

Running Head: LONG-TERM IMPACT OF EARLY GRADE RETENTION

Mount Saint Vincent University

Department of Education

Grade Retention: Evaluating the Impact of Early School Experiences on Self-Esteem and
Self-Efficacy in Adulthood

by

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Dedication

I would like to make a special dedication to my daughter, Kayla, who has inspired me to challenge myself and achieve my goals. I also dedicated this thesis to my family, friends, and committee members who have supported me throughout my masters program.

Abstract

An abundance of research has shown that the practice of grade retention has many negative consequences for the lives of students who struggle academically. What is not apparent in the literature are the views of grade retention from adults who have experienced retention as children. A total of 51 individuals (18 women, 33 men) enrolled in a post secondary institution participated in this study. The test group, those individuals who experienced grade retention, was comprised of 25 individuals, while the control group was comprised of 26 individuals. Participants were matched on age, gender, grade 12 grade point average (GPA), family structure, and family stressors. The retained group did not differ significantly from the control group on measures of self-esteem and self-efficacy. Additional analyses of the data resulted in significant correlations for the retained group, non-retained group, and the entire sample between self-esteem, subscales of the self-efficacy measure and demographic questions. Contributions and caveats of the study, as well as suggestions for professionals (school psychologists, teachers and administrators) working in the school system are discussed.

Grade Retention: Evaluating the Impact of Early School Experiences
on Self-Esteem and Self-Efficacy in Adulthood

Grade retention has been a topic of much debate across North America. Based on statistics derived from the student population in the United States (U.S) retention rates are on the rise. Researchers have reported an estimated 5-15% of students fail every year in the United States (Anderson, Whipple, & Jimerson, 2002; Hauser, 1999). In other words, an estimated 2.4 million students are retained each year in the U.S. (Dawson, 1998). In 1992 almost 40% of 14-year-old males and 20% of 14-year-old females were old for their grade (U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, 1992; cited in Roderick, 1995). Unfortunately, quality data on grade retention is not available to determine current prevalence rates in Canada. On the other hand, U.S. statistics indicate that grade retention is practiced despite the research demonstrating a negative association with academic achievement, cognitive and social competences.

Questions surrounding the benefits of retaining students have been the focus of many researchers. Generally speaking, the evidence is somewhat mixed. Some researchers would argue that there are some benefits to holding students back for an extra year (Alexander, Entwistle, & Dauber, 1994), while others argue the consequences of such actions are more harmful than good (Jimerson 1999; Jimerson, Carson, Rotert, Egeland, & Sroufe, 1997; Jimerson & Kaufman, 2003). This difference in opinion may be due to individual differences in research objectives or consideration of the short-term versus long-term effects. A closer analysis of the research reveals two themes. First, time plays an important role in

determining the impact of grade retention and second, the consequences appear to be negative in nature.

There is a significant problem in the definition of 'long-term.' Many researchers have defined 'long-term' as spanning from two-five years after the initial grade retention, or at most up to adolescence. Therefore, many of the students involved in the studies are still at the elementary level. On the other hand, many researchers have identified long-term risks of grade retention. For example, retained students often experience difficulties in later grades and some may drop out of school all together. What appear to be missing from the research are adult reports of earlier experiences and the long-term impact of failing a grade. The current study will address these issues.

Grade Retention

Grade retention (also known as grade failure or being held back) is defined by Jimerson and Kaufman (2003, p.2) as "the practice of requiring a student who has been in a given grade level for a full school year to remain at that same grade level in the subsequent school year." Grade retention has received a great deal of attention by researchers due to the potential repercussions it may have on the individual as well as on society as a whole such as, difficulties finding and maintaining employment, mental health problems, criminal activity and/or chemical abuse (Anderson, Whipple, & Jimerson, 2002). A crucial piece of the puzzle that appears to be overlooked is the students' voices and their opinions of a strong, healthy learning environment. Students who struggle academically, needing extra help and support have valuable insight to their learning style

(Lavine, 1999). Unfortunately, the student's insight may be overlooked and instead he/she may be retained to pick up the pieces missed during the first year in their current grade.

When considering the appropriateness of grade retention the current literature reports mixed findings, with both negative and positive consequence (Dawson, 1998; Jimerson & Kaufman, 2003; Setencich, 1994). For some students grade retention appears to have a positive impact and can therefore be a useful practice. Early research with primary grade students found no negative personal or social adjustment effects on students (Chansky, 1964; Finlayson, 1975), while others have found grade retention to have a positive effect on academics (Chase, 1968; Kerzner, 1982; Leggette, 1982; McAfee, 1981; Reinherz & Griffin, 1970; Scott & Ames, 1969). By using an interview approach to understanding the impact of grade retention, Rothstein (2000) identified a small group of students who felt positively about the extra year and reported it helped them academically. From this research, it appears that grade retention may be useful; however results should be interpreted with caution. Researchers have drawn these conclusions during the time students spent repeating the grade, when they are seeing class material over again, rather than after some time has elapsed.

In addition to examining the impact of grade retention immediately after its occurrence, most of the aforementioned studies involved young children in kindergarten or grade one. Stipek (1981) indicates that at such an early age children are too young to comprehend the consequences of repeating a grade. It is only later at more complex levels of cognitive development that children

comprehend and attach meaning to such events in life, especially if they are negative. Based on student perception on a variety of life events, it appears that this level of comprehension develops during the late elementary years.

Anderson, Jimerson, and Whipple (2002) replicated a study conducted in the 1980's, which had elementary children rank stressful life events such as, grade retention and loss of a parent. What was found in previous research was also found in Anderson et al.'s research. They found that sixth grade students ranked grade retention as the single most stressful life event, higher than the loss of a parent or going blind. This is an apparently alarming finding. On the other hand, caution should be taken when considering these results for two reasons. First, in general, children in the United States are under enormous pressure imposed by standardized testing which determines promotion (Wheelock, 2003). Second, these students did not necessarily experience any of the 'stressful life events' listed in the survey. Therefore it appears to be more of an assumption, on the researcher's part, to conclude that the children who completed the surveys would rank the event similarly if they actually experienced one or more of the events. Hypothetical lists and situations do not necessarily give a realistic picture as to how an individual would react to a real situation. Although Anderson et al.'s study addresses children's attitudes regarding retention, focus needs to be placed on children who have actually experienced retention with an examination of their views of achievement and socio-emotional well-being.

