

**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY**

**THE PRACTICE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN RURAL PUBLIC PRIMARY  
SCHOOLS IN UGUNJA DIVISION OF SIAYA DISTRICT**

**CSO 698: PROJECT PAPER**

**A PROJECT PAPER SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
MASTERS OF ARTS DEGREE IN SOCIOLOGY**

**BY:**

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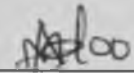


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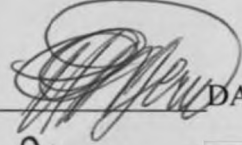
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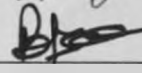
**DECLARATION**

I declare that this is my original work and that it has not been submitted in any examination.

ADOO MARYAM OSORE  DATE 19/11/2007

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## **DEDICATION**

This Project is dedicated to my late Father Mr.Siang'ani Osore for the inspiration and the last word he left me with to ensure that pursue a second degree.

To my loving daughter Tracy and Malcolm for their understanding and encouragement throughout the course and production of this project paper.

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To GOD be the glory!

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## ABSTRACT

This study is an effort to examine the practice of Corporal Punishment in rural public primary schools in Kenya. In order to give a conceptual explanation to this practice as a method of instilling and maintaining discipline. The debate on the practice of Corporal Punishment is symptomatic of a predicament that deserves some attention. The main objective of the study therefore was to establish the extent of the practice of corporal punishment, its perception by various stakeholders and to establish factors that account for its persistent use in spite of the ban. The study based its theoretical framework on various Sociological Theories ranging from Structural Functionalism, Behaviorist theory, Social Learning.

The study was carried out in Ugunja Division of Siaya District in Nyanza province. The study only covered corporal punishment in Rural Public Primary Schools focusing mainly on upper primary pupils. The respondents totaling to one hundred and twenty comprised various stakeholders in the educational enterprise such as pupils, teachers, Head teachers, parent officers from the Ministry of education and teachers service commission.

The study being qualitative research principally employed the descriptive approach in its Endeavour to clarify and analyze the concept of corporal punishment in so far as it affects the education practice and theory in Kenya. Both Primary and Secondary sources of data were used. Interviewing was the main method of data collection, a questionnaire and a structured interview guide being the main tools of data collection.

The study concludes with the actual situation on the use of corporal punishment in rural schools in the area and notes that the use of corporal punishment is still prevalent despite its ban by the government in the year 2001. The mode of corporal punishment established in the findings are caning, pinching, slapping and kicking, from the study, majority of pupil's are subjected to corporal punishment and many consider it to be effective in changing pupil's behavior. A much stronger case has been made for reform as a reason for punishing children. The 'sharp shock' involved in punishment appears to have the capacity to bring children to

their senses from the world of fantasy and help establish them in socially more desirable forms of conduct. Corporal punishment therefore, is a social predicament not only practiced in schools but also in homes. This is because many parents adhere to the Biblical Solomon dictum that, "He who spare the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him" (Proverbs 20:30; 22:15).

Various factors that enhance this practice are also examined in the study and teachers particularly use corporal punishment because the available alternative forms of punishment have drawbacks and are difficult to implement. The study ends with recommendations that organically grow from discussions developed in the study such as:

- Regular visits to schools by the Ministry of Education to monitor the implementation of the ban would be ideal.
- Educationists should create awareness to the communities on the need to discard traditional modes of discipline like corporal punishment.
- Ministry of Education should stipulate forms of punishment to be used in schools.

It should also employ more teachers to reduce the big teacher: pupil ratio to enable the teachers to monitor and supervise alternative  $\xi$  to corporal punishment.



## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background to the study

A school is a socialization agent, where learning process is associated with interaction between persons. Psychology of learning states that the behavior of one person affects the behavior of another, for example, one individual may influence another when he rewards or punishes him for certain responses. The main purpose of punishment is to minimize the recurrence of a particular action. Actions reinforced according to appropriate schedules become habitual as a result. Punishment, however, is intended to prevent undesirable behavior and not to establish some particular behavior. Although Punishment may temporarily suppress a particular behavior, it does not permanently weaken the motivation to perform that action, which is why you find teachers punishing a student even three times for the same offence (Paul and Carl, 1964). Technically, punishment is simply a word used to describe a consequence that when supplied reduces behavior. For many adults, there is a blur between punishment for the sake of punishment i.e. retribution, an eye-for-an-eye and punishment for the sake of therapy i.e. behavior reduction.

Education, more than any other single initiative has the capacity to foster development, awaken talent, empower people and protect their rights. Investing in education is the surest and most direct way a country can promote its own economy and social welfare and lays the foundation for a democratic society. Free Primary Education (FPE) was launched by the Ministry of Education on 6th.June 2003, as a commitment to realization of Universal Primary Education (UPE) by 2005 and Education for All (EFA) by 2015.This may be hindered in areas where corporal punishment is still used on students. Corporal punishment is a significant factor in leading to students dropping out of school. This is because if they don't accept the punishment given they are sent out of school. Therefore, most of the dropout problem is generally due to the teacher brutality. Where as it is expected that the school environment should ensure greater teacher-pupil relationship to enhance effective learning, pupils are punished for various reasons, some of which are petty offences like, failing to do home work, going to school late, absences from school, rudeness, noisemaking and even speaking native language. Corporal punishment can impair the child's enjoyment of the right to education and may undermine the purpose of Education as enshrined in the Convention on

the Rights of the Child .The committee on the Rights of the Child has stated categorically that all forms of corporal punishment are incompatible with the protections given to children under the Convention (Human Rights Watch Report, 1999:48)

Corporal punishment was abolished in 2001 through Legal Notice No.5613 March.2001.This was because it was seen to discourage children from attending school due to fear instilled by it, therefore hindering the objective of the government to promote education to all its members. (Daily Nation, 13<sup>th</sup> March 2001 and 25<sup>th</sup> July 2001). It is expected that teachers should make schools child-friendly learning environment. They should counsel and guide pupils during school hours and encourage them to come to school and make them enjoy learning. This has not been the case in most rural public primary schools.

Kenyan press has given extensive coverage to incidents of serious injuries caused by corporal punishment. Note that, it is only extreme cases of corporal punishment that are highlighted i.e. cases where a pupil is hurt. Otherwise where there are no visible injuries the pupil has no case to pursue. Moreover, pupils raising complaints about corporal punishment face giving up school altogether, for transfer to another school after refusing to accept the imposition of corporal punishment is impossible. This therefore should make the issue be addressed seriously as many children are suffering silently.

Banning of corporal punishment has been met with a lot of resistance in these rural areas. Infact, teachers have for years persistently preferred using this technique in managing disciplinary cases. In most schools, virtually every classroom teacher has a cane and uses it; many routinely carry canes with them for easy accessibility in their classrooms; canes lean against the wall in many head teachers' offices and adorn teacher's desk in some classrooms. Corporal punishment is still commonly practiced in rural public schools and has led to pupils dropping out of school.

## 1.2. Problem Statement

While some teachers and parents may feel that for a child to learn, it is necessary to experience pain, to the contrary the use of various types of punishment may hinder learning, encourage or lead to drop out of school, and generally undermine the purpose of education. According to Vockell (1991) three specific advantages of corporal punishment are that it is

very likely to be perceived by the recipient as unpleasant, it can be administered quickly and life can return to more productive activities and its meaning is clear and easily communicated.

These reasons may also be shared by some of the teachers who are great advocates of corporal punishment. However, Straus (1994) stresses that punishment is degrading, contributes to feelings of helplessness and humiliation, robs a child of self-worth and self-respect and can lead to withdrawal or aggression. Odera (1976:121) on the other hand defines punishment as the “infliction of pain by a certain authority”. This means that the authority must inflict pain intentionally if the inflictions should be called punishment. This is actually what corporal punishment is. For example, standing on one foot holding 2 heavy rocks or books on each hand for as long as two hours, walking around the field on your knees, caning etc.

A student teacher at KTTC wrote an Article on standard July 19<sup>th</sup> 2006 entitled “Canning is the most effective punishment”. This and other teachers oppose the ban of corporal punishment claiming that other forms of punishments are too lenient and will not work today or in the future. For example an hour or two in detention is nothing to a rude pupil. Whereas suspension is more of a reward than a punishment, a much appreciated vacation. Punishment therefore is meant to be painful in order to act as a deterrent. They argue that corporal punishment is the only way of maintaining order in schools and respect for teachers. Teenagers have become too rebellious and counseling alone cannot work. The heavy punishment in the olden days forced student to obey school rules whether they liked them or not. They feel that corporal punishment is an efficacious technique of training and discipline. According to them, these children are better controlled; learn appropriate appreciation for authority, develop better social skills as well as improved moral character and discipline themselves better. Physical punishment is the only technique left to preserve academic control; if this is the case, has the ban of corporal punishment in our schools reduced discipline in our classrooms, decreased students respect for teachers or authority figures? The research is to establish this.

Human Rights Watch encountered several reports of other forms of punishments that are arguably forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. For example, in many schools teachers force students to kneel for long periods at the front of the classroom as a form of punishment. This is intended to shame students. Besides, kneeling for long periods on uneven

concrete or dirty floors sometimes also leads to swollen, bruised, or cut knees and legs, (Human Rights Watch Report, 1999: 47). Similarly, many schools and teachers make students engage in physical labor as a punishment, distinct from ordinary classroom chores which all students might be called on to perform: digging trenches, slashing grass, or uprooting tree stumps are all commonly cited punishments. Some teachers assign other forms of physical activity as a punishment, forcing students to run around the school compound repeatedly, for instance. Still other teachers require students to clean the school toilets as punishment.

According to Lagat (1999:3), much has been discussed by the Kenyan educators and children's rights activists about the negative effects of corporal punishment. However, very little has been done to unearth the forms of punishment that are to be used other than counseling. The discussions pose it to look like corporal punishment is the most commonly form of punishment used in primary schools especially in rural areas. A rural primary school head teacher was quoted in an interview with Human Rights Watch as Saying, "Without caning, school would not run smoothly. To use other forms of discipline would require more time and time is not enough."

Specifically, the Research Questions are:

1. What are the punishment options in rural public primary schools and with what consequences?
2. What are the different perceptions of corporal punishment among teachers, pupils, parents and the community?
3. What factors account for the practice and persistence of corporal punishment in rural public primary schools?
4. What are the impacts of corporal punishment in these schools?

