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KIVAEMO: A Creative Social Studies Module for Emotion Management and Anti-Bullying

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KIVAEMO: A Creative Social Studies Module for Emotion Management and Anti-Bullying

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Abstract

Verbal bullying and social exclusion remain significant challenges in junior high schools, affecting students' emotional well-being, social relationships, and learning engagement. Social Studies learning has substantial potential to foster empathy and positive social behavior; however, classroom practices often emphasize cognitive achievement while providing limited opportunities for social-emotional development. This study aimed to develop and evaluate the effectiveness of KIVAEMO, a creative Social Studies module integrating emotional literacy and anti-bullying education into classroom learning. The research employed a Research and Development (R&D) approach adapted from the Sukmadinata model, consisting of needs analysis, product design, module development, expert validation, revision, limited trials, and effectiveness testing. The effectiveness test used a quasi-experimental non-equivalent control group design involving 64 seventh-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Sanggau, West Kalimantan, Indonesia. Data were collected through emotion regulation questionnaires, anti-bullying attitude scales, expert validation sheets, and classroom observation forms. The validation results indicated that the module was highly feasible in terms of content (91%), language (90%), and instructional design (88%). Statistical analysis revealed significant differences between the experimental and control groups in emotion regulation and anti-bullying attitudes ($p < 0.05$), with a strong effect size ($d = 0.76$). Classroom observations also showed increased empathy, greater participation in discussions, and reduced verbal bullying behavior. These findings demonstrate that KIVAEMO is an effective instructional innovation that promotes emotional regulation, empathy, and positive social interaction while supporting bullying prevention efforts in junior high schools. Future studies are recommended to examine its long-term impact across broader educational contexts.

Keywords: Anti-Bullying; Emotional Literacy; Emotion Regulation; KIVAEMO; Social Studies Module

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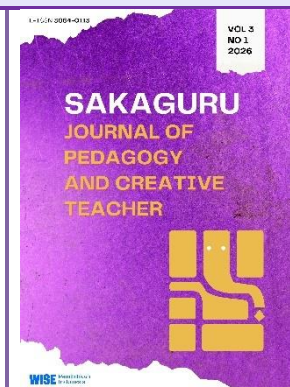
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INTRODUCTION

Bullying remains a major challenge in educational settings worldwide and continues to affect students' psychological well-being, social relationships, and academic achievement. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) reported that approximately one in three students globally has experienced bullying in schools, indicating that school violence remains a significant educational concern [1], [2], [3]. Similarly, UNICEF emphasized that bullying and social exclusion negatively influence students' mental health, learning engagement, and sense of safety within school environments [4], [5], [6]. These findings demonstrate the urgent need for preventive educational interventions that foster positive social interaction and emotional well-being among students.

In Indonesia, bullying continues to be reported across various educational levels [7], [8]. Cases of verbal harassment, social exclusion, ridicule, and intimidation frequently occur among adolescents and often remain unnoticed because they are considered part of ordinary peer interaction [9], [10], [11], [12].

However, repeated exposure to bullying can contribute to low self-esteem, anxiety, emotional distress, and decreased academic motivation [13], [14], [15]. Consequently, schools are increasingly expected to create learning environments that not only support academic achievement but also strengthen students' social-emotional competencies and character development.

At the local level, preliminary observations and needs analysis conducted at SMP Negeri 1 Sanggau revealed that verbal bullying remains a significant concern. The findings indicated that 80% of students had witnessed verbal bullying in school, 28.2% reported having experienced verbal bullying directly, and 65% felt uncomfortable expressing opinions during classroom discussions due to fear of ridicule from peers. In addition, many students demonstrated difficulties in managing emotions when facing social conflicts. These findings highlight the necessity of implementing preventive interventions that strengthen emotional literacy, empathy, and positive social behavior within classroom learning activities.

Social Studies (IPS) education offers substantial opportunities to promote social awareness, empathy, tolerance, and responsible citizenship because it focuses on human interaction, social values, and community life [16], [17], [18]. Through meaningful Social Studies learning, students can develop the ability to understand different perspectives, appreciate diversity, and resolve conflicts constructively [19], [20], [21]. Nevertheless, Social Studies instruction in many schools continues to emphasize cognitive achievement and content mastery, while opportunities to develop emotional literacy and anti-bullying attitudes remain limited.

