

Mapping the Landscape of Parental Involvement in Education: A bibliometric review via CiteSpace

Weng Jing^{1*}, Madhubala Bava Harji², Zohra Labed³, Aarti Pushp Rawal⁴

** Corresponding author*

¹ PhD, Faculty of Education, Languages, Psychology and Music, SEGi University, Kota Damansara, Malaysia, ² Associate Professor, Faculty of Education, Languages, Psychology and Music, SEGi University, Kota Damansara, Malaysia, ³ Teacher, Department of English, Ecole Normale Supérieure d'Oran, Algeria, ⁴ Independent Researcher, Pokhara, Nepal

wengjing@hstc.edu.cn, madhu7560@gmail.com, z.labed@ens-oran.dz, aartipushp.rawal@gmail.com
Tel: 008613534623339

Abstract

Parental involvement (PI) plays a crucial role in children's development, yet a systematic overview of the field remains lacking. This review aims to identify the global research landscape, hotspots, and trends of PI in education. A total of 1,523 Web of Science articles (2013–2024) in English were extracted from the Web of Science Core Collection and analyzed using CiteSpace for co-citation and co-occurrence network analyses. The results highlight PI's role in boosting academic achievement, fostering home–school collaboration, and supporting children's cognitive, emotional, and social development. These findings offer valuable implications for future research directions and evidence-based educational policies to enhance parental engagement and school–family partnerships across diverse contexts.

Keywords: Bibliometric Analysis; Citation Analysis; CiteSpace; Parental Involvement

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1.0 Introduction

Parental involvement (PI) has been widely recognized as a critical factor influencing children's educational outcomes, including academic achievement, literacy development, and social-emotional competence (Zhang, 2022; Bava Harji et al., 2026). As educational systems worldwide emphasize family–school partnerships, research on PI has expanded rapidly across disciplines. However, the field remains fragmented: studies vary in their conceptualization of PI, educational stages, and methodological approaches, making it difficult to identify research hotspots, evolutionary trends, and global contributions.

Existing reviews on PI have largely relied on narrative synthesis, which may be limited by subjective selection and lack of systematic mapping. Bibliometric analysis, particularly using CiteSpace, offers an objective and replicable approach to visualize the intellectual structure of a research field, detect emerging trends, and reveal collaboration patterns (Chen et al., 2015). Despite its growing use in education research, no comprehensive bibliometric review has specifically mapped PI in education from a global perspective.

To address this gap, this study analyzes 1,523 publications from the Web of Science Core Collection (2013–2024) using CiteSpace. It aims to answer three research questions:

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RQ1: What are the research hotspots in the field of parental involvement in education?

RQ2: What are the annual publication trends and emerging trends on parental involvement between 2013 and 2024, and what potential areas for future research can be identified?

RQ3: What is the global landscape of contributions by countries in the field of parental involvement in education?

2.0 Literature Review

PI is a multidimensional construct that encompasses parental expectations, home-based guidance, school-based participation, and parent-teacher communication (Caridade et al., 2020; Curtis et al., 2021). A large body of research confirms its positive effects on children's academic performance, literacy development, and school adjustment, particularly during basic education (Zhang, 2022). For instance, Bava Harji et al. (2026) and Menon et al. (2025) highlight the importance of home-school partnership in supporting reading and numeracy skills. Epstein's (2011) overlapping spheres of influence model provides a theoretical foundation, emphasizing the shared responsibilities of family, school, and community.

Despite this growing body of literature, several gaps remain. First, existing reviews often focus on specific educational stages (e.g., early childhood or secondary education) or particular cultural contexts, lacking a global overview. Second, the rapid increase in publications over the past decade calls for a systematic mapping of research hotspots and trends. Third, while bibliometric methods have been applied in other educational fields (Shadiev et al., 2019), no study has specifically used CiteSpace to analyze PI in education across a broad time span.

Therefore, this study adopts a bibliometric approach to fill these gaps. By mapping the landscape of PI research from 2013 to 2024, it contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the field's intellectual structure and emerging directions.

3.0 Methodology

This study employed a bibliometric analysis using CiteSpace (version 6.2.R6) to address the three research questions. The Web of Science Core Collection was selected because it covers high-quality, peer-reviewed journals across disciplines and provides comprehensive citation data (Tan et al., 2023).