### **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

#### **Broad objective**

The broad objective of this study was to carry out a situational analysis of the practice of corporal punishment in rural public primary schools in Ugunja Division of Siaya District in Kenya.

#### **Specific objectives**

The study was guided by the following specific objectives:

1. To establish the magnitude of corporal punishment in rural public primary schools.
2. To establish the perception of corporal punishment among teachers, pupils, parents and the community.
3. To identify factors associated with the practice and persistence of corporal punishment.
4. To establish the handling (action taken on) of corporal punishment by different stakeholders (pupils, teachers, parents, community and the Ministry of Education.)

### **1.4. Scope of the Study**

The study was carried out in Ugunja Division of Siaya District. It focused on the magnitude, the perception and various reasons for the practice and persistence of corporal punishment. The study only covered corporal punishment in primary public schools specifically the upper primary. This is because this particular group of students has been in the school the longest compared to their junior counter part and also this age group is many a time considered problematic to many teachers and parents. The focus of primary schools was based on the fact that this is the initial set-up from which the pupils are molded in terms of character and discipline.

The major set back anticipated was dishonesty among the teachers given that the practice is illegal and therefore fear of victimization may hinder honesty. The study focusing on the whole country or even the whole district would be essential but would involve a lot of resources, both financial and human, and since the researcher is in full time employment, the

logistics that would be required are way beyond my scope thus rendering it impossible to carry out such a study.

### **1.5 Rationale of the Study**

Though information is available on the practice of corporal punishment in rural primary schools in Kenya, substantive studies to draw lessons from on the effects of corporal punishments on school-going children are not documented. There is therefore need to document findings from such experiences.

The attitude of parents in rural areas due to traditional belief needs to be changed because they are in a way contributing to the continuity of corporal punishment. According to Collins (1996) 'older people are relatively rigid and less able to adopt new skills'. This probably accounts to the reason why parents in rural areas are adamant to the problem of corporal punishment. Many Kenyan adults were caned regularly when they were children and many believe firmly in the validity of the Biblical precept, 'spare the rod, and spoil the child'. Corporal punishment in these areas has a high degree of acceptance, even approval. Children who are not injured at the hands of their teachers generally can make no formal complain at all without dire consequences. Those who protest ill treatment are often forced to leave schools altogether-effectively losing their chances for an education. They therefore fear retaliation from teachers and head teachers.

This study was therefore timely, appropriate and justified on the following grounds:

- a) The study attempted to expose the reasons for practice and persistence of corporal punishment in rural primary schools.
- b) The study provides background information that is useful to the ministry of education, teachers and parents in preventing the use of corporal punishments on the children.
- c) The contribution of knowledge for conducting replica studies in other parts of the country by scholars and academicians in future will help in development of policies related to effective behavior change without inflicting much pain to the pupils.

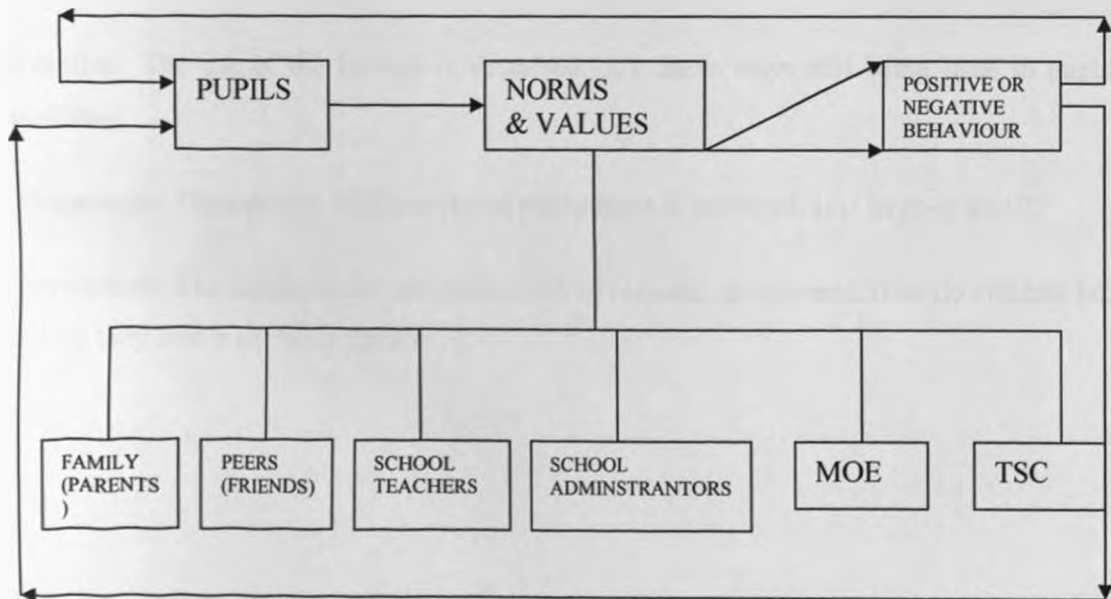
## 1.6 Conceptual framework

The pupil is born into a society that has its value system and moral codes from which he/she is subjected to special influences since as peers, family, school teachers, school administration and the MOE and TSC which regulate any excesses in the administration of corporal punishment. The special groups impart in the pupil certain school rules and regulations, norms and values which are either rewarded or punished depending on whether the pupil understood and acted within the requirements of school rules and regulations. The deviants are punished by corporal punishment or the alternative option. This results in an outcome of behavior which can be positive or negative. The pupil belief system will change and he/she will replicate the same violent behavior on weaker persons in future. When corporal punishment elicits a positive behavior the individual will be positive even when he/she assumes roles of parenthood.

The study digs on the background of parents to determine if they were subjected to corporal punishment and are likely to repeat. According to social learning theorists children who experience aggressive acts are more likely to counter attack and use violence against defenseless members of the society. When these pupils understand the reasons for punishment and accept their mistakes it has a positive bearing which impacts on child's future behavior as a parent.

However, when they are not told reasons for punishment and don't understand their mistakes corporal punishment will impact negatively. The cycle develops in which norms and values are imparted from home through school and influenced by functions of authorities like TSC and MOE.

### Conceptual model of corporal punishment



The cycle of positive and negative behaviors shows a repeat as a result of reward or punishment

The child is subjected to societal norms and values that give her particular value system. This are imparted by social groups in the society that include the family, peers, school teachers, school administrators and the functions of MOE and TSC. The outcomes of these interactions are either a reward or corporal punishment. The corporal punishment is designed to change any deviation from the societal norms to become positive. The investigation of this study is to determine if the pupil is exposed to the societal norms and regulations. (Read school rules and regulations) does the pupil conform to the rules or deviates to merit punishment? Is he or she aware of the repercussions of breaking school rules and regulations? What are forms of punishment meted out? Does it have any significant bearing on the outcomes of behavior? - (The impacts of punishment)

The outcome of behavior can determine if it deserves rewards or punishment. The reverse is true where the subject is punished or rewarded undeservingly hence acquires negative or positive behavior whichever is reinforced.

### 1.6.1 Operational definitions of concepts

**Corporal punishment:** The infliction of pain by a certain authority of the use of physical force with the intention of causing one to experience pain with the intention of changing behavior.

**Indicators** – spanking, caning, slapping, hitting with an object, pinching, excessive shaking etc.

**Practice:** The use of the indicators described. Are these ways still being used to punish children?

**Magnitude:** The extent to which corporal punishment is practiced. Is it large or small?

**Perception:** The insight or the comprehension of corporal punishment. How do children take it? Do they find it useful or futile?



## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW/THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Corporal punishment such as spanking, shaking, excessive exercise, and confinement in uncomfortable place, and caning has not stopped and in some schools has not been significantly reduced. Psychologists and other professionals are divided on the question of whether the benefits of corporal punishment might outweigh any potential hazards. Some have concluded that corporal punishment is both effective and desirable whereas others have concluded that corporal punishment is ineffective at best and harmful at worst.

### **2:1 Justification for Corporal Punishment.**

The advocates for corporal punishment argue that corporal punishment needs to be distinguished from physical abuse. They assert that corporal punishment encompasses the use of “reasonable” force with some adding qualifiers. However, “reasonable” is not well defined as what is reasonable to one may not be reasonable to a child. Moreover Straus’ (1994:13) definition of corporal punishment is “the use of physical force with the intention of causing a child to experience “pain” but not “injury” for the purpose of correction or control of the child’s behavior”. However, Most of this pain ends up being injuries.

Other advocates of corporal punishment such as Tauber (1999) say that a large body of research, all of it carried out with children, suggests that corporal punishment for incorrect behavior leads to faster learning than does reinforcement for incorrect behavior and that a combination of reinforcement and corporal punishment is no better than punishment alone. However, he stresses that it is better to combine punishment with positive statements so that while the undesirable behavior is weakened, it is important to teach correct behavior. He also quotes Bauwer (1990) as commenting that corporal punishment is effective, in the sense that it serves as a useful behavioral management instrument for suppressing undesirable behavior. He adds that corporal punishment restores classroom order; it promotes discipline and early moral development by teaching pupils to obey rules and follow instructions.

Also in support of corporal punishment is Armstrong (1984) who argues that teachers are professional educators who are trained to deal with children and can be trusted to use the

paddle. This however has not been the case as there have been many cases where these professionals have failed the trust and injured the children severely.

The potential benefits of corporal punishment according to utilitarianism are two fold:

1. General deterrence -meaning that people will be less likely to commit offence in general because they know there is a chance they will be severely punished.
2. Individual deterrence – the experience of being severely punished once for an offence will influence an individual not to commit that offence again.

Utilitarian theorists are forward looking; they are concerned with the consequences of punishment rather than the wrong done, which being in the past cannot be altered. The major flaw in this theory is failure to understand the fact that a person should be an end in itself and not a means to an end. If the purpose of the corporal punishment is to deter future offence then, in a sense you are using the current person being punished to prevent future offences rather than help the victim.

According to Paul and Carl (1964) the most justification for punishment is responsibility. The child is being trained to be responsible in one-way or another. Usually a child is said to deserve the punishment on the ground that he is charged to be responsible for having broken the rule. This implies that, the person acted of his own free will, which may not be the case in most cases.

Arthur & Elaine (1986) also in support of corporal punishment say that punishment is chosen according to the magnitude of the problem. The effect of the punishment will depend on its nature. If minor, the other children can ignore and make the same mistake; if heavy then they can get scared. Therefore the child should be punished in such a way that he learns a lesson. Thus a burnt child dreads fire.

