



state of children's Rights Report



An Analysis of
Children's Consultation
on Their Rights

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BHUTAN CENTRE
for MEDIA AND DEMOCRACY

State of Children's Rights Report
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State of Children's Rights Report

A Bhutan Children's Report for the Convention on the
Rights of the Child (CRC) Periodic Reporting

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Acronyms

BCMD:	Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy
CRC:	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSO:	Civil Society Organisation
EiE:	Education in Emergencies
FGD:	Focus Group Discussion
ICT:	Information and Communications Technology
NCWC:	National Commission for Women and Children
NGO:	Non-governmental Organisation
NNC:	New Normal Curriculum
NYP:	National Youth Policy
REC:	Royal Education Council
RENEW:	Respect, Educate, Nurture and Empower Women
URLs:	Uniform Resource Locator
VTOb:	Volunteer Teachers of Bhutan



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- *Lungtenzampa Middle Secondary School*
- *Wangsel Institute for the Deaf*
- *Draktsho Vocational Training Center for Special Children and Youth*
- *Dechenphodrang Monastery*
- *Sherab Choling Nunnery*
- *Nazhoen Lamtoen Children's Halfway Home*

❖ Introduction





Bhutan's relationship with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) dates back to the beginning of the CRC itself; Bhutan was one of the first countries to sign and ratify the International Human Rights Treaty in 1990 and also the subsequent two optional protocols in 2009 on the sale of children, child prostitution, child pornography, and children's involvement in armed conflict.

As the first legally binding international instrument, CRC guarantees children's rights to develop to their full potential by incorporating the full range of human rights in individual, civil, cultural, economic, political, and social spheres.¹ The CRC defines 'children' as a human being under the age of 18 or under the age of majority if it is below 18 within a state's national legislation. Additionally, the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan itself guarantees protection for children under article

8, Fundamental Duties and article 9, Principles of State Policy which mandates the State to ensure that "children are protected against all forms of discrimination and exploitation including trafficking, prostitution, abuse, violence, degrading treatment and economic exploitation".

The implementation of the CRC is monitored and supervised by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child which is composed of 18 independent experts who are elected by the State parties for a term of four years. The Committee meets three times a year to monitor the progress of implementation by the State parties. After initial ratification, State parties must submit a "State party report" after two years and then once every five years after the first report. Bhutan presented its 3rd to 5th Combined Periodic Report to the 75th session of the Committee on 17th and 18th May 2017 at the UN in Geneva.²

¹ UNICEF. What is the Convention on the Rights of the Child? [Online]. Available: <https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/what-is-the-convention>

² Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2017, May. 19). Press Release [Online]. Available: <https://www.mfa.gov.bt/?p=4752>

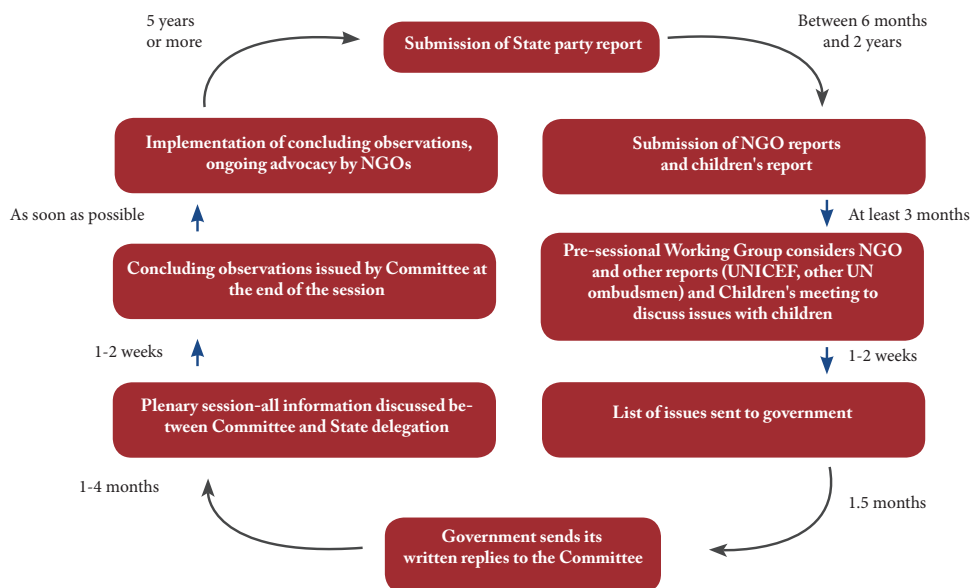
On November 20, 2019, coinciding with the 30th anniversary of the CRC, Bhutan signed the voluntary global pledge, renewing the government's commitment to the full implementation of the Convention. At the celebration, the Child Mandala was also relaunched, which provides the direction to guide the efforts of all duty bearers made towards the wellbeing and happiness of children in Bhutan. Recognising the critical need for a central repository to monitor and store information on rights violations, the government built a Central Management

Information System as an online case management system.

To supplement the State party report, the UN Committee invites "Alternative reports" or "Shadow reports" from NGOs or CSOs working for children's rights and development. Additionally, "Children's reports" are also welcomed by the committee; put together, the three reports provide a comprehensive picture of children's rights from multiple perspectives in a particular country.



▲ PHOTO: The Child Mandala by UNICEF



^ **PHOTO** : Reporting process of the Committee on the Rights of the Child by NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Background

The Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy (BCMD) is the first formally registered Civil Society Organisation (CSO) in Bhutan, established in 2008 when Bhutan made the historic transition from monarchy to democracy. With the mission to nurture democracy in Bhutan through civic engagement, public discourse and media literacy, BCMD has taken up the nurturing of youth into citizens who embody democratic ideals and are disposed to heightened awareness regarding their individual rights and responsibilities. Such

work in nurturing the youths remains paramount since 50% of the country's population are under 26 years of age. In alignment with its mission, BCMD partnered with UNICEF in 2021 to produce a Bhutan Children's Report which will supplement the Alternative Report prepared by CSOs, RENEW and Nazhoen Lamtoen, and the State party report which is due in September 2022. The government will submit its combined sixth and seventh reports that will be a review and update on the recommendations that emerged from the 2017 Concluding Observations.

Concluding observations are concrete outcomes that emerge from the country sessions (once every five years) and indicate the progress achieved by the reviewed State, and the Committee's main areas of concern and recommendations to the State to improve the implementation.

This report offers an analysis of the children's account of their state of being in the country and supplements the Alternative Report prepared by RENEW and Nazhoen Lamtoen.

Methodology

Goal

The overall goal of the study was to gain insights into the children's world through their experiences to gauge the status of their rights as enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and to capture any emerging issue.

A situational analysis into the rights of the child in Bhutan was carried out through

▼ **PHOTO:** Youth Initiative (2020) members present their audience segmentation and problem tree for an Advocacy Campaign





^ **PHOTO:** Tenzin Yoezer speaks about core issues under Mental Health during the revision of the National Youth Policy

a mixed-method study involving Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and surveys. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) served as the basis for designing the survey (refer to appendix 1). The child-friendly version of the CRC was used as a reference; the survey statements were contextualised to the cultural and local environment. The survey is organised into seven themes following the framework outlined in ‘My pocket guide to CRC reporting’ developed by Child Rights Connect. The themes are General principles, Civil rights and freedom, Violence against children, Family environment and

alternative care, Education, Leisure and Cultural activities, Disability and Special protection measures.

The draft survey was jointly reviewed with teachers, piloted in a school in Thimphu and finalised accordingly. The survey used a four-point Likert scale where the respondents could indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement including ignorance marked by a fifth point, “I don’t know.”

The FGDs followed the structure of the survey. Discussions were held at the



^ **PHOTO** : Children from a rural boarding school engaged in an energiser before the CRC consultations

end of each of the seven sections where children were invited to share their views on whichever statement resonated with them the most or was of importance to them personally to gain a deeper and holistic understanding of their experiences.

Sampling

A stratified convenience sampling was used given the restrictions posed by the COVID-19 pandemic around travel



and access to children. Gender, region and vulnerabilities were considered in determining the research participants. In total, the study aimed to cover 672 children;

of which 600 were targeted for the survey from the regions and 72 were to be engaged for the focus group discussions (also responded to the survey).

Table 1 : Sampling for the four regional quantitative surveys

Regional Quantitative Survey (4 regions)					
Age	East	West	North/ Central	South	Total
10 to 13	50	50	50	50	200
14 to 17	100	100	100	100	400
Total	150	150	150	150	600
Grand total : 600 Children					

Table 2 : Sampling for the six focus group discussions

Focus Group Discussions							
Age	Monks & Nuns	Draktsho	Wangsel	Halfway Home	Rural School	Urban School	Total
10 to 13	6	6	6	6	6	6	42
14 to 17	6	6	6	6	6	6	42
Total	12	12	12	12	12	12	72
Grand total : 72 Children							

However, after sorting out missing data for analysis, 604 children responded to all items of the survey and 53 children participated in the six focus group discussions. This study covered a sample of 657 children in total.

The 2 day-long focus groups (with an urban and a rural school) began with ice-breaking activities and reflective exercises to create an empowering, open space that facilitates drawing out respondents' ability to reflect on their lives. Children were oriented on the Convention on the Rights of the Child

and finally administered the survey and consultation (see annexe 3). FGDs were conducted with children from vulnerable sections of society: children with hearing impairment, monks & nuns, children from a shelter home and children with disabilities.

The conversations were recorded, coded, transcribed and analysed. Prior approvals were sought from relevant authorities and the participants were informed about the objectives and, more importantly, the anonymity and confidentiality of the consultations.

^ PHOTO: A bi-lingual monk from the Child Care and Protection Office translates the CRC survey items to young monks into the national language, Dzongkha



However, for the vulnerable sections of the population such as children with disabilities and students with deafness, an interpreter was present to help translate and facilitate communication between the interviewer and the participants. Nevertheless, a facilitator from BCMD was present throughout to ensure ethical and correct interpretation of the survey items. With the monks and nuns, the entire survey was translated into Dzongkha, the national language (see annexe 2), and a bi-lingual monk assisted in explaining the survey items to the young monks and nuns.

In order to maintain regional representation, focal teachers from four regional schools (East, West, North-central, South) were oriented to the CRC and the survey tool, and ethics in administering the survey. They then administered the survey within their respective schools (refer to annexe 4).

Limitation

This study reports on the state of children's rights in Bhutan through their experiences. While this study provides an insight

into the children's world in Bhutan, it is important to note that the findings here are limited to the experiences of the children which in turn are dependent on awareness, exposure and reflective ability. This is not a holistic report on the status of children's rights in Bhutan; hence the findings here need to be understood in conjunction with the shadow report by RENEW and Nazhoen Lamtoen that covers consultation with key stakeholders. Nevertheless, this report captures the quality of the environment through the eyes of the children.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic which placed restrictions on travel, BCMD worked with regional teachers of four different schools as described above.

Since this report does not utilise a random sampling method, the findings are not generalisable to the entire section of the child population of Bhutan. However, it does provide an in-depth and detailed picture of a wide range of children from various backgrounds, especially those in vulnerable situations.

❖ Respondents' Profile —





Of the 657 respondents who contributed their voice and views towards the Bhutan Children's Report, the regional school-going children made up 91.9% (604) of all respondents. However, the respondents are regionally

balanced at around 22% each; The reason for the west being 31.7% in the figure below is due to the FGDs conducted with vulnerable children groups all of whom are located in the western region of the country and make up 8.1% of the total respondents.

Table 3 : Category of Respondents

Category	Frequency	Percent
General School	604	91.9
Dechen Phrodang Monks	12	1.8
Urban School	12	1.8
Nuns	10	1.5
Nazhoen Lamtoen Halfway Home	7	1.1
Draktsho trainees	6	0.9
Wangsel School students	6	0.9
Total	657	100.0

N=657

Figure 1: Region of Respondents

Of the 657 total respondents, those in the age range of 14-17 make up more than double of the children in the age range of 10-13 years. Likewise, more than double the respondents lived in urban areas as compared to rural areas. The report has maintained gender balance, with females only slightly more represented (5%) than males.

