

Teachers' Perception of the Use of Corporal Punishment in Junior Secondary Schools in Mubi Education Zone, Adamawa State, Nigeria.

Dr. Dorcas Oluremi FAREO¹, Dr. Boludola Gbemisola OWOLABI²

¹*Department of Educational Foundations, Adamawa State University, P. O. Box 411, Mubi, Nigeria*

²*Department of Educational Psychology and Counselling, Adeyemi Federal University of Education, PMB 52, Ondo, Nigeria*

Abstract: The study assessed teachers' perception of the use of corporal punishment in junior secondary schools in Mubi Education Zone, Adamawa State, Nigeria. Three research questions and two research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study; The study employed a survey research design. The sample size consisted of 200 Junior Secondary School teachers selected by stratified sampling technique using gender and years of experience as strata. The questionnaire titled: "Teachers' Perception of the Use of Corporal Punishments in Junior Secondary Schools (TPUCPJSS)" was used to collect data. The face, content and construct validity of the instrument was established by an expert in Guidance and Counselling from Educational Foundations Department, Adamawa State University, Mubi. The test - retest reliability was carried out on 30 teachers from two Junior Secondary Schools within an interval of three weeks; while a reliability coefficient of 0.86 was obtained. Data were analyzed using mean, standard Deviation, ANOVA, Pearson moment correlation and t-test. The study revealed that corporal punishment was still used by teachers as a form of discipline to junior secondary school students in Mubi Educational Zone. The dangers associated with corporal punishment in Junior Secondary Schools in Mubi Educational Zone as perceived by teachers included mental retardation, memory loss, absenteeism in class, emotional trauma such as low self-esteem, depression and suicidal acts, physical scars, maiming and violence. The study concluded that corporal punishment has multidimensional and obnoxious impacts over the academic performance and socio-psychological well-being of the students. It was recommended that in-service training and seminars should be organized by psychologists and guidance counsellors to improve teachers' knowledge and skills about classroom management, effective discipline methods and children's rights.

Keywords: Corporal punishment, indiscipline, teachers' perception, behavior, injury, consequences.

I. INTRODUCTION

The future of any nation depends on the young ones who constitute the potential human resources needed for the continuity of the society. Thus, to achieve sustainable development of a society, the young population must not only be preserved but also disciplined. School indiscipline in Nigeria has been over time an issue of concern for educators, policy makers and public opinion in general, owing to the outbreak of aggressiveness among peers, violence within teacher-student relationship and vandalism as well, leading to perpetual existence of problem of drop out, deviant

behaviours, examination malpractice, lateness and poor academic performance among students (Ali, Dada, Isiaka, & Salmon, 2014).

In order to correct indiscipline cases in schools, teachers have the authority to discipline misbehaving students and hence become loco parentis, that is, on behalf of the parents of those who break school laws. Notwithstanding, teachers have the right to punish students for the breach of school rules. However, in some cases, teachers catch feelings and react quite emotional to misbehaving students to the extent of using punishment irrationally and harm a student (Nakpodia, 2010). Hence, the underscored emphasis is that the administration of punishment needs to be done with caution to the extent that it does not cause injuries to students.

Corporal punishment has been defined differently over time and across countries. According to Ager (2013), corporal punishment incorporates the following activities: blows to any part of a Childs' body, such as beating, kicking, hitting, slapping, lashing, with or without the use of an instrument such as a cane, pinching, pulling ears or hair, shaking, carrying, dragging or throwing a child, verbal abuse, scolding, yelling, swearing, ridiculing or denigrating, forcing a child through the use of power, authority or threats, to perform physically painful or damaging acts, deliberately neglecting a Childs' physical needs where this is intended as punishment, forcing a child to perform hazardous tasks as punishment or for the purpose of discipline, confining a child in a contained or enclosed space, any threat of physical punishment, any other physical act perpetrated on a Childs' body, for the purpose of punishment or discipline, intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light, verbally assaulting, threatening or intimidating a child, making a child look or feel foolish in front of their peers or the public and other acts or words belittling, humiliating, blaming, ignoring or isolating the child. Corporal punishment is defined as actions perpetrated to inflict pain rather than injury to control or correct the misconduct of children (Aras, Ozan, Timbil, Semin, & Kasapci, 2016). These diverse opinions from different authors prompted the researchers to find out the perception of Junior secondary school teachers particularly in Mubi Education Zone of Adamawa state, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:

1. identify the perceptions of teachers towards the administration of corporal punishment on Junior Secondary School Students in Mubi Education Zone.
2. investigate the forms of corporal punishment Students are subjected to in Junior Secondary Schools in Mubi Education Zone.
3. identify the perceived dangers associated with corporal punishment in Junior Secondary School Students in Mubi Education Zone.