Consideration of the impact retention may have on young children throughout school and beyond would serve the current research well. In a 2003

position statement on student grade retention and social promotion, the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) indicated that grade retention has a negative impact on all areas of academic achievement as well as socio-emotional adjustment (2003). This was based on an analysis of the research completed over the last century. The most recent review on grade retention, by Jimerson and Kaufman (2003), further supports the NASP with solid evidence against the practice of grade retention. They summarized a collection of studies and concluded that retaining students is not the best practice, regardless of when it may occur. Jimerson and Kaufman addressed research around academic achievement and socio-emotional adjustment identifying negative outcomes for both areas such as, significantly weaker performance in language arts and reading, poorer social adjustment, more negative attitudes toward school, problems with attendance and more problem behaviour. Among other factors discussed in their article, Jimerson and Kaufman draw attention to one of the main concerns considered in the current study, looking beyond immediate success and considering the long-term effects of grade retention.

Beyond the work of Jimerson and his colleagues, few studies have examined the long-term effects of grade retention. The available evidence concerning the long-term impact of grade retention indicates either no beneficial outcomes or a variety of negative consequences for students (Jimerson, 1999; Jimerson et al., 1997; Jimerson & Kaufman, 2003; Raygor, 1972; Thomas et al., 1992). Thomas et al. (1992) followed a group of primary and grade one students over a period of five years to determine if grade retention was associated with

long term negative or positive effects on academics, social and emotional functioning. The retained students were compared to a group of students with similar grades who did not experience retention. At the end of the five-year period, the researchers found that the retained group, particularly Caucasian children, were struggling more academically than their peers. This was identified by the retained students' weaker grade point averages (GPA). Thomas et al. also found, on the basis of behavioural checklists and rating scales completed by teachers, that retained children were perceived as less cognitively and socially competent, and displayed more anxious/withdrawn behaviour. Again the researchers only saw this effect with the Caucasian students in the retained group.

Jimerson et al. (1997) provide further support for the significant negative long-term effects associated with grade retention. After examining students in grade six and later at the age of sixteen, they found the retained students had lower emotional health, including both social and personal adjustment. This was after comparing the retained students to a group of students whose academic functioning was similar to the retained group (low-achieving promoted) based on scores from standardized achievement tests.

In a more recent report of the same longitudinal study, over a period of twenty years (from the time the children were born to age twenty), Jimerson et al. (1999) examined a number of variables including family characteristics, academic achievement, drop-out rates, employment, and post-secondary enrolment. After controlling for socio-economic status, gender and ethnicity they found significant differences on all variables included in the study. In other words, Jimerson et al.

found that when compared to similarly low-achieving/promoted peers and a normal control group, the retained group had significantly lower levels of academic adjustment, were more likely to drop out of high school by age nineteen, received lower educational and employment status, and were paid less per hour at age twenty. This further supports the belief that grade retention is associated with a number of negative long-term consequences. It is important to make the distinction that it is not a causal effect, rather that grade retention is 'associated' with long-term negative consequences. In other words life events do not occur independent of one another prior to, or after an event such as grade retention. Events and circumstances interact with one another, thus leading to the decision of retention as well as how retention may interact with events later in life (Jimerson, 1999).

In a later study, Jimerson (2001) identified even more deleterious long-term outcomes associated with grade retention such as, an increased likelihood to commit crimes, imprisonment, or living on public assistance when compared to individuals who did not repeat a grade. Jimerson's study suggests that individuals who experience grade retention are at risk of leading less enriched lives, have low paying jobs, lead a life of crime and/or live on welfare. Although these are extreme examples of outcomes for individuals who experience grade retention, it demonstrates an association between early life experiences, such as grade retention and long-term outcomes.

Taking a step beyond the short-term impact of grade retention may further support the need to address the impact of grade retention and possibly replace the

practice with programs that help struggling students. Therefore, it is important to re-examine the long-term consequences of grade retention but to take it a step further and look at adult reports. What happens beyond the elementary years and adolescence? We must consider the person's psychological well being (mental health) as well as the cost to society (welfare, prison).

For individuals who experienced grade retention, it is important to understand the impact early school experiences have on life development. How do these individuals perceive themselves and their work as they face and manage a variety of life events? Since self-perception and academic competency are both extremely important and relevant to an individual's well being they will be addressed separately in the following sections: self-esteem and self-efficacy.

Self-Esteem

Rosenberg (1965) has provided one of the most widely known definitions of self-esteem: "the favourable or unfavourable attitude toward the self (p.15)." It is more precisely described as "an individual's sense of his or her value of worth, or the extent to which a person values, approves of, appreciates, prizes, or likes him or herself" (Blascovich & Tomaka, 1991, p. 115). Through life experiences, a person may develop a sense of worth that is quite positive such as, feeling confident and self-assured. On the other hand, one's self worth could be damaged by negative life events (Anderson et al., 2002; Evans, 2001; Krider, 2002).

Grade retention is one event that may have a negative impact on an individual's self esteem. In fact, self-esteem has been one aspect of grade retention that has received a considerable amount of attention in research.

Shepard and Smith (1990), after examining the results of more than 50 studies, concluded that children who experience grade retention were more likely to have lower self-esteem as compared to the control group.

It is also important to consider the fact that prior to grade retention, students are struggling academically and therefore may already hold a negative view of themselves (Bhatti, Derezotes, Kim, & Specht, 1989). The practice of retaining students may solidify these feelings, therefore causing more harm by reinforcing a negative self-view. For other students who may not hold a negative self-view prior to grade retention, experiencing grade retention may be associated with lower self-esteem. Again, considering the transactional model of development, the above is plausible. The common theme throughout the literature is an association between the experience of grade retention and students' lowered self-esteem (Jimerson, 2001; Jimerson et al., 1997; Setencich, 1994).

Holmes and Matthews (1984) have suggested that grade retention creates problems in both emotional and social adjustment. As part of the retention process retained students are surrounded by new peer groups. These new peer groups may scrutinize the retained student because of a poor academic history. The retained student may face rejection and ridicule, which may damage his/her self-esteem. After reviewing 19 studies conducted in the 1990's, NASP (2003) reported that grade retention had a negative impact on all areas of socio-emotional adjustment including self-esteem. The studies chosen for the review focused on elementary students and compared retained students to similarly achieving but promoted students.

In a meta-analysis Jimerson (2001) looked at a number of studies that fit under a broad category of socio-emotional outcomes. In his analysis he only included those studies that used comparison groups with a variety of matching variables. Jimerson found that 16 of the 20 studies included in his analysis reported grade retention as an ineffective intervention for socio-emotional adjustment.

From an academic perspective, students have the opportunity to 'catch up' and relearn what they missed the year before. On the other hand, has the damage already occurred if the student struggled before? Will students think less of themselves, labelling themselves as "failures" and/or "stupid?" Further concern rests in the risk that students will most likely struggle while learning in future grades (Holmes, 1989; Jimerson, 2001). This could be another hit to students' self-esteem, placing them at risk of self blame and a reduced sense of worth. Using the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory - School Form (CSEI), Setencich (1994) found that after matching the groups on gender, grade level, ethnicity, and socio-economic status, retained students' perceptions of self-esteem were significantly lower than those who did not experience grade retention.

