UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU NATAL

EXPERIENCES AND ATTITUDES OF CHILDREN TOWARDS CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

BY

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DECLARATION

This study is the original work of the author and has not been submitted in any form for any degree or diploma to any university. Where information from other sources is used in the text, it is duly acknowledged.

Signed:õ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ .   Date:õ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ õ .

Sylvia Ntombifuthi Ntshingila

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DEDICATION

To the children of South Africa who are the future of the country.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

ABSTRACT

The overall objective of the study is to explore with young people their attitudes and experiences of corporal punishment. The specific aims are:

i)   To explore childrens experiences of corporal punishment

ii)   To ascertain childrens attitudes towards corporal punishment

iii)   To explore alternatives that children suggest to corporal punishment as a form of discipline

In this study I conducted in-depth interviews with eighteen early adolescents between ages of 10 to 15 year olds from a community in Imbali, KwaZulu Natal, and Pietermaritzburg. It was intentional to explicitly work with children from a similar black township of Zulu background. Hence the only representation I sought to address in this group was gender and the group was equally represented with 9 boys and 9 girls using a snowball sampling.

The prominent findings of the study which confirm some of the previous studies of particularly Dawes et el (2004 and 2005); Maree and Cherian (2004); and De Wet (2009):

- ❖ Mothers are the prominent disciplinarians in the home
- ❖ Adults use and support corporal punishment as tool to discipline
- ❖ Criminalising corporal punishment has not been effective
- ❖ Corporal punishment has worked as a temporary deterrent
- ❖ Children still think corporal punishment is the only way to prevent children from being spoiled this is despite the fact that they think of it as painful.
- ❖ Boys tend to be more aggressive after the punishment
- ❖ Girls are more fearful prior to the punishment
- ❖ Children prefer being punished at home rather than at school
- ❖ Collective punishment by teachers in schools was seen as unfair
- ❖ Most preferred alternative to physical punishment was withholding of privileges like pocket money.

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WHAT OF THE CHILD

Trapped between a frustrated single mother

and a stressed out teacher

Her voice silenced

His rights trampled

The little girl's spirit crushed

The little boy's creativity curtailed

Her opinions muted

His imagination stunted

Who will speak for the little girl

Who will love the little boy

Who will hear their voices

What of the child

What of our future leaders

Who will cry for her

Who will wipe her tears

Who will restore her innocence

Photo by courtesy of the Pretoria News

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.   Background: Corporal Punishment

To begin with, I will explain the story behind the picture of a girl on page eight above has a story found in Maree and Cherion (2004:75). She hadn't done her homework, so her teacher allegedly pinned her on the blackboard and beat her to a pulp. %am going to teach you and all your friends a lesson+were the chilling words the 14 year-old girl from Hammanskraal remembers him threatening.   Her teacher apparently threw water in her face to revive her before continuing the beating. The girl's mother was reluctant to have details published õ [because] she has entered into an agreement that the school pay the medical costs in exchange.

Hers is not a unique story; many countries view the use of corporal punishment as an acceptable means of disciplining children. Waterhouse pointed out that no African state has prohibited corporal punishment by parents, 23 states have prohibited it in schools, it is prohibited as a penal sentence in 36 states and only three African states have prohibited corporal punishment in alternative care settings. Dawes et al (2005) looked at arguments used in the context of African American families and found that one of the primary reasons for the practice was that corporal punishment was used to toughen up the children so that they can deal with the hardship of the society in which they live.

In South Africa, although outlawed in schools, in terms of the schools Act, No 84 of 1997, it is still used frequently by educators to discipline learners. At homes it is viewed as a quick deterrent of childrenç misdemeanours.   Aucion et al (2006:75) state that for some %corporal punishment is a moral imperative and a necessary aspect of parentç obligation to discipline their children, for others, the

use of corporal punishment is an act of aggression that should be banned by law+. It is against this dichotomy that most debate concerning corporal punishment is located.

According to Aucion et al (2006) the debate over the appropriateness of this form of discipline has been detailed extensively in terms of moral, religious and political foundation.   In a South African context Dawes et al (2005:6) point out that corporal punishment is interwoven into the way patterns of power were established and entrenched historically. They state that authoritarian systems tend to be ideologically based on the notion that discipline must come in the form of punishment because most members of the society are incapable of critical thinking and self discipline, and thus need to be taught to fear disobedience.

Frequent corporal punishment on children by adults has in turn led to young people themselves becoming violent towards each other and to their elders (Dawes et al, 2005).   Historically, Bhengu (1994), states that children have been nurtured through the culture of violence in this country.   She points out that to them violence is the only language that can be used to influence change.

Dawes et al (2005:5) point out that corporal punishment was extensively used in parts of South Africa, which were under colonial rule. It was sanctioned by law under Apartheid and later entrenched through the efforts of the Dutch Reformed church and Christian National Education schemes.   Corporal punishment became one of the ways in which the patriarchal, racial and authoritarian Apartheid system entrenched itself.

After 1994, there have been several legislative initiatives to outlaw the physical and psychological abuse of children within schools but not in the home. According to Watergate (2007) banning corporal punishment in the home has been mooted within the parliamentary legislative committee together with childrens rights interest groups but resistance from religious and other interest

groups have hindered the process.

The contribution of scholarship to the understanding of children's lives is crucial for those whose work is in policy and practice according to Roberts, (2008). Her argument highlights the need for continued research that will assist policymakers in pushing for banning of corporal punishment in the home as well. Currently while it is legally banned as schools, educators continue to use it with full support of parents who use it liberally in the home to discipline their children. In this dissertation I plan to explore the way children experience and view corporal punishment.

1.2   Problem Statement

The problem to be investigated in this dissertation is the silenced voices of children concerning corporal punishment, something that affects them the most. In this study I unearth the voices of the children which have been ignored throughout the studies of corporal punishment as a form of discipline. What are their views and attitudes towards corporal punishment? Most parents and teachers still strongly believe that using corporal punishment is the only effective way to maintain moral standards.

However from a child rights perspective corporal punishment is commonly seen as a fundamental violation of the rights of children, Dawes, et al (2005:5). Article 19 of the Children's Rights Commission (2007:2) asserts that State Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect children from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, while in the care of parent (s), legal guardian or any other person who has the care of the child. While policy makers and parents wrangle with the issue of corporal punishment, children themselves who are at the receiving end of corporal punishment are left out of the equation. Gandhi, the most famous pacifist in history, emphasised that children should be taught peace at the onset

because they are at the centre of peace-building. He once said: *"If we are to reach real peace in this world…we shall have to begin with children."* Sadly, it is the very centre that has been left un-attended and consequences can be seen by the increase of violent acts committed by children.

There are daily frightening reports of youth killing each other or their elders. The headlines in the media shout: "A pupil stabs his teacher in Marianhill right in front of the classroom." (Isolezwe, 12/03/2007:4) and "Test of strength ends in death on the play ground" (Khumalo, S. Sunday Times, 22/10/2006:8). I think this kind of violence reflects a dire need for intervention that will transform youth into peaceful citizens who view peace as a lifestyle. It also points to the damage of the children's psyche that has registered violence as a resolution tool to any conflict. Adults can not solve the issue of disciplining children if they continue to ignore the voices of children.

This dissertation aims to explore children's experiences and their attitudes towards corporal punishment. Previous studies on children discipline and the relevance of children's voices forms an integral part of the study to persuade policy makers not to forget the main person in the middle of an argument of corporal punishment. Data was collected through interviews with a selected sample of children between ages of 10 and 15.

A definition of corporal punishment proposed by Strauss in Vlasis-Cicvaric et al (2007:40) is:

> "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 behaviour." It is in these terms that society has seen corporal punishment as acceptable disciplinary tool. "

According to the Oxford Dictionary, a child is "a young human being below the age of full physical development" and discipline: punish of an offence / train to be obedient or self controlled.

Chapter 2

RESEARCH METHODS

2.   Research Objective

The overall objective of the study is to explore with young people their attitudes and experiences of corporal punishment.

2.2   The Specific Aims are:

iv)   To explore children's experiences of corporal punishment

v)   To ascertain children's attitudes towards corporal punishment

vi)   To explore alternatives that children suggest to corporal punishment as a form of discipline

2.3   Research Approach

I have chosen the research approach of this study to be qualitative. According to Wellman et al (2007) qualitative research methods are based on meanings expressed through words and other symbols. According to Wellman et al, (2007:195) qualitative studies can be used successfully in the description of groups or small communities. I think that their description of the researcher's function in the study fits with this particular study which aims to attempt to understand the participants' experiences of corporal punishment. The research was undertaken with a particular focus on experience and interpretation.

Interpretive research is whereby the researcher focuses on theme or repeated patterns that appear in the group, as well as deviations from these themes or patterns according to Wellman et al (2007:196). They state that the notes of these inferences and interpretation are referred to as analytical notes. Henning (2004) emphasises that the interpretive paradigm does not concern itself with the search for broadly applicable law or rules, but rather seeks to produce descriptive analysis that emphasise deep, interpretive understanding of social phenomena. I think her description connects with the focus of this study, as it is aimed at gaining an understanding of children experiences and attitudes towards corporal punishment.

2.3.1   Approach - Theoretical Framework

Corporal punishment and its impact on children is a social issue. I think is it is therefore appropriate to use a theoretical framework that is sociologically based. According to Mcneill and Chapman (2005), social research dates back to Max Weber, Marx and Durkheim in the nineteenth century and has evolved over the years. All scientific enquiries are fundamentally prompted by simple human curiosity according to Mcneill and Chapman (2005:7). They state that while some research aims to describe, others set out to explain a social phenomenon.

> It asks why? and tries to find answers to a problem. Social problems are those aspects of social life that cause private unhappiness or public friction, and are identified by those in power as needing some kind of social policy to deal with them. Social policy refers to those actions of governments that have a direct effect on the welfare of the citizens of a country. (2005: 7-8)

Sociologists, according to Mcneill and Chapman (2005:1), are "interested in those aspects of human behaviour which are the results of the social context in which we live." They state that sociology stresses the patterns and the regularities of social life which are orderly and largely predictable, hence the gravitation towards **a social learning theory**. Akers and Jensen (2007) state that Albert Bandura and his co-workers, developed this theory to look at ways in which children repeat the behaviour of their role models. According to them, social learning theory explains learning and behaviour as the result of the interaction between personality factors and situation factors.

Behaviour and personality is learned by means of reinforcement and cognitive factors within the person. If children observe positive, desired outcomes in the observed behaviour, they are more likely to model, imitate, and adopt the behaviour themselves.   Their argument is supported by Greig and Taylor (1999: 60) who argue that children learn a whole range of behaviours through observation õ parents and others serve as models of behaviour.

I think that this theory is crucial in this study considering that young people are highly susceptible to imitate their immediate superiors who are mostly either their parents or figures of authority in their lives.   If their parents depend of corporal punishment to discipline them, according to Bandura's theory as stated by Akers and Jensen (2007) there is then likelihood that they may see violent means as the quickest way to resolve a conflict.

However it is important to point out that this theory is relative and debatable as not all children from violent homes resort to violence. Nevertheless it provides a sound framework with which to view this study. According to Bandura (1977: 59) family is a primary socialising agent fro children. He points out that "humans don't just respond to stimuli, they interpret them".

2.3.2 Research

2.3.2.1 Instrument for data collection

Collins et al (2000) argue that qualitative research focuses on meaning, experience and understanding; qualitative research designs therefore give the researcher an opportunity to interact with individuals whose experiences the researcher wants to understand. Qualitative research methods in the form of questionnaire and interviews are relevant in exploring the experiences of young people between ages of 10 . 15. I conducted interviews that were guided by a semi-structured interview schedule.

The questions were semi-structured with some %closed+ for general demographic purposes and others %open ended+ to allow the participants to speak on their experiences of corporal punishment including the types of punishment they receive, the frequency and which of the two parents renders the punishment. This method is supported by Mcneill and Chapman (2005) who state that many interviews are semi-structured in that they have a mix of questions geared towards extracting meaning according to themes.