Research Questions

The following research questions will be used to guide the study;

1. What are the perceptions of teachers towards the administration of corporal punishment on Junior Secondary School Students in Mubi Education Zone?
2. What forms of corporal punishment are students subjected to in Junior Secondary Schools in Mubi Education Zone?
3. What are the perceived dangers associated with the use of corporal punishment in Junior Secondary School Students in Mubi Education Zone?

Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the perception of male and female teachers toward corporal punishment in Junior Secondary Schools in Mubi Education Zone.

H₀₂: There is no significant influence of teachers' years of experience on their perception towards the use of corporal punishment in Junior Secondary Schools in Mubi Education Zone.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study was 76 teachers in 73 public Junior Secondary Schools in Mubi Education Zone of Adamawa State; which comprised five local government areas: Madagali, Michika, Mubi North, Mubi South and Maiha. The sample size was 200. Twenty Junior Secondary Schools were selected by simple random sampling technique from two local government areas which included Mubi North and Mubi South. From each school, ten teachers were selected by stratified sampling technique using gender and years of experience as strata.

The research instrument titled: "Teachers' Perception of the Use of Corporal Punishments in Junior Secondary Schools" (TPUCPJSS) was adopted from Olakitan (2014). The questionnaire comprised of five sections. Section A consisted of the items on the socio demographic data of the respondents; such as name of school, local government, gender, years of teaching experience. Section B consisted of items on prevalence of the use of corporal punishment among

teachers in schools. Section C consisted of items on forms of corporal punishment administered in schools. Section D consisted of items on perception of teachers towards the administration of corporal punishment; while Section E consisted items on the perceived dangers on the use of corporal punishment by teachers.

The face, content and construct validity of the instrument was carried out by an expert in Guidance and Counselling from Department of Educational Foundations, Adamawa State University, Mubi. Appropriate corrections and suggestions were made to improve the quality of the instrument. To determine the reliability of the instrument, it was pilot tested on 30 teachers in two schools using test retest reliability method. The first test was carried out on 15 teachers from Government Day Junior Secondary School, Shanhui, Hong and 15 teachers from Government Day Junior Secondary School Gombi; while the second test was carried out on the same set of teachers on an interval of three weeks. The reliability coefficient of 0.86 was obtained. Data were administered and collected back from the respondents on the spot by the researcher. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics such as mean, standard deviation and t-test statistical analysis at 0.05 level of significance.

III. RESULTS

Research Question 1: What are the perceptions of teachers towards the administration of corporal punishment on junior secondary school students in Mubi Educational Zone?

Table 1: Perception of teachers towards corporal punishment.

| S/N | Items | N | Mean | STD | Remark |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|------|-------|----------|
| 1 | Hitting student(s) with any objects at hand regardless of the damage it might cause curbs' his/her wildness. | 200 | 1.60 | 1.117 | Rejected |
| 2 | Withdrawal of certain privileges from the student(s) is a good way of reprimanding him/her. | 200 | 2.63 | 1.122 | Accepted |
| 3 | Instructing the student(s) to clean toilets and sweep the classrooms after school hours or during break is one of the many ways of breaking his/her stubbornness | 200 | 3.52 | 1.099 | Accepted |
| 4 | Flogging the student(s) on any part of the body is a method of showing disapproval over a behaviour. | 200 | 1.17 | 1.074 | Rejected |
| 5 | Subjecting the student(s) to take up a painful body posture for a period of time is the best way of instilling discipline. | 200 | 1.52 | 1.099 | Rejected |
| 6 | Corporal punishment is the best way of correcting the indiscipline/ wayward acts of student(s). | 200 | 1.47 | 1.128 | Rejected |

| | | | | | |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|------|-------|----------|
| 7 | Student(s) tends to obey and respect their elders more when corporal punishment is being administered to them if they go against the rules. | 200 | 2.85 | 1.154 | Accepted |
| 8 | Any act that inflicts pains on student(s) will make him learn his lesson and behave more wisely in future. | 200 | 2.40 | 1.110 | Rejected |
| 9 | Without the act of corporal punishment, student(s) tend to be more wayward and uncontrollable, and disrespectful. | 200 | 1.53 | 1.087 | Rejected |
| 10 | Embarrassing a student in front of his peers will make him think twice before doing that same act again. | 200 | 2.67 | 1.015 | Accepted |
| | Grand Mean | | 2.10 | | |