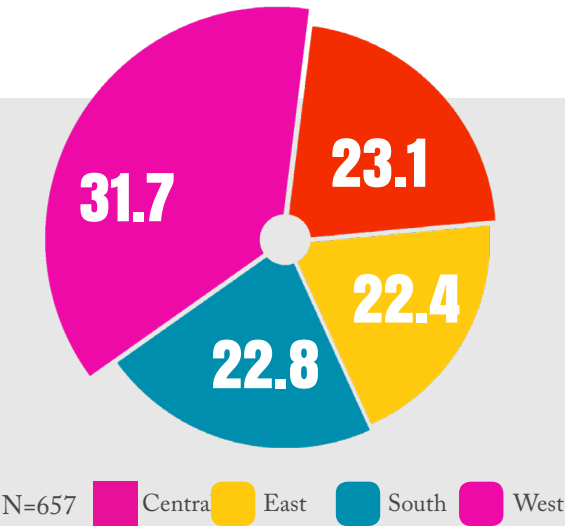


Figure 2 : Age of Respondents

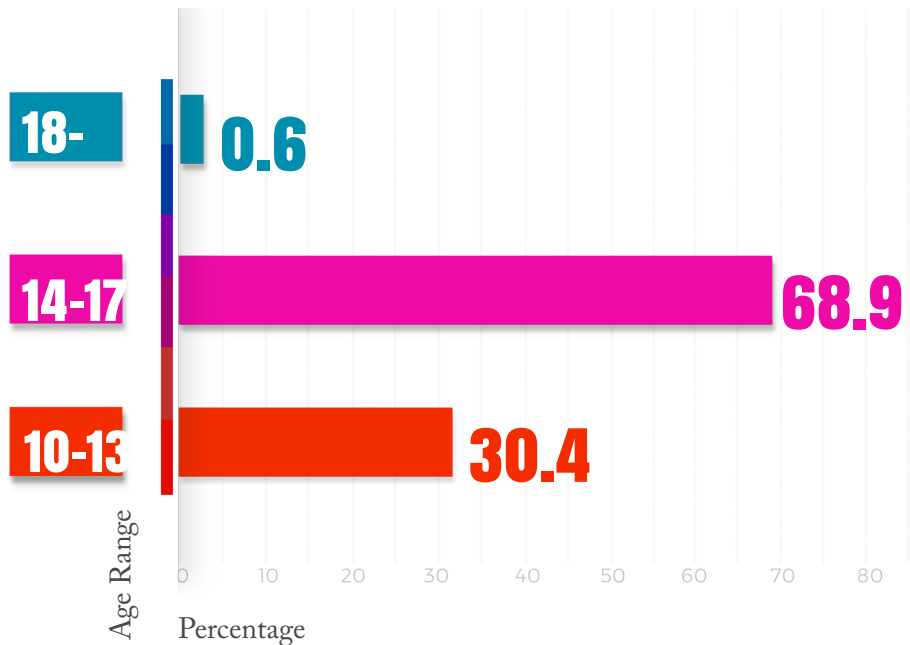


Figure 3 : Mother tongue of the respondents

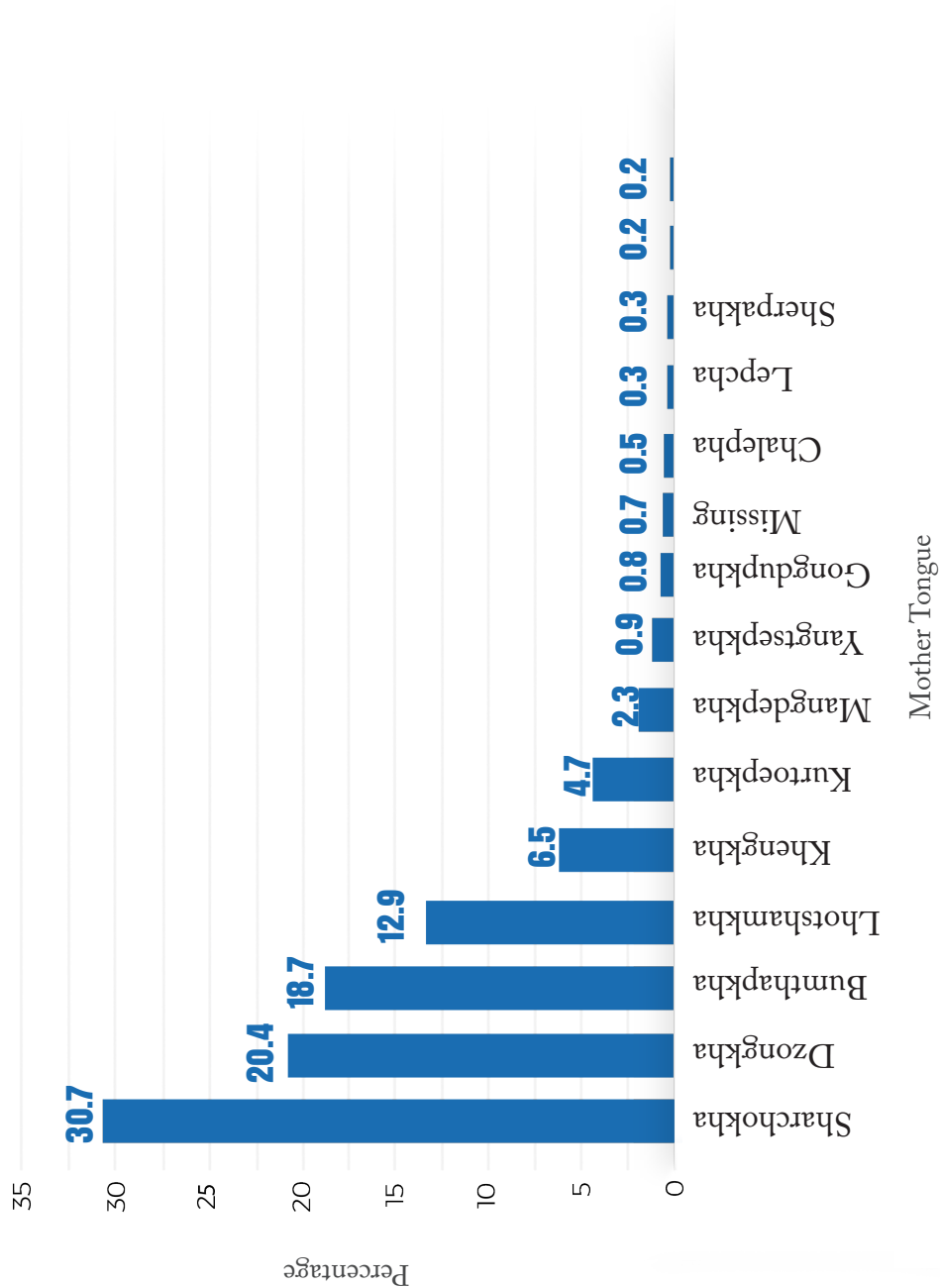


Figure 4 : Place of Residence

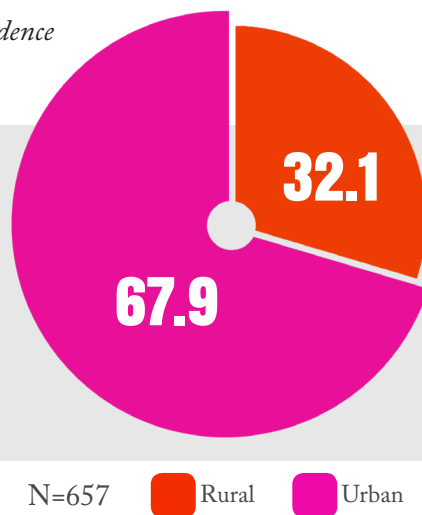
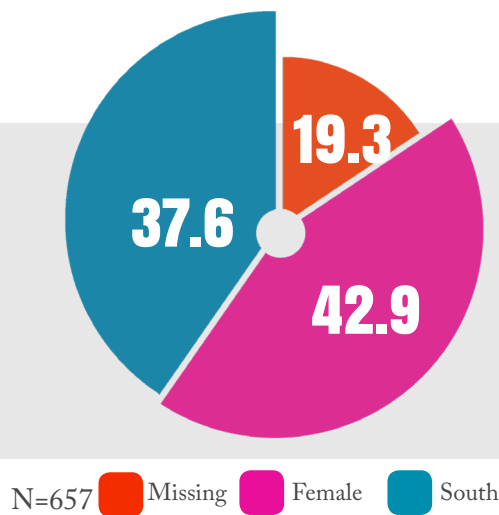


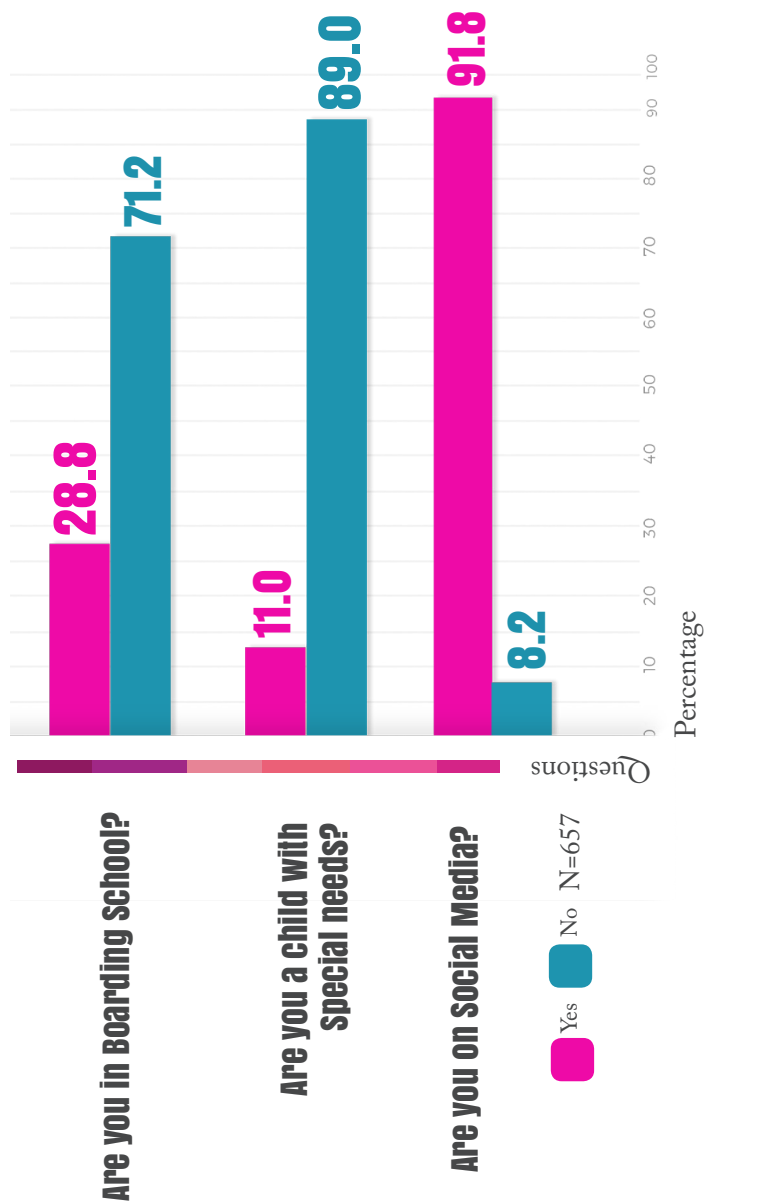
Figure 5 : Sex of the Respondents (Percentage)



Roughly 1 in every 10 children are present on at least one or more social media platforms and day students outnumber children in boarding school by approximately around 2.5 times more. 11%

of the children identifying themselves as special needs may be due to the sampling design where the research purposefully reached out to children in special needs schools and institutes.

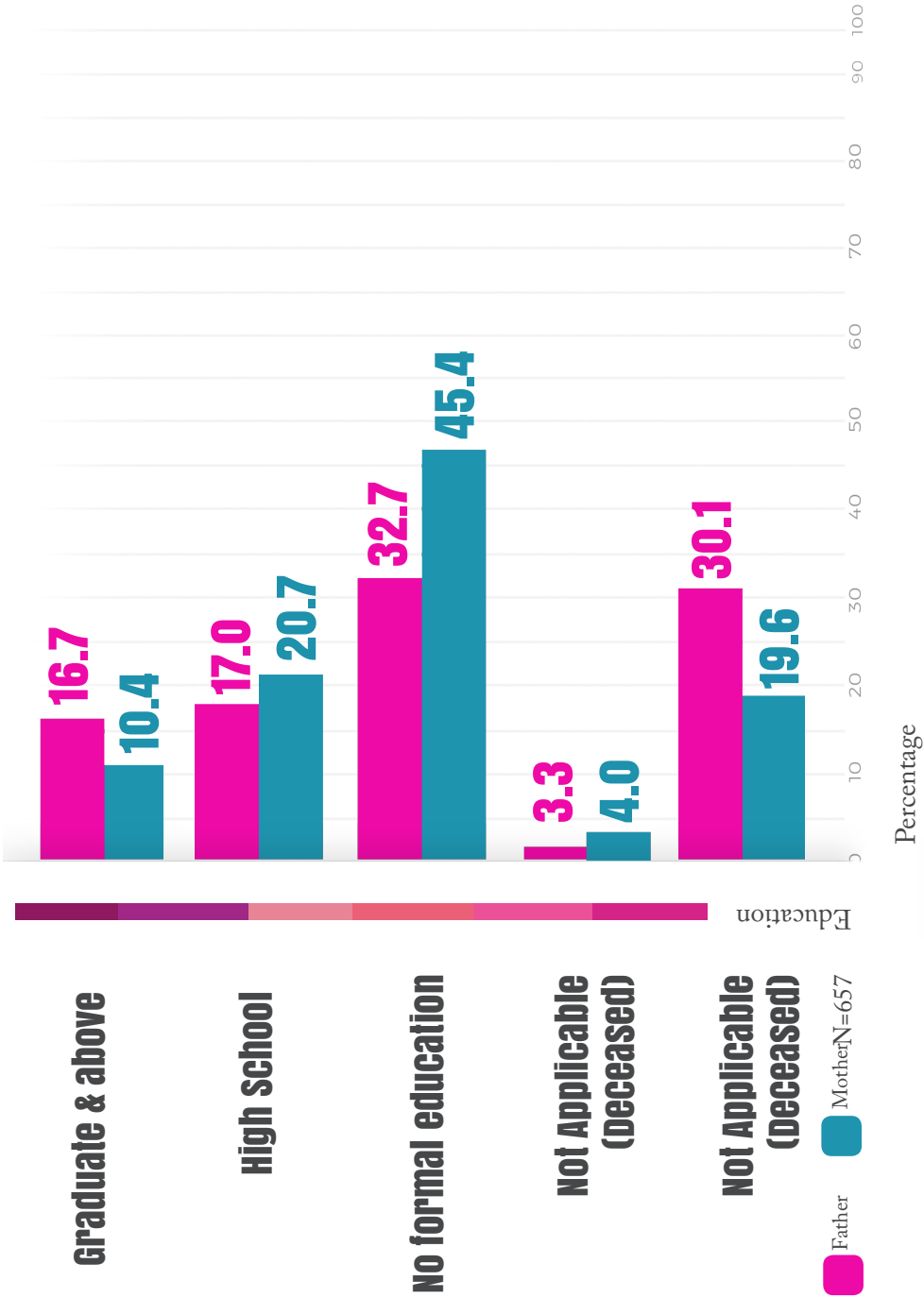
Figure 6 : Type of School, Special Needs and Social Media Presence



Inquiry into the children’s parental background informs us that a little less than half of the respondents’ mothers have no formal education, compared to around one third with their fathers. While more mothers have at least a high

school diploma compared to fathers, this comparison is reversed at the graduate and higher educational levels. Nearly a quarter of the children ‘didn’t know’ their parent’s educational background (See table 7).

Figure 7 : Education level of parents (percentage)



While no correlation can be drawn between the parents' educational level and their occupation, roughly a third of mothers and fathers are engaged in agricultural occupations. Just as many fathers work in the government as those that work in agriculture, while the second-most occupations for mothers are marked as

'unemployed'. For most children, there is a possibility that stay-at-home mothers were put under this category contributing to 20.2% of mothers being labelled as 'unemployed' when in economic terms, they would not be counted as such. The third most common employment category was within the private sector.

Table 4 : Parent's Employment Type (in percentage)

Type of Employment	Mother	Father
Agriculture (Farmer)	33.6	29.1
Unemployed	20.2	4.6
Government (Civil servant, Teachers, etc.)	18.4	29.1
Private (Business, Shopkeeper, Tourist Guide, Construction, etc.)	18.0	24.8
Housewife	5.8	
Others	1.4	2.7
Deceased	1.2	1.5
Missing	0.3	1.1
Armed Force Personnel	0.3	2.0
Corporate employee	0.3	0.8
Religious Personnel	0.2	1.5
I don't know	0.3	2.9
Total	100.0	100.0

N=657

Figure 8: Accommodation Situation

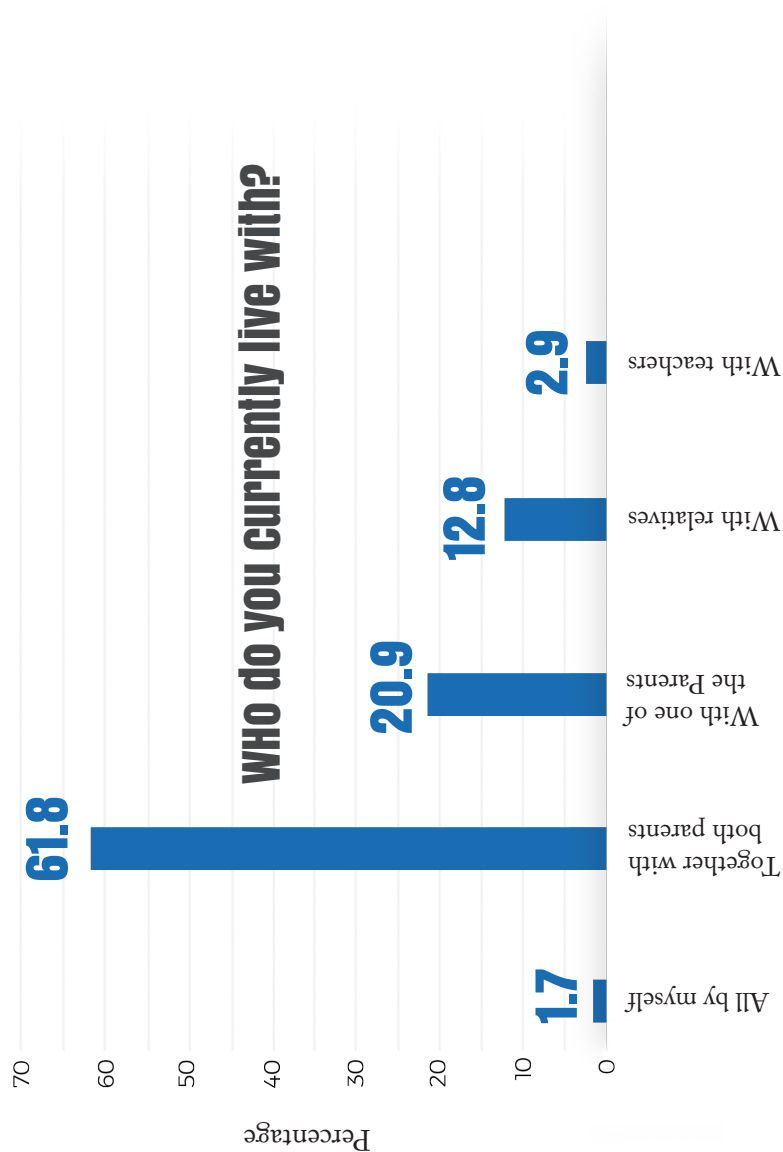


Figure 8 shows who the children are currently living with. Almost 83% of the children are living with at least one of their parents. Only 17% of the children are living with relatives, teachers or by themselves.

