

**TO PUNISH OR DISCIPLINE? TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE
ABOLITION OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

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ABSTRACT

In the last decade, corporal punishment in South African schools was banned. This is in keeping with international trends of recognising of the rights of the child and the South African Constitution. Despite the legal ban, newspapers and limited research reveal that corporal punishment practices are still occurring in schools. Government has made efforts to curb the continuing use of corporal punishment. This research explores teachers' attitudes towards the ban of corporal punishment as well as the alternate discipline strategies teachers are using to discipline their learners. The research methods adopted were quantitative questionnaires and qualitative written responses. Results of this study suggest that teachers still view corporal punishment as having a place in education. Teachers are concerned amongst others about their personal safety and feel the administering of corporal punishment will ensure their safety. Teachers' do report that they have found alternatives that do work, however, they still feel that the training that is provided is not able to meet their needs in the classroom situation.

KEY WORDS

Corporal punishment; children, teachers; attitudes; alternatives; South Africa; Social Learning theory; learners; effects

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Education (Educational Psychology) at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.

Loretta Cicognani

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INTRODUCTION

As recently as 4th June 2004, an article in *This Day* reported that a child had tragically died as a consequence of the physical complications resulting from the administration of corporal punishment. The article stated that it was common knowledge that the principal of the school administered lashes and that this was done with parental approval and the endorsement of the school governing body who felt that corporal punishment was the only way to “curb growing lawlessness among pupils”. This practice, the article continued, was rife in both urban and rural schools in KwaZulu Natal.

Ten years ago the foregoing article would not have raised a murmur, because the use of corporal punishment in South African schools was the generally accepted norm. However, in view of the Constitutional Court judgement of June 1995 which abolished corporal punishment in schools, the continuing use of such punishment in schools is extremely worrying, given that the Court, in the words of Justice Langa, felt that

It is a practice which debases everyone involved in it..., juvenile whipping is cruel, it is inhuman and it is degrading. No compelling interest has been proved which can justify the practice. Nor has it been shown to be a significantly effective deterrent... its effect is likely to be coarsening and degrading rather than rehabilitative (Vally, 1996:45)

This judgement was based on the provision in the South African constitution which states that “everyone has the right not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading way” (Section 12) and was bolstered further by the United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of the Child to which South Africa is a signatory. Under the convention South Africa agreed that “school discipline [should be] administered in a manner consistent with the child’s human dignity and in conformity with the spirit of the Convention...” (Article 28, Section 7). Following the Constitutional Court judgement the South African Schools Act was promulgated in 1996 which stated, amongst others, that “no person shall administer corporal punishment, or subject a student to psychological or physical abuse at any educational institution” (Section 3(4)(g) and (h)).

In view of the recognition of the rights of the child and the outlawing of corporal punishment described above, teachers in South African schools have been obliged to find alternative methods to enforce discipline in the classroom. It is the contention of this research report that

most teachers have found this a rather daunting and even a dis-empowering experience. To establish the accuracy of this contention this research report attempts to establish (a) teachers' perceptions of the abolition of corporal punishment; (b) the alternative methods they have developed to maintain discipline in the classroom; and (c) their perceptions of the efficacy of these alternatives to corporal punishment.

In the first chapter I review the literature on corporal punishment looking at the definitions that have developed as well as research on the effects of the use of corporal punishment, in order to provide a context for my research. Furthermore, the limited research on teachers' attitudes on corporal punishment is reviewed. Social Learning theory is used to provide a methodological perspective of how corporal punishment could have influence over the child. In the first chapter the international movement to ban corporal punishment is reviewed but more specific attention is paid to the move in South Africa towards the banning of corporal punishment.

This is followed, in the second chapter, by an exposition of the research methods I adopted to gather teachers' perceptions of the abolition of corporal punishment and the alternate discipline methods they have adopted. The research methods that were used were quantitative questionnaires and qualitative written responses. In the second part of this chapter I present the findings of the research and in the third chapter I discuss these findings in depth. In the conclusion I discuss teachers' perceptions about the continued use of corporal punishment as a valid means of classroom management; the adequacy of the training they receive at college or university to prepare them for the reality of the classroom environment; and the alternatives to corporal punishment they view as useful.

CHAPTER ONE

Literature Review

1. Corporal Punishment and its Effects

(a) Defining corporal punishment

Straus (1994), Hyman (1990) and Cohen (1984) provide several definitions of “corporal punishment”. In general, these definitions seek to point out that corporal punishment is the use of physical force against an individual. According to Straus (1994:4) corporal punishment against a child “is the use of physical force with the intention of causing a child to experience pain but not injury for the purposes of correction or control of the child’s behaviour”. Straus (1994:5) further states that “[t]he most frequent forms of corporal punishment are spanking, slapping, grabbing or shoving a child roughly (with more force than is needed to move the child), and hitting with certain objects such as a hair brush, belt, or paddle”. Cohen (1984) endorses this definition by identifying specific forms of corporal punishment such as paddling, floggings and beatings. Hyman (1990) provides a definition that reflects practices in school situations. He states that “[c]orporal punishment in the schools is the infliction of pain or confinement as a penalty for an offense committed by a student” (Hyman, 1990:10).

There is ambivalence in the research on corporal punishment. Not all researchers are of the opinion that corporal punishment is a harmful and destructive act that causes emotional, physical and psychological damage to a child. Researchers such as Straus (1994, 1996, 2003), Hyman (1990) and Gershoff (2002) explore the harmful and less desirable effects of corporal punishment such as somatic complaints, increased anxiety, changes in personality and depression. They view corporal punishment as the maltreatment and psychological abuse of the child. However, researchers such as Baumrind (1996) view the use of corporal punishment as a valid means of discipline. Baumrind (1996) claims that current research methods are not able to determine accurately the negative effects of corporal punishment. Furthermore, Baumrind (1996) states that although there is a strong correlation between corporal punishment and psychological consequences, it is difficult to determine the exact causal relationship and the effects that may result. The research done by researchers such as Straus (1994) and Hyman (1990) remains primarily correlational and as a result the effects of corporal punishment are viewed on a continuum ranging from “not harmful” to “abusive”.

There is a belief among some researchers, that acts of corporal punishment are not intended to cause harm and should therefore not be classified as abuse. Straus and Yodanis (1996) see spanking as part of a continuum leading to abuse. Hyman (1990) who views the use of corporal punishment as psychological maltreatment also supports this view. He further argues that “the symptoms of psychological maltreatment are identical to those that occur from physical abuse” (Hyman, 1990:19).

From the foregoing it will be clear that there is disagreement about the harmful effects of corporal punishment. Acts of corporal punishment are viewed on a continuum ranging from mild to severe. For purposes of this research all acts of corporal punishment are viewed as harmful and as having negative effects on children.

(b) The effects of corporal punishment

Corporal punishment and its effects are of particular relevance to childcare professionals such as teachers, psychologist, social workers and doctors. The effects that result from the use of corporal punishment are harmful to children and can be lasting and damaging reaching well into adulthood (Bitensky, 1998). In this section the emotional, social and behavioural consequences of the use of corporal punishment will be reviewed.

Children on whom corporal punishment is administered are often left with physical evidence of the abuse. According to Unicef ‘s Asian Report, 2001 children’s eardrums have burst as a result of being boxed. Minor injuries such as bruising and swelling are common; more severe injuries such as “large cuts, sprains, broken fingers” as well as teeth being knocked out, broken wrists and collar bones and internal injuries requiring surgery do occur (Human Rights Watch Kenya, 1999). Even the deaths of children as a consequence of corporal punishment have been reported in countries such as Kenya (Human Rights Watch, 1999).

Those who endorse corporal punishment hold the view that the aim of corporal punishment is to elicit compliance from a child. The aim of compliance is in fact often reached but the ability of the child to understand the incorrectness of their behaviour is often not learnt. This means that the child has learnt to stop the behaviour but not the reason why the behaviour should be stopped. They are unable to make the link between their behaviour and the punishment.

As such, corporal punishment does not promote lessons about right and wrong but rather emphasises fear and violence (Tharps, 2003). According to the Harvard Mental Health Letter (2002:1):

children whose parents hit them feel pain, anger, and fear that lead them to ignore the disciplinary message and to resent the parent instead. Some lose their incentive to internalize social values and develop self-control. They concentrate on their own grievance instead of thinking about the act for which they were punished and the harm it caused or might have caused.

Although compliance is often obtained, the effect of the punishment leaves children feeling more resentful as opposed to having learnt correct behaviours. They are left focusing on the hurt they feel and not the lesson they could learn.

The Harvard Mental Health Letter (2002:1) further states, “[s]tudies show that children who are spanked have a less trusting and affectionate relationship with their parents and feel less remorse about misbehaviour, as opposed to being caught”. Similarly, research by Straus (1994) indicates that parents who use corporal punishment as a form of discipline have a greater probability of their child developing delinquent tendencies.

Further studies indicate (Straus and Yodanis, 1996) that adolescents who experience frequent corporal punishment are at a greater risk of assaulting spouses later in life. According to Greydanus, *et al*, (2003) children who have been subjected to violence are more likely to use violence in their own families later in life. Experiencing corporal punishment as an adolescent, increases the risk that later acts by the recipient of the corporal punishment could escalate to the point that it could be classified as physical abuse (Straus, Kantor and Kaufman, 1994). Straus (2001:53) further explains that “...the psychologically harmful effects of corporal punishment are parallel to the harmful effects of physical abuse, except that the magnitude of the effect is less”.

According to Unicef’s Asian Report (2001:6) on corporal punishment, “punishment reinforces uncertainty and an identity of failure. It reinforces rebellion, resistance, revenge and resentment”. As a result children interpret people’s actions as hostile and they learn that similar situations require hostile responses (Harvard Mental Health Letter, 2002). According

to Tharps (2003) the use of violence as a disciplinary measure does not set the appropriate example, because children learn that acts of aggression are a means of solving problems.

