

Home-School Partnership to Enhance Multilingual Literacy and Mathematics Skills

**Madhubala Bava Harji¹, See Kwee Teck², Geetha Subramaniam³,
WengJing⁴**

¹ Faculty of Education, Languages, Psychology and Music, SEGi University, Kota Damansara, Malaysia, ² Faculty of Computing and Information Technology, Tunku Abdul Rahman University of Management and Technology, Malaysia, ³ School of Business, University of Wollongong, Malaysia, ⁴ School of Music, Hanshan Normal University, Guangdong, China

madhu7560@gmail.com, seekt@tarc.edu.my, geetha.s@uow.edu.my, wengjing@hstc.edu.cn
Tel: +60193511131

Abstract

Research shows that pupils from low-income (B40) backgrounds struggle to master literacy and mathematics (ML&M) skills. However, because parental engagement is strongly correlated with ML&M development, Home-School Partnerships (HSP) are effective frameworks for ML&M learning. This qualitative study developed an HSP model for the Malaysian suburban landscape. Semi-structured interviews with 24 principals, 28 teachers, and 24 B40 parents from four primary schools revealed drivers of a sustainable school-home community ecosystem. Aligned with SDGs 4 and 10, the model provides a framework for the school community to restore and accelerate primary pupils' ML&M skills.

Keywords: Home-School Partnership Model; Parental Involvement; Literacy and Mathematic skills; SDG 4 – Quality Education; SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities

eISSN 2514-7528 © 2026. The Authors. Published for AMER by e-International Publishing House, Ltd., U.K. This is an open access publication under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>). Peer-review under responsibility of AMER (Association of Malaysian Environment-Behaviour Researchers).

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21834/jabs.v11i32.488>

1.0 Introduction

School closures during the COVID-19 pandemic significantly widened early learning gaps in Malaysia, particularly among Stage 1 pupils, who rely heavily on adult guidance and predictable learning routines. This challenge was intensified for lower-income households, classified as B40, namely those earning up to RM5,249 per month (USD 1270) in Malaysia. Many B40 pupils are reported to struggle to master multilingual literacy and mathematics (ML&M) skills, and this struggle continues in the post-COVID era. B40 pupils remain at a disadvantage compared to their peers from other income groups. At the policy level, the National Education Plan (Rancangan Pendidikan Negara) 2026–2035, introduced in Jan 2026, positions parents as essential partners in their child's learning. "Synergy" has been identified as one of its seven strategic cores, focusing on building a learning ecosystem in which parents and the community co-create a student's success. The strategy emphasizes "partnerships," with parents viewed as active stakeholders in implementing the school curriculum in non-academic areas. The government also introduced the Malaysia Learning Matrix, a diagnostic tool for parents to support their children's learning gaps at home. In addition, issues in language proficiency, mathematics, and parental engagement are highlighted in various policies, including the National Education Policy, Government Transformation Program, Shared Development Goals, Shared Prosperity Vision, and the Thirteenth Malaysia Plan (13MP). The 13MP has given Persatuan Ibubapa dan Guru (PIBG) / Parent-Teacher Association a more formal role that includes i) identifying students who are at risk of dropping out, ii) having parents and local community members act as mentors, particularly in rural and low-income areas to bridge learning gaps, and iii) integrating parents into the feedback loop for the new Standard 4 and Form 3 assessments, where they have access to school-based data to support their children's learning needs. Globally, the Sustainable Development Goals, namely SDG 4 and SDG 10, reiterate commitments to ensuring inclusive, equitable, and quality education.

The B40 pupils' persistent struggles in mastering multilingual literacy (Malay, English, Chinese, Tamil) and mathematics (ML&M) skills demonstrate the need to expand learning responsibilities beyond schools. Involving parents would create a meaningful and supportive learning environment in school and at home, where pupils are scaffolded to become independent learners. Therefore, homes and schools can complement each other in a sustainable partnership. However, a Home-School Partnership (HSP) model for active PI to restore and accelerate B40 pupils' ML&M skills is currently unavailable in Malaysia.

In addressing the lack of an HSP model for the Malaysian context, the following research questions are addressed:

1. What are the readiness levels of parents and teachers to form a Home-School Partnership?
2. How willing are parents and teachers to form a Home-School Partnership?
3. What factors affect the formation of a Home-School Partnership model?
4. What are the parents' and teachers' perceptions of the types of multilingual literacy and mathematics materials to be used in the Home School Partnership program?
5. What makes up a sustainable Home School Partnership model?