Previous studies have demonstrated that Social Emotional Learning (SEL) programs effectively improve empathy, emotional regulation, social skills, and prosocial behavior among students [22]. Emotional literacy interventions have also been found to reduce aggressive behavior and support healthier interpersonal relationships [23]. However, most existing interventions are implemented as separate counseling programs, extracurricular activities, or short-term awareness campaigns. Research focusing on the integration of emotional literacy and anti-bullying education directly into Social Studies instructional materials remains limited. As a result, teachers often lack practical and curriculum-based resources that simultaneously support academic learning and social-emotional development.

To address this gap, the present study develops KIVAEMO, a creative Social Studies module that integrates emotional literacy, empathy development, emotion regulation practices, and anti-bullying education into regular classroom instruction. The module incorporates reflective learning activities, contextual social case studies, anti-bullying learning objectives, and the use of the *Dompot Emosi* (Emotion Wallet) as a tool for emotional self-regulation. Unlike conventional anti-bullying programs that operate separately from academic instruction, KIVAEMO embeds social-emotional learning within the learning objectives, materials, activities, and assessments of Social Studies education. This integration represents the primary innovation and contribution of the study.

Therefore, this research aims to (1) develop a valid and practical KIVAEMO module for Social Studies learning and (2) evaluate its effectiveness in improving students' emotion regulation and anti-bullying attitudes. The study contributes to innovative educational practices that integrate academic and social-emotional learning while supporting Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, which promotes inclusive, equitable, and quality education through safe and supportive learning environments. The following section explains the research methodology employed to develop and evaluate the KIVAEMO module.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a Research and Development (R&D) approach adapted from the Sukmadinata development model. The research aimed to develop an innovative Social Studies learning module, namely KIVAEMO, and evaluate its effectiveness in improving students' emotion regulation and anti-bullying attitudes. The development process consisted of needs analysis, product design, module development, expert validation, revision, limited field testing, and effectiveness evaluation. To assess the effectiveness of the developed module, a quantitative quasi-experimental design using a non-equivalent control group design was implemented. This design enabled comparisons between students who learned using the KIVAEMO module and those who received conventional instruction.

Population and Sample

The population of this study consisted of all seventh-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Sanggau during the 2025/2026 academic year. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants based on the similarity of academic characteristics, classroom conditions, and teacher recommendations. The sample included 64 students divided into two groups: Class VII A as the experimental group ($n = 32$) and Class VII

B as the control group (n = 32). Students who regularly attended learning activities throughout the study period were included in the sample.

Location and Timing

The research was conducted at SMP Negeri 1 Sanggau, Sanggau Regency, West Kalimantan, Indonesia. The study was carried out from November 2025 to February 2026. The needs analysis and module development stages were conducted from November to December 2025, expert validation and revision were completed in January 2026, and field implementation and effectiveness testing were conducted in February 2026.

Research Procedure and Instruments

The development of the KIVAEMO module began with a needs analysis to identify students' emotional and social challenges related to bullying behavior. The findings informed the design of learning objectives, instructional materials, reflective activities, student worksheets (LKPD), and the integration of the Dompot Emosi (Emotion Wallet) media. The module was subsequently validated by experts in Social Studies education, instructional design, and language before being revised and tested in classroom settings.

Data were collected using several instruments. First, an emotion regulation questionnaire was administered using a four-point Likert scale to assess students' ability to recognize and manage emotions. Second, an anti-bullying attitude scale was used to measure empathy, prosocial behavior, and students' responses toward bullying situations. Third, expert validation sheets were employed to evaluate the quality of the module in terms of content, language, and instructional design. Finally, classroom observation sheets were used to document students' participation, empathy, peer interaction, and bullying-related behaviors during implementation.

Instrument validity was established through expert review, while reliability testing was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha coefficients. The emotion regulation questionnaire achieved a reliability coefficient of 0.87, whereas the anti-bullying attitude scale achieved a coefficient of 0.85, indicating high internal consistency.

Data Analysis Techniques

Validation data obtained from experts were analyzed using descriptive percentage techniques to determine the feasibility level of the developed module. Quantitative data from the effectiveness test were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics software. Prior to hypothesis testing, data were examined using the Shapiro-Wilk normality test and Levene's homogeneity test. After meeting statistical assumptions, an independent samples t-test was conducted at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ to compare the performance of the experimental and control groups. Cohen's d effect size analysis was also performed to determine the magnitude of the intervention effect. Qualitative observation data were analyzed descriptively by identifying patterns of behavioral change related to empathy, participation, emotional regulation, and bullying prevention during classroom activities.

