



Urban Resilience and Poverty in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

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This article is a systematic review paper that focuses on urban resilience studies in Malaysia. Generally, resilience is not a new concept that has attracted scholars to conduct numerous relevant studies. Unfortunately, the majority of earlier studies did not consider the urban resilience perspectives towards poverty in Malaysia. This article utilizes three journal databases, Scopus, Web of Science, and MyCite for the review of the current research. The Transparent Reporting of Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses method known as Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) was adopted in this article. As a result, 10 articles have been systematically studied as a result of the search efforts. Most crucially, the review was able to develop four key topics based on thematic analyses, including economic resilience, social resilience, environmental resilience, and institutional resilience. However, there are still limited numbers of literature available on urban community resilience in Malaysia and also literature on community resilience towards poverty as compared to studies on resilience towards disaster. In short, the finding of this study hopefully can be a good baseline for the related stakeholders and policymakers in formulating action plans and strategies related to urban and poverty planning in the upcoming years.

1. INTRODUCTION

Urbanization has become a rising global phenomenon that implies a transformation in the economic, social, and cultural aspects of societies, with the purpose of achieving a better quality of life. As urbanization attracts people to towns and cities, it is reported that more than half of the world's population lived in urban areas in 2018, which led to the creation and expansion of the number of cities as urban settlements [1]. On other hand, recognized within ASEAN as a country with both political and economic stability, Malaysia also has undergone rapid growth in urbanization amidst the shift from an agricultural to an industrial-based economy over the past few decades. Malaysia was forecasted to experience an urbanization rate of 80 percent in 2020 and between 85 to 90 percent in the year 2050. Even so, Malaysia failed in reaching the target in 2020 according to MyCensus 2020 Report where the urbanization rate in Malaysia was announced at 75.1 percent only [2].

Meanwhile, the increase in Malaysia's urban population has led to a number of problems relating to people's basic necessities, including employment, housing, education, health, and financial issues due to the high cost of living [3]. These contributed to a larger issue known as urban poverty, which Cano [4] defines as a collection of economic and social challenges present in industrialized cities. She contends that a confluence of factors, including the rise in individualism, comfortable living conditions, social fragmentation, and labor market dualization, leads to an urban poverty problem that

manifests as social dualization. In Malaysia, Jayasooria [3] stated that 56 percent of the B40 group (bottom 40 percent of Malaysia's household income) are living in urban areas where all goods and services are commoditized which make this group struggling in order to adequate their living, especially those with a big number of dependents and low skill people.

In 2015, United Nations had proposed 17 interlinked global goals known as Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and SDG 1 aims to eradicate extreme poverty by 2030 through goal known as "End poverty in all its forms everywhere" while SDG 11 is about "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable" [5]. In the meantime, poverty is a global problem that hinders sustainable development and become one of the greatest challenges for developing countries. In Malaysia, alleviating poverty has long been allocated in the development policies where poverty-eliminating programs are implemented through the agricultural programs and then continued through the programs enacted in the five-year plans of Malaysia. As result, Malaysia managed to experience a sharp decline in the poverty rate, especially in rural areas [6]. In addition, one of the targets defined in SDG 1 includes increasing the resilience of the poor and those who are vulnerable and reducing their exposure and vulnerability to various economic, social, and environmental shocks and calamities as well as extreme weather occurrences associated with climate change. Based on the target, it is clearly stated that one of the strategies to alleviate poverty is resilience building. The ability of a community to anticipate, absorb, recover from, and more successfully adapt to actual or

potential adverse events in a timely and efficient manner, including the restoration and improvement of basic functions and structures, is what Scherzer et al. [7] define as resilience when applied to communities.

Thus, a systematic review known as a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) has been used as a way to better understand the link between urban resilience and poverty in Malaysia. SLR was employed because when compared to traditional review, SLR has a number of benefits, such as its several novel techniques. Through the use of thorough searching techniques, SLR encourages scholars to hunt for studies outside of their own subject areas and networks. Standard inclusion and exclusion criteria as well as specified search terms are used. Transparency is emphasized in this type of review; all terminology in inclusion criteria, for instance, must be defined and justified, and publications that are excluded must have a valid rationale.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

