

**AN INVESTIGATION OF THE ATTITUDES OF  
TEACHERS AND LEARNERS TOWARDS THE USE OF  
CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN KWADABEKA  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

**BY**

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## ABSTRACT

The study investigated the attitudes of teachers and learners towards the use of corporal punishment in three senior secondary schools. The South African Schools Act of 1996 states that corporal punishment may no longer be administered at a school to a learner. Any person who contravenes the Act can be charged with assault. Section of 12 of the Constitution states that everyone has a right not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading manner. 40 teachers and 150 learners responded to the questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of 15 items and two open-ended questions. Likert scaling was used to measure attitudes and perceptions of teachers and learners towards the use of corporal punishment in schools. Permission was granted by the KwaZulu-Natal Education Department. The question of ethics was taken into consideration. Two letters were issued for learners and one for teachers to be filled in to give their consent about their participation in the study. The purpose of the study was explained to the respondents by the researcher. Data was analysed through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The cross tabulation of raw data was used to find differences among the respondents. The chi-square statistical test ( $\chi^2$ ) was used to find the significance of differences. Qualitative analysis was used to code and categorize the responses to the open-ended questions. The findings revealed that corporal punishment should not be administered in schools. However, there were a few respondents who were in support of corporal punishment. Alternative punishments were mentioned such as detention, counselling, giving extra school work, invitation of parents to school, clearly defined rules, suspension, expulsion and sending learners outside the classroom, as alternatives to corporal punishment. There was a wide diversity in the responses of the study. The implications of the findings are discussed and recommendations are made for interventions. The indications for further research are specified.

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## DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

MBANGISEH' MARIKA MBELENI

I, ~~Nontokazi Precious Dlamini~~, declare that this research report, "An Investigation of the <sup>How Selected historically disadvantaged</sup> Attitudes of Teachers and <sup>Schools in the Petermannsburg Education District</sup> Learners towards the use of Corporal Punishment in <sup>manage the prevalent non-payment of school fees</sup> KwaDabeka Secondary Schools" is my own work and that all sources I have quoted or used have been acknowledged.

**N P DLAMINI**

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Thy 30 2010

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**DEDICATION**

**THIS WORK IS DEDICATED TO:**

*My parents who have shown me unconditional love  
and have taught me to become what I am. They have  
set an example that has given me inspiration to  
further my studies*

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In many South African schools corporal punishment was and still is the popular means of disciplining pupils. Some parents and teachers strongly believe that using corporal punishment is the way to maintain moral standards. Many teachers have used corporal punishment without stopping to think of the possible adverse effects it can have on learners. Since we are living in changing times, culture is dynamic and because of the newly formulated laws of this country, there are conflicting ideas about the execution of corporal punishment. Some teachers think of it as an integral part of the teaching and learning situation. They think that fear has to be instilled into the minds of learners in order to get them to cooperate.

#### PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study is conducted at a time when corporal punishment has been abolished. It investigates the perceptions of teachers and learners towards the use of corporal punishment at three neighbouring secondary schools at Kwa-Dabeka

circuit, under Pinetown district, in KwaZulu-Natal. This is a local study conducted in an urban area.

## **ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM**

✘The South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996 clearly states that no person can administer corporal punishment on a learner at a school but, surprisingly, many schools are still using corporal punishment as a means of discipline. Teachers, when employed, enter into a contract not to use corporal punishment, but it is common knowledge that they do. The learners are aware that teachers are not allowed to cane them, but they are happy as long as teachers do not hurt them. (Pretorius, 1998). Section 12 of the Constitution states that everyone has the right not to be treated or punished in a cruel inhuman or degrading way. Therefore applying corporal punishment to a learner at a school is both a violation of human rights and is illegal. (Grey, 1997 p.4). Some teachers believe that corporal punishment must be retained, as they maintain that it is effective. Others concur with the Act, as they say that a culture of violence manifests itself in the form of corporal punishment.

As corporal punishment has been an accepted practice, it has been abused by some educators, who, because of their own inabilities, tended to be vindictive and abusive. They punished the learners so severely that some learners had to be hospitalised. Others received treatment for wounds inflicted on them by the cruel

teachers who took out their frustrations on the poor children. The situation has become so bad that cases of abuse have been reported to the police, and court cases have had to be carried out for other perpetrators.

In terms of the South African Law, corporal punishment is a criminal offence, but some teachers and parents still support the use of corporal punishment. There have been extreme cases involving the use of corporal punishment and some teachers have had to be charged in a Court of Law and fined. A teacher in Durban was fined R500 for hitting a schoolboy. (Daily News Reporter, October 29, 1998). A seven year old girl from KwaZulu-Natal, was so severely beaten by a teacher that a tendon was severed and a bone below her elbow fractured. This could lead to the amputation of the arm. (Sunday Tribune Reporter, July 12, 1998). A learner from KwaZulu-Natal died after being beaten by a teacher. (Ilanga Reporter, May 18-20, 1998). A boy from Natal Midlands suffered head injuries and is disabled today resulting from an attack on him by a teacher. (The Teacher, September 1998). A teacher at Mpumalanga was fortunate to have faced criminal charges after hitting a 17 year old boy 17 times with a feather duster because the learner had 19 mistakes in his work. (Pretorius, 1998).

## PUNISHMENT

The above incidents clearly show that the time had come for corporal punishment to be abolished. Teachers argue that they "cane with love", but this view is difficult to support.<sup>11</sup> Surprisingly, there are still people who support corporal punishment, with the mistaken belief that it "shapes the society". It is important that teachers model or portray behaviour that sets a good example and a desire to copy. Using corporal punishment in front of the learners indicates a violent way to solve a problem. In one incident a learner fired a shot at a teacher because his teacher tried to stop him from assaulting a girl. (Sowetan Reporter, April 29, 1998).

Many teachers and parents are of the opinion that chaos will or is prevailing in schools because there is no corporal punishment. Wheldall (1992) indicates that if learners are given the laws to be followed and teachers are firm and serious during the presentation of the rules, bad behaviour can be prevented. Donald, Lazarus, Lolward (1997) indicate that in order to prevent any disciplinary problems, a code of conduct should exist which is drawn up jointly by the learners and the teachers so that everyone is accountable for his or her behaviour.

The question of authority has been cited by Sogoni (1997). She indicates that the world of politics has influenced the school administration and management. During the years 1976 and 1980, the youth made this country ungovernable. Charlton and David (1993) indicate and concur that there has been a decline of authority in

schools. Incidents have been reported where teachers have become involved in relationships with learners and in one incident they had performed sex in a bus during a school trip, claiming that they were drunk. (Sogoni, 1997).

Sogoni (1997) cites professionals, like Knowles (1996) of Durban, who are not happy about the abolishment of corporal punishment. Holdstock (1985) was campaigning for the ban of corporal punishment. This conflict of interest clearly reflects that mixed feelings still exist about the use of corporal punishment, particularly as corporal punishment was blamed, but no alternatives were tabled.

Sogoni (1997) discussed the situation in Scotland, where corporal punishment was removed and subsequently brought back.

The sample of the present study consisted of learners and teachers of three neighbouring secondary schools at Kwa-Dabeka circuit in the Pinetown District of KwaZulu-Natal. Chapter 2 consists of a review of literature on the perceptions of both teachers and learners. The research methodology and procedures for collecting data are discussed in Chapter 3. The results of data collected are reported in Chapter 4 and discussed in Chapter 5. The final chapter consists of the summary conclusion and recommendations of the study carried out.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Corporal punishment is one of the hottest debates in education especially because the South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996 has abolished corporal punishment. Surprisingly, it is widely reported that many schools still use it. Elrod and Terrell (1991) state that teachers and administrators have been continuing with corporal punishment although there had been explicit rules to be followed.

It is not possible to specify exactly what constitutes wrongdoing on the part of the learner because schools are complex organizations with intricate social interactions. What may be perceived as offensive behaviour by one teacher may be considered as admissible by another. Part of the difficulty in researching the issue of corporal punishment is the range of attitudes and perceptions of all those involved. Offences in schools are difficult to specify and define as they happen within the context with many dimensions and

nuances.

Teachers are complaining that the Government has not laid down the acceptable alternatives to corporal punishment. Therefore it is still seen by some as the only means of disciplining (Pretorius, 1998). However, there are schools which have tried to instruct their personnel to obey the law.

This chapter will follow the structure below:

- 2.2 What is corporal punishment?
- 2.3 Studies conducted on corporal punishment
  - 2.3.1 Bandura's Experiment (1973)
  - 2.3.2 Raven's Study (1976)
  - 2.3.3 Reynold's Study (1978)
  - 2.3.4 Tamner's Study (1978) and the study by Women's Voters and the American Association of University Women
  - 2.3.5 Sogoni's Study (1997)
- 2.4 Reasons given for corporal punishment
- 2.5 Legislation
  - 2.5.1 South African Regulations regarding the use of corporal punishment in schools
  - 2.5.2 Prohibition of Corporal Punishment

- 2.6 Consequences of the use of Corporal Punishment
  - 2.6.1 Educational consequences
  - 2.6.2 Psychological disturbances ✓
  - 2.6.3 Sociological consequences ✓
  - 2.6.4 Physical consequences ✓
- 2.7 Those who are in support of corporal punishment
- 2.8 Those who do not favour corporal punishment
- 2.9 Alternatives to corporal punishment
  - 2.9.1 Comments by various writers
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  - 2.9.5 Special seating arrangements
  - 2.9.6 Physical labour or exercise
  - 2.9.7 Lowering of grades
  - 2.9.8 Banishment from the classroom
  - 2.9.9 Loss of privileges
  - 2.9.10 Suspension and expulsion
- 2.10 Conclusion ✓

## 2.2 WHAT IS CORPORAL PUNISHMENT?

Smith (1985) gives a definition of corporal punishment as "the intentional infliction of some sort of unpleasantness by someone entitled or authorized to do so on an offender for a wrong voluntarily done by him" p.62. But according to Maurer (1977), as Westby (1980) reports, corporal punishment is the infliction of pain on the body of the child. Maurer (1977) points out that in the rules for the Barnado Homes the Director of Child Care's Office refers to corporal punishment as the term consisting of striking, cuffing, shaking, the use of cane, strap, trawse or other forms of physical violence. The British Working Party which was headed by Westby (1980) defined corporal punishment as "the deliberate infliction of physical pain as a form of punishment" p.16, including formal and informal practices. Cryan (1987) defines corporal punishment as the infliction of pain by the teacher or other educational official upon the body of the learner. On the other hand, Holdstock (1985) refers to corporal punishment as a legalized form of child abuse taking place daily in both black and white schools.

For the purpose of this study, corporal punishment will be defined as the infliction of pain on the body of a learner by the person who has authority to do so because both the learner and one with authority come to agreement

that the learner has violated the school rules. This definition is comprised of elements of the definitions encountered in the literature.

## **2.3 STUDIES CONDUCTED ON CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

Various studies and experiments have been conducted on corporal punishment in many countries. Some of these studies are reviewed here including an experiment by Bandura (1973), studies by Raven (1976), Reynolds (1928), Tamner (1978) and Women Voters and the American Association of University Women and Sogoni (1997).

### **2.3.1 Bandura's Experiment (1973)**

(Bandura (1973)) and his associates investigated the effects upon children by watching aggressive behaviour by adults or by actors in a film. This revealed that children copy aggressive behaviour without instructions given to them to follow. Bandura concluded that when adults are disciplining their children in order to control aggression using punitive methods their modelled behaviour contradicts their training objectives. An example cited here is that of a parent punishing a child. The parent is trying to stop the child from hitting other children. As the parent is teaching the child good behaviour at the same time he or she is modelling the behaviour that he or she is trying to discourage in the child. It was also found that children watching aggressive

behaviour from the films copied the same behaviour pattern. Looking at the situation in South Africa, this study reveals that as teachers continue to use corporal punishment, they model aggressive behaviour to the learners. The Association for Behaviour Modification with children cited that there is evidence that children copy the behaviour of their elders. Punishing learners in front of others leads to feelings of revenge, which creates hatred.

### 2.3.2 Raven's Study (1976)

This study was conducted for the Irish Association for Curriculum Development in Eire. A questionnaire was completed by 4222 representing the Intermediate Examination grade level and the immediate subsequent grade. Learners were given examples of misdemeanours for which corporal punishment might be used. It was found that half of the boys and half of the girls strongly agree or agree with the use of corporal punishment. It was also found that the learners considered that the appropriate amount of corporal punishment was used. Destruction of property, cheek to teachers, bullying and disturbing the rest of the class were the offences cited by the majority of boys. These offences were regarded as deserving corporal punishment. Half of the learners preferred corporal punishment to the use of sarcasm and detention. Dislike of the teacher, subject and even school itself were effects cited by both the girls and the boys arising from the use of corporal punishment.

### 2.3.3 Reynolds' Study (1978)

Reynolds (1978) reports on a three year study of boys' behaviour. This study was conducted on boys in nine secondary modern schools in a South Wales mining community. Other researchers have also come to the conclusion that certain schools have something in themselves which goes hand in hand with low rates of educational attainment as well as high rates of behaviour deviance among the children. Reynolds used truancy, academic attainment and delinquency to evaluate the overall performance of a school. He did this over a seven year period. The intelligence and the social background were excluded from differences in the school's performance. The study proved that unsuccessful schools like to use physical punishment for rule breaking which include formal canings by the staff and even hitting children around the head and arms. More successful schools reported far less use of physical punishment. Some teachers believe that using corporal punishment motivates the learner to learn their work.

### 2.3.4 Tamner's Study (1978) and the Study by Women Voters and the American Association of University Women

Tamner (1978) believes that corporal punishment exposes children to

excessive physical force. He conducted a survey on teachers at Daytona, Ohio. All teachers were asked to define "reasonable corporal punishment" as permitted by law. About 51% proved the correct answer in terms of the legal specifications but there was a substantial difference on the amount and degree of severity that the teachers considered acceptable. The question was also posed to the headmasters who also failed to explain the legal meaning of "reasonable corporal punishment". Gurton (1983) reports that the Supreme Court in the United States of America was unsuccessful in giving the precise meaning of "unreasonable force" after making a ruling that the teacher who uses corporal punishment excessively could be sued for liability.

Another study was conducted jointly by the local League of Women Voters and the American Association of University Women about corporal punishment. This study revealed that teachers use it when they are angry and without supervision by the administrators. Other findings revealed that teachers used corporal punishment because they did not know about other means of punishment. In both of these studies teachers and the principals <sup>NB</sup> concurred that they needed training on alternative punishments. They believed that guidance counsellors could assist both teachers and learners <sup>NB</sup> in finding out about the problems facing learners and exploring alternative ways to address these problems.

<sup>NB</sup> The above studies were used to reveal that corporal punishment is not effective and instead brings hatred. South Africa is faced with a dilemma where most teachers believe that as long as there are no alternatives laid down by the Government, teachers will continue using corporal punishment. <sup>NB</sup>

The findings of these studies show that even if South Africa continues with corporal punishment there will be no change, instead worse results can be expected.

