



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

***PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT, SELF-EFFICACY BELIEFS AND  
SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING OF ADOLESCENTS IN  
KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA***

***YAP SIEW TING***

**FEM 2015 15**



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KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA**

**By**

**YAP SIEW TING**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**June 2015**

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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**YAP SIEW TING**

**June 2015**

**Chair: Professor Rozumah Baharudin, PhD**  
**Faculty: Human Ecology**

Many studies have highlighted the positive impact of paternal and maternal involvement on human developmental outcomes. Yet, differences in parental involvement across parent and child sex have been inadequately addressed in adolescents. Lately, subjective well-being (SWB) has become a new focus in psychology. However, little is known about the mechanisms underlying adolescent SWB. This cross-sectional research aimed to determine the differences of parental involvement across parent and adolescent sex and to elaborate the relationship between parental involvement and SWB by considering the potential mediation roles of academic self-efficacy (ASE), social self-efficacy (SSE), and emotional self-efficacy (ESE), and the potential moderation role of adolescent sex. A total of 722 adolescents from 14 public secondary schools in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia participated in this study. The Father/Mother Involvement Scale (Finley & Schwartz, 2004), the Self-Efficacy Questionnaire for Children (Muris, 2001), the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988), and the Students' Life Satisfaction Scale (Huebner, 1991) were the instruments used in this study. Results of the multigroup confirmatory factor analysis revealed that mothers had higher expressive, instrumental, and leisure/companionship involvement than fathers. Besides, both fathers and mothers had higher expressive and instrumental involvement with their daughters than sons. Moreover, mothers had higher leisure/companionship involvement with their daughters than sons. Fathers showed no significant higher leisure/companionship involvement in either sons or daughters. As measurement invariance was established prior to the comparisons, the differences found may be substantive. The results of structural equation modeling demonstrated that ASE, SSE, and ESE uniquely mediated the relationships between parental involvement and positive affect. Besides, ASE was found to be the unique mediator in the relationships between parental involvement and life satisfaction. None of the proposed mediators mediated the relationships between parental involvement and negative affect. Moderation analyses showed that the relationship between paternal involvement and positive affect was significant for males but not females. Besides, the relationship between paternal involvement and ESE was stronger for males than females. Overall, this study provides valuable insights on

Malaysian parents' involvement in their adolescent children's lives and highlights the roles of self-efficacy beliefs and adolescent sex in the relationship between parental involvement and adolescent SWB.



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**PENGLIBATAN IBU BAPA, KEPERCAYAAN EFIKASI KENDIRI DAN KESEJAHTERAAN SUBJEKTIF REMAJA DI KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA**

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Banyak penyelidikan menekankan kesan positif penglibatan ibu bapa atas hasil pembangunan manusia. Namun, perbezaan penglibatan ibu bapa berdasarkan jantina ibu bapa dan kanak-kanak (iaitu, lelaki dan perempuan) tidak ditangani dengan mencukupi dalam remaja. Kebelakangan ini, kesejahteraan subjektif telah menjadi fokus baru dalam psikologi. Namun begitu, sedikit diketahui tentang mekanisme yang mendasari kesejahteraan subjektif remaja. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menentukan perbezaan penglibatan ibu bapa berdasarkan jantina ibu bapa dan remaja dan menguraikan hubungan antara penglibatan ibu bapa dan kesejahteraan subjektif dengan mempertimbangkan efikasi sendiri akademik, efikasi kendir social, dan efikasi sendiri emosi, sebagai pengantara, dan sex remaja sebagai moderator. Seramai 722 remaja dari 14 buah sekolah menengah awam di Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia mengambil bahagian dalam kajian ini. Skala Penglibatan Bapa/Ibu (Finley & Schwartz, 2004), Soal Selidik Efikasi Kendiri untuk Kanak-kanak (Muris, 2001), Skala Perasaan Positif dan Negatif (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988), dan Skala Kepuasan Hidup Pelajar (Huebner, 1991) ialah instrumen yang digunakan dalam kajian ini. Keputusan analisis faktor pengesahan berbilang kumpulan mendedahkan bahawa ibu-ibu menunjukkan penglibatan ekspresif, instrumental, dan masa lapang/persahabatan yang lebih tinggi berbanding dengan bapa-bapa. Selain itu, kedua-dua bapa dan ibu menunjukkan penglibatan ekspresif dan instrumental yang lebih tinggi dalam anak-anak perempuan mereka berbanding dengan anak-anak lelaki. Tambahan pula, ibu-ibu juga menunjukkan penglibatan masa lapang/persahabatan yang lebih tinggi dalam anak-anak perempuan mereka berbanding dengan anak-anak lelaki. Bapa-bapa tidak menunjukkan penglibatan yang lebih tinggi secara signifikan dalam anak-anak lelaki ataupun anak-anak perempuan. Disebabkan pengukuran invarian telah ditubuhkan sebelum perbandingan, perbezaan yang didapati berkemungkinan ialah perbezaan substantif. Keputusan persamaan permodelan berstruktur menunjukkan bahawa efikasi sendiri akademik, sosial, dan emosi mengantara secara unik hubungan antara penglibatan ibu bapa dan perasaan positif. Selain itu, efikasi sendiri akademik didapati menjadi pengantara unik dalam hubungan antara penglibatan ibu bapa dan kepuasan hidup. Tiada pengantara yang dicadangkan mengantara hubungan antara penglibatan ibu bapa dan perasaan negatif. Analisis