According to research by Hyman (1990), learners who are physically punished are more likely to bully their peers and can develop into adults who display little or no empathy, and will hurt without conviction (Bitensky in Human Rights Watch: Kenya, 1999). Brezina (1999) discovered that children learn aggression as an effective means of problem solving, as corporal punishment intimidates other children. This display of aggression has wider implications because, as Brezina (1999:418) suggests, "...such behaviour is likely to possess self-reinforcing properties" and has "implications for the control of teenage violence".

The use of corporal punishment also reinforces the message that force can be used to control those weaker than oneself. This promotes the message that violence in society is acceptable. Straus (1996:838) states that "...cross-cultural evidence suggests [...] that corporal punishment is associated with an increased probability of societal violence".

Corporal punishment results not only in the child exhibiting "externalising behaviours" such as hitting others but can also lead to the child internalising his/her feelings about being physically punished. Such internalising often results in depression. Research has shown that a correlation does exist between corporal punishment and depressive symptoms (Straus, 1994). Adolescents who were subjected to corporal punishment displayed an increased risk of developing depressive symptoms as adults (Straus, Kantor and Kaufman, 1994). Furthermore, the frequency of suicidal ideation (thoughts and plans about suicide) also increases with the frequency of corporal punishment experienced as an adolescent (Straus, Kantor and Kaufman, 1994). This is further associated with a high frequency of suicidal thoughts as an adult (Straus, Kantor and Kaufman, 1994). There have been reported cases of children committing suicide as a result of the humiliation and shame they feel due to physical and mental punishment (Unicef Asian Report, 2001). According to Greven (in Straus, 1994) experiencing corporal punishment as a child can lead to depression and suicidal thoughts later in adult life supporting this contention. Holden (in Straus, 1994) argues that repeated corporal punishment leads to chemical and structural changes in the brain which result in depression.

Other psychiatric disorders have also been found to correlate with corporal punishment. MacMillan, *et al*, (1999) studied the effects of slapping and spanking during childhood.

According to MacMillan, *et al*, (1999) there is a linear relationship between the frequency of slapping and spanking and the lifetime prevalence of other psychiatric disorders. In particular “the association is weak for major depression and anxiety, and stronger for alcohol abuse or dependence and externalising problems” (MacMillan, *et al*, 1999:808).

Children who experience psychological abuse because of corporal punishment or other forms of abuse may suffer from sleep disturbances, including the reappearance of bedwetting, nightmares, sleepwalking, and fear of falling asleep in a darkened room. Furthermore, somatic symptoms such as stomach-aches, headaches, fatigue, and bowel disturbances, accompanied by a refusal to go to school, can also occur (Hyman, 1990:19).

According to Hyman (1990) the experience of corporal punishment in schools is a significant traumatic experience for children and the symptoms experienced as a result are comparable to symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Research confirms these findings. This area of posttraumatic stress has been termed Educator-Induced Posttraumatic Stress Disorder¹, and it explores a child’s reaction to traumatic stresses in the learning environment. According to Hyman (1990) limited studies have indicated that symptoms learners experience as a result of trauma in the classroom include the following: “Problems in school ... aggressive behaviour ... avoidance behaviors ... changes in personality ... re-experiencing the trauma ... fearful reactions ... somatic complaints ... withdrawal ... memory and concentration problems ... dependency and regression ... habit disorders and sleep disturbances” (Hyman, 1990:100-101).

According to Straus (2003), the relationship between academic achievement and success later in adult life indicates that corporal punishment early in life affects cognitive development. Corporal punishment experienced during adolescence is inversely related to graduation from college and is associated with lower economic and occupational achievement in adulthood (Straus, 2003). Corporal punishment decreases a child’s motivation and increases his/her anxiety. As a consequence the ability to concentrate is inhibited and learning is poor (Unicef Asian Report, 2001).

¹ While this idea might capture traumatic experiences in the education context caution should be practiced in modifying PTSD for every possible circumstance. One needs to be careful in not generating other similar practices such as peer induced and parent induced post traumatic stress disorder as this could lead to PTSD as represented in the DSM-IV-TR losing its meaning.

The use of corporal punishment also influences children's school attendance, in that the learning environment is not perceived as safe and school is avoided. Furthermore, the effects can reach beyond school going years and well into adulthood with more severe psychiatric conditions resulting from harsh corporal punishment practices.

Despite researchers such as Baumrind (1996) questioning the research methods adopted by researchers such as Straus (1994) and Hyman (1990). The studies that have been conducted by researchers such as Straus (1994) and Hyman (1990) do reflect the profound effects the use of corporal punishment can have both in raising children and within the school environment. Although this present researcher adopts the perspective of all corporal punishment as harmful questions around the severity of the corporal punishment administered and the severity or not of the effects that may result would need further research. Furthermore, studies should be looked at where successful discipline has been adopted without the use of corporal punishment.

2. The movement to ban corporal Punishment

(a) The international movement to ban corporal punishment

In recent years, there has been an international movement towards recognising the rights of the child and banning corporal punishment in all countries. Sweden was the first country to pass the "first explicit ban on corporal punishment" (Durrant, 1996). By 1966, corporal punishment was outlawed in Sweden. Parents can no longer use corporal punishment and the abolition is also applicable in childcare settings. Sweden's reasons for the elimination of corporal punishment is to ensure that children are provided with the same protection as adults in cases of assault (Durrant, 1996).

Countries such as the United States of America are making strides in doing away with corporal punishment practices in the classroom. Many Asian countries such as Bangladesh and India have made no legal provision to outlaw corporal punishment (Unicef Asian Report, 2001). In African countries such as Kenya and Botswana, corporal punishment is still practised.

The United States of America developed the organization named the "National Coalition to Abolish Corporal Punishment in Schools" in 1987 (Greydanus, *et al*, 2003:385). At present,

there are still 23 states, which make use of the practice of corporal punishment (Greydanus, *et al*, 2003). Approximately 2 to 3 million cases of physical punishment are reported each year with 10000 to 20000 students requiring subsequent medical treatment as a result of the punishment (Greydanus, *et al*, 2003)

In South Asia corporal punishment is “often considered necessary to children’s upbringing, to facilitate learning and to instill discipline” (Unicef Asian Report, 2001). As in many countries, corporal punishment practices in South Asia reflect hierarchical and unequal power relations, which emphasize children’s lack of power and low socio- economic status. It is believed that if children are not punished they will develop into unruly and uncontrollable citizens. Although some governments have made provisions concerning corporal punishment, the laws are viewed by teachers, parents and professionals as being too broad and therefore open to a variety of interpretations (Unicef Asian Report, 2001).

On the African continent the use of corporal punishment is still practised in countries such as Kenya and Botswana. Physical harm as a result of corporal punishment in both countries is also common where bruising, swelling, cuts and occasional death as a result are the norm. Even though there are laws restricting the use of corporal punishment in Kenya severe injuries are reported. The guidelines for administering corporal punishment in Kenya are as follows:

Only the headteacher is permitted to administer corporal punishment, and he or she must use a cane or strap of regulation size, hitting boys on the buttocks and girls on the palm of the hand. The head teacher may give no more than six strokes as punishment, and must keep a written record of all the proceedings (Human Rights Watch, 1999:3).

These guidelines, however, are not always adhered to and teachers rather than headmasters administer the punishment, often hitting children on other parts of the body in front of their classmates (Human Rights Watch, 1999:3).

Botswana’s corporal punishment regulations are quite similar to those of Kenya, where only the principal may administer the punishment on the hand or buttocks with a regulation size cane. As in Kenya, however, caning in Botswana is “administered by all and sundry in the school- students, untrained teachers, student teachers and porters” (Tafa, 2002). According to Tafa (2002: 170) parents and teachers have been socialised into accepting caning as a form of

punishment which "...has its origins in the country's colonically imposed authoritarian systems of schooling". The same origins of corporal punishment seem to be true for other Africa countries.

South Africa like Austria, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Israel, Latvia and Norway (Bitensky, 1998) have followed Sweden's path in the outlawing of corporal punishment. In the following section I will examine specifically South Africa's abolition of corporal punishment.

(b) The ban on corporal punishment in South African schools

As a British colony, South Africa adopted colonial educational practices including corporal punishment. This was further perpetuated by the introduction of the Apartheid system of government and the adoption of Christian National Education. In this context children were seen as passive citizens who would not question authority at home or in the school setting. Although corporal punishment was legal throughout South Africa, its administration was separated along racial lines. Corporal punishment of black males and females was permitted, as well as white males, but not white females (Morrel, 2000). Corporal punishment was seen, as a means of ensuring the control of children and this was a mirror of how government was able to control social, economic and political conditions through acts of violence (Vally, 1998).

In South Africa in the 1970's, student's organisations began to demand the end of corporal punishment (Department of Education, 2000). Corporal punishment was viewed as abuse in the classroom and by the 1980's "Education Without Fear" was a slogan developed by learners, educators and parents to campaign against the hitting of children (Department of Education, 2002 and Morrel, 2000). The use of corporal punishment persisted until the change of government in 1994.

By 1996 corporal punishment was outlawed in South Africa and the reasons for doing so as described by the Department of Education (2002:5) are provided verbatim below:

- South Africa is a signatory to the Convention on the rights of the Child, which compels it to pass laws and take social, educational and

administrative measures to “protect the child from all forms of physical and mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse”.

