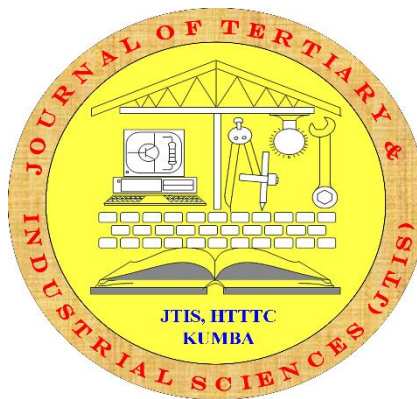


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## SCIENCE OF EDUCATION

**THE EFFECT OF AUTOMATIC PROMOTION ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF  
INTELLECTUAL SKILLS BY FORM ONE STUDENTS IN SECONDARY  
SCHOOLS IN THE KUMBA II MUNICIPALITY, MEME DIVISION, SOUTH  
WEST REGION OF CAMEROON**

By

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**Abstract**

This study was designed to investigate the effect of automatic promotion on the development of intellectual skills by Form 1 students in secondary schools in Kumba II Municipality. Three specific objectives were set for the study; To investigate the effect of collective promotion on the development of literacy skills of Form 1 students in Kumba II Municipality; To investigate the effect of collective promotion on the development of numeracy skills of Form one students in Kumba II Municipality, and finally to find out the effect of collective promotion on the development of essential life skills by Form 1 students in Kumba II Municipality. The comparative ex post facto research design was used and the target population was teachers of Form 1 in secondary schools selected through the accidental sampling technique. Data were collected from sample of 100 respondents using a structured questionnaire which had open ended and closed ended items. The data collected was computed, coded and analyzed descriptively and inferentially with the help of the SPSS. The research hypotheses were verified using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis. Findings revealed that Collective promotion has a significant influence on the development of literacy skills by form one students in secondary schools of Kumba 1 subdivision ( $r = -0.224^{**}$ ). This relationship was observed to be negative meaning that collective promotion has a negative influence on the development of literacy skills; There is a significant relationship between collective promotion and the development of numeracy skills by form 1 students in secondary schools of Kumba 1 subdivision ( $r = 0.124^{**}$ ); There is a significant relationship between collective promotion and the development of essential life skills by form one students in secondary schools of Kumba 1 subdivision ( $r = 0.187^{**}$ ). Based on the findings, it was recommended that policy makers should review the implementation of collective promotion and adopt strategies that can lead to adequate intellectual development by pupils; the government should ensure that pupils admitted in primary schools meet the demands especially in age and physical development.

**Key Words: Collective Promotion, Intellectual Skills, Literacy Skills, Essential Life Skills**

## 1 Introduction

Education is crucial to the promotion of positive development in children and particularly important in laying a solid foundation for acquisition of knowledge and skills that will enable the child function effectively in the society. Since the rest of the educational system is dependent on and built upon primary education, this level is key to the success or failure of the whole system and has great effect on the secondary and subsequent levels. Cameroon's system of education has been in a phase of profound reform at the level of primary education among which is the desire to ameliorate the efficiency of the system through an improvement of internal output; that is, increasing the rate of promotion to superior classes, a reduction in repeater rates and reduction of educational wastage. This led to the introduction of collective promotion in 2006.

Historically, the background of collective promotion can be traced from the objectives of the universal Basic Education. The Universal Basic Education (UBE, 2000) program is an educational program aimed at eradicating illiteracy, ignorance and poverty. It is in compliance with the declaration of the World conference on Education for All (WCEFA, year) which took place in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990. It clearly states in Article one that every person, child, youth and adult, shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet basic needs. This declaration was reaffirmed at the world summit for children in 1990, which stated that all children should have access to basic education by the year 2000 in a bid to achieve educational goals, the Dakar world education forum was held as a follow up meeting to the WCEFA where a new set of goals was set to be attained by 2015.