2.0 Literature Review

Studies suggest that literacy and mathematics (L&M) development are interconnected and can predict each other over time (Khanolainen et al., 2020). Children who face challenges in one domain often encounter obstacles in another (Purpura et al., 2019). Studies also show that informal home literacy and mathematics education through shared storybook reading is effective (Salihu et al., 2019); hence, leveraging storybook reading would be a pedagogical strategy to support at-risk children with learning disabilities in mathematics.

Children from low-income families, in particular, have been observed to be at a disadvantage in developing L&M skills. Koponen et al. (2019) found that by age 10, children who cannot read have limited opportunities for continued learning and future mathematical success. Given the importance of mastering ML&M skills in the early years, mechanisms to restore and accelerate B40 children's ML&M skills should be prioritized. Malaysian B40 students at all levels persistently struggle to master ML&M: primary (Kashfi et al., 2022), secondary (Mahamod et al., 2021), and university (Wahi et al., 2019). This concern calls for the urgent need to expand ML&M learning beyond the formal context.

Studies on HSP show that the home literacy environment (Luo et al., 2021), as well as parents with low literacy (Mundy & Hares, 2020) or low levels of education (Bava Harji et al., 2017), can scaffold children's literacy learning at home. Implicit and explicit engagement, along with informal home literacy and mathematics activities (Khanolainen et al., 2020), are significant in fostering ML&M development. Critical factors for successful HSP include awareness and educational settings (Masondo & Mabaso, 2025), interaction, effective communication, teamwork, community participation (Anazia et al., 2025), trust (Hornby & Witte, 2010), resources, and home visits (Rosales, 2023).

In the Malaysian context, previous studies, i.e., the Smart Partnership in Reading in English (SPIRE) project using printed English storybooks (Bava Harji et al., 2019, 2017, 2016, 2014) and the Multilingual Mobile Storybook Reader (MMSR) using interactive digital multilingual storybooks (See et al., 2019) to enhance young learners' literacy skills, provide empirical evidence for the effectiveness of HSP. Regardless of whether parents are illiterate or non-native speakers, these studies demonstrate a strong relationship between PI and literacy development. Other studies have also found that parents are ready (Lau & Ng, 2019), willing, and acknowledge the significance of their involvement (Ngadni & Chen, 2024). Parents' readiness and willingness to form an HSP and actively scaffold children's literacy development at home emerged as important factors for an effective HSP. Thus, implementing HSP in Malaysian schools is feasible.

This article describes an HSP model supported by Vygotsky's (1978) constructivist theory and its key concepts:

- (i) ZPD is "the distance between the actual development level, as determined by independent problem-solving, and the level of potential development, as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 76).
- (ii) Language serves as a tool for social interaction.

- (iii) "Learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that can operate only when a child interacts with people in his environment and cooperates with his peers. Once these processes are internalized, they become part of the child's independent developmental achievement." (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 90)

The model represents a hybrid paradigm in which both parties collaborate to scaffold B40 pupils' mastery of ML&M skills through social and physical interactions with storybooks or ML&M-related activities. The key factors that enable both parties to collaborate as partners in restoring and accelerating (R&A) ML&M skills are identified.

3.0 Methodology

A mixed-methods approach is used to explore the readiness, willingness, factors, and core components of an HSP model.

3.1 Participants and Instruments

A mixed-methods approach was adopted in this study, conducted in the Klang Valley, Malaysia. An integrative review and qualitative synthesis were conducted using a three-stage approach. The first stage included problem framing, a review of prior working documents, and a literature review on Stage 1 primary school learning loss, B40 household constraints, and PI. This stage situates the study within existing policy priorities and empirical findings. The second stage included quantitative data collection using a self-designed 13-item, 5-point Likert-scale questionnaire to gauge the readiness of parents of children in lower primary years 1, 2, and 3 and of teachers to form an HSP. 140 participants, including principals, senior assistants, language and mathematics teachers, and 400 parents from four public primary schools: National, Indigenous, Tamil, and Chinese, responded to the questionnaire. The third stage included semi-structured interviews with 24 principals, 28 teachers, and 24 B40 parents from the same four schools. To ensure credibility, the sample was drawn from the same schools. This sampling technique is intended to reflect the composition of the Malaysian school community and society in the Klang Valley, where the schools are primarily suburban, and the proportion of B40 pupils is higher.

