Parental Involvement in Young Children's Education in Malaysia: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract. This article reviews the literature on parental involvement and children's education, focusing on the primary school level in Malaysia. This systematic literature review (henceforth SLR) includes searching, screening, appraising and synthesising of articles on parental involvement published in the last ten years (2012- 2021) from a number of electronic databases, namely SCOPUS, Taylor & Francis, ERIC, Google Scholar, MyCite, and ResearchGate. The findings of this review identify 24 relevant articles and reveal that most of the relevant research was conducted quantitatively with a focus on types and levels of parental involvement as well as particular applied parental involvement models. Besides that, the researchers utilise multiple conceptualisations of parental involvement including home-based and school-based. This study suggests that more qualitative research is needed to fully comprehend the many forms of parental involvement used by parents. It may also be beneficial for researchers to use the Malaysian Ministry of Education's Parents/Caregivers Toolkit as a framework or instrument to investigate parental involvement to gain more relevant findings.

Keywords: parental involvement; Malaysian primary school; systematic literature review; Parents/Caregivers Toolkit

1. Introduction
Education is one of the main contributors to social and economic development. As children's education begins at home, the Malaysian Ministry of Education's

(henceforth MOE) educational blueprint 2013-2025, as prepared by the MOE, highlights the role of parents as one of the main stakeholders in the education system (MOE, 2013). The document states that the education system should "have a shared responsibility between parents and teachers to ensure quality learning for students" (2013, p. 21). In other words, parents function as close partners with schools to enhance children's learning performance. Such a partnership requires parents to actively contribute to the things they can do to improve their children's educational outcomes (MOE, 2013). Parental involvement has also been highlighted as a fundamental aspect of improving children's educational outcomes, as highlighted in the National Key Result Areas (henceforth NKRA) and the 12th Malaysian plan (2021-2025) (Prime Minister Department, 2021, pp. 10-25).

Parental involvement is usually regarded as a crucial component of a child's educational achievement (Hamidun et al., 2019; Saeki et al., 2018) and in children's first school years (Lara & Saracostti, 2019). It has been argued that because parents are part of a child's immediate environment, they have a significant impact on their life and development, including with their academic achievement (Bager et al., 2019; Lara & Saracostti, 2019), literacy (Parlindungan, 2017; Torres & Castaeda-Pea, 2016), engagement, motivation, and social and emotional adjustment (Bager et al., 2019; Menheere & Hooge, 2010). Regardless of the level of involvement, parental involvement has been shown to be beneficial to children's learning (Al-Fadley et al., 2018; Hosseinpour et al., 2015; Kamal & Hashim, 2021).

Parental roles in supporting children's education have been the focus of considerable research interest at an international level, but Malaysia itself remains somewhat understudied. Therefore, the aim of this systematic literature review (henceforth SLR) is to gain further insight into the way parental involvement has been explored based on previous studies and the variables utilised by the associated researchers. Furthermore, this SLR will aid in the development of a thorough understanding of the relevant issues required for critical discussion, contemplation, and recommendations (Renganathan, 2021) concerning parental involvement in the context of Malaysian primary school children.

2. Literature Review
Parental involvement has been defined as "the extent in which parents are involved in their child's education at home and the amount of communication that they have with school." (Smokoska, 2020, p. 10), or as "the extent to which parents position themselves as authority figures in their children's education" (Loera et al., 2011, p. 135).

Various approaches to examining and discussing parental involvement in children's learning have been discovered. Parental involvement has been studied and debated as a single construct (Fan & Chen, 2001) or as a collection of constructs with varying meanings, as described by different researchers (Pek & Mee, 2020; Smokoska, 2020; Tekin, 2011).

There have also been international studies discussing parental involvement in children's learning from the perspective of home-based and school-based involvement (Xiong et al., 2019) and academic socialisation (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011; Zong et al., 2017). The term 'home-based involvement' refers to parental actions at home that help support their children's classroom learning, whilst 'school-based involvement' refers to parental attendance or participation at school events. On the other hand, academic socialisation can be described as expectations of success on the part of parents.

Besides that, the concept of involvement has become synonymous with "participation", "cooperation", "partnership", "collaboration" (Hosseinpour et al., 2015, p. 1371), and "influence" (Majid et al., 2005, p. 25), leading to the development of various frameworks for parental involvement.

2.1 Models and theories of parental involvement
Among the parental involvement models and theories that have been largely used in local and international studies as lenses to contribute to the understanding of parental involvement and issues related to such are those of Epstein, (2002), Walker et al. (2005), Bronfenbrenner (1979), and Vygotsky (1978). Each of these models and theories is explained below in turn.