- The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child commits its member countries to the same measures and adds that they must take steps to ensure that a child “who is subjected to school or parental discipline shall be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the child”
- Section 12 of the South African Constitution states that: “Everyone has the right not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading way.”
- The National Education Policy Act (1996) says, “No person shall administer corporal punishment or subject a student to psychological or physical abuse at any educational institution.”
- The South African Schools Act (1996) says: “(1) No person shall administer corporal punishment at a school to a learner; (2) Any person who contravenes subsection 1 is guilty of an offense, and liable on conviction to a sentence which could be imposed for assault”.

The banning of corporal punishment was however a difficult policy change for some teachers to accept. At present, there are still reported cases of corporal punishment being used in classrooms often resulting in serious injury. According to Morrel (2000) there are a variety of reasons why corporal punishment is still being practised in the South African classroom. The explanations provided by Morrel (2000) are summarised as follows:

- a) the department of education does not do enough to enforce the prohibition of corporal punishment and a minister of KwaZulu Natal has even suggested its return;
- b) broader social factors due to the end of Apartheid, which were accompanied by violence that placed less emphasis on family life and produced community instability;
- c) the authoritarian nature of South African schools which were traditionally headed by authoritarian figures where students were expected to be respectful; and
- d) corporal punishment is still widely used in South African homes.

In South African homes, corporal punishment is prevalent and this practice is then extended to the school context (Morrel, 2001). According to Morrel (2001:297), “48% of African learners indicated that it was the most common method of discipline at home compared to 16.7%, 16.5% and 9.0% for Coloured, White and Indian learners, respectively”. Furthermore “38% of boys and 29% of girls reported that it was the most common discipline used at home” (Morrel, 2001:297).

In South African schools, some changes have occurred. In 1998, Morrel (2001) conducted research in Durban schools to establish the prevalence of corporal punishment. His findings showed that corporal punishment is still widely used in township schools and is experienced more frequently by African males. However, changes that were noted are that “it is now used less frequently, with greater restraint and via more consultative processes” (Morrel, 2001:296).

Roos (2003), Morrel (2000) and Vally (1998) explore the reasons why it has been difficult for some teachers to make the shift to alternate discipline methods and to discontinue the use of corporal punishment. According to Roos (2003: 482) “ [e]ducators, parents and learners seem to be uncertain exactly what is permitted or prohibited by the new laws”. Morrel (2000) believes that schools should not be solely responsible for discipline because home discipline also plays a role. Furthermore, certain parents feel that they themselves received corporal punishment and therefore schools should continue with this style of discipline (Morrel, 2001).

Teacher training for many years sanctioned the use of corporal punishment and therefore parents, teachers, and principals believe in it as an effective discipline tool (Vally, 1998). In schools teachers are concerned about violence both in and out of the classroom and feel that corporal punishment is able to address this issue (Morrel, 2001). Reddy (in Roussow, 2003) sees the problem as exacerbated by an over-emphasis on learner rights as well as negative learner attitudes. Furthermore, a culture of learning in schools is absent as well as a lack of qualified and competent teachers (Reddy in Roussow, 2003).

To help classroom teachers, the government suggested two methods to replace corporal punishment. It introduced codes of conduct to be implemented at schools, and also afforded parents the opportunity to be involved in school affairs. This new approach to discipline stressed “consensus, non-violence, negotiation and the development of school communities” (Morrel, 2001:292). Nevertheless, difficulties still exist, and many parents themselves sanction the use of corporal punishment. More effort needs to be made to educate parents on the implications of corporal punishment as well as the alternatives that are available to them.

(c) Teachers attitudes towards the ban of corporal punishment

Despite the ban on corporal punishment in most countries, there are still reported acts of corporal punishment being used by teachers. Although, corporal punishment is banned by law, the practical banning of corporal punishment in classrooms, with the introduction of alternatives, has not been easy for some teachers. There is limited research as to what teacher's attitudes are towards the banning of corporal punishment. This section attempts to explore the limited research on teacher's attitudes towards the banning of corporal punishment.

In Australia, corporal punishment is banned. However most teachers still support the use of corporal punishment and this view has not changed much since corporal punishment was first banned in schools. Research conducted in Australia found that most teachers view the use of corporal punishment as necessary and many would like to use the cane as a last resort (www.education.qld.gov.au/corporate/professional_exchange/edhistory/edhistopics/corporal/union.html). In an American poll conducted by ABC news titled "Support for Spanking" it was found that "sixty-five percent of Americans approve of spanking", although only "26 percent say that grade-school teachers should be allowed to spank kids at school" (www.search.abcnews.go.com/query.html). According to Flynn (1994) southern residents of the USA, have favourable attitudes towards corporal punishment and 81.1% support its use. This is reflective of southern educators being the strongest proponents of corporal punishment in schools (Boser, 2001).

Corporal punishment in Pakistan² has existed in schools for nearly 143 years (Iqbal, 2003). Recently, efforts have been made to ban corporal punishment. Teacher's opinions supporting this ban are growing. Some teachers, however, still feel that those who use corporal punishment should not be punished, as corporal punishment is seen as part of doing the job. Teachers who support the ban, feel that corporal punishment is a lazy means of control (Iqbal, 2003). In Trinidad, where corporal punishment has been banned for nearly three years, teachers and parents are requesting its reinstatement. It is felt that children are becoming

² While it is common knowledge that corporal punishment (floggings, lashes etc) form part of the penal code in various Islamic states such as Saudi Arabia, Iran, Afghanistan, no research has been conducted on the incidence of its use in the schooling system.

increasingly unruly and corporal punishment would assist in reinstating order in schools (Richards, 2003).

Teachers in Bangkok are unhappy about the ban on corporal punishment and fear that it will result in students becoming more aggressive (Bangkok Post, 13 September 2000). A secondary school executive association member in Bangkok felt that the “ban would infringe on the rights of teachers”, and a teacher further stated “...if I cannot control them. I have to hit them in these cases” (The Nation, 14 September 2000).

In some countries, the use of corporal punishment by teachers is reinforced by its use in the home or from teacher’s experiences of their own schooling. In Botswana and Kenya (Unicef Asian Report, 2001 and Human Rights Watch Kenya, 1999) teachers use corporal punishment because it is expected by parents. Parents endorse the use of corporal punishment, as it is the method they themselves use to discipline their own children.

Students entering training colleges bring with them their own discipline experiences and ideas of how to discipline. According to Tafa (2002:19) “trainees brought strong beliefs about caning to colleges of education primarily from their schools rather than their homes”. This is then coupled with the poor training of teachers in classroom management and as a result teachers drawing on their own experiences of being disciplined with the cane (Unicef Asia Report, 2001 and Human Rights Watch Kenya, 1999).

According to Hyman (1990) there are conflicting studies about which teachers are more likely to use paddling. It appears that as students get older, teachers administer less corporal punishment possibly as a result of being afraid of retaliation (Hyman, 1990). In a Gallup poll conducted in 1988 in the United States “56 percent of elementary school teachers and 55 percent of high school teachers approved of corporal punishment in lower grades” (Hyman, 1990:62). In a study in Tennessee it was also found that teachers with emotional problems are more likely to use corporal punishment (Hyman, 1990).

In South African, a study by Rice (1987) before the ban on corporal punishment, found that male teachers tend to favour corporal punishment, as do younger teachers under the age of 25 years. She also found that experience did not have an impact on the use of corporal punishment. That is, teachers teaching for less than 5 years and those with more experience

are almost equally likely to use corporal punishment. More recently, and post the ban on corporal punishment in South Africa, Cohen (1996) conducted a study on teachers' and pupils' attitudes towards corporal punishment. According to Cohen (1996:47) "teachers are ambivalent towards corporal punishment, their views are still not totally in line with the literature, nor with the aims of the new education policy". Furthermore, the majority of the teachers in the study felt that corporal punishment was necessary in order to maintain discipline.

The studies of teachers' attitudes towards corporal punishment in South Africa are very limited but numerous newspapers have documented teachers' desires to return to corporal punishment. In 1999 the then education minister of KwaZulu Natal stated, "If I had my way, I would reintroduce corporal punishment" (The Teacher, March 1999). The Sunday Times supplement of ReadRight (www.suntimes.co.za/edu/top100/topficks.htm) reported a school principal as stating he missed corporal punishment "because some boys ask for it".

It seems that numerous educators continue to believe that corporal punishment has benefits. A Soweto school with a high success rate still has a teacher who admits to administering mild corporal punishment, as this contributes to the schools' success (www.suntimes.co.za/edu/top100/toprea.htm). The education departments make provisions for teachers to be reported for administering corporal punishment. In KwaZulu-Natal "four teachers in the Northern Durban region, three in Ladysmith, three in Pietermaritzburg and two in Empangeni have been charged by the department for using corporal punishment" (Daily News, 12 September 2002). Since 1999, the numbers of complaints received by the department have increased (Cape Argus, 18 September 2002). However, teachers report that the department is not instrumental in assisting them with abusive and disruptive children. Teachers further feel they need training to manage a classroom of 40-50 learners, as they do not often have alternate methods of disciplining difficult children (Cape Argus, 18 September 2002).

From this research as well as newspaper articles, it is evident that corporal punishment is still viewed by some as having a place in education. Many teachers feel that without corporal punishment classrooms are out of control. Furthermore, they feel that they are not equipped with alternatives to effectively deal with classroom management, nor do they feel supported by relevant education departments.

(d) Conclusion

It is evident that there is ambivalence among teachers and an equal ambivalence in the literature, about the effects of corporal punishment. Within the literature there are those that support and those that oppose the use of corporal punishment. Researchers opposed to corporal punishment view the harmful effects of corporal punishment as not only lasting in childhood but often well into adulthood. The effect of corporal punishment can range from bruising and swelling to signs and symptoms of depression. Furthermore the use of violence in one context is often repeated later in other contexts.