3.2 Data Analysis

SPSS was used to analyze quantitative data, and QDA Miner Lite Version 3.0 was used for thematic analysis of the interviews. The narratives provided insight into parents' and teachers' readiness and willingness to form an HSP, as well as the factors that would drive a sustainable partnership. Teachers' and parents' responses were coded into three themes: readiness, willingness to partner, and enabling factors. The 12 subthemes were translated into design features for a sustainable HSP model.

4.0 Results

SPSS was used to analyze quantitative data, and QDA Miner Lite Version 3.0 was used for thematic analysis of the interviews. The narratives provided insight into parents' and teachers' readiness and willingness to form an HSP, as well as the factors that would drive a sustainable partnership. Teachers' and parents' responses were coded into three themes: readiness, willingness to partner, and enabling factors. The 12 subthemes were translated into design features for a sustainable HSP model.

4.1 Parents' and Teachers' Readiness Levels

As per research question 1 on readiness levels, both parties are ready to form the HSP. Table 1 shows that the levels of readiness are high.

Table 1: Parents' and Teachers' Readiness Levels

Respondents	N	Mean	SD	Level
Parents	400	4.0400	.6851	High
Teachers	140	3.9576	.5059	High

Given the obvious difference in the number of parents and teachers, the mean difference of .0824 is negligible. Clearly, both parties are ready, as evidenced by the feedback from the principals and the teachers:

We are ready. We conduct remedial, intervention, and academic clinics in phases, especially for students in the LINUS category and low achievers. (Pr 1)

Ready. We conduct programs to enhance the pupils' basic skills, such as 'Read My Child', Ready+, and curriculum intervention. (T25)

We teachers are ready because of our almost 100% commitment. We are committed to the Clever Mind program and Literacy Program. (T 24)

We are ready because the class teachers and subject teachers use the Guru platforms to share with parents on their child's performance and additional exercises. (Pr1)

With the current schools' practices, parents affirm their readiness:

The teachers tell parents to supervise children's Malay and English homework in the WhatsApp Group. (Pa 23)

Nowadays, schools set up a chat group for each class. Parents can contact teachers directly. Unlike my time, parents did not know how to contact teachers. Today's teachers are also willing to make efforts to communicate with parents. Honestly, it is not easy to communicate with 40 parents. I think teachers have put in a lot of effort. The school also uses chat groups to announce activities inside and outside the school. We strongly encourage everyone to participate in these activities. Parents also actively participate in discussions with teachers on how to improve their children's learning. I think our Chinese primary schools have done a good job in this regard. This has met parents' requirements. We are ready for the partnership. (Pa7)

In the same vein, most parents are ready to form a partnership:

Yes, ready to give ideas. Financial contributions can also be considered, so that children are

committed to the programs that are created. (Pa19)

Yes, ready to study with children, plan activities with teachers and help prepare reading and counting material, help monitor children, and prepare storybooks for students. (Pa21)

Yes. I am ready because I want to be actively involved in my child's learning development. (Pa20)

However, realistically, not all parents are ready to commit. Some working parents are not ready due to their personal constraints:

No. I am not fully ready to take on that role due to time constraints and other responsibilities. I am limited in how much I can commit. I appreciate the opportunity and hope to support the school in a way that is manageable for me ... (Pa23)

No. I may not be able to fully monitor my child's academic progress ... (Pa6)

4.2 Sub-Willingness to form a Home-School Partnership

With the school and most parents being ready to form the partnership, it is not surprising that they are equally willing:

The school is willing to form an HSP and share information on this matter. (Pr1)

We need to form the HSP program to enhance basic literacy and mathematics skills. (T15)

Yes. I am willing because I want to be actively involved in my child's learning development. I am also willing to spend time attending sessions or activities organised by the school for the benefit of the children. (Pa11)

Yes. Very willing to share with the school to improve children's reading and Mathematics. (Pa5)

Although some parents noted work commitment hindered their explicit participation in HSP, they are willing to scaffold their children at home. This willingness stems from the belief that the partnership can significantly help improve a child's academic achievement.