The search was conducted in January 2025. The search string was: TS=("parental involvement" OR "family involvement" OR "home-school relationship" OR "home-school connection" OR "parental engagement" OR "parental participation" OR "home-school involvement") AND TS=(education OR school OR student OR academic)

The search was limited to:

Peer-reviewed journal articles and review papers

English language

Publication years 2013–2024

Educational context

Inclusion and exclusion criteria are presented in Table 1 (as in the original, but ensure clarity).

Table 1. Eligibility Criteria

	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Study Characteristics	- Must be studies conducted in all educational stages.] - Must be explicitly related to the keywords parental involvement (PI), family involvement, home-school relationship (HSR), home-school connection (HSC), parental engagement, parental participation or home-school involvement - Must be peer-reviewed journal articles and review papers	- Articles beyond the educational context - Articles that did not directly address parental involvement or its closely related topics - Documents such as editorials, book chapters, letters, or conference abstracts not meeting peer-review standards
Report Characteristics	- Must be published in English language - Must have been indexed in the Web of Science (WOS) database - Must be published from 2013 - 2024	- Articles published in other languages - Not indexed in the Web of Science Core Collection - Records with missing values, duplicate entries, or incomplete metadata that could compromise the analysis

As shown in Table 1, the search terms "parental involvement", "family involvement", "home-school relationship" and "home-school connection" in various combinations were used to identify relevant work in the listed sources. These terms were next combined or excluded using the Boolean operator "OR," which searches "TS," i.e., "title," "abstract," "author keywords," and "keywords plus" in every published document in WOS.

Only peer-reviewed journal articles and review papers in English are considered. The articles must be i in the WOS database, published between 2013 and 2024, and conducted in an educational context. Records with missing values, duplicate entries, incomplete metadata, or other issues that could compromise the analysis are also excluded from the review.

The eligibility criteria are summarized in Table 1. The screening process followed the PRISMA 2020 flow diagram (Figure 1).

The 2020 Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) flow diagram is widely used in fields beyond social science (Page, et al., 2021). The four-phase PRISMA 2020 flow diagram (Figure 1) makes systematic reviews easier.