## **2:2 Arguments against corporal punishment**

According to Odera (1976:43), “Punishment is a means to an end. Infact, it is the roughest and the most cruel means to that end”. He further argues against any form of punishment by saying that usually, pain is inflicted on the offender or he/she suffers loss or denial on the ground that he/she is believed to have broken the rule which is the authority’s duty or right to protect. The rule could have been broken intentionally, by negligence or through ignorance.

These are cases where you find a teacher striking or spanking the child instantly. They fail to take into consideration the cause or reason for breaking the rule. But then, what makes pupils break the rules? Isn't there a way children can be prevented from breaking the rules instead of waiting till they break it then punish them? He concludes that the concept of punishment is so "rotten" that we should do away with them altogether and substitute fresh ideas for them. He does not however, suggest the substitutes. Just like the Ministry of Education has not stipulated forms of punishment to be followed in schools. It has left the forms of punishment at the discretion of the Head teachers who formulate rules and regulations in their various schools. Counseling stipulated to substitute corporal punishment has not taken off effectively.

Campbell (1977) argues that to depend on corporal punishment, as the principle method of discipline is to make the critical error in assuming that discipline equals punishment. It therefore makes sense to explore alternatives including reasoning, discussions, time out and many others. Children's internalization of morals is thought to be enhanced by discipline strategies that use minimal force, promote choice and autonomy and provide explanations for desirable behaviors. This is what is being considered by the majority of teachers advocating for uplifting the ban as 'slow and time consuming'.

### **2:3 Psychologists' view on Corporal Punishment**

B.F. Skinner (1953:138) states "the contingent presentation of a negative reinforcer and contingent withdrawal of a positive reinforcer has been effective and available" Punishment is employed by teachers because they hold the theory that a child may become evil if his transgression is not dealt with immediately. His views ignore the punishment for undesired behaviors, instead concentrating upon the reinforcement of desired behaviors. How possible is this in a classroom situation where there are bullies?

Skinner's arguments against retaining corporal punishment as an educator include:

- (a) What is often claimed as a last resort, when all-else fails is used too soon and too often, therefore undermining the search for appropriate alternatives.
- (b) Punishment turns kids off learning and inadvertently teaches them that the 'might makes right' force is the solution of choice in any conflict-home, school or community.

On the other hand, psychologists advise that teachers should use treatment, other than punishment. Treatment aims at eliminating the basic causes of indiscipline. Teachers should investigate the psychology, economic background, heredity, and the environment of the indisciplined child. Having collected enough data from such a study, they will then be able to understand the personality or the character of the indisciplined child. For example, if it is stealing, the child, can be provided with the items be it stationery or food. Alternatively the school can have standard meals in school or have rules preventing any food to be brought in school. Getting the root problem will solve the problem rather than caning or using other forms of punishment. If a child stole food because he was hungry; that will not stop him from stealing food next time he is hungry no matter how many beatings he receives. This is what the teachers and institutions should understand. A child who goes late to school because he was given domestic chores in the morning as many children in rural primary schools do; the parents are the ones who need to be punished not a teacher standing at the gate to cane the student. This will not deter the behavior. If the purpose of punishment is deterrence, then if punishment does not deter, it ought to be abolished and replaced with something else.

#### **2:4 Teachers' arguments**

The primary goal most teachers have in administering corporal punishment is to stop children from misbehaving immediately. They argue that FPE has necessitated the use of corporal punishment. The massive enrolment of youngsters in public schools has reduced the ratio of teacher to pupils considerably. The end result is that teachers are unable to cope with the work load leave alone spare time to do counseling, given that individual counseling requires time and constant follow up. Others also argue that with FPE, children were absorbed from outside school that came with wayward behavior like drug abuse, violence etc. Such children may only understand the language of the cane. Only the cane can tame the wayward behavior. (Standard News paper, July 19<sup>th</sup> 2006)

A teacher has gone to the extent of suing the Ministry of Education over the caning ban. Mr. Kaloki a teacher from Kitui who also doubles up as the Mutungoini. Division Children's Officer has gone into history for suing the Ministry of Education. He has gone to court to have the Ministry of Education reinstate the cane it banned six years ago. He certainly does not consider the bodily harm of learners. He does, not realize that corporal punishment is barbaric and an infringement of youngster's human rights.

Children's Act section 127 subsection 1, states that, 'anybody who assaults a child is guilty of a felony and is punishable by law. Kaloki places his argument on subsection 5 of the same section which states that 'Nothing takes away the right of a Parent, Guardian or Custodian of a child to punish a child reasonably. Kaloki's argument may also be supported by Carl & Paul (1964) who outline another purpose of punishment as reformation. Punishment of any form aims at reforming the character of the students who are ill mannered. The teacher's interest is to make him a decent citizen. However, What is reasonable to one person, may be unreasonable to another, with the likes of Mr. Kaloki, Its no wonder that corporal punishment is returning to rural primary public schools particularly Siaya district.

## **2.5 Impacts of corporal punishment**

i) According to Grusel & Goodnow (1994) the primary goal most teachers have in administering corporal punishment is to stop children from misbehaving immediately. Laboratory research on learning has confirmed that corporal punishment is indeed effective in securing immediate compliance. However, this compliance is short term and it is because corporal punishment does not promote moral internalization. Children's internalization of morals is thought to be enhanced by discipline strategies that use minimal power, promote choice and autonomy, and provide explanations for desirable behaviors.

ii) Secondly, corporal punishment has been implicated with antisocial behaviors and delinquency in children. This results from the inability of corporal punishment to facilitate children's internalization of moral values. Corporal punishment has also been associated with increases in children's aggressive behaviors, because it models aggression and promotes hostile attributions, which predict violent behavior. Early experiences with corporal punishment may model and legitimize many types of violence throughout an individual's life. (Campbell 1992)

iii) Physical abuse is another potential outcome of corporal punishment. If corporal punishment is administered too severely or too frequently the outcome can be physical abuse, which in most cases is.

iv) Corporal punishment is also known to erode Teacher – child relationship and in turn decreases children's motivation to internalize school values and those of the society, which in turn results in low self-control. The painful nature of corporal punishment can evoke feelings of fear, anxiety and anger in children; if these emotions are generalized to the

teacher, they can interfere with a positive teacher – child relationship by inciting children to be fearful of and to avoid the teacher. This will erode bonds of trust and closeness between parents and children. (E.T Gershoff 2002)

vi) Corporal punishment constructs an environment of education, which can be described as unproductive, nullifying and punitive. Children become victims and trepidation is introduced to all in such a classroom. There is limited (if any) sense of confidence and security, and even those children who are witnesses or victims of such abuse can develop low self-esteem, magnified guilt feelings and acquisition of anxiety symptoms. Hyman a professor of psychology persistently assert that approximately half of the students who are subjected to physical punishment develop an illness called EIPSD- Educationally Induced Post-Trauma Stress Disorder. In this disorder, there is symptomatology analogous to the PTSS- Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome. With EIPSD, the stress is the inflicted punishment. Such victimized students can have difficulty sleeping, fatigue, feeling of sadness and worthlessness, suicidal thoughts anxiety episodes, increased anger with feeling of resentment and outbursts of aggression, deteriorating peer relationships, difficulty with concentration, lowered school achievement, anti-social behavior intense dislikes of authority, somatic complaints tendency for school avoidance, school dropout and other evidence of negative high risk adolescent behavior. Such children become rebellious and are more likely to demonstrate vindictive behavior, seeking retribution against school officials and others in society. (Hyman et al 1977)

## 2.6 Theoretical Framework

### Sociological perspective

Every culture contains a large number of guidelines that direct conduct in particular situations. Such guidelines are known as *norms*. Norms define appropriate and acceptable behavior in specific situations. They are enforced by positive and negative sanctions, which may be formal or informal, that is, rewards and punishments. The sanctions, which enforce norms, are major part of the mechanism of social control, which are concerned with maintaining order in society. In the case of the study corporal punishment.

The study adopted a positivist's approach, which seeks social laws that enable predictions about social behavior. In their search for social laws, the positivists look for determining causes of events. Accessing the facts is very mandatory to them, for instance, asking questions like why do children break the school rules and behave the way they do. Their emphasis on observable 'facts' is due largely to the belief that human behavior can be explained.

## **Structural Functionalism**

### **Social order**

The study made reference to structural functionalism. The theory treats society as a system, which obeys its own laws. It assumes a certain degree of order and stability is essential for the survival of social systems. The theory is therefore concerned with explaining the origin and maintenance of order and stability in society, which was very vital for this study. Given the functionalist view of social system, the study leads to an assessment of the contribution made by corporal punishment to the maintenance of social order. The major functionalist theorists considered in this study are Emile Durkheim and Talcott Parson.

### **Emile Durkheim**

This French sociologist saw the major function of education as the transmission of society's norms and values. He argues that in complex industrial societies, the school serves a function, which cannot be provided either by family, or peer group, School therefore is society in miniature, a model of the social system. He further explains how in school the child must interact with other members of the school community in a *fixed set of rules*. This experience prepares him/her for interacting with members of society as a whole in terms of society's rules. Durkheim believed that school rules should be strictly enforced. Punishment should reflect the seriousness of the damage done to the social group by the offence, and it should be made clear to the transgressors why they were being punished. They would therefore learn to exercise self-discipline, not just because they wanted to avoid punishment but also because they would come to see that misbehavior damaged society as a whole. He states 'it is by respecting the school rules that a child learns to respect rules in general that develops the habit of self control and restraint simply because he should control and restrain himself.' (Haralambos et al 1995:727)

He also argues that beliefs and moral codes are passed on from one generation to the next and shared by the individuals who make up a society. From this point of view it is not the consciousness of the individual that directs behavior but common beliefs and sentiments that transcend the individual and shape his/her consciousness, thus character. This is very relevant to this study, which is concerned with correcting a child's behavior.

