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Validity and Reliability of the H.E.A.T Module toward Self-Efficacy, Self-Assertiveness and Self-Esteem among Bullying Victims

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Abstract: Bullying is a chronic issue in Malaysia that negatively affects bullying victim's cognitive, behavior and emotional. Existing intervention often involved single aspects of recovery and lacking holistic integration. This study introduces the H.E.A.T Module, a psychoeducational intervention developed using Sidek's Model and grounded in Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) The module focusing three construct self-efficacy, self-assertiveness and self-esteem to support bullying victims recovery. Content validity was assessed by six experts in counseling and psychology, while reliability was tested through a pilot study involving 40 secondary school, form one and form two student who had experienced bullying. Results showed high content validity module contents, with an overall score of 91.78%. Reliability analysis produced a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of .79, exceeding the acceptable for stability and consistency. These findings confirm that the H.E.A.T Module is both valid and reliable, providing a structured and theory-driven intervention with practical implications for school counseling practice and policy-level anti-bullying initiatives.

Keywords: Validity, Reliability, Self Efficacy, Self Assertiveness, Self Esteem, Bullying Victim

1. Introduction

The issue of bullying in Malaysia has long plagued the country (Mohamed Afiq Amani & Rani Ann, 2020). One of the people that is essential in addressing and eliminating bullying issues in school is the counselor (O'Brien, Campbell & Whiteford, 2024). Rettew & Powlowski (2022) state that bullying is an activity that is done intentionally to hurt someone, leading to cruel and frightening behavior.

Bullying victims exhibit emotional shift, bad thoughts and poor behaviors according to several research. Victims of bullying will also experience emotional deterioration such as stress, anxiety and depression (Sulaiman, Jaludin & Kamaluddin, 2019). According to Ye *et al.* (2023), 133 688 participants in meta-analysis children and adolescents who experience bullying are 2.77 times more likely to have depression than those who do not. In fact, victims of bullying also experience anxiety, depression, low self-esteem and loneliness (Guo, Tan & Zhu, 2022). Therefore, Kamal *et al* (2021) emphasize that victims of bullying need to be assisted so that they can achieve psychological well-being and stability and thus eliminate the burden they bear.

Based on the National Health and Morbidity Survey by the Ministry of Health Malaysia (MOH) in collaboration with the Ministry of Education Malaysia nationwide in 2017, it was found that 16.2% of 27,497 Form One to Five students were bullied at least once a month (Isa, Ismail, & Noor 2019). 15.9% were physically teased, 14.1% were sexually harassed, 10.6% were racially harassed, 7.9% were physically abused, 6.1% were socially excluded, and only 4.7% were religiously harassed. The result indicate that negeri sembilan ranks among the five states with the highest incident with the bullying with Pahang, Selangor, Sabah and Kuala Lumpur. Meanwhile, Form One and Form Two students are mostly victims of bullying.

The Director-General of Education Malaysia informed Utusan Malaysia that in 2022 the total number of bullying cases was 3,883 cases, while in 2023 there were 6,528 cases and in 2024 until October there were 6,208 cases recorded by the Ministry of Education Malaysia through the Student Identity System (SSDM) (Maisarah 2025).



The trend of bullying has now changed, if in the past bullying was mostly associated with physical and emotional bullying, now cyberbullying has also emerged (Koran, Smith & Noran Fauziah, 2021). A UNICEF survey from 2020, revealed that three out of ten of young Malaysians have experienced cyberbullying. This finding has made Malaysia the second highest country in ASIA for cyberbullying incidents. In terms of world rankings, Malaysia is listed in 6th place out of 28 countries studied by the international market research company IPSOS (Yap, 2020). The introduction of cyberbullying as a novel aspect of bullying indicates that this phenomenon is getting more complex along with the development of communication technology. Although this study does not focus on the relationship between technology and bullying, this statement is important to emphasize that forms of bullying are now more diverse and have a profound psychosocial impact on victims (Ahmed, *et al.* 2022; Vikneswaran *et al.* 2021; Tan & Melissa, 2025).

According to data from the Malaysian Ministry of Education, the number of bullying instances increased dramatically from 326 in 2021 to 4994 in 2023 (Abdul Mutalib & Wan Nurhafa, 2024). Several bullying cases that occurred in Malaysia have received special attention from the community, especially when they involve the death of the victim. Among them are the cases of T. Nhaveen in 2017, Zulfarhan Osman Zulkarnain in 2017, Rajeswari Appahu in 2024, and Private Muhammad Muqriz Aseri in 2025 and the most recent is Form 1 student, Zara Qairina. In the case of T. Nhaveen, the victim experienced serious physical bullying when he was hit with a blunt object resulting in brain injury, in addition to being a victim of ridicule and emotional bullying due to his personality and interests that were considered different. The case of Zulfarhan Osman involved extreme physical abuse when the victim was ironed by his friends in an attempt to force him to confess to stealing, which was also accompanied by psychological pressure. Meanwhile, in the case of Rajeswari Appahu, the victim is believed to have been a victim of psychological and cyber bullying, including receiving threats and insults via social media which is believed to have contributed to serious emotional distress leading to suicide. The case of Private Muhammad Muqriz Aseri involved physical abuse by colleagues in a uniformed training institution, which showed elements of physical bullying and mental pressure in a poorly controlled disciplined environment.

Although the number of deaths due to bullying among students and adolescents is relatively small in statistical terms, the implications are very serious because every life lost reflects the failure of the system to protect the victim. Ongoing forms of bullying, especially physical and psychological, can contribute to chronic mental health effects and death. Direct (Peprah *et al.*, 2023). Therefore, any type of bullying needs to be identified and addressed immediately because its long-term effects can be life-threatening for the victim if not effectively prevented. The cases of Zulfarhan Osman, T. Nhaveen and others should be taken as a lesson because they show how serious the consequences of bullying can be when left to continue without effective intervention. Both the bully and the victim need specific interventions to help them.

Therefore, the need for research on the construction of modules as an intervention for the development and psychological recovery of students, especially victims of bullying at school, requires space to add new knowledge in the study conducted by the researcher, namely a) the development and implementation of modules by focusing on interventions that are appropriate to the psychological needs and problems that are occurring, b) emphasizing on aspects of self-efficacy, self-assertiveness, and self-esteem that implement counseling theory in the development of modules based on Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy (REBT), which is used as the delivery method for module implementation. and c) The implementation of the modules is also designed in the form of group psychoeducational activities that emphasize elements of social and collaborative interaction. The objective of this study is to determine the validity and reliability of the H.E.A.T module and answer the research question What is the validity and reliability of the H.E.A.T module?.