moderasi menunjukkan bahawa hubungan antara penglibatan bapa dan perasaan positif adalah signifikan untuk lelaki tetapi tidak untuk perempuan. Selain itu, hubungan antara penglibatan bapa dan efikasi sendiri emosi adalah lebih kuat bagi lelaki berbanding dengan perempuan. Secara keseluruhannya, kajian ini memberi pandangan yang bernilai atas penglibatan ibu bapa warganegara Malaysia dalam kehidupan anak-anak remaja mereka dan menonjolkan peranan kepercayaan efikasi sendiri dan jantina remaja dalam hubungan antara penglibatan ibu bapa dan kesejahteraan subjektif remaja.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I believe that all the people who are in the midst of completing their doctoral thesis dream of reaching the moment of writing the acknowledgements. I am no exception. There have been twists and turns along the journey of completing this thesis. The completion would not have been possible without invaluable support, encouragement, and help from those significant people surrounding me.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my chief supervisor, Prof. Dr. Rozumah Baharudin for her encouraging guidance, constructive criticism, and generosity in sharing her profound knowledge that greatly improved the quality of this thesis. I cannot thank her enough for challenging and motivating me along this tough journey, which at times seemed never ending. I would also like to put on record my appreciation of the shared expertise and warm encouragement from my supervisory committee members, Dr. Siti Nor Yaacob and Dr. Syuhaily Osman.

Special thanks go to the leaders of True Lights, specifically Apollos Tan and Yvonne Yee for their unconditional support, spiritual guidance, and inspirational prayers, especially through the darkest period of this journey. Besides, a hearty thank you to all the members of True Lights, specifically Mandy Yen, Lawrence Lee, Sim Bee, and Shirmeen Liew for their constant prayer support, heartfelt comfort, and loving affirmations throughout the journey. Further, my great indebtedness goes to Pastor Nellie Wang for her unconditional love and kindness when I needed a silent place to write. My great appreciation is due to a few special friends, specifically Hong Lin, Yu Chien, Pei Ling, Yeng, Ru Yuan, and Siew Mooi who took their time to listen to my ups and downs during the candidacy.

I owe particular thanks to my dearest parents for being a fine role model of resilience. This has definitely become a part of my character which has helped me strive through a great deal of challenges in completing this journey. My heartfelt gratitude goes to my fiancé, Yick Hong for giving me enormous support, words of motivation, crying shoulder, companionship, hugs of encouragement, and most important his patience and willingness to travel this journey with me and the confidence he has on me in this fulfillment. His sense of humor has helped keep me relatively upbeat in the times of downcast. He has made me believe that two are better than one.

Above all, my deepest gratitude goes to Jehovah Shammah, my God who is there with me throughout the journey. There were times when my faith has failed, He remained to be loving and faithful in every way. He has been my beacon, my hope, and my strength to persevere through the storm and my fountain in the wilderness. O Lord, You deserve all the praise, honor, and glory.

I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 23 June 2015 to conduct the final examination of Yap Siew Ting on her thesis entitled “Parental Involvement, Self-efficacy Beliefs and Subjective Well-being of Adolescents in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia” in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AVE	Average variance extracted
CFA	Confirmatory factor analysis
CFI	Confirmatory fit index
EFA	Exploratory factor analysis
MI	Modification Indices
ML	Maximum Likelihood
MLR	Maximum likelihood robust
RMSEA	Root mean square error of approximation
SEM	Structural equation modeling
SRMR	Standardized root mean square residual
SWB	Subjective well-being
TLI	Tucker-Lewis index

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter details the key components that drive the present study. It is organized into eleven sections: (1.1) Background of the Study, (1.2) Statement of the Problem, (1.3) Research Questions, (1.4) Research Objectives, (1.5) Hypotheses, (1.6) Theoretical Framework, (1.7) Conceptual Framework, (1.8) Significance of the Study, (1.9) Definition of Terminology, (1.10) Organization of the Thesis, and (1.11) Chapter Summary.

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

Psychology in the past focused substantially on what was wrong with people through the investigation of psychopathology. However, Seligman, Parks, and Steen (2004) argued that psychology should be equally concerned with what is wrong and what is right with people. Simply recognize the needs of those who suffer maladaptation at some point in their lives is not sufficient as a majority of “normal people” seek advice for more fulfilling lives (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). It is from this that positive initiative emerged and went on to expand the scope of mainstream psychology beyond its preceding imbalanced focus on “the negative” – psychology disorders, which paid little attention to positive development and well-being (Marques, Pais-Ribeiro, & Lopez, 2011). This initiative provides a complementary and supplementary lens by integrating both the positive and negative indicators of well-being to yield a more comprehensive depiction of human functioning. Instead of fixing problems, this scientific endeavor intends to find out, strengthen, and foster what works to enable flourishing and optimal lives. Research in this area recognizes the importance of the proactive rather than the reactive approach to mental health. In conjunction with this positive movement, developmental psychologists have begun to embrace positive approach in studying human development (Furlong, You, Renshaw, Smith, & O'Malley, 2014). As a result, studies in developmental psychology have shifted from the imbalance focus on negative developmental outcomes to various positive human developmental outcomes (e.g., Chyi & Mao, 2012; Demir, 2010; Leung & Shek, 2014; Motti-Stefanidi, 2015). Among all, the study of subjective well-being (SWB) has become a central concern.

SWB, which is synonymously termed as “happiness”, includes affective and cognitive evaluations of one’s life (Diener, 2000). Positive affect and negative affect are the components of affective appraisal while life satisfaction is the component of cognitive appraisal. These components are related, yet clearly separable constructs. Accumulating empirical evidence suggests that the structural model of SWB is best represented by all of these components but these components should be treated as distinct dimensions (Busseri & Sadava, 2011; Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999; Kong, Zhao, & You, 2013; Pavot, 2008). In other words, each of these components provides unique information about one’s SWB. While research on SWB in adulthood has a relatively long history, efforts to study SWB among adolescents have been increasing of late.