### **Talcott Parson**

Talcott Parson an American sociologist also echoes the question of social order and how this state of affair can be accomplished. He believes that only a commitment to common values provides a basis for order. In Parson's view, fear of the consequences is insufficient to motivate people to obey rules, thus rendering corporal punishment valueless to students and school as a whole. He looks at the process of socialization and social control as fundamental to the equilibrium of the social system and therefore to order in society, in this case school. This is very relevant to the study to both advocates and critics of corporal punishment (Haralabos et al 1995)

### **Social Learning Theory**

According to Social Learning Theory, children who experience aggressive acts are more likely to counter attack. These victims of aggressive acts eventually learn through modeling to initiate aggressive interchanges. Therefore the use of corporal punishment in our schools will promote a very precarious message that violence is an acceptable phenomenon in our society. The result is that we are harming our children in teaching them that violence is acceptable especially against the weak, defenseless. (Patterson GR, 1982) Straus (1994) substantiates the following consequences as he opposes the use of corporal punishment.

- (i) The more a child is hit, the more likely it is that the child when an adult will hit his or her children.
- (ii) Corporal punishment is degrading and contributes to feelings of helplessness, humiliation, robs a child of self-worth and self respect and can lead to withdrawal or aggression.
- (iii) Children who get spanked regularly are more likely overtime to cheat or lie, be disobedient at schools, bully others and show less remorse for wrongdoing.
- (iv) Corporal punishment adversely affects children's cognitive development and therefore performs poorly on school tasks compared to other children.



The shepherd does not use the rod to hit the sheep. The shepherd uses the rod to guide and protect them from the menace of the wolves. Some how now the meaning has changed, whereby the rod is no longer viewed as the *guider* and *protector* but the punisher. When keenly considered, the children for whom corporal punishment will work can be controlled in other ways whereas the “real problems” won’t be deterred by it.

## **Behaviorist Theories**

### **Operant Conditioning**

Operant Conditioning also labeled instrumental learning is the term used by B.F. Skinner to describe the effects of the consequences of a particular behavior on the future occurrence of that behavior. Reinforcement and punishment are the core tools of Operant Conditioning. These can either be positive (delivered following a response) or negative (withdrawn following a response). Therefore positive refers to addition and negative refers to subtraction and what is added or subtracted may be either reinforcement or punishment. Positive punishment denotes the addition of punishment such as spanking and canning etc. This is also known as punishment by contingent stimulation. This occurs when a behavior is followed by an aversive stimulus, which is corporal punishment. There is also negative punishment which occurs when a behavior is followed by the removal of a favorable stimulus, such as taking away a child’s time for lunch or break following undesirable behavior, resulting in a decrease in that behavior.

There is also reinforcement, which occurs when a behavior is followed by a favorable stimulus that increases the frequency of that behavior. This is a good alternative to punishment because it can encourage the other students observing to improve in their behavior so as to be rewarded. For example a child who is always late to school, the day he happens to be punctual should be rewarded so as to increase the frequency of that behavior.

Operant reinforcement not only shapes the topography of behavior but it maintains it in strength, long after an operant has been formed. Operant Conditioning can greatly influence educational practices because children at all ages exhibit behavior and teachers by definition are behavior modifiers. (B.F Skinner 1953)

## **Humanistic Theories**

These theories believe that there is no behavior that is not guided by an attitude. For them man encounters this world as a game and he is busy trying to cope with this game with a variety of strategies. The game according to them must continue and where you see change of behavior, they are trying to survive. These theories therefore require us to understand and find out why people behave the way they do and not just punish them for misbehaving. It further describes how man changes in 3 different levels. For instance in Rational Spiritual Level, man needs to be equipped with the knowledge of how he should behavior. If not provided the individual is likely to be engaged in behavior not acceptable unknowingly. Therefore Rules and Regulations are to be stipulated clearly in schools so that the pupils know what is expected of them.

## **Social Cognitive Theory**

This theory states that change in behavior will include an integration of the information and attitudinal change. If you want to change the behavior of a person, first you must change the attitude of the person by providing necessary information to that person to persuade him/her to change behavior. How much are our teachers doing that? It further explains that it is the mind that processes the behavior; so the mind has to be changed. The behavior changer (teacher) must provide motivation, must reinforce new behavior and must enhance self-efficacy.

## **Chapter summary**

Education, more than any other single initiative has the capacity to foster development, awaken talent, empower people and protect their rights. Investing in education is the surest, most direct way a country can promote its own economic and social welfare and lays the foundation for a democratic society. This may be hindered in areas where corporal punishment is still practised and students who may fail to withstand the pain may drop out of school.

However, Goslin (1971) argues that quality education cannot be achieved in a poor environment of disorder. Punishment and more so painful punishment is there to instill peace and order in schools to enable them achieve better results. A school should be truly child-friendly. Children need to find school safe, welcoming and healthful environment, centered on the rights of the child. This is not possible to achieve without rules and regulations in a school. And that has to be followed with harsh punishment as who ever breaks the rule is trying to prevent the achievement of the above stated.

The crucial question of whether corporal punishment is the best or not still remains unanswered as discussed in this section. The research therefore was to analyze what forms of punishment being administered in our primary public schools and how they are implemented. Otherwise the various arguments may make children suffer silently in the hands of brutal teachers.

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3:0 Introduction**

This chapter provides the methodology was used in the study. Kerlinger (1964:275) defines a research methodology or design as “the plan, structure and strategy of investigation conceived so as to obtain answers to research questions and to control variance.” A research design guides the research in collecting, analyzing and interpreting observed facts. The chapter covers; site selection, unit of analysis and unit of observation, sources of data, sampling procedure, data collection procedures and data analysis techniques.

### **3.1 Site Description**

The proposed study was carried out in Ugunja Division of Siaya District, in Nyanza Province. The study focused on pupils, Head teachers, teachers, parents, and the officials from the Ministry of Education (including the Teachers Service Commission – TSC). The division was purposively selected due to its rural status besides practice and persistence of corporal punishment within the primary schools in the area. The site was also selected due to its unique cosmopolitan set up and location. Ugunja Township which hosts the Divisional Education offices is situated at the junction of the main roads to Siaya, Busia, Kisumu and Mumias thus a very busy area. The schools in the area are clustered into 3 zones namely Ambira, Sigomre and Sikalame. Sikalame and Sigomre zones border Butere - Mumias district in western province giving the schools there, a cosmopolitan set up of Luo and Luhya tribes .Major economic activity in these areas is sugar cane farming because of the Mumias sugar industry adjacent. Ambira on the hand is a purely Luo zone more of central zone in the division. Focusing mainly on trading on the busy Busia –Kisumu-Siaya towns. Another reason for the choice of the site is the fact that the researcher is familiar with the terrain and given the sensitive nature of the issues to be researched, knowledge of the community’s way of life is an important aspect to the study.

### **3.2 Unit of analysis and ~~unit~~ Observation**

According to Schutt (1996:593), unit of analysis is “the level of social life on which the research question is focused”. The unit of analysis is thus the category across which the

study's variables vary. The major unit of analysis for the study was the extent of practice and prevalence of corporal punishment.

Unit of observation is the element or aggregation of elements from which information is collected ( Babbie 1995). In this study the unit of observation was the primary school pupils. The selection of primary schools pupils for the study was purposively done because they are the ones subjected to corporal punishment by their teachers at school.

### **3.3 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size**

According to Singleton (1988:137), sampling design is that part of the research plan that indicates how cases are to be selected for observation.

**Stratified random sampling:** In this study, Stratified random sampling method was used in the selection of schools. Stratified random sampling enables the data to be more representative especially in areas where there are unique characteristics. The sampling frame was divided into strata relevant to the questions being investigated. In this case, the schools were clustered into 3 zones that is, according to their geographical location, then into economic infrastructure of low or high status. 6 schools were sampled, 2 from each Zone. Stratified random sampling ensures that every item in the population has an equal chance of being included in the sample.

#### **Purposive Sampling:**

Purposive sampling was done to select key informants such as the Head teachers, parents, teachers and officials from the MOE and TSC

#### **Sample Size**

Using proportionate sampling, the researcher interviewed a total sample size of 120 respondents. The sample that was used consisted of about 76 pupils from 6 schools, which translates to about 13 pupils per school equally distributed by sex. The head teachers from each school were considered as key informants giving a total of 6 head teachers. A sample of 13 parents was drawn at random from the Division after the stratification. The head teachers assisted in nominating the parents to ensure that those parents interviewed were parents whose children attend the schools under study. The sample also comprised three class teachers per school, each drawn from each of the classes totaling to 23 teachers and 2 officials from MOE and TSC.

Table 3.1: The Sampling matrix for pupils, teachers and parents

ZONE	School	Pupils	Teachers	Head teachers	Parents
SIKALAME	Ruwe	13	5	1	3
	Simerro	13	3	1	2
SIGOMRE	Madungu	13	3	1	2
	Ichinga	12	4	1	2
AMBIRA	Uloma	13	5	1	2
	Uref	12	3	1	2
TOTAL		76	23	6	13

+ 2 Officers from .1 from TSC and 1 from MOE

TOTAL SAMPLE SIZE =120

### 3.4. Sources of data

The research mainly used two sources of data, which are Secondary and primary. The secondary data already were available in books, journals, websites, research reports etc. The primary data was obtained from the respondents. This was done through survey and interviewing.

### 3.5 Data collection Methods and instruments

The study used interviewing as the main method of data collection. The main tool of data collection was a questionnaire and a structured interview guide. The survey was done using a structured questionnaire. This was administered to the pupils and parents from the selected schools. The questionnaire contained both open and closed-ended questions in which case the open-ended questions gave the respondents a chance to express themselves fully without restricting them to the already pre-structured answers given by the researcher. The closed-ended questions helped to simplify the process of recording down the responses. The questionnaires items were constructed while taking into account the objectives of the study.

The interview guide was be used to gather data from the key informants who comprised the Head teachers, teachers, Officials from Ministry of Education, and the officers from the TSC. After obtaining a research permit from the Ministry of Education, the researcher liaised with the head teachers of the selected primary schools in order to facilitate interviews with the pupils. The questionnaires were administered to the pupils of the selected schools during a session that the head teachers recommended and approved. To ensure high response rates, the

researcher briefly introduced each of the sections of the questionnaires to the respondents to ensure that they fully understood the questions before answering. Secondly, the researcher ensured that the respondents were allocated adequate time to answer the questionnaires. The key informants and the parents were interviewed on appointment basis.

### **3.6 Data analysis tools and procedures**

The study applied both qualitative and quantitative methods to report the findings.