Some of the goals included, expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children; ensuring that by 2015 all children with special emphasis on girls; children in difficult circumstances and from ethnic minorities have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality; ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programs; achieving 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015 especially for women and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults; eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2015; and achieving gender equality in education by 2015 with a focus on ensuring full and equal access for girls and improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence for all so that recognized and reasonable learning outcomes are achieved, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

As already alluded to the adoption and subsequent implementation of collective promotion came on the backdrop of high internal inefficiency prevailing within the primary education sub sector, coupled with low quality of education. Inefficiency manifested itself through high repetition and dropout rates, which by 2004 were recorded at approximately 35% and 21% respectively (EMIS, 2010). The low quality of education

was reflected by low academic achievements at all primary grades and characterized by disparities along gender and rural- urban dimension.

In Cameroon, the "universalization of primary Education "Education for All" is a major policy option in the educational system. The 1996 constitution provides that primary education shall be compulsory. On the eve of 11 February 2000, the president of the republic of Cameroon re-iterated this policy and declared primary education obligatory and free. In spite of these good intentions, there is hardly any instrument that compels parents to respect these declarations.

The idea of collective promotion was set up in 2005 by the Ministry of Basic Education ministerial decree No: 315/B1/1464/MINEDUB of 21st February, 2005 to lay down the modalities of promotion of pupils of primary education level. It became effective from the 2006/2007 school year. The main objective of this educational policy was to minimize wastage of educational resources caused by high rates of repetition. Though it is not known if this policy has had a positive or negative impact on the quality of education or on the attainment of skills and competencies for pupils graduating from primary schools.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In Cameroon like in many other countries, there is a debate on the effects of automatic promotion on the quality of basic education where many primary school leavers find difficulties in reading and writing. Even though there are many factors that may account for this, there seems to be inadequacies in the contributions of parents towards the success of this policy. Automatic promotion on the one hand is well conceived yet changes in the school environment and home seem not to have taken place to support its implementation (Endeley, 2016).

Beyond the teachers in the classroom, parents are key actors in the implementation of school curricula in supporting and ensuring that children learn while away from their teachers as well as providing the tools for them to do so. A lot of attention regarding the observed inadequacies of automatic promotion has been directed at policy and the teachers to the exclusion of other stakeholders particularly parents. This study is therefore designed to investigate parental contribution to collective promotion in primary schools of the Kumba Municipality.

### **Objectives of the Study**

Generally, the paper investigates the effect of collective promotion on the development of intellectual skills of form one students in the Meme Division of the South West Region of Cameroon.

Specifically, the following objectives are previewed to be achieved in this paper:

1. Investigate the influence of collective promotion on the development of literacy skills by form one students in the Meme Division of the South West Region of Cameroon.



2. Find out the effect of collective promotion on the development of numeracy skills by form one students in the Meme Division of the South West Region of Cameroon.
3. To investigate the influence of collective promotion on the development of essential life skills by form one students in the Meme Division of the South West Region of Cameroon.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions are posed to be answered by this paper:

1. What is the effect of collective promotion on the development of literacy skills of form one students in the Meme Division of the South West Region of Cameroon?
2. How does collective promotion affect the development of numeracy skills of form one students in the Meme Division of the South West Region of Cameroon?
3. To what extent does collective promotion affect the development of essential life skill of form one students in the Meme Division of the South West Region of Cameroon?

### **Research Hypotheses**

H<sub>0</sub>: Collective promotion has no significant effect on the development of intellectual skills of form one students in the Meme Division of the South West Region of Cameroon

H<sub>a</sub>: Collective promotion has a significant effect on the development of intellectual skills of form one students in the Meme Division of the South West Region of Cameroon.

## **2 Literature Review**

The key concepts reviewed in this paper include collective promotion, acquisition of intellectual skills, the acquisition of literacy skills, numeracy skills and essential life skills.

### **Collective Promotion**

Collective promotion is a policy that most countries often adopt to lessen the rate at which students and pupils repeat classes and grade levels. It is also referred to as automatic promotion in some literature. Repetition of classes and grade levels is not common in Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian Countries but have a good foothold in Latin and Mediterranean and Germanic Countries (UIS, 2012) global digest publication. The reason for which pupils are allowed to repeat classes often have to do with an inability to master competencies and can also come as a result of social immaturity in some cases. Generally, repetition of classes and grade levels is often seen as beneficial to the pupil if learning objectives for that class or school level are not met.