#### 2.3.5 Sogoni's Study (1997)

This study investigated the attitudes of learners, parents and teachers towards the use of corporal punishment in three senior secondary schools in Umzimkulu in Transkei. Her sample had 360 learners, 175 parents and 60 teachers. Questionnaires were used to collect data. The findings of the study revealed a range of opinions on the matter. Many respondents were adamant that corporal punishment should be retained as it instils good discipline and should be administered under proper supervision. In order to protect the learners in schools from overzealous caning, schools should develop an in-built mechanism to monitor corporal punishment. In this study it was shown that there are those that favour corporal punishment.

<sup>NB</sup> Teachers should know that learners are protected by the law which states clearly that corporal punishment has been abolished.



## **2.4 REASONS GIVEN FOR CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

According to Holdstock (1985) learners were punished for committing offences like late arrival, arriving late for band practice, not playing soccer well, losing a rugby match, doing what is not expected during music period, smoking, not passing tests, creating noise, fighting and writing slowly. Learners were punished for the above offences, sometimes allegedly not having done them.

Wheldall (1992) looked at the teachers' perceptions of misbehaviour in England and Wales and found that the teachers cited the misbehaviour such as talking, disturbing other learners, no punctuality and moving from seat to seat without reporting.

Newell (1972) states that the learners were punished for cruelty to other children, destruction, obscenity, personal appearance, truancy, lateness, poor work and insolence. Holdstock (1985) reports that punching, slapping, pinching, pulling of hair are some of the ways which were used as punishment. He believes that boys feel the same pain as girls. Most researchers say that the girls should not be punished using corporal punishment, but some find it acceptable for boys.

It is important for teachers to state explicitly why learners are to be punished and what to do to behave in an acceptable manner. Smith (1985) stresses that teachers must not punish the learners for offences that are not stipulated in the rules because that leads to resentment by learners.

Clark and Starr (1991) maintain that corporal punishment should not be used for secondary learners because they are no longer children. They also indicate that it should never be used by anyone except the principal, in a formal way.

NB "Corporal punishment was transformed from acceptable classroom practice into a violation of human rights" (Grey 1997 p.4). Since there are no alternatives provided, teachers end up still believing that corporal punishment is effective. NB Some teachers believe that corporal punishment can be limited in order to guide the child on the right path.

Grey (1997) and Peters (1998) quote JH Potgieter in 1984 saying "the educator must accept that the child is born with a tendency to evil, but is capable of great good. Corporal punishment can help the child to learn the correct awe and fear required to form a conscience. It brings him to God" (Grey 1997, The Teacher p.4). The view of Potgieter (1984) is highly

debatable and so many educators would strongly disagree with his view. Some educators would find Potgieter's view extremely offensive. Some teachers maintain that the end result of corporal punishment is a good human being fit for his or her community. Grey (1997) writes that teachers maintain that learners enjoy corporal punishment. They also mention that learners prefer corporal punishment rather than alternative punishment. Teachers maintain that corporal punishment will still prevail in the classrooms as long as there are no effective alternatives. Teachers see this situation as linked to the effects of apartheid which has led to family authority being undermined because of learners who cannot be disciplined by their parents because the children are more educated than their parents. (Grey 1997).

In various interviews conducted by Diseko (1997) some teachers are in favour of the banishment of corporal punishment, as they believe that corporal punishment is abusive and results in more damage than good. A certain teacher stated "The law says no. I will not accept a post at a school where they have corporal punishment". (Diseko, 1997, p.4).

On the other hand Diseko (1997), found that some teachers maintain that it is difficult to discipline learners without corporal punishment. Some teachers feel that the learners must explain why they are misbehaving. Others are of

the opinion that parents have given them a mandate to use corporal punishment because it is not harmful. This is a popular belief. Teachers and parents widely believe that they can overcome the law. They behave as if the law is unchanged.

Diseko (1997) reports that some teachers realize that children are growing up in violent communities where there is no security. Therefore, teachers need to understand the behaviour of children. Some teachers maintain that where there is no corporal punishment, the teachers and learners have a strong close relationship. There are teachers who believe that corporal punishment dehumanises the person, inflicting the punishment, as well as the person receiving the punishment. (Diseko, 1997, p.5)

Tunis (1995) reports that teachers complain that it is difficult to correct any misbehaviour in a class, as corporal punishment has been banned. Teachers feel that their hands are tied because they cannot send the learner outside because the learner has a right to be in the classroom. Teachers are voicing their opinion that the learners are becoming worse, even after having been reprimanded and the public should know about the disciplinary problems faced by the teachers, on a daily basis.

NB

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Mariakan (1998) reports that now that corporal punishment has been done

"The state of lawlessness in the classrooms, as frustrated principals think, is a lack of discipline in schools because of lenient education policies". (Daily News, October 23, 1998). The heads of the schools believe that violence exists because of lack of corporal punishment, which has been banned. Some have admitted that they feel forced to use it, even though it is against the law.

## 2.5 LEGISLATION

South Africa is one of the countries which took some time to abolish corporal punishment. The education officials stipulated the rules and the regulations to be followed, which were never effectively checked or enforced. The regulations will be discussed below and the eventual prohibition of corporal punishment will be explained.

### 2.5.1 South African Regulations regarding the use of Corporal Punishment in schools.

Prinsloo and Beckman (1988) discussed regulations which prohibited corporal punishment, specifically in respect of girls. These regulations were R5 of the Regulations under Ordinance 29 of 1953 for Transvaal; Section 24(3) of Ordinance 46 of 1969 for Natal; Section 29(2) of Ordinance 12 of 1980 and rules promulgated by the Director of Education of Section 23(1) of Ordinance 20 of 1956. All these regulations were neglected by certain schools and education officials, as Holdstock (1985) maintains.

According to Prinsloo and Beckman (1988), three provinces had specified the instrument to be used for corporal punishment, that is, Transvaal, Natal and Cape Province who had chosen a cane or strap. Only the Orange Free State did not specify the instrument to be used. Referring to the case of Goosen vs State (1984) as Prinsloo and Beckman (1988) cite, a plank was used. This made it difficult to evaluate the case legally, even during the subsequent appeal.

Prinsloo and Beckman (1988) reports that the South African Law Journal of

1984, p.534, states that the corporal punishment was not to be administered in front of other learners, unless they are joint offenders. He refers to the case of Goosen vs State (1984), where a learner was punished in front of others and the teacher was found to be guilty of assault. The teacher was warned to respect and to follow the regulations.

The regulations of Government Notice R704 of March 1990 stated that corporal punishment could be used for learners who had committed serious offences such as theft, bullying, assault, intentional damage to property, failure to do stipulated work or disobedience. The learner had to be proven guilty before punishment could be metered and the principal was the only person allowed to administer punishment. Only five strokes were allowed on the buttocks with a cane.

The teachers claimed that the caning was done with love, not hate. Prinsloo and Beckman (1988) refers to a certain case of State vs De Blom (1977)(3) SA 513A where the teacher knew the law and that caning with love was inexcusable. He was thus charged with assault.

### 2.5.2 Prohibition of Corporal Punishment

The South African Schools Act of 1996 makes it clear that corporal punishment may no longer be applied in public and independent schools as a means of punishment. Parents are not allowed to give the principals permission to use corporal punishment as they too stand in violation of the law.<sup>7</sup> Also, Section 12 of the Constitution states that everyone has the right not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading manner. Non-formal uses of force such as slapping, pinching or any other rough handling forces are specifically prohibited. Anyone who ignores this regulation and uses corporal punishment at a school, is committing an offence and can be charged in a Court of law and punished accordingly. In spite of this regulation, some schools still use corporal punishment on a daily basis.

The Daily News Reporter (September 15, 1998) has revealed that the Minister of Education has emphasized that the schools which are still using corporal punishment should discontinue doing so. The Minister of Education stressed that corporal punishment has been abolished.

Cases of corporal punishment in Courts of law have been recorded. Bissetty (1998) reports in the Daily News of October 29, 1998 of a teacher who was fined R500 for assaulting a boy in front of his classmates. It is reported that the boy was assaulted for helping a friend during a test. The Magistrate informed the teacher that he was lucky that he had not been fired from the teaching fraternity.

Bissetty (1998), in concluding the report, stated that although the teacher pleaded guilty, the parents and their children felt confused by the new law. Some learners do as they wish, which has resulted in chaos at schools.

The writer, in her position as acting deputy principal had opportunity to discuss with other administrators the question of corporal punishment. She held informal discussions with her colleagues and even interviewed a teacher and a learner, who attended the workshop, on the use of corporal punishment. In all these discussions it was discovered that the use of corporal punishment had not stopped in many schools. There is an outcry from teachers that the Government abolished corporal punishment leaving a vacuum behind with no alternative to be used. Teachers need training on how to deal with misbehaviour.

## 2.6 CONSEQUENCES OF THE USE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Corporal punishment has many negative consequences on learners, which hinders their progress in education. (Short, Short and Blanton, 1988), (Holdstock, 1985). Various experts have conducted many studies which clearly show that corporal punishment had a destructive effect rather than an uplifting effect. (Westby, 1980). The consequences of corporal punishment will be discussed under the following sub-topics:

- (a) educational consequences;
- (b) psychological disturbances;
- (c) sociological consequences; and
- (d) physical consequences.

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### 2.6.1 Educational Consequences

The use of corporal punishment in schools has been claimed to make education valueless and even dull. Vally (1998) of the Educator's Voice reports that the use of corporal punishment promotes poor teaching and "tarnishes the image of teaching". p.5 Holdstock (1985) p.5 cites a study of 2700 primary schools in Britain by Rutter and his colleagues. They found that punishment of learners resulted in low achievement levels. This was caused by an element of fear of the teachers and educators, by the

learners.

learners.

### 2.6.2 Psychological Disturbances

Many researchers have cited psychological 'scars' suffered by learners as a result of corporal punishment . According to Holdstock (1985) corporal punishment intensifies aggression and violence. He reports on research studies carried out that show that punishment causes aggressive behaviour. Some studies show that a learner who has experienced a great deal of corporal punishment will, in the future, resort to physical force to deal with problems. It is an incredible fact that there is still a desire by some people, to have corporal punishment re-instated, despite the disastrous psychological effects caused by such punishment.

According to Cryan (1987), corporal punishment causes low self-esteem, humiliation and helplessness, strained relationships with others and aggression which is carried out in the home and school environment.

Sogoni (1997) refers to corporal punishment as "love withdrawal techniques" which also lowers self-respect and a healthy self-concept, a condition which inevitably results in learners desiring to leave school. "There is a perception that psychological ill-treatment in the form of humiliation, insults, denigration and intimidation is more harmful in the long

term, than a swift smack". (Education Voice, 1998, p.5). Corporal punishment destroyed some learners psychologically, in that they chose to leave school, resulting in a feeling of alienation and more often than not, ended up joining groups of gangsters.

Tanner (1978) indicated that corporal punishment leads to psychological scars. One learner described how they felt as a class, that when they were about to be caned, they felt such fear that they wanted to urinate and that they developed blood blisters. The learner further mentioned that although the pain of caning was excruciating, this only lasted a short while, whilst the mental pain lasted many years.

### 2.6.3 Sociological Consequences

Sociological consequences is one of the effects caused by corporal punishment. Holdstock (1985) clearly states that corporal punishment causes violence and assault on teachers. Both Westby (1980) and Leach (1993) agreed that if corporal punishment is used as a method of discipline, it played as a role model and a mode of behaviour in the future of learners.

Mamalia (1998) reported of the chaos that ensued when a learner fired at

a teacher because one learner was beating another. When the teacher intervened the learner drew his gun and fired a shot at the teacher, but fortunately missed.

Holdstock (1985) indicates that corporal punishment causes rebellion and criminal behaviour in schools. The learners have become so wild and violent that some of them carry guns and knives to school to protect themselves from teachers who assault them. Abuse of corporal punishment can change learners into criminals. Holdstock (1985) cites that telling lies, running away from home, delinquency and substance abuse are associated with the use of corporal punishment.

(2)  
Cryan (1987) revealed the findings of corporal punishment on crime stating that most violent criminals were severely punished when they were young. Severe corporal punishment can result in a learner becoming a delinquent later in life and defiant when it comes to any form of authority.

#### 2.6.4 Physical Consequences

Many learners have been victims of legalized child abuse as Holdstock (1985) calls it, to the extent that some learners have experienced fractures to their bodies and even death.

Cryan (1987) mentions that although there are few minor cases which need medical treatment after corporal punishment , there are other injuries sustained by the learners such as muscle damage sciatic, nerve damage, fracturing of bones and damage to eyes.

Mtshali and Qwabe (1998) cite a story about a learner who is disabled today because during his primary education he was hit on the head with an iron pipe by a female teacher. Further damage was sustained when the principal smashed the learner's injured head against the wall.

Hoidstock (1985) reports a survey conducted by the Health Workers Association, that an average of nine children are treated daily in Soweto clinics having suffered injuries because of corporal punishment in schools.

Mbatha (1998) reports of a death of a learner resulting from a caning from a teacher. The report states that the learner lost consciousness in the classroom, after being hit by the teacher.

All of the above incidents clearly show that corporal punishment is harmful to learners. Westby (1980) , on requesting information from the British Humanist Association, was informed that experiencing physical pain has never proved to be effective.

## 2.7 THOSE WHO ARE IN SUPPORT OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

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There are some who object to the abolition of corporal punishment as they believe that the chaos that already prevails in schools will never be adequately curtailed by alternative methods.

Piek (1994) indicates that corporal punishment should be used as a last resort. He also believes that it should be used on boys for serious offences. Only the principal or the person authorized, should administer corporal punishment and that it should not be carried out in front of others. On the other hand, Holdstock (1985) indicated that boys feel pain as much as girls. Westby (1980), from the British Working Party, cites that corporal punishment should be done in the presence of the learners as it has the advantage of serving as an example to others. This view is unacceptable to

many from a human rights perspective.

Rubin (1980) is of the opinion that the use of corporal punishment is acceptable for learners because they have been brought up with it and also believes that corporal punishment creates order and prepares learners to be taught.

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Gunter (1983) believes that a child is born both evil and good and that evil should be eliminated through the use of corporal punishment. Even if the child is taught correctly, using corporal punishment can make things worse.

Hurlok (1978) indicates that the use of corporal punishment usually produces anger and confusion on the part of the learner, as there are times when the learner is unaware of having done wrong. Fourie, Oberholtzer and Hester (1995) all indicate that anger is not appropriate when one is administering corporal punishment.

Cumming, Louwe and Wakeling (1981) state some people believe that corporal punishment should be retained because it is used as a deterrent. There is no other alternative method which can replace it because other

methods take too long.

Newell (1972) claims that most teachers believe that they use corporal punishment only as a "last resort", but that in practice, this does not happen, as learners are caned from time to time.

