statement: Trainer will discuss on the following points: easy access to government information, enabling business promoting family and community ties, participation for democratic and socioeconomic discourses, create a knowledge based society

Refer: Appedix-9.2 (Page 35)

Discussion 3

- Code of Conduct: Trainer will discuss the code of conduct that all the citizens are encouraged to observe: be a good citizen, be responsible, be transparent, be accurate, be considerate, be careful, and be appropriate.

Refer: Appedix-9.3 (Page 36)

Discussion (2.00-2.30 PM)

- Participants will discuss among themselves- trainer will guide the discussion. Trainer will divide the participants into groups of 5 and will ask the participants to discuss among themselves what they learned from the session before.

Lead questions for the discussion:

Q. Discuss how you can promote your business and family ties through social media platforms

Q. How can you use social media platforms in a responsible, transparent and appropriate manner?

LEARNING STYLES QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of this questionnaire is to assess how much the participants have understood from the training session. It is also to give them an opportunity to share what they have learned.

Participants will take part in learning styles question- answer session- there will be small prizes (chocolates, pen, vouchers and etc.) for the right answers. The trainer will encourage all the participants to answer.

Ask/discuss the following

- i. Ask to draw the logo of few social media platforms

- ii. Show and ask if they identify the brand logo
- iii. Do you remember the most popular social media platforms used in Bhutan?
- iv. What is the negative impact of WeChat- if the speaker is on?
- v. How do you feel about personal photo uploads by other people? Is this ethical?
- vi. Do you think it is your responsibility to monitor your children's online activity?
- vii. Do you think it is appropriate to upload any pictures you like? Why?
- viii. Can you be taken to court if you fail to adhere to social media usage guidelines?
- ix. Can you reflect on some of the disadvantages of using social media?
- x. Can you reflect on some of the advantages of using social media?
- xi. Do you think the training is helpful to you? How?

REFLECTION AND TAKE AWAY POINTS FROM 2 DAYS OF TRAINING

The trainer will reflect/summarize important points from the 2-day training.

1. Facebook, WeChat and YouTube are the three most popular social media platforms in Bhutan
2. About 90% of people are active members of at least one social media.
3. 66% of parents believe that their children use social media at the expense of other good and healthy activities.
4. Only around a third of parents regularly monitor their children's social media use and social media usage among children and young adults is a major issue of concern, the finding of the study reports.
5. Fewer people believe that social media is effectively contributing to strengthening community vitality.
6. About three-fourth of the social media users in Bhutan have little or no awareness of privacy and ethical issues and therefore they may be vulnerable to negative experiences and cybercrimes.
7. There are many opportunities of social media in Bhutan. For example, Fundraising to help needy people, most effective platform for marketing and communication, government connects with people on key issues, attractive for business promotion, relationship, video chat

8. Equally there are also threats of social media - People developing anxiety when unable to check their social media for some time, Bhutanese people spend BTN 936/month on the internet, used to spread material which defame, abuse or threaten others, Bhutanese people spend more time on social media than the global average, privacy, fake profiles, addiction, failed relationship
9. The foundation of Bhutan's ability to harness social media for GNH is our online behavior. The RGoB expects all citizens to conduct themselves in the 'virtual' world as they would in the 'real' world. Existing RGoB laws will continue to be enforced offline and online. Be a good citizen. • Be responsible. • Be transparent. • Be accurate. • Be considerate. • Be careful • Be appropriate
10. The message of His Majesty, the fourth King, during the introduction of television and the Internet on June 2, 1999, also applies to social media: “I would like to remind our youth that the television and the Internet provide a whole range of possibilities which can be both beneficial as well as negative for the individual and the society. I trust that you will exercise your good sense and judgment in using the Internet and television”.
11. Social media encroaches on privacy - once information is posted to a social networking site, it is no longer private. It has also facilitated the spread of inappropriate content. Social media has great potential as a development tool and it can also do a lot of harm to individuals, communities and societies
12. Due to the unprecedented rise in its outreach and the variety of users, combined with technological possibilities to remain anonymous, people can use social media in a manner that has raised serious concerns related to anonymity, privacy and other ethical issues.
13. Only 67 % of the people believe that other social media users use their own names and photos.
14. One of the primary universal ethical requirements of social media use is to abstain from anonymity. People should use their true identity to engage in social media to promote transparency and embedded accountability.
15. We have to be mindful of defamation/legal consequences for unethical use of social media platforms.

APPENDICES

TRAINER RESOURCES**Appendix A**

OBJECTIVES OF THE TRAINING

This training module aims to provide the illiterate and semi-literate people of Bhutan awareness to appropriately address the digital challenges they face, and understand the opportunities it has to offer. It will provide them with a set of technical and emotional competencies that empower them to access, use, create and share information. The module looks at the basic concepts, required skills and case studies to be in control of online presence, understand both the advantages and disadvantages of new technologies and online platforms.

Learning outcomes - On completion of this module, participants will be able to:

- Be aware of various social media platforms available in Bhutan
- Understand the differences of each online platforms
- Be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of each of these platforms
- Evaluate the threats and opportunities of social media usage
- Be aware of social media privacy, ethics and security
- Identify self-responsibilities toward children's online activities
- Understand the difference between mis-and disinformation and recognize them
- Be mindful of social media policy of Bhutan

Appendix B

TRAINING NEED ANALYSIS (TNA)

Trainer will ask the participants' expectations from the training and note them. The training need analysis (TNA) is a one of the vital components of training. The trainer, after his introduction and the overall highlight of the training program, would ask each of the participants to express their learning expectations from the training. The trainer will note down the points. This exercise will assemble broader perspectives about participants' understanding of the training and their underlying expectations. Doing so, the trainer may slightly realign few of the activities, if required. This will narrow the gap between training objectives and the expectations of the participants, thereby conducting a more fruitful training.

Reference: Handouts- Training of trainers (2010). Radio Netherlands Training center

Appendix 1.1

OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL MEDIA LANDSCAPE/USAGE IN BHUTAN

Chronological order of media development in Bhutan

1967-the first Bhutanese newspaper, Kuensel, started

1973- Radio Broadcasting Service- National Youth Association of Bhutan

1999-Bhutan Broadcasting Service Corporation (television)

1999-Internet by Bhutan Telecom

2003-Mobile phone by Bhutan Telecom

Reference: Lhamo & Oyama (2015). The Role of Mass Media in Bhutan: Accessibility, Influence and its Impacts: Journal of Mass Communication & Journalism.