Researchers have also debated whether the negative impact on self-esteem was short-lived or more long-term. This is an important factor to consider since most students experience grade retention prior to grade three (Jimerson, 2003). At such a young age students may not have the cognitive understanding of how the decision may affect them until they are older. According to research, however, the negative impact of grade retention on self-esteem is seen both in

short-term as well as in the long-term (Anderson et al., 2002; Jimerson, 2001; Jimerson et al., 1997; Jimerson & Kaufman, 2003). Even as young as five or six years of age, children perceive their self-worth as more diminished than those students who did not fail. Jimerson et al.'s (1997) examination of grade six students, who experienced earlier grade retention, were characterized by teachers as less confident, less self-assured, and less engaged than their academically similar peers. Thomas et al. (1992) concluded that four years after grade retention, a negative impact could be seen in terms of academic, emotional, as well as social functioning in students.

Beyond the elementary level researchers appear to place less emphasis measuring self-esteem and more focus on academic achievement and employment outcomes. This results in unanswered questions in terms of the mental well being of students as they develop through adolescence and adulthood for example, how do they perceive themselves in terms of self-worth?

Referring back to Jimerson et al.'s (1997) longitudinal work, six years after experiencing retention, the retained group was ranked by teachers and camp counsellors as having significantly lower levels of self-esteem. This difference was found when the retained group was compared to both the low-achieving promoted group and control group. A critical point in their analysis was that the differences found between the retained group and the low-achieving promoted group for emotional health could not be accounted for by initial differences in adjustment. In a follow-up analysis, Jimerson and colleagues found that at the age

of sixteen, there were no significant gains in either group in terms of self-esteem (retained and low-achieving promoted).

It appears that grade retention has long-term negative consequences on a student's self-esteem. What is unclear is whether students continue to have a diminished sense of self as adults. The focus of the current research is to determine if young adults who previously experienced grade retention continue to have a diminished self-esteem when compared to same age peers.

Academic Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy has been shown to be an important component in the development of the self (Pajares & Schunk, 2001). Perceived self-efficacy is conceptualized as "the beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (Bandura, 1997, page 36). When we consider academics, self-efficacy plays a fundamental role in a student's experiences. If students perceive themselves as strong students academically, then they are considered to be highly self-efficacious. On the other hand, if students perceive themselves as poor students, self-efficacy is considered diminished.

According to the research on self-efficacy, it is possible that grade retention could be considered an event that could diminish how a person perceives his/her academic ability (Holmes, 1989; Jimerson, 2001). There is very little research on self-perceptions of academic ability after experiencing grade retention. In terms of academics, most research has focused on how well students are performing, not how students perceive their own academic achievement

(Hagborg, Masella, Pallading, & Shepardson, 1991; Setencich, 1994; Thomas et al., 1992). It is one thing to identify these students who are not performing as well as their classmates; it is another to find out what students think about their ability. Most researchers have found that after grade retention, students continue to do poorly academically in later grades (Jimerson et al., 1997; Thomas et al., 1992). What needs to be determined is whether they feel positively about personal achievement.

It is important to be clear how students feel about their own academic performance, particularly when they have experienced an event such as grade retention. Students' views of their abilities have a significant impact on how well they perform and how they view their achievement (Pajares & Schunk, 2001; Zimmerman, Bandura, & Martinez-Pons, 1992). Multon, Brown, and Lent (1991) conducted a meta-analysis on research conducted with elementary, high school, and college students and found that self-efficacy beliefs were positively related to academic achievement. The researchers found this to be most true for high school and college students. Multon et al., also found reports of self-efficacy were higher when students responded to questions related to classroom-based indices such as grades (in comparison to standardized achievement tests).

A final point to consider is that not all students who are retained end up dropping out of school; instead some continue their education in post-secondary institutions. These individuals would be considered the "successes" based on the above research outcomes of grade retention. Examination of how these students

perceive themselves, in terms of academic ability would add to the current research on grade retention and self-efficacy.

Current Study

It has been argued that grade retention is a stressful experience that has a negative impact on the mental health of students. It is also a strong predictor of many deleterious outcomes such as school dropout and a life of criminal activities. The purpose of the current research is to determine if grade retention has a long-term negative impact on an individual's self esteem and academic self-efficacy continuing into post-secondary education. It is important to keep in mind that these students are the successes since they have graduated from high school and furthermore continued their education in a university or college setting. The following is predicted for the current study:

1. Individuals will have a lowered self-esteem, which is associated with the experience of grade retention during an early education experience, when compared to individuals who did not fail a grade in school.
2. It is predicted that individuals who have experienced grade retention will have diminished academic self-efficacy compared to those individuals who did not experience grade retention.

Method

Participants

A total of 51 university/college students from Halifax, Nova Scotia participated in the study. The test group was comprised of 25 individuals who experienced grade retention during their early educational experiences (between

primary and grade 9). For comparison purposes, a control group was used, which was comprised of 26 individuals who had not experienced grade retention. Participants were matched for age, gender, grade 12 grade point average (GPA), family structure (i.e., marriage, separation, or divorce), and family stressors (i.e., death, illness, significant move, and job loss) based on information provided on the first demographic questionnaire (see Appendix A). The average age range of participants was 18 to 25 years, more males (33) than females (18) participated, the average GPA fell between 71 and 80, most individuals reported intact families (parents married throughout their school experiences), and of the family stressors reported, death and/or illness of a family member was most often reported.

Measures

Demographics. Participants completed two demographics questionnaire developed by the lead researcher (see Appendix A). The first questionnaire included a series of questions that were used to match participants in both groups. The second set of questions were used to gain an understanding of student's school experiences from elementary to high school, family structure, and home experiences, with additional questions specifically addressed to individuals who experienced grade retention.

Self-Esteem. To measure self-esteem the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (CSEI) was used. Coopersmith (1967) designed this inventory to measure an individual's evaluative attitudes toward the self in social, academic, family and personal areas. The CSEI is known for its high internal consistency and reliability factors ($\alpha = .80$) (Evaluating the national outcomes, 2004).

