

Attitudes of Stakeholders and the Use of Corporal Punishment as a Tool for Discipline in Public Secondary Schools, Western Region of Kenya

Eunice K. Najoli¹, Tawanda Runhare², James B. Ouda³

¹Department of Foundations of Education, Masinde Muliro University of Science & Technology, Kakamega, Kenya

²Department of Foundation of Education, University of Venda (UNIVEN), Thohoyandou, South Africa

³Department of Educational Psychology, Masinde Muliro University of Science & Technology, Kakamega, Kenya
Email: ekanaga@mmust.ac.ke

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Abstract

Since the beginning of this century, a global tendency to abolish corporal punishment has been introduced to challenge old dependence on corporal punishment as a tool for reforming children's misbehavior. This tendency was highly supported by the contemporary call for protecting human rights including the right in security and human treatment and child rights in physical protection. Corporal punishment continues to be practiced at unacceptable rates in Kenyan schools; at the same time violence rates are rising. Management of children's behavioral problems presents a significant challenge for many teachers in schools. The purpose of this research is to analyze why corporal punishment is being practiced in schools in spite of its legal ban. The paper highlights the attitudes of teachers, parents, pupils and the use of corporal punishment as a tool for discipline. A survey research design was used to collect data on attitudes of 32 parents, 32 teachers, 160 students and 8 Principals in secondary schools in western region of Kenya. A sample size of 232 respondents was included and participated in the study. The main finding of this study is that while most teachers understand and support the policy of banning corporal punishment in schools, there remain certain concerns on the effect of such a ban on children rights and equally alternative warm contributions of punishment as a means of maintaining school discipline. These concerns and conflicting viewpoints are over issues related to the difficulty in disciplining students and respecting the students' human rights.

Keywords

Corporal Punishment Policy, Human Rights, Physical Protection

1. Introduction

Corporal punishment refers to intentional application of physical pain as a method of behavior change. It includes the use of physical force intended to cause pain, but not injury, for the purpose of correcting or controlling a child's behavior. Punishing means subjecting a penalty for an offense and usually includes inflicting some kind of hurt; a practice of disciplining in which, something unpleasant is present or positive reinforces are removed following a behavior so that it happens less often in future.

During the ancient times, the Greeks; Sparta used AGOGE: flogging and caning as a means to punish when caught stealing. Likewise in the medieval era, whips were used for self-discipline especially to chastise the body (flagellation). However, in the 17th Century, a Political Philosopher (John Locke) criticized the central role of corporal punishment in education. He supported a system rich in embracing the learners interest and learning by doing and not orders from the teacher.

In the compliance with international human rights law, the Convention on the rights of the child and other human rights instruments requires that states prohibit by law all forms of corporal punishment of children in all settings, including the home [1]. There has been accelerating progress towards law reforms in Africa as in other regions, but the pace of reform is still slow. For instance: in 1950 the European convention of Human Rights, Article 3, bars inhuman or degrading treatment of punishment; 1985 convention argued on Juvenile shall not be subjected to corporal punishment; 1989 Convention on rights of the child Article 54 urged states to join Save the child initiative [2]; and child rights in physical protection Article 19, Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Many countries are in support of the rights in prohibiting corporal punishment to be used in schools, considering it as a source of school violence. Many educationists are against corporal punishment because of the affront to the child's dignity. Reference [3] stated that if we are legally prohibited from striking other adults, why is it okay to strike a child? Corporal punishment is being used as a means of disciplining action against children and students worldwide, but as catalytic action of education, it needs to be planned meticulously and executed with great sensitivity [4].

Accordingly, reports of an International Non-governmental Organization that promotes children's rights [5], indicate that there has been effort in different African states to protect children from corporal punishment using legal laws, for instance, among the African Countries that have legitimized corporal punishment: Botswana which has legitimized and accepted corporal punishment as a form of punishment as informed by the norms of the society, courts act, and the education act. Tanzania has also legitimized corporal punishment and accepted it as a form of punishment and the intention of the law makers is that it should be violent, or degrading. Other African countries that have not banned corporal punishment in schools include: Eritrea, Libya, Mauritania, Nigeria, Somalia, and

Zimbabwe. The following African countries have banned the policy; Benin, Congo, Kenya, South Sudan, Togo, Tunisia and South Africa.

In Kenya, corporal punishment was banned in 2001 through a Kenya Gazette notice. The Ministry of Education decided to ban corporal punishment in 2001 after it recognized that this kind of punishment had overall negative effects on children and adversely affected not only their academic performance but also their psychological wellbeing. Among various reasons, the ban came after Kenya had been cited as having institutionalized violence and promoting child abuse by permitting corporal punishment in a 2000 conference in Dakar. This took constitutional reforms. Article 29: Right to freedom and security; No form of violence from either public or private sources; No torture in any manner, whether physical or psychological; No corporal punishment; treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading manner. With the enactment of the Basic Education Act 2013, the Kenya government banned physical punishment, mental harassment and emphasized on guidance and counseling for discipline management in schools. Article 4: elimination of gender discrimination, corporal punishment or any form of cruel and inhuman treatment or torture. Article 36: prohibition against physical punishment and mental harassment to the child.

