Using ATLAS.ti Web for Collaborating Qualitative Analysis During Pandemic: Case of Cyberbullying

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ABSTRACT

Cyberbullying is a serious concern in Malaysia and other parts of the world. According to a recent survey by Comparitech (2021), during pandemic times and with the increasing use of the Internet, adults and children alike are more susceptible to becoming victims of cyberbullying with up to a 70% increase in the likelihood of cyberbullying incidents. In this regard, qualitative research was carried out to investigate the adequacy of the laws and policies governing cyberbullying in Malaysia, given there is no specific piece of legislation on cyberbullying in this country (Khairunnisa, 2018). One of the datasets engaged in the study was qualitative interviews involving 19 participants from the regulators, enforcement officers, health officers, advocates and solicitors, non-governmental organizations, and academics, from which nineteen (19) interview transcripts were generated for analysis. Following the restrictions imposed by the government, the researchers faced the challenge of carrying out the analysis by way of a face-to-face meeting. Therefore, they resorted to an alternative by using the computer-aided qualitative software ATLAS.ti Web, which is developed by ATLAS.ti Scientific Software GmbH based in Germany. This paper documents the process undertaken by the researchers in collaboratively analysing the interview transcripts. The process involved six (6) major steps, right from when the researchers created a project in ATLAS.ti Web. First, the researchers added the transcripts into the ATLAS.ti Web application and second, the lead researcher invited the other team members as research collaborators. Third, the coding strategy was determined based on the themes of the study. Fourth, the coding and commenting on the quotations were carried out. The fifth step involved the reduction of codes' overlapping and redundancies. Finally, in the sixth step, the analysis project in ATLAS.ti Web was exported to ATLAS.ti desktop for the purpose of visualisation and reporting. Overall, the researchers involved in the collaborative analysis process reflected on the advantages of harnessing the powers of ATLAS.ti Web for their study. Such advantages could be categorised into three (3) major dimensions. First, the web-based nature of ATLAS.ti Web-enabled the researchers to access the project remotely by using their respective devices while working on the analysis works collaboratively, albeit being at different locations. Second, the real-time mode of ATLAS.ti Web-enabled the researchers to work on the analysis while simultaneously monitoring each other's works. Third, the time and work efficiency garnered by using the application, given the researcher's ability to collaboratively coordinate the coding structure and progress of each other's works of the qualitative data analysis. From the analysis, the study found that since there is no specific law on cyberbullying in Malaysia, there are dispersed laws contained in various statutes that could potentially cover cyberbullying, such as the Communications and Multimedia Act 1998, Penal Code, Computer Crimes Act 1997, and a few others. However, the study further found that these existing laws are inadequate to properly address cyberbullying. Hopefully, the study would lead to future research on the potential of collaborative qualitative analysis using ATLAS.ti Web, particularly in meeting the challenges ahead during pandemic times.

Keywords: ATLAS.ti Web, ATLAS.ti, CAQDAS, Collaborative Analysis, Qualitative Analysis