

## Psychosocial Predictors of Academic Boredom among Secondary School Students in Ibadan

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**Abstract.** Boredom has consistently been recognized as a negative emotion that pervades modern society, as it has been seen to have an adverse impact on students' learning and achievement. Understanding the impact of boredom on achievement is at least as important as knowing how students react in a perceived boring situation. The study adopted a descriptive research design of survey type. Two hundred and fifty secondary school students were selected in five schools within the study area using simple random sampling technique. Three research questions were answered and tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis statistical methods at 0.05 level of significant. The findings showed that there was negative significant relationship between teaching style and academic boredom ( $r = -.140, p < 0.05$ ). There was a significant relationship between parental bonding and academic boredom ( $r = .331, p < 0.05$ ). Also, there was significant relationship between interest in schooling and academic boredom ( $r = .329, p < 0.05$ ). However, there was no significant relationship between counseling service and academic boredom ( $r = .141, p > 0.05$ ). The four independent variables jointly accounted for 20.8% variance in predicting academic boredom among secondary school students in Ibadan metropolis. The independent variables made relative contribution to academic boredom in the following order: teaching style (Beta =  $-.282; t = -4.553; p < 0.05$ ); parental bonding (Beta =  $.225; t = 3.807; p < 0.05$ ); interest in schooling (Beta =  $.227; t = 4.290; p < 0.05$ ); while counseling service

(Beta =  $.038; t = .554; p > 0.05$ ) had a weak relative contribution to academic boredom among secondary school students in Ibadan metropolis. This study recommend that parents should ensure that there is a strong bonding between them and their children and/wards as this would make the students to ask for those educational materials they need in school as this would propel them to have more interest in school work and boredom is eradicated.

**Keywords:** Academic Boredom, Parental Bonding, Interest in school, Counselling Service

### 1. Introduction

The standard of education in Nigeria is frequently brought to focus by stake holders in the education industry. This is obviously due to the emphasis placed on education by every nation as a means of economic, social and political development. (Dimkpa, Daisy, Inegbu and Buloubomere, 2013). The rate at which students show interest to education is not encouraging as this has led to low academic achievement and as a result such students get bored in any educational activities. Students have been found to experience a wide range of emotions in academic contexts. D'Mello, Lehman and Person (2010), stated that college/university students do not only experience positive emotions (e.g., curiosity, happiness, and surprise) when doing academic work, but that they also felt a range of negative

emotions, such as boredom, frustration, and anxiety.

Boredom is unpleasant, and has been repeatedly shown to be associated with poor performance and long-term disengagement in educational contexts. For some decades now, there has been a considerable degree of interest regarding student boredom during learning. Many agree that boredom is an unpleasant or negative experience (Harris, 2010; Pekrun, Goetz, Daniels, Stupnisky and Perry, 2010) but propose different potential causes and effects of the emotion, and disagree about its impact and how to respond to it (Belton and Priyadharshini, 2007). Boredom is commonly seen as an affective state composed of unpleasant feelings, lack of stimulation and low physiological arousal (Harris, 2010; Mikulas and Vodanovich, 2011). Symptoms also include prolonged subjective duration of time, implying that “time stands still”; tendencies to escape the situation causing boredom include behavioral or mental disengagement (e.g., by daydreaming); and slow and monotonous speech (Johnstone and Scherer, 2010; Goetz and Frenzel, 2016). This profile of symptoms implies that boredom consists of specific affective components (unpleasant, aversive feelings), cognitive components (altered perceptions of time), physiological components (reduced arousal), expressive components (facial, vocal, and postural expression), and motivational components (motivation to change the activity or to leave the situation). Given this profile, boredom is best regarded as a specific emotion, in line with contemporary component process definitions of emotions (Scherer, 2010; Kleinginna and Kleinginna, 2011).

