A Study into Self-Efficacy of Grade Repeaters and Non-repeaters; the

Implications on the Perception of their Schooling Experiences, in Basic Schools in

Ghana

A Thesis
presented to
the Faculty of Humanities

at Notre Dame University-Louaize

In Partial Fulfilment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Educational Psychology

by

KRAMO ERIC

MAY, 2020

© COPYRIGHT

By

KRAMO ERIC

2020

Notre Dame University - Louaize Faculty of Humanities

Department of Psychology, Education and Physical Education

We hereby approve the thesis of

KRAMO ERIC

Candidate for the degree of Master of Arts in Educational Psychology

_____

Dr. Patricia Eid   Chair
(Supervisor)

_____

Dr. Dr. Simon Abou Jawdeh   Committee Member

_____

Dr. Christine Sabieh, Full Professor   Committee Member

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to the Almighty God for his care, protection and favours in my life.

Acknowledgement

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Table of Figures

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

U.S.A	United States of America
B.S.	Basic School
J.H.S.	Junior High School
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Education Fund
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Scientists
SEQ-C	Self-Efficacy Questionnaire for Children
GES	Ghana Education Service
FCUBE	Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education
ADP	Accelerated Development Plan
SHS	Senior High School

Abstract

Grade repetition has been a contentious global subject, especially in contemporary times. While the protagonists of the practice espouse its benefits, the opponents claim its attendant demerits, especially psychological ones, far exceeds its merits hence advocate for its total eradication from the school system. Some chief variables like the self-efficacy and the perception of schooling experiences of the grade repeaters seem ignored, in such debate. The purpose of the study was to investigate whether there exists any difference in self-efficacy between grade repeaters and non-repeaters, and what may be its implications on the perception of their schooling experiences. The target population of the study was Ghanaian basic school pupils. The study sampled 255 participants (56 low-performers, 83-grade repeaters and 116 high-performers) who were drawn from 10 basic schools, of diverse ethnic, socio-economic and geographical background, in Ghana. The study employed mixed research design, which allowed the use of data collection instruments like survey questionnaires and semi-structured interview guides to obtain quantitative and qualitative data, respectively from the participants. The data was analysed according to the research questions and hypotheses via SPSS and content analysis technique. The results showed that grade repeaters significantly differ, in self-efficacy, from non-repeaters. However, the results failed to support the hypothesis that the self-efficacy has any influences or implications on the pupils' perception of schooling experiences. Based on the findings of the study, among others, the study recommends that teachers and educational administrators should employ a creative way, a pedagogical approach that seeks to repair the already battered self-efficacy of grade repeaters. That, teachers and educational administrators, should avoid the use of grade repetition or use it sparingly in schools because of its negative implications of children's self-efficacy.

Chapter One

Background of the Study

Research has consistently shown the prevalence of grade repetition in schools around the globe and in particular on the African continent. While the practice seems to reduce in some countries like Tanzania (2%), Mauritius (3%), Ethiopia (4%), Niger (4%), and Ghana (4%), it is actually on the ascendance in some other countries such as Togo (23%), Chad (23%), Central African Republic (23%), Congo (23%), and Burundi (36%) (UNESCO, 2012). Thus, even in the seemingly declining countries of the practice, the present rates of its prevalence are still significant. For instance, in Tanzania, where grade repetition is relatively at its lowest on the continent, 2 of every 100 pupils repeat a grade. Considering the net enrolment rate of 91% in Tanzania, 84% in Ghana, 93% in Mauritius, 82% in Ethiopia and 62% in Niger, the numbers of repeaters in such countries, with relatively low rates of repeaters, are still likely to be substantial when such analysis applies to the entire student population.

Mainardes (2002) has attributed the wide disparity in countries efforts to lessen grade repetition to the difference in promotion practices. Admitting that some countries frown upon compulsory promotion of pupils (including low performing ones) at the end of each year, others actually encourage it. Besides, in a country like France, where compulsory promotion is not the norm, the low performing pupils are not repeated within a cycle. The school authority only retains them at the end of a stage (i.e. cycle), after consultation of parents. In Denmark and Sweden, the parents are also consulted about the retention. In Greece, retention is an exception to the principle of automatic progression, and happens only in cases of prolonged absence due to illness and with an agreement with parents (Mainardes, 2002). This system differs from the promotion practices in Ghana and some other countries, where the

government policy mandate compulsory promotion at every grade. However, with the consent of the parents or the guardian of the low performing pupils, children can be repeated.

A similar view has earlier been expressed by Paul (1997) when he said "Internationally, there is a great diversity of practice in this area [promotion practices], both in Europe and in the rest of the world. In European countries that use repetition, such as Belgium, France and Switzerland, teachers affirm their confidence in the positive results of the practice". The pieces of evidence of both researchers agree in showing the diversity in approaching the phenomenon of grade promotion practices around the globe. Mainardes (2002) supported his position with the illustration that a nation like Ghana practices non-retention policy, while Togo practices the contrary, retention policy. In the non-retention policy, the government mandates a 'wholesale' promotion of pupils from one grade to another. In contrast, where retention policy is practised, promotion to the next grade is done purely by merit. Mainardes' illustration was meaningful and accounted adequately for the vast discrepancy of 4% grade retention rate of Ghana as opposed to 23% of Togo in the same year, 2010. On the other hand, the 4% retention rate sought to suggest that the non-retention policy in Ghana may not be absolute.

UNESCO's *report* (2012) further revealed that "In 2010, 32.2 million pupils repeated a grade in primary education globally compared to 34.7 million in 2000". This represented a significant improvement of 7% decrease of grade repetition despite a 6% enrolment increase in primary education. On the global landscape, the decline suggested a greater readiness to stamp out the practice of grade repetition or at least reduce it to appreciable levels. However, a close assessment of the statistics showed that the 7% decrease in grade retention was mainly realized in western countries.

The same study (UNESCO, 2012) presented a disquieting picture of Sub-Saharan Africa. According to the document, this Africa region had the highest share of primary education repeaters, numbering 11.4 million in 2010. This number represented a whopping 35% of global repeaters in the year under review. There are probably good reasons to project even higher numbers considering that most Sub-Saharan African countries lack the mechanism to adequately track and account for pupils who transfer from one school to repeat grades in their new schools. Additionally, the study explicated that the absolute number of repeaters in the region, had grown by 16% over the past decade, and this was attributed to the high primary enrolment, an increase of 53% over the same period. Notwithstanding the successes chalked by some Sub-Saharan African Countries like Mauritius, Tanzania, Ghana, Niger and Ethiopia, the region, in general, appeared to be nowhere near to eliminate grade repetition from its educational system.

In his study titled –The Cost of Grade Retention, Manacorda (2008) offered the outlook of grade repetition in other parts of the globe. According to Manacorda, while Central Asia, Eastern and Western Europe, and North America displayed repetition rates that varied between 1% and 2%, North-Africa, Middle East and South-East Asia recorded between 8% and 9%. Latin America was somewhere half-way with an average grade repetition rate of 6% (Urquiola and Calderon (2006)). Besides, UNESCO (2012), has presented some statistics on the global progress outlook of grade repetition. They are shown in Table 1, below.

Table 1

Global outlook of primary school grade repetition and enrolment between 2000 and 2010

Region	Rate of the Global population of primary repeaters	Rate of Repetition between 2000/2010	Rate of Enrolment between 2000/2010
Latin America and Caribbean	17%	-36%	-5%
Arab States	9%	-14%	18%
The East Asia and the Pacific	9%	-39%	16%
South and West Asia	28%	18%	18%
Central Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, and North America and Western Europe	2%	-	-
Sub-Saharan Africa	35%	16%	53%

The above statistics corroborated with the data that Maracorda (2008) provided in his study. It examined the percentage share of the global population of primary repeaters, the rising and falling rates of repetition and the school enrolment for all the regions in the world, between 2000 and 2010. Except for the Sub-Saharan African and South and West Asia regions, the data from Table 1, illustrates a concerted effort on the part of other regional blocks of the world to reduce grade repetition in schools. The attribution of the 16% increase in grade repetition in Sub-Saharan Africa partly to the 53% drastic enrolment increment between 2000 and 2010 might be incorrect. Although East Asia and the Pacific regions, and the Arab States experienced substantial enrolment growths of 16% and 18% respectively, they were able to cut down their grade repetition rates considerably (the Arab States experienced 14% and East Asia and the Pacific's also experienced 39% of grade repetition decline). Furthermore, the data from Table 1, suggests no positive correlation between

enrolment growth and grade repetition. Hence, the 53% enrolment increment might not be a culprit of the inability of Sub-Saharan Africa to reduce grade repetition.

Also, data from Warren, Hoffman, and Andrew (2014) confirmed the statistics about North America. Having investigated the state of grade repetition in 50 States in the United States of America, the authors evaluated that:

> Retention rates declined substantially and steadily after the 2004–2005 academic year. In 2004–2005, 2.9% of all first through ninth graders were retained. By 2009–2010, the retention rate had fallen by about half to 1.5%. The decline in retention rates is observed among all groups of students and in all geographic areas, but maybe most pronounced among groups of students with previously higher retention rates. As a result, group differences in retention rates (e.g., by race/ethnicity, parental education, region) also declined (p.6).

This achievement trajectory can be credited to the USA's ability in the implementation of the 'social promotion' policies. "From the 1940s, USA policies of 'social promotion' appeared to be intended to reduce the number of over-age, low achieving students' and high retention rates" (Mainardes (2008, p.2) cited Rose et al (1983)). The policy has been the backbone of automatic promotion or non-retention Policy in the USA educational system. Since then, retention of a child in a grade is subject to the approval of parents. However, we curiously enquire whether the automatic promotion of low achieving students leads to any quality social promotion. In the opinion of Mainardes (2008), the desirability of a grade retention policy is a controversial issue and that in the USA (some States) where grade retention is widespread; there is a heated debate on the merits and demerits of this policy.

Thus far, as anyone with experience in the field knows, it is essential to deduce from the available evidence that it is highly impossible to stamp out grade repetition from the school system without a resort to non-retention policy or its varied forms. Countries such as Tanzania, Ghana, Mauritius, Niger, Ethiopia, Malta, Jordan,

Hungary, Colombia, Chile, and Mexico scored less than 5% grade retention rating, thanks to the non-retention policy. Conversely, countries like Burundi, Togo, and even some European countries like Portugal, France and Belgium still have high levels of grade repetition rates arguably as the result of their grade retention policies.

The success of any research process relies, in part, on how well we can formulate our query into a research question. Why the lack of interest or willingness to eradicate grade repetition in some countries, especially Sub-Saharan Africa? In an attempt to answer this question, we may speculate that the widely divided research findings on the practice might have immensely contributed. The research debates, both for and against grade repetition hardly converge. Hence, countries whose policies are largely informed by these research findings are in an indeterminate state –at best, they choose the one that suits their conditions.

The Statement of the Problem

The current statistics from UNESCO (2012) suggested 4% grade retention rate in Ghana. There was a good reason, accordingly, to believe that Ghana's non-retention policy appeared to yield some positive benefits. Notwithstanding, the 4% grade retention rate was still significant and thus raised a concern. Statistics from Ghana Education Service (GES) official webpage indicated that the pupils' enrolment of the Primary and Junior High School (JHS) were 3,809,258 and 1,301,940 respectively, thus totalling 5,111,199, in 2009/2010 academic year, the same year of the study mentioned above. Effectively, the 4% grade retention translated into a whopping 204,448 pupils, a considerable number that we cannot disregard.

Essentially, research findings have steadily supported the adverse effects of grade repetition on students' educational progress. Although some studies put forth some benefits of grade retention, the evidence was seemingly rare. Jimerson (2001)

demonstrated in his meta-analysis of grade repetition that "95% of analyses from 20 studies showed that retention worsens outcomes or makes no difference." Furthermore, grade retention has been identified, as the most compelling predictor of dropping out of school (Rumberger, 1995; Lyons, 2001). The assumption was confirmed by Jimerson et al (2002) study, which noted that students retained in elementary grades were at an increased risk for dropping out of school. If all these adverse effects were accurate, it would be an act of disservice on the part of the older generation, to turn a blind eye to the situation of low achieving pupils who retain grades.

Many studies, though not in Ghana, have been conducted in the field of grade repetition. Many of these studies have investigated the impacts of grade repetition on repeaters' academic achievement, social skills, self-esteem, school dropout, while others explored the economic implications of the practice to the host countries. Nevertheless, the available literature revealed that researchers had conducted none or fewer studies on some pertinent themes that have a close association with grade repetition. The study, therefore, proposed to delve into one of the unexplored subjects of grade retention, self-efficacy.

One major determinant of success or productivity is self-efficacy (i.e., people's beliefs in their capability to exercise some measure of control over their own functioning and environmental events). According to Bandura (1994), who originally proposed the concept, when people have high levels of self-efficacy, they will have considerable capacity to regulate their own behaviour, which may well direct their efforts toward productivity. Indisputably, self-efficacy plays a crucial role in pupils' capability to excel in their studies or otherwise. It inspires their self-regulation and perseverance in the face of odds. Reasoning with Rumberger (1995) and Lyons

(2001), the underlying factor of the high school dropout among repeaters may be due to a battered self-efficacy of these pupils. Regrettably, however, the subject of self-efficacy was seemingly overlooked or downplayed in the debate of grade promotion or retention. This study sought to investigate the mentioned missing link.

Similarly, Bandura (1994, p.65) advanced that "Peoples beliefs in their personal efficacy influence what courses of action they choose to pursue, how much effort they will invest in activities, how long they will persevere in the face of obstacles and failure experience, and their resiliency following setbacks." The forgone assertion is perfectly applicable to pupils as well. Thus far, the study intended to explore whether there is a significant difference between the self-efficacy of retained pupils and the self-efficacy of promoted pupils. Moreover, how does this variable impact on the perception of their overall schooling experience?

Overview of Ghana Educational System

Ghana is located in West Africa. The country borders Cote D'Ivoire, Togo and Burkina Faso on the west, east and north, respectively. On the south, Ghana borders the Gulf of Guinea and the Atlantic Ocean. For political and administrative purposes, Ghana is now divided into 16 regions (until 2019 there were only ten regions). The geographical area of Ghana is estimated at 238,535 km^2, with a current population of approximately 30 million. The population and housing census of Ghana of 2010 (presently in use) showed that 74.1% of the population, 11 years and older, is literate (Ghana. Statistical Service, 2013).

The educational system bequeathed to Ghana by their British colonial masters was largely grammar-based. It consisted of 10-year elementary school, 5-year secondary school and 2-year lower and upper forms, totalling 17 years of pre-tertiary education. Since the country's independence in 1957, many major educational reforms

had been introduced by successive governments in view of increasing access, restructuring the content of educational system and improving quality. Some of these reform programmes include; Accelerated Development Plan (ADP) in 1951, the Education Act of 1961, Introduction of the Continuation School in 1966, The New Educational Reforms in 1987, Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) in 1996, among others. Notable among them is the 1987 reform which saw the duration reduction of pre-tertiary education from 17 years to 12 years. Thus, the 1987 reformed curriculum consisted of 6-year primary school, 3-year Junior High School (JHS) and 3-year Senior High School (SHS) and its emphasis on vocation and technical education. This structure has been in use to date.

Unlike the earlier reforms, the 1996 and newer educational reforms lean towards automatic grade promotion of pupils. This means that non-performing pupils could only be repeated on a grade upon the consent of the parents. It is, however, unclear to pinpoint the reasons accounting for the automatic grade promotion, a sharp departure from the past practice of grade repetition. It might be plausible to speculate that governments likely find the practice as a financial panacea to the high cost of education associated with the high school enrolment in recent times. It is equally a possibility that the governments have allowed themselves, to be guarded by research evidence that grade repetition is detrimental in many ways to pupils. Before the automatic grade promotion policy, the grade repetition rate of Ghana exceeded 10% (Mainardes, 2002; UNICEF, 2012). Now, the country boasts of 4% grade repetition rate (UNESCO, 2010), hence UNICEF (2012, p.39) remarks, "Overall, grade repetition is not a serious problem in Ghana".

As indicated above, despite the existence of the automatic grade policy in Ghana Education system, both government and private-owned schools repeat non-

performing students on condition of their parents' consent. This concession about the automatic grade promotion policy, perhaps, account for the 4% of the grade repetition rate of Ghana. How does the grade repetition impact on the grade repeaters in the country? Is the practice evidence-based? So far, the researcher's checks showed that pieces of literature on this subject are non-existence.

Ethnic and Geographical Distribution in Ghana

The urban and rural population distribution of Ghana stands at 50.6% and 49.4%, respectively (Ghana. Statistical Service, 2013). Comparing the cited census' figures with the previous ones, the document showed an increasing trend in the urban population growth.

Similarly, the Population and Housing Census (PHC, 2010) also indicated that Akan was the largest ethnic group in the country (47.3%), followed by Mole Dagbani (16.6%), Ewe (13.9%), Ga-Dangme (7.4%), Gurma (5.7%) and Guan (3.7%). The Akan ethnic group consists of dialect groupings such as Asante, Fante, Sefwi, Akuapim, etc. Though scattered all over the country, they are dominantly present in Ashanti, Brong Ahafo, Central, Western, and Greater Accra regions.

Objectives

The general objective of the study was to find out the implications of self-efficacy of grade repeaters and non-repeaters on the perception of their schooling experiences. To attain this ultimate goal, the study set the following specific objectives;

1. To find out the contribution of low performing pupils in the decision to repeat a grade or to be promoted to the next grade.

2. To establish whether there exists any significant difference between the self-efficacy of grade repeaters and the self-efficacy of non-repeaters.

3. To ascertain the general perception of grade repeaters and non-repeaters on their schooling experiences.

4. To determine whether there is any relationship between self-efficacy of grade repeaters and non-repeaters and the perception of their schooling experiences.

Research Questions

The study was also guided by the following research questions:

1. To what extent do grade repeaters and low-performers (non-repeaters) contribute to the decision to repeat or not to repeat a grade?

2. How do grade repeaters compare with non-repeaters on the self-efficacy construct?

3. How do grade repeaters compare with non-repeaters on the perception of schooling experiences' construct?

4. How does the self-efficacy of grade repeaters and non-repeaters impact on their perception of their schooling experiences?

Hypotheses

Moreover, the study hypothesized that;

1. There is a significant relationship between self-efficacy and perception of schooling experiences.

2. There will be a significantly lower self-efficacy rate among grade repeaters than in low-performers (non-repeaters).

3. Grade repeaters' self-efficacy will have a significant positive correlation on their perception of schooling experiences.

4. Non-repeaters' self-efficacy will have a significant positive correlation on their perception of schooling experiences.

Significance of the Study

The literature available to the researcher suggests that no research has been conducted, regarding self-efficacy of grade repeaters and non-repeaters and its possible implications on their perception of schooling experiences. The study, therefore, offers the following importance:

The findings of the study provide the educational policymakers with evidence-based data to inform their decisions on grade repetition policy. A country like Ghana, where the study was carried out, does not have locally researched data on psychological effects of grade repetition. Educational policymakers, therefore, heavily rely on data from other parts of the world, which might not be consistent with the pertaining environmental factors. The study findings thus corroborate the existing data used by policymakers. Also, it has uncovered new data to inspire their decisions in formulating better planning and management of the educational system in Ghana.

Additionally, the findings of the study provide teachers with scientific evidence of how the grade repetition has impacted on grade repeaters' self-efficacy and its attendant effects on their overall perception of schooling experiences. This knowledge significantly impacts the role of teachers as the implementers of educational policies of every nation. Thus crucial role further places them as the people directly in charge of assessing pupils' performance and determiners of their fate. The results then equip them to understand better and appreciate the impact of their decisions regarding pupils' promotion or retention. Thus far, help to mitigate the consequences of grade retention in Ghana schools.

Parents remain indispensable stakeholders in the educational enterprise. In a country like Ghana, where non-retention policy is functional, parents are usually required to consent to a school arrangement to repeat their children. Regrettably, many of these parents do not understand the aftermaths of the decision they make. The outcome of the present research work also equips parents with the needed information to make the right decisions about their children's promotion.

The findings of the study add to the existing body of knowledge about the psychological well-being of students. Organizations and agencies like UNESCO and UNICEF who are concerned about the welfare of children may find it useful in their decisions about the children, in Ghana context. Finally, the study paves the way for more research and more discussions on the theme. It arouses in researchers the interest to explore more in this area.