According to Epstein (2002), there are six different types of parental involvement, including: (1) parenting; (2) communicating; (3) volunteering; (4) learning at home; (5) making decisions; and (6) collaborating with the community.
In parenting, schools are advised to support parents in creating learning-friendly home settings for their children. The communicating part refers to the school's two-way communication channel for discussing students' progress and educational programmes. Volunteering is a way in which the school can involve parents in facilitating their own children's education and helping other parents and teachers. Parents can carry out educational activities with their children in learning at home following information and guides from schools. Encouraging parents to be involved in Parent-Teacher Associations (commonly called PTAs) is an example of how parental involvement includes decision making. In collaborating with the community, schools must determine how the community can help with school programmes to collaborate with them. This comprehensive model explains how schools, families, and communities can work together to improve students' learning performances (Sheldon & Epstein, 2005). Tekin (2011) notes that Epstein's model is perceived more as a manual for professionals than a manual for parents and communities themselves.

Previous research from Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997), later revised by Walker et al. (2005), discusses several factors influencing parental involvement in children's education. In this case, the perspective is that of parents (Tekin, 2011). The three main factors, according to Walker et al. (2005, p. 88), are: (1) Parents' motivational beliefs, including their perceptions of their role and their efficacy as parents in regards to assisting children to do well at school, (2) "parents' perceptions of invitations for involvement with others", including opportunities for parental involvement from their children, schools, and teachers, and (3)

"Parents' perceived life contexts" – the amount of time, energy, skills, and knowledge available to students.

Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of human development highlights that the social networks that children belong to can directly influence their learning development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Development occurs in a system of relationships in which various individuals and parties are involved (Krishnan, 2010). Children are often directly affected by social settings, such as the teacher, parents, family, and friends. In addition, children are also affected indirectly by broader social environments, such as various institutions and settings (Palts & Kalmus, 2015). The model proposed by Bronfenbrenner (1979) consists of four ecological levels, also referred to as 'onion rings' (Cole, 1996, p. 84), which are a model of the environments and settings affecting the development of children: microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems and macrosystems.

According to the theory, children spend a considerable amount of time interacting with people in their immediate surroundings, known as microsystems. Those people include parents, family members, teachers, and other students (Jaeger, 2012), and this is the layer that has the most direct effect on the child. The systems are also defined as "activities, roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in a given setting with particular physical and material characteristics" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 22). There is a reciprocal face-to-face relationship between children and their parents, and such interactions influence the interaction between one party with another. The mesosystems are "a system of two or more microsystems" (Hayes et al., 2017, p. 15) such as a child's school and home relationship. A child's growth is facilitated when the mesosystems have strong and positive connections between its components.

Exosystems, meanwhile, are one or more settings that do not involve the individual as an active participant but in which events occur that are related to, or affected by the activities within the individual's setting (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). These settings include parents' workplaces, mass media, and education policies, amongst others. It is still possible for students to be affected by what occurs within the settings despite not being actively involved.

Macrosystems refer to the "consistencies, in the form of content lower-order systems that exist, or could exist, at the level of subculture or culture as a whole, along with any belief systems or ideology underlying such consistencies" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 26). In other words, all lower layers of ecosystems are shaped by the societal blueprint (Krishnan, 2010). Macrosystems incorporate values and norms. These elements of culture are not readily found in the immediate lives of children but are very important to their development.

In the study related to parental involvement that uses Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of human development, one can argue that children's learning experiences are not limited to their interactions with teachers and schools, but further involves a broader system that includes parents, families, and communities.

Understanding a child's environment provides theoretical support for involving parents in their children's education (Tekin, 2011).

Vygotsky, in his social constructivist theory, emphasises individuals' relationships with their environments. According to him, people construct knowledge through interactions with their social surroundings (Vygotsky, 1978); that is to say, it is through the interactions with their environments and other individuals that students develop their knowledge (Roth, 1999). Vygotsky (1978) emphasised the meaning-making process that occurs in the context of cultural and social situations (Au, 1998; Cooper, 2017). Therefore, the role of people surrounding children, such as parents, in facilitating their learning and development is significant (Moll, 1990; Ebrahimi, 2015; Kamal & Hashim, 2021). Another aspect highlighted in Vygotsky's theory is the so-called 'zone of proximal development' (henceforth ZPD) which is interpreted as the "difference between the child's actual level of development and the level of performance that he achieves in collaboration with the adult" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 209). Social interactions are believed to enhance students' ability to think. Furthermore, the best way to help students progress is to help them advance just beyond their current level of knowledge (Pritchard & Woollard, 2010). Therefore, assistance from other people such as parents is integral to helping children to progress further in their education. Communication is a central part of this theory, as it emphasises how individuals develop from communication (Hayes et al., 2017).

2.2 Parental Involvement Model in the Malaysia MOE Documents
In the Malaysian context, the MOE believes that parents' participation in children's learning will significantly affect their performance at school since children spend most of their time at home. Therefore, the MOE (2012) has developed a guide called *Sarana Ibu Bapa* or Parents/Caregivers Toolkit. The aim of this national initiative is to increase parental involvement in children's learning in and out of school. The guide outlines several benefits of parental involvement to both children and parents. Among the benefits to the children are: i- children will obtain good grades in school assessments, ii- children will have self-worth and higher motivation, iii- children's attendance will improve, iv- disciplinary issues will decline, and v- school dropout can be avoided.

