



The Effectiveness of Self-Control Techniques in Group Counseling to Enhance Learning Motivation among Senior High School Students

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of self-control techniques in group counseling in enhancing the learning motivation of Grade XA students at Sint. Carolus Catholic Senior High School during the 2025/2026 academic year. This study employed a quantitative approach using a quasi-experimental method with a one-group pretest-posttest design. The study population consisted of all Grade XA students at Sint. Carolus Catholic Senior High School, with a sample of seven students selected through purposive sampling based on their learning motivation levels determined using categorization guidelines. Data were collected using a learning motivation questionnaire. Data analysis was conducted using non-parametric statistical analysis through the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test with the assistance of SPSS version 26 for Windows. The results showed a Sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.008. This significance value was considerably lower than the predetermined significance level ($p < 0.05$), indicating that the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted.

Keywords: Self-Control Technique; Group Counseling; Learning Motivation; Senior High School Students

Abstrak: Tujuan yang ingin dicapai dalam penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui efektivitas teknik self-control dalam konseling kelompok untuk meningkatkan motivasi belajar siswa kelas XA SMA Katolik Sint. Carolus Tahun Pelajaran 2025/2026. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah kuantitatif dengan desain eksperimen semu (one-group pretest-posttest design). Populasi dalam penelitian ini adalah seluruh siswa kelas XA SMA Katolik Sint Carolus, dengan sampel sebanyak 7 siswa yang dipilih menggunakan teknik purposive sampling berdasarkan pengelompokan tingkat motivasi belajar melalui pedoman kategorisasi. Instrumen pengumpulan data yang digunakan berupa angket (kuesioner) motivasi belajar. Teknik analisis data yang diterapkan adalah analisis statistik non-parametrik menggunakan uji Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test dengan bantuan program SPSS versi 26 for windows. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan nilai Sig. (2-tailed) sebesar 0,008. Nilai signifikansi tersebut jauh lebih kecil dari taraf signifikansi yang dipersyaratkan ($p < 0,05$), sehingga hipotesis nol (H_0) ditolak dan hipotesis alternatif (H_a) diterima.

Kata kunci: Teknik Self-Control; Konseling Kelompok; Motivasi Belajar; Siswa SMA

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Introduction

Schools play a strategic role in supporting students' development, both in academic achievement and attitude formation. In the learning process, students' achievement is influenced not only by external factors but also by internal conditions, one of which is learning motivation. Learning motivation refers to an internal drive that encourages students to remain enthusiastic, maintain attention, and sustain their engagement in learning activities to achieve the expected outcomes (Amrulloh et al., 2024). Students with strong learning motivation tend to demonstrate greater interest in learning, possess clear achievement goals, and remain persistent when encountering academic difficulties.

Conceptually, learning motivation is understood as a force that encourages students to mobilize their abilities to comprehend learning materials optimally (Aunurrahman, 2011). Nevertheless, maintaining learning motivation in the current context presents a considerable challenge for students. Declining learning motivation is not solely associated with laziness but may also arise from students' limited ability to manage and regulate themselves when facing various forms of distraction in the school and social environment (Munfiatik, 2023).

This issue is consistent with the conditions observed among Grade XA students at Sint Carolus Catholic Senior High School. Based on direct observations conducted by the researcher in September 2025 during classroom learning activities, several indications of low student engagement were identified. Some students appeared less enthusiastic when participating in lessons, became easily tired and bored during learning activities, and showed inadequate preparation before examinations. In addition, some students arrived late for lessons and tended to become discouraged when obtaining unsatisfactory examination results. These various indications suggest that the learning motivation of Grade XA students at Sint Carolus Catholic Senior High School during the 2025/2026 academic year was at a low level.

The observation findings were further supported by an interview with the Guidance and Counseling (GC) teacher at the school. The GC teacher reported that some Grade XA students had experienced a decline in their enthusiasm for learning. This was reflected in their tendency to remain passive during group discussions, postpone task completion, and pay insufficient attention to teachers' explanations. According to the GC teacher, these conditions were associated with students' less-than-optimal ability to regulate themselves and

manage their study time effectively. Their concentration was also easily disrupted by various distractions, particularly the use of mobile devices during learning activities.

In response to these problems, group counseling using self-control techniques can be implemented as an effort to help students strengthen their self-regulation while supporting the improvement of their learning motivation. Group counseling provides students with opportunities to share their experiences, receive support from other group members, and learn to understand and address their difficulties together with peers who face similar challenges.