Academic boredom is an emotion that is caused by a lack of value in a given situation or in an academic activity. Academic Boredom can ruin academic achievement, even for bright students. Materials closer to their actual lives will surely raise their interest and consequently their scores too. Academic boredom is induced because of a lack of subjective value in a learning situation, whereas other emotions such as anger, frustration, or joy are stimulated by an academic activity (Pekrun, Goetz, Daniels, Stupnisky and

Perry, 2010). Pekrun, Goetz, Titz and Perry (2002), posit that academic boredom is comprised of five key factors: affective, cognitive, expressive, motivational, and physiological components. The affective element reflects the negative and unsettling feeling of boredom; the cognitive part pertains to an inert mental state; the expressive component refers to the expression of a slumped posture and a flattened tone of voice; the motivational element reflects the inclination to leave the situation; and the physiological component refers to a low level of arousal (Pekrun, Goetz, Daniels, Stupnisky and Perry, 2010).

Given that students spend most of their time in classes, their perception of an academic activity and reaction in a boring situation should be of great interest to educators and researchers. Past literature shows that academic boredom may have an adverse impact on students’ behaviors and achievement (Larson and Richards, 2007; Mann and Robinson, 2009; Nett, Goetz and Daniels, 2010). About 58% of college students perceived more than half of their lectures as boring (Mann & Robinson, 2009), and academic boredom is highest when students learn abstract subjects in a passive way (Larson and Richards, 2011). Mann and Robinson (2009) posit that when students feel bored, they are more likely to daydream in classes and skip future class. In contrast to angry or frustrated students who interrupt the class, students feeling bored are often non-disruptive, and may be labeled as indolent. Yet, recent findings show the harmful impact of boredom on students’ educational development (Pekrun, Goetz, Daniels, Stupnisky and Perry, 2010), including distress (Barnett, 2005), juvenile delinquency (Newberry and Duncan, 2001) deviance truancy and dropping out of school (Wegner, Flisher, Chikobvu, Lombard and King, 2008).

One factor that may influence academic boredom is teaching style. Some students feel bored in class as a result of the teaching styles adopted in class by their teacher in teaching a particular subject this could however affect the academic performance and/or achievement of such students. Teaching styles refer to the mechanism of how teachers convey the knowledge and information to students.

Teaching styles represent those enduring (personal) qualities and behaviours that appear in how we conduct our classes. Thus, it is both something that defines a teacher, that guides and directs teacher instructional processes, and that has effects on students and their ability to learn” (Grasha, 2002). Teachers may employ numerous methods of teaching that engage the students and create an unforgettable learning experience. When the learning experience is memorable, the concepts taught are often concepts that remain with the student long after the student has graduated. There are no universal engaging methods of teaching. Not every method employed may result in a successful delivery of a concept (Connerr, 2012).

Another factor that could influence academic boredom among students is parental bonding. Parenting has always been an essential factor on what a child will be when he grows up as an adult and also influence the academic achievement and boredom of their wards and children (Biradar, 2013). Bonding refers to a close emotional tie that develops between parents and baby at birth. A mother's bond with her infant often starts when she feels fetal movements during pregnancy, so bonding is just a continuation of the relationship that began during pregnancy. The physical and chemical changes that were occurring in her body reminded her of the presence of this little person. Parental bonding refers to the emotional relationship that exists between the parents and the child. Parents/Caregivers play a significant role in the academic and adjustment of persons with academic boredom (Cohen and Wills, 2005 as cited in Daire, 2012). Not only do they provide much needed emotional support, they may also provide assistance with activities of daily living and financial support. However, the role of parents comes with the additional challenge of managing one's own personal care needs and affairs along with those of a loved one. This presents the caregiver with a significant amount of psychological strain and burden. Whether the student with academic boredom resides independently or in an assisted living facility, the caregiver is at risk for psychological distress and depression (Levesque, Ducharme and Lachance, 2010).