The recent survey conducted by Bhutan Media Foundation (BMF, 2021) has revealed that Facebook, WeChat and YouTube are the three most popular social media platforms in Bhutan. These are among Facebook, WeChat, YouTube, Telegram, WhatsApp, Instagram, Gaming apps, TikTok, Snapchat, Twitter, Pinterest, LinkedIn, Blogs and others.

The penetration of social media in Bhutan is very high with widespread ownership of smartphones and greater access to the internet. About 90% of people are active members of at least one social media. The survey reports that 66% of parents believe that their children use social media at the expense of other good and healthy activities. Only around a third of parents regularly monitor their children's social media use and social media usage among children and young adults is a major issue of concern, the finding of the study reports. Fewer people believe that social media is effectively contributing to strengthening community vitality.

The good news is the people over 60 years are the least intensive users of social media in Bhutan. Seeking information and entertainment are the two major purposes for people's engagement on social media, survey reports.

The survey reveals that about three-fourths of the social media users in Bhutan have little or no awareness of privacy and ethical issues and therefore they may be vulnerable to negative experiences and cybercrimes. It further adds that a mix of regulation and greater advocacy about social media ethics, privacy, and security are widely considered to be necessary for promoting safe and healthy use of social media. The study, therefore, calls for immediate attention and indispensable intervention at

the grassroots level of our Bhutanese society. Basic social media literacy training is, thus, very appropriate and timely.

In Bhutan, mass media primarily refers to radio, newspapers, cinema, television, and the internet. It comprises a variety of modes by which senders can record information and experiences and transmit them to a large audience fairly rapidly. This definition summarizes those commonly used in writings on the media.

The mass media constitute a powerful and infusing force in our lives. We are bombarded by media messages daily. Today, most of the information that we get about our local, national, and international news comes to us through these mass media, which is very different from the situation before 1999 in Bhutan. TV and the Internet were introduced in 1999 and mobile phones in 2003.

The information and views communicated through these media have a great impact on our attitudes toward people, events, and problems. The media have relayed information to the people about the country's five-year plans, development programs, and education systems, and this has motivated people to become partners in the progress of the country. Accessibility of information and communication has improved, and people are constantly consuming information; however, its excessive influence may undermine the traditional culture and value system.

Therefore, realizing the important role of mass media and, its impacts on society, and determining its future direction have become very important. Castell in 2007 stated that, throughout the history of information and communication, mass media is considered as a powerful factor that shapes social change. It can construct or deconstruct the norms and values on which the society is built, because the real challenge in society is the battle over the minds of the people.

Reference: Social Media Landscape in Bhutan (2021, in press). Bhutan Media Foundation

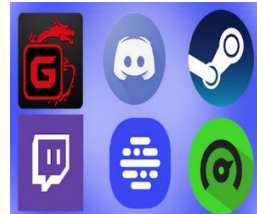
Appendix 2.1

VARIOUS SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS BEING USED IN BHUTAN

- Facebook
- WeChat
- YouTube
- Telegram
- WhatsApp
- Instagram
- Gaming apps
- TikTok
- Snapchat
- Twitter
- Pinterest
- LinkedIn
- Blogs and others

Reference: Social Media Landscape in Bhutan (2021, in press). Bhutan Media Foundation

Brand logo of social media platforms



Appendix 3.1

THE MOST POPULAR SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS IN BHUTAN

- Facebook
- WeChat
- YouTube

Few advantages and disadvantages of these social media platforms

1. Facebook

Facebook is arguably the most powerful social media and social networking site. Most people who know how to use a computer and Internet have a profile on Facebook. You can use Facebook to connect with your family, friends, work colleagues, and you can even meet new people on Facebook.

- **Advantages**

Relationship: Anyone can take advantage of Facebook to maintain a good relationship with their family member, relatives, friends or others.

Business: people can maintain good relationship with other who identify with certain tastes or products, thereby advertising their products to increase business. Using a Facebook page, you can increase your brand value and social media presence for your business.

Partnership: Facebook allows the establishment of partnerships between various projects.

Video chat: Facebook can also be used as video chat tool for business or social purposes

Host images and videos: You can set privacy levels for individual albums to control who can see what you share. One can also download their complete collection of Facebook photos and videos using the Facebook backup account feature.

Real-time social networking site: This makes it one of the best sources to stay updated with the latest news and information

- **Disadvantages**

Privacy: One thing to consider has to do with the availability of really personal information, whether it's in video, pictures, or text. Here's a good rule: Never give out too much personal information. All throughout the Internet, we should always keep in mind the privacy of our personal data. After it's placed online, we lose all control.

Fake Profiles: Facebook is full of fake profiles. We must be careful.

Failed relationship and breakups: Facebook is also becoming one of the major vehicles for failed relationship and breakups.

Addiction: Spending too much time on Facebook might make you a Facebook addict, and you might end up wasting too much time.

2. WeChat

This application is free to install and can install from Google Play.

- **Advantages**

Making friends: we can meet new friends from another country or village. It's like Voice Chat, Group Chat, Moments, Voice Call, Free Call, Sticker Gallery, Broadcast Message, Friends Radar, Favorite Message, Group Chat, QR Code, Chat History Backup, Web WeChat, Shake, People Nearby, & Walkie Talkie.

- **Disadvantages:**

Easy to get personal detail: people can have access to other's personal data if we are not careful with the setting. We also have to be careful to use our own picture as our profile picture because anybody can take and save our picture.

3. YouTube

It is free to use. There is no fee to pay in using YouTube.

- **Advantages**

Videos: You can practice and test your own creative ways on doing videos and see how the market reacts for. Expressing your creativity through YouTube is a major benefit and you can get a good deal of information to many people in a short amount of time. You can attach invitation links to have your viewers conveniently subscribe as well. You can also blog about it and then embed the YouTube video on your website.