The application of self-control techniques is conducted gradually by helping students observe their own behavior, identify and evaluate aspects that need improvement, and provide themselves with rewards when they successfully achieve the desired behavioral changes. Through this process, students not only gain an understanding of the importance of self-control but are also trained to develop practical skills for reducing the influence of external distractions, managing emotions, and redirecting their attention toward their academic responsibilities (Kusumawati, 2024).

Based on the theoretical foundation and empirical problems identified at the school, this study was designed to address the following research question: Is the use of self-control techniques in group counseling effective in enhancing the learning motivation of Grade XA students at Sint Carolus Catholic Senior High School during the 2025/2026 academic year? Accordingly, this study aimed to determine the effectiveness of self-control techniques in group counseling in enhancing the learning motivation of Grade XA students at Sint Carolus Catholic Senior High School during the 2025/2026 academic year.

Method

Research Design and Setting

This study employed a quantitative approach using a *pre-experimental design* with a *one-group pretest-posttest design*. The study was conducted at Sint Carolus Catholic Senior High School, located at Jl. Adi Sucipto No. 44, Maulafa District, Kupang City, East Nusa Tenggara, from December 2025 to June 2026. The design involved an initial measurement (*pretest*), an intervention using self-control techniques through group counseling, and a final measurement (*posttest*) to examine changes in students' learning motivation following the intervention.

Participants, Sample, or Data Sources

The study population consisted of 26 Grade XA students at Sint Carolus Catholic Senior High

School during the 2025/2026 academic year. The sample comprised seven students identified as having low levels of learning motivation based on the pretest results and predetermined categorization criteria. Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on characteristics relevant to the research objectives.

Instruments and Measures

Data were collected using a learning motivation questionnaire developed by (Kupu Da, 2025). The instrument was a closed-ended questionnaire consisting of 60 items covering four aspects: achievement drive, commitment, initiative, and optimism. Each item provided four response options: Strongly Appropriate (4), Appropriate (3), Inappropriate (2), and Strongly Inappropriate (1) for favorable statements. The instrument had undergone validity and reliability testing, with a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.819, and was therefore used as the data collection instrument. In addition, an intervention guide for implementing self-control techniques through group counseling was developed by the researcher and reviewed in consultation with the academic supervisors.

Procedure and Research Ethics

Data collection was conducted after permission was obtained from the principal of Sint Carolus Catholic Senior High School and coordination was established with the school's Guidance and Counseling teacher. The research procedure consisted of three stages: pretest, treatment, and posttest. The pretest was administered to all 26 Grade XA students to identify those with low learning motivation. The seven students who met the selection criteria subsequently participated in four group counseling sessions using self-control techniques, with each session lasting 2 × 35 minutes, conducted from May 22 to June 5, 2026. The intervention addressed four aspects of learning motivation: achievement drive, commitment, initiative, and optimism. Following the intervention, the participants completed the same questionnaire as a posttest to measure changes in their learning motivation.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics were used to describe students' learning motivation scores at the pretest and posttest stages. Hypothesis testing was conducted using the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test as a non-parametric statistical procedure. The significance level was set at 0.05, with a p-value < 0.05 indicating a statistically significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores. All statistical analyses were performed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 26 for Windows.

Results and Discussion

Results

Results Pretest

Table 1. Pretest Results Data

NO	Name	Total Score	Category
1	Adriana Vasa Doren	116	Low
2	Agustinus A. Tongge	191	High
3	Andreas Enga Bia	106	Low
4	Apliana Enjela Kolo	195	High
5	Astin Sofia Prilia Fenaïs	125	Moderate
6	Chelsy Margarita Bones	103	Low
7	Clara Angela Sife	112	Low
8	Dan Vano Tantaruru	181	High
9	Elisabth Nengguisa	119	Low
10	Frikenza Rodelus Tlonaen	181	High
11	Giacinta Kesya Metak	189	High
12	Jeni Nitbani	182	High
13	Maria Melani Haki Kafun	149	Moderate
14	Maria Srywinarti Bhекty	189	High
15	Mario Gregorisel Petrus	192	High
16	Marvel Easterly Nubatonis	161	Moderate
17	Melisa Gracia Banunaek	192	High
18	Monika Ehot	186	High
19	Oktovianus Hendro Bau	185	High
20	Reinaldi Kase	183	High
21	Steven Yunus Boimau	114	Low
22	Trisna Wulandari Lema	186	High
23	Vikthoria Bones	185	High
24	Vorges Talaen	118	Low
25	Yohanes Eksel Koa	190	High
26	Yustinus Dappa Tallu	199	High

Based on the pretest results presented in Table 1, of the 26 students, 7 respondents were categorized as having low learning motivation, 3 respondents were in the moderate category, and 16 respondents were in the high category. The seven respondents classified in the low category were subsequently selected as the research participants (Table 2).