**Quantitative data:** The quantitative approach helped the researcher to generate descriptive and inferential data necessary to make deductions on the practice and persistence of corporal punishment within rural primary schools in Ugunja Division of Siaya District. After a careful review and cleaning of the collected data, the closed-ended questions were coded and entered into a codebook from where they were keyed into a computer using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). From this stage, descriptive and inferential statistics was used to present and interpret the data. In this study, some of the descriptive statistics that are used are the mean, percentages, and frequency counts. The findings have been presented using tables and charts. This has helped to draw conclusions and make decisions about practice and persistence of corporal punishment on the basis of samples.

**Qualitative data:** The qualitative approach helped to fill in the gaps and provide additional information on alternative disciplinary measures for pupils. Qualitative data was analyzed through content analysis. According to Hancock (2002:17), content analysis involves coding and classifying data through categorizing or indexing. The basic idea is to identify from the transcripts, the extracts of data that are informative in some way and to sort out the important messages hidden in the mass of each interview.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

A questionnaire was used to establish the magnitude of corporal punishment in rural public primary schools. A total of 76 pupils; 37 boys and 39 girls responded to the questionnaire. All the 76 pupils were ranging between ages 10-20 years drawn from standards 6, 7 and 8. The pupils' responses and observations have been tabled and content analyzed.

There was a separate questionnaire used to establish the perception of corporal punishment among teachers. In this respect 23 class teachers responded to the questionnaire. They were drawn from the six different schools. The teachers' responses and observation have also been tabled and content analyzed.

There were other interviews to establish the perception of corporal punishment among parents and key informants who included ministry of education and TSC officials. Head teachers were also interviewed. In some schools where the head teacher was not available, the deputy or senior teachers were interviewed.

##### 4.1.1 Background information of respondents

Table 4.1 Distribution of respondents

Respondents	Number	%
Primary school pupils	76	64.4
Pupils class teachers	23	19.5
Pupils Parents	13	11.0
Key informants (Head teachers, MOE and TSC officials)	8	5.1
Total	120	100.0

There number of females was slightly higher (51.3%) than the males (48.7%) as shown in table 4.2

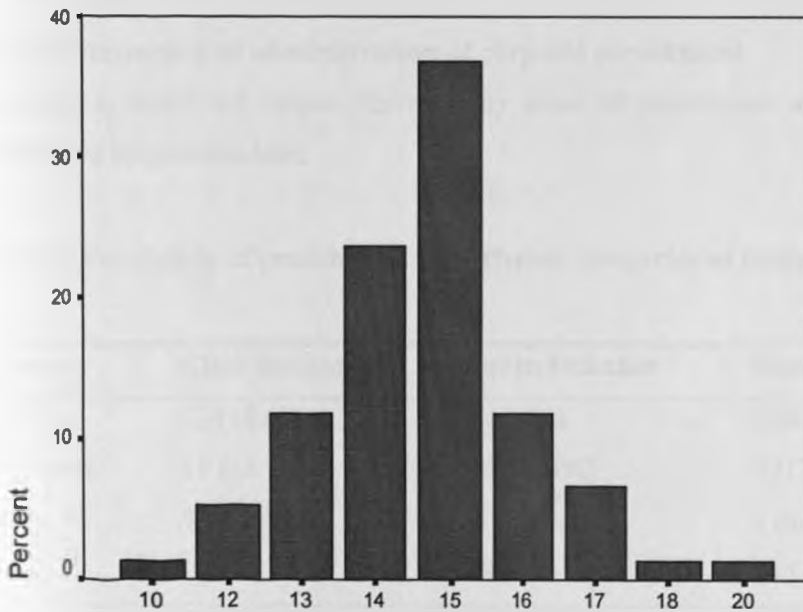


**Table 4.2 Distribution of pupil respondents by sex**

Sex of the pupil respondents	Number	%
Male	37	48.7
Female	39	51.3%
Total	76	100%

The pupils' respondents were drawn from ages 10 to 20 years. Majority (36.8%) were 15 years old, 23.7% were 14 years old and 13 years and 16 years old formed 11.8% each. The distribution of the respondents is shown in figure 1 below.

**Figure 1 Distribution of pupil respondents by age**



Age distribution of the pupils

## 4.2 Magnitude of corporal punishment in rural public primary schools

Pupils were asked variety of questions to establish the extent to which corporal punishment is administered and the reasons for meting out corporal punishment.

Majority of the pupils 90.8% have been subjected to corporal punishment recently.

Apparently corporal punishment is rampant in these schools.

**Table 4.3 whether the pupils have been subjected to corporal punishment recently**

Response	Number	%
Yes	69	90.8
No	7	9.2
Total	76	100.0

### 4.2.1 The frequency of administration of corporal punishment

According to table 4.4 below, the majority areas of punishment are given by the class teachers and subject teachers.

**Table 4.4 Frequency of punishment by different categories of teachers**

Frequency	Class teachers	Subject teacher	Head teacher
Every day	13 (18.6%)	2 (4.1%)	2 (6.5%)
Every week	11 (15.7%)	10 (20.4%)	4 (12.9%)
Often	46 (65.7%)	9(18.4%)	2 (6.5%)
Rarely	-	28 (57.1%)	23 (74.2%)
Total	70 (92.1%)	49 (64.5%)	31 (40.8%)

The head teacher accounts for only a small percentage of cases involving corporal punishment a fact attributed to the few extreme cases referred for further action by teachers and school prefects.

#### **4.2.2 Reasons for being punished**

The following reasons were given by students for getting punished:

- Absenteeism
- Lateness to school or class
- Failure in a test or exam
- Neglect of assignments or failure to do assignments
- Misbehavior in chewing the schools sugarcane without permission
- Boy-girl communication through letter writing
- Not clearing fees
- Fighting and beating others
- Buying food at the canteen when during class time
- Noisemaking
- Misusing school property
- Failure to participate in co-curricular activities
- Refusing responsibility such as sweeping class
- Writing on a textbook
- Incomplete / late submission of assignment
- Missing classes
- Incorrect answering of questions
- Moving out of class without permission

Some of the pupils were punished for not clearing school fees, which is a factor beyond the pupils' control. None of the pupils is responsible for paying their own school fees under normal circumstances yet some were punished for not clearing fees.

#### **4.3 Perception of Corporal punishment among pupils, teachers, parents and the local community**

The pupils, teachers and parents responses were used to derive their feelings and attitudes towards corporal punishment. This was gauged by their thinking whether corporal punishment is necessarily useful or an exercise in futility.

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### 4.3.1 The usefulness of punishment as perceived by pupils

The majority of pupils (84.2%) perceive punishment as useful and only 15.8% deny the importance of punishment. This means given an option of taking punishment or not, the majority of pupils would opt for punishment because it is important.

**Table 4.5 whether the pupils find the punishment useful**

Response	Number	%
Yes	64	84.2
No	12	15.8
Total	76	100.0

#### 4.3.1.1 Reasons why punishment is useful

The majority of the pupils 84.2% endorsed punishment and gave the following reasons why they find punishment useful:

- Creates fears that prevents them from sneaking out of class
- Is deterrent and prevents one from repeating the same mistake
- Changes behavior
- Corrects behavior
- Inculcates discipline
- Serves as a reminder to work hard
- Enables one to realize his/her mistakes
- It is mandatory to respect the teacher
- Assignment must be completed and taken for marking
- Teachers are to be punctual
- Makes one clever and polite
- Changes manners to become an upright child
- Bible advocates for punishment for an errant child
- Manual work will assist the pupil in future
- Makes one careful not to do wrong
- Enables pupils learn how to perform many tasks

However a minority (15.8%) gave their reasons for not approving corporal punishment as:

- Caning a child may lead to drop outs
- Doesn't help to cane pupils for not clearing fees because he/she will still not pay after caning
- It makes the pupil unhappy all the time
- Others are beaten without knowing the mistake

#### 4.3.1.2 Whether punishment is optional

The students are not given the choice to accept or reject taking the punishment. The majority (77%) have no option with regard to taking punishment while 23% have the option

**Table 4.6 whether the pupils have an option to take the punishment**

Response	Number	%
Yes	19	25.0
No	57	75.0
Total	76	100.0

#### 4.3.2 Perception of corporal punishment among class teachers

Majority of the class teachers (60.9%) consider punishment as effective in instilling discipline compared to 39.1% who think contrary. This is as depicted in table 4.7 below.

**Table 4.7 Effectiveness of corporal punishment in instilling discipline**

Response	Number	%
Effective	14	60.9
Not effective	9	39.1
Total	23	100.0

##### 4.3.2.1 Reasons why class teachers consider corporal punishment effective

The majority of the teachers indicated that they regard corporal punishment as effective due to the following reasons:

- Children don't like corporal punishment consequently they avoid making mistakes

- It is instant and on the spot. The pupil gets the punishment and moves on with other activities therefore saving time.
- It is painful and therefore serves as a reminder making the child to resist temptations of misbehaving.
- Acts as a deterrent and others won't do the same mistake for instance caning a pupil who fails to complete an assignment.
- "Works very well with children since it is the only language they understand." said a teacher.
- "Talking alone does not work," said another teacher.

However, those teachers opposed to corporal punishment advanced the following arguments:

- "Corporal punishment produces results only on short term. The child repeats the same mistake and that is the reason why they are punished time and again." Said a teacher
- It affects the children emotionally and psychologically causing them to hate school.
- It is an orthodox way of instilling discipline, which makes students callous to the punishment.
- It hinders learning since the children learn in fear and are emotionally unstable.

#### **4.3.2.2 Students' reaction to punishment**

When asked how the students react to punishment; the teachers were quoted as follows:

"Of course, they don't like it; sometimes they resist and run away" remarked one teacher.

Another teacher responded, "of course, they don't like it, so they cry and beg for forgiveness."

"They don't like it but then, when they are on the wrong they have no choice but to accept it," responded another teacher.

"They don't mind it; they know they must be punished" said another

"They realize their mistakes and take it well, though they cry sometimes," another teacher asserted.

#### **4.3.3 Perception of corporal punishment by parents**

The majority of parents (76.9%) are not concerned that that their children are subjected to corporal punishment at school. Asked how frequently they subject their children to corporal punishment at home; 54.5% responded that at least once every week while the rest do it often. This partly explains why they are less concerned about their children being subject to corporal punishment at school.

**Table 4.8 whether parents are concerned about their children being subjected to corporal punishment at school**

Response	Number	%
Yes	3	23.1
No	10	76.9%
Total	13	100.0

The parents were quoted explaining why they appear to be less concerned about their children being subjected to corporal punishment below:

“Corporal punishment is okay as long as it is for a good cause.”