4.3 Drivers for Home-School Partnership Model

12 distinct themes emerged as drivers for the HSP model: *awareness of HSP, communication, collaboration, trust, home-school learning environment, guidance, resources, volunteerism, financial support, recognition and appreciation, community involvement, and monitoring HSP.*

4.3.1 Awareness of HSP

Pertinent to the conception of an HSP is the need to create awareness of its importance and to motivate parents:

We must provide awareness and motivate parents to be involved in the partnership. (Pr10)

The school can conduct an awareness campaign. Parents must be made aware during briefing sessions and workshops of the importance of the home-school partnership. (T15)

Parental understanding and awareness of the importance of the program for the children's reading and mathematics development. (Pa7)

4.3.2 Communication

The need for bi-directional communication using multiple channels, platforms, and types of communication is proposed for various reasons:

We foster open, clear, consistent, respectful two-way communication. Use multiple channels, such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and Telegram, to share students' progress and feedback. (Pr3)

Ease communication for parents to feel appreciated in their child's education. (Pr2)

Formal and informal discussions ... provide ideas for parents to do at home ... to encourage them to be

involved at home. (T7)

Social media, face-to-face, phone calls, written communication, and provide regular and honest reports on

children's performance. (Pa24)

Online, house-to-house visits, and PIBG hold regular parent-teacher meetings. (Pa1)

4.3.3 Collaboration

All parties called for a collaboration to work together as partners, and for scheduled activities to realize the partnership:

We need to collaborate with parents ... teach them how to help their children at home. (Pr1)

Creating a culture of continuous cooperation through combined activities to unite both parties as partners is

important. (T18)

Collaborations can help improve my child's achievement. With our support, she will be more motivated and will receive more effective guidance in reading and mathematics. (Pa12)

We can collaborate with the PIBG Committee and organise monthly activities with parents. (Pa2)

4.4.4 Trust

All principals shared on building trust, respect, and shared educational goals and expectations in HSP:

Build trust, strong relationships, and partnerships with parents. (Pr3)

Trust and mutual respect for a partnership. (Pr1)

Share educational goals and expectations. (Pr2)

4.4.5 Home-School environments

Schools need to create conducive learning environments, such as a dedicated literacy space/reading room, to facilitate HS.

Create a welcoming, inclusive environment in schools. (Pr 1)

Availability of a literacy room or space at school to encourage parents. (T3)

The school can have a special home-school partnership room for parents or a dedicated literacy space

(Pa10)

We live in a hot country ... so those kiosks and reading spaces should be cool for students to access books anywhere in the school. (Pa13)

Principals and teachers also urged parents to create a multilingual-rich learning environment at home:

Create multiple-language environments for Malay and English, and math-rich environments. Prepare materials and monitor children at home. (Pr2)

Have shared reading and interactive story creation at home. (Pr3)

Parents need to monitor their child's progress at home and always provide feedback to the teachers. (T8)

4.4.6 Guidance

Provisions for motivation and academic, psychological, and emotional guidance/support were highlighted:

Training on how to help children at home. (Pr3)

Sessions on motivating parents and teachers. (T8)

Courses on basic reading and mathematics for parents. (T17)

Awareness of the importance of parental involvement and conducting workshops on emotional support and emotional intelligence. (T3)

Awareness and positive parenting ... workshops on general guidance for parents, brief assessment, math

games, and number concepts. (T9)

Reading and mathematics training. (Pa3)

4.4.7 Resources

Both parties requested multilingual literacy-related materials and training resources to enable them to scaffold their child at home:

Use materials that are accessible anywhere so that parents can support their child's reading and mathematics at home. (Pr3)

Prepare resources for reading and mathematics activities that can be carried out anywhere. (T19)

Creating a monthly activities schedule with parents. (T9)

Providing activity materials to be carried out with children at home ...additional reading and numeracy training resources. (Pa8)

In addition to multilingual literacy-related materials and training resources, a parent highlighted the need for human resources, "*human resources, the expertise of those who carry out the program, providing motivation and support, collaborating in terms of monitoring the level of children's mastery, rewarding*" (Pa16)

4.4.8 Recognition and Appreciation

The school community called for recognition and appreciation of volunteerism and involvement:

Recognition should be given to parents who contribute to HSP. (Pr1)

Certificates can be given so that they feel appreciated in involving themselves in their child's education...(T3)

Give tokens, awards or certificates to parents and teachers who are actively involved in HSP. (T19)

Celebrate parent involvement in any form of home learning and volunteering. (Pa5)

4.4.9 Financial support

All principals highlighted financial support for HSP. They noted that funds can be sourced from the government, parents, and NGOs