The psychometric properties are reported to be strong, based on several studies (e.g., Bhatti, Derezotes, Kim, & Specht, 1989). The adult form contains 25 items that are answered either “like me” or “unlike me.” Eight of the items form a lie scale to identify “false-positive” responses. These are responses in which the individual thinks he/she is answering a question in a way that reflects high self-esteem, but the answer actually reflects that the individual’s genuine feelings are different (Pollack, 1999). Participants’ responses were scored using a scoring key from the test publisher. A final score out of 100 was determined, with higher scores reflecting high sense of self-esteem and low scores reflecting a weaker sense of self-esteem. The CSEI took approximately 10 minutes to complete. A copy of the CSEI is not included in the appendix due to copyright policies held by the test publisher. Reliability for the current study was also analyzed ($\alpha = .67$).

Self-Efficacy. The Morgan-Jinks Student Efficacy Scale (MJSES) was used to measure self-efficacy (see Appendix B). With permission, the MJSES (Morgan & Jinks, 1999) was modified from its original version (used with elementary aged children) to use with an adult sample. The MJSES is reported to have an overall reliability coefficient of .82. The sub-scale alphas were .78 for talent, .70 for context, and .66 for effort (Jinks & Morgan, 1999). It is a 30-item Likert-Scale with four intervals: “Really Agree,” “Kind of Agree,” “Kind of Disagree,” and “Really Disagree.” There are three subscales: Talent (13 items) “I am a good reading student” or, Context (13 items) “It does not matter if I do well in school”, and Effort (4 items) “I work hard in school.” The three subscale

scores were used as the self-efficacy measure for this study. The MJSES took approximately 15 minutes to complete. Reliability alphas for the current study were as follows: alpha of .72 for talent, .79 for context, and .68 for effort.

Procedure

Initially the lead researcher approached students at the end of psychology, sociology, and/or biology classes, after the professor left the room to protect anonymity. The research project was explained and student cooperation was elicited from a large number of students. Each student completed the first demographics questionnaire with a first name and contact number at which they could be reached to complete the second set of questionnaires.

Due to time constraints and difficulties finding participants for the retained group, permission was sought from the Mount Saint Vincent University Research Ethics Board (UREB) to expand the recruitment process into the general public (Halifax, Nova Scotia). Posters were placed in the Halifax metro area. To maintain the sample of post-secondary students, it was stipulated that individuals had to be enrolled in a post-secondary institution, either a university or college. Participants were offered the chance to win a gift certificate as an incentive to participate.

Arrangements were made for participants to meet with the lead researcher to complete the consent form (with confidentiality clause) and the questionnaires. Five of the questionnaires were completed over the phone (three for the retained group, two for the control group). Each person completed a short demographics questionnaire in addition to the formal questionnaires in the package. When the

participants completed the forms they were asked to place them in the provided envelope, with no identification, and return it to the lead researcher, postage supplied.

Results

The variables of the study were examined using analysis of variance (ANOVA) and multivariate (MANOVA) tests addressing the hypotheses of the study. Additional analysis of the data was completed to gather information on the test group, control group, as well as both groups combined to examine correlations for self-esteem, self-efficacy, and the demographic variables. Results for the ANOVA and MANOVA will be addressed first.

Analyses of Variance

An ANOVA was utilized to determine if there were differences between retained and non-retained individuals for self-esteem, measured by the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (CSEI). Results were not significant, $F(1, 49) = 1.70, p = \text{n.s.}$ Means and standard deviations for the retained and non-retained groups are found in Table 1.

A MANOVA was utilized to determine if differences were present between the retained group and the non-retained group for academic self-efficacy (talent, context and effort subscales) when measured by the Morgan-Jinks Self-Efficacy Inventory (MJSEI). Results were not significant, $F(3, 47) = 0.74, p = \text{n.s.}$ Means and standard deviations for the retained and non-retained group are found in Table 1.

Table 1

Means (M) and Standard Deviations (SD) for retained versus non-retained groups on measures for Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (CSEI total) and Morgan Jinks Self-Efficacy Inventory Subscales (MJ-talent, MJ-context, and MJ-effort).

Measure	Retained N=25 M(SD)	Non-retained N=26 M(SD)
CSEI-total	71.36 (20.45)	64.15 (19.05)
MJ-talent	3.17 (.37)	3.29 (.36)
MJ-context	2.54 (.31)	2.62 (.28)
MJ-effort	3.03 (.39)	3.16 (.62)

Additional Analyses

Test group. Examination of the demographic questions related to grade retention was completed using frequency analyses. Within the retained group, 20 reported academics as the reason for retention, while three reported social reasons, two indicated that it was because of a transfer, and one reported social and transfer as reasons for being retained.

In response to a question about participants' retention experience nine participants reported retention as being a positive experience (36%), nine reported it as a negative experience (36%), while seven indicated that grade retention was neither positive nor negative experience (28%). The retained participants were also asked to identify how they felt at the time of retention, based on eight possible feelings (e.g., joy, sadness, anger, fear, surprised, acceptance, expectant, and/or disgust). These were further divided into positive/negative feelings for frequency analysis. Seven participants in the retained group reported positive feelings related to retention (28%), 13 participants reported negative feelings (52%), three reported both positive and negative feelings related to retention (12%), and two participants did not report on their feelings regarding their retention experiences (8%).

Correlation analyses were completed for the test group to determine if retained participants' reports for self-esteem and self-efficacy were related to the demographic questions (Table 2). The following correlations were found to be significant. First, positive correlations were found between the self-esteem composite and participants' reports of father's academic support,

$r(23) = .593, p < .01$. Second, negative correlations were found for the self-efficacy talent subscale and participants' reports of mother's academic support, $r(23) = -.415, p < .05$. Third, negative correlations were found between the self-efficacy context subscale scores and participants' reports of father's academic support, $r(23) = -.433, p < .05$. Fourth, positive correlations were found between the self-efficacy effort subscale and predicted science mark, $r(23) = .413, p < .05$, predicted math mark, $r(23) = .409, p < .05$, predicted psychology mark, $r(23) = .465, p < .05$, and predicted English mark, $r(23) = .549, p < .01$. As participants in the retained group reported higher levels of self-efficacy, related to effort, they also anticipated to receive higher marks in all four subject areas (science, math, psychology, and English). Finally, negative correlations were found for the self-efficacy effort subscale and father's level of education, $r(23) = -.444, p < .05$. As participants reported an increased sense of self-efficacy for talent items, fathers were reported to have less education.

