

# Gross National Happiness Philosophy Manifested in the Selected Speeches of His Excellency Tshering Tobgay

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**Abstract** - *A nation's progress has been measured in terms of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) throughout modern history. Suffice it to say that the higher a country's GDP, the more progressive a country is considered to be. An internationally used measure of a country's economic activity, GDP has undergone much thought as to its statistical and conceptual bases, but it mainly measures a country's market production. Clearly, there is a need for a coherent complement to a nation's GDP. Every nation can benefit from a fresh and transformational approach to defining and measuring their progress and this can be done by considering the country's Gross National Happiness (GNH). It is a holistic and sustainable developmental approach targeted at achieving a healthy balance between material and non-material values while giving utmost priority to human happiness and well-being. This study is an analysis of Bhutan's Prime Minister His Excellency Tshering Tobgay's Gross National Happiness philosophy, highlighting key insights from the selections. Analysis revealed that His Excellency exemplified the core philosophy of Gross National Happiness in true adherence and embodiment of the pillars which constitute the said philosophical concept, and these are in terms of good governance, socio-economic development, cultural preservation and environment sustainability. Likewise, he achieved the efficiency of connecting with his audience and effectively sending his message across by utilizing rhetorical devices such as humor, ethos, logos and pathos. This paper likewise uncovered and discussed important insights which foster values essential to a nation's well-being and to appreciation of literature as manifested in his discourses, which in themselves can be considered as ample proofs that a nation's well-being and the appreciation of literature can be secured by advocating the holistic approaches within the philosophy of Gross National Happiness.*

**Keywords:** *Bhutan, Good Governance, Gross National Happiness, Tshering Tobgay, Rhetorical Devices*

## INTRODUCTION

Scholars have yet to unanimously agree on the key ingredients that make up man's happiness and well-being. The great Aristotle's usage of the word eudemonia or happiness in describing a life well-lived depicts an understanding of man's happiness that is not limited to satisfaction, but is also inclusive of contentment, independence, healthy interpersonal relationships, a general sense of vigor and vitality, and a sense of purpose, or to other theorists, a "calling" or a meaningful work. On the other hand, utilitarian theorists and hedonists put "pain avoidance" and "pleasure" on top of the list of well-being's main ingredients [1]. To others, the state of man's well-being requires a fulfillment of several conditions, which includes optimum physical health and interpersonal relationships. Others consider the

fulfillment of one's desires and the realization of goals and endeavors, while more subjective facets of life, as important elements of well-being [2].

Man's individual pursuit forms a small but essential part of a nation's quest for the true meaning of happiness. It can be understood that a nation's triumphant journey toward prosperity is hinged on every step they take in consideration with the well-being of every citizen. The attainment of work-life balance is an endeavor now considered as integral to any step toward progress. While it is generally accepted that a nation's progress is reliant upon the amount of work output of its citizens, the state of well-being of every contributing individual cannot be understated, as every individual's happiness and well-being fuels each and every step they take. Many countries have sought to define and determine worthy

leisure in an attempt to secure the healthy balance needed for a forward-moving nation. While others may find a certain amount of constructive leisure-time without public assistance, it can be understood that a number of people greatly benefit from public places for recreation, or group of activities, that cater to every gender and age, which explains why the pursuance of a nationwide program is heavily favored by many nations.

The search for happiness is an age-old concept that has spurned academic interest many centuries ago. For example, The American Declaration of Independence in 1776 has long since argued for their citizen's inalienable rights which include the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness [3]. Other nations have long since been founded based on the pursuit of happiness which is placed on the same level with freedom and the right to live.

In the United Kingdom in 1789, Jeremy Bentham's moral philosophy argued that the main goal of politics should be to strive to bring the greatest happiness to the greatest number of people [4]. Since then, political interest in happiness has not diminished, as can be understood in a recent survey which showed that 81% of the population agreed that the UK Government's main objective should favor the creation of happiness over wealth [5]. British Prime Minister David Cameron, who was then-leader of the opposition in 2006, put happiness firmly on his agenda by persuading the people to accept that there is more to life than money, and asked them to focus not just on their nation's Gross Domestic Product or GDP, but on their nation's General Well Being or GWB as well [6]. The pursuit for happiness has long since been a global contagion that in July 2011, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously passed UN Resolution 65/309 which placed happiness on the global agenda for development [7].

A nation's progress has been measured in terms of its Gross Domestic Product throughout modern history. Suffice it to say that the higher a country's GDP, the more progressive a country is considered to be. An internationally used measure of a country's economic activity, GDP has undergone much thought as to its statistical and conceptual bases, but it mainly measures a country's market production. More often than not, GDP has been considered a measure of a country's economic well-being, but a country's market production and its economic well-being are two different concepts that, when interchanged, can lead to

false indications about a nation's well-being and may entail wrong decisions on policies [8].

Clearly, there is a need for a coherent complement to a nation's GDP. Every nation can benefit from a fresh and transformational approach to defining and measuring their progress and this can be done by considering the citizen's happiness and well-being. There is a need for mankind to draw on their inherent values to visualize the essential hallmarks of success and the benchmarks by which society will be able to attain progress. Mankind needs to understand that progress is hinged not only upon a nation's general triumph over unemployment or lack of income but also, in its victories over non-monetary aspects such as faltering social connections, or the psychological costs of weak human relationships, alienation and isolation, exposure to risks or hazards, and the human experience of vulnerability.

Hence, it can be considered that the amendments proposed by the Stiglitz Sen and Fitoussi Commission to traditional GDP accounting are incremental progress that permit people to realize what really matters to them, to their well-being and to the quality of their lives [9]. Likewise, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization or UNESCO affirmed that social inclusion, equity, work and education were important factors for human happiness and well-being. Quality education for example, is considered a prerequisite to empower people with the necessary skills and knowledge to access decent jobs and allow them to shape the future on their own. As such, UNESCO proposed universal access to quality education and freedom of expression and information as worthy determinants of a society's happiness and well-being and likewise included culture, social cohesion and intercultural communication as important indicators of a society's development. Thus, UNESCO has offered a helping hand in the formulation of a happiness and well-being index as part of the developmental framework of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Index [10].