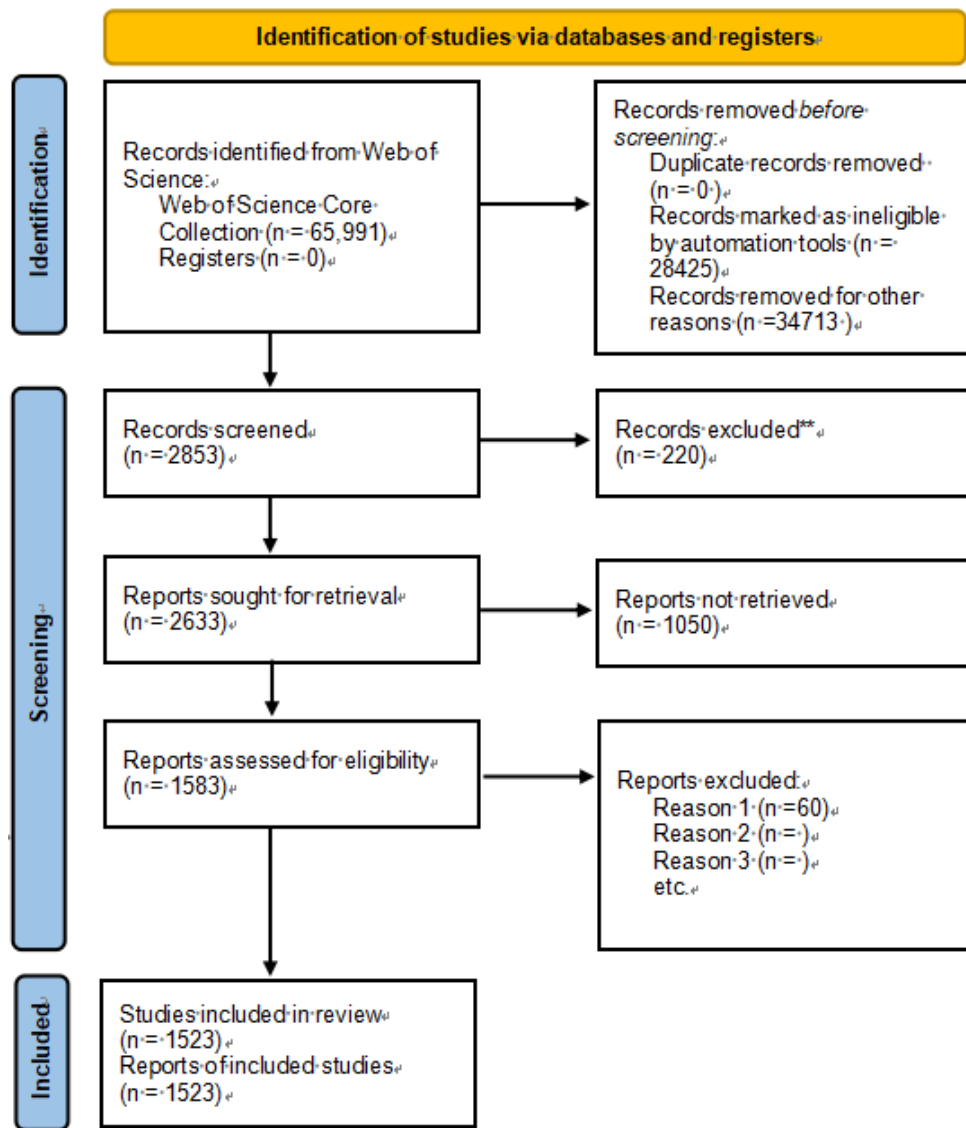


Fig. 1: PRISMA Flow Diagram for This Study

(Source: From the 2020 PRISMA Statement, by PRISMA Group, 2020, PRISMA <https://www.prisma-statement.org/prisma-2020-flow-diagram>. Copyright 2024 by PRISMA Group. Reprinted with permission.)

As seen in Figure 1, the meticulous process of identifying and incorporating studies into a review is facilitated through the utilization of databases and registers. The data were next analysed using CiteSpace version 6.2.R6 software for visual analysis.

4.0 Findings

The results are presented in answer to the research questions.

4.1 Hotspots

A keyword co-occurrence network map was generated using CiteSpace. This map reveals multiple closely related concepts across the fields of PI, HSR, and HSC, highlighting correlations among concepts and the evolution of research focus. High-frequency keywords reflect research hotspots in the field, and a visualization atlas analysis of these keywords provides an overview of research and trends in the field.

The keyword co-occurrence map generated by CiteSpace is presented in Figure 2. The lines on the map indicate the degree of correlation among the keywords, and the font and node sizes indicate the keywords' research popularity. The dataset was imported into CiteSpace, the node types were configured as keywords, the year per slice was set to 1, and the threshold (by frequency) was adjusted to 50. In other words, only keywords with a co-occurrence frequency exceeding 50 were displayed to obtain the keyword co-occurrence network. This facilitated an enhanced comprehension of research hotspots in PI applied within the education context.



Fig. 2: Map of Keyword Co-occurrence

As seen in Figure 2, the network has 249 nodes ($N=249$) and 469 links ($E=469$), and the network density is 0.0152 ($D=0.0152$), which indicates that the keywords in PI research are highly correlated, and the research has diversified in features. The cluster analysis revealed that the module value of the cluster map is 0.7028 (>0.3), and the average profile value is 0.8712 (>0.7), indicating a reasonable clustering result (Chen et al., 2015).

To better understand the research hotspots, node frequency and intermediate centrality were derived from keyword co-occurrence (Tables 2 & 3). The greater the intermediary centrality, the more important the keyword is. ##

Tables 2 and 3 list only the top 20 keywords by frequency and intermediation centrality. Table 2 lists the top 20 keywords in PI research by frequency, centrality, and year, highlighting key focus areas such as “parental involvement,” “education,” and “academic achievement”.

Table 2. Top 20 Keywords

Frequency	Centrality	Year	Keyword
797	0.17	2013	parental involvement
288	0.09	2013	education
248	0.48	2013	academic achievement
237	0.27	2013	achievement
212	0.07	2013	family
210	0.08	2013	school
197	0.12	2013	children
181	0.18	2013	involvement
180	0.03	2013	students
116	0.18	2013	family involvement
105	0.08	2014	engagement
103	0.27	2014	metaanalysis
90	0.09	2014	perceptions
73	0.07	2014	performance
66	0.07	2014	parental engagement
57	0.1	2014	home
55	0.03	2014	socioeconomic status
49	0	2015	teachers
48	0.1	2014	beliefs
47	0.16	2015	outcome

The visualization map in Figure 2 (Signature, Network: N = 249, E = 469, Density = 0.0152) reveals that "PI" occupies the largest portion alongside the retrieval term "education" (Centrality = 0.09). This suggests that much of the research has focused on the relationship between PI and student achievement. Keywords 'PI' (with a frequency of 797 and centrality of 0.17) and 'education' (with a frequency of 288 and centrality of 0.09) are the most frequently occurring terms, followed by 'academic achievement' (frequency 248, centrality 0.48) and 'achievement' (frequency 237, centrality 0.27). This indicates that most of the research focused on the relationship between PI and education, particularly regarding academic achievement and student performance.

