

Extent to Which Non-retention of Students Helps in Preventing School Failure in Adolescents in Muhoroni Division, Nyando District, Kisumu County

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Abstract- The purpose of the study was to identify and analyze the psychological interventions for preventing school failure in adolescents. The researcher adopted a survey research design that utilized both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The design enabled the researcher to determine the existence of relationship between the independent variable non retention of students and the dependent variables; preventing of school failure in adolescence. The target population consisted of students, school management and teachers. Research instruments included questionnaires, observation and interview schedule. Piloting was done as well to ascertain the reliability of instruments. The test- retest technique was used to estimate the degree (accuracy) to which same results could be obtained with repeated measure of the same. The data collected was analyzed using statistical package of social science (SPSS) and presented in pie charts, frequency distribution tables and percentages. On the strength of the findings and the subsequent conclusions drawn, the study recommends that psychological interventions measures for preventing school failure in adolescents should be included in the teachers training curriculum of study at both college and university as a unit to ensure that teachers get adequate knowledge to deal with school failure among adolescents in schools.

Index Terms- Non-retention, Failure, Adolescents

I. INTRODUCTION

Many teens experience a time when keeping up with school work is difficult. These periods may last several weeks and may include social problems as well as a slide in academic performance. Research suggests that problems are more likely to occur during a transitional year, such as moving from elementary to middle school, or middle school to high school (Baker & Sansone, 1990; Im, *et. al*, 2013). Some adolescents are able to get through this time with minimal assistance from their parents or teachers. It may be enough for a parent to be available simply to listen and suggest coping strategies, provide a supportive home environment, and encourage the child's participation in school activities. However, when the difficulties last longer than a single grading period, or are linked to a long-term pattern of poor school performance or problematic behaviors, parents and teachers may need to intervene.

The consequences of academic failure are not confined to adolescence or the actual period of formal schooling. Failure is an early indicator of potential dropout (Barrington and Hendricks 1989; Martin, 1993) linking this behavior to larger patterns of social inequality. In addition, one study found that academic failure is a major determinant of status attainment and adult well-being (Kaplan, Peck and Kaplan, 1997). Low-performing students are less likely to graduate from high school and less likely to

go to college than other students; subsequently ,high school dropouts,even those who obtain a General Equivalency Degree have substantially lower adulthood wages than do high school or college graduates (American Council on Education 2001 ;Cameron and Heckman 1993) . In Tanzania, secondary school performance showed a sharp decline in 2010, with barely 50% of students passing the form four Certificate of Secondary Education Examination a 30% of drop from the 2009 pass rate. These results stress the urgent need to improve the quality of teaching and learning in Tanzania schools. The National Examinations Council of Tanzania (NECTA) recognizes that examination failure represents a significant waste of national and household income and resources which must be addressed.

Research from the Kenya Institute for public Research and Analysis (Kippra) shows that the survival rate from class one to form four is below 20% while those who survive from class one to university from class one to university is 1.69%.This means few adolescents attain tertiary education where skills are developed, despite the huge resources spent on education. Education at secondary school or teen level is supposed to be the foundation towards higher knowledge in college or tertiary education. It is an investment as well as an instrument that can be used to achieve a more rapid economic, social, political, technological, scientific and cultural development in the country. The National Policy on Education, (2004) stipulated that secondary Education is an instrument for national development that fosters the worth and development of the individual for further education and development, general development of the society and equality of educational opportunities.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Research shows that the practice of having students repeat a grade has negative educational consequences, such as increasing their chances of dropping out of school (U.S. Department of education, 1997). According to the American Federation of Teachers (1997), a majority of teachers reported that they had promoted unprepared students in the past year. The ideas behind grade promotion are intended to assist low achieving students by allowing them to stay on a course with their peers throughout their education (Picklo and Chistenson, 2005). In a longitudinal study (Livingston and Livingston, 2002) cases can be made against passing legislation to ban grade promotion. Many administrators and teachers feels that the success on standardized tests should not determine if student will be able to continue on to the next chapter on school lives. The failing of standardized tests and reliability on whether or not a student is successful discourages students from making even a little bit of progress towards graduation. Many schools districts do not necessarily ban social promotion; rather look for ways that social promotion helps student succeed in life and school.

Not all grade promotion is due to poor grades. Some grade promotion is pursued due to the inability of the students. Many students learn from social situations. The greatest lesson some students learn is how to interact with their peers. Causing a student to repeat the same class again with a new group of student does not allow this student a chance to grow with the group they began with in school. The question is do the benefits of grade promotion outweighs the consequences to the academic achievement after being gradely promoted? According to study (Jimerson, Pletcher&Gradon, 2006) students who are gravely

promoted tend to have fewer negative consequences within their education than students who are retained to retake a class or grade level again. This method can cause fewer dropouts from students who are grade promoted than otherwise would be seen.