South Africa has decided to follow in the lead of other countries in banning corporal punishment. Furthermore, the South African constitution is based on a culture of human rights and ensures the protection of the child. Despite this, there are still reported cases of its use. Some educators continue to believe that corporal punishment has meritorious benefits. Limited research and newspaper articles continue to show that some educators and parents believe corporal punishment has a definite place in education.

Research has been done into the use of corporal punishment in schools. However within the South African context limited research such as that of Morell (2000 and 2001), Vally (1998) and Roos (2003) amongst others attempt to provide explanations of why the shift away from corporal punishment has been difficult for teachers. This research seeks to determine whether teachers have found sustainable alternatives, and if they have altered their perceptions of corporal punishment as a recognized means of disciplining children. The following areas are the focus of this study:

- Teachers beliefs on the necessity of corporal punishment to maintain discipline in schools
- Teachers attitudes towards corporal punishment and its abolition
- Alternative discipline strategies teachers are using
- What strategies teachers see as effective

However, before I report on the research conducted it is necessary to look at the attempts to explain the effects of corporal punishment on the individual. The next section is consequently devoted to an exposition of the generally adopted theoretical framework to explain the effects of corporal punishment.

CHAPTER 2

Theoretical Framework

Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1963) explains how social variables have an influence on behaviour. This is relevant when examining the school context, as teachers are social variables that have influence over learner's behaviour.

The relevance of acquisition and imitation of behaviour, especially when a social model is involved, is explained by Bandura and Mac Donald (1963). They state that "imitation is an indispensable aspect of learning" (Bandura and Mac Donald, 1963:3) of which the acquisition period can be shortened through the provision of models (Bandura and Mac Donald in Bandura and Walters, 1963). Within the teaching context, the teacher is a social variable that is likely to be a positive role model (through which learning should occur) in the face of more negative behaviours. Although the child may not exhibit a behaviour that they have learnt through modeling directly after it is learnt, they may do so at another time. Bandura (in Bandura and Walters, 1963) explains that learning does occur without reinforcement through observation, even when the behaviour is not reproduced during acquisition, and is not immediately apparent.

Imitation is important in the acquisition of all behaviour whether positive or negative (Bandura and Walters, 1963). The reinforcement of the behaviour is not necessary for new responses to be learnt and existing hierarchies of previous responses to be changed (Bandura and Walters, 1963). Children learn behaviour that they have observed from their parents and other models. According to Reichard (in Bandura and Walters, 1963:49) "in many cultures children do not do what adults tell them to do but rather what they see adults do".

Observing models produces three effects: observers may require new responses, inhibitory responses may be strengthened or weakened, and observation can elicit previously learnt matching responses (Bandura and Walters, 1963).

Through observation children learn new responses. One of the new behaviours observers such as children can acquire is aggressive responses to situations. An experiment of Bandura's studying the transmission of novel responses revealed that "the children who observed the aggressive models displayed a great number of precisely imitative aggressive responses, whereas such responses rarely occurred in either the non- aggressive model group

or the control group" (Bandura and Walters, 1963: 61). Once children have learnt aggressive responses as dominant ones, there is high probability that they will display this reaction when feeling frustrated as well (Bandura and Walters, 1963). For example, when children fight. Teachers and parents often deal with the situation using an aggressive response such as corporal punishment. Through this reaction, they are reinforcing the behaviour they are trying to eliminate.

Previously learnt matching responses can be elicited through generalization, that is, "the similarity between the original learning situation and the novel sets of cues" (Bandura and Walters, 1963: 8). There is the possibility that the learnt behaviour will be repeated in a similar situation. Thus, the behaviour in one context could be repeated in another context, which may not always be appropriate. For example, children do not learn to distinguish between the appropriate display of violence used in a boxing ring as opposed to violence when fighting with a sibling. The difficulty arises when responses are overgeneralised or generalised with irrelevant cues. Learners observe behaviour in the school and classroom environment and maladaptive behaviour may result if appropriate generalization and discrimination are not learnt.

Social training produces the effect of strengthening or weakening responses. This is achieved through the positive reinforcement of desirable behaviour as well as the inhibition and suppression of undesirable responses. As we grow older our learnt responses need to be modified and children are taught to comply with social demands (Bandura and Walters, 1963). Some parents, teachers and society try to teach learners appropriate behaviours and alter inappropriate ones through the use of physical punishment.

According to Bandura and Walters (1963:12) punishment is " primarily concerned with the direct administration of a noxious stimulus to an organism, the behaviour of which is intended to change". Social Learning theory views punishment as a way of inhibiting responses as opposed to producing avoidance responses. Punishment does not necessarily lead to real change in behaviour, but rather to the discovering of ways in which to avoid being found out or punished. According to Mowrer (in Bandura and Walters, 1963) external cues such as an adult who administers punishment can result in emotive responses such as shame, fear or anger. Through the learning of the emotional cue children are then able to learn to stop the sequence of behaviour or avoid the punishment. The production of a

emotionally conditioned response is similar to non-reward as they both focus on socially disapproved behaviour. However, with punishment the emphasis is placed on the removal of the disapproving behaviour using physical and verbal punishment, rather than relying on its disappearance through lack of reinforcement.

The resulting effect between non-reward and conditioned emotional response is different. Non-reward generally results in the extinction of the responses (Azrin 1959,1960; Estes, 1944 in Bandura and Walters, 1963) and aversive stimuli (physical and verbal punishment) suppress rather than eliminate unapproved of responses and can sometimes result in generalised inhibition. That is, the incorrectness of the behaviour is not learnt. According to Bandura and Walters (1963:15) “emotional responses established through aversive conditioning may motivate socially undesirable behaviour patterns that are highly resistant to extinction”.

Miller’s conflict paradigm (in Bandura and Walters, 1963:16) states that “inhibitory (fear or anxiety) responses and the responses with which they compete, generalize to stimulus situations similar to those in which they were originally learned”. This model has been applied to Social Learning theory and accounts for aggression responses being directed to someone other than the aggressor when there is similarity between the observation of aggression and strength of the original fear response. This is known as displaced aggression. Aggressive responses can be displaced onto a scapegoat when the agent of frustration is feared. Displaced aggression is relevant as children who are subjected to corporal punishment may act aggressively not on the person with whom they are angry, but rather onto another target.

Within the context of the school and classroom, teachers are “social variables” that influence and model behaviour for learners. Teachers model both good and bad behaviours. Social Learning theory tells us that children will often imitate adult behaviour. An act such as corporal punishment in the classroom could be imitated elsewhere. Once children have observed behaviour such as corporal punishment, they do not associate it strictly with the classroom. On the play ground children might see an incident or experience a situation similar to the classroom and generalise the behaviour. Furthermore, if punishment of a physical nature is used, children will learn ways of stopping the sequence of events or avoiding the punishment. This implies that children have not internalised the lesson about the

wrongs of their behaviour. It is important to consider that an important aspect of teaching is teaching to discriminate between right and wrong behaviour, and also to model right and wrong behaviour.

Thus, social variables are able to influence behaviour. Children acquire behaviours from observing others and can use learnt behaviour in similar situations. Aggressive responses which children have learnt through observation can be displaced onto innocent targets and not on the original aggressor. This is relevant within the school context as educators are models of behaviour and have influence over children. Children will imitate behaviour they have observed from teachers.

CHAPTER 3

Research Methods and Results

1. Research Methods

a) Sample selection

58 teachers participated in the study. Teachers who participated came from three different English medium co-educational mainstream government high schools (grades 8-12) in the Gauteng area. Of the three high schools that participated one is situated in the northern suburbs, one in the eastern, and one in the western suburbs of Johannesburg. Participation in the study was voluntary and because of this, only three schools agreed to participate therefore limiting the sample and lack of representation of the research.

b) Procedures

Principals were contacted telephonically to request permission for their staffs' participation. The principals agreed to distribute the questionnaire among staff. A formal letter requesting permission (See Appendix B) for their staff's participation in the study was addressed to each principal. Furthermore, a formal letter addressed to teachers (See Appendix C) was attached to each questionnaire. This letter explained to teachers the aims of the study and requested their honest participation.

Principals were given instructions to hand out questionnaires and collect them on the same day. In reality, not all questionnaires were collected on the same day and some were received later.

c) Measure

Susan Cohen's (1996) unpublished masters research titled "Teachers and pupils attitudes regarding the abolition of corporal punishment in the schools in the Gauteng area" researched teachers' and pupils' attitudes and practices regarding corporal punishment. For purposes of her research, she developed a questionnaire exploring attitudes and discipline strategies used by teachers. It was decided by the present researcher that the measures of her teacher's

questionnaire explored the aims expressed in this proposed research and the questionnaire was adopted (See Appendix A).

A questionnaire format was chosen as it enables participants to remain anonymous and it was hoped participants would feel freer in expressing their views and opinions. Furthermore, the questionnaire enables researchers to gather information from a larger geographical area. When using a questionnaire it is also easier to ensure that questions and instructions are uniform for all participants which allows for comparisons to be made (Rosnow and Rosenthal, 1996).

The Likert scale was chosen for the construction of the questionnaire (Cohen 1996); the reasons being that it is the most popular attitude scale due to efficacy and ease of construction. It assumes test items have the same meaning for all participants and comparisons can be made. The Likert scale also assumes that there is prior knowledge of responses (Cohen 1996).

The questionnaire contained four different sections. The first section requested biographical data of research participants such as information about age, sex, language, qualification, experience, and training. Participants were provided with spaces to fill in relevant information.

The second section consisted of a selection of controversial statements on corporal punishment. The statements found in this section were to determine teachers attitudes to corporal punishment and what alternate strategies they use to maintain discipline. A five point rating scale ranging from strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree was used for participants to rate their responses.