Besides the above, the MOE (2012) believed that by getting involved in the children's learning, parents can: i- learn how to help the child completie their homework, ii- find out helpful ways to assist their children, iii- share their parenting knowledge with other parents, and iv- find it easier to provide a comfortable home learning environment.
The Parents/Caregivers Toolkit also provides a self-assessment checklist for parents to identify their strengths and weaknesses in four areas, namely:
a-   Creating a learning environment at home
b-   Having social interaction
c-   Having parents-children communication
d-   Providing academic support

Five items are developed for the construct of creating a learning environment at home: i- provide a learning space, ii- get children to learn at home according to a schedule, iii- reduce noise interference from the television or radio while the child is studying, iv- ensure that the child's study area is always neat and clean, and v- ensure that the child has sufficient reference books. Besides these, five items have been constructed for the concept of having social interaction, and parents must specify how many days they spend with their children per week for each activity; chatting, eating, doing activities together, keeping track of children's locations, and providing religious and moral teaching are all examples of such activities.

Another five items have been developed for the construct of 'having parent-child communication', and parents must again identify the number of days they spend conducting certain activities with their children. These activities include: i- discussing children's academic development, ii- listening to children's stories about events at school, iii- keeping track of children's homework, iv- keeping track of children's activity planning, and v- exchanging opinions with children.
In addition, parents must specify the number of days spent with their children to complete the task for the academic support construct. These include: i- praising the child, ii- encouraging the child, iii- reading aloud as a family, iv- helping the child with schoolwork, and v- providing private tutoring to the child.

After finish completing the checklist, parents can calculate their own score or achievement marks, which will be based on three indicators: basic, advancing, and exceptional by referring to the Kit. The Kit also includes some advice for parents to follow in order to help their children at home. Although the Kit is not sufficiently comprehensive to address the requirements of individual parents, it may provide some ideas for parents to consider in their current parenting practices and focus on areas of involvement that require greater attention (MOE, 2012).

2.3 Research Questions
This SLR aims to look at the literature on parental involvement with children, with a focus on the Malaysian primary school context. The focus of this paper is to report the methods applied by researchers in the past. Besides this, this paper also considers the many structures of parental involvement in previous studies. It further examines the benefits and limitations of parental involvement as discovered by scholars. As such, the following research questions have been formulated for this study.
i-   How has parental involvement in Malaysian primary school children been investigated?
ii- How has parental involvement been conceptualised in the research literature?

3. Methodology
The authors have applied rigorous standards to identify, evaluate and synthesise all the literature on the research topic (Cronin et al., 2008). The process is explained according to the following sub-titles: search strategy, and identification of the literature adapted from several scholars (Lim& Yunus, 2021; Renganathan, 2021; Xiao & Watson, 2019).

3.1 Search strategy

The following databases and search engines were utilised to assist the researcher in identifying and collecting relevant sources for this review: SCOPUS, Taylor & Francis, The Education Resources Information Center (henceforth ERIC), Google Scholar, MyCite, and ResearchGate. SCOPUS, and Taylor & Francis are accessed through Open Athens and are subscribed to by the authors' institutions. While Scopus "uniquely combines a comprehensive, expertly curated abstract and citation database with enriched data and linked scholarly literature across a wide variety of disciplines" (Elsevier, n.d), Taylor & Francis is considered one of the world's main publishers of open access research. On the other hand, ERIC is a user-friendly and all-inclusive online digital library comprising educational research and information. Meanwhile, Google Scholar is a platform for researchers to explore the academic literature of a wide variety of fields and sources, such as research articles in education that also home articles written in Malay, the national language of Malaysia. Besides that, MyCite is the Malaysian Citation Index comprised of Malaysian scholarly journals, whilst ResearchGate is an academic social network that also compiles multiple selections of projects and publications. The selection of the literature was narrowed to current research work published between 2012 to 2021 (approximately ten years). Backward and forward searches were also performed, as suggested by Levy and Ellis (2006).