The strong link between “parental involvement” and “education” underscores the importance of family engagement in educational settings. The link between “academic achievement” and “achievement” indicates a focus on student outcomes. The co-occurrence of “family” and “school” suggests research interest in the home-school relationship. Additionally, the pairing of “children” and “students” reflects the target population of much of the research. The presence of “involvement” alongside “engagement” points to a focus on participatory aspects in education. The co-occurrence of “meta-analysis” and “perceptions” suggests a trend toward analytical studies on educational perspectives, and the link between “performance” and “parental engagement” implies that parental participation is seen as a factor in student performance. The combination of “home” and “socioeconomic status” highlights the influence of family background on education. The co-occurrence of “teachers” and “beliefs” might indicate research into teachers' attitudes and their impact on education. Finally, the appearance of “early childhood education” alongside “kindergarten” emphasizes the foundational role of early education.

The keyword co-occurrence network map reveals the complex links between different concepts in the field of education. These links not only demonstrate the breadth of educational research, but also point to the interdependencies between specific research topics. These co-occurrences collectively paint a picture of a research landscape deeply interested in the interconnected roles of family, school, and community in shaping educational outcomes, with a particular emphasis on the early years and the socioeconomic dimensions that influence these dynamics.

Table 3. Top 20 Centrality Keywords

Rank	Count	Centrality	Year	keywords
1	32	0.18	2013	high school
2	41	0.16	2013	urban education
3	61	0.15	2013	model
4	10	0.15	2013	attainment
5	61	0.14	2013	teachers
6	52	0.14	2015	self efficacy
7	36	0.14	2013	children's education
8	11	0.14	2014	professional development
9	28	0.13	2013	family literacy
10	20	0.12	2013	emergent literacy
11	18	0.12	2013	autism spectrum disorder
12	14	0.12	2018	childhood
13	7	0.12	2013	and materials
14	2	0.12	2019	peer
15	23	0.11	2017	efficacy
16	17	0.11	2016	communication
17	43	0.1	2013	young children
18	25	0.1	2013	aspirations

19	17	0.1	2013	adjustment
20	6	0.1	2017	school improvement

As seen in Table 3, the top centrality keywords are "high school" and "urban," which are the most important keywords in terms of centrality. The top frequency keywords (except the keywords used in searching WoS) are education, academic achievement, achievement, school, and family. Clearly, the data in Table 2 and Table 3 reveal an inconsistent relationship between the frequency of keywords and the intermediary centrality of keywords, suggesting a fragmented research direction in PI on education.

Keywords citation bursts, which refer to keywords that suddenly increase or are used more frequently in a certain period of time, also reflect research hotspots. The keywords with the strongest citation bursts (Figure 3) reflect research topics that were more prominent during the different periods/year in the field of PI. Among them, the top three keywords from strongest to weakest citation bursts are kindergarten, PI, and children's education. Three stages can be divided according to the time when the keyword bursts begin and end.

