

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN REMOTE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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Abstract

Background and Purpose:

The rapid transition to remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the critical role of parents in early childhood education. Young learners' limited independence in digital learning environments required parents to assume expanded instructional and supportive roles. This study explores how parents engaged in their children's remote early childhood education, the challenges they encountered, and the strategies they adopted to facilitate effective learning.

Methods:

A qualitative research design was employed, using semi-structured interviews with parents of children enrolled in early childhood education programs during remote learning. Data were analyzed thematically to capture parents' experiences, perceptions, and practices in supporting their children's learning from home.

Key Findings:

The findings revealed that parental involvement was multifaceted, encompassing academic support, emotional encouragement, and management of technological tools. Parents reported challenges such as balancing work and teaching responsibilities, limited pedagogical knowledge, and technology-related barriers. However, they also identified positive outcomes, including stronger parent-child bonds, increased awareness of children's learning needs, and the development of adaptive strategies to sustain engagement.

Conclusion:

The study concludes that while remote early childhood education imposed new demands on parents, it also fostered deeper parental involvement in children's learning processes. These insights emphasize the need for schools to provide targeted guidance, resources, and communication strategies to empower parents in digital learning contexts.

INTRODUCTION

Background and Motivation

Early childhood (approximately ages 3 to 6) is widely recognized as a critical period for cognitive, social,

emotional, and language development. During this time, children's learning environments, both at home and in preschool or kindergarten, exert a profound influence on long-term trajectories of development.

Parental involvement has for decades been considered a key factor in supporting children's development in early childhood education (ECE) through activities such as reading, play, conversation, and emotional support.

The emergence of remote learning modalities—accelerated by global events such as the COVID-19 pandemic—has shifted much of early childhood education into home settings mediated by digital tools. In these remote settings, parents often take on roles they had not before: facilitating or guiding lessons, managing technology, structuring routines, emotionally scaffolding, and acting as informal educators. This shift raises questions about how parental involvement functions, what parents experience, what challenges arise, and how to leverage strengths in remote ECE.

Recent qualitative studies have begun to document these experiences. For example, research in Saudi Arabia using a phenomenological approach found that parental involvement changed substantially during the pandemic, with increased demands on parents to support their children's schooling at home and to mediate new technological, emotional, and pedagogical challenges (Alhazmi & Kaufmann, 2022). Another study exploring engagement in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) during COVID-19 found that parents appreciated the work of educators but struggled with engaging very young children in digital formats (Early Childhood Education Journal, 2022). These emerging findings suggest both opportunities and stress points in parental involvement in remote early childhood learning.

Motivation for the present study arises from recognition that remote ECE is likely to remain in some form—whether through blended models, emergency remote learning, or support resources even when in-person schooling resumes. Understanding the lived experiences of parents in remote early childhood education can inform policy, program design, educator practices, and parent support systems, to optimize children's learning and well-being under these shifted educational conditions.

Problem Statement

While there is growing literature on ECE and parental involvement, many of the studies to date focus on

traditional, in-person settings or on older learners. There is less detailed, nuanced qualitative understanding of parental involvement specifically in remote early childhood settings—what parents do, how they perceive their changing roles, how they experience challenges and supports, and how these affect both the child and parent.

Moreover, remote ECE presents distinctive difficulties: young children's limited attention spans and need for hands-on, face-to-face interaction; parents' varying levels of pedagogical knowledge, digital literacy, time resources, and emotional capacity; technical and infrastructural issues (connectivity, device access); and how home contexts may or may not be supportive physically, socially, emotionally. These issues may exacerbate inequality, stress, or disengagement, but may also open new possibilities for parent-child bonding, home learning, and collaboration between parents and educators.

Therefore, the problem this study addresses is: How do parents of early childhood learners experience involvement in their children's remote education? What roles do they assume, what challenges and supports do they encounter, and how do these experiences shape their engagement and children's learning?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore in depth the lived experiences of parents involved in remote early childhood education. Using a qualitative approach, the study aims to uncover how parents perceive and enact their roles, what strategies they employ, what barriers and facilitators they face, and how they negotiate the challenges of remote learning for young children. By providing rich, descriptive, and interpretive accounts, the study seeks to generate insights that can inform educators, policy-makers, and program designers to better support parental involvement in remote early childhood education.

Research Objectives

The study is guided by the following research objectives:

1. To explore how parents perceive their role in remote early childhood education, including instructional, emotional, and organizational dimensions.

2. To identify the challenges parents face when supporting their young children's learning remotely (technological, pedagogical, time, emotional, etc.).
3. To investigate what strategies, practices, and supports parents use or need to overcome these challenges.
4. To examine how parental involvement in remote early childhood settings influences children's engagement, learning, and emotional well-being (as perceived by parents).
5. To derive recommendations for educators, early childhood institutions, and policy makers to enhance parental involvement in remote ECE settings.