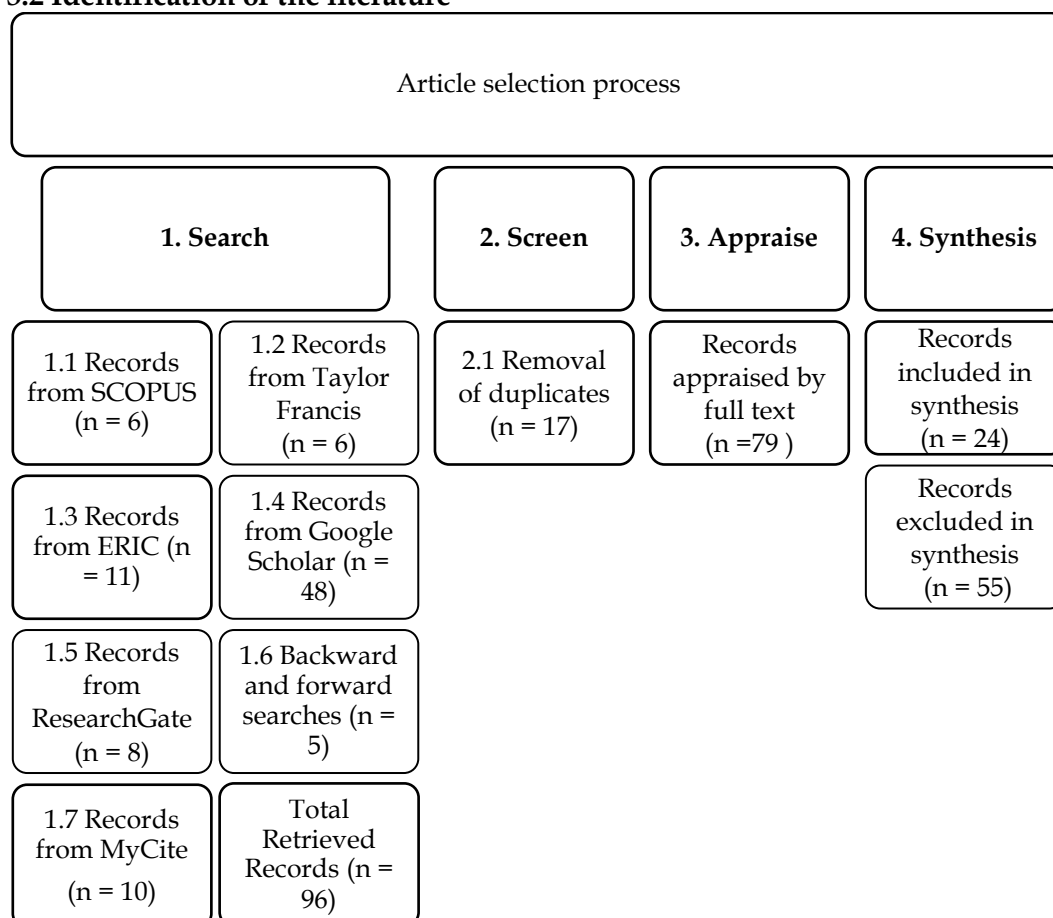## 3.2 Identification of the literature

Figure 1: Article selection process

The article selection process involves four main stages: search, screen, appraise, and synthesis. The first stage in this process is the search for related articles from several main electronic databases, namely SCOPUS, Taylor & Francis, ERIC, Google Scholar, MyCite, and ResearchGate. Keyword searches and the combination of keywords using operators such as 'AND' and 'OR' are utilised (Ely & Scott, 2007).

In addition, the keywords searched in all the databases incorporated both English and Malay, the national language of Malaysia (Saifi & Matore, 2020). The Malay keywords are utilised in Google Scholar and MyCite because the researcher found a paucity of relevant studies are available in English. Furthermore, articles in Malay are generally shared by researchers on Google Scholar and MyCite. The combination of search terms used in databases is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Keywords searches in the databases

SCOPUS, TAYLOR FRANCIS, ERIC AND RESEARCHGATE	parental involvement, parent participation, parenting style, parental support, parents-teacher partnership, academic achievement, ESL, reading, Science, Mathematics, primary school, children, and Malaysia
GOOGLE SCHOLAR AND MYCITE	parental involvement, parent participation, parenting style, parental support, parents-teacher partnership, academic achievement, ESL, reading, Science, Mathematics, primary school, children, and Malaysia *Penglibatan ibu-bapa, gaya keibu-bapaan, hubungan ibu-bapa dan sekolah, pencapaian akademik, Bahasa Inggeris, membaca, literasi, Sains, Matematik, sekolah rendah, kanak-kanak, and Malaysia*

The total number of records gained from five different databases and backward and forward searches was 96. After searching for the relevant articles, the records were screened by removing duplicates from the records retrieved. This process yielded 79 unique records.

After that, the researcher appraised the records by examining the full text to identify eligible articles to review. This process applied the inclusion criteria typically used in the SLR, as shown in Table 2 adapted from Lim & Yunus (2021). Finally, the synthesis process is carried out by finalising the records following the inclusion and exclusion criteria in the review, which yielded a final total of 24 articles.

Table 2: Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Types of article	Journal articles, proceedings	Books, book chapter, thesis
Years of publication	2012-2021	< 2012
Peer-review	Peer-reviewed	Non-peer reviewed
Context	Primary school	Pre-school, secondary school, special education, special needs
Setting	Malaysia	Outside Malaysia
Texts	A full text	Not a full text

4. Analysis and Findings

Research Question 1: The way parental involvement has been investigated.

