



## PARENTS' ENGAGEMENT AND READINESS IN CHILDREN ONLINE LEARNING IN BHUTAN

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### Abstract

The present quantitative study explored parents' engagement in children's online learning, considering parents' readiness to engage in their child's online learning and aligned those with a discussion of parents' education qualifications. The sample of the study was 374 primary school students' parents. The data was gathered through survey questionnaires which were checked for reliability before being administered. Descriptive analysis was employed to study parents' engagement and readiness levels in their child's online learning, and to study the difference in parents' engagement and readiness levels based on parents' education level. One-way ANOVA was employed. In addition, correlation analysis was used to explore the relationship between parents' readiness level and their engagement in children's online learning. The findings from the study revealed that parents were engaged in their children's online learning and confirmed the high readiness level towards involvement in their child's online learning. However, parents' engagement and readiness level differed by parents' educational level so that there was a positive relationship noted between engagement in children's online learning and their readiness towards online learning. Therefore, the study suggests that parental education level and their readiness towards online learning needs to be considered when schools move teaching and learning online.

**Keywords:** Parents' educational level, parents' engagement level, parents' readiness level, primary school, Bhutan.

### INTRODUCTION

There has been a great deal of research interest in parental engagement in children's education in many countries (Mantzicopoulos, 2003; Pomerantz, Moorman, & Litwack, 2007; Wahid, 2022; Yamamoto & Brinton, 2010) where it has been argued that engagement positively benefits the child. These studies generally suggest parents have multiple roles in children's education. The phrase 'parental engagement', or 'parental involvement', is generally taken to mean supporting a child's learning experiences at home or school through direct or indirect involvement (Pomerantz, Moorman, & Litwack, 2007); this engagement has become an essential part of a child's development and learning, particularly during and after the Covid19 pandemic where they were expected to support their children's virtual learning (Lee & Figueroa, 2012; Makrooni, 2019; Woofter, 2019). According to United Nation Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), it was estimated that more than 990 million children were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic (UNESCO, 2020), which forced education policy makers, and those engaged in teaching and learning children to rethink strategies for teaching and learning before another crisis arise. One such strategy was the use of different Information Communication Technology (ICT) tools across the world. Bhutan is no exception. Online teaching and learning platforms substituted face to face teaching during the pandemic. In addition, the recent reform in school curriculum, popularly termed the National School Curriculum Framework, demands blending the teaching and learning strategy practiced in the country. This new approach has led to an increased and shared responsibility in



the child's learning. Parents, by virtue of being in the room, were entrusted with more roles in managing and facilitating the teaching and learning processes of their children. In fact, the involvement of parents in children's online learning has been considered vital today and is likely to be of paramount importance in the future. Though, in some of countries, online learning proved to be beneficial to both the teacher and learner (Yakubu & Dasuki, 2018), there was a new role for parental engagement during children's online learning (Stevens & Borup, 2015). In other countries, however, we do not yet know what its impact was and will continue to be (Alvarez et al., 2013). As such, this paper explores how parents are engaged in their child's learning through online and are they ready (even able) to adopt this new system of teaching and learning specifically in the developing countries like Bhutan. Accordingly, its aim is to understand the current context of parental engagement and readiness towards their children's online learning. This study was carried out to explore the following questions:

1. What are the perceptions of parents' engagement in their children's online learning?
2. What is the readiness level of parents towards children's online learning?
3. Is there any difference in parents' engagement level in children's online learning based on parents' educational level?
4. Is there any difference in parents' readiness level towards children's online learning based on parents' education level?
5. Is there a relationship between parents' readiness towards online learning and parents' engagement in children's online learning?

### **Parents' education level, parental readiness, and parental engagement in children's online learning**

The term online learning is frequently used interchangeably with other terms including distance learning, virtual education, distance learning technologies, information, and communication technologies (ICT), however, the key feature is the use of modern information technologies (Fedina et al., 2017) and different (multi)media resources to enhance self-directed learning and give ownership over learning to different stakeholders involved in the education process (Algahtani, 2011). It became mandatory during the pandemic with the paradigm shift in teaching and learning from school to home and from face to face to online. However, learning at home through online tools demanded greater willingness and readiness of parents to step up and help manage the process to ensure at the very least the child is engaged in their learning and listening to the teacher through online tools. Thus, the parents' acceptance of their children's learning through online methods needs to be understood because of the onerous nature of the impact of this approach on parents' own work and home lives. Importantly, parents are likely to be unaware of the methods teachers use particularly when teaching and learning events that take place at home (Churiyah et al., 2020), which is exacerbated in countries like Bhutan where the move to online learning happened suddenly during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Although parental participation has been greatly associated with children's academic achievement (Anderson & Minke, 2007; Gutman & Midley, 2000; Henderson & Mapp, 2002) attendance and pro-social behaviors (Barnard, 2004, Edwards, 2004), these studies were focused more traditionally on learning prior to the pandemic and under normal, classroom based conditions, and as these differed from the online learning system that was implemented to support learning during and after global pandemic, its effect on parents' behavior and willingness to support learning is unknown.

