

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHERS' ATTITUDES AS A SCHOOL DYNAMIC IN CLASS REPETITION POLICY IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS OF EMBU EAST SUB-COUNTY - KENYA**

1. Alfred Nyaga Njiru 2. Dr. Mary Mungwe 3. Nicholas Musau  
*Mount Kenya University Kenya, P. O. Box 342 – 01000*  
*Thika –Kenya*  
Contact Email: *nimusau12@gmail.com*

**INTRODUCTION**

Repetition is making learners take more time in a particular class who have not met the set standards of that institution. This practice is embraced with cultural and historical traditions that are not within teaching methods founded. Repetition has few curriculum benefits and considered as education wastage, Lockheed (2001) established that from his study to handle effectively challenges of repetition, reforms need to address reasons behind poor attendance, quality of teaching, relevance of teaching and provide enough support for teachers. Lockheed (2001) also noted that policy on repetition and automatic promotion differs from country to country. In view of this, repetition is an influence of culture and linguistics.

**KEY WORDS:** Teacher's attitudes, class repetition, repetition policy, primary schools

**Statement of the Problem**

Most of the education systems in the world are undergoing changes at the level of Primary Education. These changes are aimed at bringing internal improvement, that increasing the rate of progression of learners from class to class thus reducing the rate of repetition in the gap that exist in terms of performance. In longitudinal study conducted in Cameroon, Ministry of Education (2004) indicated that repetition is 40% in primary schools showing there is inefficiency in terms of cost and wastage. The results of the test which were administered in the education project II in November 2002 indicated the primary schools were weak with an overall mean of 5/20.

In Kenya and Embu East Sub – County in particular, despite enactment of class repetition policy to regulate forceful repeater rates, Bedi et al (2004) posited that repeating a class has a direct cost to the parents and the government. This may lead to congestion in classes and attendance problems leading to poor assessment and management of learners in the classes. More finances will be required for the construction of classrooms as well as equipping of these new classes. More teachers will be required to be trained in order to handle the challenges faced by the learners as well as compromised teacher's attitudes and providing additional didactic materials. However, few empirical studies on school dynamics which influence the implementation of class repetition policy have been conceptualized along the frame work of teacher attitude, physical facilities and instructional resources and thus the study.

**Objective**

To examine teachers' attitudes as a school dynamic of implementation of class repetition policy in primary schools in Embu East Sub-county.

### **Rationale of the Study**

Despite the existence of class repetition policy, forceful class repetition still persists as though unabated. Most primary schools still insist on learners who have failed to repeat classes. However, implementation of class repetition policy has not been smooth and yet little has been done to analyze the school-based dynamics which enhance such implementation. At the same time, class repetition is not among the glamorous topics in educational research.

### **Literature review**

In European Countries repetition is rarely used as an education policy but learners are automatically promoted to the next level but the weaker ones who can't transit to other levels are given additional support (UNICEF & USAID). In longitudinal study conducted in Cyprus, Gibbs & Spouse (2007) asserted that repetition is referred to as a practice of making learners who have not achieved the required skills repeat the year while the peers progress to the next level. However, Gibbs & Spouse (2007) asserted that implementation of class repetition policy is dependent on teachers' attitudes, availability of physical facilities and instructional resources. Inconsistent with these assertions, Dowling Brown (2008) a study conducted in France, indicate that social or automatic is the practices of making learner continue studying together with their peers in spite of not having mastered the required skills. On the other hand is having repetition is institutionalized in Francophone countries such as France and Belgium (Eisenmon 2007)

Repetition is widely practiced in the United States of America besides that no research has been done on the same (Haddad & Wadi, 2008). Despite this most authors claim repetition is done on bases of overage children in different classes (Shepard & Smith 2009). Repetition is common in Francophone Canada, UNESCO (2007) established that France in 1966, 60% of pre – primary children had repeated classes in various levels. In 2005 this figure had gone down to 20% which was a positive trend. On the other hand in 1966 18% of learners had repeated at least two academic levels by the time they were completing sixth grade of primary education whereas in 2005 the figure had gone down 1%. However, Buckingham (2003) pointed out while the trend had gone down since 1990s the percentage of repeaters had gone up and one out of every five early childhood learners had repeated a class for one year. Belgium had witnessed a downward trend in repetition at pre – primary school level. At the secondary level when learners allowed repeating it has to be accompanied by individualized Educational Programme intervention to support the early childhood learners (Buchingham, 2003)

The colonial administrators influenced the education system of the countries they colonized. This influence can be noted in their present day education systems in Francophone Africa and Asian countries such as Gabon, Equatorial Gunea and Cambodia and Lusophone countries like Angola and Mozambique. Most Aglophone are more likely to adapt automatic promotions except in few instances where there are illness and other reasons (Bay, Clarke & Stephens, 2002) Pre – school repetition is light in Cameroon at 40% which leads to wastage in education and problematic to state, parents, caregivers and pupils. (Bray et al 2002) it is a common understanding that efficiency as applied in educational gains combine both qualitative and quantitative variable which relates inputs and output.