The interview questions also gave the participants a chance to voice their views on corporal punishment regarding how they feel after the punishment and if they would in fact use corporal punishment on their children when they become adults. Macneill and Chapman (2005:52) state that open questions make it possible for respondents to say what they really feel something that the researcher was aiming for. I used methods that were aimed at drawing maximum results; hence the tools that sustained the interest of participants. The best method for this is qualitative research which was in the form of in-depth interviews. Interviews according to Wellman et al (2007:196) are very useful in cases where the researcher wants to launch an explorative investigation.

Methods of qualitative research are designed to help researchers understand people, their social and cultural contexts within which they live. Greig and Taylor (1999) state that the qualitative research framework is based on assumptions about the subjective nature of children, knowledge and research methods.   The qualitative framework entails a methodology in which theory is "grounded" in data such as observation, interviews, written reports and interpretations. They argue that the basic methodological tool in this framework is interpretation.

2.3.2.2   Analysis

Interpretation seeks to understand the social world from the point of view of the child living in it. In this project; I sought to understand corporal punishment from the perspective of children. Greig and Taylor (1999) argue that interpretative method encourages entering the child's world and meanings to get the child's perspective. In summary they state that qualitative research attempts to capture the ways in which child research participants make sense of the research events under investigation. Qualitative research enables the voice of the participant to be heard. Their summary of the qualitative research methods articulates what the researcher aimed to do in this project which is to hear the voice of the children who are often not heard. For analysis I focused on repeated emotions reported by the participants regard their feelings towards corporal punishment.

2.3.2.3   Sample Chosen

Collins et al (2000) argue that two important factors have to be considered in order to ensure that the sample that is drawn actually represents the population. One is how similar or dissimilar is the population?   The second factor is the degree of precision with which the population is specified. They argue that if the population is homogeneous, the researcher can use a smaller sample which is what I did.

In this study I conducted in-depth interviews with eighteen early adolescents between ages of 10 to 15 year olds from a community in Imbali, KwaZulu Natal, and Pietermaritzburg.   It was intentional to explicitly work with children from a similar black township of Zulu background.   Hence the only representation I sought to address in this group was gender and the group was equally represented with 9 boys and 9 girls using a snowball sampling. Collins et al (2000) explains that snowball sampling is useful for the study of sensitive matters.

Children in this township have informal kidsq social clubs and they helped in recruiting others to participate.   According to Wellman et al (2007:196) the first phase of snowball sampling, we approach a few individuals from relevant population. These individuals then act as informants and identify other members (for example acquaintances or friends) from the same population for inclusion in the sample.   In this study, I approached four participants and explained that nature of my study they then referred and invited their friends until the sample was sufficient.

2.3.2.4   Ethical Issues

The nature of this research involves children as the main subject of research which has significant ethical implications; hence the scarcity of information on the perspective of children. There is however a strong emerging voice advocating for children arguing that %children have the right to be heard and regarded as experts of their own experiences,+ Grover, (2004).   Albeit, ethical guidelines still have to be followed to protect the dignity of children.   To ensure proper ethical practice; the following steps were taken:

❖ *Parental Consent*

I drafted a letter explaining the objectives of the research and conducted home visits to the parents of each child I intended to interview to request permission with a signed written consent. They were ensured that no harm would be done to the participants.   The confidentiality and anonymity of the participants and their responses were also assured of the 18 homes I visited all parents agreed.

❖ **Child Consent**

This involved getting consent from the children as participants. I explain the purposed my study to them and gave them the right to withdraw should they wish to; in order to ensure they did not feel forced to participate.

❖ *Forewarning*

However participants and gatekeepers were forewarned that should a participant appear stressed while relating certain experiences of discipline, a referral to a counsellor will be made. This is a controversial issue of child protection which brings about a dilemma for a researcher. However, no such instance arose amongst the participants.

2.3.2.5   Limitations

Limitations included issues of trust as I, an adult researcher, dont live within the community full-time. I think it is possible that the participants interviewed may have held back concerning bigger and potentially embarrassing misdemeanours they were punished for perhaps for fear of being judged or out of embarrassment therefore some part may not have been completely honest.   Amongst the older male participants I had a definite sense that they were withholding information

concerning misbehaviours.   They seemed shy and slightly uncomfortable. Through translating questions from English to isiZulu and answers from isiZulu to English, meaningful substance of answers may have been slightly lost.   The study was limited in scope and time due to a long distance travel I had to do to get to the community where research took place.

2.3.2.6   Child Protection

According to Roberts (2008) the question of child protection is an issue that needs a good deal of fore-thought by all who interact with children. She points out that in most research work; it is always assumed that unless the researcher guarantees confidentiality, people will not talk about abuse. Roberts (2008) points out that there have been cases where researchers with advanced experience in child protection have not been able to guarantee complete confidentiality in the interest of preventing further abuse on children.   It should therefore be acknowledged that sometimes certain child protection protocols in research are mostly in the interests of risk-averse organisations and not in the interest of protecting children. In the process children may feel silenced by such protocols. These are some of the issues that I had to consider prior to starting a study.

It must be stated that initially the university's Ethical Clearance Committee expressed concerns about my conducting research with children under the age of 18 citing that parents as gatekeepers may feel exposed by their children concerning how they are punished at home.   However I sought the opinions of child protection experts including the Ministry of Women, Children and Persons with disabilities. Subsequently, Ethical Clearance was granted on the basis of Children Act of 2005 that encourages children's participation on matters that affect them.

Chapter 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.   Introduction

The main purpose of this literature review is to provide an overview of academic research and knowledge on corporal punishment in general; childrens' experiences of corporal punishment and their attitudes towards it.   The aim is to focus on issues pertaining to disciplining of children. There are gaping gaps in research and the relevance of childrens' voices that have been highlighted. Traditionally there has been a tendency of doing research like corporal punishment on children from a perspective of adults ignoring the children even though they suffer significantly from it.

According to Roberts (2008:10) as researchers are still learning ways of involving children fully in every stage of the research process from identifying meaningful research questions, to collaborating with researchers and disseminating good practice.   On the matter of corporal punishment, children are normally at the receiving end but researchers tend to focus on the voice of adults more than they do children. Some scholars like Dawes (2004), Dodge and Lansford (2008) and Douglas (2006) are primarily focused on advocacy for legal banning of corporal punishment.

They have in their studies explored the damage done by corporal punishment on children; others including Harris (2004), Bar-Tal (2002) and Castro (1999) have focused on the importance of educating for peace amongst young people.   Hart et al (2005) have looked at the way forward to constructive child discipline. Evidently most of the literature available is work done using the voices of adults mostly to influence policy on banning corporal punishment, to draw attention to the negative effects of corporal punishment on youth, to promote the importance of peace education and to expose the continual practise of punishment in school

environments where it is illegal.

3.2   Previous Studies Theories

3.2.1   Historical context of corporal punishment in South Africa

Most of the studies done on corporal punishment in South Africa are within the context of schools against the background of its abolishment in schools since 1996. Corporal punishment in the home is an area that is not usually threaded up.   Historically, child rearing from biblical times has involved corporal punishment as a means of disciplining the child.

Corporal punishment has been part and parcel of child rearing in most parts of the world. Maree and Charian (2004:4) point to the Bible,

> "For decades the Biblical perspective and the ideal of morality and character development laid the foundation for the justification of corporal punishment in South Africa. The use of the word ±discipline‗ in the Bible is mistakenly equated to the concept of corporal punishment. Parents and teachers often quote the Bible as their *raison d'être* for corporal punishment.‑

Strongly held beliefs connected to religion are complex and those who hold the beliefs do not change their minds easily. I think that one can safely argue that part of reason that is stalling the banning of corporal punishment in all environments is closely linked to society‗s belief that corporal punishment is a better way of rearing and disciplining the children. While some in the religious communities have seen the light like the South African Council of Churches (2007) have supported the banishment of corporal punishment and even debunked the biblical interpretations to support physical punishment of children; others refuse to abandon what they see as God‗s sanctioned way of child discipline.

Morrell (2001) pointed out that corporal punishment was an integral part of schooling for most students and teachers in the twentieth century. He points out that it was excessively used in white single sex boys schools and less so in the white single sex girls' schools. He then goes to the Bantu Education in 1955 where black children of both sexes were exposed to the school beatings. The debate of negative impact of corporal punishment increased in the 1970's and 1980. Cited by Morrel (2001) in these debates are psychologists and social commentators (Newell, 1972 and Murray, 1985) who argued that respectful relations between teachers and students were not possible.

According to Morrel (2001), the end of apartheid and emergence of the human rights culture led to calls for the criminalisation of corporal punishment in schools. Taking the lead from the European Union, South African Law courts declared corporal punishment to be infringement of a person's rights. Taken from Maree and Cherian (2004:1):

> "The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 in section 10: (1) and (2) states specifically that: 10 (1) no person may administer corporal punishment at a school to a learner. (2) Any person who contravenes subsection (1) is guilty of an offence and liable of conviction to a sentence that could be imposed for assault."

Morrell's historical context of corporal punishment leading to the ending of corporal punishment in schools supports Dawes et al (2005) argument that some of the efforts made to ban corporal punishment are done as part of political moves in keeping with international trends not because government legislation recognises the importance of alternative discipline of children. Hence the continued prevalence of this kind of punishment used even after it was outlawed.

3.2.2 The obduracy of outlawed corporal punishment in schools

Morrel (2001) set out to explain the persistence of corporal punishment in schools by conducting a survey of 19 schools in Durban with the aim of explaining the ongoing use of corporal punishment. His sample comprised of 60.3 percent African, 13.6 percent White, 13.5 percent Indian and 12.6 percent Coloured with 45 percent male and 55 percent female grade 11 learners. He investigated the change in school discipline since the banning of corporal punishment. 80 percent of white learners reported change compared to 47, 49 and 62 percent of coloured, African and Indian learners respectively.

Morrel (2001) in his findings states that corporal punishment remains widespread in township schools thus experienced disproportionately by African learners. He points out that his finding suggests that the support for beating children at school as most effective discipline reflects domestic patterns of discipline. About 48 percent of African learners in his study indicated that beating was the most common method of discipline at home compared to 16.7, 16.5 and 9.5 percent of Coloured, White and Indian learners respectively.

He argues that "reasons for persistence of corporal punishment in schools are linked to the lack of alternatives, the legacy of authoritarian education practices and belief that corporal punishment is necessary for orderly education to take place," Morrel, (2001: 23). The salient point that he makes in the end is that if corporal punishment is to be banned successfully in schools, it has to be banned at home too. He states that the neglected explanation is that corporal punishment persists because parents use it in the home and support its use at school. I think Morrel's argument highlights what has been the struggle of many children's right advocacy activists who face a lot of resistance within legislative committees.

3.2.3 Advocacy for the banishment of corporal punishment in the home

At the level of advocacy for a change of policy in Africa concerning children, Waterhouse (2007) drafted a presentation paper advocating for an end to corporal punishment of children to the African Committee of experts on the rights and welfare of the child.   On this paper, Waterhouse made assertions using a solid 2006 United Nations Global Study on violence against children which found shocking levels of violence affecting children globally - in their families, at schools, in alternative care institutions and in communities.   The study's recommendation emphatically urged that "no violence against children is justifiable and all violence against children is preventable" (Waterhouse, 2007:4)

She points out that in the same year of UN's study; the Second International Policy Conference on the African Child released the African Declaration on violence against girls urging all member states of the African Union to take necessary measures for the effective prohibition of all forms of violence against children, including corporal and other humiliating forms of punishment. According to Waterhouse (2007:4) "no African state has prohibited corporal punishment by parents, 23 states have prohibited it in schools, it is prohibited as a penal sentence in 36 states and only three African states have prohibited corporal punishment in alternative care settings."

She then points out that this overall picture equates to 52 percent of African children who are not protected from corporal punishment in schools and 100 percent of African children are not protected in their home environment.
Her recommendations to the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the child called for a leadership to:
- Adopt a written statement urging African states to prohibit corporal punishment in all settings,
- To ensure that member states provide information on their progress in

eradicating the use of corporal punishment in their periodic reports to the Committee,

- To remind members states of the need to undertake to fulfil their obligations under international and African human rights instruments; a promotion of a ban on corporal punishment of children by member states in their individual interaction with government officials and

- To support recommendation in the Africa Declaration on Violence against girls for the African Union to support the efforts of the Committee towards preventing, reporting and monitoring violence against children on the continent. (Waterhouse 2007:5)

While Waterhouse's arguments are based on compelling research, I think she focuses solely on banning corporal punishment without looking at constructive means that should replace such punishment as a mode of discipline.   There are also issues of culture and strong belief in corporal punishment as the only effective means of disciplining children amongst many adults in Africa and other parts of the world.   There is therefore a need to present alternatives that will ensure that adults are not left wanting when it comes to ensuring that their children are guided in a manner that is constructive but not physically or otherwise harmful.