Financial support is needed. For example, budget allocation from PPD [district officer] to finance the

purchase of materials, workshops, and infrastructure. (Pr1)

PIBG or NGO to financially support the home-school partnership. (Pr2)

Good financial resources are important. During home visits, we can bring some food items for the B40

families. (Pr3)

A parent even volunteered to offer financial support, "Yes, willing to give financial contributions to ensure children are committed to the program that is created." (Pa16)

4.4.10 Community involvement

Expanding the school community to involve external parties, including NGOs and alums:

Involve NGO and the community to support HSP. (Pr1)

Involvement by teachers, parents, the community, and external parties. (T5)

I suggest the school involve former students who have been successful to teach the new children...(T8)

Involve former successful students to teach the new pupils. (T8)

Collaborate with JKKK [Village Development and Security Committee]. (Pa9)

4.4.11 Volunteerism

Teachers call for parental volunteerism at school and as reading mentors. In response, working parents who are keen to be involved suggest flexible involvement:

Parents' volunteerism to support the home-school partnership ... (Pr1)

Parental volunteerism is needed in school, volunteer as 'reading mentors', assist weekly reading sessions,

or supervise the reading corner in school. (T5)

Parental volunteerism is needed. We can work together. (T4)

Offer flexible opportunities for involvement ... (Pa10)

4.4.12 Monitor HSP

Concerned with sustainability, both parties highlighted the need to assess HSP.

Conduct a structured assessment on the effectiveness of the home-school partnership.
(T15)

Consistency and follow-through throughout the year, evaluate effectiveness, and involve parents in identifying challenges to co-create. (Pa7)

4.4 Types of Materials

Both parties proposed printed and electronic materials. Printed materials were preferred for various reasons, including avoidance of screen time:

i) For literacy skills/reading, *printed storybooks*:

Attractive and colourful illustrations, short and simple sentences, and more durable in the long term.

(T4)

To prevent eye damage. Reading books can increase vocabulary, help construct sentences, give opinions, improve thinking skills, and boost self-esteem. (P11)

Reading e-books is bad for the eyes ... avoid gadget addiction, and avoid Internet use.
(Pa20)

Printed books to avoid gadget addiction and avoid Internet use. (Pa7)

Easy to use without technology, more comfortable for repeated reading, tactile experience, and visual focus. (Pa1)

If he does not finish, he can stop and continue again, easier ... he is still young and might not be competent to operate an e-book. (Pa24)

However, some parents are receptive to both printed and e-storybooks. They noted:

Printed books are preferred to avoid gadget addiction, though e-books can provide a different

experience. (Pa22)

Both. Printed materials can make them focus. eBooks can provide a different experience because

they are not boring. (Pa12)

I think both are necessary. However, you cannot always read e-books. Sometimes it is better to read physical

books. (Pa4)

Both. Can read repeatedly, but one book at a time. (Pa20)

Both parties also proposed other literacy activities:

Diverse activities because different students have different interests. (T18)

Reading relay, word search, reading aloud, retelling, story mapping, and quizzes via apps. (T16)

Other activities include story mapping, word games, puzzles, singing activities, picture story videos, making storybooks together, and quizzes via apps. (Pa7)

ii) For mathematics skills

Myriad activities were suggested to enhance the children's mathematical skills:

Using Math songs, poems, or rhymes and telling math problems. We hold quizzes and cypher- memorisation activities. (T19)

Math vocabulary, making exercises using DIY materials and tools. (T17)

Math journal, math enrichment exercises. (Pa13)

Use number cards, tell stories about maths, mini shopping, and daily maths puzzles. (Pa23)

Other pertinent feedback includes calls for “creating a school-home partnership policy, developing official policies or guidelines that recognize the role of parents in their children's education” (Pa2), “school leaders and teachers must actively support the partnership vision, empower children to be responsible for their learning both at school and home, and encourage consistent contact not only during PIBG” (Pa14), and “engagement in decision making with parent involvement in school governance and setting goals” (Pa4). Another parent concludes, “Parental understanding of the program, parental awareness of the importance of the program to children's development. Parents play an important role in the education of every child to create a quality generation.” (Pa10)

4.5 HSP Model

Drawing on Vygotsky's theory of social interaction and interviewees' feedback, the HSP model, shown in Figure 1, is proposed.

