
TEACHING IN THE TRENCHES:
WHAT ONE CAN DO IN AMDO

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ABSTRACT

The reality of local education is described at a central boarding primary school in a pastoral area of a northeastern Tibetan community in China. I describe how I became a teacher; my personal relationships at the school; the school in general terms; the local teachers' backgrounds; school positions, ranks, and duties; adult education programs; teaching certificates; students' parents' backgrounds; school terms; student number and class sizes; students' daily schedule and curriculum; student monitors and their responsibilities; student food; student dormitories; textbooks; post-graduation; relationships between teachers and student families; teacher and student relationships; teachers' attitudes toward students; students' families' attitude toward education; what administrators expect from teachers; official evaluation of administrators; and evaluation of teachers. I conclude with observations and recommendations on how to improve rural Tibetan education.

KEYWORDS

Bilingual education, curriculum, Tibetan education, Tibetan primary school education

INTRODUCTION

Minority education has been part of a global conversation for at least the last three decades or so (Jacob and Jordan 1993, Skutnabb-Kangas and Cummins 1988) - a conversation that has also included China (e.g., Lee 1986, Hansen 1999).

Attention to Tibetan education has included implementation of education policies (Bass 1998, Wang and Zhou 2003, Kalsang Wangdu 2011, Zhu 2008), family education (Zhoumaoji 2015, Postiglione et al. 2006), forms of social exclusion and inequality in schooling (Lin 2008, Postiglione 2006, Caixiangduojie 2010, Wang 2007), compulsory education (Tsang 2005), teaching methodology and curriculum (Upton 1999, Stuart and Wang 2003), bilingualism (Badeng Nima 2001, 2008, Gouleta 2012, Postiglione and Benjiao 2009), gender equality (Seeberg 2008), and basic education and its socio-economic implications (Lopsang Gelek 2006).

These and numerous other studies focusing on Tibetan education are important and welcomed. One area, however, that is often overlooked is in-depth studies of particular schools, especially by locals directly involved with the school. The study presented here is based on my experiences and observations of a rural Tibetan primary school in a northeastern Tibetan community as I attempt to describe local educational realities at the micro level. These are some of the questions I asked: Who were the teachers? What were their educational backgrounds? What textbooks were used? What was the language of these textbooks? What were the subjects studied? What were the students' daily schedules? What was a typical teacher's schedule? How were the teachers evaluated and by whom? Who were the students' parents? What was the relationship between teachers and students, and between teachers and parents? What were the basic facilities? What food did the school provide to the students? What did the school leaders see as their areas of responsibility?

I conclude with how rural primary schools might be improved.

HOW I BECAME A TEACHER

In July 2013, I was in a large city in central China, eager to improve my English, hoping that this would lead to further educational opportunities. However, my paternal grandmother (b. 1933) had other ideas. She phoned repeatedly, urging me to take an exam that, if I passed, would eventually lead to an official government job. In her mind, this would lead to a stable, respectable livelihood.

I understood Grandmother. Obtaining an official job is the primary reason most families in China send their children to school. Grandmother wanted to see me "settled down," married, and with children, a description that typifies many of my "successful" former classmates. Families that have such children are respected and have higher social positions than families without such children.

This is the easy path, the comfortable life - according to most of my peers - but it was not at that particular time, the life that I wanted. Nevertheless, I eventually gave in, returned to my home autonomous Tibetan prefecture, and took part in an examination for an official teaching position in Serlong¹ County where most residents are Tibetan herders. The high altitude of the county does not allow for farming.

During the pre-exam procedure, I paid a registration fee, and indicated my teaching interests and major. At that time, fifteen primary school English teaching positions were advertised in Serlong County. Although I wanted to register for a junior or senior middle school English teaching position, I was only allowed to register for a primary school position. Around 4,000 people took the exam for the 250 teaching positions that were offered. Around 160 people were registered for English teaching positions for primary schools in Serlong County.

The registration process required listing all academic majors and higher education degrees earned. In general, registrants with

¹ Names of all people and places have been altered. Generally, I have used Wylie for the Tibetan, however, for terms that often appear, e.g., "Serlong," I use a term that readers might find easier to pronounce. I have also used Tibetan and Chinese terms based on local usage.

associate two-year college degrees registered for primary school positions, and candidates with BA and MA degrees registered for junior and senior middle school positions. The exam candidates' majors were also key in the registration procedure. I had earned a two-year associate degree in English and Tibetan language. Though I also had an MA degree, I was not allowed to register for a junior or senior middle school position because my MA degree was not in ESL (English as a Second Language), nor in English language and literature. My only choice was then to register for a primary school teaching position.

I took the examination in July 2013 in the prefecture capital. The written exam consisted of three sections: English, educational theory, and general knowledge. This last section covered many topics and included questions about politics, economics, law, culture, history, current affairs, and so on. After about three weeks, I was notified online that I had passed the written exam, which counted for sixty percent of the total score.

About two weeks later, I took exams to test how well I spoke Tibetan and Chinese, which counted for forty percent of the total score. About 750 candidates took the oral exam for 250 positions. Both men and women were required to dress formally. Candidates assembled on the examination day on the playground of a middle school in the prefectural capital. After attendance was taken, we were escorted to classrooms based on our majors and the county where we hoped to find employment. Around sixty candidates were in the room designated for English majors, hoping to become English teachers in Serlong County. Other counties had similar classrooms for candidates applying for teaching jobs in those counties.

A box at the front of the room had pieces of paper with a number written on each. Candidates were called individually and chose a number, which indicated interview order. I selected number seventeen. When each number was called, two invigilators escorted the candidate to another classroom where eight interviewers sat. A desk and chair were designated for the candidate. The interviewers, all of whom were Tibetan, included a former teacher, a former classmate, a friend, and an acquaintance. After I was seated, I was asked two

questions in Tibetan and one question in Chinese. All the questions were asked by the same person - the *kaoguan* 'test master'. After each question was asked the *kaoguan* told me I had five minutes to answer each. In the event, I answered all three questions: Why do you want to become a teacher? What are the three requirements of a good '*dzin bdag (banzhuren)* 'head of a class'? How would you resolve a conflict between two students? The first two questions were asked in Tibetan and I answered confidently in Tibetan.

The third question was asked in Chinese and I answered in Chinese. The third question was challenging because my oral Chinese is not nearly as good as my oral Tibetan. Furthermore, knowing four of the interviewers made me even more nervous. I answered all three questions in less than eight minutes. During the interview, Chinese was used as the language of communication. The only time Tibetan was spoken was when two of the three questions mentioned above were asked, and when I answered in Tibetan.

After each question was answered, the interviewers wrote a score on a piece of paper and passed it to a woman who was responsible for calculating scores. After I answered all the questions, I was told to wait outside in the corridor for five minutes. After five minutes, I was called in and informed of my final score by the exam master. I was asked, in Chinese, if I had any concerns about my final score.

I answered that I did not, and was then asked to sign a paper that I did not read. I assumed the paper said that I agreed to the score that I had been assigned. After signing the paper, I left the room. If a candidate did not agree with the score, they were given an opportunity to explain their objection. I assume that no one voiced an objection to the score they were assigned, in fear this would negatively affect the final decision.

Although I was only asked three questions, I had prepared for more. Before the exam, I had prepared, expecting that I might be given a text, given fifteen minutes to prepare a lesson plan, and then teach the text for five minutes. I also thought I might be asked to explain what my teaching methodology would be for a class and explain why I had chosen it. I was surprised that my oral exam consisted of only three

questions. Some candidates I knew had paid 5,000 to 10,000 RMB to professional training centers where they received coaching in preparing lesson plans, methodological skills, and oral Chinese. In my case, I had spent three days preparing with my uncle who had at that time, been teaching for more than twenty-five years. I had also talked to former classmates who had taken such oral exams previously.

The oral exam was given in mid-August and the results were announced a week after the exam. The candidates who passed both written and oral exams were told to report to a prefecture level hospital for a physical examination that included eyesight, hearing, a dental examination, various X-rays, and detailed blood work. A few candidates were told their results were abnormal and that they needed to repeat certain exams. From my contacts at this hospital, I knew that those with disqualifying results obtained results that allowed them to pass if they paid 500 to 2,000 RMB. I have never known anyone who was denied a government job because they failed a medical exam.

About a week after the hospital tests on 1 September 2013, I was notified that I had passed all the medical tests and that I had been selected as a new teacher. New teachers were then required to provide original copies of diplomas and degrees to the prefectural Renshi ju 'Personnel Bureau Office' for evaluation. After my documents were verified, I was told to report to the Serlong County Education Bureau for formal registration on 22 September 2013. When I arrived, there were papers posted on a wall inside this office listing candidates who had qualified to become teachers in Serlong County. It was then that I learned the school I had been assigned to.

It took me two days to finish all the paperwork. I had to line up for five different forms (one of which was a contract) from a small office, fill out the forms in a different office, obtain stamps from three different offices at the local education bureau, and then have two of the forms stamped by the school I had been assigned to.

Fortunately, all the headmasters in Serlong County were attending a meeting in the county town. I called a relative who had been working in Serlong County for years and obtained my headmaster's name and phone number. During my first call, the

headmaster said he would be at the education bureau office in twenty minutes, but after an hour he had still not appeared. When I called him a second time, he said he was busy meeting county leaders and that I should call the vice-headmaster and then he gave me his name and phone number. I called the second headmaster immediately. He promised to come very soon, and did so with the school stamp.

I was unable to submit the papers on the first day because of a lack of time. I submitted the papers around lunch time the next day. After all the papers were submitted to the Human Resource Office, I obtained forms from a financial office for salary payment. After filling out these forms, I was told to go to the Agricultural Bank of China and open a new bank account. I did so, returned to the financial office, and submitted my bank account number.

After finishing these steps, I was told to report to my assigned school. A relative came to the office when I finished all the paperwork. We then went back to his home where I prepared my bedding and got ready to leave for the school.

It was at this time that I received calls from two new teachers who had been assigned to the same school I had been assigned. I knew neither. Both were Tibetan. One was to teach the Tibetan language and the other had been assigned to teach the Chinese language. They proposed that we leave together. My relative then drove a four-door Cherry Tiggo SUV (owned by another relative) to where these two new teachers were waiting. We then left together to our school, which was located twenty-five kilometers from the county seat. After a twenty-minute drive over a bumpy, deserted road on a vast grassland, we reached a basin. We proceeded down a zigzag road that stretched to the bottom of the basin. The school buildings were near a huge monastery and a large resettlement community.

My relative driving the vehicle had phoned the headmaster, who said we should drive directly to the teachers' cafeteria for a welcome party. We arrived and were warmly greeted by the headmaster and other colleagues with a big noisy banquet that featured many meat dishes, singing, laughing, and liquor. The somewhat tipsy headmaster formally introduced all the assembled

twenty-three teachers - both new and old. The teachers were very respectful due to the presence of my relative, who happened to be the headmaster's friend. Furthermore, three other teachers there were my relative's former students.

After about an hour, the headmaster told us we could leave and return after National Day in early October. This was because no students were at the school. Classrooms were under construction and students were on holiday. After farewells, my relative and I left the school.

About two weeks later after the National Day Holiday on October First, I returned to the school. On the same day, I was assigned a room that I was to share with another new teacher. This room was in a row of long one-story buildings. There was a total of three rows of buildings with teachers' quarters. Each building featured three rooms - a total of nine teachers' quarters. Each room was assigned to two teachers. The room was about fifteen square meters in area and divided into two sections - a living room and a bedroom. Both had tiled floors. The room also had a small balcony with glass windows set in aluminum frames. We used this space to store yak dung and coal.

My roommate, a Tibetan language teacher, was in his late twenties and had been born and raised in a neighbor county.

The living room was next to the door and the weather had already turned cold. We decided to put both of our beds in the bedroom section which was warmer.

Our room was unfurnished so we went to the county town and purchased our own beds (350 RMB each), one metal stove (300 RMB), one desk (200 RMB), a TV (300 RMB), a satellite dish (150 RMB) that received forty-nine channels, and paid a delivery fee of one hundred RMB. Though the dorm building was less than one-year-old, the ceiling leaked and large chunks of plaster were falling off the walls.

In terms of basic living conditions, water was fetched from a well with a tap about fifty meters from my room. The only heating in the room came from the metal stove mentioned above. There were two barred windows in the room, not counting the balcony windows. The supply of electricity was very dependable. The school paid the

electricity fees.

We used the same outside toilet the students used, which was about one hundred meters from our living area. This pit toilet¹ was built of red bricks and was about twenty meters long and three meters wide. It featured a wooden roof that leaked in the rainy summer season and was freezing cold in winter.