In the South African context where the past and the present are heavily influenced by violence as a means of resolving conflict, there has been little done in cultivating the culture of peace not only amongst young people but amongst South Africans in general.   The South African Schools Act of 84 of 1996 which saw the banning of corporal punishment in schools is an example of that. Whilst the move was a positive one, I think it was not properly thought out. There were no proper alternatives put in place to substitute corporal punishment. Hence in some schools the punishment is still meted out on children. Educators claim that they do not have alternatives. In other schools the frustration levels of educators are high as they feel disempowered by the corporal punishment ban

and are at a loss with how to discipline their pupils.

Dawes et al (2005) conducted a South African national survey of attitudes to the use of corporal punishment by caregivers in which they found that 57 percent of all the parents with children under 18 reported using corporal punishments. Of the parents interviewed 33 percent were administering severe corporal punishment using a belt or a stick. Their finding also revealed that most common age of children who are smacked is three years of age and the most common age of children who are beaten with a belt or other object is four years old. Of those parents who reported that they smacked their children in the past year, 30 percent were men and 70 percent were female.

Their study found that cohabiting parents are most likely to smack their children and similar proportions of single to married parents use corporal punishment. A greater proportion of previously married single parents beat their children with belts and other objects. There was a strong link between corporal punishment and partner violence. Participants who experienced high levels of partner violence were also more likely to agree with physical discipline of children.

In their brief overview of corporal punishment in South Africa, Dawes et al (2005:3) say:

> "Corporal punishment is interwoven into the way patterns of power were established and entrenched historically in South African society. Authoritarian systems tend to be ideologically based on the notion that discipline must come in the form of punishment because most members of the society are incapable of critical thinking and self discipline, and thus need to be taught to fear disobedience. It was extensively used in parts of South Africa, which were under colonial rule. It was sanctioned by law under Apartheid and later entrenched through the efforts of the Dutch Reformed church and Christian National Education schemes. Corporal punishment became one of the ways in which the patriarchal, racial and

authoritarian Apartheid system entrenched itself.+

Dawes et al (2005) specifically point out that the study focuses on the views and practices of persons over 16 years of age. Children were not included as participants in this research. They however acknowledge the importance of accessing the views and voices of children and points to a series of future studies by Save the Children Sweden that will include youth. They conclude by arguing that corporal punishment is violence to children.

While Dawes and his team conducted a thorough groundbreaking research study, it is largely dealing with the corporal punishment from a legislative perspective. I think that criminalising corporal punishment is not the only way and it is not the most effective way of curbing the problem because the mentalities and attitudes of people would not have been addressed. Policy that would ban corporal punishment in the home would merely become an imposed enforcement. While it is a compelling study, banning corporal punishment without alternatives is not a transformative measure.

3.2.4 Perspectives of educators

Another important study on corporal punishment from the perspective of educators; reveals a new dilemma that leaves educators and parents at a loss when corporal punishment as a form of discipline is taken away from them. Narain (2006) looked at the views of discipline from the perspective of educators with the aim of exploring alternative methods. His findings indicated that educators believed that the incidents and severity of learner misbehaviour had increased rapidly post 1996. He found that a significant number stated that their superiors in the Department of Education have left a void with the banning of corporal punishment by providing little or no alternatives to disciplining of learners.

Many educators believed that their authority was undermined and it affected discipline and hence the culture of teaching and learning. Numerous methods of disciplining were suggested by the sample of educators with the most popular being that of getting the parent involved in disciplining of their children and personal counselling of those with behavioural problems. Sadly he states, the third popular measure believed to be effective was the use of corporal punishment, which was still used by small percentage of respondents. There were no significant differences in views between male and female teachers.

I think that Narain's study reveals how the issue of corporal punishment has created a divisive line between adults and youth. The adults seem resentful of the idea of banning corporal punishment. It is almost as if their authority is taken from them. Interestingly, one of the suggestions that educators came up with in his study was to involve the parents in disciplining children but there is no mention of involving the learners. Learners are portrayed as smug winning party who have more rights than their elders.

I think that these opinions about learners are not because educators have sat them down and had discussions with them, they are assumptions based mostly on exceptions to the rule. The study highlights a pressing need for alternatives that will equip both adults and youth with tools that would help them resolve conflicts without resorting to violent means.

Narain (2006) states that suggestions for better disciplinary measure that was made pointed towards a call for a review of the Code of Conduct as required by the South African Schools Act of 84 of 1996, with the focus being immediacy and relevance of sanctions. The respondents also wanted a frequent use of the parent-components, of the Schools Governing Body, in discipline.

3.2.5 Perceptions of high school students

Vally (2006) conducted an extensive survey between 2005 and 2006 on the perceptions of high school students and their understanding of education rights, attitudes to schooling and the violation of human rights. The survey involved 1700 students and was accompanied by a household survey completed by parents in Ekurhuleni and Soweto in Gauteng.

His findings revealed that 80 percent of the respondents said that their teachers still administered corporal punishment at least once a week. Despite corporal punishment being outlawed in school since 1996, 53 percent of the respondents from 15 schools were not aware that corporal punishment in schools was an illegal practice. About 34 percent of pupils did not know that schools are not allowed to refuse them admission if they did not pay school fees. Ten percent of the pupils believed that schools could turn away pupils who are HIV positive and more than a quarter believed schools could exclude pregnant pupils.

In his conclusion Vally (2006) advances an important point to the argument of those who are calling for a return of %corporal punishment+ to instil discipline on children. He argues that they need to reflect on the fact that in many schools corporal punishment never went anywhere. He states that this very point shows that corporal punishment is not a deterrent against perceived ill disciplined among learners.   His survey also exposes lack of vigilance on the side of the Department of Education and agencies that are entrusted with the task of promoting %legislation that outlaws corporal punishment; ensures professionalism and sanctions those who break the law.+ (Vally 2006:5)

Vally (2006) states that corporal punishment exacerbate problems around discipline, destroys healthy relations amongst all in the school community, affects the self-confidence of learners and contributes to a culture of force and violence instead of reason and self-discipline in our society. He further argues that the reintroduction of corporal punishment to deal with the spate of violence will merely increase levels of violence in our schools.

On ending, Vally (2006) suggests that instead of corporal punishment, there should be campaigns, education and support that highlights the rights of learners, promotion of legal literacy, examines the socio-economic and socio-cultural context of discipline and relations between community and schooling remain essential to ensure the practical realisation of the ban of corporal punishment in schools.

While Vally's study focuses on children's understanding of their rights, their voices on their attitudes towards corporal punishment are unclear. It is interesting that Vally does not look or question the tolerability of corporal punishment in the home. If it is acceptable in the home, it is therefore not surprising that more than half of the children did not know that corporal punishment is outlawed in school.

Another study that ties in well with Vally's findings of corporal punishment being destructive of "healthy relations amongst all in the school community, affects the self-confidence of learners and contributes to a culture of force and violence instead of reason and self-discipline in our society," (Vally 2006:6) is that of de Wet (2009). He looked at school violence as reported in the media over the past decade. His focus is mainly on newspaper portrayal of school violence in South Africa.

While de Wet does not explicitly link such violence with corporal punishment, it is interesting to see that some of the violence incidences he mentioned are connected to a learner resistance to receiving corporal punishment from a teacher.   The prevalence of such violence in itself is an indicator of a culture that is rooted in solving conflicts with a quick fix of a knife, a gun or a fist.

De Wet (2009:60) conducted a qualitative content analysis of newspaper articles on school violence that were published between June and September 2008 in South Africa. His findings revealed that learners, educators and parents are the responsible for school violence.   He quotes incidences of learner-to-learner violence; learner-to-educator violence, and incidence of parents arriving at the school and chasing the learners with dangerous weapons.   De Wet (2009:55) points out that the main group contributing to school violence is enrolled learners.

In terms of causes for such wide-spread violence in schools, De Wet (2009) points to three levels starting with individual level using the example of a much reported incident of a learner who attacked and killed another learner with a Sumarai sword. He quotes from an open letter by the mother of the now convicted killer. She claims that her son may have had a %combination of stress, bad self-esteem, wrong influences and absolute feeling of powerlessness.+   De Wet (2009:52) points out that, experts who were contacted on this case concurred with the mother.

The second cause of school violence mentioned by De Wet (2009) is the educational factor. He removes himself from the argument and points out what others have said concerning the ban of corporal punishment. De Wet (2009) uses Ramasehlas argument (cited in Bailey 2008a:4), who blames the educational authorities of school violence. In this argument Ramasehla, the Gauteng chair of the National Professional Teachers Organisation of South

Africa, states that "when corporal punishment was abolished educators were not trained in alternative discipline. The Education Department is not doing enough… We need solutions".

De Wet (2009:55) claims that this view was shared by a victim's mother who believes that "the reinstatement of corporal punishment will be the panacea of school violence."   He points out that from the analysis it seems as if educators' efforts to instil discipline may lead to learner-on-educator violence. He cites an example of an educator whose car was burnt by a learner after he had instructed the learner to remove a hat he had on in class.

His third and last cause of school violence is mentioned as societal factor over which the school has no control.   De Wet (2009:52) points out that these factors may include "political violence, disintegration of family life, poverty, the glorification of violence on television, internet, movies, the collapse of positive norms and values…".

De Wet (2009:49) cites an interesting quote by Ntyintyane who states

> *"We are a violent nation…if people can't get their way, violence is the answer…Schools are just a mirror of our sick society. How does one expect schools to correct the wrongs we have created in our homes? … Schools can only build on the foundations started by parents."*

De Wet concludes by pointing out two approaches that may lead to reduction of violence in schools. He states that punitive approach using zero-tolerance school policies which he claims have led to limited number of reactive responses to problem behaviour, including office discipline referrals, in and out of school suspension and expulsion.   He points out that some acts of school violence are punishable by the law and intervention by the South African Police Services.

The other approach is school security measures which he claims is a popular strategy in the effort to prevent violence.   He states that this intervention is

designed to deter and detect potential perpetrators of school violence before they harm themselves or others. De Wet, (2009: 50) points out that the role players in South Africa see security measures as an important deterrent to school violence. De Wet's study touches on the most prominent symptoms of something gone wrong with disciplining of children both in school and at home. The rampant school violence has underlying roots that De Wet did not investigate because as like most researchers, the concern is on making the lives of educators/adults easier. Learners in his study are seen as prominent perpetrators of violent acts; however their voices are completely silent.

Their parents speculate for them what could be their problem and educators bemoan the dilemma of not being able to administer corporal punishment. But where are the main perpetrators? What are they saying is the cause for such frustration manifested in killing each other, their parents and their educators? I think that De Wet's suggestions of punitive and security measures are but a bandage over a festering sore. Punitive measures may only lead to more violence and security measures while they are important for both educators and learners, perpetrators will find ways to bypass them.

Maree and Cherian (2004) conducted a study focusing on learners while most scholars locally dealt with adults namely educators and parents. Maree and Cherian (2004) investigated learner's beliefs and attitudes towards corporal punishment and other related matters. They conducted interviews with 265 learners from Limpopo, Capricorn District between ages of 17 and 25. They looked at the frequency with which corporal punishment is meted out; the types demeanours that warranted the punishment; learner's opinion regarding the appropriateness of the punishment and they polled the opinions of learners concerning punishment of children and the appropriateness of corporal punishment for certain types of misbehaving.

Their findings revealed that learners prefer alternative discipline to corporal punishment. The alternatives that they preferred included "cutting grass, reporting every 30 minutes to the educator, suspension, exclusion from class, solitary confinement" Maree and Charian, (2004:12). Unfortunately Maree and Charian do not give percentages in terms of how many preferred what. They also found that a "small percentage" still viewed corporal punishment as appropriate way of addressing certain misbehaviours like drinking.