Table 3: Analysis of the way parental involvement has been investigated

No.	Authors	Types of research methodology			The focus of the research
		Qualitative	Quantitative	Mixed-methods	
1.	Ahmad et al. (2017)		✓		The types and levels of parental involvement
2.	Hashim et al. (2018)		✓		The types and levels of parental involvement
3.	Hashim et al. (2015)		✓		The relationship between parental involvement and students' engagement and life goals.
4.	Kamal et al. (2021)	✓			Challenges to parental involvement
5.	Kamal& Hashim (2021)	✓			The types of involvement
6.	Koh & Wing (2020)	✓			The types of involvement Challenges to parental involvement
7.	Kuan & Chuen (2017)		✓		The types and levels of involvement The relationship between parental involvement and students' academic achievement
8..	Latif & Abdullah (2016)		✓		The types and levels of parental involvement

No.	Author				Description
					The relationship between parental involvement and children's achievement in Science subjects
9.	Manukaram et al. (2013)		✓		The relationship between parental involvement and primary school children's self-regulated learning.
10.	Ramalingam et al. (2019)			✓	The types and levels of parental involvement The relationship between parental involvement and factors of student academic achievement
11.	Raslie et al. (2020)		✓		The types and levels of parental involvement The relationship between a specific type of involvement with the children's reading skill achievement
12.	Satar et al. (2020)		✓		The types and levels of parental involvement The relationship between socio-economic background and parental involvement
13.	Shahri et al. (2020)		✓		The types and levels of parental involvement The relationship between parental involvement and the level of mastery in the practice of prayer (*amali solat*) among students.
14.	Simon (2017)	✓			Parents' perceptions of their relationship with teachers and school

					Limitations to parental involvement
15.	Termize et al. (2021)		✓		The types and levels of parental involvement
16.	Vellymalai (2011)		✓		The types and levels of parental involvement The relationship between educational background and parental involvement
17.	Vellymalai (2012a)		✓		The types and levels of parental involvement The relationship between socio-economic background and parental involvement
18.	Vellymalai (2012b)		✓		The types and levels of parental involvement The relationship between school-parents cooperation and parental involvement
19.	Vellymalai (2012c)		✓		The types and levels of parental involvement The relationship between socio-economic background and parental involvement
20.	Vellymalai (2013a)		✓		The types and levels of parental involvement The relationship between family size and parental involvement
21.	Vellymalai (2013b)		✓		The types and levels of parental involvement The relationship between parents' socio-economic status and parental involvement
22.	Vellymalai (2014)			✓	The types and levels of parental involvement of low

					and high achiever students Limitations to parental involvement
23.	Vellymalai (2016)		✓		The types and levels of parental involvement The relationship between school-parents partnership and parental involvement
24.	Wahab et al. (2016)	✓			The types and levels of parental involvement. Limitations to parental involvement

The analysis in Table 3 shows that the majority of the study was performed quantitatively. Five studies were performed qualitatively, and another two studies combined elements of the qualitative and quantitative approaches. For the quantitative studies, most researchers focus on the types and levels of parental involvement (Ahmad et al., 2017; Hashim et al., 2018; Kuan & Chuen, 2017; Latif & Abdullah, 2016; Raslie et al., 2020; Shahri et al., 2020; Satar et al., 2020; Termize et al., 2021; Vellymalai, 2011, 2012a, 2012b, 2012c, 2013a, 2013b, 2016).

Additionally, from these quantitative studies, some researchers also discussed the relationship between parents' educational backgrounds and parental involvement (Vellymalai, 2011), the relationship between parents' socio-economic background and parental involvement (Satar et al., 2020; Vellymalai, 2012a, 2012c, 2013b), and the relationship between family size and parental involvement (Vellymalai, 2013a). Apart from this, the relationship between parental involvement and children's academic performance (Latif & Abdullah, 2016; Kuan & Chuen, 2017), and children's reading skills (Raslie et al., 2020) were also highlighted. Additionally, Manukaram et al. (2013) focus on the influence of parental involvement on self-regulated learning of primary school children, while Ahmad et al. (2017) discuss the relationship between parental involvement and students' engagement and life goals. In other studies, the relationship between school-parents cooperation and parental involvement was also highlighted (Vellymalai, 2012b, 2016).

Additionally, the qualitative studies related to parental involvement explore the types of involvement parents had with their children (Kamal & Hashim, 2021; Koh & Wing, 2020; Wahab et al., 2016), challenges to parental involvement (Kamal et al., 2021), and parents' perceptions of their relationships with teachers and schools (Simon, 2017). Apart from that, mixed methods research has investigated the types and levels of parental involvement (Ramalingam et al., 2019; Vellymalai, 2014), the relationship between parental involvement and factors affecting

students' academic achievement (Ramalingam et al., 2019), and limitations to parents' involvement (Vellymalai, 2014).

