

Development of Self-Awareness and Self-Management Instruments for Children to Support Physical Bullying Intervention

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Abstract

Physical bullying in school-age children hurts emotional development and self-regulation skills. Self-awareness and self-management are two core competencies in building children's psychological resilience. However, contextually relevant measurement instruments remain limited. This study aimed to develop and validate a culturally appropriate instrument to measure self-awareness and self-management in school-age children based on the CASEL framework. A Research and Development (R&D) approach was employed, involving indicator development grounded in relevant theory and literature, content validity assessment by two experts (a pediatric nursing expert in child psychosocial development and an educational psychology expert in psychosocial measurement), and psychometric testing. The instrument was tested on 210 children aged 9-11 years. Construct validity was examined using Exploratory Factor Analysis, and internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. The final instrument comprises 58 valid and reliable items grouped into two main constructs and ten underlying factors. This instrument is suitable for further application in assessing self-awareness and self-management among school-age children who experience bullying.

Keywords: Bullying intervention, children, instrument development, self-awareness, self-management

Introduction

Physical bullying is one of the most common forms of violence experienced by elementary school children. It can take the form of hitting, kicking, pushing, or other painful and repeated physical treatment (Radwan et al. 2021). Various studies show that children who are victims of physical bullying are at high risk of experiencing psychological disorders, such as anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and difficulties in social interaction.(Armitage 2021; Samara et al. 2020; Zhong et al. 2021). In addition, physical bullying can inhibit the development of essential self-regulation skills in the face of environmental pressures (Huang, Ho, and Cheung 2024). Taken together, these findings indicate that physical bullying not only produces immediate psychological harm but also undermines children's emotional regulation and adaptive functioning over time. Therefore, strengthening and accurately assessing self-awareness and self-management skills is a critical foundation for understanding children's resilience and informing effective bullying intervention strategies.

One effective approach to building children's psychological resilience is strengthening their social-emotional competencies, particularly self-awareness and self-management. Problems commonly experienced by young children include maladjustment, egocentric behaviour, aggressiveness, anxiety, and a tendency to withdraw from social interactions, which may lead to behavioral problems and hinder optimal social-emotional development (Wirahandayani, Rakhmawati, and Arum 2023). These difficulties indicate that children who lack adequate social-emotional competencies are more vulnerable to psychosocial stressors and environmental challenges. These two competencies are core components of the five domains of social-emotional learning proposed by Goleman (1995) and further conceptualized by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning(CASEL).Self-awareness refers to children's ability to recognize their emotions, develop self-confidence, and maintain accurate self-perception, while self-management involves regulating emotions,

making responsible decisions, demonstrating persistence, and adapting behavior to social contexts (Gimbert et al. 2023). Together, these competencies play a crucial role in enabling children to respond adaptively to stress and social challenges, highlighting the importance of systematically assessing these domains. Consequently, the development of valid and reliable instruments is necessary to accurately measure self-awareness and self-management in school-age children.

In a survey conducted by the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) and the Federation of Indonesian Teachers' Unions (FSGI), there were 398 cases of bullying behavior recorded between 2020 and 2022, with physical bullying being one of the most dominant forms occurring in the school environment (Marhaely et al. 2024). The results of the study by Wicaksono et al., (2022), the incidence of physical bullying in Indonesia ranks first compared to other types of bullying that occur in elementary school students aged 10-12 years. This data highlights the high need to understand the psychosocial conditions of child victims in more depth, as well as the need for appropriate measurement tools. Without the right assessment tools, intervention efforts or mentoring programs for child victims of bullying are often not based on the child's specific needs. Social emotional competencies such as self-awareness and self-management are very important to strengthen children's psychological resilience. Therefore, the absence of valid and culturally appropriate instruments is an important gap that needs to be filled through this research.