They conclude by stating that their findings support a number of other previous studies which found that "corporal punishment was an out-let for pent up feelings of adults rather than a tool to educate children" Maree and Charian (2004:12). They also point out that many ways of disciplining children currently are not aimed at building self-discipline, do not take learner's basic needs into account and do not suggest an attempt at improving the underlying problem of an inadequate configuration of relationships.

Their recommendation suggests a set of written school codes and conducts visible to parents and children, compiled by a panel of experts in education law; constitution experts; educators; psychologists, parents and children. They also call for a national indaba to deal with the situation of corporal punishment which they claim has a direct link to incidence of school violence. They demonstrate a chain of violence that breeds more violence, starting from "violence (including corporal punishment) leading to fear . violence, hate and anxiety . retribution . more violence" (Maree and Charian, 2004:13)

I think that their study's strong point is focusing on the opinions of children, however, the findings do not reflect a clear indication that learners are against corporal punishment. The link between corporal punishment and school violence does not seem to come directly from the learners studied but from previous studies they had used. I think that the suggestion of combining experts to come up with school codes is ideal however practically children's voices in the process

of drawing codes may be drowned in the hierarchy of experts.   Codes and conducts that are meant for the children may end up with the voice of the adults more than the children who should be at the focal point.

3.2.6 Relevance of Children's voices

I concur with Vlasis-Cisvaric (2007) who argues that children's views and opinions are important because they are uncoloured.   The relevance of children's voices in research has been one of contested debate. Some scholars (Kellet and Ding 2004) claim that children have inadequate life experience and they say what is expected of them while others (Prout 2007; Christensen and Jones 2007; Smith 2006) argue that children should be positioned as subjects, rather than objects of inquiry.   Others simply do not argue but continue to study children through adults using parents or guardians of children.

Smith (2006) argues that children should be viewed as social actors; this is part of a new sociological approach to studying children's experiences. Her study does not necessarily look at the issue of corporal punishment. She is looking at children's view and construction of fatherhood using the Human Science Research Council's Fatherhood project.   Her study was selected because it makes a very compelling point about how children have been put aside and how they can now be brought forward and have their voices respected and heard.

She points out that there is simply no safeguard against either adults or children questioned in a non-threatening way about a topic that is important to them, and in a way that they can understand, they can provide reliable and trust worthy responses.   It is also understood by and large, that children in the 'middle year' age (11-13) are able to read and write and express themselves fairly competently.   Smith (2006) states that traditionally fields like developmental psychology studied children within the context of stages and ignored them as

actually living in the social world.   According to Smith, much of what is known about children has been derived from studying the individually located "timeless" representative child. Her study points to a shift from traditional ways of studying children towards focusing on the socially constructed and historical child, situated within a range of social communities.

Smith (2006) argues that this shift is "precisely because the social space of childhood has been determined for so long through the model of the developing child, questions are now being asked about what children can say and what status children's words can have."   This new paradigm characterises a move from the notion that children are to be seen not heard towards a realisation of their social significance in the world.

Smith (2006) clarifies that this new paradigm sets out to situate childhood at the heart of the debate, as opposed to subsuming their interests to other familial topics.   She however admits that attempting to interpret children's work and finding their "authentic world" may be very different from 'normal' conceptions.

Her assertion of this point is contrary to Prout's foreword (2007:xi) who states that:

> "The study of children does not require special techniques, but rather simply a rigorous application of a general methodological requirement, applicable whether studying adult or children and the techniques used in the study should reflect the concrete particularities of the children being studied"

She argues that researchers should pay particular attention to the 'culture of communication' of children as a way of guiding their work.

Christensen and James (2007) discuss researching children and childhood cultures of communication with the entry point that is not very different from Prout's argument.   Like Prout they claim that their "focus is on research *with*

rather than *on* children, in our desire to position children as social actors who are subjects, rather than objects of enquiry.+(Christenson and James 2007:1)

While they clearly state that %children are not adults+, they insist that researchers need not adopt different methods but to adopt practices that resonate with childrens own concerns and routines.   Their argument supports a prior assertion by Greig and Taylor (1999:31) who stated that one way of assisting our conceptualisation of the child in society is to view her as part of the social system. A system, whether biological, economic or psychological has two basic properties: *wholeness and order*, which means that all parts within are related to each other.

The arguments clearly suggest that ignoring the childrens voices is leaving out an important section of a ±social systemq Studying a section of a social system is not getting the whole picture of society. Society will continue to present violence, crime and hedonistic values, all symptoms of an ailing society. While there are emerging theories advocating for the voices of children to be heard, on this particular matter of corporal punishment the gap is still wide.   Researchers who are interested in the topic are looking at it from a parental point of view. Those who study the children are interested in how much they know concerning their rights. However those who are keen on getting to find out first hand how children feel about corporal punishment are minimal to non-exist.   The role of being the spokespeople for the children is still dominant, drowning the voices of children themselves on the issue concerning and affecting them most directly.

3.2.7   Relevance of Educating for Peace

"If we are to reach real peace in this world…we shall have to begin with children" – Mahatma Gandhi

Studying childrens experiences and their alternative preferences to corporal

punishment has to be based on theory that will replace the long term negative impact with a positive one. Dawes et al (2004) point out that corporal punishment is an aggressive means of disciplining children. Akers and Jensen (2007) argue that Bandura, the developer of social learning theory, stated that children learn from observing adults.

If children learn early on that to resolve conflict one needs to resort to violent means, then it is all the more important to have peace education for children to know that there are alternatives. Hence the relevance of peace education and building a society of young people who apply their minds on issues of resolving conflicts using tools that are alternative to violence. Gandhi, the most famous pacifist in the world emphasized that the centre of peace-building is on teaching children ways of peace. They should be taught peace at the onset. Sadly, it is the very centre that has been left un-attended and consequences can be seen by the increase of violent acts committed by children.

There is an undeniable link cited by (Dawes et al, 2004; Vally 2006; Waterhouse 2007, Blaine 2008) between violent acts committed by children and their upbringing which involved exposure to a lot of violence whether at school or in their homes. These are two major socialising agents that are most influential in the identity formulation of adolescents. The frequent reports of violent deaths committed by teenagers are the symptoms of violent rearing which breeds violent citizens. The rampant violence is a big indication of a need for an alternative to violent rearing of the future generation. The childrens involvement in coming up with the resolution and alternatives to violence is therefore crucial.

There are six key issues mentioned by Burns and Aspeslagh (1983) relating to peace education which I think are relevant in the context of teaching South African children to live peacefully. They argue that peace education deals with issues of violence, aggression, conflict, prejudice and power, influence and change. Floresca-Cawagas and Toh (1989) argue that peace education has to

be hopeful, not in an idealistic sense that the world will somehow get better, but ‰n the dialectical sense of simultaneously appreciating the grim realities while working as hard as possible to transform un-peaceful structures and passing on the spirit of hope to even more fellow human beings.+ Floresca-Cawagas and Toh, (1989:20)

Dovey (1996) argues that the aim and challenge of educating for peace is to educate every new generation of young people to become peacemakers and to devote their talents, capacities and energies towards the creation of a civilisation of peace based on a culture of peace and healing. Peace education in schools should not be a leisurely option but an examinable subject as serious as Mathematics. De Wet, (2009: 50) argued that achieving sustainable peace in South Africa is going to involve transforming its people, its societal conditions, and its development models, and as peace educators, we might sometimes experience disillusionment as we wonder about the effectiveness of what we are doing.

According to Carl and Swartz (1996) never has the need been greater, nor the time riper for including education for peace in the curriculum. They point to two factors that favour this development: a multicultural education and the expertise available in curriculum design, teaching methodology and in the field of cognitive development. Maxwell, Enslin and Maxwell (2004) accurately claim that a unique and particularly violent South African context calls for a program that is specific to the context. The content involved should include, amongst other things, self esteem, celebration of diversity, communication and most important, conflict management.

Kent (1993), states that there are two concepts of peace, negative peace and positive peace. He claims that negative peace deals with immediate symptoms and the absence of physical violence. While positive peace entails the elimination of the root causes of violence. It is a conscious effort to build a

society which reflects a lifestyle of peace. It assumes an interconnectedness of all life. This latter kind of peace is the one that this study is most interested in because of its transformative ability and sustainability when integrated to everyday life.

Melko (1999), on his study of peaceful societies demonstrates that although conflict would always be with us, reaction to it does not necessarily have to be violent. He cites Bruce Bontas study of the Amish and Hutterties societies where "self restraint is expected as is the intervention of bystanders… . Humour is valued and loss of temper is a disgrace," Melko (1999:302). Already there are tools that could be used to help adolescents to think creatively about ways of resolving their issues in non-violent manners. What is needed is someone to encourage them and engage with them in coming up with their own tools so that they can internalize values of peaceful living.

Harris (1999:60) points out that research have shown that teenagers exposed to non-violence benefit in many positive ways. "Peace education can give children exposed to violence positive images of alternative to violence. Research indicates that children are most reassured when adults attempt to do something about childrens fears." He points out that parents of adolescents who participated in a non-violence course noted that their children were taking more responsibility for their actions: they were keeping out of fights more, having fewer emotional outbursts and applying fairness rules more often.

The benefits mentioned by Harris emphasise the permanence involved in transforming youth into balanced peaceful members of society. Peace education amongst youth is an integral part of this study. Castro (1999: 169) argues that a peaceful classroom is also one that encourages students of both sexes… to participate fully in the class … giving them a sense of equal value and dignity. Educating children about peace in their formative years may influence

their mentality and approach to issues as adults.   Bar-Tal (2002:1) lists peace with freedom, equality and justice as the most desirable values in most societies.

Dovey (1996) aptly quote a student who declared that: "Peace doesn't form a picture in my mind because I haven't experienced complete peace."   She accurately argues that South Africa is one of the most violent places in the world and those most affected are children. For Dovey, it is not easy to work for peace in a country that has always been geared for physical and emotional confrontations.   Catholic Peace Education (1986:134) touches on issues of peaceful relationships from the personal level right up to global. It starts from the personal level because this is the core of peace building, if it doesn't exist on a personal level than peace can not be expected on any other level.   What is needed in this country is what was respectively introduced by Gandhi in India and Martin Luther King Jr. in the African American communities of the United States, a culture of non-violence.

3.3   Concluding Remarks

There is apaucity of previous studies on children's experience of corporal punishment. There are variations of studies looking at corporal punishment and perceptions of it from educator and/or parent's point of view (Dawes et al 2004, Narian 2006, Vally 2007). Some researchers used studies for advocacy purposes to ban corporal punishment however with limited suggestions as to alternatives once corporal punishment is banned (Waterhouse 2008).

Some studies looked at the disruptions in schools since the criminalisation of corporal punishment and advocated for punitive measures to be reinstated (De Wet 2009). Others in direct contrast to this showed that even as corporal punishment was outlaw more than a decade ago, it was still rampant in schools. Disruption continues in schools even those that use corporal punishment thus proving the ineffectiveness of corporal punishment (Vally, 2007).