The teachers ate in the teachers' dining room located 200 meters from the students' cafeteria. Teachers who ate in the cafeteria were charged 200 RMB a month, which purchased vegetables, spices, fruit, yogurt, and other items. The teachers' cook was a local Tibetan woman, who prepared three meals a day with about three dishes per meal e.g., potatoes with beef, cabbage with noodles, and chopped cucumber seasoned with chili powder. Milk tea was served daily. Hotpot and boiled mutton were served periodically by school leaders when appropriate occasions arose, for example, on Teachers' Day (10 September), Children's Day (1 June), and when officials visited to evaluate the school. Because the school had no clothes washing machines, most teachers washed their clothes by hand. There were also no refrigerators teachers could use to keep fruit, bread, or snacks.

I was initially thrilled to be an official teacher in this rural Tibetan community, despite the somewhat challenging living conditions. I had always wanted the opportunity to help children in rural areas - children whose eyes glittered with hope for a better future. From my own experience of growing up in the countryside, I believe rural children are as clever as children anywhere in the world and deserve qualified teachers and a good education to nurture their talents.

My initial enthusiasm, however, waned over time. The subjects I was assigned disturbed me. Before becoming an official teacher, I had accumulated ten years of English teaching with rural Tibetan youth during short-term holiday teaching programs and was confident that I

¹ It was divided into a section for females and one for males. There were eight squat holes per section. The toilet was about one hundred meters away from the students' dormitory and classroom, as well as the teachers' office and living quarters.

could teach English well. But, to my disappointment, I was assigned to teach Chinese language, math, and science because, the headmaster said, the school had enough English teachers.

I was challenged because I had no previous experience in teaching these subjects. A lengthy discussion with the headmaster changed nothing. He would not agree to allow me to teach English.

I often talked to the four English teachers of whom only two had majored in English. These two English majors knew very little English and their pronunciation was poor. The other teachers giving instruction in English included a computer science major and a Tibetan language and literature major. I was told their "English teaching" consisted of assigning student new vocabulary from the textbooks. They did not attempt other parts of the textbook lessons.

Time passed and I challenged myself in my spare time, observing classes taught by other teachers in addition to teaching my own assigned classes. I often heard the phrase "good teacher" and wished to learn what that meant in the local context. I observed a number of classes during my first two months at the school, noting how teachers taught and what the students did and did not do. I mostly observed Tibetan, Chinese, English language, and arithmetic classes.

The teachers I observed came to class punctually. Students stood and greeted "Good morning, Teacher!" in the English class, "*Laoshi hao!*" in the Chinese language classes, and "*Dge rgan bzang!*" in other classes while bowing their heads to show respect to the teachers. When a class was over, students said goodbye in the above languages.

Teachers usually did not reply to students' greetings. Instead, they immediately walked to the podium at the front of the room, ordered students to sit, and began class.

For the reader to better understand classroom dynamics, I will now describe a classroom in the school. It was about thirty-five square meters in area and featured three white plastic-framed windows. A blackboard was in the front on a concrete platform along with a podium. The floor was covered with white tile. The walls were completely plastered except for a one-meter section at the bottom that

was painted light green. Wooden student desks and chairs were placed on the floor.

There was another blackboard at the back of the classroom which was used as a notice board and featured written slogans such as 中国梦 *Zhong guo meng* ལྷོ་གོ་འཛི་ཕུགས་མདུན། *krung go'i phugs mdun* 'China Dream' in beautiful Chinese and Tibetan calligraphy.

Brooms, mops, and rubbish containers were in a corner at the back.

Tibetan and English language teachers immediately asked students to open their books and began with vocabulary. Typically, the teacher pronounced each new word three times and students repeated very loudly. Such repetition lasted ten to fifteen minutes. Students were then told to read all the words individually and repeat each word three times. This took about five minutes. The teacher then went on to the text, reading each line and explaining the meaning of each sentence in Tibetan. This lasted for twenty minutes. Students were then instructed to read the new text on their own.

At the end of every class, homework was assigned to the students to be completed by the following day. Generally, there was no group activity nor pair work in the classes I observed. Students asked few questions in class.

The Chinese language teachers were two native Chinese speakers and three who had acquired Chinese as a second language. They all had advanced knowledge of the Chinese language, which facilitated teaching, though they did not use student-centered methodologies to raise student interest. The teaching was teacher-centered with heavy emphasis on translation and repetition.

In contrast, the English teachers had very limited English, as already mentioned. Teaching English was very challenging for them. They focused on repeating vocabulary and reading texts for the entire class period. In most cases, students were told to memorize word lists. There were generally six units per textbook with each unit featuring twenty to thirty new vocabulary words.

Tibetan and math classes proceeded differently than Chinese and English language classes. Teachers wrote that day's lesson content

on the blackboard and explained it point by point. To better ensure that students understood the content, teachers wrote questions on the blackboard and then asked students to come and write answers (solve math problems and so on). Students were given coursework to do in class and encouraged to ask questions if they did not understand the assigned materials.

Although all the teachers had lesson plans as required by the school, no teachers that I observed followed a lesson plan in class. The lessons they prepared were to show to school leaders during evaluation periods.

PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AT THE SCHOOL

During my time at the school, I tried hard to maintain a positive relationship with my colleagues and helped them when I could. Maintaining such relationships was not always easy because the teachers had formed groups based on their home counties and whether they self-identified as a '*brog pa* 'herder' or '*rong ba* 'farmer'. Those with herding backgrounds typically questioned the Tibetanness of those with farming backgrounds based on their close association with Han Chinese people, rarely wearing Tibetan robes (an indication of not being "true" Tibetans), and what they judged to be a lack of honesty.

Meanwhile, those with agricultural backgrounds typically suggested that those from herding communities were dirty, retained outdated ideas, lacked intelligence, and were at a level of economic development that lagged behind that of farmers and town residents.

In the face of such divisions and animosities, I maintained a neutral position and was friendly to all. I was successful enough to become close friends with several teachers from herding backgrounds who shared their teaching experience and general views on teaching and education. For example, one teacher who was regarded as a "good teacher" told me that the local township was known for its remoteness and had long been regarded as a dumping ground for unqualified, irresponsible teachers. He said that he hated being a teacher and that

the job he dreamed of was one in which he could perform secretarial duties in a government office. However, with no other options, he kept his teaching job to support his family and, importantly, he enjoyed the long summer and winter holidays that came with the job.

Several other teachers shared their thoughts: they disliked being where the quality of education and the management system were poor. I hasten to add that the teachers offering these opinions were Tibetans who were raised in Tibetan communities. They also said that they considered the students to be dirty, dishonest, and not intelligent enough to learn much in class. This judgment about lack of intelligence was based on their belief that the students did not learn as quickly as students attending schools in cities and county towns. They blamed this on the local students' herding backgrounds and their parents' illiteracy.

Teachers also often mentioned that the school's location was seriously lacking in comparison to county seat towns that provided a variety of shopping venues, where there were more people, more entertainment centers, more trade, easy and convenient transportation, and various cultural centers, such as cinemas, bars, tea houses, and internet cafes. County seat schools were where the local elite - rich people and officials - sent their children to receive the best local education consequently, the school conditions and teachers' qualifications were significantly better.

I rarely saw teachers spend time with students after classes in activities related to education, i.e., helping students with homework, organizing students to review their lessons, and doing exercises to help students learn. Instead, most teachers gathered in their private living quarters to gossip, play card games, drink, smoke, and watch TV. I participated in such gatherings. To better illustrate these gatherings, I summarize one below:

One night I was invited to one of the teacher's living quarters. Soon after I arrived, I realized it was going to be a long party, but I was lonely so I stayed. There were about nine teachers in the room that included six men and three women. All the women were married and had children. Only one man

was married and his wife was in the room. The five unmarried male teachers were all in their mid- to late-twenties. Five male teachers sat near a window around a student desk. Twenty bottles of Qingdao beer and plates of sunflower seeds and other snacks were on top of the desk. The group was drinking beer and smoking cigarettes in the smoke-filled room. Those sitting around the desk already looked tipsy so I immediately took a seat by the stove.

Three women were sitting on a double bed in the corner of the room, munching sunflower seeds, and giggling. I was not drinking at the time so I was offered a cup of hot water.

Suddenly, one of the tipsy men began recounting the first time he slept with a girl. He explained that he was so excited that he ejaculated before intercourse.

We all laughed hard.

More sexual stories followed, one after another, for about two hours. Women in the room were also very candid about their sexual lives, e.g., how their husbands were no longer interested in satisfying them sexually, their interest in finding young men as sexual partners, and so on. It was a long party with sex as the main topic for two hours.

The teachers were bored, lonely, and had relatively little to do. Such activity entertained most teachers. After attending a few similar parties, I felt tired and uncomfortable because sex and gossip were the main topics. I wondered why this group of teachers did not discuss our students, our classes, teaching methodologies, and how to improve the quality of local education.

INTRODUCTION TO THE SCHOOL

Derkyid Township is located twenty-five kilometers from the county seat and about 250 kilometers from the provincial capital. In 2006, Derkyid Township residents were offered the chance to have a house in the resettlement community if they paid 6,000 RMB each. No family was required to leave their grassland home and move to the

resettlement community. In the end, nearly all the township's 660 households paid 6,000 RMB each and received a house during the 2005-2007 period.

In 2015, local families earned income from selling animal products (yak dung for fuel, meat, sheep and yak skins, butter, yogurt, milk, dried cheese, and so on), herding for others, collecting and selling caterpillar fungus, and working in service sectors such as restaurants and hotels, and performing manual labor at construction sites. Elders typically lived in the resettlement community while younger people grazed livestock in the pastureland. Herding was generally little affected by choosing to own a house in the resettled community.

Time passed, property prices increased, and in 2015 these houses sold for 60,000 to 70,000 RMB each. Many locals found a settlement house convenient in terms of transportation, shopping, and medical care. The township government offices were also situated here, giving locals easy access to officials, who were consulted about government subsidies paid to local families and assisted in solving local conflicts. Furthermore, a nearby large monastery allowed elders a place to circumambulate, attend religious rituals, and consult *bla ma* for divinations, e.g., the direction in which to search for a missing yak or which hospital to take an ill person. In general, locals who had obtained housing in this community were glad they had done so.

According to a board posted on the classroom building, Derkyid Primary School was first built in 1953 by local people, demolished during the Cultural Revolution, and then rebuilt in the 1990s. In 2015, the school had an area of 20,000 square meters, including 15,000 square meters of open ground and 5,000 square meters of construction.

The school employed thirty-five individuals, including five cooks from the local community. Another woman spent two hours a day at the school heating a boiler to provide hot water for students to wash and brush their teeth in the morning. She also cleaned all the teachers' offices and made fires (with coal) in the stoves in the offices.

Most teachers earned 4,500 to 7,000 RMB a month. The exact amount depended on the length of their employment. Salaries were

also based on the degree (two-year, four year, graduate), the school location (distance to the local capital city/town), altitude, weather, and so on. For temporary teachers, the salary was 1,200 to 1,500 RMB a month. School cooks and the janitor received 800 to 1,000 RMB per month.

Before 2002, local roads were bumpy and muddy in warm weather. In 2015, the road from the county town to Derkyid School was paved and thus much improved.

In 2015, there were ten classes - a class of students generally between the ages of four and six, a class of preparatory students, one class each for grades one to four, and two classes each for grades five and six. In late 2015, there were 395 students at Derkyid School (203 boys, 192 girls).

Since early 2009, students were no longer required to pay tuition fees,¹ but were required to pay about thirty RMB for review books.² Students' miscellaneous expenses included medicine, pencils, pens, school bags, clothing, shoes, and snacks. A student's family generally spent 200 to 300 RMB per student per semester.

The school had two cars, a Changcheng 'Great Wall'³ pickup truck with four doors and a Dongfeng⁴ SUV with six doors. Both cars, officially, were only to be used for school affairs and only authorized leaders could use them. These two vehicles were used when school leaders attended meetings at the county, prefectural, and provincial centers. They were also used when transporting teaching equipment and food for students. The student food budget was around 300,000 RMB per semester.

¹ Before 2005 and 1990, tuition was 80-120 RMB per term.

² Review books were needed for Tibetan, Chinese, math, and English. The content included weekly quizzes and exercises for each lesson.

³ Great Wall Motor Company Limited is China's largest SUV and pickup manufacturer.

⁴ The Dongfeng Motor Corporation was established in 1969 in China.

