



## A SURVEY OF AUTOMATED TESTING TECHNIQUES FOR ANDROID-BASED MOBILE APPLICATIONS

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### ARTICLE HISTORY:

Received: 19 October, 2024.

Revised: 22 May, 2025.

Accepted: 05 June, 2025.

Published: 07 July, 2025.

### KEYWORDS:

Mobile Application Testing, Systematic mapping, Software Testing, Test Automation, Model-Based Testing.

### ARTICLE INCLUDES:

Peer review

### DATA AVAILABILITY:

On request from author(s)

### EDITORS:

Chidozie Charles Nnaji

### FUNDING:

None

### HOW TO CITE:

Eke, N. O., Salihu, I. A., Usman, A., Ibrahim, R., and Mshelia, Y. "A Survey of Automated Testing Techniques for Android-Based Mobile Applications", *Nigerian Journal of Technology*, 2025; 44(2), pp. 311 – 337; <https://doi.org/10.4314/njt.v44i2.15>

### Abstract

To conduct a survey of Mobile Applications Testing (MAT) to determine the research contributions in mobile applications testing such as the test approach, test strategy, testing techniques and evaluation methods used in mobile applications testing, as well as to determine the publication frequency and the publication region. This study adopted the guidelines provided by Kitchenham and Charters, and Petersen et al. for conducting this systematic mapping study. A total of 242 studies were selected using predefined inclusion/exclusion criteria. Studies were retrieved from five major academic databases (IEEE Xplore, ACM Digital Library, ScienceDirect, Web of Science, and EBSCOhost) using validated search strings. Findings show that MAT publications increased steadily between 2009 and 2022, with 2018 recording the highest number ( $n = 33$ ). China and United States were the most active contributors. Model-based testing emerged as the most commonly used testing technique, while fault detection and code coverage were the most widely adopted evaluation methods. Dynodroid, with 952 citations and an NCII score of 79.3, was identified as the most influential MAT-related study. This study presents a structured overview of MAT research trends, methods, and influential works, offering a valuable reference for researchers and practitioners in the software testing community.

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Computer technology is developing quickly. In recent years, computers have evolved from desktops to laptops and, more recently, a range of portable mobile devices. This movement has profoundly altered the way we govern, run our businesses, and live our lives. It has also had a big impact on how testers and software engineers perform their work [1].

Over 371 million smartphones were bought in the fourth quarter of 2021, and approximately 1.54 billion smartphones were sold to consumers globally in that year [2], [3]. In order to meet the computational demands of its users, mobile applications (both web and native apps) for smartphones and tablets have increased in development in tandem with the rising demand for these devices [4], [5]. A recent study shows that 230 billion mobile applications (Mobile Apps) were downloaded worldwide in 2021 alone [6]. Mobile applications otherwise referred to as Mobile Apps are software programs that run on mobile devices such as smartphones, tablet PCs, and other mobile devices with the capability to run 48 network-

based applications over a cellular or satellite data link [1], [7]. Determining the quality of mobile applications—such as their functionality, behaviour, and performance under specific conditions—has become extremely difficult for software engineering experts, especially software testers, due to the rise in the number of mobile apps and their usage [5], [8].

Software testing is a technique used to guarantee that software programs have high-quality in terms of its features, functionality, behaviors, and performance [9]. Testing according to Morgado et al. [10] is essential in improving the product's quality, hence, a central part of the mobile development. In software testing, test-approach refers to the general guideline, perspective or philosophy adopted by a software tester when designing the test cases. The main test approaches include white-box, black-box, and grey-box. A test strategy outlines the approach and objectives of testing; providing a framework for the testing process and serves as a reference for the entire testing effort. It is more about the “what”, “why”, and “when” of testing. Test technique, on the other hand, provides specific methods or procedures used to design and execute test cases. It guides testers in creating efficient and effective tests that can uncover defects in software. Despite its significance in any apps development, testing mobile apps is challenging and expensive as a result of numerous factors, such as the short time period to market, and diverse underlining technologies [11], [12]. Several researchers have explored numerous methods, approaches, and techniques of testing Mobile Apps recently and many testing tools were proposed. However, another systematic literature review is needed to address new research questions, update existing knowledge, or to provide fresh insights about new challenges in the area. To ascertain the frequency of publications and the publication region, the study aims to investigate the research contributions in mobile app testing with a particular focus on test approaches, strategies, and techniques used in testing mobile apps as well as the method used to evaluate the performance of the existing tools.

This is how the remainder of the paper is structured. The associated works are discussed in Section 2. The methodology is discussed in Section 3. In Section 4, the survey's findings were examined. Lastly, section 5 offers a recommendation for additional study to wrap up the work.

## 2.0 RELATED WORKS

There is number of surveys [255], systematic mapping [12][19] and systematic review [20][24] studies on

mobile testing conducted in recent times. Though systematic mapping may seem like a systematic literature review in terms of the methodology used in performing the literature search and study selection [17], they are different in area of data analysis. The former focuses on structuring research areas, while the latter is aimed at synthesizing evidence. Table 1 shows the summary of existing systematic reviews.