In longitudinal study in Doula, Cameroon Ministry of Education (2004) revealed that class repetition has been analyzed as a macro – level society problem and as a micro – level individual opinion. Ministry of Education (2004) further posited that society economic conceptualization; schooling has a lot of benefits to individual learners. This translates in large classes and may require

additional of learning facilities and infrastructure and if many children repeat each year the institutions of learning may require more teachers and support staff. Ministry of Education (2004) argued that repetition leads to wastage of resources. The society has a responsibility in provision of schools, teachers and resources thought as sufficient in enabling all learners achieves expected skills and attitude. If the society fails to support education, it is suggested the resources were not adequate or some learners failed to take the advantage of resources provided.

Personal Wilchingen to repeat a grade may enable learners to pass exams or cover subject matter which was not adequately covered the year before will be seen by learners and their families as rational decisions that led to desired achievements. However, forced repetition has negative effects on education outcome and this is associated with social adjustment problems and increased likelihood of school drop outs. Research has shown that some countries and school systems have adapted automatic promotion policy which dictates all learners irrespective of their level of achievement be promoted to the next level. The practice of automatic is opposed by educators who belief in lower school performance and learners individual expectations (Davidson & Kanyuk, 2003) Educators want to have or require schools to retain in grade all learners who fail to meet standards that require learners to be promoted to the next level in education.

In Kenya, class repetition policy which was enacted in 2003 has been adopted and it prevents forceful class repletion (KES, 2006) However, the implementation has encountered numerous challenges ranging from teachers' attitudes, availability of physical facilities and instructional resources. In the meantime, according to the manual for head teachers a publication for Kericho Head teachers Association (KES 2006) Kericho County had a dropout rate of 28.6% and a repetition rate of 22.6% and completion rate of 62% for most of schools. Repetition rates for the girls and boys were 15% and 7.6% respectively. Cognizant of this findings; Bedi, Kimalu, Manda & Nafula (2004) in study conducted in Nairobi quoted that the data concluded that neither automatic promotion grade repetition cater for challenges of low achievers satisfactorily so that potential solutions lie in providing these learners with more and better learning opportunities.

Considering Embu East Sub – County, z research that was conducted by the Ministry of Education in Kenya (MOEST, 2013) on efficiency of levels of education system established that the effectiveness of education system established the attention of the policy. According to the research, the cumulative repetition rate was as high as 14% between class one and seven. It was also established that the survival rate has been as low as 40%. At the primary school level the survival rate has been 84% although the overall performance remained low considering GER for secondary school level at 22%. The research found that the primary school level a total of 2.8 million pupils between the age of 14 – 17 years who should have been in primary school had not joined school. In order to attain Education for all policy measures need to be addressed. However, little has been done to analyze the dynamics which enhance to the implementation of class repetition policy in Embu East County thus the study.

### **Teachers' attitudes as a school dynamic for implementation of class repetition policy**

In its longitudinal study in Kansas, Beach Centre of Families and Transitions (2000) indicated that although the process of class repetition involves pupils, their parents, school managers and primary school teachers, it is in fact all the stakeholders have the power in the repetition (Attwood, 2000) It is the stakeholders who are ultimately involved in implementation of class repetition policy. According to (Bronfenbrenner 1986) the child is influenced by environmental systems as well as the

teacher. The micro system of the school, its ethos and views of workmates within the school, followed by links between the teachers, school and parents, also the teacher participation in the delivery of curriculum. The teachers' attitudes and beliefs in class repetition and understanding of school systems has an impact on the class repetition. The ecosystem and macrosystem have an influence on the teacher in terms of the curriculum delivery as well as the cultural expectations and views of the teachers' and their role in the society.