LOCAL TEACHERS' BACKGROUNDS

In 2014, there were thirty teachers (twenty-two males, eight females) at Derkyid School of whom twenty-six were Tibetan and four were Han Chinese. Sixteen teachers were twenty-five to thirty years old, ten were between thirty and forty, and four teachers were between the ages of forty and fifty-one. All the teachers were from the same province where Derkyid School was located. All the Tibetan teachers spoke Tibetan well. The four Han teachers spoke a smattering of Tibetan, but none could read or write Tibetan. Lack of facility in Tibetan meant that the Han teachers had difficulty interacting with Tibetans both inside and outside classes.

In terms of educational attainment, sixteen teachers had BA degrees, twelve had Associate Degrees, one had an MA degree, and one had a *'bring rim (zhongzhuan)* degree.¹ More than half of the BA degrees and most of the Associate Degrees were earned through adult education programs (described later). In fact, only five of the teachers had BA degrees earned by passing the Higher Education Examination and entering and graduating from colleges and universities.

Teachers had majored in Tibetan language and literature (thirteen), English (three), Chinese language and literature (nine), computer science (two), biology (one), and math (two). Of the thirty teachers total, twenty-one had received degrees from universities in the same province, eight had graduated from universities outside their home province, and one had received a degree from a vocational school in his home prefecture.

Eight of the thirty teachers worked as temporary hires because eight staff members were in administrative roles and did no teaching,

¹ Translated variously as secondary specialized, tertiary vocational, technical, or technical senior high schools. At one time, enrolling in these schools was extremely competitive because graduation led to permanent government employment. However, locally, the guarantee of a government job for *zhongzhuan* graduates ended in about 1997. In 2015, *zhongzhuan* schools were places parents paid to send their children who had failed to pass the senior middle school entrance examination. Locally, the quality of education in *zhongzhuan* schools was deemed to be poor.

hence the need for replacement teachers. These temporary hires received a monthly salary of 1,200 RMB from 2013 to 2014. In 2015, it increased to 1,500 RMB. As was the case with other teachers, the temporary teachers also paid 200 RMB per month to eat in the teachers' cafeteria.

The temporary teachers had few other options for employment, hence their willingness to work in a temporary capacity for a relatively low salary. They also hoped that such temporary employment would ultimately lead to an official, permanent job as a teacher.

In many cases, temporary teachers were not allowed to take exams for official positions on the grounds that they lacked teaching certificates. Graduates of normal universities who had majored in a field in education (e.g., math teaching, English teaching, and so on) automatically earned a teaching certificate. Otherwise, a teaching certificate could be obtained by passing a national test offered twice a year. Educational theory and psychology were the only test subjects.

Temporary hires obtained their jobs at this school through personal connections. Such positions were never filled through public advertisement and no exams were given to evaluate teaching qualifications. The hiring decision was made entirely by the school headmaster. Among the temporary teachers, three had BA degrees, three had two-year college degrees, and two had vocational school degrees.

POSITIONS, RANKS, AND DUTIES

Of the school's thirty teachers, one was the general headmaster, three were assistant headmasters, four were office directors, and twenty-three were teachers. In terms of teaching duties, eight teachers had administrative duties and did not teach. Another nine taught between ten and twenty hours a week, and twelve taught twenty to twenty-five hours a week. Nineteen of the teachers had begun their teaching career in the period 2010 to 2015, four began work in the period 1990 to 2000, and two had started work between 1980 and 1990.

The *slob gtso (xiaozhang)* 'general headmaster' oversaw all school affairs, had his own office, was not required to teach, and had a *drung yig (mishu)* 'secretary' who was a teacher with a reduced teaching load as compared to other teachers.

The *slob ston slob gtso (jiaowu xiaozhang)* 'teaching headmaster' oversaw the Office of Teaching Affairs, and shared an office with the *zhuren* 'director', who was responsible for implementing affairs related to teaching. In addition, the teaching headmaster worked as the school accountant and cashier. Overall, this office reviewed student homework and lesson plans, made teaching schedules, managed teacher leave requests, and organized all activities related to the performance of both teachers and students.

The *slob ston kru'u rin (jiaowu zhuren)* worked closely with the *jiaowu xiaozhang* to implement all the duties mentioned above. *Zhuren* also included the *jiaowu zhuren*, *zongwu zhuren*, and *deyu zhuren*. The first took care of teaching affairs and the other two were responsible for school facilities, political studies, and moral discipline. They were assisted by a teacher with good Tibetan and Chinese language skills and computer word processing skills, who obediently and enthusiastically undertook whatever duties they were assigned. This teacher was the *zhushou* 'assistant'.

The *kun sbyod slob gtso (deyu xiaozhang)* 'moral and disciplinary headmaster' administered the Office of Morals and Disciplines, which he shared with an office director. Duties included organizing the *slob ma'i tshogs ba (xuesheng hui)* 'Student Union', overseeing student safety, managing student permissions for temporary absences from the school, and ensuring the classrooms and dormitory rooms were clean and tidy. In terms of student hygiene, the Student Union ensured students wore clean clothes, brushed their teeth, and washed their hair. This office also made sure toilets were cleaned weekly by on-duty students.

This moral and disciplinary headmaster was also responsible for keeping school property (windows, desks, chairs, computers, and beds) in good condition, and mediating conflicts between students that might involve the families of the students.

In addition, this office oversaw reviewing teachers' political study essays. Teachers were told to study current political reforms and policies, and then write their opinions about what they had read. In practice, teachers copied materials from the internet to meet this requirement. This was generally done in the Chinese language. Although Tibetan written assignments were acceptable, related material in Chinese was more plentiful and, thus, most papers were prepared in Chinese.

The *kun spyod kru'u rin (deyu zhuren)* took orders from the 'moral and disciplinary headmaster' and also worked with a teacher designated as an assistant.

The *spyi gnyer kru'u rin (zongwu zhuren)* 'Director of Student Accommodation' worked closely with the general headmaster, accountant, and cashier. His responsibilities were to purchase meat, vegetables, and other necessities for the student cafeteria. These items were generally purchased in the county town in large amounts at wholesale prices and stored in a large refrigerator on campus. He closely monitored the preparation of food by five cooks who were all local Tibetan women born between 1973 and 1993. Their jobs were temporary and offered on a yearly contract basis. Salaries for such work ranged from 800 to 1,000 RMB per month.

The *zongwu zhuren's* duties were to ensure students and teachers had adequate, safe food. He directly supervised food preparation and general security of the students. He kept the student dining room in order and was also in charge of distributing bags of yak dung to students to use as fuel in their classrooms and dormitory rooms.

The *dudao* 'supervisor of school affairs' oversaw *gmang gnyis (liangji)* 'universalizing nine-year compulsory education and eliminating illiteracy among young and middle-aged adults'. His main duties were to compose reports on school enrollment in Derkyid Township, and compile information about students' families, e.g., number of family members, income, illiteracy rates, number of livestock, and so on. He also collected data on the annual reduction in illiteracy. Derkyid School was the only school in the township, which

made his work more challenging.

The *gmang gnyis* program, announced in 2003, was designed to address educational issues in China's western regions, including rural rangeland and mountain areas. The project aimed to build new classrooms, renovate old rooms to sustain indicators enforced by *liangji* implementation. To ensure that students in these areas had better school facilities and equal opportunity access to quality education, *liangji* included special funds from the Central Government to support poor students in rural areas, such as providing cash subsidies to students' families, abolishing tuition fees, free textbooks, and no boarding fees. Prior to the implementation of *liangji*, students had to pay for both tuition and textbooks.

The *dudao* was also responsible for making a budget once a school construction project was approved by relevant authorities, creating a need for proposals. He regularly reported to the County Education Bureau about the school's current situation and weekly activities, providing basic school information about teachers, students, and students' parents. He also collected and computerized all basic student information; e.g., age, name, and the number of household members.

The 'class supervisor' supervised all class affairs for one class of students and were paid an additional 200 RMB monthly. They shared an office with other 'ordinary' teachers in a huge room where seventeen teachers each had a table. Their responsibilities included teaching the class they supervised, collecting student information (names, ID numbers, home village name), writing weekly reports regarding students' study progress, and writing background summaries of students' families. They were required to submit whatever information the school leaders requested.

The *bslab bya dge rgan (putong laoshi)* 'ordinary teachers' were responsible for teaching students and had no administrative duties other than rotating weekly duties. In terms of weekly duties, two teachers were assigned to supervise school security and study affairs for seven consecutive days. These duties included ensuring students did morning exercises (each class stood in two lines and jogged around

the school campus three times) punctually beginning at six AM, and taking attendance of both teachers and students during the morning and evening review classes. Each review class lasted forty-five minutes. They were also required to complete forms that evaluated class discipline, neatness, and student attitudes. These forms also recorded teacher presence, i.e., was the teacher there?

Teachers on weekly duties were expected to maintain order in the dining hall during meals. At around nine-thirty PM, on-duty teachers visited the dorm rooms and noted student presence or absence, if the students were in bed, and ensured all was in order. At the end of the seven-day period, forms filled out during this time of duty were summarized and submitted to the *deyushi* 'discipline office'.

There was one teacher on the school employee list that I never met. He received a full salary, medical insurance, and an annual bonus. Colleagues suggested that he was a local resident in his fifties who had become a teacher in the late 1980s. A relative had once been Director of the County Education Bureau, a connection that allowed him to receive a long 'medical' leave. In certain cases, teachers on 'medical' leave were not ill at all. While on leave, they might have engaged in small business activities, or stayed at home enjoying themselves.

Three teaching titles were used in Derkyid School: *xiaojiao yiji* 'primary school level one' (P1, six teachers), *xiaojiao gaoji* 'primary school level three' (P3, eight teachers), and *shisanji* 'level thirteen' (L13, eight teachers). Temporary hire teachers were not assigned a level.

Teaching titles were granted by the County Education Bureau every October. Requirements for a title included having held a two- to three-year period of employment, having a teaching certificate and a certificate for competence in oral Mandarin, having passed a formal teaching observation by the County Education Bureau, and a published article.¹ Teachers with a minimum of three years of employment were selected for P1, which automatically brought a 200 RMB increase in monthly salary, along with an increase to the annual bonus and

¹ I was told that teachers bought already-written articles from a publisher that were guaranteed to be published. After purchase, the total cost to publish was 1,200 RMB per article.

medical insurance coverage. After about another five years, teachers with the qualifications and certificates mentioned above, and with additional merit awards or certificates, were selected for P3, which brought another 800 RMB increase in monthly salary and additional increases to the annual bonus and medical insurance coverage.

The school leadership had decision-making powers to select qualified candidates. Consequently, few teachers complained about the school leadership.

ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Higher adult education programs in China were designed to provide associate and BA degree level education for those who were unable to enroll in colleges and universities through the college entrance examination system. Some such programs were offered throughout the regular semester. Other programs were offered during holiday periods. I will focus on the program I attended that was held at a teachers' university in the provincial capital during summer and winter holidays for six terms. Each term lasted two weeks.¹ Acceptance into this program required passing an exam given by the provincial education department in the provincial capital and in prefectural capitals. The registration period was 15 September to 1 October. The registration fee was about 120 RMB. The exam was given in late October. *Xiandai hanyu* 'modern Chinese language' and politics were mandatory exam subjects. The third exam focused on the student's major field.

Enrolled students who passed the College English Test Level Four² and maintained an average grade of seventy-five or above in

¹ Those with a senior middle school diploma studied six terms for an Associate Degree. Those with only a junior middle school diploma were required to take ten terms of study (five years). An Associate Degree was required for entry into the BA program of the adult education system.

² The College English Test is a national, large-scale, standardized test annually administered by education departments of every province, autonomous region, and directly-controlled municipality in China. It includes listening, reading, writing, and grammar (Sun and Henrichsen

their classes received a diploma and a degree.¹

To better illustrate what obtaining an adult education degree involved, I now provide an acquaintance's experience:

After I earned my Associate Degree, I went abroad to do MA study. I then returned to China with an MA degree and from 2011 to 2012, took two major exams that were given to select a university teacher. Both times I was told I was unqualified because I did not have a BA degree prior to my MA study. Realizing that a BA degree was important to my future career, I registered and took the adult education examination in October 2013. In addition to paying the registration fee and providing a copy of my Associate Degree diploma, I was also required to show my *khyim tho* (*hukou*) 'household registration' and a letter certifying that I was an official government employee.² My registration was deemed complete after presenting all the above papers and credentials.

I took the exam in October and received the results in December. The minimum passing mark was fifty out of 150 for each test. Acceptance required a minimum mark of 150 (total). My score was 278 so I passed and started my first term of study in January 2014.