The extent to which students go for counseling could influence boredom. Students who are bored in their academic work need someone who would assist them to rediscover their interest in school work and also make them to be active. This makes it imperative that an effective counselor is needed in a school whose work is to render counselling services to students who are emotionally down and this is impinging on their academic performance and/or achievement. One of the functions of education is to provide opportunities for each student to reach his full potential in the areas of educational, vocational, personal, and emotional development. Guidance is an integral part of education and is centered directly on this function. Counseling services prepare students to assume increasing responsibility for their decisions and grow in their ability to understand and accept the results of their choices (Gibson, 2010; Kauchak, 2011).

Interest in schooling could be refer to the view of interest as an emotion that provides a perspective to considering how interest influences task engagement and how it might relate to self-efficacy. In broaden- and-build theory of positive emotions, (Fredrickson, 2009, 2011) argues that interest broadens the momentary thought-action tendency of exploration by arousing feelings of involvement that aim at increasing knowledge of and experience with the target of interest. The past years have witnessed the evolution of research pertaining to interest. Several studies concerned with the effect of interest factors on academic achievement in secondary schools have yielded positive result. Meanwhile, Adeyemo (2005) posited that “the importance of interest in whatever a person does cannot be underestimated when it comes to making choice, this is because interest is of considerable importance.

There have been several studies on students' study habit, intelligent-quotient, learning styles, teachers' influence and peer influence that triggers academic boredom among students. However, these past studies have only focused on isolated factors without a thorough investigation on factors which include teaching

styles, parental bonding, counseling service and interest in schooling. This is the gap to be filled in this study as it examined the above factors that influence academic boredom among secondary school students.

### 1.1 Objectives of the Study

- To investigate the relationship between teaching style, parental bonding, counselling service and interest in schooling on academic boredom of secondary school students
- To examine the joint contribution of the independent variables (teaching style, parental bonding, counselling service and interest in schooling) on academic boredom of secondary school students
- To ascertain the relative effect of the independent variables (teaching style, parental bonding, counselling service and interest in schooling) to the prediction of academic boredom of secondary school students

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1 Research Design

This study adopted correlation survey design to integrate the different components of the study in a coherent and logical way. Correlational design was considered to be most suitable for the study since it involved collection of data on existing phenomenon and determining whether or not there exist a relationship among the five quantifiable variables the researcher is interested in without any form of manipulation.

### 2.2 Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample size for this study comprised 250 senior secondary school students that were selected from five schools in Ibadan metropolis. Ibadan has five (5) local governments out of which three local governments were selected using stratified random sampling techniques.

### 2.3 Instrumentation

**Teaching styles scale (TSS):** The teaching style scale was developed by Conti (2004). It was used to measure the various qualities displayed by a teacher that are persistent from situation to situation regardless of the content. The scale has twenty (20) items, with a response format ranging from strongly agree =5 to strongly disagree =1. Some sample items are: “*My teacher arranges the classroom so that it is easy for students to interact*” and “*My teacher uses written tests to assess the degree of academic growth rather than to indicate new directions for learning*”. The instrument reported a Cronbach alpha internal consistency of 0.87. The scale was piloted tested to ascertain its reliability and it has a Cronbach alpha of 0.89

**Parental bonding inventory (PBI):** The Parental Bonding Inventory was developed by Parker, Tupling and Brown(1979) and modified by Heider 2005. The scale is a 25-item self-report measure that evaluates the attachment to one’s parent from the adult child’s point of view. It has a response format that ranges from strongly disagree =1 to strongly agree =5. Some sample items are: “*my parents speak to me in a friendly and warm voice*” and “*my parents try to control everything I do*”. The instrument however reported a Cronbach alpha of .90. The scale was piloted tested to ascertain its reliability and it has a Cronbach alpha of 0.91

**Counselling service scale (CSS):** The counseling scale was developed by Audu (2015). This instrument was designed to measure the various counseling services offered in the school and how effective the services are. The counseling service scale consists of twenty-five (25) items with a Likert response format ranging from strongly disagree = 1to strongly agree = 5 using a five point Likert format. Two samples of the items are: “*students are allowed voluntary visits to counsellor.*” and “*counsellor assists students to develop high aspirations towards their academic pursuits.*” The instrument however reported a Cronbach alpha internal consistency of .83. The items were adopted for the study. The scale was piloted tested to ascertain its reliability and it has a Cronbach alpha of 0.88.