It is worth noting that almost 16% of the children live with families other than their own though only 1.75% live by themselves.

Findings





In general, the findings from the survey project a very good picture of the rights and freedom children enjoy in Bhutan. However, the FGDs provide insights into specific issues that are not captured by the survey. This report highlights those issues from the survey where 5% or more children have indicated “disagreement” on some items and efforts have been made to shed more light on these issues with data from the FGDs.

General Principles

The four general principles underpinning

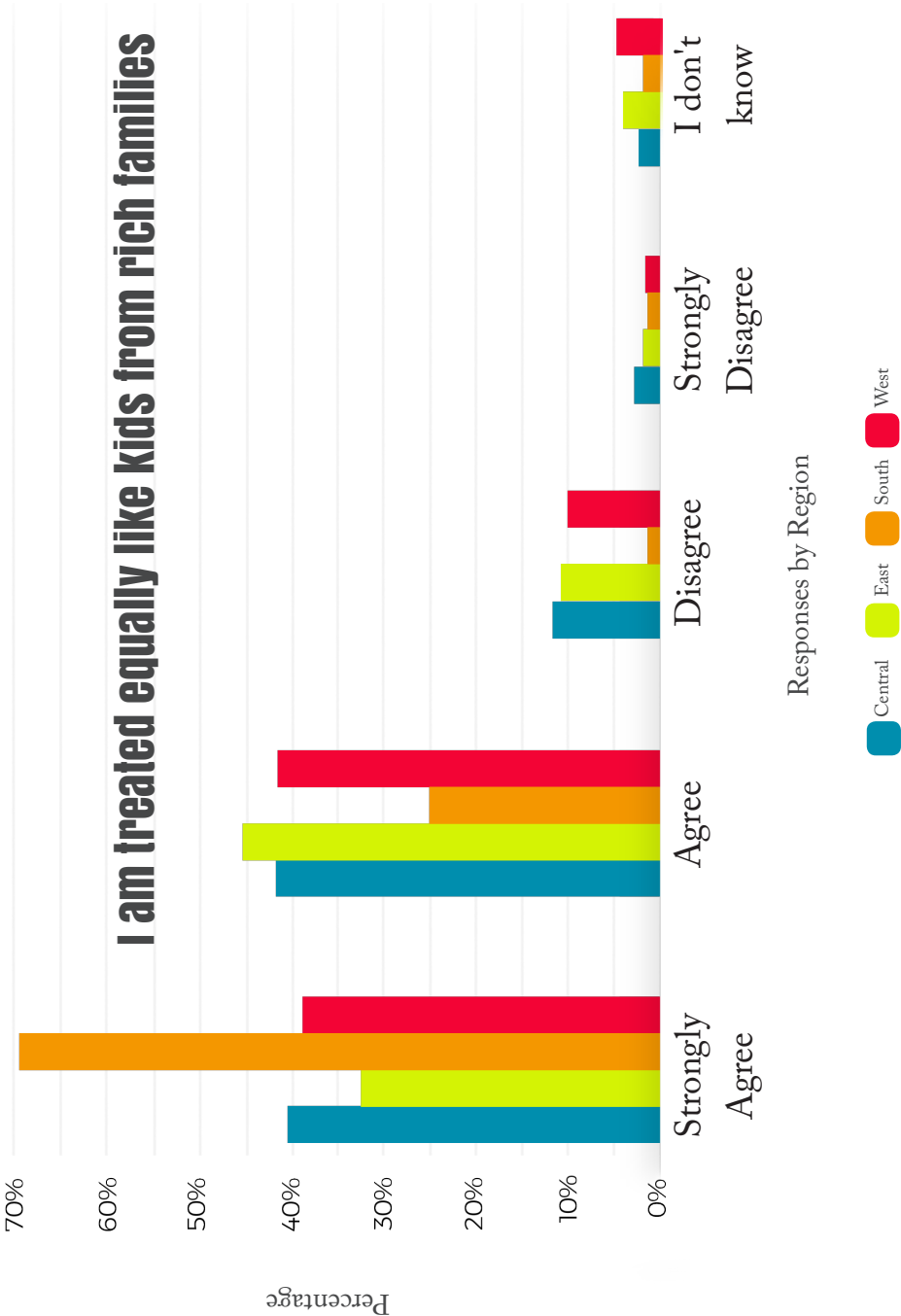
CRC serve as the ideological and ethical foundation for a renewed understanding and approach towards children as equal human beings. The four general principles are non-discrimination, the best interest of the child, right to survival and development, and respect for views of the child. While most children generally ‘agree’ (>83.6%) that they are not discriminated against based on their gender, socio-economic status, language and region, the percentage of those that ‘disagree’ are relatively higher under socio-economic background (10.1%) and language (7.2%) as evident from the table below.

Table 5: General Principles (non-discrimination)

GENERAL PRINCIPLES (Non-discrimination)	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I don't know	Total
I am treated equally like other genders (boys, girls, others).	63.5	28.8	4.0	0.9	2.9	100.0
<i>I am treated equally like kids from rich families.</i>	45.5	39.1	8.7	1.4	5.3	100.0
<i>I am treated equally like kids who speak a different language.</i>	51.6	37.1	6.1	1.1	4.1	100.0
I am treated equally like kids from other dzongkhags.	58.1	32.4	4.1	0.6	4.7	100.0

N=657 * Note: Statements in table highlighted for analysis

Figure 9 : Experience of discrimination by region



To gain a deeper understanding of the 'economic backgrounds of the children, a cross-tabulation was run to investigate if 'regional differences' contributed towards their agreement or disagreement. Interestingly, more than 11% of children from the West, East and Central regions experience discrimination as compared to only two percent from the South as shown in *Figure 9*.

This finding relates to a study conducted to study inequality from 2007-2017 in Bhutan;³ The inequality in the two western districts of Thimphu and Paro (which is also where the surveys and FGDs were conducted) enjoyed "downward sloping inequality" between 2007-2012 (by 7% & 0.2% respectively) and 2012-2017 (by 10% & 4% respectively). The central district where the survey was conducted experienced a fall between 2007-2012 and then a rise by the same margin between 2012-2017. Finally, the eastern district and the southern district both experienced a fall first and then a sharp rise from 4-13% and 17-62% respectively. However, the childrens'

experiences of inequality in the western district aren't too different from children in the other districts with the exception of the southern district. Ironically, the southern district which experienced the sharpest rise in inequality have not impacted childrens' experience of discrimination as they enjoy the most equal treatment compared to children of other districts.

As indicated in Table 6 below, vulnerable children from Draktsho Vocational Training Center for Special Children and Youth, Halfway Home, Monks and Wangsel School that constitute 10.1% of the children experienced the most discrimination based on economic background.

Additionally, a cross tab was run on 'economic status' against their 'sex' to see if sex played any role in children's perception of discrimination. Children who have not specified their sex (13.4%) and girls (10.3%) report slightly higher experiences of discrimination based on economic background as compared with boys and other sex.

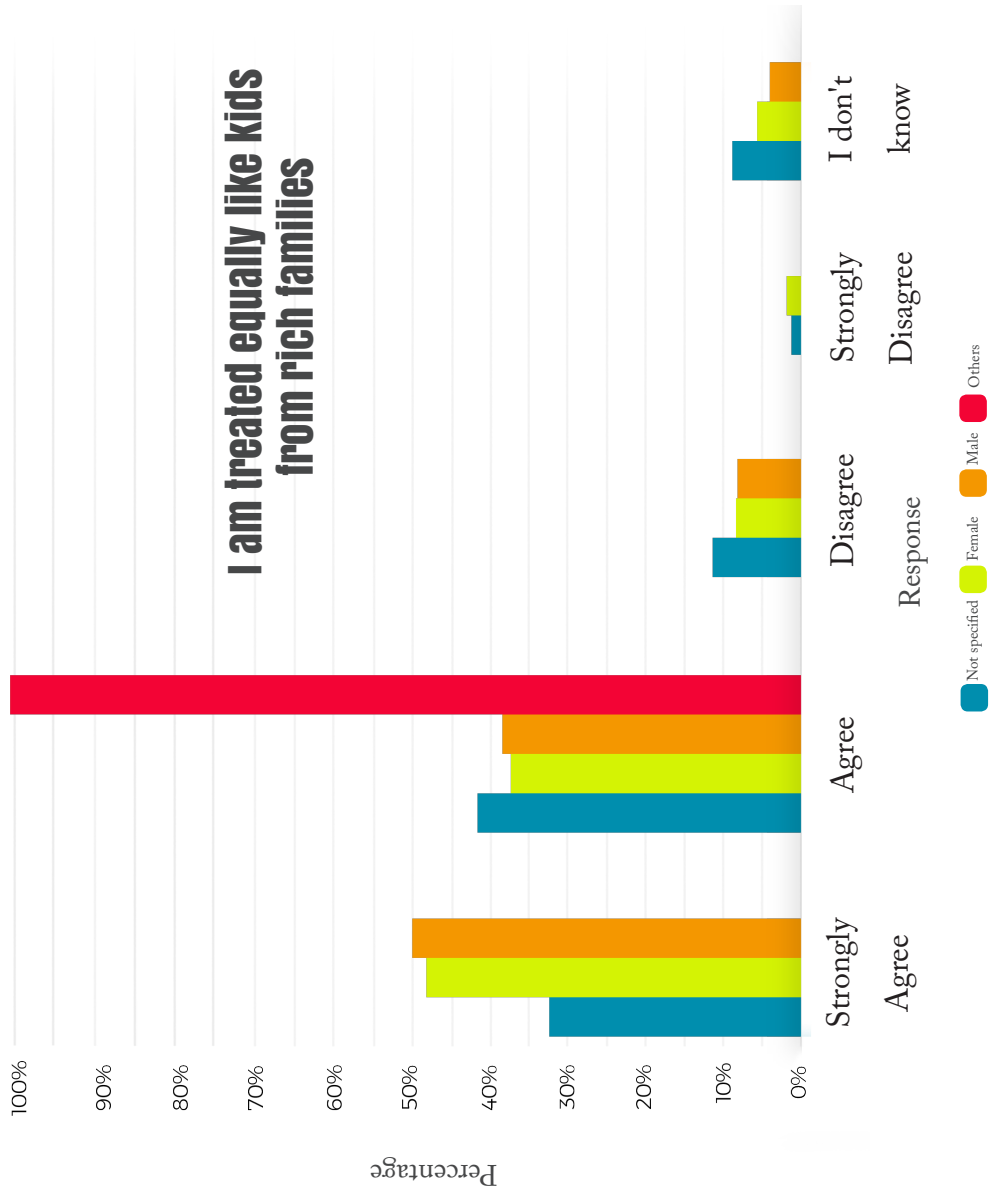
³T. Tobden. (2019, May), "Estimating the trends in inequality in Bhutan using the recent BLSS 2017: The importance of adjusting expenditure for household composition". *Asia & the Pacific Policy Studies* [Online]. Vol. 6, Available: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/app5.285>

Table 6 : Experience of discrimination by socio-economic background

I am treated equally like kids from rich families						
Category	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I don't know	Total
Draktsho	16.7%	16.7%	33.3%	16.7%	16.7%	100.0%
Nazhoen Lamtoen Halfway Home	0.0%	42.9%	42.9%	0.0%	14.3%	100.0%
Dechen Phrodang Monks	41.7%	33.3%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
General School	46.2%	40.1%	7.3%	1.2%	5.3%	100.0%
Sonam Choeling Nuns	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Urban School	33.3%	58.3%	8.3%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Wangsel School students	0.0%	0.0%	66.7%	16.7%	16.7%	100.0%
Total	45.5%	39.1%	8.7%	1.4%	5.3%	100.0%

N=657

Figure 10 : Experience of discrimination by sex



In terms of discrimination against children who speak a different language, only 7.2 % of the children perceived being discriminated, while 88.7% do not perceive

being discriminated, and 4.1% “don’t know” about it. As shown in Table 7, children speaking Lepchakha (50%) report discrimination followed by *Mangdephka* (13.3%) and *Lhotshamkha* (10.6%).

Table 7 : Mother Tongue

Mother tongue	I am treated equally like kids who speak a different language					
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I don't know	Total
Not specified	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Bumthapkha	50.4%	36.6%	6.5%	0.8%	5.7%	100.0%
Chalepkha	66.7%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Dzongkha	53.0%	32.8%	6.7%	1.5%	6.0%	100.0%
Gongdupkha	20.0%	80.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Hindi	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Khengkha	55.8%	34.9%	4.7%	0.0%	4.7%	100.0%
Kurtoepkha	38.7%	51.6%	6.5%	0.0%	3.2%	100.0%
Lepcha	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

Lhotshamkha	64.7%	24.7%	5.9%	3.5%	1.2%	100.0%
Mangdepkha	60.0%	26.7%	13.3%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Sharchopkha	45.5%	45.0%	5.4%	0.0%	4.0%	100.0%
Sherpakha	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Tibetan	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Yangtsepkha	83.3%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Total	51.6%	37.1%	6.1%	1.1%	4.1%	100.0%

N=657

Generally, children do not seem to experience serious discrimination, however, the situation is different for children living with disabilities and other vulnerabilities as evidenced by the following excerpts from them (See also section on Care, Guidance & Parenting of Vulnerable Children):

Regarding the next three general principles of the CRC, ‘best interest of the child’, ‘life survival and development’ and ‘respect for children’s views’, almost all children of Bhutan (98%) felt that their best interests

are prioritised by their parents. Similarly, almost all (98.4%) believed that their families and teachers ensure their right to safety, survival and healthy development. The level of agreement is also quite high for ‘respect for children’s views’ as 92.7% felt their families and teachers listen to them; and 92.8% of children felt that on topics which are of importance to them, their families and teachers do discuss the topics with them.

Table 8 : General Principles (child's best interest, life survival, children's views)

GENERAL PRINCIPLES (Best interest of the child, Life survival & development, Respect for children's views)	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I don't know	Total
My parents do what is best for me.	80.2	17.8	1.2	0.3	0.5	100.0
My family & teachers make sure I am safe and healthy.	78.8	19.6	0.6	0.2	0.8	100.0
My family & teachers listen to me.	46.1	46.6	4.0	0.5	2.9	100.0
My family & teachers discuss with me on topics that are important to me.	58.1	34.7	2.4	1.1	3.7	100.0

In addition to the general principles, on the whole, the research participants' responses project a fairly good picture of civil rights and freedom in Bhutan. Children enjoy freedom of expression, right to privacy, freedom of association and access to

educational resources and so on. It may be worth noting that a relatively higher percentage of children 'disagree' on their right to privacy (8.6%) and protection (11.6%) respectively.