For instance, as far back as 10 years ago, a study by Beck, Maranto, & Lo (2013) recognized that parents have greater responsibilities when children's learning is facilitated online when compared with face-to-face learning. On the other hand, studies have noted parents' engagement in online learning depends on several factors. For example, effective communication between the teacher and the parents could enhance the positive engagement of parents in the integration of online learning (Kong & Li, 2009; Lewin & Luckin, 2010). Parents' beliefs and attitude towards technology usage in children's learning was also influential (Tsuei & Hsu, 2019). Parents' education level (Coman et al., 2020) and their occupation and knowledge of the tools of the subject area and of the lesson, or lack thereof (Putri et al., 2020; Rasmitadila et al., 2020) were all found to be influential. It is evident from the literature cited



here that parents' social and economic factors may have influenced their engagement level in their child's online learning which may adversely affect a child's engagement during online learning (Domina, Renzulli, & Murray, 2021; Herwin & Dahalan, 2022). Similarly, parents' educational attainments are found to be very robustly related with their children's educational attainments (Ermisch & Francesconi, 2001). This, however, may not be true in the case of Bhutanese parents as Bhutan's socioeconomic and cultural factors differ a lot from other countries. Thus, it is deemed important to understand the specific issues faced by Bhutanese schools and students to question school educators about how much parents were engaged and are they ready for the widespread adoption of online learning. Nonetheless, there are significant differences in the literacy rate across Bhutan's districts; specifically, urban areas have a higher literacy rate than rural areas (National Statistical Bureau, 2017). Thus, parental engagement and readiness level during online learning may or may not be efficient and effective.

## METHOD

The research methodology is discussed as follows:

### Research Design

To address the research questions and look specifically at Bhutan, a quantitative research approach was employed as it saves time and resources in data collection and description (Bryman, 2008; Gorard, 2001).

### Research Setting

The study was conducted in the primary schools in one of the provinces of Bhutan; Chhukha Dzongkhag, as it was easy for researcher to reach parents since the researcher works in the same province. So, through the help of school personals like teachers, principals, and other support staff, the data collection was more convenient, and it was also cost effective.

### Research Participants and Sample

The population consisted of parents whose children were studying in primary schools (PS) in one of the provinces in Bhutan, Chhukha Dzongkhag. The sample of the parents was drawn from the total number of students who were in the primary schools (PS) in Chhukha Dzongkhag. There are 2172 students (Ministry of Education, 2022) studying in 26 primary schools under this province. The final sample of 374 parents (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970) was selected using a simple random sampling method to give every population in the sample an equal opportunity to get selected (Creswell, 2013). Then the final 374 survey questionnaire was distributed to the parents of 26 schools in Chhukha Dzongkhag.

### Research Instrument Validity and Reliability

The data was collected using survey questionnaires as it enables researcher to gather data within an abbreviated period of time (Creswell, 2013), which were self-administered as well as collected with the support from school management. The survey questionnaires consisted of two parts; part 1 was demographic data focusing on parents' educational level (Above bachelor's degree, High school level, primary school level and no education). Part 2 was survey questionnaires consisting of 16 items; 8 items on parental readiness levels towards their children's online learning and the other 8 items were on parental engagement in children's online learning. The items were developed on a six-point Likert scale with 1= Strongly Disagree (SDA), 2 = Disagree (DA), 3 = Somewhat Disagree (SWDA), 4 = Somewhat Agree (SWA), 5 = Agree (A), and 6 = Strongly Agree (SA). After setting 16 items of the survey questionnaire as a tool, the validity of the instrument was carried out, mainly to see the ability of the questionnaire to measure a concept or variable that was chosen for this study (see Creswell, 2014). To achieve the objective of the study, content validity, also known as face validity, was carried out, where the instrument was assessed by the expert's suggestion, guided by their own expertise and prior experience in the field. This was done to ensure that the research instrument was within the scope of the study. After eliciting feedback from the expert, the reliability of the instrument was employed mainly to see the stability and consistency of the tool developed for the study (see Creswell, 2010). To ensure