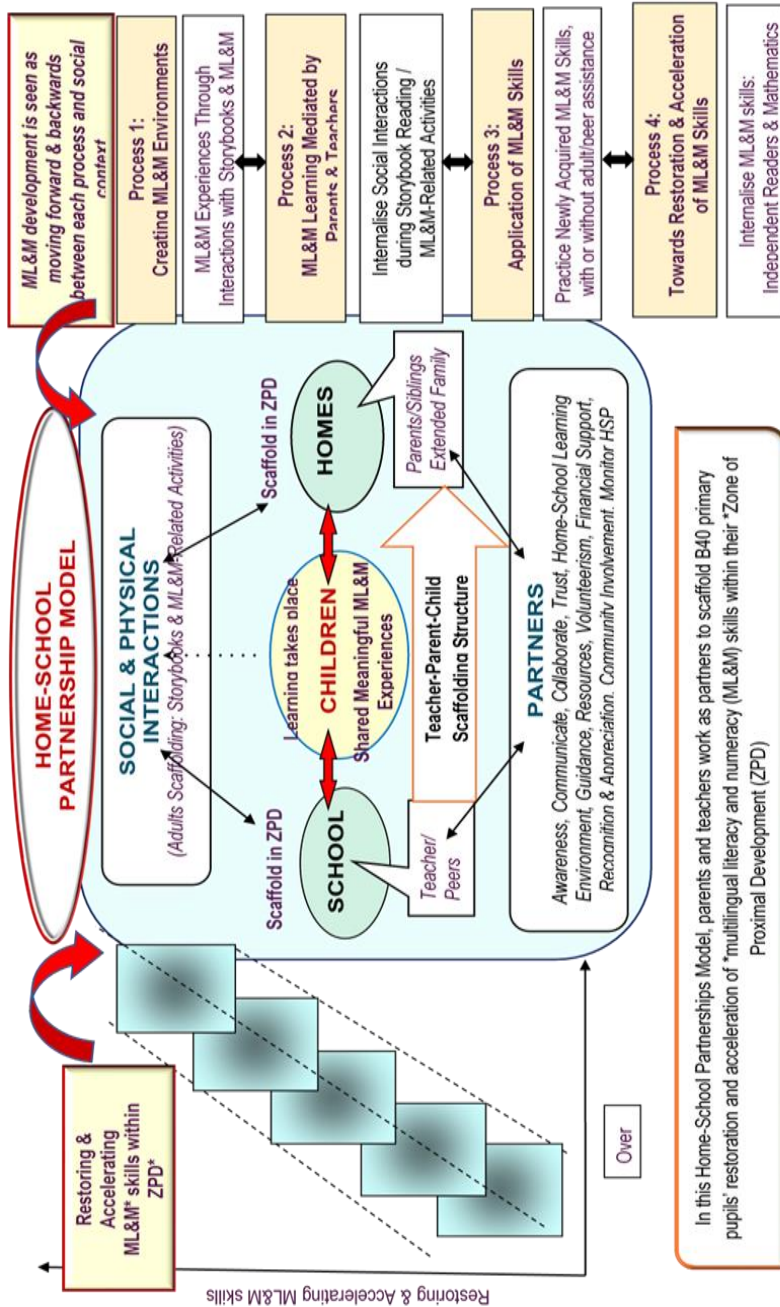
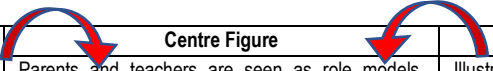


Figure 1: Home-School Partnership Model

Partnership Model

Descriptions in each column below correspond to the placement of the figures in the model.



Left Figure	Centre Figure	Right Figure
Illustration of the R&A of ML&M skills within ZPD, mediated by teachers and parents. The smaller boxes reflect the upward progression of R&A of ML&M skills over time. It is presented as a linear upward progression, and 'time' is a form of simplification. Within the limitations of computer graphics, the processes appear discrete and distinct from one another. However, in reality, there would be a more gradual movement and overlap in the R&A process.	Parents and teachers are seen as role models, scaffolding children's mastery of ML&M skills within the ZPD. They are 'designers' for physical interactions and 'coaches' during social interactions with children. As 'designers', parents and teachers can create a physical ML&M (multilingual storybooks and related activities) environment where learning can take place. As 'coaches', scaffolding through social interactions enables children to engage in active R&A of ML&M skills. Children are seen as internalizing social interactions within the ZPD through shared meaningful experiences with teachers, peers, parents, siblings, and extended family members. Eventually, they will be able to perform reading and mathematics tasks independently. The teacher-parent-child scaffolding structure is a multi-layered support system: schools scaffold parents, who in turn, scaffold their child's ML&M skills. The driving factors for a sustainable HSP include awareness, communication, collaboration, trust, home-school learning environments, guidance, resources, volunteerism, financial support, recognition, appreciation, community involvement, and monitoring.	Illustration of the processes of creating environments for ML&M experiences. Opportunities for ML&M learning are created through storybooks and related activities. The children internalize the social interactions. The ML&L development process is dynamic: forward and backward movement between school and home. It provides opportunities for children to practice newly acquired ML&M skills, with or without adult assistance. Children gradually move towards R&A of ML&M skills as independent learners and mathematics readers.