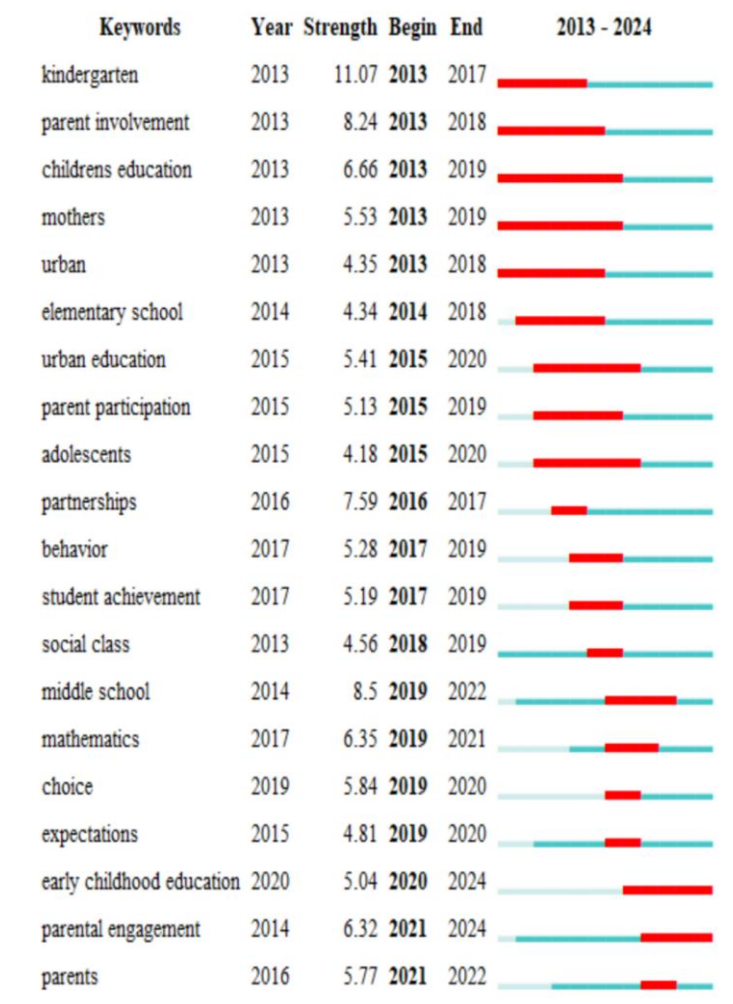


Fig. 3: Top 20 Keywords with the Strongest Citation Bursts

Note. The red bars indicate the burst period for each keyword, and the strength value represents the intensity of the citation burst.

As shown in Figure 3, the top 20 keywords with the strongest citation bursts in PI research between 2013 and 2024 highlight temporal trends and varying intensities of scholarly attention. Keywords such as "kindergarten", "parent involvement", "children education", "mother," and "urban" demonstrate early and sustained prominence starting in 2013, while terms like "early childhood education" and "parental engagement" gained significant traction more recently, peaking from 2020 or 2021 to 2024. The red bars indicate periods of citation bursts, reflecting heightened academic interest in these topics in the field of PI research. This visualization illustrates the evolving research priorities and emerging areas of focus within the field.

4.2 Trends and Future Directions in Parental Involvement Research (2013-2024)

Figure 4 illustrates the annual publication trends in the field of PI from 2013 to 2024.

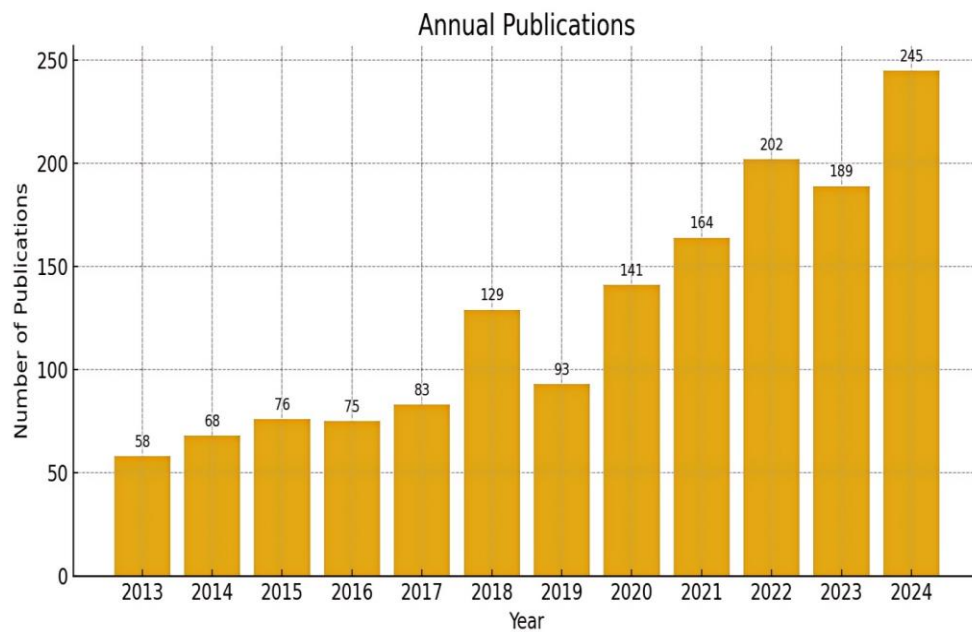


Fig.4: Annual number of publications on parental involvement in education (2013–2024)