In the 1970's, the former King of Bhutan made a famous declaration which challenged conventional and materialistic notions of a society's progress. He stated that the current and contemporary paradigm for development that is Gross National Product or Gross Domestic Product did not consider every human being's ultimate goal which is happiness. He explained that GDP was neither a meaningful nor equitable measurement for human happiness; hence it should

not be the country's prime focus for governance. Seemingly inspired by the wisdom of his predecessors, Bhutan's fourth king fathered the philosophy of GNH or Gross National Happiness.

Since then, Bhutan's policy-making and the nation's development has been guided with the vision of Gross National Happiness. Considered a unique concept among other nations, GNH is a balanced middle path wherein an equitable social and economic development is considered in line with cultural promotion, environmental conservation and good governance. It is a holistic and sustainable developmental approach targeted at achieving a healthy balance between material and non-material values while giving utmost priority to human happiness and well-being. The main objective of GNH is to attain a balanced development across each domain that is a contributing factor to human happiness and well-being [11].

Over two decades since the birth of the philosophy of Gross National Happiness, Bhutan remained isolated from the rest of the world with GNH as its intuitive insight and guiding light, reminding the government and its people that material progress is not the sole contributor and not even the most important determinant of a nation's well-being. As Bhutan stepped up its relationship with the global community, so did its efforts in making clear to the international organizations as to the definition of GNH and how it can be measured. The creation of indices of measurements as well as screening tools for government policies paved the way for the ever-important phase in the development of GNH which is its practical implementation in the government with Bhutan serving as prime example [11]. With the global community bearing witness to Bhutan's experience of GNH, the nation's leaders have thrived with all humility, representing a commitment to building an economy that would preserve Bhutan's culture while considering Buddhist spiritual values over western-inspired material development, as indicated by GDP "Policy Innovations-Redefining Progress" [12]. True to his commitment, Bhutan's fifth king has stated that while GNH has come to mean many things to other people, to him, it simply means "development with values".

As previously mentioned, since its inception in 1972, GNH has undergone substantial steps especially in 2007 and 2012, when surveys have been concluded resulting in the creation of indices and screening tools as policy-making guides. As a result, GNH can be

considered as a reliable marker by which a shift in a nation's consciousness in relation to the world around it can be subtly measured. Thus, for contemporary Bhutan, GNH serves as the bridge that links the fundamental values of kindness, equality and humanity to a nation's pursuit of economic development. It encompasses the wide range of factors that make life worthwhile, even including those not measured in monetary or trading units, and thus defines Bhutan's forward movement as a society and as a nation [9]. Today's Bhutan remains as a Buddhist kingdom on the eastern edge of the Himalayas, a land of monasteries, fortresses or dzongs with a backdrop of breathtaking topography ranging from subtropical plains to steep mountains and valleys and a nation enjoying a healthy GNH under the leadership of His Excellency Tshering Tobgay who has been the nation's Prime Minister since 2013.

Prior to becoming the nation's Prime Minister, Tshering Tobgay served in several administrative positions in the Royal Government of Bhutan. He started his career as a civil servant on October 16, 1991 as a Program Officer in the Technical and Vocational Education Section in the Department of Education, and held the position until December 31, 1996. Soon after, he became the officer-in-charge of the said section from January 1, 1997 until May 9, 1999, after which, he established the National Technical Training Authority and served as its director from May 10, 1999 to June 30, 2003. Not long after, he served as the Director of the Human Resources Department of the Ministry of Labour and Employment on July 1, 2003 until February 1, 2007 while studying in the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University from 2003 until 2004 when he received his Master's Degree in Public Administration. In February 1, 2007, Tshering Tobgay resigned from the Ministry of Labor and Employment when His Majesty endeavored to establishing democracy in Bhutan, and thus began a new life in politics as one of the founding members of People's Democratic Party, the first registered political party of Bhutan. The first and foremost democratic election of Bhutan in 2008 paved the way for the People's Democratic Party to win two seats, one of which was won by Tshering Tobgay. He headed the opposition in Bhutan's National Assembly while serving as the President of the People's Democratic Party from April 21, 2008 to April 20, 2013. In the 2013 electoral campaign, in addition to continuing his predecessor's footsteps in line with the GNH, he pledged to provide

every district with utility vehicles and a power tiller for each village in line with his belief that matters of youth employment, national debt and corruption are matters of grave concern which can be understood as falling under the detail of the ever-encompassing Gross National Happiness. July 27, 2013 saw the triumph of Tshering Tobgay as Bhutan's Prime Minister, and to date, the Prime Minister is known to often interact with common Bhutanese and is likewise known for his resolve in fighting to reduce corruption in the government [13]. As a result of his efforts, Tshering Tobgay became the first ever recipient of the reinstated Lungmar Scarf, a lifelong scarf conferred by His Majesty The King during the 107th National Day celebration on December 17, 2014, in recognition of his contributions to the democratic transition in his tenure as opposition leader between 2008-2012, and with expectations of his good service as the country's Prime Minister [14].

If considered within the perspective of history and society, literature comes with it the important purpose of providing people with the language by which the human experience is intellectualized and discussed. The accessibility to a language of experience permits people to gain personal access to experiences they did not usually have and allows them to trace an experience within a social, political or cultural frame. It enhances man's ability to conceptualize, analyze and to a certain degree, feel, as the aforesaid can be understood as being dependent on his ability to use language extensively and appropriately. Literature utilizes communication methods in much more defined, efficient and effective ways. Lye [15] stated that to engage in literature is to commit oneself to an ardent and continuous process of refining one's capabilities to utilize language and to commit one's sensibilities to using good language. Literature, meanwhile, awakens men to a sense of awareness to a whole range of feelings and ideas, to symbols and images which underpin their personal, social and at times, political lives.