Table 2. Learning Motivation Scores of Research Participants

No	Student name	Pretest score	Category
1	Adriana Vasa Doren	116	Low
2	Andreas Enga Bia	106	Low
3	Chelsy Margarita Bones	103	Low
4	Clara Angela Sife	112	Low
5	Elisabth Nengguisa	119	Low

6	Steven Yunus Boimau	114	Low
7	Vorges Talaen	118	Low

For greater clarity, the results are presented in the diagram below.

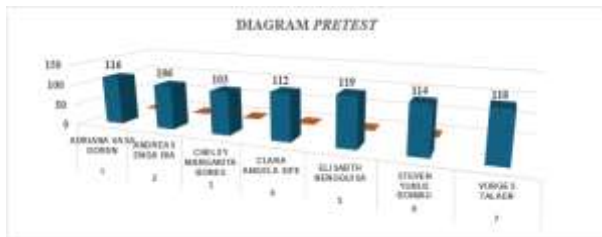


Figure 1. Pretest Score Data

Posttest Results

Table 3. Posttest Results Data

No	Student Name	Posttest Score	Category
1	Adriana Vasa Doren	205	High
2	Andreas Enga Bia	198	High
3	Chelsy Margarita Bones	196	High
4	Clara Angela Sife	200	High
5	Elisabeth Nengguisa	190	High
6	Steven Yunus Boimau	195	High
7	Vorges Talaen	215	High

Based on the posttest results presented in the table above, a substantial increase in learning motivation was observed among all research participants. The seven students who were initially classified in the low category subsequently showed increased learning motivation, with all participants reaching the high category after receiving group counseling services using the self-control technique. These findings indicate that the implementation of group counseling using the self-control technique was associated with increased learning motivation among the students. For greater clarity, the results are presented in Figure 2 below.



Figure 2. Posttest Score Data

Differences Between Pretest and Posttest

Table 4. Pretest and Posttest Scores

N o	Student Name	Pretest Score	Category	Posttest Score	Category
1	Adriana Vasa Doren	116	Low	205	High
2	Andreas Enga Bia	106	Low	198	High
3	Chelsy Margarita Bones	103	Low	196	High
4	Clara Angela Sife	112	Low	200	High
5	Elisabeth Nengguisa	119	Low	190	High
6	Steven Yunus Boimau	114	Low	198	High
7	Vorges Talaen	118	Low	194	High

Based on the comparison data presented in the table above, a substantial change in the level of learning motivation was observed among all research participants. Before the intervention, all seven students were classified as having low learning motivation. However, after receiving group counseling services using the self-control technique, all participants showed increased learning motivation and reached the high category. The shift from the low to high category across all participants indicates that group counseling using the self-control technique was associated with increased students' learning motivation. For greater clarity, the results are presented in Figure 3 below.



Figure 3. Differences in Pretest and Posttest Data

Calculating Descriptive Statistics

a) Overall Pretest Analysis

$$\bar{x}_1 = \frac{\sum x_1}{n_1}$$

$$\bar{x}_1 = \frac{4229}{26}$$

$$\bar{x}_1 = 162,653$$

b) Analysis of Pretest Sample Data

$$\bar{x}(7) = \frac{\sum x(7)}{n_1}$$

$$\bar{x}(7) = \frac{788}{7}$$

$$\bar{x}(7) = 112,57$$

c) Posttest Analysis

$$\bar{x}_2 = \frac{\sum x_2}{n_2}$$

$$\bar{x}_2 = \frac{1381}{7}$$

$$\bar{x}_2 = 197,29$$

d) N-Gain Analysis

$$g = \frac{\text{Posttest Score} - \text{Pretest score}}{\text{maximum score} - \text{Pretest Score}}$$

$$g = \frac{197,29 - 112,57}{240 - 112,75}$$

$$g = \frac{84,71}{127,42}$$

$$g = 0,66$$

Based on the data calculations presented above, the mean N-Gain score was 0.66. This value falls within the coefficient range of $0.30 \leq g \leq 0.70$, indicating that the increase in learning motivation among Grade XA students at Sint Carolus Catholic Senior High School was in the moderate category.

