

Identifying and Ranking Core Elements of Counseling-Based Interventions that Enhance Student Self-Belief and Motivation

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E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The sentence “Counseling-based interventions have become a cornerstone of contemporary educational practice” may be overly broad. Not all educational systems prioritize counseling equally. Adding global variability or references to cross-national differences could strengthen accuracy.

When discussing “group counseling programs designed to help students discover passions and cultivate enthusiasm”, the manuscript lacks a theoretical framework (e.g., Social Cognitive Theory, Self-Determination Theory). Linking these findings to a theory would enhance conceptual depth.

The statement “open, axial, and selective coding procedures were applied” does not include coder training, inter-coder agreement, or steps taken to prevent researcher bias. Additional detail will strengthen the trustworthiness of qualitative analysis.

Table 1 lists concepts, subthemes, and themes, but the narrative does not explain how many codes belonged to each category or how code frequency influenced theme creation. Clarifying this will enhance methodological depth.

The ranking table uses mean scores but does not provide standard deviations, confidence intervals, or statistical significance. Without these elements, the ranking lacks analytical robustness. Add inferential statistics where possible.

The sentence “The ranking results show that Cognitive Empowerment Strategies emerged as the highest-priority element” is purely descriptive. The Discussion should elaborate on why students prioritize cognitive over structural factors, using psychological theories.

The lower ranking of Identity and Self-Concept Development is interesting, but the manuscript only briefly speculates. A deeper critique—such as differences across cultures in identity salience—would significantly strengthen interpretation.

The Discussion repeats findings but does not integrate them into established motivational frameworks (e.g., Self-Determination Theory, Expectancy-Value Theory). Aligning the hierarchy of counseling elements with major theories would enhance scholarly contribution.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The discussion of “school-based bullying prevention programs” highlights positive outcomes but does not address limitations of these studies (e.g., cultural bias, non-experimental design). Adding a brief critique will increase academic rigor.

The paragraph mentioning “virtual counseling for cyberbullying victims” summarizes qualitative findings but does not connect how such virtual elements relate to student motivation, which is central to your study. A tighter conceptual link is recommended.

The manuscript states that “self-esteem and self-concept represent core psychological constructs that shape motivation,” but the explanation lacks references to developmental psychology models (e.g., Erikson, Marcia). Consider integrating identity-development theory.

The sentence “Technology-based counseling models have also contributed to the evolution of motivational interventions” is accurate but too general. The manuscript should specify mechanisms (e.g., interactivity, novelty, ecological validity) through which technology enhances motivation.

The Introduction never explains why Moroccan university students were selected. Adding rationale (e.g., cultural relevance, gaps in local research) will strengthen contextual grounding.

The Methods section states: “Articles were selected based on predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria.” However, these criteria are not listed anywhere. Without them, the qualitative phase cannot be replicated. Please add explicit inclusion/exclusion criteria.

The manuscript states that the survey items were “constructed using the final set of qualitative themes”. Yet no examples of the item wording, number of items, or validation steps (expert review, pilot testing) are provided. These are essential for instrument validity.

The sentence “Using convenience sampling, a total of 260 participants were recruited” presents a threat to generalizability. Discuss why a probability sampling method was not feasible or how bias was minimized.

Although the manuscript states adherence to the Helsinki Declaration, it does not provide the ethical approval code, committee name, or approval date. Journals typically require this information.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.