Gurton (1983) recommended that procedures should be followed when corporal punishment is administered to help curtail those who use it excessively. But even with such procedures, teachers seem to ignore them. Francis (1975) states that teachers who are in support of corporal punishment are of the opinion that corporal punishment is not harmful to learners. However, these people refuse to see the reality of the harm that corporal punishment causes. According to Ndzamela (1998), some learners have suffered physical harm when corporal punishment has been administered.

## **2.8 THOSE WHO DO NOT FAVOUR CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

South Africa has finally passed an Act which abolishes corporal punishment. However, many schools have disregarded the Act and continue using

corporal punishment .

Jackson (1991) states that corporal punishment should never be used by the teacher in the classroom. Smith (1985) believes that punishing a child in the classroom infers that the child is a failure. Holdstock (1985) believes that the use of corporal punishment intimates a lack of respect for the child's dignity. Gurton (1983) noted that corporal punishment is usually applied to non-white young boys, not girls. Both Holdstock (1985) and Elrod and Terrell (1991) have long campaigned for the abolition of corporal punishment .

Holdstock (1985) states that learners experience hostilities towards the education system and also indicates the ignorance of communities towards the acceptance of the child abuse that takes place daily in various schools. Berkowitz (1975) states that corporal punishment results in the learner becoming more aggressive. Under these conditions the learner learns very little.

Eldrod and Terrel (1991) regard the use of corporal punishment as the catalyst to hostile feelings between the teacher and learner. They feel the teachers should be examples of knowledge and rational decision making.

Wheldall and Glynn (1986) schools should represent a place of learning and not ridicule.

Holdstock (1985) states clearly that teachers claim that they administer corporal punishment with love or they are what they are because of corporal punishment. Holdstock (1985) also states that learners fear education because of corporal punishment.

Short, Short and Blanton (1988) state that corporal punishment makes learners feel alienated from school and also "decreases interest in and commitment to the school" (p.84). They also maintain that corporal punishment cannot force the learner to behave in an acceptable manner and that non-attendance and deviousness can be products of corporal punishment. These negative effects could result in a learner becoming a criminal. (Short, Short and Blanton (1988)).

Ndzamefa (1988) and Short, Short and Blanton (1988) both maintain that corporal punishment causes physical injury, truancy, fear, anger, absenteeism, dropping out of school and even committing suicide. The abolition of corporal punishment has been long overdue if one studies the consequences of corporal punishment.

Cryan (1987) believes that effective discipline can be maintained without resorting to corporal punishment .

Ndzamela (1988) maintains that corporal punishment is child abuse, which further violates human rights. Some teachers are of the opinion that a person cannot develop self-discipline and state further that there are teachers who were exposed to severe discipline when they were young. The report quotes one principal after being interviewed; "corporal punishment is one weapon that the teacher has to strengthen his or her role. Without it, discipline is whittled away and the impact of teaching is lost". Ndzamela (1988), p.15).

Koenig (1995) expresses his intense dislike for corporal punishment because he believes that by spanking a learner, an enemy full of revenge emerges. Clark and Starr (1991) clearly state that corporal punishment has had little success in schools.

Good and Brophy (1978) maintain that corporal punishment reduces misbehaviour, but does not teach desirable behaviour. It is important for

teachers to state why learners are punished and what to do to behave in an acceptable manner. Good and Brophy (1978) also state that when learners are punished, they react with anger and resentment and a desire to strike back.

## **2.9 ALTERNATIVES TO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

The abolition of corporal punishment has created a gap where teachers are confused as how to discipline the learners. There is an outcry that the schools are chaotic with no alternatives of discipline presented to them. A code for educators to be presented by the Provinces soon is in the pipeline which will clarify the alternatives to corporal punishment.

### **2.9.1 Comments by various writers**

It is very important for teachers to focus on alternatives to corporal punishment and try to implement them. Holdstock (1985), Wheldall and Glynn (1986) both maintain that teachers are required to have a positive approach in all the activities of the school and also to regard the learners as human beings who are in need of help. Holdstock (1985) mentioned that talking with the child after a lesson or after school, counseling the learner on

better behaviour, is a better alternative to corporal punishment . Sogoni (1997) maintains that some of the alternative methods of discipline have a positive outcome academically as well as on the behaviour of the learner.

Jackson (1991) maintains that sending letters to parents to notify them can be one of the alternative to corporal punishment .

Both Westby (1980) and Cryan (1987) state that in-service training is essential for teachers to gain competence in the use of alternatives. Also counselling services should be used as Cryan (1987) maintains that it helps to understand why the learner is misbehaving. Wheldall and Glynn (1986) mention that it is important to discuss the rules with the learners as the rules are to be applied to them.

Short, Short and Blanton (1988) indicate that the use of rewards, especially with younger children, is the best alternative to corporal punishment . For older learners, they suggest sitting down with the learner and putting together a contract for better behaviour, thereby making them define their problem behaviour and to specify goals towards acceptable behaviour. Short, Short and Blanton (1988) also mention the use of behaviour cards, especially to unmotivated learners. This technique apparently works very

well because the cards are sent to parents. They maintain that suspension in school, plus the behaviour contract and behaviour report card can be effective in changing learners unacceptable behaviour. Adams (1987) also recommends the use of the behaviour report card.

Wheldall and Glynn (1986) and Short, Short and Blanton (1988) mention that it is important for the teacher to discuss classroom rules as well as the consequences and to adhere to the rules when students violate them. The teachers lack discipline strategies in the classrooms. The inspectors at schools and heads of departments can improve discipline by providing individual support and presenting information to teachers.

Different alternatives are cited by writers, namely; detention, extra school work, repetitive sentences and the like, special seating assignments, physical labour or exercise, lowering of grades, banishment from the classroom, loss of privileges, suspension from school and expulsion. These will be discussed below :

### 2.9.2 **Detention**

Lorber and Pierce (1990), Jackson (1991) and Jackman (1998) all cite

detention as one of the alternatives to corporal punishment . Detention punishes both the teacher and the learner because it needs to be supervised. (Jackson (1991) . The learner is deprived of certain opportunities at school, while he or she is in detention. Prinsloo and Beckman (1988) and Adams (1987) also mention detention as an alternative to corporal punishment .

Pretorius (1998) cites offences like failing to do homework, bunking a lesson, cheating during a test, swearing and displaying racial intolerance as fitting for detention.

### 2.9.3 Extra Schoolwork

Good and Brophy (1978) and Jackson (1991) report that the work that is not done, together with the extra work, needs to be completed at home. Lorber and Pierce (1990), indicates that punishing by giving extra work may not help to punish the learners, because they could develop a negative attitude towards school work.

### 2.9.4 Repetitive Sentences And The Like

Lorber and Pierce (1990) mention that many teachers have used this

alternative when not using corporal punishment. Some teachers have found that this method works for them, whilst there are others that have not.

#### 2.9.5 **Special Seating Arrangements**

Lorber and Pierce (1990) explains that the learner is ridiculed by removing the seat that he or she is assigned to. Another alternative is to separate friends to minimize learner interaction.

#### 2.9.6 **Physical Labour or Exercise**

Lorber and Pierce (1990) suggest the use of physical exercise as an alternative method to corporal punishment. This would consist of push-ups, running on the spot in the classroom, and any other exercise. Lorber and Pierce (1990) mention that these exchanges are potentially harmful to the learner and can result in a negative attitude from the learner.

#### 2.9.7 **Lowering of Grades**

This is used by other schools as a means to disciplinary action. For example, a learner does not receive a certificate of not meeting all the requirements. (Lorber and Pierce - 1990).

### **2.9.8 Banishment from the Classroom**

As another alternative to corporal punishment, the learner is instructed to leave the classroom and stand outside. According to Lorber and Pierce (1990), this creates a problem for the teacher, as the lesson has to be explained at a later date. Good and Brophy (1978) feel that the learner should be placed at the back of the class or made to stand in a corner in the classroom. Jackson (1991) suggests the offender should be removed from the presence of friends in order to calm down.

### **2.9.9 Loss of Privileges**

Good and Brophy (1978) and Adams (1987) maintain that the loss of privileges could serve as an alternative to corporal punishment. The withdrawal of privileges could serve as a deterrent to correct bad behaviour.

### **2.9.10 Suspension and Expulsion**

Adams (1987) refers to suspension, as cited by the Judge in Spier vs Warrington Corporation, as meaning the refusal to admit a pupil to school, for a specific time or indefinite time. In other words, certain conditions have to be met before the learner is allowed to return to school. Expulsion means

that the name of the learner is removed from the register, which is the responsibility of the Head of Education. Prinsloo and Beckman (1988) state that all the rules and regulations should be made known to both the parents and the learner before suspension or expulsion can be implemented.

## 2.10 Conclusion

It has been recorded in the literature review that there are different perceptions on the use of corporal punishment in schools. South Africa is one of the countries where corporal punishment is not well researched and the topic still needs to be addressed. Other countries, like the United States of America and England have debated the issue of corporal punishment in great depth, however, in some of the states in the United States of America, corporal punishment is still allowed. The banning of corporal punishment in South Africa in 1996 has nevertheless, created problems both for the teachers and the learners.

However, teachers should adhere to the law. The law clearly states that corporal punishment in all schools has been abolished.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY & PROCEDURE FOR DATA COLLECTION**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

South African education is faced with a lot of confusion in respect of the use of corporal punishment as a disciplinary action, although some schools have stopped the use of corporal punishment. A study will be organized and reported upon, from all the stakeholders of each school about their perceptions towards the use of corporal punishment.

#### **3.2 THE RESEARCH DESIGN**

This section will cover the setting, the sample, measuring instrument, the preparation of the questionnaire, the question of ethics and the validity of the instrument.

### **3.2.1 The Setting**

Schools A, B and C are neighbouring schools situated in Kwa-Dabeka, part of Clermont, which is near Pinetown. They are the only secondary schools in the KwaDabeka area. School B specializes in science and commerce, while school A has general subjects and science subjects. School C offers general subjects, science and commerce subjects. School B is popular because it has a reputation of excellent matriculation results.

### **3.2.2 The Sample**

Bayle (1994) states "A sample must always be viewed as an approximation of the whole rather than as a whole in itself (Bayle 1994, p.83). Convenience sampling was adopted by the researcher. The sample consisted of teachers and learners in Grade 11 in all three schools. All teachers, as well as all learners in Grade 11 were encouraged to participate in the study. There were 40 teachers and 150 learners involved. Both learners and teachers participated by answering the questionnaires which were supplied by the researcher.

### 3.2.3 The Measuring Instrument

Gay (1987) points out that the use of a questionnaire is more efficient than an interview, in that it requires less time, is less expensive and permits collection of data from <sup>any size</sup> a ~~larger~~ <sup>AdU</sup> sample. The researcher opted for that measuring instrument because it allowed for larger samples. <sup>the collection of the instrument</sup> Any Jacobs and Razavieh (1990) believe that using questionnaires leads to more truthful responses by the participants, than a personal interview. They also point out that it can be a disadvantage to use a questionnaire because the respondents may misinterpret the questions. To minimize the above, the researcher <sup>did</sup> administered the questionnaires herself, in order to explain to the <sup>not as to participants</sup> participants.

According to Bailey (1994), open-ended questions can reveal what the researcher did not anticipate or expect and the respondent is free to answer the way he wishes. However, Bailey (1994) and Babbie (1995) maintain that open-ended questions can lead to a collection of some irrelevant information. To minimize that possibility, there were only <sup>few</sup> two open-ended questions in this study.

Likert scaling was the method used to assess <sup>6</sup> the perception of both teachers and learners. According to Ary (1990), Likert scaling is used to

assess attitudes of the respondents towards a certain topic, whether they strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree. Babbie (1995) points out that it is easy to construct Likert scaling and this is used by many studies because it is reliable. However, Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh (1990) and Wiersma (1991) believe that a Likert scale actually provides an ordinal scale of measurement. According to Tuckman (1994), this means a rank ordering of responses.

#### 3.2.4 The Preparation of the Questionnaire

The questionnaires were adapted from Sogani (1997). (See Appendices 2 and 3). The researcher decided to make the questionnaire shorter and to avoid long open-ended questions, as young participants do not always finish a lengthy questionnaire in the allotted time.

In this study it was decided that the same questionnaire would be used for both teachers and learners. This would enable the researcher to be able to compare their responses to the same set of statements.

Each questionnaire was divided into three sections. Section A dealt with demographical data, where personal names were not required. This was done to allow the respondents to be more frank and open, as the topic is a sensitive one. Section B consisted of 15 statements and the respondents had to express their perceptions through Likert scaling. Section C consisted

of two open-ended items, where the respondents commented on what they felt was worth mentioning.

### 3.2.5 The Question of Ethics

The question of ethics was taken into consideration. According to Groenewald (1989) and Bayle, Benrose, Goddard, Impey, Joslyn and Mackness (1996), the researcher make the participants understand that they are not obliged to participate in the study and they may withdraw at any time. Also Nachmias (1987) stresses that the participants involved in a research must do so with their consent, especially when they are exposed to danger and even say "are asked to forfeit their person input" p.83.

Gay (1987) points out that the participants must be briefed particularly if the participants are school children. Permission must be granted by the parents in order for their children to participate in the study. In following these guidelines of ethics, before the participants filled in the questionnaires, two forms were issued. The first one was for all participants where they agree to participate in the study and to withdraw if they wish. The learners were also given a second form for parents to sign that they give permission for their children to participate in the study.

McMillan and Schumacher (1993) point out that the researcher should be frank and should not misrepresent the nature and purpose of the study

Both learners and teachers were told of the purpose and scope of the study and invited to ask questions for clarification.

### 3.2.6 Validity of the Instrument

Ary (1990) states that it is important that the researcher asks the question about the validity of the instrument with which he is measuring or assessing. He further maintains that validity "is specific to the particular job that one wants a test to do" p.268.

Ary (1990) also believes that a test must be constructed to measure one purpose but if it has many purposes, it will not be able to measure any of them well.

It is important for the researcher to ask himself or herself many questions about the validity of the instrument to be used. Many studies should be used to test for the validity of the instrument. Thus it is difficult for the researcher in this study to assess the validity of the test.

### 3.3 Administering of Questionnaires to both Learners & Teachers

After being granted permission by the Education Department, the principals and the Governing Bodies of the three schools, the researcher made appointments with the principals of the schools involved in order to schedule

times for carrying out the collection of data.

In each school, the researcher administered the questionnaires herself. It was convenient for the researcher because the questionnaires were administered immediately after a short staff meeting. Some teachers filled in the questionnaires after they received them from the researcher. Others promised to bring back the questionnaires the next day. The learners were asked to remain for fifteen minutes after school in order for the researcher to administer the questionnaires.

When the researcher was administering the questionnaires she introduced herself and gave the name of the University in which she is studying. The researcher mentioned that such studies have been conducted in many countries, including South Africa and a recent one on the same topic had been conducted in the Transkei. The researcher asked the respondents to help her with the information and mentioned that they were not forced to participate, but it would be appreciated if they did so.

The researcher asked the respondents not to discuss the statements amongst themselves. At the end the researcher thanked them for the time they had taken in completing the questionnaire and assured them that the information given would be confidential and would only be used for research purposes.