Zein et al. [12] conducted a comprehensive systematic mapping study (SMS) for mobile and Smartphone apps testing. Their study argued that most related studies on mobile app testing as at the time of their research had limited their focus on the test automation area without real inclusion/exclusion selection criteria, hence, making those studies a subject of biased selection. Consequently, the authors elaborated their study to include other areas of interest in mobile app testing such as context-awareness, usability, test automation, and security testing. Furthermore, the study investigated other issues of mobile application testing like mobile services testing, testing of life cycle conformance, and test metrics.

In another study, “A systematic mapping study on cloud-based mobile application testing” by Ya’u et al. [13], the authors conducted a systematic mapping of 23 research studies to investigate the testing of cloud-based mobile apps and the impact of Testing-as-a-Service (TaaS). The study identified a lack of general testing approaches to accommodate different OS or platforms. According to the authors, most of the studies focus on Android mobile apps neglecting other popular mobile platforms such as Symbian, Blackberry, iOS and Web OS. The systematic mapping reveals insufficient empirical evaluation employed in evaluating the proposed approaches.

Tramontana et al [14] conducted a SMS to investigate the techniques and tools for the functional testing automation of mobile apps. The study reveals that there are inadequate studies in areas such as tools and techniques for testing iOS applications, testing tools on Android targeting C++ based components of Android mobile Apps. Other research gaps identified by the study include fault detection testing, context-aware testing and concurrency testing.

Wimalasooriya et al. [15] conducted a SMS of Mobile applications reliability testing. The study observed lack of research in understanding reliability testing regarding context-awareness; handling of runtime event, self-healing, aging and rejuvenation, then suggested further research on these areas. Another mapping study by Sahinoglu et al. [16] on the existing



mobile application testing observed low research interest on performance testing of mobile applications, and prioritization of system testing.

Petersen et al. [17] proposed an updated guideline for conducting systematic mapping studies in software engineering, while Banerjee et al. [18] conducted a mapping study of 230 articles on Graphical User Interface (GUI) testing. The most recent systematic mapping study by Nie et al. [19] examines 114 research studies published from 2011 to 2022. The authors performed bibliometric and qualitative analysis of the studies to ascertain the most researched topics, author's community, evaluation metrics and the approaches employed in the primary studies.

In terms of literature reviews, Kong et al. [20] provided a thorough analysis of 103 pertinent research articles that were published in prestigious conferences and journals up until 2016. The authors also offered new research directions to guarantee the quality of

apps, concentrating on compatibility problems and updates that cause vulnerabilities.

A set of guidelines for performing systematic literature reviews in software engineering was put forth by Kitchenham et al. [21]. In 2022, Kaur and Kaur [23] carried out an SLR with the goal of determining and contrasting the various test estimation methods for traditional software. To determine the trends of static analysis methodologies, their current state, and potential research areas, Li et al. [24] conducted a systematic literature review of 124 studies on static analysis of Android apps.

In this study, an in-depth survey of 242 research studies focusing on automated testing of mobile apps was carried out with the goal of determining the research contributions in the area automated testing of mobile apps, the test approach, the test strategy and testing techniques as well as the evaluation methods employed by the various techniques.

**Table 1:** Summary of existing systematic mapping studies

Authors	Year	Study Objectives	No. of Articles	Limitation
Zein et al. [12]	2016	Organize and classify published research evidence covering techniques and challenges in the field of mobile apps testing.	79	There aren't many studies that base their research on actual mobile application development environments.
Ya'u et al. [13]	2019	Carried out a SMS on the testing of cloud-based mobile apps.	23	There is insufficient research on gathering testing requirements during the requirement engineering stage.
Tramontana et al. [14]	2019	Offers a classification of scientific material pertaining to the functional testing automation for mobile apps. Solutions were offered for the problems that have been found.	131	Insufficient universal and scalable methods to accommodate the different kinds of mobile app testing for apps running on different platforms, including Web OS, Symbian, Blackberry, and iOS.
Wimalasooriya et al. [15]	2022	Examine the most recent developments in the field of mobile app dependability.	87	Insufficient case studies or other evaluation techniques to support the suggested strategies.
Sahinoglu et al. [16]	2015	Presents a SMS of software verification in the area of mobile apps	123	Strong prevalence of Android-based approaches.
Petersen et al. [17]	2015	Determined the method used to carry out the systematic mapping procedure.	52	Lack of contributions from the industry.
Banerjee et al. [18]	2013	Identify improvement potential in conducting some practices of systematic review guidelines.	136	Lack of specialized journals and venues for automating mobile testing.

Among the studies reviewed in the literature, the study conducted by Zein et al. [12] seems close but different from our study. While the work presented by Zein et al. considered 79 research articles published from 2005 to 2015. Though the study was comprehensive as at the time of the study, a number of new techniques have emanated recently, hence the need to identify and incorporate these newly proposed techniques. The study also did not consider the relationships among the study authors. This study covers relevant research studies published from 2005 to 2025, making our study more elaborate while capturing the concentration of research and the current trends in the different areas of mobile apps testing. This study also

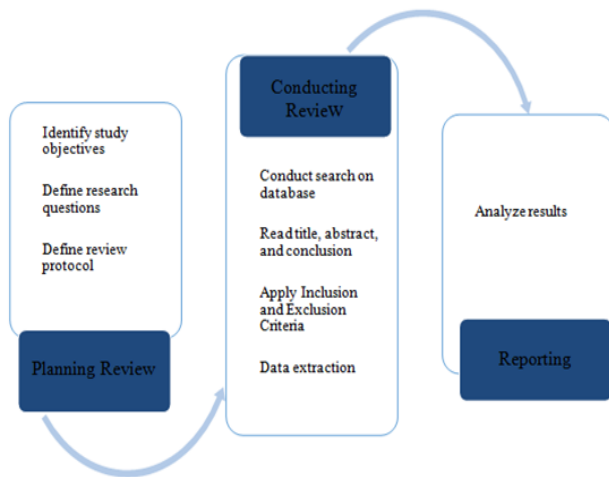
analyzes the selected studies to identify the most influential study relating to mobile application testing (MAT).