International and national organizations have recently adopted the resilience notion extensively in their policymaking. Resilience is typically defined as a system's capacity to withstand stresses or shocks. It is also constantly recommended as a desirable trait and the solution to many problems in today's uncertain world [7]. In order to understand the origin of resilience theory, ecologist Holling [8] has always been widely credited to the origins of resilience concept as according to him, resilience is "a measure of systems' persistence and of their capacity to tolerate change and disruption while maintaining the same linkages between populations or state variables" [8]. Meanwhile, Zeng et al. [9] in their study had extracted the opinion of scholars on resilience concepts specifically on urban community towards natural disaster and the study also summarized three major dimensions for urban resilience consist of adaptive capacity, absorptive capacity and transformative capacity. However, research by contemporary researcher conclude that resilience's determinants vary in different risk contexts which contributed to the notion that resilience is a process [10]. In this study, resilience building is explored in the context of urban community and different vulnerability. Though UN claimed that one of the strategies in poverty alleviation is to build poor community resilience [11], there is still limited research regarding community resilience and poverty linkages [12]. The existed literature only promoting community resilience towards natural disaster such as coastal hazards [13, 14] climate change [15], and flood [16]. Study by Chen et al. [17] indicated that there are six dimensions of city resilience, namely, community resilience, social resilience, economic resilience, institutional resilience, infrastructure resilience and environmental resilience.

This paper mainly focuses on exploring the domain concept of urban community resilience amongst Malaysia's studies. It is important to review the current literature in order to recognize the attribute of a resilient community especially in local contexts as these characteristics change with current development [18]. By taking into account the complexity of communities in terms of their social, economic, and ecological environments, Imperiale and Vanclay [19] describe community resilience as a survival mechanism in a situation of disruption. "Factual knowledge base of the community, training, networks, leadership, collective efficacy, and

empowerment" are factors that set community resilience apart [20]. Furthermore, Kapucu et al. [21] noted that when examining community resilience, it becomes more relevant to distinguish between urban and rural resilience because they differ in terms of economic, social, ecological, and infrastructure approaches.

So, this paper aims to conduct a qualitative approach through Systematic Literature Review (SLR) on the urban resilience study in Malaysia. The SLR has adopted the Transparent Reporting of Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses method known as PRISMA [22]. This method has mapped out the existed empirical studies on the urban community resilience. The outcome of SLR will be analyzed using descriptive and thematic analysis and the findings of this study are expected to have a significant value in improving the comprehension of poverty issues such as employment issues, income stability, community social support, social trust, and access to social support as a good baseline for the related stakeholders and policymakers in formulating action plan and strategy.

3. METHOD

3.1 Systematic Literature Review (SLR)

SLR is described by Higgins et al. [23] as a literature review methodology that utilizes systematic, organized, transparent, and repeatable techniques at each stage of the approach to discover and synthesize related material. Through the use of sophisticated search techniques, specified search strings, and standardized inclusion and exclusion criteria, SLR encourages researchers to hunt for studies outside of their own subject areas and networks [24]. This study therefore adapts the work of Shaffril et al. [25] which provided three systematic processes to retrieve the relevant articles consists of identification, screening and eligibility. Implementation of these three processes allowing a comprehensive and transparent search in the related topic.

Table 1. Full search string used in selected database

Database	String
Web of Science (WOS)	(TS= (("resilience" OR "flexibility" OR "elasticity") AND ("urban poor" OR "town poor" OR "city* poor" OR "urban poverty" OR "town poverty" OR "city* poverty" OR "urban deficient" OR "town deficient" OR "city* deficient" OR "urban low-income" OR "town low-income" OR "city* low-income")))
Scopus	TITLE-ABS-KEY (("resilience" OR "flexibility" OR "elasticity") AND ("urban poor" OR "town poor" OR "city* poor" OR "urban poverty" OR "town poverty" OR "city* poverty" OR "urban deficient" OR "town deficient" OR "city* deficient" OR "urban low-income" OR "town low-income" OR "city* low-income"))
Other Database: (MyCite)	"Urban resilience" or "community resilience"

3.1.1 Identification

Based on the formulated research objective, four main keywords were first identified: resilience, urban, poor, and community. Then, in order to provide more options for selected database in searching related articles for the review,

the keywords will be enriched through synonym, related terms, and variations by using an online thesaurus, such as thesaurus.com, referring to the keywords used by past studies, and as well as referring to the keywords suggested by Scopus. Then, utilizing the primary and enhanced keywords, the search procedure was conducted on specific databases (Scopus, Web of Science and MyCite) either alone or in combination with advanced searching techniques, such as phrase searching, Boolean operator, wild card, truncation, and field code functions (Table 1). A total of 461 potential articles were identified from Web of Science (WOS), Scopus and MyCite based on the searching process.