**Interest in schooling scale (ISS):** The interest in schooling scale developed by Mitchell (1993) was used as a measuring tool. It was modified

by Umoiyang (1998) to suit the Nigerian environment. It is a fifteen-item scale with response format ranging from strongly agree (4) to strongly disagree (1). Some sample items are: “I go to school regularly” and “The environment of my school is not conducive for learning”. As indicated by Umoiyang (1998), the instrument has a Cronbach alpha internal consistency of 0.79.

**Academic boredom scale (ABS):** The academic boredom scale was developed by Pekrun, Goetz, Titz and Perry (2002) and adapted by Christiana and Alfred (2007) to suit African situation was used to measure academic boredom. The scale was used to measure students’ levels of boredom during studying. It is a twelve-item scale with response format ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). Some sample items are:

“studying for my courses bores me” and *I find my mind wandering while I study*”. It was validated by the experts and has a Cronbach alpha internal consistency of 0.82. The scale was piloted tested to ascertain its reliability and it has a Cronbach alpha of 0.89.

**2.4 Method of Data Analysis**

Multiple regression analysis was used to analyse the joint contribution and the relative effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable and Pearson product moment correlation was used to test the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. The research questions were analysed and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

**3. Results**

**Research Question One:** What is the significant relationship between teaching style, parental bonding, counselling service and interest in schooling on academic boredom of secondary school students in Ibadan metropolis?

**Table 1:** Correlation matrix showing the relationship between study variables

Variables	Mean	Std.Dev	Academic boredom	Teaching style	Parental bonding	Counselling service	Interest in schooling
Academic boredom	30.660	13.193	1				
Teaching style	89.012	10.769	-.140*	1			
Parental bonding	80.280	13.225	.331**	.221**	1		
Counselling service	97.840	14.984	.141	.397**	.452**	1	
Interest in schooling	55.978	8.227	.329**	.257**	.437**	.362**	1

\*\*Correlation is significant at 0.01(2-tailed) \*Correlation is significant at 0.05(2-tailed)

Results from Table 1 show that all the independent variables (teaching style, parental bonding and interest in schooling) have significant linear relationship with the dependent variable (academic boredom) except counselling service which showed no relationship with the dependent variable. Teaching style and academic boredom has negative linear relationship:  $r(248) = -.140, p < 0.05$ , parental bonding status and academic boredom is significant:  $r(248) = .331, p < 0.05$ , while interest in schooling and academic boredom is significant:  $r(248) = .329, p < 0.05$ , however counseling service was not significant to academic boredom:  $r(248) = .141, p > 0.05$ . This means that the teaching style adopted by the teacher was good for the students which have made them to develop interest in academics as boredom is eradicated. Also, most of the students have interest in schooling as a result of the activities that aid teaching and learning which are provided by the school administrators which has given room for a warm atmosphere that is conducive for teaching and learning as this consequently exterminated boredom among the students. In addition, it was revealed that parents were concerned about their children and wards performance in their school work as this has made the students to develop more interest in school work

and shut boredom. Lastly, it was shown that lack of counselling in the schools of the students has made academic work to be boring to them.

**Research Question Two:** Would there be any joint contribution of the independent variables (teaching style, parental bonding, counselling service and interest in schooling) on academic boredom of secondary school students in Ibadan metropolis?

**Table 2:** Summary of regression for the joint contributions of independent variables to the prediction of academic boredom

R = 0.469						
R Square = 0.220						
Adjusted R square = 0.208						
Std. Error = 11.77419						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	9553.412	4	2388.353	17.319	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	33786.688	245	137.905		
	Total	43340.100	249			

Result from Table 2 reveals the significant joint contribution of the independent variables (teaching style, parental bonding, counseling service and interest in schooling) to the prediction of academic boredom among secondary school students in Ibadan metropolis. The result yielded a coefficient of multiple regressions  $R = 0.469$  and multiple R-square = 0.220. This suggests that the four factors combined accounted for 20.8% ( $Adj.R^2 = .208$ ) variance to the prediction of academic boredom. The other factors accounting for the remaining variance are beyond the scope of this study. The multiple regression analysis shows that there was a significant effect of the independent variables on the academic boredom,  $F_{(4, 245)} = 17.319, P < 0.05$ .