2. Literature Review

Bullying is an emotional expression of dissatisfaction displayed through physical or verbal behavior towards another individual who is considered weak (Bermejo, Hernandez & Sanchez, 2022). The consequences of bullying extend beyond physical harm, they also affect the victim's social, mental and emotional health (Kowalski & Limber, 2013). In addition to affecting their confidence and social functioning in the school setting, victims of bullying typically exhibit traits including apathy, anxiety, melancholy, rage, and low self-esteem (Ibrahim *et al.* 2024; Dou *et al.*, 2022).



Previous studies have found that interventions implemented often only focus on one aspect such as emotional control or communication, without taking into account the need for comprehensive recovery from cognitive, emotional and social aspects. Meanwhile, integrating cognitive, psychosocial and emotional elements in a comprehensive intervention can benefit more holistic effect on the bullying victim's psychological resilience and rehabilitation (Hikmat *et al.*, 2024).

Self-efficacy, self-assertiveness and self-esteem have been empirically highlight a positive effect on the recovery of victims of bullying (Sir & Lok, 2024; Mullan *et al.* 2023; Haraldstad, 2019; Yosep *et al.*, 2024). However, not many studies have combined self-efficacy, self-assertiveness and self-esteem simultaneously in one intervention module. Therefore, the researcher proposes a new psychoeducational module that combines these three elements to provide a more comprehensive and effective intervention effect.

Although various interventions have been developed, the researcher believes that there is still a need to produce new modules that are more systematic, comprehensive and suitable for the local educational context. Therefore, the researcher proposes the development of a psychoeducational module based on Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) that integrates these three important constructs, using the Sidek's Model as the framework for building the module.

The Sidek Model was chosen because of its systematic and adaptive framework to the needs of education and counseling in Malaysia. In this module, the REBT approach is applied comprehensively to help students identify and restructure irrational thoughts, thereby changing negative emotional and behavioral patterns. REBT has been empirically demonstrated to be effective in enhancing self-efficacy, self-assertiveness and self-esteem among at-risk students and bullying victims. The combination of these three elements in a module that is based on theory, empirical and contextual is expected to empower victims of bullying holistically not only in terms of thoughts and feelings, but also behavior and social functions in daily life.

2.1 Theoretical framework

This study is grounded in four theories: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory, Social Cognitive Theory, Behavioral Learning Theory and Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT). Self-efficacy will be explained via the Social Cognitive Theory. Self assertiveness using the theory of behavioral learning. Self esteem will be using Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory and the counselling strategy will be explained via Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy.

Behavioral Learning Theory, Social Cognitive Theory, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory and Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) with the construct of self-efficacy, self-assertiveness and self-esteem are very important in helping victims of bullying recover. Social Cognitive Theory focuses on learning through observation and imitation of modules (Bandura 2001). Through Bandura's social cognitive theory, self-efficacy is a key concept that shows an individual's confidence in their own ability to face challenges through past experiences, observation of others, social persuasion and emotional states (Bandura, 1997). High levels of self efficacy are strongly associated with psychological resilience, positive coping strategies and well-being recovery in bullying circumstances (Williams *et al.* (2016); Van der Ploeg *et al.*, 2019). Empirical studies have shown that self-efficacy is a moderator that decrease the negative effects of victims and affect the behavior of defending victims in bullying context (Pöyhönen *et al.*, 2010).

As informed by the behaviorism theory, learning is the result of reinforcement and punishment in the form of behavior through the relationship between stimuli and responses (Skinner, 1953; Pavlov, 1927). Social behaviors such as assertiveness can also be learned through direct experience and continuous positive reinforcement (Bandura, 1977; Ormrod 2020; Slavin 2020). Assertiveness is a behavior that results from experience and positive reinforcement in line with the principles of behaviorism that emphasize the relationship between stimuli and responses. Interventions grounded in assertiveness training are seen to not only reduce the negative consequence of bullying but also enhance the self-esteem and social skills bullying victims (Yosep *et al.*, 2024). In addition, assertiveness training combined with cognitive strategies such as problem solving can strengthen mental well-being (Golshiri *et al.*, 2023). Assertiveness training is an evidence-based treatment that strengthens individual confidence and coping skills that will contribute to the bullying victim's rehabilitation process (Speed *et al.*, 2017).



According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory, self-esteem is an important level that must be met after the basic needs of safety and love. Maslow (1943,1945) stated that individuals who do not achieve self-esteem are more susceptible to experiencing feelings of inferiority and exhibit difficulty achieving self-actualization. Individuals who do not feel valued or do not have positive feelings of self-esteem will find it difficult to achieve a higher level of self-perfection (Darjan, Negru & Ilie, 2020). Self-esteem acts as a psychological protector against bullying (Kocak, Semerci & Aslan, 2025).

Rational Emotive Behavior Theory (REBT) states and behavior (Ellis 1994; Greenberger & Padesky, 1995). Through self-efficacy, REBT helps replace irrational thoughts with more rational thoughts and can increase confidence in one's own abilities (David *et al.*, 2018). Self-assertiveness can also be strengthened through REBT because individuals are trained to articulate their needs and feelings assertively but in a constructive, positive and beneficial mode, overcoming feelings of fear or shame due to negative beliefs (Dryden & Branch, 2008). Self-esteem has been proven to be increased and dysfunctional thinking can be reduced through REBT-based interventions (Trip *et al.*, 2016). This suggests that REBT is not only theoretically effective but also has empirical validated and demonstrating its effectiveness for increasing the level of self-efficacy, self-assertiveness and self-esteem among victims of bullying. The following is the theoretical framework for this study in figure 1.