“As long as you do not cane excessively, it is very effective”

“Children need to be caned to be disciplined”

“It is good to discipline children when they are young”

“That is the only language they understand. It is good for discipline”

“They must have made a mistake to be caned”

#### **4.3.3.1 Parents perception of usefulness of corporal punishment in changing children’s behavior**

A clear majority (84.6%) of the parents concur with the usefulness of corporal punishment in changing children behavior.

**Table 4.9 whether corporal punishment helps in changing children behavior**

Response	Number	%
Yes	11	84.6
No	2	15.4
Total	13	100.0

#### **4.3.3.2 Parents preference for corporal punishment**

The parents interviewed do not like other forms of punishment other than corporal punishment (72.7%).

**Table 4.10 whether parents would prefer non-corporal punishment**

Response	Number	%
Yes	3	23.1
No	10	76.9
Total	13	100.0

The parents gave the following reasons why they are opposed to non- corporal punishment. They were quoted below:

“Teacher use other forms of punishment purposely to avoid teaching for instance when a class makes noise they are taken to shamba to weed sugarcane.”

“It is better to cane them and they go to class than keeping them in the shamba for hours on end”

“Most children enjoy other forms of punishment as they don’t mind missing classes”

“Caning is faster and does not waste a child’s time to study”

“Caning teaches children a good lesson”

#### **4.3.3.3 Alternative forms of punishment**

The parents opposed to corporal punishment (23.1%) suggested alternative forms of punishment they would prefer. These are:

- Manual labor such as slashing and digging because it is a form of learning.
- Counseling
- Co-curricular activities that is activities outside the syllabus such as running around the field

#### **4.3.4 Perception of corporal punishment by the school heads**

The school heads confirmed that corporal punishment is rampant in schools. Of the six schools surveyed, the heads of four schools confirmed that corporal punishment is administered in their schools while the rest indicated that they were not sure.

**Table 4.11 whether corporal punishment is administered in respondents’ schools**

Response	Number	%
Yes	4	66.7
No	2	33.3



Total	6	100.0
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Asked how they rate the effectiveness of corporal punishment; 66.7% of the school heads revealed that they are very effective, 16.7% quite effective while another 16.7% indicated that it is not effective at all.

**Table 4.12 Rating of effectiveness of corporal punishment by school heads**

Response	Number	%
Very	4	66.7
Quite	1	16.7
Not at all	1	16.7
Total	6	100.0

#### **4.4 Factors associated with the practice and persistence of corporal punishment**

There were several factors associated with the practice and persistence of corporal punishment as per the views of the pupils, teachers, head teachers and parents.

##### **4.4.1 Factors attributed to pupils as derived from their personal views on punishment**

The pupils gave several reasons why corporal punishment should persist. Some of them were quoted below:

“Without punishment the school can become a market”

“There must be corporal punishment, without which children will be rude”

“Should continue because it makes me pass exams and become disciplined”

“It should continue, if a child is not caned he/she will end up a thug”

“I support it so that I can become a good person”

“It is good to punish me when I do wrong so that I become a good child”

“It is good it promotes discipline”

“It should be moderated to avoid school drop outs”

“It should be there but a teacher must reason first before administering it”

“It should continue because it teaches pupils”

“It must be there but moderated. It should not cause injury”

“It should only be applied to great wrong doing”

“Corporal punishment gives children a good adulthood”

“Teachers should punish students but not daily”

“It should continue but with reduced intensity”

#### 4.4.2 Factors attributed to class teachers on the practice and persistence of corporal punishment

Teachers attributed the persistence of corporal punishment on the following reasons:

- Indiscipline of the pupils  
“Children who are disciplined are never given corporal punishment” said one of the teachers.
- Parental advice – some parents advise the teachers to administer corporal punishment on their children whom they consider wayward.
- Effectiveness  
“Corporal punishment is instant, time saving and leads to immediate behavior change”
- Heavy workload for teachers due to the high teacher: student ratio
- Time – alternative forms of punishment need supervision, which is not tenable due to the teachers’ workload.
- Poor parenting – this has led to many cases of indiscipline which are enormous to handle by alternative forms of punishment.

#### 4.4.3 Factors attributed to parents accounting for the practice and persistence of corporal punishment

Parental background and lack of awareness of the ban on corporal punishment are some of the factors that may account for the persistence of this practice at school.

##### 4.4.3.1 Subjection of parents to corporal punishment

All parents that were interviewed said that during their school time they were subjected to corporal punishment.

**Table 4.13 whether or not parents students were subjected to corporal punishment**

Response	Number	%
Yes	13	100
No	-	
Total	13	100.0

Moreover, 76.9% of them were regularly punished compared to 23.1% who received corporal punishment once in a while.

**Table 4.14 Frequency of corporal punishment administered to parents**

Frequency	Number	%
Always	10	76.9
Once in a while	3	23.1
Total	13	100.0

#### **4.4.3.2 Awareness of ban on corporal punishment**

Most parents (69.2%) were not aware that administration of corporal punishment is prohibited as indicated in table 4.15 below

**Table 4.15 whether parents are aware of the ban on corporal punishment**

Response	Number	%
Yes	4	30.8
No	9	69.2
Total	13	100.0

#### **4.4.4 Factors attributed to the heads of schools regarding the practice and persistence of corporal punishment**

The heads of school seem to be in agreement with the class teachers on the factors accounting to the practice and persistence of corporal punishment. They expressed the following reasons:

- Gross misconduct among the pupils
- Corporal punishment is less time consuming
- Insufficient manpower to implement counseling
- Student: teacher ratio is very big to permit alternative forms of punishment, which are time consuming.

#### **4.4.5 Factors attributed to MOE that account for the practice and persistence of corporal punishment**

According to the MOE official, the ratio of pupils to teachers is overwhelming. This forces the teachers to use a quick and easier form of punishment rather than the better and time consuming counseling.

This corroborates complaints by teachers that there is a heavy work load because of the numbers. In addition alternative forms of punishment such as counseling is not only time consuming but also require enough trained personnel in the field of guidance and counseling.

#### **4.4.6 Factors attributed to TSC officials that account for the practice and persistence of corporal punishment in schools**

According to a TSC official, certain factors can be attributed to the continuity of corporal punishment. These are:

- Lack of education on the effects of corporal punishment. Some teachers are not well informed of the damage they cause to students.
- Ignorance by pupils of their rights and the action to take against teachers who administer corporal punishment.
- Encouragement by parents who have failed to discipline their children.

The practice of corporal punishment is persistent in schools and the TSC officials say that cases are only reported where physical injuries are severe.

### **4.5 The handling (action taken on) of corporal punishment by different stakeholders**

Majority of the pupils (77.6%) were subjected to corporal punishment whether they liked it or not.

**Table 4.16 whether corporal punishment is optional**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	17	22.4
No	59	77.6
Total	76	100.0

#### **4.5.1 Reporting of cases of corporal punishment to parents**

Most pupils (53.9%) don't find it necessary to tell their parents when given corporal punishment. This is indicated in table 4.17 below

**Table 4.17 whether pupils tell their parents when given corporal punishment**

Response	Number	%
Yes	35	46.1
No	41	53.9
Total	76	100.0

#### **4.5.1.2 Reaction of parents towards reported cases of corporal punishment**

According to the pupils who reported to their parents instances of corporal punishment; most parents were not cooperative and blamed their children for misbehaving in school. The following are some statements on how parents reacted:

“He asks but not with keenness”

“They always tell me that they were also punished during their school days”

“They ask why I was punished and if I was on the wrong, they also punish me”

“They don't care”

“They keep quiet”

“They normally say, I must be punished to have a bright future”

“They tell me to work hard to avoid being punished since a teacher cannot cane a bright pupil”

“They say that I must respect the teachers”

“They say it was for a reason and since there was no injury it is just okay”

“They tell me not to repeat the same mistake”

However, some parents reacted angrily as depicted by comments of the pupils below:

“They are against the teacher punishing pupils in a wrong way”

“They come to school and find out why I was punished”

“They complain to the head teacher”

“They storm the school and quarrel the teacher”

### 4.5.1.3 Pupils self evaluation on corporal punishment

Most pupils heaped blame on themselves for making mistakes and in a few cases attributed it to parent's laxity to act. They reported that:

"I can't tell the parents because am the one who is messing in class"

"He won't take any action, doesn't care"

"He can add me more punishment"

"The punishment is teaching me"

"They are harsh; if I tell them they will cane me again"

"They can cause unnecessary confrontation"

"They can take me back to school for more beating"

"They may start quarrelling with the teacher"

"They will tell me it is because of my mistakes"

"They will know that I have done a mistake"

Majority of the pupils (89.3%) recognize that they are on the wrong and their parents disapprove of their behavior. A minority (10.7%) feels parents should not be told because they don't care, will quarrel the teachers and complain to the head teachers. This category fears their harsh parents; a clear pointer to a poor parent – child relationship.

### 4.5.2 Teachers handling of corporal punishment in schools

The researcher sought to find out whether the teachers gave explanations to the pupils for punishing them. All the teachers indicated that they gave explanations, some preferring to do it before the punishment (56.5%) while others both before and after the punishment (43.5%).

**Table 4.18 when teachers give explanations for punishing pupils**

Response	Number	%
Before punishment	13	56.5
Both before and after punishment	10	43.5
Total	23	100.0

This shows that always teachers explain the reasons for punishing pupils even if the reason is considered flimsy by the pupils.

#### 4.5.2.1 Impact of corporal punishment in schools according to class teachers

Corporal punishment has both positive and negative effects as expressed by the teachers.

Below are some of the negative effects:

- School drop outs
- Physical injury
- Emotionally and psychologically affects children
- Creates fear and inflicts pain
- Strains relationship between the pupils and the teachers

“Some students are very sensitive and personalize the punishment” said a respondent.

Another said, “It does affect pupil – teacher relationship because I have heard them (pupils) talking of how they hate the teachers.”

“The child will hate you and this strains the relationship which is otherwise meant to be warm” stressed another respondent.

Corporal punishment may have a short lived impact. This is the reason why a child has to be subjected to it repeatedly.

However, the teachers noted that it produces a significant number of positive results. These are:

- Reduced absenteeism
- Good discipline
- Punctuality
- Respect for teachers
- Seriousness especially in handling assignments

Commenting on the effect of corporal punishment on teacher – pupil relationship; majority of the teachers dismissed the opinion that it hinders the relationship. Below are some of their comments:

“It does not affect since I explain to them, they understand they were on the wrong and am doing my duty.”