3.1.2 Screening

Screening is the second phase in SLR and in this process, after removing six duplicate records, all 455 selected articles were screened with the assistance of the sorting function available in the selected databases. The screening process consists of article selection based on a specific set of criteria. As it is impossible to review all the 455 potential articles identified, hence, four early inclusions of studies had been fixed in order to identify suitable articles to be analyzed in the findings (Table 2). This is in line with the suggestion by Okoli [26] that researchers should determine the range of periods that they able to review and the concept of ‘research field maturity’ by Kraus et al. [27]. Therefore, based on this, the timeline between 2015 to 2022 was selected as one of the inclusion criteria. Next, only social science and Malaysia’s published articles were chosen as well as English and Malay written in order to avoid confusion. Based on the screening process, a total of 361 articles were removed, and resulted in 94 articles remained. However, one article had to be excluded as access to the article was denied. This results to additional exclusion known as non-open access articles.

Table 2. The inclusion and exclusion criteria

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Timeline	2015-2022	2014 and earlier
Subject area	Social science	Non-social science
Language	English and Malay	Non-English
Country	Malaysia	Non-Malaysia
Document type	Open access article	Non-open access articles

3.1.3 Eligibility

After the screening procedure, the authors personally checked the retrieved articles to make sure all of the remaining articles met the criteria. If authors still doubting on how pertinent the chosen articles are to the study, authors will read the complete publication in addition to the title and abstract. 50 papers were disqualified during the title screening phase of this process, while another 33 articles were disqualified during the abstract screening due to non-suitability in terms of content and contexts of study. There was a total of 10 articles chosen for the review. The flow diagram of the articles’ search process is shown in Figure 1.

3.2 Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis is one of the qualitative synthesis techniques proposed by Shaffril et al. [25] and consists of the identification of prominent or recurrent themes from the collected data of selected previous studies, and summarizing these data under thematic headings. By using this technique,

10 empirical research had been synthesized in order to summarize the main theme in urban resilience studies in Malaysia.

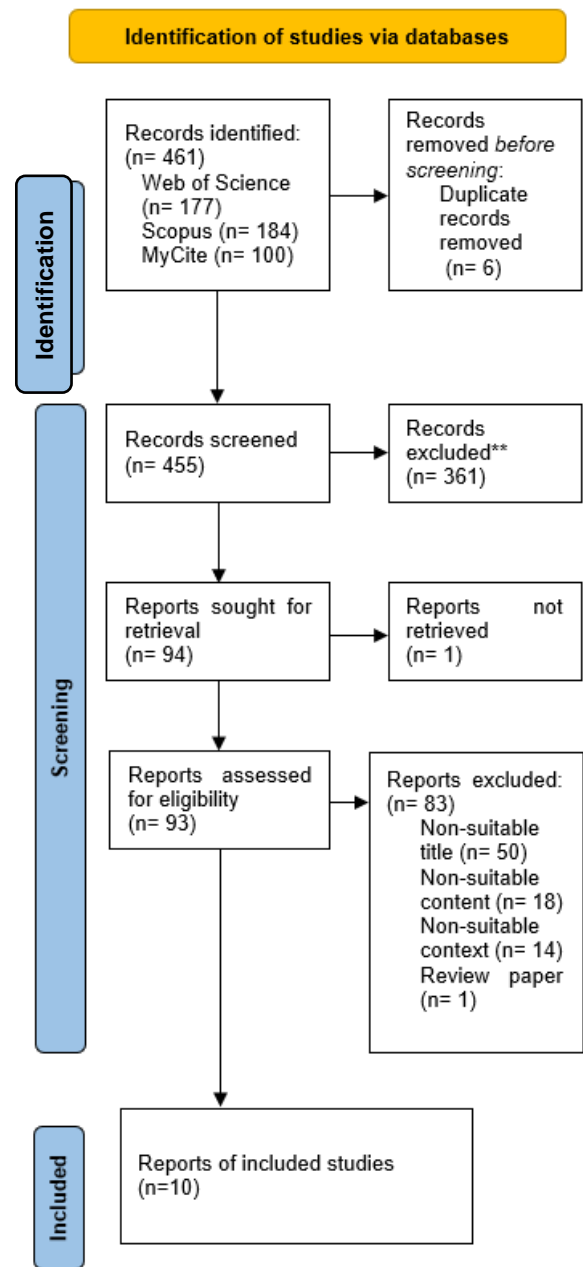


Figure 1. Flow diagram of the articles searching process

4. RESULTS

4.1 Descriptive results

4.1.1 Publication years

This research included papers published from the year 2015 until 2022. The year 2015 was chosen due to the introduction of resilience building concept in Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) formulated by the United Nations in 2015 [1]. The first empirical study found after the selected time range on urban resilience in Malaysia was published in 2018. There were three studies found in 2018, followed by one study in 2019 and 2020 respectively. However, there had been a rising trend in urban resilience studies in the year 2021 which

contributed to five publications in that year. The trend in publication year was illustrated in Figure 2.