As can be understood, the contemporary civilization is grounded on effective communication. Art, culture, history and language- humanities- thrive and flourish through communication. As with any art form, literature, according to Lye, engages and holds the readers within a complex set of moral, intellectual, emotional, social and symbolic considerations, and makes use of the common means of communication like language, stories, images, symbols and codes while employing them with either more complexity or

more subtlety than in typical day-to-day communication. While language can be a dynamic linguistic device used by speakers to express their thoughts, opinions and ideas, it is likewise a subtle tool by which an inappropriate manner of usage may mislead, distort or obscure a speaker's real feelings, views and opinions.

Nowadays, as is before, political leaders and activists attempt to inject a dose of ideology into language and literature. As can be observed, many a great deal of speeches that include official statements, political ads, jingles and debates are not without literary and rhetorical clichés. But not all of these discourses should be bound by mere catch-phrases, and every so often, a political leader comes up with a speech in a most memorable and effective way that contributes to historical change, not limited to discussing general concerns about age-old ideologies such as socialism and communism, or even pegging those ideologies versus democracy. Every so often, a memorable speech focuses on a leader's dynamic attempts to bring in a fresh discussion on state issues that can be understood as a more deliberate and comprehensive approach in addressing the toughest problems that humanity has to face, sans the cliché.

It is therefore important for people to be able to learn how to differentiate from the bravado of the former to the more promising dynamic approach of the latter. It is of equal importance to understand that influential political rhetoric is not limited to a person simply captivating his audience, rather, it is a collective experience by which both the speaker and his audience share a healthy dose of well-thought points on policies, a convincing affirmation of one's party culture, a peaceful engagement in the construction of rules and procedures, a respectful declaration of political victory, as well as in sharing thought-evoking words to advocate an ideology and inspire the faithful.

While today's means of communication may seem to be dominated by the print and broadcast media as well as mobile and online technology afforded by the internet, speeches thrive as a fundamental medium of political communication globally. Blogs, op-ed or "opposite the editorial page" columns as well as the rhetoric of TV news reporting can be considered both relevant and influential to some extent, but speech still retains a level of intimacy and potential to reshape the thoughts of its audience. The importance of understanding and appreciating political rhetoric cannot be underestimated if one were to have a firm

grasp on how politics work or if one were to fully absorb the ideology of any political group.

A thorough study of rhetoric and literature can reveal the inner workings of politics and give a glimpse on how politicians think. With it, people can gain important insights on the important political arguments and how they evolve over time, or if some political arguments can be associated more to a particular position or political ideology over another [16].

To a politician, to share his ideology to others means that he must essentially find the most convincing way for his audience to think like him. For this very reason, rhetoric and literature are considered to be fundamental ingredients of his political life and thus, should be exercised fully and be celebrated. Hence, it can be understood why leaders and politicians would employ the applicable rhetorical devices in an attempt to persuade their audiences to be swayed into their ideologies as well as to embrace their concepts about good governance, cultural preservation, environmental issues, as well as social and economic prosperity.

The usage of rhetorical device is a technique employed by an author or a speaker to convey a meaning with the main goal of persuading the audience to consider a certain topic or issue from another perspective, often with the help of statements that are designed to provide a rational consideration of an argument from an emotional display of their given action from their perspective or standpoint. Rhetorical devices include humor as well as ethos, logos, and pathos. Farrell [17] stated that rhetorical devices belong to articles of trade in politics of which there has never been a scarcity. With it, a speaker or author's style is determined by his selection and usage of certain devices, and his tone is likewise determined by the type of technique he utilizes [18].

This study highlighted the philosophy of His Excellency Tshering Tobgay and the rhetorical devices used in his speeches, which showed how he appealed to the intellect of the politically engaged, scholars of rhetoric as well as to readers who may be interested in understanding how the strategic utilization of language in provocative contexts or more simply, how the art of rhetoric can shape the world, unite or divide people, or to an extent create conditions that allow for social change. Likewise, this study attempted to enrich the reader's understanding of how rhetorical performances and their effective delivery can function as ever-important venues for

intervention as well as how rhetorical actions can both limit and permit social change.

The importance of literary analysis is highlighted in terms of how it can prove to be significant to a number of individuals. Hence, it is important to explain how this study can prove to be beneficial to academic managers, working professionals, college and university instructors of literature, students of literature, the researcher, and future researchers.

This study will inspire academic managers to consider the ideologies espoused by His Excellency Tshering Tobgay as worthy epitomes of culture and letters in the highest order and persuade them to disseminate the very same values in their respective academes. In the same light, this paper can help bring about a reappraisal of what really matters in life and in time will help shift social progress and considerations of well-being from government departments as well as academia into mainstream consciousness. This paper will likewise be beneficial for the working professionals like the politically-inclined and intellectually-engaged scholars of rhetoric as well as anyone who may be interested in understanding how the strategic use of language in a thought-provoking context can contribute to the study of contemporary public rhetoric and political discourse and encourage them to organize workplace initiatives inspired by the rhetoric of Tshering Tobgay. This study will be helpful to college and university instructors of literature by way of inspiring them to infuse methodological concepts in teaching literature, specifically the usage of appropriate theories, approaches and devices in literary analysis as well as the connection between Tshering Tobgay's identity and persuasion which helped in establishing his identity at the forefront of Bhutan's political landscape. This paper will likewise convince students to consider literature as a work of art that is notable from other texts through its unique content and form, and will help them regain an intensified appreciation of articles and speeches and further inspire them to engage in literary analysis as a beneficial academic endeavor. In the same light, the researcher will benefit from this research in the sense that this paper will serve as her humble and modest contribution to the ever-growing body of literature on Gross National Happiness and His Excellency Tshering Tobgay's rhetoric and literature. Finally, this paper may benefit future researchers by serving as a frame of reference in conducting future studies about literature as an effective form of communication.

Bearing these thoughts in mind, the researcher who currently is an English lecturer at the Batangas State University felt deeply motivated to analyze and explore Tshering Tobgay's philosophy on Gross National Happiness pointing out some important insights gleaned from the selections that foster the values essential to a nation's happiness, well-being and appreciation of literature.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This study is an analysis of His Excellency Tshering Tobgay's Gross National Happiness philosophy, highlighting key insights from the selections that illustrate how this philosophy is manifested in terms of good governance, socio-economic development, cultural preservation and environmental sustainability. This research likewise aimed to identify the rhetorical devices used by the author in the treatment of works; and to identify the insights gleaned in the selections that promote values that are integral to a nation's well-being and to the appreciation of literature.