Program cost was reasonable: a total of 800 RMB for textbooks for all three years plus 6,600 RMB (total) for tuition. Students were expected to also pay for dorm accommodation, which was 105 RMB per term (seven RMB per day) - a total of 630 RMB for six terms (three years).

There were fifty students in my class. Approximately thirty were either official teachers or government officials. The other students were young college graduates who lacked a BA degree. There was a sizable age gap between my classmates. The youngest were around twenty and the oldest were around forty years old. Almost ninety percent of the students had zero interest in learning. Everybody had one purpose - to obtain the

2011:11).

¹ A "diploma" certifies that the student took all the courses and studied at the education institution. A "degree" certifies the holder has graduated from a BA program, passed all the courses, and submitted an acceptable thesis.

² In fact, at this time, this interviewee was not an official government employee, but obtained such a statement through their network of connections.

diploma and degree.

Each semester lasted around fifteen days. Different subjects were offered per semester. The first term included Deng Xiaoping Theory, Advanced English Reading 1, English Listening and Speaking 1, and English Reading Skills 1.

For the second term, the classes were Education Theory, English Listening and Speaking 2, English Reading Skills 2, and English to Chinese Translation.

The third term featured Advanced English Reading 2, Psychology (in Chinese), English Reading Skills 2, and Computer Science.

For the fourth term, the classes were English Listening and Speaking 3, English Reading Skills 3, and Japanese.

Fifth term classes were British-American Classic Reading Collection, English Writing, and Japanese 2.

The sixth term was for the thesis.

All the teachers were from the English Department of the university that provided this program.

After I enrolled in the program, I attended all the classes and did my homework on time. Most teachers only required that we attend class and complete the homework, which we usually copied from textbooks. Teachers did not disturb students who slept in class.

Students with a reasonable foundation in English had the opportunity to learn, however, most students lacked a foundation in English and thus there was little that they could learn in the program.

Each subject was taught for four days. On the fourth day, class monitors followed the teacher to their office, presented 200 RMB in an envelope to the teacher, and said, "Thank you for your time and teaching us. This is from our class." The teacher then commonly gave eighty percent of the final exam answers to the class monitor, who later relayed these answers to their classmates, who were impatiently waiting in the classroom.

At the end of the semester (after fifteen days), we were given final exams. Each class had four proctors. The class monitor was expected to give 200 RMB to each proctor before the exam started. These expenses

were usually paid from a class fund.¹

Thus favorably inclined, the proctors allowed students to copy answers from each other. When school leaders made an inspection visit for about two minutes, students were warned, which meant that they hid their cell phones, books, and small papers with answers written on them. After the school leaders finished the "inspection," students resumed copying answers.

After the exams, the class monitor went to the class supervisor's office and said something akin to, "Thank you for your hard work and taking care of our problems," and presented him with 500 RMB as a "gift." The class supervisor then told the monitor to arrange a dinner for teachers and department leaders, which "would open a smooth door" for students' graduation.

The class supervisor selected his favorite Sichuan-style restaurant near the university. Seven students and three teachers attended that dinner. I was one of the students. We all arrived at the restaurant around seven PM. I had never seen the class supervisor's two companions on campus. They were introduced as leaders of the Adult Education College Office. It was a grand dinner. We consumed two bottles of local liquor costing about 180 RMB per bottle, and five boxes of canned Budweiser beer.² The dinner went on for more than three hours and we all became intoxicated. We left the restaurant after the monitor paid the bill of 1,500 RMB.

Students pass the final exams unless they miss an exam. If an exam is missed, there is a second chance to pass at the beginning of the following semester. Overall, nobody fails if they pay all the tuition, do all the homework, and attend the final exams.

¹ At the beginning of each term, one hundred RMB was collected from each student and was used for class related affairs (electric hot water kettle for the classroom, tea, brooms, locks, paper cups, and white board pens and erasers). More than eighty percent of the funds were "gifts" for course subject teachers, proctors on exam day, and meals for the class supervisor and his companions, i.e., department leaders.

² One box held twelve cans and cost about sixty-four RMB.

TEACHING CERTIFICATES

A teaching certificate was an official document certifying that the holder was qualified in teaching a specified major at a designated level, e.g., primary school, junior middle school, senior middle school, or college. There were three ways to obtain a teaching certificate: to study at a normal/teaching university with teaching as a major, pass a national examination in educational theory and psychology and scoring sixty or above in both subjects, or to apply for a teaching certificate from a local education bureau with scores in education theory and psychology earned in university courses. A teaching certificate was required when taking exams for official teaching positions.

For teachers with official teaching jobs, the serial numbers on teaching certificates were generally requested when completing forms for annual evaluations and promotions. At Derkyid School, twenty-four teachers held a teaching certificate: twelve in Tibetan, one in chemistry, four in Chinese, three in English, one in computer science, two in mathematics, and one in biology.

Despite requirements for a teaching certificate, teachers were often assigned to teach subjects that they were unfamiliar with.

STUDENTS' PARENTS' BACKGROUNDS

All the students at Derkyid School were from Derkyid Township, one of five townships in Serlong County. In 2014, Derkyid Township was home to 660 households with a total population of 3,133 (1,540 males; 1,593 female). Derkyid Township had a total grassland area of 27,000 *mu* (1,800 hectares) and was divided among three large administrative villages.

The annual income for most township households was 6,000-8,000 RMB per year, which is low compared to the provincial average. Most income was earned from the sale of caterpillar fungus and animal products (discussed earlier). Locals were engaged as skilled workers

(ten percent), manual laborers (eighty percent), and small business activities (ten percent).

Income earned from collecting and selling caterpillar fungus was a vital part of family income. Collection occurred from May to June. The fungus grows in areas determined by altitude and weather and the local area did not produce fungus. Therefore, local families often traveled to distant prefectures in the same province. One person usually paid 5,000 to 30,000 RMB that entitled them to collect on a designated area of land without disturbance from the land owners. Some locals also worked for caterpillar fungus bosses as hired collectors and received 6,000 RMB in payment after thirty to forty-five days.

Some of the students' parents were also involved in skilled labor in Derkyid communities and the township seat, e.g., local tailors who earned 200 RMB per day when there was good business. Other skilled workers included masons, and carpenters. Other villagers were drivers, transporting people between the county seat and township, charging fifteen RMB per passenger in 2014.

Most parents, however, were employed as laborers in construction work, unloading bags of cement from trucks, carrying bricks to a second or higher floor, and as restaurant workers (washing dishes, cleaning floors, and cleaning vegetables). Such workers earned about 120 RMB per day.

Beginning in 2010, impoverished families were given annual subsidies from the local Civil Affairs Office to alleviate poverty in herding communities. These subsidies ranged from 2,000 to 3,000 RMB per household.

Some villagers owned cars and every family had a motorcycle. In 2015, almost everyone had smart phones (iPhone, Samsung, Oppo, Huawei, Nokia).

There were five stores and two health clinics in the township seat, as well as two locally run restaurants that sold dumplings and noodles. The two restaurants were similar. They were small - about fifteen square meters in area. The floors were covered with old, broken red bricks. Each restaurant had five old tables. Each table had

dispensers containing vinegar and chili sauce. Two women worked in each of the kitchens making dumplings and noodles. The walls were covered with *China Daily* newspapers. Pictures of Chinese celebrities were then affixed to the newspapers.

The shops were typically one-room affairs, about ten square meters in area. Shops had plastic-panel ceilings and plastered walls. Around five shelves were placed against three walls and were filled with bottles of liquor, bottles and tins of Snowflake and Qingdao beer, cigarettes (Lanzhou, Furong Wang, Red Mountain Pagoda, Yan'an, Yunyan, Baisha, Huangshan, Huangjinye, Hongmei), milk drinks, bottled yogurt, bottles of soda (Sprite, Pepsi, Jianlibao¹), salt, vinegar, soy sauce, snacks, and clothing. Separating the proprietor and customers was a two-meter-long glass box filled with various snacks children were fond of, e.g., chewing gum, potato chips, peanuts, sunflower seeds, spicy tofu, and plastic-wrapped sausages made from highly processed meats and other ingredients that did not require refrigeration. The other half of the box was filled with matches, light bulbs, electrical sockets, nails, hammers, and screwdrivers. Hanging from the walls were such items as raincoats, rubber boots, Tibetan robes, down jackets, and umbrellas. Two shops sold green onions, cabbages, green chili, carrots, and radishes brought from the county town. Vegetables were often wilted and beginning to spoil.

The two clinics each had one proprietor. Both represented themselves as Traditional Tibetan Medicine (TTM) practitioners. I am unsure how they learned TTM. The clinics were very small and lacked such basic medical equipment as blood pressure measuring devices. Patients typically described their symptoms and then were given antibiotics in pill form or as injections.

Every family owned a TV set and a satellite dish. Before 2012, families usually bought large satellite dishes in county town shops. Beginning in 2012, local families were provided small satellite dishes.

¹ One of first sodas created in modern China, it was the official drink of the Chinese team at the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles and was the most popular soft drink in China in the 1990s (<https://goo.gl/FQPXXC>, accessed 26 November 2016).

However, to obtain this satellite dish, the head of a family had to visit the local TV station in the county seat with their family registration book and valid ID to register the satellite dish. After paying 150 RMB, they received a dish, a remote control, and channel controller machine. The purpose of this procedure was to block access to illegal channels.

Occasionally, three-wheeled truck vendors came from the county town and neighboring counties with metal plates and bowls, toys, kettles, vegetables, fruits, and basic household goods, which they bartered for cash or animal products. In late autumn, Muslim traders came to purchase livestock and sheepskins.

Herders bought wheat and barley flour from stores. Barley flour was a main food that was usually eaten for breakfast and at other time as a snack. Dinner was often *guamian* 'dried noodles' boiled with meat. The most commonly consumed vegetables were potatoes, cabbage, and green onions. Local herders had distinct, negative ideas about eating vegetables which they believed made a person physically weak and more Han-like. Those who frequently ate vegetables were sometimes termed *rtsa gzan* 'grass eaters', which generally referred to such herbivores as sheep and yaks.

SCHOOL TERMS

Each school year was divided into two semesters. Each semester was about seventeen weeks in duration. The spring semester started in March and the fall semester started in September.

Prior to 2014, students stayed in the school for twenty days of consecutive classes, followed by a ten-day break. The decision for this schedule was made by local education bureau leaders, not by the provincial government. One reason for this decision was to reduce cost and time for families because some students' homes were relatively far from the school and it was thus expensive for them to return home every weekend or to be escorted home by a family member. For example, when students had weekend holidays, most parents drove motorcycles for forty to sixty kilometers (roundtrip), which required

twenty to fifty RMB for gasoline. Students who had no one to pick them up paid ten to twenty-five RMB for a small van to go home. Such vans transported six to ten students at a time.

Another reason for this scheduling change was that most teachers were from other counties and this system allowed them more time to return to and stay at their homes.

This system changed in early 2015 after local parents, teachers, and students complained. Both teachers and students were exhausted after twenty consecutive days of classes. Teachers commented that many students forgot what they had learned after the ten-day break. Consequently, education bureau leaders then reinstated a weekend holiday. Every Saturday after lunch, students and teachers were free to go home, but were required to return before five PM on Sunday.

Students had several holidays annually; summer holiday from 20 July to 20 August (thirty days), winter holiday from 15 December to 15 March (ninety days), 1 October (National Day, seven days), 1 May (Labor Day, five days), the fifth day of the fifth lunar month (Dragon Boat Festival, three days), the first day of the fifth solar term of the traditional Chinese lunisolar calendar¹ (Tomb Sweeping Day, one day), and 1 June (Children's Day, three days).

STUDENT STATISTICS AND CLASS SIZE

In this section, I focus on students and particularly on the number of students, gender division, age (both reported and actual), student monitors, subjects, student meals, and accommodation.

In 2014, there were 395 students at Derkyid School (203 boys, 192 girls) in grades one through six. However, grades five and six were each divided into a class A and a class B to make class size more manageable. Grades five and six in 2015 were the largest classes the school had ever enrolled. This was a time when nine-year compulsory education was strictly enforced in the area and all households were required to send their children to school.

¹ In 2015, Tomb Sweeping Day fell on 5 April.