### 3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the guideline provided by Kitchenham and Charters [21] and Petersen et al. [17] in conducting a systematic mapping study to systematically analyze Mobile Apps Testing (MAT) studies to ascertain the publication frequency, region, the testing techniques and strategies for mobile apps, as well as the test automation tools proposed by research community as well as the authors the co-relationship among author. The three primary stages



of the systematic mapping procedure used in this work include (1) planning review, (2) search, and (3) reporting. As seen in Figure 1, each step of the methodical mapping process is further broken down into stages.



**Figure 1:** The systematic mapping process

Planning review phase as shown in Figure 1 involves (i) identifying study objectives, (ii) defining research questions to guide the process, and (iii) defining review protocol. The second phase is conducting reviews such as (i) conducting a search on the database, (ii) applying inclusion and exclusion criteria, (iii) keyword abstraction, and (iv) data extraction. Finally, the reporting phase analyzes the results.

**3.1 Research Questions**

This study aims to survey the research contributions in the area of Mobile Apps Testing (MAT). Kitchenham and Charters guidelines were adopted in the study [21]. The authors conclude that the most crucial step in carrying out a systematic mapping study is identifying the research question or questions that the investigation is meant to answer [21]. The purpose of this is to answer the following research questions (RQs): -

1. RQ1. How frequently are MAT research studies published, and what are the prevalent themes in MAT research?
2. RQ2. Which testing approach and test strategy do these studies apply?
3. RQ3. Which testing technique do the studies use?
4. RQ4. How were these testing techniques evaluated /validated?
5. RQ5. Which study is the most influential MAT-related study?

**3.2 Literature Search**

The literature search was conducted on five popular academic databases such as Web of Science (WoS), IEEE Xplore, ACM Digital Library, ScienceDirect, and EBSCOhost databases. These databases were chosen due to their broad and reputable coverage of peer-reviewed computing and software engineering literature, particularly in the domain of software testing. Other databases were excluded to overlap and ensure quality control, as the selected sources already index many of the top-ranked journals in the field. Mobile applications testing-focused scholarly articles published between 2005 and 2025 were considered in the study. This timeline was chosen following the earliest MAT related study obtained during the search justifying the study conducted by [12] which revealed that the earliest MAT-focused paper was published in 2005 and further confirmed in the cause of carrying out this research.

**3.3 Search Strategy**

The search strings were mainly formulated according to the research questions. The primary terms found were testing and mobile applications, which were grouped into sets. Their synonyms were considered while creating the search string using the approach recommended by Zein et al. [12], and Kitchenham and Charters [21] as illustrated below:

- a. Search for alternative keywords and synonyms.
- b. Use Boolean “OR” to include alternative spellings and synonyms.
- c. Use Boolean “AND” to link and include other keywords.

Additional terms were added as synonyms such as “verification”, “technique”, context-aware, and “approach” to expand the search to ensure wider coverage. After arriving at several search strings, the search results were validated by examining their ability to retrieve a set of 16 known Mobile Application testing studies in Table 2, then, used to form the search strings. A pilot search was further conducted on ACM Digital Library on the 15 selected MAT studies.

**Table 2:** List of the preliminary paper used for search string construction

S/N	Paper Title	Year
1	A comprehensive empirical evaluation of generating test suites for mobile applications with diversity [33]	2020
2	Droidbot: A lightweight ui-guided test input generator for Android [129]	2017
3	Static window transition graphs for Android [34]	2018
4	GUI-Guided test script repair for mobile Apps [42]	2022
5	MobiGUITAR automated model-based testing of mobile Apps [161]	2015
6	Dynodroid: An input generation system for Android Apps [128]	2013

7	Automated test input generation for Android: Are We There Yet? [11]	2015
8	A systematic mapping study on cloud-based mobile application testing [13]	2019
9	Systematic literature review of mobile application development and testing effort estimation [23]	2022
10	Software testing of mobile applications: Challenges and future research directions [216]	2012
11	EvoDroid: Segmented evolutionary testing of Android Apps [126]	2014
12	TEGDroid: Test case generation approach for Android Apps considering context and GUI events [41]	2020
13	Guided, stochastic model-based GUI testing of Android Apps [119]	2017
14	A Whitebox approach for automated security testing of Android applications on the cloud [29]	2012
15	A systematic mapping study addressing the reliability of mobile applications: The need to move beyond testing reliability [15]	2021
16	AMOGA: A static-dynamic model generation strategy for mobile Apps testing [5]	2019

After the pilot evaluation, it was observed that the search string no.2 in Table 3 retrieved all the 16 selected studies, hence was chosen as the final search string. The study references were further screened and

included studies that were not captured in the search results.