### **METHODS**

#### **Research Design**

This study utilized the qualitative method of research in analyzing His Excellency Tshering Tobgay's Gross National Happiness philosophy. Qualitative research is bound by the philosophical premise that one must consider the multiple realities experienced by the audience themselves to understand a complex phenomenon, as stated by Suter [19]. The said multiple realities that were experienced by the participants themselves can be manifested in numerous ways, including the literary genre often referred to as discourses or speeches. As such, the philosophical approach was used as basis for the analysis in this study.

Human experiences borrow their meaning from social, cultural and political influences, thus, are inalienable for them, according to Ary, et al. [20]. Therefore, in analyzing the selected literary works, the ideologies in the context of being the leader of a nation were considered, as these provided substantial and significant interpretations of Tshering Tobgay's motivations with regard to his ideology.

Patton [21] stated that the goal of qualitative data analysis is to trace the emergence of themes, patterns, insights and concepts, hence, this research likewise involved content analysis which in itself is a

systematic technique in message handling and message content analysis [22].

The data analysis in this study focused on searching for patterns and the extraction of meaning from His Excellency Tshering Tobgay's selected literary narrative or image data.

### **Treatment of Materials**

The essential features in the treatment of materials were considered by the researcher in the course of conducting this study.

As with other forms, literature is bound by a specific set of standards by which it can be evaluated and analyzed. According to Garcia, et al. [23], seven standards govern a selection's evaluation and analysis, and these seven standards are as follows: universality, permanence, suggestiveness, intellectual and spiritual value, style and artistry.

With reference to universality, it is noteworthy to mention that the selected literary pieces exude both timeliness and timelessness. They can be considered universally appealing since they deal with fundamental truths under universal conditions. As regards the quality of permanence, the selections have an appeal that is both enduring and lasting. As with other great literature, the selections belong to works which can be read and re-read, opening new realms of discernments, experiences and fresh interpretations.

With regard to suggestiveness, it is important to consider the selections' potential to appeal to the imagination and to the emotion of their audience, with emphasis on what they awaken in the audience that constitutes their charm. In many ways, the author opens a door through which his audiences enter a realm from which a myriad of values can be learned. As regards the selections' intellectual value, it is important to mention that the said selections are full of thought-stimulating concepts that captivate the intellect in ways that help readers to enrich their mental acuity by realizing fundamental truths about life and human nature.

With regard to the spiritual value of the selections, it is worth mentioning that the selections have a robust and profound moral message that can elevate the human spirit by bringing out the innermost values which help them become better persons. With reference to style, the selections have their distinct quality of style that bears the unique way in which the writer sees life and expresses his thoughts from his own unique perspective. The greatest literary works

are defined as much by their memorable substance as by their unique style.

Finally, with reference to artistry, the selections can be considered as aesthetically appealing in its way of being an expression of life in all its truth and beauty. The selections can be considered worthy expressions which may remain unnoticed until another sensitive soul brings it to the attention of others who may be able to appreciate it.

Through his work, Tshering Tobgay invites readers to get a glimpse of his philosophy. For purposes which may serve this study and to give philosophical credibility, the selected literary works were analyzed: *The Opening Remarks by the Prime Minister and Chair of NEC High Level Opening Session on 18 May 2015 "Dialogue on Climate Resilient & Carbon Neutral Development"* and the *Keynote Address by the Honourable Prime Minister of Bhutan, Lyonchoen Tshering Tobgay, to the International Conference on Gross National Happiness, 2016*. These speeches formed the core and twining sources of the study. From these speeches, readers will be able to glean in them the rhetorical devices as well as the system of ideas and ideals of the author especially those that serve as the framework of his political theory and economic policy.

Other speeches of His Excellency which have undertones of GNH were not included in the study. Likewise, other approaches in literary criticism that may be employed were excluded in the analysis.

By subjecting the selected materials to internal and external analysis and criticism, the veracity and meaning of the statements were carefully analyzed and chartered. In this light, the researcher exercised full freedom in defending her understanding and appraisal of every literary piece in accordance to the desired sensibilities with adherence and reference to the concept of ideology evoked in her, by defining the language-theme suitability, the relevance of language to the situation, and the appropriateness of the language to the selections.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### **1. His Excellency Tshering Tobgay's Concept of Gross National Happiness Philosophy Manifested in terms of Good Governance, Socio-Economic Development, Cultural Preservation and Environmental Sustainability.**

**1.1 Good Governance.** The penultimate goal of man lies in his triumphant quest for happiness and freedom. It is therefore required for societies or

nations who adhere to this mantra that their respective society's polity and concept of governance should promote and strive to function in line with this endeavor. A nation like the kingdom of Bhutan offers a prime example of a society that upholds a system of governance that is centered on the happiness and well-being of its people. His Majesty the King of Bhutan serves as the nation's guiding light as he leads the country en route to a restructuring of their political and social framework which encompasses the true virtues of democracy without sacrificing the strength of the nation's resilient and pristine ancient culture.

Long before the waves of modernization came by in 1960's, Bhutan consisted of self-sufficient communities with institutions and a set of rules that govern and oversee the proper utilization of common resources, 1981 saw the fourth king spearheading a nationwide program aimed at administrative and political decentralization with a progressive policy that required transparency in governing processes, increased the social responsibilities of the citizens, and enhanced the democratic powers and structures of villages and communities at the grass-roots. Suffice it to say that the Royal Government of Bhutan, together with its government institutions, strives to consciously fulfill their duties in all accountability, transparency and integrity [24].