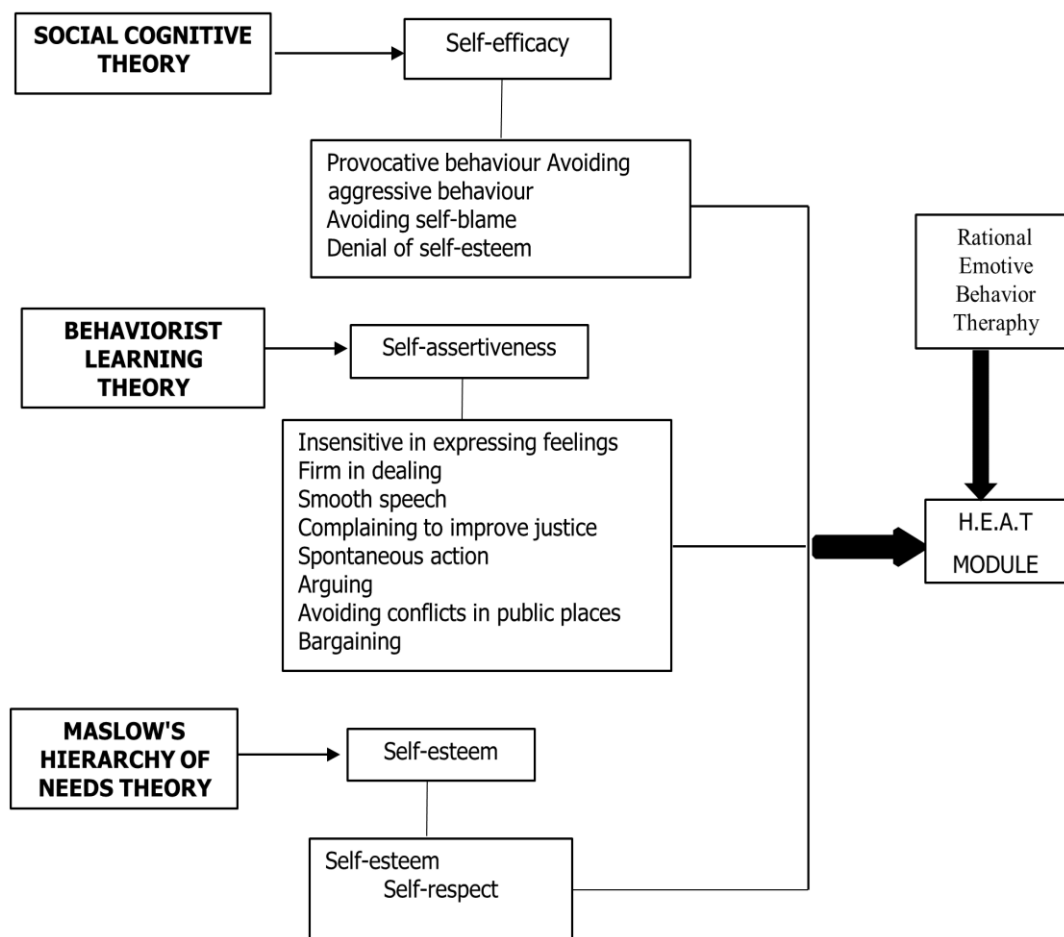


Figure 1. Theoretical framework of this study

3. H.E.A.T Module

The H.E.A.T Module developed in this study is a psycho-educational module because it combines a psychological therapy approach and educational elements in a structured way. The psychoeducational approach is seen as a relevant and high-potential alternative in helping victims of bullying. Although there are studies that apply psychoeducational modules in the context of emotional and behavioral development (Mat *et al.*, 2023; Nordiana,



2022; Normardiana, 2022), the application of psychoeducational modules that focus on aspects of self-efficacy, self-assertiveness, and self-esteem among bullying victim is still lacking in Malaysia. Therefore, this study attempts to address this gap by developing and evaluating the effectiveness of the H.E.A.T psychoeducational module based on REBT Therapy, which is systematically structured using the Sidek's Model and is suitable for implementation in school settings.

Accordingly, the development of the H.E.A.T Module through Sidek's model. There are two phases in the Sidek's Module Development Model. The first phase is the process of producing a draft module. While the second phase is the process of evaluating the developed modules. The procedure for implementing this study is summarized in figure 2 according to the two phases in Sidek's model. Therefore, validity and reliability tests are conducted to obtain useful findings in improving by looking at the suggestion and recommendation received from experts on the development module.