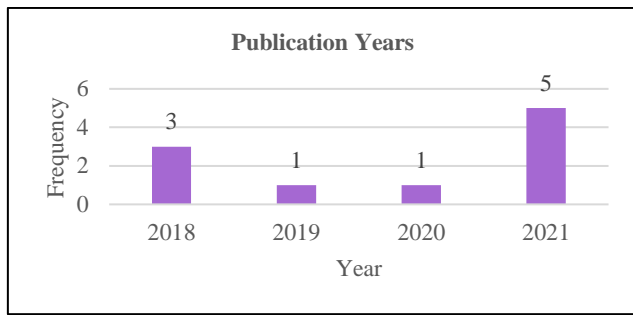


Figure 2. Publication years of selected articles

Table 3. Distribution of articles in journal

Journal Name	Yearly Malaysian Journal Impact Factor (2020)	H-index (2020)	Frequency
<i>e-Bangi: Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities</i>	0.009	7	2
<i>Journal of Administrative Science</i>	0	1	1
<i>Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities</i>	0	4	1
<i>Planning Malaysia</i>	0	2	1
<i>Journal of Nusantara Studies</i>	0	2	1
<i>International Journal of Built Environment and Sustainability</i>	0	3	1
<i>International Journal of Care Scholars</i>	NA	0	1
<i>Jurnal Psikologi Malaysia</i>	0	3	1
<i>Geografi</i>	0	6	1

4.1.2 Journal of publication

A total of 10 identified studies were published in nine journals. Deriving out of the 10, two articles were published by ‘*e-Bangi: Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*’ which was listed with an H-index of seven. In the meantime, the remaining eight articles were published respectively by eight different journals known as the ‘*Journal of Administrative Science*’, ‘*Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*’, ‘*Planning Malaysia*’, ‘*Journal of Nusantara Studies*’, ‘*International Journal of Built Environment and Sustainability*’, ‘*International Journal of Care Scholars*’, ‘*Jurnal Psikologi Malaysia*’ and ‘*Geografi*’ [18, 28-36]. All nine selected journals also were indexed by MyCite or also known as the Malaysian Citation Index which provides access to bibliographic and full-text contents of scholarly journals published in Malaysia according to five main fields of study. The complete list of journals is shown in Table 3. The yearly Malaysian Journal Impact Factor refers to the average number of citations of articles from the journal published in the last two years in the year calculated. The impact factor is calculated by dividing the number of citations of articles published by a journal in the calculated year by the total number of articles published in the previous two years. In

the meantime, the H-index provides an assessment of the importance of a journal's cumulative output. The index is based on the distribution of citations received by articles published in a journal. Thus, a journal with an index of h has published h articles, each of which has been cited at least h times in other articles. Lastly, frequency refers to the number of selected articles published by the journal [37].

4.2 Thematic results

4.2.1 Main domains found on urban resilience studies in Malaysia

Based on the thematic analysis, the main domains of the urban poor resilience used in Malaysia’s studies are economic resilience, social resilience, environmental resilience and institutional resilience as shown in Table 4. The next subsection will elaborate on each of the themes that emerged.

Table 4. The main domains of urban resilience studies in Malaysia

Domain	Indicator	Author
Economic	Employment status, fixed income, side income, business opportunity, money dependent, debt, financial aids	Mohamad et al. [18]; Samion et al. [28]; Iqbal and Adriani [29]; Hashim et al. [30]; Amir Zal [31]
	Community social support, resident association, networking	Mohamad et al. [18]; Ahmad Zaki et al. [32]; Firdaus et al. [33]; Samion et al. [28]; Iqbal and Adriani [29]; Rohayah et al. [34]; Hashim et al. [30]; Amir Zal [31]; Ludin [35]
Social	community, support of local community in activity, community identity, community response, social trust, social training, leadership, social problem, demographic (health, education, gender, marital status, religion, etc.)	
	Governance of resident association, networking with local authority, sense of community belonging, natural resources, natural disaster, pollution, environmental policy	Mohamad et al. [18]; Samion et al. [28]; Amir Zal [31]
Environmental	Local policy, stakeholder agency, access to social support	Ahmad Zaki et al. [32]; Rohayah et al. [34]; Jamaludin and Sulaiman [36]

