

ACADEMIC ADVISING AS A CORRELATE OF ACADEMIC BURNOUT AND CLASSROOM ENGAGEMENT AMONG IN-SCHOOL ADOLESCENTS IN ANAMBRA STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated academic advising as a correlate of academic burnout and classroom engagement among in-school adolescents in Anambra State. The study was guided by four research questions and four null hypotheses. A correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population comprised all in-school adolescents in public senior secondary schools in Anambra State, while the sample was drawn using an appropriate sampling technique. Data were collected using structured questionnaires on academic advising, academic burnout, and classroom engagement. The instruments were validated by experts and their reliability was established using appropriate reliability indices. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to answer the research questions, while the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that a high negative but insignificant relationship existed between academic advising and academic burnout among in-school adolescents in Anambra State. A high positive and significant relationship was found between academic advising and classroom engagement among in-school adolescents. Based on gender, academic advising had a higher negative but insignificant relationship with academic burnout among female adolescents than males, while a higher positive and significant relationship was observed between academic advising and classroom engagement among male adolescents than their female counterparts. The study concluded that although academic advising significantly enhances classroom engagement among in-school adolescents, it does not significantly reduce academic burnout, particularly among females. It was therefore recommended that school administrators should strengthen academic advising programmes by making them more structured, frequent, and gender-sensitive. Additionally, trained guidance counsellors should collaborate with academic advisors to address academic burnout among in-school adolescents in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Keywords: Academic advising, academic burnout, classroom engagement, adolescents

Introduction

Between childhood and adulthood lies a critical developmental phase known as adolescence. The term *adolescence* is derived from the Latin word *adolescere*, meaning *to grow into maturity*. This stage is characterized by rapid physical, emotional, cognitive, and social changes that significantly shape an individual's personality, behaviour, and outlook on life. Adolescents often experience sudden physical growth spurts and heightened emotional sensitivity, which may create an illusion of full maturity (Oguzie, Chigbu, Ugwele & Opkala, 2026). However, despite this perceived independence, many adolescents remain psychologically and socially dependent on parents, teachers, and other significant adults for guidance and support.

However, in-school adolescents are adolescents in the four walls of secondary schools (Chigbu, Nwobi, Ngwaka & Mokwelu, 2021). Within the context of the present study, in-school adolescents refer to students enrolled in senior secondary schools.

According to Okeke and Joe-Akunne (2020), the majority of senior secondary school students fall within the adolescent age bracket. They further observed that this developmental stage is marked by abundant energy, curiosity, and experimentation, yet many adolescents struggle with self-identity formation and emotional regulation. Consequently, several adolescents derive their sense of identity from peer groups, often adopting behaviours that align with perceived social approval (Chigbu, Oguzie, Ahaneku & Udefi, 2026). This developmental vulnerability exposes them to academic challenges, including academic burnout and poor classroom engagement, which have become recurring concerns in secondary education.

Academic burnout has emerged as a significant psychological issue among in-school adolescents. It is generally defined as a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion resulting from prolonged academic stress, excessive workload, and inadequate balance between academic demands and personal wellbeing. Kourea, Papanastasiou, Diaconescu and Popa-Velea (2023) conceptualized academic burnout as an emotional and cognitive exhaustion state arising from sustained academic pressure and workload. This condition often manifests through emotional fatigue, disengagement from academic activities, and negative cognitive evaluations of learning tasks. Academic burnout is multidimensional, encompassing physical exhaustion, emotional exhaustion, and cognitive exhaustion. However, among students, emotional exhaustion appears to be the most dominant dimension, as the physical and cognitive dimensions are less visibly manifested (Dominguez & Merino, 2019). Several factors contribute to academic burnout among in-school adolescents. These include excessive academic workload, pressure to meet assignment deadlines, frequent examinations, limited study time, and prolonged classroom hours. Araoz, Valverde, Herrera, Uchamaco & Peralta, (2023) noted that academic overload, insufficient time to complete academic tasks, continuous assessments, exhibitions, and extended class schedules significantly heighten students' stress levels, thereby increasing the likelihood of burnout. When these stressors persist without adequate coping mechanisms or institutional support, adolescents may gradually lose motivation and emotional connection to learning.