Jordan and Jones (2003) investigated primary school teachers' attitudes and beliefs about class repetition practices in Scotland. They established that although primary schools teachers' described their commitment to collaboration during the period of class repetition or transitions, they had different expectations. The study found that schools proposed primary schools should teach class repeaters how to accept their status as class repeaters and by familiarizing them with appropriate routines and expected behaviors. In order to have more success with implementing class repetition policy for primary school pupils, it is important that teachers and stakeholders have positive attitudes.

Clark (2000) study on the attitudes of the teachers towards repetition stated that teachers' training should help teachers' to deal with repeaters that are placed in regular classroom programmes. Clark (2000) noted that teachers' who have not been trained demonstrate negative attitudes and lacked confidence in handling class repeaters with other learners. It is important that extensive professional development is needed for educators in order for them to be more effective in their delivery of curriculum. In a longitudinal conducted in U S, Hoy and Miskel (2005) researched towards implementation of class repetition policy. They further investigated whether teachers' attitudes were related to their perceptions of progress made by the class repeaters over the period of study. The teachers' filled in a questionnaire, a demographic survey for both teachers' and students groups. On the other hand some teachers' were interviewed to determine their views on class repetition policy. After analyzing the data, Hoy and Miskel (2005) concluded that the pupils in the study made no important change either positively or negatively in their social skills. They observed that there was a decrease in negative connotations about class repeaters as indicated by general education teachers' ratings. In neither group of teachers' was there a significant correlation between attitudes towards class repetition policy. Parental attitude was another area to consider about class repetition policy.

Fombonne (2003) established that parents cited concerns regarding peer relationship and rejection. He also included views of the parents on class repetition of children who had repeated classes. This study as discussed in talking sides, parents views on inclusion of class repeaters by Rosenketter et al (2000) include 140 parents comments concerning their support or resistance to class repetition. The parents who support class repetition of their children who have registered dismal grades have the view that the child would learn better due to higher expectations and a more stimulating environment and also cited the advantage of regular education of class repeaters (Fombonne, (2003). The parents noted that their children would learn better if they were placed in a regular classroom set up.

The parents who were not for the idea of class repetition for the poorly performing pupils indicated that seventy of their pupils ability to master basic concepts, believed that regular classroom education would not accommodate the class repeaters. The parents also noted attitudinal and social barriers as some of the major contributors to class repetition (Fombonne, 2003). Similar scenario is witnessed in Embu East Sub – County with regard to class repetition amongst poor performers.

However, Hoy et al (2005) and Fombonne (2003) did not indicate how teachers' or teachers' favourable or unfavourable attitude toward class repetition for poorly performing learners mentally challenged pupils' which immensely enhance children's class repetition. It was against this background that the researcher sought to evaluate teachers' attitude on implementation of class repetition policy in Embu East Sub – County.

### Research Gaps

On teachers' attitudes, studies by Hoy et al (2005) and Fombonne (2003) have not revealed how teachers' favourable or unfavourable attitude toward class repetition for poorly performing learners mentally challenged pupils' which immensely enhance children's class repetition.

### Research Methodology

The study applied mixed methods approach. In other words, the study applied both quantitative and qualitative methods (Creswell, 2009). This was due to the fact that the researcher asked specific questions and collected quantifiable data from a large number of participants. In this case, data was collected using questionnaires. At the same time, qualitative data was collected by relying on the views of participants and collecting data consisting largely of words from the participants. In this case, data was collected using interview schedules and observation checklists.

### Research Design

The study adopted concurrent triangulation design in which the research implemented the qualitative and quantitative methods (Creswel 2009). This design involved the concurrent but separate collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data. The research merged the two set of data by combining the separate results together in the interpretation.

### Locale of Study

The study was carried out in Embu East Sub-county in Embu County. It has an approximate population of 123,345 persons and covers an area of 253.8 km<sup>2</sup>, that is, a population density of 486 persons per km<sup>2</sup> (KNBS, 2009). The most common economic activities include; miraa, dairy farming and subsistence crop farming. However, residents in this sub-county experience numerous economic hardships with some of the residents living in relatively poor conditions. Such economic challenges have seen the sub-county register higher repeater rates despite the government's directive on forceful class repetition policy. This situation sustained the curiosity of the researcher to focus on Embu East Sub-county as the locale of study.