YouTuber: You can make videos and upload them, this is an opportunity to make money from your uploaded videos. YouTube allows you to create Google AdSense account with you YouTube profile. If your videos are genuine and interesting, people would like to see more uploaded videos on your channels, the people would recommend your channel to other peoples over the internet. You can get fame over the internet world.

- **Disadvantages**

Copyright issues: It is public. Anyone can see the videos that you post, there could be copyright infringement or privacy invasion issues. If you do not comply with YouTube terms and conditions,

your account might get flagged or disabled. You must have the original content or have the explicit permission of the person who creates the content to include it in your video. You must own the copyrights and distribution rights for all audio and video content that you upload.

Inappropriate videos: All videos people post are not good at all times. Some videos can sometimes be inappropriate without warning. Example, violence, explicit videos and etc. Some of these content are not good for children.

Appendix 4.1

OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE IN BHUTAN

OPPORTUNITIES

1. *Fundraising to help needy people:* There are many heart touching, sentimental and emotional occasions where Bhutanese, through donations appeal on social media platforms, have rescued their fellow citizens in times of life and death situations. There are many accomplished Bhutanese stories of donation drive on social media for noble cause. Be it for sick, needy or financially disadvantaged Bhutanese individual, social media donation drive in the recent past has much to be reflected and credited for.

Social media landscape in Bhutan, a recent survey conducted by Bhutan Media Foundation (BMF, 2021) has also captured the advantages of social media, in particular the Facebook to raise funds to support people who are in dire need of financial assistance.

- For example, in July 2009, a fund raising campaign launched on social media for a Bhutanese student hospitalized in Japan mobilized BTN 1.9 million.

Reference: Social Media Landscape in Bhutan (2021, in press). Bhutan Media Foundation

- A private newspaper in Bhutan-The Bhutanese in 2019 clearly highlights another case of a social media donation drive led by a private citizen that led to the collection of around BTN 1.5 million to support the family of a 9 year old girl who, in December-2019, disappeared and later found dead in Dechencholing- Thimphu. These are just few examples of the many noble opportunities social media can offer to us.

Reference: We had great difficulty making ends meet but what gave me hope was that Dena said she would become a doctor and help her family: Mother (The Bhutanese, Dec 14, 2019)

- However, we must also be mindful of the changing national regulations and policies on the use of social media in Bhutan. According to Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs (MoHCA), as reported by BBS on its webpage dated March 24, 2021, soliciting donations without approval will be charged with deceptive practice. The report further states that civil society and religious organizations or those approved by relevant agencies only are permitted to seek donations. Soliciting donations without approval, according to police, will be charged with deceptive practice, which is petty misdemeanor and may have prison term of one month to three years, the report states.

Reference: *Soliciting donations without approval will be charged with deceptive practice (BBS, 2021). Retrieved from: <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=145815>*

2. *Most effective platform for marketing and communication:* Facebook and Instagram are considered the most effective social media platform in Bhutan for marketing and communication. Facebook is considered to be the most beneficial for marketing and communication purposes because of its high penetration rate both within and outside the country and also across age groups. Schools in Bhutan use WhatsApp, WeChat and Telegram more intensively to communicate with students, parents and teachers.
3. *Imparting education during pandemic:* During the pandemic the social media became an even more important tool.
 - The government departments, CSOs and educational institutions mostly use social media platforms to disseminate information, spread awareness about relevant issues, connect with the public, send out notifications, and advertise vacancies.
 - Education institutions started to use social media platforms more intensively for teaching-learning activities and communications with students and parents.
4. *Government connects with people on key issues:* During Bhutan's second pandemic-related nationwide lockdown, the Facebook pages of the Prime Minister's Office and Ministry of Health were extensively used by the government to make regular announcements, raise awareness, and communicate with the public.
5. *Attractive for business promotion:* Social media offers an inexpensive or costless marketing platform for business, and allows businesses to network and expand their clientele.
 - They do it through marketing, brand promotion and hiring.
 - Media houses in Bhutan also use social media platforms to post their news and other contents.

Reference: *Social Media Landscape in Bhutan (2021, in press). Bhutan Media Foundation*

Appendix 4.2

THREATS

1. *People developing anxiety when unable to check their social media for some time* : The survey (2021) has found that 73.6% of people check their social media as the last thing they do before they sleep, while 43.6% reported that it is the first thing they do after waking up. People developing anxiety when unable to check their social media for some time reflects addictive behavior. 45% of people feel uncomfortable when they cannot check their social media account for even some hours. Researchers have found a strong association between the intensity of social media use and sleep disturbance, the report adds.
2. *Bhutanese people spend BTN 936/month on the internet*: On an average, the rural people spend Nu. 821 per month while the urban people spend Nu. 1128 per month to support their higher usage of social media.
3. *Social media challenges- used to spread material which defame, abuse or threaten others*: According to Social Media Policy of Bhutan (2016), social media also brings challenges. It has been used to spread material which defame, abuse or threaten others. Children who use social media expose themselves to danger. Social media encroaches on privacy - once information is posted to a social networking site, it is no longer private. It has also facilitated the spread of inappropriate content.
4. *Bhutanese people spend more time on social media than the global average*: On average, a person in Bhutan spends 18 minutes more every day on social media than the estimated global average. When a Bhutanese, on average, spends 163 minutes every day on social media the estimated global average is 145 minutes, according to Social Media Policy of Bhutan (2016).

Reference: *Social Media Landscape in Bhutan (2021, in press). Bhutan Media Foundation*

Appendix 5.1

USE OF MESSENGER/WHATSAPP/WECHAT: DOS AND DON'TS

The trainer will have practical sessions to spot the disadvantages of using loudspeaker in a group, to be aware of social media chats and chat history record and to highlight the risks on giving personal phone/ email ID or passwords to others

Appendix 6.1

CHILDREN AND SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE-PARENTS RESPONSIBILITIES

The recent survey conducted by Bhutan Media Foundation (BMF, 2021) reports that 66% of parents believe that their children use social media at the expense of other good and healthy activities. Only around a third of parents regularly monitor their children's social media use.

The government's social media policy does not have a guideline on the minimum age for subscribing to a social media platform. Most social media platforms allow children aged 13 years of age or older to become members, based on the US COPPA Act 1998. However, many psychologists agree that children develop the ability to think more abstractly only between 12-18 years, and suggest it is safer to join social media at 18 years (Howard, 2018), the report concludes.

