

18. März 2013

The Karma Leksheyling School (KLLS), Kathmandu, Nepal

Since 2008, I have visited the Leksheyling School regularly, had many fruitful discussions on educational topics with the staff in charge and the chance to teach creative writing to children in its elementary classes. The Karma Leksheyling School (KLLS) follows a concept mainly developed by Ven. Choje Lama Phuntsok, the present abbot of the Karma Leksheyling Institute for Higher Buddhist Studies.

“Today's young generation should be taught both, basic modern and Dharma knowledge. Without a proper view of Dharma and contemporary ideas we may face difficulties even if we aim for peace and happiness.

Therefore Karma Leksheyling has realized how necessary it is to give children both, a regular and a Dharma education. So, they are taught not only a regular curriculum but also a Buddhist one.”

Ven. Choje Lama Phuntsok

Ven. Choje Lama Phuntsok Rinpoche established Karma Leksheyling School with a vision of educating children of indigenous Himalayan Buddhist families.

In 2007 KLLS was formally established with funding from the Karma Leksheyling educational trust. KLLS is a non-profit charitable organization registered with the District Education Office as a public school at Kathmandu, Nepal. Although it is academically affiliated with the Karma Leksheyling Institute with which it shares some facilities, the school is a separate organization.

Presently the school is accredited for grades 1 – 8 with around 100 students and around 100 monks who continue their studies at the Karma Leksheyling Institute for Higher Buddhist Studies.

Key elements of the KLLS concept

The target group are Himalayan children as boarders. KLLS plans to be co-educational. It provides a quality education to poor and needy children who are often excluded or marginalized from most educational systems in Nepal because of their families' poverty. Students at KLLS are often orphans or come from families who can't afford to send them to governmental schools because of school fees, expenses for uniforms and schoolbooks, etc. At KLLS the monastery will cover all such costs including all living costs like nutrition, health care, housing, clothing, etc.

Approval of KLLS by the Nepali Government

This curriculum for their monastic education has been approved by the Nepali government:

Subject	Name of text books	Marks	Medium	Time
Nepali class 1 to 8	My Nepali book	Full mark 100	Nepalese	45 min.
English class 1 to 8	My English/Easy Learning	Full mark 100	English	45 "
Math 1 to 8	My math/ Ngahi Tsi dheb	Full mark 100	Tib. up to 3 class	45 "
Science and arts 1 to 8	My science/Ngahi Tsenrig	Full mark 100	Himalayan	45 "
Social and moral 1 to 8	My Social/ chyitsok Rigpa	Full mark 100	Himalayan	45 "
Native language/extra sub.	Ritual text books up to 5 and debating 6 to 8	Full mark 100	Himalayan	45 "
Grammar and literature only for class 6 to 8		Full mark 100	Himalaya	45 "
History only for class 6 to 8	Full mark 100	Himalaya	45 "
Language	Our Himalayan language	Full mark 100	Himalaya	45 "

Aims of the Buddhist and formal education

- To provide a timely and quality education for the children of indigenous Himalayan Buddhist and low-income families;
- To offer Buddhist philosophical teachings to interested foreign students;
- To unite Buddhist brothers and sisters from all over the world through their learning together;
- To infuse a spirit of cooperation, self-help, morality and discipline;
- To develop multi-dimensional personalities of the young Buddhist monks and nuns;
- To emphasize practical and vocational skills that can be of practical use in the course of the future life of the young nuns and monks.

Conclusion

To teach disadvantaged Himalayan children more efficiently is quite a challenge. Therefore good models are urgently needed.

KLLS attempts to educate destitute and needy children who mostly come from remote areas in the Himalayas lacking access to quality education.

The development of the KLLS curricula will even more contain the rich teachings of Buddhist values together with an innovative and modern education fitting the needs of Nepal.

Teaching these children more efficiently in both, a basic traditional Buddhist knowledge and a modern formal education is a very interesting approach that will contribute to their better learning in a holistic way.

This means suitable materials and training programs for the students have to be created. Their teachers have to attend training seminars to learn how to effectively use these new as well as multimedia and multilingual materials.

As this concept is very open there is a high motivation for further developments and innovative approaches. KLLS could develop into a most interesting example to be adapted as an evidence-based model to other schools and contexts how best to unite formal and non-formal education in the future.

Aspects needed for a future innovative and integrative approach of learning:

- Preschool-Education
- Boys and girls together (co-education)
- Inclusion (the integration of handicapped children)
- Multi-lingual approaches
- Decisions for further education after grade 8
- Support of the arts – traditional and modern (special programs for talented children)
- Family literacy
- Networking with the neighborhood (community education)
- The combination of formal and non-formal education
- Medical support program
- Sports
- Healthy food and health education

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gabriele Rabkin". The signature is written in black ink and has a fluid, connected style.

Dr. Gabriele Rabkin

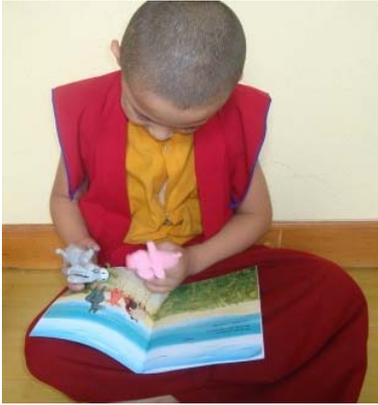
Some examples of practice at KLLS:



Lesson on creative writing and painting



Individual presentations and sharing one's own ideas with others



Reading and developing a dialogue using finger-dolls



A space to create a literacy room for elementary school students in future