“They know it is not the teachers fault but theirs; so they take it positively.”

“They know it is the order of the day; it is part and parcel of learning”

“They know it is part of learning; no pain no gain”

#### **4.5.2.2 Alternative punishments available to teachers**

The teachers advanced several options to corporal punishment and their consequences. These are:

- Manual labor such as digging, weeding, slashing and cleaning - These are time consuming and make the pupils to miss classes. However, they are effective.
- Detention at breaks and lunch times - These are not effective since they make no difference especially to those who do not go for lunch.
- Suspensions – this makes the pupils to lag behind in class work.
- Running around the field – it is effective though some pupils enjoy it.
- Counseling – it needs follow ups, which are not realistic due to teacher’s workload.

The teachers are unable to endorse alternative forms of punishment due to the reasons pointed out above.

#### **4.5.3 The handling of corporal punishment by heads of schools**

The school administrators conceded that corporal punishment is used in their schools. They further revealed that there are no stipulated forms of punishment. Forms of punishment meted out are at the discretion of the teachers depending on the magnitude of the offence. However, they indicated that the rules are clearly stipulated.

Asked what the stipulated forms of punishment in their respective schools were; they gave the following responses:

“Forms of punishment vary from one offence to another. They are however not stipulated though the rules are clearly stipulated.”

“Picking litter, suspension, kneeling, standing, slashing, running, missing lunch break”

“Punishments are not stipulated as such, but vary from one offence to another. They range from caning, kneeling, missing break/lunch, slapping, running around the field, pinching to uprooting tree trunks.”

“Punishments are not stipulated but left at the discretion of the teacher. They range from cleaning classes, picking rubbish, uprooting tree trunks, pinching, kneeling to caning.”

The rules and regulations in most schools are communicated at different gatherings in the school. This is major done during assemblies and in classes. Constant reminders are made whenever prompted by an incident of rule breaking.



Table 4.19 shows that students in five out of the six schools surveyed are not served with a code of conduct on arrival at school.

**Table 4.19 whether students are served with a code of conduct on arrival at school**

Response	Number	%
Yes	1	16.7
No	5	83.3
Total	6	100.0

#### 4.5.3.1 Impacts of corporal punishment in schools according to heads of schools

Just like class teachers, the heads of school view corporal punishment as having both positive and negative impacts.

The negative impacts include:

- Emotional damage and psychological torture
- School drop outs
- Stress to the pupils

The positive impacts are:

- Academic success  
 “They fear cane so they work hard and perform well” commented a school head.
- Improved discipline standards

#### 4.5.3.2 Alternative forms of punishment proposed by heads of schools

Asked the options of punishment available in public primary schools and their consequences; the school administrators were very pessimistic. They highly doubt the success of alternative forms of punishment as expressed by their observations below:

“Cleaning and sweeping just makes them (pupils) do useless jobs”

“Counseling is not effective as the pupils get used to the teacher just talking and not disciplining them.”

“Digging, weeding and uprooting make pupils develop a negative attitude towards agriculture.”

“Running around the field makes the child to hate sports”

“Suspension makes a child miss classes leading to poor performance”

“Missing meals is not effective since most of pupils in the village don’t eat much”

#### **4.5.3.3 The views of school administrators on the ban of corporal punishment**

The views were varied depending on those supporting the ban and those against the ban.

Those opposed to the ban were quoted giving their reasons for opposition as:

“The ban has lead to increase in indiscipline. With 11 teachers against 600 pupils nothing much can be done. ”

“It should have been minimized and not banned. Corporal punishment is good to some extend”

“It should be uplifted because it was very effective, less time consuming and a good deterrence.”

“It should have been left to the head teacher and deputy head teacher to administer”

Those supporting the ban see the implementation as a milestone in education system in the country. They expressed the following views:

“I support it fully as long as the government provides manpower to offer counseling”

“The ban is good because children now do not fear going to school because of being caned”

“The ban is good because teachers stopped hitting children and there are no more injuries. Teachers now try to talk because they know it is illegal”

#### **4.5.3.4 School heads recommendations to the MOE on the ban of corporal punishment**

- Employ adequate teachers in schools and train them in guidance and counseling
- Employ counselors in schools if the ban is to be effective
- Visit schools regularly to monitor the implementation of the ban since most schools still practice
- Uplift the ban and let the heads of school monitor its administration since there is inadequate manpower for counseling
- Stipulate the forms of punishment that should be given for which specified offences

#### **4.5.4 Parents handling of corporal punishment**

The parents strongly recommended corporal punishment because it is effective as it enhances performance. The following observations were made by the parents:

“Ban of corporal punishment is not realistic; what does the government expect teachers to do?”

“Caning is good and effective; the children don’t repeat the mistake”

“It is a big joke that the government can ban corporal punishment. It is biblical and must be used.”

“It is effective and makes children pass exams”

“As long as there is no injury it is okay”

“It is quite effective particularly in performance therefore should be used but not excessively to harm”

“Corporal punishment should be given right from home”

“Let the head teacher and deputy head teacher administer it not every teacher; some are not fair and too harsh”

“The number of canes should be agreed on so that teachers don’t give a lot”

“It is very effective; am what I am today because of this scars”

“Should be controlled by the school as some teachers give so many canes”

“Should be used but not excessively like some teachers do; it makes children hate school”

“It should not be used because it scares the children and make them hate school”

#### **4.5.5 Ministry of Education handling cases of corporal punishment**

Whenever cases are reported to the ministry; various actions are taken depending on the magnitude. The actions taken include:

- Recording the reported case in the ministry files
- Visiting the school concerned to verify the information from the head teacher
- Reporting to TSC and the police incase of injuries since it is illegal and criminal
- Ensuring the pupil is treated at the teachers’ expense

##### **4.5.5.1 Action taken by MOE in enforcing the ban on corporal punishment**

The ministry of education sends quality assurance standards officers to schools once in a while to monitor activities taking place in schools; including punishment and handling of indiscipline cases.

However, most cases are only reported by head teachers. Moreover the MOE expects the teachers to exercise professional integrity in handling all matters pertaining to their roles as teachers.

#### **4.5.6 The Teachers Service Commission handling of cases of corporal punishment in schools**

The teacher’s service commission receives a number of reported cases (less than 10%) of corporal punishment. These cases are usually reported by students and their parents.

The TSC procedure of handling these cases include:

- Receiving a report from MOE, head teacher or from parents directly. The information from parents is verified by the head teacher.
- TSC acts by interdiction of the teachers concerned, referring the matter to police for action or transferring the teacher. The action taken depends on the magnitude of the problem.

According to TSC counseling is mandatory in all schools but other forms of alternative punishment are left for the schools to decide.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After analyzing the results on the situational position of the practice of corporal punishment in rural public primary schools, the researcher gives the following conclusion and recommendations.

The results are summarized under the following sub-headings:

1. Magnitude of corporal punishment in rural public primary schools
2. Perception of corporal punishment among teachers, pupils and parents
3. Factors associated with the practice and persistence of corporal punishment
4. How corporal punishment is handled by the different stakeholders – pupils, teachers, administrators and parents.

#### 5.1 a) Magnitude of corporal punishment in rural public primary schools

Majority of the pupils are subjected to corporal punishment. This mode of punishment can be considered a rampant practice in schools and at home.

Most parents subject their children to corporal punishment at home as they consider it effective in changing pupils' behavior. The majority are not even concerned that their children are inflicted with pain in order to change their behavior at school. The parents appear to take this form of punishment as the norm rather than the exception.

Interestingly, these parents whom majority are aged between 30 and 50 years were subjected to corporal punishment at school regularly. Parental background explains why parents are not even concerned that their children are subjected to corporal punishment in school.

Furthermore, head teachers, deputy head teachers and class teachers all use this mode of punishment to varying degrees despite the ban on corporal punishment. Therefore, the society appears to use this mode of punishment to all errant children.

#### 5.1 (b) Perception of corporal punishment among teachers, pupils and parents

The majority of teachers, pupils and parents view corporal punishment as effective. They also justify this form of punishment as a biblical directive. The teachers prefer corporal

punishment as opposed to other forms of punishment because it saves their time from supervising and monitoring alternative modes of punishment. The workload of teachers due to the high teacher: student ratio gives majority teachers no option to go for alternative methods of behavior modification.

#### **5.1.1 (b) The reasons why corporal punishment is considered effective include:**

- Acts as a deterrent; preventing pupils from repeating mistakes
- Enables pupils to pass exams and tests.
- Is corrective and changes behavior.
- Saves time for the pupil and the teacher.
- Does not require monitoring and supervision.
- Inculcates respect and good discipline.
- Is a painful reminder of their mistakes.
- The bible advocates for punishment of an errant child.

#### **5.1.2 (b) Reasons why Corporal punishment is abhorred**

- May lead to school drop-outs
- Emotionally and psychologically affects children thus hindering learning.
- Can lead to injury if excessively used.
- It is illegal and can lead to arrest and prosecution of teachers.

#### **5.1 (c) Factors associated with the practice and persistence of corporal punishment**

These factors are social, cultural, religious, legal and educational factors.

##### **5.1.1 (c) Social – Cultural factors**

The society uses corporal punishment as a means of changing behaviour. Majority of parents have been socialized in the school of corporal punishment in which pain must be inflicted for a child to understand. Parental background explains why they are not even concerned that their children are receiving corporal punishment.

Moreover, respect for elders is a cherished virtue. Corporal punishment is approved for being able to instill respect for teachers, parents and the community. This form of punishment is said to be the only language known by the pupils.

#### **5.1.2 (c) Religious factors**

The bible advocates for corporal punishment in the holy book, which states, "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul, spare for his crying" (Proverbs 19:18; 22:6).

Those who subscribe to this biblical teaching that reinforce the idea that when you spare the rod you spoil the child will certainly administer corporal punishment as a way of instilling discipline in children.

#### **5.1.3 (c) Legal factors**

The ban on corporal punishment in March 2001 through legal notice no. 5613 was aimed at encouraging pupils to attend school without fear of being caned.

However, despite the ban caning is carried out unabated. Parents do not mind the caning so long as it is corrective and not excessive. Most parents are not aware that corporal punishment is not allowed in schools.