Collective promotion is a policy whereby all children are systematically promoted to the next grade except in exceptional circumstances such as extended absenteeism due to illness (UIS, 2012, p. 17). The policy of collective promotion is often a very contentious policy in most educational cycles and often leaves teachers and other educational stake holders with mixed ideas as to what should constitute collective promotion, its relevance

in the curriculum and its effectiveness in teaching and learning. Most parents and teachers haven't understood the importance of promoting pupils, have often welcomed this policy with caution upon its commencement in most curriculum (Ahmed & Mihiretie, 2015). In particular, parents are of the opinion that mass promotion is directly associated with poor performance in school (Tumwijekye, 2017). The contention stems from the fact that the only support that teachers can give to pupils under such a system in order to promote pupil's performance in school subjects is tutoring.

One of the major drawbacks with the policy is that promoted pupils often lack the competence and skills needed to survive the next level. Promoting students who have not demonstrated a mastery of the competences being transmitted to them as a result of the lack of an effective evaluation mechanism creates loopholes in curriculum implementation in that ascertaining success of learning objective becomes jeopardized. This system according to Ahmed and Mihiretie (2015) teems with undesirable negative consequences including low interest, low effort and low attendance.

Promoters of the policy argue that, class competition which is associated with learning anxiety is taken off pupils when the burden of not having to prove anything to their peers is taken off through this policy, however critics of the policy have contended that, even though competition do not seem to have any significant effect on pupils' performance in school subjects, it however has a partial mediating effect on performance through learning anxiety (Li et al., 2022). Efforts made in classroom learning through constant effective attendance and active lesson participation have been found to have a direct effect on final exam score (Bekkering & Ward, 2020).

In this light, critics of the policy have warned of dire curricular ramifications on the continuous practice of the policy of collective promotion. High dropout rates from schools are associated with the policy of collectively promoting pupils, this as Ahmed and Mihiretie (2015) contend are as a result of a lack of a proper support system to the policy, and the staggering low level of interest, effort and a class attendance demonstrated by most pupils in schools where the policy of mass promotion is practiced.

Under this policy, teachers have reported to feeling less empowered as the decision to promote students on the basis of merit have been taken away from them thereby making classification of learners based on their performance difficult (Tumwijekye, 2017). As such the majority of the teachers in some cases do not consider automatic promotion policy as an effective educational practice since the government in most cases does not arrange orientation programs for teachers before initiating any new policy (Chohan & Qadir, 2011). In addition, collectively promoting pupils have been found to render them always less ready for upcoming lessons.

Moreover, pupils themselves have faulted the policy by admitting that the policy leads to laziness and poor performance in school subjects. As a solution, teachers, parents and pupils have all pointed out to a revision in which sensitization will be a key element or an outright return to the merit based system of promotion. Following this, most parents have been found to make enrolment decisions for the children based on whether

competences have been mastered and not based on the dictates of the policy (King et al., 2008).

The policy of collective promotion in Cameroon was designed to have a support mechanism by which the weaker pupils who were promoted from one class to the other within the same level are given remedial teaching in preparation for promotion exams into the next level (Nalova, 2016). The challenges with automatic promotion in Cameroon according to Nalova, revolve mostly around teachers' perceptions of the policy and teachers' differences in conception and implementation of the policy.

### Intellectual Skills Development

Intellectual development is also known as cognitive development and has to do with the increase in pupils' ability to think and reason things out. By intellectual development, pupils are able to organise their thoughts, mind and ideas in such a way that they can individually make sense of it. Intellectual development occurs in stages, beginning from concrete representation of objects in infants and becomes much more abstract in representation in adolescents and adults (Schunk, 2012). Usually, students' ability to learn new vocabulary (acquisition of language), counting numbers, asking questions, giving explanation to things, assuming responsibility on issues, curiosity and the ability to be attentive for a prolonged time, just to list a few, happens to constitute salient indicators of intellectual development.

