Validation of the Emotional Competency Module

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ABSTRACT

This study is a design and development-based research which intends to develop a module specifically to be implemented on adolescents to help enhance their emotional competence and also to test the content validity of the module. Seven professionals with experience in dealing with adolescent emotional issues were recruited to validate the module. A rating scale based on this is constructed to be evaluated by the professionals. The overall validity was calculated based on the percentage of agreement between the professionals. The Emotional Competency Module received an overall validity rating of 85.6%. Therefore, there is evidence that shows that this module is suitable to be implemented to enhance the emotional competency level of adolescents.

Keywords: *Emotion competency, Emotional Competency Module, validity*

Introduction

A recent study on adolescent delinquency found that adolescents with better emotional intelligence had lower levels of delinquency[1]. Numerous social problems happen today that start from less serious cases such as coming late to school, skipping class, breaking rules, followed by serious cases such as disobeying teachers, smoking, participating in illegal racing, gangsterism, bullying and more serious cases such as involving in sexual activities, pregnant out of wed lock, baby dumping and rape that has been reported by the mass media almost every day[2].

Research Background: From the year 2009 to 2013, the Malaysian Welfare Department revealed that there are a total of 23,950 male and 1828 female offenders[3]. The Department of Statistic Malaysia reported that Malaysian adolescent population from the age of 10 to 19 years old was estimated to be 5.5 million while the population of Malaysian youths aged 15–25 years old was estimated to be around 5.2 million and approximately 19% of the total population[4]. Although, the number of delinquent juveniles is not high, the number is still alarming and significant enough to simply let this go. In addition, this does not include the number of hotspot schools identified in Malaysia with many delinquent behaviours detected among their students. These delinquent behaviours are such as drug abuse, smoking, vandalism, bully among many others. Hence, a module is developed to help to address these issues among adolescents. Many studies showed that emotional intelligence programmes or trainings were effective in many facets such as positive emotional intelligence shifts and others behaviors [5] enhance emotional intelligence through expressive writing and deep breathing, increase emotional intelligence in adolescents with emotional and behavioral problems[6]

Problem Statement: We keep observing adults saying these common labels for adolescents these days such as 'disobedient', 'incorrigible', 'unruly' or 'ungovernable'. These social illnesses faced by young generations demand the governable attention of various individuals as there is a link between their current behaviour and the potential for delinquency and future involvement in criminal activities[7]. Recently, there are many studies conducted based on experimental design that implemented training or intervention to develop emotional intelligence. However, very little researches

have been done on emotional intelligence module development in Malaysia. Therefore, this study intends to fill up the gap by developing a module specifically to be implemented on adolescents to help enhance their emotional competence.

Research Objective: This study aims to develop an emotional competency module for adolescents and to test the validity of the module to be implemented for adolescents in Malaysia. Hence, the research objectives for the study are as stated:

  i. Is there any content validity evidence for Strategy 1: Self-Awareness?

  ii. Is there any content validity evidence for Strategy 2: Self-Management?

  iii. Is there any content validity evidence for Strategy 3: Social Awareness?

  iv. Is there any content validity evidence for Strategy 4: Relationship Management?

Literature Review

Emotional intelligence is a combination of competencies that allows an individual to be aware of, to understand and to be in control of their own emotions, to recognize and understand the emotion of others, and to use this knowledge to foster their own success and the success of others[8]. A person who can manage their behaviours, face changes, can solve problems, capable of building good relationships with others during worrying situations and can communicate with others are those with high EQ[9]. The current study follows the Goleman's Emotional Intelligence Theory. Although Goleman's theory is more applicable within organization setting but his theory focuses on a wider area in an individual's emotional intelligence. His theory includes the four constructs of emotional competence which are self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management. Therefore, the module is mainly constructed using the Goleman theoretical framework.

Meanwhile, findings from a survey showed that many higher education students agreed that financial support lead to stress and that a module to deal with emotional problems was necessary [10]. Besides, 86% of the students at the university mentioned that a module is needed to address the emotional issues that university students are facing.

Other emotional problems intervention studies managed to maintain the positive effects and prevent violence among adolescence in terms of use of aggressive strategies to resolve conflict was significantly reduced[11] whereas emotional competence were found to be significant predictors of changes in perceived stress, mental health, somatic complaints and vigour and confusion[12].

Methodology

This study is a design and development research. An Emotional Competency Module was developed for adolescents. Hence, to check for the content validity, the module was sent to be validated to 7 professionals with experience in dealing with emotional issues among adolescents and also in developing modules[13] [14]. According to Yaghmale (2003), having around 5 to 10 field experts is more suitable to measure the content validity[15].

Research Sampling: The samples of this study consisted of 7 professionals with experience in handling adolescents with emotional or/and delinquent behaviours. Five of them are counselling or psychology lecturers from Sultan Idris Education University, National University Malaysia, International Islamic University Malaysia and Putra University of Malaysia. Meanwhile, other experts who were recruited worked at a setting in which they have to deal with adolescents behaviours. Some of them include a counselling teacher at a secondary school, a Welfare Department Assistant Officer and a psychology officer at a juvenile delinquent rehabilitation center.

