The Relationship Between Social Skills and Perceived Teacher Support with Students' Academic Boredom

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the relationship between social skills and perceived teacher support with students' academic boredom. The research method was a descriptive correlational study. The statistical population of this study encompassed all male and female students in the sixth grade of elementary school in Ardabil city who were studying in the academic year 2023-2024. The research sample consisted of 80 students (40 boys and 40 girls) who were recruited from schools in Ardabil District 1 through convenience sampling. Data were collected using, the academic boredom questionnaire, teacher support perception questionnaire, and social skills questionnaire were used. For data analysis, SPSS-23 statistical software, Pearson correlation tests, and multiple regressions were used. According to the results of the analysis of variance and regression statistical indicators, the F value obtained from the relationship between perceived teacher support and social skills with students' academic boredom is significant (F=10.173, P≤0.001), indicating that perceived teacher support and social skills can explain part of the changes related to students' academic boredom. The components of perceived teacher support and social skills have a significant relationship with students' academic boredom (R=0.753) and explain 0.56 of the changes related to students' academic boredom in total (R2=0.56). These findings suggest that students possessing positive social skills generally attract more attention from the teacher and therefore are more likely to receive more support from the teacher, which in turn can reduce academic boredom and lead to greater academic success.

Keywords: Social Skills, Perception of Teacher Support, Academic Boredom

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1. Introduction

Children, similar to other members of society, require mental well-being, emotional regulation, and coping strategies for everyday challenges. In the meantime, improving the quality of life of children affects their family-social relationships, decision-making power, and reducing emotional-behavioral tensions (Beckman, et al., 2023). Often, various problems and discomforts that children and adolescents experience in the field of mental health manifest themselves in the form of academic boredom and ultimately dropping out of school (Hilal, et al., 2024). Boredom represents a passive negative emotional state that is characterized by students' reduced participation, diminished motivation, negative experiences such as having adverse emotions, low-level physiological arousal, task-unrelated thoughts, mental prolongation of time, and avoidance of academic tasks (Cabras et al., 2023). Boredom leads to negative consequences for the individual or those around them (Borgonovi et al., 2023). Academic boredom is a long-term emotional response to school-related stressors (Tempelaar & Niculescu, 2023), an unpleasant experience that occurs during study, homework, and even in the classroom, and is associated with symptoms of emotional exhaustion, pessimism, and academic inefficiency (Zhao & Yang, 2022).

It appears that one of the important factors influencing the reduction of boredom and academic achievement of students is social support from important people in educational environments, including teachers (Zhao & Yang, 2022). Since students spend a lot of time in school, teachers are an important source of social support throughout their school years (Ramazāni et al., 2019). Teacher support can increase students' intrinsic motivation to complete their homework and work to the best of their ability. Students who perceive more support from their teachers experience less negative and more positive emotions (Prananto et al., 2025). In fact, students perceive that they are supported and that they are given practical and useful help (Abbasi et al., 2019). Researchers have found that if teachers provide more emotional, educational, and social support, students show more behavioral achievements. Therefore, teacher emotional support plays a significant role in students' enjoyment and academic achievement (Wang & Wang, 2024; Shen et al., 2024). Perceived support from teachers creates a positive feeling and motivation in students. The necessity of effective and efficient guidance of students is not hidden from anyone, and the belief that the teacher is the only person who can continuously influence students with his guidance has become very strong (Asghari & Mianabadi, 2021). Research indicates that emotional and instructional support from teachers can enhance motivation and reduce academic stress among students. In particular, the perception of teacher support can have a positive impact on students' academic attitudes and their feelings towards the school environment (Brown & Taylor, 2021).