Acceptance (\bar{x} is 2.5 and above); Rejection (\bar{x} is less than 2.5)

Table 3 showed that majority of the teachers were of the opinion that withdrawal of certain privileges from the student(s) is a good way of reprimanding him/her ($\bar{x} = 2.63$), as well as instructing the student(s) to clean toilets and sweep the classrooms after school hours or during break to break his/her stubbornness ($\bar{x} = 3.52$). It was further noted that teachers believed that student(s) tend to obey and respect their elders more when corporal punishment is being administered to them if they go against the rules ($\bar{x} = 2.85$) and they were of the opinion that embarrassing a student in front of his peers will make him think twice before doing that same act again ($\bar{x} = 2.67$). Assertions that hitting student(s) with any objects at hand regardless of the damage it might cause curbs his/her wildness ($\bar{x} = 1.60$), flogging the student(s) on any part of the body to show disapproval over a behaviour ($\bar{x} = 1.17$), subjecting the student(s) to take up a painful body posture for a period of time is the best way of instilling discipline ($\bar{x} = 1.52$), corporal punishment is the best way of correcting the indiscipline/wayward acts of student(s), any act that inflicts pains on student(s) will make him learn his lesson and behave more wisely in future and the assertion that without the act of corporal punishment, student(s) tend to be more wayward and uncontrollable and disrespectful were rejected by teachers in junior secondary schools.

Research Question 2: What forms of corporal punishment are students subjected to in Junior Secondary Schools in Mubi Education Zone?

Table 2: Forms of Corporal Punishment Administered in Schools

| S/N | Items | N | Mean | STD | Remark |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------------|-----|------|-------|----------|
| 1 | Beating is used to enforce discipline in School | 200 | 2.67 | 1.097 | Accepted |
| 2 | Hitting the student(s) with any objects can inflict injury | 200 | 1.61 | 1.141 | Rejected |

| | | | | | |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------|-----|------|-------|----------|
| 3 | Kicking student(s) can inflict pain | 200 | 1.82 | 1.156 | Rejected |
| 4 | Burning the student(s) can inflict injury on the student | 200 | 1.26 | 1.136 | Rejected |
| 5 | Shaking the student(s) violently | 200 | 1.55 | 1.107 | Rejected |
| 6 | Forcing students to stay in an uncomfortable position | 200 | 2.67 | 1.108 | Accepted |
| 7 | Slapping student(s) can affect them psychologically | 200 | 2.82 | 1.126 | Accepted |
| 8 | Throwing objects on the students can inflict injury | 200 | 1.25 | 1.125 | Rejected |
| 9 | Punching students can cause injury | 200 | 1.52 | 1.141 | Rejected |
| 10 | Starving students can lead to aggressiveness | 200 | 0.74 | 1.148 | Rejected |
| | Grand Mean | | 1.79 | | |

Acceptance (\bar{x} is 2.5 and above); Rejection (\bar{x} is less than 2.5)

In assessing the forms of corporal punishment administered in Junior Secondary Schools in Mubi Education Zone, it was noted from the teachers' responses that beating was used in most schools to enforce discipline ($\bar{x} = 2.67$). Forcing students to stay in an uncomfortable position ($\bar{x} = 2.67$) and slapping students ($\bar{x} = 2.82$) were some of the corporal punishments administered to students in junior secondary schools in Mubi Education Zone. The results however showed that Hitting student(s) with any objects ($\bar{x} = 1.61$), kicking student(s) ($\bar{x} = 1.82$), burning the student(s) ($\bar{x} = 1.26$), shaking the student(s) violently ($\bar{x} = 1.55$), throwing objects at the students ($\bar{x} = 1.25$), punching students ($\bar{x} = 1.52$) and starving students ($\bar{x} = 0.74$) were rejected as among the corporal punishments administered to students in junior secondary schools in Mubi Education Zone.

Research Question 3: What are the perceived dangers associated with corporal punishment in Junior Secondary School Students in Mubi Educational Zone?