There were minimal problems during the conducting of the questionnaires. Some of the learners informed the researcher that their parents did not allow them to participate in the study. Some parents thought that it was something to do with politics. However, everything went well.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **ANALYSIS OF RESULTS**

The first part of this chapter will be concerned with the scoring of responses and the organization of data from the questionnaires and the second part will deal with the statistical analysis of data. Leeds (1993) believes that statistics is the language which speaks more clearly and forcefully and it becomes easy to the researcher to see the nature and interrelationships of the facts. The third part of the present chapter describes the qualitative analysis of verbal responses to the open-ended questions.

Leeds (1993) indicates that data are analysed so that meanings are inferred that lie hidden within data. Sometimes certain potentials and some forces may exist that can warrant further investigation. Also the purpose of analysis as Sogoni (1997) sees it, is to reduce data, synthesizing them into interpretable form in order to systematically search and discover what is important and worth reporting.

#### **4.1 SCORING RESPONSES AND ORGANIZING DATA**

Each questionnaire was divided into three sections namely, Section A, which dealt with personal information, Section B consisted of 15 items where the respondents have to indicate their opinions towards the use of corporal punishment in schools, by indicating the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each statement.

Likert scaling was used, which consists of a five - point scale. For favourably stated responses the numerical value is 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively, ranging from 'Strongly Disagree' and for unfavourable stated responses the weighting is reversed. This is shown in the table below :

Table 1 Five - point scale weighting

<b>FAVOURABLE WEIGHTING</b>		<b>UNFAVOURABLE WEIGHTING</b>	
<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>SCORE</b>	<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>SCORE</b>
<b>Strongly Agree = SA</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree = SD</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Agree = A</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Disagree = D</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Undecided = U</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Undecided = U</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Disagree = D</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Agree = A</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Strongly Disagree = SD</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Strongly Agree = SA</b>	<b>1</b>

For learners and teachers responses, coding and scoring was done to facilitate the analysis of the collected data by computer.

#### 4.1.1 Learners' Responses to Questionnaires

Frequency tables have been developed to display the frequencies of the respective responses on both favourably and unfavourably stated items.

Frequency tables were formulated on 150 learners covering overall responses and by gender. There were 75 females and 75 males.

To enable the reader to review the table, the 15 items are listed below:

#### SECTION B

Given below are a series of statements about the use of corporal punishment in schools. Please respond to each statement by making a cross (x) in the block which best represents your perception about the statement.

A key to a scale has been provided.

Use only one of the terms above to indicate your responses.

#### EXAMPLE

Regulations concerning corporal punishment are vague

SA	A	U	D	SD
			X	

The X shows that I disagree with the statement

**Indicate your answers to the following :**

For Office  
use only

1. Corporal punishment teaches learners respect for authority.
 

SA	A	U	D	SD
  
2. When a learner is punished there is an aggressive desire to hit back.
 

SA	A	U	D	SD
  
3. Learners like teachers who use corporal punishment.
 

SA	A	U	D	SD
				✓
  
4. A learner's behaviour does not improve even after caning.
 

SA	A	U	D	SD
✗				
  
5. Learners prefer corporal punishment to manual work as punishment.
 

SA	A	U	D	SD
				✗
  
6. Discipline can be maintained in schools without resorting to corporal punishment.
 

SA	A	U	D	SD
✗				
  
7. Corporal punishment encourages learners to do their work.
 

SA	A	U	D	SD
				✓
  
8. Corporal punishment results in learners attacking teachers.
 

SA	A	U	D	SD
✓				
  
9. Corporal punishment results in learners dropping out of school.
 

SA	A	U	D	SD
✗				
  
10. Corporal punishment destroys trust between teachers and learners.
 

SA	A	U	D	SD
✗				

11. A teacher who has to resort to using the cane to maintain discipline has failed in the classroom.

SA	A	U	D	SD
✓				

12. Learners should make use of the protection the Law offers when teachers use corporal punishment.

SA	A	U	D	SD
✓				

13. Discipline cannot be maintained in schools without resorting to corporal punishment.

SA	A	U	D	SD
				✓

14. The unpleasantness associated with corporal punishment will prevent the reoccurrence of bad behaviour.

SA	A	U	D	SD

15. Corporal punishment does not ensure that discipline will be maintained.

SA	A	U	D	SD
✓				

**FREQUENCY OF LEARNERS RESPONSES TO EACH ITEM = 150 (Both Male and Female)**

Table 2

Item No.	FREQUENCY										Total
	SA %	A%	U%	D%	SD%						
1	35	23	52	35	11	7	23	15	29	19	150
2	28	19	33	22	10	7	45	30	34	23	150
3	10	7	18	12	18	12	59	39	45	30	150
4	18	12	39	26	24	16	50	33	19	13	150
5	17	11	29	19	10	7	38	25	56	37	150
6	56	37	45	30	08	5	21	14	20	13	150
7	34	23	44	29	12	8	20	13	40	27	150
8	23	15	51	34	17	11	29	19	30	20	150
9	42	28	45	30	15	10	24	16	24	16	150
10	22	15	40	27	24	16	37	25	27	18	150
11	23	15	50	33	17	11	26	17	34	23	150
12	41	27	47	31	22	15	29	19	11	7	150
13	33	22	57	38	29	19	24	16	7	15	150
14	31	21	48	32	08	5	41	27	22	15	150
15	31	21	42	28	16	11	37	25	24	16	150

**Key: SA = Strongly Agree; A= Agree; U=Undecided; D=Disagree; SD=Strongly Disagree**

From Table 2 what is striking with the responses is that most learners tend to agree that corporal punishment teaches respect for authority. The researcher was surprised, because she knew that the learners are aware of the abolition of corporal punishment and they know their rights as learners. 69% of learners disagreed with an item stating that learners like teachers who use corporal punishment. 37% of the learners strongly disagreed with an item stating that they prefer corporal punishment to manual work as punishment. The researcher noticed that they prefer other means of punishment as they cited alternatives to corporal punishment in open ended questions. For item 13, the majority of learners disagreed with an item stating that discipline cannot be maintained without resorting to corporal punishment. In this study, the researcher noticed that there is a wide diversity of responses.

## FREQUENCY OF LEARNERS RESPONSES BY GENDER

= 150 (75 Male; 75 Female)

Table 3

Item No	Frequency - Male										Frequency - Female										Total
	SA%	A%	U%	D%	SD%	SA%	A%	U%	D%	SD%	SA%	A%	U%	D%	SD%						
1	12	16	25	33	4	5	12	16	22	29	23	31	27	36	7	9	11	15	7	9	150
2	23	31	14	19	7	9	18	24	13	17	5	7	19	25	3	4	27	36	21	28	150
3	3	4	6	8	8	11	28	37	30	40	7	9	12	16	10	13	31	40	15	20	150
4	10	13	21	28	11	15	24	32	9	12	8	11	18	24	13	17	26	35	10	13	150
5	11	15	16	21	3	4	13	17	32	43	6	8	13	17	7	9	25	33	24	32	150
6	36	48	21	28	2	3	5	7	11	15	20	27	24	32	6	8	16	21	9	12	150
7	17	23	22	29	6	8	10	13	20	27	17	23	22	29	6	8	10	13	20	27	150
8	17	23	25	33	8	11	11	15	14	19	6	8	26	35	9	12	18	24	16	21	150
9	26	35	28	37	5	7	5	7	11	15	16	21	17	23	10	13	19	25	13	17	150
10	14	19	19	25	12	16	17	23	13	17	8	11	21	28	12	16	20	27	14	19	150
11	15	20	17	23	9	12	22	29	12	16	8	11	9	12	6	11	28	37	22	29	150
12	22	29	33	44	7	9	9	12	4	5	19	25	14	19	15	20	20	27	7	9	150
13	18	24	29	39	14	19	10	13	4	5	15	20	28	37	15	20	14	19	3	4	150
14	9	12	25	33	2	3	22	29	17	23	22	29	23	31	6	8	19	25	5	7	150
15	23	31	18	24	7	9	13	17	14	19	20	27	23	31	13	17	11	15	8	11	150

Key: SA = Strongly Agree; A= Agree; U=Undecided; D=Disagree;

SD=Strongly Disagree

In Table 3 female learners tend to agree that corporal punishment teaches respect for authority than males. Both males and females disagree that learners like teachers who use corporal punishment. Males tend to agree that discipline can be maintained in schools without resorting to corporal punishment than the females. However, the scores were widely distributed.

#### 4.1.2 Teachers Responses To Questionnaire

Frequency tables were formulated on 40 teachers covering overall responses and by gender. There were 18 males and 22 females.

## FREQUENCY OF TEACHERS' RESPONSES TO EACH ITEM

N = 40 Males and Females together

Table 4

Item No.	FREQUENCY										Total
	SA %		A%		U%		D%		SD%		
	1	10	25	13	33	2	5	12	30	3	
2	4	10	15	38	4	10	13	33	4	10	40
3	4	10	7	18	7	18	19	48	3	8	40
4	4	10	6	15	6	15	15	38	9	23	40
5	5	13	17	43	3	8	12	30	3	8	40
6	7	18	15	38	4	10	11	28	3	8	40
7	6	15	20	50	4	10	6	15	4	10	40
8	3	8	14	35	5	13	13	33	5	13	40
9	8	20	12	30	4	10	7	18	9	23	40
10	4	10	3	8	11	28	14	35	8	20	40
11	3	8	5	13	2	5	23	58	7	18	40
12	7	18	7	18	6	15	14	35	6	15	40
13	8	20	15	38	1	3	11	28	5	13	40
14	6	15	14	35	7	18	11	28	2	5	40
15	1	3	21	53	3	8	11	28	4	10	40

**Key: SA = Strongly Agree; A= Agree; U=Undecided; D=Disagree;**

**SD=Strongly Disagree**

It is striking that teachers have disagreed with an item stating that learners like teachers who use corporal punishment. 65% of teachers have expressed that corporal punishment encourages learners to do their work and also half of the teachers have agreed that corporal punishment does not ensure the purpose of maintained discipline. This shows that there is a diversity of response among the subject.

**Table 5 Frequency of teachers' responses by gender**

**Number = 40 (18 males and 22 females)**

**FREQUENCY OF LEARNERS RESPONSES BY GENDER**

**N = 18 Males**

**N = 40 Teachers N = 22 Females**

Item No	Frequency - Male					Frequency - Female					Total
	SA%	A%	U%	D%	SD%	SA%	A%	U%	D%	SD%	
1	33	39	-	17	11	18	27	9	41	5	40
2	6	17	11	44	22	5	50	9	32	5	40
3	11	22	22	33	11	5	14	14	59	9	40
4	11	17	6	44	17	9	14	23	32	23	40
5	17	44	-	28	11	9	41	14	32	5	40
6	11	33	-	50	6	27	36	18	9	9	40
7	39	33	-	11	17	-	59	18	18	5	40
8	6	33	17	22	22	9	36	9	36	9	40
9	17	33	6	22	17	23	23	14	18	27	40
10	11	11	17	39	22	9	5	36	32	18	40
11	11	17	6	50	17	5	9	5	64	18	40
12	22	6	17	44	11	14	27	14	27	18	40
13	6	44	-	33	17	32	32	5	23	9	40
14	22	44	11	22	-	14	27	23	32	5	40
15	6	39	6	39	11	-	64	9	18	9	40

**Key: SA = Strongly Agree; A= Agree; U=Undecided; D=Disagree; SD=Strongly Disagree**

What is striking in Table 5 is that females rather than males, tend to agree with an item stating that corporal punishment encourages learners to do their work . The researcher expresses that such a reaction from females is caused by insolence shown by male learners when asked about homework. In this table the scores are widely distributed, thus there is a diversity of opinions.

#### 4.2. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES TO QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS

The responses of teachers and learners to the questionnaire with items 1 - 5 were analysed using SPSS for MS Windows. Pearson chi-square statistic ( $\chi^2$ ) was used to examine the data for statistically significant differences between the responses of teachers and learners and between the responses of all females and all males. Those comparisons which yielded a probability level of less than 5% ( $p < 0.05$ ) are reported below.

For items 1, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 14 no statistically significant differences were found in the analysis, comparing the responses by gender or by status of learner or teacher.

For item 2 "When a learner is punished there is an aggressive desire to hit back", female teachers were significantly more in agreement

with the statement than male teachers ( $P=0.0086$ ). Whereas male learners were more supportive of the statement than the female learners.

For item 5, 'Learners prefer corporal punishment to manual work as punishment', significantly 55% more teachers than 31% learners tended to disagree with the statement ( $P=0.0024$ ). This result should be treated with caution as the minimum expected frequency of 2/10 (two over ten) cells was low.

On the same item males showed a statistically significant tendency towards agreement with the statement when their responses were compared with those of females ( $P=0.0261$ ).

For item 6, "Discipline can be maintained in schools without resorting to corporal punishment", there is a statistically significant difference with teachers showing more support than learners for the statement ( $P=0.0462$ ). It is important to note that learners were over-represented at the extremes, that is, with some showing strong disagreement while others strongly supported the view expressed.

For item 7, "Corporal punishment encourages learners to do their work", gender differences were detected with female respondents showing less

support than males for the statement ( $P=0.0329$ ). The responses of females were clustered mainly in the positions of indecision, disagreement and strong disagreement.

For item 11, "The teacher who is using a cane is a failure in the classroom", there is a statistically significant tendency for learners to be more supportive than teachers towards the statement ( $P=0.0358$ ). It must be noted that the responses of learners were widely distributed, with large numbers in the position of strongly disagreeing. The majority of the teachers (30/40) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.

On the same item, females were statistically more likely than males to disagree or strongly disagree with the statement ( $p=0.0$ ).

For item 12, "Learners should use the protection provided by the Law against teachers who use corporal punishment, females showed less support than males for the statement ( $P=0.0249$ ). Males were mainly in favour of the statement.

For item 13, "Discipline cannot be maintained in schools without resorting to corporal punishment, teachers showed significantly less support than learners for the statement ( $P=0.0412$ ), though it should be noted that the responses of both learners and teachers were widely

distributed across the scale. Some caution should be applied in interpreting this result as the expected frequency of 1/10 cells of the chi-square analysis is low.

For item 15, "corporal punishment does not ensure the purposes of maintaining discipline", the responses of both learners and teachers were widely distributed across the scale. This implies that in both of these groups of respondents, there is a wide diversity of reaction to the statement. Analysis revealed that learners showed significantly less support than teachers for this view ( $P=0.0358$ ), though a large majority of learners did support the view.

#### 4.3 OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS

1-13  
Section C of the questionnaire consisted of open-ended questions. These items were used in this study whereby the respondents replied in any response they wanted. This was done to gather further information about corporal punishment in secondary schools. The actual questions will be followed at the end. (See Appendix 2).

Qualitative analysis was used to analyse the responses to the open-ended questions. Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) maintain that qualitative analysis is concerned with discovering and deriving order in data, attempting to find out what the data is about. It is also

concerned with making sense of data (Hitchcock and Hughes (1995).