Adolescence is a developmental period that spans the gap between childhood and adulthood. It is a crucial developmental phase, deemed to be complex and marked by various transitions in parent-child relationships, peers, schools, and cognitive and emotions-related abilities (Ben-Zur, 2003). To date, many countries worldwide, including Malaysia have experienced rapid societal changes which have not only benefited people, but also placed increasing demands and pressures on adolescents. Globally, 10 to 20% of children and adolescents suffer mental disorders and half of all mental disorders begin during adolescence (World Health Organization, 2014b). The National Health Mobility Survey (III) that was conducted by the Ministry of Health in Malaysia highlighted an increase in mental health problems from 13% (in 1996) to 20.32% (in 2006) among Malaysian adolescents. The highest prevalence of acute suicidal ideation was also found among youth. In recent years, teenage crime, such as snatch thefts, blackmail, gangsterism, rape, murder, and drug abuse were all on the rise too (Cheng, 2014). Adolescence is considered an important period in majority of the aspects of human development (Goldbeck, Schmitz, Besier, Herschbach, & Henrich, 2007). In recent years, developmental psychology field has started examining subjective perception of this developmental stage by adolescents themselves. Adolescents are expected to play crucial roles in leading the future. Therefore, it is important to foster what is best for their development and proper functioning (Weems, 2009).

In line with the emergence of the positive movement in psychology, various efforts in promoting youth positive functioning have been seen under different monikers such as “positive youth development” (e.g., Sun & Shek, 2013) and “resilience studies” (e.g., Masten, 2001) in recent years. These efforts account for the positive cognitive, social, emotional, and behavioral development of youth across various developmental periods (i.e., childhood, adolescence, and adulthood) and within various developmental contexts (i.e., home, school, and community settings). Instead of viewing adolescents as problems to be managed, these efforts view adolescents as great resources to be developed (Vimont, 2012). Importantly, initiatives in promoting positive developmental outcomes in adolescents are grounded deeply in the perspectives of developmental psychology (Masten, 2014; Scales, 2011; Vimont, 2012). Specifically, they view human as actor who play active role in creating his own development. Besides, they postulate that development is the product of interaction between the person and the environment. One of the commonalities of these positive initiatives is that SWB is regarded as an indicator of positive development. According to Eryilmaz (2012), SWB in adolescence is as crucial as in any other developmental phase. Extant studies suggest that SWB is not only advantageous for adolescent adaptive functioning, but also, to serve as a protective factor against maladaptive functioning. Thus, continuing efforts to examine adolescent SWB remain crucial. To date, we have limited knowledge of adolescent SWB in the context of Malaysia. While only a few studies related to Malaysian adolescent SWB are available in literature (e.g., Muhamad & Jaafar, 2009; Yaacob, Tan, Tan, & Juhari, 2012), it seems that SWB research in Malaysia is in its preliminary stages and it is imperative to find out the underlying factors that may promote Malaysian adolescent SWB.

Developmental psychologists have long agree that the environment is a potent force in many aspects of human development (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2013). Previous studies have documented parenting as a potent factor influencing various adolescent developmental

outcomes such as internalizing and externalizing behaviors (e.g., Jafari, Baharudin, & Archer, 2013; Lansford, Laird, Pettit, Bates, & Dodge, 2014; Suldo & Huebner, 2004; Taylor, Lopez, Budescu, & McGill, 2012), health behaviors (e.g., Kwon & Wickrama, 2014), self-esteem (e.g., Raboteag-Saric & Sakic, 2014), and school achievement (e.g., Attaway & Bry, 2004; Pong, Johnston, & Chen, 2010). In recent years, evidence has mounted on the relationship between parental involvement and youth SWB (e.g., Finley & Schwartz, 2007, 2010; Flouri & Buchanan, 2003a). Conventionally, parental involvement is conceptualized in terms of quantity, i.e., how much time a parent spends with his/her children. In this regard, Finley and Schwartz (2004) claimed that the traditional conceptualization of parental involvement from the “time-spent” perspective may be insufficient given constantly evolving parental roles owing to changes in society and parental role expectations. A multidimensional measurement of parental involvement, i.e., consideration of different aspects of a child’s life in which a parent may or may not be involved, is more appropriate as it attends to the fact that parental involvement is multifaceted in nature.

To date, investigations of parental involvement from a multidimensional perspective are comparatively sparse and studies on the differences between paternal and maternal involvement have been found mainly in young children. Meanwhile, inconclusive findings have been revealed on the differences in parental involvement across child sex (i.e., male versus female). Hence, there is a need to investigate differences in parental involvement across parent and adolescent sex by using a multidimensional measurement. Since evidence on the link between parental involvement and youth SWB is available to this end, it is also vital to discover possible underlying factors in the parental involvement—SWB link.

Besides contextual positive resources such as positive parenting, internal resources possessed by people are also factors that could affect the development of well-being (Ben-Zur, 2003). Developmental psychologists (e.g., Benson, Leffert, Scales, & Blyth, 1998) termed internal resources as “developmental assets” and suggested that they could not only enhance essential developmental outcomes, but also increase positive outcomes. Previous studies revealed that parenting behaviors could affect adolescent developmental outcomes indirectly via internal resources such as self-regulation (e.g., Lee, Yu, & Choi, 2012), attributional style (e.g., O’Donnell, Moreau, Cardemil, & Pollastri, 2010; Schleider, Vélez, Krause, & Gillham, 2014), self-control (e.g., Evans, Simons, & Simons, 2012; Li, Zhang, & Wang, 2013), optimism (e.g., Chong, Huan, Yeo, & Ang, 2006), and self-esteem (e.g., Gaylord-Harden, Ragsdale, Mandara, Richards, & Petersen, 2007). Self-efficacy refers to people’s perceptions of their capabilities and it varies across domains (Bandura, 1977, 2012). In positive psychology, self-efficacy (Khan, 2013; Lightsey et al., 2013; Sivis-Cetinkaya, 2013; Suldo & Shaffer, 2007; Sun & Shek, 2012; Vecchio, Gerbino, Pastorelli, Del Bove, & Caprara, 2007) is among those internal resources [e.g., gratitude, optimism, self-esteem, hope, and resilience (Khan, 2013; Merkaš & Brajša-Žganec, 2011; Sivis-Cetinkaya, 2013)] which have been identified as psychological strengths that could promote adolescent SWB. It has been included as one of the qualities to be fostered in adolescents through positive youth development programs conducted in both Western and Eastern countries (Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 2004; Sun & Shek, 2012, 2013).