stability and consistency, the survey questionnaire was pilot tested with 20 respondents who were not in the actual sample cohort. The data collected from these 20 respondents was analyzed using SPSS 22 to calculate the Cronbach Alpha value, which is usually accepted and reliable when found above .60 (see Andale, 2014; Pallant, 2001). Considering this value as a benchmark, the overall Cronbach Alpha value of the research instrument was found to be greater than .7 for both parental engagement (.759) during online learning and parental readiness (.860) towards online learning. Further, Cronbach Alpha indicated that 14 items were greater than .7 while two items were indicated to be greater than .6 as shown in Table1.

**Table1.** Reliability statistics on parental engagement (PE) during online learning

Items on Parental Engagement (PE) during online learning	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Provide Learning facilities (PE1)	.092	.786
Organize Child's online Learning (PE2)	.455	.735
Supervise Child's online learning study time (PE3)	.577	.710
Help Child's learning difficulties during online learning (PE4)	.533	.724
Make contact with child's teacher for effective learning (PE5)	.301	.759
Help child to clear doubts on topic taught through online (PE6)	.276	.761
Keep record of child's work done (PE7)	.699	.682
Help child to prepare online study timetable (PE8)	.689	.683
Overall Cronbach's Alpha=.759		
Reliability statistics on parental readiness (PR) towards online learning		
Items on Parental Engagement (PE) during online learning	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Confident to support child's online learning	.559	.848
Confident in using technologies to support online learning	.608	.847
Have Adequate internet facilities at home	.736	.831
Provide needed technological devices	.608	.843
Aware of online learning tools	.615	.844
aware of online learning platforms	.658	.842
Make use of online learning platforms	.664	.836
Spend more time with child during online learning	.543	.850
Overall Cronbach's Alpha=.860		

## Data Analysis

To study the perception of parents' engagement and readiness towards their children's online learning, descriptive analysis; a mean of 1.00-1.82 = Strongly Disagree, 1.83-2.65= Disagree, 2.66-3.48=Somewhat Disagree, 3.49-4.31= Somewhat Agree, 4.32-5.14= Agree and 5.15-6.00 = strongly agree (see Pimentel, 2019) was employed. One-way ANOVA analysis was conducted to see the difference in parents' engagement level and readiness levels in their child's online learning by parents' education level. To study the relationship between parents' readiness level towards online learning and their engagement in online learning, multiple Correlational analysis was used.

## FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The current study was aimed to understand the current context of parental engagement and readiness towards their children's online learning based on the parents' education level in a Bhutanese context. Therefore, the findings of the study are presented below.

1. What are the perceptions of parents' engagement in their children's online learning?

**Table 2.** Descriptive analysis on parental engagement in children's online learning.

Items	Mean	Std.Dev.	Agreement Level
Provide Learning facilities	5.12	1.05	Agree
Organize Child's online Learning	4.69	1.14	Agree
Supervise Child's online learning study time	4.57	1.18	Agree
Help Child's learning difficulties during online learning	4.54	1.24	Agree
Make contact with child's teacher for effective learning	4.27	1.29	Somewhat Agree
Help child to clear doubts on topic taught through online	4.41	1.37	Agree

**Table 2** (Continued). Descriptive analysis on parental engagement in children’s online learning.

Items	Mean	Std.Dev.	Agreement Level
Keep record of child's work done	4.25	1.36	Somewhat Agree
Help child to prepare online study timetable	4.31	1.42	Somewhat Agree

The result in Table 2 revealed that of the eight items measuring parents’ engagement in their children’s online learning, five of the items; providing learning facilities (Mean=5.12); organizing child's online learning (Mean=4.69); supervising child's online learning study time (Mean=4.57); helping child's learning difficulties during online learning (Mean=4.54) and helping child to clear doubts on topic taught through online (Mean=4.41) were rated at an agree level, while, making contact with child's teacher for effective learning (Mean=4.27); keeping record of child's work done (Mean=4.25) and helping child to prepare an online study timetable (Mean=4.31) was rated at a somewhat agree level.