Delimitations of the Study

The total geographical area of Ghana is 238,533 km^2 with over 12000 primary schools; and 6000 junior high schools. The geographical vastness and the enormous number of Basic schools in the country made it impossible to cover all in a single study. This study was, therefore, restricted to three regions –Western, Greater Accra, and Ashanti, in Ghana, where the researcher investigated the phenomenon of self-efficacy among pupils in five (5) government-owned (public) and five (5) private-owned (private) schools in these regions. It allowed the researcher to study the phenomenon in detail.

The study was also delimited, to the sample population. The sample population included grade repeaters and non-repeaters (low-performers and high-performers) in the Basic schools (both upper primary and junior high). The researcher considered that these stages of schooling were critical since they involved adolescents whom

according to Erikson's psychosocial stages of human development, struggle with identity and identity confusion. Thus, understanding their self-efficacy was an additional advantage to enable their teachers to enhance healthy growth and social functioning during this period of adolescence.

Operational Definition of Key Terms

Basic School (B.S). It consists of both the primary school and the junior high school. Thus, there is a B.S. one through B.S. nine.

Grade repeater: A non-performing pupil who was not allowed by the school authority (usually by the consent of their parents) to advance to the next stage of their study at the end of the academic year. It may include any pupil who has repeated a grade/class before.

Grade repetition or grade retention: The two terms will be used interchangeably in the same sense throughout the work. They refer to the practice of retaining a pupil for one year on a particular grade level because of academic non-performance.

Grade: An academic level of a pupil.

High-performer: is a pupil who has no academic deficit and whose grade advancement has not come to any contention.

Low-performer: is a non-performing pupil who did not meet the minimum promotion criteria yet allowed by the school authority (following the government policy of non-retention) to advance to the next stage of their study.

Non-performing pupil: is a pupil who does not perform well academically. It includes grade repeater and non-repeater.

Non-repeater: This refers to a low-performer or a high-performer, who gains promotion to the next grade.

Non-retention policy: is the national educational policy that forbids a school authority to repeat a pupil on a grade for low academic performance, as in the case of Ghana. Sometimes, the policy stipulates the conditions (such as prolonged absence from school due to ill-health or truancy and parental consent) under which a non-performing pupil can repeat a grade.

Perception: The cognitive evaluation of a phenomenon or something as either desirable or undesirable.

Pupil: A learner who is in primary school or the junior high school (JHS). In Ghana, grade one through grade six is the primary school, while grade seven through grade nine constitutes the junior high school.

Schooling experiences: Refers to the overall pupil's activities of the formal and informal aspects of the school curricula. These experiences include syllabus-based learning, participation in extra-curricular activities such as visiting the library at free periods, joining clubs and societies, and social interaction with other pupils and teachers.

Self-efficacy: Refers to the belief that one can accomplish a given goal or task and produce positive change (Laura, 2017, p.413).

Theoretical Framework

Groom (1993, pp.71-72) has postulated that "Theories are significant in every study, and we cannot think without a theory: facts do not speak for themselves, we impose meaning on them. We need theories to be able to make statements about human behaviour." By this submission, Groom evaluated that theories were underpinnings of any credible research study, which intended to explore human behaviour. This assertion is true to a very great extent considering that many theories have withstood the test of the time and are found valid and reliable to organize

knowledge about human behaviour. Further, they serve as references and illuminations for the safe exploration of researchers. In light of this, the present study set to be grounded, on Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) and Self-efficacy is a key variable in this theory.

Self-efficacy, according to Bandura (1994), is the belief in one's ability to influence events that affect one's life and control over the way these events, are experienced. Bandura (2001, p.10) restated self-efficacy as "People's beliefs in their capability to exercise some measure of control over their own functioning and environmental events." The two descriptions are the same, in essence. The operational expression in Bandura's definitions of self-efficacy is the belief to influence or control. Thus, Bandura does not anticipate self-efficacy as *the real ability* to get things done*;* but, *the perceived ability* of the subject by the subject.

Nevertheless, *the perceived ability (*self-efficacy) is as important as *the real ability* of the subject. It provides a firm foundation upon which *the real ability* of the people rests. For this matter, Bandura (1997, p.3) passionately remarked:

> Self-efficacy beliefs influence the courses of action people choose to pursue, how much effort they put forth in given endeavours, how long they will persevere in the face of obstacles and failures, their resilience to adversity, whether their thought patterns are self-hindering or self-aiding, how much stress and depression they experience in coping with taxing environmental demands, and the level of accomplishments they realize.

We can infer with a high level of accuracy that self-efficacy is quite significant to the beginning of human behavioural learning, its sustenance through its successful completion. Self-efficacy not only inspires decision but also serves as intrinsic motivation.

Driscoll (2014) has informed us that Bandura, the main proponent of the theory, thought of self-efficacy to be a generative capability, not a fixed trait. "That is,

people develop self-efficacy beliefs in different areas and to different degrees, and these differences help to explain why people with similar skill levels may perform differently or why an individual may perform differently under different circumstances without a change in skill level" (Driscoll, 2014, p.318). The position of Driscoll, being herself an educational psychologist, tended to suggest that the decision to promote a low performing pupil to the next grade or to repeat on a grade, has some implications on the child's self-efficacy. The pupil's self-efficacy can either weaken or strengthen.

According to Bandura, the self-efficacy of a person; can be acquired, weakened, or strengthened by one, or different combinations of four key sources. These sources include mastery experiences, social modelling, social persuasion, and physical and emotional states. These beliefs are specific to particular learning contexts. Therefore, students form perceptions about their personal capabilities in light of the requirements of a particular learning task. Indeed, these sources are quite apparent in the experiences of both the grade repeater and non-repeater (low-performer).

Feist, Feist & Roberts (2018), wrote that mastery experiences, which chiefly stem from past performances, are the most prominent sources of self-efficacy. Previous successes raise mastery expectations, while repeated failures lower them. It is rightly so because, the subject has concrete data to compare his capabilities, hence can draw the most plausible imaginary of performing well or otherwise in a subsequent similar task. In this case, the grade repeater is less advantageous in comparison with the low-performer. The low-performer may have glimpses of can-do attitude resulting from his promotion. Such positive psychological orientation is more likely to develop in him or boost his self-efficacy. By the virtue of his repetition, the grade repeater lacks this positive psychological constituent required to spur self-efficacy.

Social modelling that is, vicarious experiences, was noted by Bandura as a second source of self-efficacy. This source proposed that people learn from other people whom they interact. Two ideas are distinct in this concept. First, learners "are more likely to follow the behaviour of those they perceive to be competent in the skill being learned than those they see as less competent" (Driscoll, 2014, p.320). Naturally, pupils believe that they are more competent than their juniors. Likewise, grade repeaters are less likely to model even the best pupils who meet them in repeated grade. Consequently, they would miss the opportunity to model the perceived competent pupils in their actual class, to spur their self-efficacy.

Second, as part of the comprehensive developmental experience, the self-efficacy of pupils tends to increase when they see colleagues they compare equal to or better than, performing well on a task. In this case, grade repeaters will be at an advantage since they perceive they have better capability than their juniors. Thus, the performance of the best pupils in their repeated grade will enhance their confidence that they can do the same. Low-performers, on the other hand, do not have such a group of pupils to compare their effort to raise their self-efficacy.

Social persuasion is another legitimate and potent source of self-efficacy. According to the theory, exhortations or criticisms; which are examples of social persuasion, from perceived significant people can strengthen or weaken self-efficacy, respectively. Grade repetition decisions are usually taken by the school authority, teachers, and parents on behalf of pupils. These people are, in no doubt, the significant persons in the life of pupils. Their 'criticism' in the form of grade repetition will seriously put their self-efficacy of doing better into jeopardy. The source in partnership with other sources of efficacy, therefore, predicts that grade repeaters are likely to

measure less on self-efficacy scale than low-performers (non-repeaters), who rather experience promotion as positive social persuasion.

Finally, the self-efficacy theory considers the physical and emotional state of people as a source of acquiring, enhancing, or weakening self-efficacy. Grade repeaters usually experience negative affect as opposed to positive affect. Laura (2017) defined "negative affect as negative emotions such as anger, guilt, and sadness." These and other negative emotions like distress, shame, fear, and disgust may well-describe the feelings of grade repeaters. These negative emotions are potential sources to weaken the self-efficacy of low performing pupils who are not able to make it to the next grade. As such, they can minimize their belief in their own capability. These emotions are bound to recur, giving the fact that the repeaters see their former mates ahead of them every day.

Most of the time, grade repeaters remain in the same classroom for another academic year. This decision deprives them of the satisfaction that accompanies the natural transition from one classroom to another. The external physical state in terms of the same classroom, textbooks, and sometimes the class teacher can work against their self-efficacy. They serve as strong permanent reminders of their inability.

The Organisation of the Study

The present research work organizes into five chapters. Chapter one deals with the preliminaries of the study. It thus gives a general introduction to the study, defines the problem, states the purpose and the objectives of the study, and clearly outlines the research questions and hypotheses. Furthermore, the chapter offers a theoretical framework that underpins the entire work, operationalizes keywords in the study and gives some contextual background information.

Chapter two reviews related literature on the topic: *Self-Efficacy of Grade Repeaters and Non-repeaters; the Implications on the Perception of their Schooling Experiences, in Basic Schools in Ghana.* In doing so, the chapter focuses on the definition of self-efficacy, perceptions, schooling experiences and grade repetition. Other themes, like the merits and demerits of grade repetition, the historical overview of grade repetition, the influence of self-efficacy on academic performance, the relationship between self-efficacy and perceptions, are sufficiently treated.

Chapter three focuses on the methodology of the study. It discusses in detail mixed research design (the proposed research design), the participants, the sample and sampling method of the study. Moreover, it presents an in-depth account of data collection instruments, the procedure of data collection, data analysis and ethical considerations of the study.

Chapter four presents the study results and analyses. To facilitate comprehension of data, tables and figures, are given after some verbal descriptions and interpretation. Last but not least, chapter five presents discussions on the results, recommendations, and general conclusion of the study. The discussions organize into research questions and hypotheses. The format intends for orderly arrangement and appreciation of the study responses to the research questions and hypotheses.

Chapter Two

Review of Related Literature

Introduction

This chapter reviews the sources gathered and read that relate the self-efficacy and its influences on the perception of schooling experiences among grade repeaters and non-repeaters. It traces the historical overview of grade repetition, examines grade retention and non-retention policies, and identifies merits and demerits of grade repetition. It also discusses self-efficacy, examines the relationship between self-efficacy and academic performance, schooling experiences, and perception of grade repeaters on schooling experiences.

Self-efficacy

Since Bandura published his 1977 paper, "Self-efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioral Change", this subject has become one of the most studied topics in cognitive and social psychology. Self-efficacy was operationally defined, in this study, as the belief that one can accomplish a given goal or task and produce positive change. This presumes that self-efficacy is not a generalized concept but varies with tasks. By experience, it has been observed that some people may have a high belief to accomplish a set of activities and not others. This belief in their own ability may emanate from their previous successful performances or by mere observation of people they think of themselves better than them, performing well on such tasks (Bandura, 1994). Piñeiro, et al. (2019, p2) agreed with the former when they stated that, "There is no doubt that prior achievement and, especially, students' experiences of success and failure, are the main predictor of their future academic career."

Carroll et al (2008) also said that "Self-efficacy is best conceived as a differentiated set of self-beliefs specific to different areas of functioning." Consistent with the original conception of self-efficacy, Bandura opined that self-efficacy is thought to be a generative capability, not a fixed trait; people develop self-efficacy beliefs in different areas and to different degrees (Bandura, 1997). Carroll et al (2008) provided examples of domain-specific self-efficacy as social self-efficacy, academic self-efficacy, and self-regulatory self-efficacy.

In agreement with their observation, the mentioned examples (of domain-specific self-efficacy) could be further differentiated. For instance, academic self-efficacy might still be too general. Admittedly, in the field of academia, some people may have a high level of confidence in their abilities to deliver in Mathematics, while the same people may have a low level of confidence in their ability to perform well even in a trivial task in the English Language. Acknowledging these forms of self-efficacy is very crucial to the discussion of the level of self-efficacy among grade repeaters and non-repeaters. This association may be significantly positive. Not only would it help assess the exact self-efficacy problem among the proposed population but also fragmenting self-efficacy, (social self-efficacy, academic self-efficacy and self-regulatory self-efficacy) helps understand better how it could predict academic performance.

Historical Overview of Grade Repetition

Given the complicated nature of grade repetition, it was challenging to trace its very beginnings. Notwithstanding the foregone, "the practise was widespread in British schools as early as the 16th Century, as a chosen method of correcting academic deficiency" (Mainardes, 2002, p.2). It may be reasonably inferred from Mainardes (2002) that grade repetition was objective specific, to correct the academic

deficiency, from the onset. This confirmed what Reynolds (1992) had earlier said that the goal of grade retention was to improve school performance by allowing more time for students to develop adequate academic skills. Whether this objective was adequately met, by the practice, it remains contestable till present day as it is thoroughly demonstrated in subsequent headings. It could also have alluded that the attendant psychological implications such as; self-efficacy, perception, self-esteem, among others, of the practice, were not envisaged.

The United States of America introduced grade repetition into their educational system through the adoption of many practices of the British precursors. However, it was particularly pointed out by Owings & Magliaro (1998, p.86) that "It was not until about 1860 that it became [a] common [practice] in U.S. elementary schools to group children in a grade level with promotion dependent on mastery of quota content." As observed by Reynolds (1992), it was intended to improve the performance of low achieving students.

Like the United States of America, many Anglophone countries such as Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, among others, the practice of grade repetition was bequeathed to them by their colonial masters, the British. The first British group arrived in the Gold Coast, present-day Ghana, in the early nineteenth century, as traders. By the late nineteenth century, they had conquered Gold Coast and established it as a colony. Among other things, the country was ruled by the British political and educational systems. However, it should be noted that the early Europeans settlers, the Portuguese, the Dutch, and the Danish, who arrived in the country had already laid the foundation of education. Nonetheless, evidence regarding their practice of grade repetition is non-existence.

In the mid-twentieth century, the global educational landscape experienced a new wave. Upon the introduction of the social promotion policy in 1940, the USA rolled out grade non-retention policy in its educational system in the spirit of offering equal opportunities to low achieving students (Mainardes, 2002). The English soon followed the move initiated by the USA. Wilson (1954) accurately captured it in the following manner:

> [It was] decisively crystallised in the great 1944 Education Act, which virtually prescribes that every child in England shall pass into a secondary school at the age of 11. It is practically inevitable; therefore, that grading in Primary school shall be on an age basis from year to year, since at the magic age of eleven the child will jump into a new stage of educational life whatever his achievement hitherto (p. 190, 191).

While the enactment of the social promotion policy necessitated U. S's automatic promotion, the English's was borne out of the constraints of passing into a secondary school at the magic age of 11. Correspondingly, from the 1950s, different countries, including Ghana, adopted various forms of promotion practices. Meanwhile, international organizations like the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations International Children's Education Fund (UNICEF) that have children welfare at heart continued to encourage non-retention policy across the globe, especially among developing countries where grade repetition rate has been quite high (Mainardes, 2002).

The Merits of Grade Repetition

The practice of grade repetition has been extolled, for its ability to improve upon repeaters' academic performance. UNESCO (2012) acknowledged this assumption by referencing the Organization for Economic Co-operation and

Development (OECD, 2011) when it stated that by grade repetition, students' productivity and readiness for the labour market, was improved. By the same token, Manacorda (2008) argued that the mere exposure of the grade repeater, to the same learning materials for another year, might improve their academic performance. While UNESCO (2012) had matured students in mind, Manacorda (2008) specifically talked about pupils in the first grades of school. He might have underestimated the effects of factors like boredom of repeating the same activities, the psychological state of the repeater, and the decline in motivation to study. These intervening factors, especially self-efficacy (psychological state) of the repeater could erode the perceived positive influence of the mere exposure effect. The study, therefore, sought to delve into the self-efficacy of grade repeaters and its implication on their overall schooling experiences.

In the study titled *Controversy over Grade Repetition-Afghan Teachers' View on Grade Repetition*, Haidary (2013) provided empirical evidence to support the view that grade repetition improves academic performance. She employed a sample size of 170 male and female teachers. To collect appropriate data to measure the advantages of grade repetition, Haidary (2013) used Likert scale approach with a five-degree range (strongly agree, agree, not agree not to disagree, disagree, strongly disagree) to solicit data on the following statements; (i) Repetition prevents future failure, (ii) Repetition allows for better results the second time, (iii) Repetition allows the student to catch up with peers, (iv) Repetition is effective for students of unsupportive families, (v) Repetition maintains grade-level standards, and (vi) Difficult textbooks contribute to students' repetition. In the end, Haidary summarized the data into Agree (strongly agree and agree), Neutral (not agree not to disagree) and Disagree (strongly disagree and disagree) to facilitate smooth analysis of data.

The results of the study showed that 75% of the cohort agreed that grade repetition prevents future failure; a whopping 81% agreed that it allows for better results the second time, while 58% thought that the practice allows students to catch-up with peers. The other items on the questionnaire yielded similar results. Thus results were significant in demonstrating the trust teachers have in grade repetition to improve academic performance. Nonetheless, Haidary's study seemed to lack a representative sample. Sample participants included only teachers, ignoring victims of the practice (grade repeaters) and their parents who regularly monitor their children's academic performance. Appropriate reasons for opposing the use of non-representative samples is lack of heterogeneity (Richiardi, Pizzi, & Pearce, 2013).

According to Manacorda (2008, p3), "the strongest argument in favour of grade repetition is that it acts as a deterrent against students' poor school performance." This is a plausible and convincing argument when talking about students (pupils) who have the potentials to make it to the next grade but fail to do so out of laxity. Possibly, grade repetition may serve as a wake-up call to them. However, it should be seen as an extreme form of positive punishment which does not commensurate to the perceived misbehaviour of the immature child.

Rose et al (1983) conducted a meta-analysis of about 50 studies spanning between 1911 and 1983, on grade retention in America. Though many findings of their study did not favour grade retention, they made some fascinating revelation about grade retention. It was unravelled that grade retention was somewhat more positive when children were retained because of intellectual immaturity. Similarly, Donofrio (1977) had earlier argued that grade retention might be helpful for children with learning disabilities that exhibit certain constitutional and chronological factors. Among the factors he cited was late maturation (Wynn, 2010). Additionally,

Manacorda (2008) suggested that practising grade repetition was necessary "if a child's development makes him more apt to attend a certain grade at a later age, or if changing peers and possibly teachers lead to an increase in a child's productivity." The researchers sounded quite reasonable; however, their works lacked empirical evidence to support their claims. Also, the present researcher believes that such a child can be transferred to a new school for the needed environment to bloom without necessarily making him repeat the grade in the same school and suffer public ridicule.

The Demerits of Grade Repetition

Notwithstanding the numerous merits of grade repetition so far advanced, many research findings do not approve of grade repetition (Glasser, 1969; Reynolds, Temple & McCoy, 1997; Wynn, 2010). To better understand the research findings regarding this subject, the present researcher discussed them under the following subheadings; academic demerits, economic demerits, psychological demerits, consequences on schooling experiences and social demerits.

Academic demerits of grade repetition.

Glasser (1969) asserted that the only thing students learn from retention is to embrace a failure identity. If Glasser's assertion were found valid, then the effects of grade retention are quite grave, and unnecessary to melt out to the potential school pupils. This is because the successful future that education intends for the pupils requires success-driven and positive-oriented mind, which runs counter to the embrace of failure identity.

In agreement with Glasser's line of thought, Wynn (2010) listed four reasons why retention did not work or was not efficient. They included the following: (1) Retention is often practised for non-academic reasons; (2) The decision to retain a

student does not account for poor instruction; (3) Retained children do not do better academically after they repeat a grade, and (4) Grade retention contributes to school dropout rates and is associated with a high percentage of students leaving school early.

Some of the reasons presented by Wynn might not be completely accurate. It is the irrefutable fact that some pupils repeated in a grade for non-academic explanations. These may include prolonged absenteeism (sometimes due to ill-health, non-payment of school fees, among others), emotional immaturity, and behaviour misconduct. However, these do not constitute the main reason for repetition rather only symptoms of the actual cause, which is low academic performance. It should be borne in mind that the goal of grade retention from the beginning has been to improve the performance of low achieving students (Reynolds, 1992).