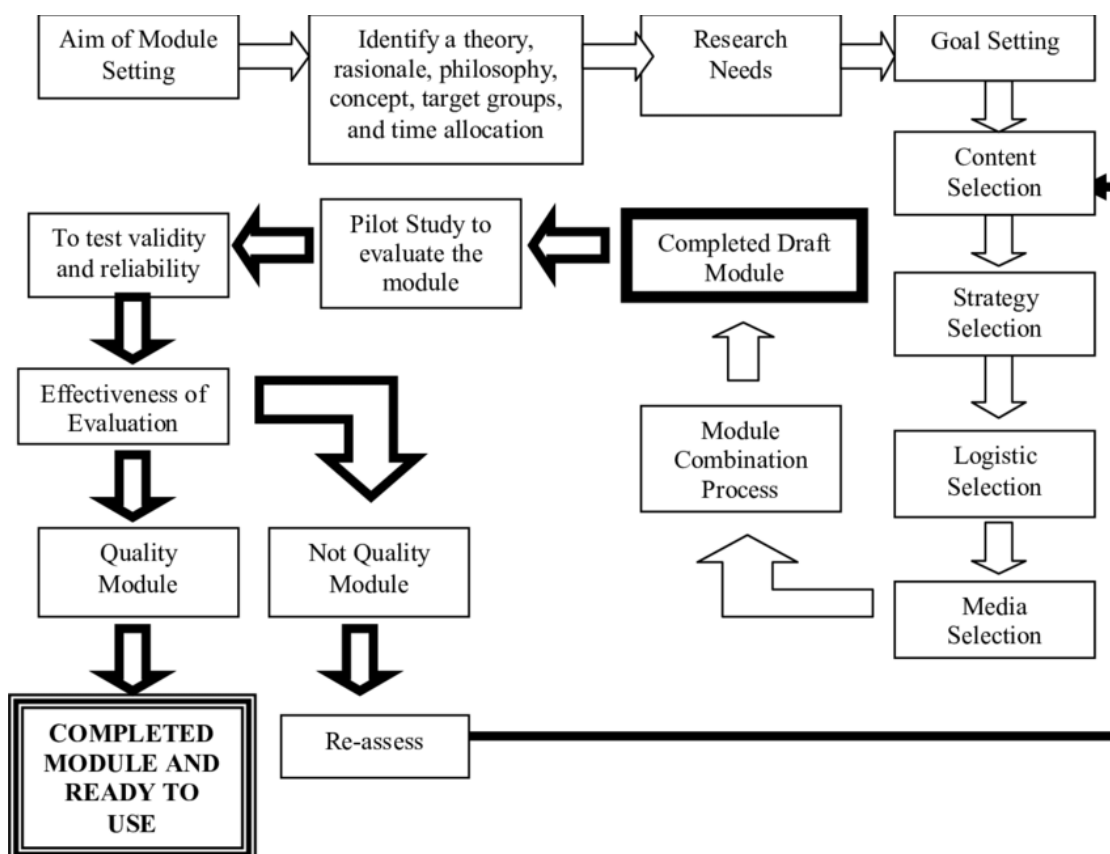


Figure 2. Two phases of Sidek's Module development model

3.1 REBT application in module

The H.E.A.T Module was developed based on the content of the module which is divided into three construct. Each construct is supported by a theory to further strengthen the construction module. In the development of the module, the researcher applies REBT therapy in each activities. Therefore, three construct, twelve subconstruct and 12 activities in the H.E.A.T Module. Table 1 describe a summary of activity by each construct.

This illustration (Figure 3) is a depiction of the development flow of the H.E.A.T module from its theoretical input to the desired results. The input is the Sidek Development Model, the REBT approach, three core theories of variables, namely Social Cognitive Theory, Social Learning Theory and Maslow's Hierarchy Theory. This input is carried out through 12 structured psychoeducational activities centered on three main constructs, namely self-efficacy, self-assertiveness and self-esteem as a process. At the output level, through the 12 activities carried out, victims of bullying will have the opportunity to challenge irrational beliefs, identify their strengths and weaknesses, communicate assertively and improve conflict resolution skills.



Table 1. Summary of activity by each construct

Construct	Subconstruct	REBT Technique	Summary of Activity Guide
Self-efficacy	Sub 1: Trait of Personality	Cognitive Techniques (Eliminating Irrational Beliefs) Irrational questions need to be challenged and replaced with new, more rational thinking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognize yourself through personality traits and identify your strengths and weaknesses. assess emotion, level of emotion and personality through the Personality Inventory.
	Sub 2: Lifeline	Cognitive Techniques (Cognitive Tasks) Researching the "must" and "should" statements one holds and then changing those statements to be more positive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge and experience about bullying and state the age when the bullying incident occurred.
	Sub 3: SWOT	Cognitive Techniques (Psychoeducational Methods) Determining the extent of the problem and identifying help or treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> assess the level of negative emotions write down the strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities that exist in oneself to avoid self-conflict evaluate actions to overcome personal shortcomings and how to take advantage of personal advantages.
	Sub 4: New Goals	Behavioral Techniques (Systematic Desensitization) Unwanted responses are replaced with desired behaviors as a result of repeated training and eliminating the participant's irrational beliefs that cause feelings of worry, shame, fear, and insecurity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> plan how to increase self-confidence in life. write down what changes they want to make to improve themselves within 3 months from now group discussion on how to improve the quality of life understand and accept their own habits.
Self-Assertiveness	Sub 5: Say No to Bullying	Emotive Technique (Force and Vigor) Intellectual process to emotional understanding. Dialogue with yourself and express any irrational beliefs, then refute those beliefs firmly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> assess the level of bullying experienced examine the events, behaviors and effects of bullying that can be overcome to reduce stress.
	Sub 6: Self-Reflection	Emotive Technique (Argument) rational thinking to give the bully space to think about their belief system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify the actions to be taken when realizing oneself is being bullied.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make an assessment of the actions to be taken correctly.
	Sub 7: Rational Action "Cloud"	Cognitive Techniques (Cognitive Tasks) Perform certain actions in certain situations to reinforce positive traits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide suggestions for responses that can be taken if bullied
	Sub 8: Conflict Resolution	Cognitive Techniques (Cognitive Tasks) Perform certain actions in real situations and reinforce the participants' positive nature by looking at "must" and "should" statements and changing those statements to be more positive in helping to make decisions to deal with conflicts with bullies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain ways to deal with conflict • know ways to manage anger properly. • apply steps to manage anger behavior • identify the correct way to negotiate with a bully
Self- esteem	Sub 9: Personal Skills	Emotive Technique (Rational Emotive Imagery) Builds new emotional patterns. It also helps participants not to feel disappointed by negative situations they think about	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assess the level of calmness • find out why they are being bullied • make an assessment of what might happen to them if they take certain actions such as actions while thinking irrationally
	Sub 10: Self-Esteem	REBT Emotive Technique (Shame-Attacking) Helps reduce shame towards certain behaviors that occur. Emotive Technique (Humor) Develops an element of humor by using subtle humor to mock irrational beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • means "self-esteem" • refuse to feel embarrassed by telling yourself that it is not a bad thing if someone makes a negative statement about you • write as many words of appreciation or praise as possible when someone has done a good job.
	Sub 11: Self-worth	Behavioral Techniques (Reinforcement) Removing irrational beliefs and making reinforcements for more positive thoughts so as not to damage yourself with old beliefs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • list five positive life values or behaviors that you want to practice • list five negative life values or behaviors that you want to abandon.
	Sub 12: Self Transformation	Behavioral Techniques (Modeling) Look at the situation being faced and provide a positive model so that it can be imitated or used as a guide and be able to choose better decisions compared to the previous situation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discuss the negative attitude they want to change. • act out a scene that displays the negative attitude they have chosen • act out the same situation but change the negative attitude to a positive one



This output has a short-term effect, namely this intervention has increased the level of self-efficacy, self-assertiveness and self-esteem of victims of bullying. Furthermore, the long-term effect is that the intervention successfully contributes to the recovery of victims of bullying in terms of self-confidence and psychological well-being.