The survey (BMF, 2021) reflects that children (below 18 years) hold 4.2 social media accounts, while adults have 4 accounts on average.

Descending order of popular social media platform among children in Bhutan

Facebook- 98% of children are members

YouTube -74.2%

WeChat and Instagram - third distinct choices of Bhutanese children

Time spent on social media

It has been noted that children use social media for four major purposes: education, seeking information, entertainment and socialization. On average, children spend almost 3 hours every day on social media. This is just about 10 minutes less than the adults.

Monitoring by parents

A majority of Bhutanese parents do monitor their children usage of social media. However, only 28.5% of parents regularly monitor their children's social media usage. 36.5% do it often while 35% ever monitor or rarely monitor their children's social media use.

Discussion with children on ethical issues

The recent survey (BMF, 2021) has revealed that only 16% of parent discuss social media ethical issues with children. Just about 18 % become social media friends of their children's accounts to monitor them. The worrying revelation is about 17% of parents do not monitor their children's engagements on social media.

More than half of the parents (60%) reported that their children neglect other good activities due to addictive use of social media. Over half of the parents surveyed (51%) reported that they are very worried about their children's social media usage, 42% are slightly worried, while 7% are not worried about it.

Discussion

The survey indicates that the Bhutanese parents are at the crossroads: younger parents have a more liberal attitude toward allowing their children to use social media at an early age, and at the same time are also worried about its overuse and related harms.

Reference: *Social Media Landscape in Bhutan (2021, in press). Bhutan Media Foundation*

Appendix 6.2

SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES: PARENT'S GUIDE BY ONGUARD ONLINE

“It’s 10 p.m. Do you know where your children are?” Remember that phrase from your own childhood? It’s still a valid question, but now, it comes with a twist: “Do you know where your kids are — and who they’re talking to online?”

Social networking sites encourage and allow people to exchange information about themselves, and use blogs, chat rooms, email, or instant messaging to communicate with the world-at-large. But while they can increase a person’s circle of friends, they also can increase exposure to people who have less-than-friendly intentions, including sexual predators.

Help Your Kids Socialize Safely Online OnGuard Online urges parents to:

- **Keep the computer in an open area**, like the kitchen or family room, so you can keep an eye on where your kids are online and what they’re doing.
- **Use the Internet with your kids.** Be open to learning about the technology so you can keep up with them.
- **Talk to your kids about their online habits.** If they use social networking sites, tell them why it’s important to keep information like their name, Social Security number, address, phone number, and family financial information — like bank or credit card account numbers — to themselves. Remind them that they should not share that information about other people in the family or about their friends, either. Your children should be cautious about sharing other information too, like the name of their school, sports teams, clubs, where they work or hang out, or any other information that could be used to identify them or locate them offline.
- **Make sure your kids’ screen names don’t say too much about them.** Explain why it’s inappropriate — even dangerous — to use their full name, age, or hometown. Even if your kids think their screen name makes them anonymous, it doesn’t take a genius to combine clues to figure out who your kids are and where they can be found.
- **Use privacy settings to restrict who can access and post on your child’s website.** You may approve of their friends from school, clubs, teams, community groups, or your family being able to view your kids’ website, but not strangers from a neighboring town or school.
- **Your kids should post only information that you — and they — are comfortable with others seeing — and knowing.** Many people can see their page, including their teachers, the police, a college admissions officer, or a potential employer.

- **Remind your kids that once they post information online, they can't take it back.** Even if they delete the information from a site, older versions exist on other people's computers.
- **Warn your kids about the dangers of flirting with strangers online.** Because some people lie online about who they really are, no one ever really knows who they're dealing with.
- **Tell your children to trust their gut if they have suspicions.** If they feel threatened by someone or uncomfortable because of something online, they need to tell you and then report it to the police and the social networking site. You could end up preventing someone else from becoming a victim
- **If you're concerned that your child is engaging in risky online behavior, you can search the blog sites they visit to see what information they're posting.** Try searching by their name, nickname, school, hobbies, grade, or area where you live
- **Check site privacy policies.** Some sites may share information like your child's email address with other companies, which could generate spam and even spyware on the family computer. Sites' privacy policies or other posted links for parents also may contain contact information for you to ask about your child's personal information.

Reference: Social Networking Site: Parent's Guide by OnGuard Online

Appendix 7.1

ETHICAL AND SECURITY CONCERNS

The survey conducted by Bhutan Media Foundation (BMF) in 2021- Social Media Landscape in Bhutan, reports that due to the unprecedented rise in its outreach and the variety of users, combined with technological possibilities to remain anonymous, people can use social media in a manner that has raised serious concerns related to anonymity, privacy and other ethical issues.

Anonymous online users

According to the survey conducted by Bhutan Media Foundation (BMF) in 2021- Social Media Landscape in Bhutan, only 67 % of the people believe that other social media users use their own names and photos. However, as per the code of conduct delineated in the government's social media policy framework (RGoB, 2016), the social media policy of Bhutan aims to promote ethical and transparent online behavior, the study reports.

As per the report, one of the primary universal ethical requirements of social media use is to abstain from anonymity. People should use their true identity to engage in social media to promote transparency and embedded accountability.

Appendix 8.1

MISINFORMATION AND DISINFORMATION: HOW CREDIBLE IS INFORMATION ON THE WEB?

- It's important for everyone to know how to spot mis- and disinformation online to avoid spreading falsehoods and to be critical consumers of online news, particularly through social media.
- The trainer will provoke the discussion with the following questions.
 - Q. How many of you believe on everything that you read, hear or see on social media sites?
 - Q. Do you question where the information originated?
 - Q. Do you give some time to think whether you can share this information, or you just do it?

Misinformation

This is the false information. However there is no intent to mislead. The key here is that you unintentionally spread false information around but you didn't mean to.

Misinformation is simply a term for any kind of wrong or false information. It can happen often in our everyday lives.

For example

A Gewog meeting starts at 9AM, but you forget or misread the invitation/order and tell your friends that it starts at 10AM, you are supplying them with misinformation. Your intent is not to mislead or give them false information. It simply happened. You made a mistake.