In summary, the analysis of past research on parental involvement in Malaysian primary schools has found that:

i-   The majority of the studies were quantitative in nature. Five studies were qualitative, and another two combined elements of the qualitative and quantitative approaches.

ii-   Most of the research addressed the types and levels of parental participation.

iii-   The relationship between parents' characteristics and parental involvement was also highlighted in many research studies.

iv-   The relationship between parental involvement and students' learning was frequently discussed.

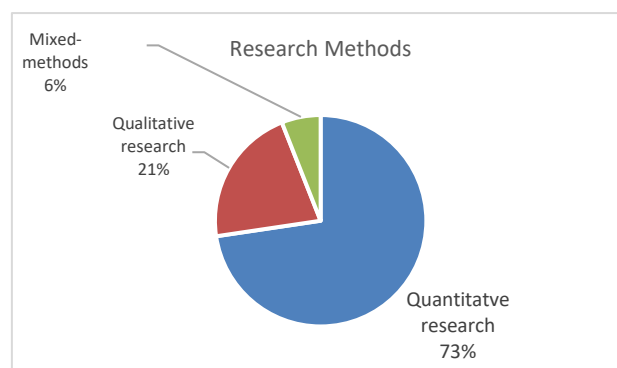v-   A few studies also highlighted challenges to parental involvement.

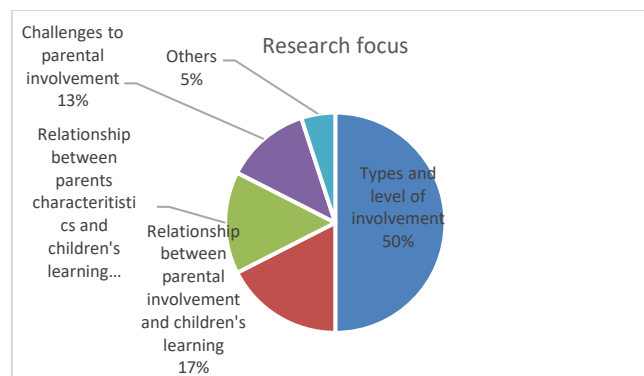**Figure 2: Research methods applied in previous studies**

Figure 3: Research focus of previous studies

Research Question 2: Characterisations of parental involvement explained in the research literature.

From the analysis, the findings show that all authors discuss parental involvement differently. The findings can be categorised into three main focuses, namely home-based, school-based, and others. Each focus is discussed in turn below.

Home-based involvement
Home-based involvement is the most common categorisation of parental involvement used in previous studies (Kuan & Chuen, 2017; Latif & Abdullah, 2016; Satar et al., 2020; Vellymalai, 2012a, c; 2013b, 2014; Wahab et al., 2016). However, each study defines home-based involvement differently.

Latif and Abdullah (2016) utilise several characteristics to define home-based involvement. These include creating a home learning environment, social interaction with children, communicating with children, and supporting children's success. According to the authors, these constructions are based on the Parents/Caregivers Toolkit developed by the MOE (2012), which aligns with the microsystem element in Bronfenbrenner's model of parental involvement (1979). On the other hand, Satar et al. (2020) constructed several characteristics of home-based involvement, which are: i- giving motivation, ii- providing facilities, iii- obtaining feedback from teachers, iv- discussing children's interests with them, v- assisting children with homework, vi- discussing education planning with children, vii- taking part in religious activities with children, viii- reading together, and viii- taking children to participate in community activities. These constructions are based on the literature review and not based on any models or theories.

In other studies, Vellymalai (2012a,c, 2013b, 2014) highlights parental involvement at home, based on Walker et al.'s (2005) model. These include: i- discussion of future planning, ii- discussion of school activities, iii- identifying academic problems at school, iv- identifying academic problems at home, v- assisting with homework, vi- identifying homework, viii- guidance for examination, ix- motivation, x- time limits, and xi- identifying learning patterns. Wahab et al. (2016) discuss home-based involvement by highlighting aspects of parental support in children's learning. This model is adapted from the GPILSEO model of parental involvement, which was developed for the Māori community in New Zealand (Bishop & Sullivans, 2005). In another study by Kuan & Chuen (2017), home-based constructions are not specified in their paper.

School-based involvement
Apart from home-based involvement, school-based involvement was also utilised by authors to define the concept of parental involvement in their studies (Kuan & Chuen, 2017; Latif & Abdullah, 2016; Wahab et al., 2016). School-based involvement is characterised as parents' attendance at school events in general (Wahab et al., 2016) and, in particular, report card day, sports day, parent-teacher meetings, and excellence awards ceremonies (Latif & Abdullah, 2016). However, the construct of school-based involvement is not discussed in detail in the study by Kuan and Chuen (2017).

Other characterisations of parental involvement
Other characterisations of parental involvement were also found in many studies. For example, Wahab et al. (2016) discussed parents' aspirations and parents' actions regarding their involvement in their children's education.

Adapting the model of parental involvement by Walker et al. (2005), Kuan and Chuen (2017) put forth several other categories of parental involvement, including parental role construction, parental self-efficacy, parental perception of life context, parental perception of specific invitations for involvement from child and the child's teachers.

Apart from the above, Vellymalai (2011, 2012b, 2013a, 2016), who authored most of the articles, also explains parental involvement by adapting Walker et al.'s (2005) framework, and determined 14 categorisations of parental involvement: i- discussion of future planning, ii- discussion of school activities, iii- identifying learning patterns, iv- identifying academic problems at school, v- identifying academic problems at home, vi- assisting with homework, vii- identifying homework, viii- examination guidance, ix- monitoring academic performance at school, x- motivation, xi- time limits, xii- getting reading materials, xiii- tuition, xiv- monitoring activities.

The parental involvement model by Walker et al. (2005) has also been used by Kamal et al. (2021), who studied challenges to parental involvement. Their study highlights three types of challenges: parents, teachers and school, and children. Ahmad et al. (2017) investigated parental involvement based on the four aspects of involvement as outlined in the Parents/Caregivers Toolkit by the MOE (2012), which are: creating a learning environment at home, having social interaction with children, having communication with children, and providing support for children's academic success. Several aspects of parental involvement were highlighted by Ramalingam et al. (2019) based on the parental involvement model by Epstein (2002). These include parenting, communication, learning at home, decision making, community collaboration, and volunteerism. Conversely, Hashim et al. (2015) conceptualised parental involvement as parenting, learning at home and spiritual support, which is adapted from the parental involvement model by Epstein (1995).

On the other hand, Hashim et al. (2018) split parental involvement into three categories: parental involvement with children, teacher, and school parent-teacher association. These categories are adapted from the Inventory of Parental Influence (henceforth IPI). However, no further references are mentioned. In another study, Manukaram et al. (2013) conceptualised parental involvement as parental participation and parental support, and utilised the Perceptions of Parents Scales (Grolilnick et al., 1997) as a guide to measure parental involvement in their children's lives.

Raslie et al. (2020) specifically focus on parental reading socialisation at home by looking at the frequency of mother-child shared reading sessions. The ideological paradigm of literacy, which regards literacy as a social practice (Street, 2016), acted as the lens for this study. On the other hand, a study by Kamal & Hashim (2021) conceptualises parental involvement by highlighting ESL reading-related activities carried out at home such as school-related activity, entertainment, storybook time, and literacy for the sake of teaching/learning literacy. The findings of the study are discussed based on the perspectives of Vygotsky's social

constructivist theory and Reyes et al.'s (2007) domains of activity related to the literacy framework.

A number of other studies are not explicitly based on any models or theories. For example, Simon (2017) studies a particular aspect of parental involvement, namely parent-teacher communication. Termize et al. (2021) discuss parental involvement in the contexts of having discussions with children, communicating with children, and parental support at home. Koh & Wing (2020) discuss parental involvement from the perspectives of music education, including parent attendance at one to-one piano lessons, home environment and home practice, and effective communication. Shahri et al. (2020) conceptualise parental involvement according to two particular concepts: i- interaction and communication and ii- parenting practices.

In conclusion, the analysis of past research on parental involvement in Malaysian primary schools has found that home-based and school-based involvements are the categorisations that are most commonly used in the past research in the context of Malaysian primary school children. Additionally, parental involvement models by Walker et al. (2005) were most frequently used by researchers in their studies, followed by Epstein's (1995; 2002), the Parents/Caregivers Toolkit by the MOE (2012), and finally Bronfenbrenner's (1979).
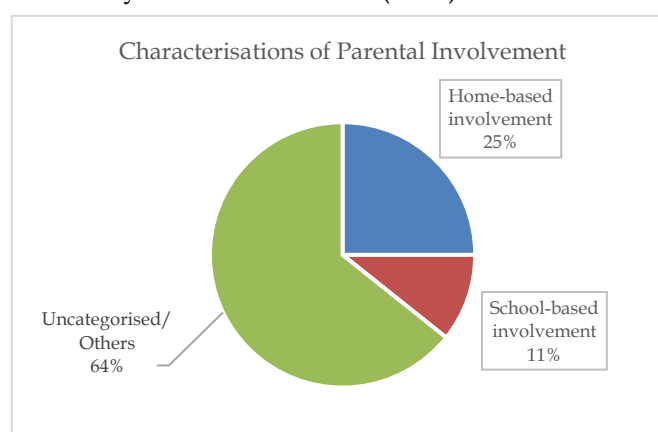

Figure 4: Characterisations of parental involvement in previous studies
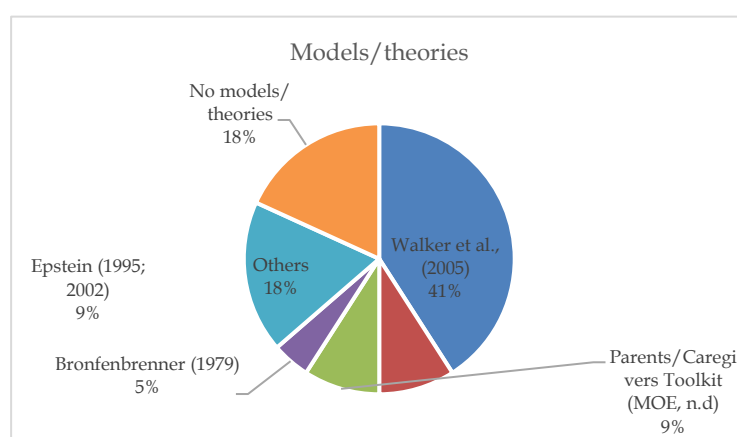

Figure 5: Models/ theories employed in previous studies

5. Discussion and Implications of the Study

Research Question 1: The way parental involvement has been investigated.

Most studies are performed quantitatively from this SLR with a focus on types and levels of involvement. The quantitative study is a typical way of gathering information on parental involvement to allow for subsequent statistical analysis (Hanover Research, 2016). These types of involvement surveyed have to be predetermined, and they help determine how parents are engaged with their children by using a large sample size. However, researchers agree that quantitative study, unlike qualitative study, might limit the accessibility of different involvement (Hosseinpour et al., 2015; Howard et al., 2014).

Although both designs are undeniably needed, applying a qualitative method to discover how parents engage with their children's learning could encourage findings to be inclusive (Zwass, 2018), incorporating those who are generally underrepresented, which might also reflect their cultural circumstances (Bailey & Osipova, 2016) such as their beliefs, perceptions, expectations and practices. The use of in-depth interviews, for example, would likely lead to detailed explanations of the ways parents are involved with their children's learning at home (Kamal, 2020; Latunde, 2017; Lee, 2010; Pendleton, 2017), which is unlikely to be discovered in a quantitative study.

Research Question 2: Constructions of parental involvement explained in the research literature.

From this SLR, the authors note that parental involvement has been researched and explained as a single component or as multiple components with different definitions by different researchers. The diversity of concepts concerning parental involvement suggests little or no agreement among researchers as to how to engage theoretically with parental involvement in their children's education (Kamal, 2020). A situation such as this makes it difficult to determine the significant factors that influence children's learning outcomes (Shute et al. 2011). Further, the inconsistent definition of parental involvement makes it difficult to draw broad conclusions across studies (Jaiswal & Choudhuri, 2017) or to compare and interpret data from studies that define this construct in different ways (Shute et al., 2011).

However, the findings of this SLR also revealed that 'home-based' and 'school-based' have been commonly used as categorisations of parental involvement in a considerable amount of the research in the Malaysian primary school context, similar to the international context (e.g., Hornby & Lafaele, 2011; Xiong et al., 2019; Zong et al., 2017), even though the definitions of each construct differ from one study to the next, further complicating the interpretation of data from various studies.

In addition to that the above, the findings from this SLR indicate that most of the parental involvement categorisations do not reflect the Parents/Caregivers Toolkit developed by the MOE (2012). These findings suggest that the researchers may not be aware of the Toolkit's existence because most academics who authored the studies work in higher institutions. Had the research adopted parental

involvement characteristics highlighted in the Toolkit, the study's findings would be more relevant to Malaysian primary school children.

Besides this, many studies are tied to particular parental involvement models or theories. Having theories or models from prominent academics such as Walker et al. (2005), Epstein (1995, 2002), and Bronfenbrenner (1979) are helpful to help understand the phenomenon under study. However, not many theories or models on which such research is based are discussed appropriately. As a result, these studies present what effectively amounts to misinformation to the reader about the content and propositions of the theory, which may lead to a flawed heuristic tool. Additionally, the way the research is presented may prevent a fair test of the theory, thus preventing proper adjustments to be made (Tudge et al., 2009, p. 198). Therefore, further explanation and discussion of the findings concerning the theories and models are required to orient readers to the models' applications in the study.

6. Conclusion
In this article, we report on a systematic literature review we have carried out to gain additional insight into the research methods and research focuses of studies of parental involvement. We also explain multiple constructs of parental involvement that existed in such studies. Future studies might include analysis of level of parental involvement variables and the relationship between parental involvement and children's learning. Otherwise, the SLR can also be performed by focusing on parental involvement amongst preschool and secondary school children. Our focus is limited to the parental involvement with the Malaysian primary school student context. This study concludes that parents' ability to influence the educational performance of their children appears to be significant in general. All relevant stakeholders must be aware of Malaysian parental involvement practices and their implications for children. Schools and teachers may play an essential role in promoting the involvement of parents in their children's education.

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