The third section surveyed participants use of various methods of discipline and their efficacy as well as their use of corporal punishment practices. Participants were asked to record their responses on a five point rating scale on how often they use each strategy. The rating scale consisted of the following five options never (0), seldom (once a year), sometimes (once a month), often (once a week) and always (everyday). To determine the effectiveness of the approach a 3-point rating scale was used. The three options participants could choose from are “yes”, “sometimes” and “no”.

The fourth section consisted of open ended questions on teacher's views on corporal punishment. Participants were able to respond freely and state their beliefs and opinions.

In order to ensure confidentiality participants were not requested to identify themselves or the school.

d) Data

Basic descriptive statistics were used to analyze data. Frequency distributions and percentages were seen to be the most applicable method for the study.

2. Qualitative Results

a) Biographical Data

Table 1

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Gender		
Male	37	63.7
Female	21	36.2
Age		
20-25	7	12.0
26-29	9	15.5
30-35	15	25.8
36-39	1	1.7
40-49	13	22.4
50-59	8	13.7
60+	2	3.4
Not answered	3	5.1
Home Language		
English	32	55.1
Afrikaans	20	34.4
Xhosa	4	6.8
Level of qualification		
Teaching Diploma	12	20.6
Teaching Diploma plus further studies	11	18.9
Teaching Degree	7	12.0
Teaching Degree and further studies	20	34.4
Other qualification	9	15.5

Year teaching qualification was obtained		
Pre 1996	36	62.0
Post 1996	14	24.1
Not answered	8	13.7
Length of teaching experience		
1-2 years	9	15.5
3-5 years	5	8.6
6-9 years	14	24.1
10-15 years	10	17.2
16 years +	20	34.4
Length of time taught at current school		
0-11 months	6	10.3
1-2 years	18	31.0
3-5 years	12	20.6
6-9 years	9	15.5
10-15 years	6	10.3
16 years +	5	8.6
Not answered	2	3.4
Number of classes taught at school		
1-2	1	1.7
3-4	6	10.3
5-10	44	75.8
11 +	4	6.8
Not Answered	3	5.1
Average Number of learners in each class		
5-10	0	0
11-19	2	3.4
20-29	15	25.8
30-35	13	22.4
36+	27	46.5
Not Answered	1	1.7
Grades taught at school		
Grade 8	35	60.3
Grade 9	39	67.2
Grade 10	40	68.9
Grade 11	38	65.5
Grade 12	32	55.1

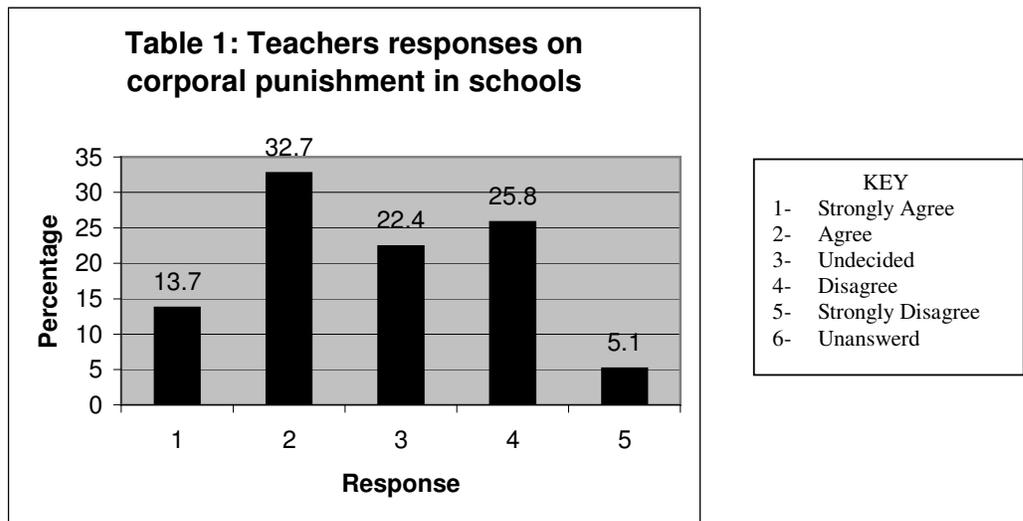
Of the 58 participants, 63.7% were male and 36.2% female. The sample was mostly composed of teachers aged between 20 and 35 years of age (53.4%) with the remainder aged between 36 and 60+ years of age (41%). English was the home language for 55.1% of the sample, Afrikaans 34.4% and Xhosa 6.8%. With respect to level of qualification 20% had obtained a teaching diploma, 18.9% a teaching diploma and further studies, 12.0% a teaching

degree and further studies and 34.4% a teaching degree with postgraduate studies. 15.5% of participants have obtained another qualification. The majority of the sample (51.7%) indicated that they had been teaching for 10 years or more. The remaining 48.2% had teaching experience of less than 10 years. 18.9% of the teachers had been teaching at their present school for 10 years or more. The majority of the teachers (75.8%) teach between 5-10 classes with 46.5% having 36 or more learners per class. All teachers teach more than one grade.

It is relevant to note that 62% of the sample obtained their teaching qualification before 1994 and 51.7% have been teaching for ten years or more. This is relevant as the abolition of corporal punishment only occurred in 1996. It is therefore assumed that majority of these teachers started teaching when corporal punishment was still accepted policy.

b) Teachers' responses favouring the use of corporal punishment

46.4% of the sample felt that corporal punishment is necessary in schools. Teachers opposed to this belief was reflected by 30.9% of the sample and 22.4% were undecided (see Table 1).



A large percentage of the sample 63.7% did not agree that corporal punishment prepares pupils to become victims (see Table 2). Similarly 48.1% of the sample did not believe that corporal punishment encourages aggression in pupil and 27.5% believe that it does (see Table 3).

Table 2: Responses on corporal punishment preparing learners to become victims

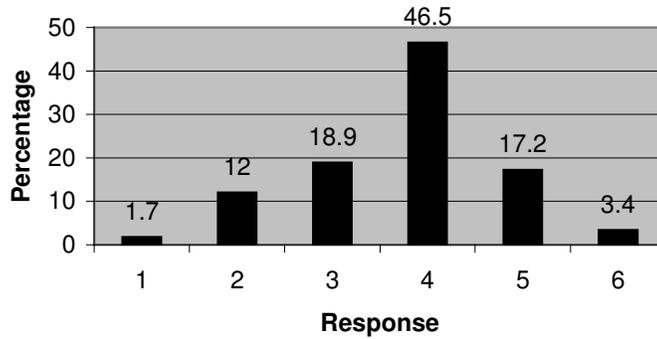
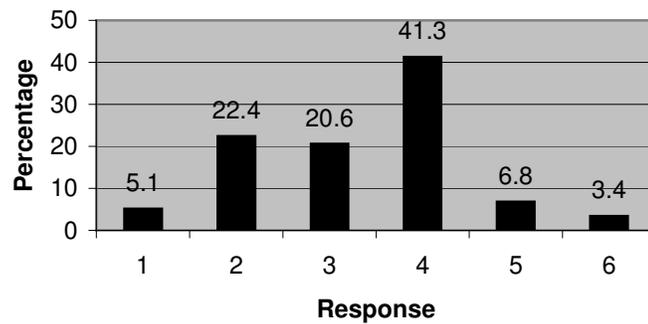
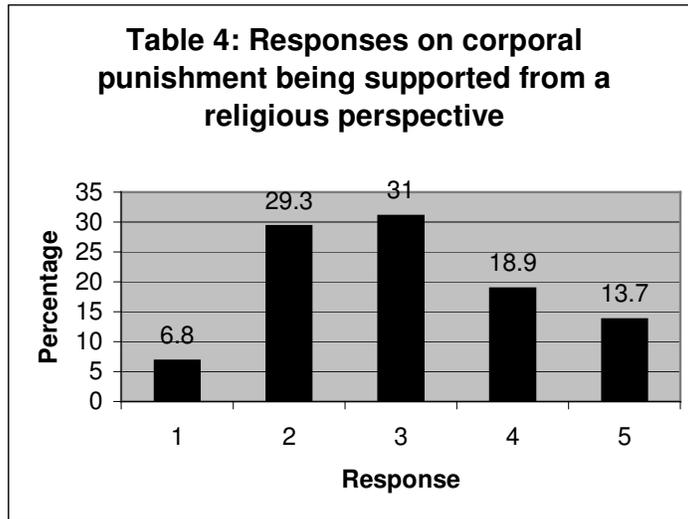


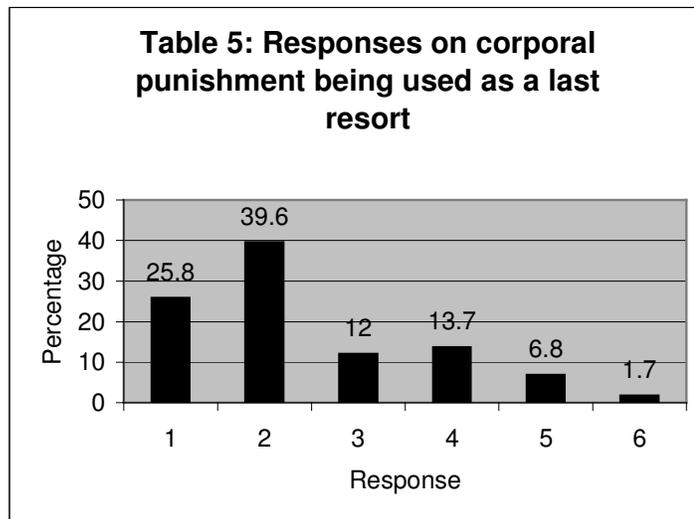
Table 3: Responses on the belief that corporal punishment enhances aggression in learners



From a religious point of view, little difference was noted between those supporting corporal punishment and those who opposed it. 36.1% agreed that corporal punishment can be supported from a religious perspective and 32.6% do not believe so (see Table 4).