To the people of Bhutan, good governance is a determining factor for their living conditions. Therefore, while a number of policies and programs that have been developed for the country were rightfully done so in line with the Gross National Happiness, it can be understood that as a pillar of happiness, good governance is a requisite for the Bhutanese so much so that GNH is even written in Bhutan's constitution, which clearly directs the state to promote conditions that allow for the pursuit of GNH [25]. Furthermore, the restructuring of the political system from monarchy to parliamentary democracy paved the way for a greater efficiency in governance that is congruent with GNH. As the Prime Minister of Bhutan, His Excellency Tshering Tobgay's adherence to the philosophy of Gross National Happiness can be gleaned from some of his works aimed at sending his thoughts on good governance.

His Excellency Tshering Tobgay's words in Le Meridien, Thimphu resounded with complete trust in the symbol of leadership of what he refers to as the blessed monarchs of Bhutan, without whose guidance, the holistic approach to development that is Gross National Happiness or GNH would have not come to

fruition. He attests that the capability of a small nation to thrive would not have been realized had it not for the enlightened monarchs who saw the benefits of tirelessly endeavoring for the growth and development of Bhutan as a nation, and this he gives credit to relentless efforts within the framework of good governance.

In His Excellency Tshering Tobgay's keynote address to the International Conference on Gross National Happiness in 2016, the honorable prime minister reiterated his words that clearly outlined the firmness in his resolve on the importance of good governance to the goal of Gross National Happiness. In it, he again reminded his audience that the true and unadulterated beginnings of Bhutan's development was drafted and blueprinted by the kings of Bhutan, without whose visions of holistic, equitable and sustainable progress for the nation, the state of balance between political and spiritual issues would have not been attained. It can be understood from Tshering Tobgay's reiteration of the roots of GNH that he is in adherence to the mantra of good governance and he himself believes so, most especially in his capacities as the Prime Minister, that what the fifth king refers to as development with values, or simply, Gross National Happiness, is dependent on the contentment of the people and the good governance that enables the people to uncover their potential as contributors to society.

**1.2 Sustainable and Equitable Socio-Economic Development.** The gradual and sustainable improvement of social conditions in Bhutan through the enhancement of access to social services can be attributed to the national government's policies that highlight the development of the people. It is thus achieved by maintaining an amount of respect to spiritual traditions while being in equilibrium with socio-economic development. As it is part of the national policy to promote economic growth, it is therefore a prerequisite to empower the people with the necessary capacity to contribute to activities that foster economic growth. Therefore, it is in accordance with the fulfillment of this prerequisite to identify and focus on key areas of the economy which may contribute to economic development. Such is the government of Bhutan's dedication to this endeavor that it has always been adept with policies that strengthen government regulations and develop financial services to stimulate the environment that is conducive to economic growth. The government of Bhutan considers the creation of opportunities as an

equally important factor in the development of private initiative and people-capacity as it is required for a thriving economy based on Gross National Happiness [26].

In his opening remarks on May 2015's Dialogue on Climate Resilient and Carbon Neutral Development in Le Meridien, Thimphu, His Excellency Tshering Tobgay outlined the framework of Bhutan's Sustainable and Equitable Socio-economic Development as espoused within the philosophy of Gross National Happiness. In it, he gave emphasis to his belief that GNH, as a pioneering vision, is the fuel that drives all forward movement in Bhutan geared toward the happiness and well-being of its people. Notwithstanding the fact that Bhutan's Gross Domestic Product is a meager amount less than two billion dollars, His Excellency Tshering Tobgay provided the blueprint for success for Bhutan's triumphant hurdling over what was supposed to be a monumental challenge for such a small country: the pursuit of GNH. True enough, his words explained that the key driving factor for an economy with GNH as its fuel lies in the commitment of the state and its people to social and economic partnerships forged under the vows of working together and contributing together for the sake of GNH. This, together with public policy, protects local industries from cheaper imports and thus strengthens the local trading. Tshering Tobgay likewise emphasized that the adherence to GNH as "development with values" explains why a small country like Bhutan is able to provide for free education and free healthcare by way of ardent and resilient efforts both by the state and the people to remain faithful to the core mission of GNH.

In his keynote address to the attendees of the International Conference on Gross National Happiness in 2016, Tshering Tobgay once again gave his thoughts that offer proof of how deeply embedded the philosophy of GNH is within him as Bhutan's Prime Minister. While it can be understood that from any standpoint, businesses are widely accepted as contributory factors to development, it was in the way that Tshering Tobgay emphasized that from a GNH standpoint that businesses are considered vital pillars that are necessary for the improvement of people's lives and likewise contributing factors to well-being and happiness that strengthens the philosophy of GNH as being within his core as the country's prime minister. His words that outlined the country's Economic Stimulus Plan aimed at empowering people and ensuring balanced social and economic



development offer enough proof that he, in adherence to the philosophy of GNH, firmly believes that a worthy investment that considers the well-being and happiness of the smallest of businesses across the country can facilitate and sustain Bhutan's self-reliant economy within the GNH business culture.

**1.3 Cultural Preservation.** A small nation like Bhutan is not without its rich cultural heritage with which its national identity is inscribed and embodied by its people. Hence, it is understandable that for the Bhutanese, it is imperative to safeguard their cultural identity and heritage as it is crucial to their survival as a nation. For them, their cultural heritage is the life-force from which all virtues and the traditional values spring forth, as values like respect, tolerance, charity and compassion are fundamental for a nation to thrive amidst a developing planet. Likewise, the preservation of Bhutan's pristine cultural heritage serves both as a solid bond and a support system between individuals and the rest of society, acting as a formidable safety net for Bhutan's flourishing communities. More often than not, the by-product of profit and modernization comes at the expense of the ties that bind the basic unit of society- the family. Therefore, it is imperative for any leader to have the political will to preserve the quality of social relationships as therein lay the roots of happiness and well-being of every human being. Suffice it to say that tradition and social values are an indispensable and formidable foundation to the evolution and development of a society [27].