Different researchers have identified different levels of intellectual development which are classified according to the different age ranges of the learners. While these stages have been labelled differently and the various age ranges are selected differently, the characteristics of the stages are similar. Piaget gave four different stages of cognitive development. Different developmental stages are characterised by different mode of representation. Brunner gave three different representation of knowledge by learners (Schunk, 2012). To make things simple rather than developmental levels, Bateman and Donald (1987) identified two basic student views on the development of knowledge. "The first is that knowledge consists of facts and data, and that professors should supply them. The second is that knowledge is a quest in which students have responsibility for their own learning, and are expected to be able to judge the validity of arguments and to identify and defend their own point of view".

Intellectual skills development is measured through learning outcomes. There are three main categories of learning outcomes for learners which include behavioural, attitudinal, and cognitive. Gagné (1985) identified in a hierarchy from lowest to highest the building blocks for instruction known as intellectual skills. These consist of discrimination, concrete concepts, defined concepts, rules, and problem-solving. The ability of pupils to discriminate between various stimuli plays an essential rule in learning and a great indication of intellectual growth. An example is when a learner distinguishes between a teacher's question that needs an answer and a rhetoric question.

The idea of concrete concepts is the ability of the pupils to identify objects based on their unique characteristics, these include distinguishing objects based on their colour, their shapes and sizes. The ability to make these distinction of concrete objects is an indication of intellectual development. In addition, the idea of defined concepts represents pupil's ability to know the meaning of things that are abstract such as what it means to be jealous, to be angry, to be in love just to name a few. Define concepts represent abstract ideas which do not exist in the physical. The ability to understand these concepts indicates intellectual development.

Moreover, the ability of pupils to master the statements about relationships between different concepts represent significant intellectual development. By being able to know that one thing is bigger or smaller than another, or that something exist elsewhere except here or that one thing comes before another and so on, represent pupils' ability to master and use rules that govern relationships between concepts. Finally, problem-solving is at the highest hierarchy of intellectual skills development and represents learners' ability to apply a rule or a combination of rules to solve-problems in learning situations or more generally in daily life.

Concerning literacy skills, UNESCO (2022) estimates that over 171 million youths and adults worldwide lack basic literacy skills and that 250 million children worldwide are failing to acquire basic literacy skill, this was compounded by the COVID-19 outbreak. Literacy skills refer to the ability to read and write. Particular literacy skills include spelling, reading, writing and listening. The ability to understand vocabulary, comprehension and understanding the link between sounds and letters, constitute literacy skill for pupils.

To develop literacy skills of pupils, teachers need to engage and encourage activities during lessons that foster talking, singing, reading, storytelling, drawing and writing. Pupils' needs to be encouraged to draw from their experiences and relate them to classroom learning. The Cameroon primary school curriculum encourages talking in that during lessons teachers often use recitation as a lesson strategy to encourage verbal exchanges between teachers and pupils. This can be when the teacher is correcting homework, or when teaching and assessing students. Writing is a subject taught in the primary school and during this lesson time, teachers can request pupils to copy out a drawing from the board, their textbooks or from imagination.

Concerning numeracy skills, pupils' ability to explore the connection and patterns in and between numbers, in order to use, interpret and communicate mathematical information and ideas, in order to engage in and manage the mathematical demands of various situations in future task. To be numerate is to confidently and effectively use mathematics to meet the everyday demands of life. In the Cameroon primary school curriculum, numeracy is seen as the ability of pupils to master a number of competences including, sets, numbers and operations, measurement and size, geometry and space, and graphs and statistics. To develop numeracy skills in pupils, the curriculum recommends appropriate lesson planning, implementation and feedback. Moreover, the competency-

based approach to the curriculum require teachers to choose examples lesson topics that have relevance to the context and that aim at addressing the future needs of pupils.