Table 3: Perceived Dangers Associated with Corporal Punishment.

| S/N | Items | N | Mean | STD | Remark |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|------|-------|----------|
| 1 | Corporal punishment leads to mental retardation which includes, memory loss, absenteeism in class | 200 | 2.67 | 1.097 | Accepted |
| 2 | Corporal punishment causes emotional trauma which includes, low self-esteem, depression, suicidal acts | 200 | 2.61 | 1.141 | Accepted |
| 3 | Corporal punishment causes physical scars as a result of broken or swollen skin where the pain was inflicted | 200 | 2.82 | 1.156 | Accepted |
| 4 | Corporal punishment causes maiming or disability of the student as a result of the infliction of corporal punishment. | 200 | 2.62 | 1.136 | Accepted |
| 5 | Corporal punishment causes psychological trauma in which the students see violence as a normal way of life | 200 | 2.55 | 1.107 | Accepted |
| | Grand Mean | | 2.65 | | |

Acceptance (\bar{x} is 2.5 and above); Rejection (\bar{x} is less than 2.5)

The dangers associated with corporal punishment in Junior Secondary Schools in Mubi Educational Zone as perceived by teachers include that corporal punishment leads to mental retardation which includes, memory loss, absenteeism in class ($\bar{x} = 2.67$), it can also cause emotional trauma which includes low self-esteem, depression and suicidal acts ($\bar{x} = 2.61$). The result further shows that corporal punishment causes physical scars as a result of broken or swollen skin where the pain was inflicted ($\bar{x} = 2.82$) and that corporal punishment causes maiming or disability of the student as a result of infliction of corporal punishment ($\bar{x} = 2.62$). Finally, it was noted that from the teachers' perceptions that corporal punishment causes psychological trauma in which students see violence as a normal way of life ($\bar{x} = 2.55$)

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference between the perception of male and female teachers towards corporal punishment in Junior Secondary Schools in Mubi Education Zone.

Table 4: T-test analysis of difference between the perception of male and female teachers towards corporal punishment in Junior Secondary Schools in Mubi Education Zone.

| | N | \bar{x} | SD | t | Df | Sig. |
|--------|-----|-----------|-----------|------|-----|------|
| Male | 100 | 2.9 8 | 1.7 74 | .192 | 198 | .624 |
| Female | 100 | 2.7 2 | 1.9 66 | | | |

$P > 0.05$

Table 4 above indicates there is no significant difference in the opinions of male teachers ($\bar{x} = 2.98$, $SD = 1.774$) and female teachers ($\bar{x} = 2.72$, $SD = 1.966$) on corporal punishment in Junior Secondary Schools in Mubi Education Zone by $t(198) = 0.192$, $P > 0.05$, i.e. $P = .624$ is greater than 0.05. it is imperative therefore to state here that the null hypothesis which states that There is no significant difference between the perception of male and female teachers towards corporal punishment in Junior Secondary Schools in Mubi Education Zone is accepted, and the alternate is thus rejected.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant influence of teachers' years of experience on their perception towards the use of corporal punishment in Junior Secondary Schools in Mubi Education Zone.

Table 5: ANOVA analysis of difference in the influence of teachers' years of experience on their perception towards the use of corporal punishment in Junior Secondary Schools in Mubi Education Zone.

| Sources of Variance | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Squares | F | P-value |
|---------------------|----------------|-----|--------------|--------|---------|
| Between Groups | 14.13 2 | 2 | 7.066 | 13.279 | .000 |
| Within Groups | 237.8 68 | 447 | .532 | | |
| Total | 252.0 00 | 449 | | | |

$P < 0.05$ (Significant)

Table 5 shows the data on the Analysis of Variance result showing the difference in response of respondents towards the influence of teachers' years of experience on their perception towards the use of corporal punishment in Junior Secondary Schools in Mubi Education Zone. There is a statistically significant difference between groups as determined by one-way ANOVA ($F(2,447) = 13.279$, $p = .000$). Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant influence of teachers' years of experience on their perception towards the use of corporal punishment in Junior Secondary Schools in Mubi Education Zone was rejected. This means that the alternate hypothesis which states that there is a significant influence of teachers' years of experience on their perception towards the use of corporal punishment in Junior Secondary Schools in Mubi Education Zone is upheld.

III. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of the study revealed that most teachers were of the opinion that corporal punishment was used to enforce discipline in the schools and also corporal punishment was being used for effective class control. This finding is in line with the findings obtained from a study conducted by Olakitan (2014) among teachers who agreed that corporal punishment is needed to maintain discipline in schools.