### Target Population

Mugenda and Mugenda (2005) define population as an entire group of individuals, events or objects having a common observable characteristic. For the purpose of this study, the target population consisted of 71 head teachers, 797 teachers and 2132 class VII pupils all totalling to 3000 as indicated in Table 1:

**Table 1: Target Population of the Study**

Categories	Target Population
Primary School Head teachers	71
Teachers	797
Class VII Pupils	2132
<b>Total</b>	<b>3000</b>

**Source:** Embu East Sub-county Education Office Report (2015)

### Sampling and Sampling Techniques

A sample is a subset of the population for which the study is intended (Kothari, 2005). The researcher sampled 10 public primary schools, that is, 14.08% of 71 and 300 respondents, that is, 10% of 3000. Stratified sampling was used to create 5 different strata based on the number of zones in Embu East Sub-county. From each zone, 2 primary school head teachers and 15 teachers were selected using purposive sampling. The rationale behind the selection was due to the fact that they are close to primary school children and their responsibilities as implementers of class repetition policy. Similarly, from each stratum, 48 Class VII Pupils were selected using simple random sampling. This was appropriate since it eliminated bias and favouritism. This sampling procedure enabled the researcher to realize a sample of 10 head teachers, 76 teachers and 214 Class VII Pupils as shown in Table 2;

**Table 2: Sample Size Grid**

Categories	Sample size	% Proportion	Sampling Techniques
Primary School Head teachers	10	14.08	Purposive Sampling
Teachers	76	10.00	Purposive Sampling
Class VII Pupils	214	10.03	Simple Random
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>		

**Source:** Researcher (2015)

### Data Collection Instruments

The tools which were used to gather information about the specific set themes of the research objectives included; questionnaire for teachers, interview schedules for head teachers and focused group discussions for Class VII Pupils. The researcher applied a self-designed questionnaire with closed-ended test items to collect quantitative data from teachers. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. The first section consisted of information on respondents' demography, while the second part contained close-ended questions in 5-point Likert Format on the research objectives. The respondents were also assured of confidentiality.

### Interview Schedules

An interview is a data collection instrument which enables to measure, values and preferences and attitudes and beliefs of a person. Interviews can be structured, unstructured, directional or no directional. In this study the research used structured interviews with open ended test items to gather qualitative information from head teachers' (Kothari, 2005). Structured interviews were significant because it enabled the researcher to ask probing and supplementary questions, develop good rapport with respondents.

### Focused Group Discussions

A focused group discussion is a form of qualitative research whereby groups of people respond to their perceptions, opinions, beliefs and attitude (Morse, 2000). Class VII pupils narrated their experiences on transitions or repetition. The researcher divided the sampled class VII pupils (220) into 20 groups each consisting 11 members. The questions for discussion were divided from the objectives of the study.

### Validity and Reliability of the Research Instruments

To enhance content validity, open ended questions were validated using experts, teachers and learners. The ambiguous questions, suggestions of questions that would have been forgotten were

used to revise the instruments. The researcher improved the quality of instruments by replacing vague questionnaires with suitable ones.

In order to improve the reliability of the instrument the researcher with the help of the expert judgment of the supervisors critically used the constituency of the responses on the pilot questionnaires. Split half techniques were used to establish the reliability of test items. In this case, the test items were administered once to a group of respondents and the results obtained were divided into two equal halves. Correlation between the two halves was carried out and correlation coefficient obtained using Pearson's product moment correlation method. A reliable coefficient of  $r = 0.715$  was obtained which was nearer to the expected  $r = 0.8$  indicating higher internal consistency.

### **Credibility and Dependability of Qualitative Data**

The researcher established the credibility of qualitative data by triangulation through multiple analyzer experts. The researcher established dependability of qualitative data by data collection process by reporting in details to enable the researcher to repeat the inquiry and achieve similar results.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

The study involved concurrent triangulation design; separately by concurrently collected data was analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively and then merged into one overall interpretation in which the researcher related the quantitative results to quantitative findings.

Frequency counts of responses were then obtained so as to generate descriptive information about the respondents and to illustrate the general trend of findings on the various variables that were under the investigations. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically along the study objectives and basic quantitative data was analyzed using one sample T – Test analysis in statistical packages for social science (SPSS version 21). One sample T – Test analysis was useful since this study involved establishing the variances of means of two categories. The findings of the study were presented using tables.

### **Data Analysis and Presentation**

Analysis of data is a process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming, and modelling data with the goal of discovering useful information, suggesting conclusions, and supporting decision making (Creswell, 2009). Data analysis has multiple facets and approaches, encompassing diverse techniques under a variety of names, in different business, science, and social science domains. Since the study involved concurrent triangulation design, the separately, but concurrently, collected data was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively and then merged into one overall interpretation in which the researcher related the quantitative results to the qualitative findings.