**Research Question Three:** What is the relative effect of the independent variables (teaching style, parental bonding, counselling service and interest in schooling) to the prediction of academic boredom of secondary school students in Ibadan metropolis?

**Table 3:** Relative effect of the independent variables to the prediction of academic boredom.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	P
		B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	12.988	7.499		1.732	.085	
	Teaching style	-.346	.076	-.282	-4.553	.000	<.05
	Parental bonding	.254	.067	.255	3.807	.000	<.05
	Counselling service	.033	.060	.038	.554	.580	>.05
	Interest in schooling	.444	.104	.277	4.290	.000	<.05

\*correlation is significant at 0.05 (2-tailed)

Table 3 shows that the following independent variables have relative effect in the following magnitude; teaching style ( $\beta = -.282, t = -4.553; p < 0.05$ , parental bonding ( $\beta = .255, t = 3.807; p < 0.05$ , and interest in schooling ( $\beta = .227, t = 4.290; p < 0.05$ ). However, counselling service did not have relative effect on academic boredom ( $\beta = .038, t = .554; p > 0.05$ ). This implies that each of these independent variables is a compelling factor on academic boredom among secondary school students in Ibadan metropolis.

#### 4. Discussion of Findings

Research question one that seeks to answer the significant relationship that exist between

teaching style, parental bonding, counselling service and interest in schooling on academic boredom of secondary school students in Ibadan metropolis showed that there was significant

relationship teaching style, parental bonding and interest in schooling on the academic boredom while no relationship existed between counselling service and academic boredom. On the significant relationship that exists between teaching style and academic boredom, the finding corroborates Mann and Robinson (2009) who found that there was significant relationship between teaching styles and boredom. They stated further that the type of teaching style adopted by teachers goes a long way in determining how active students would be in the classroom and also how bored they would be in the classroom. This finding also goes in line with Nett (2010) who found a relationship between boredom and teaching style. He stated further that teachers are sometimes the cause of academic boredom among the students in that some teachers do not know the appropriate teaching style to be adopted in teaching a particular topic they want to teach. On the relationship that existed between parental bonding and academic boredom, the findings support Likewish, Dwiry, Achoui, Abousevic, and Farah (2010) who found that in Arab societies, authoritative parenting is not associated with negative effects on the adolescents academic performance as is within western and liberal societies. They stated further that it has been found that indulgent parenting is associated with equal or better outcome for children than authoritative parenting. Earlier findings from Salbach-Andrae (2008) and van der Meer (2008) also support the finding of this study by reporting that when there is low to moderate accordance between parents' perceptions and students' statements on health related issues could lead to academic boredom. on the significant relationship the existed between counseling service and academic boredom, the finding upholds Eliamani, Richard and Baguma (2013) who found that revealed that accessing guidance and counselling services has an impact on students' school life and academic boredom. They stated further that when students have access to counseling within their school, it would make them to have more interest in their academic work and also make enhances their academic performance and their future career would be achieved. The finding of Lapan, Gysbers and Sun (2007) also corroborates the

finding of the study by positing that Students who have access to counseling programs reported being more adjusted, positive and having greater feelings of belonging and safety in their schools. On the relationship that existed between interest in schooling and academic boredom, the finding corroborates Pekrun (2010) who found that students who attach less value to a psychology course report higher boredom for the course than those who value the course more highly. Earlier finding from Elliot and Gramling (2010) found that children interest in school helps the college students to lessen depression, anxiety, and increase their academic performance. They also found that interest in school could help the students manage and lessen their psychological problems.