In his opening remark in *Le Meridien*, Thimphu, on May 2015, His Excellency Tshering Tobgay delivered a few words that manifested the link between the philosophy of GNH and cultural preservation. In it, he proudly spoke of Bhutan's national dress, the "gho" and provided his audience with important facts about his dress that clearly gave the message of his deep sense of national pride without the air of boastfulness. This aura of happiness and well-being which was embodied by the Prime Minister at the time of his opening speech signified the sense of cultural resilience that is shared by every citizen of Bhutan. To him, as well as to every citizen of Bhutan, the preservation of Bhutanese culture contributes to the endeavor of Gross National Happiness. Thus, it can be understood why for the people Bhutan, cultural expression is considered sacred and this fact is evident in the strict rules that require the donning of the traditional garment during work hours and the adherence of buildings to national

architecture standards as well as the mandatory mindfulness trainings in Bhutanese schools [28].

His Excellency Tshering Tobgay further affirmed the GNH philosophy in his keynote address on the International Conference on Gross National Happiness in 2016 with a serious observation that offered an analysis on the many countries which have had their cultural identity lost in the rush for modernization of times. With a firm resolve anchored on the Gross National Happiness perspective, His Excellency manifested a strong political will required for a leader of a thriving nation like Bhutan, as his words resounded a mindful awareness of the factors that weaken a society, hence his political mandate to preserve Bhutan's tradition, heritage, and cultural identity.

**1.4 Environmental Conservation.** In the advent of modernization and sustainable development, the need for environmental protection is in the interest of every mindful being. For a country like Bhutan, the need for leaders who are guided by the ethics of environmental conservation has long since been addressed even before global environmental issues were brought to the international arena. Fueled by a traditional reverence for the environment, the country's first national park was established in 1996, and as of today over 26 percent of the total land area of Bhutan is under protection in a move to nurture and protect the environment's biodiversity. The country's remnant forest area covers 72 percent of the country and more than 60 percent are in under government protection, whose main development philosophy is to prevent its exploitation [29]. It is understandable for Bhutan to have developed a strict philosophy that protects its forests as they are considered national assets in the fields of tourism and energy. This philosophy explains the extent of coverage of policies in Bhutan aimed at controlling pollution and the promotion of proper waste management as these are considered to have lasting effects in the quality of lives in the future [30].

When His Excellency Tshering Tobgay addressed the 2015 attendees at *Le Meridien*, Thimphu, he once again gave astounding figures that reflected the nation of Bhutan's commitment to environmental conservation under his leadership. His message in the 2015 dialogues exemplified a sense of pride that is backed up by an unwavering commitment and was bereft of false bravado often seen in so-called leaders with a dense political will. His Excellency was magnanimous in declaring the accomplishments of his

nation in terms of being the only one in over 200-plus countries to be carbon neutral. His attempt to be more honest and accurate in disclosing that Bhutan in actuality was carbon negative was not out of boastful pride, as he never made the slightest connection of the country's environmental triumphs to his steadfast leadership. Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay had a way of disclosing facts in the most casual of manner that is not common for a national leader. While it is true that under his leadership, Bhutan is carbon negative by being a net carbon sink for four million tons of carbon dioxide each year, thanks to its pristine forests, or Bhutan's fast-flowing rivers generate renewable and exportable energy which offsets staggering amount of carbon dioxide generated by a first world country's city for one year, or simply put, the figures point to the straight forward fact that Bhutan is a worthy example of a nation with a philosophy that works when it comes to environmental conservation. While all of these statements fall under the undeniable facts, His Excellency's words reverberated with the tone of certainty in his commitment to lead a nation that is firmly bound to the philosophy that is GNH, regardless of how monumental the issue of climate change may sound. It can be gleaned from Tshering Tobgay's statements that send a serious message to people who are concerned about the environment that, the firm resolve to lead a small nation such as Bhutan stems from a philosophy aimed at the pursuit of every individual's happiness and well-being.

As in his keynote address in 2016, the same can be said for the Prime Minister's philosophy which can be gleaned in between the lines that exemplify his breadth of knowledge when it comes to the ever-important issue of preserving and safeguarding the environment. It can be understood that if one were to take away every statement that spoke of the detailed steps Bhutan took in the direction of environmental conservation, or the oneness of Bhutan with the environment friendly nations in their adoption of electric cars, or the programs in Bhutan's agricultural practices that promote a green economy, the fact remains that Bhutan is a small but thriving nation which is a prime example of a small state which is capable of hurdling monumental or even global environmental issues, and this can never be denied as being driven by the core mission of every individual's happiness and well-being, or Gross National Happiness.

## **2. The Rhetorical Devices Used by the Author in the Treatment of Works.**

**2.1 Humor.** This literary tool is utilized to elicit a joyful ambiance or even laughter, aimed at disrupting the build-up of boredom and anxiety, making the audience more relaxed and therefore, more responsive and receptive to the author or speaker. The use of humor entails a utilization of various techniques, tools, words, phrases or sentences to remind the audience of the lighter and funnier side of life. It is commonly found in theater, advertising, in television and movies and in literature, with the basic aim of making readers and audiences happy.

The efficacy of humor as a literary tool lies in its ability to please audiences as well as its ability to develop characters and contribute to a story's revolving plot. In literature, it is capable of arousing and sustaining the attention of the readers, establishes a connection with which readers are able to relate to a character and aids the reader to vividly visualize the situation within the story. In addition to generally improving the quality of work by the connection that is established to the audience, humor is capable of providing the element of surprise which greatly improves the literary piece stylistically [31].

His Excellency Tshering Tobgay was able to break the ice in his opening remarks on the Dialogue on Climate Resilient & Carbon Neutral Development on May of 2015 in Le Meridien, Thimphu with a few words that easily connected with his audience. Delivering an opening remark to a large crowd is not something out of the ordinary for a country's Prime Minister, and with the level of position the speaker carried with him upon rising to the podium, getting the attention of his audience can be understood as having the level of difficulty of next to none. It is not so much as the air of authority surrounding His Excellency Tshering Tobgay that easily established the connection with his audience, but his otherwise cheerful disposition that perhaps easily allowed the audience to relate to the Bhutanese leader. He was straightforward in introducing the national dress, and was able to provide the audience with first-hand information about the culture of Bhutan with so much ease, but what stood out was perhaps his cheerful disposition which afforded him the eloquence to utilize the humor behind his few words that made the audience connect with this happy Bhutan. He utilized humor in humility without deprecating his nation when he gave the facts that the GDP of Bhutan is just a little less than a couple of billion dollars, but he

utilized the humor in the simple fact if only to illustrate the best points of the philosophy that is Gross National Happiness.