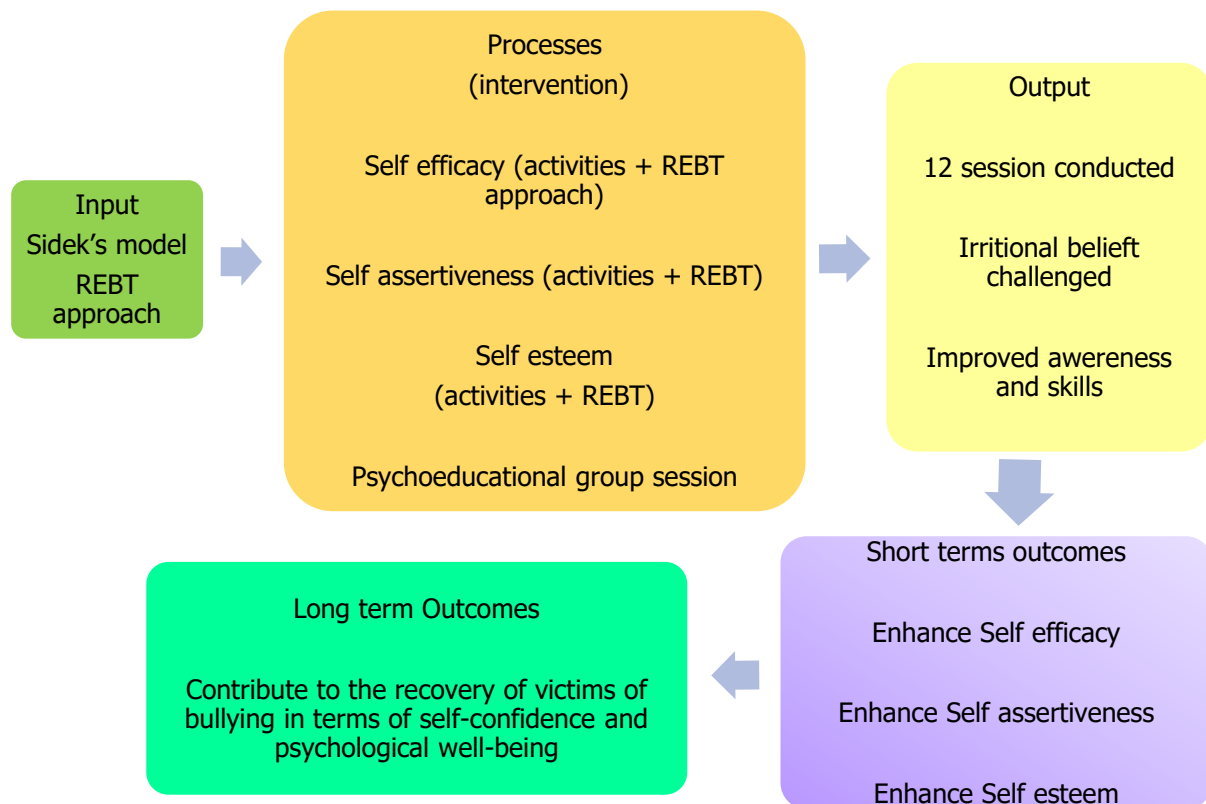


Figure 3. Illustration of the developmental flow of the H.E.A.T module

4. Methodology

The aim of this study is to establish the validity and reliability of the drafted module. Accordingly, the modules that have been developed need to be determined for validity and reliability first to help bullying victims achieve the objective set. Therefore, the module that has been designed must have a high validity and reliability value. All the information about expert comments and suggestion in writing through the expert validity form and the reliability value through the reliability form obtained from a group of subjects students among bullying victims can help improve the H.E.A.T module to strengthen the rigor and quality of the module developed. The validity survey of the H.E.A.T module expert comes from counselling and guidance who serve in public universities, teaching institutes, Ministry of Education Malaysia and counselling practitioners in school.

At the same time, the reliability survey was located at one national secondary school in Negeri Sembilan. The respondents involved in evaluating the validity of this module are a group of experts with areas of expertise, knowledge and experience that are compatible with the built module. The profile of the expert panel is shown in table 2.

The second group of respondents was 40 students from one and two students who are bullying victims were involved in testing the reliability of the H.E.A.T Module. They will go through the activities found in the heat module first before answering the reliability items of the module. The student background is from form one and two who are bullying victims. Their selection follows the needs of the study.

Table 2. The profile of the expert panel

Experts	Expertise	Position
Expert 1	Educational Counseling, Guidance & Counseling, and Character Development	Senior Lecturer, Department of Moral, Civics, and Character Development, Faculty of Human Sciences, Sultan Idris Education University
Expert 2	Educational Psychology	Senior Lecturer, Education Faculty, The National University of Malaysia
Expert 3	Guidance and Counseling	Assistant Director of Student Affairs, Negeri Sembilan State Education Department
Expert 4	Guidance and Counseling	School Counselor SMK Senawang
Expert 5	Guidance and Counseling	School Counselor SMK Panchor
Expert 6	Guidance and Counseling	Senior Assistant Secretary, Division of Psychology and Counseling, Ministry of Education Malaysia

4.1 Module validity review tool

The Sidek (2001) percentage formula is used in measuring expert validity where it looks at the percentage of expert agreement.

$$\frac{\text{Total Expert Score (X)}}{\text{Maximum Score (Y)}} \times 100\% = \text{Module Content Validity Percentage}$$

Equation 1

Total expert score = the total score given by all experts for an item

Maximum score = number of experts x highest score on the Likert scale

Equation 2

Calculation example

For example, item 1 was rated by 6 experts using a likert scale of 1 to 5. The scores given were 5,4,5,5,4 and 4

Total expert score = 5+4+5+5+4+4 = 27

Maximum score = 30

Then,

$$CV = \frac{27}{30} \times 100 = 90$$

Interpretation

Regarding the following results, item 1 has obtained a 90% content validity level and has exceeded the minimum percentage of 70% (Sidek 2001). Therefore, item 1 is considered valid and suitable for use in the module.

4.2 Module reliability review tools

After obtaining the validity value of the module, the H.E.A.T module needs to reach a level of reliability so that students can follow each activity developed to achieve the objectives specified in the module. Therefore, the developed module needs to demonstrate high reliability. Accordingly Russell (1974) the reliability of the developed



module can be seen to the extent to which students can follow each of the steps arranged in the module. Therefore, students need to master the steps outlined in the module to ensure that students can master the objectives of the module.