Research question two that seeks to answer the joint contribution of the independent variables (teaching style, parental bonding, counselling service and interest in schooling) on academic boredom of secondary school students in Ibadan metropolis revealed that the four independent variables jointly contributed to the prediction of academic boredom. On the joint contribution that existed between teaching style and academic boredom, the finding corroborates Hafner (2013) who found that the type of teaching style used by the teacher greatly contribute to the academic boredom of students. On the joint contribution of parental bonding to academic boredom, the finding supports DeBaryshe, (2009) who found that authoritative parenting promotes the development of a healthy achievement orientation which includes intrinsic motivation that facilitates their school performances. He stated further that parent's play a lot of role in the lives of the students and that if there is a strong bond between parents and the students, such students would be motivated to do well in their school work. On the joint contribution of counselling service to the prediction of academic boredom, the finding supports Lapan, Gysbers and Sun (2007) who studied the impact of guidance programs on the school experiences of high school students. Students who have access to counseling programs reported being more adjusted, positive and having greater feelings of belonging and safety in their schools. Earlier 2010) who found

the influence of guidance and counselling services on academic boredom among secondary school students in Kenya. He concluded that absence of counseling service in school could lead to poor academic performance which is brought about as a result of boredom experienced by the students. On the joint contribution of interest in schooling to the prediction of academic boredom, the findings corroborates Nahid and Sarkis, (2010) who found that low level of school interest have been associated with high level of academic boredom which result into academic failure in college students. Interest in school was found to be one of the most important protective factors for student's academic boredom. This means that students who do not have interest in school would experience boredom and this would affect the academic performance of such students.

The third research question that seeks to answer the relative effect of the independent variables (teaching style, parental bonding, counselling service and interest in schooling) to the prediction of academic boredom of secondary school students in Ibadan metropolis showed that each of the independent variable predict academic boredom of the students. The finding on the relative effect of teaching style to the prediction of academic boredom supports Graham, Wilson, Gerrick, Fraas, and Heimann (2014), who concluded that the type of teaching styles teachers adopt has effect on the academic outcome of the students. The findings of the study showed that there was significant effect of teaching styles on academic boredom of Texas students. Also, the finding on the relative effect of parental bonding to the prediction of academic boredom corroborates Olson (2014) reports preliminary finding of 3 years study examining the ability of qualitative and quantitative measures of the parental bonding variable to contribute to the prediction of third through fifth-grade students' academic boredom and growth scores in reading and mathematics. He found that there was significant effect of parental bonding on the academic boredom of their children. Earlier finding from Gonzalez (2012) found that parental bonding - as perceived by the student - predicted academic boredom among the students, characterized by persistence, seeking new challenges, and non-

satisfaction. The result on the relative effect of counseling service to the prediction of academic boredom validates Eguche (2011) who found the effect of guidance and counselling services on academic boredom among secondary schools students and this study was designed to ascertain the status of the implementation of guidance and counselling programmes in the secondary and also meant to determine its effects on academic boredom. On the relative effect of interest in schooling on academic boredom, the finding goes in line with Villanova and Bownas (2006) for found that interest in school could help students to cope with everyday life stressor and lighten the burden of academic workload. Without enough support from family and low level of school interest, they would be in trouble and are vulnerable to depression, anxiety, stress and high level of academic failure.

## 5. Conclusion

Academic boredom is a deactivating emotion that is often neglected in classrooms due to its non-disruptive nature. Recently, scholars have started examining how boredom may affect students' learning and what types of boredom coping strategies relate to better learning outcomes. This research work has established that there was a positive relationship between parental bonding and academic boredom. Also, there was a significant relationship between interest in schooling and academic performance while teaching style had a negative significant relationship with academic boredom. However, counselling service was not significant with academic boredom. This study has provided more details to the existing information on the academic boredom as a factor that required immediate solution. From this study, it becomes clear that when the emotion of students changes continuously and /unstable, it affects their academic performance. Learners should ensure that they have control over their emotion and they should make sure that it doesn't change intermittently as this leads to boredom.

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