Concerning essential life skills, the World Health Organization (WHO) define it as “a group of psychosocial competencies and interpersonal skills that help people make informed decisions, solve problems, think critically and creatively, communicate effectively, build healthy relationships, empathize with others, and cope with and manage their lives in a healthy and productive manner. Life skills may be directed toward personal actions or actions toward others, as well as toward actions to change the surrounding environment to make it conducive to health.”. Essential life skills therefore are seen as pupil’s ability to respect themselves and others and to think critically thereby effectively solving problems that arise in daily life.

### 3 Methodology

#### 3.1 Research Design

This study adopted the comparative ex post facto research design. This design is relevant because the focus is on achievement of form one students who have passed through collective promotion at the primary level. So we intended to find out the extent to which collective promotion have influenced current achievement.

#### 3.2 Target Population

The target population for this study consisted of 250 teachers of secondary schools within the Kumba II Municipality especially those who have taught form one students from the collective promotion class.

#### 3.3 Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample of this study comprised of 100 respondents randomly drawn from every one of the school types; public, private and denominational within the Kumba II Municipality. The sample was selected with the help of the Krejcie & Morgan (1987) table. The accidental sampling technique was used for the selection of those (teachers) who responded to the questionnaire since teachers could only be located in the job sites. This technique ensures that any teacher identified in schools could automatically be selected but respecting the quotas for gender. The sample is presented in table 1.

**Table 1: Distribution of Sample Population of the study by school (teachers)**

School Type	Teachers		
	Male	Female	Total
GHS Kumba-Mbeng	18	10	28
GHS Kake	12	8	20

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Martin Luther Comprehensive College	10	7	17
St John's College Kumba	11	6	17
Victory Comprehensive College	10	8	18
Total	61	39	100

*Field Survey 2022/2023*

### 3.4 Research Instrument

A questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection. This was developed using the Likert Scale to be responded to either choosing the options strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD), depending on the specific construct under investigation. The first section of this instrument collected data about the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The scores assigned to the response options were 4, 3, 2, and 1 for SA, A, D and SD respectively for positively worded questions and vice versa for negatively worded questions.

### 3.5 Method of Data Analysis

The data collected from the respondents were analysed using descriptive statistical methods (percentages, means, and standard deviation) in search of relationships between collective promotion and the development of intellectual skills by form one students in Kumba II Municipality. The hypotheses developed for the study shall be subject to statistical testing with the help of the SPSS. The statistical technique that will be used to establish the relationship between collective promotion and the development of students' intellectual skills, is the Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis calculated using the formula below

$$\Gamma_{xy} = \frac{\sum (x - \bar{x})(y - \bar{y})}{\sqrt{\sum (x - \bar{x})^2 \sum (y - \bar{y})^2}}$$

Where x is the independent variable, y is the dependent variable and  $\Gamma_{xy}$  is the correlation coefficient for x and y.

## 4 Findings

The findings are presented according to the specific research questions as follows:

### 4.1 Research Question One

The first specific research question was designed to investigate if collective promotion influences the development of literacy skills by form one students in secondary schools of Kumba II Municipality. This question was investigated using ten questionnaire items whose frequencies and mean opinions were calculated and tallied to find out if collective promotion influences the development of literacy skills among form one students. The distribution of responses pertaining to this research question is presented in table 2.

*Table 2: Distribution of responses on the influence of collective promotion on literacy skills of form one students (N=100)*

School Type	Number of respondents	Number of items	Mean opinion	Percentage Agree (%)	Percentage disagree (%)
Public	48	10	2.46	48.88	51.12
Confessional	18	10	2.63	55.75	44.25
Lay Private	34	10	2.59	58.07	41.93
All	100	10	2.56	54.23	45.76
Critical mean opinion			2.50		

The results in table 2 show that 54.23% of all the respondents generally agree (mean of 2.56) that collective promotion has an influence on the development of literacy by form one students in secondary schools of Kumba II subdivision while 45.76% of them disagree. The average mean opinions of respondents in public schools are observed to be the lowest meaning that students in public schools demonstrate the least skills in literacy. This opinion is comparatively most profound (58.07%) among respondents in lay private schools and respectively 48.88% and 55.75% for public and confessional schools respectively.