Disinformation

This is where the sources make deliberate efforts to mislead, deceive, or confuse an audience in order to promote their personal, religious, political or ideological objectives. These are information that are known to be false, and that are asserted with intention to mislead. Disinformation is knowingly spreading false information.

For example

A Gewog meeting starts at 9AM. You know it very well. However, you would like somebody to reach late or miss the meeting. And therefore you told him that the meeting starts at 1 in the afternoon instead of saying 9 in the morning. Your intent is to mislead or give them false information. It is not a mistake on your part, you did it intentionally.

How to recognize misinformation and disinformation

According to Dr. Brian Southwell, a Senior Director of the Science in the Public Sphere Program in the Center for Communication Science at RTI International, if we come across information with the following characteristics, we should consider it suspicious.

- If it seems too good to be true
- If it plays to your own implicit biases
- If it elicits either extreme positive or negative emotions
- If it's not properly sourced, or the stats appear out of date
- The best, baseline way to interrogate a source of information is to check:
 - The author
 - The organization
 - The date it was published
 - The evidence
 - What other sources say

Reference: Keshavarz, Hamid *How Credible is Information on the Web: Reflections on Misinformation and Disinformation. Infopreneurship Journal*, 2014, vol. 1, n. 2, pp. 1-17. [Journal article (Paginated)]

Fetzer, J.H. *Disinformation: The Use of False Information*. *Minds and Machines* 14, 231–240 (2004).
<https://doi.org/10.1023/B:MIND.0000021683.28604.5b>

Appendix 9.1

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY FOR THE ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF BHUTAN HIS MAJESTY, THE FOURTH KING’S VISION

The message of His Majesty, the fourth King, during the introduction of television and the Internet on June 2, 1999, also applies to social media: “I would like to remind our youth that the television and the Internet provide a whole range of possibilities which can be both beneficial as well as negative for the individual and the society. I trust that you will exercise your good sense and judgment in using the Internet and television”. *(Trainer will focus on His majesty’s vision on social media in Bhutan)*

(The following paragraphs are additional information, if needed, for the trainer on social media policy)

Social media are Internet-based tools for sharing and discussing information. It includes: Social Networks (e.g., Facebook, Google+, SinaWebo), Blogs (e.g. Huffington Post, PaSsu Diary], Wikis (e.g. Wikipedia), Forums (e.g. Bhutan Speaks), Podcasts (e.g. TED Talks), Content Communities (e.g. Youtube), and Microblogs (e.g. Twitter, WeChat).

It is different from traditional media -- such as newspaper, TV and radio – because it is not a broadcast medium. Social media is a Web 2.0 platform for collaboration and co-creation. Social media has been described as 'an essential tool for hundreds of millions of Internet users worldwide and a defining element of the Internet generation'. It is also an enabler of social, economic and political change. Social media has been credited to helping us 'return to neighbourly communications' in a globalizing society. With social media, distance is no longer a barrier to having social relationships. Social media has also facilitated the creation of 'intentional' groups – collections of individuals with shared recreational, social, political, or religious views or interests. Contrary to those who see social media as encouraging selfishness, a recent study concludes that Facebook encourages “some aspects of empathy” and that Facebook is “primarily a tool for staying connected, (rather) than self-promotion”.

Social media also helps the economy grow. It enables businesses to improve consumer focus, enhance collaboration in the production process, and better marketing of goods and services. One research firm suggests that improved communication and collaboration due to the use of social media in the enterprise could add \$900 Billion to \$1.3 trillion in value to the US economy alone (A Study by the

McKinsey Global Institute, MGI, entitled the Social Economy, Unlocking Value and Productivity through Social Technologies, 2012). Social media is also enabling millions of people across every sector of the economy to join forces in self-organized collaborations to produce dynamic new goods and services. Social media has also become a tool for good governance. Governments around the world are using social media to reach out to their citizens to get feedback on service delivery, seek inputs into policy making, and create community based programs.

The use of social media in government creates greater transparency, a collaborative relationship with the public, a stronger sense of ownership of government policy and services. These lead to greater public trust in government. But social media also brings challenges. It has been used to spread material which defame, abuse or threaten others. Children who use social media expose themselves to danger.

Social media encroaches on privacy - once information is posted to a social networking site, it is no longer private. It has also facilitated the spread of inappropriate content. Social media has great potential as a development tool and it can also do a lot of harm to individuals, communities and societies. This way it is important for government to develop a policy that would harness the potential of social media to do good and mitigate its dangerous effects.

Since the introduction of internet in 1999, the number of internet users especially the social media is gaining popularity among the urban educated population. Many of the users use social media on a daily basis to interact, network and share information. Social media is also widely used to “express views and opinions on socio-political and economic issues” Bhutan Information and Media Impact Study (BIMIS), 2013. The highest number of social media users (40.1%) falls between the age group of 18 – 24 years followed by 25 – 34 years (32.4%) as per the BIMIS study report. Owing to the lack of internet literacy and in the absence of a code of conduct to guide the general public in the usage of social media, we have observed people misusing social media.

Appendix 9.2

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY STATEMENT OF BHUTAN

As stated in Social Media Policy of Bhutan (2016), the Royal Government of Bhutan (RGoB) sees social media as an important tool for operationalizing our Gross National Happiness (GNH) and strengthening democracy and good governance. On its part, the RGoB shall use social media to facilitate the implementation of all the pillars of GNH. In particular, social media shall be used for:

1. Making easy access to government information and to foster greater transparency, collaborative relationships with the public, a stronger sense of ownership of government policies and services. These will lead to greater public trust and accountability in government.
2. Enabling businesses entities to improve consumer focus, enhance collaboration in the production process, and better marketing of goods and services.
3. Promoting and strengthening family and community ties.
4. Encouraging citizenry participation for democratic and socioeconomic discourse.
5. Timely and accurate information will create a knowledge based society.

Appendix 9.3

SOCIAL MEDIA CODE OF CONDUCT IN BHUTAN

According to Social Media Policy of Bhutan (2016), the foundation of Bhutan's ability to harness social media for GNH is our online behavior. The RGoB expects all citizens to conduct themselves in the 'virtual' world as they would in the 'real' world. Existing RGoB laws will continue to be enforced offline and online.