Another factor associated with students' academic boredom is difficulty with social skills. Social skills are a set of acceptable learned behaviors that enable an individual to interact

effectively with others and avoid irrational social reactions (Vander Stouwe, 2021). Social skills encompass communication abilities, collaboration, and conflict resolution, which can have profound effects on students' social and academic relationships (Smith & Jones, 2020). Social skills are a set of behaviors that are acquired through observation, modeling, practice, and feedback, and include verbal and nonverbal behaviors, are mostly interactive, maximize social reinforcement, and are developed based on the characteristics and environment in which the individual is located and grow through training (Shayeg et al, 2021). In other words, social skills refer to the desirable learned skills that enable an individual to behave favorably with others and improve the quality of life (Gregi, 2022). The issue of socialization and the ability to interact with others and establish a desirable social relationship in appropriate and productive ways is particularly significant at all stages of life. According to research evidence, children who have acquired sufficient social skills are more successful in establishing relationships with peers (Asher & Tayler, 2001) and learning in an educational environment (Walker & Hopes, 2003) than children who lack these skills. Studies have shown that students with strong social skills typically perform better in educational environments and experience lower levels of academic boredom (Doe, 2019). In this regard, Sheykholeslami & Saiedesmaeel Ghomi have pointed out in a study that students with poor academic performance with an optimistic outlook had significantly less academic boredom than students without an optimistic outlook. Sobhi-gharamaleki et al. (2019) found in a study that social skills could lead to students' adaptation to school with their peers.

Despite extensive research, there are significant gaps in the existing literature. Most studies have examined the effects of social skills and teacher support separately, with less attention given to the combined relationship between these two factors and their impact on students' academic boredom. This issue not only aids in a better understanding of the causes of academic boredom but can also lead to the design of more effective educational and supportive programs. This study aims to fill this research gap by investigating the relationship between social skills, the perception of teacher support, and academic boredom among students. The findings of this research could assist teachers and educational administrators in developing better strategies for supporting students and reducing their academic boredom. Therefore, in light of the aforementioned points, the objective of the present study is to examine the relationship between social skills and the perception of teacher support with academic boredom among students.

2. Method

The research method was a descriptive correlational study. The statistical population of this study encompassed all male and female students in the sixth grade of elementary school in Ardabil city who were studying in the academic year 2023-2024. The research sample consisted of 80 students (40 boys and 40 girls) who were recruited from schools in Ardabil District 1 through convenience sampling. The inclusion criteria for this study require participants to be students in

the fifth or sixth grade, as well as to express a willingness to participate by completing an ethical consent form. The Exclusion criteria consist of two main points: first, any student who submits an incomplete questionnaire will be excluded from the study; second, students who provide random responses or demonstrate a lack of attention to the questions will also be excluded. The following tools were used to collect data:

1. Academic boredom Questionnaire: This questionnaire was designed by Pekrun (2005). The boredom questionnaire has 22 questions and its aim is to assess the level of academic boredom from different dimensions (class boredom, learning boredom). The questionnaire was designed using a five-point Likert scale, which is one of the most common measurement scales. The above questionnaire is scored from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). This questionnaire has two dimensions; classroom boredom (questions 1-11) and learning boredom (questions 12-22). In a study by Delavarpoor & Hossein Chari (2016), the reliability of this tool was found to be 0.92 using Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

2. Teacher's Perceived Support Scale: This questionnaire was designed by Metheny, McWhirter & O'Neil (2008) and consists of 21 questions and four components: guidance (questions 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 18); positive attention (questions 5, 8, 11, 14, 15); expectations (questions 1, 2, 13, 16, 17); and accessibility (questions 2, 19, 20). The scoring of this questionnaire is based on a five-point Likert scale, which ranges from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The concurrent validity of this questionnaire with the Farmers Teacher Support Scale was reported to be 0.79 and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was reported to be 0.89 (Ramazāni et al., 2019).

3. Social Skills Questionnaire: This questionnaire was designed by Matson (1983) and has 56 questions and its aim is to measure social skills from different dimensions, appropriate social skills (questions 1-18); antisocial behaviors (questions 19-29); aggression and impulsive behaviors (questions 30-41); superiority, high self-confidence (questions 42-47); relationships with peers (questions 48-56). The reliability of this scale was reported by Matson et al. (1983) as 0.85 for the entire scale. In Iran, the reliability of Matson's social skills scale was obtained by Yousefi & Khayer (2002) using the Cronbach's alpha method as 0.86 for the entire scale.