The consequences of academic burnout are far-reaching. Yu and Chae (2020) observed that academic burnout negatively affects students' physical health, emotional wellbeing, and academic outcomes. Emotionally, burnout manifests as frustration, irritability, pessimism, emotional inhibition, and interpersonal conflict. Cognitively, it is associated with low academic expectations, difficulty concentrating, loss of meaning in academic tasks, and catastrophic thinking patterns (Araoz et al., 2023). Somatic symptoms include chronic fatigue, sleep disturbances, headaches, and changes in eating habits, while behavioural symptoms may involve absenteeism, declining academic performance, social withdrawal, aggression, and substance use such as caffeine, alcohol, or tobacco (Suárez & Restrepo, 2019). Although academic burnout cuts across disciplines, Osorio, Parrello, and Prado (2020) reported higher burnout levels among students in health, education, and psychosocial science-related fields due to the emotional demands associated with caring for or interacting closely with others. Given the serious implications of academic burnout for adolescents' mental health and academic achievement, Ardiles et al. (2022) emphasized the importance of identifying its prevalence early in order to implement effective preventive strategies. Such strategies include time management, goal setting, avoidance of procrastination, social participation, healthy eating, and physical activity, all of which help promote a positive mindset and reduce stress (Chen, 2021). Beyond these

personal strategies, classroom engagement plays a critical role in mitigating academic burnout.

Classroom engagement refers to students' active psychological involvement in learning activities through sustained attention, participation, emotional investment, and cognitive effort. Ma and Wei (2022) described classroom engagement as a persistent, positive behavioural state related to learning, characterized by vigor, dedication, and concentration. Engaged in-school adolescents demonstrate interest in learning, actively participate in classroom activities, and apply cognitive strategies to understand academic content. Conversely, disengaged students often display apathy, indifference, or resistance toward academic tasks (Zhao, Xiong, Zhang & Qi, 2021). Classroom engagement is a multidimensional construct comprising behavioural, emotional, cognitive, and attitudinal components. Attitudinal engagement reflects students' involvement in academic and extracurricular activities, emotional engagement relates to students' feelings toward learning, teachers, peers, and school, while cognitive engagement refers to students' use of self-regulation strategies and sustained mental effort (Reyes-de-Cózar, Merino-Cajaraville & Salguero-Pazos, 2023). Alonso-Tapia, Merino-Tejedor, and Huertas (2023) further expanded the concept by including agency, which involves students' proactive participation through questioning, discussion, and feedback during classroom interactions. High levels of classroom engagement are associated with numerous benefits for in-school adolescents. Egbert (2020) asserted that meaningful classroom engagement occurs when students are enthusiastically involved in learning and are motivated to exploit learning opportunities. Engaged adolescents exhibit higher self-efficacy, emotional connection to school, improved academic outcomes, and increased dedication to academic tasks (Loscalzo & Giannini, 2019). In contrast, low engagement is characterized by irregular class attendance, poor motivation, low academic performance, and feelings of inefficacy (Guerra & Jorquera, 2021). Engagement in cognitively demanding tasks such as analysis, reasoning, and meaning-making also enhances social interaction, collaboration, and knowledge exchange between students and teachers (Amerstorfer & Frein, 2021).

Notwithstanding the acknowledged importance of classroom engagement, observations in some public secondary schools in Anambra State indicate persistent cases of poor classroom engagement and academic burnout among in-school adolescents. This concern is reinforced by the WAEC performance statistics of 2022, 2023, and 2024, which revealed unsatisfactory academic outcomes among students in the state. This trend has generated concern among parents, teachers, and school administrators, particularly in light of the recent recruitment of professionally qualified teachers who are expected to improve instructional delivery and student engagement. In addressing academic burnout and classroom engagement, academic advising has emerged as a critical institutional support mechanism. Academic advising involves structured, purposeful interactions between an advisor (teacher or counselor) and an advisee (student) aimed at enhancing academic performance and personal development. Zaher (2024) defined academic advising as a series of meetings in which students and academic staff discuss issues affecting academic progress. Through academic advising, students receive guidance on subject selection, goal setting, academic planning, and coping strategies.

Effective academic advising fosters a supportive professional relationship that considers students' academic aspirations, personal interests, and extracurricular involvement. Jennings (2021) noted that academic advisors play essential roles in course planning, credit allocation, and academic monitoring. Cicco (2021) emphasized that successful advising begins with establishing rapport and trust between the advisor and the

advisee. When students struggle academically, they may experience self-doubt and feelings of alienation from the school environment (Gebauer, 2019). In such cases, academic advisors serve as critical support figures who help students navigate academic challenges and regain confidence (McFarlane & Wallder, 2021). Specified the rising concerns of academic burnout and declining classroom engagement among in-school adolescents in Anambra State, it remains imperative to empirically examine the role of academic advising. Specifically, understanding how academic advising correlates with academic burnout and classroom engagement will provide evidence-based insights for improving student wellbeing and academic outcomes. Therefore, this study investigates academic advising as a correlate of academic burnout and classroom engagement among in-school adolescents in Anambra State.