Frequency counts of the responses were then obtained so as to generate descriptive information about the respondents and to illustrate the general trend of findings on the various variables that were under investigation. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically along the study objectives and the basic quantitative data was analyzed using One-Sample t-Test Analysis in Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS Version 21). One-Sample t-Test Analysis was useful since this study involved establishing the variances of means of two categories. The findings of the study were presented using tables.

### **Logistical and Ethical Considerations**

Ethical considerations in research involve outlining the content of research and what will be required of participants, how informed consent was obtained and confidentiality ensured. This was obtained by signing of informed consent forms. The researcher undertook confidentiality the information from the respondents. This was also done by signing no – disclosure forms. The respondents were assured no identifying information would be revealed. The researcher assured and ensured respondents that their identity will not be revealed for whatsoever. The nature and purpose of research were explained to the respondents by the researcher. The procedure to be followed was clearly explained to the respondents so that they may participate willingly. Raw data collected was filed for easy reference. Once data has been analyzed, computer printouts were filed while soft copies were stored in storage devices such as CDs and flash diskettes.

### **RESEARCH FINDINGS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

This study sort to examine teachers' attitudes as a school dynamic of implementation of class repetition policy in primary schools in Embu East Sub-county,

#### **Questionnaire Return Rate**

The questionnaires were administered in person to the Teachers. Out of the 76 questionnaires administered, 74 were successfully filled and returned. This gave return rates as indicated in Table 3;

**Table 3: Questionnaire Return Rate**

<b>Respondent Categories</b>	<b>Sampled Respondents</b>	<b>Returned Questionnaires</b>	<b>Achieved Return Rate</b>
Teachers	76	74	97.37%
<b>Total</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>97.37%</b>

The above information shows that the total questionnaire return rate was 97.37% affirming the fact that the questionnaire return rate was sufficient and above 75% of the acceptable levels to enable generalization of the results to the target population (Creswell, 2009). At the same time, head teachers and Class VII Pupils registered a response rate of 98.21% (220 out of 224).

#### **Respondents' Demographic Information**

The research instruments solicited demographic information of the respondents. These included gender and level of education.

##### **Gender of the Respondents**

Information about the distribution of the respondents by gender was collected and the results were as indicated in Table 4:



**Table 4: Distribution of the Respondents by Gender**

Gender	HT		TR		Class VII Pupils	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Male	6	60.0	21	28.4	124	59.04
Female	4	40.0	53	71.6	86	40.96
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>100</b>

**Key:** HT-Head Teachers; TR-Teachers; F-Frequency

The data on Table 4 indicate that a fair majority (60.0%) of the sampled Head Teachers were male with female Head Teachers constituting 40.0%. However, majority (71.6%) of the sampled Teachers were female with 28.4% being male. At the same time, slightly more than half (59.04%) of the sampled Class VII Pupils were male whereas female pupils constituted 40.96%. These data reveal that there was adequate gender disparity at all levels of the study which is consistent with the assertions of Chall (2003).

#### **Head Teachers' and Teachers' Level of Education**

The research instruments also elicited information on the level of education of Head Teachers and Teachers since this variable could influence their ability to supply credible information about the research objectives. The results were as indicated as shown in Table 5;

**Table 5: Head Teachers' and Teachers' Level of Education**

Educational Qualifications	HT		TR	
	F	%	F	%
Certificate	0	0	40	54.04
Diploma	3	30.0	17	22.97
Bachelors'	5	50.0	11	14.86
Postgraduate	2	20.0	6	8.13
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>100</b>

**Key:** HT-Head Teachers; TR-Teachers; F-Frequency

The data shown on Table 5 indicates that half (50.0%) of the sampled Head Teachers had Bachelors' degrees, 30.0% had diplomas and whereas 20.0% had postgraduate qualifications. More than half (54.04%) of the sampled Teachers had certificate qualifications whereas 22.97% had diplomas. 14.86% of the Teachers had Bachelors' degrees whereas 8.13% had postgraduate qualifications. This information reveals that the respondents in the study locale met the minimum qualification to be competent to answer the research questions.