A lot of apparently unrelated data is collected in a qualitative research but it is important for the researcher to organise the data into categories, units and topics. It is important to organise data into codes and categories so that the researcher is able to identify the relationship between units of meaning. As coding is a part of data analysis, it assists the researcher to give meaning to events and activities.

According to Svensson (1985-1986) the researcher first begins with the holistic grasp where he or she gets a feel for the completeness of the experience. The researcher should be careful of his or her own preconceptions so as not to confuse subsequent interpretation. To achieve a sense of the wholeness of data repeated, reading is recommended.

Secondly, as Svensson (1985-1986) cites, the researcher deals with distinction of the protocol into Natural Meaning Unit (MNU). Natural Meaning Units are statements made by the respondents. The researcher should be careful in using language much used by respondents when these statements are rephrased. These statements should be written in the third person. Thirdly, the researcher should group together all the closely related meanings to form categories. Many related categories are brought together to form a cluster of

themes.

According to Hitchcock and Hughes (1995), the qualitative researcher begins with informal analysis of the data, then comes to the formal stage where the researcher will come across with hunches, ideas and ways of questions. The inductive approach is the formal approach used where the researcher is breaking down the data in terms of general and particular units of meaning. During analysis, the researcher is expecting the consistencies, patterns and themes where codes and categories are formed and used by the researcher.

Using grounded theory, which is one of the processes in qualitative analysis, the qualitative researcher tries to find ideas from the data after collecting and comparing them. Moving from that, the researcher is able to develop new concepts and give explanations. In analysing the open-ended question, the researcher used Svensson (1985-1986) approach.

#### 4.4 **COMMENTS BY LEARNERS ABOUT THE USE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN SCHOOLS**

##### 4.4.1 **The Overall Response**

What is striking with this study is that a lot of respondents are against the use of corporal punishment. This probably is explained by the fact that,

community of this area is exposed to the South African Constitution and they have been taught about their rights.

#### 4.4.2 Comments Against the Use of Corporal Punishment in Schools

The respondents commented that corporal punishment contributed to strikes and violence in schools and it is good that it was abolished.

Learners reported instances where those who are punished severely come back with guns to shoot teachers. One learner commented that "Learners are not donkeys". This indicates that learners view the use of corporal punishment as degrading.

Other respondents mentioned that the use of corporal punishment destroys trust, discourages learners from coming to school and moreover, creates enemies which could lead to gangsterism. The educator should learn to listen to explanations made by learners. It must not be as if teachers come to punish rather than to teach. They further cited that corporal punishment causes learners to be dissatisfied as sometimes there are inconsistencies when punishment is administered.

For example, it is reported that there are teachers who punish with hatred and also because of taking out their own personal worries and

frustrations out on the learners. One learner commented, "Learners are there to learn, not to be punished". Because learners do not always feel free and are always fearful, they may copy homework if it has not been done.

The respondents mentioned that corporal punishment is physical abuse. Sometimes learners absent themselves during certain teachers' periods of they know that those teachers are likely to use corporal punishment. Some comments included that learners are scared of asking questions in certain classes, because they are punished for minor offences. The respondents mentioned that this does not change behaviour in a positive direction. Instead it destroys trust, creates a lot of misunderstanding and conflicts in the classroom.

They commented that alternatives should be used instead of corporal punishment, since corporal punishment was part of apartheid education. Those teachers who have not stopped using it, should be compelled to do so. The respondents stated that it tends to turn learners into criminals, by making a school feel like a prison. One learner commented, "A teacher using corporal punishment should be killed". It is obvious that for at least some learners, the use of corporal punishment provokes strong feelings and a desire for retribution.

Others commented that learners should be referred to school

psychologists to deal with their problems. They also stated that some educators use "imithi" (witchcraft) when punishing so that the learners is infected until death. Lastly, some even claimed that learners have died because of corporal punishment.

#### **4.4.3 Comments by Learners in Support of the Use of Corporal Punishment in Schools**

Some respondents recommended the use of corporal punishment as it teaches discipline. They said that it is good because it encourages the learners to do work and also leads to respect for authority. Some respondents mentioned that it should be used systematically, for example, not more than two strokes. If a learner is hurt, a teacher should be compelled to apologise. Others mentioned that it encourages the learner to work and pass, and for some it was seen as the only way to make learners work. The penalty for smoking and fighting should be corporal punishment, according to some of the learners.

A few respondents emphasised that Black schools really need corporal punishment in order to function effectively. The Minister of Education should take steps to legalise it again. Lastly, some commented that although teachers use corporal punishment, they punish with love and show that they care about the learners when using corporal punishment.

#### 4.5 **LEARNERS SUGGESTIONS FOR ALTERNATIVES TO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

In the analysis, six themes emerged. Learners responses consisted of methods involving time penalties, methods involving unpleasant tasks, methods involving parents and other people, methods involving depriving them of their right to education.

##### 4.5.1 **Methods Involving Time Penalties**

The following were the alternatives suggested by the respondents that involved time; learners to be given notice in advance before being punished, suspension, detention, writing an essay of about five pages and locking gates when learners are late.

##### 4.5.1.1 **Learners To Be Given Notice in Advance Before Punishment**

This was cited as one of the alternatives to corporal punishment. This means that learners should be notified beforehand that they are to be punished. They do not believe that immediately after they have misbehaved they should be punished, as the teacher then issues the punishment in anger. By the time the punishment has been administered,

the learners would have realised they had misbehaved and admitted it.

#### 4.5.1.2 **Suspension From School**

Suspension was cited by the learner respondents as an alternative to corporal punishment. This means sending the learner home for a week. This can only be carried out by the Governing Body after a fair hearing.

#### 4.5.1.3 **Detention**

Detention was mentioned by learner respondents as one of the alternatives to corporal punishment. The learner has to remain on the school premises after school and is supervised by the teacher. It is important that the teacher informs the parents about the learner's detention. During detention, the learner may be given work to do, for example, writing 50 seven letter words from the dictionary.

#### 4.5.1.4 **Writing An Essay of About Five Pages**

This was cited as another alternative to corporal punishment. Usually when learners are to write a composition, they do not exceed two pages. Writing more pages can be tedious to them that can make them hate writing compositions.

#### 4.5.1.5 **Locking The Gates When The Learners Are Late**

The learner respondents cited locking of gates when the learner is late as an alternative to corporal punishment. What usually happens is that the teacher who has been assigned the gate duty, locks the gate for a certain time, not exceeding an hour. Sometimes it is found that teachers lock the gates until break time, leaving the learners standing outside until the gates are opened again.

#### 4.5.2 **Methods Involving Unpleasant Tasks**

The learner respondents cited cleaning the toilets, planting flowers, cleaning the school yard for five days, sweeping the floors of classrooms and passages, picking up papers in the school yard, washing teachers cars and cutting grass in the school yard.

##### 4.5.2.1 **Cleaning The School Yard, Buildings and Teachers Cars**

Cleaning the school yard and the buildings means that instead of receiving tuition, the learner does the manual work. This method of discipline would benefit the school and buildings by keeping them cleaner.

#### **4.5.2.2 Standing For One Hour On One Leg Without Touching The Ground**

Standing on one leg for one hour without touching the ground as an alternative to corporal punishment would require the learner to stand on one leg in front of the class while the teacher and the class are watching him. This would disturb the teacher as he or she cannot teach and supervise at the same time. Some learners are disabled in one way or another, so this form of punishment could be physically harmful and could cause embarrassment when he or she is unable to stand on one leg.

#### **4.5.2.3 Staying After School To Do Manual Work**

The learner respondents mentioned staying after school to do manual work as an alternative to corporal punishment. This means that both the teacher and the learner remain at school. The learner may clean the school yard or sweep several classrooms, depending on the teacher.

#### **4.5.3 Methods Involving Parents And Other People**

The respondents felt that teachers ought to tell them their misdeeds to many respondents as an alternative to corporal punishment. It is felt that parents would be able to discuss the behavioural problem with their

children. The respondents mentioned that the educators must try to listen to what the learners are saying. This can serve as an alternative to corporal punishment. The teachers should be able to listen to the reasons cited by the learners if there is bad behaviour.

The respondents mentioned that reporting names of offenders to the principal about bad behaviour by the learner is another alternative other than using corporal punishment.

#### 4.5.4 **Methods Involving Depriving Their Rights to Education**

Sending learners out of class for a certain time and punishing them by not teaching them certain work was cited by the learner respondents as an alternative to corporal punishment. According to the South African Constitution every child has a right to education. Thus these alternatives are illegal. The learner respondents cited that if a learner is late, he or she should go back home to sleep. This means that the learner would not receive any tuition that day.

#### 4.5.5 **Methods Involving Bodily Harmful Exercises**

Running around the school, doing physical exercises like push-ups and frog leaping exercises and kneeling on the floor during class periods were cited by the learner respondents as alternatives to corporal punishment.

This can result in learners hating physical education as a subject.

#### 4.5.6 **Methods Dealing With Communications Between Learners & Parents**

Discussing rules with the learners, communicating and motivating them, were alternatives to corporal punishment cited by the learner respondents. It is very important that rules are discussed with the learners as well as parents and they should know the consequences if the rules are broken.

The respondents mentioned that teachers are expected to be patient in finding out more about the misbehaviour. However, some respondents felt that there should be no alternative to corporal punishment and that learners must be hit now and again. One respondent mentioned that it is the responsibility of a learner to prescribe the punishment to the teacher.

### 4.6 **COMMENTS BY TEACHERS ABOUT THE USE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

#### 4.6.1 **The Overall Response**

It is surprising that a lot of teachers in this study are against the use of corporal punishment in school and only a few are still holding the idea of sparing the rod and spoiling the learner. A lot of commentary clearly

shows that the educators are co-operating with the South African Schools Act of 1996.

However, there were respondents who commented against and for the use of corporal punishment. The researcher will first look at the commentaries which are against corporal punishment, then support those in support of corporal punishment.

#### 4.6.2 **Comments Against the Use of Corporal Punishment in Schools**

The respondents stated that corporal punishment does not serve the purpose of changing behaviour, therefore it should be completely abolished. They mentioned that corporal punishment perpetuates violence in that it will turn learners into adults who will use violence in extreme situations or when confronted by any form of conflict. "Learners can drop out of school because of corporal punishment" one teacher commented.

Other teachers stated that biologically it is not right to hit the person on the body because it can damage some of the organs and tissues.

Other comments included that pain in the body would lead to hatred towards the person who has caused it. One of the teachers commented, "Corporal punishment must not be used because learners come to school

carrying guns or drunk in order to seek revenge". One respondent said that it is usually used by male teachers on learners who refuse to be their girlfriends.

Some teachers commented that all educators must acquaint themselves with the South African Schools Act of 1996, and the Constitution of this country where it clearly states that corporal punishment is child abuse and also the violation of human dignity.

#### 4.6.3 Comments In Support Of The Use Of Corporal Punishment In Schools

Some educators feel that corporal punishment should not have been abolished because it encourages learners to do school work. Some respondents opt for corporal punishment rather than an alternative because it is less time consuming and there are many learners. They felt that the abolition of corporal punishment will lead to disorder in schools. Other respondents mentioned that since corporal punishment is the only language learners understand, it should not have been abolished.

They commented that some learners were brought up with the use of corporal punishment therefore they expect it to be continued. They believe that it maintains discipline and one teacher commented, "We have political figures like Mandela because of corporal punishment". One respondent commented that the Law makers should revise their decision on corporal

punishment, otherwise learners will disobey teachers. Learners will take the Law into their own hands. Crime and drug abuse will increase.

#### 4.7 **TEACHERS' SUGGESTIONS FOR ALTERNATIVES TO THE USE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

When the responses were analysed, six themes also emerged. Each theme is further divided into categories. Teachers' responses consisted of methods involving penalties of time, methods involving manual labour, methods involving bodily harmful exercises, methods involving other people, methods involving infringement of their right to education and other methods dealing with misbehaviour.

##### 4.7.1 **Methods Involving Penalties of Time**

The teachers' respondents cited detention, suspension, no break time, arriving early or staying behind after school and giving extra work as alternatives to corporal punishment.

Some teachers believe that detention can be an alternative to the use of corporal punishment because it makes the learner realise that he or she has done wrong. It is important that the teacher informs the parent about the learner to be detained. The contents of the letter should include the day and duration of time. During this time the learner takes instructions

from the teacher on duty of what is expected of him. For example, the learner writes many pages about the wrong that he has committed, e.g. "I will never copy Biology again".

Suspension refers to exclusion from attending school of a learner for example, up to one week. Only the Governing Body, after a fair hearing, can suspend a learner. The teacher respondents stated that instead of using corporal punishment, suspension can be used because it makes the learner realise that he or she has done wrong, when he or she finds himself or herself at home during school hours.

A few respondents mentioned that for minor offences, the learner can be disallowed break time to correct what he or she had done wrong. For example, re-writing the homework during break time.

The teachers respondents cited arriving early or staying after school as one of the alternative to the use of corporal punishment. They mentioned that it makes the learner feel bad when he or she realises that something different is happening to him.

A lot of respondents believed that the learners should be given more work instead of being given corporal punishment. They stated that the learners misbehave in class because they have nothing to do and end up making a noise.

#### 4.7.2 **Methods Involving Manual Labour**

One of the alternatives to corporal punishment as mentioned by the respondents, was cleaning toilets. They mentioned that when cleaning toilets, learners see themselves as cleaners. Such menial tasks given to them can make them think about their parents who are cleaners and even feel embarrassed about it.

Digging pits was cited by the respondents as an alternative to corporal punishment. The learner has to dig a large pit for papers and other refuse to be thrown in. The learner has to work very hard to finish her or his punishment.

#### 4.7.3 **Methods Which Are Harmful To Bodies**

Some respondents mentioned that frog jumping and push-ups were the best to replace corporal punishment. The learner has to perform in front of the class and has to continue trying, even if he cannot do it.

Another alternative to corporal punishment cited by the respondents was standing on one leg, which embarrasses the learner, if he fails to do it.

#### 4.7.4 Methods Involving Other People

Parents were mostly mentioned by the respondents as the people whom the learners must be sent to when it comes to punishing. It was further mentioned that the parents must be called to come and discuss the misbehaviour of their children. Instead of punishing the learners using corporal punishment, they should be sent home to fetch their parents.

The respondents mentioned that the learners should be referred to social workers and educational psychologists to solve the problems causing the bad behaviour of the learners.

They further stated that this is one of the alternatives which can alleviate all the problems leading to punishment and can give advice to learners.

The respondents mentioned that counselling is one of the alternative that can be used instead of corporal punishment that will give the learner the opportunity to talk about his problems to the counsellor. Sending the learner to the counsellor was cited by most respondents.

#### **4.7.5 Methods Involving Infringements Of Their Right To Education**

Instead of using corporal punishment, sending the learners out of class can be an alternative to corporal punishment. The respondents mentioned that the learners experience the loss of subject matter and learn not to repeat the wrong again.