Grade promotion can be an attractive option for students who cannot and will not be able to meet with the standards of average students. Grade promotion keeps one thing constant in life of a student who cannot already achieve the same. It causes a student to stay with the peers so they feel more connected with a group of students they started school with and not to feel like the only one who cannot pass tests to move on to the next level of their education. A child in this state could benefit and learn from the other children of the same age group if placed in the same environment with them. Many times even the most well trained teachers may not be able to get certain concepts over the fastest learning students but another child could reason in a different way that can prove to be more understandable. It is with this in mind that many schools have implemented grade promotion.

A 2003 study by the National Association of School Psychologists showed disturbing information about grade promotion versus retention. The study showed that when students are retained, it not only hurts their self-esteem. But causes them to behave poorly, continue to achieve poor academic results and struggle through adolescence and into adulthood. The study also showed that students who were retained at lower levels of school were more likely to drop out of high school than those who were promoted. Grade promotion may ease this problem. This research were mainly done in America which is a far well developed country hence the need to research more in a Kenyan set up so that its benefits can be brought to full realization.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey design to explore psychological interventions for preventing school failure in adolescents. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used since there is no one method, which is adequate in looking for solutions to problems. Yilmax, (2013) pointed out that a mixture of qualitative and quantitative designs seems appropriate since educational issues have both aspects.

Study Area

The research or study was done at secondary's school in Muhoroni division of Nyando district in Kisumu County in Kenya. The schools in this division are either mixed day or mixed boarding or single sex school that is either day or boarding. Most of the teachers in these schools have been posted by the government although there are a few who have been employed by the board of governors.

Target Population

The target group constitutes of teachers, school management, parents and students at secondary's school in Muhoroni division. Muhoroni division has got twenty four secondary schools in total and the researcher carried out his study in six schools.

Data Collection Instruments

The study used questionnaires, observation schedules and interview guides for collecting data. Kothari (2003) states that primary and secondary data as well as qualitative and quantitative data are collected.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics including percentages and frequencies were used to analyse data. Data was presented in pie charts and tables. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically and the interviews were used to compare and contrast the findings from the questionnaires and there after descriptive discussion was given for the same.

Ethical Considerations

The participants were informed that the information was for academic research findings and no undesirable person was to access the questionnaire. The subjects were also told not to write their names anywhere. This protected the subjects from embarrassment from the public. The subjects were requested to participate in the research voluntarily. Protocol was observed by following the chain of command in respective schools.

IV. RESULTS

Results on availability and adequacy of non-retention as a psychological measure to prevent adolescence failure in school, 50% stated that it is very good while 50% said that it was good. On the other hand, teachers responded on the adequacy and availability of non-retention as psychological interventions for preventing school failure in adolescence as not available (46.67%), available but not efficient (40%) and available and efficient (13.33%).

Table 1: Principals' and teacher's response on non-retention as a psychological measure's adequacy and efficiency

| Principal Response | | Teacher Response | |
|--------------------|-----|-----------------------------|--------|
| Very Good | 50% | not available | 46.67% |
| Good | 50% | available but not efficient | 40.00% |
| Not good | 0 | available and efficient | 13.33% |
| Fair | 0 | | |

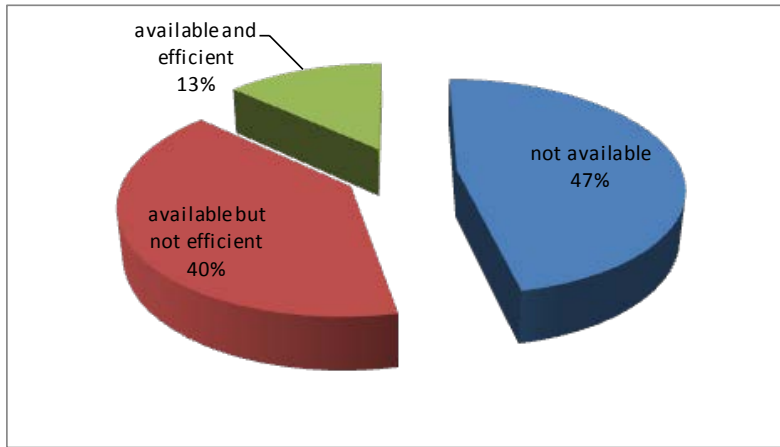


Figure 1: Teachers' response on the availability and Effectiveness of non-retention measures within their schools

Cultivating Relationships towards non-retention

An inquiry was made on Cultivating Relationships as a non-retention measure to help in preventing school failure in adolescents, respondents results were; that 33.33 % of the principals were neutral and an equal number were in agreement and an equal number in strong agreement .Most of the teachers (48.57%) strongly agree and others in agreement (34.29%) with cultivating relationships as a measure towards non-retention. Most of the students (24.6%) are neutral about this measure while an almost equal number are either in agreement (20.63%) or disagree (21.43%) with this measure.