Respondents highlighted the fact that form one students are to an average extent able to read and write but are unable to communicate effectively neither are they able to distinguish different parts of speech nor express their ideas in reading and writing.

### Verification of Hypothesis One

There is no significant relation between collection and the development of literacy skills by form one students in secondary schools of Kumba II Municipality.

The statistical analysis technique used to test this hypothesis was the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis as summarized in table 3.

**Table 3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of the relationship between collective promotion and literacy skills of form one students (N=100)**

Variable	$\sum X$	$\sum X^2$	$\sum XY$	$\Gamma_{xy}$
	$\sum Y$	$\sum Y^2$		
Collective Promotion (X)	6412	124905	118513	-0.224**
Intellectual Skills (Y)	6231	118083		

$p^{**}<0.01$ ;  $df=100$ ; critical  $\Gamma_{xy}=0.113$

The result of the analysis reveals that the calculated  $\Gamma_{xy}$ -value of -0.224 is greater than the critical  $\Gamma_{xy}$ -value of 0.113 at .01 level of significance with 100 degrees of freedom. With the result of the analysis, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis retained. This result therefore means that there is a significant relationship between collective promotion and the development of intellectual skills by form one students in secondary schools of Kumba II subdivision.

However, calculated  $\Gamma_{xy}$  coefficient is observed to be negation meaning that even though this relationship is significant, their effects are opposite. This implies that the influence of collective promotion on the development of intellectual skills of form one students in the views of their teachers is negative. This indicates that the more we keep promoting children collectively from one class to the other at the primary, the poorly their intellectually skills will be developed.

#### 4.2 Research Question Two

The first specific research question was designed to investigate if collective promotion influences the development of numeracy skills by form one students in secondary schools of Kumba II Municipality. This question was investigated using eight questionnaire items whose frequencies and mean opinions were calculated and tallied to find out if collective promotion influences the development of numeracy skills among form one students. The distribution of responses pertaining to this research question is presented in table 4.

**Table 4: Distribution of responses on the influence of collective promotion on the development of numeracy skills by form one students in secondary schools (N=100)**

School Type	Number of respondents	Number of items	Mean opinion	Percentage Agree (%)	Percentage disagree (%)
Public	48	5	2.90	68.10	31.90
Confessional	18	5	2.57	54.34	45.66
Lay Private	34	5	2.87	66.11	33.89
All	100	5	2.78	62.85	37.15
Critical mean opinion			2.50		

The results in table 4 show that 62.85% of all the respondents generally agree (mean of 2.78) that collective promotion has an influence on the development of numeracy skills by form one students in secondary schools of Kumba II subdivision while 37.85% of them disagree. This opinion is comparatively most profound (68.10%) among respondents in public schools and respectively 54.34% and 66.11% for confessional and lay private schools respectively.

Respondents highlighted the fact that form one students are not comfortable in dealing with numbers and are unable to solve basic mathematical problems. Even problems relating to simple and compound proportions learnt in the primary schools are still a problem to them. They are also unable to use their knowledge of numbers in other subject areas in school.

#### Verification of Hypothesis Two

There is no significant relation between collection and the development of numeracy skills by form one students in secondary schools of Kumba II Municipality.

The statistical analysis technique used to test this hypothesis was the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis as presented in table 5.



**Table 5: Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of the relationship between collective promotion and the development of numeracy skills by students (N=100)**

Variable	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	$\Gamma_{xy}$
Collective Promotion (X)	6419	124911	118529	0.124**
Intellectual Skills (Y)	6233	118085		

$p^{**}<0.01$ ;  $df=100$ ; critical  $\Gamma_{xy}=0.113$

The result of the analysis reveals that the calculated  $\Gamma_{xy}$ -value of 0.124\*\* is greater than the critical  $\Gamma_{xy}$ -value of 0.113 at .01 level of significance with 100 degrees of freedom. With the result of the analysis, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis retained. This result therefore means that there is a significant relationship between collective promotion and the development of intellectual skills by form one students in secondary schools of Kumba II subdivision.