Research Instruments: There are three criterias for checking for validity of items which are, a) The content measures what it's supposed to measure, b) The items do not underrepresent the content required, c) Items represent what the researcher meant to measure[16]. A rating scale based on this is constructed to be evaluated by the experts. This rating scale was back-to-back translated and underwent face validity before it was given to the experts.

Data Analysis

An inter-rater reliability analysis for the 7 experts ratings was conducted. The results showed that the reliability of the experts ratings was high. A descriptive analysis was conducted based on the percentage of rating

for each activity as well as the overall module by the experts. The results are stated in the research findings. A validity rating of 70% for the content validity of a module is considered high[17][18].

Research Findings

Table 1: Content validity analysis results of module activities

	Activity: Theme	Total Score	Percentage of Validity (%)
	Theme 1: Self-Awareness	**342**	**81.43**
1	The Emotional Brain: Psycho-biology of emotions	55	78.57
2	Emoticons: Understanding emotions	56	80.00
3	ABC: Emotion rationalization	57	81.43
4	This Is Me: Self-acceptance	57	81.43
5	Triple Vision: Self-efficacy/Resilience	56	80.00
6	The Best Version of Yourself: Self-esteem	61	87.14
	Theme 2: Self-Management	**507**	**80.48**
1	Emotional Map: Emotion regulation	57	81.43
2	Breathing Technique: Controlling emotions	58	82.86
3	POP!: Stress management	52	74.29
4	Pressure Cooker: Stress management	59	84.29
5	Time Flies: Stress management/Time management	55	78.57
6	My Spiritual Coping: Stress management	56	80.00
7	Progressive Muscle Relaxation: Stress management	57	81.43
8	Weigh Me Up: Self-motivation	57	81.43
9	Move It!: Self-motivation	56	80.00
	Theme 3: Social Awareness	**281**	**80.29**
1	One Day: Social responsibility	56	80.00
2	Empathy: Empathy	58	82.86
3	Colourful Emotions: Empathy	59	84.29
4	Life Tree: Social respect	55	78.57
5	Colours of Malaysia: Social respect	53	75.71
	Theme 4: Relationship Management	**286**	**81.71**
1	Sherlocking: Communication skills	55	78.57
2	Let's Win: Assertive skills	58	82.86
3	Maze Runner: Teamwork	56	80.00
4	Rabbits and Hyenas: Dealing with criticism	60	85.71
5	Sorry Sorry: Emotion expression	57	81.43

Table 1 shows that all the module activities has a high percentage of content validity results. Overall, the 'POP!' activity in the self-management theme received the lowest percentage of validation rating which is 74.29% whereas 'The Best Version of Yourself' activity which focuses on enhancing self-esteem received the highest rating which is 87.14%. Obtaining 70% for the content validity of a module is considered high[19]. Hence, all the activities are accepted and presumed to be effective in enhancing the self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management skills of participants.

Table 2: Overall module validity analysis results

	Overall Module Content Validity Results	Percentage
1	This module covers for the target population.	84%
2	This module can be implemented successfully.	88%
3	Time allocated to the individuals to complete the module was sufficient and appropriate.	80%
4	The emotional competence of the adolescent was enhanced after the completion of the module.	88%
5	This module is capable of enhancing the emotion competence.	88%
	Total Content Validity	85.6%
	Inter-rater reliability (α = 0.606)	

Based on Table 2, a high validity of 85.6% for the overall module was calculated. Hence, it can be concluded thus far in the research that the module developed is appropriate to be implemented to enhance adolescents' emotional competence.

According to inter-rater reliability the α = 0.606, indicate that there was fair agreement among the rater analysis on the module contents.

Discussions, Implications And Suggestions

The development of this module can aid the Malaysian Youth Policy that helps prepare youths to lead the nation by empowering their emotional competency skills. Besides, the module will also be a tool for psychologists or counsellors as well as other mental health professionals to implement this module for adolescents identified with emotional competency issues. Numerous social problems happen today that start from less serious cases such as coming late to school, skipping class, breaking rules, followed by serious cases such as disobeying teachers, smoking, participating in impulsive behaviors that has been reported by the mass media almost every day [20]. It is quite challenging to handle such numerous number of adolescent involving in problems in Malaysia. In accordance to this, many areas related to adolescent delinquency problems have been investigated by researchers[21]. The Emotional Competency module is developed to meet the challenge to work with vulnerable youth to develop their emotional health. The four main emotional domains are used to assess the emotional competency levels of adolescents in this study, and the valid and inter validity shown the higher (85%) of validity score. The contents of the module are valid with the inter reliability of experts (0.90). activities are most useful and inspire way to practically build up the emotional competency skills[22]

Findings provide evidence that the Emotional Competency Module is suitable to be implemented for adolescents to help enhance their emotional competence level. This is also similar to the Emotional Intelligence Module (EeiM) which also revealed good content validity[23]. Future suggestions for the research would include that testing the module on a wider scale whereby adolescents' population from different background such as juvenile delinquency center, international secondary schools and private institutions can become the participants. Besides, this module can certainly be modified for use for differently abled adolescents.

Conclusion

The Emotional Competency Module has a high validity of 85.6% for the overall module which shows that it is suitable to be used for the adolescent population in Malaysia. Hence showing evidence that the Emotional Competency Module can help enhance the emotional competence of adolescents.

Acknowledgment

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