Several studies have emphasized the importance of social emotional instruments for children. A study by Prabawati et al. (2023) explains that strengthening emotional competence and emotional regulation through appropriate assessments has an impact on reducing negative behavior at school. A study by (Denham et al. (2016) that to design effective interventions must begin with an assessment of emotional maturity. Research by Samara et al. (2020) and Müller et al. (2020) developing a social emotional competence measurement tool in preschool children, and identifying various measurement tools to measure social emotional competence

in school children, but they are still general and have not been specifically directed at the population of elementary school children who experience psychosocial risks due to physical bullying. This indicates a gap in the availability of instruments that are not only theoretically valid, but also specifically measure children's self-awareness and self-management in the context of physical violence experiences at school. Therefore, the development of instruments that are contextual and focus on the social emotional dimensions related to resilience to bullying is an urgency in the education and nursing of children in Indonesia.

This study was developed to provide an initial instrument that can serve as a foundation for the psychosocial assessment of school-age children. The instrument not only measures general social-emotional competencies but is also intended to support the planning of more targeted interventions for children who are at risk of or have experienced physical bullying. This approach is grounded in the CASEL framework, which has been widely applied internationally in the development of social-emotional competencies. Accordingly, this study aimed to develop and examine the validity and reliability of an initial instrument for measuring self-awareness and self-management in elementary school-age children as a basis for psychosocial interventions for victims of physical bullying.

Although several instruments are available to assess children's social-emotional competencies, most existing measures focus on broad domains and are not specifically designed to guide psychosocial interventions for children exposed to physical bullying. In addition, many widely used instruments were developed in Western contexts and may not fully reflect culturally relevant expressions of self-awareness and self-management in school-age children. Furthermore, existing tools often function primarily as screening or descriptive measures, limiting their applicability in intervention planning. Therefore, a contextually relevant and intervention-oriented instrument is needed to specifically assess self-awareness and self-management as key protective factors for children affected by physical bullying. This study addresses this gap by developing and

validating an instrument that supports both psychosocial assessment and intervention planning in school-age children.

Research Method

This research is a research and development (R&D) study that aims to compile and test the validity and reliability of the initial instrument to measure self-awareness and self-management in elementary school children. The R&D approach has been widely applied in previous studies for the development and validation of measurement instruments, especially in educational and psychological research (Borg & Gall, 1989; Creswell, 2018). The development model used refers to the stages of instrument development, including compilation of constructs and indicators, content validation, trials, and psychometric analysis.

This study focuses on two main constructs, namely: 1) Self-awareness, with subdimensions: emotional self-awareness, accurate self-awareness, and perceived self-confidence; 2) Self-management, with subdimensions: decision self-control, trustworthiness, adaptability, conscientiousness, and Achievement-Motivation. The sampling technique used was total sampling, which involved all elementary school students in grades 4-5 who met the inclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria for subjects were active students in grades 4-5, aged 9-11 years, able to read and understand the questionnaire questions, and received approval from parents/guardians. The number of subjects obtained was 210 students. The study was conducted from 14 April to 28 April 2025 at a private elementary school in Jambi City. The study location was selected because it represented the target age group for instrument development, enabled full access to the study population through total sampling, and had granted official permission to conduct the instrument trial.

The initial instrument developed consisted of 131 items, divided into: 71 items for self-awareness and 60 items for self-management. Constructs and indicators were arranged based on the CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning) framework and relevant literature. Content

validation was carried out by two experts (child educational psychology and child nursing) using the Item Content Validity Index (I-CVI), as recommended for assessing expert agreement in instrument development studies (Lynn 1986; Polit and Beck 2006). Each expert independently rated the relevance of each item using a four-point scale (1=not relevant, 2=somewhat relevant, 3=relevant, and 4=highly relevant). The I-CVI for each item was calculated as the proportion of experts assigning a rating of 3 or 4, indicating adequate content relevance.

After validation, a trial was conducted on 210 children and construct validity analysis using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), and reliability using Cronbach's Alpha. Data collection was carried out directly at school after obtaining permission from the school and written consent from parents. Children filled out the questionnaire in about 30–40 minutes with the guidance of teachers and researchers. Data were coded and analyzed using SPSS version 25. The analysis stages include: Item feasibility test (communality and item-total correlation), Exploratory Factor Analysis with Principal Axis Factoring and Promax rotation, and reliability test with Cronbach's Alpha on each subdimension. This study has received ethical approval from the Health Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, University of Jambi with number: 888 / UN21.8 / PT.01.04 / 2025.