Previous studies had also examined the potential mediation role of self-efficacy in the relationship between various parenting dimensions and adolescent well-being (Chun & Dickson, 2011; Niditch & Varela, 2012; Wright & Perrone, 2010). To date, studies have demonstrated relationships between parental involvement and SWB (e.g., Finley & Schwartz, 2007), parental involvement and self-efficacy (e.g., Weiser & Riggio, 2010), self-efficacy and SWB (e.g., Suldo & Shaffer, 2007; Vecchio et al., 2007). Nevertheless, the potential mediation roles of domain-specific self-efficacy beliefs underlying the parental involvement—SWB link are yet to be examined. Of equal importance is the consideration of the potential moderating effect of adolescent sex in the pathways between parental involvement, self-efficacy beliefs, and SWB, given existing studies demonstrated inconclusive moderating effect of child sex in both direct and indirect relationships between parenting and adolescent developmental outcomes (e.g., Behnke, Plunkett, Sands, & Bámaca-Colbert, 2011; Harper, 2010; Windle et al., 2010).

## **1.2 Statement of Problem**

According to Locke, Spirduso, and Silverman (2013), statement of problem should indicate “why you want to do the study and what you intend to accomplish”. Correspondingly, scholars (e.g., Creswell, 2014; Newsome, 2015) accentuated that the statement of problem not only conveys the overall intent of the study, but also establishes the scope of the study by setting boundaries (i.e., what are contained within a study). For a quantitative research, these boundaries include general description of the theories applied, variables, general definition of each key variable, connections of variables, type of strategy of inquiry, participants, and research sites. The subsequent paragraphs delineate the problem statement of the present study in accordance with these scholars’ work.

The present study aimed to inspect the differences in parental involvement across parent and adolescent sex from a multidimensional perspective and further elaborated the relationship between parental involvement and SWB by considering the potential mediation roles of self-efficacy beliefs and the potential moderation role of adolescent sex. As noted earlier, rapid societal changes over the past few decades have rendered the traditional conceptualization of parental involvement insufficient, particularly, from the perspective of time-spent between parents and their children. This is especially true given the evolving expectations with regard to fathers’ and mothers’ roles. There is a need for the study of parental involvement to become more multifaceted (Finley & Schwartz, 2004). Further, various problems are on the rise among Malaysian adolescents. Past findings revealed that adolescent SWB served to promote positive functioning and protection against negative functioning, thereby, these urge researchers to look for the underlying factors contributing to adolescent SWB. Given the extant empirical evidence on the relationships between parental involvement, self-efficacy beliefs, and SWB as well as inconclusive moderating role of adolescent sex in these relationships, the present study considered the roles of self-efficacy beliefs and adolescent sex when examining the parental involvement-SWB links.

The present study was theoretically guided by the integration of two developmental theories – bioecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 1999, 2005; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) and Bandura's (1977, 1993, 1999, 2012) concept of self-efficacy. Essentially, this integration viewed adolescent well-being as a function of interaction between environmental- and self-factors. In this regard, adolescents were envisioned as being surrounded by multiple interconnected social contexts. Parents — by virtue of being situated in the closest environment to adolescents, their involvement was considered as a prominent environmental factor affecting adolescent well-being. On the other hand, adolescent sex and self-efficacy beliefs were the self-factors considered in this study. A more comprehensive description of theoretical perspectives that guided this study is presented in Section 1.6: Theoretical Background.

The major variables in this study were parental involvement, self-efficacy beliefs, and SWB. A large number of earlier studies focused on either maternal parenting or paternal parenting. In recent years, both paternal and maternal parenting is deemed potent to adolescent developmental outcomes (e.g., Gryczkowski, Jordan, & Mercer, 2010; Lansford et al., 2014). Hence, the present study included both paternal involvement and maternal involvement. Self-efficacy varies across domains (Bandura, 2012) and its importance differs by developmental phase (Berry & West, 1993). The present study included academic self-efficacy, social self-efficacy, and emotional self-efficacy which have been recognized as the most crucial domains of efficacy beliefs in adolescents (Suldo & Shaffer, 2007). As noted earlier, SWB comprises positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction. Past research (Busseri & Sadava, 2011; Diener et al., 1999; Kong et al., 2013; Pavot, 2008) suggested that each of them should be included and treated as separable dimensions. A detailed list of the conceptual and operational definitions of these variables is presented in Section 1.9: Definition of Terminology. In terms of connections of the variables, paternal involvement and maternal involvement served as independent variables while positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction served as dependent variables. In the relationships of paternal and maternal involvement to positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction, academic self-efficacy, social self-efficacy, and emotional self-efficacy served as the potential mediators while adolescent sex served as the potential moderator in the pathways of the independent variables—mediators—dependent variables.

Data collection for the present study considered feasibility, budget, and time constraints. A cross-sectional design was applied and survey questionnaires were used to collect the data. Samples were collected from adolescents who resided in the Kuala Lumpur, using multi-stage cluster sampling. Being the capital of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur undergoes massive development and this threw up challenges such as high cost of living, crowding, pollution, congestion, unemployment, and high rates of crime (Yaakob, Masron, & Masami, 2012). Such an environment could contribute to high daily stress (Lederbogen, Haddad, & Meyer-Lindenberg, 2013) which consequently could compromise parenting quality (Kotchick, Dorsey, & Heller, 2005) and human well-being (Deardorff, Gonzales, & Sandler, 2003; McKnight, Huebner, & Suldo, 2002; Suldo, Frank, Chappel, Albers, & Bateman, 2014; Youngstrom, Weist, & Albus, 2003). These considerations motivated the choice of the research site for the study.