Significance of the Study

This study has multiple levels of significance:

- **Theoretical significance:** It contributes to the body of knowledge about parental involvement in early childhood education by focusing on remote modalities, an area less well understood. It also adds to qualitative understandings of how parents make sense of, adapt to, and enact their roles in remote learning contexts.
- **Practical significance:** Findings will help educators and ECE providers understand what kinds of support (e.g., training, resources, communication, technological infrastructure) parents need to be effective partners. This can guide the design of remote or blended learning programs, parent-teacher communication systems, and home learning kits or guidelines.
- **Policy significance:** Policymakers can use insights from this study to develop policies that ensure equity (e.g., ensuring digital access), provide resources or subsidies for low-resource families, integrate remote learning contingency plans, and support caregiver-friendly practices in education.
- **Social significance:** By understanding parents' lived experiences, the study may help reduce stress, improve parental confidence, and improve children's well-being and learning outcomes. It also can highlight areas of inequality and help in advocating for support for marginalized or disadvantaged families.

Structure of the Paper

The paper is organized as follows. Following this Introduction, **Chapter 2 (Literature Review)** will provide a review of existing research on parental involvement in early childhood education, remote learning/home learning, parent-educator collaboration, challenges of digital and remote modalities, and frameworks relevant to understanding parental roles (such as ecological systems theory, constructivist or sociocultural perspectives).

Chapter 3 (Methodology) will describe the qualitative design selected, participant selection (sampling), data collection methods (e.g., semi-structured interviews, observation, diary, documentation), data analysis approach (such as thematic analysis or grounded theory), and issues of trustworthiness, ethical considerations.

Chapter 4 (Findings) will present major themes from parents' experiences: e.g., roles assumed, challenges, strategies, emotional/relational dimensions, perceptions of children's learning and engagement.

Chapter 5 (Discussion and Implications) will interpret findings in light of the literature, discuss implications for educators, institutions, and policy, consider limitations of the study, and propose directions for future research.

Finally, **Chapter 6 (Conclusion)** will summarize the study's contributions, practical recommendations, and implications for future practice and research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Review of Relevant Theories

Two theoretical frameworks dominate contemporary explanations of parental involvement in early childhood education and provide useful lenses for understanding parents' actions in remote learning contexts. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory foregrounds the role of social interaction and culturally organized tools in children's cognitive development. From this perspective, parents are central mediators of learning: they scaffold children's participation in tasks within the zone of proximal development and supply cultural tools (language, books, digital media) that structure learning opportunities (Vygotsky, 1978). In remote early childhood education, parents often serve as the primary proximal other who interprets and adapts digitally delivered activities for young children,

thereby performing core sociocultural functions (Beltrán-Sierra, 2024; Lin et al., 2023).

Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory complements this micro-interaction focus by situating parent-child interactions within nested contextual systems that shape development. The mesosystem (family-school linkages), exosystem (parents' workplaces, community resources), and macrosystem (policy, socioeconomic conditions) all influence how parents participate in remote learning. The shift to home-based digital schooling during crisis periods has amplified the influence of exo- and macrosystem factors—such as access to devices, parental work demands, and policy supports—on parents' capacity to engage in children's learning (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Tong, 2024). Recent reviews underscore that combining sociocultural and ecological lenses helps explain both micro-level practices (scaffolding, dialogic reading) and macro-level constraints (digital divide, economic stressors) shaping parental involvement online (Tong, 2024; Kurth et al., 2023). Beyond these, family-systems and home-literacy frameworks are often used to specify mechanisms by which parental practices translate into developmental outcomes. Home literacy environment models, for example, focus attention on activities (shared reading, storytelling) and resources (books, digital content) that parents make available—variables that changed in form and frequency when early childhood services moved online (Zhang, 2024; Beltrán-Sierra, 2024).

Existing Studies (related to topic)

Empirical studies since 2020—many prompted by school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic—have documented diverse parental experiences with remote early childhood education. Several qualitative investigations report that parents' roles expanded beyond caretaking to include co-teacher, technology manager, and emotional supporter (Garbe et al., 2020; Carrell Moore, 2022; Martin, 2023). Parents described increased day-to-day responsibility for structuring routines, maintaining attention, and adapting learning activities to suit very young children's needs (Fettig et al., 2022; Steed et al., 2022). Studies focusing on technology and the home learning environment identify both opportunities and barriers. Research indicates that when families had adequate devices, connectivity, and parental digital

literacy, remote formats enabled novel parent-child interactions and sustained engagement with early literacy activities; however, the digital divide and limited parental time or pedagogical confidence often constrained these benefits (Lin et al., 2023; Alharthi et al., 2022; Nores et al., 2021). Qualitative interviews in diverse settings revealed that many parents developed adaptive strategies—scheduling short, play-based sessions, repurposing household materials for hands-on tasks, and co-watching teacher-led videos—but also experienced stress balancing work and child support (Shum et al., 2023; Martin, 2023; Kurth et al., 2023).