Therefore, among the methods that can be used to determine the coefficient of the reliability is to use the module reliability questionnaire, thus Sidek and Jamaluddin (2005), state that the reliability assessment is based on activity measures or objectives to test the value of the reliability coefficient to find out the Cronbach alpha value of the module. Therefore, the researcher can build a reliability questionnaire using two approaches based on the steps or objective of the assemble module. In this study, the researcher has developed a reliability questionnaire based on the purpose of each activity. A total of 21 reliability questionnaire questions were constructed including 12 activities using five answer scales to determine the reliability value of the module. Next, the module's reliability questionnaire was answered by student after undergoing the pilot test of the H.E.A.T Module.

The data was analyzed to obtain the Cronbach alpha coefficients to assess the module's reliability. However, some procedure must be followed before getting the module's reliability. The researcher first obtain permission from the Education Policy Planning and Research Division, Ministry of Education (KPM) to conduct the study after receiving approval from the Malaysian Ministry of Education (KPM) for the researcher also to get permission to conduct a pilot study for the module that has been developed from the State Education Department (JPN). Next, a pilot study of the module was carried out in selected schools after discussions with the State Education Department (JPN). To test the module's reliability, the researcher selected 40 respondents by filling out a reliability questionnaire.

5. Results and Finding

5.1 Finding of module validity

The finding of the module validity study conducted by experts are discussed based on the module content validity questionnaire which has been modified to determine the content level of the H.E.A.T module. As a result of expert evaluation, the validity value for the entire H.E.A.T module content can be seen in table 3.

Table 3 is the expert consensus findings showing that the minimum percentage is 85.00% for the statement that the content of the H.E.A.T Module can increase the level of self-efficacy of victims of bullying. While the maximum percentage is 93.33% for the statement that the content of the H.E.A.T module meets its target population. Therefore, the overall score for all items is 89.52%.

Table 3. The validity value for the entire H.E.A.T module content

	Item	Content Validity Achievement (%)	Views expert
Validity of H.E.A.T module content	The content of the H.E.A.T module meets its target population	93.33	accepted
	The content of this H.E.A.T module can be implemented perfectly	90	accepted
	The content of this H.E.A.T Module is appropriate for the time allocated.	90	accepted
	The content of this H.E.A.T module can increase the self-efficacy level of bullying victims.	85	accepted
	The content of this H.E.A.T module can increase the level of assertiveness of victims of bullying.	88.33	accepted
	The content of this H.E.A.T module can increase the self-esteem of victims of bullying.	90	accepted
	The content of this H.E.A.T module can change the attitude of victims of bullying towards a more positive one.	90	accepted



Table 4. The results of content validity findings based on sessions and activities

		Item	Content Validity Achievement (%) (%)	Views expert
Content validity of session and activity suitability	Self Efficacy	Activity 1: Personality traits	93.33	accepted
		Activity 2: Lifeline	91.66	accepted
		Activity 3: SWOT	91.66	accepted
		Activity 4: Personal goals	88.33	accepted
	Self Assertiveness	Activity 5: Say no to bullying	91.66	accepted
		Activity 6: Self-reflection	91.66	accepted
		Activity 7: Rational action "Cloud"	93.33	accepted
		Activity 8: Conflict resolution	90	accepted
	Self Esteem	Activity 9: Personal skills	91.66	accepted
		Activity 10: Self-appreciation	95	accepted
		Activity 11: The value of life	90	accepted
		Activity 12: Self-transformation	93.33	accepted

Table 5. the results of the content validity of the H.E.A.T. Module Language

	Item	Content Validity Achievement (%) (%)	Views expert
Validity of the language content of the H.E.A.T module	The content of the H.E.A.T module uses appropriate language settings	95	accepted
	The content of this H.E.A.T module uses correct language structure	93.33	accepted
	The content of this H.E.A.T module is accurately translated	91.66	accepted
	The content of this H.E.A.T module does not contain sensitive language that offends any party.	96.66	accepted
	The content of this H.E.A.T module uses precise vocabulary in explaining the processes involved.	93.33	accepted
	The content of this H.E.A.T module uses appropriate language to show the continuity of the process.	93.33	accepted
	The content of this H.E.A.T module uses understandable language to explain the processes involved.	95	accepted

Table 4 shows the results of content validity findings based on sessions and activities. The results of comparative analysis according to sessions and activities of the H.E.A.T. Module.



Table 6. Overall content validity percentage

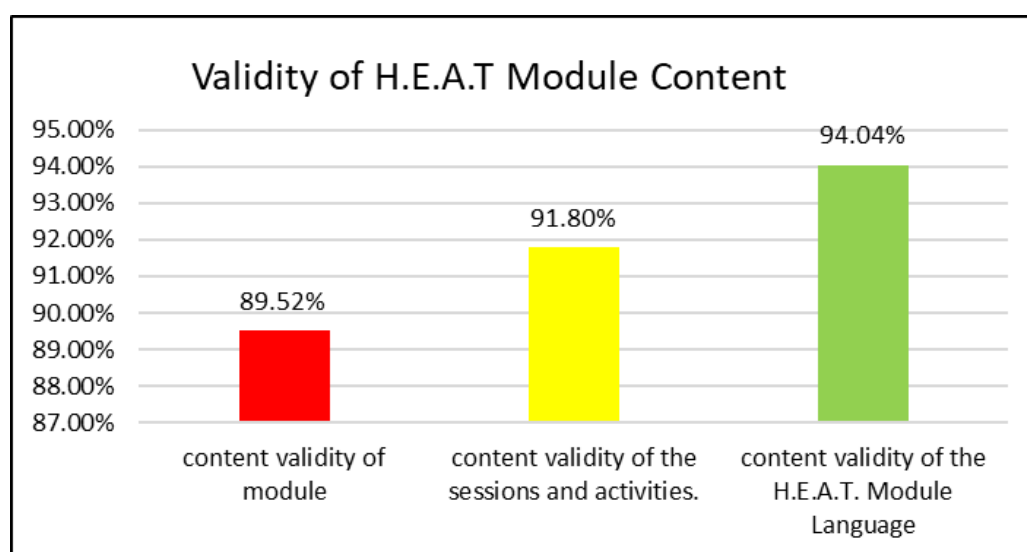
Content validity	Content validity percentage
Content validity of module	89.52%
Content validity of the sessions and activities.	91.8%
Content validity of the H.E.A.T. Module Language	94.04%
Total	91.78%

The self-appreciation session and activity achieved the highest content validity achievement of 95%. while three sessions and activities obtained a content validity assessment of 93.33%. The sessions and activities were personality traits, rational action "cloud" and self-transformation. while the sessions and activities of lifeline, swot, say no to bullying, self-consideration and self-skills achieved a content validity achievement of 91.66%. followed by the conflict resolution and life values sessions and activities with a validity value of 90.00%. Self-goals also achieved the minimum content validity achievement value of 88.33%.