Impact Evaluation

The success of the KIVAEMO module was evaluated through both quantitative and qualitative indicators. Quantitative indicators included improvements in students' emotion regulation scores and anti-bullying attitude scores measured through post-intervention assessments. Qualitative indicators included reductions in verbal bullying incidents, increased empathy among students, greater participation in classroom discussions, and improved peer interactions. Evaluation data were collected through questionnaires, classroom observations, and follow-up monitoring activities conducted after implementation. The effectiveness of the intervention was determined by statistically significant differences between the experimental and control groups, positive behavioral changes observed during learning activities, and sustained improvements in students' social-emotional competencies.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Result

Students' Needs Analysis

A needs analysis was conducted to identify students' initial conditions related to bullying experiences and emotional challenges in the school environment. The findings revealed that bullying remained a significant issue among seventh-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Sanggau. The results are presented in [Table 1](#).

Table 1. Students' Needs Analysis Results

No.	Indicator	Percentage (%)
1	Students who witnessed verbal bullying at school	80.0

2	Students who felt uncomfortable expressing opinions due to fear of ridicule	65.0
3	Students who experienced verbal bullying directly	28.2

Table 1 shows that verbal bullying remains a significant issue among students. Most students, or 80.0%, reported witnessing verbal bullying at school, while 65.0% felt uncomfortable expressing their opinions because they were afraid of being ridiculed. In addition, 28.2% of students stated that they had directly experienced verbal bullying. These findings indicate the need for learning materials and school programs that strengthen emotional regulation, empathy, and anti-bullying awareness.

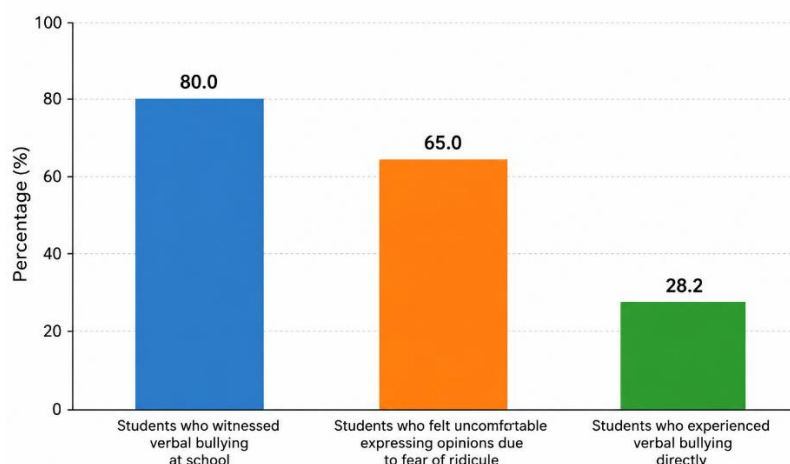


Figure 1. Students' Needs Analysis Results

The findings indicate that verbal bullying was frequently observed within the school environment. More than half of the students reported feeling hesitant to express their opinions during classroom discussions due to fear of negative peer responses. These results highlight the need for instructional interventions that promote emotional literacy, empathy, and positive social interaction.

Validation Results of the KIVAEMO Module

The KIVAEMO module was evaluated by experts in content, language, and instructional design before implementation. The validation results are presented in Table 2.

Evaluation Aspect	Percentage (%)	Category
Content Feasibility	91	Highly Feasible
Language Feasibility	90	Highly Feasible
Instructional Design	88	Highly Feasible

Table 2 presents the results of expert validation of the developed learning product. The content feasibility aspect obtained a score of 91%, language feasibility reached 90%, and instructional design received 88%. All evaluation aspects were categorized as highly feasible, indicating that the product was considered appropriate in terms of content accuracy, language clarity, and instructional organization.

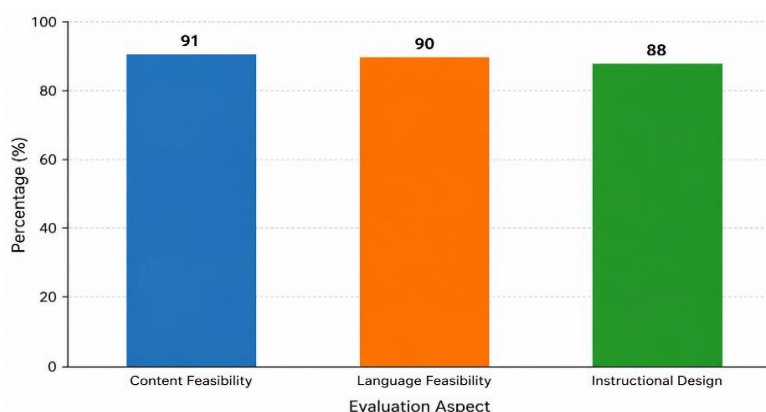


Figure 2. Expert Validation Results

The validation results demonstrate that the module achieved a high level of feasibility in all evaluated aspects. Minor revisions were conducted based on expert suggestions, particularly regarding language clarity and instructional guidance.