Several studies highlight the centrality of parent-teacher communication for effective remote ECE. Daily, clear, and practical guidance from educators increased parents' self-efficacy and reduced the burden of translating school expectations into home activities (Fujisawa et al., 2025; St. George et al., 2024). Conversely, inconsistent messaging, lack of age-appropriate materials, or the expectation that parents should "deliver lessons" without pedagogical support undermined engagement and increased family stress (Steed et al., 2022; Alharthi et al., 2022). Research also documents heterogeneity by socioeconomic status and context. Low-resource families faced compounded challenges: device scarcity, unreliable internet, limited physical space, and greater parental time constraints, all of which affected the quantity and quality of parental involvement and risked widening inequities (Nores et al., 2021; Guardian reporting on digital exclusion; Kambona, 2025). Some recent studies from low- and middle-income countries emphasize that community and institutional supports (e.g., radio lessons, home resource packs, teacher phone outreach) partially mitigated these barriers (Bruening et al., 2022; Kambona, 2025).

Finally, emergent qualitative work considers the emotional and relational dimensions of parental involvement. Many parents reported strengthened bonds and deeper knowledge of their children's learning styles, but also emotional fatigue and concerns about screen exposure and socialization deficits (Shum et al., 2023; St. George et al., 2024). Studies of telehealth and virtual consultation for young children's mental health and special needs show that when remote models are co-designed with

parent input, they can support family-centered practices (Cheung et al., 2022; St. George et al., 2024).

Identification of Gaps

Although the corpus of research on parental involvement in remote education has grown rapidly, several gaps remain that justify further qualitative inquiry. First, much published work aggregates parents of school-age and preschool-age children; fewer studies focus specifically and exclusively on the unique developmental needs and parental strategies relevant to early childhood (ages 3–6). Second, while many descriptive studies document challenges and strategies, fewer studies have deeply explored how parents interpret their changing identities as caregivers and co-educators over time—how role shifts affect parental beliefs, agency, and long-term practices. Third, there is limited comparative qualitative work that attends to cultural, economic, and policy differences across regions: how do parents in middle- and low-income contexts reconfigure practices compared to those in high-income settings, beyond what can be inferred from surveys? Fourth, the interplay between parental digital literacy, teacher guidance design (e.g., asynchronous vs synchronous tasks), and children's engagement needs further unpacking—particularly observational or longitudinal qualitative work that captures in-situ home practices rather than retrospective reports. Finally, despite attention to equity, there is less research examining intersectional factors (e.g., single parenthood, parental disability, multilingual homes) that uniquely shape remote ECE experiences.

Conceptual Framework

Based on the theoretical and empirical review, a conceptual framework for qualitative analysis of parental involvement in remote early childhood education should integrate sociocultural processes (micro-level interaction and scaffolding), ecological constraints and supports (meso/exo/macrosystem influences), and family literacy/technology affordances. Practically, the framework positions parental involvement as a set of interrelated domains: instructional practices (scaffolding, guided play, literacy routines), logistical/technological mediation (device management, scheduling, adapting materials), relational/emotional support (encouragement, socioemotional regulation), and communicative collaboration with educators (feedback loops, expectations, and co-planning). Each domain is nested within contextual moderators such as socioeconomic resources, parental work demands, cultural beliefs about education, and policy/institutional supports. Qualitative inquiry guided by this framework can explore how parents negotiate across domains, how their practices change over time, and which meso/exosystem factors intensify or alleviate burdens. This integrative framework draws on and extends prior work by synthesizing micro-interactionist insights (Vygotsky), contextual determinants (Bronfenbrenner), and contemporary empirical findings on digital and home-based early learning. It foregrounds parents' voices and situated practices and provides analytic categories for thematic or grounded qualitative analysis that can inform practice and policy.