The ban is not enforced strictly by the government. Most pupils are aware but do not want to involve their parents for fear of creating conflicts with teachers.

#### **5.1.4 (c) Educational factors**

The practice is considered useful in ensuring pupils pass their exams and tests. They are able to attend school punctually and complete their assignments. It inculcates good discipline and respect. The cane changes behavior of errant children to become well behaved. Saves time for both pupils and teachers. Teachers argue that unless the government employs additional teachers to handle the heavy workload it is not possible to try the alternative forms of punishment. It is effective in ensuring children perform well in their exams according to majority pupils, teachers and parents.

In addition, parents endorse caning as far as improvement of academic performance is concerned. Most of them have passed through education system through corporal punishment hence regard it as a norm rather than exception in schools. Corporal punishment has majority universal support despite the pain involved and sometimes dropouts.

#### **5.1 (d) How corporal punishment is handled by the various stakeholders**

The pupils, teachers, administrators, MOE and TSC were all involved in handling corporal punishment in schools.

The pupils sometimes get involved in beating and pinching fellow pupils, which in turn draws punishment for the offenders. All the stakeholders mentioned above administer corporal punishment to a given degree as analyzed in this chapter.

Majority pupils are given no options or alternatives to corporal punishment by teachers. The mode of corporal punishment is basically through caning, pinching, slapping and kicking. Others are kneeling down on rough ground and inflicting hunger pains through detention during lunchtime. The severity of the caning depends on the person administering it and the nature of the offence. There is no prescribed form of corporal punishment for any particular offence.

Many pupils did not report cases of corporal punishment to their parents because either parents would not act or their reaction would create conflict with teachers at school.

Class teachers were able to explain to the pupils why they were to be given corporal punishment. Corporal punishment had negative and positive effects. The negative effects include:

- Necessitates school drop outs
- Leads to injuries when used excessively
- Affects the children emotionally and psychologically thus hindering learning
- Creates fear and inflicts pain
- Leads to strained relationships between teachers and pupils

The positive impacts of corporal punishment are:

- Reduced cases of absenteeism in schools
- Maintenance of good discipline
- Improved academic performance
- Improved punctuality



- Timely doing of assignments

The available alternative forms of punishment have many drawbacks and are difficult to implement. Some of the limitations are:

- They are time consuming and make students to miss classes
- Shortage of trained manpower skilled in guidance and counseling
- Inadequate number of teachers with a heavy workload
- Manual labor makes the pupils to develop a negative attitude towards agriculture

The school administrators concede that corporal punishment is used but the forms of punishment are not stipulated. The teachers have the discretion to use any form of punishment depending on the magnitude of the offence. Rules and regulations are very clear and pupils continually are reminded during assembly and in class. According to them corporal punishment has both negative and positive results. These findings concur with views of teachers on impact of corporal punishment.

In addition, those who support the ban on corporal punishment do so conditionally. They only support the ban if the government provides enough manpower for counseling. However, a clear majority of the school administrators propose the lifting of the ban because it is effective, less time consuming, a good deterrence and facilitates exam success.

They made the following recommendations to the MOE concerning the ban:

- The ministry should employ adequate personnel trained in guidance and counseling
- There should be regular visits to the schools to monitor implementation of the ban
- Lifting of the ban and mandating head teachers to monitor the administration of corporal punishment
- The ministry should stipulate the forms of punishment for specified offences.

Most parents do not care that their children have been given corporal punishment as long as there is no injury. Most of parents administer similar corporal punishments regularly at home. Hardly do pupils report the cases of corporal punishment to their parents for fear of being subjected to additional punishment and avoid conflicts with their own teachers.

The parents strongly recommend corporal punishment arguing that it is effective in instilling discipline and good academic performance. Some view it as a biblical directive and therefore imperative.

Ministry of education handles cases of corporal punishment that are reported by parents and students. The ministry verifies the claims and liaises with the TSC for disciplinary action to be taken against the teacher involved. Very serious cases are reported to the police for legal action.

According to MOE, quality assurance and standards officers are regularly dispatched to the schools to monitor school activities including implementation of the corporal punishment.

The Teachers Service commission handles all cases referred to it by the MOE or by parents and head teachers. Just like the MOE it verifies the cases before action is taken. The commission acts within its powers to discipline the teacher who has contravened the law. Depending on the magnitude of the offence, the TSC can transfer the teacher to another school, refer the matter to police for legal action or interdict the teacher.

The government is blamed for not employing enough teachers and training counselors to handle indiscipline cases so that the ban on caning can be enforced. Meanwhile, despite the legal ban, corporal punishment is still going on unabated in the majority of schools.

## 5.2 Discussion

The study indicates that corporal punishment has unanimous approval by all the stakeholders save for the government, which issued a legal notice in March 2001 banning corporal punishment. The magnitude of corporal punishment is big and wide-ranging from school to home environment.

The pupils corroborate previous research that contends that corporal punishment for incorrect behavior leads to faster learning (Tauber, 1999). Teachers argue that it is necessary since it is faster and saves valuable time for not only pupils but also teachers themselves. Together with parents they advocate for corporal punishment based on social, cultural, religious, legal and educational factors.

According to pupils and teachers corporal punishment is useful for such reasons as:

- Correcting and changing behavior
- Inculcates respect and good discipline
- Reminder to perform academic tasks like assignments
- Creating fear to repeat mistakes
- Is a biblical directive not to spare the rod and spoil the child.

This agrees with Armstrong (1984) who argues that teachers are professional educators who are trained to deal with children and can be trusted to use the paddle.

However, physical punishment is not recommended by the stakeholders under the following circumstances:

- When excessive and leads to school dropouts.
- If it is injurious
- When it serves no purpose like caning children who cannot afford school fees.
- If it affects the child emotionally and psychologically hindering learning.

All stakeholders detest punishment when it is not moderated. Unfortunately, there are no spelt out rules and regulations on how to conduct corporal punishment or inflict pain on offenders for which offence. The ministry of Education on the other hand has not stipulated forms of punishment to be followed in schools. The void created by the MOE leaves school head teachers to formulate rules and regulations in their schools.

The alternative forms of punishment that were presented include:

- Manual work such as weeding, cleaning, slashing, digging and uprooting trunks.
- Detention during breaks time and lunch time hours.
- Suspension
- Running around the field
- Kneeling and walking on knees
- Missing classes

These forms of punishment require monitoring and supervision hence time wasting for both pupils and teachers. The workload for teachers at the high teacher: student ratio cannot allow for these alternatives. Parents, teachers and pupils detest these time wasting options. Some pupils enjoy staying out of class rendering the punishment options null and void.

The psychologists' view of use of treatment other than punishment does not fit well with these stakeholders argument that counseling as an alternative form of behavior correction is not tenable in the short run given shortage of qualified staff. Even legal ban has not prevented completely the use of corporal punishment. The desire to achieve exam success in the short run motivates the stakeholders to punish offenders and correct behavior as long as it leads to exam success, respect and good discipline.

### **5.2.1 The Impacts of corporal punishment**

There are negative and positive impacts of corporal punishment. Positive impacts include:

- Improvement in exams and performance of academic tasks
- Correction of behavior
- Respect for teachers and good discipline even if in the short run
- Improved punctuality
- Time is not wasted
- Instant action against indiscipline

Negative impacts include:

- School drop outs
- Sometimes injury occurs
- Child affected emotionally and psychologically
- Strained relationship between teachers and pupils
- Conflicts between teachers and parents
- Repeat of mistakes requiring caning again and again

In spite of the negative effects of corporal punishment, it is still the most preferred mode of punishment until any viable alternative forms of behavior modification can take root in schools.

The pupils feel angry with those who punish them but most understand their mistakes. They do not enjoy being caned but have no options provided. Corporal punishment is mandatory in most schools. It creates fear of being caned again and again hence prevents them from repeating the mistakes. However, the pupils would rather go for corporal punishment than waste time outside classrooms.

### 5.3 Conclusion

From the study the following points are evident:

- Corporal punishment is rampant in rural public primary schools
- Physical punishment is used in schools with no limit or criteria as to the form of punishment meted out to which particular offence. It is left to the discretion of teachers.
- Corporal punishment is not only at school but also at home
- Parents approve of corporal punishment as long as it not excessive and injurious to their children.
- Pupils endorse corporal punishment because the alternative forms of punishment are time wasting and are negatively affecting academic work
- Teachers prefer corporal punishment because it is easier, saves time and effective in correcting behavior, even if it means in the short run. The heavy workload means only corporal punishment works.
- All stakeholders; pupils, teachers, administrators and parents accept corporal punishment for changing behavior and achieving exam success.

Pupils have very positive attitudes towards corporal punishment and state clearly that it should be used because it is useful in:

- Acting as deterrent to repeating the same mistake
- Correcting and changing behavior
- Instilling discipline and respect for teachers
- Completing assignments and presentation for marking
- Punctuality; avoiding lateness
- Realizing one has done wrong

Therefore, the following conclusions may be drawn from this study:

- In primary schools, corporal punishment is acceptable as a mode of instilling discipline and ensuring success in exams. For this reason, pupils, parents, teachers and administrators are unanimous in their acceptance of corporal punishment in schools.

- There is also urgent need to review the ban of corporal punishment and institute alternative forms of punishment if the legal ban is to become effective.
- The results of this study shows that parents and pupils perception of corporal punishment contradicts the psychologists view on punishment which propagates that corporal punishment adversely affects children's cognitive development and therefore performs poorly on school tasks according to the literature review (Straus, 1994; Patterson GR, 1982).
- Since most educationists agree that one's perception (attitudes and feelings) has direct bearing on behavior, then it follows that positive attitudes formed early in life (especially at primary level) will persist throughout life. When these primary school pupils eventually join secondary schools they will need to be conditioned through corporal punishment to perform well and remain disciplined.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

The following recommendations can be made from this study:

- i. The ban on corporal punishment should be reviewed in order to determine and institute alternative forms of punishment.
- ii. Schools should have a punishment policy so that there is uniformity and consistency in handling indiscipline to ensure fairness.
- iii. Guidance and counseling programmes should be promoted and enforced in schools as an alternative form to corporal punishment.
- iv. Educationists should create awareness to the communities on need to discard traditional modes of discipline like corporal punishment due to its negative effects
- v. On the job training of teachers as counselors and peer education to improve discipline and academic success in schools.
- vi. Teachers should not take advantage that pupils accept physical punishment as a method of correction and use excessive force.

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