It can be understood from His Excellency Tshering Tobgay's approach that while one may be able to rely on the air of authority one possesses, it certainly makes a difference if one does not take for granted the opportunity to open up and establish a more intimate connection with one's audience in order for one's message to be received warmly and for one's words to make a lasting impression.

**2.2 Ethos.** It is a means of establishing the credibility of the speaker to persuade his audience. In rhetoric, the acceptance of the message of persuasion by a speaker is dependent upon his ethical appeal, that, when established, paves the way for the audience to readily accept the said message of the speaker [32].

His Excellency Tshering Tobgay did not need to mince words to establish ethos in his discourse in *Le Meridien*, Thimphu, as he presented the audience with the amount of knowledge he had on his topic with much ease and eloquence. In his address, he hinged both on his personal authority and the mandate his office held to effectively establish his ethical appeal to his audience. His Excellency was fully knowledgeable in all aspects concerning the necessary steps for Bhutan to fully finance their environmental conservation efforts, and delivered his message with full certainty and in full trust of his office's and his nation's capability to hurdle the monumental task of conserving nature. He embodied the similar fortitude hinged on ethos when he delivered his keynote address on International Conference on GNH in 2016. Here, the Prime Minister manifested the breadth of knowledge in the driving philosophy of Gross National Happiness by outlining the challenges facing Bhutan as they trudge forward and with him at the helm. His detailed explanation on the simplest of steps were not indicative of the ease by which Bhutan can and will hurdle future obstacles, rather, his words utilized the credibility afforded by ethos and mandated by the position he held, which generally delivered his point across to his audience.

**2.3 Logos.** It is a literary device in the form of a statement or argument which utilizes reason or logic to persuade the audience. The effectiveness of logos relies on the use of inductive and deductive methods of reasoning. For example, the generalization involved in deductive reasoning should be based on solid evidence before it can effectively be deemed applicable to a specific case in order to convince the

audience towards accepting the said generalization [33].

His Excellency Tshering Tobgay manifested adept skill in convincing his audience at the Dialogue on Climate Resilient and Carbon Neutral Development in May 2015 in Thimphu, where his utilization of logic afforded him the necessary leverage to effectively lobby Bhutan's carbon neutral strategy. He began by outlining the simple ways Bhutan is able to keep up with the thrust of being carbon neutral, and described the logic behind the government's provision of free electricity to rural townsfolk, which, in turn serves the purpose of minimizing carbon emissions through the avoidance of using firewood as fuel. Similarly, his detailed description as to how investing in sustainable transport through electric vehicles and subsidizing the cost of LED as bright sources gave justification to the government's Clean Bhutan Program, and followed his statement with additional inputs on another national program aimed at ensuring that Bhutan's national parks, wildlife sanctuaries and natural reserves are preserved and maintained.

**2.4 Pathos.** It is a literary device which utilizes a recollection of life experience or a work of art often expressed through words, pictures or at times, bodily gestures. Aimed at stirring up emotions of sympathy, pity and even sorrow, pathos is a method of persuasion in which an argument is drawn out through the audience's emotional response [34].

In *Le Meridien*, Thimphu on May of 2015, His Excellency made effective use of pathos when he raised the issue of climate change. He achieved this by firstly reminding his audience of Bhutan's experience when its voice on climate change went unheard a few years back, being the tiny nation that it is, and went on to highlight the resilience of his nation in its willingness and commitment to be heard, and likewise heralded other governments who joined in his nation's commitment a few years later. His Excellency was able to utilize pathos with the simplest of words which reflected a sincere and honest commitment to the message he wishes to send to his audience, and this he was able to do by making mention of the young, innocent and helpless children who, long before they become the inheritors of the ultimate responsibility of being the planet's caretakers, need to share in the leaders of today's vision of tomorrow. His Excellency's mention of the words "carry this dream" can be deemed a worthy example of the use of pathos in sending his message across.

Thereafter, His Excellency then disclosed his request to the organizers to turn the heat in the venue up by two degrees, to emphatically drive his point across by giving his audience first-hand experience of the effects of global warming, and this again offers proof of his tactful and creative utilization of pathos.

### **3. The Insights Gleaned in the Selections that Foster the Values Essential to Nation's Well-being and Appreciation of Literature.**

#### **The Insights Gleaned in the Selections that Foster the Values Essential to Nation's Well-being.**

Throughout the history of modern civilization, the greatest thinkers of mankind, most especially the economists, have long agreed that the attainment and enjoyment of material development are essential to happiness. To a country like Bhutan, whose people adhere to a different philosophy, the concept of achieving material gain does not necessarily relate to the pursuit of happiness. As such, the country, while not disregarding the otherwise prevalent concept of Gross Domestic Product or Gross National Product, advocates measuring their nation's progress through Gross National Happiness. Upon admission to the United Nations in 1971, His Majesty the third Druk Gyalpo Jigme Dorji Wangchuk gave emphasis on making his people prosperous and happy as the prime goal of his nation's development. While the key words resounded by His Majesty in his address in 1971 rightfully included prosperity along with happiness, the latter was deemed to be of higher significance than the fourth Druk Gyalpo Jigme Singye himself once explained an important analogy about the rich not always being happy, while the happy essentially consider themselves rich, thus emphasizing that Gross National Happiness should be considered more important than Gross Domestic Product.

While it is true that conventional development models emphasize economic development as the ultimate objective, Gross National Happiness hinges on the premise that society can be deemed on the right path to development only if both material or physical and spiritual growths are in congruence to augment and strengthen each other.