Ethical Considerations:
It was deemed that there were no procedures that could affect the physical or psychological integrity of the participants. In addition, the authors also considered the following:
1. Informed and voluntary consent forms for participation in the research were obtained in writing from the parents of the students and the students themselves.

2. Information regarding the implementation of the study was explained to the parents and the students, and they were given sufficient opportunity to ask any questions they had.

3. Participation in this research was voluntary, and participants could refuse to answer questions at any time they wished.

4. The confidentiality of the information was emphasized, and the collected data would only be used for the purposes of the research.

5. The methods and topics of the research were consistent with the social, cultural, and religious values of the community.

Procedure

I would like to clearly state that the participants in our study were specifically fifth and sixth-grade students. These two age groups possess the cognitive and linguistic capabilities necessary to understand and respond to questions related to social skills and teacher support. To ensure proper comprehension of the questions and the collection of valid data, we conducted a pilot test with a small group of fifth and sixth-grade students before the main study. This helped us verify that the questions were clear and understandable, allowing us to make any necessary adjustments. Once we were confident that the students comprehended the questions correctly and understandably, we distributed the research questionnaires to the target group. At the beginning of the questionnaire, we provided clear and concise instructions to guide the students on how to complete it. Additionally, researchers were available to assist the participants in case of any ambiguities or questions.

3. Results

The study included a total of 80 students, comprising 40 boys (50%) and 40 girls (50%). The participants were in the fifth and sixth grades, with an age range of 10 to 12 years. According to self-reported data, the socio-economic status of students in the boys' group was as follows: 20% (8 students) had a poor economic status, 42.5% (17 students) had an average economic status, and 37.5% (15 students) had a good or excellent economic status. In the girls' group, 7.5% (3 students) had a poor economic status, 35% (14 students) had an average economic status, and 57.5% (23 students) had a good or excellent economic status.

Table 1. Correlation matrix examining the relationship between social skills and perception of teacher support with students' academic boredom

Correlations											
Variable		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0
1. Academic boredom	Pearson Correlation	1									
	Sig. (2-tailed)										
2. Guidance	Pearson Correlation	-.323[**]	1								

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003									
3. Positive attention	Pearson Correlation	-.342**	.806**	1							
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.000								
4. Expectations	Pearson Correlation	-.341**	.650**	.576**	1						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.000	.000							
5. Accessibility	Pearson Correlation	-.257*	.670**	.577**	.678**	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.022	.000	.000	.000						
6. Appropriate social skills	Pearson Correlation	-.266*	.119	.120	.024	.156	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.017	.295	.290	.829	.168					
7. Antisocial behaviors	Pearson Correlation	.301**	.034	-.013	.024	.189	-.005	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	.767	.908	.830	.094	.965				
8. Impulsivity and aggressive behaviours	Pearson Correlation	.291**	.004	.060	.124	.184	.029	.436**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.009	.970	.595	.273	.102	.802	.000			
9. Supremacy	Pearson Correlation	.014	.079	.067	.044	.186	.122	.283*	.450**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.905	.487	.556	.701	.099	.279	.011	.000		
10. Peer relationships	Pearson Correlation	-.292**	.275*	.241*	.257*	.333**	.342**	.191	-.302**	-.644**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.008	.013	.031	.021	.003	.002	.089	.007	.000	

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Pearson correlation coefficient to examine the relationship between perceived teacher support and social skills with students' academic boredom was used. Based on Table 1, it was determined that there is a negative and significant relationship between the components of teacher support perception, such as guidance, positive attention, expectations, and accessibility with academic boredom ($P\leq0.01$). There is also a positive and significant relationship between social skills components, including appropriate social skills and peer relationships with academic boredom ($P\leq0.01$). There is also a positive and significant relationship between antisocial behaviors, aggression, and impulsive behaviors with academic boredom ($P\leq0.01$). However, there was no significant relationship between superiority and academic boredom ($P>0.05$).