Ignoring the learners by not marking their work was cited by teacher respondents as another alternative to corporal punishment. That makes the learner feel alienated from the class and will never think of repeating the same offence.

#### **4.7.6 Methods Involving Communication With Learners**

One of the alternatives cited by the respondents was discussing with the Representative Council of Learners (RCL), the offences committed by the learners, with the aim that learners will understand other learners when talking to them.

The respondents cited that sending the learners for discussion to the disciplinary committee can be used for correcting the misbehaviour of learners. The disciplinary committee can be formed by the deputy

principal, one head of department, two teachers, the president of the Representative Council of Learners and his deputy.

To alleviate problems which could lead to corporal punishment, the respondents stated that each school should have clearly defined rules which govern the conduct of learners as an alternative to corporal punishment, because they will know what is expected of them. Teachers should also discuss with the learners the consequences of breaking the rules and this should be implemented when the occasion arises.

#### **4.8 CONCLUSION**

This study reveals that there is a wide diversity of opinions among teachers and learners towards the use of corporal punishment in the three secondary schools mentioned throughout this study. Some respondents took extreme positions in these issues, showing that the ongoing use of corporal punishment in schools causes resentment and opposition.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter will focus on the results of this study taking into consideration the research previously conducted about the perceptions of teachers and learners on the infliction of corporal punishment.

In analysing the responses to Likert scale items the chi-square statistical test ( $\chi^2$ ) was used to determine the significant differences in data in different categories.

What is striking in this study is that most of the teachers claim that they are against corporal punishment but within few teachers there is a wide variety of opinions about corporal punishment. There are also differences in attitudes towards the regulations forbidding it. There are many differences regarding acceptable alternatives to corporal punishment. This study shows that it is difficult to generalise about opinions of teachers and learners.

## 5.2 DISCUSSION OF RESPONSES TO LIKERT SCALE ITEMS

Below the researcher will discuss the responses to Likert scale items. It was discovered that learners had a desire to strike back when they received corporal punishment. Good and Brophy (1978), Holdstock (1985) and Koenig (1995) all state that learners react with anger when punished and have a desire to strike back. Sometimes that happens because of the teachers disregarding the South African Schools Act of 1996 and the South African Constitution.

Most teachers in this study agree that discipline can be maintained without corporal punishment as Cryan (1987) states. This is incredible as it comes directly from teachers while it is widely known that many teachers are continuing to <sup>use</sup> corporal punishment. This attention by the teachers was focussed following the abolition of corporal punishment. In a few cases teachers have been charged in courts of law. Diseko (1997) states that most teachers feel that it is difficult to maintain discipline without corporal punishment. This view is not supported by the teachers in the present study.

Significant gender differences were shown in attitudes towards the use of

corporal punishment. Overall, females feel less likely to consider that corporal punishment encourages learners to do their work. Male respondents strongly agree with the statement. However, Holdstock (1985), Short, Short and Blanton (1988) all agree that corporal punishment decreases motivation and leads to low achievement. In this study males strongly agree that corporal punishment encourages learners to do their work. Rubin (1980) concurs with the view. He maintains that corporal punishment creates order and makes learners ready for learning.

Male respondents in this study showed some support for charging teachers who use corporal punishment. The South African Schools Act of 1996 states explicitly that one who contravenes the law will be charged in a court of law. Holdstock (1985) indicates that corporal punishment is an invasion of privacy. His view is supported by the South African Constitution.

In this study, learners supported the view that the teacher who uses corporal punishment is a failure in the classroom. This view is also supported by Smith (1995). It is important to say that there were some learners who disagreed with the statement. That shows that there was a wide diversity of responses. Some learners can regard a teacher who is using a cane as the best if they were brought up with corporal punishment as Sogoni (1997) cites Rubin (1980). However, the majority of the teachers disagreed or strongly disagreed with the view that a teacher who is using a cane, is a

failure in the classroom.

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Both teachers and learners had a wide diversity of opinions on whether discipline cannot be maintained without resorting to corporal punishment. A large majority of learners disagreed with the view. The researcher thinks that the views of the learners were affected by the South African Schools Act of 1996 and the Constitution of South Africa which prohibits corporal punishment and safeguards the rights of the learners respectively. A few teachers agreed with the view that discipline cannot be maintained without resorting to corporal punishment.

The reaction of learners to the view that corporal punishment does not ensure the purpose of maintaining discipline also had widely different opinions. However, a large majority of learners showed support for this view. This shows that learners disagreed with Ndzamela (1998), when he states that learners cannot develop self discipline. The scores of the teachers were also scattered, with more support for the view that corporal punishment does not ensure the purpose of maintaining discipline. The researcher is of the opinion that such a reaction is influenced by a few workshops conducted in this community on the South African Constitution.

Nearly half of the teachers disagreed with the view that learners prefer corporal punishment to manual work as punishment. The majority of the learners favoured manual labour. After conducting questionnaires in one of

the schools, the researcher heard the comments of the learners that they would prefer manual labour. They gave the reason that corporal punishment spoils the climate of the school. (Personal Communication).

### 5.3 DISCUSSION OF ALTERNATIVES TO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT CITED BY BOTH TEACHER AND LEARNER RESPONDENTS

115 Below the researcher will discuss the alternatives suggested to corporal punishment under the following topics : detention, suspension and expulsion, giving extra work, summoning of parents, sending learners outside the classroom and the institution clearly defining rules.

#### 5.3.1 Detention

12 Detention was cited by both teacher and learner respondents as one of the alternatives to corporal punishment. Lorber and Pierce (1990) do not favour detention. They regard it as punishment to both the teacher and the learner because it needs supervision. Pretorius (1998) in contrast, favours detention and even mentions offences like failing to do homework or bunking a lesson as fitting the punishment of detention. Landman, van der Merwe, Pitout, Smith and Windell (1992) and Adams (1987) mention detention as an alternative to corporal punishment. Some schools have been using it as punishment even before corporal punishment had been

abolished. The South African Schools Act of 1996 states that learners have the right not to go to detention.

### 5.3.2 Suspension and Expulsion

The South African Schools Act of 1996 states that a governing body may suspend a learner after a fair hearing for up to a week. It is known that suspension has been widely used by the schools. It is important to note that only the head of the department of education can expel the learner after following the prescribed procedures. It is known that teachers have been disregarding guidelines stated by law when suspension takes place.

### 5.3.3 Giving Extra Schoolwork

The respondents cited giving of extra schoolwork to learners as an alternative punishment. Good and Brophy (1978) and Jackson (1991) agreed that learners should be given extra schoolwork to be done at home or school. While Jackson (1991) supported the view, he mentioned that sometimes the learners can develop a negative attitude towards schoolwork.

#### 5.3.4 Parents being summoned to school

N/3

This was cited by many learners and teachers and it is also the method which has been used in many schools. The purpose of calling the parents is to notify them about the behaviour of the learner at school. Short, Short and Blanton (1988) concurred with the view and they mentioned the use of the behaviour report card. They found that the behaviour report card helps in modifying the behaviour of the learners. Also Pretorius (1998) supported the view of using a behaviour report card. The behaviour report card is sent on a regular basis to parents and it works well with the learners in a secondary school. Short, Short and Blanton (1988). The researcher thinks that one should be careful with summoning parents to school as some of the learners look after themselves and others have parents who can neither read nor write. The school would have to accommodate the needs of such parents by inviting them to school in order to address them.

#### 5.3.5 Counselling

Counselling as an alternative to corporal punishment was cited by both teacher and learner respondents. Cryan (1987) and Pretorius (1998) and the South African Schools Act of 1996 all concur with the view. Counselling is not used by many schools, especially black schools. In

some black schools counselling was implemented. Guidance teachers were trained in order to help the learners with problems. The guidance teacher in turn, trained the teachers in schools. That helped a great deal because teachers learnt to listen to the learners and the use of punishment decreased. Counselling is considered effective because the learners are counselled and the teachers understand them better.

### **5.3.6 Sending Learners outside the classroom**

The Constitution of South Africa and the South African Schools Act of 1996 state that every learner has a right to education. Lorber and Pierce (1980) cited this alternative but mentioned that it tends to be a teacher who is also punished because he has to re-teach the subject matter to the learner. It is reported that many teachers used this method even before corporal punishment was abolished. Jackson (1991) tends to differ from what the law prescribes, by claiming that sending the learners outside the classroom gives the opportunity for the learner to cool down.

### **5.3.7 Clearly defined rules**

It was cited by some of the respondents that clearly defined rules are essential to prevent disciplinary problems. The South African Schools Act

of 1996 clearly declares that every school should have a code of rules. They should be known to both parents and learners. Both Wheildail and Glynn (1986) and Short, Short and Blanton (1998) stress the importance of discussing rules with the learners. The consequences of breaking the rules should be discussed so that the learners and the parents know.

#### 5.4 DISCUSSION OF COMMENTS BY TEACHERS AND LEARNERS ABOUT THE USE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN SCHOOLS

This study has shown that a lot of respondents ~~are against the use of~~ corporal punishment in schools. <sup>exam in but how it is in</sup> Holdstock (1985). Elrod and Terrel (1991) were promoting the <sup>anti-corporal punishment ideas</sup> anti-corporal punishment ideas. Some respondents commented about violence and strikes caused in past resistance to corporal punishment, as Sogoni (1997) states.

113 Berkowitz (1975) and Good and Brophy (1978) indicate that corporal punishment initiates fighting amongst the learners. It is known that in some schools learners turned out and started to assault teachers. Learner respondents mentioned that corporal punishment is child abuse which is emphasised by Holdstock (1985), the Constitution of South Africa and South African Schools Act of 1996. Holdstock (1985) refers to corporal punishment as legalised child abuse. The researcher believes that many parents are ignorant of the law and to them corporal punishment is not seen

as child abuse but correction of some misbehaviour.

Some respondents in this study objected to the statement that corporal punishment does not encourage learners to do their work. Rubin (1980) disagrees with that statement. He maintains that corporal punishment creates order and encourages learners to be ready for learning.

Few respondents mentioned the view that black schools still need to use corporal punishment in schools because black learners were brought up with this type of punishment at home. Sogoni (1997) concurs with this view, on the basis of her study of attitudes towards the use of corporal punishment conducted in a rural area.

This study has shown that there are different opinions on the issue of the use of corporal punishment in schools. It is important that teachers obey the South African Schools Act of 1996 to minimise violence in the country. Teachers should know that if they continue using corporal punishment they are contributing to the breeding of a violent society.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **CONCLUSION**

This chapter concludes the whole dissertation. The implications of the study, the strengths and limitations and the recommendations for further research on this topic will be discussed.

#### **6.1 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The findings of the study show that the use of corporal punishment is not favoured by many respondents. It was noticed that most teachers do not favour the use of corporal punishment in this study. The researcher did not expect such a reaction from the teachers in view of the many newspaper reports and comments among educators and learners that corporal punishment is still widely used in schools. It is possible that the teachers who constituted this sample might be the ones who understand and follow the South African Schools Act of 1996. Only a few teachers were in support of the use of corporal punishment in secondary schools.

Sogoni (1997) indicates that some writers like Knowles (1996), maintain that the time for the ban of corporal punishment was too early. Other people like

Holdstock (1985) have been pleading for the ban of corporal punishment for many years. This clearly illustrates that there is still confusion about the ban of corporal punishment. More studies should be conducted to get the opinions and recommendations of different people.

The ban of corporal punishment has resulted in some teachers having to face criminal charges. This shows that parents and learners are beginning to understand the rights of the learners and the South African Schools Act of 1996. This Act explicitly states that no corporal punishment can be administered to the learner in a public or private school. Failure to do so can result in a charge of assault being laid by the Court. Laying charges against teachers should make other teachers realise the importance of the law and the consequences of breaking the law. Hopefully this will stop them pretending that the law has not been changed.

Due to many schools still disregarding the new law, as reflected in News Reports, the Minister of Education has stressed the abolishment of corporal punishment. (Daily News, September 15, 1998). Co-operation by teachers has been shown regarding the study of this law and they claim that they do not disregard it.

The findings of this study showed that many respondents, both teachers and

learners view corporal punishment as child abuse, as Holdstock (1985) and the South African Constitution maintain. It should be noted that learners are protected from teachers who use corporal punishment by the Constitution of this country and the South African Schools Act of 1996.

Westby (1980) believes that learners should be caned in front of others to set an example. Other opinions are that this would embarrass the offenders which in turn would result in them displaying insolent behaviour.

This study has proved that caning induces a revengeful attitude from the learners. This has already taken place in schools. Teachers have been held hostage by learners resulting in police action having to be taken. (Personal Communication with teachers). To minimise such incidents, the Heads of schools should report teachers who still use corporal punishment as a means of discipline. Each and every class should have a chart displayed in bold print, stating that corporal punishment has been abolished. This could assist both teachers and learners as a reminder of the prohibition of corporal punishment.

Holdstock (1985) maintains that corporal punishment leads to violence and criminal behaviour. Children learn that the way to solve problems is by using violence. A learner attempted to shoot the teacher when the teacher

intervened because the learner was beating a girl. This proves that adults can model violent behaviour when punishing children. This was discovered in an experiment carried out by Bandura (1973). Cryan (1987) cited a study where it was found that most of the criminals were severely beaten in their youth. There is a tendency displayed by teachers, that they can cane with love. Teachers claim that parents have given them the mandate to carry out corporal punishment. Teachers and parents should know that the law remains in force, no matter what the circumstances. Both teachers and parents could be convicted of assau

Political Leaders could play a major role in disseminating the message that corporal punishment has been abolished. People can co-operate by discussing it among themselves.

Teachers have voiced their thoughts that the ban of corporal punishment has left their hands tied (Tunis 1998). They claim that the Government offered no alternatives. Prior to the abolishment of corporal punishment, there had been alternatives, but some are debated as being illegal. Suspending a learner from attending school is illegal if it has not been carried out by the Governing Body. Detention is another alternative method of punishment which is widely used in many schools. In terms of the South African Schools Act of 1996, the learner has the right not to attend a detention class. Teachers should be careful not to use alternative forms of

discipline that will have a negative consequence on the learner's perception of tuition.

## 6.2 **STRENGTHS & LIMITATIONS OF STUDY**

The above sub-topic will be discussed in terms of the sample, ethics, measuring instrument and analysing the results.

### 6.2.1 **The Sample**

The sample of this study consisted of learners and teachers. This was done intentionally by the researcher to collect relevant data as teachers and learners are directly involved. Parents who are also important stakeholders, were excluded to lack of time and financial constraints. Furthermore, it would be difficult to get parents to complete the questionnaires, as few parents come to school meetings.

The researcher chose the sample from three neighbouring schools, including the school where she works. This gave her the opportunity to organise collecting data easily from teachers and learners who demonstrated their willingness to participate in the study. Most of them were excited about the study as it thus enabled their attitudes and perceptions to become known to the outside world.

The researcher chose Grade 11 learners as they only have two years of high school left and therefore are more mature. Although they raised a concern of not expressing themselves fluently in English, the researcher understood their answers.