Control group. Correlation analyses were completed for the test group to determine if participants' reports for self-esteem and self-efficacy were related to the demographic questions (Table 3). The following correlations were found to be significant. First, positive correlations were found between the self-efficacy talent subscale and estimated current grade point average (GPA), $r(24) = .420, p < .05$, and predicted English mark, $r(24) = .417, p < .05$. Participants reported a stronger sense of self-efficacy, for talent items, as they predicted their GPA and final English mark to be higher. Second, a positive correlation was found

Table 2

Correlation coefficients for the retained group between self-esteem scores (CSEI-total), self-efficacy scores (MJ-talent, MJ-context, and MJ-effort subscales), and demographic variables

Demographic Variable	CSEI Total	MJ-talent	MJ-context	MJ-effort
Age	-.058	-.225	.265	.313
Current GPA	.277	-.248	-.376	.287
Science Mark	-.244	-.284	.242	.413 *
Math Mark	-.263	-.093	.361	.409*
Psychology Mark	-.096	-.237	.276	.465 *
English Mark	.119	.061	.173	.549**
Mom's Education	-.104	.178	-.069	-.089
Dad's Education	.146	.038	-.165	-.444*
Mom Support	.064	-.415*	-.252	.218
Dad Support	.593**	-.048	-.433*	-.015

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

Table 3

Correlation coefficients for the control group between self-esteem scores (CSEI-total), self-efficacy scores (MJ-talent, MJ-context, and MJ-effort subscales), and demographic variables

Demographic Variable	CSEI Total	MJ-talent	MJ-context	MJ-effort
Age	-.061	-.170	-.313	.068
Current GPA	-.199	.420*	-.086	.226
Science Mark	-.116	-.275	.175	.080
Math Mark	-.253	-.141	.205	.173
Psychology Mark	.238	-.126	.372	-.070
English Mark	-.049	.417*	.116	-.190
Mom's Education	.068	-.256	-.134	-.058
Dad's Education	-.137	.249	.439*	-.073
Mom Support	.119	-.175	.330	.013
Dad Support	.025	.135	.295	.047

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

between the self-efficacy context subscale and father's level of education, $r(23) = .439, p < .05$. Results indicated no significant relationship between the composite self-esteem scores, self-efficacy effort subscales, and the demographic questions.

Total sample. Analysis of the data was performed to determine if gender differences were present for self-esteem and self-efficacy. No significant differences were found for self-esteem, or across the three subscales of the self-efficacy measure (Table 4).

Correlation analyses were completed to determine if participants' self-esteem reports were related to their reports on the subscales of self-efficacy. Results indicated no significant relationship between the composite self-esteem score or the subscales of the self-efficacy scale. A significant correlation was found between the talent and the context subscales of the self-efficacy measure, $r(49) = .372, p < .01$.

Additional correlations were completed between the demographic questions and the independent variables for the total sample (Table 5). The following correlations were found to be significant. First, the talent subscale of the MJSEI were negatively correlated, $r(49) = -.293, p < .05$, with participants' reports of maternal academic support. As participants reported higher self-efficacy on the talent items, reports on the amount of mother's academic support decreased. This was also the case for the context subscale, $r(49) = -.291, p < .05$, of the self-efficacy measure. Third, significant positive correlations were found for MJSEI context subscale and participants predicted university/college marks for math, $r(49) = .303, p < .05$, and psychology, $r(49) = .312, p < .05$. As

Table 4

Means (M) and Standard Deviations (SD) for gender differences on measures for Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (CSEI-total) and Morgan Jinks Self-Efficacy Inventory Subscales (MJ-talent, MJ-context, and MJ-effort).

Measures	Females N=18 M(SD)	Males N=33 M(SD)
CSEI-total	72.4 (16.05)	65.1 (21.48)
MJ-talent	3.21 (.44)	3.24 (.32)
MJ-context	2.56 (.26)	2.60 (.32)
MJ-effort	3.16 (.36)	3.06 (.59)

participants reported high academic self-efficacy on the context items they also anticipated their marks in math and psychology to be higher.

When self-esteem was considered, participants' reports on the CSEI were positively correlated with participant's reports of paternal academic support $r(49) = .282, p < .05$. As participants reported higher self-esteem, reports on the amount of father's academic support increased. Also, participants' reports on the CSEI were negatively correlated with their predicted university/college final marks for math, $r(49) = -.283, p < .05$. As participants' reported higher self-esteem they predicted a lower math mark for themselves. All other correlations for the CSEI and demographic variables were not significant (Table 5).

Table 5

Correlation coefficients between self-esteem (CSEI-total), self-efficacy subscales (talent, context, effort), and matching variables for the sample (N=51).

Variable	CSEI-total	MJ-talent	MJ-context	MJ-effort
Age	.005	-.234	.059	.041
GPA Now	.014	.116	-.212	.254
Science Mark	-.182	-.263	.217	.213
Math Mark	-.283*	-.081	.303*	.275
Psych. Mark	.076	-.188	.312*	.124
English Mark	.031	.241	.147	.089
Mom Education	-.045	-.027	-.074	-.040
Dad Education	-.026	.171	.149	-.182
Mom Support	.094	-.293*	-.291*	.084
Dad Support	.282*	.054	-.071	.046

* $p < .05$

Discussion

The aim of the current study was to determine if early experiences of grade retention (primary to grade nine) are associated with a diminished sense of self-esteem and/or academic self-efficacy in post-secondary students. It was found that grade retention does not appear to have a long-term negative impact on university/college student's sense of self-esteem or academic self-efficacy when compared to non-retained peers. These findings are inconsistent with the majority of findings reported in the current literature on grade retention (Evans, 2001; Hagborg et al., 1991, Jimerson, 2001; Jimerson et al., 1997).

Self-Esteem

Research on retention has examined socio-emotional outcomes, with mixed results. The current study suggests that individuals who experience retention are similar to their peers in terms of self-esteem. A trend that appears in current study is that retained individuals' were actually reporting a higher sense of self-esteem than the non-retained individuals. Although the results for self-esteem contradict many of the studies on grade retention, there is evidence similar to results found in the current study.

In a meta-analysis, Jimerson (2001) found sixteen studies that examined socio-emotional outcomes (i.e., social, emotional, behavioural, self-concept and adjustment). He found 8 of the 148 analyses were in favour of the retained group, while 127 of the analyses yielded no significant difference (between retained and comparison group). This indicates that many of the studies included in the meta-analysis (86%) found retained individuals were similar to their peers in terms of

socio-emotional adjustment. In addition to supporting Jimerson's (2001) analysis, the current study also suggests that an individual's socio-emotional adjustment is still present into adulthood. In other words, retained individuals' self-esteem is comparable to their non-retained peers long after retention experiences.

Additional analyses of the study variables revealed significance for self-esteem when academic support was considered. Retained individuals' sense of self-esteem was positively related to the academic support they felt from their fathers throughout school. One way to explain this finding is through Baumrind's (1971) theory of parenting, particularly the authoritative parenting style.