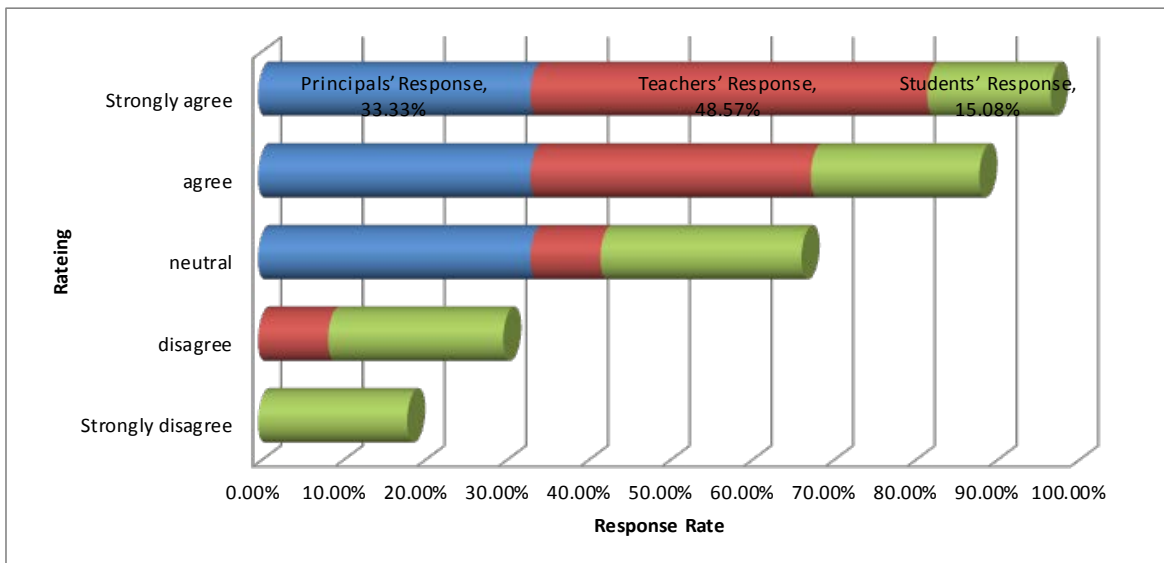


Figure 2: Cultivating relationships towards Non-retention

Making learning relevant as a measure towards non-retention

The study also attempted to investigate Making Learning Relevant as a measure towards non-retention. This measure was very popular among the respondents with 33.33% of principals in strong agreement while 50% were in agreement, 44.44% of teachers were in strong agreement and an equal number in agreement with this measure and 37.30% of the students were in strong agreement with 20.63% in agreement with this psychological measure towards non-retention.

Table 2: Making Learning Relevant as a measure towards non-retention

| Rating | Principals' Response | Teachers' Response | Students' Response |
|--------|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
|--------|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Strongly disagree | 16.67% | 0.00% | 16.67% |
| disagree | 0.00% | 2.78% | 12.70% |
| neutral | 0.00% | 8.33% | 12.70% |
| agree | 50.00% | 44.44% | 20.63% |
| Strongly agree | 33.33% | 44.44% | 37.30% |

Developing a Community Plan for students as a non-retention psychological measure

When asked about respondents rating on Developing a Community Plan for students as a non-retention psychological measure, quite a number of students were for this measure with 38.89% of them in strong agreement and almost equal number of teachers in strong agreement (33.33%). Very few principals were in strong agreement with these measures (16.67%) while an equal number were neutral about this measure. Most of the principals seemed to agree with developing a community plan for students as a psychological measure (66.67%) but it was clearly not as popular among them as it was among students with almost twice as many students in strong agreement as principals.

Table 3: Developing a Community Plan for students as a non-retention psychological measure

| Rating | Principals' Response | Teachers' Response | Students' Response |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 0.00% | 0.00% | 7.94% |
| disagree | 0.00% | 5.56% | 7.94% |
| neutral | 16.67% | 8.33% | 10.32% |
| agree | 66.67% | 52.78% | 34.92% |
| Strongly agree | 16.67% | 33.33% | 38.89% |

Adoption of Student-centered Funding model as a non-retention Psychological measure

The study further inquired the adoption of a student-centred funding model as non-retention psychological measure, 28.80% of the students strongly agreed with this measure with an almost equal number being neutral (27.20%) and 20.80% in agreement.

Table 4: Adoption of Student-cantered Funding model as a non-retention Psychological measure

| Rating | Students' Response |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Strongly disagree | 8.80% |
| Disagree | 14.40% |

| | |
|-----------------------|--------|
| Neutral | 27.20% |
| Agree | 20.80% |
| Strongly agree | 28.80% |

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the results of the findings, it was concluded that majority of the respondents did not like the idea of students repeating classes'. They however admitted school failure among adolescence is a big challenge.

The study therefore recommended that teachers and parents and other stake holders need to avoid making students repeat a class and instead promote the learners and give them remedial lessons to catch up with the others

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