There was also a class of fifty-four pre-school students who were all officially under the age of seven. These children slept in the nearby resettlement homes where a family member helped care for them. The size of each grade and group of students are listed below:

- Pre-school class, fifty-four students (twenty-seven boys and twenty-seven girls)
- Grade one, forty-nine (twenty-four boys and twenty-five girls)
- Grade two, fifty-four (twenty-two boys and thirty-two girls)
- Grade three, fifty-seven (thirty-two boys and twenty-five girls)
- Grade four, forty-six (twenty-five boys and twenty-one girls)
- Grade five class A, thirty-three (sixteen boys and seventeen girls)
- Grade five class B, thirty-one (eighteen boys and thirteen girls)
- Grade six class A, thirty-five (sixteen boys and nineteen girls)
- Grade six class B, thirty-six (twenty-three boys and thirteen girls)

The actual average age range was seven to sixteen. However, on official reports, student ages were reported as six for preparatory class, seven for grade one, eight for grade two, nine for grade three, ten for grade four, eleven for grade five, and twelve for grade six. Pre-school students aged five and six were cared for by teachers during the daytime and taught the Tibetan alphabet, Arabic numbers, and Chinese Pinyin. At other times, children played in the classroom or on the playground and watched Chinese-language cartoons before returning home at the end of the day.

The officially-reported ages for students in grades one to six were, respectively, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, and twelve. In actuality, ages ranged from about eight to nineteen during the time I taught. School leaders reported ideal ages to demonstrate that the school was following the Nine-year Compulsory Education Policy¹ and

¹ "In 1986, the Chinese government passed a compulsory education law, making nine years of education mandatory..." "Today, the Ministry of Education estimates that 99.7 percent of the population area of the country has achieved university nine-year basic education" (<http://goo.gl/GMFjgj>, accessed 2 August 2016).

thus received positive reviews from higher officials, increasing the possibility of promotion.

STUDENTS' DAILY SCHEDULES AND CURRICULUM

From Monday through Saturday, students got up at six AM and went to bed at ten PM. There were four, forty-five-minute class sessions in the morning. There were another four sessions in the afternoon. In addition, there were morning and evening review classes, each lasting forty-five minutes.

The first of the four classes began at eight-thirty. The lunch break began at twelve noon and lasted two and a half hours. The first afternoon class began at two-thirty. The last class ended at six-thirty PM. A ten-minute break followed each session.

Supper was served at six-fifty. The evening review class ran from eight-ten to eight-fifty-five. Afterwards, students were free to play and chat, but were expected to be in bed by ten, with lights out at ten-thirty.

I will now present class sessions for each grade per week from Monday through Saturday noon, based on the second school term in 2014.

The preschool class schedule featured a total of forty classes, consisting of eleven classes each of Chinese, Tibetan, and math; two PE classes, two life and behavior classes, two music classes, one art class, and one class that gave instruction in patriotism, love for the motherland, and faithfulness to the Party.

First-year students had fifty-three classes per week. Language courses included sixteen classes of Tibetan and twelve classes of Chinese. Other courses included fourteen classes of math, two health classes, one music class, two PE classes, one law class, two morality classes, one Chinese calligraphy class, one art class, and one Chinese language dialogue class.

The second-year schedule featured fifty-six classes per week. These included fifteen Tibetan classes; fifteen Chinese classes; fifteen

math classes; two PE classes; two morality classes; one law class; one art class; two labor periods that were used to clean the dormitory rooms, classrooms, and the campus; one music class; and one Chinese calligraphy class.

The third-year schedule featured fifty-three classes per week. These included ten Tibetan classes, ten Chinese classes, eleven math classes, eight English classes, two health classes, two behavior and society classes, one music class, two computer science classes, two PE classes, two science classes, one art class, one Chinese calligraphy class, and one Chinese language conversation class.

The fourth-year schedule had fifty-four classes including language classes (twelve Chinese, eleven Tibetan, seven English), eleven math classes, two science classes, two health classes, two behavior and society classes, one law class, one Chinese dialogue class, one music class, two computer science classes, one art class, and two PE periods.

The fifth-year schedule had fifty classes with twenty-nine language classes (ten Chinese, twelve Tibetan, seven English), eleven math classes, one law class, two behavior and society classes, two health classes, two computer science classes, two science classes, one music class, one art class, two PE classes, one Chinese language dialogue class, and one Chinese calligraphy class.

The sixth-year schedule had fifty-three classes with twenty-seven language classes (eleven Tibetan, ten Chinese, six English), eleven math classes, two computer science classes, two science classes, two behavior and society classes, one law class, two PE classes, one art class, one music class, three health classes, and one calligraphy class.

Students and teachers generally did not rest during lunch time. Instead, students played basketball or football, strolled about the campus, sang, ate snacks, chased each other, and so on. A few did homework assignments and a few studied if told to do so by teachers. Teachers walked around in the classrooms, busied themselves with their phones, and sometime wandered off into the small town located outside the school campus.

Most students prioritized Tibetan, Chinese, English, and math and spent study time memorizing and doing homework assignments. The education bureau emphasized these subjects because they later appeared on entrance exams for junior and senior middle school, and college.

STUDENT MONITORS AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES

Each class had a *'dzin dpon (banzhang)* 'general monitor', study monitor, PE monitor, and sanitation monitor. The general monitor oversaw all class affairs related to student safety, sanitation, and study performance, and ensured students obeyed school regulations and behaved well during classes. They reported to the class supervisor if students were disobedient. The study monitor's responsibilities included collecting student homework, delivering completed homework to the teachers' office, distributing marked homework assignments to the students, and supervising the classroom while teachers were away or absent.

The PE monitor took attendance for morning exercise (discussed earlier), and led class break exercises between the first and second class in the morning, and kept classmates in line during PE class sessions if the teacher assigned them to do so.

A group of four "on-duty" students swept and mopped the classroom and corridor three times a day, cleaned the blackboard after every class, and cleaned the windows and teachers' podium. These duties lasted one day and then another four students were assigned this duty the next day. The sanitation monitor ensured these responsibilities were carried out, and was also responsible for ensuring the dorm rooms were neat and tidy. This was an important task because teachers on weekly duty and student union members checked twice a day to see if the on-duty students had completed their daily work duties.

Classrooms and dormitory rooms received stars based on completed teacher evaluation forms. Classrooms and dorm rooms that

received the most stars were rewarded five RMB per star. Classes and residents of dorm rooms with the fewest stars were criticized and warned about their poor performance.

STUDENT FOOD

Students were provided daily meals in a one-story, red-brick building with an A-frame, red-tiled roof. This building was about 200 square meters in area. The interior walls were white-plastered and the dining hall had a white, plastic-paneled ceiling. Glass panels in aluminum frames separated the kitchen and student dining area. Student meals included breakfast (seven-thirty AM), lunch (twelve noon), dinner (six-twenty PM), and late dinner (eight PM). Student meals were cooked with yak meat and vegetables (cabbage, potatoes, green onions). A teacher who had worked at the school for more than twenty years told me that meals had improved considerably. In the past, meals had little meat and there were few vegetables. Instead, rice soup and *rtsam pa*¹ were mainstays.

There were twenty long metal tables with wooden benches that accommodated eight students per bench. Two large basins were atop a big table against the wall next to the cafeteria entrance. One basin was filled with washed metal bowls and the other was filled with steamed buns. A plastic container with chopsticks was also on the table. Two basins filled with long noodles made by a machine in the kitchen sat atop a long table against the glass-panel division. The noodles were served for dinner and lunch. The dinner noodles were in a soup of meat and radish. Lunch noodles had more vegetables than those served for breakfast and supper.

Students stood in queues, each holding a bowl and bun. When it was their turn, the cooks filled their bowls with soup and noodles.

Breakfast was served differently. Students took the bowls and sat at the tables. Cooks filled their bowls with milk tea. Milk tea and

¹ Barley flour mixed with butter, cheese, and hot tea. Other ingredients such as sugar were added depending on personal taste.

steamed buns were served on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. *Rtsam pa* was served for breakfast on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

Late supper was served right after the evening review class and usually consisted of supper leftovers.

Students were provided a snack at four-twenty PM. Apples and cookies were served one day, and individual packaged milk and boiled eggs (one per student) the next day. On-duty teachers kept the students in a long queue and then distributed the snacks, which students liked more than any other food.

Several students complained to me about the school meals because the vegetables were not fresh, the cabbage was unwashed, and an excessive amount of spice created unfamiliar flavors. They also complained that the food occasionally upset their stomach. I ate student meals several times and concluded that the food was generally good. There was plenty of meat and vegetables in the food and I thought spices were used appropriately.

The students particularly enjoyed junk food (cheap sausages, sweet frozen concoctions of highly processed ingredients on a stick, fried chips, chicken feet, chicken legs, pig skin, candy, cookies, and spicy dried starch) that were sold in campus shops run by two local teachers. Students competed among themselves on how much they spent on junk food and whom they bought snacks for. However, the school did not want to be responsible for students becoming ill so consequently, these shops were closed in March 2015 by school leaders because the snacks were generally unhealthy, old (expired dates), and some of the snacks were made by private food companies that had not been inspected by appropriate authorities.

STUDENT DORMITORIES

Students in grades one to six boarded at the school, as has already been mentioned. The students' dorms were one-story, ten-year-old buildings with A-shaped roofs covered with red tile. There were two types of dorm rooms: a large room accommodating thirty-six students

and a smaller room that accommodated twelve students. Some dorm rooms leaked during summer rains. However, the government renovated the dorms in late 2013. In the winter, as the weather got colder, students made fires in stoves in the rooms.¹ Each dorm had one stove and bags of yak dung were given weekly for fuel.

In smaller dorms, two or three students slept together due to a lack of beds. Younger students were afraid to go to the toilet at night and often needed to be accompanied by older students.

Students were not allowed to spend Saturday night at the school. This was part of an elaborate, ongoing game between parents and the school administration. Parents contended that they had entrusted their children to the school. Therefore, whatever happened to the students while they were at school was the school's responsibility. Examples of this included student injuries, e.g., falling down stairs and out of bed, injuries that occurred during sports activities or fights between students, and illnesses.

The school administrators forbade students from staying on campus after noon on Saturday, thus turning responsibility for the students back to their parents.

There was no health clinic on campus. Taking a child to the township clinics (both located just outside the campus) or county town hospital depended on how seriously ill the student was thought to be. Colds, sore throats, coughing, fever, eye diseases, and diarrhea were common complaints. Students were responsible for medical fees.

Students were only offered hot drinks in the form of milk tea and black tea at breakfast. Students occasionally asked teachers for hot water. Also, if they were thirsty or were taking medicine, some took water directly from the well. In short, there was no readily available supply of boiled water for students. The school also had no laundry facilities. Students washed clothes at home.

¹ The metal stove was a square metal box with four legs. Fuel was added through a large round hole on top of the stove that had several metal concentric rims used as lids. A metal stovepipe took smoke out of the top of the stove. A square metal tray at the bottom collected ash and was emptied when full.

 TEXTBOOKS

Each grade consisted of one school year, or two semesters. Students received new textbooks at the beginning of each semester. All the textbooks were free and prepared in the Tibetan language, except for the Chinese language and English language textbooks. The primary school had six grades, thus there were generally a total of twelve books per subject over the course of six years. Nevertheless, some subjects were only taught beginning in a certain grade and the number of those textbooks were thus fewer than for other subjects. All the textbooks were supervised and produced by the 'Gan babs slob gso'i slob deb (Yiwu jiaoyu kecheng jiaoke shu) 'Compulsory Education Textbook Office'.

Skad yig (Yuwen) translates literally as 'language script' and appears as the title on all twelve of the Tibetan language textbooks. Prepared by Ljongs zhing Inga'i mnyam bsgrigs bslab gzhi (Wu shengqu xiezuo jiaocai) 'Five Provinces and Regions Cooperatively¹ Written Textbooks', these textbooks were published by Mtsho sngon mi rigs dpe bskrun khang (Qinghai minzu chubanshe) 'Mtsho sngon Nationalities Press'.

Hanyu 'Chinese Language' textbooks (books one to twelve) were in the Chinese language with Tibetan translations for new vocabulary. They were prepared by the Hanyu kecheng jiaocai yanjiu kaifa zhongxin 'Chinese Textbook Research Development Center', and published by the Renmin jiaoyu chubanshe 'People's Education Press' in Beijing.

There were eight *Yingyu 'English Language'* textbooks, since English was not taught until grade three. The books were in English with Chinese translations for vocabulary and were prepared by the Yingyu kecheng jiaocai yanjiu kaifa zhongxin 'English Textbook Research Development Center' and published in Beijing by the People's Education Press.

Grangs rig (Shuxue) literally translates as 'study of numbers'

¹ Referring to the Tibet Autonomous Region, and the provinces of Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan, and Yunnan.

and consisted of twelve books used in math classes. All the lessons were in the Tibetan language (books One to Twelve) and prepared by the Xiaoxue shuxue kecheng jiaocai yanjiu kaifa zhongxin, 'Primary Arithmetic Textbook Research Development Center', and published by Qinghai Nationalities Press.