Authoritative parents encourage children to be independent, but still places limits and controls on their actions. Fathers could have played a more nurturing role, while maintaining limits and control, characterizing the authoritative parenting style (Baumrind, 1971). Father's support and interest may have contributed to building a stronger, more positive, and confident sense of self. This is consistent with research completed on parenting styles (Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, & Fraleigh, 1987; Steinberg, Elmen, & Mounts, 1989; Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch, & Darling, 1992). With a large sample of adolescents (4,100), Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg, and Dornbusch (1991) found that adolescents who characterized their parents as authoritative reported stronger psycho-social competence as compared to those adolescents who identified other parenting styles (authoritarian or neglectful).

When considering the entire sample (both retained and non-retained), a negative relationship was found for self-esteem and predicted math mark. This

may suggest that students blame some externalizing factor for their low marks, rather than internalizing the difficulties they are having with math and blaming themselves for lower grades in this subject area. For example, students may attribute poor grades to the math course itself, which could be extremely difficult and students are realistic about grade expectations. Literature on self-esteem and achievement suggests that individuals with higher self-esteem use effective adaptive strategies in regards to their academic achievement, and are less likely to internalize problems they face in their daily life, including academic performance. (Aunola, Stattin, & Nurmi, 2000). Also, it would have been more counterintuitive if self-efficacy, rather than self-esteem, was negatively related to perceived math performance, given that self-efficacy refers to perceptions of ability.

Academic Achievement

Since retention is a practice intended to help children academically, more emphasis has been placed on the academic achievement of retained students, rather than socio-emotional adjustment. Nonetheless, a small portion of retention research has identified either neutral (neither positive or negative) or positive results associated with academics and grade retention, similar to findings in the current study (Chansky, 1968; Finlayson, 1975; Kerzner, 1982; Leggette, 1982). Holmes (1989) found 9 of the 63 controlled studies within his meta-analysis reported positive achievement effects. In a more recent meta-analysis, Jimerson (2001) found 9 of the 91 statistically significant analyses favoured retained students, while 84 of the 175 analyses resulted in no significant differences between the retained and comparison groups, relative to academic achievement.

This suggests that while a small portion of the analyzed variables resulted in favour of the retained group, almost half of the variables indicated that both the retained and comparison groups were performing similarly in their academics. Since time was an important factor in the present study, it is important to keep in mind that many of these studies examined the short-term outcomes of retention. Therefore, the current study extends these findings by examining the long-term impact of grade retention through retrospective reports.

Analyses of correlations between participants' self-efficacy and demographic questions indicated both positive and negative significant relationships. Although Morgan and Jinks (1999) did not explicitly define the three subscales it is thought that talent refers to how an individual perceives his/her own general performance, as well as within specific subject areas (e.g., "I am a good math student," and "I am smart"). Second, the context subscale refers to an individual's perception of school and professor's perceptions of students (e.g., "Professors like students even if they do not always get good marks," or "I go to a good university"). Third, the effort subscale refers to perceptions of how hard and individual works, academically ("I work hard in university").

According to individual's who experienced retention, effort related self-efficacy was positively correlated with each subject areas (English, math, psychology, and science). The post-secondary students involved in the study have demonstrated academic success by graduating from high school with average marks (71-80 GPA), and furthering their education at university/college. It seems logical that these individuals would anticipate higher end of term marks,

as they reported a stronger sense of ability related to effort. Similarly the non-retained group reported a stronger sense of self-efficacy (talent) they anticipated to receive higher English marks and an overall GPA.

Negative correlations were found between academic talent/context with mother and father's support, respectively. Overall, these two areas reflect individual's perception of themselves as students, views of university, as well as views of professors. So, as participants reported higher self-efficacy, they reported lower amounts of academic support from their mothers and fathers. While these findings may seem counter-intuitive, one way to explain these findings would be to consider parenting styles.

The research on parenting styles has repeatedly shown parental nurturance may directly impact children's perceived academic ability (Baumrind, 1971; Lamborn et al., 1991). Baumrind's (1989) more recent work on parenting style identified a variant of the authoritative parenting style. She described directive parenting, which is defined as firm, directive parenting with less support than what is typically described in the authoritative style. This variant of the authoritative parenting style may have been what participants were describing with a stronger sense of self-efficacy (talent and context items) and a reduced sense of academic support from mothers and fathers on talent and context subscales. This may indicate that participants may have been self-efficacious and not requiring the support, which in turn resulted in little maternal/paternal support. It is also important to keep in mind that these correlations are bi-

directional. Therefore, individuals may have developed a stronger academic self-efficacy in their attempt to gain support from parents.

Self-Report Methodology

A distinct feature of the current study rests in the use of self-report methodology. Previously, many studies used parent/teacher reports to determine many variables around psychosocial well-being and achievement (Holmes, 1989; Jimerson, 2001). The current study takes the perspective of the individual who experienced grade retention, rather than using reports from professionals and parents. Perspective plays an important role when judging performance, particularly when socio-emotional variables are examined (Byrnes, in Shepard and Smith, 1989). Since previous research often relied on the viewpoint of parents/teachers, results are based on secondary perceptions of how well students adjusted before and after an event such as grade retention. The perspective of the individual who experienced the event may be very different, with the possibility of reporting a more positive experience (Plummer & Graziano, 1987; Rothstein, 2000). How a student perceives his/her own performance may be very different from how another person (teacher/parent) perceives the student's performance. For example, a student who performs below the class average may feel good about his/her personal performance, while the teacher perceives the student's performance as weak relative to his/her classmates. It is important to set goals for all children to help them achieve personal bests, which could be overlooked when educators compare students on achievement.

Additional Contributions of the Current Study

The current study adds novelty to the research on grade retention, and provides valuable insight into the population used for the research. First, the sample was comprised of university/college students, which means students in the retained group have already accomplished a great feat by graduating from high school and furthering themselves with a post-secondary education. Referring back to Jimerson's (1999) work, he found that within the retained group (29 students from a total sample of 129) 44% of the individuals had received a high school diploma. This was significantly lower than both the low-achieving group (72%) and the control group (percentage not available). Also, Jimerson found the retained group were least likely to be enrolled in post-secondary education when compared to the low-achieving and control groups (23%, 41%, and 56%, respectively). After matching groups for age, gender, race-ethnicity, socioeconomic status (SES), and achievement, Fine and Davis (2003) found that approximately 59% of retained students, who graduated from high school, had enrolled in a post-secondary education, as compared to 81% of their promoted peers. Considering these statistics, participants in the current study must value themselves, as a person (self-esteem) and/or in their ability to do well as a student (self-efficacy), in order to persist and be the "successes" of retention.