Table 9 : Civil Rights and Freedom

Civil Rights and Freedom	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I don't know	Total
I can talk freely about things that matter to me so long as it does not harm another person	49.8	39.0	5.9	2.1	3.2	100.0
I am free to practice my religion	66.7	26.6	1.7	0.9	4.1	100.0
I am free to form or join groups that benefit us (Ex. Clubs)	58.4	32.7	4.4	1.1	3.3	100.0
<i>I have the right to privacy (If I don't want to share something, I don't have to)</i>	<i>56.3</i>	<i>32.7</i>	<i>6.2</i>	<i>2.4</i>	<i>2.3</i>	<i>100.0</i>
<i>I can complain to the police if someone says things about me that are not true</i>	<i>47.0</i>	<i>35.6</i>	<i>9.6</i>	<i>2.0</i>	<i>5.8</i>	<i>100.0</i>
I have what is important for my education (e.g. Internet, books, radio, television newspapers etc.)	65.8	30.0	2.1	1.2	0.9	100.0

*Note: Statements in table highlighted for analysis

Access to E-Learning Resources

While 95.8% of the children report good access to educational resources (internet, books, radio, TV, newspapers, etc.) in the survey (see Table 9), the FGDs reveals that 'e-learning' and particularly the 'New Normal Curriculum' (NNC) were most

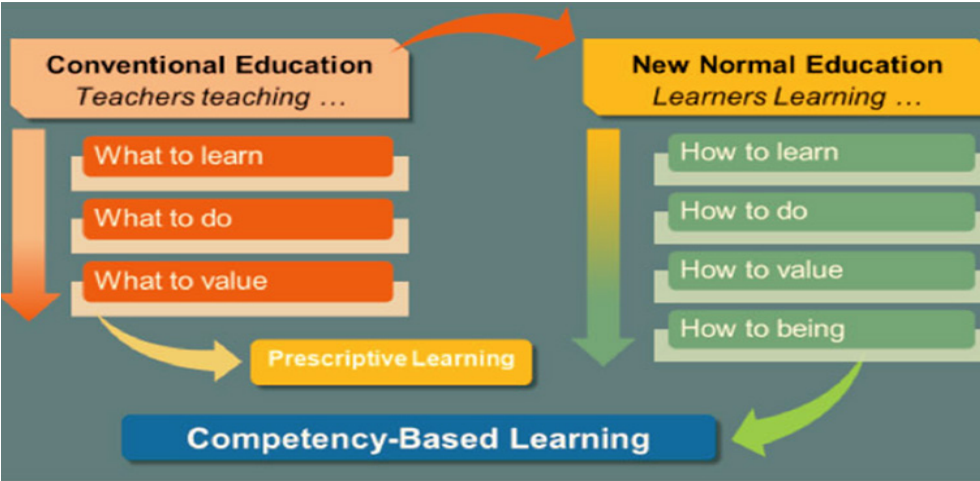
frequently mentioned as children discussed challenges faced. NNC was introduced in February 2021 after almost a year since schools were first closed from March 2020.⁴ While an appropriate and timely response to disruptions in education from the COVID-19 pandemic, e-learning initiatives were found to be uncoordinated and ambiguous.⁵

⁴ Kuensel. (2020, Mar. 18). School closure purely preventive measure: Govt. [Online]. Available: <https://kuenselonline.com/school-closure-purely-preventive-measure-govt/>

NNC, an initiative of the Royal Education Council (REC) aimed at offering the education fraternity with a “competency-based education that emphasises students to develop and apply knowledge, skills and attitudes to new and challenging situations”.⁶ In principle, it offered to “depart significantly from (conventional) perspective learning” and usher in the beginning of an educational approach that leverages on IT and makes education relevant to the needs of the hour.⁷ However in practice, NNC and e-learning has faced major challenges in meeting its goal across

various groups of children as evidenced from the consultations in this study as well as research published on this subject.

The widening gap in learning has been observed and confirmed by various studies and news reports, with statistics as high as 70% of students (both boarding and day students) from the central school in Haa who lack access to personal smartphones and laptops to attend online education.⁸ A Kuensel news report highlights the story of a teacher in a far-flung eastern region (Pemagatshel) who speaks on this gap:



▲ PHOTO : Schools to have New Normal Curriculum 2021: REC' by Kuensel

⁵ Kuensel. (2020, Mar. 21). E-learning explored to engage students. [Online]. Available: <https://kuenselonline.com/e-learning-explored-to-engage-students/>

⁶ Royal Education Council. (2021, Feb. 2). New Normal Curriculum Frameworks. [Online]. Available: <https://rec.gov.bt/new-normal-curriculum-frameworks/?fbclid=IwAR2YrRb6azy28EQYIk3XCcJVPyy0UYs4fvm1sO6Jvhi1hO9plmrqX-DxM>

⁷ Kuensel. (2020, Mar. 21). E-learning explored to engage students. [Online]. Available: <https://kuenselonline.com/e-learning-explored-to-engage-students/>

“We don’t have proper internet service to communicate through social media applications, how can we teach students through Wechat (a simple messaging platform). Not many students have smartphones or tablets, neither can they afford them.”⁹

Similarly, a study that involved parents, students and teachers in an urban school revealed that “many students had limited access to computers, smartphones, and internet at home” with 50% using their parent’s laptops and smartphones after their office hours to learn online.¹⁰ In addition to the one-time cost of purchasing a digital device to access online education, one of the major challenges in accessing online education is the recurring cost of the internet, a finding that makes appearances across various studies. One of the studies

highlights the costly data packages as it is compared to the “income of the people in developing countries”.¹¹

The consultations conducted adds to the existing literature and reveals an important factor missing, i.e. the marked gap between the boarding students and day scholars. In addition to the challenges outlined above, the boarding students face an additional obstacle of boarding school policies that ban the possession or use of smartphones and laptops in their boarding facilities. A boarding student from a rural school remarks:

“It is easier to open the links and study since they (day scholars) have constant access to their phones but us boarding students, due to the lack of ICT in the school, they tell us to figure it out on our own”.

⁸ N. Wangdi, Y. Dema, N. Chogyel. (2021). “Online learning amid COVID-19 pandemic: Perspectives of Bhutanese students”. *International Journal of Didactical Studies*. [Online]. vol. 2, issue 1. Available: <https://www.ijods.com/download/online-learning-amid-covid-19-pandemic-perspectives-of-bhutanese-students-10791.pdf>

⁹ Kuensel. (2020, Mar. 21). E-learning explored to engage students. [Online]. Available: <https://kuenselonline.com/e-learning-explored-to-engage-students/>

¹⁰ T. Dorji. (2020, Mar. 3). “Problems and Challenges Faced by Students, Parents, and Teachers in Google Classes & Television Lessons”. *International Journal of Asian Education*. [Online]. vol. 2, issue 1. Available: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/350190267_Problem_and_Challenges_Faced_by_Students_Parents_and_Teachers_in_Google_Classes_Television_Lessons

¹¹ S. Pokhrel, R. Chhetri. (2021, Jan. 19). “A Literature Review on Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Teaching and Learning”. *Higher Education for the Future*. [Online]. vol. 8, issue 1. Available: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2347631120983481>



▲ **PHOTO :** Children at a rural school engaged in the CRC survey

Another child from the same school echoes similar views:

“The NCC is not as understandable for the students and the teachers ask the students to search from Google and YouTube. Boarding students cannot submit the work on time and teachers need to allow phones in school.”

Challenges with lack of access to ICT for children's online education remains a cross-cutting issue as a child from a shelter home points out:

“These days when we get classwork, the teachers send it on WeChat and the computers at school don't work and we can't use our phones because when they break/stop working, there is no one to fix our phones. This is why we need phones and laptops. We cannot keep up with the notes they send us, we are always 5–6 pages behind.”

While children in boarding schools as well as shelter homes believe that access to ICT would solve the problem, research shows that even among those children who had access to ICT, there were numerous

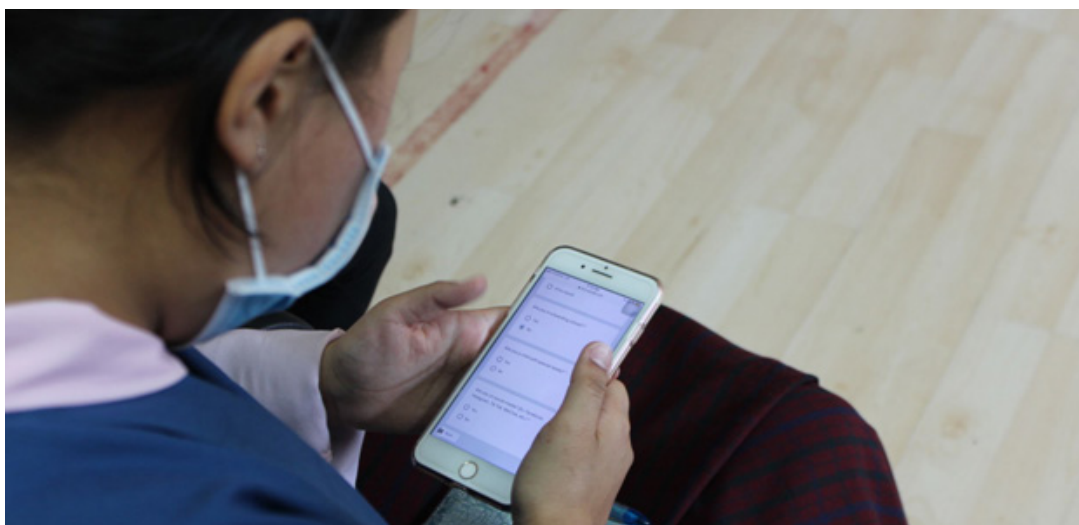
challenges in completing and submitting their assignments on time due to the unfamiliarity with e-learning platforms.¹² Additionally, most parents who are either illiterate, technologically-challenged or busy with their office work were unable to assist their children with their learning. Even the study from the capital city revealed that 80% of parents mentioned that “they were illiterate to provide their children's necessary support. Both literate and illiterate parents depended significantly on

the school for children's education”.¹³

However, there is evidence to suggest that regardless of personal ownership, students have the “required knowledge to use digital devices... for educational purposes”.¹⁴

When asked what they would do if they had a magic wish, a boarding student of a rural school said,

“I would like to create two IT labs where the students can learn the NNC and make phones allowed in schools *since our entire curriculum is based online*”.



▲ **PHOTO** : A girl from an urban school uses her smartphone to complete the CRC survey

¹² T. Dorji. (2020, Mar. 3). “Problems and Challenges Faced by Students, Parents, and Teachers in Google Classes & Television Lessons”. International Journal of Asian Education. [Online]. vol. 2, issue 1. Available: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/350190267_Problem_and_Challenges_Faced_by_Students_Parents_and_Teachers_in_Google_Classes_Television_Lessons

¹³ Ibid.,

¹⁴ N. Wangdi, Y. Dema, N. Chogyel. (2021). “Online learning amid COVID-19 pandemic: Perspectives of Bhutanese students”. International Journal of Didactical Studies. [Online]. vol. 2, issue 1. Available: <https://www.ijods.com/download/online-learning-amid-covid-19-pandemic-perspectives-of-bhutanese-students-10791.pdf>

While challenges surrounding lack of access to ICT dominate the consultations with boarding children, the lack of quality in learning is felt across the various respondent groups with direct impact on children's mental well-being. Although NNC was supposed to reduce content to allow "time and space for learning instead of only focusing on completing the syllabus",¹⁵ the ground reality has ironically been just the opposite:

"Because of the new curriculum, in most of the subjects we have to make our own notes that we have to explore through the

internet. When we get home we don't get much rest." (Urban student)

"We get a lot of homework everyday. We get many presentations to make and when there is too much I don't know what to start with first and get stressed". (Urban student)

Even data from the survey under the 'Education' section show that while a majority of children are generally satisfied with other components of education, 9.9% of the respondents report not having adequate time to rest and relax (see Table 10 below).

Table 10 : Education, leisure and cultural participation

Education, Leisure & Cultural activities	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I don't know	Total
I can get free education in government schools.	77.0	18.6	1.4	0.8	2.3	100.0
I can continue my education till whatever level I am capable of.	71.1	22.8	1.8	1.7	2.6	100.0
Schools allow me to explore my interests, talents and abilities.	65.6	29.8	2.4	1.1	1.1	100.0
Schools teach me to respect culture and environment.	82.3	16.9	0.3	0.0	0.5	100.0
Schools teach me to respect other people.	81.6	17.8	0.3	0.2	0.2	100.0
<i>I get time to rest and relax.</i>	<i>43.1</i>	<i>45.1</i>	<i>6.7</i>	<i>3.2</i>	<i>2.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>
I have opportunities to participate in cultural activities, arts and sports which I am interested in.	66.8	27.9	2.9	1.4	1.1	100.0

N=657 * Note: Statements in table highlighted for analysis

¹⁵ Kuensel. (2021, Jan. 27). Schools to have New Normal Curriculum 2021: REC. [Online]. Available: <https://kuenselonline.com/schools-to-have-new-normal-curriculum-2021-rec/>



▲ **PHOTO** : Teachers from Olathang use their smartphones during a Media Literacy training

The heavy workload on the students has also been highlighted by a study as one of its findings which had contributed towards 95% of the students “copying assignments... directly from their friends, the textbook, or the internet”.¹⁶ Challenges with ascertaining the “authenticity of work and actual learning taking place” has also been highlighted in another paper.¹⁷ The FGDs conducted with the boarding children shed some light as to why this might be the case:

“Most of our work comprises (of) watching the videos, understanding it and writing our own notes based on the video. Sometimes we only get to watch the video once. They send us the

link and expect us to write the notes and submit them.”

“We cannot keep up with the new curriculum because they show it to us for 5 minutes and expect us to write notes and we cannot catch up.”

In addition to the sheer workload resulting from lack of resources to keep up with the move towards digitalisation, factors affecting the quality of online education involve lack of proper planning in terms of content, and teachers’ capacity to teach online, both of which are interrelated to one another. As those responsible for translating

¹⁶ T. Dorji. (2020, Mar. 3). “Problems and Challenges Faced by Students, Parents, and Teachers in Google Classes & Television Lessons”. International Journal of Asian Education. [Online]. vol. 2, issue 1. Available: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/350190267_Problem_and_Challenges_Faced_by_Students_Parents_and_Teachers_in_Google_Classes_Television_Lessons

¹⁷ S. Pokhrel, R. Chhetri. (2021, Jan. 19). “A Literature Review on Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Teaching and Learning”. Higher Education for the Future. [Online]. vol. 8, issue 1. Available: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2347631120983481>

the NNC ultimately at the grassroots level to students, the teachers themselves have been “confused as to what their new role is with the new curriculum in place”.¹⁸

While the NNC gives more freedom for the teachers to utilise a variety of flexible teaching and learning methods, the ground realities are such that most of the teachers don't even have a laptop to teach the basics of computers.¹⁹ In particular, teachers' lack of capacity to integrate online pedagogical approaches with technological ease has led to “95% of the assignments (being) submitted... in JPEG format and 1% in .doc format”, despite efforts to leverage online learning platforms to mirror in-person learning with robust formative assessments and timely feedback.²⁰

Even content material for classes have faced challenges with links whose

URLs have changed from design to implementation stage, as evidenced by a student from an urban school,

“The teachers give out links to study, which is not effective”. Likewise, even students in rural areas face similar challenges: “When we inform the teachers that the links aren't working, they tell us that that's our problem and not theirs. They aren't willing to help us”.

As a result of challenges faced by children and parents to learn online, some 317 students between grades IX and XII dropped out midway through the academic year in 2020.²¹ However, many had expressed their interest to repeat the grade in the following year. Nevertheless, there are concerns with internet addiction, teenage pregnancy and the negative impacts of social isolation that comes with unengaged

¹⁸ Kuensel. (2021, Feb. 3). NNC and challenges. [Online]. Available: <https://kuenselonline.com/nnc-and-challenges/>

¹⁹ Ibid.,

²⁰ T. Dorji. (2020, Mar. 3). “Problems and Challenges Faced by Students, Parents, and Teachers in Google Classes & Television Lessons”. International Journal of Asian Education. [Online]. vol. 2, issue 1. Available: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/350190267_Problem_and_Challenges_Faced_by_Students_Parents_and_Teachers_in_Google_Classes_Television_Lessons

²¹ Kuensel. (2020, Dec. 9). More than 300 students drop out of school amid the pandemic. [Online]. Available: <http://www.bbs.bt/news/?p=140369>



^ **PHOTO** : Red cross volunteers discuss the importance of media and information at a workshop

children who are out of school.²²

In general, a majority of student respondents identified access to ICT as an issue especially with the pandemic disrupting schools across the country. The study reveals that the digital divide is becoming apparent in the education system with schools and teachers ill-equipped with technological infrastructure and know-how to make a smooth transition to online learning. As we are living in the

age of technology and information, this is indeed an urgent issue for the ministry of education to address. Investment in digitising education and building new competencies for teachers is a crucial need for Bhutan's education system. Providing technological infrastructure and Internet access needs to be combined with adoption of a robust guideline by schools and education institutions on proper use of the facilities to curb misuse and issues that could emerge with unregulated access to Internet and screen time.