Perhaps the most robust argument advanced by Wynn (2010) is the decision to retain a student does not account for poor instruction. In most parts of the globe, and specifically in Ghana, class teachers (in primary schools) and subject masters (in junior and senior high schools) construct, administer and evaluate promotion examinations of their pupils/students. Many a time, these examinations are composed based on what and how learning materials, are taught. In many cases, pupils are left vulnerable by becoming victims of poor instructions. This implies that some pupils underperform and consequently repeat the grade, not as a result of their intellectual inability but the non-performance of the very teachers who evaluated them.

Another point that Wynn (2010), debated in disfavour of grade repetition was that, retained children do not do better academically after they repeat a grade. There is an abundant amount of literature supporting this view (OECD, 2011; Wynn, 2010; Reynolds, Temple & McCoy, 1997). He further reported, "For almost 50 years, research has shown that grade retention provides no academic advantages to students."

Marsh, Gershwin, Kirby & Xia (2009, p.ii) carefully observed that "critics of grade retention contend that it fails to benefit children academically in the long run", while Roderick (1995, p.5) concluded that "results of studies investigating the effects of retention on academic performance generally indicate that retention as a mean of remediation does not work."

Conversely, the topic of the influence of grade repetition on repeaters appears to be a story of two worlds. Ikeda & García (2014, p.270) observed, "The empirical literature assessing the consequences of grade repetition provides inconclusive evidence of the academic and socio-emotional effects of retention on students." Their observation was quite relevant, considering other studies yielded contradicting results. In the study, the controversy over grade Repetition-Afghan's teachers' view of grade repetition; Haidary (2013) noted that Afghan teachers perceived grade repetition very advantageous. It is interesting to know that in the mentioned study, a whopping 81% of the participants agreed that grade repetition allows for better results the second time.

The dual positions of researchers regarding the impact of grade repetition on academic performance are not surprising. However, it can be better understood when these opposing positions on the practice are seen together in the findings that follow:

> In middle- or high-income countries, primary school classes have fewer than 30 pupils, and in a majority of them, there are fewer than 20 pupils per class. Yet, in sub-Saharan Africa, the average class size in public primary schools ranges from 26 pupils in Cape Verde to 84 in the Central African Republic. In four out of ten countries reporting data, there are on average 50, or more pupils per class. (UNESCO, 2012, p. 52)

Thus, it can be inferred from the UNESCO's findings that in the middle or high-income countries where the majority of primary school classes have fewer than 20 pupils, individualized teaching leading to remediation of the learning difficulties of

grade repeaters is possible. The fewer number of pupils in class makes it possible to pay attention to the repeated pupils and consequently monitor their progress. The same cannot be said about public primary schools in developing countries and sub-Saharan Africa countries, like Ghana, where 50 pupils per class, is found to be the average. In such classrooms, the learning difficulties of weak and repeated pupils are often neglected, usually as a result of overwork on teachers. On the above premises, the worst outcome of a grade repeater is likely to be prognosticated.

Consequences on schooling experiences.

Many research findings hold that grade repetition has massive negative impacts on the overall schooling experiences of grade repeaters. Notable among the negative impacts is its association with the high incidence of school dropout cases among grade repeaters (Marsh, Gershwin, Kirby & Xia, 2009; Wynn, 2010; UNICEF, 2012; Yannick, 2017). It can be recalled that Wynn (2010) revealed that grade retention contributed to school dropout rates and was associated with a high percentage of students leaving school early. Given the foregone finding and the observation of the OECD (2014) that grade repeaters developed negative attitudes towards school, it may be reasonably speculated that grade repeaters do not find meaning and satisfaction in the schooling experiences. Hence, they develop negative attitudes, and the school dropout becomes a spontaneous response to the perceived unhelpful schooling experiences.

UNICEF (2012) Ghana Country Study, titled *Global Initiative on Out-Of-School Children*, reported that "When children repeat grades they not only lose valuable time in school, but they may also become frustrated with the schooling experience and as a result are more likely to drop out" (p.39). While Marsh, Gershwin, Kirby & Xia (2009) demonstrated that grade repetition has a correlative relationship

with dropping out of school, Yannick (2017, p.6) suggested that "limiting the use of grade repetition as a pedagogical tool could help decrease the dropout rate and allow more students to complete a second cycle and go to university."

The evidence is startling and set one pondering over the possible underlying causes. What fundamental aspects of grade repetition push pupils that repeat a grade to decide to drop out of school? Could grade repeaters experience low self-efficacy through learned helplessness? If yes, does low self-efficacy among grade repeaters well accounts for their poor perception of the schooling experience? This study delved into this mystery through an empirical approach.

Economic demerits of grade repetition.

Another attendant demerit of grade repetition, which seldom mentioned, is cost. A pupil who repeats a grade consumes an additional year of educational resources, potentially limiting the capacity of the education system, increasing class size and the cost per graduate. The cost of grade repetition is, therefore, enormous, manifest in various forms and incurred by all principal educational stakeholders that include the government, schools, parents or guardians, and grade repeaters themselves.

UNESCO (2012) proposed two broad approaches, namely; direct and indirect costs, for estimating costs of grade repetition. The direct costs refer to the amount of resources committed to education, which is usually estimated as per pupil. For instance, the government of Ghana, through its annual budgets, presents to the citizens the amount of money it spends on each pupil at the Basic school for the year. This money is technically known as Capitation Grant. The total sum of the Capitation Grant is the total direct cost of education, in this case, for the government of Ghana (Osei, Owusu, Asem, & Afutu-Kotey, 2009). Similarly, parents and guardians incur some private direct cost on their children for each school year. The direct costs incurred on

grade repetition are, therefore, estimated as direct cost per pupil multiply by the number of repeaters.

Indirect costs, on the other hand, involves taking a broader view, which includes potential human capital development, economic returns and growth that might be delayed or missed due to grade repetition or early school leaving (Belfield, 2008; OECD, 2011; UNESCO, 2012). Though very expensive, it appears little or no attention is given to indirect costs when dealing with this topic. UNESCO (2012, p.55) predicts that "if resources spent on repeating a grade were instead spent on enrolling new entrants into school without reducing the quality of education, annual GDP in countries like Burundi, Madagascar and Malawi could grow potentially by 1.3%, 0.7% and 0.6%, respectively." On the whole, this offers robust evidence of the adverse effect of grade repetition on the national economy.

Psychological demerits of grade repetition.

There has been much evidence that grade repetition has some negative psychological ramifications on the victims of the practice. Among the psychological consequences include negative attitudes towards school, low self-esteem, rejection, guilt, resentment, and remorse (Holmes & Matthews, 1984; Smith & Shepard, 1987; Holmes, 1989; Mainardes, 2002; OECD, 2014). Marsh et al (2009, p.1), evaluated that "if not promoted along with his or her [their] peers, [grade repeaters] may incur psychological and emotional damages, such as low self-esteem or a low sense of self-worth." By implication, despite their academic difficulties, low-performers (non-repeaters) may least experience such negative psychological consequences or not experience them, at all.

Byrnes and Yamamoto's (2001) interview of retained students, also gave robust evidence to the psychological difficulty that grade repeaters experience. The

researchers reported that 84% of their cohort's answers included words such as sad, bad, or upset. Additionally, 47% of the retained students reported being punished by their parents or teased by their peers. This evidence gave credence to the earlier study of Yamamoto (1980) where he reported that "children rated the prospect of repeating a grade as more stressful than wetting in a class or being caught stealing. The only two life events that children thought would be more stressful than being retained are going blind or losing a parent" (pp. 6-8).

The fear of failing again coupling with loss of self-esteem among grade repeaters leads to high anxiety (Slavin, 2014). This situation can be detrimental to their academic aspiration. Slavin (2014, p.320) thought that "Anxious students might have difficulty learning in the first place, difficulty using or transferring the knowledge they do have, and difficulty demonstrating their knowledge on tests." It is sufficiently clear that the psychological consequences are not an end to themselves. They adversely affect the academic successes of grade repeaters and unfortunately perpetuate the vicious cycle of repetition.

Notwithstanding the numerous psychological ramifications presented in the preceding paragraphs, the available literature suggested no studies associating self-efficacy and grade repeaters or non-repeaters. It was however imperative to investigate this psychological construct, considering its implication on the overall human functioning (Bandura, 1990; Bandura et al., 1996; Hysong & Quinones, 1997; Sacco et al, 2007; Carroll et al, 2008). The present study intended to fill this gap.

Schooling Experiences

Wilson (1990) defined a curriculum as anything and everything that teaches a lesson; planned or otherwise. This definition was elucidated by Oliva (1997) when he redefined a curriculum as everything that goes on within the school; including but not

limited to, the syllabus-based subjects, extra-class activities, guidance and counselling, and interpersonal relationships. Wilson (1990) and Oliva (1997) definitions blend to give a broader definition of a curriculum and a complete insight of schooling experiences. Thus far, we are confident to say that schooling experiences, which are indeed the school curriculum, are not limited to the syllabus-based activities that take place in classrooms, laboratories, and workshops under the auspices of teachers. In addition to Oliva's list, schooling experience may include reading in the library, doing homework, weekly school worship, participating in school sporting activities, entertainments, clubs, and association, relating with teachers and other pupils, among others.

School curriculum experts conveniently put these schooling experiences into two broad categories. The first is the formal (or planned) curriculum, which comprises all schooling experiences well-articulated in the school official syllabuses and textbooks. Examples of the formal curriculum are contents of Mathematics, Ghanaian Language, English Language, Science, Creative Art, Computer science, Religious Studies, Our World and Our People, and Citizenship Education. The second is the informal (or unplanned) curriculum, which consists of all schooling experiences that are not directly taught in schools yet contribute to the holistic formation of the person. For instance, sporting activities in schools, leisure reading in the library, recreating with other pupils, guidance and counselling services, joining clubs and societies, school worship, constitute an integral part of the informal curriculum. The informal curriculum is as imperative as the formal curriculum. It is necessary for the formation of the moral, social, and psychological faculties of pupils.

Critical attention to schooling experiences is crucial and timely. Johnson (1973) has contended that unpleasant school experiences seldom attract pupils. He

further argued that "when the beauty and the importance, as well as the substance of a subject, are taught, when pupils appreciate the importance and the usefulness of what they are learning, education is exciting, growth-producing experience." What kinds of perception do grade repeaters and non-repeaters have of their schooling experiences? Are they growth-producing experiences are postulated by Johnson? Do they differ? How do they impact on their psychological well-being, especially self-efficacy? The study, thus investigated the perceptions of both grade repeaters and non-repeaters on their schooling experiences, to obtain empirical data on the subject.

Perception of Grade Repeaters on Schooling Experiences

It has been illustrated earlier from the perspective of the curriculum that there exist a wide range of schooling experiences for pupils, which include both the formal and informal curricula. Furthermore, the equal merits of every schooling experience towards pupils' academic success were stressed. Most importantly, it was recognized that perception has a prominent place in all these experiences. Efron (1969) defined perception as man's primary form of cognitive contact with the world around him. The grade repeater has some cognitive contacts (thoughts) of the world around them (schooling experiences), especially after being repeated, so do the non-repeaters.

Interestingly, as a process of organizing and interpreting sensory information, the perception was found to be an adaptation that improves a species' chances for survival (Laura, 2017). The implications of perception of grade repeaters of their schooling experiences are therefore imperative if they must respond pertinently to the impending learning deficiency. It is to say that good perception of the schooling experiences can potentially facilitate better chances of correcting the repeaters' learning difficulties, whereas the opposing argument holds.

Also, Adler (1956) has postulated that people's subjective perceptions shape their behaviour and personality. However, what he meant by perception is only an interpretation of sensory assumptions, and these interpretations can differ wildly between individuals. In comparison, it can be presumed that the perceptions of schooling experiences of grade repeaters and non-repeaters (low-performers and high-performers) significantly differ and might contribute to shaping their future behaviour. It was instead challenging to envisage which group would predict the better perception of schooling experiences since literature to make such prediction was lacking. Notwithstanding, the evidence available showed that more grade repeaters dropped out of school than non-repeaters (low-performers and high-performers) (Glasser,1969; Wynn, 2010). This situation might be partly due to their attitudes (perception) towards schooling experiences.

A study titled: *Adolescents' Perceptions of School Environment, Engagement, and Academic Achievement in Middle School;* was conducted by Wang and Holcombe (2010). It was short-term longitudinal research which objective was to examine the relationships among middle school students' perceptions of the school environment, school engagement, and academic achievement. About 1,046 student participants were drawn from a representative, ethnically diverse, and urban sample. The researchers concluded that students' perception of school environment influences their academic achievement directly and indirectly through different types of school engagement. Notable among the school engagements are school participation, sense of identification with school, and use of self-regulation strategies. These school engagements were all in the ambient of the overall schooling experiences.

The relationship between self-efficacy and perception

Bui (2016) conducted a study on the subject, *The Relationship Between Self-Efficacy and Perceptions of Different Literacy Types Among College Students*. In the study, 250 college students were sampled to rank four different literacy types in order of perceived importance for the participants (perception). Finally, participants reported their "feelings of competence" for each of the four types of literacy described, using a 10-point Likert scale, which yielded their self-efficacy results. The researcher had earlier hypothesized that self-efficacy of the college students positively associates with their perceptions of different literacy types. Results showed that rankings of importance were significantly and positively related to self-efficacy beliefs in corresponding literacy areas ($p < .05$) (Bui, 2016). Similarly, Knowles, Apputhurai, O'Brien, Ski, Thompson and Castle (2020, February) confirmed through their study of *Exploring the relationships between illness perceptions, self-efficacy, coping strategies, psychological distress and quality of life in a cohort of adults with diabetes mellitus* that Illness perceptions directly influenced self-efficacy.

A copious amount of research studies has also revealed a positive relationship between students' perceptions of the classroom learning environment and their self-efficacy beliefs (Dorman 2001; Dorman & Adams 2004; Partin & Haney 2012). Dorman (2001), for instance, investigated the relationship between students' perceptions of the classroom learning environment and their academic efficacy in mathematics. The researcher unravelled that the two variables positively correlate. In other words, students who had a higher perception of their learning environment equally recorded a higher self-efficacy (Boz, Sevda, Aydemir, & Aydemir, 2016).

The above shreds of evidence offered credence to the fact that self-efficacy and perception have a positive association. This study sought to verify the existence of

such association or relationship in grade repeaters. For example, is there any relationship between grade repeaters' their self-efficacy and perceptions of schooling experiences? Again, is there any relationship between non-repeaters' self-efficacy and perceptions of schooling experiences? And drawing on the earlier research studies, the researcher even dares to speculate a positive relationship.

Self-efficacy and Academic Performance

Compelling shreds of evidence of a positive correlation between self-efficacy and performance abound. A study on the relationship between self-efficacy and performance: A meta-analysis study conducted by Hysong and Quinones (1997), revealed a moderately significant positive correlation of 0.30 between self-efficacy and task performance. Their work investigated a notable sample of 30 studies. Notwithstanding the 0.30 correlation, the researchers projected a stronger positive association, if self-efficacy in the studies were measured by the same method.

The researchers found that some of the studies conformed to Bandura's original method of calculating self-efficacy by aggregating ratings of self-efficacy strength, magnitude, and generality. On the other hand, they found that others used one of the five methods of estimating self-efficacy as identified by Lee and Bobko (1994). The first measure, self-efficacy magnitude (the degree of task difficulty an individual believed he or she could handle), was simply the sum of positive responses. The second method was self-efficacy strength (the confidence the individual placed on their magnitude judgment), which was calculated by adding the ratings across all performance levels. The third method used a combination of the first two; z scores of the self-efficacy strength items were only added across those performance levels to which participants answered "yes." The fourth method was the same as the third, except that raw scores instead of z scores were used. Finally, one could measure self-

efficacy by openly asking participants to rate their confidence level on a given task (single item measure) (Hysong & Quinones, 1997).

Lee and Bobko (1994) evaluated that the single item method had the lowest convergent validity with the other methods and predicted the weakest correlation. They, however, found that the composite methods predicted higher validities than either the magnitude or strength methods alone. Consequently, Hysong and Quinones (1997) agreed that the method of measuring self-efficacy could influence the results of the study and even be a source of error.

Hence, Hysong and Quinones (1997) made a striking observation that much variability existed across findings of the strength of the relationship. They further identified the use of different measures (explicated above) by researchers as the dominant cause of this variation. It is nevertheless encouraging to learn that despite the variability, almost all the studies investigated, predicted a positive relationship between the two constructs –self-efficacy and task performance.

On a different ground though quite relevant to our topic, Sacco and his colleagues (2007) also studied the role of self-efficacy in the healing process of diabetes type 2. The researchers had earlier predicted that "the greater level of self-efficacy patients felt, the more likely people would adhere to their disease management plan and therefore the better the patients would feel" (Feist, Feist & Robert, 2018, p.520). The results of the study confirmed their prediction. They found that higher levels of self-efficacy were related to lower levels of depression, increased adherence to doctors' orders, lower Body Mass Index (BMI) and fewer and decreased severity of diabetes symptoms.

In their study, Self-Efficacy and Academic Achievement in Australian High School Students: The Mediating Effects of Academic Aspirations and Delinquency,

Carroll et al (2008) found a compelling relationship of the impact of self-efficacy on the academic performances of students. The study comprised a sample of 935 students (454 males and 481 females) averaging 14.35years from 8th to 12th grade. The participants were randomly drawn from 10 socio-economically diverse state high schools in the capital cities of Perth, Western Australia, Brisbane, and Queensland. This approach offered a representative sample of the target population of the study, which was central to the enhancement of the study's validity (Christensen, Johnson, & Turner, 2011).

Among the three scales that the researchers administered to the participants, was The Children's Perceived Self-Efficacy Scale (Bandura, 1990; Bandura et al., 1996). The scale comprised 37 items representing seven domains of functioning that form three basic efficacy factors - academic, self-regulatory, and social self-efficacy. The findings of the study showed that except for social self-efficacy, the efficacy factors correlated positively with academic performance of the students. Thus, while both academic and self-regulatory self-efficacy correlated 0.25 (Correlation was significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)), social self-efficacy recorded 0.03 coefficient with English Achievement of the students.

Carroll et al (2008) offered a broader perspective of the impact of high self-efficacy on an individual's academic performance. In doing this, it, however, fell short of one relevant element. It focused so much on the general student population without any consideration of students whose self-efficacy factors, especially academic self-efficacy might have been battered as a result of their grade repetition experiences. For example, would a student who was repeated on a grade for non-performance in their sample, measure the same self-efficacy as a student who was promoted to the next grade although he did not merit it? The present research work intended to

examine dependent variables like self-efficacy, perception of schooling experiences in light of independent variables like grade repeaters and non-repeaters (low-performers and high-performers).

In this study, the researcher proposed the following research questions; To what extent do grade repeaters and low-performers (non-repeaters) contribute to the decision to repeat or not to repeat a grade? How do grade repeaters compare with non-repeaters on the self-efficacy construct? How do grade repeaters compare with non-repeaters on the perception of schooling experiences construct? How does the self-efficacy of grade repeaters and non-repeaters impact their perception of their schooling experiences? Based on the available literature, the study further hypothesized that; (1) There is a significant relationship between self-efficacy and perception of schooling experiences. (2) There will be a significantly lower self-efficacy rate among grade repeaters than in low-performers (non-repeaters). (3) Grade repeaters' self-efficacy will have a significant positive correlation on their perception of schooling experiences. (4) Non-repeaters' self-efficacy will have a significant positive correlation on their perception of schooling experiences.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

Introduction

The following chapter presents an in-depth examination of a research methodology that the researcher followed to attain the set objectives for the study. It describes actions taken to investigate the research problem. Thus, it discusses the research design, the sample and sampling technique, the description of research instruments, the procedure of collecting data, the data analysis, as well as the ethical considerations.

Research Design

The study used a mixed research approach. This research design that combines quantitative and qualitative research methods enabled the researcher to blend both quantitative and qualitative data within a single investigation. Also, the mixed research design was used because of its ability to integrate both general and particular data (Christensen, Johnson & Turner, 2011).