In the past, it was common for differences between groups to be assessed at the observed level, in which, the invariance of the measurement across groups was not pre-ensured. This could cause inaccuracy of interpretation. Moreover, examination of relationships between variables was usually conducted using conventional techniques such as Pearson correlations and regression analyses which were inadequate to handle error variances. Additionally, researchers used to assess mediation effects of multiple mediators separately. This approach rendered the results suffered from omitted variable problem. This study attempted to address these issues by adopting more advanced analysis approaches. Specifically, the differences in parental involvement across parent and child sex were assessed at the latent level after the establishment of measurement invariance. This study also assessed relationships among variables using a two-step procedure (i.e., assessment of measurement model and structural model) recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). These analysis approaches are structural equation modeling-based (SEM-based) approaches which consider error variances and enable examination of two or more relationships simultaneously. Additionally, this study utilized the multiple mediator model approach (Preacher & Hayes, 2008) to assess the effects of mediation. This approach allows multiple mediators to be tested simultaneously in a single model and thereby, identify unique mediation effect of each mediator.

In a nutshell, this cross-sectional study attempted to examine the differences in parental involvement across parent and child sex, as well as the potential mediation roles of self-efficacy beliefs and the potential moderation role of adolescent sex in the parental involvement—SWB link. Particularly, parental involvement consisted of paternal involvement and maternal involvement, self-efficacy beliefs comprised academic self-efficacy, social self-efficacy, and emotional self-efficacy, and SWB comprised positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction. The incorporation of Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model and Bandura's concept of self-efficacy guided this research. This research was conducted among adolescents residing in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (N= 721, aged 15-17). The collected data were analyzed using SEM-based analytic techniques.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. Does parental involvement differ across parent and adolescent sex?
2. Do self-efficacy beliefs (i.e., academic self-efficacy, social self-efficacy, and emotional self-efficacy) mediate the relationships between parental involvement (i.e., paternal involvement and maternal involvement) and adolescent SWB (i.e., positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction)?
3. Does adolescent sex moderate the relationships between parental involvement (i.e., paternal involvement and maternal involvement), self-efficacy beliefs (i.e., academic self-efficacy, social self-efficacy, and emotional self-efficacy), and SWB (i.e., positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction)?

## 1.4 Research Objectives

The present study aimed to examine the differences in parental involvement across parent and adolescent sex and the potential mediation roles of academic self-efficacy, social self-efficacy, and emotional self-efficacy as well as the potential moderation role of adolescent sex in the relationships of paternal involvement and maternal involvement to adolescent positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction.

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- 1) To describe the measurement invariance of parental involvement across parent and adolescent sex.
- 2) To examine the latent mean differences of parental involvement across parent (i.e., paternal involvement versus maternal involvement) and adolescent sex (i.e., male adolescents versus female adolescents).
- 3) To determine whether self-efficacy beliefs (i.e., academic self-efficacy, social self-efficacy, and emotional self-efficacy) mediate the relationships between parental involvement (i.e., paternal involvement and maternal involvement) and adolescent positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction.
- 4) To determine whether adolescent sex moderates the relationships between parental involvement (i.e., paternal involvement and maternal involvement), self-efficacy beliefs (i.e., academic self-efficacy, social self-efficacy, and emotional self-efficacy), and SWB (i.e., positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction).

## 1.5 Hypotheses

The present study set out to investigate a number of hypotheses concerning parental involvement (i.e., paternal involvement and maternal involvement), self-efficacy beliefs (i.e., academic self-efficacy, social self-efficacy, and emotional self-efficacy), and SWB (i.e., positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction).

The following hypotheses were derived corresponding to the Specific Objective 2:

- Hypothesis 1a : There will be significant differences between paternal involvement and maternal involvement, such that maternal involvement will be higher than paternal involvement.
- Hypothesis 1b : There will be significant differences in paternal involvement across male and female adolescents.
- Hypothesis 1c : There will be significant differences in maternal involvement across male and female adolescents.

The following hypotheses were derived corresponding to the Specific Objective 3:

- Hypothesis 2a : Academic self-efficacy, social self-efficacy, and emotional self-efficacy will mediate the relationship between parental involvement (i.e., paternal involvement and maternal involvement) and positive affect.
- Hypothesis 2b : Academic self-efficacy, social self-efficacy, and emotional self-efficacy will mediate the relationship between parental involvement (i.e., paternal involvement and maternal involvement) and negative affect.
- Hypothesis 2c : Academic self-efficacy, social self-efficacy, and emotional self-efficacy will mediate the relationship between parental involvement (i.e., paternal involvement and maternal involvement) and life satisfaction.

The following hypotheses were derived corresponding to the Specific Objective 4:

- Hypothesis 3 : Adolescent sex will moderate relationships between parental involvement (i.e., paternal involvement and maternal involvement), self-efficacy beliefs (i.e., academic self-efficacy, social self-efficacy, and emotional self-efficacy), and SWB (i.e., positive affect, negative affect, life satisfaction).

Given inconsistent findings in the extant literature, the present study did not generate specific direction for the Hypotheses 1b, 1c, and 3. Besides, there was limited amount of research that considered academic self-efficacy, social self-efficacy, and emotional self-efficacy as mediators and tested them in a single model. Hence, specific hypotheses about which self-efficacy beliefs would emerge as unique mediators were not formulated.

## **1.6 Theoretical Background**

Scholars (e.g., Creswell, 2014; Grinnell & Unrau, 2011; Hoskins & Mariano, 2004; Sharma, 2014) noted that theoretical framework of a study should be based on literature review and it provides description for the associations among variables. Hence, in the light of past literature, bioecological model and social cognitive theory were used as part of the theoretical framework of this study in supporting the relationships between parental involvement, self-efficacy beliefs, and SWB, on top of the well-being theories that support the conceptualization of the SWB variable.