The majority of teachers (65.4%) believed that corporal punishment should be used as a last resort once other methods have been tried (see Table 5).



A small percentage of teachers favoured corporal punishment as the best form of punishment due to it being over quickly. 36.1% agreed with this statement and 34.4% disagreed (see Table 6). 56.8% of teachers agree that females should not be caned (see Table 7).

Table 6: Responses favouring corporal punishment due to its short duration

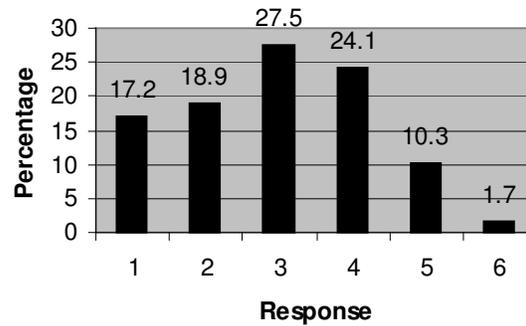
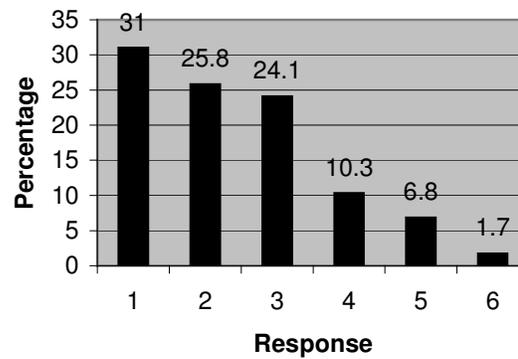


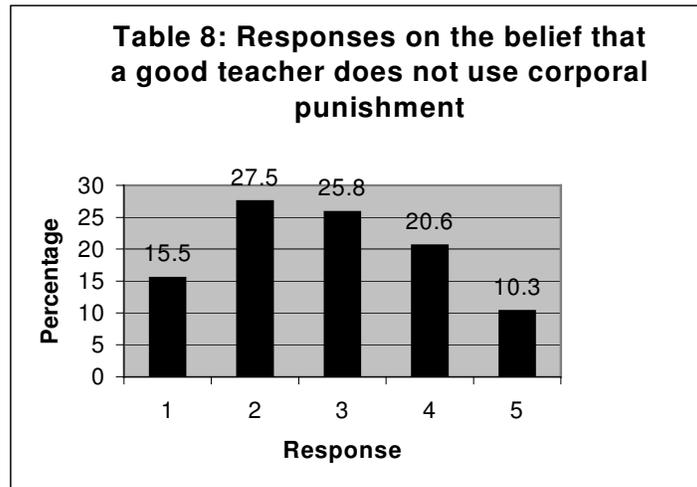
Table 7: Responses on the view that females should not be cained



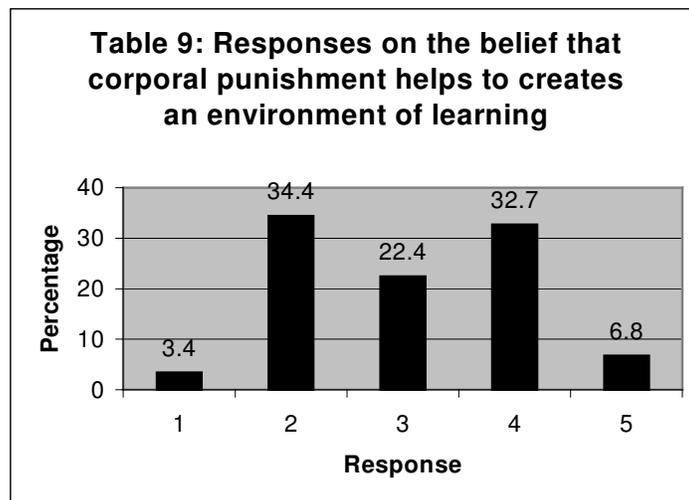
c) Teachers responses against corporal punishment

Of the sample 43% of teachers, believe that a good teacher does not use corporal punishment.

However 30.9% do believe it is necessary to be a good teacher (see Table 8)

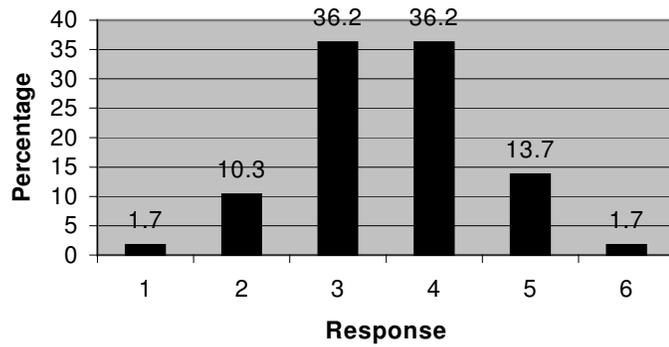


A marginal difference of 1.7% reflected that teachers are almost equally divided on the belief that fear of corporal punishment helps to create an environment of learning. 37.8% agreed and 39.5% disagreed with this statement (see Table 9).



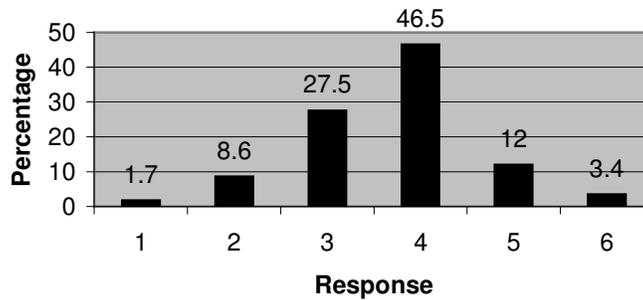
A small percentage of teachers (12%) believe that corporal punishment teaches learners to respect the teacher. 49.9% of the sample disagreed and 36.2% were undecided (see Table 10).

Table 10: Responses on the belief that corporal punishment teaches learners to respect the teacher

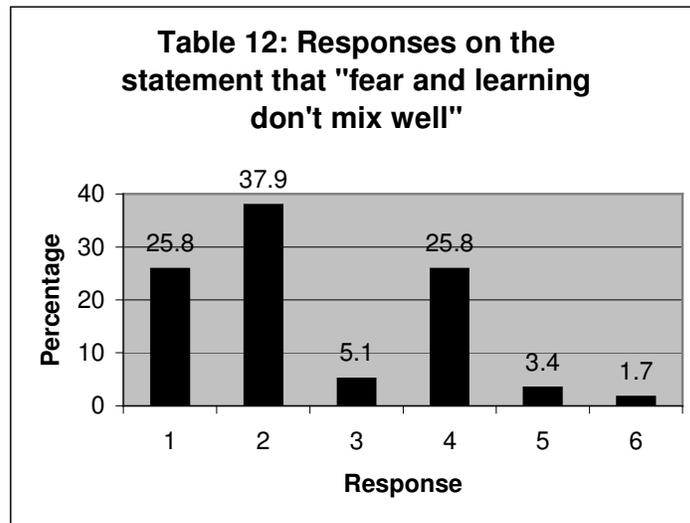


Concerning the statement “corporal punishment enhances the teacher-learner relationship” 58.5% of teachers disagree (see Table 11).

Table 11: Responses on the statement that "corporal punishment enhances the teacher learner relationship"



The majority of teachers 63.7 % support the statement that “fear and learning don’t mix well” (see Table 12).



d) Alternate discipline strategies

Teachers were asked to rate the alternate discipline strategies they use. These responses indicated a variety of strategies ranging from “sometimes” to “often”.

Strategies, which seemed favoured and were used by teachers sometimes or often, are:

- a) Sending learners to detention
- b) Sending an unfavourable report home
- c) Seeing or telephoning parents
- d) Give the learner a “good talking to” in private
- e) Reason with learner during the lesson
- f) Giving positive reinforcement
- g) Giving extra homework
- h) Giving physical tasks around the school
- i) Make learner stay in at break or after school
- j) Deprive learner of enjoyable activity
- k) Daily report of behaviour

Less favoured strategies used by teachers, which are “seldom” or “never” used:

- a) Sending learner to headmaster/mistress
- b) Sending the learners out of class

- c) Approaching school counsellor/ social worker/psychologist to resolve conflict between the learner and teacher
- d) Contract system
- e) Make the learner look foolish

The majority of the teacher's (93.1%) never administer corporal punishment and 84.4% of teachers never send pupils to the head for corporal punishment.

e) Teachers' attitudes towards the abolition of corporal punishment in schools

The majority of teachers 56.8% disagree with the abolition of corporal punishment in schools. 34.4% agree with the abolition and 8.6% did not answer.

65.5% of the sample feel that there are adequate discipline structures in their schools (31.0% feel there are not and 3.4% did not answer).

3. Qualitative Results

Teachers' qualitative responses toward the abolition of corporal punishment indicated that most teachers support the idea that corporal punishment should be permitted in schools. Some teachers felt that "there are times when a child needs a good hiding". This should occur after "repeated offences and warnings and attempts to remedy the problem". Some teachers felt that only certain educators in the school should administer corporal punishment such as "I believe that not every teacher but certainly the HOD's, grade heads and principals should have this option, especially in the light of increasing absence of parental involvement and discipline". Furthermore teachers felt the administering of corporal punishment could be effective. For example one teacher commented that "corporal punishment administered within a structured system by experienced teachers who do not become emotional can be extremely effective"

Qualitative responses by teachers seemed to express that they experienced corporal punishment at school and because it had caused them no harm as children, this view could be generalized to all learners. One teacher said, "I was caned, never felt bitter and got educated in a quite, ordered and respectful environment. I teach with out (cp) in a rowdy, disrespectful

and unproductive environment”. It was also felt that corporal punishment is a much quicker method as one teacher responded “corporal punishment is done quickly i.e. is the only way to maintain good behaviour”.