The quantitative aspect which dealt with the descriptive and inferential statistics allowed the researcher to describe variables appropriately and to make inferences about the larger population based on the behaviour of the surveyed sample. Questionnaires and interview guides were used to collect data from the sample population. Statistical Package for the Social Scientists (SPSS, version 24) was used to code and handle the quantitative data that the questionnaires churned out. Through the SPSS, the researcher generated graphs, frequency distribution tables, and calculated means to describe interested variables accurately. Similarly, inferential statistical values such as standard deviations, variances, and correlation coefficients were

computed for hypotheses testing. Based on such inferences, the results were generalized about the larger population of subjects.

Conversely, the qualitative aspect allowed the researcher to include open-ended questions on the questionnaires and use interview guides as data collection instruments. Both means of data collection afforded the individual participants the freedom to express diverse views about a particular item following no pre-set answers or options. The data that was generated through the interview guides were organized in a tabular form and crystalized into related themes to facilitate their better understanding. Indeed, the approach helped to describe and understand particular groups and individuals in their context (Christensen, Johnson & Turner, 2011).

Participants

 The target population of the study comprised of grade repeaters and non-repeaters (both low-performers and high-performers), drawn from B.S. 4 through B.S. 9, in both private and public basic schools in Ghana. The three independent variables –grade repeaters, low-performers and high-performers were required for the adequate examination of the topic; A Study into Self-Efficacy of Grade Repeaters and Non-repeaters; the Implications on the Perception of their Schooling Experiences, in Basic Schools, in Ghana.

The lower primary pupils (i.e., from B.S.1 to B.S.3) were excluded on the grounds of potential language deficit in reading and comprehending the data collection instruments, which was constructed in the English Language. It would be imperative to pinpoint again that Ghana has a language policy that "Where teachers and learning materials are available and the linguistic composition of classes is fairly uniform, the children's first language must be used as the dominant medium of instruction in

Kindergarten and lower primary school" (Anamoah-Mensah, 2004; Klu and Ansre, 2018). Many lower primary school pupils are therefore expected not to be fluent in using the English language.

The participants were drawn from ten (10) private and public basic schools. Three of the schools were selected from the Greater Accra region, three from the Western region and four from the Ashanti region. The three regions were selected purposively for their high geographical and socio-economic diversity of the pupils, hence enabled the researcher to accurately identified a representative sample of the study.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The study selected 255 participants from the ten basic schools from the Greater Accra, Ashanti, and Western regions in Ghana. The 255 participants included 83-grade repeaters, 56 low-performers and 116 high-performers. The study involved three stages of sampling, namely sampling of regions, schools and the participants. The researcher used non-probability sampling technique of judgement (purposive) sampling to select the three regions and the ten schools. According to Mills & Gay (2019), purposive sampling is the process of determining a sample that the researcher believes to be representative of a target population. In view of that, the study used the judgement (purposive) sampling for a representative sample of the target population.

The researcher also employed a disproportional stratified sampling technique to select the research participants. The stratification variable was pupils' categories, which included grade repeaters, low-performers and high-performers. This technique was used in order not to miss out the small groups (grade repeaters and low-performers) whom the study was much interested (Christensen, Johnson & Turner,

2011). The researcher intended to randomly select 12 participants from grade repeaters, low-performers and high-performers, from each of the ten schools. There was no difficulty regarding the selection of participants for the high-performers, from all the schools. However, in many schools, the pupils' available in the grade repeaters and low-performers were well smaller than the expected number. In such cases, all the target population was selected as participants, hence, the differences in numbers among the stratification variables.

Accordingly, two participants, a grade repeater and a low-performer were simple randomly selected from each school for the semi-structured interview. Thus, the researcher administered interviews with a total of 20 participants from the surveyed sample.

Description of Research Instruments

To correctly measure and investigate data, the study used two sets of research instruments: questionnaires and interview guides. While the questionnaires were designed to solicit quantitative data from the research participants, the interview guides were used to collect qualitative data from a few simple randomly selected participants, through face-to-face interviews.

Participants questionnaire.

The participants' questionnaire comprised four sections –A, B, C and D. The questionnaires served a couple of purposes; to gather the demographic information of participants, to evaluate participants' self-efficacies (academic, social, emotional, and general) and perception of schooling experiences (perception of academic work, teachers, and other pupils), and to find out participants' contribution to their promotion or repetition decision.

Section A was a socio-demographical questionnaire, which contained items that required the participants to provide their demographical information. The items in section A included the age, gender, class (grade), nationality, parents' occupation, the geographical location of the school, and the school type of research participants. The data informed the study on the extent these variables impact on the topic; Self-Efficacy of Grade Repeaters and Non-repeaters; their Implications on the Perception of Schooling Experiences, in Ghana (See appendix B for the complete questionnaires).

Section B was a Likert scale with five-degree range (*Not at all, hardly well, scarcely well, well and Very well*) of *Self-Efficacy Questionnaire for Children* –SEQ-C by Muris (2001). SEQ-C composed of 24 items with three subscales measuring three domains of self-efficacy –academic, social and emotional self-efficacy. SEQ-C, thus categorized by items as academic self-efficacy; 1,4,7, 10, 13, 16, 19, 22; social self-efficacy; 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 23; and emotion self-efficacy; 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24. While the subscales scores were computed by summing up the scores of items in each domain, the general self-efficacy score was obtained by adding the three subscales' (domains) scores. The data collected from participants by SEQ-C were scored according to the above procedure to obtain their general, social, academic and emotional self-efficacy.

Social self-efficacy had to do with the perceived capability for peer relationships and assertiveness. It entailed questions like; How well can you become friends with other children? How well can you work in harmony with your classmates? And How well can you have a chat with an unfamiliar person? Academic self-efficacy was concerned with the perceived capability to manage one's own learning behaviour, to master academic subjects, and to fulfil academic expectations. Samples of items belonging to this domain included; How well can you study a chapter for a test? How

well do you succeed in finishing all your homework every day? How well can you study when there are other interesting things to do? And How well do you succeed in understanding all subjects in school? The emotional self-efficacy, however, pertained to the perceived capability of coping with negative emotions. Some of the items were; How well do you succeed in becoming calm again when you are very scared? How well can you control your feelings? and How well can you give yourself a pep-talk when you feel low? (Muris, 2001).

Habibi, Tahmasian, and Ferrer-Wrede (2014) affirmed studies that demonstrated strong psychometric properties of SEQ-C in the English and Dutch editions. For instance, in a validation study of the SEQ-C, the Cronbach's alphas for the 21-item version of the scale were .90 for the total self-efficacy score, .82 for social self-efficacy, .84 for academic self-efficacy, and .86 for emotional self-efficacy (Muris, 2002). The researcher chose SEQ-C because of its ability to measure the three domains of self-efficacy closely associated with pupils' academic performance, which is part of their schooling experiences. SEQ-C assisted in evaluating the extent of self-efficacy among grade repeaters and non-repeaters.

Section C (perception of schooling experiences scale) was also a Likert scale with five-degree range (Strongly agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly disagree) questionnaire composed by the researcher. Having reviewed the available literature on the topic under consideration, the researcher carefully constructed a survey questionnaire that was practical to the targeted population. It took into account what different studies considered to be pupils' perceptions of schooling experiences.

The perception of schooling experiences questionnaire also comprised of 15 items. Items 1,3,8,10, and 15 were reversed coded to make them compatible with the data and its interpretation meaningful. Likewise, the scale was also subdivided into

three subscales –Perception of Academic work (PA; items 9,11,13,14,15), Perception of other Students (PS; items,6,7,8,10) and Perception of Teachers (PTRS; items 1,2,3,4,5,12). Each subscale's total score was obtained by the combined scores of the individual items that form it. The Perception of Schooling Experience (PSE)was then computed as the sum total of the three subscales or domains described above.

Lastly, items in section D, on the other hand, were structured to solicit data from participants on their contribution to the decision to repeat a grade or to be promoted to the next grade and how these decisions influenced them. For instance, it included items like; who made the decision on your repetition or promotion (with alternative responses parents, teachers, myself, others)? And, So far, I like the decision (with alternative responses No and Yes). Such questionnaires geared towards responding to the research question; to what extent do grade repeaters and low-performers (non-repeaters) contribute to the decision to repeat or not to repeat a grade?

Interview guides for participants.

The study used the interview method in its data collection (see appendix C & D for the interview guides). The method was considered because of its usefulness in measuring attitudes, eliciting other content from research participants and exploration as well as hypothesis testing research (Christensen, Johnson & Turner, 2011). Also, Schensul, Schensul and LeCompte (1999) have postulated that "semi-structured interview combines the flexibility of the structured, open-ended interviews with the directionality and agenda of the survey instrument to produce focused, qualitative and textual data at the factor level" (p.149). It was for this reason; the researcher engaged the semi-structured interview to fine-tune the study. The items on the interview guide were constructed in a manner that gave the participants the autonomy to address the research questions as profoundly as possible and with greater flexibility.

The purpose of the interview was to obtain primary data about the contribution of participants to promotion or repetition's decisions and its effects on their schooling experiences and self-efficacy. Two different sets of semi-structured interview guides (one for the grade repeaters and the other for the low-performers (non-repeaters)) were designed for the interviews (see the two sets of the interview guides in appendices C & D). While the researcher administered *the interview guide for grade repeaters* to pupils who could not advance to their next grades as a result of non-performance, *the interview guide for low-performers* was administered to pupils who declined to repeat their grades even though they did not perform well.

Participants' responses to every item were tabulated. This made it possible for the researcher to see together various responses from participants. Besides, the number of participants who responded 'Yes' or 'No' to an item could be estimated and analysed. Where participants were required to compose their responses, the researcher studied and identified striking themes that ran through them. In this way, it was possible to condense many different views into some fewer representative ideas.

Validity and reliability of the research instrument.

Validity and reliability are two significant pivots around which every study revolves. Christensen, Johnson, & Turner (2011), define validity as the extent to which the measurement instrument measures what it intends to measure. To ensure the validity of the outcome of the research, the researcher used two different measuring instruments –questionnaires and interview guides. According to Yin (2003), the use of more than one research instrument can considerably enhance research outcome validity. Also, Burg and Gall (2001) submit that the validity of the instrument can be improved, through expert judgment. The researcher improved upon the validity of the study tools through research experts' assistance and the invaluable contributions of the supervisor.

Reliability, in contrast, is the consistency or stability of the scores of the measurement instrument (Christensen et al, 2011). The reliability of the research instrument was ensured by faithfully following the prescribed research procedure.

Procedure

The researcher contacted each head of school in his sample schools, via telephone, to book an appointment with them. The head of school invited the researcher for one-on-one meetings, where he was opportune to explain his research topic, sample population and data collection instruments to them. They then offered the researcher their convenient dates and times, which he obliged. In every school, the researcher requested for the assistance of a teacher who knew the stratification variable (grade repeaters, low-performers and high-performers), to administer the questionnaires.

In each school, the school authority permitted the researcher to enter the classrooms, to explain the purpose of the study, and the consent form to the pupils. Students who were willing to participate in the study raised their hands, and they were issued with questionnaires to fill out and consent forms to sign. Meanwhile, the rest of the pupils left the classroom. The questionnaires given to the low-performers were marked **Y** (without the knowledge of the pupils), to avoid confusing them with the questionnaires of the high-performers after they had filled them out. The assisting teacher was given both marked and unmarked questionnaires and then instructed to give the marked questionnaires to low-performers and the unmarked to grade repeaters. When the teacher had finished, the researcher then, issued to the remaining pupils, assumed to be high-performers. This was done according to the sampling procedure described earlier. The participants were allowed about 20 minutes to fill out and submitting the filled out questionnaires to the researcher who remained in the classroom to attend to the participants' questions for clarification.

After the completion of the questionnaires at each school, the researcher randomly selected two participants (a grade repeater and a low-performer) for the semi-structured interview, which lasted for not more than 10 minutes per a respondent. The interviews also took place on the school premises.

Data Analysis

As mentioned earlier, the study was grounded on mixed research design, which blended quantitative research methods and qualitative research methods –to form a database from which it inferred characteristics or relationships among the sampled population. Along the lines of its research design, the study used version 24 of SPSS to analyse the quantitative data collected. Raw data gathered from questionnaires were coded into the SPSS programme to generate measures of central tendency and measures of variability. These measures provided numerical values to express what was typical and how spread-out were the quantitative variables such as self-efficacy, perception, age, and gender –the study investigated. These measures were significant to understand the dynamism of the studied variables.

To test the hypotheses of the study, the researcher used a number of parametric statistical tests like the Pearson correlation coefficient, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test and Bonferroni test. The tests helped in computing correlations which were necessary to establish associations between/among independent and dependent variables. Consequently, these associations offered the basis either to reject or not to reject the null hypotheses of the study. To facilitate the computation of the mentioned tests, the researcher used the Statistical Package for the Social Scientists (SPSS) version 24 as the principal tool.

Moreover, the researcher used content/theme analysis to handle the data that the semi-structured interviews generated. According to Leedy & Ormrod (2001, p. 155),

content analysis is a "detailed and systematic examination of the contents of a particular body of material to identify patterns, themes, or biases." Accordingly, the qualitative data corpus (the responses of the interviews) was categorized into themes, which was used to support the quantitative evidence and where appropriate refute inconsistent evidence.

Ethical Considerations

This study observed the ethical procedures of research. The researcher sought permission of the headmasters of the sampled schools before conducting the study in their schools. Concerning the participants, principal ethical considerations; safety, confidentiality, anonymity, and informed consent of the participants were duly observed.

The participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity by informing them that their information would be used purely for academic purposes and that their names would not appear in the final work of the study. For their safety, the researcher informed them that there were no known risks to participation beyond those encountered while answering questions on personality dimensions and personal experiences. The participants were also made to understand that their participation in this research project was completely voluntary; that they may decline altogether, or leave blank any questions they do not wish to answer.

Finally, to ensure their formal consent, the researcher explained the objective of the study to the participants, after which each of them was requested to fill out a consent form (see the consent form in appendix A). Copies of the final document of the study would be sent to the sampled schools to give the participants access to the findings of the study.

Chapter Four

Presentation of Results and Analysis

Introduction

With the aid of the data collection instruments and the procedure described in chapter three, a large body of data was obtained. This chapter attempts at a systematic presentation and analysis of the data collected. It thus utilizes tables and graphs to present both the quantitative and qualitative data from the participants in a more comprehensible style. As such, qualitative data generated by the interview guides were put into common themes in the form of tables (see appendix E) to streamline the views of participants. Likewise, to facilitate classification, easy comparison, and a better description of the dependent variables (i.e. self-efficacy and perception of schooling experiences' scores), the participants' Z-scores were computed to standardize the data.

The research questions guided the following analyses. They include, to what extent do grade repeaters and non-repeaters contribute to the decision to repeat or not to repeat a grade? How do grade repeaters compare with non-repeaters and well-performing pupils on the self-efficacy construct? How do grade repeaters compare with non-repeaters and well-performing pupils on the perception of schooling experiences construct? And how does the self-efficacy of grade repeaters and non-repeaters impact on their perception of their schooling experiences?

Besides, the research hypotheses comprise *Hypothesis 1:* there is a significant relationship between self-efficacy and perception of schooling experiences; *Hypothesis 2:* there is a significant difference between the self-efficacy of grade repeaters and the self-efficacy of low-performers (non-repeaters); *Hypothesis 3:* grade repeaters' self-efficacy will have a significant positive correlation on their perception of schooling experiences, and *Hypothesis 4:* non-repeaters' self-efficacy will have a

significant positive correlation on their perception of schooling experiences. To successfully verify the hypotheses, the researcher used an ANOVA (F-test) test to investigate the existence of difference (or otherwise) between grade repeaters and low-performers (non-repeaters) on the self-efficacy variable in *Hypothesis 2*. Subsequently, Bonferroni Posthoc test was conducted to establish the direction of associations of variables and limit the possibility of Type I error. Regarding the remaining three hypotheses, the Pearson correlation coefficient tests were conducted to investigate the hypothesized associations among variables. Table 2 below shows the statistical tool(s) that was/were used to verify each of the research hypothesis.

Table 2

An illustration of the alternative hypotheses of the study and their corresponding inferential statistical tool used to analyse them

No.	The alternative hypotheses(H_1)	The inferential statistical tool used
1.	There is a significant relationship between self-efficacy and perception of schooling experiences.	Pearson' Correlation Coefficient
2.	There is a significant difference between the self-efficacy of grade repeaters and the self-efficacy of low-performers (non-repeaters).	ANOVA, Bonferroni Posthoc tests
3.	Grade repeaters' self-efficacy will have a significant positive correlation on their perception of schooling experiences.	Pearson' Correlation Coefficient
4.	Non-repeaters' self-efficacy will have a significant positive correlation on their perception of schooling experiences.	Pearson' Correlation Coefficient

Social Demographic Information

Age of participants.

Table 3 below shows the frequency distribution of the ages of participants. The mean age ($\mathcal{X}$), the median (M) and the standard deviation (SD) of participants are calculated as 12.63 years, 13 years, and 2.14, respectively.

From Table 3, it was also observed that nearly 10% of the participants were older than 15 years, the expected age for basic school completion in Ghana. Two explanations may be attributed to this: the first could be that those participants delayed in starting school at six years (the expected school-going age). The second could be that they repeated at least once in the course of their schooling. Where the latter explanation is a possibility, it may present itself as a possible demerit to grade repetition in the school system.

Table 3

Frequencies of the Ages of Participants, (N=255, $\mathcal{X}$=12.63, SD=2.14)

Age (in years)	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
9	23	9.0	9.0
10	29	11.4	20.4
11	31	12.2	32.5
12	35	13.7	46.3
13	41	16.1	62.4
14	39	15.3	77.6
15	32	12.5	90.2
16	22	8.6	98.8
17	3	1.2	100.0

Gender of participants.

The sample size was 255 participants. The total number of males was equal to 50.6%, while the total number of females was equal to 49.4%. This result shows no

significant difference between the genders of the participants. Thus, both genders were adequately represented in the survey.

The linguistic background of participants.

Table 4 below shows that 40% of the participants speak Asante, 18.4% speak Ewe, 9.4% speak Fante, 9.4% speak Ga, 16.9% speak Sefwi, and the remaining 6.9% speak other languages. This result indicates that more participants speak the Asante language than they speak any of the other languages. This may be explained that the Ashanti Region, one of the regions where the survey was conducted, is home to Asante speakers. Similarly, the Greater Accra region is a cosmopolitan area that hosts many Asante speakers. Furthermore, the Asante language is the most widely spoken in Ghana. The contrary notwithstanding, the data still demonstrates a high level of linguistic variation among the participants.

Table 4

Frequencies of Linguistic Background of participants, (N=255)

Language	Frequent	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Asante	102	40	40.0
Ewe	47	18.4	58.4
Fante	24	9.4	67.8
Ga	19	7.5	75.3
Sefwi	43	16.9	92.1
Others	17	6.9	100.0

Grade (academic level) of participants.

Table 5 below shows the grade distribution of the participants. Nearly 16.1% of the participants indicated they were in B.S. 4; 12.9% reported they were in B.S. 5, and 17.6% said they were in B.S. 6. Additionally, 18.4% reported they were in B.S. 7, while 14.1% indicated B.S. 8, the remaining 20.8% said they were in B.S. 9. From

Table 5, it is also observed that B.S. 9 and B.S.4 yielded the highest 20.8%, and the

least 12.9% numbers of participants, respectively.

Table 5

Frequency distribution of Grade (academic level) of Participants, (N=255)

Class	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
B.S. 4	41	16.1	16.1
B.S. 5	33	12.9	29.0
B.S. 6	45	17.6	46.7
B.S. 7	47	18.4	65.1
B.S. 8	36	14.1	79.2
B.S. 9	53	20.8	100.0

Note: B.S. stands for Basic School. In Ghana, B.S.7 to B.S. 9 is also referred to as Junior High School (J.H.S).

Categories of participants.

Table 6 shows the summary of the frequency distribution of participants

according to the category variable of grade repeaters, low-performers and high-

performers.

Table 6

Frequencies of Categories of Participants, (N=255)

Category	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Grade Repeater	83	32.5	32.5
Low-performers	56	22.0	54.5
High-performers	116	45.5	100.0

The geographical location of participants.

The geographical distribution among participants of the survey was obtained.