### **6.2.2. The Question of Ethics**

The question of ethics was taken into consideration. Nachmias and Nachmias (1987) indicate that consent must be received from the respondents involved in a research. Letters were thus issued to the respondents, and the purpose of the study was personally explained by the researcher herself. This ensured that agreement was ascertained by all the respondents to complete the questionnaire unreservedly and instilled a sense of confidence in the respondents answers on behalf of the researcher. Thus any confusion was eliminated which could result in a reluctance to answer questions.

### **6.2.3. Analysing Results**

When the results were analysed, all female teachers and learners were put together as well as the males. This made it difficult to distinguish between teachers and learners according to gender. Analysing by age was neglected because of lack of time and financial constraints. It was important

to look at statistical differences between learner and teacher respondents and also by gender. This information would potentially enable the teachers and learners to achieve a better understanding of each other in schools.

### 6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The researcher recommends that further study should be conducted by a full-time researcher who will be able to involve all the stakeholders of the schools. For purposes of analysis, the stakeholders should be further divided into groups. For example, parents could be divided into parents involved in Governing Bodies and literate and illiterate parents. For teachers, there could be Principals, Heads of Departments and all teachers and learners to be divided according to grades.

A group of researchers is recommended by the researcher to do research on a representative basis, on the topic for the whole of South Africa.

The researcher recommends that other types of measuring instruments such as interviews, focus groups and direct observations should be used to collect more data. This should be done because each measuring instrument has both advantages and disadvantages.

An in-depth study of looking at the misbehaviour of learners including the short temperedness of teachers should be conducted. The study should consider why teachers are demotivated. It should also do a comparison on teachers who are in the field of education since the Soweto riots in 1976 and those who were already in the field.

A study should be conducted on how parents raise their children and the disciplinary methods they use. The educational psychologists should conduct workshops with teachers and parents, to recommend methods like positive reinforcement and a rewarding system that could be used in raising children.

The Education Department should organise workshops for both learners and teachers and invite people like lawyers to explain the law concerning the abolishment of corporal punishment. The inspectors of Education could invite Heads of schools, Presidents of the Representative Council of Learners, Chairpersons of Governing Bodies, general practitioners and lawyers to attend the workshop. The role of the General Practitioners could be to relate diagnosis of learners that have been harmed as a result of the use of corporal punishment.

Outside agencies, i.e. Lawyers for Human Rights, could be invited to

schools to discuss the rights of the learners. Preferably, this could be structured as seminars where teachers, parents and learners could be in attendance.

It is believed that this piece of work will stimulate and touch the hearts of others to do more research in this area.

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## **APPENDICES**

- Appendix 1 : Correspondence
- Appendix 2 : Questionnaire for Learners
- Appendix 3 : Questionnaire for Teachers
- Appendix 4 : South African Schools Act, 1996

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

- 1. Letter from the researcher to KwaZulu Natal Education**
- 2. Letter from the researcher to School Principals and the Governing Bodies**
- 3. Letter from KwaZulu Natal Education Department to the researcher**
- 4. Letters from the Principals and the Governing Bodies to the researcher**
- 5. Letter to the parent of a learner**
- 6. Letter to the participant**

P.O. Box 219

Clernaville

3602

20 May 1998

The Superintendent-General

P/Bag x 04

ULUNDI

3838

Dear Sir

PERMISSION TO ADMINISTER RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRES

I am a registered part-time student in the Department of Psychology of Education. I am writing a dissertation on the topic " To investigate the perception of teachers and learners towards the use of corporal punishment in KwaDabeka secondary schools ". My supervisor is Mr. R.H. Forman who is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Educational Psychology in University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg. I am doing research for the degree of Master of Education.

I am writing this letter to ask permission to administer a research questionnaire to teachers and learners of Ianga Secondary School, Sithokozile Secondary School and KwaDabeka No.7 Secondary School.

I would be glad if my request is successful.

Yours Sincerely

N. P. Dlamini. (Mrs).

P.O. Box 219  
CLERNAVILLE  
3602

17 June 1998

The Principal & The Governing Body  
Ilanga Secondary School  
P.O. Box 267  
CLERNAVILLE  
3602

Sir/Madam

RESEARCH STUDY

Kindly allow me to use your school as a research site to the study on this topic "TO INVESTIGATE THE PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHERS AND LEARNERS ABOUT THE USE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT in KwaDabeka Secondary Schools.

The information given will not be revealed to anybody, except the researcher and will only be used for research purposes.

Thanking you in advance, in anticipation of your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

*N.P. Dlamini*

N.P. DLAMINI (MRS)

**DURBAN SOUTH REGION**

**PROVINCE OF  
KWAZULU-NATAL**

**ISIFUNDAZWE  
SAKWAZULU-NATAL**

**PROVINSIE  
KWAZULU-NATAL**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
AND CULTURE**

**UMNYANGO WEMFUNDO  
NAMAZIKO**

**DEPARTEMENT VAN  
ONDERWYS EN KULTUUR**

**ADDRESS: MALGATE BUILDING  
IKHELI: 72 STANGER STREET  
ADDRESS: DURBAN**

**PRIVATE BAG : X54330  
ISIKHWAMA SEPOST: DURBAN  
PRIVAATSAK : 4000**

**TELEPHONE (031) 3270911  
UMCINGO; EXT. 2278  
TELEFOON**

**FAX: (031) 3270244**

**ENQUIRIES : D.M. MOODLEY  
IMBUZO :  
NAVRAE :**

**REFERENCE :  
INKOMBA :  
VERWYSING :**

**DATE: 1 DECEMBER 1998  
USUKU :  
DATUM :**

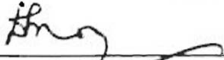
Mrs N.P. Dlamini  
P.O. Box 219  
CLERNAVILLE  
3602

**PERMISSION TO ADMINISTER RESEARCH**

Your letter dated 12 October 1998 refers.

1. Permission is granted in principle for you to conduct your research at the schools listed.
2. Kindly forward a copy of your research questionnaire to my office.
3. Kindly arrange your visits to the schools at a mutually convenient time.
4. The process must be regarded as confidential and must be used for academic purposes only.
5. Please forward a copy of your final research report.

I wish you all the success.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**D.M. MOODLEY  
CHIEF EDUCATION SPECIALIST**

# SITHOKOZILE SECONDARY SCHOOL

LOT 1001, UNIT C  
MWA-DABEKA TOWNSHIP  
CLERNAVILLE  
3602



P.O. BOX 77  
CLERNAVILLE  
3602

TEL: (031) 7071388

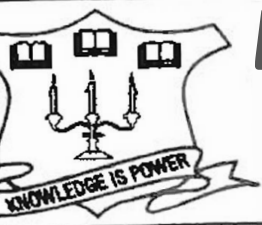
SITHOKOZILE SECONDARY SCHOOL  
P.O. BOX 77  
CLERNAVILLE  
3602  
DEPT. OF ED. & CULTURE (K7...)

98-12-07

To whom it may concern:

This serves to certify that  
N.T. Blamini was granted permission  
to do questionnaires at the  
above-mentioned school. The  
topic was "To investigate the  
perception of teachers and  
learners towards the use of  
corporal punishment in  
Secondary Schools"

Yours faithfully  
S. A. B. Mganga  
Deputy Principal



# KWADABEKA NO. 7 SECONDARY SCHOOL

P O BOX 1696  
New Germany  
3620  
Tel: (031) 7073987

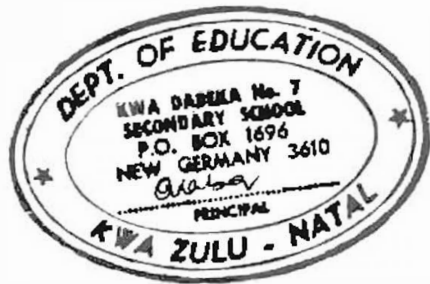
26 - 10 - 98

To WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This letter proves that Mrs N P Dlamini of Ilange High School has been granted permission by the Principal and the Governing Body of Kwadabeka No 7 Secondary School to do research in the school about corporal punishment.

Yours faithfully  
N Xaba

S.S. N P Dlamini - Governing Body



# ILANGA PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL

Lot 102B  
Kwa-Dabeka Township

P.O. Box 267  
Clernaville  
3602  
Telefax: (031) 707 6000



Your Ref:

Our Ref:

Enquiries: MR HLAKANYANA

Date: 07 - 12 - 1998

## TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

THIS SERVES TO CERTIFY THAT N. P. DLAMINI  
WAS GRANTED PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH  
QUESTIONNAIRES AT THE ABOVE MENTIONED  
SCHOOL. THE TOPIC WAS "TO INVESTIGATE  
THE PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHERS AND LEARNER  
TOWARDS THE USE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT  
IN KWADABEKA SECONDARY SCHOOLS".

SURE FAITHFULLY

N. P. HLAKANYANA (DEPUTY PRINCIPAL)

*HLAKANYANA*

KZN DEPT OF EDUCATION  
AND CULTURE  
ILANGA SECONDARY SCHOOL  
CLERNAVILLE 3602  
TELEFAX 7076000

PERMISSION

-----

I, N.P. DLAMINI, AM FINDING OUT WHAT TEACHERS AND PUPILS THINK ABOUT THE USE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN SCHOOLS. I AM ASKING THEM TO READ SOME IDEAS AND MARK THE PAPER TO SHOW IF THEY AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH EACH IDEA. I SHALL BE USING THIS INFORMATION TO WRITE A REPORT FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF NATAL SO THAT PEOPLE CAN KNOW WHAT LEARNERS AND THE TEACHERS THINK ABOUT THE USE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT. I ASK YOUR PERMISSION FOR YOUR CHILD TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY.

IF YOU DO NOT WISH FOR YOUR CHILD TO PARTICIPATE, PLEASE COMPLETE THE FORM BELOW AND SEND IT TO SCHOOL WITH YOUR CHILD.

-----

I, ----- PARENT/GUARDIAN OF  
-----  
----- FROM STANDARD -----  
-----  
WILL/WILL NOT ALLOW MY CHILD/WARD TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY.

-----

PARENTS SIGNATURE

-----

DATE

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE.

-----

MRS N.P. DLAMINI ( RESEARCHER )

R.H. FARMAN ( SUPERVISOR )

THIS STUDY IS UNDERTAKEN WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE KWAZULU NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE AND THE PRINCIPAL AND THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE SCHOOL.

I, ..... have been informed of the purpose of the research to be undertaken by Mrs N.P. Dlamini. I have agreed to participate in this research and I am aware that I am entitled to withdraw from participation at any stage.

SIGNED:  
DATE :  
PLACE :

I, ..... have been informed of the purpose of the research to be undertaken by Mrs N.P. Dlamini. I have agreed to participate in this research and I am aware that I am entitled to withdraw from participation at any stage.

SIGNED:  
DATE :  
PLACE :

I, ..... have been informed of the purpose of the research to be undertaken by Mrs N.P. Dlamini. I have agreed to participate in this research and I am aware that I am entitled to withdraw from participation at any stage.

SIGNED:  
DATE :  
PLACE :

**APPENDIX 2**

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LEARNERS**

# QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LEARNERS

This research is conducted under the supervision of Mr R H Farman of the Department of Educational Psychology, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus.

The researcher is trying to investigate the perception of Teachers and Learners towards the use of corporal punishment in schools.

**CORPORAL PUNISHMENT:** Corporal punishment is defined as infliction of pain on the body of a learner by the person who has the authority to do so because both the learner and the person with authority have reached agreement that the learner has violated the school rules.

There are no correct or incorrect answers. It is not necessary for you to give your name. Responses are confidential and should be made honestly and without restriction. Genuine responses will help a great deal and if there is a need to quote from these responses, it will be done anonymously.

## INSTRUCTIONS:

Below are various statements on corporal punishment. At the end of each statement, you are asked to make a cross (x) to indicate the statement which best represents your perception.

A key to the scale has been provided :

### SECTION A

#### PARTICULAR

3. SEX

M	F

For Office  
use only

4. AGE

Under 40 years	40 years and over

Use only one of the terms to indicate your response, as per the key to the scale illustrated below:

Strongly	AGREE	=	SA
	AGREE	=	A
	UNDECIDED	=	U
	DISAGREE	=	D
Strongly	DISAGREE	=	SD

**EXAMPLE**

Regulations concerning corporal punishment are vague

SA	A	U	D	SD
			X	

The X shows that I disagree with the statement

**For Office use only**

*Indicate your answers to the following :*

1. Corporal punishment teaches learners respect for authority.

SA	A	U	D	SD

2. When a learner is punished there is an aggressive desire to hit back.

SA	A	U	D	SD

3. Learners like teachers who use corporal punishment

SA	A	U	D	SD

4. A learner's behaviour does not improve even after caning.

SA	A	U	D	SD

5. Learners prefer corporal punishment to manual work as punishment.

SA	A	U	D	SD

6. Discipline can be maintained in schools without resorting to corporal punishment.

SA	A	U	D	SD

7. Corporal punishment encourages learners to do their work.

SA	A	U	D	SD

8. Corporal punishment results in learners attacking teachers.

SA	A	U	D	SD

9. Corporal punishment results in learners dropping out of school.

SA	A	U	D	SD

10. Corporal punishment destroys trust between teachers and learners.

SA	A	U	D	SD

11. A teacher who has to resort to using the cane to maintain discipline has failed in the classroom.

SA	A	U	D	SD

12. Learners should make use of the protection the Law offers when teachers use corporal punishment.

SA	A	U	D	SD

13. Discipline cannot be maintained in schools without resorting to corporal punishment.

SA	A	U	D	SD

14. The unpleasantness associated with corporal punishment will prevent the reoccurrence of bad behaviour.

SA	A	U	D	SD

15. Corporal punishment does not ensure that discipline will be maintained.

SA	A	U	D	SD

**SECTION C**

**For Office  
use only**

v. What could be the alternative to corporal punishment?

(i) .....

.....

(ii) .....

.....

(iii) .....

.....

(iv) .....

.....

(v) .....

.....

2. Any other comments regarding the use of corporal punishment in schools?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**NB: Please will you check to see if all the statements have been responded to.**

Thank you for your co-operation and contribution to this study.

**APPENDIX 3**

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS**

# QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

This research is conducted under the supervision of Mr R H Farman of the Department of Educational Psychology, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus.

The researcher is trying to investigate the perception of Teachers and Learners towards the use of corporal punishment in schools.

**CORPORAL PUNISHMENT:** Corporal punishment is defined as infliction of pain on the body of a learner by the person who has the authority to do so because both the learner and the person with authority have reached agreement that the learner has violated the school rules.

There are no correct or incorrect answers. It is not necessary for you to give your name. Responses are confidential and should be made honestly and without restriction. Genuine responses will help a great deal and if there is a need to quota from these responses, it will be done anonymously.

## INSTRUCTIONS:

Below are various statements on corporal punishment. At the end of each statement, you are asked to make a cross (x) to indicate the statement which best represents your perception.