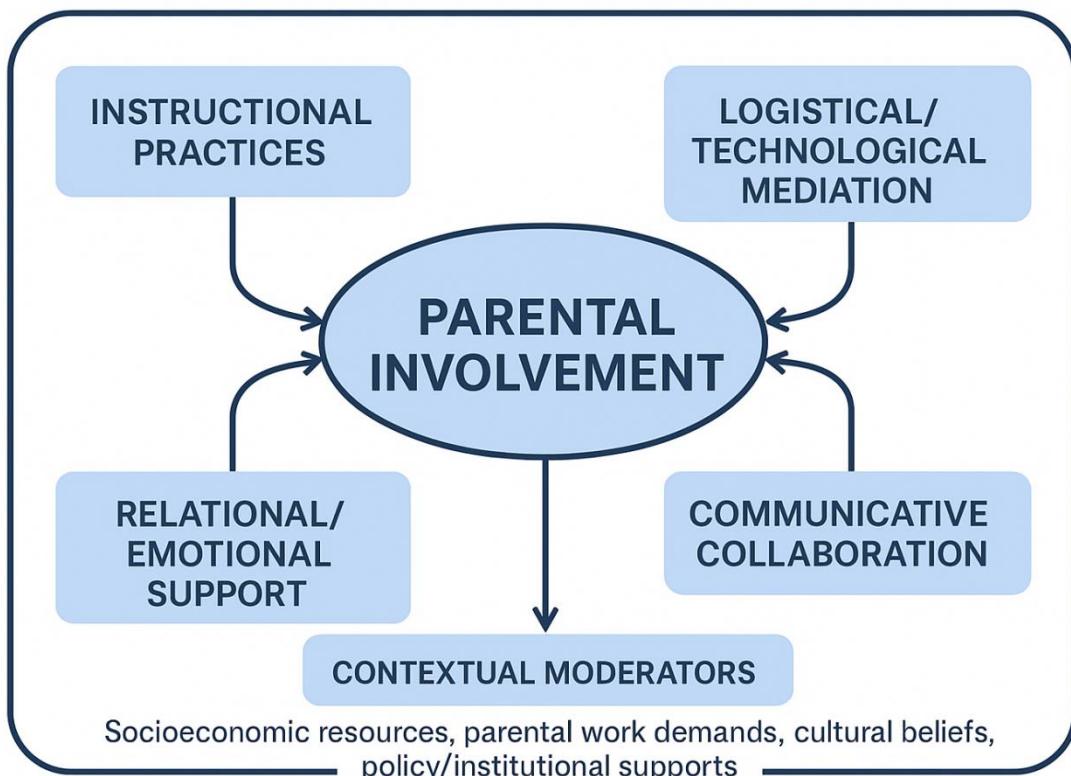


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of Parental Involvement in Remote Early Childhood Education

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework guiding this study. At the center is parental involvement, which encompasses four interrelated domains: instructional practices, technological and logistical mediation, relational and emotional support, and communicative collaboration with educators. These domains represent the key roles parents undertake in facilitating their children's remote learning experiences. Surrounding these domains are

contextual moderators, including socioeconomic resources, parental work demands, cultural beliefs, and institutional or policy supports, which shape the extent and effectiveness of parental engagement. The framework highlights the dynamic interplay between parents' direct actions with children and the broader structural and contextual factors that enable or constrain their involvement in remote early childhood education.

Table 1: Identification of Gaps in Literature on Parental Involvement in Remote Early Childhood Education

Focus Area	What Existing Studies Show	Identified Gaps
Age-specific focus	Many studies combine early childhood with primary or older children.	Limited research focused exclusively on parents' involvement with preschool-aged children (3-6 years) in remote settings.
Parental roles	Parents as co-teachers, emotional supporters, and technology managers are acknowledged.	Few studies deeply explore how parents interpret these changing roles and how role shifts affect their long-term practices and beliefs.
Cultural and socioeconomic diversity	Evidence shows inequalities in access and involvement due to resources.	Limited qualitative research comparing experiences across different cultural and socioeconomic

		contexts, especially in low- and middle-income countries.
Parent-teacher collaboration	Communication and guidance are recognized as critical.	Insufficient exploration of how communication styles, expectations, and supports influence parents' confidence and practices over time.
Digital literacy and pedagogy	Studies note the importance of devices, connectivity, and digital skills.	Need for deeper investigation into how parental digital literacy interacts with pedagogical guidance to shape children's engagement.
Equity and inclusivity	General acknowledgment of disparities.	Limited focus on intersectional factors (e.g., single parents, multilingual homes, disability) in shaping parental experiences in remote ECE.
Methodological approaches	Surveys and short-term qualitative interviews dominate.	Scarcity of longitudinal, in-situ qualitative studies capturing evolving parental practices and lived experiences in home learning environments.

Table 1 summarizes the main research gaps identified in the literature on parental involvement in remote early childhood education. While existing studies provide valuable insights into parental roles, challenges, and adaptive strategies, much of the research remains broad, often combining different age groups or relying on short-term data. The table highlights the lack of age-specific focus on early childhood, limited cross-cultural and equity-centered analyses, and the need for more nuanced exploration of parental roles, digital literacy, and communication with educators. It also identifies methodological gaps, particularly the scarcity of longitudinal qualitative research that captures parents' evolving practices and lived experiences in remote learning contexts.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a **qualitative research design** to explore parents' lived experiences of involvement in their children's remote early childhood education. A qualitative approach was chosen because it allows for in-depth exploration of meanings, perceptions, and practices that cannot be adequately captured through quantitative measures alone (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The design was interpretivist in nature, focusing on understanding parents' perspectives and contexts rather than testing predefined hypotheses. The study drew on phenomenological sensibilities, emphasizing participants' subjective experiences and how they

make sense of their roles and challenges during remote learning (Moustakas, 1994).