Economic Resilience. Economic resilience in past studies typically discusses the economic viability of communities and the diversity of the local economic environment (Mohamad et al. [18]; Amir Zal. [31]; Samion et al. [28]; Iqbal and Adriani [29]; Hashim et al. [30]). Mohamad et al. [18] have used indicators such as employment status, fixed income, side income and business opportunity in measuring the economic resilience of Putrajaya urban community. The indicators were adopted from Conceptual Model: Community Capacity by Wilson [38], the Urban Resilience Indicators by The Rockefeller Foundation & ARUP [39], and the Community Resilience Indicators by Longstaff et al. [40]. Next, economic

resilience also can be found in Amir Zal [31] study. He was measuring community resilience amongst flood victims in Peninsular Malaysia using a questionnaire developed through Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) theory and early interviews among the community. Meanwhile, Samion et al. [28] used indicators of income increments, money dependent, side income, business opportunity, and financial aids in order to measure the economic resilience of Pontian farmers in the face of the impact changes of rapid development in Iskandar Malaysia. The usage of economic resilience also can be found in Iqbal and Adriani [29] study about the level of family resilience in South Tangerang City to prevent family resilience problems and was measured using the family resilience measurement tool from Iqbal and Roebiyanto [41]. Lastly, Hashim et al. [30] in their study also indicate the importance of socioeconomic factors in the determination of the adaptation model on the vulnerability of sea level rise in Selangor, Malaysia. The study was conducted using a structured interview and being analyzed using the Structured Equation Model (SEM) method. Therefore, based on previous empirical studies, indicators to measure economic resilience can be divided into seven main indicators, namely employment status, fixed income, side income, business opportunity, money dependent, debt, and financial aid.

Social Resilience. Social resilience is typically correlated with the ability of people, social units, and social systems to resist, absorb, accommodate to and recover from the vulnerability (Mohamad et al. [18]; Zaki et al. [32]; Firdaus et al. [33]; Amir Zal [31]; Samion et al. [28]; Ludin [35]; Iqbal and Adriani [29]; Rohayah et al. [34]; Hashim et al. [30]). Therefore, this aspect has been divided into eleven main indicators based on its use in previous studies which include community social support, resident association, networking community, support of local community in activity, community identity, community response, social trust, social training, leadership, social problem and demographic. For example, Mohamad et al. [18] have introduced indicators of community social support, resident association, networking community and support of local community in activity to test the social resilience of communities in the well-planned city of Putrajaya. The study shows that social resilience in the chosen location was in moderate level for the most of social indicator used. Furthermore, Samion et al. [28] suggested in their study that social resilience also can be measured through neighborhood trust, involvement in community, social training and trustworthy in local leadership. As results, they concluded that farmers community in Pontian District may need better community bonding with the residents and the local leader. In addition, social problem especially in the younger generation will jeopardize the future of the agricultural industry if no further action taken in the near future. In the meantime, though other studies normally relating social resilience in community aspect, Ludin [35] choose to see the relation between different resilience factors towards single social units. She studied the association between demographic characteristics and resilience factors among flood event victim. One of the resilience factors including social trust and the results shows that there was a high level of trust among the respondents. Besides, demographic variable such as gender and educations also demonstrate a significant relationship with community disaster resilience.

Environmental Resilience. Chen et al. [17] describing environmental resilience as a concept associating to hazard frequency and intensity, ecosystem, sustainability and

protective resources. There were only three studies (Mohamad et al. [18]; Amir Zal [31]; Samion et al. [28]) discussing on environmental capital out of ten articles selected. It can be assumed that some researchers might thought that environmental resilience is less important than other dimensions as opinioned by Chen et al. [17]. However, environmental resilience should not be excluded because resilient city is normally constructed based on sustainable development. For example, Mohamad et al. [18] in their study tend to encompass environmental resilience as part of their study in determining the resilience of local community. Indicator used to represent environmental includes governance of resident association, networking with local authority and sense of community belonging. Amir Zal [31] and Samion et al. [28] are another two researchers who decided to inserting environmental factor in their study. Indicator related to this both studies including natural resources, natural disaster, pollution and environmental policy.