²² Kuensel. (2020, Dec. 5). 149 students drop out from Thimphu Thromde schools. [Online]. Available: <https://kuenselonline.com/149-students-drop-out-from-thimphu-thromde-schools/>

Co-Curricular Programmes

To a large extent, a majority of the children agree that they enjoy free education and that it helps them explore their interests, and enables them to learn values such as respect for culture, people and environment (see Table 10). While the survey shows that 94.7% of the children report enjoying ample “opportunities to participate in cultural activities, arts and sports,” the FGDs reveal students’ discontent with how co-curricular programmes receive least regard from schools and parents.

The importance of co-curricular activities as supplemental spaces to the otherwise academic-saturated school structure has been studied for decades. Research has shown time and again that extra-curricular engagement is positively correlated with academic achievement, lower dropout rates, interpersonal competence, strong sense of identity and other aspects of positive child development.²³ Other researches have delved deeper and demonstrated that even after controlling for crucial “dropout”

forces (such as race, socio-economic status, and gender) and “pullout forces” (such as employment), the relationship still remains.²⁴ Such findings are significant especially in the context of Bhutan that has called repeatedly for smart investment in the youths to be able to reap the benefits of its largely youthful demographic (below 25 years) that make up more than half the population.

A recent news article highlights the worrying trend exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic: a record number of 1,300 students failing class XII, a youth unemployment rate of 22.6%, literate youths who are not keen on taking up agriculture or vocational trade, an underdeveloped private sector and an oversaturated public sector.²⁵ Such a trend becomes even more meaningful against studies that have documented strong links between adolescents’ co-curricular activities and adult educational attainment, occupation, and income even after taking into account social class and cognitive abilities.²⁶ Therefore, it is important to

²³ J. S. Eccles. (2003). “Extracurricular Activities and Adolescent Development”. *The Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues*. [Online]. vol. 59, issue 4. Available: <https://spssonlineibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1046/j.0022-4537.2003.00095.x>

²⁴ R. B. McNeal, Jr., (2014, June, 28). “Extracurricular Activities and High School Dropouts”. *Sociology of Education*. [Online]. vol. 68, issue 1. Available: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2112764>

²⁵ Kuensel. (2021, April. 13). Investing in youth and their potential. [Online]. Available: <https://kuenselonline.com/investing-in-youth-and-their-potential/>

direct investments towards programmes that work. Child developmentalists and youth advocates argue that engagement in co-curricular activities provide opportunities for social, emotional, and physical development:²⁷

Nevertheless, qualitative data collected during the revision of the National Youth Policy (NYP) identified ‘Lack of life skills in curriculum’ as a core issue under education.²⁸ It highlighted how classes on value education, health and physical education are often “sacrificed for subjects

like science and mathematics”, reinforcing the idea that extracurricular activities are secondary considerations that are granted if and only when academic subjects are on track. The COVID-19 pandemic’s disruptive effect on schools has only meant that educationists are now even more focused on playing catch-up with the syllabi. In May 2021 the Ministry of Education re-instituted half-day Saturday classes so that schools “can conduct remedial lessons to make up for the learning loss last year”.²⁹



^ **PHOTO** : A child playing marbles after his school

²⁶ D. W. Osgood, A. L. Anderson, J. N. Shaffer. (2002) “Unstructured leisure in the after-school hours”. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum and Associates [Online]. Available: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/258295610_Unstructured_Leisure_in_the_After-School_Hours

²⁷ J. S. Eccles. (2003). “Extracurricular Activities and Adolescent Development”. *The Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues*. [Online]. vol. 59, issue 4. Available: <https://spssi.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1046/j.0022-4537.2003.00095.x>

²⁸ BCMD, “Youth Voices: Youth Matters,” BCMD., Thimphu, pg. 36, 2020.

²⁹ Kuensel. (2021, May. 18). MoE orders classes on Saturdays to cover lessons. [Online]. Available: <https://kuenselonline.com/moe-orders-classes-on-saturdays-to-cover-lessons/>

Children from the FGDs speak on this subversion of co-curriculars within their academic culture as well as their home environment:

"There are no entertainment activities in our hostel and we feel bored. Sometimes we want to play volleyball but our warden doesn't allow us. They always take it in a negative sense. They think we are going to do something bad."

"When we say we want to join a sport like a football club they [teachers] say you are in class 10, you have to study and we say that we'll play and be healthy but they don't listen."

"When it comes to important things like my studies, my parents listen but not too much when it comes to games."

"I can't ask them (parents) for money when it comes to other school expenses like sports (taekwondo belt, etc.) and co-curricular activities."

What is noteworthy about the testimonials above is that discussions on co-curricular activities lean predominantly towards sports and games. This could potentially be advantageous for Bhutanese children since

"athletic participation remains significantly related to dropping out".³⁰ However, it should be noted that the research was conducted in America and that a similar study needs to be conducted in Bhutan to ascertain its applicability for the Bhutanese context. No research has been conducted in Bhutan that studies the relationship between extracurricular activities and other domains of student life.

In addition to athletics, children also spoke about how their interests in clubs are affected by the lack of importance given to co-curricular activities.

"I want to join scouts but my parents disagree since we have to go camping and do other stuff. They said because of COVID you cannot go and they just forced me to quit it."

"I think by joining clubs, there are tons of benefits not only to the house (refers to the groups in school made to inspire healthy competition) but also to us, as we learn how to help other people and develop problem solving skills."

"When I joined the scouts, they took us trekking but I was not allowed to go."

³⁰ R. B. McNeal, Jr., (2014, June, 28). "Extracurricular Activities and High School Dropouts". *Sociology of Education*. [Online], vol. 68, issue 1. Available: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2112764>



^ **PHOTO** : Students from Wangsel Institute for the Deaf perfect their haircutting skills

In an otherwise limited avenue for wholesome development, school clubs offer children the opportunity to explore their interests and passions outside of academics. The clubs range from cricket, basketball, football, computer, media, democracy, UN, chess, haircutting, culture, knitting, cooking, etc. through which they engage

with children from outside their respective classes. Otherwise, the academic structure only allows for a small community of learners as children interact with only their classmates; clubs open up this space further and allow for meaningful interaction with other children from various backgrounds, age, and classes.

The stimulating effect of voluntary participation on one's development of talents, values, interests and most importantly their identity has been studied and well documented.³¹ Engagements that invite voluntary participation from children allow for exploration and expression of various identity options since children find more opportunities for personal development, reflection and exploration. Moreover, the same study also draws a link between identity, patterns of activity involvement and indicators of successful and risky adolescent development. This opens up the possibility for curriculum developers and designers to study the relationship between club activities, identity formation and likelihood of children engaging in either successful or risky behaviours. The findings could then be used to guide extracurricular activities in the school system with long-term positive impact on the youth -- the social capital of Bhutan.

In Bhutan, co-curricular activities have also forged links and platforms between parents and the school. Most schools host an annual concert, featuring creative performances by the students which are well attended by

parents, family and friends. The concerts not only help fundraise for the schools, but more importantly, offer children, parents and schools to gather together in a common space and nurture a sense of community. Such shared spaces are important because it sets up the groundwork for parents to engage more within their children's learning and lives. Currently most parents' responsibilities end at dropping and picking their children up from school coupled with the belief that teachers know best how to teach their children.

Family Environment

The quantitative data shows an overwhelmingly positive response among youths as it pertains to parent's care and guidance in providing a good family environment and alternative care when needed. The data shows a slightly different perception in the case of children without family members where 9.4% of the respondents do not believe that adopted children are well taken care of by their adoptive parents. Also, 23% of the participants chose "I don't know" as the answer.

³¹ J. S. Eccles. (2003). "Extracurricular Activities and Adolescent Development". *The Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues*. [Online]. vol. 59, issue 4. Available: <https://spssi.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1046/j.0022-4537.2003.00095.x>

Table 11: Family environment and alternative care

Family Environment & Alternative Care	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I don't know	Total
My family/guardian takes good care of me	83.1	16.1	0.5	0.2	0.2	100.0
My family/guardian teaches me to be responsible and independent	78.4	19.8	1.2	0.2	0.5	100.0
My parents/guardians teach me to be a good human being	83.6	15.5	0.5	0.0	0.5	100.0
I know that no one can take me away from my family unless my home environment is unsafe	63.6	27.2	2.9	0.9	5.3	100.0
No one can stop me from being in contact with my parents if they live outside Bhutan	64.8	24.8	2.4	1.1	6.8	100.0
The police will help if people try to kidnap me	68.2	26.9	0.5	0.3	4.1	100.0
Children without parents are looked after by family members and other relatives	43.5	39.9	3.7	0.6	12.3	100.0
Children who are adopted are treated well by their adopted parents	30.4	37.0	8.2	1.2	23.1	100.0

*Note: Statements highlighted for analysis

A majority of the data from the consultations support the survey finding in highlighting good parental guidance and involvement, with value-laden advice to “be polite”, lead a “simple life”, “be content”, “respect elders” and refrain from stealing and telling lies.

Most children in the FGDs from across localities and living situations generally spoke with acceptance and appreciation for the care and guidance they received from their parents and guardians. Positive receptivity by children towards their parents has been linked with a lower likelihood of



^ **PHOTO** : A girl from Wangsel Institute for the Deaf talks about the guidance she received from her parents

substance abuse internationally.³²

In Bhutan, a study has demonstrated correlation between authoritarian parenting styles with substance abuse;³³ where young people adopt an avoidant coping style in response to their parents.

Other findings from the FGDs also emphasise the importance placed on academics and schooling when parents and families guide their children. This is representative of the societal importance placed on academics as the determining factor in forecasting success in life. The following testimonials stand as evidence of that:

“When I was in class one, I used to cry and tell my father that I didn't want to study and he told me that the one thing a child must focus on is gaining knowledge/their studies.” (a rural boarding student)

“(Parents and guardians tell us that) we should look up to and follow people who do well in studies and we shouldn't follow the people who don't study, are naughty and talk back to their parents” (rural boarding student)

“They advise us to study hard and to be independent. They tell us not to abuse drugs, not to steal, not to drink (alcohol).” (nun, rural nunnery)

³² T. M. Chaplin. (2014, December). “Parental-Adolescent Drug Use Discussions: Physiological Responses and Associated Outcomes”. *Journal of Adolescent Health*. [Online]. vol. 55, issue 6. Available: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1054139X14002171>

³³ T. Choden, (2019, Autumn). “Influence of Family Dynamics on the Prevalence of Substance Use Among Emerging Adults in Bhutan”. *Rig Tshoei*. [Online]. vol. 2, issue 1. Available: <https://www.rtc.bt/images/rightshoei/Rig-Tshoei-2019-Vol-2-No-1.pdf#page=114>

It is interesting to note that a large majority of the children in the FGDs spoke about academic guidance and made no reference to receiving guidance in negotiating peer pressures, relationships and nurturing emotional resilience that are equally important for their development and well-being. This contrasts with a 2016 national health survey with students aged 13-17 which found that students looked not for “material things” but “for safety, a place to talk and connect with friends and feel loved and trusted ... stable and caring relationships at home, in their schools and with their peers”.³⁴

The rise in the number of mental health issues and suicides nationally over the years has been a cause of concern. Other research conducted on the causes of suicides reveal “academic pressure and expectations from schools and parents along with concern regarding stability in their homes and their future” as some of the causes.³⁵

Findings from the FGDs also point towards limited parental care/guidance experienced mostly by children in boarding facilities, rural areas and those with special needs.

A probe into the family environment during the FGDs revealed that life is increasingly busy and children are left on their own.

A student from the rural boarding school shared: “Even before breakfast my father works, after breakfast my mom goes to work in the shop and me and my younger brother go off on our own.” Another said:

“If our parents don’t take good care of us, sometimes we can get addicted to drugs and may even commit suicide”. Echoing similar sentiments, another child complained that the parents “... are not spending enough time with us”.

On the importance of rehabilitative guidance from adults like parents and school counsellors when children go astray with substance abuse, a child from a rural boarding school said, “I think the parents give up on the child fairly easily saying that the child is spoiled and there's nothing they can do to help now. When in fact, the child cannot change that quickly and recovery takes time.” Children shared how they hear their friends at night “crying due to depression and when you ask them what's wrong they tell us that they are just not

³⁴ Ibid.,

³⁵ S. Pelden, (2016, July). “Making sense of suicides by school students in Bhutan: documenting a societal dialogue”. School of Occupational Therapy and Social Work. Curtin University. [Online]. Available: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/312093777_Making_sense_of_suicides_by_school_students_in_Bhutan_documenting_a_societal_dialogue



▲ **PHOTO** : A child with disability from Draktsho seek clarification on the survey from his teacher

feeling well.” When asked why their friends don’t seek help from school counsellors and teachers, their friends say things like “How can I trust them, when I can’t trust myself.”

While the schools in Bhutan have counsellors, it appears that students in need do not seek help on their own accord. They are not able to muster the confidence to seek help and also believe that their problems are too private to be confided in school counsellors.

Care, Guidance & Parenting of Vulnerable Children

There is much evidence to show that parental involvement is an important contributor to the ‘educational processes and experiences of their children’ either in school activities or in school-associated activities at

home.³⁶ However, some children in FGDs across all the different vulnerable groups share that they have not experienced the level of care and guidance that they had wished from their parents:

“Before, he (my father) used to take care of me but now he doesn’t. When I hurt my legs or when I am sick, he doesn’t care. My father used to be a good man, but now he has changed.”

“My parents don’t support me. I stay with my relatives the most. My aunt gives me opportunities to do many things. She gives me good clothes to wear and good food to eat.”

“Our teachers listen to whatever we say and help us... whereas, our parents drink alcohol and don’t listen to us at all.”

Respondents also pointed out that female members of the family are primary caregivers

³⁶ W. H. Jeynes (2005, May 1). “A meta-analysis of the relation of parental involvement to urban elementary school student academic achievement.” Urban Education. [Online]. Available: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085905274540>

of children with special needs. The lack of engagement from the fathers or male adults is of concern because of the detrimental impact it can have on their children's "education, mothers' stress levels, and family cohesion".³⁷ Such an example in lack of paternal care impacting a mother's well-being can be found in the following testimonial by a child with special needs:

"My mother is an alcoholic, she never listens to what I say. I told her to quit drinking but she never listens. I feel sad when my parents don't listen to me."

Data from the quantitative survey also shows that of the many domains affecting children with disabilities (access to education, medical care, sports, games, cultural activities), their ability to participate in political processes poses the greatest challenge. With only 74.5% who either 'strongly agree' or 'agree', their participation (as perceived by themselves and able-bodied children) rank the lowest. Of the total respondents, 5.5% and 9.2% of the children disagree that those with disabilities enjoy the same level of social and political participation respectively. Similarly, 5.7% of the children do not agree that children with vulnerabilities enjoy the same level of access to education. (See table 12)

Table 12: Disability

Disability	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I don't know	Total
Children with disabilities (ex. blind, deaf, mute, and those with physical and neural disability) can go to school like other children	60.7	28.5	4.6	1.1	5.2	100.0
Children with disabilities (ex. blind, deaf, mute, and those with physical and neural disability) can get medical help like other children	71.1	22.1	2.6	0.2	4.1	100.0
Children with disabilities (ex. blind, deaf, mute, and those with physical and neural disability) can participate in sports, games, cultural activities, etc.	56.5	31.5	4.4	1.1	6.5	100.0
Children with disability (ex. blind, deaf, mute, and those with physical and neural disability) can attend meetings & elections for captains and other positions	39.9	34.6	7.6	1.8	16.1	100.0

³⁷ K. Jigyel, J. Miller, S. Mavropoulou, J. Berman. (2019, July 4). "Parental Involvement in Supporting Their Children with Special Educational Needs at School and Home in Bhutan". *Australasian Journal of Special Education*. [Online]. Available: <https://eprints.qut.edu.au/131115/>



^ **PHOTO** : Nuns at their study room engage in a conversation on the education they receive at the nunnery

With regards to children in the monastic institutions (respondents were mostly teenagers), lack of parental care and guidance center mostly on ‘respect for children’s views’ as parents take important life decisions for their children which may be contrary to the child’s aspirations:

“My wishes and expectations are different from my parents, but they expect me to do the things that they think is right for me and they don’t discuss these things with me. I wished to go to school but my parents enrolled me at a nunnery.”