Such is the advocacy for Bhutan's concept of Gross National Happiness that recently, the United Nations has come up with a resolution which clearly stated that it recognizes the inadequacy of GDP or GNP to reflect the happiness and well-being of people. The same resolution likewise clearly indicated the pursuit of happiness as a fundamental human goal

as a testament to the international cognition afforded to Bhutan's GNH philosophy.

As such, it can be gleaned from the selections that a nation's well-being can be secured by advocating the important facets which constitute the philosophy of Gross National Happiness, as it was clearly outlined in the selections. The said values which prove essential to a nation's well-being are embedded within the philosophy of Gross National Happiness as key values that embody national and local virtues, aesthetics and spiritual traditions are likewise considered the pillars of Gross National Happiness, and are as follows: equitable socio-economic development, preservation of cultural and spiritual heritage, environmental conservation and transparent and consistent good governance.

To better understand the pillars that constitute Gross National Happiness, it is important to consider its capability of achieving breadth in reach and applicability to other countries, and this can be done by uncovering the moral and cultural values which lie in the core of this philosophy. Not to be disregarded is the simplicity by which the philosophy of GNH enables the pursuit of development along with the pursuit of happiness, which lies well within its rational and personal approach. GNH basically works because it caters to the holistic requirements of a human being, which justifies the need for enhancing the physical and mental well-being of a human along with and not mainly limited to material development. GNH therefore requires that the pursuit of happiness should not be considered as a competitive unit to be pursued by an individual at the expense of others, rather, it should be pursued within the context of happiness in consideration with the greater good. Thus, GNH promotes a conscious inner search which requires the capacity to formulate a harmonious and beneficial management and development of happiness in consideration of outer circumstances. Finally, GNH is well capable of catering to the common need of both state and nation to work towards the creation of sustainable and proactive policies while in consideration of its philosophy which transcends ideological and contentious values, thereby resulting in less arbitrary but self-developing economic tools which can be working examples for other nations.

**The Insights Gleaned in the Selections that Foster the Values Essential to One's Appreciation of Literature.** His Excellency Tshering Tobgay can be considered as a worthy gleaming example of values which may prove essential to the appreciation of

literature. As manifested in the selections in this paper, it can clearly be outlined how one public official can be a source of inspiration for those yearning for it, and this he effectively offered proof by his efficient use of literary and rhetorical devices to send his message across.

His Excellency Tshering Tobgay did not necessarily need to bank on the gravity of his incumbent position to build on his use of ethos, as his ethical appeal seemed arbitrary, if not forced. But it can be gleaned from the selection that Tshering Tobgay relied on the sincerity and commitment by which he assumed and embodied his role as Bhutan's Prime Minister. The same can be said for his utilization of logos, as the logic behind his argument or whatever message he wished to convey was backed up by his intense knowledge on the topic he wished to discuss, which can be understood as something he would have not achieved had he not possessed the determination and the political will to serve his nation and likewise make his nation a worthy example for others in addressing global issues. His Excellency's utilization of pathos, likewise, can be gleaned as an efficient by-product of the previously-highlighted dedication. It can be understood that in his position as a knowledgeable and rightful leader of a thriving nation, it was never a tough task to evoke the emotion of his audience especially when he essentially showed sincerity in sharing his dream and his nation's dream with the rest of the world. Finally, his usage of humor can be gleaned as virtually radiating from the cheerful disposition that is innate within him as a person who is an embodiment of the effective and enduring philosophy that is Gross National Happiness. In the gravity of the situation facing Bhutan and the rest of the world in terms of climate change and global warming, the Prime Minister exuded a positive aura which the audience can lift an important insight: the key to man's happiness lies in his sense of identity, his sense of security, and his sense of purpose. The same values which were manifested in the selections can be applied to achieve an appreciation of literature, if and only if the simplicity of the philosophy of Gross National Happiness is holistically embraced. As His Excellency Tshering Tobgay himself provided a working template for others, literature essentially gained from the values he exemplified which can be gleaned as a celebration of the potential of literature to foster challenge and development in individuals, communities, nations and even the whole world.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

Bhutan's Prime Minister His Excellency Tshering Tobgay exemplified the core philosophy of Gross National Happiness in true adherence and embodiment of the pillars which constitute the said philosophical concept, and these are in terms of good governance, socio-economic development, cultural preservation and environment sustainability. Likewise, His Excellency achieved the efficiency of connecting with his audience and effectively sending his message across by utilizing rhetorical devices such as humor, ethos, logos and pathos. This paper likewise uncovered and discussed important insights which foster values essential to a nation's well-being and to appreciation of literature as manifested in the selections from His Excellency Tshering Tobgay's discourses, which in themselves can be considered as ample proofs that a nation's well-being and the appreciation of literature can be secured by advocating the holistic approaches within the philosophy of Gross National Happiness.

The researcher therefore offers the following recommendations: that academic managers thereby consider the philosophical approach of His Excellency Tshering Tobgay as an important example of culture and letters in the highest order with the capability of inducing change, and therefore find merit in them which may aid in the formulation of congruent concepts which may be applicable to their respective academes; that working professionals may consider the work ethic and determination exemplified by Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay as a proven template of the necessary mindset of a leader which may in turn inspire them to conceptualize a practical application of the said philosophy in organizing workplace initiatives; that instructors and professors of literature may be able to celebrate the triumph of literature and benefit from an inspired and revitalized dedication to teaching literature, and that they may find applicable pedagogical concepts from within the philosophy of His Excellency which may be infused in their respective methodologies in teaching literature; that students may learn from the values within the pursuit of happiness and well-being and consider the adherence and advocacy of such values as important tools, if not as panacea, to tackling personal issues which may hinder the pursuit of personal development and in their imminent role as future contributors to society, and that they may learn from the positive and proactive disposition exemplified by Tshering Tobgay and through it, they themselves may find a fresh

appreciation for literature as an effective tool of communication; and finally, that this paper which is the researcher's modest contribution to the growing literature on Gross National Happiness may be considered as a worthy template or framework of reference for future researchers who may be inclined to pursue future research about the working philosophy that is Gross National Happiness, and that they may uncover more insights to further substantiate this study and even further the advocacy on the pursuit of man's happiness and well-being.

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