Data Collection Methods

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews with parents of children enrolled in early childhood programs formed the primary data source. Interviews provided opportunities for participants to describe their experiences in detail, while still allowing flexibility for probing and clarification. Open-ended questions invited parents to reflect on how they supported learning, what challenges they encountered, and what strategies they found effective.

Focus Groups

To capture shared experiences and collective perspectives, two online focus groups were conducted with small groups of parents. Focus groups encouraged dialogue and allowed for the identification of commonalities and differences across participants' accounts (Morgan, 2019). They also provided insights into how parents negotiated shared concerns, such as technological barriers and balancing work with children's education.

Document Analysis

Document analysis was used as a supplementary method to triangulate findings. Parents were invited to share digital communication from schools (e.g., newsletters, instructional guides, schedules) and

examples of home learning activities. These documents provided context for how parental roles were framed by institutions and how parents interpreted and enacted these expectations (Bowen, 2009).

Data Analysis Methods

Data were analyzed using **thematic analysis**, following Braun and Clarke's (2021) six-phase approach. This involved (a) familiarization with the data, (b) generating initial codes, (c) searching for themes, (d) reviewing themes, (e) defining and naming themes, and (f) producing the report. NVivo software was used to manage and code the data systematically. Themes were developed inductively from participants' narratives but were also interpreted in relation to the conceptual framework derived from sociocultural and ecological theories. Cross-checking of codes was conducted by multiple researchers to enhance consistency.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was sought from the university's institutional review board before commencing data collection. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, who were assured that participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any stage without penalty. Data confidentiality was maintained by using pseudonyms and storing digital files in password-protected formats. Given the sensitive nature of parents discussing family and work-life struggles, interviews were conducted with empathy, and participants were reminded that they could decline to answer any question that made them uncomfortable (Tracy, 2020).

Trustworthiness and Rigor

To ensure rigor, the study followed Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria of **credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability**.

- **Credibility** was enhanced through member checking, where participants were invited to review summaries of their interviews to confirm accuracy of interpretation. Triangulation across interviews, focus groups and document analysis also strengthened credibility.

- **Transferability** was addressed by providing rich, thick descriptions of participants, contexts, and settings, enabling readers to judge applicability to their own settings.

- **Dependability** was achieved by maintaining an audit trail of research decisions, coding

- processes, and data management procedures. Reflexive journaling by the researcher also contributed to transparency.

- **Confirmability** was ensured by documenting analytic decisions and engaging in peer debriefing with colleagues to check researcher bias and assumptions.

By adhering to these methodological standards, the study aimed to provide trustworthy and insightful findings into parental involvement in remote early childhood education.

RESULTS / FINDINGS

The analysis of interviews, focus groups, and documents revealed three broad themes with interconnected subthemes. These themes illustrate how parents experienced and enacted involvement in remote early childhood education during extended periods of home-based learning.

Theme 1: Navigating Instructional Roles

Parents described themselves as "co-teachers," often stepping into instructional responsibilities typically carried out by educators. Many highlighted the challenge of adapting early childhood pedagogy to home contexts, particularly when balancing multiple children or limited resources.

One parent stated:

"I was suddenly expected to explain phonics and numbers in a way my child could understand. I'm not trained as a teacher, so sometimes I felt frustrated, but I had to learn alongside her."

Patterns suggested that parents engaged in instructional practices ranging from reinforcing teachers' online lessons to designing supplementary activities. However, the degree of involvement was mediated by parental confidence, literacy levels, and access to materials. This finding aligns with previous research indicating that parents' pedagogical roles expand significantly during remote education (Dong et al., 2020).

Theme 2: Technological and Logistical Mediation

A recurring theme was parents' role in managing technology and ensuring access to digital platforms. Parents reported spending substantial time troubleshooting devices, downloading materials, and mediating children's interactions with online classrooms.

One participant explained:

"The biggest hurdle wasn't the lesson itself, it was getting the internet to work and keeping my child focused on the screen. I felt more like an IT person than a parent."

Parents also emphasized logistical challenges, such as scheduling sessions around work commitments and ensuring a quiet environment for learning. This resonates with existing studies highlighting the digital divide and its influence on remote education outcomes (Andrew et al., 2020).

Figure 2 (below) illustrates the mediating role of technology as both an enabler and barrier in parental involvement, demonstrating its central position in the conceptual model.

Theme 3: Emotional Support and Relationship Building

Beyond instruction and logistics, parents saw their most important role as providing emotional stability. Many reported that young children struggled with isolation from peers and teachers, leading parents to create new routines that blended learning with play and reassurance.

As one parent reflected:

"My child missed her friends terribly. I had to make learning fun and safe. Sometimes we abandoned the lesson plan just to bake together or do crafts—it kept her engaged and happy."

Patterns revealed that emotional support not only sustained children's motivation but also preserved family relationships under stress. Parents' narratives

emphasized resilience, patience, and creativity in maintaining a nurturing environment, echoing the socioemotional dimensions of early childhood education (Clark et al., 2021).