### 2. What is the readiness level of parents towards children’s online learning?

**Table 3.** Descriptive analysis on parent’s readiness level towards their children’s online learning.

Items	Mean	Std.Dev.	Agreement Level
Confident to support child's online learning	4.54	1.34	Agree
Confident in using technologies to support online learning	4.23	1.41	Somewhat Agree
Have Adequate internet facilities at home	4.02	1.58	Somewhat Agree
Provide needed technological devices	4.66	1.42	Agree
Aware of online learning tools	4.53	1.31	Agree
aware of online learning platforms	4.48	1.28	Agree
Make use of online learning platforms	4.49	1.23	Agree
Spend more time with child during online learning	4.38	1.27	Agree

The answers presented in Table 3 suggest parents’ readiness level on the items; confident to support child's online learning (Mean=4.54); providing needed technological devices was higher (Mean=4.54); aware of online learning tools (Mean=4.53); aware of online learning platforms (Mean=4.48); making use of online learning platforms (Mean=4.49) and spending more time with child during online learning (Mean=4.38) was showed at agree level, whereas in relation to the other responses ,confidence in using technologies to support child's online learning (Mean=4.23) and having adequate internet facilities at home (Mean=4.02) was indicated at somewhat agree level.

### 3. Is there any relationship between parents’ education level and parents’ engagement in children’s online learning?

**Table 4.** One-way analysis of variance of parents’ engagement in online learning by parents’ education level.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	12.99	3	4.33		
Within Groups	277.14	370	.75	5.78	.001
Total	290.13	373			

One-way ANOVA data analysis in Table 4 showed that there was a significant difference in parental engagement in their child’s online learning at the  $p < .05$  level based on the parent’s education level with  $F_{(3,370)} = 5.78$ ,  $p = .001$ .

**Table 5.** Descriptive analysis on parental engagement in child’s online learning by parents’ education level.

Parents’ education level	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Above Bachelor’s degree	68	4.62	.805	.098
High school	169	4.67	.793	.061
Primary School	92	4.31	.946	.099
No education	45	4.22	1.03	.153
Total	374	4.52	.882	.046
Model	Fixed Effects		.866	.04
	Random Effects			.123



Post hoc comparison using the Turkey HSD test in table 5 indicated that the mean score for parents with high school educational level (Mean=4.67, Std.Dev.=.793) and parents with primary school education level (Mean=4.31, Std.Dev.=.946) was significantly different than parents with no school education levels (Mean=4.22, Std.Dev.=1.03). However, no statistically significant difference was found between parents with education level of bachelor's degree and above, high school level, primary school, and no education level. Furthermore, there was no significant difference found between parents with no education level and primary education level in terms of their engagement in online learning.

**Table 6.** Multiple comparisons on parents' engagement in child's online learning by education level of parents.

(I) Parents Education Level	(J) Parents Education Level	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std.Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Above bachelor's degree	High school	-.052	.124	.975	-.373	.268
	Primary School	.316	.138	.104	-.042	.673
	No education	.402	.166	.076	-.027	.831
High school	Above bachelor's degree	.053	.124	.975	-.268	.373
	Primary School	.368*	.112	.006*	.079	.658
	No education	.454*	.145	.010*	.080	.829
Primary School	Above bachelor's degree	-.316	.138	.104	-.673	.042
	High school	-.368*	.112	.006*	-.658	-.079
	No education	.086	.157	.947	-.320	.493
No education	Above bachelor's degree	-.402	.166	.076	-.831	.027
	High school	-.454*	.145	.010*	-.829	-.080
	Primary School	-.086	.157	.947	-.493	.320

\*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

The Turkey HSD post hoc multiple comparison analysis in Table 6 showed that the education level among parents with high and primary school educational qualifications was statistically significant when compared with parents with the no educational qualifications with  $p=.006$  between the high school education level and primary school education level,  $p=.010$  between the high education level and no school education level.

4. Is there any difference in parents' readiness level towards children's online learning based on parents' education level?

**Table 7.** One-way analysis of variance on parent's readiness toward children's online learning by parent's education level.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	23.97	3	7.99		
Within Groups	324.43	370	.88	9.11	.000*
Total	348.40	373			

\* $p<.05$

One-way ANOVA data analysis in Table 7 showed that there was a significant difference in parents' readiness towards children's online learning at the  $p<.05$  level based on the parent's education level with  $F_{(3,370)}=9.11$ ,  $p=.000$ .