Although some teachers favoured the use of corporal punishment, this view was not shared by all. One teacher felt “it demeans the child. Not emotionally and spiritually positive”, “it is more punitive than correct” and “it does not deter naughty children from misbehaving”. Others had mixed responses and said “if used correctly it may be effective but it could also be abused” and “it works in some cases and not in others”.

Questions about teacher training brought about responses indicating that teachers felt that training was not adequate. For example: “the training given is not in line with what happens in schools. There is often not the support needed for discipline”. Further responses were “they tend to hand out manuals and expect you to follow and read them”, “teacher training focuses little on what occurs in the multicultural classroom”, “ a few short lectures on discipline don’t prepare one for the reality of the classroom” and “classroom management should be taught not theorised”.

Questions on classroom management also reflected concern from teachers regarding their safety in the classroom. One teacher said the following “senior boys especially can become very aggressive, very quickly, that leads to concerns regarding personal safety if you are a female teacher”

Some teachers favoured the idea of inservice training; however they felt that it did not often meet their needs for various reasons. One teacher stated it “ would be valuable if given by people who are teachers, not people who seldom set foot in a classroom” and “ it might help to have workshops with teachers from other schools to share ideas and discuss problems encountered in different schools and how to resolve them”. Others felt additional training is not necessary as “you develop your own method and there is no time for teachers to be trained during teaching job (give us less pupils in classes (20-25))”.

Teachers were asked to suggest alternative discipline methods that they felt would be better able to address classroom management difficulties. The following were suggested: “Cleaning and gardening (manual labour)”, “community service”, “in-school suspension”, “more

counsellors and psychologists”, “contact with parents”, “support groups” and “parental involvement”.

Although some teachers expressed their discontent with the education system, saying “corporal punishment will never come back, it’s a pity that our proud school system will end up looking like those in the USA and UK”. There were teachers who felt they were able to manage the demands of teaching utilising to a few simple rules: “to a large extent good classroom discipline involves good teaching, zero tolerance for any unacceptable behaviour and most importantly the right type of personality. Some people are not cut out to be teachers”.

CHAPTER 4

Discussion

The teachers who participated in the study indicate that although corporal punishment is no longer practised, there are teachers who feel that it should be reinstated. They feel the return of corporal punishment would be effective particularly as a last resort once other methods have been attempted. Although some teachers wish for the return of corporal punishment, the majority of the sample have not administered corporal punishment (at least in the last 8 years) or sent a child to a head master for corporal punishment. Teachers who do not administer corporal punishment appear to be using other methods of classroom management, but they are still experiencing levels of frustration. A small percentage of teachers have succumbed to the use of corporal punishment.

The teachers in this sample felt that corporal punishment is a method that is over quickly and would not be time consuming or costly to administer. Beliefs in the use of corporal punishment being time efficient were reflected by opinions such as “corporal punishment is done quickly, i.e. is the only way to maintain behaviour”. Teachers in this sample supporting this view are correct in believing that corporal punishment controls behaviour, because it has been used historically to elicit compliance in children. This compliance however does not necessarily lead to corrective behaviour. Through the administration of corporal punishment, teachers are not modeling appropriate behaviour nor are they teaching lessons of right and wrong. Thus learners are not internalising the implications and consequences of their incorrect behaviour. In addition corporal punishment leads to poor relationships between the individuals involved, leaves the child with feelings of anger and resentment, encourages rebellion and revenge and the use of violence in other situations (Harvard Mental Health Letter, 2002; Tharps, 2003; and Unicef Asia Report, 2001).

Many teachers in the sample believed that corporal punishment does not encourage aggression in learners. This is in contrast to opinions in the literature, which held that corporal punishment can result in learners interpreting actions as hostile and then acting in similar ways in other situations (Bandura and Walters, 1963 and Harvard Mental Health Letter, 2002). According to Straus and Yodanis (1996) adolescents who are subjected to frequent corporal punishment are at a greater risk of assaulting spouses later in life. According to Tharps (2003) the use of violence does not set a good example and encourages

the lesson that acts of aggression solve problems. Furthermore the use of violence by teachers models the use of violence as a control of those weaker than ourselves (Straus, 1996).

Teachers in the sample feel helpless and are not able to cope with classroom management because they do not feel they have the adequate resources and training. These responses support the perception that some teachers felt that corporal punishment assisted in classroom management “I was caned, never felt bitter and got educated in a quite, ordered and respectful environment. I teach without (cp) in a rowdy, disrespectful and unproductive environment”.

The teachers who are opposed to corporal punishment agree with current educational practices. However, the fact that not all teachers subscribe to this philosophy illustrates the complexity of trying to implement this as a universal policy. Teachers in general are trying to adhere to the law, however there are incidents of corporal punishment still occurring and it is apparent that some teachers are struggling to maintain and draw on appropriate resources.

Although shifts have been made at a policy level on corporal punishment, there are still teachers who feel that they are better able to do their jobs with corporal punishment in place. Nearly half the teachers reported that corporal punishment enables them to be better teachers and they felt that corporal punishment created an environment of learning. However, the majority of the teacher’s felt that fear and learning did not mix well. Although teachers felt that corporal punishment enables the teachers to perform better in the classroom they do not agree that fear encourages learning. There is a contradiction between teachers’ feeling that while it assists them in doing their job, corporal punishment but does not support learning. This could be as a result of teachers not making an association between corporal punishment and the fear it evokes. According to Hyman (1990), the use of corporal punishment in schools can be a traumatic experience for children. Furthermore it can affect children’s concentration, motivation, anxiety and lead to poor learning (Unicef Asia Report, 2001).

More than half the teachers felt that there are adequate structures to deal with discipline in their schools. However, in spite of this, it appears that difficulties do arise in the classroom situation. Teachers felt that the training provided at colleges or universities was not adequate. They experience difficulty applying what is recommended at talks or in manuals in the classroom environment. Overall, teachers in the sample felt they are not adequately supported

in their professional role. Teachers felt that training should be provided by people who have had experience inside the classroom and support such as networking amongst teachers would be of benefit. Teachers feel that the training provided is not adequate. According to Tafa (2002) teachers entering training colleges bring with them beliefs about caning from their own schooling experience. When they are not provided with suitable alternatives they will resort to their own experience, which is often the use of corporal punishment.

Teachers also expressed concern for their personal safety. They feel they have no way of protecting themselves, when learners become aggressive. Teachers feel that they would like to use violence such as corporal punishment to defend themselves. According to Morrel (2001), the use of violence in schools is sanctioned due to parents still practicing corporal punishment in their homes. This practice is then extended to the schools. For many years corporal punishment was a means of controlling children but also a means of how government controlled society (Vally, 1998). These ideas are still prevalent in many people's minds, as they are learnt behaviours that they have internalised.

The majority of the teachers in the schools disagreed with the abolition of corporal punishment. However, a substantial portion of the sample felt that corporal punishment was not necessary to being a good teacher and that it does not enhance the teacher learner relationship. Despite this, many teachers are using alternate strategies. It appears that alternate strategies being used involves dealing with learners directly, contacting parents and providing some form of written or physical punishment

CONCLUSION

The focus of this study was to explore teacher's attitudes towards corporal punishment as well as its abolition. Furthermore the study attempted to explore the methods of discipline teachers are using, their effectiveness as well as teachers needs for further training. The results of this study do have implications for teachers and learners in classrooms.

Although the majority of teachers do not administer corporal punishment, it seems that the concept of and use of corporal punishment is still prevalent and viewed as a viable option for teachers. Teachers feel that the use of corporal punishment could be useful particularly once other methods of discipline have failed. The training provided at universities or colleges does not meet teachers needs. Perhaps teaching practices and the teaching of classroom management would need to be re-examined in order to provide teachers with adequate support. Nevertheless, teachers have been able to use a variety of alternatives to maintain order although they feel that these are not always suitable.

An area of concern for teachers was their personal safety. Teacher's fear being harmed by learners. Perhaps what needs to be explored is methods to ensure teacher safety. They need to feel supported in this area and protected.

Perhaps in the South African context with its diverse population dynamics, schools should be viewed as having their own unique dynamics. This is relevant as some areas are characterised as more violent and in some homes corporal punishment is still enforced. Teachers also come from varying backgrounds and bring with them their own beliefs and values. Teachers should be assisted with classroom management according to their own unique situations, with alternatives that are more suitable.