Fundamentally, conceptualization of well-being has its root in two general theories: eudaimonism and hedonism (Bishop, 2015). Eudaimonism theorized well-being as fulfillment and actualization of human potential. Hedonism, on the other hand, characterizes well-being as a function of the balance of an individual positive

experiences (e.g., pleasure, happiness) over his or her negative experiences (e.g., suffering, pain). The central notion of this theory is that the hedonic quality of individuals' subjective experience is what ultimately matters for well-being. SWB (Diener, 1984) is a derivative of the hedonistic perspective of well-being. However, it is important to note that SWB is not a mere hedonism. It not only identifies well-being with the individual's balance of pleasant over unpleasant experience, but also favorable attitude towards life. Additionally, pleasurable experiences in long term reflect something deeper than pure hedonism – that people are pursuing things they value. SWB is typically defined as a compound of positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction. According to Haybron (2008), SWB adopts hybrid theories of well-being, in which inclusiveness is the chief premise. Specifically, hybrid theories argued that all the components of SWB are important. The conceptualization of SWB in this research is grounded in these theories of well-being, in which positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction were treated as separate dimensions of SWB.

There are a few key developmental theories that often used by researchers in guiding their research: psychosocial theory, psychodynamic theory, behaviorism, social cognitive theory, bioecological model, information-processing theory, Piaget's theory, and Vygotsky's theory (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2013; Ludlow & Gutierrez, 2014; Santrock, 2015). In recent years, researchers found that developmental theories are useful in understanding various influences on SWB. For example, Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model has been widely used by researchers in studying environment influences on SWB (e.g., Fernandes, Mendes, & Teixeira, 2013; McAuley & Layte, 2012; Newland, Lawler, Giger, Roh, & Carr, 2015; Oberle, Schonert-Reichl, & Zumbo, 2011). Bandura's social cognitive theory, on the other hand, has been used in studying self-efficacy as a self factor that influences SWB (e.g., Bandura, 2011; Jackson, van de Vijver, & Fouché, 2014; Tu & Zhang, 2014; Wang, Zhao, & Wang, 2014). More importantly, well-known interventions (e.g., "positive youth development", "resilience studies") which target at promoting adolescent positive well-being are grounded deeply in developmental theories (Masten, 2014; Vimont, 2012). They have great emphasis on the interaction between environment and individual in promoting adolescent positive functioning.

The bioecological model postulates that well-being is a function of dynamic and interactive relationships among process, time, context, and person (Bronfenbrenner, 1999, 2005; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). Process, more specifically proximal processes are posited as the most potent force producing human development. They refer to increasingly complex reciprocal interactions between the developing person and the environment. To be effective, proximal processes must occur fairly regularly over extended periods of time, examples of which are parent-child interactions.

Context, the most well-known component of the bioecological model, refers to the nested environment surrounding the developing person. It includes the most immediate environment in which the developing person spends a great deal of time (i.e., microsystem), interrelations among microsystems (i.e., mesosystem), an indirect environment (i.e., exosystem), and lastly the broader society (i.e., macrosystem). Notably, proximal interactions between the developing person and significant figures in

microsystem are accorded special importance as compared to the more distal environmental contexts. Parents are the key figures in a child's microsystem and remain as significant contributors to the developmental outcomes for a child transitioning into adolescence. Therefore, parent-adolescent interactions are particularly potent to adolescent development. Further, Bronfenbrenner (1979) suggests that the nested environment influences each other. For example, the macrosystem, the outermost layer of the nested environment which comprises factors such as societal expectations, beliefs, and values could influence and shape the interactions between the developing person and the microsystem.

One of the advancements found in the bioecological model as compared to the earlier version of the ecological system theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) is that the former is drawn from a more social agentic perspective. In this regard, person characteristics function as indirect producers and products of development. The person characteristics are categorized into demands, resources, and forces. Demand characteristics refer to immediately apparent personal characteristics (e.g., age, sex, and physical appearance) which may influence interactions in social environment owing to the expectations formed. Resource characteristics are those mental, emotional, or material resources (e.g., ability, experience, knowledge, and education opportunity) possessed by the developing person at specific developmental stage that could influence his/her capacity to engage effectively in the proximal processes. Force characteristics (e.g., directive beliefs, goals, and motivations) set in the ways that individuals engage with their environments are therefore, ways in which they experience proximal processes of development. As children grow older, their increasing capacity and active propensity enables a conceptualization of their experiences. In this regard, directive beliefs make children active agents both in relation to the environment and the self. Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006) cited Bandura's (1977) concept of self-efficacy as a more advanced and comprehensive formulation of this concept. More importantly, the three types of person characteristics were not limited to the developing person; they could expand and be incorporated into the nested environment such as characteristics of parents in the microsystem.

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's beliefs in his/her capabilities of exercising control over his/her functioning (Bandura, 1977, 1993, 1999, 2012). Rooted in social cognitive theory, self-efficacy has its foundation in the social environment. Adolescents exist within the social environment and continuously interact with their parents. According to Schunk and Miller (2002), adolescents acquire much of their self-efficacy information from their families and homes. So, parents play vital role in the development of their adolescent children's self-efficacy. Vicarious experiences, mastery experiences, psychological states, and verbal persuasion are the four major sources of efficacy information. It is through interaction and engagement in adolescent children's lives that parents can develop and influence adolescent self-efficacy by providing support and opportunities for mastery experiences, observational models, guidance, encouragement in obstacles encounter, and feedback in accomplishment.