There is a significant relationship between collective promotion and numeracy skills but the  $\Gamma_{xy}$  is observed to be very low, just above the critical value. This relationship is positive but weak which means that the collective promotion influences numeracy skills but is not a very strong determinant of numeracy.

### 4.3 Specific Research Question Three

The last specific research question was designed to investigate if collective promotion influences the development of numeracy skills by form one students in secondary schools of Kumba II Municipality. This question was investigated using eight questionnaire items whose frequencies and mean opinions were calculated and tallied to find out if collective promotion influences the development of numeracy skills among form one students. The distribution of responses pertaining to this research question is presented in table 6.

**Table 6: Distribution of responses on the influence of collective promotion on the development of essential skills by form one students in secondary schools (N=100)**

School Type	Number of respondents	Number of items	Mean opinion	Percentage Agree (%)	Percentage disagree (%)
Public	48	9	2.88	66.67	33.33
Denominational	18	9	2.74	65.43	34.57
Lay Private	34	9	2.81	62.50	37.50
All	100	9	2.81	64.91	35.09
Critical mean opinion			2.50		

The results in table 6 show that 64.91% of all the respondents generally agree (mean of 2.81) that collective promotion has an influence on the development of essential life skills by form one students in secondary schools of Kumba II subdivision while 35.09% of them disagree. This opinion is comparatively most profound (66.67%) among respondents in public schools and respectively 65.43% and 62.50% for confessional and lay private schools respectively.

A further analysis of the results revealed that respondents generally agreed that form one students do not have enough essential life skills such as the ability to effectively communicate, demonstrate creativity in learning, show leadership in their interactions with others, unable to effectively manage their time nor demonstrate self-control among other social essential skills.

### Verification of Hypothesis Three

There is no significant relation between collection and the development of essential life skills by form one students in secondary schools of Kumba II Municipality.

The statistical analysis technique used to test this hypothesis was the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis as presented in table 7.

**Table 7: Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of the influence of the intensity of use of didactic materials on pass rates in Chemistry (N=246)**

Variables	$\sum X$	$\sum X^2$	$\sum XY$	$\Gamma_{xy}$
	$\sum Y$	$\sum Y^2$		
Collective Promotion (X)	2621	43651	79112	0.187**
Essential Life Skills (Y)	4839	147169		

$p^{**}<0.01$ ;  $df=100$ ; critical  $\Gamma_{xy}=0.113$

The result of the analysis reveals that the calculated  $\Gamma_{xy}$  -value of 0.187\*\* is greater than the critical  $\Gamma_{xy}$  -value of 0.113 at .01 level of significance with 100 degrees of freedom. From the result of the analysis, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis retained. This result therefore shows that there is a significant influence of collective promotion on the development of intellectual skills by form one students in secondary schools of Kumba II Municipality.

Since there is a significant influence of collective promotion on the development of intellectual skills by form one students in secondary schools, a further exploration of the result showed that the  $\Gamma_{xy}=0.187$  was positive but not high enough. This means that collective promotion is a weak determinant of students' intellectual skills.

Three open ended questions were formulated for teachers at the end of the instrument to solicit responses on ways if any that collective promotion could be improved upon. These responses are reported here.

When teachers were asked how collective promotion at the primary level has influenced the development of intellectual skills, the following responses were obtained:

*"Students are not able to read and write due to the fact that they were just promoted to the class even if they were below average"*

*"Collective promotion at the primary has helped the reasoning of the form one students to be "very low as they lack the basics and do not concentrate on their studies since know they are going to the next class".*

*"You see form one students who cannot write their names and cannot write at all. They lack the lack the basics... it is at the primary that these children are taught the alphabet and how to read*

*and write. And so when they are collectively promoted, it is not evident that they will all develop these skills".*

*"It is a bad influence on form one students since some students are unable to spell out some words correctly while others cannot even identify letters".*

When teachers were asked if the policy of collective promotion should be upheld, they were of the opinion that:

*"It should not be upheld because it causes slow students to continue being slow and end up as illiterates even after school".*

*"It has caused great harm in the educational system, students are half baked". "Special predispositions should be taken to improve the teaching at the primary level".*