The Code of Conduct while essentially meant for the civil servants, is normally followed universally and therefore, all the citizens are encouraged to observe it.

- Be a good citizen. Respect the Constitution, all laws, and other people's rights, including intellectual property, trade-marked names and slogans and other copyrighted material.
- Be responsible. Always act in a constructive manner and exercise good judgment.
- Be transparent. Be open about who you are, who you work for, who you represent or who you may be speaking on behalf of
- Be accurate. Ensure that what you post is true
- Be considerate. Never post malicious, indecent, vulgar, obscene, misleading or unfair content about others, your organization, your friends or your competitors.
- Be careful. Do not disclose sensitive private information about yourself or others. Do not post confidential or proprietary particulars about your organization. Beware of trolls and scammers.
- Be appropriate. Use social media in a manner that is consistent with public sector values, legal requirements, related policies and this code of conduct.

Business Associations, Civil Society Organizations, Youth Groups and other associations are invited to define and promote their respective social media codes of conduct that balances the right to free expression and responsible use of social media.

Reference: *Social Media Policy for the Royal Government of Bhutan (2016)*. Retrieved from: <https://www.moic.gov.bt/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Social-Media-Policy-for-the-Royal-Govt.-of-Bhutan-Approved-Version.pdf>

CASE STUDIES

Case Appendix 1

Leki Tshewang will be studying in Class II this year, and his friends who will be in class III and IX used their parents' phone to study through WeChat.

Leki Tshewang and his three friends from Ramina in Lunana gewog completed the 2020 academic year without going to school. The Covid-19 pandemic disrupted the conventional teaching mode and forced the education ministry to embark on virtual learning which resulted in many challenges for rural students. The students of Bjishong Central School in Damji, Gasa come from one of the most remote villages in the country. Nestled among the mountains rising more than 3,400 meters above the sea level, the village has no electricity, television network, or road. The residents climb to certain spots to catch the mobile network signal to communicate with the world beyond.

Every year they walk days to get to the boarding school, but not this year. Before their school, which usually opens in April, could open, the government in March instructed all schools to shut down and the education ministry adopted distance teaching and learning methods.

For Leki Tshewang, 10, and his three friends, options ran out. Given the remoteness, teachers could not visit them to teach. Teachers arranged to send Self Instructional Materials (SIM), but they did not have a teacher to teach using the material. The social media application WeChat became their classroom. Leki Tshewang will be studying in Class II this year, and his friends who will be in class III and IX used their parents' phone to study through WeChat.

Teachers sent lessons through voicemail and image. Given the poor mobile network coverage in the area, especially in summer, accessing them became a challenge. "We used to search for a mobile network signal, and wherever there was a network, we would sit together and then refer to the assignments shared by teachers through WeChat," Leki Tshewang said. "I used to complete my homework, but I was always late in submitting my work because of the network problem." Chiwog Tshogpa Norbu Tshering said sometimes students walked about an hour to get connected to the

internet. “When they do, downloading images was an issue,” he said. “But students patiently waited in the cold until the download was complete”. He added when the internet did not work, teachers guided them through the phone calls.

Leki Tshering sometimes sought help with the lessons from his elder brother who dropped school after the fourth grade. Likewise, two students of Esuna village under Lunana also completed the academic session. Esuna is more than two days walk from Ramina village, but except for the locals and a few villagers from Ramina village, no one knows how to reach Esuna. There is no mobile network either.

Even though teachers tried all possible means, they could not reach the students. Students who had access to online education in urban areas studied through Google classroom with proper and continued guidance from teachers on their mobile phone, ipad, computer or laptop. The year 2020 was a pandemic year that compelled the Ministry of Education to embrace digital teaching and learning model.

The government decided the academic year for Classes PP-VIII would be completed through an e-Learning platform. In the process, the decision triggered the issue of the digital divide. To make up for the lost instructional hours and implement distance learning, the ministry ensured various technologies to engage students during the school closure. Some teachers came forward to initiate tele-education. The education ministry launched it as ‘Bhutan e-Learning.’ The initial idea was to deliver lessons through national television. The ministry recorded more than 400 video lessons. It was simultaneously broadcast on the radio too.

But many private schools in Thimphu were ahead of where Google Classrooms were already in practice and implemented immediately after the school closure. The ministry also came up with SIM, a printed version of tele-education in a concise period to cover students without access to gadgets, television or internet. Then as an emergency in education, the Royal Education Council developed an adapted curriculum and prioritized curriculum. The prioritized curriculum was implemented when the government decided to reopen Classes IX-XII. The ministry to enable e-Learning also initiated additional data than regular internet packages with TashiCell and Bhutan Telecom Limited and allowed access to only e-Learning sites.

Reference: *Rural students fall through the digital divide (kuensel 2021). Retrieved from: <https://kuenselonline.com/rural-students-fall-through-the-digital-divide/>*

Case Appendix 2

Rescued from Baghdad

...nine rescued women share the ordeal, request others to be careful with foreign agents

Sonam was 25. She had gone to a primary school and a nunnery. She had never heard of Iraq, forget Baghdad, the capital city of the war-torn country in the Middle East.

She would never want to remember anything of the country where she had a torturous six months before finally being rescued in March this year along with eight other women.

The foreign country where she dreamt of earning and helping her mother was a ‘huge’ house with a parking lot and iron gates. For six months, she had never left the gate. Her movement was monitored and restricted. “Don’t go to work abroad unless the government send you assuring your safety,” says Sonam who is back to country and undergoing a re-skilling training with other women. “Don’t trust the agents who promises you of work and good salary.” This is what Sonam wants all the Bhutanese, desperate for jobs, to know. “I was tortured, made to work for almost 19 hours in a day without proper meal or rest,” she said between tears, as she recollected the incidents. “Everyday was a nightmare and I wanted to come back home but didn’t know how.”

They are among the 160 plus women that were trafficked to Iraq in the last few years through illegal Bhutanese agents by colluding with foreign agents. The story line is familiar. They are lured with promises of a better lifestyle, opportunities and easy money. Most of them were never told or knew where they were heading until they reached the destination.

How did they go?