#### **Teachers' Attitudes and Implementation of Class Repetition Policy**

As per question one, the study sought to establish how teachers' attitudes influence the implementation of class repetition policy. Data was collected from Teachers and results were as indicated in Table 6;

**Table 6: Teachers' Views on Difference between Teachers' Attitudes on Implementation Policy**

Summary of Test Items	SA %	A %	U %	D %	SD %
Having positive attitude towards class repetition policy determines the number of pupils who transit to other classes	71	12.3	1.3	10.1	5.3
Having positive attitude towards class repetition policy determines the number of pupils are retained	66.9	13.2	2.4	12.7	4.8
Having negative attitude towards class repetition policy does not determine the number of pupils who transit to other classes	80.5	12.4	1.6	3.3	2.2
Having negative attitude towards class repetition policy does not determine the number of pupils who are retained	67.4	19.7	3.5	5.3	4.1

The data on the Table 6 reveals that majority (71%) of the sampled Teachers strongly agreed with the view that having positive attitude towards class repetition policy determines the number of pupils who transit to other classes. At the same time, 12.3% agreed. However, only a paltry 1.3% of the sampled teachers were undecided, 10.1% disagreed whereas 5.3% strongly disagreed. The study also revealed that a fair majority (66.9%) of the sampled Teachers strongly agreed with the view that having positive attitude towards class repetition policy determines the number of pupils who are retained as did 13.2% of the teachers. At the same time, 2.4% of the sampled teachers were undecided, 12.7% disagreed whereas 4.8% strongly disagreed. These findings corroborate the assertions of Bronfenbrenner (1986) that attitudes and beliefs the teachers have about class repetition and his or her understanding of the primary school system can also impact on the class repetition by primary school learners in his or her care.

The findings also support the findings of Jordan and Jones (2003) who investigated primary school teacher's attitudes and beliefs about class repetition practices in Scotland. They found that although primary school teachers described their commitment to collaboration during the period of class repetition or transitions, in practice they had very different expectations of each other. They found that schools proposed should teach class repeaters how to behave in school by accepting their status as class repeaters and by familiarizing them with appropriate routines and expected behaviours. In other words, in order to have more success with implementing class repetition policy for primary school pupils, it is important for teachers and educators to have positive attitudes.

The study also revealed that an impressive majority (80.5%) of the sampled Teachers strongly agreed with the view that having negative attitude towards class repetition policy does not determine the number of pupils who transit to other classes and retained as did 12.4% of the teachers. However, 1.6% of the sampled Teachers were undecided, 3.3% disagreed whereas 2.2% strongly disagreed. A fair majority (67.4%) of the sampled teachers strongly agreed with the view having negative attitude towards class repetition policy does not determine the number of pupils who are retained. 19.7% agreed. However, 3.5% of the sampled Teachers were undecided, 5.3% disagreed whereas 4.1% strongly disagreed. The study also revealed that a fair majority (69.6%) of the sampled teachers strongly agreed with the view that substance abusing parents who refuse to comply have their children not acquire basic numeracy skills as did 13.8% of the teachers. On the other hand, 1.6% of the sampled Teachers were undecided, 10.6% disagreed whereas 4.4% strongly disagreed. These findings lend credence to the findings of a longitudinal study conducted in the US

in which Hoy and Miskel (2005) concluded that there was a decrease in negative connotations about class repeaters as indicated by the general education teachers' ratings.

These findings affirm the fact that teachers or educators without training not only demonstrate negative attitudes, but also lack confidence in their instructional skills to teach class repeaters together with other learners. In other words, extensive professional development is needed for teachers in order for them to become more successful in handling learners with diverse needs in regular education classrooms. To verify the possibility of difference between teachers' attitudes and class repetition, data was collected on number of repeaters and those who transited to other classes and the results are shown in Table 7;

**Table 7: Results of Components of Teachers' Attitudes and Number of Pupils Repeating Classes and Number of Pupils Undergoing Transition to other Classes**

Components of Teachers' Attitudes	Class Repetition	
	Number of Repeaters	Number of Pupils Transited
Teachers who manifested positive attitude towards class repetition	21	64
Teachers who manifested negative attitude towards class repetition	13	71
Teachers who showed interest towards class repetition	16	61

The results in Table 7 indicate that teachers' attitudes influenced transition of most primary schools. However, there is still quite a number of pupils who repeat classes. These results were subjected to One Sample t-Test Analysis and results were as indicated in Table 8:

**Table 8: One-Sample t-Test Analysis of Difference between Components of Teachers' Attitudes and Number of Pupils Repeating Classes and Number of Pupils Undergoing Transition to other Classes.**

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Repeaters	7.143	2	.019	16.667	6.63	26.71
Transistors	22.052	2	.002	65.333	52.59	78.08