The findings of this study cannot be generalised due to the limited sample however it does provided an indication of teachers feelings towards the ban of corporal punishment as well as the alternatives they have adopted. The sample size was limited due to the voluntary nature of the study as well as time constraints. A larger sample representing a larger geographical area, different South African communities and population dynamics would better represent teachers' opinions. Teachers or principals carried out the administration of the questionnaire at their own convenience. The completion of the questionnaires was not compulsory and

confounding variables such as motivation, time of day, sharing of responses and time of year may have had an impact.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

Section 1: Biographical Information

Please mark the appropriate box with an X:

Please indicate whether you are:

Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
Male	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please indicate your age:

Please indicate your home language:

Afrikaans	<input type="checkbox"/>	IsiZulu	<input type="checkbox"/>	Setswana	<input type="checkbox"/>
English	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sepedi	<input type="checkbox"/>	TshiVenda	<input type="checkbox"/>
IsiNdebele	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sesotho	<input type="checkbox"/>	Xitsonga	<input type="checkbox"/>
Isiskhosa	<input type="checkbox"/>	Seswati	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

Other (please specify): _____

Please indicate your level of qualification:

Teaching diploma	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teaching Diploma plus further studies	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teaching degree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teaching degree plus postgraduate studies	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other (please specify): _____

In what year was your teaching qualification obtained:

How many years teaching experience do you have? _____

How many years have you taught at your current school? _____

How many classes do you teach? _____

What is the average number of learners in your class? _____

Please indicate the Grade (s) you are currently teaching:

Grade 8	
Grade 9	
Grade 10	
Grade 11	
Grade 12	

Here are selections of controversial statements on classroom discipline. Show your agreement or disagreement by circling the appropriate number:

- 1- Strongly agree
- 2- Agree
- 3- Undecided
- 4- Disagree
- 5- Strongly disagree

STATEMENT	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Giving extra homework as a punishment only results in the learners hating the subject	1	2	3	4	5
2. Sending learners out of the class removes the problem but does not solve it	1	2	3	4	5
3. Organised teachers have less discipline problems	1	2	3	4	5
4. Corporal punishment is necessary in order to maintain discipline at school	1	2	3	4	5
5. Learners tend to disregard teachers threat of punishment	1	2	3	4	5
6. Corporal punishment prepares learners to become victims of abuse	1	2	3	4	5
7. Detention is an effective way of preventing pupils from misbehaving	1	2	3	4	5
8. A good teacher is one who does not use corporal punishment to discipline students	1	2	3	4	5
9. Keeping learners in during break is not an effective form of punishment	1	2	3	4	5
10. The learner's fear of corporal punishment helps to create an environment of learning	1	2	3	4	5
11. Teachers should discipline learners in a calm manner	1	2	3	4	5
12. Corporal punishment increases aggression in learners	1	2	3	4	5
13. Approaching the school counsellor/ other is an effective way of solving behaviour problems	1	2	3	4	5
14. Corporal punishment can be justified from a religious point of view	1	2	3	4	5
15. It is morally correct that a person who has done wrong be punished for it	1	2	3	4	5
16. If the teacher gives learners interesting and challenging work, there will be less discipline problems in class	1	2	3	4	5
STATEMENT	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
17. If a teacher is liked, learners tend to behave better in class	1	2	3	4	5
18. Corporal punishment teaches	1	2	3	4	5

learners to fear the teacher					
19. Consulting with parents is not an effective way of solving learners' misbehavior in class	1	2	3	4	5
20. Corporal punishment teaches learners to respect the teacher	1	2	3	4	5
21. Discipline problems should be solved together with learners in order to teach them to take responsibility for the problem	1	2	3	4	5
22. Fear and learning don't mix well (i.e. when children are afraid they don't learn)	1	2	3	4	5
23. Appointing a classroom monitor to report to the teacher about misbehaviour is effective	1	2	3	4	5
24. Corporal punishment enhances the teacher learner relationship	1	2	3	4	5
25. Learners prefer authoritarian teachers (where very strict measures of discipline are used)	1	2	3	4	5
26. Corporal Punishment should be used as a last resort, when all other methods of discipline have failed	1	2	3	4	5
27. Corporal punishment is the best form of punishment because it is over quickly	1	2	3	4	5
28. Female learners should not be caned (corporal punishment)	1	2	3	4	5

2. Which of the following forms of classroom discipline do you use? Mark the box corresponding to your answer. Rate the effectiveness of the approach even if you never used it.

1. Send learner to detention?				
Never (0)	Seldom (Once a year)	Sometimes (Once a month)	Often (Once a week)	Always (Everyday)
Is this approach effective?				
Yes	No	Sometimes		
2. Send learner to headmaster/mistress?				
Never (0)	Seldom (Once a year)	Sometimes (Once a month)	Often (Once a week)	Always (Everyday)
Is this approach effective?				
Yes	No	Sometimes		
3. Send an unfavorable report home?				
Never (0)	Seldom (Once a year)	Sometimes (Once a month)	Often (Once a week)	Always (Everyday)
Is this approach effective?				
Yes	No	Sometimes		
4. Send learner out of class				

Never (0)	Seldom (Once a year)	Sometimes (Once a month)	Often (Once a week)	Always (Everyday)
Is this approach effective?				
Yes	No	Sometimes		
5. Reason with learner during lesson?				
Never (0)	Seldom (Once a year)	Sometimes (Once a month)	Often (Once a week)	Always (Everyday)
Is this approach effective?				
Yes	No	Sometimes		
6. See or telephone parents?				
Never (0)	Seldom (Once a year)	Sometimes (Once a month)	Often (Once a week)	Always (Everyday)
Is this approach effective?				
Yes	No	Sometimes		
7. Give the learner a "good talking to" in private?				
Never (0)	Seldom (Once a year)	Sometimes (Once a month)	Often (Once a week)	Always (Everyday)
Is this approach effective?				
Yes	No	Sometimes		
8. Administer corporal punishment (jacked; hit with cane) yourself?				
Never (0)	Seldom (Once a year)	Sometimes (Once a month)	Often (Once a week)	Always (Everyday)
Is this approach effective?				
Yes	No	Sometimes		
9. Send learner to head for corporal punishment?				
Never (0)	Seldom (Once a year)	Sometimes (Once a month)	Often (Once a week)	Always (Everyday)
Is this approach effective?				
Yes	No	Sometimes		
10. Approach school counsellor/social worker/psychologist to resolve conflict between learner and teacher?				
Never (0)	Seldom (Once a year)	Sometimes (Once a month)	Often (Once a week)	Always (Everyday)
Is this approach effective?				
Yes	No	Sometimes		
11. Use a contract system?				
Never (0)	Seldom (Once a year)	Sometimes (Once a month)	Often (Once a week)	Always (Everyday)
Is this approach effective?				

Yes	No	Sometimes		
12. Give positive reinforcement?				
Never (0)	Seldom (Once a year)	Sometimes (Once a month)	Often (Once a week)	Always (Everyday)
Is this approach effective?				
Yes	No	Sometimes		
13. Give extra homework?				
Never (0)	Seldom (Once a year)	Sometimes (Once a month)	Often (Once a week)	Always (Everyday)
Is this approach effective?				
Yes	No	Sometimes		
14. Give physical tasks around the school (e.g. clean up the rubbish in the school)				
Never (0)	Seldom (Once a year)	Sometimes (Once a month)	Often (Once a week)	Always (Everyday)
Is this approach effective?				
Yes	No	Sometimes		
15. Make learners stay in at break/ after school?				
Never (0)	Seldom (Once a year)	Sometimes (Once a month)	Often (Once a week)	Always (Everyday)
Is this approach effective?				
Yes	No	Sometimes		
16. Deprive learner of an enjoyable activity?				
Never (0)	Seldom (Once a year)	Sometimes (Once a month)	Often (Once a week)	Always (Everyday)
Is this approach effective?				
Yes	No	Sometimes		
17. Make the learner look foolish?				
Never (0)	Seldom (Once a year)	Sometimes (Once a month)	Often (Once a week)	Always (Everyday)
Is this approach effective?				
Yes	No	Sometimes		
18. Give a slap or hit in passion?				
Never (0)	Seldom (Once a year)	Sometimes (Once a month)	Often (Once a week)	Always (Everyday)
Is this approach effective?				
Yes	No	Sometimes		
19. Give a daily report of behaviour to head/parent?				
Never (0)	Seldom (Once a year)	Sometimes (Once a month)	Often (Once a week)	Always (Everyday)

Is this approach effective?				
Yes	No	Sometimes		
20. Other (specify)				
Never (0)	Seldom (Once a year)	Sometimes (Once a month)	Often (Once a week)	Always (Everyday)
Is this approach effective?				
Yes	No	Sometimes		

3. Do you feel that you were adequately trained in classroom discipline in your teacher training programme? (Tick the appropriate box)

YES NO

If yes, give examples: _____

If no, state concerns: _____

4. Do you feel the need for in service training (during your teaching job) on methods of classroom discipline? (Tick appropriate box)

YES NO

Specify: _____

5. Do you feel there are adequate structures within your school to deal with the discipline problems? (Tick the appropriate box)

YES NO

If yes, state what they are: _____

If no, what procedures do you feel are needed: _____

6. Do you agree/ disagree with the legal abolition of corporal punishment in South African schools?
(Tick the appropriate box)

AGREE

DISAGREE

If you agree, give reasons: _____

If you disagree, give reasons: _____

Suggest alternative methods to corporal punishment

7. Any additional comments

Thank you

Appendix B

Dear Principal,

I am currently completing my master's degree in Educational Psychology. In order to complete this degree I am conducting research on discipline in schools. The aim of the study is to explore teacher's attitudes towards discipline in the classroom. Specific areas of focus are teachers views on the abolition of corporal punishment and the methods of discipline they have adopted to replace corporal punishment.

The co-operation of your staff will assist me in reaching my aims. Furthermore, the information gained will help make recommendations towards what support needed with regards to classroom discipline. In completing this questionnaire, the confidentiality of your staff and the school is assured, as the respondents remain anonymous.

Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated!

Yours sincerely

Loretta Cicognani
M.Ed Educational Psychology Intern

Appendix C

Dear Teacher,

I am currently completing my masters degree in Educational Psychology. In order to complete this degree I am conducting research on discipline in schools. The aim of the study is to explore teacher's attitudes towards discipline in the classroom. Specific areas of focus are teachers views on the abolition of corporal punishment and the methods of discipline they have adopted to replace corporal punishment.

The following questionnaire asks for your opinion on a number of issues relating to corporal punishment and your personal discipline style. This questionnaire is hoped to inform researchers of teacher's needs regarding the maintenance of discipline in the classroom.

The questionnaire is anonymous- your name must not be given. Please answer the questions frankly and honestly and do not discuss the questionnaire with anyone whilst completing it. Your opinion is greatly valued.

Thank you for your time and co-operation

Yours sincerely,

Loretta Cicognani
M.Ed Educational Psychology Intern