It’s the same story of one woman leading to another after the so-called agents convinced them. In September 2019 Sonam came to the national referral hospital. Here she met a friend who was readying to leave for the Middle East. “She told me that an agent helped her to find a job. Then I requested if she could also help me since the job didn’t require any qualification and she introduced me to an agent,” Sonam recalls. The agent told her she would earn USD 300 to USD 400 in a month. “I thought I would be able to help my single mother.”

None of the women met the agent, a woman herself, in person. They talked on WeChat.

The women had to have a passport to travel. The agent had the tricks. Mentioning Iraq would raise the antenna of the officials the women were told to lie to foreign ministry officials when they were processing passports. Some were told to say that they were off to Nepal for business or *Nyekor*. Sonam was one. Her friends were either going to Dubai or Kuwait. “The agent told me that if I say

I'm going to Nepal I will get passport on the same day," said another woman. "She (agent) said I would be sent to Kuwait. When I got the passport, I was told I would be sent to Iraq."

The women became skeptical. But when they were shown images and videos of women in the Middle East "having a good life," they decided to continue. "The agent asked us to pay Nu 30,000 in fees and said if we couldn't pay it, she would deduct from the salary once we start earning," said Dechen, 20, another woman. "They were so nice and kind. This is why I was convinced," she said.

The road to Bagdad

After getting her passport, Sonam was asked to come to Phuentsholing where she and more Bhutanese women were waiting. The agent's husband took them to Samtse and the next day, they left for Delhi from the Bagdogra airport. In Delhi, they were added in a WeChat group chat where many women were bound for Iraq. They spent three days in Delhi to process the visa. A Nepali speaking agent in Dubai received the women at the Dubai airport where they halted for almost 12 hours. From Dubai, they reached Erbil, the capital of Iraqi Kurdistan.

From Erbil, the journey was by road in trucks. Dechen, the youngest in the group cried through the whole journey. "When they saw police, they pushed me into a tight space near the driver to hide me," said Dechen. Another added that they were told they have to travel by truck as the road was not good. Most of the police didn't check the trucks where the Bhutanese women were hiding under blankets. Hiding under blankets, they cannot recollect the time.

The journey was at night. It was a relief for them to reach the agent's house in Baghdad. But once they reached Bagdad their phones and passports were seized. Their photographs were taken and sent to clients. "Whenever an employer comes to employ us, they would give our passport to the employer but never to us."

The jobs

Almost all the Bhutanese women were sent to work as housemaids. It is where they were exploited and harassed. Most worked from 5am until midnight, some without proper meals. Many were not paid for months.

"Whenever it was time for them to pay us, they would take us back to agent and complain about our work. That way they refused to pay the salary," said another. "Our request to send us home would result in the agent threatening us with beating or demanding the money they paid the Bhutanese agent back." One woman who worked for six months received only a month's salary. "I had USD 100 in my pocket when I was rescued," she said.

Besides the household chores, some were even abused and sexually harassed. Falling sick in Baghdad was even riskier. "Whenever we fell ill, they would take us to hospital and give us painkiller shots and

before we could recover they would ask us to work,” another 25-year-old woman said. “We were locked inside the house or the premises all the time. I have never seen what was there behind the walls of my employer,” said one.

Rescued

Lost, desperate, and physically and emotionally tired, the women were about to give up. “We kept crying and praying. We couldn’t tell our parents,” said Sonam. Some informed their relatives, but because of the nature they left, they couldn’t inform authorities.

But their prayers were answered. One day one of them managed to contact someone from Bhutan in Iraq. They created a group chat on a social media platform.

“This is how they were able to contact Royal Bhutan Police,” said one. “We didn’t know who to ask for help since we did not come through proper channel. Whenever we request the Bhutanese agent for help, she would block those who begged her to take home.” However, they were rescued. “We cried in joy when we saw a Bhutanese official from the Embassy in Kuwait for the first time,” said Sonam. “When I saw the Drukair aircraft, I thanked my *Kencho Sum*, His Majesty The King and the government for rescuing us.”

A relief flight on September 20 brought home another 132 Bhutanese women evacuated from Iraq upon the command of His Majesty The King. After completing 21-day quarantine they are currently under home quarantine for another 10 days. They were provided medical care and counselling. However, there are still many Bhutanese women scattered in different groups in Iraq where the Royal Bhutanese Embassy in Kuwait is working to find and bring them home.

Reference: *Rescued from Baghdad* (Kuensel, 2021). Retrieved from:
<https://kuenselonline.com/rescued-from-baghdad/>

Case Appendix 3

Social media is a useful tool but it needs to be used wisely

Dear lama,

I would like to inquire one question to you regarding impact of social media. As we all know, a lot of people get divorce due to of Wechat, Facebook, Messenger, Skype etc.

What is the impact of social media acting as a source of divorce? I have seen lot of men and women get divorced due to misuse of advance technology. Could you share me little bit about this issue?

KD, Dagapela.

Well, social media is like the TV or internet. In itself, it is neither good nor bad. It purely depends on how we use it. I have not done any research on the effects of social media on the divorce rate, but I would guess that inappropriate use of Facebook, etc, has contributed to many marital breakups.

Actually, there are numerous ways that social media can create rifts in relationships. For example, someone might become uneasy if his or her partner is spending a lot of time chatting on line or spending hours reading other people's personal posts. To avoid misunderstanding, it would be best to develop social media habits that engender trust, such as sharing passwords and using the media in full view of your partner. Basically, in the name of family harmony, social media use should be rooted in openness and transparency.

For a married person or someone in a long term relationship, regularly chatting with someone of the opposite sex on Wechat or Facebook etc. is a huge error of judgment and can easily lead to a break-up. Basically, if you feel that it is inappropriate to hang-out with a person in real life, then it is also inappropriate to do so on-line.

In reality, we need to be fully aware that our deeds are not done in isolation but that everything we do has consequences. In this respect, it is really important for a parent to remember that a child needs a stable and loving environment to develop into a mature, caring and well-adjusted adult. If the home environment is marked with mistrust, suspicion and resentment, then our children will very likely grow up disturbed and insecure, which can lead to a number of behavioral issues.

In short, we cannot directly blame social media for an increase in divorce cases, but it can be argued that it is a contributing factor when misused. Like a car, social media can be extremely positive and empowering when used wisely, but it can be a weapon of destruction when abused. It is the operator that decides which it is to be.