**Table 3:** Search String Piloted on ACM Digital Library

Search String	Missed	Returned Results
((("Mobile applications" OR "Mobile apps") AND ("Testing" OR "Validation") AND (Approach OR Technique)))	6	9,054
((("Mobile applications" OR "Mobile apps" OR "Context aware Mobile app") AND (Verification OR Fault OR Testing) AND (Approach OR Technique OR Method)))	0	15,231
((("Mobile applications" OR "Mobile apps") AND ("Testing" OR "Test") AND (approach OR technique)))	3	11,453
((("Mobile applications" OR "Mobile apps") AND ("Testing" OR "Test")))	3	11,724

The distribution of the search results obtained using the search string is presented in Table 4, using the five selected databases.

**Table 4:** Selected search string and corresponding database results

Search String	Search Results				
	ACM	Science Direct	Web of Science	IEEE Explore	EBSCOhost
((("Mobile applications" OR "Mobile apps" OR "Context aware Mobile app") AND (Verification OR Fault OR Testing) AND (Approach OR Technique OR Method)))	15,231	12,476	2,097	5,404	3,068

### 3.4 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Applying the inclusion/exclusion criteria listed below serves the primary goal of ensuring that this study only includes related research publications that provide proof of mobile application testing. Therefore, the following inclusion criteria were considered:

- Studies that focused on Mobile application testing.
- Studies must be peer-reviewed.
- Studies must be written in the English Language and have full text.

The following criteria were considered for the exclusion:

- Studies that do not contain key terms as identified in the search string in their title, abstract and keywords.
- Studies written in languages other than the English language.

- Duplicates, MAT-focused Books, and non-full text.

The above criteria were applied on the selected databases at three stages: keyword search, database search and whole article scan – the results obtained are presented in Table 5. After the selection a total of 242 papers were selected for the SMS as presented in Table 6.

**Table 5:** Distribution of Search Results Per Database

Research Database	Search Results	Distribution		
		Conference	Journal	Others
ACM Digital Library	15,231	12,703	1,912	616
ScienceDirect	12,476	86	11,506	884
Web of Science (WoS)	2,097	94	1,687	316
IEEE Xplore	5,404	4,796	526	82
EBSCOhost	3,068	102	2,789	177

**Table 6:** Application of Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Search Stage	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria	Search Results (Conference & Journal)
Keyword search	The keywords "mobile application testing," or "mobile app testing," must be available either in the paper title, keywords or abstract	Publication that does not contain any of the key words in its title, abstract or keywords	15,231
Database search	Full text published in English-Language. Published Articles, dissertations, book chapters, and reviews	Languages other than English MAT focused Books	516



Article scan and selection	Focus on the MAT Peer-review articles Listed in an academic database	Repeated and/or duplicate papers. Publication unrelated to MAT	242
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### 3.5 Data Extraction

In this study, data extraction – otherwise known as "coding" is the process of obtaining useful knowledge from primary studies for the aim of addressing research questions. A systematic and careful extraction of information was performed on the selected study articles where relevant information such as the year of publication, region of publication, article title, author’s name and study contribution, testing technique, testing approach, and test evaluation technique were manually extracted into a Microsoft Excel sheet for further analysis.

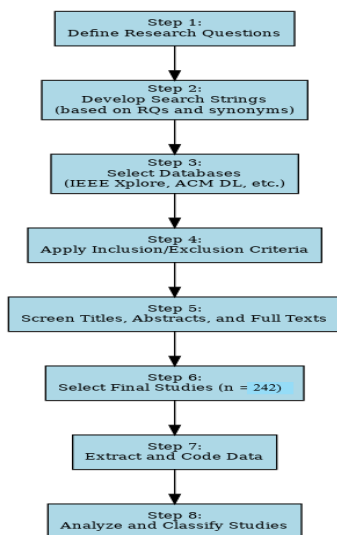
### 3.6 Validity Evaluation (Inter-Rater Reliability)

Several evaluations were conducted to guarantee the validity of the study. To address the research questions included in the search strategy section. First, the search string was verified to yield accurate results. Second, a quality evaluation was carried out to make

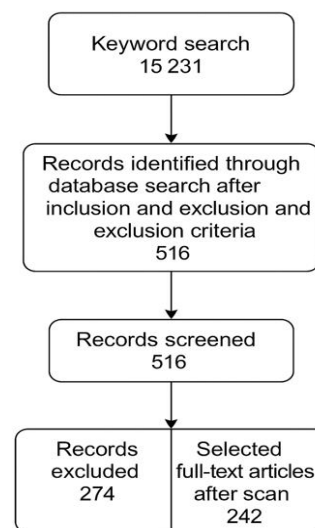
sure the included studies fulfilled specific requirements for relevance, validity, and reliability. This entails assessing each study's methodological soundness and bias risk to ascertain the general level of confidence in the findings. Thirdly, the first and second researchers worked independently to extract (code) the data. When unsure, the researchers double-check the article until a common ground is reached. The inter-rater reliability agreement was calculated for the 242 qualified articles under study using the Cohen’s Kappa formula (Equation 1):

$$k = \frac{po-pe}{1-pe} = 1 - \frac{1-po}{1-pe} \tag{1}$$

The results indicate that the average between the researchers is K = (0.97). This is a near-perfect agreement according to Glen [25].