While 50.2% of participants indicated they lived in urban areas, 49.8% indicated they

lived in rural areas. The data displayed a balanced geographical background of the participants.

Type of school of participants.

Figure 1 below shows that 67% and 33% of the cohort reported that they belonged to public and private schools, respectively. Thus, the pupils from public schools who responded to the survey were as twice as those from private schools. However, the data was a representation of the reality of school types in Ghana. As of 2014/2015 academic year, the number of public basic schools, 23,850 was by far more than 12,299 private basic schools (Education Sector Performance Report, Ghana, 2015).
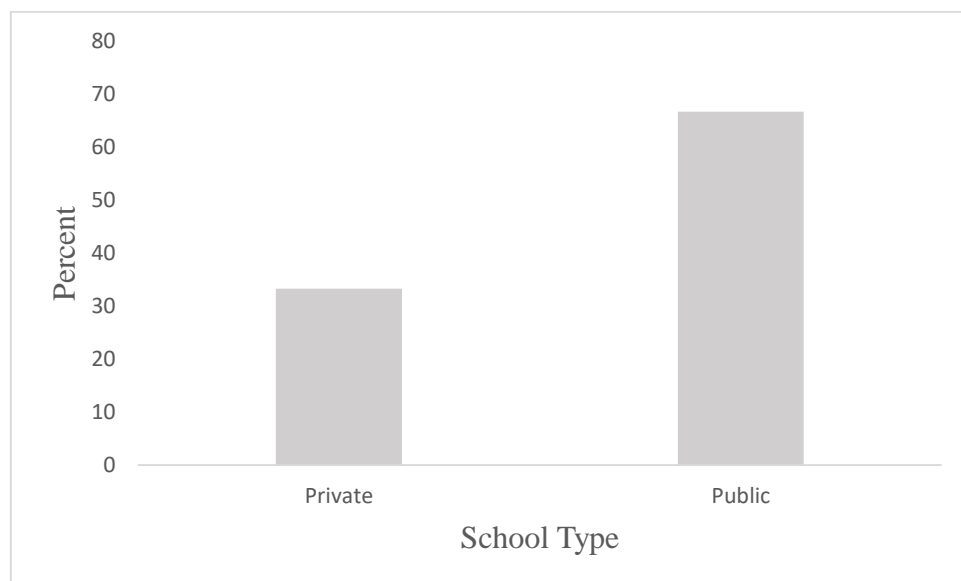
Figure 1, A Bar Chart Showing the Distribution of Participants School Types

Occupation of the parents of participants.

Table 7 below gives a diverse occupational profile of the parents of participants in the study. It was observed that the occupational profile of their fathers was more diverse in nature than their mothers. This data was significant in understanding the social-economic dynamics of the sample population. The data

provided very strong evidence to speculate that while some of the participants were from high social-economic families, the highest numbers were from middle and low social-economic families.

Table 7

Frequency distribution of the Occupations of the Parents of Participants, (N=255)

Occupation	Fathers		Mothers	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Banker	11	4.3	2	0.8
Carpenter	18	7.1	-	-
Doctor	7	2.7	-	-
Driver	26	10.2	-	-
Electrician	3	1.2	-	-
Engineer	6	2.4	-	-
Farmer	54	21.2	29	11.4
Hairdresser	-	-	5	2.0
Mason	22	8.6	-	-
Mechanic	7	2.7	-	-
Miner	3	1.2	-	-
Nurse	3	1.2	5	2.0
Pastor	8	3.1	-	-
Policeman	2	0.8	-	-
Tailor/Seamstress	6	2.4	27	10.6
Teacher/Lecturer	19	7.5	19	7.5
Trader	29	11.4	139	54.5
Unemployed	21	8.2	22	8.6
Welder	2	0.8	-	-
Others	8	3.2	7	2.7

Nationality of participants.

Figure 2 shows that 97.25% of the survey participants indicated their nationality as Ghanaians, and the remaining 2.75% indicated others. The result primarily demonstrated that the sample population was dominantly Ghanaian. Thus, any analysis based on the data would likely reflect the reality of the country.
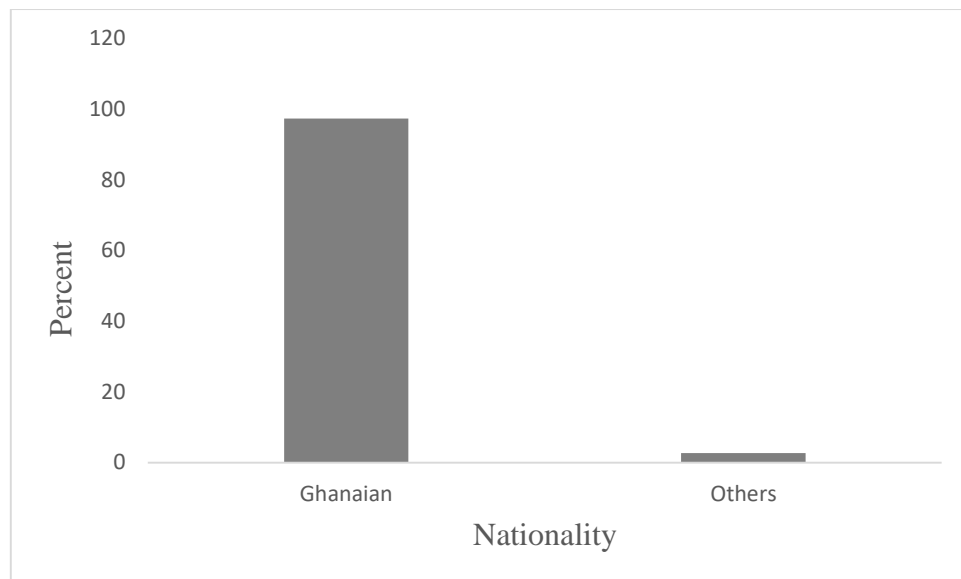
Figure 2, A Bar Chart Showing the Distribution of the Nationality of Participants

Z-Scores of Self-efficacy and Perception of Schooling Experiences

Z-scores were computed for the self-efficacy ratings and the perception of schooling experiences ratings. The Z-scores standardized the scores and allowed for comparison. The means (*M*) and the standard deviations (*SD)* of the self-efficacy ratings and the perception for schooling experiences were found to be (*M* = 89.39, *SD* = 14.17) and (*M* = 51.85, *SD* = 7.56), respectively. The Z-scores in each scale, were then categorized into Very High (z ≥ 2), High (1 ≤ z < 2), Average (-1 ≤ z < 1), Low (-2 ≤ z < -1) and Very Low (z < -2). The categorization of the data yielded the frequency distribution tables (Table 8 and 9 below) to allow descriptive comparison of the constructs, among the high-performers, low-performers and grade repeaters.

Table 9 shows mixed results when grade repeaters Z-scores of perception of schooling experience's ratings were compared with that of the other two categories (low-performers and high-performers). Approximately 19% of grade repeaters recorded below average on the perception of schooling experiences' scales in contrast with 25% of low-performers and 11% of high-performers. Thus, while grade repeaters

performed more favourably than low-performers, they, in turn, performed less favourably than high-performing pupils.

From Adler's subjective perceptions tenet (Adler, 1956), the difference in perception of schooling experiences among high-performers, low-performers and grade repeaters' may be understandable. The higher high-performing pupils' perception of schooling experience than grade repeaters may stem from the positive feedback to their efforts. In contrast, it is seemingly challenging to explain why grade repeaters (who experienced negative feedback of their efforts) still fared better than their counterparts, low-performers (who experienced positive feedback to their efforts).

On the other hand, comparing the Z-scores of self-efficacy of participants, it was observed from Table 8 that grade repeaters rated lower against the other two categories. A total of 28 % of grade repeaters recorded below average on self-efficacy scale as opposed to 11.76% of low-performers and 13.08% of high-performers. Put it differently, only 72% of grade repeaters recorded average or better on the self-efficacy scale compared with 88.24% of low-performers and 86.92% of high-performers. It can be concluded then that, comparing low-performers and high-performers, a greater percentage of grade repeaters performed more poorly on self-efficacy scales.

The results confirmed the prediction of Bandura's self-efficacy theory, that grade repeaters would have lower self-efficacy non-repeaters (low-performers and high-performers). Such finding may be attributed to the negative emotional states of grade repeaters. This attribution was supported by the data from the interviews. Responding to an interview item, "Given the choice, would you choose promotion over grade repetition? And Why?", eight out of ten interviewees answered in the

affirmative. Remarkably, their reasons revealed the negative emotions they were

struggling with.

Table 8

Frequency distribution of the Z-scores of self-efficacy of high-performers, low-performers and grade repeaters.

Range	High-performers		Low-performers		Grade repeaters	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
High	14	13.08	14	27.46	4	5.33
Average	79	73.83	31	60.78	50	66.67
Low	11	10.28	3	5.88	16	21.33
Very Low	3	2.80	3	5.88	5	6.67

Table 9

Frequency distribution of the Z-scores of perception of schooling experiences of high-performers, low-performers and grade repeaters.

Range	High-performers		Low-performers		Grade repeaters	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Very High	6	5.36	-	-	-	-
High	26	23.22	7	13.22	4	5.06
Average	68	60.71	33	62.26	60	75.95
Low	11	9.82	11	20.75	13	16.46
Very Low	1	.89	2	3.77	2	2.53

Reliability of the Instruments at Study

Self-efficacy.

Cronbach's alpha of the self-efficacy questionnaire for children (SEQ-C) was

calculated to check the reliability (or the internal consistency) of the data yielded. The

overall reliability of the data produced an $\alpha = 0.84$. This demonstrated that the

instrument was adequately reliable in measuring the construct or variable for which it

had been designed. Table 10 below displays the alphas of the three subscales in

relationship to the construct of self-efficacy, among the subscales under study.

Additionally, Table 10 depicts strong alpha values between the subscales and the scale. The alpha values between the self-efficacy and academic self-efficacy, self-efficacy and social self-efficacy and self-efficacy and emotional self-efficacy were recorded as 0.84, 0.78 and 0.87, respectively.

Table 10

Reliability (or internal consistency) values of self-efficacy questionnaire for children, for the scale and subscales (α = .84)

Inter-Item Correlation Matrix				
Scale/subscales	*ASE*	*SSE*	*ESE*	**SE**
ASE				
SSE	.46			
ESE	.61	.53		
SE	.84	.78	.87	

Note: **SE:** general self-efficacy, *ASE:* academic self-efficacy, *SSE:* social self-efficacy and *ESE:* emotional self-efficacy.

Perception of schooling experiences.

Similarly, Table 11 shows the Cronbach's alpha of the perception of schooling experiences scale and its subscales. While the perception of schooling experience and perception of academic work; and perception of schooling experience and perception of teachers, yield strong alpha values of α = 0.75 and α = 0.84, respectively, perception of schooling experience and perception of others gives a moderate alpha value of α = 0.59. The overall Cronbach's alpha (i.e., the internal consistency) for the sample population surveyed was calculated as α = 0.79. The calculated alpha (i.e., α = 0.79) showed sufficient internal consistency or reliability, thus the instrument reliably measured the construct for which it was designed.

Table 11

Reliability (or internal consistency) values of Perception of schooling experiences, for the scale and subscales (α = .79)

| | **Inter-Item Correlation Matrix** | | | |
Scales/subscales	*PA*	*PTRS*	*PS*	**PSE**
PA				
PTRS	.44			
PS	.18	.29		
PSE	.75	.84	.59	

Note **PSE:** perception of schooling experiences, *PA*: perception of academic work, *PTRS:* perception of teachers, and *PS:* perception of other pupils.

Pearson Correlations of Variables: Self-efficacy and Perception of Schooling Experiences

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted for the surveyed data, including the two main scales (i.e., self-efficacy and Perception of schooling experiences) and their subscales. The results shown in Table 12 depicted some significant values. The Pearson's correlation for the data revealed that the relationship of participants' social self-efficacy (SSE) to their perception of teachers (PTRS) was positive but weak in strength, (r (24) = .15, p = .02). This implied that participants who had high social self-efficacy reported high perceptions of their teachers. Also, it was revealed that the relationship between social self-efficacy and the general perception of schooling experiences (PSE) was positive, but weak in strength, (r (235) = .14, p = .03). Additionally, it was shown that emotional self-efficacy of participants weakly and positively correlated with their general perception of schooling experiences, (r (236) = .15, p = .02). Thus, participants who had high emotional self-efficacy reported a corresponding high general perception of schooling experiences.

Table 12

Pearson's correlation values for scales and subscales

	ASE	SSE	ESE	SE	PA	PTRS	PS	PSE
				Correlations				
ASE								
SSE	.44**							
ESE	.61**	.52**						
SE	.84**	.78**	.87**					
PA	.22**	.02	.06	.13				
PTRS	.31**	.15*	.19**	.28**	.43**			
PS	.12	.12	.05	.12	.18**	.28**		
PSE	.32**	.14*	.15*	.26**	.75**	.84**	.59**	1.00

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
Note **SE**: general self-efficacy, *ASE:* academic self-efficacy, *SSE:* social self-efficacy, *ESE:* emotional self-efficacy, **PSE:** perception of schooling experiences, *PA:* perception of academic work, *PTRS:* perception of teachers, and *PS:* perception of other pupils.

Pearson's correlation values for the categories (grade repeaters, low-performers, and high-performers) concerning the classes of participants were estimated and are presented in Table 13 below. Three significant correlation values -.61, .43 and .55 were noticeable. In B.S.5, the relationship of self-efficacy and general perception of schooling experiences among the high-performing participants was negative, moderate in strength and statistically significant (r (13) = -.61, p =.02). Thus, among the high-performers in B.S. 5, participants who demonstrated high self-efficacy rather demonstrated the low general perception of schooling experiences.

On the other hand, among the high-performing pupils in B.S.7, the relationship between the self-efficacy and the general perception of schooling experiences was positive, moderate in strength and statistically significant (r (22) = .43, p = .03). This suggested that participants who had higher self-efficacy equally reported higher general perception of schooling experiences.

Among B.S. 9, participants in the low-performing category exhibited some characters of the high-performing pupils. Self-efficacy of the participants moderately positively correlated with the general perception of schooling experiences, (r (14) = .55, p = .03). This means that the low-performing participants in B.S.9 who had higher self-efficacy also reported a corresponding higher general perception of schooling experiences. No significant correlation was found among participants who belong to the grade repeaters category.

Table 13

Pearson's correlation values for categories and grades (academic level) of participants

			Grade repeaters	Low-performer	High-performers
Class	Scale		PSE	PSE	PSE
B.S. 5	SE	Pearson Cor.	.37	.59	-.61[*]
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.27	.29	.02
		N	11	5	15
B.S. 6	SE	Pearson Cor.	.20	.11	-.02
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.56	.67	.96
		N	11	18	10
B.S. 7	SE	Pearson Cor.	-.39	-.22	.43[*]
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.38	.63	.03
		N	7	7	24
B.S. 8	SE	Pearson Cor.	.29	1.00[**]	-.31
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.28	.	.24
		N	16	2	16
B.S. 9	SE	Pearson Cor.	.16	.55[*]	.90[**]
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.59	.03	.00
		N	14	16	15

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

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

a. Cannot be computed because at least one of the variables is constant
b. B.S. stands for Basic School, thus B.S.4 to B.S.9 is equivalent to grade 4 to grade 9, correspondingly.
c. **SE:** general self-efficacy and **PSE:** perception of schooling experiences

To ascertain the association or otherwise of the constructs (self-efficacy and perception of schooling experiences) measured in the sample population, the researcher ran another Pearson's correlation test to calculate Pearson's r values over the participants' categories and among scales and subscales. Table 14 below presents a summary of the results. From Table 14, no significant associations among scales and subscales were found in the grade repeaters' category. On the other hand, remarkable correlations were observed in the low-performers and the high-performers categories. They are presented in the following paragraphs.

In the low-performers' category, from Table 14, it was observed that the relationship between participants' perception of their teachers (PTRS) and their academic self-efficacy (ASE) was positive, weak in strength (r (52) = .29, p = .03). In other words, low-performers that indicated a high perception of teachers tended to have high academic self-efficacy. A similar observation was made between the perception of teachers (PTRS) and general self-efficacy (SE) of participants in the same category. Thus, the perception of teachers positively weakly correlated with general self-efficacy, (r (49) = .29, p = .04). This means that low-performers who reported a high perception of teachers also reported high general self-efficacy. Besides, it was revealed that there was a positive moderate association between perception of teachers (PTRS) and perception of others (PS) among low-performers, (r (53) = .31, p = .02). This result may be interpreted that low-performers who had a high perception of their teachers equally had a high perception of other pupils.

Among the high-performing pupils, it was found that the relationship between perception of academic work (PA) and general self-efficacy was positive but relatively weak in strength, (r (104) = .21, p = .03). This means that participants from the high-performers who had a high perception of academic work also measured high on

general self-efficacy. Table 14, again shows that the perception of other pupils correlated positively weakly to social self-efficacy, (r (110) = .21, p = .03). Thus, the high-performing participants who measured high on the perception of other pupils tended to measure high on social self-efficacy. Similarly, perception of other pupils positively but weakly correlated with perception of academic work (r (111) = .19, p = .04). This implied that the high-performers who measured high on the perception of other pupils accordingly predicted high perception of academic work. Finally, the data revealed a positive but weak correlation between the general perception of schooling experience and social self-efficacy among the high-performing pupils (r (108) = .21, p = .03). Thus, the high-performers who measured high on the general perception of schooling experiences equally predicted high measure on social self-efficacy.

Table 14

Pearson's correlation for participant categories across scales and subscales

Participants' Category	Scale/ subscales	*ASE*	*SSE*	*ESE*	**SE**	*PA*	*PTRS*	*PS*	**PSE**
Grade Repeater	*ASE*								
	SSE	.47**							
	ESE	.59**	.49**						
	SE	.87**	.76**	.84**					
	PA								
	PTRS					.32**			
	PS								
	PSE					.71**	.78**	.53**	
Low-performers	*ASE*								
	SSE	.40**							
	ESE	.75**	.58**						
	SE	.83**	.82**	.91**					
	PA								
	PTRS	.29*				.29*	.39**		
	PS							.31*	
	PSE					.72**	.86**	.54**	
High-performers	*ASE*								
	SSE	.48**							
	ESE	.58**	.48**						
	SE	.85**	.77**	.85**					
	PA	.30**			.21*				
	PTRS	.39**	.17	.25**	.35**	.43**			
	PS		.21*			.19*	.30**		
	PSE	.40**	.21*		.33**	.76**	.84**	.62**	

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

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

Note: **SE:** general self-efficacy, *ASE:* academic self-efficacy, *SSE:* social self-efficacy, *ESE:* emotional self-efficacy, **PSE:** perception of schooling experiences, *PA:* perception of academic work, *PTRS*: perception of teachers, and *PS:* perception of other pupils.

Relationships between Variables

To investigate whether there were significant differences of self-efficacies and perception of schooling experiences among the three independent variables (i.e., grade repeaters, low-performers and high-performers), ANOVA test was run with the three categories of participants as the independent variables and the following: general self-efficacy, academic self-efficacy, social self-efficacy, emotional self-efficacy, perception of schooling experiences, perception of academic work, perception of teachers, perception of other pupils as dependent variables. The results of the ANOVA test are presented in Table 15. Additionally, the means and the standard deviations for the general self-efficacy, perception of schooling experiences and their subscales for the independent variables, participant's categories, were calculated and, summarized as shown in Table 15.

Table 15

Summary of means, the standard deviations and ANOVA test results of participants'
categories, across self-efficacy and perception of schooling experiences variables.

	Grade repeaters		High-performers		High-performers		**F**	**Sig.**
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*		
ASE	27.73	6.33	31.21	5.19	31.92	5.44	13.52	.00
SSE	29.13	4.66	31.58	7.00	29.68	4.46	3.30	.04
ESE	28.32	5.25	30.19	7.05	28.99	5.61	1.79	.17
SE	85.19	13.46	92.98	16.47	90.59	12.83	5.55	.00
PA	15.65	3.09	15.66	3.52	17.18	3.40	5.58	.00
PTRS	20.80	3.57	20.89	4.48	23.14	3.91	10.86	.00
PS	13.30	2.56	13.04	2.33	14.09	2.79	4.14	.02
PSE	49.75	6.33	49.58	7.64	54.41	7.58	13.03	.00

Note **SE:** general self-efficacy, *ASE*: academic self-efficacy, *SSE*: social self-efficacy, *ESE*:
emotional self-efficacy, **PSE:** perception of schooling experiences, *PA:* perception of
academic work, *PTRS*: perception of teachers, and *PS*: perception of other pupils.