Effectiveness Test Results

The effectiveness test involved 64 students divided into an experimental group and a control group. Students in the experimental group participated in learning activities using the KIVAEMO module, while the control group received conventional instruction. The post-test results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Comparison of Post-Test Scores

Variable	Experimental Group Mean	Control Group Mean	t-value	df	p-value	Effect Size (d)
Emotion Regulation	82.4	70.3	4.12	62	0.001	0.76
Anti-Bullying Attitude	85.1	72.6	4.89	62	0.000	0.76

Table 3 demonstrates that the experimental group achieved higher post-test scores than the control group in both measured variables. The mean score for emotion regulation in the experimental group was 82.4, compared with 70.3 in the control group. Similarly, the experimental group obtained a mean anti-bullying attitude score of 85.1, while the control group scored 72.6. The statistical results indicate significant differences between the groups, with an effect size of 0.76, suggesting that the intervention had a substantial effect on students' emotion regulation and anti-bullying attitudes.

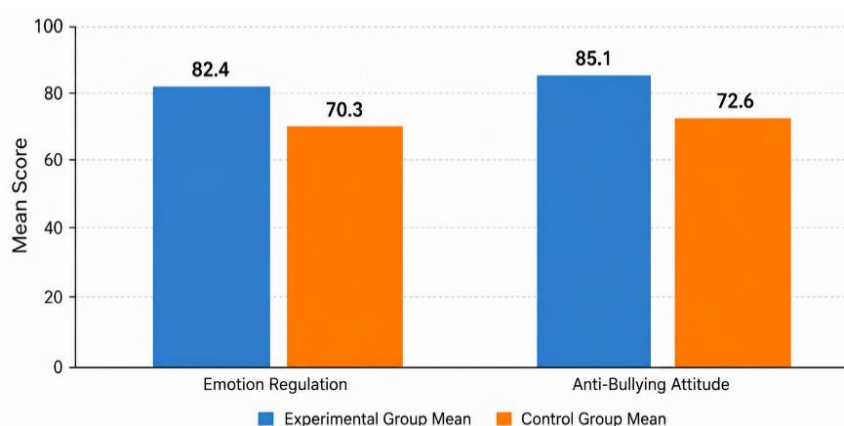


Figure 3. Comparison of Post-test Scores

The results of the normality and homogeneity tests indicated that all assumptions for parametric analysis were satisfied. Independent-samples t-test analysis revealed statistically significant differences between the experimental and control groups ($p < 0.05$). The effect size value ($d = 0.76$) indicates a strong effect of the KIVAEMO intervention on students' emotion regulation and anti-bullying attitudes.

Behavioral Observation Results

Behavioral observations were conducted throughout classroom implementation and follow-up monitoring to identify changes in students' social interactions and participation. The results are presented in Figure 4.

Behavioral Aspect	Before Intervention	After Intervention
 Verbal Bullying	● Frequently observed	● Rarely observed
 Social Empathy	● Limited peer support	● Increased peer support
 Classroom Participation	● Dominated by a few students	● More inclusive participation

Figure 4. Behavioral Observation Results

The [figure 4](#) provides a qualitative comparison of students' behavioral conditions before and after the intervention. The overall pattern indicates a shift from negative and less supportive classroom interactions toward a safer, more empathetic, and inclusive learning environment. The simultaneous improvement across verbal behavior, peer support, and classroom participation suggests that the KIVAEMO module influenced not only individual attitudes but also the broader social dynamics of the classroom. These findings reinforce the module's potential to promote positive peer relationships and create a more supportive classroom climate.

Changes in Bullying and Empathy Levels

To evaluate the sustainability of behavioral change, follow-up monitoring was conducted after implementation. The results are presented in [Table 4](#).