As shown in Figure 4, an upward trend in the number of PI articles is evident over the past 11 years. The annual number of publications steadily increased from 58 in 2013 to 245 in 2024, reflecting growing research interest in the field of PI throughout this period. Although there was a slight dip in the number of publications between 2018-2019 and again between 2020 and 2021, the overall trend has been upward. There appear to be three phases in the research trend: fewer than 100 articles between 2013 and 2017, more than 100 articles between 2018 and 2022, except for 2019 (93), and more than 200 articles between 2022 and 2024, except for 2023 (189).

Figure 5 presents the frequency and pattern of keywords in the field from 2013 to 2024. By analyzing the temporal distribution of keywords, the evolution of academic discussion and emergence of new research topics can be tracked. This upward trend in annual publications on PI, especially in the post-COVID era from 2022 to 2024, shows that research on PI in children's education continues to gain interest.

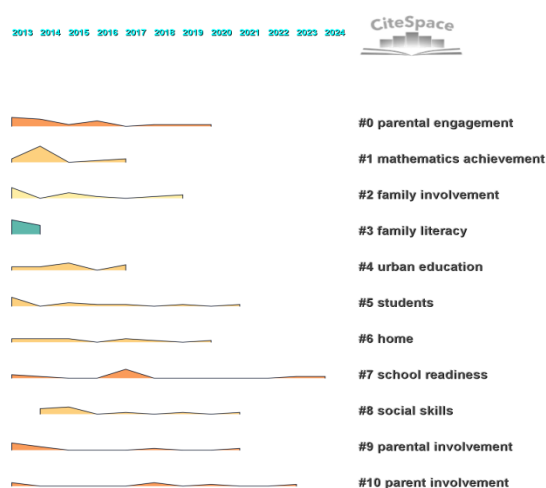


Fig.5: Frequency and Pattern of Keywords in Different Years from 2013 to 2024

As seen in Figure 5, the following keywords occupy a prominent position in research on PI throughout this period:

1. Parental Engagement (#0): Since 2013, research on PI has received continuous attention, which indicates that the role of parents in school education is a long-term and important research topic.
2. Mathematics Achievement (#1): Peaking in 2017, this keyword reflects a period of heightened interest in how PI impacts mathematics achievement.
3. Family Involvement (#2): With a noticeable surge in 2019, this keyword underscores a growing research interest in the family's educational involvement.
4. Family Literacy (#3): The keyword family literacy peaked in 2013, indicating a significant research interest that year. However, it abruptly "disappeared" by mid-2014, suggesting a shift in research focus or a decline in its prominence within the field.
5. Urban Education (#4): A rise in frequency of research on urban education beginning in 2015 suggests an increased focus on the challenges and dynamics of parental involvement in urban settings.

Other keywords, such as students (#5), home (#6), school readiness (#7), social skills (#8), parental involvement (#9) and parent involvement (#10), also show the focus trend in a particular year, reflecting the diversity and breadth of educational research over the years.

Key words, such as "home" (#6), "parental involvement" (#9) and "parent involvement" (#10), peaked in 2013. "School readiness" (#7) and "social skills" (#8) also indicate focus trends in 2017 and 2015, respectively reflecting the diversity and breadth of educational research.

The keyword timelines reveal the shift in research interest and the emergence of an evolving focus in the field of education. The continued focus on keywords such as PI and "School Readiness" suggests that familial factors and academic performance play central roles in children's educational success. The increased focus on "Urban Education" and "School Readiness" indicates a focus on responding to policy reforms and initiatives aimed at improving early childhood education in urban areas.

4.3 Global Landscape on Parental Involvement The analysis of the 1,523 bibliometric records showed that PI has been an area of interest in 97 different countries across the globe. Figure 6 presents the research priorities on PI in different countries and regions from 2013 to 2024.