Cross-Cutting Theme: Partnership with Educators

While parents acknowledged the centrality of their role, they also stressed the importance of communication with teachers. Some reported positive, collaborative relationships, while others expressed frustration over unclear expectations. Effective communication channels, such as WhatsApp groups or weekly calls, helped bridge gaps. *"When teachers checked in regularly, it felt like we were a team. Without that, I felt completely alone trying to figure things out."*

This finding highlights the dynamic interaction between families and institutions, consistent with ecological models of learning that place children within interconnected systems of support (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Diagrammatic Representation

Figure 2. Themes of Parental Involvement in Remote Early Childhood Education

This model maps the interrelated themes:

- Instructional Roles
- Technological/Logistical Mediation
- Emotional Support and Relationship Building
- Partnership with Educators (cross-cutting theme)

The diagram positions **parental involvement** at the center, encircled by these overlapping domains, reflecting how each theme coexists and interacts in practice.

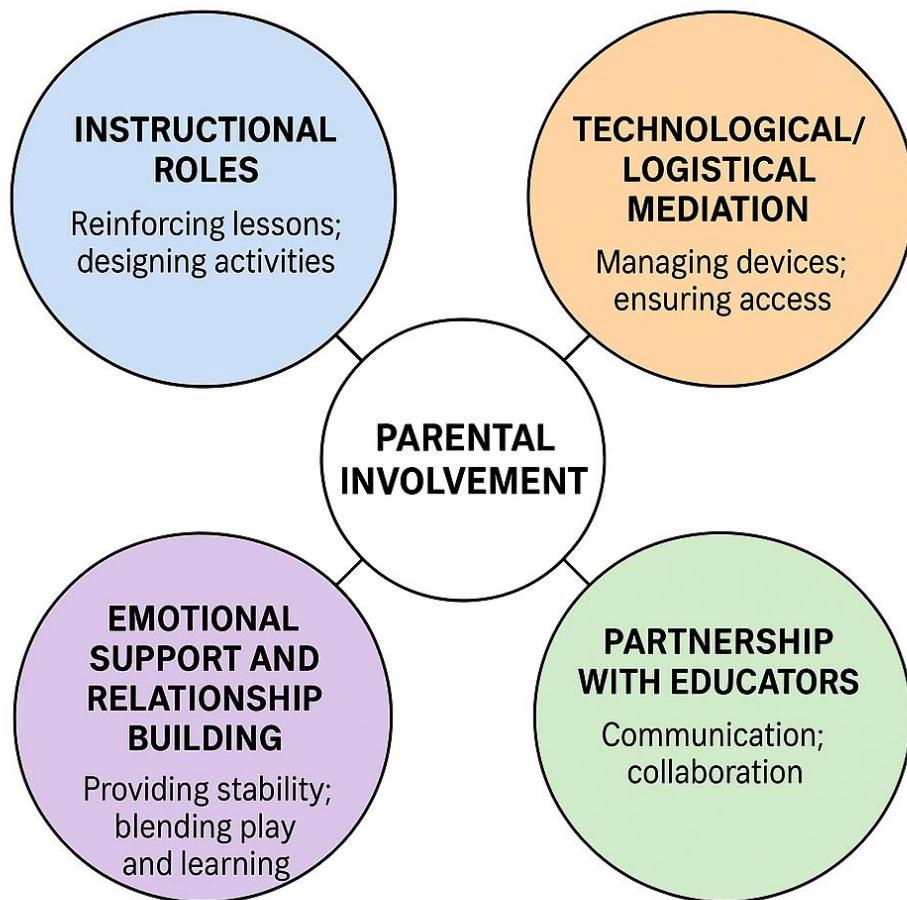


Figure 2. Themes of Parental Involvement in Remote Early Childhood Education

Figure 2 presents the key themes that emerged from the analysis of parental involvement in remote early childhood education. At the center is parental involvement, which is expressed through four interconnected domains. *Instructional roles* represent parents' engagement in reinforcing lessons and designing learning activities at home. *Technological and logistical mediation* highlights parents' responsibility for managing devices, troubleshooting digital access, and scheduling learning routines.

Emotional support and relationship building emphasizes how parents maintained stability and blended play with learning to support children's well-being. *Partnership with educators* reflects the importance of communication and collaboration between parents and teachers. Together, these domains form a holistic picture of how parents actively shaped their children's remote learning experiences, illustrating both the complexity and interconnectedness of their roles.