The scope of previous studies reveals a gap and even an injustice that is being done on children by ignoring their voices.   The violence witnessed in society whether it is child-on-child, pupil-on-educator or parent carefully studied by De Wet (2009) is clear loud cry from children calling to be heard.
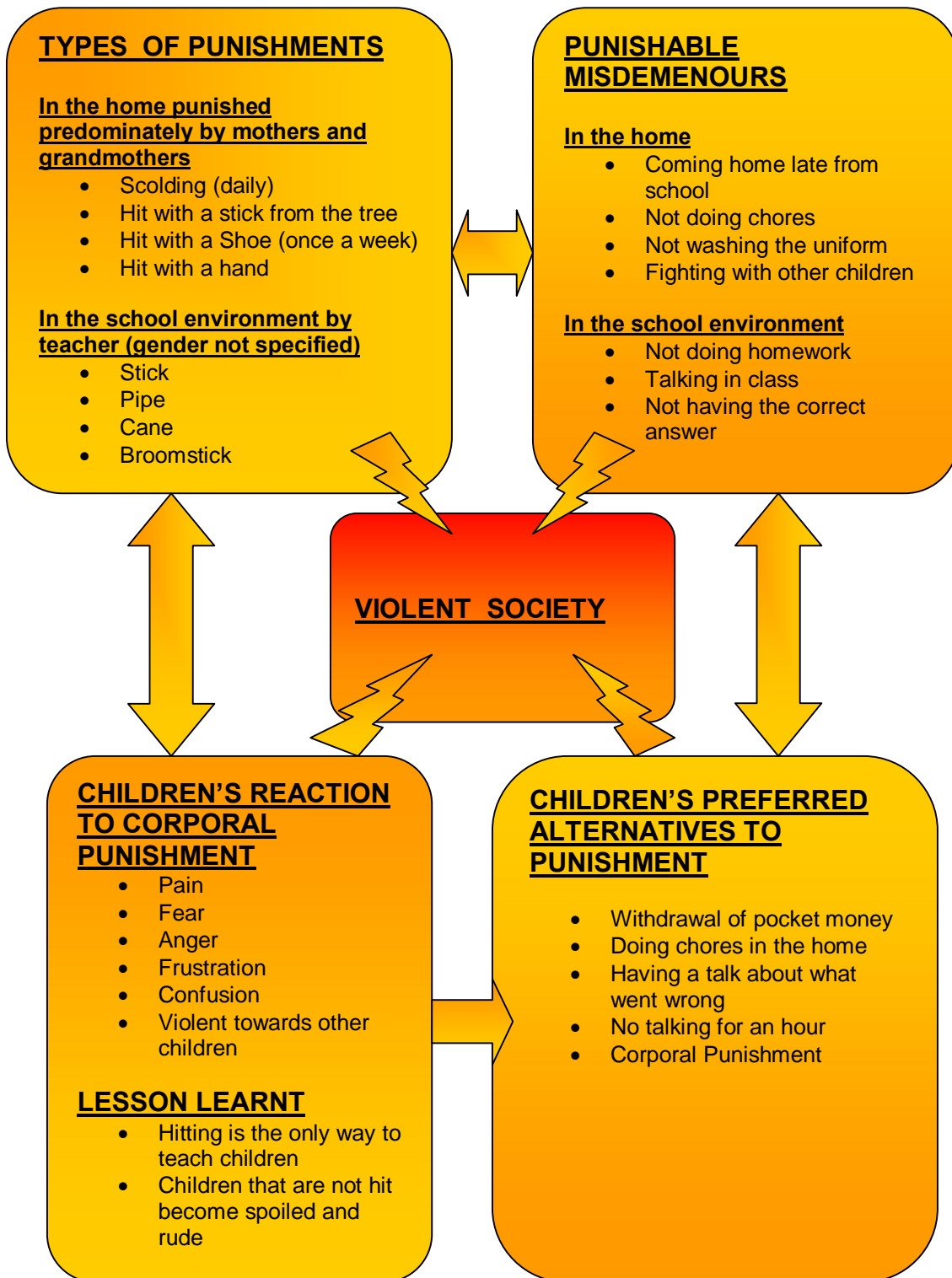
Chapter 4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

My specific aims (see section 2.2) were: a) to explore children's experiences of corporal punishment; b) to ascertain children's attitudes towards corporal punishment and c) to explore alternatives that they suggest to corporal punishment as a form of discipline. The findings of the study demonstrate that participants felt conflicted by corporal punishment in that while on one hand they think it is painful, on the other hand their elders believe it is the only way to raise respectful children. They unanimously mentioned the word . painful . when describing corporal punishment.   What compounds the confliction is the clear lack of communication between the participants and their parents and or teachers prior to administering corporal punishment.

Although it was not explicitly articulated as a cultural belief, participants felt they couldn't defend themselves before punishment because they simply believed that talking back to adults/elders was rude. This lack of communication created feelings of anger and frustration. The female participants expressed fear prior to the punishment. One participants stated: ‰always feel like running away from home when I know that I will be punished." The majority of male participants reported feeling aggressive after being punished. Some said they sometimes vented their frustration on their siblings. This type of reaction may initially be seen as insignificant but it can actually be a start of something that can later on pose a social problem in society. It is the early sign of violence that later causes menace in society.

Figure 4.1
THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE

TYPES OF PUNISHMENTS

In the home punished predominately by mothers and grandmothers
- Scolding (daily)
- Hit with a stick from the tree
- Hit with a Shoe (once a week)
- Hit with a hand

In the school environment by teacher (gender not specified)
- Stick
- Pipe
- Cane
- Broomstick

PUNISHABLE MISDEMENOURS

In the home
- Coming home late from school
- Not doing chores
- Not washing the uniform
- Fighting with other children

In the school environment
- Not doing homework
- Talking in class
- Not having the correct answer

VIOLENT SOCIETY

CHILDREN'S REACTION TO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT
- Pain
- Fear
- Anger
- Frustration
- Confusion
- Violent towards other children

LESSON LEARNT
- Hitting is the only way to teach children
- Children that are not hit become spoiled and rude

CHILDREN'S PREFERRED ALTERNATIVES TO PUNISHMENT
- Withdrawal of pocket money
- Doing chores in the home
- Having a talk about what went wrong
- No talking for an hour
- Corporal Punishment

The framework I have developed based of the findings of the study to illustrate how early childhood experiences of corporal punishment contribute to the cycle of violence currently dominating newspaper headlines in many societies locally and internationally as pointed out in my literature review.

The worrying trend especially amongst male children is that studies have found that corporal punishment in the early years can be linked with violent behaviour in the later years. "Research shows that almost all of the most dangerous criminals were regularly threatened and punished during their early years." (Maree & Cherian, 2004:75)

4.2   Aggression and Corporal Punishment

The participants reported becoming aggressive and violent towards their siblings after they have been hit by their parents. *"I feel embarrassed and when my brothers and sisters laugh at me I hit them to stop them from laughing at me,"* said one participant. This indicates that at a smaller scale they have already began the cycle of violence. According to Vlasis-Cicvaric (2007:220) corporal punishment is related to increased occurrences of social and psychological development aberrations.   Furthermore, he argues that excessive corporal punishment during childhood is considered to predispose children to physical abuse as adults.

According to Dawes et al (2004) children who are spanked more often exhibit more socio-emotional problems in the form of hyperactivity, aggression and low self-regulation. It is not clear however whether these are the causes or the results of corporal punishment. Some studies argue that caregivers resort to punitive and harsh disciplinary measures as a means of stopping pre-existing undesired behaviour (Keagon, 2001). It is most probable that the two are closely connected. According to Dawes, et al (2005:23), "difficult children provoke more

controlling discipline, which exacerbates the child s problems. Independently, harsh discipline is likely to give rise to emotional problems.+

While in the current study I found that there was no significant difference in the use of corporal punishment between boys and girls, most studies have found that corporal punishment is used more on boys than on girls (Dietz, 2000; Straus & Stewart, 1999; Giles-Sims et al, 1995; Gershoff, 2002).   What I found was that the female participants were punished for not doing house chores. The male participants on the other hand were usually punished for fighting which was a common misdemeanour amongst boys. Fighting points to the aggression tendencies amongst boys, it also indicates that it has already started being activated.

These findings may be be consistent with the popular argument that boys may be more likely to engage in misbehaviour more frequently than girls leading parents to adopt harsher disciplinary measures on boys (Straus and Stewart, 1999). Straus and Stewart (1999) argue that alternatively parents q decisions regarding disciplinary techniques are influenced by their gender role expectations - parents may believe that boys are more aggressive and require greater discipline. Parents may also use corporal punishment because they aim to socialise boys to be more aggressive in order to reinforce traditional gender norms (Giles-Sims et al, 1995).   Considering that the culture of the community where I conducted the study is largely patriarchal, there is likelihood of parents using corporal punishment to socialise boy to be manlier. Similarly girls may be punished to subdue and socialised them into feminine roles expected by society of them.

4.3 Children's experiences of corporal punishment

Misdemeanours leading to punishment

**Figure 4.2
Punishable
Misdemeanours at
school and home.**
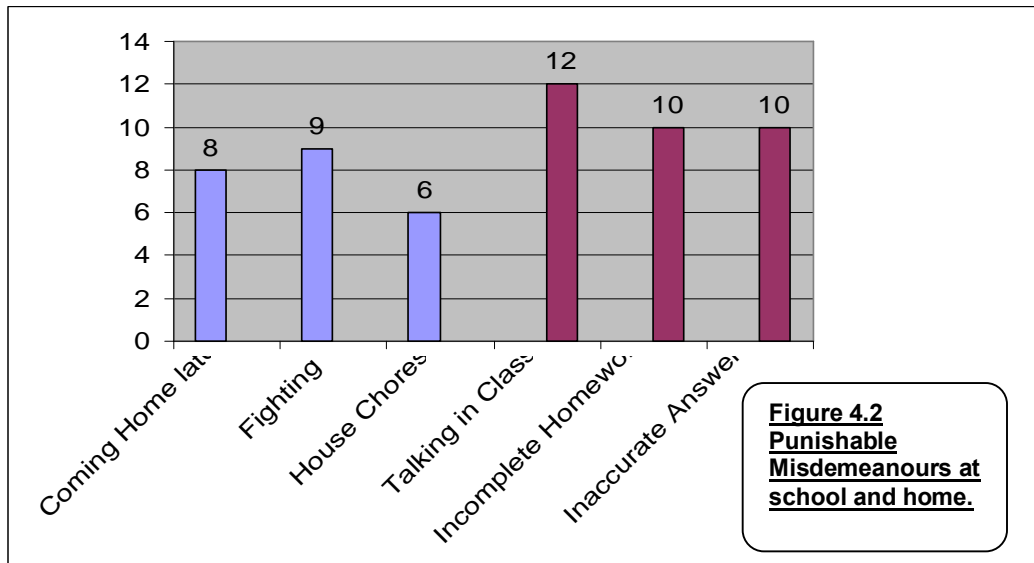
The most frequent misdemeanour reported by almost half of the participants (figure 4.2) was coming home late from school. Fighting with others was mostly reported by male participants while not doing house chores was mostly amongst the female participants. At school, the majority of participants mentioned that they got punished for talking in class, not doing their homework and failing to accurately answer the teachers questions.

Only three out of 18 participants stated that they do not get punished with corporal punishment at school. Two of the three were attending the same high school and the other attends a former Indian school in town. The rest of the participants reported that sometimes teachers at school punish the whole class for something done by a few. One participant said, *"a teacher asked the class a question and we couldn't answer and we all got hit with a stick on our hands."* Not doing homework, talking in class and not responding to the teachers questions were common misdemeanours in schools that lead to a punishment by
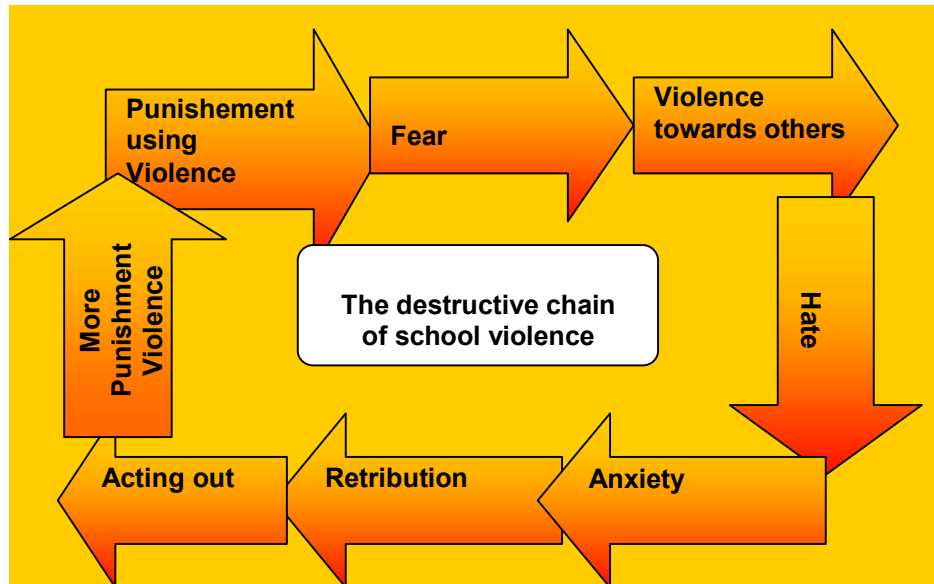
teachers.