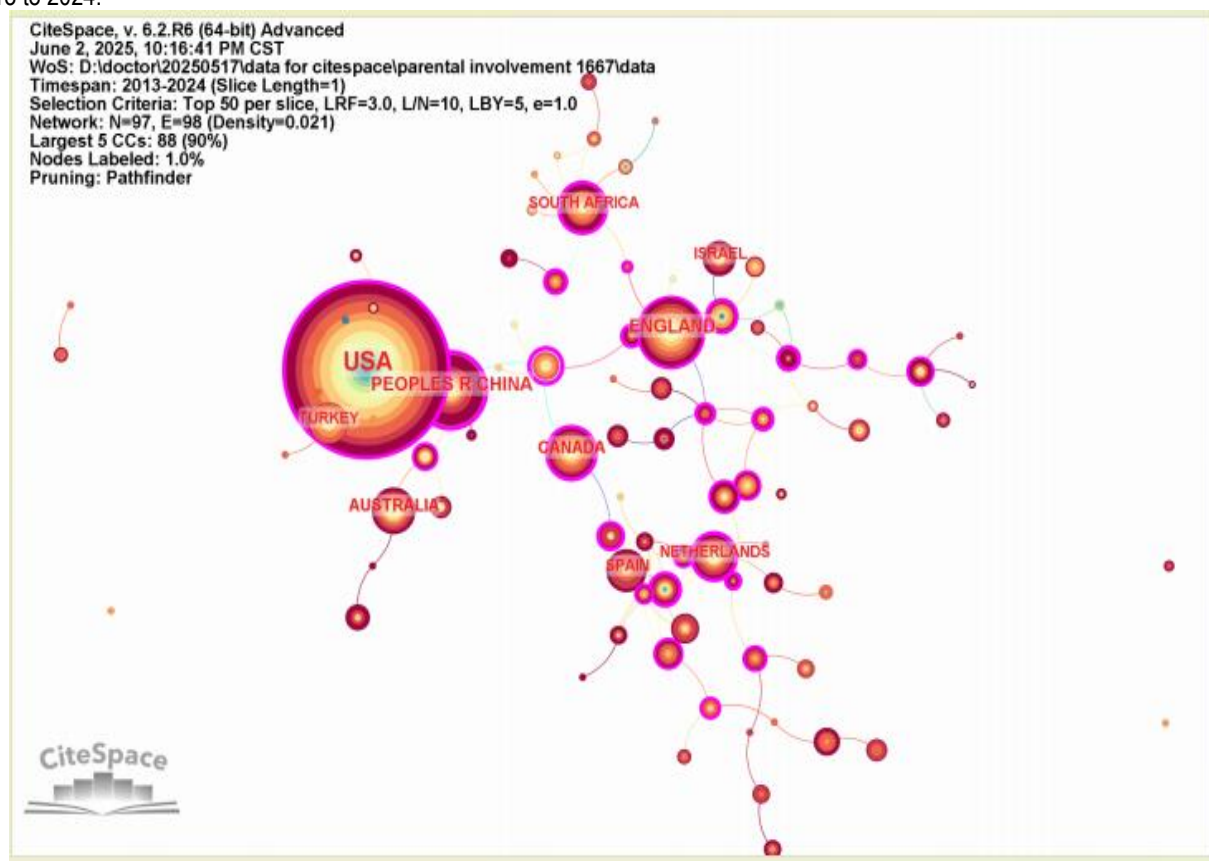


Fig. 6: Top Contributing Country Analysis

The visualization in Figure 6 was generated with parameters including a time span of 2013 to 2024, slice length of 1, selection criteria based on top the 50 per slice with g-index, LRF=3.0, L/N=10, LBY=5, and e=1.0. The network consists of 97 nodes and 98 edges, with a density of 0.021, suggesting a relatively sparse network of connections among the countries. The largest 5 co-citation clusters (5 CCs) contain 88 nodes, representing 90% of the network, indicating a concentration of prominent countries in this research area. The network was pruned using the Pathfinder algorithm to enhance the clarity and interpretability of the clusters. The modularity Q value of the

network is 0.7028, reflecting a significant community structure, and the weighted mean silhouette S value is 0.8712, indicating a reasonable clustering result with good cluster consistency. This analysis highlights scholars' collaborative efforts across different regions to advance research in the field of education.

As shown in Figure 6, the United States (USA), England, the People's Republic of China, South Africa, Canada, Australia, Spain, etc., illustrate the global interest in PI across Eastern and Western countries and the significance of international collaboration on a shared research interest. The prominence of the United States in this network underscores its leading role in PI research.