2a: Methodology flow diagram for the systematic mapping study



2b: PRISMA flow diagram for the systematic mapping study

Figure 2: Methodology and PRISMA flow diagram for the systematic mapping study

## 4.0 RESULTS

In this section, the findings of the study are reported based on the research questions presented in Section 3.1. As shown in Figure 3, the graph reveals that the MAT-focused papers were published in 43 countries with the China recording the highest number of publications (23.08 %, n=54), followed by the USA with (21.79%, n=51). The remaining countries received publication distribution as follows: Italy (10.68%, n=25); Germany (5.56%, n=13); Brazil (4.27%, n=10); Portugal (3.85%, n=9); Malaysia, Taiwan, and Singapore (2.56%, n=6) respectively;

Korea and Japan (2.14%, n=5) respectively; Pakistan and India (1.71%, n=4) respectively; Australia, UK, and France (1.28%, n=3) respectively; Vietnam, Indonesia, Israel, Spain, Argentina, Switzerland, and Denmark (0.85%, n=2) respectively; then followed by Colombia, Palestine, Sri Lanka, Iran, Sweden, Bahrain, Netherlands, Ireland, Mauritius, Luxembourg, Jordan, Canada, Austria, Egypt, Bangladesh, South Korea, South Africa, Norway, and Algeria with (0.43%, n=1) respectively.



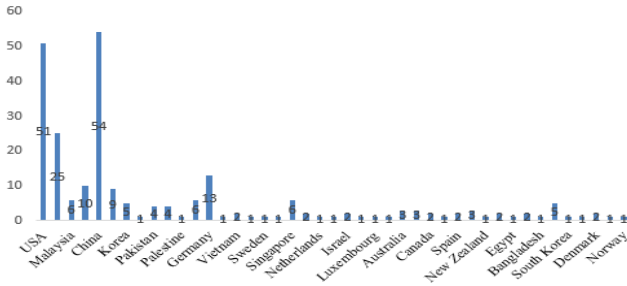


Figure 3: Contribution by countries

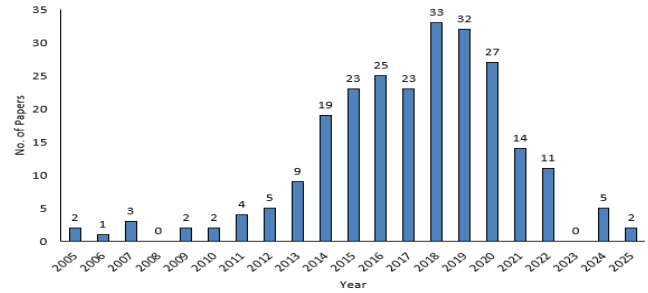


Figure 4: Publication by year

### 4.1 How Frequently are MAT Research Studies Published, and which Study has the most Citations?

The findings reveal that 2.6% (6 of 242) of the entire MAT-focused research studies were conducted between the years 2005 and 2008, the reason for the low record in the number of publications is not far-fetched as testing of mobile apps within this period was relatively new. Between 2009 and 2013, 9.4% (22 of 242) of MAT-focused papers were published. While the years between 2014 and 2022 as shown in Figure 4, report consistent publications recording 85% (207 of 242) with 2018 recording the highest number 14.1% (33 of 242) of the entire MAT related publications under study. Table 11 reveals that out of the 11 most cited studies, “*DynoDroid: An Input Generation System for Android Apps*”, published in 2013, is the most cited study among all MAT-related studies.

### 4.2 Which Testing Approach Do These Studies Apply?

Generally, three types of test approaches are used: white-box, black-box and grey-box testing approaches. The white-box (also referred to static) approach is the type in which information for the test generation is extracted either directly from the source code or via reverse engineering, the black-box (also referred to dynamic) does not require the source code. Instead, it aimed at executing the app to detect faults at run-time, and grey-box (also referred to hybrid) which combines the two approaches. The tester extracts information from source code to support the dynamic exploration of the app. Table 7 classifies the studies according to the different testing approaches they implement.

Table 7: Classification of studies according to testing approach

Approach	Reference
White box	[26], [27], [28], [29], [30], [31], [32], [33], [34], [35], [36], [37], [38], [39], [40], [41], [272], [273].
Black box	[42], [43], [44], [45], [46], [47], [48], [49], [50], [51], [52], [53], [54], [55], [56], [57], [58], [28], [59], [60], [61], [62], [63], [64], [65], [66], [67], [68], [69], [70], [71], [72], [73], [74], [75], [76], [77], [78], [79], [80], [81], [82], [83], [84], [85], [86], [87], [88], [89], [90], [91], [92], [93], [94], [95], [96], [97], [98], [99], [100], [101], [102], [103], [104], [105], [106], [107], [108], [109], [110], [111], [112], [113], [114], [115], [116], [117], [118], [119], [120], [121], [122], [123], [124], [125], [126], [127], [128], [129], [130], [131], [132], [133], [134], [135], [136], [137], [138], [139], [140], [141], [142], [143], [144], [145], [146], [147], [148], [149], [150], [151], [152], [153], [154], [155], [156], [157], [158], [159], [266], [267], [268], [269], [270], [271], [272].
Grey box	[5], [160], [161], [33], [162], [163], [164], [165], [166], [167], [168], [169], [170], [171], [172], [173], [174], [175], [176], [177], [178], [179], [180], [181].

The results obtained show that 75% of testing tools applied the black-box approach, 14% applied grey-box while tools applied white-box are just 11%, as shown in Figure 5.