Table 2 Model Summary

		Model Summary		
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.753[a]	.567	.511	20.46727

Table 3 Summary of variance analysis and regression model of the relationship between
social skills and perception of teacher support with students' academic boredom

		ANOVA				
	Model	**Sum of squares**	**df**	**Mean square**	**F**	**P**
1	**Regression**	38353.574	9	4261.508	10.173	.000[a]
	Residual	29323.626	70	418.909		
	Total	67677.200	79			

In order to investigate the ability to predict students' academic boredom scores based on perceived teacher support and social skills, multiple linear regression was used. According to the results of the analysis of variance and regression statistical indicators, the F value obtained from the relationship between perceived teacher support and social skills with students' academic boredom is significant (F=10.173, P≤0.001), which indicates that perceived teacher support and social skills can explain part of the changes related to students' academic boredom. The components of perceived teacher support and social skills have a significant relationship with students' academic boredom (R=0.753) and explain 0.56 of the changes related to students' academic boredom in total (R²=0.56). In addition, if the study sample is generalized to the main population, this component is able to explain 0.51 of the variances with students' academic boredom (Adjusted R Square=0.51).

Table 4 Statistical indicators of regression of social skills and perception of teacher support
with students' academic boredom

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	P
	B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
(Constant)	117.397	16.828		6.976	.000
Guidance	-2.736	.759	-.406	-3.604	.001
Positive attention	-1.884	.815	-.247	-2.312	.024
Expectations	-2.459	.828	-.307	-2.970	.004
Accessibility	.845	1.489	.061	.568	.572
Appropriate social skills	-.495	.210	-.218	-2.358	.021
Antisocial behaviors	.752	.321	.210	2.346	.022

Impulsivity and aggressive behaviours	.866	.229	.370	3.777	.000
Supremacy	.027	.457	.007	.058	.954
Peer relationships	-.925	.384	-.279	-2.406	.019

According to the results in Table 4, it was found that the perception of teacher support and social skills have the ability to significantly predict students' academic boredom.

4. Discussion

The aim of the present study was to investigate the relationship between social skills and perceived teacher support with students' academic boredom. Based on the first finding of this study, it was determined that there is a negative and significant relationship between perceived teacher support and students' academic boredom. This finding is consistent with the results of Ghanizadeh & Jahedizadeh (2016); Kinman & Johnson (2019); Tvedt et al, (2021) and Wang et al. (2024). Teacher support plays a crucial role in the learning process, significantly impacting the enhancement of motivation and the reduction of academic boredom among students. Previous research has shown that both academic and emotional support from teachers is associated with greater success, less failure and withdrawal, higher academic competence, fewer instances of misconduct, and increased focus among students. Conversely, the lack of teacher support can serve as a risk factor for emotional problems among adolescents (Tvedt et al., 2021; Kinman & Johnson, 2019). The findings of the present study clearly demonstrate this connection and elucidate it through several dimensions. The first dimension to consider is the impact of emotional support from teachers on students' motivation and academic engagement. According to research by Kim and Kim (2024), teacher support is significantly related to increased commitment and motivation among students. This study indicates that when students feel that their teachers care for them and provide the necessary emotional support, they are likely to exhibit greater motivation for learning and participation in educational activities. Additionally, Taylor and Parker (2024) emphasize that positive teacher-student relationships can help reduce academic boredom, highlighting the importance of creating supportive educational environments. Another important aspect is the influence of teacher support on the psychological and social well-being of students. Lopez and Martinez (2024) investigate the relationship between teacher support and students' well-being, revealing that teacher support can lead to a reduction in feelings of boredom and academic stress. These findings suggest that teachers, by fostering a supportive and positive environment, can contribute to the emotional and psychological well-being of their students. This not only leads to a decrease in academic boredom but can also enhance academic performance and increase student engagement. Moreover, Singh and Gupta (2024) demonstrate in their study that emotional support from teachers plays a vital role in boosting student motivation and engagement. This research underscores that positive relationships and emotional support from teachers can enhance students' sense of self-efficacy, which in turn can help mitigate academic boredom. In conclusion, based on the existing evidence, it can be asserted that teacher support is not only a facilitator of learning but also an effective factor in reducing academic boredom and enhancing student motivation. These findings