**Table 8.** Descriptive Analysis on Parent's readiness in children's online learning by parents' education level.

Parents' education level	N	Mean	Std.Dev.	Std.Error
Above bachelor's degree	68	4.84	.786	.095
High school	169	4.47	.964	.074
Primary School	92	4.20	.993	.104
No education	45	4.03	.920	.137
Total	374	4.42	.966	.050
Model	Fixed Effects		.936	.048
	Random Effects			.168



In Post hoc comparison using the Turkey HSD test in Table 8, it was indicated that the mean score for parents with a bachelor degree and above educational level (Mean=4.84, Std.Dev.=.786) was significantly different than the parents with a high school education level (Mean=4.47, Std.Dev.=.964), parents with primary education level (Mean=4.20, Std.Dev.=.993) and parents with no education level (Mean=4.03, Std.Dev.=.966). Furthermore, mean scores of parents with high school education level were also significantly different than parents with no education level. However, no statistically significant difference was found between parents with a high school level and primary school education levels and those with a primary school education level and no education level.

**Table 9.** Multiple comparisons on parents’ readiness in child’s online learning by education level of parents.

(I) Parents Education Level	(J) Parents Education Level	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std.Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Above bachelor’s degree	High school	.375*	.134	.028*	.028	.721
	Primary School	.648*	.150	.000*	.262	1.035
	No education	.810*	.180	.000*	.346	1.274
High school	Above bachelor’s degree	-.375*	.135	.028*	-.722	-.028
	Primary School	.273	.121	.111	-.040	.586
	No education	.436*	.1571	.030*	.0302	.841
Primary School	Above bachelor’s degree	-.648*	.150	.000*	-1.035	-.262
	High school	-.273	.121	.111	-.586	.039
	No education	.162	.170	.776	-.277	.602
No education	Above bachelor’s degree	-.810*	.180	.000*	-1.274	-.346
	High school	-.436*	.157	.030*	-.841	-.030
	Primary School	-.162	.170	.776	-.602	.277

\*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

The Turkey HSD post hoc multiple comparison analysis in Table 9 showed there was a significant difference in parents’ readiness to assist with children’s online learning between parents with bachelor degree and above education level and parents with high school education level with  $p=.028$ , parents with bachelor’s degree and above education level and primary education level with  $p=.000$ , parents with bachelor’s degree and above education level and parents with no education with  $p=.000$ . In addition, there was also a significant difference in parents’ readiness towards children’s online learning between parents with high school education qualification and parents with no education qualification with  $p=.030$ .

**5.** Is there a relationship between parents’ readiness towards online learning and parents’ engagement in children’s online learning?

**Table 10.** Pearson product moment correlation coefficient between parents’ readiness level towards online learning and parents’ engagement level during the online learning (N=374).

Parents Engagement in Online Learning	
Parents’ readiness towards online learning	.674**

Correlation is significant at .01 level (2-tailed)\*\*

Table 10 revealed that there was a moderate positive correlation between parents’ readiness towards online learning and parents’ engagement during online learning ( $r=.674$  with  $p\leq.01$ ).

## DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, and RECOMMENDATIONS

The discussion will focus on four themes: (1) parents’ engagement in their children’s online learning, (2) their readiness towards supporting their children through online learning, (3) their engagement in online learning and readiness based on education level, and (4) the relationship between parents’ readiness to support their children’s online learning and parents’ engagement in children’s online learning.



### **Parents' engagement in children's online learning**

Schooling and education would not be possible without the active participation of parents in their children's learning. Thus, research suggests that the greater the involvement of parents in their children's learning, the better the performance of children in school (Lara & Saracosti, 2019; Wang & Sheikh-Khalil, 2014; Sheldon, 2009). In line with those studies, the current study found that Bhutanese parents rated they agree that their involvement was important to their child's success and suggested their engagement in supporting online learning could take many forms including providing learning facilities, organizing the child's learning at home, supervising online learning study time, helping with the child's learning difficulties, and helping the child to clear up any issues they had during online learning. The present study validates the work of Dwiyono, Harnowo, and Ridani (2021), who found that the role of parents was seen to be particularly important in the child's learning at home. Similarly, Hoover-Dempsey, Walker, Sandler, Whetsel, Wilkins, and Closson (2005) stated that parents should be more aware of the importance of home access to ICT. However, the study found that parents did not completely agree in terms of their engagement, including contacting the child's teacher to determine their role in effective online learning, keeping a record of work done by the child, or helping the child to prepare an online study timetable. Thus, to fully involve parents in their children online learning may require campaigns that focus on effective parent-teacher communication, home-school communication, and improving parents' understanding of their role and the requirements for involvement in their children's learning (Smith, Burdette, Cheatham, & Harvey, 2016), which could improve the collaboration and engagement of parents in the online learning of their children.