Personally, I recommend that you pause and then check your motivation before engaging in a conversation or leaving a comment on a social media. Basically, you can ask yourself these questions:

“Is my aim to benefit my family and others or is it purely to fulfill my personal wants and desires”. If you conclude that you are doing it just for yourself and that your action lacks concern for your family or others, then it should trigger loud alarm bells in your head. You are moving into a danger zone. Suffering will enviably follow if you proceed.

Reference: Social media is a useful tool but it needs to be used wisely (Kuensel, 2021). Retrieved from: <https://kuenselonline.com/social-is-a-useful-tool-but-it-needs-to-be-used-wisely/>

Case Appendix 4

Being better parents

The amount of time we’re spending with our children is shortening. Understandably, this is because we’re working longer hours. But what is worrying is that some of us are also spending more of our leisure hours with our televisions, laptops, tablets, and smart phones, rather than our children.

At a recent parent-teacher-child meeting held at a school in Thimphu, it was pointed out that some students had submitted essays wishing they were a social media platform like Facebook or a television set, rather than a child. They feel that only then would they be loved more.

Some students also said that these technologies and social media platforms were causing their parents to fight. Alcohol abuse and divorce were other activities that disturbs the young minds of our children. No society is perfect but when it comes to better parenting, there is much we can learn and do to better ourselves judging by the way some of us live our lives. Better parenting is not possible if we are not there as parents in the first place.

Alcohol abuse and divorce are issues that have been around for some time. On alcohol, efforts continue to be made by the government and some non-government organizations in the form of education and awareness, counselling, and rehabilitation. Recognizing that alcoholism is a disease that requires medical and family attention is a first step many of us are beginning to understand. But when it comes to divorce, we can do more. Getting divorced is an easy process in Bhutan requiring little paperwork. This is in stark contrast to some public services that can entangle applicants in red tape for days, sometimes weeks.

It is ironic that the one service that should rightly be cumbersome is not. A time consuming divorce process could give some couples who intend to split just enough time to re-think their decision. Not all breaks are repairable but a few are based on impulse and can be mended. There could be requirements added to the process such as undergoing couple’s counselling and other sorts of interventions before a divorce is approved by a court. The requirements to obtain a marriage

certificate could also perhaps get more stringent, not in terms of red tape, but in having certain conditions met like the number of years that a couple has lived together prior. There is a weakness in the system as made apparent by incidences of fake marriages taking place for visas.

Ensuring that both the father and mother are together is the first step towards achieving better parenting. We can achieve this by making sure marriages are built on solid foundations and that in times of trouble, both are open to repairing their relationship through counselling. However, this is not to say that single parents cannot do the same what two parents can. Following that, tackling an issue like not spending enough time with children becomes a comparably easier task.

There is a need to begin educating ourselves on what good parenting is. The BBS programme on parenting where a parent is interviewed along with their child is an initiative that deserves to be sustained. Some schools are beginning to observe “parenting month” which is another important initiative. Through such programmes and events parents can be made aware of where they are lacking.

We have to learn how important it is, as a parent, to make time for our children, not just physically but mentally as well. We need to know how our actions, our behaviors directly influence our children. If we can clearly see the link and be constantly reminded about it, perhaps, we will serve as better role models. Studies have shown that good parenting helps to foster qualities such as empathy, honesty, self-reliance, cooperation, among others. It also promotes intellectual curiosity, motivation and a desire to achieve. Which parent would not want their children to have such qualities? It our duty to ourselves, to our children, and to our nation, to be the best parents possible.

Reference: *Being better parents* (Kuensel, 2021). Retrieved from: <https://kuenselonline.com/being-better-parents-2/>

Case Appendix 5

We cannot avoid technology (ICT), but use it effectively

Filling the gap in 2021? One of the forces driving the development of ICT in the education sector this year is the digital education flagship programme that will digitize classroom teaching and learning. Schools have launched the ICT subject for Classes IX-XI. Digital Drukyul flagship programme could supplement the push towards a “modern” education system.

The ministry is already working on a learning management system (LMS) to fill the digital disparity gap. It (LMS) is an e-learning platform and will have contents of every subject. It will be virtual teaching. The government is also exploring ways to issue tablets to each student in the country, mainly those in rural areas like Leki Tshewang. Although the government has supported every

initiative that teachers and education ministry took during the pandemic, some doubt that providing tablets may not address the digital gap unless the country builds on the ICT.

Case Appendix 6

Court sentences 74-year-old businessman for harassment

Thimphu dzongkhag court's bench I sentenced the 74-year-old man, who had circulated intimate videos of him and a young woman on social media last year, to three months and four nights in prison for harassment. A Thimphu-based businessman, Sonam Wangdi, was found guilty of harassing a woman by circulating intimate videos to his friends through the social media platform, WeChat.

The April 15 judgment stated that although the videos were filmed with consent from the woman, the man circulated them without her consent, causing her and her families grief and humiliation. He was found guilty of breaching section 462 of the Penal Code of Bhutan. The videos went viral on social media in May 2020 and the woman and her family lodged a complaint to the police. Police arrested Sonam Wangdi on May 18 that year. He was released on bail on May 22.

The court ordered the man to pay Nu 22, 500 to the victim as compensation. The judgment stated that although Sonam Wangdi also contended that he should also be compensated, as the videos caused him embarrassment in front of his family, children, nieces and nephews, the court dismissed his claims, ruling it was him, who circulated the videos. It also stated that police retrieved the videos from Sonam Wangdi's mobile. Meanwhile, the man could pay Nu 11,250 in lieu of the prison term

Reference: *Court sentences 74 year-old businessman for harassment (Kuensel, 2021)*. Retrieved from: <https://kuenselonline.com/court-sentences-74-year-old-businessman-for-harassment/>

NOTE

Basic social media literacy training is targeted to Illiterate and semi-literate audience in rural Bhutan. They are from scattered settlements in the Gewog, they have their daily chores to be met at the end of the day, and at times they have to walk long distance in absence of transport facilities or the farm road connections. Some even are the sole caretaker of disabled member in the family or aged parents at home. They have in general many daily obligations to be fulfilled.

Considering these difficulties, it would be advisable to end the training session at 4. 00 pm in the evening or even earlier than this.

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