From the One-Sample t-Test Analysis in Table 8, the processed data, which is the population parameters, has a significance level of 0.019 for repeaters and 0.002 for transistors which shows that the data is ideal for making a conclusion on the population's parameter as the value of significance values (0.019 and 0.002) are less than 5%, that is,  $p\text{-value}=0.019 < 0.05$  and  $0.002 < 0.05$ . It also indicates that there is significant difference between teachers' attitudes and means of repeaters and those undergoing transition to other classes. These results were consistent with the

findings of a study conducted in the US by Hoy and Miskel (2005) which generated a p-value of  $0.0023 < 0.05$ . These findings attest to the fact that teachers or educators without training not only demonstrate negative attitudes, but also lack confidence in their instructional skills to teach class repeaters together with other learners. The findings also affirm the fact that teachers or educators without training not only demonstrate negative attitudes, but also lack confidence in their instructional skills to teach class repeaters together with other learners. That is, extensive professional development is needed for teachers in order for them to become more successful in handling learners with diverse needs in regular education classrooms.

**Table 10: Results of Components of Teachers' Attitudes and Number of Pupils Repeating Classes and Number of Pupils Undergoing Transition to other Classes**

Components of Teachers' Attitudes	Class Repetition	
	Number of Repeaters	Number of Pupils Transited
Schools with adequate and conducive classrooms	17	69
Schools with well-stocked libraries	13	58
Schools with well-stocked laboratories	16	63
Schools with adequate and conducive play grounds	11	43
Schools with well-equipped resource centers	9	59

The results in Table 10 indicate that most primary schools with adequate and conducive classrooms, well-stocked libraries, laboratories and well-equipped resource centers have their learner's transit to other classes with few repeaters, though the number of repeaters is high. These results were further subjected to One Sample t-Test Analysis and results were as indicated in Table 11:

**Table 11: One-Sample t-Test Analysis of Difference between Means of Number of Repeaters and Transistors**

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Repeaters	6.626	4	.003	11.400	6.62	16.18
Transistors	8.379	4	.001	37.000	24.74	49.26

From the One-Sample t-Test Analysis in Table 11, the processed data, which is the population parameters, has a significance level of 0.003 for repeaters and 0.001 for transistors which shows that the data is ideal for making a conclusion on the population's parameter as the value of significance values (0.003 and 0.001) are less than 5%, that is,  $p\text{-value} = 0.003 < 0.05$  and  $0.001 < 0.05$ . It also indicates that there is significant difference between means of repeaters and those undergoing transition to other classes. These results were consistent with the findings of a study conducted by Bell and Rhodes (2003) that in order for a school to advance the learning opportunities offered to class repeaters, it has to adequately utilize the facilities available. These findings attest to the fact

that teachers or educators without training not only demonstrate negative attitudes, but also lacked confidence in their instructional skills to teach class repeaters together with other learners.

### **Discussions of Qualitative Data: Thematic Analysis**

An interview of head teachers and focused group discussions with Class VII Pupils echoed similar sentiments. They too indicated that teachers' attitudes towards class repetition influence the implementation of the class repetition policy. That is, teachers' attitudes determine the number of pupils who transit to other classes. The interviewees and discussants indicated that attitudes and beliefs the teachers have about class repetition and his or her understanding of the primary school system can also impact on the class repetition by primary school learners in his or her care. Besides, although primary school and primary school teachers describe their commitment to collaboration during the period of class repetition or transitions, in practice they have very different expectations of each other.

Schools proposed should teach class repeaters how to behave in school by accepting their status as class repeaters and by familiarizing them with appropriate routines and expected behaviours. In other words, in order to have more success with implementing class repetition policy for primary school pupils, it is important for teachers and educators to have positive attitudes. These findings corroborate the assertions of Bronfenbrenner (1986) that attitudes and beliefs the teachers have about class repetition and his or her understanding of the primary school system can also impact on the class repetition by primary school learners in his or her care. The findings also support the findings of Jordan and Jones (2003) who investigated primary school teacher's attitudes and beliefs about class repetition practices in Scotland. They found that although primary school and primary school teachers described their commitment to collaboration during the period of class repetition or transitions, in practice they had very different expectations of each other. They found that schools proposed should teach class repeaters how to behave in school by accepting their status as class repeaters and by familiarizing them with appropriate routines and expected behaviours. In other words, in order to have more success with implementing class repetition policy for primary school pupils, it is important for teachers and educators to have positive attitudes.

