COGNITIVE SCIENCES AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Development and Validation of an Instrument Measuring Cyberbullying Among Malaysian Youths

Akmar Hayati Ahmad Ghazali[1,2*], Asnarulkhadi Abu Samah[1,3], Siti Zobidah Omar[1,2], Haslinda Abdullah[1,3], Aminah Ahmad[1], Hayrol Azril Mohamed Shaffril[1]

[1]Institute for Social Science Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia
[2]Faculty of Modern Language and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia
[3]Faculty of Human Ecology, Universiti Putra Malaysia

ABSTRACT

This study sought to develop and validate an instrument measuring cyberbullying among Malaysian youths. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was employed to determine the best sub-factors and items for the instrument, while confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to test and validate the measurement model. Results from EFA on 38 items showed that the items were pooled into four sub-factors. Meanwhile, results from CFA indicated that eight items had to be discarded in order to confirm that the model was fit. Overall, the final version of the instrument consisted of four cyberbullying sub-factors, namely, impersonation (13 items), cyberstalking and harassment (nine items), flaming (four items), and elimination (four items).

Keywords: Instrument development; Youths; Cyberbullying; Youth development

INTRODUCTION

Cyberbullying can be understood as intentional and repetitive harmful behaviour through the use of information and communication technology (Smith et al., 2008). Compared to traditional bullying, cyberbullying has a higher tendency to be committed by youths as the virtual world offers them advantages such as an extra degree of protection and an anonymous identity (Balakrishnan, 2015). As a result, those who do not dare to commit traditional bullying might arguably turn to cyberbullying (Mohamad Salleh & Zainal, 2014). In Malaysia, cyberbullying is a matter of utmost concern. A recent cyber-safety campaign found that 83% of young people in Malaysia were vulnerable to online risks due to minimal protective actions, while 70% identified themselves as being subjects to various forms of online harassment (Digi, 2015). In another