Prioritizing Pathways Linking Educational Stress to Mental Health Outcomes: A Mixed-Methods Analysis Among Moroccan Students

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

It is unconventional to treat a systematic literature review as a qualitative data source without triangulation through interviews or focus groups. Please clarify how thematic saturation was confirmed solely from literature synthesis and how researcher bias was minimized.

Table 1 presents comprehensive themes but lacks a column linking each theme to mental health outcomes. Adding an interpretive column explaining how each category directly relates to anxiety, depression, or well-being would increase applied clarity.

Themes on academic pressure and parental/societal expectations show conceptual overlap. Consider merging or delineating them more sharply by specifying whether "performance anxiety" pertains to self-imposed standards or familial expectations.

Excellent reporting of concordance, but confidence intervals for mean ranks and an interpretation of effect size magnitude would enhance transparency and statistical rigor.

Figure 1 is mentioned but not presented or described. Ensure the figure includes clear axis labels, legend, and interpretation in the text. If omitted intentionally, remove the reference.

Consider expanding this interpretation by linking to preventive intervention literature—for instance, resilience training as an upstream approach in educational policy—to provide practical implications.

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

1.2.   Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

While software use is noted, details on intercoder reliability or coder validation are absent. Specify whether coding was performed by multiple researchers and how agreement was measured (e.g., Cohen's kappa).

There is no evidence that the questionnaire underwent pilot testing or content validity assessment. Include details on validation procedures, expert review, and Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients.

The description of analysis omits mention of inferential comparisons (e.g., gender, role, or academic level differences). Including subgroup analyses would enhance interpretability and depth.

The discussion effectively aligns with prior studies but could benefit from explicit theoretical integration (e.g., Lazarus & Folkman's transactional model of stress) to move beyond descriptive comparison.

Avoid overgeneralization. Morocco's educational context differs socioeconomically from other MENA regions. Include a brief contextual nuance to avoid assuming cultural homogeneity.

The novelty claim is strong but underdeveloped. Specify how this prioritization model differs from prior frameworks—does it offer new conceptual categories, weighting methods, or empirical validation?

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

2.   Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.
Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.