Statement of the Problem

Understanding the factors that motivate in-school adolescents to strive for academic excellence remains a critical concern in contemporary secondary education. Classroom engagement, in particular, has been identified as a central determinant of students' academic achievement, as it either enhances or diminishes learning outcomes across school subjects. Despite the acknowledged importance of classroom engagement, evidence from secondary schools suggests persistent cases of underachievement and disengagement among some in-school adolescents. This situation is further compounded by the increasing prevalence of academic burnout, which undermines students' motivation, emotional wellbeing, and capacity to sustain meaningful involvement in academic activities. In recent years, academic burnout among in-school adolescents has become an emerging challenge in public secondary schools. Many students are exposed to excessive academic workload, continuous assessments, examination pressure, and limited recovery time, which collectively contribute to emotional exhaustion and reduced academic efficacy. In Anambra State, the researcher observed with concern that several in-school adolescents in public secondary schools appear to be overburdened by academic demands, resulting in heightened levels of stress and burnout. These students often exhibit symptoms such as fatigue, loss of interest in learning, and emotional detachment from academic tasks.

In addition to academic burnout, a noticeable decline in classroom engagement has been observed among some in-school adolescents. Although regular classroom attendance is increasingly enforced in many schools, mere physical presence in the classroom does not necessarily translate to active participation, cognitive involvement, or emotional commitment to learning. Many students remain disengaged during lessons, showing limited interest, minimal participation, and poor attention to instructional activities. This disengagement persists despite the recent employment of professionally qualified teachers by the Anambra State Government, who are expected to implement effective teaching strategies capable of stimulating students' interest and reducing academic stress. The persistence of academic burnout and poor classroom engagement among in-school adolescents has become a source of serious concern to key educational stakeholders, including parents, teachers, school counselors, and school administrators. These trends raise questions about the adequacy of existing support mechanisms within secondary schools, particularly those aimed at guiding students academically and emotionally. One such support mechanism is academic advising, which is designed to assist students in navigating academic challenges, managing workload, and setting realistic educational goals. However, despite its potential importance, little empirical evidence exists regarding

the extent to which academic advising relates to academic burnout and classroom engagement among in-school adolescents, especially within the context of public secondary schools in Anambra State.

The apparent gap in empirical knowledge regarding the role of academic advising in addressing academic burnout and promoting classroom engagement necessitates systematic investigation. Without such evidence, school administrators and academic advisers may continue to implement interventions that are not adequately informed by research. It is against this backdrop that the present study seeks to investigate academic advising as a correlate of academic burnout and classroom engagement among in-school adolescents in Anambra State, with a view to providing evidence-based insights that can inform policy formulation, counseling practices, and educational planning.

Purpose of Study

The general purpose of this study was to investigate academic advising as a correlate of academic burnout and classroom engagement among in-school adolescents in Anambra State. Specifically, the study determined the:

1. relationship between academic advising and academic burnout among in-school adolescents in Anambra State.
2. relationship between academic advising and classroom engagement among in-school adolescents in Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between academic advising and academic burnout among in-school adolescents in Anambra State?
2. What is the relationship between academic advising and classroom engagement among in-school adolescents in Anambra State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between academic advising and academic burnout among in-school adolescents in Anambra State.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between academic advising and classroom engagement among in-school adolescents in Anambra State.

Methods

Correlational research design was used for the study. According to Bhandari (2023), correlational research design is used to explore the direction and degree of relationships among factors in a particular population either positive or negative. The use of correlational research design is justified because the study sought to establish the relationship between academic advising and academic burnout as well as the relationship between academic advising and classroom engagement among in-school adolescents in Anambra State (Chigbu, Oguzie, Nnadi, Ahaneku & Okpala, 2014). The study was conducted in Anambra State. The choice of the area for the study was informed by the fact that the state has been recognized among the educationally advantaged states in Nigeria whose status needs to be maintained at all times. The population of the study was made up of all the 12, 670 SS 2 students in the 268 public secondary schools in Anambra State. The sample for the study was 715 (300 males and 415 females) SS 2 students for the 2024/2025 academic session. Simple random sampling and Proportionate sampling techniques were utilised to compose the sample size for the study. The choice of 10%

sample size is in accordance with the recommendation of Nworgu (2015) that 10% to 80% of any given population is deemed adequate for a research work.