Most participants reported a change of behaviour after the punishment. However, the same misdemeanours were repeated at a later stage when they forgot about the punishment. Some reported that the actions that caused them to be punished involved activities that they enjoy doing. One participants explained: *"I like playing with my friends until late. I keep doing it even when I know my parents will hit me."* The majority viewed corporal punishment as a temporary deterrent, not a long-term solution. One participant said *"It doesn't matter if I stop or not because I know I will be hit anyway and sometimes I don't understand what I did wrong."*

4.3.1 Corporal Punishment and School Violence

The majority of those punished at school mentioned a stick as a popular tool used to beat up children. Pipes and canes were also mentioned as popular punishment tools at school. None of the participants reported being hospitalised after punishments but bruises and marks from the beating were reported. More concerning is the unquantifiable psychological damage that some scholars have argued is the course of the rampant school violence witness currently.

Based on the findings of the study and other previous studies (Maree and Cherion 2004: 83) on school violence, I have developed the diagram (figure 4.3) to best explain what seems to be an unending cycle of violence in school. It starts with the unfair punishment of learners which, according to the conceptual description of corporal punishment, is violence. This leads to fears by learners who in turn become violent and aggressive. They develop feelings of hate and anxiety leading them to act out. This prompts teachers to react with more corporal punishment which in strict terms is violence and there the cycle rotates again and again.

Figure 4.3 the destructive cycle of school violence

All participants had a markedly strong negative reaction towards being disciplined by a teacher rather than a parent at home. Most reported emotional reaction was anger towards the teacher. Participants said it was unfair to be hit collectively for the faults of the few. The majority reported a strong reaction against being punished at school but punishment at home was viewed as somewhat acceptable. One participant who expressed a preference of being punished at home than at school reasoned by saying: *"the teachers hit us harder than we are hit at home."*

It was easily accepted to be punished at home than at school. This may be closely connected to the manner in which the punishment is meted out. The participants reported that sometimes teachers at school would punish the whole class for something done by a few. One participant said, *"a teacher came into a class where a few learners were talking, he hit us with a stick, the whole class even us who were not talking. It made me feel sad and angry"* The unfairness of it was what made participants react negatively not the fact that corporal punishment is actually banned at schools. Some of the participants knew this but

they did want to report it at home because they felt it could lead to their victimisation in the school.

In a school environment one male participant admitted to getting aggressive with a teacher for purpose of self-defence saying*: "I grabbed the stick because I was sacred. She hit me on the head with a broomstick and I had a bump on my head."* When I asked about what he was punished, he said he had told his mother that the teacher punishes them with a stick.

This reveals that a culture of silence is cultivated by intimidating and threatening children with further violence. Another interesting aspect of this participant's story is that the teacher was female and the participant was male. This may suggest that boys are likely to aggressively defend themselves than girls especially in an environment where the discipliner is not a parent.

I think this links this study with that of De Wet (2009) who conducted a qualitative content analysis of newspaper articles on school violence that were published between June and September 2008 in South Africa. His findings revealed that "learners, educators and parents are responsible for school violence". He quotes incidences of learner-to-learner violence; learner-to-educator violence, and incidence of parents arriving at the school and chasing the learners with dangerous weapons.

De Wet (2009) points out that "the South African and international foregoing discussion argue that the main group contributing to school violence is the enrolled learners." He also states the "commonness of the verbal abuse of learners by educators," citing that it was exposed by De Wet (2006) and supported by Blaine (2008).

Despite corporal punishment being outlawed in school since 1996 only three of 18 participants were not punished by corporal punishment in their school. That means more than 70% of participants interviewed have teachers who are committing criminal acts against them on a daily basis. Since according to Bandura, children learn from observing adults it can be argued that children learn violence from their teacher and parent, the two immediate socialising agents in their early development.

This finding corresponds with the findings of Vally (2006) who conducted an extensive survey between 2005 and 2006 on the perceptions of high school students and their understanding of education rights, attitudes to schooling and the violation of human rights. The survey involved 1700 students and was accompanied by a household survey completed by parents in Ekurhuleni and Soweto in Gauteng.

His findings revealed that 80 percent of the respondents said that their teachers still administered corporal punishment at least once a week. Bandura (1977:59) points out that %humans don't just respond to stimuli, they interpret them+. I think that perhaps the teachers themselves have interpreted corporal punishment as a necessity that can not avoid applying when they become parents at a later stage.

The widespread of corporal punishment use in schools that continues a decade after it was outlawed is a phenomenon studied by Morrel (2001). His findings revealed that corporal punishment remains widespread in township schools thus experienced disproportionately by African learners. He points out that his finding suggests that the support for beating children at school as most effective discipline reflects domestic patterns of discipline.

Morrel 2001 argues that %reasons for persistence of corporal punishment in schools are linked to the lack of alternatives, the legacy of authoritarian education practices and belief that corporal punishment is necessary for orderly education to take place.+ The salient point that he makes in the end is that if corporal punishment is to be banned successfully in schools, it has to be banned at home too. Morrel, (2001:25) states that the %neglected explanation is that corporal punishment persists because parents use it in the home and support its use at school.+

4.3.5 Frequent administrators of punishment
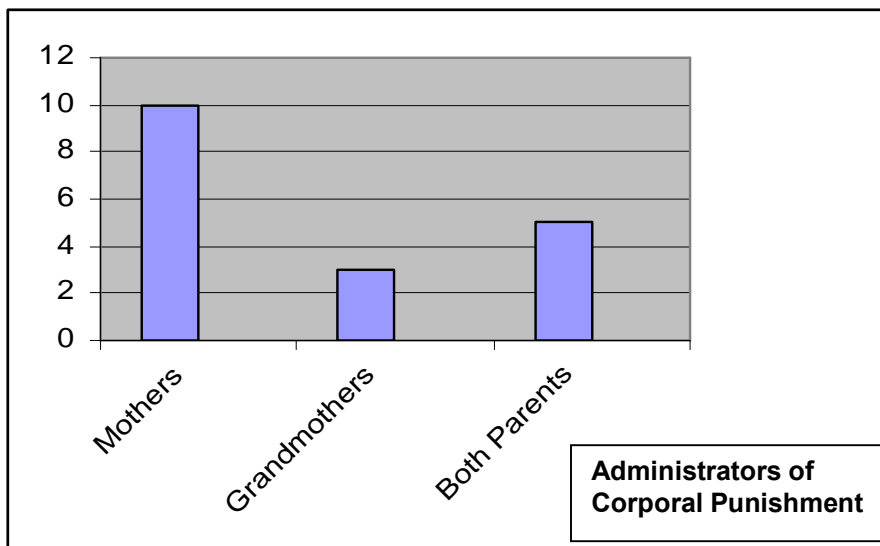
Ten of the participants interviewed live under single mother headed households, five still have both parents living with them and three live with grandmothers. The majority of the participants reported being punished by mothers and grandmothers. Two out of three who live with both parents reported that both their mothers and fathers administer corporal punishment but stated their mothers punished them more than their fathers. Punishment received at school

was not specified by gender.

The finding that revealed mothers as frequent users of corporal punishment was supported by previous research where (Dietz, 2000; Gershoff, 2002; Straus et al, 1998) also found that mothers use corporal punishment more often than fathers. Dawes 2004 argues that caregivers psychological functioning and temperament predicts their use of corporal punishment, particularly those who are depressed, anxious and aggressive use corporal punishment more frequently. According to Keagon (2001) maternal depression is a significant risk factor for the use of corporal punishment.

The study did not explore the emotional or mental health of the participants parents hence it is inconclusive to state that the participants mothers hit them because of depression.   However Dawes 2005 points out another angle that seems to be more logical for this particular study.   He mentions that this finding must be interpreted within the context of maternal and paternal roles in the family. Clearly, mothers have greater opportunities to discipline children simply because they assume the role of primary caretakers and tend to spend more time with their children.

The chances of mothers utilising corporal punishment are thus higher than fathers even though fathers tend to assume the role of disciplinarians in the family. This is consistent with findings that fathers have more favourable attitudes to corporal punishment than mothers, even though increased frequency is associated with mothers use of corporal punishment (Straus and Stewart, 1999). Bearing in the mind that the study found that ten of the participants interviewed live under single mother headed households, perhaps another plausible explanation for mothers as primary discipliners is that higher rates of corporal punishment have been found among single parents (Giles-Sims et al, 1995; Straus & Stewart, 1999; Gershoff, 2002).

The argument is that such persons experience greater stress as a result of parenting alone, particularly when under conditions of economic hardship. For example, divorced women commonly experience a drop in income and financial stress. The additional strain may result in inconsistent discipline and physical punishment.

4.3.6 **Frequency, Types and Severity of punishments received**
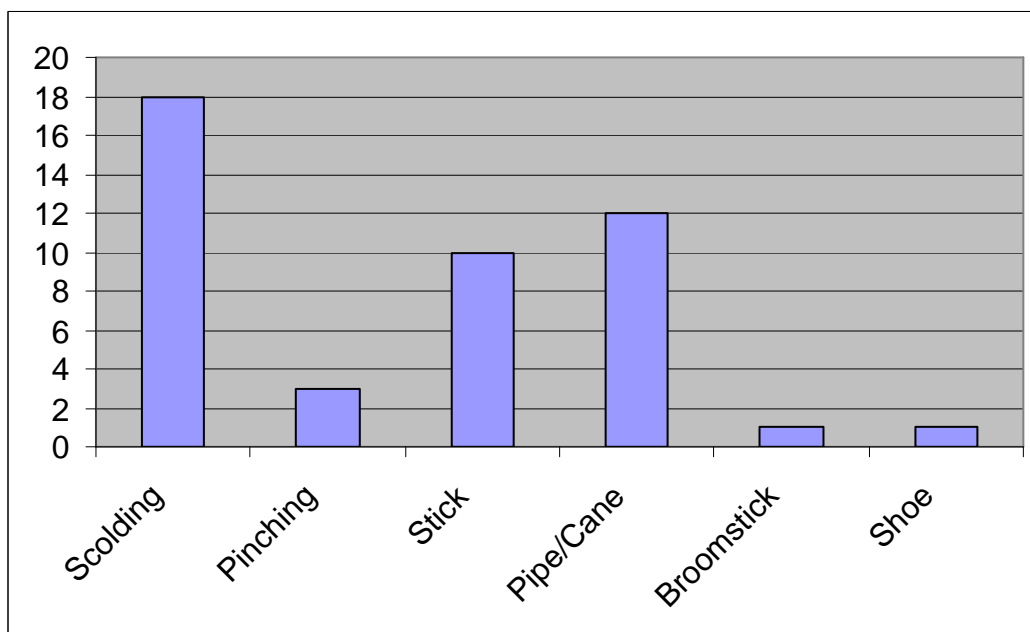
All participants stated that first their parents or teachers react with anger to their misdemeanours which initially leads to scolding and then hitting. Scolding was the initial punishment received for lesser misdemeanours like breaking a plate or not washing uniforms was mentioned by all of the participants.   The majority mentioned scolding as something that happens almost every day while other forms of punishment like pinching and beating happens between once to three times a week. Pinching by grandmothers was mentioned by all those who live with grandmothers as heads of households.   Being hit on the legs and bums

with a stick from the tree was reported as a popular methods used by mothers. One participant mentioned being hit by a shoe all over the body.

The Oxford English dictionary describe scolding as "angrily rebuke", "criticise", "chiding", "rebuking a person harshly" or "a succession of critical remarks such as those directed by a parent towards a misbehaving child." The common denominator to these various descriptions is the negativity that is associated with scolding. All participants reported that prior to being punished, they are scolded. The scolding is preceded by anger; the participants mentioned that the initial parental reaction to the participant's misdemeanours was anger. Many studies done have found that children who are physically punished are likely to have insecurities and low self-esteem but there is paucity of research done in the effects of scolding.

One survey conducted in Denmark (Sigsgaard, 2002) investigated the effects of scolding on children found that children who were scolded saw little difference between that and smacking. Sigsgaard (2002) observed and interviewed six year old children and found that more than 50 percent said they hated being shouted at and thought the grown-up was still angry with them long after the scolding. He argued that it cannot be said that it is better to scold your child then beat it. His other finding which supports the current study was that children felt fearful of the scolder.