Results

This study produced a series of findings related to the development, content validation, and validity and reliability testing of initial instruments to measure self-awareness and self-management in elementary school-aged children.

Content Validation Results

The initial instrument consisted of 131 statement items, which included 71 items for self-awareness covering three dimensions and 60 items for self-management covering six dimensions. Content validation was conducted by two experts in the field of child educational psychology and

pediatric nursing. The involvement of two validators was considered methodologically appropriate because content validity using the Item Content Validity Index (I-CVI) can be adequately established with two experts when they possess complementary domain expertise and substantial professional experience. According to Lynn (1986) and Polit and Beck (2006), the use of two three subject-matter experts is acceptable in early-stage instruments development, particularly when the focus is on evaluating item relevance and conceptual clarity. The selected experts were chosen based on their academic qualifications, clinical and educational experience with school-age children, and direct involvement in child development and psychosocial care. Content validity was assessed using the I-CVI, and items with an $I-CVI \geq 0.80$ were retained as content valid.

In addition to quantitative content validity assessment, qualitative feedback was obtained from both experts during the consultation process. The experts generally agreed that the items were conceptually relevant and appropriate for measuring self-awareness and self management in elementary school-aged children. Several items were revised to improve wording clarity, age appropriateness, and cultural relevance, particularly to ensure that the statements could be easily understood by children aged 9–11 years. A small number of items were identified as redundant or overlapping in meaning and were refined prior to the field trial. Overall, the expert consultation confirmed that the instrument had adequate content representation before proceeding to construct validity testing.

The results show that all items obtained an I-CVI value ≥ 0.80 , with an average I-CVI on the self-awareness instrument of 0.94 and self-management of 0.89. This indicates that all items have been considered relevant to the construct being measured and are worthy of being continued to the stage of construct validity and empirical reliability testing through field trials. The average I-CVI value of the self-awareness and self-management instruments can be seen in table 1.

Table 1. Average I-CVI Initial Instrument Self-Awareness and Self-Management

Instruments	Number of Items	I-CVI Range	Average I-CVI
Self Awareness	71	0.83 – 1.00	0.94
Self Management	60	0.83 – 1.00	0.89

Data Feasibility Test for EFA

The data feasibility test for exploratory factor analysis (EFA) showed that the data were worthy of further analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) results for the self-awareness instrument showed values between 0.805 and 0.886 on the three dimensions of the self-awareness construct, indicating that the sample adequacy level was in the good category, and for self-management showed values between 0.696 and 0.913 on the six dimensions of the self-management construct, indicating that the correlation between pairs of items was high enough to conduct EFA. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ($p < 0.001$) on both instruments. This indicates

that the correlation between items is not random and latent factors can be identified through exploratory factor analysis

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) Results

The initial instrument consisted of 131 items (71 self-awareness and 60 self-management). However, the results of the EFA analysis showed that 73 items did not meet the statistical criteria (loading < 0.40 and low communality), so they were removed from the model. After elimination, 58 valid items were obtained, which were spread across 3 dimensions for self-awareness and 6 dimensions for self-management, in accordance with the referred theoretical constructs. The final number of each subdimension and its reliability value are presented in Tables 2 and 3. The factor structure of the EFA results showed the stability of the model and the representation of the concept according to the CASEL theoretical framework. No significant double loading was found, and the factor loading was in the range of 0.42–0.82.

Table 2. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) Results of Self Awareness Construct (n=210)

Dimensions	Initial number of items	Valid items	Number of Factors	KMO	Bartlett's Test (p)	Variance	Loading Factor	Alpha Cronbach
Emotional Self Awareness	31	7	1	0.886	< 0.001	54.37	0.688-0.832	0.892
Accurate Self Awareness	22	8	2	0.805	< 0.001	58.87	Factor 1: 0.589-0.721 Factor 2: 0.626-0.791	0.723 0.740
Perceived Self Confidence	18	9	2	0.855	< 0.001	60.23	Factor 1: 0.573-0.805 Factor 2: 0.606-0.764	0.798 0.816

Based on Table 2. The results of the self-awareness construct show that the Self-Awareness instrument shows good construct validity. All dimensions have a KMO value > 0.800 , which indicates strong sample adequacy for factor analysis. Emotional Self-Awareness consists of 7 items with 1 dominant factor, loading a variance of 54.37% and very high reliability ($\alpha = 0.892$). Accurate Self-Awareness produces 2 factors: Realistic Self-Appraisal and Feedback Awareness, with a cumulative variance of 58.87% and adequate reliability ($\alpha = 0.723$ and 0.740). Perceived Self-Confidence also forms 2 main factors: Assertive Confidence and Self-Doubt, explaining 60.23% of the variance with good reliability ($\alpha = 0.798$ and 0.816).

Table 3. Self-Management Factor Structure Based on EFA (n = 210)

Dimensions	Initial number of items	Valid items	Number of Factors	KMO	Bartlett's Test (p)	Variance	Loading Factor	Alpha Cronbach
Decision self Control	16	11	1	0.913	< 0.001	50.54	0.540-0.808	0.901
Trustworthiness	8	4	1	0.696	< 0.001	53.45	0.518-0.695	0.706
Conscientiousness	10	4	1	0.776	< 0.001	59.6	0.667-0.722	0.774
Adaptability	10	8	1	0.890	< 0.001	45.45	0.593-0.715	0.867
Achievement-Motivation	16	7	1	0.903	< 0.001	50.05	0.629-0.786	0.874

Based on Table 3. The Self-Management Instrument is proven to be valid and reliable. All dimensions show a KMO value ≥ 0.696 and the Bartlett test results are significant ($p < 0.001$), indicating the adequacy of the sample and correlation between pairs of items that are worthy of factor analysis. Decision Self-Control: 11 items, 1 factor, variance 50.54%, very high reliability ($\alpha = 0.901$). Trustworthiness: 4 items, 1 factor, variance 53.45%, sufficient reliability ($\alpha = 0.706$). Conscientiousness: 4 items, 1 factor, variance 59.6%, good reliability ($\alpha = 0.774$). Adaptability: 8 items, 1 factor, variance 45.45%, high reliability ($\alpha = 0.867$). Achievement-Motivation: 7 items, 1 factor, 50.05% variance, high reliability ($\alpha = 0.874$). All factor loadings were above 0.40, indicating a strong contribution of each item to the factor. No significant cross-loading was found, and the factor structure was consistent with the initial theoretical framework.

Reliability Analysis

The results of the reliability test show that all dimensions in the Self-Awareness construct have good to very high internal consistency. All dimensions in the Self-Awareness construct are declared reliable, with Cronbach's Alpha at 0.723 to 0.892. This shows that the measuring instrument has good internal consistency and can be used to assess aspects of self-awareness reliably in the context of research and practice. In the self-management reliability test, all dimensions in the Self-Management construct have adequate to very strong reliability (0.706-0.901). This shows that the items in each dimension have good

internal consistency in measuring aspects of self-management. No items were found with a negative correlation to the total score. This shows that each dimension has adequate internal consistency and can be relied on for repeated measurements.

In general, this study found that the initial instrument developed has met good psychometric criteria, both in terms of content validity, factor structure, and reliability. This strengthens the potential use of this instrument in the context of initial assessment as a foundation for psychosocial interventions for children who are victims of physical bullying in the future.

Discussion

Overview of Instrument Development and Psychometric Properties

This study successfully developed and validated an instrument to measure self-awareness and self-management in elementary school-aged children who are victims of physical bullying. The instrument comprises two main constructs with multiple dimensions, and its underlying structure was empirically identified through exploratory factor analysis. The findings from the factor analysis and reliability testing collectively demonstrate that the instrument has a stable structure and satisfactory internal consistency across all dimensions. These results indicate that the instrument is psychometrically sound and suitable for use in psychosocial assessment among school-age children.

Comparison with Previous Studies and

Theoretical Support

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research by Coelho & Sousa (2021) and Malti et al. (2021), which reported that social-emotional instruments grounded in strong theoretical frameworks tend to exhibit stable factor structures and good reliability when applied in school setting. Similar evidence was reported by D'Urso et al. (2022) in Irish primary schools, who found that children exposed to bullying showed impairments in emotional regulation and increased behavioral and social difficulties. The findings highlight the importance of having a valid and reliable instrument capable of identifying self-awareness and self-management capacities to support early psychosocial intervention.

Furthermore, Morton et al. (2022) emphasizes the necessity of conducting local validation of social-emotional instruments to ensure cultural relevance and accurate interpretation of assessment results. The instrument developed in this study was specifically adapted to the Indonesian cultural context and to the lived experiences of children who experience physical bullying. This contextual adaptation enhances the relevance and applicability of the instrument for use in both research and practice within similar sociocultural settings.

Alignment with Emotional Intelligence and Resilience Theory

This study is theoretically grounded in Goleman (1995) emotional intelligence model, which identifies self-awareness and self-regulation as core components of emotional development. Consistent with this framework, previous studies have shown that the ability to recognize and understand one's own emotions plays a critical role in reducing the psychological impact of bullying (Divecha & Brackett, 2020). Recent empirical evidence further supports these findings, indicating that emotional self-awareness, accurate self-awareness, and decision self-control contribute significantly to children's resilience when facing social pressure and adverse experiences, including bullying (Lin, Zhang, and Kuo 2024; Yang, Zhou, and Wang

2024).

Interpretation of Factor Structure and Dimensional Findings

The factor exploration results revealed a structure that is consistent with both theoretical expectations and the contextual characteristics of children who experience physical bullying. Emotional Self-Awareness emerged as a single coherent factor, reflecting children's capacity to recognize emotions such as fear, anger, and sadness. Accurate Self-Awareness was represented by subdimensions related to realistic self-appraisal and feedback awareness, suggesting variability in children's ability to evaluate themselves and respond to external input. Similarly, the Self-Confidence dimension encompassed both assertive confidence and self-doubt, illustrating the emotional instability often observed in children who are victims of bullying.

Within the self-management construct, all dimensions including decision self-control, adaptability, and achievement motivation demonstrated coherent conceptual meaning. These findings suggest that although children who experience bullying may face emotional and behavioral challenges, they still retain capacities for self-regulation and motivation that can be strengthened through appropriate psychosocial support.

Implication for Practice and Psychosocial Interventions

Overall, the development of this instrument contributes to pediatric nursing and educational practice by providing a valid, reliable, and contextually appropriate tool for psychosocial assessment. The instrument can support nurses, teachers, and psychologists in conducting early screening, identifying individual strengths and vulnerabilities, and designing targeted interventions for children who are victims of physical bullying. Considering that the impact of physical bullying extends beyond physical harm to disrupt children's emotional and social development, comprehensive assessment of self-awareness and self-management is essential to enhance the effectiveness of

nursing interventions and character education programs.

Limitations and Future Directions

Despite the promising findings, several limitations of this study should be acknowledged. First, the instrument was tested in a single school setting, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to broader populations of elementary school-age children. Second, the cross-sectional design did not allow for examination on changes in self-awareness and self-management over time. Third, reliance on self-report measures may have been influenced by children's developmental level and social desirability bias.

Future research is recommended to further validate this instrument in more diverse educational and cultural contexts and to involve larger and more heterogeneous samples. Longitudinal studies are needed to examine the sensitivity of the instrument in detecting developmental changes and evaluating the effectiveness of psychosocial interventions. In addition, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) should be conducted to test the stability of the factor structure, and future studies may incorporate multi-informant approaches, such as parent or teacher reports, to strengthen the robustness of the findings.

Conclusion

This study successfully developed an initial assessment instrument to measure self-awareness and self-management in elementary school children with good validity and reliability. This instrument was compiled based on the theoretical framework of emotional intelligence and has gone through an initial empirical testing process on elementary school children, so it is suitable for use as a measuring tool in the context of education and children's social-emotional development.

The identified factor structure supports the existence of key dimensions such as emotional self-awareness, accurate self-awareness, self-confidence, decision self-control, adaptability, and achievement motivation. These findings contribute to the

development of evidence-based instruments that can be used in the process of psychosocial assessment and character education of children. In the future, this instrument has the potential to be used more specifically in child populations with certain psychosocial risks, such as children who are victims of physical bullying, provided that further validation tests are carried out on the target population.

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