Table 4. Changes in Students' Social-Emotional Indicators

Indicator	Before (%)	After (%)	Monitoring (%)
Mild Bullying	28.2	18.7	10.6
Empathy	56.0	68.0	82.0

[Table 4](#) illustrates positive changes in students' social-emotional indicators after the implementation of the intervention. The percentage of mild bullying decreased from 28.2% before the intervention to 18.7% afterward and further declined to 10.6% during monitoring. Meanwhile, students' empathy increased from 56.0% before the intervention to 68.0% afterward and reached 82.0% during monitoring. These findings suggest that the intervention contributed to reducing bullying behavior and improving students' empathy over time.

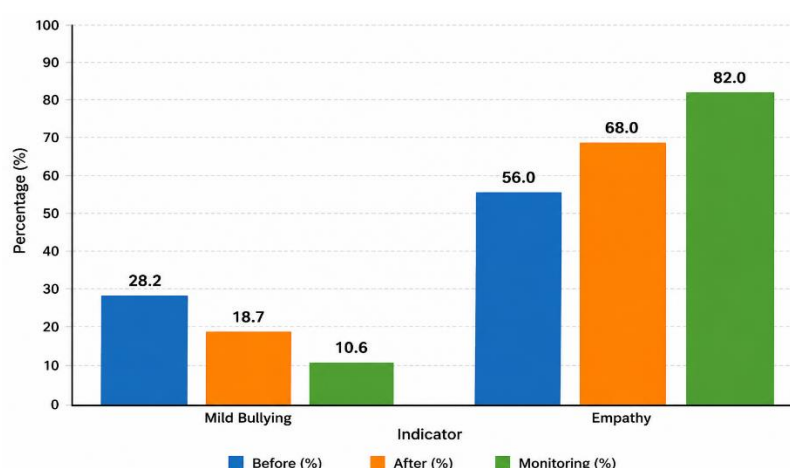


Figure 5. Changes in Students' Social-Emotional Indicators

[Figure 5](#) provides a visual representation of the contrasting trajectories of the two indicators across the assessment stages. The consistently downward pattern of mild bullying and the upward pattern of empathy indicate that the intervention produced a coherent and sustained social-emotional improvement. The continued movement observed during the monitoring stage further suggests that the effects of the KIVAEMO module were maintained beyond the immediate implementation period, reflecting its potential to support lasting positive behavioral development among students.