The results, except for the emotional self-efficacy subscale, showed significant
F-values and p-values across the main constructs and subscales. These gave solid
indications of the presence of the differences in the measured constructs among the
groups studied. They, however, did not say anything about the direction of these
differences.

Bonferroni posthoc test was then conducted to determine the direction of these
differences in self-efficacy that exist among grade repeaters, low-performers and high-
performers. Table 16 shows the summary result of the Bonferroni posthoc test. The
result indicated that grade repeaters significantly differ, on the academic self-efficacy
subscale, from non-repeaters (low-performers and high-performers), but no such

difference was found between non-repeaters (low-performers and high-performers).

Similarly, in the social self-efficacy subscale, it was found that grade repeaters differ

from non-repeaters (low-performers and high-performers), yet there was no difference

between non-repeaters (low-performers and high-performers). On the whole, regarding

the general self-efficacy construct, no difference was recognised between non-

repeaters (both low-performers and high-performers), however, significant differences

were recognised between grade repeaters and low-performers, and grade repeaters and

high-performers.

Table 16

Summary of the result of Bonferroni posthoc test

Dependent Variable	(I) Student's category	(J) Student's category	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
ASE	Grade Repeaters	Low-performers	-3.79[*]	.99	.00	-6.18	-1.39
		High-performers	-4.12[*]	.83	.00	-6.13	-2.12
	Low-performers	High-performers	-.34	.93	1.00	-2.59	1.91
SSE	Grade Repeaters	Low-performers	-2.23[*]	.91	.04	-4.42	-.04
		High-performers	-.43	.76	1.00	-2.26	1.40
	Low-performers	High-performers	1.80	.85	.11	-.25	3.84
SE	Grade Repeaters	Low-performers	-7.79[*]	2.51	.01	-13.85	-1.74
		High-performers	-5.40[*]	2.09	.03	-10.45	-.35
	Low-performers	High-performers	2.39	2.35	.93	-3.28	8.06

Note: **SE**: general self-efficacy, *ASE:* academic self-efficacy and *SSE:* social self-efficacy

Students' Involvement in Deciding Their Promotion Practices

The purpose of this section was to respond to the research question one; To what extent do grade repeaters and low-performers (non-repeaters) contribute to the decision to repeat or not to repeat a grade? It, therefore, consisted of items that investigated participants' involvement in deciding their promotion practices. Also, it looked into the possible impact of their involvement or lack of it, on their academic aspirations.

Who made the decision for your repetition?

Eighty-three of the total participants indicated having retained a grade before or presently retaining a grade (grade repeaters). Figure 3 below shows the distribution of participants' responses to the question 'Who made the decision to repeat the grade?' Forty-two grade repeaters (representing 50.6%) reported that their teachers decided their repetition; 22 of them (representing 26.5%) said their parents did so; 15 (representing 18.1%) reported taking the decision by themselves, and the remaining 4 (representing 4.8%) indicated that other people decided on their behalf.

Figure 3 clearly shows that teachers (50.6%) and parents (26.5%) made the grade repetition decision most of the time for the participants. Barely 18% of the surveyed participants decided by themselves to repeat their grade when made aware of their low performances. The data may imply that many of the participants in the study would have preferred promotion to repetition.
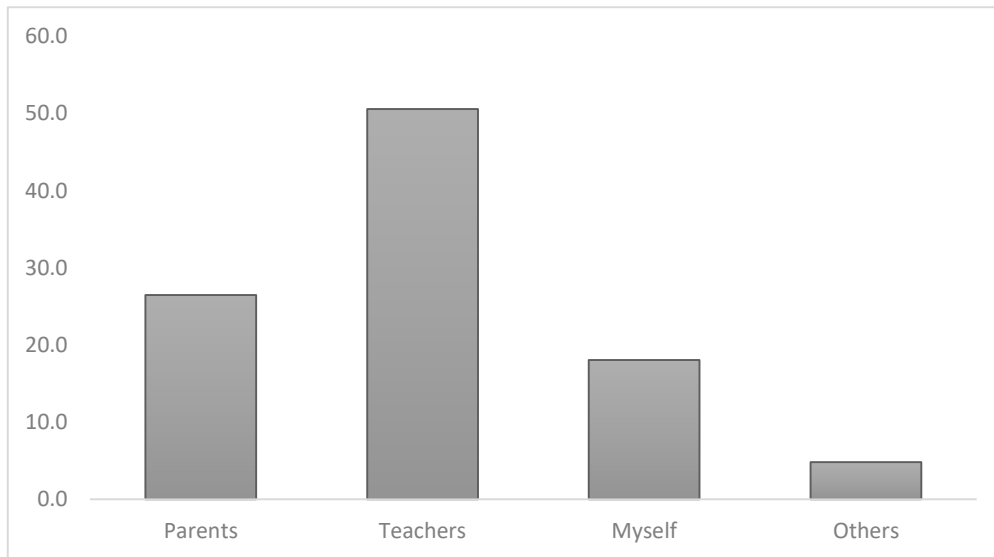
Figure 3, Bar chart showing the percentage of respondents' responses to the item 'Who made the decision to repeat the grade?'

So far, I like the decision.

The statement "So far, I like the decision", sought to find out the level of satisfaction of grade repeaters with the decision to repeat the grade. While 47 participants (56.6%) indicated *Yes,* to assert their satisfaction for the decision, 36 participants (43.4%) indicated *No,* to show their dissatisfaction with the decision. The data suggests that the majority of the grade repeaters (56.6%) liked the decision, to have repeated a grade before, and at the time of the survey. However, it should be noted that a significant portion of 43.4% was dissatisfied with the decision they either made by themselves or made on their behalf.

Repeating a grade gives me a second chance to improve my academic performance.

Out of the total respondents of grade repeaters, 68 (i.e., 81.9%) reported *Yes,* while the remaining 15 (i.e., 18.1%) reported *No*. It was observed from the results that the majority of the respondents (81.9%) believed that repeating a grade

has some benefits of improving the academic performance of grade repeaters. Thus, the results demonstrated a strong affirmation of the statement among the studied sample population.

Additionally, the data supported the findings (Haidary, 2013; Manacorda, 2008; UNESCO, 2012) that grade repetition improved upon grade repeaters' academic performance. Though her study was conducted among teachers, Haidary's (2013) finding that 81% of her sample agreed that grade repetition allowed for better results the second time, is in tandem with the present sample which involves grade repeaters.

Are you likely to drop out of school because of grade repetition?

The data shows that 13 (15.7%) of grade repeater's respondents answered in the affirmative, *Yes,* and 70 (84.3%) answered in the negative, *No.* The data presented a clear case that many grade repeaters still preferred being in school to dropping out of school. Notwithstanding, a significant portion (15.7%) of respondents, was unequivocal about their likeliness to drop out of school as a result of grade repetition. Thus far, it can be generally agreed with Marsh, Gershwin, Kirby & Xia (2009) that grade repetition has a correlative relationship with dropping out of school.

Interviews

In all, 20 participants were interviewed. Ten participants were drawn from the grade repeaters and low-performers (non-repeaters), respectively. The responses of the participants are presented in Table 17 (i.e., responses of grade repeaters) and Table 18 (responses of non-repeaters) in appendix **E**.

From Table 17, two respondents (grade repeaters) answered that they decided to repeat by themselves as opposed to eight, who reported that either their parents or teachers decided for them. The above results confirmed the earlier response that barely 18% (Figure 3) of respondents' decision to repeat grade was made by the grade

repeaters themselves. Similarly, only two out of the ten (Table 18) respondents among low-performers said they decided by themselves to go to the next grade. The data from the surveyed sample illustrated that when pupils did not perform well, in their end of year examinations, they had no or little role to play in deciding whether to retain their grade or move on to the next grade. In other words, this decision laid very much within the ambient of teachers and parents.

Two themes seemed to run through when analysing the extent of the respondents' involvement in the decision to promote them to the class or be repeated. The respondents were either *not involved* or *just offered their consent*. Some of the responses showing the little or non-involvement of respondents included, "*Nobody asked me anything*" and "*I was not involved at all*" (Table 17). Others were, "*I had no opinion on the decision*" and "*My opinion was not sought, but I really wanted to go to the next class*" (Table 18). On the other hand, respondents offered their consent by responses like, *"They just informed me about it, and I accepted the decision of my teachers", "I just agreed with my mother*" (Table 17), and "*I agreed with the decision*" (Table 18). The result, therefore, showed that both grade repeaters and low-performers (non-repeaters) were not engaged in any discussion before the final decision. This could lead to apathy, where they may fail to take full responsibility for the final decision (Gonani, 2018).

Two compared with eight of the grade repeaters interviewed, said they would have declined the opportunity to go to the next class were they given. These were some of their responses to the question "Given the choice, would you choose promotion over grade repetition? Why?": "*No, because I know I didn't understand the materials taught on the grade well*" and "*No, I want to improve upon what I know [my performance]*" (Table 17). The remaining eight expressed their willingness to go to the

next class if they were given the opportunity. Some of the reasons of their readiness for promotion were given as follows; *"Yes, because people tease me and I feel hurt about that", "Yes, I would like to go along with all my friends", "Yes, because my friends laugh at me"*, and *"Yes, I feel that all my friends have left me behind"* (Table 17). Thus, the expressions of the grade repeaters were seemingly that of displeasure and objection to their present status. It is also important to note here that their reasons were much about their feelings regarding how others acted towards them.

When contrasting question "Given the choice, would you choose repetition over grade promotion? Why?" was proposed to the low-performers, their answers expressed satisfaction and contentment for their current decision, hence unwilling to reverse them. Strangely, though, one low-performer responded; "*Yes, because I didn't do well and I know I'd have done better in B.S.6 than in B.S.7*" (Table 18). In general, the result revealed there was a higher sense of satisfaction among low-performers (non-repeaters) than their counterparts who repeated a class.

The respondents (both grade repeaters and low-performers) were further asked to give their opinion on the advantages of repeating a class. Except for a few respondents (i.e., one, grade repeater and three non-repeaters) who found no good thing about grade repetition, others were quite positive. Interestingly, less number of grade repeaters do not say grade repetition has no value.

The other responses may be categorized into three themes; *motivation to study hard*, *improvement upon academic performance* and *reformative nature*. An example of respondents that favoured motivation to study hard reported as follows; *"It motivates you to study hard to avoid repeating a grade, again"*. Additionally, some respondents that favoured improvement upon academic performance said, "*It helps me to learn better. It also helps me to make better marks now", "It gives you a chance to*

better understand the materials of the grade [the class]" (Table 17), and "*It helps the repeater to learn again what he/she had earlier learned but didn't understand*" (Table 18). Those that viewed grade repetition as reformative offered responses like *"It allows you to correct your difficulties/mistakes"* and "*It opens your mind. The teachers give you more assistance. It draws you closer to your books*". The diverse remarkable attributes presented by the respondents demonstrate that there are, at least, some advantages of grade repetition (Haidary, 2013; Manacorda, 2008; Donofrio 1977).

Probing into the disadvantages associated with grade repetition, the researcher inquired using this question "Why do you think that grade repetition could not be a good option?" to the interviewees. The answers of the respondents (repeaters and low-performers) were alike. Moreover, the disadvantages expressed by the respondents were essentially psychological in nature. A few are sampled here, *"My former classmates tease me. At home, my parents reprimand me, and my siblings also tease me"; "Your new classmates tease you, and they don't respect you"; "I think my former classmates laugh and tease me. I feel I'm wasting my time when the teachers are teaching something I already know, and it's painful"*; and "*When you repeat a grade, you become ashamed of yourself"* (Table 17). Some others revealed that *"You become ashamed of yourself. You also lack confidence"; "It feels sad [distressed] seeing your classmates moving on to the next class while you retain a class"; "Friends laugh at you and you feel shy at school";* and *"When you repeat a class, you don't enjoy school, and you may even think of stopping school"* (Table 18).

From the interview data, the underlying themes of the respondents' expressions were guilt, distress, shyness, embarrassment, self-reproach and lack of self-confidence. Bandura (1994; 1997), among other things, found that the sources of strengthening or weakening self-efficacy include emotional states. Guilt, distress, shyness,

embarrassment, self-reproach and lack of self-confidence are negative emotions that could harm the self-efficacy of repeating a grade (Holmes and Matthews, 1984; Smith and Shepard, 1987; Holmes, 1989; Mainardes, 2002; OECD, 2014).

Tables 17 & 18 revealed that two respondents each from grade repeaters and low-performers evaluated their schooling experiences as average, while the remaining evaluated them as enjoyable. None of the respondents saw their schooling experiences as less enjoyable. It showed that despite their different experiences, grade repeaters enjoy schooling as much as low-performers (non-repeaters).

Finally, the researcher gathered data about respondents' responses on the question, "If a grade repeater drops out of school, will you blame him or her? Please, explain your answer further." This helped the researcher to understand the respondents' attitude toward dropping out of school. Three out of ten grade repeaters interviewed indicated that they would not blame a grade repeater who decided to drop out of school. On the other hand, two of ten low-performers (non-repeaters) said they would not blame a grade repeater who dropped out of school. On the whole, the result was an indication that though a few, some of the respondents did not see anything wrong repeaters dropping out of school. Such responses may be interpreted as a tendency to drop out by themselves.

Chapter Five

Discussions, Recommendations and Conclusion

Introduction

The previous chapter attempted at the orderly presentation of the survey results and their interpretations to put the study into a perspective. Subsequently, the present chapter discusses the research questions and hypotheses that guided the study. In light of the results from the collected data and the available literature, the chapter sufficiently responds to research questions and verifies the research hypotheses. Also, based on the findings, some recommendations are made to provide a beneficial guide and to instigate further research in the related field. Finally, the chapter ends with a general conclusion of the entire study.

Research question one: To what extent do grade repeaters and low-performers (non-repeaters) contribute to the decision to repeat or not to repeat a grade?

The research findings indicated that both grade repeaters and low-performers (non-repeaters) contributed very minimal to the decision about their grade promotion matters. Out of the ten low-performers (non-repeaters) interviewed, only one recounted that he decided himself to move to the next grade; as for the rest, either their parents or teachers decided on their behalf (Table 18). A similar trend prevailed among the grade repeaters. Two of the ten grade repeaters interviewed said they decided to retain their grade because of their low performance (Table 17). Moreover, the interviewees who answered that the final decisions were made by persons other than themselves, were asked a follow-up question that sought to find out the role they played in the decision-making. Interestingly, their answers (as given in Tables 17 & 18 in appendix E) suggested a passive role; thus, they just agreed to the decisions of their parents, teachers and others.

Similarly, barely 18% of the questionnaire respondents decided by themselves to repeat their grade when made aware of their low performance, while the fate of the overwhelming 82% was determined by others (Figure 3). Gonani (2018) has observed that the involvement of people in decision making possibly leads to increased morale and motivation. In line with his observation, it is no wonder that the vast majority (eight out of ten) of the grade repeaters interviewed (see Table 17) expressed dissatisfaction with the decision. Some were disgruntled *"people tease me and I feel hurt about that"*, others complained, "*I would like to go along with all my friends*" and still some felt it was lack of sensitivity to their plight – *"I feel I'm wasting my time when the teachers are teaching something I already know, and it's painful"* (see Table 17), while 15.6% of the questionnaire respondents considered the option to drop out of school.

On the other hand, nearly 57% of grade repeaters who answered the questionnaire reported they liked the decision they did not make themselves. Some of the reasons they gave were "*because I know I didn't understand the materials taught on the grade well", "I want to improve upon what I know [my performance]"* and *"It motivates you to study hard to avoid repeating a grade*" (see Table 17). Furthermore, nine of the ten interviewed non-repeaters expressed utmost satisfaction for the decision (see Table18). This may be viewed from the perspective that the decision went in their favour. Again, it gives us an indication of how pupils dread grade repetition. Yamamoto (1980) observed that the only two life events that children thought would be more stressful than being retained are going blind or losing a parent.

Research question two: How do grade repeaters compare with non-repeaters (low-performers and high-performers) on the self-efficacy construct?

The research findings suggested that there was sufficient evidence that grade repeaters compare less favourably on self-efficacy construct to non-repeaters (low-performers and high-performers). The self-efficacy Z-scores of the sample population showed that 28% of grade repeaters scored below average as opposed to 11.76% of low-performers (non-repeaters) and 13.08% of high-performers (non-repeaters) (Table 7). In other words, compared with the non-repeaters, grade repeaters performed worse on the self-efficacy scale.

Furthermore, a close study of the distribution of the statistical properties such as the means (*M*) and the standard deviations (*SD*) among the studied groups confirmed the above claim. Thus, on the general self-efficacy, grade repeaters recorded *M=85.19; SD=13.46,* which was worse than low-performers' *M=92.98; SD=16.47* and high-performers' *M=90.59; SD=12.82*. A similar movement was observed even among the subscales of academic self-efficacy, social self-efficacy and emotional self-efficacy (Table 14).

With these results, it could be accurately speculated that retaining a grade affects the victims' general self-efficacy (i.e., academic self-efficacy, social self-efficacy and emotional self-efficacy). This conclusion agreed with Xia et al (2009), assertion that "if not promoted along with his or her [their] peers, [grade repeaters] may incur psychological and emotional damages, such as low self-esteem or a low sense of self-worth" (p.1). From the findings of the study, it was observed that not only emotional self-efficacy of grade repeaters was affected but also their social and academic efficacies. This showed that the difficulties of grade repeaters even transcended emotional functioning to include other domains such as social and academic. It may be, therefore, imperative to consider the self-efficacy effects and

how it could be mitigated if children, especially those who are relatively older among their peers, should be repeated on a grade.

Research question three: How do grade repeaters compare with non-repeaters (low-performers and high-performers) on the perception of schooling experiences construct?

On the perception of schooling experiences' construct, grade repeaters compared more favourably than low-performers (non-repeaters), but still lagged behind high-performers (non-repeaters). The frequency distribution table of Z-scores (Table 8) illustrated that 19% of grade repeaters recorded below average on the perception of schooling experiences' scale, in contrast with 25% of low-performers and 11% of high-performers. Put another way, more grade repeaters scored better on the construct than low-performers, but fewer grade repeaters scored better than high-performers from the same sample population.

The above assertion is equally supported by the analysis of the means (*M*) and the standard deviations (*SD*) of the perception of schooling experiences. While grade repeaters measured *M=49.75; SD=6.33* on the said construct, low-performers and high-performers recorded *M=49.58; 7.64* and *M=54.41; SD=7.58*, respectively. It was obvious from the figures that though the means of grade repeaters and low-performers were quite comparable, the scores of low-performers spread wider from the group mean. It was worth noting that the same bent was found in the subscales (i.e., perception of academic work, perception of teachers, and perception of other pupils).

The results may be interpreted that high self-efficacy of pupils does not necessarily yield the healthy perception of their schooling experiences. Although low-performers (non-repeaters) scored higher on the self-efficacy scale than grade repeaters, the opposite holds on the perception of schooling experience. Thus to say,

on an average, a grade repeater who had a lower academic self-efficacy rather had a higher perception of academic work than a low-performer (non-repeater). Such a result appeared unusual, inconsistent and inexplicable. It would be interesting for further studies to delve into the factors that could account for this.

However, Wang & Holcombe (2010) research on *Adolescents' Perceptions of School Environment, Engagement, and Academic Achievement in Middle School*, seemed to offer some consolations. The researchers concluded that students' perception of school environment influenced their academic achievement directly and indirectly through different types of school engagement. Thus, the majority 81% of grade repeaters measuring average or better on the perception of schooling experiences was an indication that they could be redeemed. In other words, if well managed, the positive perception of schooling experiences of the grade repeaters could positively influence their academic achievement in the future.

Research question four: How does the self-efficacy of grade repeaters and non-repeaters impact on their perception of their schooling experiences?

The results from the data collected so far offered no evidence of any association of self-efficacy and perception of schooling experiences in the grade repeaters group. On the contrary, though weak, some associations between self-efficacy and perception of schooling experiences had been established among the low-performers (non-repeaters).