Table 2: Parents' Instructional Roles in Remote Early Childhood Education

Subtheme	Description	Illustrative Quote
Co-teaching	Parents stepped in as facilitators of online lessons and supported skill reinforcement at home.	<i>"I had to repeat what the teacher showed on screen until my child understood."</i>
Activity design	Parents created additional activities (games, crafts, storytelling) to sustain engagement.	<i>"Sometimes I made my own flashcards because my child was losing interest."</i>
Balancing multiple children	Parents struggled to divide time and attention among siblings.	<i>"One child needed help with letters while the other wanted my phone for class—it was overwhelming."</i>

Table 2 highlights the ways parents assumed instructional roles during remote early childhood education. The findings show that parents became active co-teachers, reinforcing lessons and ensuring comprehension through repetition and scaffolding. Many reported designing supplementary activities such as flashcards, storytelling, or creative play to keep children engaged, especially when digital

lessons proved insufficient. The accounts also reveal challenges in balancing instructional support among multiple children, often leading to stress and divided attention. This table emphasizes the expanded pedagogical responsibilities parents took on, illustrating their adaptive strategies and the strain of managing learning at home.



Table 3: Technological and Logistical Mediation by Parents

Subtheme	Description	Illustrative Quote
Troubleshooting technology	Parents spent significant time managing connectivity and digital platforms.	<i>"Half the class was gone just fixing the internet."</i>
Scheduling and routines	Parents had to coordinate school timetables with work and home tasks.	<i>"I rearranged my office calls so I could sit with my daughter for her class."</i>
Learning environment	Families worked to create quiet, child-friendly spaces for online classes.	<i>"We turned a corner of our living room into a study corner."</i>

Table 3 presents parents' roles as technological and logistical mediators. The findings demonstrate that parents were central to managing access to digital platforms, resolving technical difficulties, and maintaining consistent internet connectivity. They also coordinated school schedules alongside work and family obligations, reflecting the complexities of managing competing responsibilities. Moreover,

parents actively shaped the home learning environment, creating quiet and child-friendly spaces conducive to concentration. This table underscores the extent to which technology management and daily logistics became a critical component of parental involvement in remote education.

Table 4: Emotional Support and Partnerships with Educators

Subtheme	Description	Illustrative Quote
Emotional reassurance	Parents provided encouragement to reduce stress and disengagement.	<i>"When she cried, I told her it's okay to take a break—we'd try again later."</i>
Strengthening bonds	Shared learning activities deepened family connections.	<i>"Baking together became a learning session and also a happy memory."</i>
Communication with teachers	Frequent updates and support strengthened trust.	flexible <i>"Weekly calls with her teacher made me feel I wasn't alone in this journey."</i>

Table 4 illustrates parents' contributions to emotional support and collaborative partnerships with educators. Parents emphasized the importance of reassurance, patience, and encouragement in helping children cope with stress and disengagement during online learning. Beyond managing lessons, families used shared activities to nurture stronger bonds and create positive learning experiences. Communication with teachers also emerged as a key factor in sustaining parents' confidence and reducing feelings of isolation. This table demonstrates that emotional and relational dimensions were equally vital as instructional and logistical efforts in ensuring meaningful parental involvement.

To present the findings in a structured manner, three tables were developed to summarize the themes and subthemes that emerged from the qualitative analysis. These tables provide an overview of the roles parents undertook in supporting remote early childhood education, organized under instructional responsibilities, technological and logistical mediation, and emotional support with partnerships. Each table includes subthemes, descriptive insights, and illustrative quotes from participants, offering a clear representation of the lived experiences and challenges parents encountered. The use of tables complements the narrative analysis by highlighting patterns across participants and reinforcing the thematic structure of the findings.

DISCUSSION

Interpretation of Results

The findings of this study highlight the multifaceted nature of parental involvement in remote early childhood education. Parents assumed roles that extended beyond traditional caregiving, encompassing instructional guidance, technological mediation, emotional support, and collaborative

engagement with educators. These results indicate that parental involvement in remote learning is not a singular activity but a complex interplay of pedagogical, logistical, and relational responsibilities. The study also underscores that while some parents embraced these roles as opportunities for bonding and growth, others experienced stress and fatigue, particularly when navigating technological barriers or balancing work demands.

Linkage with Existing Literature

The findings align with existing literature that emphasizes the central role of parents in sustaining children's learning during school closures and remote instruction. Prior studies have similarly documented the shift in parental roles toward co-teaching and pedagogical support (Dong et al., 2020). The technological and logistical mediation observed in this study echoes the digital divide and related inequalities discussed by Andrew et al. (2020), where access to reliable internet and devices shaped the quality of children's learning experiences. Furthermore, the emphasis on emotional reassurance and relational support reflects earlier research highlighting the socioemotional dimensions of early childhood education and the importance of nurturing resilience in children during crises (Clark et al., 2021). However, this study extends prior knowledge by integrating these strands into a holistic framework, showing how instructional, logistical, and emotional domains interact dynamically in practice.