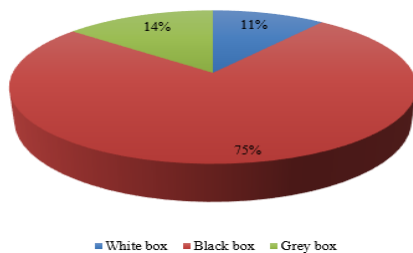


Figure 5: Percentage of testing approach

### 4.3 Which Test Strategy Do These Studies Apply?

A test strategy covers multiple testing levels, including unit testing, integration testing, system testing, and user acceptability testing [157]. Unit testing is the first phase of testing in software development. It involves testing the individual components of the software. This kind of testing is usually carried out during app development by the developer to identify software faults. Integration testing is the second phase of testing process that involves testing the interface between two software units to determine accurate integration [157]. The main reason for integration testing is to expose faults



and detect any irregularity between the integrated units. The third phase is system testing, which is performed on the entire system. The purpose of system testing is to find defects/errors within both integrated modules and the system as a whole [18]. User acceptance testing (UAT) is the final stage of testing. Just as the name suggests, UAT is a software test that verifies that a given application works as expected by the user [182].

This study identifies that most of the research studies in mobile application testing focus on system-level testing with a few of them focusing on other test levels. The classification of research studies based on testing level is presented in Table 8. Testing at other levels remains a potential research area for further research. The results obtained show that 97% of tools are tested at the system level while 1% each for the tools test other testing levels.

**Table 8:** Test strategy/level

Strategy/Level	Reference of articles
Unit Testing	[63], [36]
Integration Testing	[32], [120]
System Testing	[42], [43], [44], [45], [46], [47], [48], [49], [50], [51], [52], [53], [54], [55], [56], [57], [58], [28], [59], [60], [61], [62], [64], [65], [66], [42], [67], [68], [69], [70], [71], [72], [73], [74], [75], [76], [77], [78], [79], [80], [81], [82], [31], [83], [84], [85], [86], [87], [88], [33], [89], [90], [91], [92], [93], [94], [95], [96], [97], [98], [99], [101], [102], [103], [104], [105], [106], [107], [108], [109], [110], [111], [112], [113], [114], [115], [116], [117], [118], [119], [121], [122], [123], [124], [125], [126], [127], [128], [129], [130], [131], [132], [133], [134], [135], [136], [137], [138], [139], [140], [141], [142], [143], [144], [145], [146], [147], [148], [149], [150], [151], [152], [153], [154], [155], [156], [157], [158], [159], [5], [160], [161], [33], [162], [163], [164], [165], [166], [167], [168], [169], [170], [171], [172], [173], [174], [175], [176], [177], [178], [179], [180], [181], [26], [27], [28], [29], [30], [31], [33], [34], [35], [37], [38], [39], [40], [41], [266], [267], [268], [269], [270], [271], [272], [273].
User Acceptance Testing	[185], [100]

**4.4 Which Testing Technique Does the Studies Apply?**

Generally, test cases are important software testing input that must be created from a kind of information, which is some type of software artifact. Several forms of artefacts are used as a reference input to test case development, including software specifications or design models, program source code, and information gained from dynamic program execution. The popular techniques employed to generate test cases are script-based, capture/replay, random testing and its modified

adaptive random testing, symbolic execution, search-based testing, combinatorial testing, systematic exploration, and model-based testing [183], [184]. This study identified that a large majority of the research applied model-based testing (MBT) as shown in Table 9. This indicates the increasing popularity of MBT among the software engineering community as it can improve the construction of test cases and test coverage, though the model generation is a challenging process.

**Table 9:** Testing technique

Technique	Testing tool
Script-based	METER [42], GUI Ripper [44], FIT4Apps [185], MobileTest [87], GUIDER [118], PREFEST [170, 171], Segen [168], JPF-ANDROID [259], TESTINTENTION [273]
Capture/replay	AppCheck [234], ParaAim [83], MOKA [155]
Random walk & Adaptive Random testing	Monkey [153], T+ [127], Monkey [215, 95, 151], Dynalog [160], Smart-Monkey [228], Fax [173], Dynodroid [128], AutoClicker [133], VanarDena [178], VTest [140], EvoMASTER [272], ROBOTEST [271]
Model-based	Humanoid [49], APPTSTMIGRATOR [48], AMOGA [5], MobiGUITAR [161], Androidetect [249], AIMDROID [84], CRASHSCOPE [82], BBOXTESTER [227], Moneky & Acvtool [52], Android Black-Box Coverage Analyzer (ABCA) [53], SCANCIF [56], FSMdroid [57], Snowdrop [26], MISTA [64], MODISCO [29], AutoDroid [71], VTE [72], APE [74], DroidDev [77], MobTAF [226], DROIDMATE [229], AndroidRipper [243], Word2Vec [65], Textout [75], ACAT [80], Monkey++ [88], Androidetect [294], SENTINEL [225], GATOR [34, 180], A3E [163], PBGT [86], IMPAcT [230], LAND [79], Sketch-guided [70], Android Ripper & Extended Ripper [51], CAT [237], GAT [69], DSML [136], EMMA [154], Calabash [139, 150], JaBUTi/ME [40], AndroTotal [146], AOBako [145], Multi-Level GUICC [142], ATUA [179], YAKUSU [177], ENVIAR [137], CrawlDroid [136], DroidMate [175], ODIN [132], DetReduce [131], DroidBot [129], EvoDroid [126], FlakeScanner [123], RacerDroid [122], NAMBA [38], NaviDroid [172, 121], TRIANGLE [120], StoaT [119], ATG [117], AndroidRipper [116], ALARic [115], Latte [114], Mimic [113], Dune [112], MobicoMonkey [111], MobiGolog [110], Appium [108], Swisscom [106], ICCMATT [105], MTEst [104], MoSSOT [102], MT4A [101], ADDET [37], Paladin [99], PLATOOL [98], MBTS4MA [95], CRAFTDROID [165], iMPAct [164], PBGT Tool [174], UIAutomator & EyeAutomator [89], Robotium [158], DeepREST [266], DinoDroid [267]
Search-based	ADAPTDROID [47], Cadage [78], COBWEB [239], SAPIENZdiv [33], A2T2 [60], DroidCrawler [247], ORBIT [162], EHBdroid [81], PJUnit [63], TimeMachine [61], FLAG [66], AGRippin [147], SAPIENZ [94], TEGDroid [41].
Symbolic/Concolic Execution	CRAXDroid [31], SynthesiSE [244], Collider [141], SIERRA [35]
Combinatorial based	CTGen [62], ComboDroid [30], JUnit and Money [176]
Graph transformation	AToM3 [152]