Past examination of the structure of self-efficacy has verified that self-efficacy beliefs vary across domains (Bandura, 2012). Besides, the importance of specific efficacy beliefs varies by developmental phase (Berry & West, 1993). Academic self-efficacy,

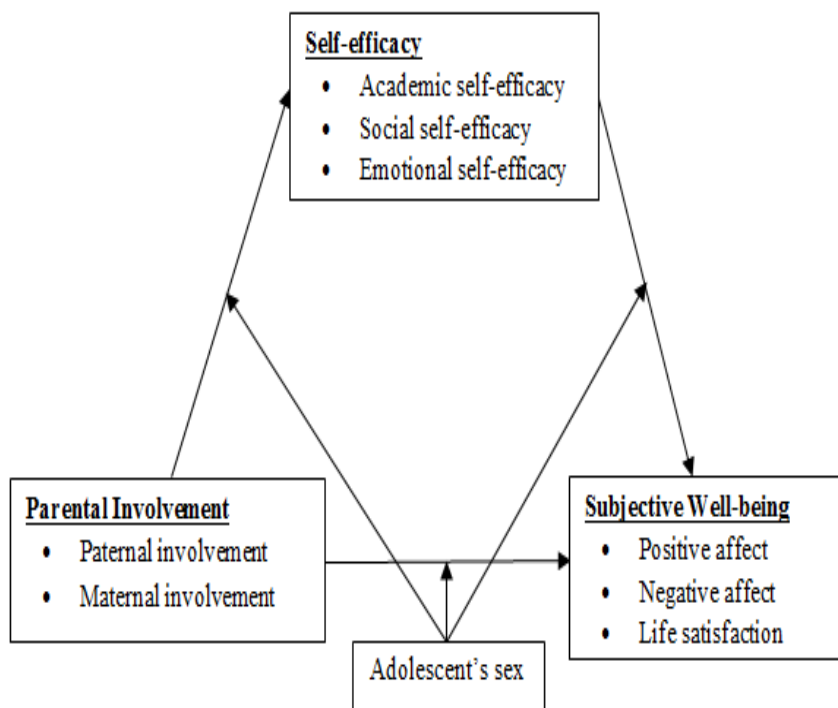
social self-efficacy, and emotional self-efficacy are considered to be the most salient domains of efficacy belief during adolescence (Suldo & Shaffer, 2007). Self-efficacy exerts its influences via affective, cognitive, motivational, and choice processes. Specifically, those with higher self-efficacy are less vulnerable to disturbing thoughts that affect their emotional states. Besides, self-efficacy influences people's cognitive processes such as the goals they set, anticipation of outcomes, and perceived controllability of the environment. It also contributes to motivation by determining persistence and resilience in the face of demanding conditions. Additionally, self-efficacy influences people's selection of activities and environment which shapes their life courses. As such, self-efficacy is central to mental health. Previous studies have identified self-efficacy as a mediator for promoting SWB among adolescents in both Western and non-Western settings (Fogle, Huebner, & Laughlin, 2002; Sun, Wang, & Kong, 2014; Wang et al., 2014). Though efficacious beliefs have universal functional values, culture does play a role in shaping them (Bandura, 2002). This is in line with the bioecological model which postulates that culture is embedded in the nested environment and may shape development of an individual.

In sum, the present study integrated Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model and Bandura's concept of self-efficacy and offered perspectives to incorporate contextual and person influences into the understanding of adolescent well-being. In essence, this study focused on the proximal processes which occur in the microsystem of adolescents and their impact on adolescent SWB. The proximal processes were studied in terms of parents' involvement in their adolescent children's lives. Joint consideration of person characteristics can be found within this study. First, it was in terms of the differences in parental involvement across parent and adolescent sex. Second, adolescent self-efficacy beliefs were proposed as mediators, in which they were postulated as both products of parental involvement and indirect producers of adolescent SWB. Third, adolescent sex was proposed as a moderator, in which it may exert influences on the relationships between parental involvement, self-efficacy beliefs, and SWB.

## **1.7 Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework of the present study was developed in light of the theoretical background presented in the previous section (Section 1.6: Theoretical Background). It was developed from a need to comprehensively understand adolescent well-being from an integrative view of contextual and individual influences. Specifically, it focused on studying parental involvement as a contextual factor that exists in an adolescent's microsystem. In this regard, parental involvement was postulated to differ across parent and adolescent sex. The impact of parental involvement was incorporated with that of the impact of individual characteristics (i.e., adolescent self-efficacy beliefs and sex) in understanding the possible mechanisms underlying adolescent SWB. In essence, self-efficacy beliefs were proposed to transmit effects of parental involvement on adolescent SWB. Meanwhile, adolescent sex was proposed to moderate the relationships between parental involvement, self-efficacy beliefs, and SWB.

This conceptual framework is in-depth in such a way that both paternal and maternal involvement were included in the model. Besides, it considered three domain-specific self-efficacy beliefs (i.e., academic self-efficacy, social self-efficacy, and emotional self-efficacy). Further, positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction were encompassed to represent SWB. In examining the model, paternal and maternal involvement were the independent variables while positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction were the dependent variables. In connecting the relationship between parental involvement and SWB, academic self-efficacy, social self-efficacy, and emotional self-efficacy were proposed as mediators while adolescent sex was proposed as a potential moderator. Altogether, the conceptual framework of this study is depicted in Figure 1.



**Figure 1: Conceptual framework**

### 1.8 Significance of the Study

The present study is important in a number of ways. First, investigation of SWB in adolescents is crucial per se as it can provide warning signs and preempt psychological disorders or problems manifested in adolescents. Second, extant studies of adolescent SWB were predominantly based on Western samples. Though SWB research in non-Western samples is on the rise of late, such research is still in its preliminary stages in the Malaysian context. Hence, this study can not only expand the knowledge of adolescent SWB in a non-Western context, but can also offer insights into the

generalizability of past findings concerning adolescent SWB. Third, joint consideration of positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction in representing the construct of SWB may help to build knowledge regarding SWB and advance our understanding of SWB as a multi-component construct. Fourth, it was found that prior studies focused mainly on examining differences between paternal and maternal involvement in young children. Besides, the measurement of parental involvement used to adopt traditional time-based perspective. The present study can add to the existing literature by examining differences in parental involvement across parent and child sex in adolescent children and by adopting a multidimensional perspective.