### **Parents' readiness towards children's online learning**

The role of parents in children's online learning included organizing learning, facilitating learning, monitoring learning, motivating learning, nurturing learning, and supporting learning (Budhrani et al., 2021). In line with these previous findings in other studies, it was noted here that Bhutanese parents felt some level of confidence in supporting their child's online learning, providing technological devices, their awareness of learning tools, and some capacity at making use of online learning platforms, and spending more time with their children. On the other hand, the parents' readiness level in using technologies and providing adequate home internet facilities was considered challenging possibly due to the specific and unique challenges of living in a developing country.

### **Parents' engagement in children's online learning by parents' education level**

Involving themselves in children's online learning was deemed essential, but such involvement may be easier said than done. This is because children come from divergent backgrounds, and it is this difference in backgrounds that plays an important role in parents' ability to engage effectively in their children's online learning. It is well known that a parent's socioeconomic background significantly affects their participation in their children's online learning, as found in the study conducted by Amanor-Mfoafo, Akrofi, Edonu and Dowuona in 2020. The researchers concluded that high socioeconomic status parents are more comfortable and able to assist with their children's learning at home than low socioeconomic status parents. In line with their study, the findings of this current study reveal that parents' education level significantly influenced their engagement in their child's online learning.

### **Parents' readiness toward children's online learning by parent's education level**

Effective engagement in a child's learning may depend on how one perceives the importance of learning online, but more than that, the readiness of a parent to assist with online learning needs to be considered, which depend on one's socioeconomic background, not least because of a difference in ability to afford the tools to facilitate online learning. In addition, a study conducted by Bhamani et al., (2020) concluded that parents' level of familiarization with technology usage and online learning tools affected their ability to support their children, and those who are most effective in engaging in children's learning at home are those who have a good deal of experience with the tools. Furthermore, Lase, Zega, Daeli, and Zaluchu (2022) concluded that parent's inability to become teacher at home influence parent's involvement in the online learning. Similarly, the current study revealed that while all parents have a high readiness level toward their children's online learning and are broadly sympathetic to their role





helping their children, their education level influenced their ability to turn that readiness level into effective support for their children's online learning.

### **Relationship between parents' readiness level towards online learning and their engagement in children's online learning.**

Parents' engagement in children's online learning depends on several factors and one very crucial factor is parents' readiness level towards online learning (Siahaan, Murniarti, & Simbolon, 2021) as capacity to help their children learn online. Similarly, the current study found there was a positive relationship between parent's readiness towards online learning and their engagement in children's online learning. However, the parents training and readiness towards online learning need to be considered (Dong, Simin, & Hui, 2020) before involving parents in online learning with their children.

### **Conclusion**

Parents' involvement plays a crucial role in the wholesome development of a child. The recent move made by Bhutan's Ministry of Education in adopting, implementing, and continuing learning through online tools can only be effective if schools, teachers, parents, and children work collaboratively. In fact, more than educational institutions, it is imperative to understand from the parent's perspective, as they are the ones sitting there in the room with children while they undertook their online lessons. So, the current study, which aimed to explore the level of parental engagement and readiness level in children's online learning, was so important. It concluded that parents do get engaged in their children's online learning with high readiness towards online learning, specifically in the Bhutanese context, but it was each parents' education level that determined the level of parental engagement and readiness towards the child's online learning. Hence, based on the current study, schools could partner with parents to have effective online teaching and learning considering the parents educational qualification and their readiness towards online learning. Potentially, home hubs with supportive parents with higher education levels could be established to help 'train' parents with lower education levels toward readiness and effectiveness in supporting online learning.

### **Limitations and recommendations**

The first limitation of the study is the sample size. Because the study was conducted in one province, it cannot fully account for how every parent perceived online learning as whole in the country. Therefore, a future study could focus only on large scale sample covering other provinces in the country to explore the level of engagement and readiness towards their child's online learning. Involving more participants in the study would give more insights on the research topic. Second, the study was targeted only at Primary schools with a single quantitative research approach, and as such, it cannot be concluded that the same pattern of parental engagement and readiness level would be replicated across all levels of a school. So, future research studies could include different school levels with a mixed method study approach.

### **Ethics and Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare that the study has not unethical issues and that research and publication ethics have been considered carefully. The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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