The instruments that were used to collect data are three sets of questionnaire. The three sets of questionnaire were titled 'Academic Advising Questionnaire (AAQ), Academic Burnout Questionnaire (ABQ)' and 'In-School Adolescents' Classroom Engagement (ISACE)' respectively. AAQ was developed by the researcher from literature. The AAQ has 10 items structured on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) with numerical values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively for positively worded items while negatively worded items were reversely scored. ABQ was adopted from Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach and Jackson, 1996). The ABQ has two sections A and B. Section A requires the respondents to fill in their personal data such as gender. Section B has four domains viz: Exhaustion, mental distance, cognitive impairment and emotional impairment. It contains 23 items. It was developed in such a manner that the respondents will respond by choosing one of four response categories viz: Never (N), Rarely (R), Sometimes (ST), and Always (A). ISACE was constructed by the researcher. It has two sections – A and B. Section A sought information on the gender of students while Section B sought information on students' classroom engagement. The ISACE items were structured on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) with numerical values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively for positively worded items while negatively worded items were reversely scored. The instrument contains 19 items. Copies of the AAQ, and ISACE were given along with the title, purpose of the study, research questions and hypotheses to three validators, two in the Department of Guidance and Counselling and one in the Department of Educational Foundations, all at Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. They were requested to assess the AAQ, ABQ and ISACE with regards to adequacy of the items and their relatedness to the research. Their inputs led to certain modifications such as removal and addition of some items in the final production of the AAQ, ABQ and ISACE.

The reliability of the AAQ, and ISACE was ascertained using Cronbach alpha method. This was done by administering the AAQ, and ISACE to a similar group of 20 SS 2 students in Enugu State which is outside the study area. The internal consistency of the items in AAQ, ABQ and ISACE was determined using Cronbach statistics. The alpha coefficients got were 0.88 and 0.79 respectively for AAQ and ISACE. These values were considered adequate and the AAQ and ISACE adjudged reliable as they fell within the stipulation of Shrestha (2021) that the adequate threshold value for Cronbach alpha should be greater than or equal to 0.70.

Data collection for the study was done by the researcher through the help of 10 research assistants who were SS 2 teachers in each of the schools that were sampled. Data analysis was done with Pearson product moment correlation coefficient for the research questions. The interpretation of the correlation coefficient was guided by the recommendations of Nwana (2007) viz: 0.20 – 0.40 (low relationship), 0.40 – 0.60 (moderate relationship), 0.60 – 0.80 (high relationship) and 0.80 – 0.10 (very high relationship). The testing of the hypotheses was done with Pearson Correlation critical value table at 0.05 alpha level. All the hypotheses were tested at 5% level of significance with the decision rule that the null hypothesis was rejected if p-value was less than the alpha level of 0.05; otherwise the null hypothesis was not rejected.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between academic advising and academic burnout among in-school adolescents in Anambra State?

Table 1: Pearson r on Relationship between Academic Advising and Academic Burnout among In-School Adolescents in Anambra State

Source n	of	Variation	r	Remark
Academic Advising		705	-0.614	High Negative Relationship
Academic Burnout				

Data in Table 1 show that there is a high negative relationship existing between academic advising and academic burnout among in-school adolescents in Anambra State. This is evident by the size of Pearson's Correlation Coefficient r, which is -0.614. This indicates that a unit increase in academic advising leads to .614 (61.4%) decrease in academic burnout among in-school adolescents in Anambra State.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between academic advising and classroom engagement among in-school adolescents in Anambra State?

Table 2: Pearson r on Relationship between Academic Advising and Classroom Engagement among In-School Adolescents in Anambra State

Source n	of	Variation	r	Remark
Academic Advising		705	0.809	Very High Positive Relationship
Classroom Engagement				

Data in Table 2 show that there is a very high positive relationship existing between academic advising and classroom engagement among in-school adolescents in Anambra State. This is evident by the size of Pearson's Correlation Coefficient r, which is 0.809. This indicates that a unit increase in academic advising leads to .809 (80.9%) increase in classroom engagement among in-school adolescents in Anambra State.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between academic advising and academic burnout among in-school adolescents in Anambra State.

Table 3: Test of Significance of Pearson Correlation between Academic Advising and Academic Burnout among In-School Adolescents in Anambra State

Source n	of	Variation	r	p-value	Remark
Academic Advising		705	-		
Academic Burnout			0.614	0.07	Not Sig

Analysis in Table 3 shows that there is no significant relationship between academic advising and academic burnout among in-school adolescents in Anambra State. The calculated r (-0.614) has p-value <0.05. The null hypothesis one was therefore not rejected.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between academic advising and classroom engagement among in-school adolescents in Anambra State.