It is clear that while scolding may be a popular means of punishing children without getting physical its effects are as negative as corporal punishment. It is associated with negative communication as described by the Oxford dictionary hence there is a possibility of psychological damage by hurtful words. If the predicator of scold is anger then one can argue that like corporal punishment, scolding "is an outlet for pent-up feelings of adults rather than an attempt to educate children" (Maree and Cherian, 2004:83).

All participants reported that they never get to tell their side of the story before they were punished. One participant explained that trying to reason would exasperate the situation. This lack of communication combined with scolding compounds the confusion an a child who is left hurt by the words said in anger, afraid that the scolder is still angry and shamed for misbehaving. These feelings on a young mind are similar to those produced when one is punished physically as Sigsgaard found in his study. Hence the effect of scolding has the similar potential of triggering the process that leads to the cycle of violence elaborated on earlier.

4.4 The raison d'être for using corporal punishment

4.4.1 Historical legacy of using corporal punishment as a tool to subdue - *(parallels between the African American context and the current study)*

As mentioned earlier, participants felt that when they become parents they will use corporal punishment to prevent their children from getting spoilt. This was regardless of the fact that they felt that corporal punishment was painful, unpleasant and caused them to be afraid. This intriguing response warranted a search for a deeper explanation. Dawes et al (2005) looked at arguments used in the context of African American families and found that one of the primary reasons was that corporal punishment was used to toughen up the children so that they can deal with the hardship of the society they live in. The insights drawn from the African American context has parallels with reasoning in the community where this study was conducted.

Dawes et al (2005) argued that African-American parents are more likely to use corporal punishment as a function of their slave and oppressed heritage. This is similar to the oppressed heritage of South African black families. They point out that in the African American context corporal punishment was used to secure obedience in a dangerous world. Again in South Africa corporal punishment was initially closely connected with ensuring subservient behaviour and if the children of the older generation insist on it, it shows the entrenchment of this legacy.

Surprisingly it seems the current generation still carry the legacy of corporal punishment as the only method of discipline. The majority of the participants described corporal punishment as painful. They associated corporal punishment with fear. One participant said she always felt like running away when she was about to be punished. However 16 out of 18 participants interviewed said they would use corporal punishment on their children when they become adult. There was a strong belief amongst the participants that children who are not punished by corporal punishment are rude and spoiled.

Their response supports the Bandura's social learning theory which argues that are likely children mimic their role models. He argues that children store events in two ways through visual images and through verbal codes. What children saw repeatedly as normal practice by parents to misbehaving children became a stored visual image which they have interpreted as a standard method of disciplining unruly children. Verbal code could have been the repeated reasoning that children who are not punished physically are rude and spoiled.

Bandura (1977:59) points out that "humans don't just respond to stimuli, they interpret them". It was clear from the interviews that participants have interpreted corporal punishment as a necessity that can not avoid applying when they

become parents at a later stage. Like their parents, the participants felt that should they not use corporal punishment, their children will be spoilt. According to Maree and Cherian (2004:76)

> %he motives provided for administering corporal punishment include belief that corporal punishment enhances character development, is effective, quick and relatively easy, achieves temporary compliance, makes people feel powerful, contributes to rapid education or elimination of unwanted behavioural patterns and facilitates discrimination learning, is needed as a last resort, is harmless, induces respect, is the only language that children understand, and that behavioural problems increase in its absence+

According to Dawes et al (2005) studies of cultural practices and obedience practices in Africa suggest that corporal punishment is certainly used by parents to control their children in the face of danger. Similar to inner city life in the USA, in rural contexts, the need for obedience is evident in contexts that are perceived as dangerous for children. Strict discipline that promotes obedience is believed to be a source of protection. Compliant children, who listen to their care-givers, regardless of who they are, will be regarded as safer than those who are freer to exercise their will (LeVine et al, 1994).

The culture of silence seems to be closely linked with the use of corporal punishment. All participants reported that they never get to tell their side of the story before they were punished. One participant explained that trying to reason would exasperate the situation. %My grandmother says it is rude to talk back to an adult,+said one participant. Others did not seem to understand that there is a possibility of having communication to state their side. The general understanding was that you do not talk back when spoken to in a tense situation prior to punishment. The only communication that happens is from an adult scolding and response to that from a child is a sign of insolence.

During the slave period in the USA, misbehaviour would result in being sold and lynched. The argument is that corporal punishment thus emerged as the most appropriate way of socialising a child to adapt to that type of society (Ferrari, 2002). While the consequence of misbehaviour may not be as harsh in South Africa, they were incidents of detention and even mysterious death for those who revolted against apartheid masters. This historical connection of corporal punishment as a tool to subdue and socialise unruly children has a link with the current environment where despite the acquirement of political freedom, there is still economic and structural oppression.

Baumrind (1991) and Belsky (1991) argue that the environment in which contemporary working class African Americans live promotes the use of corporal punishment as a way of preparing children for the harsh world. For example, ghetto life is characterised by high levels of violence, peer pressure to use drugs, and to engage in crime. Rearing children under such conditions is very challenging, and prevention of risks to children requires firm parental monitoring and control. Some studies report that these parents see corporal punishment as a way of reducing the risk of their children engaging in destructive behaviour (Straus, 1994; Dodge, Pettit & Bates, 1994).

From peace studies perspective the goals of peace education are aimed at dealing with conflict creatively and non-violently without hurting or oppressing others. It calls for patience with those misbehaving without condoning the behaviour. Anger and grief can be channelled constructively to have positive outcome without resorting to violent means.

4.4.2 The Influence of low economic status on the use of corporal punishment

The economic status of the parents of participants interviewed was not examined, however generally in the community where the study was conducted have families that can be classified under the low income status. Hence what Baumrind and Belsky argue about African American families of low income status use corporal punishment to prepare children for the harsh world can apply to the current study. However with the current study the other reasoning is closely linked with the African culture of ensuring respect of elders by children.

Children who do not have respect are a reflecting of bad rearing by the parents. Participants insisted that if they don't use punishment on their children, the children will grow up rude and spoilt. Their response reflects what they have heard their parents say. There was a clear lack of communication that left children to interpret for themselves the importance of corporal punishment.

A number of studies and reviews have suggested that low socio-economic status is a significant predictor for the use of parental corporal punishment (Dietz, 2000; Keagan, 2001; Straus & Mathur, 1995; Straus & Stewart, 1999; Giles-Sims et al, 1995; Gershoff, 2002). Parents with low economic status tend to use corporal punishment more often than middle class parents. Straus (1994) does however argue that incidence is not significantly related to income. Rather, levels of stress determine the influence of socio-economic status on the use of corporal punishment.

Stress is associated with increased parental depression and marital conflict both of which are predictors of punitive and hostile parenting practices (Crouch & Behl, 2001). The likelihood that stress is positively associated with child abuse and corporal punishment is moderated by beliefs related to parenting and corporal punishment in particular. In other words, parents who face high levels of stress but do not believe in corporal punishment and the use of physical force in interventions with children are not likely to use corporal punishment (Crouch and Behl, 2001; Gershoff, 2002).

4.5   Alternatives suggested by participation to corporal punishment as a form of discipline
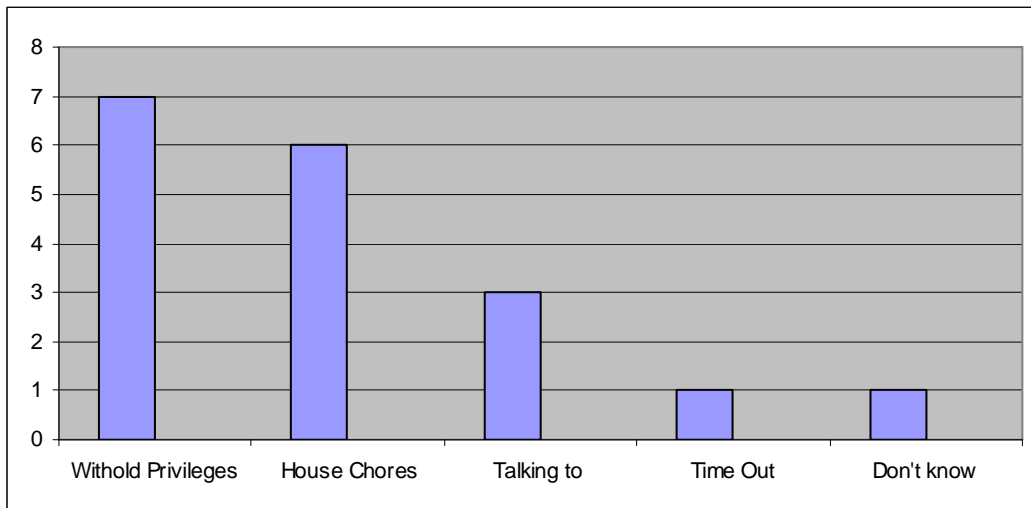
Two most popular alternative methods of punishment preferred by participants are withholding of things like pocket money for school or new clothes, seven out 18 participants expressed this. House chores were preferred by six participants, three preferred being talked to so that they understand their mistakes, one preferred being given a time out to not talk for an hour.   One participant didnt know of any preferred way of punishment.   All participants stated that these methods preferred were better than corporal punishment. A few who preferred being spoken to, said talking would help them understand what they did wrong so that they can change their behaviour.

Chapter 5

5. Conclusion

Considering the scarcity of the body of work dealing with the experience of children regarding corporal punishment, I think these findings may have some role in shedding light on how children feel about corporal punishment so that policy makers can implement policies geared towards a peaceful society. Below are the prominent findings of the study which confirm some of the previous studies of particularly Dawes et el (2004 and 2005); Maree and Cherian (2004); and De Wet (2009):

- ❖ Mothers are the prominent disciplinarians in the home
- ❖ Adults use and support corporal punishment as tool to discipline
- ❖ Criminalising corporal punishment has not been effective
- ❖ Corporal punishment has worked as a temporary deterrent
- ❖ Children still think corporal punishment is the only way to prevent children from being spoiled this is despite the fact that they think of it as painful.
- ❖ Boys tend to be more aggressive after the punishment
- ❖ Girls are more fearful prior to the punishment
- ❖ Children prefer being punished at home rather than at school
- ❖ Collective punishment by teachers in schools was seen as unfair
- ❖ Most preferred alternative to physical punishment was withholding of privileges like pocket money.

The study reveals that there is a widespread use of corporal punishment on children both at home and at school. Only three out of 18 participants reported absence of physical punishment in school. I think that it can be argued from the findings that corporal punishment is a pervasive problem that is part of the underlying problem of aggressive and violent behaviour in society.

"Corporal punishment sends out a signal that it is acceptable to express one's feelings of anger by hitting others in relation" Maree and Cherian (2004:70). This was clear when the participants reported hitting other children after they were being physically punished. While most children viewed corporal punishment as painful, they said they would use it when they become adults. They see it as the only way to prevent children from becoming spoilt. Children are confused by the lack of communication prior to being punished. It seems that corporal punishment fosters a culture of silence. I want to argue that it is due to this silence that children are confused about the use of corporal punishment.

5.2   Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of my study, I make the recommendations that are mostly linked to peace studies and are advocating for peace education. I think parents need to be given tools to deal with disciplining children in a manner that is non-violent but constructive enough for them to feel that their child rearing job is being done. A mind-shift in parents should be the focus. It is important to note that corporal punishment is closely linked with cultural practises hence whatever change that is suggested has to happen with sensitivity to cultural values.

Harris 2004:28 argues that peace education can give children exposed to violence positive images of alternatives to violence. "Research indicates that children are most reassured when adults attempt to do something about children's fears." I want to argue that most of adults who lived through the turmoil of South African politics are children inside in deep need of peace. For Dovey, it is not easy to work for peace in a country that has been geared fro physical and emotional confrontations. "Achieving sustainable peace in South Africa is going to involve transforming its people, its societal conditions, and its development models, and as peace educators, we might sometimes experience

disillusionment as we wonder about the effectiveness of what we are doing,+ (Dovey, 1996:149).