It was observed that the relationship between participants' perception of their teachers (PTRS) and their academic self-efficacy (ASE) was positive but weak in strength (r (52) = .29, p = .03). That is to say, low-performers (non-repeaters) that had a high perception of teachers tended to have high academic self-efficacy as well. A similar observation was made between the perception of teachers (PTRS) and general

self-efficacy (SE) of participants in the same category. Thus, the perception of teachers positively weakly correlated with general self-efficacy, (r (49) = .29, p = .04).

The results did not differ from Wang and Holcombe's (2010) findings that students' perception of school environment influences their academic achievement. This idea seemed depicted in the exceptional association between the participant's perception of their teachers (part of the school environment) and their academic self-efficacy, a prominent determinant of academic performance, (Hysong & Quinones, 1997; Carroll et al, 2008).

These observations were laudable in understanding the invaluable role that teachers play in the educational enterprise. Besides their known responsibility, teachers could inspire academic self-efficacy, a key ingredient in a pupil's academic life. Hence, pupils' academic self-efficacy and general self-efficacy could be improved through encouraging their good perception of teachers.

Notwithstanding, the findings did not yield any association of the general perception of schooling experiences (PSE) and the general self-efficacy (SE) among the sampled population.

Hypotheses Testing

The study consisted of four hypotheses, which were analysed in this section. Different statistical tests, namely; Pearson correlation, Analysis of variance (ANOVA) test and Bonferroni posthoc test, were conducted (see Tables 12, 13, 14, 15 & 16) to verify the statistical significance of the collected data and possible rejection or otherwise of the study hypotheses.

Hypothesis One:

H_0: There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and perception of schooling experiences.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between self-efficacy and perception of schooling experiences.

The results (Table 12) found no significant correlation between general self-efficacy and perception of schooling experiences of the sample population. To this extend, we failed to reject the null hypothesis that "there is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and perception of schooling experiences". This means that, on the whole, the self-efficacy of the pupils in the study sample did not predict their perception of schooling experiences or vice versa.

It was, however, observed that self-efficacy correlated with perception of schooling experiences in some groups in the sample population. For instance, in B.S.5, the two constructs moderately negatively correlated (r (13) = -.61, p =.02) among high-performing respondents. On the other hand, among the high-performing respondents in B.S.7, the relationship between self-efficacy and perception of schooling experiences was positive, moderate in strength and statistically significant (r (22) = .43, p = .03). Also, among B.S. 9. low-performers' (non-repeaters') respondents, the constructs moderately positively correlated (r (14) = .55, p = .03) (Table 13).

The specific findings seemed to provide essential clues in comparing the constructs of self-efficacy and perception of schooling experiences of pupils. For instance, in B.S.9 (the final grade of basic school), an appreciable positive correlation was observed between the constructs among the low-performers (non-repeaters). The implication is that high self-efficacy of low-performers (non-repeaters) from B.S.8 may predict a corresponding high perception of schooling experiences. Hence, strengthening of self-efficacy would be deemed crucial among such group, at this stage of their academic progression.

On the contrary, self-efficacy moderately negatively correlated perception of schooling experiences among high-performer participants in B.S.5. Put it differently, the high self-efficacy scores predicted low perception of schooling experiences among these group. It should be recalled that B.S.5 pupils are at the onset of adolescence. Could over self-confidence negatively impact on their perception of schooling experiences rather than promoting them? A further study into the concern raised above may be valuable.

Hypothesis Two:

H_0: There is no significant difference between the self-efficacy of grade repeaters and the self-efficacy of non-repeaters.

H_1: There is a significant difference between the self-efficacy of grade repeaters and the self-efficacy of non-repeaters.

The above hypothesis that self-efficacy of grade repeaters significantly differ from the self-efficacy of non-repeaters was supported. An analysis of variance showed that the self-efficacy difference among grade repeaters, low-performers and high-performers was significant, $F(2, 231) = 5.55$, $p = .004$ (see Table 15). Post hoc analyses using Bonferroni post hoc criterion for significance also indicated that the average scores self-efficacy was significantly lower in the grade repeaters (*M=85.19; SD=13.46)* than in the non-repeaters (both low-performers and high-performers) (*M=92.98; SD=16.47*), *p = .01*.

The preceding result was fully appreciated when interpreted in line with the study's theoretical framework based on Bandura's self-efficacy theory. Bandura (1994; 1997) postulated four sources of self-efficacy, namely; mastery experiences, social modelling, social persuasion, and physical and emotional states. Considering the poorer performance of grade repeaters on the emotional self-efficacy subscale, it could

be understood that their physical and emotional states might have been the possible causes. Recall that some grade repeaters recounted that *"My former classmates tease me. At home, my parents reprimand me, and my siblings also tease me"; "People insult and laugh at you"; "I feel I'm wasting my time when the teachers are teaching something I already know, and it's painful"* (see Table 17) and others like these. They were certainly not pleasant emotions that could produce positive self-efficacy.

Mastery experiences could also be lacking for grade repeaters since their condition persistently reminded them of their incapability. They may hear explicitly or implicitly from their previous low performances that they were not capable even this time. Negative social persuasion like parents' reprimands (as some pupils have already expressed), pupils experiencing grade retention as a personal punishment from teachers (Mainardes, 2002) and teasing from others, might have also contributed to their low performance on self-efficacy construct. Moreover, grade repeaters might have also seen their erstwhile well-performing juniors (now classmates) as inferior to them and may not want to socially model them (Laura, 2017; Jeist, Jeist & Robert, 2018).

However, it is heartening to note that Bandura thought of self-efficacy to be a generative capability, not a fixed trait. This conception means that the self-efficacy of the grade repeaters can still be strengthened or improved. The study recommendation section thus looked into the means to strengthen the self-efficacy of the grade repeaters.

Hypothesis Three:

H_0: Grade repeaters' self-efficacy will have no significant positive correlation on their perception of schooling experiences.

H_1: Grade repeaters' self-efficacy will have a significant positive correlation on their perception of schooling experiences.

Pearson's correlation test was conducted to verify the research hypothesis that the self-efficacy and the perception of schooling experiences among grade repeaters positively correlate. The hypothesis was formulated based on a copious research works that lend credence to the fact that there existed a positive correlation between self-efficacy and perception (Dorman 2001; Dorman & Adams 2004; Partin and Haney 2012; Bui, 2016; Knowles, Apputhurai, O'Brien, Ski, Thompson, & Castle, 2020, February).

The results, as shown in Table 14, yielded no significant Pearson r-value. This implied that the hypothesis was not supported by the study data. In other words, there was no positive relationship between grade repeaters' self-efficacy and perception of schooling experiences. This result seemingly contradicted the known facts that self-efficacy positively correlates with perceptions. Dorman (2001) found a positive relationship between students' perceptions of the classroom learning environment and their academic efficacy in mathematics; Knowles, Apputhurai, O'Brien, Ski, Thompson, & Castle (2020, February) established a positive correlation between illness perceptions and self-efficacy. It was unclear what could account for a contrary result.

Hypothesis Four:

H_0: Non-repeaters' self-efficacy will have no significant positive correlation on their perception of schooling experiences.

H_1: Non-repeaters' self-efficacy will have a significant positive correlation on their perception of schooling experiences.

The null hypothesis that the self-efficacy and the perception of schooling experiences will not positively correlate was not rejected. The results of the Pearson correlation yielded no significant r –value. This means that there was no statistically significant association of the general self-efficacy and general perception of schooling experiences scores among the non-repeaters (both low-performers and high-performers alike). Once more, the result opposed to the observations of Dorman (2016), Bui (2016), among others.

However, it was observed that some subscales exhibited some traces of the relationship between the measured variables among non-repeaters. For example, while it was observed, among the low-performers, that perception of teachers had a positive significant relationship with academic self-efficacy, the general perception of schooling experiences significantly positive correlated with social self-efficacy. These particularities are essential to note since they can guide actions, especially in the educational sphere.

Limitations of the Study

Mugenda & Mugenda (1999) defined the limitation of research as some aspects of the study that the researcher acknowledges may negatively affect the results or generalizability of the results, but over which he probably has no control. This study was limited in terms of the number of schools. As a result of financial and time constraints, the study sampled only ten (10) schools from many Basic schools in Ghana. The valid representative sample may, therefore, be a challenge.

It was a challenge to obtain the participants' examination grades to effectively decide on the grade repeaters, low-performers and high-performers, as such records were unavailable. Though grade repeaters were obvious to identify, it took the assistance of teachers of various schools to identify low-performers from high-

performer (non-repeaters). Thus, there was a possibility of subjectivity, which the researcher thinks could negatively affect the generalization of the results.

Moreover, many grade 4 to 6 pupils lacked comprehension skills to read and understand the questionnaire well. In such situations, the researcher was constrained to facilitate the process by reading, explaining some of the questionnaire items. Such intervention from the researcher could influence the participants' responses to the questionnaire items, a potential threat to the generalization of the results.

The study also employed correlational research hypotheses. By this means, the study was deficient in causal inferences. In other words, it would be a mistake to use the findings of the present study to pre-empt that one variable caused the other. Only correlational or relationship inferences or conclusions can be drawn, from the study outcomes.

Implications of the Study

The study has several implications for students, parents, teachers, educational administrators, educational policy-makers and researchers. The findings sufficiently suggested that grade repeaters compared less favourably on self-efficacy construct to their non-repeaters counterparts. This relationship was not found between low-performers (did not perform well, yet promoted) and high-performers. Though this association was more correlational than causal, it was a genuine cause for concern. Low-performing pupils should be promoted to the next grade and only repeated, when it is of absolute necessity. This may strengthen self-efficacy tendency among the grade repeaters, in particular, and low-performing pupils, in general.

Aware of the devastating effects of grade repetition on pupils' general self-efficacy and the possibility of school dropout, teachers and educational administrators should sparingly activate its use. Most especially, they should refrain from using grade

repetition as a pedagogical or a disciplinary tool (Yannick, 2017). Where deemed necessary, with the good of the child in mind, he or she can be transferred to another school, at least, to cater for their social self-efficacy. It also implies that parents should duly investigate to see whether a proposed grade repetition for their wards would serve the intended purpose before they agree to it.

It also prepares that grounds for the future causality study into the low self-efficacy among grade repeaters; whether the low self-efficacy causes their repetition or vice versa. Again, the findings showed that the self-efficacy of low-performers (non-repeaters) of B.S. 9 moderately positively correlates with their perception of schooling experiences. A study can delve into this to understand the rationale behind it and subsequently help pupils at this stage of their academic life.

Recommendations and Future Research

In line with the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

The study demonstrated that there exists a significant difference between the general self-efficacy of grade repeaters and non-repeaters. According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy is a generative capability, not a fixed trait. Thus, teachers and educational administrators can, therefore, find creative ways to bridge the self-efficacy gap, where the two kinds of pupils exist. A pedagogical approach that caters for individual differences may, in particular, improve the academic self-efficacy of grade repeaters, while occasional general counselling (where need be individual counselling) can enhance their general self-efficacy.

Interestingly, the study revealed that general self-efficacy moderately negatively correlated with the perception of schooling experiences among B.S. 5 high-performers. It must also be borne in mind that this is an onset of adolescence, a

challenging stage in human development. Parents and teachers must be aware of this to help their high-performing children to adequately balance their self-efficacy and schooling experiences through counselling. Additionally, it may be proposed here that a study is conducted to investigate the reasons self-efficacy negatively correlates the perception of schooling experiences among B.S. 5 high-performers

To minimize the negative psychological effects of grade repetition, including low self-efficacy, negative attitude toward school (Holmes, 1989; Mainardes, 2002; OECD, 2014), potential repeaters should be transferred to a different school. Such initiative may improve the social self-efficacy component which stems from the child's environment and interactions with school mates and teachers (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1997).

The findings showed that the views of the majority of the pupils were not taken into consideration in promotion or repetition decision. Gonani's (2018) observed that the involvement of people in decision making possibly leads to increased morale and motivation is highly recommended here. Candidates for grade repetition should be actively involved in the decision in order to accept the full responsibility of it. Where the counselling facility is available, they should be counselled on the pros and cons of the decision they make.

Conclusion

In sum, the study attempted to respond to four research questions and four hypotheses. The research questions include; to what extent do grade repeaters and non-repeaters contribute to the decision to repeat or not to repeat a grade? How do grade repeaters compare with non-repeaters and well-performing pupils on the self-efficacy construct? How do grade repeaters compare with non-repeaters and well-performing pupils on the perception of schooling experiences construct? And how does the self-

efficacy of grade repeaters and non-repeaters impact on their perception of their schooling experiences?

The research findings showed that pupils contributed but minimally to their promotion or repetition decisions. Grade repeaters differed significantly from non-repeaters on the self-efficacy construct. Regarding the perception of schooling experiences, it was found that grade repeaters differed significantly from high-performers but no such difference existed between grade repeaters and low-performers. On the whole, the findings suggested no influence of self-efficacy on the grade repeaters and non-repeaters' perception of schooling experiences.

The four research hypotheses are; *Hypothesis 1:* there is a significant relationship between self-efficacy and perception of schooling experiences; *Hypothesis 2:* there is a significant difference between the self-efficacy of grade repeaters and the self-efficacy of non-repeaters; *Hypothesis 3:* grade repeaters' self-efficacy will have a significant negative correlation on their perception of schooling experiences, and *Hypothesis 4:* non-repeaters' self-efficacy will have a significant positive correlation on their perception of schooling experiences. Except for hypothesis 2, the research results failed to support the research hypotheses.

Finally, the results of the study supported its main theoretical assumption (Bandura's social learning theory). That, people's self-efficacy can either be strengthened or weakened by four means; mastery experiences, social modelling, social persuasion, and physical and emotional states. It was demonstrated in the study that the general self-efficacy of grade repeaters was adversely impacted by these sources, especially negative social persuasion, and physical and emotional states.

Appendices
Appendix A: Consent Form

Consent Form
Study of Perception of schooling experience
Under the supervision of Dr. Patricia Eid

Purpose: The study is interested in understanding what personal factors contribute to understand your experiences at school.

Procedure: Consenting to participate in the study, you will fill a set of questions describing your experience at school and how you perceive yourself. These questionnaires are self-reported, this means we really want your personal opinion and perspective. Also, after completing the questionnaire, the researcher will ask you questions orally that we would like you to answer. Your answers will be recorded to allow us to remember and understand better your answer. These questions are also about your schooling experience and we want you to express your opinion in your own words.

Duration: The study will require about 20 minutes of your time to answer the questionnaires. The interview with the researcher could last up to 10 minutes

Benefits and risks on the participant:

We thank you for your time and contribution in helping us with our study. In addition to helping us understand the schooling experience of children at your age, these are the personal benefits that you will gain from participating in our study:

- be more aware of the diverse schooling experiences children at your age can go through
- become more conscious of your capabilities.
- Understand what makes your experience more positive.

Voluntary Nature of the Study/Confidentiality:

Your participation in this research project is completely voluntary. You may decline altogether, or leave blank any questions you don't wish to answer. There are no known risks to participation beyond those encountered while answering questions on personal experiences. Your responses will remain confidential and anonymous. Data from this research will be kept under lock and key and reported only as a collective combined total. No one other than the researcher will know your individual answers to this questionnaire.

If you have questions about the study, kindly contact:

_____   _____

Researcher: Kramo Eric
Department of Psychology, Education, &
Physical Education
Faculty of Humanities
Telephone: +233541232734
Email address: ekkramo@ndu.edu.lb

Supervisor: Dr. Patricia Eid, PsyD, PhD
Department of Psychology, Education, &
Physical Education
Faculty of Humanities
Telephone: +961 9 208 523
Email address: peid@ndu.edu.lb

Please sign below if you agree to participate:

_____   _____

       Participant's signature   Date

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix B: Participants' Questionnaire

<u>Socio Demographic Questionnaire (SDQ)</u>

<u>Instructions:</u>

For the following items, please indicate your response by either circling the answer that suits you best or writing your response, where applicable, in the space provided.

1. What is your date of birth (please, indicate the year only)?
    1) Year: _____

2. What is your gender?
    1) Male
    2) Female

3. What is your mother tongue?

    _____

4. What class are you currently in?
    1) B.S.4
    2) B.S.5
    3) B.S.6
    4) B.S.7
    5) B.S.8
    6) B.S.9

5. What is your school type?
    1) Private
    2) Public

6. What is your nationality?
    1) Ghanaian
    2) Others: _____

7. What is your father's occupation?

    _____.

8. What is your mother's occupation?

    _____.

SEQ-C

Instructions:

Each student has a different perspective about how they are able to deal with situations to come. These situations can be of academic, social or emotional content. Please rate your degree of confidence on each of the following statements on a scale from 1 to 5 by circling a number for each.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Hardly well	Slightly well	Well	Very well
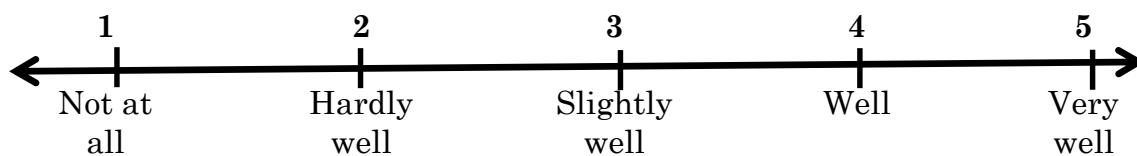
1.	How well can you get teachers to help you when you get stuck on schoolwork?	1 2 3 4 5
2.	How well can you express your opinions when other classmates disagree with you?	1 2 3 4 5
3.	How well do you succeed in cheering yourself up when an unpleasant event has happened?	1 2 3 4 5
4.	How well can you study when there are other interesting things to do?	1 2 3 4 5
5.	How well do you succeed in becoming calm again when you are very scared?	1 2 3 4 5
6.	How well can you become friends with other children?	1 2 3 4 5
7.	How well can you study a chapter for a test?	1 2 3 4 5
8.	How well can you have a chat with an unfamiliar person?	1 2 3 4 5
9.	How well can you prevent to become nervous?	1 2 3 4 5
10.	How well do you succeed in finishing all your homework every day?	1 2 3 4 5
11.	How well can you work in harmony with your classmates?	1 2 3 4 5
12.	How well can you control your feelings?	1 2 3 4 5
13.	How well can you pay attention during every class?	1 2 3 4 5
14.	How well can you tell other children that they are doing something that you don't like?	1 2 3 4 5
15.	How well can you give yourself a pep-talk when you feel low?	1 2 3 4 5
16.	How well do you succeed in understanding all subjects in school?	1 2 3 4 5
17.	How well can you tell a funny event to a group of children?	1 2 3 4 5
18.	How well can you tell a friend that you don't feel well?	1 2 3 4 5

|						
19.	How well do you succeed in satisfying your parents with your schoolwork?	1	2	3	4	5
20.	How well do you succeed in staying friends with other children?	1	2	3	4	5
21.	How well do you succeed in suppressing unpleasant thoughts?	1	2	3	4	5
22.	How well do you succeed in passing a test?	1	2	3	4	5
23.	How well do you succeed in preventing quarrels with other children?	1	2	3	4	5
24.	How well do you succeed in not worrying about things that might happen?	1	2	3	4	5

Schooling Experiences

Instructions:

School is an important part of a child's life. Many activities that take place in the school may involve the child and his/her teachers, other children and what he/she study. The child may have his/her personal view of them. Please indicate the degree to which you agree with each of the following statements on a scale from 1 to 5 by circling a number for each statement.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
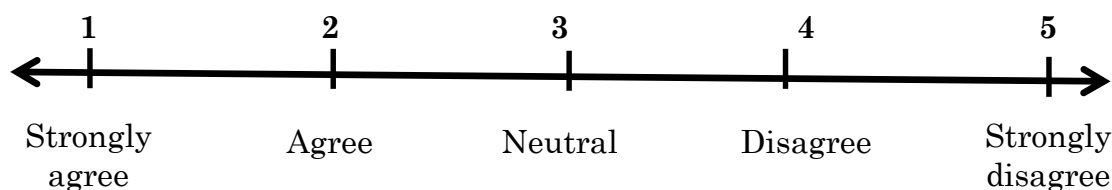
1.	My teachers think I can do better	1 2 3 4 5
2.	My teachers do not respect my contributions in class	1 2 3 4 5
3.	I feel that my teachers do their best to help me	1 2 3 4 5
4.	My teachers do not usually call me when I raise my hand to answer a question in class	1 2 3 4 5
5.	I feel the teachers pay more attention to the brighter pupils, in the class	1 2 3 4 5
6.	I feel teased by other children	1 2 3 4 5
7.	I don't play with many pupils because they don't like playing with me	1 2 3 4 5
8.	I feel my colleagues respect my views in discussions	1 2 3 4 5
9.	My best moment in school is the recreation period	1 2 3 4 5
10.	Belonging to, at least, one group (e.g. football team, debate club) is very important to me	1 2 3 4 5
11.	My teachers give too many exercises and homework	1 2 3 4 5
12.	I don't do well in school because the teachers don't teach the way I like	1 2 3 4 5
13.	I don't study much on my own	1 2 3 4 5
14.	Schoolwork is not fun enough	1 2 3 4 5
15.	I think it is good to go to school always	1 2 3 4 5

Promotion Decision-Making

Instructions:

Each student has a different experience about school. Depending on our performance, we might sometimes have to repeat a grade. Please answer by checking the appropriate box or composing your own response, where applicable.