A key to the scale has been provided :

### SECTION A

#### PARTICULAR

1. SEX

M	F

2. AGE

Under 40 years	40 years and over

For Office  
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Use only one of the terms to indicate your response, as per the key to the scale illustrated below:

Strongly	AGREE	=	SA
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	UNDECIDED	=	U
	DISAGREE	=	D
Strongly	DISAGREE	=	SD

**EXAMPLE**

Regulations concerning corporal punishment are vague

SA	A	U	D	SD
			X	

The X shows that I disagree with the statement

*Indicate your answers to the following :*

**For Office use only**

1. Corporal punishment teaches learners respect for authority.

SA	A	U	D	SD

2. When a learner is punished there is an aggressive desire to hit back.

SA	A	U	D	SD

3. Learners like teachers who use corporal punishment.

SA	A	U	D	SD

4. A learner's behaviour does not improve even after caring.

SA	A	U	D	SD

5. Learners prefer corporal punishment to manual work as punishment.

SA	A	U	D	SD

6. Discipline can be maintained in schools without resorting to corporal punishment.

SA	A	U	D	SD

7. Corporal punishment encourages learners to do their work.

SA	A	U	D	SD

8. Corporal punishment results in learners attacking teachers.

SA	A	U	D	SD

9. Corporal punishment results in learners dropping out of school.

SA	A	U	D	SD

10. Corporal punishment destroys trust between teachers and learners.

SA	A	U	D	SD

11. A teacher who has to resort to using the cane to maintain discipline has failed in the classroom.

SA	A	U	D	SD

12. Learners should make use of the protection the Law offers when teachers use corporal punishment.

SA	A	U	D	SD

13. Discipline cannot be maintained in schools without resorting to corporal punishment.

SA	A	U	D	SD

14. The unpleasantness associated with corporal punishment will prevent the reoccurrence of bad behaviour.

SA	A	U	D	SD

15. Corporal punishment does not ensure that discipline will be maintained.

SA	A	U	D	SD

SECTION C

For Office  
use only

v. What could be the alternative to corporal punishment?

(i) .....

.....

(ii) .....

.....

(iii) .....

.....

(iv) .....

.....

(v) .....

.....

2. Any other comments regarding the use of corporal punishment in schools?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**NB: Please will you check to see if all the statements have been responded to.**

Thank you for your co-operation and contribution to this study.

APPENDIX 4

Cover page of Government Gazette South African Schools Act, 1996

Copy of page 10 of the Government Gazette

Copies of papers 9 – 14 of the Government Gazette



REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

# GOVERNMENT GAZETTE

## STAATSKOERANT

VAN DIE REPUBLIEK VAN SUID-AFRIKA

*Registered at the Post Office as a Newspaper*

*As 'n Nuusblad by die Poskantoor Geregistreer*

Vol. 377

CAPE TOWN, 15 NOVEMBER 1996

No. 17579

KAAPSTAD, 15 NOVEMBER 1996

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

KANTOOR VAN DIE PRESIDENT

No. 1867.

15 November 1996

No. 1867.

15 November 1996

It is hereby notified that the President has assented to the following Act which is hereby published for general information:—

Hierby word bekend gemaak dat die President sy goedkeuring gegee het aan die onderstaande Wet wat hierby ter algemene inligting gepubliseer word:—

No. 84 of 1996: South African Schools Act, 1996.

No. 84 van 1996: Suid-Afrikaanse Skolewet, 1996.

(c) provisions of due process safeguarding the interests of the *learner* and any other party involved in disciplinary proceedings.

(4) A *learner* or the *parent* of a *learner* who has been expelled from a *public school* may appeal against the decision of the *Head of Department* to the *Member of the Executive Council*.

(5) If a *learner* who is subject to compulsory attendance in terms of section 3(1) is expelled from a *public school*, the *Head of Department* must make an alternative arrangement for his or her placement at a *public school*.

#### Prohibition of corporal punishment

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 on conviction to a sentence which could be imposed for assault.

#### Representative council of learners

11. (1) A representative council of *learners* at the *school* must be established at every *public school* enrolling *learners* in the eighth grade and higher.

(2) A *Member of the Executive Council* may, by notice in the Provincial Gazette, determine guidelines for the establishment, election and functions of representative councils of *learners*.

(3) The *Member of the Executive Council* may, by notice in the Provincial Gazette exempt a *public school* for *learners* with special education needs from complying with subsection (1) if it is not practically possible for a representative council of *learners* to be established at the *school*.

### CHAPTER 3

#### PUBLIC SCHOOLS

##### Provision of public schools

12. (1) The *Member of the Executive Council* must provide *public schools* for the education of *learners* out of funds appropriated for this purpose by the provincial legislature.

(2) The provision of *public schools* referred to in subsection (1) may include the provision of hostels for the residential accommodation of *learners*.

(3) A *public school* may be an ordinary *public school* or a *public school* for *learners* with special education needs.

(4) The *Member of the Executive Council* must, where reasonably practicable, provide education for *learners* with special education needs at ordinary *public schools* and provide relevant educational support services for such *learners*.

(5) The *Member of the Executive Council* must take all reasonable measures to ensure that the physical facilities at *public schools* are accessible to disabled persons.

(6) Nothing in this Act prohibits the provision of gender-specific *public schools*.

##### Public schools on State property

13. (1) In this section, immovable property owned by the State includes immovable property held in trust on behalf of a tribe by a trust created by statute.

(2) Subject to section 20(1)(k), a *public school* which occupies immovable property owned by the State has the right, for the duration of the *school's* existence, to occupy and use the immovable property for the benefit of the *school* for educational purposes at the in connection with the *school*.

(3) The right referred to in subsection (2) may only be restricted-

(a) by the *Member of the Executive Council*; and

(b) if the immovable property is not utilised by the *school* in the interests of education.

(4) The *Member of the Executive Council* may not act under subsection (3) unless he or she has -

(a) informed the governing body of the *school* of his or her intention so to act and the reasons therefor;

REPUBLIC  
OF  
SOUTH AFRICA



REPUBLIEK  
VAN  
SUID-AFRIKA

# Government Gazette Staatskoerant

Vol. 395

PRETORIA, 15 MAY  
MEI 1998

No. 18900

## GENERAL NOTICE ALGEMENE KENNISGEWING

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
DEPARTEMENT VAN ONDERWYS

NOTICE 776 OF 1998

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS ACT, 1996 (Act No.84 of 1996)

**GUIDELINES FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF GOVERNING BODIES IN  
ADOPTING A CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LEARNERS**

I, Sibusiso Mandlenkosi Emmanuel Bengu, Minister of Education, after consultation with each member of the Council of Education Ministers, hereby give notice in terms of section 8(3) of the South African Schools Act, 1996, of guidelines in the Schedule which governing bodies may consider in adopting a Code of Conduct for Learners.

**S M E BENGU**  
Minister of Education  
April 1998

- 5.7 The Learner Representative Council should represent the interests and views of the learners within the school. They should also promote proper conduct of learners but do not have the authority or right to punish other learners.
- 5.8 A school may establish a liaison mechanism between learners and educators.
6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS WITH RESPECT TO THE CODE OF CONDUCT
- 6.1 The ultimate responsibility for learners' behaviour rests with their parents or guardians. It is expected that parents will
- (a) support the school, and require learners to observe all school rules and regulations and accept responsibility for any misbehaviour on their part; and
  - (b) take an active interest in their children's schoolwork and make it possible for the children to complete assigned homework.
- 6.2 Parents should attend meetings that the governing body convenes for them.
- 6.3 Parents have the right to take legal action against any educator, learner or person who unlawfully violates the constitutional rights of their children by, e.g. corporal punishment, injury to a child, etc.
7. DISCIPLINE
- 7.1 Discipline must be maintained in the school and the classroom to ensure that the education of learners proceeds without disruptive behaviour and offences. Its goal is to teach and lead learners to self discipline.
- 7.2 The disciplinary process must be expeditious, fair, just, corrective, consistent and educative. Where possible the parent should be informed and involved in the correction of the learner's behaviour. Learners should be protected from abuse by adults or other learners.
- 7.3 Restraint is the act of controlling the actions of learners when such actions may inflict harm to others or to the learner, or violate the rights of other learners or educators. Educators may use reasonable measures where necessary to prevent a learner from harming him/herself or others.
- 7.4 The South African Schools Act, 1996, empowers school authorities to discipline learners, but it is beyond the law to delegate this authority to fellow learners. Learners are partners with other members of the school and are not in charge of the school.

- 7.5 Every educator is responsible for discipline at all times at the school and at school related activities. Educators have full authority and responsibility to correct the behaviour of learners whenever such correction is necessary at the school. Serious misconduct must be referred to the principal of the school. However, a mechanism must be created at schools to handle disciplinary problems to reduce the load of the principal.
- 7.6 Any corrective measures or disciplinary action must be commensurate with the offence/infraction. Corrective measures may become more severe with subsequent repeated infractions. Suspension or expulsion may follow. Learners should not think that they cannot be suspended or expelled simply because it is their first offence or infraction of a rule or policy, but such decision should be taken by the right authority.
- 7.7 In cases where a learner cannot adjust to the school and where his/her behaviour is objectionable in that it violates the rights of others, he/she will be referred to the principal. Through consultation with his/her educators, and the site of learning based team in consultation with the parents or guardians every effort should be made to assist him/her to adjust. This will include referral to the education support services for treatment. If all these efforts fail, the principal will refer the matter to the governing body, which may make a decision in the best interest of the learner and the other learners at the school.

E  
G

## 8. PUNISHMENT

- 8.1 Punishment is a corrective measure or a penalty inflicted on an offender who has to suffer the consequences of misconduct in order to maintain the orderly society of the school.
- 8.2 Corporal punishment shall not be administered.

## 9. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Educators as disciplinarians must resolve disciplinary problems which are not serious enough to be referred to the principal. A liaison mechanism, or objective and impartial adjudicator between learners and educators, should be set up to resolve disputes. In cases where learners are involved in gangs, the principal should not confront them but the governing body should set up a negotiation mechanism.

10. PREVENTION, PROACTIVE ADVICE, COUNSELLING, PENALTIES AND CORRECTIVE MEASURES

10.1 In case of minor offences corrective measures may be applied. These measures could include one or more of the following:

- (a) verbal warning or written reprimand by an educator or a principal;
- (b) supervised school work that will contribute to the learner's progress at school, the improvement of the school environment, provided that the parents are timeously informed and the security of the child is assured;
- (c) performing tasks that would assist the offended person;
- (d) agreed affordable compensation;
- (e) replacement of damaged property; and
- (f) suspension from some school activities, e.g. sport, cultural activities.

10.2 Suspension should only be considered after every effort has been made to correct the behaviour of the learner.

11. OFFENCES THAT MAY LEAD TO SUSPENSION

Provincial regulations must be consulted in the compilation of a list of offences which may lead to suspension of a learner. Offences that may lead to such suspension include, but are not limited to the following:

- (a) conduct which endangers the safety and violates the rights of others;
- (b) possession, threat or use of a dangerous weapon;
- (c) possession, use, transmission or visible evidence of narcotic or unauthorised drugs, alcohol or intoxicants of any kind;
- (d) fighting, assault or battery;
- (e) immoral behaviour or profanity;
- (f) falsely identifying oneself;
- (g) harmful graffiti, hate speech, sexism, racism;
- (h) theft or possession of stolen property including test or examination papers prior to the writing of tests or examinations;

- (i) unlawful action, vandalism, or destroying or defacing school property,
- (j) disrespect, objectionable behaviour and verbal abuse directed at educators or other school employees or learners;
- (k) repeated violations of school rules or the Code of Conduct;
- (l) criminal and oppressive behaviour such as rape and gender based harassment;
- (m) victimisation, bullying and intimidation of other learners;
- (n) infringement of examination rules; and
- (o) knowingly and wilfully supplying false information or falsifying documentation to gain an unfair advantage at school.

## 12. SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

- 12.1 A governing body may, after a fair hearing, suspend any learner who has been found guilty of contravening stipulations of the Code of Conduct:
- (a) for a period of one week; or
  - (b) for a reasonable period not exceeding one week, pending a decision by the Head of Department on the recommendation of the governing body as to whether or not the learner is to be expelled from the school.
- 12.2 A learner who has been expelled, or his/her parent, may appeal against the decision of the Head of Department to the Member of the Executive Council, within seven days of the decision so to expel him/her.
- 12.3 In cases of disciplinary transfer, the Head of Department must find a school place for a learner until the learner is beyond compulsory school-going age, as the right of a learner to basic education cannot be violated.
- 12.4 All decisions leading to suspension or expulsion must take cognisance of applicable laws, e.g. a learner whose parent is unable to pay the school fees determined by the governing body may not be suspended from classes or expelled from the school.

### 13. DUE PROCESS

- 13.1 The South African Schools Act makes provision for due process including a fair hearing before a learner may be suspended from the school by the governing body. Due process guarantees a learner a fair hearing before a learner may be suspended for a period of one week or be expelled from the school by the Head of the Department.
- 13.2 Any learner alleged to have violated any rule that may require suspension or expulsion, must be brought to the principal. The principal shall hear the evidence and then decide on the action to be taken. Such action must include that the principal must inform the parents in writing of the proposed action and arrange for a fair hearing by a small disciplinary committee (tribunal) consisting of members designated by the governing body. This tribunal must not be intimidating to the learner. In the case of very young learners special arrangements must be made for the hearing and the parents or guardians could represent the learners.
- 13.3 The disciplinary committee so appointed must conduct the hearing in accordance with the provincial regulations laid down by the Member of the Executive Council.
- 13.4 For the hearing the learner must -
- (a) be informed of and understand the charges of which written notice should be given at least five days before the time also indicating the date, time and place of the hearing;
  - (b) receive such particulars on the charges as he/she may be entitled to according to law, if he/she so requests;
  - (c) get the opportunity to be heard and tell his/her side of the story and to present the relevant facts;
  - (d) not be prohibited from being represented by legal counsel, in which case written explanation of the charges must be given, or, in less serious cases the learner may be represented by a member of the LRC, parent, guardian or educator;
  - (e) be heard by an impartial person(s);
  - (f) be treated with dignity during the process;
  - (g) be informed in writing of the decision of the governing body on whether or not he/she is guilty of misconduct, and the penalty to be imposed in the case of suspension or expulsion; and
  - (h) have the right to appeal to the MEC if he/she is aggrieved by the decision of the governing body.

- 13.5 The governing body must keep a record of the proceedings of the hearing, and
- (a) may inform, in writing, the Head of Department of its decision to suspend a learner; or
  - (b) must inform the Head of Department within twenty-four hours of its recommendation for expulsion of the learner.
- 13.6 Subject to any provincial law a learner may only be expelled by the Head of Department.

14. **SERIOUS MISCONDUCT AND THE LAW**

Serious misconduct which may include offences according to the law, must be investigated by the police and referred to the Court if necessary. Serious misconduct must be handled in terms of the government notice and regulations promulgated by the Member of Executive Council in the Provincial Gazette of the province concerned.

Should a governing body have difficulty to interpret these guidelines they must please contact the Head of Department of the province in which their school is situated.