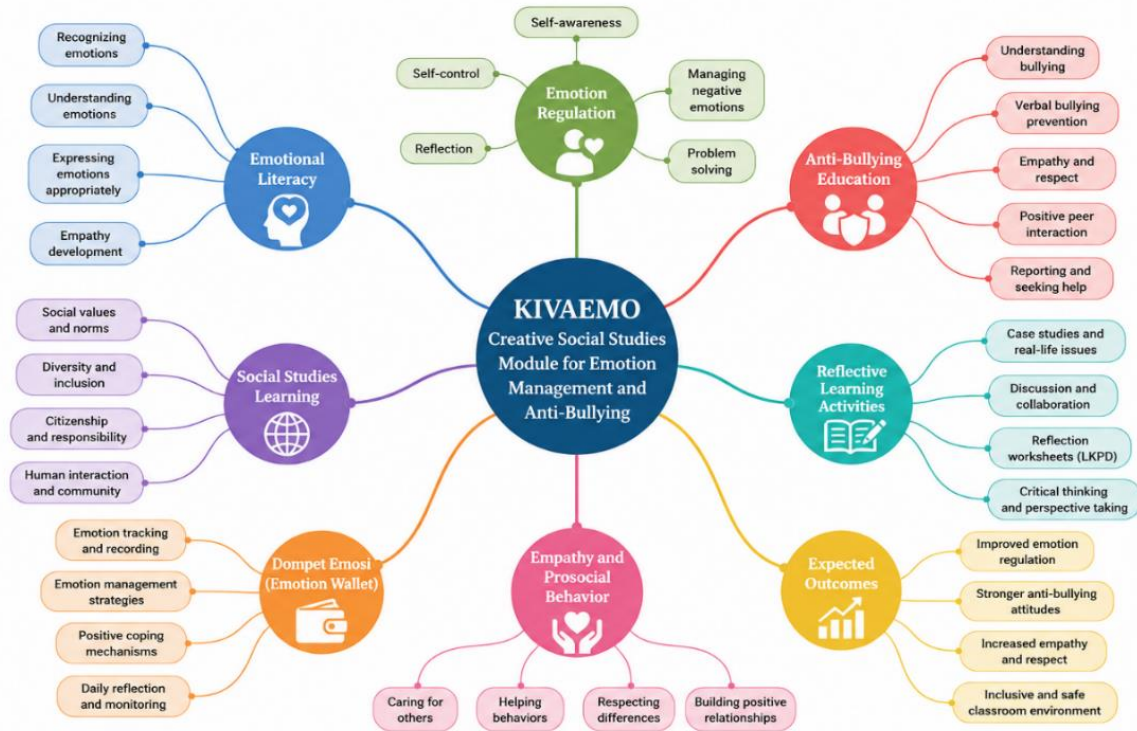


Figure 6. Changes in Students' Bullying and Empathy Levels During Implementation

The figure presents the conceptual structure of the KIVAEMO module as an integrated framework that connects emotional literacy, emotion regulation, anti-bullying education, social studies learning, reflective activities, and prosocial behavior. The interconnection among these components shows that the module is designed to address bullying through both individual and social-developmental pathways. Rather than focusing solely on preventing negative behavior, KIVAEMO combines emotional competence, empathy, reflection, and responsible social interaction to support broader changes in students' attitudes and classroom relationships. This framework also illustrates how learning activities and supporting tools are systematically aligned with the expected development of a safer, more inclusive, and emotionally supportive learning environment.

Discussions

The findings demonstrate that the KIVAEMO module produced meaningful improvements in students' emotion regulation and anti-bullying attitudes. The significantly higher post-test performance of the experimental group, accompanied by a substantial effect size, indicates that the observed differences were not limited to statistical significance but also represented an educationally meaningful intervention effect. These outcomes suggest that social-emotional competencies can be strengthened when emotional literacy and bullying prevention are systematically incorporated into regular subject instruction rather than delivered exclusively through counseling sessions or short-term awareness campaigns. This result supports previous meta-analytic evidence demonstrating that structured school-based social-emotional learning interventions can improve emotional competence, interpersonal skills, and positive social behavior [1], [2].

The improvement in emotion regulation may be explained by the way KIVAEMO provides repeated opportunities for students to identify, label, communicate, and manage their emotions. Emotional regulation does not develop merely through the transmission of information about emotions; it requires students to practise recognizing emotional triggers, evaluating possible responses, and selecting constructive coping strategies. The reflective activities and the Dompot Emosi or Emotion Wallet encouraged students to externalize their emotional experiences and examine them before responding to difficult social situations. This process potentially strengthened self-awareness and self-control, which are central components of emotional intelligence [21], [24]. By helping students pause and reflect before reacting, the module may have reduced impulsive verbal responses that could otherwise develop into ridicule, insults, or interpersonal conflict.

The Emotion Wallet also served as a concrete bridge between abstract emotional concepts and students' everyday experiences. Junior high school students may recognize feelings such as anger,

embarrassment, fear, or disappointment without necessarily possessing the language or strategies required to manage them appropriately. Recording emotions and reflecting on their causes enabled students to transform subjective experiences into objects of learning. This metacognitive process may explain why the intervention affected not only students' understanding of emotional regulation but also their classroom behavior. Consequently, emotion management became a practical routine embedded in learning activities rather than an isolated psychological concept.

The positive development of anti-bullying attitudes can also be associated with the module's emphasis on empathy, perspective-taking, and moral decision-making. Through contextual cases and real-life social issues, students were invited to examine bullying from the perspectives of victims, perpetrators, bystanders, and peers. Such activities allowed students to consider the emotional and social consequences of verbal bullying rather than viewing it as harmless joking. This process reflects Lickona's character education framework, in which moral knowledge must be accompanied by moral feeling and moral action [20], [25]. Understanding that bullying is inappropriate is insufficient unless students are also able to empathize with affected peers and translate that empathy into supportive behavior.

The findings are consistent with studies showing that social-emotional interventions can reduce bullying-related behavior by strengthening empathy, prosocial skills, and responsible decision-making [9], [10]. Previous research has also emphasized that effective bullying prevention requires more than disciplining individual perpetrators. It must address peer norms, bystander responses, emotional competence, and the overall school climate [4], [5], [6]. KIVAEMO addresses these dimensions by combining individual emotional development with collaborative classroom activities. Students were not only taught how to manage their own emotions but were also encouraged to recognize bullying, support peers, seek help, and participate in creating respectful social relationships.

The behavioral observations provide important complementary evidence for the questionnaire and post-test findings. The change from frequently observed verbal bullying, limited peer support, and participation dominated by a small number of students toward less frequent bullying, stronger peer support, and more inclusive participation suggests that the module influenced the social dynamics of the classroom. This is important because improvements in questionnaire scores do not automatically indicate behavioral transformation. The convergence between quantitative outcomes and classroom observations strengthens the interpretation that students began to apply the competencies developed through the module during authentic social interactions.

More inclusive participation may also indicate that students experienced greater psychological safety after the intervention. Before implementation, many students were hesitant to express opinions because of fear of ridicule. In classrooms where negative peer responses are common, students may avoid participation even when they understand the learning material. The decline in verbal bullying and the growth of peer support may therefore have created conditions in which students felt safer contributing to discussions. From a sociocultural perspective, learning develops through interaction, dialogue, and collaborative meaning-making [23]. A supportive classroom environment consequently benefits not only students' emotional well-being but also their opportunities to participate in academic learning.

Changes in classroom interaction can further be interpreted through Bandura's social learning theory [22]. Students learn social behavior by observing others, interpreting the consequences of particular actions, and reproducing behaviors that are socially reinforced. During KIVAEMO activities, respectful communication, empathy, peer support, and constructive conflict resolution were repeatedly modelled and discussed. When these behaviors received positive responses from teachers and classmates, they were more likely to be adopted as acceptable classroom norms. Thus, the effect of the intervention may have extended beyond individual participants by gradually influencing collective expectations regarding how students should communicate and respond to bullying.

The follow-up monitoring results are particularly relevant because they indicate that the behavioral changes continued beyond the immediate implementation stage. Sustained improvement suggests that students did not simply provide socially desirable responses at the end of the learning sessions. Instead, emotional regulation, empathy, and anti-bullying behavior may have become increasingly internalized through repeated application. Previous research has shown that the effects of social-emotional learning are more likely to persist when competencies are practised continuously and reinforced within everyday classroom contexts [2], [9], [12]. Because KIVAEMO is embedded in Social Studies instruction, students have ongoing opportunities to connect emotional and moral competencies with discussions of social values, diversity, citizenship, responsibility, and community life.

Social Studies provides a particularly appropriate curricular context for this integration. Its disciplinary objectives extend beyond the acquisition of factual knowledge and include the development of social awareness, citizenship, responsibility, and constructive participation in society. The KIVAEMO framework strengthens this function by connecting Social Studies content with emotional literacy, empathy, reflective learning, and anti-bullying education. This alignment is consistent with the C3

Framework, which emphasizes inquiry, civic engagement, and responsible participation in social life [24], [25]. Therefore, the module does not introduce social-emotional learning as an additional burden detached from curriculum requirements. Instead, it expands the pedagogical function of Social Studies by linking academic content to students' actual social experiences.

The high expert-validation results further indicate that the module was considered coherent in terms of content, language, and instructional design. Content feasibility suggests that the emotional literacy and anti-bullying materials were relevant to Social Studies objectives, while language feasibility indicates that the module was sufficiently accessible for junior high school learners. Instructional-design feasibility reflects the logical organization of objectives, learning activities, reflection tasks, and assessments. Although expert validation alone cannot establish effectiveness, it provides evidence that the intervention was developed through a systematic process and that its instructional components were appropriately aligned before classroom implementation.

A distinctive contribution of this study lies in the integration of several components that are frequently implemented separately. KIVAEMO combines emotional literacy, emotion regulation, anti-bullying education, reflective case-based learning, prosocial behavior, and the Emotion Wallet within one curriculum-based module. Existing anti-bullying initiatives often operate as school campaigns, counseling services, or stand-alone programs. While these approaches remain valuable, their separation from regular classroom instruction may limit continuity and teacher involvement. KIVAEMO offers an alternative model in which bullying prevention becomes part of the learning process, allowing teachers to reinforce social-emotional competencies through regular instructional routines.

The conceptual framework also shows that the module addresses bullying through interconnected individual and environmental pathways. Emotional literacy and regulation strengthen students' internal capacity to manage reactions, while empathy and prosocial learning shape how they respond to peers. Anti-bullying education develops awareness of harmful behavior and help-seeking strategies, whereas reflective and collaborative activities provide opportunities to practise these competencies. The expected outcome is therefore not merely a reduction in negative behavior but the development of a safer, more participatory, and emotionally supportive classroom environment. This multidimensional orientation is consistent with the view that bullying is a social and relational phenomenon requiring changes in both individual competencies and peer-group norms [3], [6], [12].

Practically, the findings suggest that teachers can contribute to bullying prevention without abandoning academic learning objectives. Contextual cases, guided reflection, collaborative discussion, emotional recording, and perspective-taking activities can be incorporated into Social Studies lessons while still supporting curriculum achievement. Schools may also use the module as a preventive resource rather than waiting until severe bullying incidents occur. However, effective implementation requires teachers to establish clear discussion rules, respond consistently to bullying-related disclosures, and create a classroom atmosphere in which students feel safe expressing emotions and seeking assistance.

At the theoretical level, the study supports an integrative understanding of emotion regulation, character education, social learning, and sociocultural learning. The results indicate that students' social-emotional development emerges through the interaction of internal reflection, moral understanding, behavioral modelling, and collaborative participation. Emotion management supports students' ability to control reactions, empathy guides their interpretation of others' experiences, and classroom interaction provides a social space in which positive behavior is observed, practised, and reinforced. Accordingly, bullying prevention should not be conceptualized only as behavior control but as a developmental educational process.

Nevertheless, the findings should be interpreted within the methodological scope of the study. The quasi-experimental design provides evidence of differences between groups but does not eliminate all possible influences from classroom characteristics, teacher interaction, or peer-group composition. The study was also conducted in one school with a relatively limited sample and implementation period. Further research should examine KIVAEMO across different schools, cultural contexts, educational levels, and longer implementation periods. Future studies could also employ multilevel analysis, student interviews, peer assessments, teacher diaries, and systematic records of bullying incidents to provide a more comprehensive evaluation of how and under what conditions the module produces sustainable effects.

CONCLUSION

This study successfully developed and evaluated the KIVAEMO module as an innovative Social Studies learning resource that integrates emotional literacy, empathy development, emotion regulation, and anti-bullying education into classroom instruction. The findings indicate that the module is valid, practical, and effective in

improving students' emotion regulation and anti-bullying attitudes while fostering positive social behavior and a more inclusive classroom environment. These results demonstrate that integrating social-emotional learning within regular academic instruction can address the limited availability of curriculum-based interventions for bullying prevention and character development. The study contributes to both educational theory and practice by providing evidence that Social Studies learning can serve as an effective platform for strengthening students' social-emotional competencies. Practically, the KIVAEMO module offers teachers a sustainable strategy for promoting empathy, reducing bullying behavior, and creating safe learning environments without requiring additional instructional programs. The findings also support the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, particularly in promoting inclusive, equitable, and quality education through supportive and student-centered learning environments. Despite these positive outcomes, the findings should be interpreted in light of several limitations. The study was conducted in a single school with a relatively limited sample size and a short implementation period, which may affect the generalizability and long-term applicability of the results. Future research is recommended to involve larger and more diverse populations, extend the duration of implementation, and employ longitudinal approaches to examine the sustainability of behavioral and emotional changes. Further studies may also explore the integration of KIVAEMO into different subjects and educational levels, as well as the use of digital learning platforms to expand its implementation and impact.

LIMITATIONS

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the research was conducted in a single junior high school with a relatively limited number of participants, which may restrict the generalizability of the results to different educational settings and socio-cultural contexts. Second, the implementation period was relatively short, limiting the ability to evaluate the long-term sustainability of changes in students' emotional regulation, empathy, and anti-bullying attitudes. Third, some data were collected through self-report questionnaires, which may be influenced by social desirability bias and students' subjective perceptions. Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable evidence regarding the effectiveness of integrating emotional literacy and anti-bullying education into Social Studies learning. The findings offer practical implications for teachers, schools, and educational policymakers seeking to create safer, more inclusive, and emotionally supportive learning environments. The KIVAEMO module may serve as a feasible instructional model for strengthening students' social-emotional competencies while supporting character education and bullying prevention initiatives in schools.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

WA: Conceptualization, methodology, module development, investigation, data collection, formal analysis, data interpretation, visualization, writing—original draft preparation, writing—review and editing, and final approval of the manuscript.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

DECLARATION OF USE OF AI IN SCIENTIFIC WRITING

During the preparation of this manuscript, artificial intelligence (AI) tools were used solely to support language refinement, grammar checking, sentence restructuring, and proofreading. AI-assisted tools were not used to generate research data, conduct data analysis, formulate research findings, or draw conclusions. All research activities, including conceptualization, methodology design, data collection, data analysis, interpretation of results, and manuscript development, were conducted and verified by the author. The author assumes full responsibility for the accuracy, integrity, originality, and scientific validity of the content presented in this article. The use of AI was limited to improving the clarity and readability of the manuscript while maintaining transparency and compliance with academic integrity standards.

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