“I wish to do something else but I have to stay and continue (in the) nunnery.”

Education is a social equaliser; in the best interest of the children, parents enrol them

in schools and monasteries. In the past, it was customary of Bhutanese families to enrol at least one child in the monastery and keep another as a farmhand for spiritual and economic reasons. While this study does not inquire into the rationale behind the parents’ choice of education (western versus spiritual education) for their children, it is important for teen monks and nuns to know how to discuss their interests and life choices with their parents and significant others who have their best interest in their heart.

Alternative Care

The findings of the regional quantitative survey as it pertains to alternative care show a sizable percentage of children that are unaware or ‘disagrees’ with quality care

received by children without parents. While 23.1% of children 'don't know' if adopted children are treated well, a substantial 9.4% 'disagrees' with the statement. This percentage remains the highest among all other statements under the theme.

When probed into the inner world of the children regarding adoption, a vignette of experiences support the findings from the quantitative survey:

"One of my neighbours adopted a child and they constantly bully him. One time, I remember him being put in the washing machine and one time he was starved." (urban day-student)

"When children get adopted, they [adopted family] sometimes make us their servants, they make us wash the dishes, clean the rooms and give them either little food or rotten food." (child, shelter home)

"When fights occur between the children, the parents scold the adopted child by saying that they are adopted and they don't fit in here, they should leave. The adopted child may feel sad, depressed, and even suicidal" (rural boarding student)

"[An adopted friend] was given all the properties, but in some cases, the [adopted] children are [made] to work like a servant, ... showing their anger and frustration on that adopted child." (urban day-student)

"A child's parents died but his mother's sister adopted him. He was taken to their house and they used to eat the meat but give the bone to him and if he didn't eat the bone, they would beat him." (urban day-student)

Violence takes on many forms: self-inflicted, interpersonal and collective, all of which results either in physical injury, death, psychological harm, sexual and emotional abuse, mal-development, neglect or deprivation.³⁸ A comprehensive 3-year, multi-phase (desk review, qualitative and quantitative) research conducted by the National Commission for Women & Children (NCWC) and UNICEF shows that 60% of children in Bhutan aged 13-17 have experienced at least one incidence of physical violence in their lives. And a multi-year (2009-2020) compilation of rape statistics done by NCWC showed that 70% of all rape committed were against children.³⁹

³⁸ A. Kulkarni. (2016, Winter), "Adolescents and Youth in South Asia: A Force to Reckon With". The Druk Journal [Online]. Vol. 2, Issue 2. Available: <http://drukjournal.bt/adolescents-and-youth-in-south-asia-a-force-to-reckon-with-2/>

³⁹ Kuensel. (2020, Nov. 10). NCWC calls for a harsher penalty for sexual assault perpetrators. [Online]. Available: <https://kuenselonline.com/ncwc-calls-for-a-harsher-penalty-for-sexual-assault-perpetrators/>

With regards to alternative care (see table 11) 12.1% of all children 'didn't know' if orphaned children are taken care of by their relatives or not. Similarly, 23.1% "didn't know" if the adopted children were treated well by their adopted parents but 9.4% of them believe that adopted children are not treated well. The FGDs are revealing in terms of first-hand experiences of children without parents:

"I am someone without parents as my mother passed away and my father does not look after me. I am currently being looked after by my mother's sister (aunt). She also takes care of all my school expenses." (rural boarding student)

"When I was younger, I went to Samdrup Jongkhar to meet my father as he lives there with his wife. When my father was not around, my stepmother told me and my brothers not to come and visit my father." (rural boarding student)

Additionally, children who did not necessarily experience neglect or harm first-hand, spoke on second-hand cases and stories that they had experienced from their friends and the news.



▲ **PHOTO**: A child and her sibling take a walk around Drugyel, Paro

"When I was in class 7 I had a friend and when he made small mistakes, his stepfather beat him mercilessly." (urban day student)

"A girl was sexually abused by her stepfather which even came in the news." (urban day student)



However, not all experiences with adoption are negative; two children from a rural boarding school share their positive experiences:

“My father treats my adopted brother very well. For eg. When I fight with my adopted brother and tell him that he shouldn’t be in my house since he’s not even my real brother, my

father scolds me, tells me to not treat him this way and tells me that when I grow up, I will understand how sad he [adopted brother] must feel.”

“I also have an adopted younger brother that is put into our family census and is treated well. In fact, my parents treat him better than me.”



< **PHOTO** : Children from various parts of Bhutan engaged in sketching their ideal Bhutan

Table 13 : Special protection measures

Special Protection Measures	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I don't know	Total
I don't have to do work that is unsafe or harmful to me	68.8	24.7	3.8	0.8	2.0	100.0
I know where to report if someone tries to take me away forcefully	63.6	27.4	4.0	0.3	4.7	100.0
<i>I know that nobody can make me do things that are harmful</i>	56.3	30.3	5.3	1.2	6.8	100.0

N=657

When we examine the data from the survey, of the three statements under special protection measures (protection from harmful work, kidnapping/trafficking and exploitation), children are least aware that they cannot be exploited.

Discrimination and Exclusion of Children with Disabilities

Many children in the FGDs are sensitive and empathetic to peers living with disabilities. They talked about the

challenges that children with vulnerabilities face both in terms of practical challenges as well as in terms of social discrimination. A child shared how he saw “a story about a disabled kid in the BBS where he needs the support of his brother just to go to the toilet”. He believes that “they need support from other people but there are not enough staff and teachers at the school”.

“Some tease them which makes them [children living with disability] not able to come (to schools)”.

“Some parents don't support and discourage their own children from going to school”.

“We shouldn't judge as they are born like that”.

Children living with vulnerabilities shared how they experience more discrimination:

“... the school tries to minimise [discrimination] and guide them [other children] towards the right track”.

“No one supports us because we are poor. They judge us by our appearance and ignore us”.

“Some students lie and spread rumours about us in the hostel which leads to arguments”.

“For example, when we go out to town, our friends [people without disabilities] push us”.

Peer helpers curb discrimination and abuse by reporting the incidents to school counsellors, however, apparently many abusers go undetected as abuse happens mostly in boys toilet area as shared by a respondent thus:

“most of the students [abusers] are not being caught as some of the peer helpers are girls and they are scared of the boys...[girl] peer helpers are not allowed in the boys toilet”

While acknowledging free education and health care in the country, children with disabilities face challenges in accessing public services as described:

“Yes, but there are not enough facilities for the children. For example, there are no wheelchair ramps for children who use wheelchairs”.

“There is no one to support us. For example, children who use wheelchairs need someone to help and support them. Just like them, we need someone to help and support us”.

"When I visit the hospital all by myself, I don't understand what the doctors are saying and they don't understand what I am saying. We are not able to communicate with each other so we need an interpreter to help us".

"I can search for information on google and it helps me to understand better. We get to know what is happening in our country on BBS. They [BBS] used to [interpret in sign language] but for now, that has stopped"

"If there are subtitles for the news as well as an interpreter that would help us".

Children with disabilities at Draktsho Vocational Training Center for Special Children and Youth touched most on challenges faced with communication whether with their own family members or availing of social services:

"Because of my speech problem, it is hard to communicate with them [family members] as I have to speak repeatedly for them to understand".

"People who have trouble communicating verbally have a hard time communicating with the doctors and getting proper diagnosis".

When asked about equality in accessing medical help, a child replied *"No, I don't think so, because certain people who go to the hospital face problems receiving help"*. Additionally, they also remain not too optimistic about participating in democratic spaces; *"I think we can't because of our disability, we can't communicate clearly and people have trouble understanding us. Whereas, other people who can communicate clearly can and do participate"*.

In terms of inclusion, children with disabilities spoke mostly on sports and one child spoke on education:

"People with disabilities should play together and able-bodied people should play together".

"They do not give us these opportunities [in sports, games and cultural activities]".

"In places like Thimphu, Paro, Phuentsholing [students can attend school like able-bodied children]".

Intergenerational Digital Divide

Lopen Karma Phuntsho (PhD), the leading Bhutanese historian says, "Bhutan has changed much more in the past 50 years

than the 500 years before that”.⁴⁰ While has provided Bhutan with the opportunity the consciously measured and sustained approach towards opening up to the world to balance the pace of modernisation with her cultural values and traditions, one of the impacts has been the widening generational gap. Aptly characterising the state of Bhutanese youth as being in a “cultural limbo”, cultural scholars have highlighted their “diachronic life... having relinquished the old Bhutanese ways of life yet not fully reaching the new modern lifestyle which they see being lived in developed countries”.⁴¹



^ **PHOTO** : A student talks about his mother as his hero during ‘My Storybook’ exercise

The generation gap is evident in how technology is also viewed, understood and consumed. While all children of Bhutan make up the entirety of the ‘digital native population’, their parents constitute the ‘digital migrants’ section, who prefer a book over their smartphones as the primary source of information and processes information in a linear manner. This stands in stark contrast to the children who “prefer their graphics before their text”, “random

access (like hypertext)”, “function best when networked”, “prefer games to serious work” and “thrive on instant gratification and frequent rewards”.⁴² The difference in view towards technology especially as it relates to the move towards digitalisation in education has exacerbated the generational gap even further:

⁴⁰ K. Phuntsho. (2016, Winter), “The Promise of Broken Youth: A Positive Perspective”. The Druk Journal [Online]. Vol. 2, Issue 2. Available: <http://drukjournal.bt/the-promise-of-broken-youth-a-positive-perspective/>

⁴¹ K. Phuntsho. (2016, Winter), “The Promise of Broken Youth: A Positive Perspective”. The Druk Journal [Online]. Vol. 2, Issue 2. Available: <http://drukjournal.bt/the-promise-of-broken-youth-a-positive-perspective/>

⁴² M. Prensky (2001, October). “Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants”. MCB University Press. [Online]. vol. 9, issue 5. Available: <https://www.marcprensky.com/writing/Prensky%20-%20Digital%20Natives,%20Digital%20Immigrants%20-%20Part1.pdf>

"They think we are getting bad influence from it [technology] and they blame our sickness on the phone as well". (urban day student)

"Since last year I didn't have [a] phone, my parents would say that you are just gonna play games and not concentrate on studies". (urban day student)

"When we fall sick they blame it on technology... they [teachers] just say I am pretending to not attend the class". (urban day student)

"[Our family think] ...that we will misuse the phones and become spoiled". (rural boarding student)

Parents remain cautious of the double-edged nature of technology since they were introduced to technology much later in their lives and have other frames of references against which to understand and process their world. On the contrary, most children primarily rely on technology as the medium through which to develop their worldview. The differences in attitude towards technology has created tensions between children and their parents.

Children share about violation of privacy as their "phones are checked" without their permission.

However, another child from the same focus group argued that the parents should in fact check their phones to make sure that the children aren't misusing it. While some children formed their opinion based on their rights, others emphasised responsibility that comes with gaining personal access to technology. Another child spoke about a middle ground where certain apps and browser history should be checked but other messaging apps should not be checked since "we just talk for fun but then they think we are doing it for real when we are actually joking".

The generation gap also has had implications in other areas of life. The children spoke of not being able to engage in volunteering and co-curricular clubs/groups due to mistrust from their parents/guardians. An urban day scholar student said, "We do voluntary work at school but they assume we are roaming in town". Another child also spoke about his interest



^ **PHOTO:** Youth volunteers from Drugyel Central School engaged in an advocacy campaign to reduce plastic waste

in joining the Scouts Association but was compelled to quit since it involved “going places that were far”. The children spoke about how the stories of one or two errant youth have impinged on their interest such that even when they are genuine, their parents/guardians lean on the more cautious and mistrusting side.

The findings here highlight the emerging challenges to parenting posed by the proliferation of technology in all aspects of

life including education and socialisation. Children are open to the use of technology and its potential while adults are wary of its double-edged nature. However, as education and public services become digitised, access to the Internet and digital devices become inevitable. This global trend underscores the importance of instituting guidelines for proper use of technological infrastructure and facilities and mitigating the effects of misuse in educational settings and the country at large.

Experience of Abuse

Generally, children in Bhutan are safe across various domains (home, school, neighbourhood and online) with more than 80% who have ‘never’ experienced abuse (see table below). This should be understood in the context of ‘serious’ harm or abuse and

not in terms of ‘violence generally’, where physical violence has been defined as ranging from having one’s ear pulled, being made to stand for a long time, carrying stones, etc., to more serious forms such as being hit with a belt, stick, wire, being stabbed, etc.⁴³

Table 14: Experience of abuse

Within the last one year, I have experienced serious harm (abuse)	Never	Hardly	Often	Very often	Missing	Total
<i>At home by parents/ guardians.</i>	83.3	13.7	2.6	0.3	0.2	100.0
At school by teachers.	86.6	10.8	1.7	0.6	0.3	100.0
At school by peers.	83.3	14.6	1.5	0.3	0.3	100.0
By neighbours.	88.4	8.8	1.8	0.5	0.5	100.0
On the streets by strangers.	89.6	8.4	1.4	0.5	0.2	100.0
<i>Online (facebook, WeChat, Instagram etc).</i>	81.3	14.2	3.5	0.8	0.3	100.0

N=657

⁴³ NCWC & UNICEF, “Research on violence against children in Bhutan: A report,” Thimphu, 2016

A 2016 study reported that 6 in 10 children experience “at least one incident of physical violence in their lifetime” and 1 in 10 children experience sexual violence (defined as ranging from pulling down underwear to touching of girls’ breasts and buttocks to ‘forcing sex’) at least once in their lifetime.⁴⁴

The current study shows that more than 80% of children have ‘never’ experienced serious harm or abuse in the last one year. However, the percent of respondents choosing “hardly” ranges from 8 to about 15 indicating that they did experience some serious harm in the last one year, though not often.



▲ **PHOTO:** A student checks her smartphone for feed updates

⁴⁴ Ibid.,

Among the various domains, the findings from this report show that children experience abuse mostly 'online' with 14.2% (or 93 from 657) who experience it 'hardly' and 3.5% (or 23 from 657) who experience it 'often'. Other national studies have demonstrated that more than 20% of children reported exposure to pornography; however, the findings are inconclusive as to whether the exposure represents an experience of risk and violence or simply a part of 'normal' adolescent experience. Nevertheless, the qualitative FGDs show that online violence is prevalent among vulnerable groups of children:

"My friend's friend had requested to be friends with me [on Facebook]. So I accepted their request and we were good friends before. But now they have started to send vulgar messages on messenger"

"Some strangers send us vulgar messages and pictures"

"Sometimes people can make us do their dirty work and although we can say no we can be forced to do so and/by bullying [cyber bullying]"

Table 15: Violence against children

Violence against children	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I don't know	Total
My government will protect me if I am seriously harmed (abused)	65.4	27.5	2.0	0.8	4.3	100.0
I can go to the hospital if I fall sick	71.4	24.8	2.1	0.9	0.8	100.0
I have clean water to drink	65.6	30.3	3.0	0.3	0.8	100.0
I have enough healthy food	71.4	26.6	1.2	0.3	0.5	100.0
I am safe in the place I live	66.8	27.4	2.1	0.5	3.2	100.0
<i>I know what sexual abuse (rape, bad touch, etc.) is</i>	<i>70.3</i>	<i>24.0</i>	<i>2.6</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>2.6</i>	<i>100.0</i>
<i>I know where to report if I experience sexual abuse</i>	<i>61.6</i>	<i>27.5</i>	<i>4.3</i>	<i>0.8</i>	<i>5.8</i>	<i>100.0</i>
The government advises us not to use and sell drugs	83.0	14.3	0.6	0.5	1.7	100.0

N=657

The second-most common experience of abuse happens ‘at home by parents/guardians’ with 2.6% (or 17 from 657) experiencing it ‘often’ and 13.7% (or 90 from 657) experiencing it on a lesser frequency -- ‘hardly’ (see table: 14). This remains consistent with one of the key conclusions of a nationwide study which concluded that “Children are harmed by people who have responsibility to care for them, including their family”.⁴⁵ Four in ten children experience physical harm at home; girls experience sexual abuse more often than boys with the perpetrator usually in a position of trust and authority, usually an older male family member. The study also found that girls experience verbal sexual harassment from strangers who prey on them on public transport and in other public spaces.