Table 5 shows the results of the content validity of the H.E.A.T. Module Language. The expert group has confirmed that the content of the H.E.A.T. Module does not contain sensitive language that offends any party, which is 96.66%. The content of the H.E.A.T. Module uses appropriate and understandable language to explain the processes involved, which is 95%. This is followed by the content of the H.E.A.T. module using the correct language structure, using the correct vocabulary in explaining the processes involved and using appropriate language to show the continuity of the process, which is 93.33% of the content validity achievement. The percentage of content validity for the content of the H.E.A.T. module translated into the correct language is 91.66%.

Based on expert assessment, the content validity value of the H.E.A.T Module is at a high level. The table 6 and figure 4 shows that the module content validity has been obtained (89.52%), session and activity content validity (91.8% ang language content validity (94.04%) making the total 91.78%.

This result shows that the H.E.A.T module has acceptable and good content validity and is in line with the views of [Tuckman \(1965\)](#) which states that if the percentage of modules obtained exceeds 70% then the module is considered to have good content validity. These results shown that the H.E.A.T Module has the acceptable and good content validity aligning with the [Tuckman \(1965\)](#) standards highlight that modules attaining a score exceeding 70% are considered to have strong content validity.

**Figure 4.** Validity of H.E.A.T Module Content

5.1 Finding of module reliability

Reliability refers to the level of stability and consistency of a measurement tool when used in various situations and at different times (Sidek & Jamaludin, 2005). In this study, the reliability of the H.E.A.T Module was determined by constructing a questionnaire according to the objectives of each module activity, where each objective represents the learning outcomes targeted by the module. The results of the reliability of the H.E.A.T Module shown in table 7.

Table 7. The results of the reliability of the H.E.A.T Module

Module	Nilai Alpha Cronbach
H.E.A.T	.79

Based on the pilot study that has been conducted, the value of the overall reliability coefficient is well above the .60 level, which .79. This findings is enough to confirm that this module shown high-reliability value and is regarded as acceptable as previously suggested by reseacher. The view further reinforces this (Fraenkel *et al.* 2013), which states that cronbach’s alpha value (α) > .6 is acceptable and consistent. The reliability values for each item are also stated in table 8.

The graph in the figure 5 below shows the reliability values for each item in the module reliability instrument. Overall, all items exceeded the .70 value which is often used as the minimum benchmark for acceptable internal consistency (Nunnally & Berstein, 1994). Items 2, 5 and 6 obtained the highest value of .80, while item 9 was the item that obtained the lowest value of .74. Although the Cronbach alpha values obtained were in the range of .74 to .80, all of them were still within a good and acceptable range and were suitable for use in real studies.

EFA analysis showed a KOM value of .502, still exceeding the minimum value suggested (Kaiser, 1974). Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity was also significant ($\chi^2 = 384.903$, $df = 210$, $p < .001$), indicating that there was sufficient correlation between items to enable factor analysis to be carried out.

The KMO value indicated that the level of sample suitability was moderate. However, it was still acceptable in the context of social and psychological studies that used module development instruments with a moderate sample size (Field, 2018).

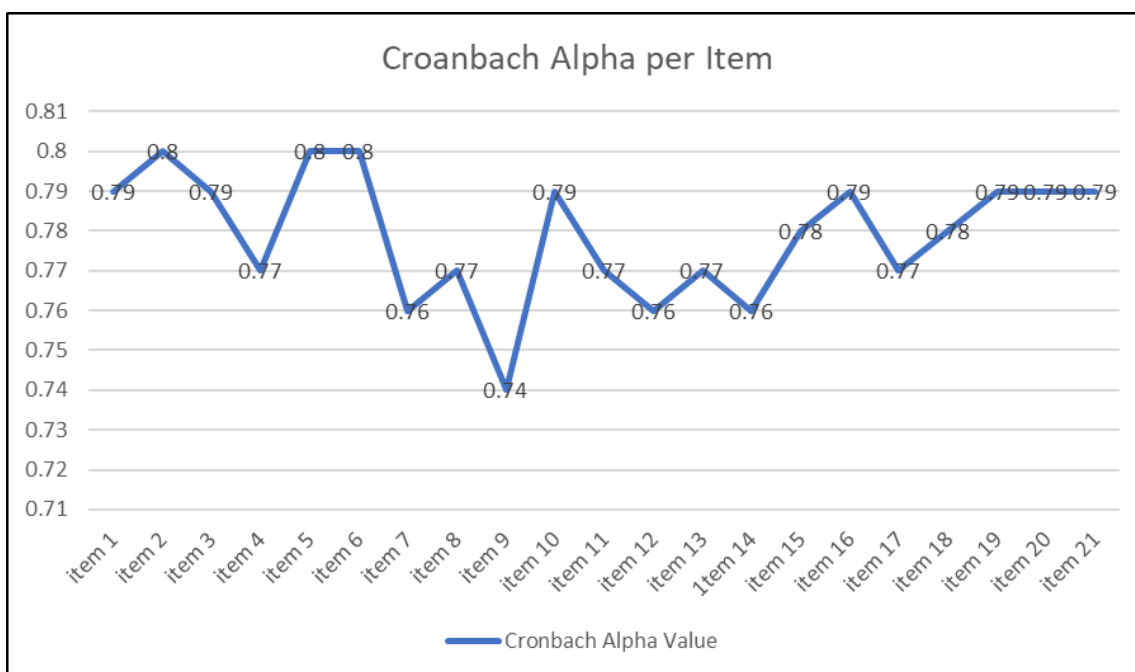


Figure 5. Cronbach Alpha per Item

5.3 Discussion

The construction of the H.E.A.T Module was developed as a result of a needs analysis using the Fuzzy Delphi method involving experts in the fields of counseling, education, and discipline management. This module is based on the Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) approach by Albert Ellis, which emphasizes changing rational thinking to influence individual emotions and behavior. The REBT approach was chosen as the main framework for building the module based on the suitability of this theory in addressing psychosocial issues such as bullying that impact students' self-efficacy, self-assertiveness, and self-esteem (Ellis, 1994; Dryden, 2020).