The four key processes are:

- Process 1: Creating ML&M Environments

This process involves creating physical ML&M learning environments with storybooks, related materials and activities.

- Process 2: Parents' and Teachers' Mediated ML&M Learning.

As 'designers', adults set up learning environments, and as 'coaches', they scaffold children's mastery of ML&M skills through social interactions within the ZPD.

- Process 3: ML&M-Related Activities.

Using ML&M-related activities for children to practice newly acquired ML&M skills, with or without adult assistance.

- Process 4: Towards Restoration and Acceleration of ML&M skills.

Children gradually restore ML&M skills and accelerate as independent readers and mathematics readers as they internalize the social interactions and experiences.

The HSP Model is designed for the school community to work as partners to restore and accelerate Stage 1 B40 pupils' ML&M skills.

5.0 Discussion

HSP is not a peripheral learning aid. A central mediating mechanism for ML&M development is essential, especially when socioeconomic vulnerability continues to disrupt continuity in the R&A process. As in the studies by Lau and Ng (2019), Bava Harji et al. (2019, 2017, 2106, 2014), and Ngadni and Chen (2024), the school communities' readiness and willingness to forge a partnership affirm the directionality and reciprocity needed to share an aligned optimism for R&A B40 pupils' ML&M skills. Although working parents are unwilling to volunteer at school, they do not hesitate to scaffold their child at home. They call for teachers to continue communicating with them and to share materials to scaffold their child at home. Thus, since working parents are in favour of fostering HSP with schools, schools will need to address parents' limited involvement. Both parties must deliberate on possible avenues for the school to scaffold them, as they, in turn, will scaffold their child at home. In this case, a multi-layered support system from schools is paramount. Teachers will need to scaffold working parents, who will, in turn, scaffold their child. The teacher-parent-child scaffolding structure must be embedded in HSP models.

The thematic data clearly outline 12 key drivers for a sustainable HSP model. Parents and teachers highlighted the need to develop parents' HSP awareness, maintain consistent bidirectional communication, foster active collaboration and trust between partners, create and monitor conducive home-school learning environments, provide guidance, resources, volunteerism, and community involvement, secure financial support, give recognition and appreciation for the teachers' and parents' involvement, and monitor the effectiveness and sustainability of the HSP model in the Malaysian context.

6.0 Conclusion

Three-pronged research questions are addressed: to explore the school community's readiness, willingness, and drivers for an HSP Model. The findings show that, first, the school community is ready and willing to form a partnership. Second, 12 distinct themes emerge as drivers of HSP: awareness, communication, collaboration, trust, home-school learning environment, guidance, resources, volunteerism, financial support, recognition, appreciation, community involvement, and monitoring. Third, the HSP Model creates a sustainable home-school-community ecosystem.

The findings offer insights into how parents and teachers can partner to scaffold the R&A of B40 pupils' ML&M skills. Hence, this model can be adopted to create opportunities for the school community to collaboratively minimize learning loss and accelerate learning gains within a harmonious and sustainable learning environment. Drawing on Vygotsky's theory, this model helps create a sustainable ecosystem of home-like schools, school-like homes, and school-and-home-like communities in Malaysian society to enhance B40 pupils' learning journey toward equitable education, aligned with SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 10 (Reducing Inequality). Since this synthesis of findings draws on existing literature and parent excerpts rather than causal estimates, future studies could assess its feasibility and causal impact.

Article Contribution to Related Field of Study

The HSP Model identifies key drivers to bridge homes and schools and provides a framework for a sustainable partnership that enhances the learning journey of B40 primary pupils in the Malaysian education landscape, aligned with SDGs 4 (Quality Education) and 10 (Reduced Inequality).