Fifth, in assessing the impact of parental involvement on adolescent SWB, both paternal and maternal involvement was considered in this study. This practice may help to understand the unique roles that fathers and mothers play in the positive well-being of their adolescent children. In essence, it may fill the gaps in existing literature that have solely focused on either maternal or paternal parenting. Sixth, consideration of the potential mediation roles of self-efficacy beliefs and the potential moderation role of adolescent sex in examining the parental involvement-SWB link can yield important insights into possible mechanisms underlying adolescent SWB. The findings may lay the foundation for future longitudinal research intending to establish the causality of adolescent SWB.

Lastly, besides theoretical implications, it is believed that this study may have valuable practical implications in the forms of providing useful information to enhance parenting education practices, counseling services, and direct prevention and intervention efforts that aim to promote well-being among adolescents and help them to flourish. Ultimately, it may contribute to the field of developmental psychology in terms of understanding development of adolescent positive well-being.

## **1.9 Definition of Terminology**

### **Adolescents**

**Conceptual:** Young people aged between 10 and 19 years (World Health Organization, 2014a).

**Operational:** Individuals aged between 15 and 17 years attending public secondary schools.

### **Paternal Involvement**

**Conceptual:** Father's interaction and engagement in various facets of his children's lives which attempts to promote some aspects of development (Finley & Schwartz, 2004).

**Operational:** Adolescent respondent's ratings of his/her father's involvement in 20 aspects of his/her lives assessed in the

father version of the Father/Mother Involvement Scale (Finley & Schwartz, 2004) along a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1— never involved to 5—always involved. Higher scores indicate more frequent involvement.

### **Maternal Involvement**

**Conceptual:** Mother's interaction and engagement in various facets of her children's lives which attempts to promote some aspects of development (Finley & Schwartz, 2004).

**Operational:** Adolescent respondent's ratings of his/her mother's involvement in 20 aspects of his/her lives assessed in the mother version of the Father/Mother Involvement Scale (Finley & Schwartz, 2004) along a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1— never involved to 5—always involved. Higher scores indicate more frequent involvement.

### **Subjective well-being (SWB)**

**Conceptual:** Subjective appraisal of one's life which comprises two aspects: affective aspect (positive affect and negative affect) and cognitive aspect (life satisfaction) (Diener, 1984).

**Operational:** Comprises positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction which are treated as related but separable dimensions.

### **Positive affect**

**Conceptual:** One's pleasant moods and emotions (Diener, 2006).

**Operational:** Respondent's scores on 10 positive affect items extracted from the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988) which used a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 — never to 5 — all the time. Higher scores indicate more frequent experience of pleasant moods and emotions.

### **Negative affect**

**Conceptual:** One's unpleasant moods and emotions (Diener, 2006).

**Operational:** Respondent's scores on 10 negative affect items extracted from the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS; Watson et al., 1988) which used a 5-point Likert scale,

ranging from 1 — never to 5 — all the time. Higher scores indicate more frequent experience of unpleasant moods and emotions.

### **Life satisfaction**

**Conceptual:** Cognitive appraisal of one's life taken as a whole (Diener, 2006).

**Operational:** Respondent's scores on Students' Life Satisfaction Scale (Huebner, 1991) which used a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 — strongly disagree to 7 — strongly agree. Higher scores indicate higher level of life satisfaction.

### **Self-efficacy Beliefs**

**Conceptual:** An individual's perception of his/her own capabilities in dealing with a specific situation (Bandura, 1977).

**Operational:** Comprises academic self-efficacy, social self-efficacy, and emotional self-efficacy.

### **Academic Self-efficacy**

**Conceptual:** One's perceived capabilities in academics such as mastering academic subjects, fulfilling academic expectations, and managing learning behavior (Muris, 2001).

**Operational:** Respondent's scores on the subscale of academic self-efficacy in Self-Efficacy Questionnaire for Children (Muris, 2001) which used a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 — not at all to 5 — very well. Higher scores indicate higher level of perceived capability in the academic domain.

### **Social Self-efficacy**

**Conceptual:** One's perceived capabilities in peer interactions (Muris, 2001).

**Operational:** Respondent's scores on the subscale of social self-efficacy in Self-Efficacy Questionnaire for Children (Muris, 2001) which used a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 — not at all to 5 — very well. Higher scores indicate higher level of perceived capability in the social domain.

### **Emotional Self-efficacy**

**Conceptual:** One's perceived capabilities in regulating negative emotions (Muris, 2001).

**Operational:** Respondent's scores on the subscale of emotional self-efficacy in Self-Efficacy Questionnaire for Children (Muris, 2001) which used a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 — not at all to 5 — very well.. Higher scores indicate higher level of perceived capability in the emotion regulation domain.

## **1.10 Organization of the Thesis**

This thesis is organized into five chapters. The framework of each chapter is presented below:

Chapter 1 — Introduction: This chapter introduces the pivotal elements which drove the research. The elements include background of the study, statement of problem, research objectives, hypotheses, theoretical background, conceptual framework, significance of the study, and definition of the key terms.

Chapter 2 — Literature Review: This chapter contains comprehensive reviews of literature centered on the topic of interest. Besides, it summarizes the reviews and describes their impact on the present research.

Chapter 3 — Research Methodology: This chapter comprises details of methodology used to empirically study the topic of interest. It includes the research design, location, population of the study, sampling procedure, instruments, data collection, data preparation, and plan of data analysis.

Chapter 4 — Results and Discussion: This chapter presents the detailed results generated from statistical analyses performed on the obtained data. Besides, it discusses the findings in relation to the outlined specific research objectives.

Chapter 5 — Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations: This chapter summarizes the major findings and presents the conclusion and implications emanating from the findings. Besides, it also mentions the limitations and offers recommendations for future study.

### **1.11 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has introduced the study and presented the statement of the problem, research questions, and its significance. Besides, it has outlined the research objectives together with the hypotheses, theoretical framework, conceptual framework, and definition of terminology. It has also presented a brief overview of the content of other chapters. The next chapter presents the review of literatures relevant to this study.



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