Huihua 'Chinese Conversation' textbooks were in the Chinese language (books One to Twelve) and were prepared by the Qinghai minzu jiaocai bianyi zhongxin 'Qinghai Nationalities Textbook Compilation Center' and published by Qinghai Nationalities Press. All the Chinese conversation textbooks were in Chinese with Tibetan translations for new words.

Kun spyod dang 'tsho ba (Pinde yu shenghuo) 'Behavior and Life' textbooks were in the Tibetan language (books One to Four) and taught to grades one and two students. Prepared by the Bod ljongs bslab gzhi rtsom bsgyur lte gnas (Xizang jiaocai bianyi zhongxin) 'Tibet Textbook Compilation Center', they were published by Bod ljongs mi dmangs dpe bskrun khang (Xizang renmin chubanshe) 'Tibet People's Press'.

Kun spyod dang spyi tshogs (Pinde yu shehui) 'Behavior and Society' textbooks were in the Tibetan language (books Five to Twelve) and were taught to grades Three, Four, Five, and Six. Prepared by the Xizang jiaocai bianyi zhongxin 'Tibet Textbook Compilation Center', they were published by Tibet People's Press.

Mdzes rtsal (Meishu) 'Art' textbooks were in the Tibetan language (books One to Twelve) and taught to grades one to six. Prepared by the Xizang jiaocai bianyi zhongxin 'Tibetan Textbook Compilation Center'. They were published by Tibet People's Press.

Rol dbyangs (Yinyue) 'Music' textbooks were in the Tibetan language (books One to Twelve) and taught to grades one to six. They were prepared by the Tibet Textbook Compilation Center and published by Tibet People's Press.

Tshan rig (Kexue) 'Science' textbooks were in the Tibetan language (books One to Eight) and were only taught to grades three to six. Prepared by the Xizang jiaocai bianyi zhongxin 'Tibet Textbook Compilation Center', they were published by Tibet People's Press.

Xiezi 'Chinese Calligraphy' textbooks were in the Chinese language (books One to Twelve) and taught to grades one to six. Prepared by Li Yanshui, they were published by the Jiaoyu kexue chubanshe 'Education and Science Press' in Beijing.

Cha 'phrin lag rtsal (Xinxi jishu) 'Information Technology' textbooks were in Tibetan (books One to Eight) and were taught from grades three to six. The textbooks were prepared by the Mtsho sngon Nationalities Textbook Compilation Center and published by Xi'an jiaotong daxue chubanshe 'Xi'an Jiaotong University Press'.

STUDENT TEXTBOOKS: CRITICAL COMMENTS

Tibetan students need textbooks that are relevant to Tibetan culture. Such subject matter would bring dramatic, positive changes to current pedagogical efforts and concepts. To illustrate this issue, I cite the cultural irrelevance of the English teaching material in the dialogue below:¹

1 Zoom: Wow! What a great job!

Zip: Yes. What other unusual jobs can you think of?

2 Zoom: How about a lion tamer?

Zip: Oh, no. Too dangerous.

3 Zoom: What about a bee farmer? I love honey.

Zip: Hmm. Maybe a bee farmer will get stung. That's not for me.

4 Zoom: Maybe you can be a computer game tester. You can play games and work at home.

Zip: I like to study. I don't like computer games.

5 Zoom: What about a magician's assistant? That would be cool.

Zip: Oh, no. I don't like that.

¹ Book 6 #1:55.

Zoom: Well, what do you want to be?

6 Zoom: I want to be a nut cracker. Yum! I like eating nuts.

Zip: Haha! You're nuts!

Carlson (nd) writes that the term "culturally relevant teaching" was created by Ladson-Billings (1992), who described this approach as a way that would empower students to excel. This was because the way in which they experience the curriculum makes sense in the context of their lives and helps them to develop confidence as learners. Ladson-Billings found that students were put more at risk for academic failure if they did not see themselves or their culture represented in the classroom or felt they had to assume another culture (in this case, of their mostly white, middle-class teachers in the United States) to be able to fit and excel in school. From this research, she created a framework that teachers can incorporate, to make learning relevant to students. Carlson points out that effective teaching involves teachers building a connection between students' home lives and their classroom experiences, allowing them to bring rudiments of the former into their daily learning at school that validate their culture, creating teachings that create a strong, personal impact because of those connections.¹

Tibetan children being taught English in Derkyid School are presented with an unfamiliar culture in their textbooks as indicated in the dialogue above. Picture 1 shows a clown-like figure that the children would likely be unable to identify, having never encountered a "clown" before, especially when introduced by a chipmunk and bear, creatures that local children have never seen. The puzzlement continues as they are presented with other vocational options - a lion tamer, bee farmer, computer game tester, and magician's assistant in illustrations that would surely prove as baffling as the job titles. Unit Five is entitled "What does he do?" hence the above dialogue. The dialogue could have been rewritten, achieving the same pedagogic aims if the two animals had been a yak (large creature) and a pika

¹ <http://goo.gl/eFqKQ6> (accessed 18 September 2016).

(small creature) engaged in a dialogue about jobs that introduced a Traditional Tibetan Medicine doctor, a monk, a herdsman, a cook, and a store clerk, suitably attired to emphasize their place in the local world that children inhabit.

Similarly, the Chinese textbooks contain culturally irrelevant materials, that surely contribute to students' lack of enthusiasm in learning Chinese. For example, primary school Chinese textbook Twelve for grade six featured twenty-four lessons. Only three lessons are somewhat culturally relevant. In addition, certain Tibetan translations for the new vocabulary were inappropriate.

Tibetan language textbooks are also culturally problematic. Book Twelve for grade six, for example featured twenty-one lessons in total. Eight of these lessons were translated from Chinese and contained little that was culturally relevant to local Tibetan students.

Scholarly poems written by prominent Tibetan scholars are the focus of five lessons that, while rich in literary value, are inappropriate to teaching skills to language learners. Such lessons are often memorized by students who do not comprehend the meaning of the selections nor how to use such materials in real life situations.

POST-GRADUATION

After completing grade six, nearly all students entered one of the two junior middle schools in the county town. All students were accepted into these junior middle schools where education was free. There were no senior middle schools in the county.

I estimate about thirty-five percent of students who completed their studies at Derkyid School passed the entrance exam to senior middle school. If the parents chose to and paid tuition, entry into a vocational school was not difficult. However, many parents did not encourage their children to pursue such study because finding later employment was very difficult. Consequently, most parents wanted their children to stay at home and herd, make money for the family, and be near their parents and other family members. Most children

ended up in herding areas, though many did not like the herding lifestyle.

By this time, the "boys" were now young men aged nineteen to twenty-eight and did not see livestock herding as an attractive life. Many young men roamed about, riding motorcycles with loudspeakers playing *la gzhas*¹ and pop songs in Tibetan. Many motorcycles had no mufflers. They were thus very loud, which was seen as very cool. These young men also competed to see, for example, how many bottles of beer they could drink, the number of women they could sleep with, and the brand and price of cellphones that they owned. After nightfall, they typically went to small shops that offered commercial instant noodles in self-contained paper containers that only needed hot water added. After eating such noodles, they often set off looking for sex and heavy drinking at shops. They subsequently either slept with a woman or passed out in a shop. They wore heavy robes that provided warmth and thus protected the unconscious body wrapped within. The next morning, they rode back to the pastures to herd, returned in the afternoon, and repeated the same behavior.

Young women generally stayed at home, helping the family with herding, collecting yak dung, milking, churning butter, and so on. At the age of fifteen or sixteen, they began to receive suitors and eventually had children and/or married.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN TEACHERS AND STUDENT FAMILIES

Generally, there was no regular interaction between ordinary teachers and students' family members, except for the head of a class - a teacher assigned responsibility for a class. Each class had one such adviser who was responsible for all student affairs, such as dealing with student illness at which time the class adviser was expected to contact and

¹ Traditional Tibetan love songs are often sung between young lovers. Taboos prevent singing such songs in the presence of opposite sex relatives, e.g., between brothers and sisters, sons and mothers, and fathers and daughters.

inform the family head and relevant school leaders.

Occasionally, a parent visited the class adviser to ask for leave for their child. The leave system was uncertain. Parents could take their children home for various periods of time after signing an agreement between the school and parents and putting a fingerprint on it. The agreement stipulated that the parents were in charge of the student's safety. In a general sense, parents consulted advisers in relation to concerns about their child's study and other affairs, such as consulting the head of a class when students asked for money from parents. Parents wished to confirm the amount of money they should give their child and verify the information their child had provided. For such reasons, class advisers had frequent interaction with student family members. Conversely, ordinary teachers had little contact with family members. For example, in my case I never talked to a student family member for the period I taught there.

On occasion, parents visited students unannounced. For example, about ten minutes after I had started a class one afternoon, the door opened with a loud bang. When I turned and looked, a man with dark skin and long disheveled hair stood at the door for a few seconds and then strode to one of the students sitting at a desk in the front row. The man then removed a pair of new shoes from his robe pouch, took off the boy's old shoes, and put the new shoes on the boy. After about three minutes he slowly walked out. He did not speak to me.

When I described this to a colleague, he told me this was common in herding areas. Such visits reflected local culture. Herders did not knock on doors when they visited neighbors' homes.

TEACHER AND STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

The absence of intimacy between teachers and students was obvious, stemming in part from the cultural notion of what a student is and what a teacher is. Traditionally, Tibetans consider a teacher to be a guru or *bla ma* who is highly respected and occupies a high social

position. I observed teachers using this distinction to order students to clean their living quarters, wash their clothes, and fetch water. This distinction between teacher and student also gave teachers authority to dole out punishments such as beatings with sticks, reading scripture volumes, and even punishments with electrical wires. I personally witnessed such punishment at the school. Students played the role of subordinate as evidenced in bowing to teachers, remaining silent, and generally being terrified when in the presence of teachers. There was a general sense of unease when students were in the presence of teachers.

Students' fear of teachers' brutal beatings, scolding, and a commonly-held idea that students are stupid and hopeless, partly explains this teacher-student separation. Furthermore, many teachers were clearly frustrated by the working location and environment. They thought being away from their home county and working in this "remote place" was an embarrassment and indication that they were a failure. Consequently, they blamed the students and used their power over students to make themselves feel important and in charge.

A few teachers had favorite students and often asked them to clean their living quarters, fetch water, and carry bags of coal from a school storehouse to their living quarters - a distance of about 300 meters. These students were given one or two RMB as a reward, leftover food cooked in the teacher's living quarter, and hot water to drink and use to wash their hair. Conversely, some teachers ordered students to do such chores with no thought of compensation - they felt that the position of teacher entitled them to such privileges.

Many students fled or hid when they saw their teachers on campus or outside the school campus. This general sense of fear meant students seldom sought consultations with teachers and seldom asked questions in class.

To better illustrate such punishments, I interviewed a male teacher at the school about his experiences:

My patience came to an end. Two students in my grade six class did not pay attention throughout the entire class, passed notes to other classmates, laughed at me, and did not attempt to follow any of my

teaching instructions when I assigned them group and pair work. They deliberately spoke Tibetan to other students when I asked them not to. These students were older and bigger than other students in the class. They had been absent more than three times from my class and had done none of the homework assignments. I called the students to my office after class, told them to do fifty push-ups, struck their palms twenty times with a stick, and ordered them to stand on the playground for two hours with their arms outstretched in front of their bodies. After punishment, they behaved well.

From my personal experiences as a student and from chatting with friends who taught in different schools in Tibetan areas, I conclude that physical punishment is the most common technique teachers used to discipline and motivate students.

Regarding my own childhood, I was often punished for my poor performance in primary school. Once when I was about nine years old (grade three), I was called to the blackboard by a teacher who told me to write three new vocabulary items on the blackboard. I had not prepared, and had no idea what to put on the blackboard. I then made up three words and wrote them.

When the teacher saw what I had put on the blackboard, he furiously grabbed the hair at the back of my head and smashed my face against the window and a desk. My nose was broken. When the teacher saw me bleeding profusely, he immediately ordered me back to my seat. I quickly sat behind my desk and remained silent. I had nosebleeds for weeks. I did not report this beating to my family because I knew it would lead to further conflicts. If my father had realized that the teacher had broken my nose during a brutal beating, I was sure he would have gone to the school and complained. Consequently, the teacher would have been angry and would have berated me and made my time in his class more difficult.

This horrific incident motivated me. In fear of future beatings, I prepared for class on time.