The literature on grade retention is filled with arguments for and against the retention process (Alexander, Entwisle, & Duaber, 1994; Jimerson, 2001). Even when time is considered, the short-term benefits are limited and the long-term consequences appear to have more negative outcomes (Holmes, 1989;

Jimerson, 2001; Shepard & Smith, 1989). What can be determined from the research is that while some children may benefit others do not, particularly with academics. Although the current study did not find diminished self-esteem or self-efficacy associated with retention, it supports the need to clarify the many inconsistencies within the research.

Caveats of the Current Study

Factors that need to be addressed when considering caveats to the current study are the reliance on retrospective self-reports and a revised self-efficacy measure. First, the study used self-reports to collect information on self-esteem and academic self-efficacy. A caveat to this method is the heavy reliance on honesty from participants to report true feelings and thoughts. Even so, self-reports provide a wealth of information from the perspective of the individual (Rothenstein, 2000).

The self-reports were also retrospective in nature, which leave room for error in the accuracy of recalling events that happened many years previous to reporting time. In this case, where participants recalled feelings and events from early school experiences, there is a huge gap in time (anywhere from 10 plus years) since grade retention and reporting early education/family experiences for the study. In spite of this, retrospective reporting is a common research method that has produced significant contributions to retention practices (Hagborg et al., 1991; Plummer & Graziano, 1987; Setencich, 1994; Thomas et al., 1992).

Also, it is important to consider is the use of a measure that was designed for an elementary sample in reporting self-efficacy. Although it was determined

to be a valid and reliable measure, according to Morgan and Jinks (1999), it may not have been as effective as a measure designed for an adult sample when gathering information on self-efficacy.

Finally, variables not accounted for such as, participant's self-motivation may have directed the current findings. Again, this is a sample of 'successful' retained students because they persevered and continued their education at a university/college. On the other hand, views of being retained could have changed from the actual time of retention. There is also the possibility that the retained group perceived themselves very differently at the time of retention as compared to now, which may be more reflective of the successes they have experienced as adults (i.e., graduating from high school, and/or attending a post-secondary institution).

Ideas for Future Research

A significant contribution to the area of grade retention would be conducting more longitudinal research, both prospective and retrospective. In addition, valuable information could be gathered through further follow-up from previous longitudinal studies. This would provide a wealth of information regarding the viewpoints and experiences of adults who were retained in early school experiences, while accounting for the many variables and factors that are potentially overlooked with retrospective reports.

Furthermore, analyses of retained individuals who have been successful versus those who have experienced more negative outcomes would provide

further insight into variables that contribute to long-term successes. It may also provide information related to how individuals' views may change over time.

Ideas for Future Practice

As a school psychologist, I feel it is important for professionals in the education system (school psychologists, teachers and administrative staff) to consider all options before making a final decision when retention is considered. Supports in the home, community, and school require consideration to evaluate their effectiveness. If support is questionable, professionals are obligated to exhaust resources to try and build the necessary supports for every child before using retention. Each participant in the current study was able to identify at least one person who supported him/her academically throughout school. Participants also appeared to report a stronger sense of self-esteem and self-efficacy.

Educational and community supports have the potential to help many children with minimal cost, such as peer tutors and mentoring programs. Peer tutors focusing on literacy and math skills can help build essential foundation skills. Mentoring programs such as Big Brothers/Big Sisters provide emotional as well as educational supports for children who may need additional support.

It is also important to determine if there are behavioural issues and if so what the root cause of the behaviour may be (academic/other). Although a variety of reasons for retention were noted in the current study, overall, many participants indicated academics as the reason for retention. If the problem is academics, restructuring the program to meet the child's needs is necessary for inclusion purposes. Examination of the child's learning style may reveal a learning

disability, in which case retention is not an effective practice. Again, evaluation of the curriculum is necessary to meet the needs of the child so learning is challenging, yet success is within reach.

As educators we need to be sensitive to both short-term as well as long-term effects of the decisions we make as professionals and educators. For some children retention is not the answer, while building supports may give them the chance they need to make it through school and become productive members of society. As for the small percentage of children, who may benefit from retention, we need to gain a clearer picture of personal characteristics as well as characteristics of their environment (supports) to identify what made the process a positive one.

We have a responsibility to our children, to build the strongest foundation we can so each child grows to be a productive member of society. Although it is difficult to tease apart what contributed to participant's success in the current study, it appears that not every person who has been retained faces an unpromising future. As a school psychologist, I feel that part of my responsibility is to try and understand the source of the problem and exhaust all resources to help each child, one child at a time. It is necessary to understand the resiliency individuals possess, like those in the current study, including contributing factors that promote success. Simply speaking to the individual may provide this insight into their needs and abilities.

The current study indicates that retained students can persevere academically. Moreover, it suggests that despite early school retention,

individuals, who continue onto post-secondary education, are comparable to non-retained peers in terms of self-esteem and self-efficacy. Again, further understanding of the intrinsic/extrinsic factors in the student's life may give us a better understanding of how we can help more students in the face of grade retention. This would enable us to provide the appropriate supports to remediate or compensate for weaknesses early in a child's life, such as academic difficulties.

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Appendix A

Consent Form

Demographics Questionnaire #1

Demographics Questionnaire #2

Consent Form

Date: March 2005

Dear Student,

My name is Angela Ellsworth and I am a graduate student in the Master of Art in School Psychology program at Mount Saint Vincent University. I am gathering information on student's self-esteem, self-efficacy, and the impact of early school experiences, under the supervision of Dr. Daniel Lagace-Seguin. Participation in this study involves completing the following questions as well as returning to the school, at a convenient time, to complete a set of short questionnaires. Your responses to the questionnaires will help in understanding the long-term impact of early school experiences.

Participation in this study is voluntary. It is important that you take care not to reveal any identifying information on any of the forms that you complete. There is one exception to this request, which is the requirement of a first name for contact purposes only at the beginning of the study. Completion of the questionnaires should take much less than 45 minutes to complete. You may discontinue participation at any time.

In reporting the results of the study you will not be identified in any way. If you would like to receive a general report at the study's conclusion, outlining general findings, please complete the bottom section of this letter and return it to me before leaving today.

This study has been reviewed and granted approval by the University Review Ethics Board (UREB). If you have any questions and/or concerns regarding the research or questionnaires, please contact me at (902) 457-6151, my thesis supervisor, Dr. Daniel Lagace-Seguin at (902) 457-6460 or the Chair of the University Ethics Review Board, Dr. Anthony Davis at (902) 457-6296.

Please tear this top page from the following questionnaire, and keep it for personal reference.

Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Angela Ellsworth, BA
M A in School Psychology Candidate
Mount Saint Vincent University

Daniel Lagace-Seguin, Ph.D
Assistant Professor
Mount Saint Vincent University
Department of Psychology

Demographic Questionnaire #1

A. Would you like to participate in the current research project? Yes _____ No _____

B. If yes, please provide a contact number where you can be reached _____.

C. When is the best time to reach you at this number?
day _____, evening _____, or weekends _____.

D. Also please provide your first name for calling purposes. _____.

Please complete the following questions if you agree to participate:

1. Age: 18-25 _____ 26-30 _____ 31-35 _____ 36-40 _____ 40+ _____

2. Gender: Male _____ Female _____

3. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

High School _____ College _____ University _____

4. What was your approximate graduating average from high school (grade 12 only)?

50-60 _____ 61-70 _____ 71-80 _____ 81-90 _____ 91-100 _____

5. What is your mother's level of education?

Did not finish high school _____
Graduated high school _____
Completed an undergraduate degree _____
Completed a graduated degree _____

6. What is your father's level of education?

Did not finish high school _____
Graduated high school _____
Completed an undergraduate degree _____
Completed a graduated degree _____

7. Were there any changes in your parents' marital status while you were in (**please circle**):

- Elementary school:	Yes	No	If yes, please specify _____
- Jr. High school:	Yes	No	If yes, please specify _____
- High school:	Yes	No	If yes, please specify _____
- Now:	Yes	No	If yes, please specify _____

8. Have you experienced any of the following (please circle Yes or No)?

a. A death of family member/close friend **in elementary**: Yes No
in middle school: Yes No
in high school: Yes No

b. An illness (self/other) **in elementary**: Yes No
in middle school: Yes No
in high school: Yes No

c. A significant move (in location) **in elementary**: Yes No
in middle school: Yes No
in high school: Yes No

d. A job loss by a parent **in elementary**: Yes No
in middle school: Yes No
in high school: Yes No

9. Have you ever been held back a grade at any point during your school experience (please circle one)?

Yes No

Demographics Questionnaire #2

Please complete the following questions:

1. Did you have academic supports at home throughout your education?

Yes No

2. How much did you feel supported academically by your mother?

Very much somewhat very little not at all

3. How did your mother support you with your academics? **(Check all choices that apply)**

- Invested interest in your work ____
- Spoke with teachers on a regular basis ____
- Helped with homework and projects ____

4. How much did you feel supported academically by your father?

Very much somewhat very little not at all

5. How did your father support you with your academics? **(Check all choices that apply)**

- Invested interest in your work ____
- Spoke with teachers on a regular basis ____
- Helped with homework and projects ____

6. Is there someone else who you would consider supported you with academics?

Yes No

7. How much did you feel supported academically by this person?

Very much somewhat very little not at all

8. How did this person support you with your academics? **(Check all choices that apply)**

- Invested interest in your work ____
- Spoke with teachers on a regular basis ____
- Helped with homework and projects ____

9. Who are you closer to:

Mother _____ Father _____ Other (relationship: _____)

10. Did you like school?

elementary	Yes	No
middle school	Yes	No
high school	Yes	No

11. How would you rank your academic success?

- Did very well so far
 Did okay but I tried very hard
 Could do better if I tried harder
 Can't seem to do well

12. Do you find yourself to be a perfectionist when it comes to academics?

- Yes very much
 Somewhat
 only with subjects that hold my interest
 not at all

13. How would you describe your relationships with peers?

Great Good Satisfactory Poor

14. How many close friends do you have?

1-2 3-4 5-6 6 or more

ONLY complete the following questions if you have been held back during your school experience.

15. What grade were you held back?

Kindergarten primary 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

16. What was the reason(s) for holding you back for an extra year? Rank the following that are appropriate to your situation:

- Academics
 Social
 Transfer (from one school to another)
 Other (Explain _____)

17. How did it make you feel? (Circle all choices that apply)

Joy Sadness Anger Fear Surprised Acceptance Expectant Disgust

18. How did your mother react to the decision?

Fully Agreed Somewhat agreed Disagreed

19. How did your father react to the decision?

Fully Agreed Somewhat agreed Disagreed

20. If you identified a significant other above as supportive of your academics, how did that person react to the decision?

Fully Agreed Somewhat agreed Disagreed

21. Did you take part in the decision-making process?

Yes No

22. Do you think it affected your relationship to:

(A) Mother – YES NO

(B) Father – YES NO

(C) Other – YES NO

23. If you feel it affected your relationship, the change was:

with (A) **mother** Positive OR Negative OR Neither

with (B) **father** Positive OR Negative OR Neither

with (C) **other** Positive OR Negative OR Neither

24. How would you describe your experiences during the year you were held back?

Positive Negative Neither positive/negative

Appendix B

Morgan-Jinks Student Self-Efficacy Inventory

Please complete the following questions in relation to your university experience.

Statement:	Really Agree	Kind of Agree	Kind of Disagree	Really Disagree
1. I work hard in university				
2. I could get the best marks in class if I tried enough				
3. Most of my classmates like Math because it is easy. (Mark an N/A if statement does not apply to you)				
4. I would get better marks if my professor liked me better.				
5. Most of my classmates work harder on their work than I do.				
6. I am a good Science student. (Mark an N/A if statement does not apply to you)				
7. I will graduate from university.				
8. I go to a good university.				
9. I always get good marks when I try hard.				
10. Sometimes I think an assignment is easy when my classmates think it is hard.				
11. I am a good Social Sciences student. (Mark an N/A if statement does not apply to you)				
12. People with good jobs probably were good students in school/university.				
13. I am one of the best students in my classes.				
14. No one cares if I do well in school.				
15. My professors think I am smart.				
16. It is important to go to university.				
17. I am a good Math student. (Mark an N/A if statement does not apply to you)				

Statement:	Really Agree	Kind of Agree	Kind of Disagree	Really Disagree
18. My classmates usually get better marks than I do.				
19. What I learn in university is not important.				
20. I usually understand my class assignments.				
21. I usually do not get good marks in Math because it is too hard. (Mark an N/A if statement does not apply to you)				
22. It does not matter if I do well in university.				
23. Peers who get better grades than I do get more help from the professors than I do.				
24. I am a good English student. (Mark an N/A if statement does not apply to you)				
25. It is not hard for me to get good marks in university.				
26. I am smart.				
27. I will quit university as soon as I can.				
28. Professors like students even if they do not always make good marks.				
29. When the professor asks questions I usually know the answer even if the other students don't.				

What do you expect your overall average will be this year?

50-60 _____ 61-70 _____ 71-80 _____ 81-90 _____ 91-100 _____

What mark do you expect for Science classes? A B C D F NA

What mark do you expect for Math classes? A B C D F NA

What mark do you expect for Psychology classes? A B C D F NA

What mark do you expect for English classes? A B C D F NA