Table 4: Test of Significance of Pearson Correlation between Academic Advising and Classroom Engagement among In-School Adolescents in Anambra State

Source n	of	Variation	r	p-value	Remark
Academic Advising		705	0.809		
Classroom Engagement				0.01	Sig

Analysis in Table 4 shows that there is a significant relationship between academic advising and classroom engagement among in-school adolescents in Anambra State. The calculated r (0.809) has p -value <0.05 . The null hypothesis two was therefore rejected.

Discussion

The finding of this study revealed that a high negative but insignificant relationship existed between academic advising and academic burnout among in-school adolescents in Anambra State. This implies that although academic advising tends to relate inversely with academic burnout, its influence is not strong enough to significantly reduce burnout among the adolescents studied. Within the Nigerian educational context, this finding suggests that the existing structure and practice of academic advising in public secondary schools may be inadequate for addressing the multifaceted nature of academic burnout. In Nigeria, academic advising at the secondary school level is often informal, irregular, and largely subsumed under general guidance and counselling services, which are frequently understaffed or poorly implemented. As a result, academic advising may focus more on administrative tasks such as subject selection rather than addressing students' emotional exhaustion, stress management, and coping strategies. This may explain why academic advising, as currently practiced, does not significantly mitigate academic burnout among in-school adolescents.

This finding aligns with Najwa (2015), who reported that many students perceived academic advising negatively due to unsatisfactory advising experiences. Furthermore, the insignificant relationship observed in this study underscores the complexity of academic burnout, which in the Nigerian context is influenced by factors such as overcrowded classrooms, high-stakes examinations (WAEC and NECO), parental pressure, socio-economic challenges, and inadequate school facilities. These systemic factors may overshadow the potential benefits of academic advising. Additionally, Kokenge, Heath and Soria (2023) observed that advisors themselves may experience burnout, anxiety, or depression, which could impair their effectiveness. In Nigerian schools where teachers often double as academic advisors without specialized training or reduced workload, the likelihood of effective burnout prevention through advising becomes even more limited.

The findings of the study indicated a high positive and significant relationship between academic advising and classroom engagement among in-school adolescents in Anambra State. This suggests that effective academic advising plays a crucial role in enhancing students' participation, interest, and involvement in classroom activities. In the Nigerian educational system, where teacher-centered instructional methods still dominate, academic advising may serve as an important motivational and supportive mechanism that helps students feel guided, valued, and academically connected. When in-school adolescents receive meaningful academic guidance, they are more likely to understand academic expectations, set goals, and actively engage in classroom learning. This finding supports Erika (2023), who reported that effective academic advising positively influences students' academic success. In the Nigerian context, academic

advising may help bridge the gap between students and teachers, thereby fostering trust, improving communication, and encouraging students to participate more actively during lessons. Thus, even if academic advising does not significantly reduce burnout, it appears to promote classroom engagement by enhancing students' academic orientation and sense of belonging.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that while a high negative and insignificant relationship existed between academic advising and academic burnout among in-school adolescents, a high positive and significant relationship existed between academic advising and classroom engagement among in-school adolescents in Anambra State.

Implications of the Study

There are several implications of the findings of the study. They are thus outlined: The indication of the finding of the study is that a high negative and insignificant relationship existed between academic advising and academic burnout among in-school adolescents in Anambra State. This implies that providing academic advising may not be sufficient to mitigate academic burnout among ins-school adolescents. It further implies that academic advising needs to be complemented with other support services such as mental health counselling, peer mentoring or stress management workshops to provide students with a broad range of resources to manage their academic and personal challenges. The revelation of the finding of the study is that a high positive and significant relationship existed between academic advising and classroom engagement among in-school adolescents in Anambra State. The implication is that academic advising plays a critical role in enhancing in-school adolescents' classroom engagement.

Recommendations

In view of the findings of the study, several recommendations were made which include:

1. Policy makers should consider prioritizing the creation of a school culture that values in-school adolescents' well-being. That way, they will mitigate the factors contributing to academic burnout while fostering a healthier learning environment for in-school adolescents.
2. School administrators should consider providing ongoing professional development for advisors as well as implementing systems for feedback. This is to ensure that advising services are meeting the needs of in-school adolescents while enhancing their classroom engagement.

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