*"The policy of collective promotion should be abandoned completely for the children to study and know you have to pass exams before promotion to the next class".*

When teachers were asked how the policy could be improved, they stated that:

*"A limit as to the average that must score to be promoted to the next class should be set".*

*"The policy of collective promotion should simply be banned and students be moved from one level to another only when they have fulfilled set promotion criteria".*

These findings revealed that teachers are generally uncomfortable with the policy of collective promotion because with the very limited intellectual skills demonstrated by the learners, the teachers' job especially in form one is very difficult. Teachers think that the policy should simply be abandoned because it makes students ill-prepared intellectually for academic life in the secondary school.

#### **4.4 Discussion of Findings**

Findings obtained were in concordance with some past writings and findings of other authors who were interested in the same problem. Discussion of the findings is presented in the following paragraphs based on the summaries of findings got from tests of hypothesis in chapter four:

1. Collective promotion has a significant influence the development of literacy skills by form one students in secondary schools of Kumba II subdivision. This relation was observed to be negative meaning that collective promotion has a negative influence on literacy skills.

This finding aligns with Roset (2020) who carried out a study to investigate the effects of automatic promotion on the teaching-learning process in schools. Results revealed that automatically promoted learners do not acquire adequate understanding of the prescribed academic content.

Findings however, did not agree with Okurut (2015) carried out a study to determine the effect of automatic promotion on students' literacy skills with the main aim to compare the effects of automatic promotion on the acquisition of literacy skills between urban and rural schools and between male and female students. She found that, the policy had a positive effect on the acquisition of literacy schools. The effect was equally significant for both urban and rural students and also according to gender.

2. There is a significant relationship between collective promotion and the development of numeracy skills by form one students in secondary schools of Kumba II subdivision. This relationship though positive is observed to be weak.

This finding is in agreement with Okurut (2015) who carried out a study to determine the effect of automatic promotion on students' numeracy skills by comparing the effects of automatic promotion on the acquisition of numeracy skills between urban and rural schools and between male and female students. Results revealed that, the policy had a positive effect on the acquisition of numeracy schools. The effect was equally significant for both urban and rural students and also according to gender. It however contradicts Koppensteiner (2013) carried out a study to determine the effect of automatic promotion the achievement of public primary school students in Brazil. The results revealed a negative relationship between collective promotion and students' mathematics achievement.

3. There is a significant relationship between collective promotion and the development of essential life skills by form one students in secondary schools of Kumba II subdivision.

This finding is corroborated by Lyonga and Fosso (2020) who carried out a study to determine the effect of the policy of collective promotion on the development of literacy, numeracy and essential life skills of primary school learners. The results revealed that, the policy of collective promotion negatively affected the attainment of literacy, numeracy, and essential life skills of pupils. Interview results revealed that the policy of collective promotion in basic education did not achieve its objective of minimizing wastage of educational resources; neither did it positively improve the literacy, numeracy, and essential life skills of pupils. Even though this study finds that collective promotion has a positive influence on the development of essential life skills by form students, this relationship was found to be low and weak. This means that collective promotion is a weak determinant of intellectual skill development.

## **5 Conclusion**

From the findings, it can be seen that collective promotion as practiced in our primary schools has an influence on the overall intellectual development of form one students in secondary schools of Kumba II subdivision. The observed relationships were however weak or negative which shows that collective promotion as practiced is not sufficiently meeting the desired needs.

## **5.1 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Policy makers should review the implementation of collective promotion and adopt strategies that can lead to adequate intellectual development by pupils.
2. The government should ensure that pupils admitted in primary schools meet the demands especially in age and physical development. This is because some pupils are observed to be too tender when they accede to secondary education making coping with the pressure of secondary impossible due to lack of readiness.
3. Parents should also ensure that they get involved in the educational life of their children instead of getting excited that they have moved to the next higher class without guarantee of skills acquisition.

## **5.2 Suggestions for further studies**

Further studies could focus on the effect of collective education on entrepreneurship, the role of collective education on the employment rate of Cameroonians. The same study could be extended to other sub divisions of Cameroon.

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