These findings also lend credence to the findings of a longitudinal study conducted in the US in which Hoy and Miskel (2005) concluded that there was a decrease in negative connotations about class repeaters as indicated by the general education teachers' ratings. These findings affirm the fact that teachers or educators without training not only demonstrate negative attitudes, but also lacked confidence in their instructional skills to teach class repeaters together with other learners. In other words, extensive professional development is needed for teachers in order for them to become more successful in handling learners with diverse needs in regular education classrooms. The head teachers and Class VII Pupils also indicated that there are different types of school physical facilities such as classrooms, laboratories, libraries, play grounds and resource centres. Such physical facilities resource determines the number of pupils who transit to other classes. Just like in quantitative data, the findings corroborate the findings of a longitudinal study conducted in Scotland in which Avery (2002) revealed that schools with well stocked libraries registered impressive educational outcomes and have few cases of class repetition compared to their counterparts which had no such resource centre. This points to the fact that libraries staffed by professionally qualified librarians, who are in an excellent position to support teaching and learning by providing appropriate curriculum related resources, offer a range of reading material, and helping the school community to develop skills required to be proficient users of information. In other words, these findings were consistent with the assertions of Bell and Rhodes (2003) that in order for a school to

advance the learning opportunities offered to class repeaters, it has to adequately utilize the facilities available. In other words, the school grounds such as play grounds should be safe and well maintained.

Just like teachers, head teachers and Class VII Pupils also revealed that there are different instructional resources in most schools which teachers adopt to teach. These include; books and teaching aids. Availability and use of such instructional resources determine the number of pupils who transit to other classes. These findings also lend credence to the findings of a national study undertaken in the U.S. in which Pianta & Cox (2001) found that 85% of teachers felt that a coordinated instruction coupled with adequate instructional resources such as books would be a positive step. In other words, implementation should create more coherence across the various learning opportunities available to class repeaters in this age group, while also acknowledging the diversity of settings.

These findings were consistent with the findings of a study conducted by Nuerhling and Sitlington (2003) which established the efficacy of class repetition on academic performance asserted that schools with relevant and adequate instructional materials such as books, teaching aids and play materials and other learning resources for class repeaters. Nuerhling and Sitlington (2003) further asserted that these resources when well applied can lead to successful engagement in mainstream classes as the mentally challenged learners get older.

### **Teachers' Attitudes and Implementation of Class Repetition Policy**

The study established that teachers' attitudes influence the implementation of class repetition policy. Components of such attitudes are either positive or negative which determine the number of pupils who transit to other classes. That is, teachers' attitudes determine the number of pupils who transit to other classes. These findings support the fact that attitudes and beliefs the teachers have about class repetition and his or her understanding of the primary school system can also impact on the class repetition by primary school learners in his or her care. Besides, although primary school and primary school teachers describe their commitment to collaboration during the period of class repetition or transitions, in practice they have very different expectations of each other.

### **Discussions**

Schools proposed should teach class repeaters how to behave in school by accepting their status as class repeaters and by familiarizing them with appropriate routines and expected behaviours. In other words, in order to have more success with implementing class repetition policy for primary school pupils, it is important for teachers and educators to have positive attitudes. In the same vein, there is a decrease in negative connotations about class repeaters as indicated by the general education teachers' ratings. This is indicative of the fact that teachers or educators without training not only demonstrate negative attitudes, but also lacked confidence in their instructional skills to teach class repeaters together with other learners. That is, extensive professional development is needed for teachers in order for them to become more successful in handling learners with diverse needs in regular education

### **Conclusions**

Drawing from the findings above, teachers' attitudes, which can be both positive and negative, influence the implementation of class repetition policy. In other words, components of teachers' attitudes determine the number of pupils who transit to other classes. These findings support the fact that attitudes and beliefs the teachers have about class repetition and his or her understanding of the primary school system can also impact on the class repetition by primary school learners in his or her care.

### **Recommendations for Practice**

Drawing from the research findings and conclusions discussed herein, the researcher recommends that;

- i. Educators, teachers and other stakeholders should develop a liking and positive attitude towards education of primary school pupils. This may enhance their academic performance which, in turn, minimizes instances of class repetition.
- ii. The Ministry of Education should give room for class repetition of learners who cannot cope with the demands of the next class or those who have special challenges which require special attention.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

- i. A study could be conducted to evaluate the role of school management in implementing class repetition policy.

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