The construction of this module includes 12 intervention sessions that target changes in three main constructs, and all activities are designed based on specific objectives that refer to principles in REBT such as the ABC Model, Disputation, and Cognitive Restructuring. According to Sidek and Jamaludin (2005), a good module must meet three important elements, namely content validity, reliability, and effectiveness. In this study, an assessment of the content validity and reliability of the module was carried out as an initial step in determining the quality of the module.

Table 8. The Cronbach's Alpha values for each item

Item Number	Item	Cronbach's Alpha Value
Item 1	I can identify individual personality traits	.79
Item 2	I can identify in terms of strengths and weaknesses	.80
Item 3	I can express each other's life experiences as a victim of bullying	.79
Item 4	I can identify strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities in myself	.77
Item 5	I can describe positive behaviors that can change negative behaviors	.80
Item 6	I can show my own value	.80
Item 7	I can plan how to increase self-confidence in life	.76
Item 8	I can evaluate true thoughts and feelings	.77
Item 9	I can give an impact from past life history as a victim of bullying	.74
Item 10	I can identify events that disturb the participant's thinking	.79
Item 11	I can rewrite the impact of behavioral events on the victim of bullying	.77
Item 12	I can identify the belief system of the victim of bullying	.76
Item 13	I can list ways to solve bullying situations by responding in a "cloud"	.77
Item 14	I can explain ways to deal with conflict	.76
Item 15	I can give an example of a good self-concept, can distinguish and evaluate my own abilities	.78
Item 16	I can express a positive and open response	.79
Item 17	I can list the effects on a person's self-esteem when praised and appreciated	.77
Item 18	I can state the life values that I want to practice	.78
Item 19	I can list five life values or negative behaviors that I want to leave behind	.79
Item 20	I can describe the negative attitudes that participants need to change	.79
Item 21	I can prepare a short video and upload it to the tik tok application	.79



The finding showed that the content validity of the H.E.A.T Module was high based on the evaluation of the six experts in content, sessions and activities as well as aspects of language use. Expert consensus is a systematic and widely accepted method to validate the development of new modules. The result showed a high level of consensus with a validity more than 70%. This indicates that all items exceeded the established level of consensus (>70%), met the guidelines of a valid module construction model (Polit & Beck, 2006; Harun & Yaacob, 2021) and acceptable and appropriate (Hazaha *et al.*, 2023; Sidek & Jamaluddin, 2005; Ishak *et al.*, 2022). This finding supports recent studies conducted by Chan & Lee (2021) and Kandasamy & Jaafar (2023) showing high expert consensus in their studies. Other studies that state the use of expert consensus are Khalid *et al.* (2024) through the development of the IAGELESS module and Nguyen *et al.* (2025) in the validity of the mental health literacy toolkit. Therefore, this study reinforces the importance of expert consensus on the credibility and effectiveness of the developed module.

Reliability analysis of the H.E.A.T module showed a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .79. This finding is consistent with (Sidek & Jamaludin, 2005; Polat, Eskici & Sen, 2025) which states that a coefficient above .70 indicates a good and acceptable level of internal consistency. Taber (2017) also explained that although the use of Cronbach's alpha is quite limited, education research still agrees that a value $\geq .70$ is sufficient for the level of reliability or internal consistency. Based on the EFA results, the factor structure formed is in line with the theoretical framework of the H.E.A.T module. There are several items that show cross-loading but all of these items are retained because the item content is appropriate and relevant to the original construct and the theoretical validity of the module is maintained (Hair *et al.*, 2019). Therefore, these findings agree with the justification that the H.E.A.T module has an acceptable factor basis and is suitable for use in this intervention study.

The panel of experts involved in this study have backgrounds in guidance and counseling and psychology from various agencies such as schools, universities and ministries. This diversity ensures that this module is in line with the cultural context of education in Malaysia and strengthens its ecological validity. At the same time, this study has limitations where future studies need to examine the adaptability of the H.E.A.T module across regions and cultural group differences in order to strengthen its generalizability. These studies show that intervention modules that have undergone a systematic validity and reliability assessment process have the potential to be used in real implementation with positive results. Therefore, the H.E.A.T Module that has been developed and evaluated shows high validity and reliability characteristics.

6. Conclusion

Through this study, the validity and reliability of the heat module developed as a psychoeducational intervention on self-efficacy, self-assertiveness and self-esteem of victims of bullying. The results of the study show that this module is systematically constructed, valid and reliable. This H.E.A.T module, from the perspective of counseling practice, can be used by counselors or guidance and counseling teachers as a structured psychoeducational intervention to assist in the recovery of victims of bullying in schools. The integration of the rebt technique is a practical guide provided to facilitate counselors or guidance and counseling teachers in overcoming the irrational beliefs of victims of bullying. In addition, at the policy-making level, the positive results of this study can contribute to the Ministry of Education, Malaysian and other parties to disseminate the use of the H.E.A.T Module as one of the national anti-bullying interventions. In fact, this intervention, through counseling in schools, can contribute to a decrease in bullying cases and thus create a safe atmosphere in schools. However, further research is needed to examine the long-term effectiveness of this module. Future research should include cross-population and age-level validation to assess and identify whether there is an increase and effectiveness in self-efficacy, self-assertiveness, and self-esteem of bully victims. In addition, comparisons between the H.E.A.T Module and other existing interventions can also determine its relative effectiveness. This study is limited to a relatively small sample size in this study and only examines the validity and reliability of self-efficacy, self-assertiveness and self-esteem. Therefore, future studies should use larger samples. Thus, the heat module contributes not only to educational psychology and counseling but also provides valuable implications for practice and policy and has the potential to become a national intervention module to aid the recovery of victims of bullying among secondary school students.



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Yes

Author Contribution Statement

Mohd Khairulnizam Bin Muslin: Conceptualization, Methodology, Data Collection, Analysis, Writing: Original Draft. Mohd Izwan Bin Mahmud: Supervision, Writing: Review & Editing, Validation. Ku Suhaila Bin Ku Johari @ Ku Ali: Supervision, Writing: Review & Editing, Validation. All the authors read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Conflict of Interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare. There is also no financial interest to report. The author certifies that the submission is original work and is not under review at any other publication.

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