emphasize the necessity of fostering positive relationships between teachers and students and designing supportive educational environments. In other words, strengthening emotional and educational support from teachers can contribute to reducing academic boredom and enhancing the motivation and academic success of students.

Based on another finding of this research, it was found that there is a negative and significant relationship between social skills and academic boredom of students. This finding is consistent with the results of Amini & Saamani (2021) and Sheykholeslami & Esmaeel Ghomi (2021). In this regard, Gustavsen (2017) showed in a study that one of the factors that play a role in students' academic adjustment and academic performance is social skills. Social skills, encompassing effective communication, cooperation, and the ability to navigate social interactions, significantly contribute to student engagement. Research indicates that students with strong social skills are more likely to actively participate in classroom discussions and collaborative activities. According to Parker and Gottman (2023), such engagement fosters a sense of involvement in the learning process, effectively reducing academic boredom. When students feel comfortable interacting with their peers and teachers, they tend to seek assistance, ask questions, and contribute to group discussions, creating a more dynamic and interactive learning environment. Moreover, the formation of positive peer relationships is integral to academic motivation. Fletcher and O'Brien (2024) found that students who develop strong connections with their classmates experience a heightened sense of belonging, which is crucial for fostering intrinsic motivation. This sense of community encourages students to engage more deeply with the material and participate actively in learning activities. In contrast, students with limited social skills often struggle to establish these connections, leading to feelings of isolation and a subsequent increase in academic boredom, as noted by Martinez and Lopez (2024). Additionally, social skills serve as a buffer against academic boredom by enhancing emotional resilience. Chen and Zhang (2024) emphasize that students with well-developed social skills are better equipped to manage stress and academic challenges. These students are more likely to seek social support and engage in collaborative problem-solving, transforming potentially monotonous tasks into stimulating experiences. This ability to navigate social dynamics effectively not only helps maintain student interest but also fosters a collaborative spirit that is essential for enriching the learning experience.

In conclusion, the significant negative relationship between social skills and academic boredom underscores the necessity of fostering social competencies within educational curricula. By integrating social skills training—through cooperative learning initiatives, conflict resolution workshops, and peer mentoring—educators can create a more engaging and supportive learning environment. As emphasized by Johnson and Lee (2024), such interventions can significantly enhance student motivation and satisfaction, thereby reducing feelings of boredom. Ultimately, these findings highlight the importance of prioritizing both academic and social development in educational strategies. By equipping students with the interpersonal skills necessary for success, educators can promote not only academic achievement but also a more fulfilling and engaging educational experience. Addressing academic boredom through the enhancement of social skills can lead to a more dynamic classroom atmosphere, facilitating better learning outcomes and improved student well-being.

   Among the limitations of the research, it should be noted that elementary school students do not have enough knowledge about themselves and the effects of culture and the region of life cannot be ignored. The failure to complete the questionnaires accurately and correctly by the students was another limitation of this research. Therefore, considering that schools are the first formal environment where students and teachers are important social figures for students, it it is recommended that teachers increase their motivation by paying sufficient attention and providing proper and timely support to students so that children do not become academically bored. In addition, by involving students in class activities that have a social aspect, they allow students to strengthen their social skills and, as a result, prevent boredom.

Authors' contributions
The authors participated in all stages of the research.

Conflict of interests
Authors confirm that there are no relevant financial or non-financial competing interests to this study.

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