The findings of the study showed forms of corporal punishment include beating which was used in most schools to enforce discipline. Forcing students to stay in an uncomfortable position and slapping students were also some of the corporal punishments administered to students in junior secondary schools in Mubi Education Zone. In a similar study by Kimani, Kara and Ogetange (2012) also identified canning, slapping, kneeling down, pinching, pulling of ears/hairs, forced manual labour, standing in the sun and kicking as forms of corporal punishment. However, in a similar study it was found out that the most common form of punishment administered in schools was flogging (Egwunyenga, 2009).

The findings of the study showed that corporal punishment leads to mental retardation, emotional trauma, physical scars, maiming or disability and psychological trauma in which students see violence as a normal way of life. The findings of the study are in line with Nevine (2011) who claimed that corporal punishment is associated with severe possible damages resulting from corporal punishment such as death, serious injuries, besides social and psychological problems as well as study conducted by Kopansky (2012) showed that physical punishment often elicit a host of unwanted negative consequences while missing opportunities to promote students discipline through non-violent methods. He also found out that punishment produces emotionality, anxiety and fear in the child being punished, none of which is conducive to good learning.

The test of hypotheses showed that there is no significant difference between the perception of male and female teachers towards corporal punishment in Junior

Secondary Schools in Mubi Education Zone. Also, it was found that there is a significant influence of teachers' years of experience on their perception towards the use of corporal punishment in Junior Secondary Schools in Mubi Education Zone.

IV. CONCLUSION

Corporal punishment encompasses numerous impacts prominently including distortion of academic performance/career; brings havoc to psychology of the students and almost devastates the process of personality development. It was also noted that some teachers see corporal punishment as an important instrument in child upbringing and should necessarily be used. Some teachers strongly believe that "Spare and spoil the child" is not only biblical but real. Teachers hold culturally held myths about corporal punishment and its power, they are also aware of the various negative consequences of corporal punishment on children. When years of experience increases, teachers' attitude towards corporal punishment use becomes more negative as teachers who are perceived as having rich knowledge in problem behaviour and its school-based management hold less positive attitude towards corporal punishment than teachers reported as having essential and inadequate knowledge.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- i. In-service training seminars should be organized to improve teachers' knowledge and skills about classroom management, effective discipline methods and children's rights.
- ii. Guidance counsellors in schools should be given the task on giving seminars and conferences about corporal punishment and the destruction caused by it.
- iii. Legal regulations and implementations should be allowed for getting rid of any kind of physical punishment.

- iv. Parents and teachers should be trained on anger management especially when dealing with their children or students.
- v. Encourage and praise children. A nonverbal response such as a smile or a nod, or a verbal response such as "good" or "right", not only provides incentives for accomplishment, but also builds students' confidence.

REFERENCES

- [1] Ager, M. (2013). Bill seeks to ban corporal punishment to discipline children. *Inquirer.net*.
- [2] Ali, A. A., Dada, I. T., Isiaka, G. A., & Salmon, S. A. (2014). Types, Causes and Management of Indiscipline Acts among Secondary School Students in Shomolu Local Government Area of Lagos State. *Journal of Studies in Social Sciences* 8 (2), 254-287.
- [3] Aras, S., Ozan, S., Timbil, S., Semin, S., & Kasapci, O. (2016). Exposure of students to emotional and physical violence in the school environment. *Noro Psikiyatri Arsivi*, 53(4), 303-310. doi:10.5152/npa.2016.1132
- [4] Egwunyenga, E. J. (2009). Corporal punishment and disciplinary control of secondary school students in Delta State. *Journal of Educational Research and Development*, 7(2), 109-113.
- [5] Kopansky, T. M. (2012). Corporal punishment in schools.: A hit or miss proposition. *Tennessee School Journal*, USA
- [6] Kimani, G. N., Kara, A. M., & Ogetange, T. B. (2012). Teachers and pupils' views on persistent use of corporal punishment in managing discipline in primary schools in Starehe Division, Kenya. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 2 (19), 268- 274. Retrieved from <http://www.ijhssnet.com>
- [7] Nakpodia, E. D. (2010). Principals' Attitude Towards Corporal Punishment in Nigeria Secondary Schools. *Global Journal of Human Social Science Linguistics & Education*, 12 (11). 30-33.
- [8] Nevine, H.W. 2011. Corporal punishment in schools. School of Global Affairs and Public Policy. A thesis submitted to the Public Policy and Administration Department in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Policy and Administration. The American University in Cairo. ,
- [9] Olakitan, T. S. (2014). Perception and attitude of parents, teachers and students concerning corporal punishment in secondary schools in Ibadan North East Local Government Area, Nigeria. Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria