

# Study of Post-Secondary Education: A Systematic Literature Review

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## Abstract

Teenagers are a crucial asset for a country. To ensure that these teenagers are not too complacent and comfortable with all the facilities available, various strategies need to be implemented to prevent the country from running out of skilled and expert workers in the future. This study aims to conduct a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) to collect qualitative data that can provide explanations and views from *Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia* (SPM) graduates about their desire to continue their studies at the post-secondary level. The review process includes five main methodological steps, guided by the review protocol, formulating research questions, and a systematic search strategy based on identification, screening, and the qualification of several established databases such as Scopus, Science Direct, Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), and Google Scholar. As a result of the five processes, the researcher selected 30 articles to be studied. Consequently, there are two themes, namely; (1) the factor of wanting to learn and (2) the factor of not wanting to continue studying. From these two big themes, there are 16 sub-themes. For the factor of wanting to study, there are eight sub-themes, and the factor of not wanting to continue studying eight sub-themes.

**Keywords:** Teenagers, Post- Secondary Education, Factor, Constructivist Grounded Theory, Coping Strategies.

## Introduction

This study results from the researcher's concern and confusion regarding the behavior of young people who have graduated from *Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia* (SPM) who are not interested in continuing their studies to a higher level.

At the end of 2019, the world was shaken by the threat of the Covid-19 pandemic and Malaysia was also affected. To deal with the continuous spread of this epidemic, the government has taken various initiatives to eradicate this epidemic. Moreover, various directives and law enforcement have been implemented, such as Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), Movement Control Orders (MCO), Conditional Movement Control Orders

(CMCO), and Enhanced Movement Control Orders (EMCO). This has changed the entire culture, thinking, and way of life, as well as the community's view on aspects such as economy, society, career, education, and spirituality.

From the context of education, the researcher discovered that youngest people who have completed their studies up to Form Five seem uninterested and unmotivated to continue their studies to a higher level. There are various ways they attempt in avoiding to continuing their studies. Since the researcher's house is where all the villagers' correspondence is kept, the researcher is able to know a little about this matter. Once, a teenager was willing to disappoint his parents when he cheated in applying to a private college. This was revealed when the researcher's mother personally delivered the letter sent by the postman to the teenager's home. The face of happiness turned to gloom as soon as the teenager's mother saw the name on the letter addressed. Clearly, the teenager refused to continue his studies since the name printed on the offer letter belonged to his younger brother, 17-year-old student still in high school.

Other than that, the teenager has also thrown away two offer letters to continue studying offered by Public Higher Education Institutions. The question that plays in the researcher's mind now is why the teenager refused the opportunity when both were fully sponsored. The researcher felt very sad and aggrieved by the teenager's actions considering that, before the Covid-19 pandemic, the opportunity for young people to continue their studies was very difficult. However, after the outbreak of this epidemic, the government gave privileges to students to continue their studies to a higher level. Unfortunately, these benefits have been wasted. Who is to blame in such matters?

This study will answer every question that prompts the researcher to research teenagers who have graduated from "high school". A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) needs to be conducted to see the factors that cause these SPM graduates in Malaysia to want to continue their studies or not to the next level. The selection of SLR writing is to ensure trustworthy findings. Moreover, systematic reviews strive to gather and integrate all relevant studies that meet predetermined eligibility criteria, employing methods designed to reduce bias. To obtain dependable conclusions, the review's authors must thoroughly evaluate the potential drawbacks of the studies included (Higgins et al., 2011).

## **Methodology**

### **Review protocol-PRISMA 2020**

This study was guided by the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 review protocol. The main objective of PRISMA is to assist systematic reviewers in providing clear explanations for the review, the actions taken by the authors, and the results obtained. The 2020 version of the PRISMA statement supersedes the 2009 version and incorporates updated guidelines for reporting that incorporate advancements in methods for identifying, selecting, evaluating, and synthesizing studies. Furthermore, the primary objective of PRISM is to assist systematic reviewers in offering concise justifications for the review's purpose, the authors' actions, and the achieved outcomes. The 2020 PRISMA statement replaces the 2009 edition and includes enhanced guidelines for reporting that encompass the latest advancements in methods for identifying, selecting, evaluating, and synthesizing studies. Moreover, Page et al (2020) made changes to the structure and

presentation of the items to make implementation easier. The SLR process, guided by PRISMA 2020, started by formulating research questions using the PICO method, where 'P' represents the Problem or Population, 'I' represent Interest, and 'Co' represents the Context.

Afterwards, the process of searching for relevant documents was carried out in three systematic stages: identification, screening, and eligibility. Subsequently, a quality assessment was performed using the criteria provided by (Hong et al., 2018). Prior to being included in the review, the quality of each chosen article was assessed. Following this, the selected articles underwent various stages, including data extraction and data analysis. The primary research question guided the process of extracting data, while the extracted data was analyzed through qualitative data synthesis (thematic synthesis). When appropriate, the authors incorporated the recommendations proposed in the review by exploring alternatives to ensure that the review protocol aligned with the review's objective.

### **Formulations of the Research Question**

This study develops the research questions to provide direction for the SLR. Consequently, the PICO mnemonic formulated the research question (Lockwood et al., 2015). The study combines three main elements, namely teenagers/students (Population), continuing studies (Interest), and post-secondary education issues (Context), according to the concept. This enabled the authors to formulate the main research questions of this study: factors in continuing studies or discontinuing study after finishing high school.

### **Systematic Searching Strategies**

The three phases of identification, screening, and qualification proposed by Shaffril et al. (2018) engaged in a systematic search strategy for this review to retrieve relevant articles. These phases are implemented to ensure a thorough investigation (Figure 1) in answering the review objectives while also allowing authors to search and synthesize studies comprehensively in an organized and transparent SLR.

### **Identification**

Identification is the first phase of a systematic search strategy and is done by determining the keywords used in the search process. According to Durach et al. (2017), the most appropriate combination of keywords to use at this stage was selected after considering the inclusion/exclusion criteria of the review research questions. This ensures that the search process will include all relevant studies and exclude irrelevant ones. Additionally, it is important to use multiple databases to avoid retrieval bias (Durach et al., 2017). The search relies on one main keyword, post-secondary education, based on the research questions formulated. This is considering that this SLR aims to determine how teenagers can be encouraged to continue their studies at the tertiary level. The basic functions of the Boolean operator OR or AND or AND NOT, field codes, phrase searches, wildcards, and truncation, have been used whenever possible.

The article was researched based on four major indexing databases in the scientific community; Scopus, Science Direct, Educational Resource Information Center (ERIC), and Google Scholar. The ERIC database was chosen as it provides research-related studies and educational information. Note that each article retrieved from this database was carefully reviewed beyond its title and study abstract to select the most appropriate articles relevant to the objectives of this SLR. This search process effort retrieved 22,661 potential articles from the selected database.

Table 1

*Search string used in the selected database*

Database	String
Scopus	TITLE-ABS (factor AND "post-secondary education")

Table 2

*Inclusion and exclusion criteria*

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Timeline	2006-2023	2005 and earlier
Document types	Articles (with empirical data)	Review article, book chapter, book, proceeding of a conference
Language	English	Non-English
Subject area	Education, social sciences, psychology, economics, nursing, environmental science, health professions, arts and humanities	Medical, neuroscience, computer science, business, management, accounting, biological sciences, biochemistry

### Screening

During the screening phase, the objective is to differentiate appropriate articles from inappropriate ones for the SLR using a specific set of criteria. According to Kitchenham and Charters (2007), authors can choose any criteria for the review. It is as long as it aligns with the research question and enables accurate interpretation and classification of study articles. Following the notion of 'research field maturity' highlighted by Kraus et al (2020), a range of articles were chosen from the pool of publications spanning from 2006 to 2023. This particular timeframe was selected due to the adequate number of studies available, enabling a comprehensive review. Another criterion was that the articles were empirical research papers since they offered primary data, not thesis or dissertation reports, review papers, or were in the form of a newsletter.

Since the SLR objective related to school education, parenting, and family issues, choosing education, social sciences, psychology, nursing, environmental science, health professions, as well as arts and humanities as criteria for the subject area was believed to increase the possibility of attaining more articles related to the research question. According to Linares-Espinos et al (2018), the articles to be reviewed are limited to English to avoid confusion and reduce time consumption. Therefore, this SLR has selected English-language articles only. After discarding 217 articles that had failed to meet the mentioned criteria, 110 articles were retained to check for any duplication. This process has four duplicate articles records, and the potential articles that can be used are 106 articles for the next stage of the selection process.

### Eligibility

Eligibility was the third process of the systematic search strategy, where the 106 selected articles were re-examined to determine compliance with the selection criteria. As Durach et al (2017) suggested, it is crucial to look beyond the study's title and abstract when assessing the relevance of each article to the scoping review. The authors thoroughly examined the remaining papers to determine if they met the predetermined inclusion criteria, either by reviewing the title, abstract, or the entire paper. Two articles were deemed unsuitable during the initial screening based on their titles, and 34 were eliminated after the authors evaluated their abstracts. Additionally, another 40 articles were excluded after the authors carefully read the content of the selected articles. In total, 76 articles were removed at this stage since they did not focus on factors in continuing studies or discontinuing studies after finishing high school. As a result, 30 articles were finally selected for the SLR (see Figure 1).

### Quality Appraisal

The purpose of the quality appraisal stage was to verify that the selected studies were conducted adequately in terms of methodology and analysis. To achieve this objective, the researchers utilized the Mixed-Method Appraisal Tool (MMAT) developed by (Hong et al., 2018). It allows researchers to assess a comprehensive range of studies in a systematic mixed studies review, including qualitative research, randomized controlled trials, non-randomized studies, quantitative descriptive studies, and mixed methods studies (Hong et al., 2018). In addition, the quality of the chosen articles was evaluated using five primary criteria established in the research design. Two co-authors assisted the corresponding author in evaluating each article's methodological and analytical rigor. Each article was read carefully, focusing on the methodological and analytical sections.

Other than that, MMAT examined articles, for example, the consistency between the sampling conducted in each study and the analysis conducted (non-random sampling vs confounders) (Table 3). Each article is examined based on five criteria with three options in presenting their answers (Yes, No, and Can't Tell). The articles were included in the SLR if they passed at least three criteria. Consequently, the inclusion decision for each article is based on a mutual agreement where the author will immediately resolve any disagreement through discussion. All authors agreed that all 30 articles passed the minimum quality requirements regarding methodology and analysis from this quality assessment process. In summary, 11 articles met all criteria, while 12 articles achieved at least four criteria, and another seven obtained at least three criteria (Table 4).

Table 3

*The criteria used to determine the rigor of the methodology and analysis used in the selected articles*

Research design	Assessment criteria
Qualitative	QA1: Is the qualitative approach appropriate to answer the research question? QA2: Are the qualitative data collection methods adequate to address the research question? QA3: Are the findings adequately derived from the data? QA4: Is the interpretation of results sufficiently substantiated by data?

	QA5: Is there coherence between qualitative data sources, collection, analysis, and interpretation?
Quantitative (descriptive)	QA1: Is the sampling strategy relevant to address the research question? QA2: Is the sample representative of the target population? QA3: Are the measurements appropriate? QA4: Is the risk of nonresponse bias low? QA5: Is the statistical analysis appropriate to answer the research question?
Quantitative (non-randomized)	QA1: Are the participants" representative of the target population? QA2: Are measurements appropriate regarding both the outcome and intervention (or exposure)? QA3: Are there complete outcome data? QA4: Are the confounders accounted for in the design and analysis? QA5: During the study period, is the intervention administered (or exposure occurred) as intended?
Mixed methods	QA1: Is there an adequate rationale for using a mixed methods design to address the research question? QA2: Are the different components of the study effectively integrated to answer the research question? QA3: Are the outputs of the integration of qualitative and quantitative components adequately interpreted? QA4: Are divergences and inconsistencies between quantitative and qualitative results adequately addressed? QA5: Do the different components of the study adhere to the quality criteria of each tradition of the methods involved?

Table 4  
Result of the quality assessment

Study	Resear ch Design	QA 1	QA 2	QA 3	QA 4	QA 5	Numb er of criteri a fulfille d	Inclusi on in the review
Merli Tamtik	QL	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	5/5	Y
S. Childs et al.	QN(DC )	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	4/5	Y
Tehilia Refaeli et al.	QL	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	4/5	Y
D. Murphy Odo, R.D'silva & L. Gunderson	QL	Y	N	Y	Y	C	3/5	Y
Genge and Day	QN(NR )	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	5/5	Y
Brown et al.	QN(DC )	Y	Y	N	Y	N	3/5	Y
G.D. Sandefur et al.	QN(NR )	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	5/5	Y

Pillay et al.	QN(NR )	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	4/5	Y
O'Meara, Prendergast, & Treacy	QN(DC )	Y	N	Y	Y	C	3/5	Y
Holt et al.	QN(NR )	Y	N	Y	Y	N	3/5	Y
Heath & Keptner	MX	Y	N	Y	Y	C	3/5	Y
Sallaffie et al.	QN(DC )	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	5/5	Y
Falk and Needham	MX	Y	Y	Y	Y	C	4/5	Y
M. Olivarez Et Al.	QL	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	4/5	Y
S. T. JANG	QN(NR )	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	5/5	Y
Yang and Bechtold	QL	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	4/5	Y
M. Shah and M. Cheng	QN(NR )	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	5/5	Y
Lawson et al.	QN(NR )	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	4/5	Y
K. Gamage et al.	QN(NR )	Y	Y	C	Y	C	3/5	Y
J. Huang et al.	QN(DC )	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	4/5	Y
A. Martin et al.	QN(NR )	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	4/5	Y
K. T. Lisnyj, R. Russell, & A. Papadopoulos	QN(DC )	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	5/5	Y
M. Scanlon et al.	QL	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	5/5	Y
Murphy	QN(DC )	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	5/5	Y
Rivera and Li	MX	Y	N	Y	Y	C	3/5	Y
N.Y. Park	QN(DC )	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	5/5	Y
C. Zishiri et al.	QL	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	5/5	Y
K. Grace, S. Eng	QL	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	4/5	Y
M. Sandner et al.	QL	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	4/5	Y
X. Jing et al.	QL	Y	Y	Y	C	Y	4/5	Y

QA=Quality assessment; QN (DC) = Quantitative descriptive; QN (NR) = Quantitative non-randomized; QL = Qualitative; MX = Mixed-Method; C = Can't tell

### Data Extraction and Analysis

The data extraction process was guided by the research question. Given that the review relied on various research designs, the articles were thematically analyzed to determine the best methods of integrating the differences through qualitative synthesis (Whittemore and Knaf, 2005). Although there are multiple options for qualitative synthesis, this review followed the approach proposed by Flemming et al (2019), who emphasized the flexibility of thematic synthesis in synthesizing data from diverse research designs. In this review, thematic synthesis was conducted using the recommended steps outlined by Kiger and Varpio (2020),

aiming to recognize and communicate the patterns discovered in previous studies. It is conducted by identifying any resemblances or connections that may be present in the accessible data (Braun and Clarke, 2019). Initially, the researchers acquainted themselves with the complete dataset through active and repeated readings. This procedure provided the researchers with valuable insight into the unprocessed data and established the groundwork for all subsequent actions.

In the second step, the researchers created initial codes, wherein they meticulously arranged the data at a detailed and precise level. Throughout this phase, the researchers thoroughly examined all chosen articles and extracted any relevant data pertaining to the primary research inquiry. Note that the generation of themes was the focus of the third process. The researchers utilized inductive coding frameworks and tried to observe any interests, similarities, and connections among the extracted data using the coded data. Moreover, the synthesis depended on an inductive coding framework in which the themes were derived from the coded data. Meanwhile, the formed themes were connected to the initial data and represented the entirety of the data set (Braun and Clarke, 2019). Throughout this procedure, two primary themes emerged. Subsequently, the researchers underwent the same process for each theme to detect potential sub-themes, resulting in 16 subthemes.

The next process involves reviewing the themes developed. Here, the researcher examines the appropriateness of the main theme and sub-themes. The main theme remains only two themes, maintaining 16 sub-themes. Consequently, the themes and sub-themes were presented to two experts in qualitative synthesis and community development and asked to confirm the themes and sub-themes. Furthermore, both experts were also asked about the relevance of the theme to the research question. All two themes and 16 sub-themes were retained following this process.

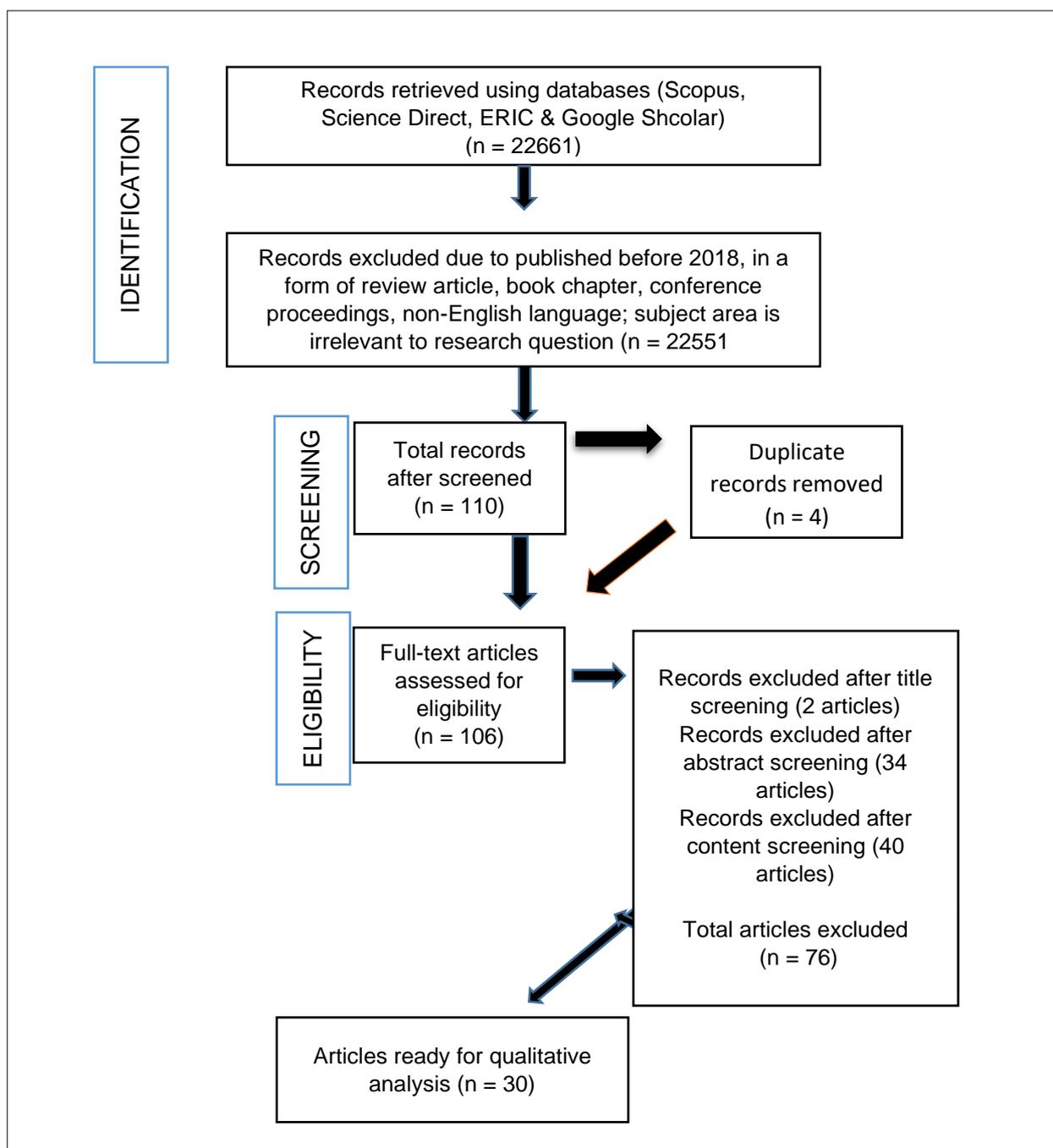


Figure 1: Flow diagram of the systematic search strategies for the SLR

## Result

### Background of the Study

Out of 30 articles, 16 articles were published in Scopus (Heath and Keptner 2023; O'Meara et al., 2023; Refaeli et al., 2023; Brown et al., 2022; Pillay et al., 2022; Olivarez et al., 2022; Yang and Bechtold 2021; Sallaffie et al., 2021; Genge and Day 2021; S. T. Jang 2020; Tamtik 2018; Holt et al., 2018; Childs et al., 2016; Falk and Needham 2013; Odo et al., 2012; Sandefur et al., 2006). Three articles were published in ERIC (Gamage et al., 2021; Lawson et al., 2020; Shah and Cheng 2018). Meanwhile, two articles from Science Direct (Martin et al., 2019; Huang et al., 2010) and Google Scholar with nine articles were used (Sandner et al., 2023; Jing et al.,

2021; Zishiri et al., 2021; Lisnyj et al., 2020; Rivera and Li 2020; Grace and Eng 2020; Park 2018; Murphy 2018; Scanlon et al., 2018).

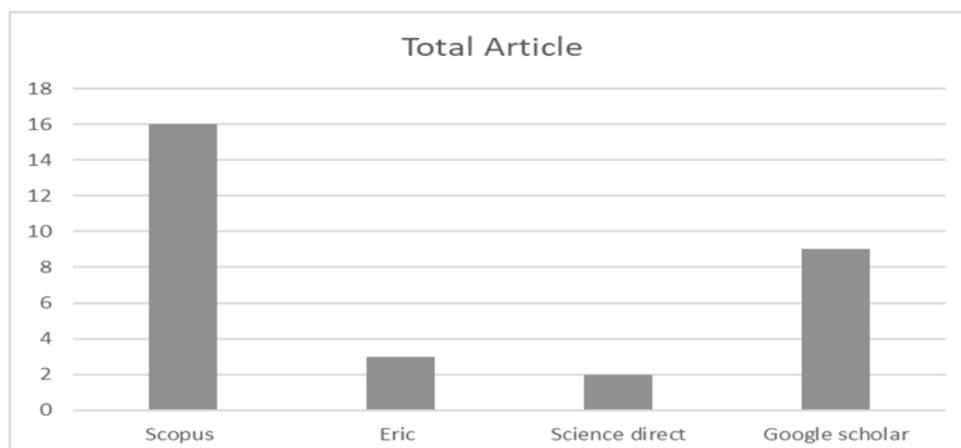


Figure 2: Total Article

Other than that, there are ten qualitative articles used (Refaeli et al., 2023; M. Sandner et al., 2023; Olivarez et al., 2022; Yang and Bechtold 2021; Zishiri et al., 2021; Jing et al., 2021; Grace and Eng 2020; Scanlon et al., 2018; Tamtik, 2018; Odo et al., 2012). While for quantitative articles, there are 17 articles (O'Meara et al., 2023; Brown et al., 2022; Pillay et al., 2022; Genge and Day 2021; Sallaffie et al., 2021; Gamage et al., 2021; Jang 2020; Lisnyj et al., 2020; Lawson et al., 2020; Martin et al., 2019; Holt et al., 2018; Shah and Cheng, 2018; Murphy, 2018; Park, 2018; Childs et al., 2016; Huang et al., 2010; Sandefur et al., 2006), and for the mixed method article, three articles are used (Heath and Keptner, 2023; Rivera and Li, 2020; Falk and Needham, 2013).

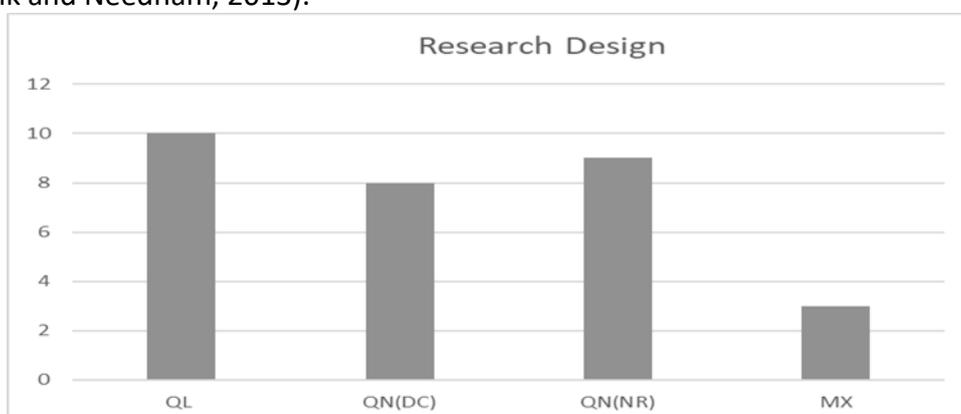


Figure 3: Total Research Design

In addition, based on the year, four articles from 2023 are used (Heath and Keptner, 2023; O'Meara et al., 2023; Refaeli et al., 2023; M. Sandner et al., 2023). For 2022, three articles were analyzed (Brown et al., 2022; Pillay et al., 2022; M. Olivarez et al., 2022). For the year 2021, there are six articles (Yang and Bechtold, 2021; Sallaffie et al., 2021; Genge and Day, 2021; Gamage et al., 2021; Jing et al., 2021; Zishiri et al., 2021). For 2020, five articles were used (Jang, 2020; Lawson et al., 2020; Lisnyj et al., 2020; Rivera and Li, 2020; Grace and Eng, 2020). In 2019, an article was used for 2019 (Martin et al., 2019). In the year 2018, as many as six articles are examined (Tamtik, 2018; Holt et al., 2018; Shah and Cheng, 2018; Park, 2018; Murphy, 2018; Scanlon et al., 2018). For 2016, there is one article (Childs et al., 2016).

In 2013, there was an article (Sandner et al., 2023). For 2012, there is one article used (Odo et al., 2012), while for 2006, there is one article used (Sandefur et al., 2006).

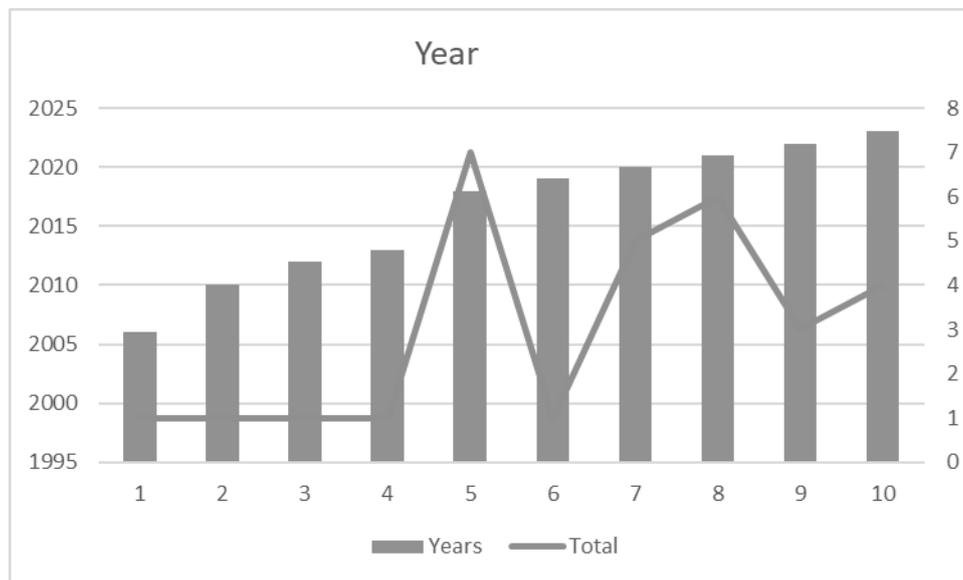


Figure 4: Total of articles by year

## The Developed Themes

### Factor to Learnt

Several sub-categories will be discussed in the factors that cause them to want to continue their studies to a higher level.

### Self-Factor

Students with a stable academic background and good relationships with the surrounding community can help them continue their studies to the highest level (G.D. Sandefur et al., 2006). In addition, according to Pillay et al (2022), individuals expect strong support from their families in carrying out their daily activities. The students must also be supported with a deeper approach by their teachers to adapt to a more effective teaching and learning environment (Murphy, 2018).

Individuals with stable emotional well-being are more likely to have better self-efficacy and can improve skills such as coping skills, and the institutional climate is slow to change (Holt et al., 2018; Heath and Keptner, 2023). Furthermore, with stable emotional well-being and beneficial activities, this group can share their interests with friends with the same interests as a path to getting a good job after graduating (Scanlon et al., 2018; Rivera and Lee, 2020).

In addition, the factor that causes Chinese students to continue their post-secondary studies abroad is that they find fierce competition in the *Gaokao*, which encourages them to continue their studies (Jing et al., 2021). In addition, the negative attraction factor from third countries is also the factor for teenagers to choose Canada as their place of study (Jing et al., 2021).

### Parent

Based on the response provided by parents who belong to upper secondary school, the need to continue studying and choosing a place of study is to secure the student's future. The main

categories that emerged from the interviews emphasized the career prospects of the changing global environment. It also focused on selecting post-secondary education that crosses cultural boundaries, traditions, and similar language backgrounds. The concept of "push-pull-plus factors" is relevant to explain the decision-making process to parents and students who have different geographies (Sandefur et al., 2006; Childs et al., 2016; Tamtik, 2018).

The involvement of parents in school also has a positive effect on the development of students and is the reason these groups decide to continue their studies to a higher level since their safety is guaranteed and good (Sandefur et al., 2006; Rivera and Lee 2020; Pillay et al., 2022; Khairizah et al., 2023). Support from various parties, such as the teachers' families and the surrounding community, is crucial for this group in solving all the problems that occur and can increase their confidence and success (Sallaffie et al., 2021; Pillay et al., 2022; Falk and Needham 2013). According to Zishiri et al (2021); Olivarez et al (2022); O'Meara et al (2023), family is more influential in determining the decision of male students to continue their studies and their future.

Table 5  
Findings

No	Author/ Theme	Factor to learnt								Factor unwillingness to learn							
		SF	P	EC	SM	SC	S	CD	D	UM	C	M	T	FM	F	A	SP
1	Tamtik (2018)		/	/	/	/	/			/	/	/	/				
2	S. Childs Et Al. (2016)		/	/				/						/	/		
3	Refaeli Et Al. (2023)									/	/	/	/	/	/	/	
4	Odo et al. (2012)								/								
5	Genge And Day (2021)				/	/					/						/
6	Brown Et Al. (2022)							/	/								
7	G.D. Sandefur Et Al. (2006)	/	/	/													
8	Pillay Et Al. (2022)	/	/				/			/			/	/			
9	O'meara, Prendergast, & Treacy (2023)		/				/		/								
10	Holt Et Al. (2018)	/					/				/						
11	Heath & Keptner (2023)	/					/										
12	Sallaffie Et Al. (2021)	/	/	/			/									/	
13	Falk And Needham (2013)		/	/			/										
14	M. Olivarez Et Al. (2022)		/				/								/		
15	S. T. Jang (2020)						/										/
16	Yang And Bechtold (2021)			/		/						/		/	/	/	
17	M. Shah And M. Cheng (2018)					/							/	/			
18	Lawson Et Al. (2020)						/			/							
19	K. Gamage Et Al. (2021)								/								
20	J. Huang Et Al. (2010)		/	/												/	
21	A. Martin Et Al. (2019)		/										/	/			
22	Lisnyj et al. (2020)						/										
23	M. Scanlon Et Al. (2018)	/	/				/				/				/		
24	Murphy (2018)	/															
25	Rivera and Li (2020)	/	/			/	/										
26	N.Y. Park (2018)			/													
27	C. Zishiri et al (2021)		/								/		/	/			
28	K. Grace, S. Eng (2020)		/	/													
29	M. Sandner et al. (2023)									/					/		
30	X. Jing et al. (2021)	/		/		/											

Factor to learnt				Factor unwillingness to learn			
SF – Self-Factor	SC – Surrounding	UM- Unmotivated	FM- Family				
P – Parent	Communities	C – Country	F- Financial				
EC – Socioeconomic/ Economy	S – Stakeholders	M - Multiculturalism	A – Abuse				
SM – Social Media	CD – Cultural diversity	T – Teachers	SP - Surrounding People				
	D - Demography						

According to Scanlon et al (2018), parents have a 'strategic orientation' towards their children's education in terms of subject selection and selecting a more suitable place of study. In this regard, teenagers are exposed to career paths that families from low socio-economics

do not have access to. In addition, according to Grace and Eng (2020), based on a gender perspective, girls are more valued since it has been voiced as facilitating career achievement, financial stability, and social/community contributions. Moreover, female graduates demonstrate that their families value education very much. In addition, the pressure faced by the family has different psychological effects on the mental health of parents, which can influence their children's development in furthering their studies (Huang et al., 2010; Martin et al., 2019).

### **Socioeconomic/ Economy**

According to Tamtik (2018), the skill that all students need to master is to be fluent in English since it is important for those who want to continue their studies abroad. Besides, it is to maintain their socioeconomic status or be promoted when working later. In addition, family education and income sources for wealthy parents are able to invest in their children's education and have a positive effect on the education of this group (Sandefur et al., 2006; Huang et al., 2010; Childs et al., 2016; Yang and Bechtold, 2021). In addition, to help families financially send their children to continue their studies, parents are advised to save for their children's needs while in university to avoid financial problems (Huang et al., 2010).

According to Sallaffie et al (2021), putting financial issues into education is important to ensure that these teenagers can follow the post-secondary study program perfectly without the burden that can affect mental health. Financial issues are also significant to have a perfect infrastructure to ensure that the teaching and learning process can be carried out perfectly (Falk and Needham, 2013).

Environmental, social, and personal factors profoundly affect a student's education. Suppose some problems occur, for example, financial problems or problems in the learning environment. In that case, it will negatively affect this group of teenagers, and if on the contrary, it will encourage this group to achieve their goals (Grace and Eng, 2020; Park, 2018). This can be proven in the study of Jing et al (2021), who stated that this group could escape the intense pressure and competition in China by studying abroad. In addition, the main attraction factors for this group to study abroad are lower tuition fees, higher quality of education, and the opportunity to improve English language skills.

### **Social Media**

The use of social media platforms to promote their universities in attracting these teenagers' interest to continue their post-secondary studies is growing rapidly. Whether it is a university in the country or abroad does not matter. Moreover, various strategies have been implemented to attract teenagers to continue their studies. It is also helped by the support received from various parties (Tamtik, 2018; Gene and Day, 2021).

### **Surrounding Communities**

According to Tamtik (2018), agents, teachers, and family friends are trusted by teenagers in making decisions. Students are more likely to link their decisions to perceptions of overall reputation. Additionally, according to Genge and Day (2021), some factors explain the positive attitudes of non-indigenous Canadians towards post-secondary funding for Aboriginal students. It is related to supporting factors for social policies and social outcomes in general.

Furthermore, according to Rivera and Li (2020); Yang and Bechtold (2021), social support from school counselors and parents on providing moral support, obtaining financial

assistance, managing costs, providing emotional support to young people, and technology-assisted learning. This is with the aim that they successfully continue their studies at the post-secondary level.

In addition, according to Shah and Cheng (2018), students who study online think of withdrawing due to the difficulty in accessing instructors and sufficient feedback about learning. Good support should be given to these students to prevent them from withdrawing. The attractive factor that causes these teenagers to continue their studies is that the education available in Canada is higher (Jing et al., 2021).

### **Stakeholders**

Closer cooperation between higher education institutions and local schools should continue as it opens opportunities for students to choose post-secondary education with a perfect environment (Tamtik, 2018). In addition, according to Pillay et al (2022), the importance and challenges received in forming identity, self-awareness, and self-efficacy as potential protective factors for a successful transition in navigating and managing transition challenges. Factors that influence students' decisions to follow higher level mathematics studies are the influence of bonus point initiatives on students' decisions to study mathematics in the most advanced form (O'Meara et al., 2023).

In addition, this lack of support increases understanding with a greater acceptance of evolution that can improve conflict (Holt et al., 2018). Peer mentoring programs and spaces to help individuals from underrepresented groups succeed in the college space. Additionally, institutional factors emphasizing individual characteristics over systemic issues may not meet the needs of emerging adults in marginalized groups (Heath and Keptner, 2023). According to Scanlon et al (2018); Sallaffie et al (2021); Olivarez et al (2022), success in education takes into account the role of family, educators, and a perfect life community. Moreover, according to Falk and Needham (2013), the interaction between the factors discovered in this study is not very strong and, in many cases, is not statistically significant compared to the direct effect.

Furthermore, to attract the interest of these teenagers to continue their studies to the post-secondary level, the school has allowed this group to visit several colleges and universities to make it easier for them to make decisions in their college selection (Olivarez et al., 2022). According to Jang (2020), participation in school- or community-based programs between non-free or reduced lunch and eligible LGBTQ students may also factor in patterns related to perceived care from adults. To reduce concerns about students' academic performance, those responsible need to highlight critical factors that can be addressed in post-secondary campuses, such as critical target areas and protective factors (Lisnyj et al., 2020). Other than that, schools are also encouraged to continue to increase efforts related to teacher professional development and parent capacity building. This key protective factor can build and support student resilience (Rivera and Li, 2020). Teachers are taught about quantitative concepts in geoscience, including communication and metacognitive skills that can help them in their studies (Gamage et al., 2021).

### **Cultural Diversity**

Cultural communication is social communication that includes steps for discussion about school with parents related to food and other issues. It is a student's response to the frequency of parents discussing political, social issues, books, and programs together (Childs et al., 2016). In addition, it discusses the sociocultural interventions that have been proposed (Brown et al., 2022).

### **Demography**

According to the view of Odo et al (2012); Brown et al (2022); O'Meara et al (2023), stated that the general information of a study that includes gender, type of school, age, language, achievement, and race affects a student's decision to continue their studies at the post-secondary level according to their desires and goals to be achieved.

### **Factor unwillingness to learn**

#### **Unmotivated**

According to Tamtik (2018), the experience of previous students studying abroad is the cause for new students who want to decide to continue their studies abroad. Young people in the Bedouin community state that the state is not fully responsible for children's education. (Tamtik, 2018). However, lack of school budgets, lack of study scholarships, lack of supervision over the quality of schools, and lack of encouragement and guidance for young women to get an education is why teenagers do not continue their studies (Refaeli et al., 2023).

In addition, the problems of depression and anxiety that occur, limited social skills, and communication challenges are risk factors for an autistic student not to succeed in post-secondary education, employment, independent living, and friendship formation (Pillay et al., 2022). In addition, according to Lawson et al (2020), age and gender are related to social quality of life. Thus, autistic males have poorer social QoL than autistic females, and older autistic individuals have poorer social QoL than younger autistic individuals. Furthermore, Sandner et al (2023) stated that students are calmer during holidays and when not attending school since they feel less stressed due to reduced stress and bullying. In extreme cases even leads to less suicide during the holiday months.

### **Country**

According to Tamtik (2018), parents experience difficulty sending their children to continue their studies abroad due to difficulty obtaining visas for minors and the health condition of children who need further treatment. These factors discourage them from continuing their studies abroad country. Additionally, there are several types of gender discrimination in the Bedouin community, where they only provide education to men compared to women. This is due to the government's low investment in the Bedouin community. Especially in their schools, the lack of enforcement of compulsory education laws in Bedouin schools, and the low socioeconomic situation of the Bedouin community (Refaeli et al., 2023). However, if this discrimination is not controlled at the institutional level, it will negatively impact the psychological well-being of marginalized groups, despite the sense of belonging.

Additionally, according to Gene and Day (2021), the body of knowledge about prejudice and its association with attitudes is a potential barrier to strengthening support for politically oriented programs, and beliefs may pose a challenge to change the level of public support. Furthermore, a clear lack of motivation and worry that might be 'nothing' once he finishes school causes them not to continue their studies to the post-secondary level (Scanlon et al., 2018). Other than that, micro factors become an obstacle in pursuing post-secondary education (Zishiri et al., 2021).

### **Multiculturalism**

According to Tamtik (2018), the security theme mentioned earlier is multiculturalism, which influences the thinking of parents in favor of Canada. It has promoted a global image as a multicultural country, with its advantages raised only once among students. Additionally,

study abroad experiences tend to have spillover effects, where individual experiences with studying abroad or living abroad from trusted people can significantly impact family decisions in favor of early study abroad.

Furthermore, the Bedouin education system can be divided into two sub-themes: the lack of preparation and guidance for personal and social education and discriminatory treatment and abuse. For the previous sub-theme, participants do not know what they can study in the future, their options, and the criteria for accepting certain study courses (Refaeli et al., 2023).

### **Teachers**

According to Refaeli et al (2023), teachers invest more in Bedouin boys, students with strengths, or the teacher's children while the other students are left alone. The challenges young adults face during the transition are due to insufficient attention to their abilities, limited knowledge about the developmental nature of autism, and the implementation of other individualized interventions in this population (Pillay et al., 2022). In addition, the obstacles received by alumni to continue their studies are teachers and staff who are not supportive while in school financially and being homeless while in college (Yang and Bechtold, 2021).

### **Family**

According to Childs et al (2016), the more help provided by parents and other siblings, it will reduce the probability for these teenagers to attend university. Conversely, lack of familial support and opposition, particularly from parents, hinders their pursuit of higher education. This is in contrast to the encouragement typically extended to older siblings to continue their studies beyond the secondary level, as highlighted in studies by (Pillay et al., 2022; Refaeli et al., 2023). In addition, the main obstacle they receive to continuing their studies is that daughters are expected to be able to take care of their younger brothers and help mothers with housework. For those about to start a family, all promises are not fulfilled. Furthermore, the Bedouin community does not allow their daughters to continue their studies to a higher level to avoid the family name becoming bad (Refaeli et al., 2023).

In addition, the basic obstacles that cause them not to continue their studies are the historical legacy of not pursuing post-secondary education, insufficient transition support from uninvolved parents, and existing jobs in their host farms (Zishiri et al., 2021). Moreover, family stress, work commitments, mental health, disabilities, and physical health are the main barriers to learning that can cause a teenager to withdraw from continuing their studies at the post-secondary level. In addition, parents' difficulties in marriage and behavior are influenced by the difficulties experienced in the family (Shah and Cheng, 2018; Martin et al., 2019). Furthermore, parents play a role in determining the safety of their children before continuing their studies by taking into account the current situation in the country where their children will continue their studies and others (Tamtik, 2018).

### **Financial**

Most teenagers to continue their studies to the post-secondary level stated that their wish is not fulfilled due to the family's poor economic status causing that desire to disappear (Johdi et al., 2009). However, if some continue their studies to the post-secondary level, the number is few. Some even have high-income families and do not want to continue their studies. This is since parents' income and education have a weaker relationship with the decision to enroll

in a certificate or post-secondary program (Sandefur et al., 2006; Childs et al., 2016; Refaeli et al., 2023).

According to Sallaffie et al (2021), mental health support such as counseling does not meet students' needs. However, stress is exacerbated by housing and living costs. In addition, financial barriers, institutions, the low academic achievement of parents, and lack of guidance or involvement with substance use or crime reduce student success (Yang and Bechtold, 2021; Olivarez et al., 2022).

Additionally, parents voiced concerns about eligibility and whether or not student grants are sufficient to cover all costs. Some parents worry that the high cost of going to college has a negative impact on their children's aspirations to pursue post-secondary education due to unstable family socioeconomic factors (Scanlon et al., 2018; Zishiri et al., 2021). A lack of evidence-based strategies can result in high attrition, low progress, and poor graduate exit standards. In addition, financial need, high attrition, and poor student success limit their life chances in terms of employment, health, and other social and economic benefits (Shah and Cheng, 2018).

According to Huang et al (2010), the long-term effects of family background can result in educational inequality, about 60% of parents save for their children's education, yet only 30% of low-income parents do so. Additionally, some low-income students are more likely than other students to enter college with inadequate academic preparation and require remedial services that impede academic progress (Martin et al., 2019).

### **Abuse**

According to Refaeli et al (2023), in Bedouin society, there is no one to prevent corporal punishment from happening. Note that various types of discrimination and incidents of abuse will affect education in the future.

### **Surrounding People**

According to Gene and Day (2021), we discovered that majority group membership is uniquely related to less support from the surrounding community. Lack of support from communities and organizations presents challenges for LGBTQ Asian/Pacific Islander students compared to their non-LGBTQ counterparts (Jang, 2020). According to Yang and Bechtold (2021), the main barriers for young people to obtain post-secondary education are a lack of supportive relationships, mental health concerns and low self-esteem, and logistical concerns such as housing, employment, and financial aid.

### **Discussion**

#### **Factors to Learnt**

This research will discuss three sub-themes for the factors that cause these teenagers to continue their studies. The first sub-theme that causes teenagers to want to continue their studies at the post-secondary level is themselves. This can be observed when a person has a deep interest and high motivation to continue their studies to a higher level. It will increase their enthusiasm to continue their studies. This has been supported by Ridzuan et al (2022), who stated that motivation is the main driving force behind a person's success in learning as well as in everyday life.

In addition, the academic background of a teenager also plays an important role in ensuring that they continue their studies at the post-secondary level. If students have good results in SPM, they will continue their studies to a higher level. It is supported by Sandefur

et al (2006), who stated that students with a good academic background and a good relationship with the surrounding community can help them continue their studies to a higher level.

In addition, teenagers continue their studies to the post-secondary level since there is fierce competition to get a job nowadays, giving an advantage to those with a high education to work. It has been supported by Ridzuan et al (2022), who stated that students need to be confident that they will get attractive and excellent career opportunities after post-secondary education.

Suppose a teenager's motivation cannot attract him to continue his studies. In that case, it will cause many undesirable things, such as the country losing skilled human resources in the future. The limitation that can be observed is that a person's motivation and emotions are different and can change, which will cause this group not to continue their studies. This can be linked to a study conducted by Norfarahzatul et al (2022), stating that students' attitudes, interests, and motivation play a role in influencing school dropout.

Family is the main source of support for a teenager in choosing, and keeping safe, to name a few. The family, consisting of parents, sisters, and brothers, plays a role in advising these teenagers. This includes the selection of study centers, fields of study, expenses during studies, and others. It can be supported by the study of Ridzuan et al (2022), who stated that students choose to continue their studies at the post-secondary level due to family influence.

In addition, the parent's educational background also plays an important role, influencing these teenagers' decision to continue their studies at the post-secondary level. This can be supported by a study by Norfarahzatul et al (2022), who stated that parents need to be actively involved in all activities the school carries out. This ensures that all problems discovered in the school can be dealt with immediately and do not interfere with the teaching and learning process. Moreover, it also affects the opportunities for children who have the potential to continue their studies at the post-secondary level. In addition, if families provide support and encouragement to their children by involving themselves in school activities, this will raise the children's spirit to study hard to achieve the desired success.

The limitation that can be observed in this sub-category is family support. It is difficult to obtain for parents who work and do not know about their children's education development. In addition, for parents who are separated, this will cause the children to be left alone without monitoring. This is supported by a study by Norziah et al (2021), who stated that families divided by divorce further increase the dropout rate.

In this borderless world, all information can be accessed easily without moving much. The same goes for advertisements promoting universities on social media platforms to attract these teenagers' interest in continuing their post-secondary studies. Most universities that promote their advantages are private universities to open up opportunities for young people who fail to continue their studies at public universities. This can be supported by a study by Ridzuan et al (2022), who stated that the dissemination of information about marketing strategies is carried out by Higher Education Institutions. This is especially by Public Higher Education Institutions (IPTAs) and Private Higher Education Institutions (IPTSs) as one factor that attracts students to study courses offered by the institutions concerned.

One of the advantages of using social media in attracting the interest of this group of teenagers to continue their studies at the post-secondary level is that it makes it easier for this group to get information more easily and accurately without doing much movement. This can be supported by a study conducted by Rahmahtunnisah et al (2014), which stated that

the main factors that influence the success of marketing educational products offered by IPTS are marketing strategies and environmental factors. In addition, it can save time, energy, and financial resources. Suppose there is no promotion or advertisement on these social media. In that case, these teenagers need to get information by visiting the open day held by the university. This will cost time and money to move there.

The limitation of this study is that these teenagers abuse all the facilities available to do things that are not beneficial. Some use this facility to view social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok for a long period. Consequently, some are willing to skip school since they wake up late to go to school due to browsing these social sites until late in the morning. This can be supported by a study by Arwansyah et al (2022), which stated that school students who should be at school to learn are willing to skip school simply for activities. This includes playing games, chatting through Facebook, video games, and various other activities that are not beneficial.

### **Factor Unwillingness to Learn**

The sub-theme for the factors that cause these teenagers not to want to continue their studies to the post-secondary level is caused by themselves. If you do not have a strong passion and motivation to continue your studies, it will affect the goals set before. This statement can be supported by the results of a study conducted by (Norfarahzatul et al., 2022). The authors stated that if the student's attitude is the opposite such as not wanting to advance themselves and not caring about the importance of education, it will disrupt the learning process and continue to result in dropping out of studies.

In addition, a handful of SPM holders state that they are not interested in continuing their studies to a higher level since they see their brothers and sisters who have completed their studies at university still not getting jobs and are unemployed. This can be further strengthened by the study by Christina et al (2010), stating that many students (83.1%) agreed by saying they felt afraid of being unemployed after finishing university studies. Moreover, the accepted limitation is that these teenagers refuse to cooperate in conducting this study. This complicates the process of obtaining more in-depth information.

The surrounding community is an agent that can be said to be important. This is because if they give support to these teenagers to learn, to some extent, it will give them enthusiasm and motivation to learn. However, the opposite happened when the surrounding community did not offer words of encouragement, and some even cursed and said, "There is no need to continue studying since later, you will work in the fields too." This has weakened the spirit of the youth to continue their studies for fear of not getting the job they want when they finish their studies. Subsequently, this statement can be further strengthened by the study conducted by Christina et al (2017), who stated that many students worry about not getting the job they want in the future. The accepted limitation is that the surrounding community does not offer words of encouragement, considering that they think that it is not their children who continue their studies at university.

Financial is an important aspect in all matters, including continuing studies to the post-secondary level, where continuing studies to a higher level require strong financial resources to cover the expenses in the study centers. If the family's economic status is not strong, it will cause the children's opportunity to continue their studies to a higher level nullified. This can be supported by a study conducted by Norfarahzatul et al. (2022), who stated that the family's low socioeconomic status is a barrier factor for individuals to obtain higher education

opportunities, and limited financial resources hinder students' willingness to continue their studies.

In addition, some teenagers think that their difficulty in getting equipment, such as laptops and mobile phones, and others, is why they do not continue their studies to the post-secondary level. This statement can be supported by the results of a study by Christina et al (2017), which stated that the factor that causes students' financial problems is that they are not able to afford to buy reference books since the price is so high.

In addition, some of them think that if they continue their studies, they will be bullied by other senior students. This is because many cases of physical bullying and abuse that took lives have been reported on social media. This statement can be supported by a study by Junainah (2019), which states that physical bullying is likely to cause mental and psychological health problems due to bullying.

Furthermore, with the inflation that occurred, causing the country's currency to fall and the price of goods to rise sharply, this group of teenagers decided not to continue their studies to the highest level. Some continuing their studies at the university have to do part-time work to support life there, which is very challenging. This has painted an impression on younger siblings who want to continue their studies and decide not to and continue to work instead to earn money to help their families. Moreover, this can be supported by the results of a study by Norziah et al (2021), which opined that only persistent students who still want to learn need to do part-time work to help their families continue to survive. The limitation is that the cost of living nowadays is increasing and requires sacrifice from all parties to continue living.

## **Conclusion**

In this study, 30 articles were evaluated for their quality using the SLR approach. Additionally, given that the review relies on the diversity of research designs, a thematic analysis was conducted on 30 selected articles, resulting in two main themes: (1) wanting to learn factors; (2) the factor of not wanting to learn. From these two big themes, there are 16 sub-themes, each with eight sub-themes.

This study determines the factors that cause these young people who have passed SPM to continue their studies to the post-secondary level or not. It is understood that the factors that cause this group to want to continue their studies are due to (1) self-factor; (2) parent; (3) socioeconomic/ economic; (4) social media; (5) the surrounding community; (6) responsible party; (7) cultural diversity; and (8) demographics. At the same time, the factors that cause the SPM graduates not to want to continue their studies to the post-secondary level are (1) Unmotivated; (2) Country; (3) Multiculturalism; (4) Teachers; (5) Family; (6) Financial; (7) Abuse; and (8) the Surrounding Community. The main purpose of this study is to collect qualitative data that can provide explanations and views from SPM graduates about their desire to continue their studies at the post-secondary level.

However, some limitations exist in this study. Gusenbauer and Haddaway (2020) suggested 14 potential databases to find relevant articles. Due to limited access to these databases, only four databases were used, namely Scopus, Eric, Science Direct, and Google Scholar. Second, the evaluation of the quality process depends on MMAT. It is expected that articles will highlight variations in quality if examined based on different quality assessment tools. Therefore, it suggests examining whether more or fewer articles compared to the 30 articles that were finally reviewed in this study using various evaluation tools. Shafril et al (2021) emphasized that quality assessment is not solely aimed at finding the perfect article but more at helping find articles suitable for the review. Third, although performing meta-

analysis is encouraged in SLR due to its advantages of obtaining better estimates of relationships that exist in populations than in single studies, including its ability to minimize bias, this review chose to focus on Qualitative Systematic Literature Reviews (QSLR) considering the diversity of methods used in selected studies.

In addition, other studies such as those by Jansen (2019); Chen (2020), and Bonaiuto et al (2016) have emphasized the effect of place attachment related to the preparation of strategies to attract SPM graduates to continue their studies to the post-secondary level, although different in this SLR. Furthermore, in this study, there are only two major themes, namely (1) the factor of wanting to continue studying; and (2) the factor of not wanting to continue studying. It is likely that future researchers can further expand the study to obtain more related themes. This is to obtain more in-depth information on the attitude of young people who have graduated from SPM and whether they want to continue their studies to the post-secondary level or not.

Since predicting the events that will happen in the future is almost impossible, more efforts need to be implemented toward increasing the desire of young people who have graduated from SPM to continue their studies at the post-secondary level. In this study, we have systematically reviewed previous studies related to the desire of teenagers to continue their studies at the post-secondary level. Using this approach, any claims of rigor in some of these studies will be challenged, allowing for the identification of gaps and providing opportunities for future research.

#### **Credit authorship contribution statement**

Ahmad Ridzuan Midan: Conceptualization, Methodology, Data Curation, Formal analysis, Investigation, Writing.

Nor Junainah Mohd Isa: Conceptualization, Validation, Supervision, Writing, Resources

Mohamad Hafiz Ahmad Zaidi: Formal analysis, Investigation

Amiruddin Jamaluddin: Formal analysis, Investigation

Muhammad Nurshafwan Zulkifli: Formal analysis, Investigation

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The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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