In sum, I feel that in a local context physical punishment may be a practical way to get students' attention and achieve teaching goals

- until a better way is found and demonstrated to be effective. Students who are not interested in learning may not pay attention if the teacher does not inflict physical punishment. Student think teachers who physically punish them have power and can control them. This fear motivates students to work harder and behave well in classes.

TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD STUDENTS

Derkyid School leaders blamed the children's poor school performance on the students' families. Parents were depicted as illiterate herders unable to properly educate their children at home, failing to encourage them to further their education, and failing to create a good atmosphere for study. The leaders contended that parents' negative to neutral view of the value of education directly and negatively influenced their children's view on the importance of schooling.

Teachers generally displayed a lack of dedication, sincerity, and devotion to teaching. They did not accept that the children they taught had the potential to learn well. Many thought it was not their responsibility to help students learn if they lacked the intelligence to learn in class. And generally, they did not want to spend additional time with students after class.

On their part, children had little interest in classes, because in their opinion, they were boring. They were often sleepy and their minds wandered in class.

I once asked a teacher if he really cared about the students' future and learning. His reply surprised me. He said he did not care, because whatever concerns he might have had made no difference because it was not his job to babysit students after class. Certain teachers also believed that they were incapable of teaching well. They felt, "I am a terrible teacher. I cannot teach well. There is nothing that I can do about becoming a better teacher."

One teacher had studied for two years at a vocational school and had received an Associate Degree in Commerce and Computer Science. He confided that he had learned practically nothing in the

program. In late 2004, he passed an official examination, obtained an official teaching position in Serlong County, and had been teaching the Tibetan language to grades five and six since 2005. He was greatly challenged by the difficulty of the material he was responsible for teaching and was full of self-loathing for not being able to teach well.

In addition to what is mentioned above, some teachers told me that even if students got a good education, a good life in the future was by no means assured because they would not find official jobs given the increasing difficulties of obtaining such employment. For the last fifteen years, a "useful education" meant spending years engaged in various activities at educational institutions that led to a *tie fan wan* 'iron rice bowl', a Chinese term used to describe a stable government salary and benefits such as housing, healthcare subsidies, and retirement benefits. State-sponsored education as exemplified in the primary, junior and senior middle schools, and colleges and universities were considered to have value because they led to a steady income.

The teachers generally concluded that there was nothing they could do to change the students' bleak prospects for obtaining government employment. In contrast, it was very different when official jobs were arranged for graduates with *zhongzhuan* diplomas; and *dazhuan* and BA diplomas until about 1997. Many of my relatives obtained government jobs in the 1980s and 1990s. None took official examinations. At that time, the local education bureau generally made job arrangements for students as soon as they graduated.

STUDENTS' FAMILIES' ATTITUDES TOWARD EDUCATION

Certain parents firmly believed state-sponsored education was important, accepting that it could eventually lead to a stable government job. Such parents encouraged their children to study hard and be obedient at school. In cases where children obtained school awards, it elevated the family's social standing and parents enjoyed the ensuing compliments.

Other families considered school primarily an opportunity to avoid expenses for food and clothes, e.g., regular domestic and international donations made the student's life easier, e.g., schools provided free uniforms, food, shoes, and cash rewards. In addition, students received donations of new and secondhand clothes. Parents felt that their children ate good food at school and slept in accommodations that they considered better than at home, where students slept in tents or in adobe houses.

Some community elders were critical of schooling, believing that the children learned to speak Tibetan mixed with Chinese words and avoided wearing robes. Few children wore Tibetan robes on campus. However, on Children's Day, all the students wore Tibetan robes prepared by their parents, who came to see dancing and singing performances by children and teachers, and engaged in sports competitions, poetry recitations, comedy performances, and riddle competitions. Elders also criticized children for not preferring *rtsam pa*, a weakening of their knowledge and interest in herding livestock, and a weakening of their religious belief.

Certain parents felt education was a waste of time and money, pointing out that parents typically spent 500 RMB per year per child on miscellaneous expenses. They felt that when their children completed primary school, they had very limited ability in written Tibetan, not to mention the ability to understand and communicate in the Chinese and English languages. Furthermore, as obtaining official jobs became steadily more difficult, some parents concluded that it made more economic sense to keep children at home and provide them with opportunities to earn money for the family.

ADMINISTRATORS: TEACHERS' EXPECTATIONS

The teachers who were critical of the school leadership and its management system, complained that they had to be deferential, obedient, and please the leaders by turning in lesson plans and lesson notes, adhere to strict time regulations for classes, and attend weekly

meetings on Wednesdays and Sundays from eight to ten PM.¹ Such teachers pointed out that in the past, the system was laxer and there was a much greater sense of equality between the headmaster and ordinary teachers. The situation I experienced was one of increasing power and authority given to the headmaster. In this context, pleasing school leaders was paramount, given their power in determining promotions, granting leaves of absence from the school, and providing opportunities to go for training elsewhere in China.

Meetings between the headmaster and teachers were held in a classroom. Three students' desks were placed at the front of the classroom where the headmaster sat in the center with one vice-headmaster on either side. Ordinary teachers sat at the remaining students' desks and pretended to take notes. The meetings began with the general headmaster saying something akin to, "Quiet! Let's start the meeting now."

As teachers sat silently, he asked his assistant to take attendance. Afterwards, he stressed the importance of the meeting and expressed the hope that all those present would take it seriously. This was often followed by a description of his participation in a meeting at the County Education Bureau, with the addition that the teachers were required to study a document that he had received. An assistant was then asked to read the document in Chinese.

When he finished, the general headmaster then talked about other school affairs, expressing the hope that the teachers would comply with school rules and the importance of being on time and preparing good lesson plans. He also stressed that teachers should not drink and become rowdy, gamble, or be absent from classes. This admonition did not vary from meeting to meeting.

¹ Tardiness was strictly monitored. If a teacher was one or two minutes late for class, an assigned assistant took note and the teacher was fined fifty RMB. At the end of each term, a final meeting was held at which incidents of tardiness and other such issues as absences, failure to assign a required amount of homework, unruly behavior (e.g., getting drunk and creating disturbances), playing mahjong, and failure to carry out assigned responsibilities when on-duty were dealt with.

The meetings rarely addressed issues of how to improve teaching and school/class management. Well-organized class observations have the potential of motivating teachers and could lead to better preparedness and an improved attitude toward teaching. These were, however, not sentiments the school headmaster entertained. He did not observe classes, though he had ample free time every day. This was likely due to his inability to identify problems in a classroom setting and then offering appropriate, constructive comments. Secondly, class observations did not figure into the equation of increasing the likelihood the headmaster would be promoted. If the headmaster was understood by his superiors as having good administrative skills, he was considered a good leader.

OFFICIAL EVALUATION OF ADMINISTRATORS

In 2013 and 2014, the headmaster was evaluated based on assigning teachers to *weiwēn* 'protect stability'. These were twenty-four hour periods of duty during "sensitive" periods (every March, during the lunar New Year period, religious gatherings, and Chinese National Day). A headmaster who did not assign *weiwēn* duties to teachers put his position in jeopardy.

When higher authorities visited, they went to the school janitor's room, and checked the most recent *weiwēn* duty schedule. These are forms signed by on-duty teachers after completing a duty period, and forms that recorded all school visitors. All forms recording weekly on-duty activities were reviewed to ensure no safety regulations had been violated, e.g., students were in bed, and in the classroom at the proper times, and no incidents such as fighting had taken place. These forms were completed by the on-duty teachers.

Before an inspection visit, an official phoned the school headmaster and gave notice of the impending visit, which set off a flurry of frantic preparation. Teachers energetically prepared political essays and lesson plans, while students were ordered to clean dorm rooms, classrooms, and the campus grounds. School leaders typically

prepared a meal featuring mutton, yogurt, fruit (bananas, apples, and oranges), liquor, and soft drinks. When the inspectors arrived, everything was well-planned. The school headmaster and his two chief assistants took inspectors around the school, showing them the classrooms, dormitory rooms, and areas that had been cleaned. The school leaders were utterly deferential to the inspectors and accompanied them for the entire period of their visit. The inspectors usually arrived an hour before lunch or supper and were, at the end of the visit, taken to the teachers' dining room for a small banquet.

As mentioned earlier, teachers were required to write essays expressing their understanding and thoughts on the documents received from the education bureau and County Government. Every month, County Education Bureau leaders came to inspect the school. During such visits, the political study essays were brought out. Visiting inspectors reviewed the numbers of essays and stamped and dated each essay (to ensure that the essays were not used again). They also ensured all the teachers had written political study essays, including the headmaster. The final marks of the school's students were not generally reviewed during such visits.

During my time at Derkyid School, the general headmaster was often not on campus. He frequently traveled to the county and prefecture towns to report and attend meetings and, in some cases, was engaged in family issues.

EVALUATION OF TEACHERS

Local teachers were occasionally evaluated by school leaders based on students' performance on final exams, homework, and the teacher's presence/absence during class time. The final exam was a core portion of a teacher's evaluation. When students' final exam marks on *bslab bya gtso bo (zhuke)* 'main subjects' (Tibetan, Chinese, English, math) did not reach school standards, teachers of assigned subjects were punished. School leaders felt such evaluations motivated teachers to work hard and be more responsible.

Final exams were prepared by the Jiaowu chu 'Teaching Affairs Office' and proctored by all the teachers. Teachers were not allowed to proctor exams to students they taught. Occasionally, when there was a single examination for all primary schools in Serlong County, the exams were made by the County Education Bureau and proctored by teachers from different schools.

The amounts of the fines varied. For instance, in the winter of 2013, five teachers had to pay fines because their students' marks were below the school standard. I was one of those five teachers. I taught third grade math. The average mark for the class was twenty while the school requirement was thirty-five. This was a difference of fifteen points and I was required to pay ten RMB per point. I thus was fined 150 RMB for not reaching the school requirement. I thought this "motivating" system of punishment did not encourage teachers to take their work more seriously, because teachers could afford to pay a few hundred RMB as a fine for not reaching the school standard. Reflecting on my students' low grades and the school requirement, I now believe that I could have taught better with more experience in math education. All the other math teachers' students scored high enough to meet the school requirement. These teachers said that they gave weekly exams to familiarize students with new questions and stimulate them to think beyond the exercises in the textbooks.

The school requirements were very low, e.g., sixty for the Tibetan course, and thirty-five for math, and the Chinese- and English-language courses. This coincided with a consensus on the part of teachers and administrators that the children of illiterate herders lacked intelligence. This was compounded by the oft-mentioned idea that working in a remote, high-altitude area is heroic and an adequate indication of their hard work and dedication. Furthermore, the maximum fine paid in the winter of 2013 was 500 RMB levied against a teacher whose monthly salary was about 5,000 RMB per month, excluding annual bonuses and other benefits. In short, fines were not steep enough to worry teachers.

It should also be pointed out that sixty points was the requirement for Tibetan language courses. Sixty was the standard for

Tibetan courses on the grounds that Tibetan was the students' mother tongue and it was easier for students to learn as compared to learning math, Chinese, and English. Once, during my time at the school, the headmaster proposed setting sixty as the standard for all four main subjects. However, teachers of math, English, and Chinese complained that this was unfair because such a standard ignored the difficulties involved. The headmaster did not insist, probably because he did not want to antagonize the teachers on an issue that did not make much difference to his personal future. There were no exams for minor courses. Instead, students received marks for minor courses based on their attendance and homework.

The second evaluation was based on students' homework. School leaders announced when and what homework would be reviewed. Tibetan, Chinese, math, and English were considered main courses, and it was homework for these subjects that was usually reviewed. Teachers were told to assign a minimum of five homework assignments per main subject per week. Teachers who failed to meet this requirement were warned shortly after the homework review process.

In actuality, most teachers did not assign homework until they learned that they must soon submit homework that they had assigned. At such times, the students copied "homework" from their textbooks. After the teachers had collected what they considered an adequate amount of student "homework," they summoned several good students from their class to come to their living quarters, gave the students model homework assignments, and told the students to mark all the homework. After marking, the student study monitor took the marked homework assignment to the Teaching Affairs Office for final student homework review.

This review was simple because no one took it seriously. Problems with homework rarely received comment. What mattered was the number of homework assignments and writing a date on every student's homework. Everything went smoothly during the review process if the required assigned amount of homework was turned in and the dates were recorded.

CONCLUSION

In the above pages, I have sought to describe the realities at Derkyid School, focusing on teachers, students, parents, and the school leaders; evaluations of school leaders; teachers' educational backgrounds; how teachers were evaluated; food and meals for teachers and students; students' daily schedules; students' and parents' backgrounds; textbooks used at the school; and the textbooks' relevance to the students' futures and livelihood. In total, this provides a detailed picture of the day-to-day life of teachers, leaders, and students in the second decade of the twenty-first century.