When broader studies highlighted above are analysed with findings from the survey, what is particularly worrying is that given the prevalence of sexual abuse, 5.7% (combining “disagree,” “strongly disagree” and “don’t know”) of the children are unaware of what sexual abuse is and 10.9% (combining “disagree,” “strongly disagree” and “don’t know”) of the children do not know where to report sexual abuse.

However, there are limitations to the findings from this report and other studies regarding violence and abuse committed at home. It is often difficult to ascertain the scale and incidence of what is perceived as “violence” by children.



▲ **PHOTO:** A child rides his toy scooter on the side of the road

⁴⁵ Ibid.,

❖ Conclusion





The mixed-method study involved a sample of 657 children including vulnerable groups like those living with disabilities, or in halfway homes and monasteries. In general, the study points to a fairly safe and enabling environment for children in Bhutan. A vast majority of the children report enjoying civil rights and freedom, a safe and caring home environment, free education and health services and opportunities that groom them holistically. The study also found that the children are aware of their rights to be protected from abuse and violence.

The focus group discussions, however, provided insights into some emerging issues such as the contradiction in educational policy and practice with regards to access to technology in schools, generational divide in attitude towards technology and subversion

of learning from co-curricular programmes to academic attainment. The study also reveals negligence and abuse experienced by vulnerable children at homes and in institutions and point to the need for more attention to these groups.

While the government continues to digitise education in response to the pandemic, teachers and students alike are caught ill-prepared. Teachers are neither equipped with the requisite IT infrastructure nor capacitated with the technological knowledge to deliver teaching online. The students have neither equitable access to learning nor to their teachers who themselves are in need of the guidance that the students seek from them. This has impinged on the children's right to “rest and play” as guaranteed under the CRC. Students from boarding schools have been

faced with the greatest disadvantage, with the hostel rules banning them from owning IT devices that make them dependent on their day scholar friends for the most basic of educational needs, i.e. notes.

While children in Bhutan receive good care and guidance from their parents, it is mostly centring around academic performance and ignores the other non-academic needs of a child such as pursuing an interest. Additionally, children with disabilities have faced negligence both in terms of care and in terms of their civic participation. When it comes to care received by children without parents who are either looked after by family members or adopted, most children believe that they are not well cared for.

While the children have many other areas of interests spanning from games and sports to volunteering, they are at times constrained by the lack of trust by their parents/guardians who believe that their reasons are false excuses. The generational gap in understanding and view towards technology has been the most consequential with far-reaching impacts on education

which is increasingly being digitised in a context where parents are increasingly challenged with providing guidance and direction for their children.

Finally, in terms of experiences with abuse or serious harm, around 80% of children said that they have never experienced it in their lives. However, among those that do, online abuses emerge as the most prevalent abuses and children with disabilities are no exception to such abuse. Additionally, the data also shows that with the exception of the online realm, the next most common space of abuse is within the walls of one's own homes by individuals such as one's parents or guardians who are supposedly in a position of trust and care.

abuses emerge as the most prevalent abuses with children with disabilities expressing how people send them vulgar images and pictures without their consent. Additionally, the data also shows that with the exception of the online realm, the next most common space of abuse is within the walls of one's own homes by individuals such as one's one parents or guardians who are supposedly in a position of trust and power.

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❖ Appendices





Appendix 1: CRC Survey (English)

This is a survey conducted by Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy (BCMD) to develop a Children's report for the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) periodic reporting. The survey is confidential and will only be used to understand the situation of children in Bhutan.

We would like to request you to be as honest as possible with your answers below. If you are unable to answer, please select 'I don't know'.
Thank you for your contribution and time.

1 Gender *

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Other:

2 Age *

- ☐ 10
- ☐ 11
- ☐ 12
- ☐ 13
- ☐ 14
- ☐ 15
- ☐ 16
- ☐ 17

3 Father's education level **

- ☐ No formal education
- ☐ High school
- ☐ Graduate & above
- ☐ Not Applicable (Deceased)
- ☐ I don't know

4 Mother's education level *

- ☐ No formal education
- ☐ High school
- ☐ Graduate & above
- ☐ Not Applicable (Deceased)
- ☐ I don't know

5 Father's Employment

- ☐ Agriculture (Farmer)
- ☐ Government
(Civil servant, Teachers)
- ☐ Private (Business, Shopkeeper,
Tourist Guide, Construction, etc.)
- ☐ Unemployed
- ☐ Others:

7 Mother Tongue

- ☐ Dzongkha
- ☐ Sharchopkha
- ☐ Lhotshamkha
- ☐ Kurtoepkha
- ☐ Chalepkha
- ☐ Gongdupkha
- ☐ Khengkha
- ☐ Mangdepkha
- ☐ Other

6 Father's Employment

- ☐ Agriculture (Farmer)
- ☐ Government
(Civil servant, Teachers)
- ☐ Private (Business, Shopkeeper,
Tourist Guide, Construction, etc.)
- ☐ Unemployed
- ☐ Others:

8 Current place of residence *

- ☐ Rural
- ☐ Urban

9 Who do you currently live with? *

- ☐ Together with both parents
- ☐ With one of the parents
- ☐ With relatives
- ☐ All by myself

10 Are you in a boarding school? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

11 Are you a child with special needs? *

☐ Yes

☐ No



A-General Principles

Sl. No	Statement	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> I don't Know
1	I am treated equally like other genders (boys, girls, others)					
2	I am treated equally like kids from rich families					
3	I am treated equally like kids who speak a different language					
4	I am treated equally like kids from other dzongkhags					
5	My parents do what is best for me					
6	My family & teachers make sure I am safe and healthy					
7	My family & teachers listen to me					
8	My family & teachers discuss with me on topics that are important to me					



B-Civil Rights & Freedom

Sl. No	Statement	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> I don't Know
1	I can talk freely about things that matter to me so long as it does not harm another person					
2	I am free to practice my religion					
3	I am free to form or join groups that benefit us (Ex. Clubs)					
4	I have the right to privacy (If I don't want to share something, I don't have to)					
5	I can complain to the police if someone says things about me that are not true					
6	I have what is important for my education (e.g. Internet, books, radio, television newspapers etc.)					



C-Violence Against Children

Sl. No	Statement	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> I don't Know
1	My government will protect me if I am seriously harmed (abused)					
2	I can go to the hospital if I fall sick					
3	I have clean water to drink					
4	I have enough healthy food					
5	I am safe in the place I live					
6	I know what sexual abuse (rape, bad touch, etc.) is					
7	I know where to report if I experience sexual abuse					
8	The government advises us not to use and sell drugs					



D-Family Environment & Alternative Care

Sl. No	Statement	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> I don't Know
1	My family/guardian takes good care of me					
2	My family/guardian teaches me to be responsible and independent					
3	My parents/guardians teach me to be a good human being					
4	I know that no one can take me away from my family unless my home environment is unsafe					
5	No one can stop me from being in contact with my parents if they live outside Bhutan					
6	The police will help if people try to kidnap me					
7	Children without parents are looked after by family members and other relatives					
8	Children who are adopted are treated well by their adopted parents					



E-Education, Leisure & Cultural Activities

Sl. No	Statement	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> I don't Know
1	I can get free education in government schools					
2	I can continue my education till whatever level I am capable of					
3	Schools allow me to explore my interests, talents and abilities					
4	Schools teach me to respect culture and environment					
5	Schools teach me to respect other people					
6	I get time to rest and relax					
7	I have opportunities to participate in cultural activities, arts and sports which I am interested in					



F-Disability

Sl. No	Statement	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> I don't Know
1	Children with disabilities (ex. blind, deaf, mute, and those with physical and neural disability) can go to school like other children					
2	Children with disabilities (ex. blind, deaf, mute, and those with physical and neural disability) can get medical help like other children					
3	Children with disabilities (ex. blind, deaf, mute, and those with physical and neural disability) can participate in sports, games, cultural activities, etc.					
4	Children with disability (ex. blind, deaf, mute, and those with physical and neural disability) can attend meetings & elections for captains and other positions					



G-Special Protection Measures

Sl. No	Statement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	I don't Know
1	I don't have to do work that is unsafe or harmful to me					
2	I know where to report if someone tries to take me away forcefully					
3	I know that nobody can make me do things that are harmful					




H-Experience of Serious Harm (Abuse)

Sl. No	Statement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Never	Hardly	Often	Very Often
1	Within the last one year, I have experienced serious harm (abuse) at home by parents/guardians				
2	Within the last one year, I have experienced serious harm (abuse) at school by teachers				
3	Within the last one year, I have experienced serious harm (abuse) at school by peers				
4	Within the last one year, I have experienced serious harm (abuse) by neighbours				
5	Within the last one year, I have experienced serious harm (abuse) on the streets by strangers				
6	Within the last one year, I have experienced serious harm (abuse) online (facebook, WeChat, Instagram etc)				



KADRINCHEY LA!

Your views matter in making our country an inclusive,
safe and happy place for children to live and grow in





Appendix 2 : CRC Survey (Dzongkha)

འཛིན་པ་ལྟ་ཞིབ་འདི་འབྲུག་བཟང་བརྒྱུད་དང་དམངས་གཙོ་ལྷན་ཁག་གི་སྤྱི་ལུ་ལཱ་འཛིན་པ་དབང་མཐུན་གྲོས་ཀྱི་དུས་མཆོམས་སྟེན་
ཞུགས་འཕེལ་བཟང་ཞིའི་དོན་ལུ་ཨིན། སྟེན་ཞུ་འདི་གསང་བ་ཨིན་མ་དུ་འབྲུག་ལུ་ཨ་ལཱ་འཛིན་གནས་སྤང་ཏེ་གོ་ཞིའི་དོན་ལུ་ཨིན།

ཁྱོད་ཨ་ལུ་ཚུ་གིས་ཡང་ འོག་ལུ་ཡོད་མའི་ངེ་བ་ཚུ་ཕྱང་འདི་དྲོང་པོ་འབདེ། ལན་ཁྱབ་མ་ཚུ་བ་པ་ཅིན་
ང་མི་ཤེས་ཟེར་མི་འདི་ནང་ལུ་ཏྲགས་བཀལ་གནང་། དུས་ཚོད་སྟོན་འདི་ཁྱབ་སྟེར་གནང་མི་ལུ་བཀའ་དྲིན་ཆེ།

༡༥ སྐྱོད་པུ་ལྟེ་བ།

☐ སྐྱོད་

☐ སྐྱོད་

☐ སྐྱོད་

༡༦ སྐྱོད་པུ་ལྟེ་བ།

☐ ༡༠

☐ ༡༡

☐ ༡༢

☐ ༡༣

☐ ༡༤

☐ ༡༥

☐ ༡༦

☐ ༡༧

༡༨ སྐྱོད་པུ་ལྟེ་བ་ལྟེ་བ།

☐ སྐྱོད་པུ་ལྟེ་བ་ལྟེ་བ་

☐ སྐྱོད་པུ་ལྟེ་བ་

☐ སྐྱོད་པུ་ལྟེ་བ་ལྟེ་བ་

☐ སྐྱོད་པུ་ལྟེ་བ་

☐ སྐྱོད་པུ་ལྟེ་བ་

༡༩ སྐྱོད་པུ་ལྟེ་བ་ལྟེ་བ།

☐ སྐྱོད་པུ་ལྟེ་བ་ལྟེ་བ་

☐ སྐྱོད་པུ་ལྟེ་བ་

☐ སྐྱོད་པུ་ལྟེ་བ་ལྟེ་བ་

☐ སྐྱོད་པུ་ལྟེ་བ་

☐ སྐྱོད་པུ་ལྟེ་བ་

ཡ། ཡ་པའི་ལཱ་གཡོག།

☐ སོ་ནམ་ཁྱིང་པ།

☐ གཞུང་ཁྱིང་གཡོག་པ་ སློབ་དཔོན།

☐ སྒྲེར་གྱི་ ཁྱིང་ལཱ་འབད་མི་ ལྷ་བཤལ་ལམ་སྟོན་པ་
བཟོ་སྐྱུན་པ་ གཞུན།

ལ། ཡ་པའི་ལཱ་གཡོག།

☐ སོ་ནམ་ཁྱིང་པ།

☐ གཞུང་ཁྱིང་གཡོག་པ་ སློབ་དཔོན།

☐ སྒྲེར་གྱི་ ཁྱིང་ལཱ་འབད་མི་ ལྷ་བཤལ་ལམ་སྟོན་པ་
བཟོ་སྐྱུན་པ་ གཞུན།

ཧ། ལ་སྐད།

☐ སྒྲེང་ལ

☐ ཤར་ཕྱོགས་པའི་ལ་སྐད།

☐ ལྷོ་མཚམས་པའི་ལ་སྐད།

☐ སྐར་སྟོད་པའི་ལ་སྐད།

☐ ཆ་ལིབ་པའི་ལ་སྐད།

☐ དགོང་དྲུང་པའི་ལ་སྐད།

☐ ལེངས་ལ

☐ མང་སྤེལ་པའི་ལ་སྐད།

☐ གཞུན།

ད། ད་ལྟོ་སྟོན་གནས།

☐ མཐའ་བྱུར་

☐ ལྷོ་མ་ལ

ཨ། ད་ལྟོ་ཁྱིང་ག་དང་གཅིག་ལར་སྟོན་པ་ཡིན་ནེ་?

☐ ཤམ་གཉིས་དང་གཅིག་ལར་

☐ ཤམ་ཡ་གཅིག་དང་

☐ སྐྱེན་ཆ་དང་གཅིག་ལར་

☐ ང་རང་རྒྱུང་མ་གཅིག་

☐ སློབ་དཔོན་དང་གཅིག་ལར་

༡༠། རྩོད་ནང་སྡོད་སྒོའ་བྲལ་ནང་སྡོད་པ་ཡིན་ནེ་

☐ ཡིན

☐ མེན

༡༡། རྩོད་དམིགས་གསལ་ཤོད་བའ་པོ་ལུ་སྒོག་ཐོག་མི།

གི་ཨ་ལུ་ཡིན་ནེ་

☐ ཡིན

☐ མེན

༡༢། རྩོད་མི་སྡེའི་བར་བརྒྱུད་ལག་ལེན་འཐབ་ནི་ཡོད་ག་

(Ex. Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok, WeChat, etc.)