Awareness campaign through mass media much like HIV/Aids awareness can help get the support from communities.   Adverts of known and respected personalities (Nelson Mandela/Archbishop Tutu) endorsing practical alternatives to corporal punishment in the home can help normalise the idea of not hitting but talking to children.   Television feature films with moralising storylines on the negative impact of corporal punishment also have a potential of reaching parents regarding the dangers of corporal punishment.

Carl and Swartz (1996:20) rightly point out that the levels of violence in South Africa have reached frightening proportions. %All too often violence is chosen as a means of resolving conflict rather than peaceful problem-solving mechanisms.+ They argue that the need for Education for Peace is already internationally acknowledged %yet ironically, it gets little or no attention in South Africa.+ This is evident even in schools that are exceptionally evolved; peace is an entity that doesnq have to be studied.   Castro (1999:169) argues that % peaceful classroom is also one that encourages students of both sexesõ to participate fully in the class õ giving them a sense of equal value and dignity+.

Educating for peace in a country that is riddled with violence in the home and at school is a necessity that needs not much convincing. Carl and Swartzqs (1996: 30) impassion argument is that %never has the need been greater, nor the time riper for including education for peace in the curriculum.+ They point to the expertise available in curriculum design, teaching methodology and in the field of cognitive development.   Harris 1996 argues that peace education can give children exposed to violence positive images of alternatives to violence.   He argues that peace educators do not just want to stop violence and reduce conflict in schools.   Instead he says they want to build in young peopleqs minds the foundation for positive peace.   Recently almost daily basis the media has been

reporting on increasing violence in schools with pupils carrying weapons to school.   Incidents of pupils shooting and killing each other have been part of daily reports.   Hence these circumstances make peace education an urgent necessity and crucial part of educational curriculum.

Vlasis-Cicvaric et al (2007) argue that the most appropriate and effective point in time for changing behaviour is during early childhood. "Children must learn that use of physical force, as a method of restraint is not countenanced"(2007:221). They argue that from early on in the community, children must be educated about right or wrong behaviour. This could reduce corporal punishment in the children in the community amongst adults and, in the longer term, in the children of those children who benefitted from peace education.

Vlasis-Cicvaric and his team argue that an important issue to examine is the consequences of corporal punishment in the community. He uses the example of Sweden's public opinion on the need for physical punishment where it changed dramatically after a public education campaign, which shows how opinion on this subject is open to change. I agree that "changing practice is likely to take place gradually over time, but is should be widely endorsed through different mechanisms,"Vlasis-Cicvaric et al (2007:210).

While changing behaviour may take a while the benefits show that peace education may produce well-balanced individuals who will contribute positively to the country.   Harris 1996:102 points out that research has shown that teenagers exposed to non-violent workshops benefit in many positive ways.   "Parents of adolescents who participated in a summer institute on nonviolence noted that their children were taking more responsibility for their actions: they were keeping out of fights more, having fewer emotional outbursts and applying fairness rules more often."   I think these benefits mentioned by Harris (1996) emphasize the permanence involved in transforming your into balanced peaceful members of society.

Martin Luther King Jr. described the fruit of peace education in his neighbours in very concrete terms. In his *"We are still walking"* article, he first points to crime, he argues that it diminished noticeably. "Saturday nights are not so vicious. There is an amazing lack of bitterness, a contagious spirit of warmth and friendliness. The children seem to display a new sense of belonging,+ (King 1969: 245). I think with the children King touches the life of a peaceful struggle, if children learn while they are young that there are better ways to solve conflicts than violence then there a bright future for peaceful existence.

I think participation of both the educator and a child in peace education is crucial so that they can own their ideas. Owning ideas makes it easy to practice it instead of being dictated upon. I think for schools, a peace education programme can start by work shopping indigenous and diverse ways of resolving a conflict. In a Zulu culture the king will seat with his advisers and thrash out ideas. Using this example the school can transfer it into a current situation that is inclusive of both boys and girls thus addressing not only the conflict but gender equality as well.

Learners can be encouraged in a formal subject setting to research known South African heroes of peace and discuss what they have learnt from the choices of these heroes and heroines. This will cut the power gap of who is a peace researcher/educator, peace is for everyone hence everyone involved has a chance to research and garner knowledge. Alger 1996 argues that peace researchers must do research locally and I think by involving the pupils to gather peace information there will be a wealth of the most organic research than professionals ever can.

Peace education does not only have to involve books and interviews. Teenage learners need to be stimulated by having visible signs as a constant reminder to stay peaceful, hence the idea of creating murals with names of school learners in the country who have died from violence that occurred in school. They, themselves can be involved in the mural by signing their pledges to peace. Gardens of peace will cover the concept of taking pride their environments; parents can also play an active role in this. Practical educating for peace covers issues that books can never do.

Leaders get to communicate with their parents at a deeper level by asking them question that causes both sides to think. Formalised debate on informative topic like religion, politics and history would one other way of promoting peace by increasing levels of knowledge in subjects that sometime seem to divide more than unite. Harris, 1996, points to the role that could be played by principals when he argues that ‰he principal can create school-wide events that motivate students to seek peace. Pep rallies for peace and school assemblies can inspire youth to seek nonviolent ways to resolve their conflicts. Awards for peace makers, such as peacemaker badges, can be passed out to all students individually or through a school assembly where each class nominates a student who excelled at peacemaking.+ I think the idea of incentives like this can be successful because learner then put more effort into the work.

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APPENDIX: Questionnaire and Consent Letter

University Of KwaZulu-Natal
School of Economics & Finance

M Com Research Project
Researcher: Miss S. N. Ntshingila (082 783 7946)
Supervisor: Dr Reshma Sathiparsad(031 260 2430)
Research Office: Ms P Ximba 031-2603587

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

GENERAL DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Name :

Age :

School :

Grade :

Siblings:

Parents / Guardian :

Note: questions relate to childrens experiences at home at school.

- As you were growing up, how did your parents/teachers react when you behaved in a manner that they disapproved of? What forms of punishment did they use?

- How do they react now? (Probe: If different, why? . because older?)

- Is it more your mom or dad who punishes you at home? (Probe: How? . scolding, hitting - stick or hand - other objects, deprivation of certain things,etc). Some comment on these methods of disciplining . at home and at school)

- How badly do you get hit, (Probe: From a mild spank or slap to being severe to the point of hospitalisation? (school and home)

- What did you do to get such punishment? (some examples). In retrospect, how do you think parents/teachers could have handled the situation differently?

- How often did you get punished? (In the past - when younger; At present?)

- How did you feel when you were punished? *(Probe: Do you think you deserved it, was it fair, unfair, were you confused - Explain)* Do you get to discuss with your parents/teachers why you were punished?

- Are you given a chance to tell your side of the story? *(Consequence of this*).

- How do you feel towards your teacher/parent when he/she punishes you? *(Angry, afraid, sorry that you did the wrong thing/misbehaved, sorry for yourself, frustrated at being misunderstood etc?)*

- Does the punishment stop you from engaging in the behaviour that causes you to be punished? Do you stop because you were punished or because you know it is a wrong thing to do.

- What do you think of corporal punishment as a way to discipline children *(Probe: good, effective, bad, provides some good lessons for children, must be stopped, must be continued, need to find other ways to discipline)*

- Would you use corporal punishment to your children when you become an adult? *(Probe: Reasons for answer)*

- Do you think that there are alternative ways (better/more effective ways that parents /teachers can use to discipline children/ change behaviour. Explain (*probe considerably here and discuss*.)

IMIBUZO MAYELANA NONDLELA YOKUJEZISA ABANTWANA

Igama nesibongo :

Iminyaka:

Igama lesikole sakho:

Isigaba :

Izizalwane zakho zingaki:

Abazali :

- Uma kukhona into oyenzile abazali bakho abangahambisani nayo baye bakupanishe
  kanjani? Iyiphi inhlobo yokupanisha abayisebenzisayo?\

- Bajwayele ukwenza njani uma ubadinile?

- Ubani phakathi kukaMama no Baba ojwayele ukukupanisha?
  Basebenzisa nhloboni yesijezo phakathi koku thetha, noma uswazi noma
  ngesandla? Esokoleni khona benzenjani othishela bakho?

- Ujeziswa kangakanani? (Kungabe mhlawumbe usuke wavuka
  esibhedlela ngenxa yokushaywa?)

- Ubuwenzeni ukuze uthol ukushaywa? Mawucabanga ikhona enje indlela
  angabe bayisenzile yokukujezisa?   Ujeziswa njalo noma kambalwa?

- Uke uzizwe kanjani uma ushaywa? Kuye kube khona izikhathi lapho uye
  ubone ukuthi wonile. Baye baxoxisane nawe mayelana nokuthi
  ujeziswelani?

- Uke ube nalo ithuba lokubeka isayidi lakho nawe?

- Uye izizwe njani maqondani nomzali wakho noma uthishela uma
  ekujezisa?

- Ukushaywa kuyakwenza ukuthi uyeke izinto ezingahambelani nabazali
  noma othishela bakho?

- Uye ucabange kanjani ngalento yokushaya abantwana njengayona ndlela
  yokujezisa.

- Uma usumdala usungumzali wena uyoyisebenzisa yini lendlela yokushaya
  njengesijeziso kubantwana bakho?

- Ikhona enye indlela yokujezisa abantwana ngaphandle kokusebenzisa
  ukushaya?

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PARENTAL CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

You are being invited to allow your child to participate in a research study. Before you give your permission, it is important that you read the following information and feel free to contact either me (the researcher), or my supervisor if you are unclear about anything, to ensure you understand what your child will be asked to do. It is your choice whether or not your child will participate.

Your decision of whether or not to allow your child to participate will have no effect on benefits or services to which you are otherwise entitled, the *quality of your care, academic standing, job status, etc. (whatever phrase is appropriate).* Please ask questions if there is anything you do not understand.

The study involves interviews with children concerning their views and experiences of corporal punishment in the home or/and at school.

There will be no benefits to you should you decide to allow your child participate in this study. *Your child's participation will help us get an insight about what he/ she perceives corporal punishment.*

You will not receive any compensation if the results of this research are used towards influencing policy on alternative ways of disciplining children.There are no costs for participating in this study other than the time your child will spend responding to the questionnaire.

It is unlikely that participation in this project will result in harm to participants.

Your child's privacy will be protected

Other then responding to the questionnaire, there will be no additional information collected as data for this study. Data collected for this study will be maintained for a period of about five years. Efforts will be made to protect the identities of the participants and the confidentiality of the research data used in this study, participants are not expected to give their names, ID numbers or any information that is confidential. All records will be kept in a locked file until the study ends and will be destroyed at the stipulated time. Access to all data will be limited to the researcher and supervisor.

The information collected for this study will be used only for the purposes of conducting this study. What we find from this study may be presented at meetings or published in papers but your child's name will not ever be used in these presentations or papers

• **Withdrawal from the study:** If you decide to allow your child to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and to discontinue his/her participation at any time and without any penalty. Your decision to stop your child's participation will have no effect on the *quality of care, academic standing, job status, etc. (whatever phrase is appropriate).*

˝ **Funding:** ‰There is no outside funding for this research project.+
Questions about this study *if applicable*: *or concerns about a research related injury* may be directed to the researcher in charge of this study: or the research administrator

Miss S. N. Ntshingila

University Of KwaZulu-Natal
School of Economics & Finance

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TRANSLATED LETTER REQUESTING CONSENT FROM PARENTS AND PARTICIPANTS

September 2009

Mzali Ohloniphekile,

Lencwadi iyisicelo sokuba ngixoxisane

no:_____

mayelena nocwaningo engilwenzayo mayelana nendlela yokukhulisa abantwana
eqhakambisa uxolo.

Ucwaningo lolu luyingxenye yesifundo sami soxolo eyunivesithi yakwaZulu Natali
e Thekwini.   Ngiyithembisa ukuthi konke esizoxoxa ngakho kuzokhuseleka.
Angizukuwa sebenzisa amagama abatwana kanti futhi uma benezifiso sokubona
isifundo sami uma sengiqedile bavumelekile.
Lolungcwaningo luyigxenye yokukhuthaza uxolo ezweni lethu ukuze sikwazi
ukuphila ngaphandle kodlame.

Yimi

Sylvia Ntombifuthi Ntshingila