Cloud-based	Tool-AM-TaaS [138]
Machine Learning	ARES [135], Q-testing [97], AutoBlackTest [96], AppsPred [159], Qtool [250], ACETON [144], [264], Code5T [268], ATHENATEST [269], MACdroid [270]
Systematic Exploration	THOR [92], AMOGA [167], A3E [163]

#### 4.5 How Were These Testing Techniques Evaluated/Validated?

It is a fundamental element of the process of scholarly endeavor to validate a new methodology/technique and its results. Validation is defined as a method that ensures a system works as intended as well as satisfying its objectives [263]. The goal here is to determine what validation methods exist and what ways others use to validate the effectiveness of their proposed techniques. Some of the popular validation methods used in software testing include code coverage, a metric that can assist one determine the amount of the source code is tested, fault detection which is the process of discovering the presence of a

fault in a system, bug detection, energy leak detection, privacy detection, malware detection, crash detection/report, GUI coverage, screen, activity and method coverage etc.

The methods were grouped according to their relation. Methods that have common aims – such as fault detection, error detection or bug detection – were grouped together. Other techniques were not commonly used in evaluating test methods. The study identified that most of the research employed code coverage and fault/defect detection methods to validate their proposed tools. Table 10 presents the results of the study.

**Table 10:** Evaluation method

Evaluation method	Testing tool
Code coverage	AMOGA [5, 167], GUIRipper [44], Moneky & Acvtool [52], Android Black-Box Coverage Analyzer (ABCA) [53], FSMdroid [57], MODISCO [29], ComboDroid [30], Monkey [153], GAT [69], Dynalog [160], AutoDroid [71], DroidDev [77], Cadage [78], LAND [79], BBOXTESTER [227], EHBDDroid [81], ParaAim [83], AIMDROID [84], Monkey++ [88], MobiGUITAR [161], SAPIENZ <sup>div</sup> [33], METER [42], ATOM [55], Appium [108], CTGen [62], MISTA [64], Humanoid [49], APE [74], SynthesiSE [244], METER [42], Sketch-guided [70], TimeMachine [61], MOKA [155], Qtool [250], JaBUTI/ME [40], AGRippin [147], Multi-Level GUICC [142], Collider [141], ATUA [179], CrawlDroid [136], ARES [135], ODIN [132], DetReduce [131], Dynodroid [128], EvoDroid [126], NAMBA [38], Stoa [119], ATG [117], AndroidRipper [243], Mimic [113], ICCMATT [105], Monkey [103], Fax [173], NaviDroid [37, 121], Paladin [99], PLATOOL [98], Q-testing [97], AutoBlackTest [96], SAPIENZ [94], Segen [168], TEGDroid [41], Code5T [268], ATHENATEST [269], MACdroid [270], EvoMASTER [272]
Crash detection	APE [74], CRASHSCOPE [82], TimeMachine [61], ALARic [115], Swisscom [106]
Data leakage detection, Sensor leaks, Memory leak detection	CRAXDroid [37], SENTINEL [225], FunesDroid [67]
Fault/defect detection Bug/Error detection	iMPAcT [164, 45], PJUnit [63], EHBDDroid [81], SAPIENZ <sup>div</sup> [33], COBWEB [239], Smart-Monkey [228], GUI Ripper [44], QUANTUM [50], FSMdroid [57], Textout [75], Cadage [78], ACAT [80], ImMut [224], CAT [237], AndroidRipper [116], PBGT [86], AMOGA [5], SCANCIF [56], DROIDMATE [229], MobTAF [226], Android Ripper & Extended Ripper [51], MobileTest [87], Qtool [250], EMMA [154], ATOM3 [152], VanarDena [178], ENVIAR [137], Stoa [119], ADDET [37], PLATOOL [98], Q-testing [97], MBTS4MA [95], PBGT Tool [174], Robotium [158], Latte [114], Dune [112], TEGDroid [41], Monkey [151], YAKUSU [177], JUnit and Money [176], Dynodroid [128], RacerDroid [122], ATG [117], MobicoMonkey [111], Fax [173], NaviDroid [172], PREFEST [171, 170], THOR [92], Monkey [153], Multi-Level GUICC [142], JPF-ANDROID [259], SIERRA [35], Calabash [139], VTE [72], DeepREST [266], DinoDroid [267], ROBOTEST [271], EvoMASTER [272]
GUI coverage	DroidCrawler [247], ADAPTDROID [47]
Screen, Activity and Method coverage, Test coverage, line coverage	A3E [163], GAT [69], Word2Vec [65], FragDroid [241], VTest [140], DroidMate [175], MTEst [104], DeepREST [266]
Test accuracy and migration	FLAG [66], APPESTMIGRATOR [48]
Precision analysis, Test execution time	ORBIT [162], GATOR [34], CRAFTDROID [165], PJUnit [63], ATOM3 [152], Calabash [150], MT4A [101]
Vulnerability/Malware detection	AndroTotal [146], DroidBot [129], MoSSOT [102], GATOR [180],
Energy defect detection/ Flaky test detection	ACETON [144], FlakeScanner [123]
Code Summarization	TESTINTENTION [273]