☐ ཡིན

☐ མེན



༡༩ སྤྱིར་བཏང་གི་གཞི་རྩ།

ཨང	དགའ་བརྗོད	<input type="checkbox"/> དེས་གཏན་ འབད་ ཁ་བཟེད་ནི	<input type="checkbox"/> ཁ་བཟེད་	<input type="checkbox"/> ཁ་མི་བཟེད་	<input type="checkbox"/> དེ་གཏན་འབད་ ཁ་མི་བཟེད་	<input type="checkbox"/> ད་མི་ཤེས་
༡	ད་མོ་མོ་གཡེར་དང་གཅིག་ཁར་འདྲ་མཉམ་སྤྱོད་བཟུང་ཡོད་ཅིང་། བྱམས་གཞན་གྱི་					
༢	ད་མཐུག་པའི་ཨ་ལུ་དང་གཅིག་ཁར་འདྲ་མཉམ་སྤྱོད་བཟུང་ཡོད་ཅིང་།					
༣	ད་ཨ་ལུ་ཁ་སྒྲོད་མ་འདྲ་མཉམ་སྤྱོད་ཨ་ལུ་ཚུ་དང་འདྲ་མཉམ་འབད་ བཟུང་ཡོད་ཅིང་།					
༤	ད་རྒྱུ་ཁག་མེ་མེད་ཨ་ལུ་དང་གཅིག་ཁར་འདྲ་མཉམ་སྤྱོད་བཟུང་ཡོད་ཅིང་།					
༥	ད་འདི་མཐུ་ཁྱིམ་དུ་གཡོ་མཉམ་སྤྱོད་ཨ་ལུ་འདྲ་མཉམ་འབད་ཡོད་ཅིང་།					
༦	ད་འདི་མཐུ་དང་སྤྱོད་དེ་མཉམ་སྤྱོད་ཨ་ལུ་ཁྱིམ་དུ་འདྲ་མཉམ་སྤྱོད་འབད་ བཟུང་ཡོད་ཅིང་།					
༧	ད་འདི་མཐུ་དང་སྤྱོད་དེ་མཉམ་སྤྱོད་ཨ་ལུ་ཁྱིམ་དུ་འདྲ་མཉམ་སྤྱོད་འབད་ བཟུང་ཡོད་ཅིང་།					
༨	ད་འདི་མཐུ་དང་སྤྱོད་དེ་མཉམ་སྤྱོད་ཨ་ལུ་ཁྱིམ་དུ་འདྲ་མཉམ་སྤྱོད་འབད་ བཟུང་ཡོད་ཅིང་།					



ཁོ་མི་སེར་གྱི་ཐོབ་དབང་དང་རང་དབང་།

ཨང	དག་བརྗོད	<input type="checkbox"/> ངེས་གཏན་ འབད་ ཁ་བཟེད་ནི	<input type="checkbox"/> ཁ་བཟེད་	<input type="checkbox"/> ཁ་མི་བཟེད	<input type="checkbox"/> ངེས་གཏན་འབད་ ཁ་མི་བཟེད	<input type="checkbox"/> ང་མི་ཤེས
༡	མི་གཞན་ལུ་མ་གཞོད་པ་ཅིན་ ང་ཁ་སྐབ་ དལ་དབང་ལུ་ཐོབ་དབང་ ཡོད།					
༢	ང་རང་གི་ཚེས་ལུ་གསལ་འབད་ནི་ལུ་དལ་དབང་ཡོད།					
༣	ང་རང་གིས་སྤྱེ་ཚན་བཟོ་ནི་དང་ཡང་ན་སྤྱེ་ཚན་ནང་འཛུལ་ནི་རང་དབང་ ཡོད།					
༤	ང་གསང་བ་ལུ་ཐོབ་དབང་ཡོད།					
༥	མི་གཞན་གི་ངའི་སྒོར་ལས་མ་བདེན་པའི་གཏམ་སྐབ་པ་ཅིན་ང་གིས་ ཁྱིམ་ས་སྤང་འགག་པ་ལུ་ཉོ་ག་བཤད་བཀོད་ཆོག།					
༦	ང་ལུ་ཤེས་ཡོན་ལུ་ཁག་ཆེ་བའི་བརྗོད་བརྒྱུད་ཚུ་ཡོད་ཅིན་ཁྱེད་ཀྱི་ཁྱེད་ དཔེ་ དེབ་ རྒྱང་མཐོང་ གསལ་ཤོག།					



གོ ཨ་ལུ་ལུ་རྩལ་སྤྱོད།

ཨང	རག་བརྗོད	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		ངེས་གཏན་ འབད་ ཁ་བཟེད་ནི	ཁ་བཟེད་	ཁ་མི་བཟེད་	ངེས་གཏན་འབད་ ཁ་མི་བཟེད་	ང་མི་ཤེས།
༡	ང་ལུ་ཤུག་འབད་རང་གཞི་པ་རྒྱབ་པ་ཅིན་ གཞུང་གིས་ང་ལུ་ སྤྱད་སྤྱོད་འབད་འོང་།					
༢	ང་ག་ཟུགས་མ་བདེ་བ་ཅིན་ སྤྲོན་ཁང་ནང་འབྱོར་ཆོག།					
༣	ང་ལུ་འཐུང་ཆུ་གཙང་ཉོ་གཏོ་ཡོད།					
༤	ང་ལུ་ཟས་བཟུད་ཅན་ལང་མ་འབད་ཡོད།					
༥	ང་སྤོད་སའི་ས་ཁོངས་འདི་ཉེན་སྲུང་ཅན་ཡོད།					
༦	ང་གི་ལུས་འབྲེལ་ལས་བརྟེན་པའི་རྩལ་སྤྱོད་ཀྱི་སྐོར་ ལས་ཀྱི་གོ་དོང་བཙུང་ལུས་འབྲེལ་ རྒྱུ་མེན་གྱི་ཐོག་ལས་ ག་ཟུགས་ཁང་ལག་པ་དྲེད་གསལ་ནི།					
༧	ང་ལུ་དབང་བཙུང་ལུས་འབྲེལ་འབད་ཡོད་པ་ཅིན་ ང་གིས་ག་སྤེལ་ སྤྲོན་ཁུ་འབད་ནི་ཨིན་ན་ཤེས།					
༨	གཞུང་གི་ང་བཅས་ལུ་ སྤྱོད་མཉམ་བཟུང་ནི་དང་ལག་ ལེན་འཐབ་མ་ཆོག་པའི་སྐོར་ལས་བསྐྱབ་བྱ་བྱེད་ཡོད།					



ང། བཟའ་ཚང་གི་གནས་སྐབས་དང་བདག་འཛིན་འབད་ནི་འི་ཐབས་ཤེས་གཞན།

ལང	བག་བཟློང་།	<input type="checkbox"/> ངེས་གཏན་ འབད་ ཁ་བཟེད་ནི	<input type="checkbox"/> ཁ་བཟེད་	<input type="checkbox"/> ཁ་མི་བཟེད་	<input type="checkbox"/> ངེས་གཏན་འབད་ ཁ་མི་བཟེད་	<input type="checkbox"/> ང་མི་ཤེས་
༡	ངའི་བཟའ་ཚང་/བདག་འཛིན་པ་གིས་ འཕྲ་བྱམས་སྤྱིང་གི་ཐོག་ལས་ བདག་འཛིན་འབད་འོང།					
༢	ངའི་བཟའ་ཚང་/བདག་འཛིན་པ་གིས་ ང་རའི་འགན་ཁག་དང་རང་ མགོ་རང་འདྲོང་འབད་སྤྱོད་ཚུ་བ་བཟོ་ནི་འི་དོན་ལཱ་སྤྱོད་བྱེད་མ་ཡིན།					
༣	ངའི་བཟའ་ཚང་/བདག་འཛིན་པ་གི་ ང་མི་ལེགས་ཤོམ་བཟོ་ནི་འི་དོན་ ལཱ་སྤྲོ་བ་བྱེད་མ་ཡིན།					
༤	ངའི་བཟའ་ཚང་གི་གནས་སྐབས་ཉེན་ཁ་ནང་མ་དོག་ མི་གཞན་གི་ ཡང་ ང་བཟའ་ཚང་ནང་ལས་ཕྱིར་སྤྱོད་གཏང་མི་ཆོག།					
༥	ངའི་ཕམ་ཕྱི་རྒྱལ་ཁབ་ནང་ཡིན་པ་ཅིན་ མི་གཞན་གིས་ཡང་ ཁོང་དང་འབྲེལ་བ་འཐབ་ནི་ལས་བཀའ་མི་ཆོག།					
༦	མི་གཞན་གིས་ ང་བཟོན་ཁྱིད་འབད་བ་ཅིན་ ཁྱིམ་སྤུང་འགག་པ་ གི་ངལ་ཆ་རོགས་འབད་འོང།					
༧	ཨ་ལཱ་ཕམ་མེད་མི་ཡིན་པ་ཅིན་ བཟའ་ཚང་ནང་གི་མི་ ཡང་ན་རང་གི་ཉེ་ཆོན་གཉེན་ཉེ་ཆོན་ལྟེ་བཟླ་བྱེད་འོང།					
༨	བྱ་ཆ་བའབད་ལེན་ཡོད་པའི་ཨ་ལཱ་ཚུ་ བྱ་ཆ་བའལེན་མི་འདི་གི་ རང་གི་བྱ་ལུ་འབད་བཟྱེད་འོང།					



3) བེས་ཡོན་ དཔལ་ཁོམས་དང་ལམ་སྲོལ་གྱི་ལས་སྒྲུབ།

ཨང	དག་བརྗོད	<div> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> <div> རེས་གཏུན་ འབད་ ཁ་བབེད་ནི </div>	<div> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> <div> ཁ་བབེད་ </div>	<div> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> <div> ཁ་མི་བབེད་ </div>	<div> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> <div> རེ་གཏུན་འབད་ ཁ་མི་བབེད་ </div>	<div> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> <div> ང་མི་ཤེས་ </div>
1	གཞུང་གི་སློབ་གྲྭ་ནང་ བེས་ཡོན་སྤྱད་པ་འབད་ཐོབ།					
2	ང་རའི་འབད་ཚུབ་ཚུན་ བེས་ཡོན་འཕྲོ་མཐུད་ལྷབ་ཆོག།					
3	སློབ་གྲྭ་གི་ང་རའི་སློབ་ རིག་ཅུལ་ ལྷོགས་ལྷུབ་ཚུ་ སྟོན་ནི་ལོ་གོ་ སྐབས་བྱིན་འོང།					
4	སློབ་གྲྭ་ནང་ལས་ ང་རའི་ལམ་སྲོལ་དང་གནས་སྤངས་ལུ་ ལྷན་ ཞབས་འབད་ནི་ཚུ་ སྟོན་བྱིན་མ་ཡིན།					
5	སློབ་གྲྭ་ནང་ལས་ མི་གཞན་ལུ་ལྷན་ཞབས་འབད་ནི་ཚུ་ སྟོན་བྱིན་མ་ ཡིན།					
6	ང་ངལ་གསོ་དང་དཔལ་ཁོམས་ཐོབ།					
7	ང་ལུ་ལམ་སྲོལ་གི་ལས་སྒྲུབ་དང་ཅུལ་རིག་ ང་རའི་དགའ་མི་ ཅེད་མོ་ཚུ་ནང་བཅའ་མར་གཏོགས་ནི་ལོ་གོ་སྐབས་ཡོད།					



ཆ) དབང་པོ་སློན་ཅན།

ཨང	དག་བརྗོད	<input type="checkbox"/> དེས་གཏན་ འབད་ ཁ་བཟེད་ནི	<input type="checkbox"/> ཁ་བཟེད་	<input type="checkbox"/> ཁ་མི་བཟེད	<input type="checkbox"/> དེ་གཏན་འབད་ ཁ་མི་བཟེད	<input type="checkbox"/> ང་མི་ཤེས
༡	དབང་པོ་སློན་ཅན་གྱི་ཨ་ལུ་དྲ་ཤེང་ན་མི་གཏོ་ཞུམ་ལྟ་ རྣམ་ཅོག་མ་གོ་ མི་ ཕྱི་གཟུགས་དང་རྩ་དང་འབྲེལ་བའི་སློན་ཅན་ ཚུ་ ཨ་ལུ་གཞན་ཟུམ་འབད་སློབ་གྲྭ་ནང་འགྱུར་ཆོག།					
༢	དབང་པོ་སློན་ཅན་གྱི་ཨ་ལུ་དྲ་ཤེང་ན་མི་གཏོ་ཞུམ་ལྟ་ རྣམ་ཅོག་མ་གོ་ མི་ ཕྱི་གཟུགས་དང་རྩ་དང་འབྲེལ་བའི་སློན་ཅན་ ཚུ་ ཨ་ལུ་གཞན་ ཟུམ་འབད་སློན་བཅོས་ཀྱི་ཞབས་ཏྲིག་འཐོབ།					
༣	དབང་པོ་སློན་ཅན་གྱི་ཨ་ལུ་དྲ་ཤེང་ན་མི་གཏོ་ཞུམ་ལྟ་ རྣམ་ཅོག་མ་གོ་ མི་ ཕྱི་གཟུགས་དང་རྩ་དང་འབྲེལ་བའི་སློན་ཅན་ ཚུ་ རྩ་མོ་དང་ ལམ་སྲོལ་གི་ལས་སྒྲུ་ནང་བཅའ་མར་གཏོགས་ཆོག།					
༤	དབང་པོ་སློན་ཅན་གྱི་ཨ་ལུ་དྲ་ཤེང་ན་མི་གཏོ་ཞུམ་ལྟ་ རྣམ་ཅོག་མ་གོ་ མི་ ཕྱི་གཟུགས་དང་རྩ་དང་འབྲེལ་བའི་སློན་ཅན་ ཚུ་ ཞལ་འཛོམས་ དང་ བཅོམ་འཐུ་གི་ལས་སྒྲུ་ནང་བཅའ་མར་གཏོགས་ཆོག།					



ཇོ་གཤམ་གཞན་ཅན་གི་ཉེན་སྲུང་གི་ཐབས་ལམ།

<div> <div>ཨང</div> <div>ངག་བརྗོད</div> <div> <div></div> <div> <div>ངེས་གཏན་འབད་ཁ་བཟེད་ནི</div> <div>ཁ་བཟེད་</div> <div>ཁ་མི་བཟེད</div> <div>ངེས་གཏན་འབད་ཁ་མི་བཟེད</div> <div>ང་མི་ཤེས</div> </div> </div> </div>					
<div> <div>༡</div> <div> <div>ཉེན་སྲུང་མེད་པའི་ལས་སྒྲ་དང་རང་ལུ་གཞོན་པའི་ལུ་ཚུ་ང་གི་འབད་མི་དགོ།</div> </div> </div>					
<div> <div>༢</div> <div> <div>དབང་བཅོང་གི་ཐོག་ལས་ང་འབྱིད་ཀྱི་བཅོན་ང་གིས་གསྟེ་ལུ་སྟན་ཅུ་འབད་ནི་ཡིན་ན་ཤེས།</div> </div> </div>					
<div> <div>༣</div> <div> <div>ང་རང་ལུ་གཞོན་པའི་ལས་སྒྲ་འདི་ཚུ་མི་ག་གི་ཡང་ང་ལུ་འབད་ཟེར་བང་བཅོང་མི་བཅུག།</div> </div> </div>					



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Appendix 3 : Focus Group Discussion Agenda

TIME	PROGRAMME
9 - 9:15 AM	REGISTRATION & consent forms
9:15-10:00 AM	WELCOME Icebreaker My Storybook exercise
10:00-11:00 AM	DISCOVER YOURSELF! Empowering exercise to create a safe space
11:00-11:15 AM	Tea Break
11:15-11:45 PM	INTRODUCTION Explain what CRC is and its importance to children
11:45-12:30 PM	EXERCISE Draw the BEST home / family & school Discuss their drawings
12:00-1:00 PM	MOCK SURVEY Introducing survey & mock practice
1:00-2:00PM	Lunch
2:00-4:00 PM	SURVEY Administer survey and FGD
4:00 - 4:30 PM	Tea & Closing



Appendix 4 : CRC Checklist for Teachers

Dear teachers, here's a list of considerations to bear in mind as you administer the survey to collect the voices and views of children from across the country. By ensuring that the following considerations are checked, the quality of the data and responses will be objective, honest and accurate to the experiences of the children. Please check each one off in the 'completed?' column before you administer the survey.

Have you...	You can...	Completed?
Educated on the difference between rights vs. privileges?	1. Prompt thinking on what constitutes 'needs vs. wants' 2. Engage in a 2-3 min discussion where children discuss their answers	
Earned the trust of children that the survey is completely confidential and that no answer will be traced back to them or the school?	1. Show respondents are not required to write their name anywhere in the survey 2. Assure children that they have nothing to gain or lose by answering one way or another. Only thing that matters is their honesty!	
Empowered children to answer based on their individual life experience?	1. Tell children that they know best about what they experienced and not their friend sitting next to them 2. Provide and explain the option of ticking 'I don't know' if they understand the statement but haven't experienced it yet	
Reflected on the power dynamic between you and the respondents?	1. Beware of the 'clever Hans effect' 2. Be careful of 'over explaining'; Explanation needs to be short, crisp and to the point 3. Your own bias/preferences towards certain items	





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