The number of articles published by the top 10 countries is listed in Table 4. As seen in the visualization map (Figure 6), the United States, England, China, Australia, and Canada also emerge as the top five countries in terms of research output (Table 4).

Table 4. Top 10 High Production Countries

Rank	Number of Publications	Centrality	Year	Country
1	621	0.3	2013	USA
2	115	0.17	2013	England
3	113	0.49	2014	Peoples R China
4	67	0.07	2013	Australia
5	56	0.35	2013	Canada
6	53	0	2015	Spain
7	52	0.23	2014	Netherlands
8	49	0.31	2014	South Africa
9	46	0.04	2013	Turkey
10	44	0	2013	Israel

Table 4 presents the top 10 countries, the number of research publications in PI, the centrality values, and years of prominence. The centrality of the publications appears to be not aligned with the number of publications. China recorded the highest centrality value but was in third place (113) in terms of the number of publications. Conversely, the USA recorded a low centrality value of 0.3 in comparison to its highest number of publications. Spain and Israel recorded zero centrality; equally low centrality was recorded for Turkey and Australia.

5.0 Discussion

RQ1: Research Hotspots

The keyword co-occurrence analysis reveals that PI research clusters around several core themes: academic achievement, family-school collaboration, early childhood education, and urban education. These hotspots align with Epstein's (2011) overlapping spheres of influence, which posits that student learning is enhanced when family, school, and community collaborate. The high centrality of "high school" and "urban education" in earlier years suggests a historical focus on adolescent outcomes and contextual disadvantage. More recent keywords such as "parental engagement" and "early childhood education" indicate a shift toward early intervention and participatory roles. These findings imply that educational policies should not only promote school-based involvement but also strengthen home-based support and family-school communication.

RQ2: Annual Publication Trends and Emerging Trends

Publications on PI increased steadily from 58 in 2013 to 245 in 2024, with a slight dip in 2019 and 2021. This growth reflects growing recognition of PI's role in educational outcomes, particularly after the COVID-19 pandemic. Emerging trends include home literacy environment, social capital, autism spectrum disorder, and family-school partnerships (Westerveld & van Bysterveld, 2017; Romero-González et al., 2023). These trends suggest future research should examine digital participation, culturally responsive involvement, and longitudinal effects of family-school collaboration.

RQ3: Global Landscape of Contributions

A total of 97 countries contributed to PI research, with the USA, China, England, Australia, and Canada as leading producers. However, centrality values indicate that China and Canada play important bridging roles, while the USA has high output but lower centrality. This suggests that international collaboration should be strengthened, particularly between high-output and high-centrality countries. The global landscape highlights the need for cross-cultural studies that consider diverse educational systems and family contexts.

Implications and Contributions

Theoretically, this study extends Epstein's model by mapping the intellectual structure of PI research. Methodologically, it demonstrates the value of CiteSpace for educational review. Practically, it provides evidence for policymakers and educators to design family-school partnership programs, especially in early childhood and urban education. Future research should explore digital PI, teacher preparation for family engagement, and comparative studies across cultures.

6.0 Conclusion& Recommendations

This bibliometric review of 1,523 publications (2013–2024) reveals that PI research is growing steadily, with hotspots in academic

achievement, family–school collaboration, and early childhood education. The USA leads in output, while China and Canada show high centrality. Emerging trends include home literacy, social capital, and family–school partnerships.

Limitations: This study only used the Web of Science Core Collection, which may exclude regional research and non-English publications. The keyword analysis may be affected by synonym merging and database indexing.

Recommendations: Future research should (1) integrate multiple databases (e.g., Scopus, CNKI); (2) examine digital parental involvement; (3) conduct cross-cultural comparisons; (4) use mixed methods to explore mechanisms behind PI effects. Educational policies should provide targeted support for disadvantaged families and promote teacher training in family engagement.

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Paper Contribution to Related Field of Study

This study contributes to parental involvement (PI) research in three ways. Methodologically, it employs CiteSpace bibliometric analysis to map the intellectual structure of 1,523 publications, offering an objective, evidence-based overview beyond conventional narrative reviews. Empirically, it identifies critical hotspots, i.e., home literacy, school-family collaboration, and digital participation, and traces emerging interdisciplinary trends. Practically, by revealing the global contribution landscape, it provides researchers and policymakers with a strategic reference for collaboration opportunities and evidence-based interventions to enhance parental engagement and student quality of life across diverse settings.

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