Acknowledgement

The work is funded by the Ministry of Higher Education, Malaysia, through the Fundamental Research Grant Scheme (FRGS) [Reference Code: FRGS/1/2022/SSI07/SEGI/02/2].

References

- Bava Harji, M., Letchumanan, K., & Bhar, S.K. (2014). Feasibility of Building Bridges between School and Homes in Developing ESL Literacy: The SPIRE Project. *English Language Teaching*, 7(9), 91-104.
- Bava Harji, M., Balakrishnan, K., & Letchumanan, K. (2016). SPIRE Project: Parental Involvement in Young Children's ESL Reading Development. *English Language Teaching*, 9(12), 1-15.
- Bava Harji, M., Balakrishnan, K., & Letchumanan, K. (2017). The PaCT: Parents, Children and Teacher Partnership in Developing ESL Literacy. *English Language Teaching*, 10(9), 150-160.
- Bava Harji, M. & Balakrishnan, K. (2019). Parental Involvement in Storybook Reading in English Project: Beyond the Reading Vocabulary. *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication*, 35(2).
- Hornby, G., & Witte, C. (2010). Parent involvement in rural elementary schools in New Zealand: A survey. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 19(6), 771-777.
- Khanolainen D, Psyridou M, Silinskas G, Lerkkanen M-K, Niemi P, Poikkeus A-M and Torppa M (2020) Longitudinal Effects of the Home Learning Environment and Parental Difficulties on Reading and Math Development Across Grades 1–9. *Frontiers in Psychology*. 11:577981. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2020.577981
- Kashfi, Wan Nur Izzati Hazwani, et al. (2022): Cabaran dan permasalahan pembelajaran murid B40 di sekolah rendah di Malaysia. *QALAM International Journal of Islamic and Humanities Research* 2.4
- Koponen, T., Aunola, K., & Nurmi, J.-E. (2019). Verbal Counting Skill Predicts Later Math Performance and Difficulties in Middle School. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 99, 101803.
- Lau, Y. H. & Ng, M. L. (2019). Are they ready for a home-school partnership? Perspectives of kindergarten principals, teachers and parents, *Children and Youth Services Review*, 99, 10-17.
- Luo, R., Pace, A., Levine, D., Iglesias, A., de Villiers, J., Golinkoff, R.M., Wilson, M.S. & Hirsh-Pasek, S. (2021). Home literacy environment and existing knowledge mediate the link between socioeconomic status and language learning skills in dual language learners. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*. 55. 1-14.
- Masondo, B.W., Mabaso, N.P.M. (2025). Effective Home-School Partnerships to Support Learners with Severe

Intellectual Disabilities in South Africa: A Missing Ingredient to Attaining Inclusive Education, two decades later?. *Interchange* 56, 17–30. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10780-025-09534-5>

Ngadni I., & Chen, Y. S. (2024). The Home-School Partnership in Early Childhood Education: Understanding the Challenges and Obstacles. *Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 13(3).

Purpura, D.J., Litkowski, E.C., & Knopik, V. (2019). Mathematics and Reading Develop Together in Young Children: Practical and Policy Considerations. *Policy Insights from the Behavioural and Brain Sciences*. 6(1).12-20.

Rosales, R. A. (2023). Home-School Collaboration: Maximising Resources and Efforts to Support Students' Independent Learning. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary: Applied Business and Education Research*, 4(3)

Salihi, L., Aro, M., & Rasanen, P. (2018). Children with learning difficulties in mathematics: Relating mathematics skills and reading comprehension. *Issues in Educational Research*, 28(4), 1024-1038.

See, K. T., Madhubala, B.H. & Koo, A. (2019). Motivation of Parents Towards Reading Multilingual eBooks to Pre-School Children. *International Association of Online Engineering*. <https://www.learntechlib.org/p/207189/>

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Wahi, W. N., Musa, C., Mohdali, R., & Hassan, R. (2019). Addressing the Literacy Skills of B40 Students towards 4IR Workplace. Development of Future Proof Graduate Module (FPGM), *2019 IEEE International Conference on Engineering, Technology and Education (TALE)*, Yogyakarta, Indonesia, 1-4.

Mahamod, Z., Mazlan, R., Amin, N., & Rahman, M.R. (2021). The Level of Reading and Writing Proficiency among B40 Students from the Malay Language Teachers' Perspective. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 9(3), 638-649.