Implications for Theory and Practice

From a theoretical perspective, the study reinforces Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory by illustrating how children's learning outcomes are shaped not only by family practices but also by broader institutional and technological contexts

(Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The findings suggest that parental involvement during remote education should be conceptualized as a multilayered construct, influenced by individual capacities, family dynamics, school-home communication, and structural conditions such as digital access. Practically, the results highlight the need for schools to support parents not merely as passive recipients of instructions but as active partners in the teaching-learning process. This includes providing clear guidance, flexible scheduling, accessible materials, and consistent communication channels. Policymakers and educators must also recognize the hidden labor parents contribute to remote learning and design supportive interventions such as parent training workshops, digital literacy programs, and socioemotional support networks.

New Insights

The study contributes several new insights to the field of early childhood education. First, it reveals how parents' emotional labor is equally critical as their instructional or logistical roles in ensuring sustained engagement of young children. This insight broadens the conventional understanding of parental involvement to include affective and relational dimensions. Second, the study highlights how parental identity shifts during remote learning—parents became educators, facilitators, and emotional anchors simultaneously, often negotiating these roles under stressful circumstances. Finally, the study demonstrates that partnerships with educators function as cross-cutting enablers, amplifying or constraining parents' effectiveness in all other domains. These insights call for a reimagining of home-school partnerships, where collaborative relationships are cultivated not only during crises but as a sustainable model of early childhood education.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

This study explored the experiences of parental involvement in remote early childhood education through a qualitative lens, focusing on instructional roles, technological and logistical mediation, emotional support, and partnerships with educators. The findings demonstrate that parental involvement is a dynamic, multidimensional process shaped by

individual capacities, family contexts, and institutional supports. Parents were required to step into co-teaching roles, manage technological barriers, and provide emotional reassurance, often under challenging circumstances. At the same time, effective communication and collaboration with educators proved to be vital in sustaining children's learning and parental confidence. The study concludes that parental involvement during remote learning is not only about academic reinforcement but also about creating nurturing, adaptable environments where children can thrive holistically.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, several recommendations are proposed for educators, policymakers, and future researchers:

1. For Educators

- Provide clear, practical, and developmentally appropriate guidance to parents on how to support children's learning at home.
- Maintain consistent and empathetic communication channels, including flexible options such as messaging apps, calls, or virtual meetings.
- Integrate socioemotional support strategies into instructional materials to help parents address children's emotional well-being.

2. For Policymakers

- Develop and implement policies that recognize and support parents' expanded roles in remote learning, particularly in early childhood contexts.
- Invest in digital literacy programs and infrastructure to reduce inequities in access to technology and connectivity.
- Provide financial and logistical support for families balancing work and caregiving responsibilities during crises or prolonged periods of remote learning.

3. For Parents

- Seek balance between academic activities and creative, play-based learning that nurtures children's socioemotional development.
- Engage in peer-support groups, either informally or through school initiatives, to share strategies and reduce isolation.
- Practice self-care and boundary-setting to prevent burnout while managing multiple roles.

4. For Future Research

- Explore variations in parental involvement across diverse socioeconomic and cultural contexts to understand inequities more fully.
- Investigate the long-term impact of remote parental involvement on children's academic and socioemotional development.
- Examine strategies for sustainable parent-teacher partnerships beyond emergency remote learning contexts.

In conclusion, strengthening parental involvement in early childhood education requires a holistic approach that values instructional, technological, and emotional dimensions equally. By fostering collaborative partnerships and addressing systemic barriers, remote and hybrid learning models can better support both children and families in navigating the complexities of early education.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Limitations

While this study provides valuable insights into parental involvement in remote early childhood education, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the sample was limited to a specific group of parents whose experiences may not fully represent the diversity of families across different socioeconomic, cultural, and geographic contexts. Parents with greater access to digital resources or flexible work arrangements may have been overrepresented, leaving the voices of marginalized or digitally excluded families less visible. Second, the reliance on self-reported data through interviews and focus groups introduces the possibility of social desirability bias, where parents may have presented their roles in a more favorable light. Third, the study focused primarily on the parental perspective and did not include direct observations of children's learning behaviors or educators' viewpoints, which could have provided a more holistic picture of the remote learning experience. Finally, the cross-sectional design captures a snapshot in time, limiting the ability to examine how parental involvement evolved over the duration of prolonged remote education.

Future Research

Future research should address these limitations by adopting more diverse and inclusive sampling

strategies, ensuring representation of families from varied socioeconomic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds. Longitudinal studies are recommended to track changes in parental involvement over time and to assess the long-term effects of remote learning on children's academic and socioemotional development. Including multiple stakeholders—such as educators, caregivers, and even young children themselves—could enrich understanding and highlight the interplay of perspectives. Additionally, comparative studies across different educational systems and policy contexts would illuminate how institutional supports and cultural expectations shape parental involvement. Finally, future inquiries should explore practical interventions, such as digital literacy training, parent-teacher partnership programs, and socioemotional support mechanisms, to evaluate their effectiveness in enhancing parental engagement in remote or hybrid early childhood education models.

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