The distinction between the two is that code coverage quantifies how many lines of code, branches, or functions are executed during tests, ensuring comprehensive test cases and improving the reliability of the software. While fault detection is the ability of testing to identify defects or bugs in the software. It assesses whether the system behaves as expected under various conditions with the aim of finding and

reporting defects so they can be fixed before the software is released. While code coverage provides insights into the testing thoroughness, fault detection evaluates the quality and correctness of the software itself. Both are essential for effective software testing.

#### 4.6 Which of the MAT related studies is the Most Influential Study?



To answer this research question, the technique used by Nie et al. [19] was adopted, measuring the number of citations received by the studies. The greater the number of citations, the higher the impact, which determines how influential a study is. The Normalized Citation Impact Index (NCII), was used, applying the formula below to measure the impact factor of a study based on its publication duration. Additionally, 11 articles with the highest NCII scores were considered

the most influential studies. Table 11 presents the studies and their corresponding NCII scores. The results show that Dynodroid has the highest impact factor with 952 citations and an NCII value of 79.3 NCII; therefore, Dynodroid is the most influential MAT-related study.

$$NCII = \frac{\text{Citation per publication}}{\text{Publication duration(years)}} \tag{2}$$

**Table 11:** Most Influential Studies

S/N	Paper title	Year of Pub.	Citation	NCII
1	Dynodroid: An Input Generation System for Android Apps [128]	2013	952	79.3
2	Using GUI ripping for testing of Android applications [243]	2012	707	54.5
3	Targeted and depth-first exploration for systematic testing of Android apps [163]	2013	643	53.5
4	Automating GUI Testing for Android Applications [176]	2011	450	33.1
5	A grey-box approach for automated GUI model generation of mobile [162]	2013	453	37.7
6	MobiGUITAR Automated Model-Based Testing of Mobile Apps [161]	2015	453	45.3
7	EvoDroid: Segmented Evolutionary Testing of Android Apps [126]	2014	441	40
8	Software testing of mobile applications: Challenges and future research directions [216]	2012	359	27.6
9	Guided, Stochastic Model-Based GUI Testing of Android Apps [119]	2017	433	54.1
10	droidBot: ALightweight UI-Guided Test Input Generator for Android [129]	2017	343	42.8
11	A Guided GUI Crawling Based Technique for Android Mobile Applications Testing [60]	2011	315	22.5

**5.0 DISCUSSION**

The results of the survey have shown that the evolution of testing approaches in software development is experiencing several key stages, reflecting advancement in technology, methodologies, and the growing complexity of software. In most cases the nature of software determines the type of approach to be used by testers. While the black-box approach is used by most testing tools there are still situations where grey-box can do better as it enables testers to have partial knowledge of the internal structure, which allows them to design tests that leverage some internal insights while still simulating real user behavior. This can lead to more effective testing, especially for identifying vulnerabilities or ensuring quality in applications.

For the testing techniques, the results have shown that most testing techniques applied model-based techniques. Despite the increasing popularity of model-based techniques, developing models is still a challenging task. There is a need for more techniques that can ease the efforts in model generation.

With regards to method of evaluation, the results have shown that most testing tools are utilizing code coverage and fault detection as popular means of validation of their effectiveness. However, many studies have revealed that high code coverage does not guarantee the absence of bugs; it only indicates that the code was executed during tests. As a result of this,

a combination of methods can be applied to evaluate the testing tools’ effectiveness.

In summary, while the academia aims to deepen theoretical understanding and advance knowledge in software testing that includes software testing principles, model-based testing techniques, testing automation, fault localization, and the development of new testing frameworks, the industry focuses on practical implementation and delivering high-quality software products. Collaboration between the two is highly encouraged for both domains to contribute to the overall development of software testing field.

**6.0 CONCLUSION**

This paper presented an in-depth survey of MAT focused articles, identifying the research contributions such as the techniques, strategies and the test tools proposed by researchers and practitioners for testing mobile applications. The study has further identified publication frequency as well as the participating countries. This systematic mapping study will serve as a guide for the software testing research community in identifying open areas for further research in mobile Apps Testing.

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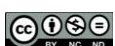
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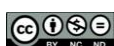
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