When the N-Gain coefficient of 0.66 is converted into a percentage, the resulting value is 66%. Based on the effectiveness criteria proposed by Meltzer (2002), this percentage falls within the range of 56%–76%, which is classified as moderately effective. The 66% value indicates that the self-control technique implemented through group counseling achieved approximately 66% of the potential improvement in students' learning motivation. The remaining percentage represents room for further development that may be influenced by other internal and external factors beyond the scope of the intervention. Thus, the intervention provided a positive contribution to changes in the learning behavior of Grade XA students at Sint Carolus Catholic Senior High School.

Hypothesis Testing

Table 5. Hypothesis Test Results

Comparison	N	Mean Rank	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Positive Ranks	7	4.00		
Negative Ranks	0	.00	-2.366	.008
Ties	0			

Based on the results of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test, the Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value was 0.008. Since this value is lower than the significance level of 0.05 ($0.008 < 0.05$), the Alternative Hypothesis (H_a)

was accepted. This result is further supported by the Ranks table, which shows that all research participants ($N = 7$) were classified under Positive Ranks, indicating that all students experienced an increase in their learning motivation scores after receiving the intervention. Thus, the implementation of self-control techniques through group counseling was associated with a statistically significant improvement in the learning motivation of Grade XA students at Sint Carolus Catholic Senior High School.

Discussion

The results of the non-parametric Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test showed a Sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.008. This significance value was considerably lower than the predetermined significance level ($p < 0.05$); therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted. This finding indicates a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of learning motivation among Grade XA students at Sint Carolus Catholic Senior High School during the 2025/2026 academic year following the implementation of group counseling using self-control techniques.

The direction of the improvement is further illustrated by the data presented in the Ranks table generated from SPSS. The analysis showed that all seven research participants were classified under Positive Ranks. This indicates that each student experienced an observable increase in learning motivation scores from the initial measurement (pretest) to the final measurement (posttest). Furthermore, the Negative Ranks and Ties values were both zero (0), indicating that none of the students experienced a decrease or stagnation in their learning motivation scores following the intervention. Therefore, the findings consistently indicate that group counseling using self-control techniques was positively associated with the improvement and optimization of learning motivation among students who were initially classified in the low category.

The improvement observed in the students was also related to the group dynamics that developed throughout the counseling process. Grade XA students, who were in the early transition from junior high school to senior high school, initially tended to be reluctant to discuss their learning difficulties. However, the group format provided a supportive environment in which they recognized that their classmates also experienced similar challenges in managing study time. Through the combination of self-control techniques and social support among group members, students became more open to providing feedback and encouraging

one another to reduce impulsive habits, such as playing games and postponing school assignments.

Theoretically, this tendency toward improvement is consistent with Guevara (2005) concept, which describes self-control as an individual's ability to regulate their own behavior in pursuit of specific goals, in this case, academic goals. Through group counseling, students were systematically guided to regulate impulsive urges, manage their time, and establish learning priorities. As students developed greater self-control, they were better able to focus on academic tasks and adapt to the increased academic demands of senior high school. This improved self-regulation may also support the strengthening of students' intrinsic motivation to engage in learning. These findings are further supported by previous research, including Lestari (2020), which reported that students with higher levels of self-control demonstrated more stable learning persistence than students who had greater difficulty regulating their impulses.

The statistical findings collectively demonstrate a measurable change following the intervention. This positive change is further supported by the preceding N-Gain analysis, which yielded an index of 0.66 (66%), indicating that the self-control technique implemented through group counseling reached a moderately effective level in addressing the research problem.

Despite the significant findings, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study employed a one-group pretest-posttest design without a control group. Consequently, the study could not fully control for extraneous variables, such as students' natural maturation or environmental influences outside the counseling sessions, which may have contributed to changes in learning motivation during the study. Second, the sample size was relatively small, involving only seven Grade XA students. This limited sample restricts the generalizability of the findings to broader student populations or schools with different characteristics. Finally, the study assessed the intervention's effects only in the short term through a posttest administered immediately after the intervention, meaning that the long-term maintenance of the effects of self-control techniques on students' learning motivation remains uncertain.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the use of self-control techniques in group counseling was effective in improving the learning motivation of Grade XA students at Sint Carolus Catholic Senior High School during the 2025/2026 academic year. The achievement of the research objective was supported

by the results of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test, which yielded a significance value of 0.008 ($p < 0.05$).

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Author Contributions (Optional)

The authors contributed to the conceptualization, methodology, investigation, data collection, data analysis, interpretation of findings, writing of the original draft, and review and editing of the manuscript. All authors approved the final version of the manuscript.

Generative AI Disclosure

The authors declare that generative AI tools were used only to assist with language refinement and manuscript preparation. The authors remain fully responsible for the accuracy, originality, integrity, and final content of the manuscript.

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