Institutional Resilience. Institutional resources or service agency assets, which include community organizations that meet the needs of the community, are related to institutional resilience. According to Chen et al. [17], institutional resilience is influenced by prior disaster experience, mitigation, planning, and resources, as well as local government initiatives to raise public awareness and readiness for disaster or any change. In this literature research, institutional resilience is represented by local policy, stakeholder agency and access to social support indicators (Ahmad Zaki et al. [32]; Jamaludin and Sulaiman [36]; Rohayah et al. [34]). A case study by Ahmad Zaki et al. [32] indicate application of resilience model for flood management in Kuala Lumpur. They explore the current water resources and flood management of the chosen city through analysis on various government documents and policies both at the federal and local government. Results shows that the existing urban flood management in Kuala Lumpur had not extensively practice a comprehensive approach based on the resilience model suggested. Though, there were evident and promising intention to change from typical and conventional measures into resilience and holistic approach. In the meantime, the same method of study also was conducted earlier by Jamaludin and Sulaiman [36] in their study specify on literature and document analysis of relevant reports, policies and literatures related to initiatives taken by Melaka in preparing the city into resilient state. Lastly, Rohayah et al. [34] in their study also indicate institutional resilience influence towards senior citizens in the era of the pandemic in Penang city. Institutional resilience in the study is presented by access to social support during the Covid19 pandemic such as monetary assistance and food aid support.

4.2.2 Natural disaster vulnerability vs irregular vulnerability

The selected articles also were distributed from the perspectives of natural disaster vulnerability and irregular vulnerability. Natural disaster referring to naturally occurring physical phenomena such as earthquake, flood, drought, landslide, tsunami and any other natural event that leads to significant environmental degradation. Meanwhile, irregular vulnerability consists of non-natural disaster vulnerability such as economic vulnerability (poverty and recession), social vulnerability and physical vulnerability. Based on 10 selected articles, more than half of the research was about natural disaster where flood topic was widely discussed in four articles (Ahmad Zaki et al. [32]; Firdaus et al. [33]; Amir Zal [31];

Ludin [35]), followed by Covid19 pandemic (Sheikh Dawood et al. [34]) and sea level rise (Hashim et al. [30]). Only one article focusing on economic vulnerability (Samion et al. [28]) and another three articles were discussing vulnerability as a whole and general (Mohamad et al. [18]; Jamaludin and Sulaiman. [36]; Iqbal and Adriani [29]). Summary of the distribution being encompassed in Table 5.

Table 5. Distribution of publication by type of vulnerability

Author	Vulnerability		
	Natural disaster	Irregular disaster	General
Mohamad et al. [18]			✓
Zaki et al. [32]	✓		
Firdaus et al. [33]	✓		
Jamaludin et al. [36]			✓
Amir Zal [31]	✓		
Samion et al. [28]		✓	
Mohamed Ludin [35]	✓		
Iqbal and Adriani [29]			✓
Sheikh Dawood et al. [34]	✓		
Md Hashim et al. [30]	✓		

5. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this review, themes related to environmental and institutional were less evident than other themes. Similarly, limited research has been conducted to review and examine these domains. Therefore, researchers and other scholars should explore how these domains can further strengthen the resilience for urban communities. Next, based on SLR, indicator used in representing the resilience domain were used non uniformly and interchangeable between different domain namely social, environmental and institutional. Hence, adoption from well-known scholar's frameworks should be able to assists future researcher in building comprehensive indicators for measuring the resilience of urban community. Lastly, it can be summarized that there are still limited numbers of literatures available on the urban community resilience in Malaysia and also literature on community resilience towards poverty compared study on resilience towards disaster. So, this research gap should be taken into consideration for future researcher in exploring this topic.

6. CONCLUSION

This paper has focused mainly on exploring the domain concept of urban community resilience amongst Malaysia's studies. Preliminary reviewal on the current literature is important in order to recognize the attribute of a resilient community before any further research conducted. A systematic review on the domain concept of community resilience has been presented in this comprehensive research. The findings conclude that there are four main domains related to urban resilience which is economic resilience, social resilience, environmental resilience and institutional resilience. The most widely presented resilience domain in selected articles is social resilience, followed by economic resilience, environmental resilience and institutional resilience respectively. Meanwhile, among the publications that were chosen, studies on the subject of floods received the greatest attention. This may be because floods are a common calamity

that residents in Peninsular Malaysia's east coast experience. In a nutshell, the finding of this study hopefully can be a good baseline for the related stakeholders and policymakers in formulating action plans and strategies related to urban and poverty planning in the upcoming years.

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