I will now discuss several critical issues. While some parents held negative opinions about schooling, most believed that schooling empowered their children and provided them with useful skills, such as literacy in Tibetan and Chinese. If their children did well in school, they expected that their children would ultimately find lifetime employment in government offices.

Most children were not empowered to the extent such parents hoped. For example, in June 2014, all fifty-seven grade six students took graduation exams. Of this number, thirty-four scored less than twenty (out of one hundred) on each of the Tibetan, Chinese, English, and math sections. On the English exam, the students were instructed (in Chinese) to write all twenty-six letters of the English alphabet. Only five students did this task without mistakes. Furthermore, students who graduated from Derkyid School did not do well in junior middle school and were unable to pass competitive senior middle school entrance exams. According to a local village leader, in 2013, only ten out of fifty students who had attended Derkyid School passed senior middle school entrance exams. Most students who failed simply discontinued their education. Those who continued, enrolled in vocational schools.

In 2014, only one student from Derkyid Township scored high enough on the college entrance exam to enroll in a four-year BA program. This so rarely happened in Derkyid Township that banners in Tibetan and Chinese were created and hung from the wall along the

main street in the township town to congratulate the student. Moreover, school and township leaders visited the student's family with congratulatory gifts. According to a township government report in 2014, only ten people from the entire township had ever obtained college degrees in formal four-year degree programs. This further supports the contention that local school education failed to achieve the goal of empowering students with a solid, fundamental education that led to college degrees, ultimately leading to good employment.

Considerable improvement has been made. There are better classrooms, dormitory rooms, and cafeteria; a larger number of better-credentialed teachers; better food quality; an array of textbooks for each grade; and substantial financial support from government. However, teachers had negative, biased attitudes toward students from illiterate families and the school lacked a teaching management system that motivated teachers to improve their general level of knowledge. For example, I never observed teachers reading materials that might have supplemented the content of classes that they taught.

Every morning when I entered the large office that accommodated twenty teachers, seven to eight teachers sat around the stove, staring at and manipulating their mobile phones, reading internet news, chatting on WeChat, reading friends' messages, and so on. Two to three teachers used desktop computers (there were four computers in the office) to surf online or to watch South Korean soap operas. A few teachers were generally in a small cluster, gossiping, arguing, laughing, and so on. Teachers appeared confident in having a stable government job. Extra study was neither encouraged nor required.

School leadership could have created an atmosphere that encouraged teachers to build basic skills in the subjects that they taught to improve the general level of education at the school.

At the school, I never encountered a teacher who employed creative teaching methodologies, was sincere in their wish to help students, and was willing to spend time with slower students.

In terms of teachers' credentials, as noted earlier, few teachers had earned BA degrees by scoring high enough on the university

entrance exam to enter four-year BA programs. Many teachers lacked basic knowledge of the subject they taught and hence were unable to teach well, e.g., two English teachers at Derkyid School had little knowledge of English, and were unable to correctly pronounce most of the English vocabulary in the textbooks. They also did not read nor understand the long sentences in the texts. Another example was a Tibetan who taught a Chinese language class and had difficulty reading lessons in the textbook, had poor oral Chinese, and was unable to distinguish the tones used in Modern Standard Chinese.

A related problem was that the subjects the teachers taught in class were not necessarily related to their own area of study. For example, I was assigned to teach grade three math in the fall of 2013. I had a poor foundation in math and encountered problems solving basic math questions in class.

Many teachers did no class preparation prior to classes and had class without lesson plans. Almost all teachers downloaded lesson plans from the internet and copied the exact material into notebooks, which were never used in actual classes. Instead, the lesson plans were prepared to meet the requirements of teacher evaluation. Reform is needed. Lesson plans should be evaluated, as well as students' homework.

Critical shortcomings in the school administration system could be addressed under a better-regulated school system, e.g., evaluating teachers on a frequent basis. If, for example, the general headmaster taught one or two classes per week, other teachers would be inspired to work harder, and complaints about the school leadership would be minimized. If school leaders spent more time with teachers and students, it would help build a more intimate and harmonious relationship. Such intimacy would allow the leadership to better understand and deal with challenges limiting the quality of education, e.g., teachers would inform the headmaster if they had problems with students during class and report the mistakes¹ of other

¹ Teachers, for example, summoning students to their living quarters and asking them to mark other students' homework, being late or absent from class, and so on.

teachers to the headmaster. Open communication between the headmaster, teachers, and students would also lead to the resolution of problems through dispassionate discussion.

The headmaster might also implement a weekly class observation on his own time to identify shortcomings in teaching methodology. Feedback could then be given on how to improve. Teachers' strong points could be pointed out and such teachers might then share successful teaching techniques with other teachers.

School leaders should set higher requirements for student marks, which would encourage students to study more effectively.

The school administration might also consider holding weekly competitions for teachers and students. For example, for the first week a Tibetan language teacher could be given a specific lesson from their respective grade and class, provided time to prepare a lesson plan, and then teach a class. Other Tibetan language teachers would observe the class while school leaders gave scores based on the teacher's time management, methodology, blackboard design, homework, and student and teacher interaction and activities. All teachers could be observed in this way with those receiving the highest scores in each subject rewarded and complimented. Such activities would motivate teachers to develop innovative teaching methods, learn new teaching skills, and provide motivation to teach class more responsibly.

In general, Tibetan scholars have ignored basic education as a legitimate field of inquiry. Annual meetings held at the prefecture and provincial levels address Tibetan education issues. However, for the past two decades, education among Tibetan scholars has generally been discussed at the macro-level. Painful, unpleasant realities are generally ignored, but these realities are critically important.

Scholars tend to present broad assumptions about local education, for example, only Tibetan language is used as the medium of instruction in XX Prefecture, a bilingual method of education is used in YY Prefecture, only Chinese is used in ZZ School, and so on. These generalizations ignore existing problems at local levels, e.g., why students cannot read well when graduating from grade six and why students cannot correctly utter even a few complete, simple sentences

in Modern Standard Chinese.

Many schools in rural areas have long been dumping grounds for unqualified and irresponsible teachers, many of whom intensely dislike being there. Children of herding families are as clever and "good" as anywhere in the world, and deserve good teachers. Consequently, it is important that Tibetan scholars focus on real issues, such as teachers' and parents' backgrounds, evaluations, and school administration and search for solutions to improve education quality.

An important goal of schooling should be to empower and help students achieve their dreams. However, at Derkyid School, both teachers and school leaders shared a common interest - make their superiors happy by completing what they had been assigned. The associated game rules were understood by teachers and school leaders, who knew how to play the game well. School teachers knew exactly how to please their leaders by submitting required lesson plans and political essays, appear in class on time, and carry out weekly duty assignments in a timely manner.

School leaders also knew precisely what their superiors looked for when they came to inspect the school. Consequently, both teachers and all levels of leadership were generally unconcerned about actual educational realities in the classroom.

An initial impression when first arriving on campus was that all the teachers and students were occupied and busy. A teacher was required to teach six hours a day and prepare lesson plans and political essays. Students had classes from six-thirty AM to eight-fifty-five PM and were required to be in the classroom and supervised. However, despite the students' tight schedules, the result was very poor educational outcomes as mentioned above.

If I had the authority to improve this local education situation, I would first address issues of suitable textbooks and assemble a good leadership team capable of encouraging and managing teachers well. Some might argue for more funding and more teachers to improve education quality, however, based on the realities I have described, government support pumped into schools is generally not wisely distributed and does not result in improved educational outcomes.

Support from local, relevant authorities would allow the issues identified at this local school to be addressed and create opportunities giving children better opportunities to be successful.

My conclusions are generally reflective of many Chinese institutions, such as schools, hospitals, and government offices. Future research might focus on higher levels of education using specific schools as examples, e.g., junior and senior middle schools, vocational schools, and universities. Detailed narrative descriptions of these different levels of education institutions would offer better understandings of education institutions and thus provide better opportunities to address critical issues that need improvement and reform.

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NON-ENGLISH TERMS

'bring rim འབྲིང་རིམ།	dazhuan 大专
'brog pa འབྲོག་པ།	deyu xiaozhang 德育校长
'dzin bdag འདྲིན་བདག།	deyu zhuren 德育主任
'dzin dpon འདྲིན་དཔོན།	deyushi 德育室
a mdo ཨ་མདོ།	dge rgan bzang དགེ་རྒན་བཟང་།
Anhui 安徽	Dongfeng 东风
Baisha 白沙	drung yig ལྷུང་ཡིག།
banzhang 班长	dudao 督导
banzhuren 班主任	Furong Wang 芙蓉王
Derkyid, bde skyid བདེ་སྲིད།	gcan rong bstan 'zhin གཅན་རོང་འཛིན།
benke 本科	བསྐྱེད་འཛིན།
bla ma ལྷ་མ།	grangs rig གྲངས་རིག།
bslab bya dge rgan བསྐྱེད་བྱ་དགེ་རྒན།	guamian 挂面
bslab bya gtso bo བསྐྱེད་བྱ་གཙོ་བོ།	rtswa gzan རྩ་གཟན།
Caixiangduojie 才项多杰	Hanyu 汉语
cha 'phrin lag rtsal ཆ་འཕྲིན་ལག་རྩལ།	Hongmei 红梅
Changcheng 长城	Hongtashan 红塔山

Huangjiinye 黄金叶	meishu 美术
Huangnan 黄南	mtsho lho མཚོ་ལྷོ།
Huangshan 黄山	mtsho sngon མཚོ་སྔོན།
Huawei 华为	Neidi 内地
Huihua 会话	Pinde yu shehui 品德与社会
hukou 户口	Pinde yu shenghuo 品德与生活
Jiangsu 江苏	Pinyin 拼音
jianlibao 健力宝	putong laoshi 任课老师
jiaowu xiaozhang 教务校长	Putonghua 普通话
jiaowu zhuren 教务主任	Qingdao 青岛
jiaowuchu 教务处	Renshi ju 人事局
jiunian yiwu jiaoyu 九年义务教育	rmang gnyis མང་གཞིས།
育	rol dbyangs རོལ་དབྱེངས།
kaoguan 考官	rong ba རོང་བ།
kexue 科学	rtsam pa རུམ་པ།
khri ka ཁྱི་ཀ།	Serlong, gser lung གཤེར་ལུང།
khyim tho ཁྱིམ་ཐོ།	Shaanxi 陕西
krung go'i phugs mdun ཀུང་གོ་ཤུག་མདུན།	shuxue 数学
ཕུགས་མདུན།	skad yig སྐད་ཡིག།
kun spyod dang spyi tshogs ཀུན་སྤྱོད་དང་སྤྱི་ཚོགས།	slob gtso སློབ་གཙོ།
སྤྱོད་དང་སྤྱི་ཚོགས།	slob ma'i tshogs ba སློབ་མའི་ཚོགས་པ།
kun spyod dang 'tsho ba ཀུན་སྤྱོད་དང་འཚོ་བ།	slob ston kru'u rin སློབ་སྟོན་ཀུའུ་རིན།
དང་འཚོ་བ།	slob ston slob gtso སློབ་སྟོན་སློབ་གཙོ།
kun spyod kru'u rin ཀུན་སྤྱོད་ཀུའུ་རིན།	spyi gnyer kru'u rin སྤྱི་གཞིར་ཀུའུ་རིན།
རིན།	འུ་རིན།
kun spyod slob gtso ཀུན་སྤྱོད་སློབ་གཙོ།	tiyu ke 体育课
གཙོ།	Tongren 同仁
Lanzhou 兰州	tshan rig ཚན་རིག།
lao shi hao 老师好	Wang 王
liangji 两基	weiwen 维稳
Liaoning 辽宁	<i>Xiandai hanyu</i> 现代汉语
Lin Yi 林一	xiaojiao gaoji 小教高级
lo sar ལོ་སར།	xiaojiao Yiji 小教一级
mar me tshe 'bar མར་མེ་ཚེ་འབར།	xiezi 写字
mdzes rtsal མཛེས་རྩལ།	xinxi jishu 信息技术

xuesheng hui 学生会
xuexi banzhang 学习班长
Yan'an 延安
yingyu 英语
yinyue 音乐
Yunyan 云烟
Yushu 玉树
Yuwen 语文

Zhejiang 浙江
zhongzhuan 中专
Zhoumaoji 周毛吉
zhuke 主课
zhuren 主任
zong xiaozhang 总校长
zongwu zhuren 总务主任