1. Have you repeated at least a class before?

    1) Yes
    2) No

If yes, then continue to answer the following question. If not….

2. Who made the decision on your promotion?

    1) Parents
    2) Teachers
    3) Myself
    4) Others: _____.

3. So far, I like the decision.

    1) Yes
    2) No

4. Explain why you like or you don't like the decision.

_____

_____

_____

_____.

5. Repeating a grade gives me a second chance to improve upon my academic performance.

    1) Yes
    2) No

6. Are you likely to drop out because of grade repetition?

    1) Yes
    2) No

7. Explain your answer further.

_____

_____

_____

_____.

Appendix C: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR GRADE REPEATERS

1. When you received your result, who took the final decision of your repetition?

   …………………………………………………………………………….

2. If not you, explain how much you were involved in the decision process

   …………………………………………………………………………………

   …………………………………………………………………………………

   …………………………………………………………………………………

3. Given the choice, would you choose promotion over grade repetition?

   Yes   No.

   Why?

   …………………………………………………………………………………

   …………………………………………………………………………………

4. Why do you think grade repetition is a good option?

   …………………………………………………………………………………

   …………………………………………………………………………………

5. Why do you think grade repetition is not a good option?

   …………………………………………………………………………………

   …………………………………………………………………………………

6. How would you rate your overall schooling experiences?

   Enjoyable   Average   less enjoyable

   Why?

   …………………………………………………………………………………

   …………………………………………………………………………………

   …………………………………………………………………………………

7. If a grade repeater drops out of school, will you blame him or her?

   Yes   No

   Please, explain your answer further

   …………………………………………………………………………………

   ………………………………………………………………………………..

Appendix D: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR GRADE LOW-PERFORMERS

1. When you received your result, who took the final decision of your promotion?

   …………………………………………………………………………….

2. If not you, explain how much you were involved in the decision process

   …………………………………………………………………………………

   …………………………………………………………………………………

   …………………………………………………………………………………

3. Given the choice, would you choose grade repetition over promotion?

   Yes   No.

   Why?

   …………………………………………………………………………………

   …………………………………………………………………………………

4. Why do you think grade repetition is a good option?

   …………………………………………………………………………………

   …………………………………………………………………………………

5. Why do you think grade repetition is not a good option?

   …………………………………………………………………………………

   …………………………………………………………………………………

6. How would you rate your overall schooling experiences?

   Enjoyable   Average   less enjoyable

   Why?

   …………………………………………………………………………………

   …………………………………………………………………………………

   …………………………………………………………………………………

7. If a grade repeater drops out of school, will you blame him or her?

   Yes   No

   Please, explain your answer further

   …………………………………………………………………………………

   …………………………………………………………………………………

Appendix E: The Interview Responses

Table 17

Interview responses of grade repeaters

No.	Interview items	Responses of Pupils
1.	When you received your result, who took the final decision of your repetition	My mother A teacher A teacher My mother Myself, because I was absent for many times so I lost a lot. My mother and my class teacher Myself My teachers My class teacher
2.	If not you, explain how much you were involved in the decision process	I was not involved I was not asked anything I was informed about it and I accepted the decision of my teacher My mother and I thought about it together I just agreed with my mother I was not involved in anyway I was not involved at all
3	Given the choice, would you choose promotion over grade repetition? Why?	Yes, because people tease me and I feel hurt about that. Yes, I would like to go along with all my friends Yes, because I have a better understanding of the things I didn't learn well Yes, because my friends laugh at me Yes, I feel that all my friends have left me behind No, because I know I didn't understand the materials taught on the grade well Yes, I feel I am older than my new classmates. They also tease me. Yes, I think I didn't know much that's why I was repeated. Now, I'm sure I have learnt well No, I want to improve upon what I know[my performance]
4	Why do you think that grade repetition could be a good option?	It motivates you to study hard to avoid repeating a grade again. It helps me to learn better. It also helps me to make better grades now. It opens your mind. The teachers give you more assistance. It draws you closer to your books. It gives you the second chance to learn the things you didn't understand. It motivates you to top the class.

		It gives you a chance to better understand the materials of the grade. I get a second chance to learn what I couldn't understand There is nothing good about repetition It gives you an opportunity to correct your difficulties/mistakes
5	Why do you think that grade repetition could not be a good option?	When you repeat a grade, you become ashamed of yourself. Your new classmates tease you, and they don't respect you. My former classmates tease me. At home, my parents reprimand me, and my siblings also tease me. People insult and laugh at you. I think my former classmates laugh and tease me. I feel I'm wasting my time when the teachers are teaching something I already know, and it's painful. I feel my former classmates laugh at me. Some even insult me. I don't feel comfortable about it. Your juniors who join you in the same class tease you and your former classmates mock at you. There is no problem with grade repetition
6	How would you rate your overall schooling experiences (Enjoyable, Average, Less Enjoyable)? Why?	Enjoyable, I think I'm learning more and I am discovering a lot Enjoyable, I receive some special attention from my teachers, which is good for me. Enjoyable, I enjoy the company of my friends and my siblings in the school. I also receive genuine support from the teachers. Enjoyable, Now I understand what I learn pretty well. I believe that I will get a job to do when I complete my education. Enjoyable, I enjoy my studies and friendship Enjoyable, I like the contribution of the teachers towards our school life Enjoyable, I still like studies, playing, etc. Average, I enjoy recreation periods. In class, I enjoy some of the things I study and sometimes, I don't. Average, Not every day you are allowed to play outside.
7	If a grade repeater drops out of school, will you blame him or her? Please, explain your answer further.	No, because the parents might have decided for him/her. Again, the person may also feel shy to come back to the same school. Yes, I think that he is not serious. He doesn't think about the future and that is why he is dropping out.

Yes, because there are many benefits for
schooling
No, because may be he fears teasing
No, he may not be interested in schooling so it is
better he stops and rests.
Yes, I think it would be better he tries to improve
upon his performance, but not to stop schooling.
Yes, I think he just doesn't like schooling
Yes, because repetition could give him an
opportunity to make corrections.
Yes, because the teachers know his or her
strength and they think repeating will help him or
her.

Table 18

Interview responses of (low-performers) non-repeaters

No.	Interview items	Responses of Pupils
1.	When you received your result, who took the final decision of your promotion	Mr. Kramer [a teacher]
		My father
		Myself
		My parents took the decision
		It was my teacher's decision
		My class teacher
		My class teacher
		Teachers
		Teachers
2.	If not you, explain how much you were involved in the decision process	I was not involved
		I agreed with the decision
		I was not prepared for the class, but my mother forced me.
		I was not involved in anyway, but I like the decision
		I was not involved at all
		I was not involved
		I had no opinion on the decision
		My opinion was not sought, but I really wanted to go to the next class
3.	Given the choice, would you choose repetition over grade promotion? Why?	No, I am happy with the promotion
		No, I think I deserve to be promoted
		No, I now do well in my new class
		No, I like my new class
		No, my juniors may laugh at me
		Yes, because I didn't do well and I know I'd have than better in B.S.6 than in B.S.7
		No, I have no reason

		No, I feel I'm studying well in my new class.
		No, because I wanted to be promoted.
4	Why do you think that grade repetition could be a good option?	It is not good
		It helps one to improve upon his academic performance.
		It allows you to deepen your understanding of what you don't fully know.
		I don't see any good thing about grade repetition
		It helps the repeater to learn again what he/she had earlier learned but didn't understand.
		I think it helps to learn more and better. It helps in broadening your mind.
		The repeater becomes more careful in his/her studies.
5	Why do you think that grade repetition could not be a good option?	You can study better than before
		You become ashamed of yourself. You also lack confidence
		Your friends tease you and your new classmates may not respect you.
		You feel teased by your friends
		It feels sad [distressed] seeing your classmates moving on to the next class while you retain a class.
		When you repeat a class, you don't enjoy school, and you may even think of stopping school.
		I don't know
		Friends laugh at you and you feel shy at school
6	How would you rate your overall schooling experiences (Enjoyable, Average, Less Enjoyable)? Why?	Average, I enjoy some of my schooling experiences and I don't enjoy others. I like when teachers teach us equally. I dislike [resent] being insulted by teachers and falsely accused by classmates.
		Enjoyable, I make more friends and I get opportunity to develop my talents like singing and playing football.
		Enjoyable, I like to study
		Enjoyable, I enjoy studying and playing with my friends during break time.
		Enjoyable, I relate well with my friends and study well.
		Enjoyable, because I make good friends, and teachers also do their best to clarify our learning difficulties.
		Enjoyable, I pretty understand what I am taught now.
		Average.
		Enjoyable, I enjoy teaching and learning, play football with friends, and I understand better what I learn.

7	If a grade repeater drops out of school, will you blame him or her? Please, explain your answer further.	No, Because the person may feel ashamed to remain in the same class with his juniors.
		Yes, Because repetition gives an opportunity to improve upon our performance.
		Yes, I think remaining in the same class will help him or her to improve upon their performance. Dropping out means that he/ she is not serious.
		Yes, I think it will help him or her to improve upon his or her performance and be promoted next time.
		Yes, I think repeating the class will help him do better next time.
		No, because, the person may feel ashamed.
		Yes, he can use the opportunity to correct himself.
		Yes, the decision is not good because, the teachers know his ability

References

Adler, A. (1956). The individual psychology of Alfred Adler: A systematic presentation in selections from his writings (H.L. Ansbacher & R.R. Ansbacher, Eds.) New York: Basic Books.

Anamoah-Mensah, J. (2004). White paper on the report of the education reform review committed.

Apeanti, W., & Asiedu-Addo, S. (31st October, 2019). EDUCATIONAL REFORMS IN GHANA: WHAT ARE THE VIEWS OF TEACHERS AND PARENTS? Retrieved from https://www.academia.edu/4755172/EDUCATIONAL_REFORMS_IN_GHANA_WHAT_ARE_THE_VIEWS_OF_TEACHERS_AND_PARENTS.

Bandura, A. (1990). Perceived self-efficacy in the exercise of personal agency. *Journal of applied sport psychology*, *2*(2), 128-163.

Bandura, A. (1994). Social cognitive theory and mass communication. In J. Bryant & D. Zllmann (Eds.), *Media effects: Advances in theory and research*. Hillside, NJ: Erlbaunm.

Bandura, A. (1996). Ontological and epistemological terrains revisited. *Journal of Behavior Therapy and Experimental Psychiatry*, *27*(4), 323-345.

Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy*: *The exercise of control*. New York: Freeman.

Bandura, A. (2001). Social cognitive theory; An agentic perspective. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 52, 1-26

Belfield, Clive (2008). "The Cost of Early School-Leaving and School". Research prepared for the World Bank. Available at: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTLACREGTOPPOVANA/Resources/BELFIELDCostofSchoolFailure.pdf.

Boz Y, Sevda Y., Aydemir. N., & Aydemir, M. (2016.). Investigating the relationships among students' self-efficacy beliefs, their perceptions of classroom learning environment, gender, and chemistry achievement through structural equation modeling. Retrieved from http://adsabs.harvard.edu/abs/2016RSTEd..34..307B

Bui H., N. (2016, November 30). The Relationship between Self-Efficacy and Perceptions of Different Literacy Types among College Students. Retrieved from https://eric.ed.gov/?q=""&id=EJ1115314

Byrnes, D & Yamamoto (2001). *Academic retention of elementary pupils: An inside look.* Education 10(2), 208-214.

Carroll, A., Houghton, S., Wood, R., Unsworth, K., Hattie, J., Gordon, L., & Bower, J. (2008, November 22). Self-efficacy and academic achievement in Australian high school students: The mediating effects of academic aspirations and delinquency. Retrieved June 22, 2019, from https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S014019710800122X

Driscoll, M.P. (2013). *Psychology of learning for instruction: Pearson new international edition*. Essex, England; Pearson Education Limited.

Efron, R. (1969). What is perception? In *Proceedings of the Boston Colloquium for the Philosophy of Science 1966/1968*(pp. 137-173). Springer, Dordrecht.

Ghana. Statistical Service. (2013). *2010 Population & Housing Census: Regional Analytical Report* (Vol. 1). Ghana Statistical Service.

Ghana. Statistical Service. (2013). *2010 Population & housing census: National analytical report*. Ghana Statistics Service.

Glasser, W. (1969). *Schools without failure*. New York: Harper and Row

Gonani, C. (2018, June 14). 6 Reasons to Involve Employees in Decision Making. Retrieved from https://peterstark.com/key-to-engagement/

Groom, A.J.R. (1993). *Paradigms in Conflict; the strategist, the conflict researcher and the peace researcher. In conflict; Reading management & resolution*. New York: St. Martin Press.

Habibi, M., Tahmasian, K., & Ferrer-Wreder, L. (2014). Self-efficacy in Persian adolescents: Psychometric properties of a Persian version of the Self-Efficacy Questionnaire for Children (SEQ-C). *International Perspectives in Psychology: Research, Practice, Consultation*, *3*(2), 93–105. doi: 10.1037/a0036059

Haidary, A. (2013). CONTROVERCY OVER GRADE REPETITION: Afghan Teachers' View on Grade Repetition.

Holmes, C. T. & Matthews, K. M. (1984). The effects of nonpromotion on elementary and junior high school pupils: A meta-analysis. *Review of Educational Research*, 54, 225-236.

Holmes, C. T. (1989). *Grade level retention effects: A meta-analysis of research studies. In L. A. Shepard and M. L. Smith (Eds.), Flunking grades: Research and polices on retention*. Philadelphia, PA: Falmer Press.

Hysong, S. & Quinones, M. (1997). The Relationship Between Self-Efficacy and Performance: A Meta-Analysis. 10.13140/2.1.1453.8880.

Ikeda, M., & García, E. (2014). Grade repetition. *OECD Journal: Economic Studies*, 2013(1), 269-315.

Jimerson, S. R. (2001). Metaanalysis of grade retention research: Implications for practice in the 21st century. *School Psychology Review*, 30(3), 420-437.

Johnson, D. W. (1973). The affective side of the schooling experience. *The Elementary School Journal*, *73*(6), 306-313.

Klu E. K. & Ansre M.A., (2018). An Overview of the Language-in-Education Policy in Ghana: Emerging Issues. *The Social Sciences*, 13: 596-601.

Knowles, S. R., Apputhurai, P., O'Brien, C. L., Ski, C. F., Thompson, D. R., & Castle, D. J. (2020, February). Exploring the relationships between illness perceptions, self-efficacy, coping strategies, psychological distress and quality of life in a cohort of adults with diabetes mellitus. Retrieved from https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/31790287

Laura, A.K (2017). *The science and psychology; An appreciative view*. New York, U.S.A; McGraw Hill Education.

Leedy, P., & Ormrod, J. (2001). *Practical research: Planning and design* (7th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.

Mainardes, J. (2002). Grade retention and non-retention policies: an overview. 10.13140/RG.2.1.5176.7768.

Manacorda, M. (2008, February). The Cost of Grade Retention, by Marco Manacorda. Retrieved May 1, 2019, from https://ideas.repec.org/p/cep/cepdps/dp0878.html

Marsh, J. A., Gershwin, D., Kirby, S. N., & Xia, N. (2009). Retaining Students in Grade

Mills, G. E., & Gay, L. R. (2019). *Educational research: Competencies for analysis and applications*. Pearson. One Lake Street, Upper Saddle River, New Jersey 07458.

Ministry of Education (2015). Education sector performance report, Ghana.

Mugenda, O.M. & Mugenda, A.G. (1999). *Research Methods: Quantitative and Qualitative Approach.* Nairobi; Acts Press. p214

Muris, P. (2001). Self-Efficacy Questionnaire for Children. *PsycTESTS Dataset*. doi: 10.1037/t11875-000

Oliva, P. (1997) *The curriculum: Theoretical dimensions*. New York: Longman.

Opportunities lost: The impact of grade repetition and early school leaving. (2012). Montreal: UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2011). "Notes on the estimation of costs for grade repetition." Available at: http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/35/29/48362484. pdf.

Osei, R. D., Owusu, G. A., Asem, F. E., & Afutu-Kotey, R. L. (2009). Effects of capitation grant on education outcomes in Ghana.

Owings, W & Magliaro, S. (1998). Grade Retention: A History of Failure. *Educational Leadership.* 56.

Paul, J. J. (1997). Le redoublement à l'école: une maladie universelle?. *International Review of Education*, *43*(5-6), 611-627.)

Piñeiro, I., Estévez, I., Freire, C., Caso, A. D., Souto, A., & González-Sanmamed, M. (2019). The Role of Prior Achievement as an Antecedent to Student Homework Engagement. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *10*. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2019.00140

Reynold, A. J (1992). Grade Retention and school adjustment: An explanatory Analysis. *Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis,* 14(2), 101-121

Reynolds, A., Temple, J. & McCoy, A. (September, 1997). *Grade retention doesn't work*. Education Week, 17(3), 36-39.

Richiardi, L., Pizzi, C., & Pearce, N. (2013). Commentary: Representativeness is usually not necessary and often should be avoided. *International Journal of Epidemiology,42*(4), 1018-1022. doi:10.1093/ije/dyt103

Roderick, M. (1995). Grade retention and school dropout: policy debate and research questions. Phi Delta Kappa Research Bulletin, n. 15, p.1-6.

Rose, J. S., Medway, F. J., Cantrell, V. L., & Marus, S. H. (1983). A fresh look at retention — promotion controversy. *Journal of School Psychology*, 21, 201-211

Rumberger, R. (1995). Dropping out of middle school: A multi-level analysis of students and schools. *American Educational Research Journal*, 32, 583-625.

Sacco, W. P., Wells, K. J., Friedman, A., Matthew, R., Perez, S., & Vaughan, C.A. (2007). Adherence, body mass index, and depression in adults with type 2 diabetes: The meditational role of diabetes symptoms and self-efficacy. *Health Psychology*, 26, 693-700

Schensul, S. L., Schensul, J. J., & LeCompte, M. D. (1999). *Essential ethnographic methods: Observations, interviews, and questionnaires* (Vol. 2). Rowman Altamira.

Shepard, L.A., and Smith, M.L. (1987). "Effects of Kindergarten Retention at the End of First Grade." *Psychology in the Schools*, 24(4), 346–357.

Slavin, R. E. (2014). *Educational psychology: Theory and practice*. Edinburg: Pearson Education Limited.

Wang, M. T., & Holcombe, R. (2010). Adolescents' perceptions of school environment, engagement, and academic achievement in middle school. *American educational research journal*, *47*(3), 633-662.

Warren, J. R., Hoffman, E., & Andrew, M. (2014, December). Patterns and Trends in Grade Retention Rates in the United States, 1995-2010. Retrieved May 1, 2019, from https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5407366/

Wilson, L. O. (1990) Curriculum course packets ED 721 & 726, unpublished

Wynn, J. L. (2010). *A study of selected teachers' perceptions of grade retention in a Florida school district.*

Yamamoto, K. (1980, September). *Children under stress: The causes and cures*. Family Weekly, Ogden Standard Examiner, 6-8.

Yannick, D. (2017). French and British Colonial Legacies in Education: A ... Retrieved June 21, 2019, from https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/

Yin. R. (2003). *Case study research*, 2rd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.