According to the Kenyan Education (School Discipline) Regulations, corporal punishment may only be administered for certain behavior, after a full inquiry, and in the presence of a witness, but not in the presence of other pupils. Only the head teacher 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.

The relevance of the ban was to remove the violence on the Kenyan child which was a regular part of the school experience. The infliction of corporal punishment was routine, arbitrary, and often brutal. Teachers used caning, slapping, and whipping to maintain classroom discipline and to punish children for poor academic performance. Bruises and cuts were regular by-products of school punishments, and more severe injuries (broken bones, knocked-out teeth) were frequent. Such severe corporal punishment acts violates both Kenyan law and international human rights standards. Similarly, many schools and teachers made students engage in physical labour as a punishment, distinct from ordinary classroom chores which all students might be called on to perform: digging trenches, “slashing” grass, or uprooting tree stumps are all commonly cited punishments.

Despite policy in place, corporal punishment in the context of schools in the late 20th and early 21st centuries has variously been defined as: causing deliberate pain to a child in response to the child’s undesired behaviour and/or language, purposeful infliction of bodily pain or discomfort by an official in the educational system upon a student as a penalty for unacceptable behavior; and “intentional” application of physical pain as a means of changing behavior [6]. Extensive

research demonstrates that although corporal punishment may have a high rate of immediate behavior modification, it is ineffective over time, and is associated with increased aggression and decreased moral internalization of appropriate behavior [7]. It is imperative to determine whether the practice of corporal punishment is maintained in Kenyan schools, and the justification for its practice, if any. This paper highlights on the attitudes of teachers, parents and pupils on the use of corporal punishment as a tool for discipline in schools in Kenya.

2. Social Learning Theory

The study adopted Bandura's [8] Social Learning Theory. The theory emphasized that behaviour is learnt in social institutions and environment can positively or negatively affect it. This theory is relevant to this study because it emphasizes that, schools should provide an appropriate environment for teaching and learning. Instead of using corporal punishment, schools should enforce positive communication. Bandura argued that behaviour is performed in the absence of external reinforcement and punishment and hence, suggested that self-regulation is the means of controlling most of our daily actions. Consequently, schools should mitigate against negative peer pressure and encourage students to be themselves instead of seeking acceptance from their peers. From this understanding, stakeholders should provide appropriate role models and ensure school environment is conducive for learning positive behaviour instead of adopting corporal punishment to discipline students. Besides, the theorist emphasized that to suppress the undesirable behaviour, punishment should be administered fairly and promptly. This implies that teachers should adhere to its implementation guidelines not go overboard as it is the case.

3. Research Design and Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was used to carry out the study on the attitudes of administrators, teachers, parents, pupils and the use of corporal punishment as a tool for discipline in schools. The research activity attempted also to determine if corporal punishment has any influence on learners' performance and also is a cause of students' strikes in schools. The study was undertaken in 8 secondary schools in western province of Kenya.

Reference [9] recommends a size of 30 elements as the lowest if some form of statistical analysis is to be carried out on the data obtained. However, [10] recommends that in a survey, there should be a minimum of 100 subjects in the sub-group and 20 to 50 in the minor. For the study, 32 class teachers and 32 parents' eight (8) principals were purposively sampled because they are the stakeholders in schools. Stratified random sampling was used to select 5 students from class 7 level, from each school. A total of one hundred and sixty (160) students participated in the study. The study included students of age bracket (12 - 17) years old. This is because the psychosocial theory [11] revealed that during this age bracket, children learn to develop a sense of independence and identity,

and any destruction that may lack protection at this stage, may lead to negative school-related outcomes including; school dropout, poor academic performance, alcohol and drug abuse, lack of confidence in social institutions and low academic achievement.

1) Target population

The study included a target population of 32 class teachers, 32 parents class representatives, 160 students and 8 principals from eight public schools in the region. **Table 1** gives a summary of the target population of the study.

2) Sampling procedure and sample size

Purposive sampling was used to select 32 class teachers, 32 parents' class representatives and 8 school principals, while stratified random sampling was used to select 160 students to participate in the study. This gave a total of 232 subjects that formed the sample size for the study. **Table 2** gives a summary of the sampling procedure and sample size of the study.

3) Sampling tools

Structured questionnaires were used to collect information from both class teachers and students on the forms of punishment carried out to maintain discipline in school. Principals and parents were both interviewed on common forms of punishment in schools, influence of punishment on performance and causes of strikes in schools.

4) Data analysis

The data collected was both in quantitative and qualitative methods. This was to ascertain the validity of the study to attain the accuracy and truthfulness of research as advised by Gall (1996). **Table 3** shows summary of data analysis.

5) Validity

Validity refers not only to what the instrument measures and also how well it does it. It involves measuring what one intends to measure; hence unreliable data is invalid since reliability assures validity [12]. To fulfil the above, the following actions were taken by the researcher. The draft of the research instruments

Table 1. Summary of target population.

County	School Name	Class Teachers Population	Parents Reps	Principals	Students
1	A	4	4	1	20
	B	4	4	1	20
2	C	4	4	1	20
	D	4	4	1	20
3	E	4	4	1	20
	F	4	4	1	20
	G	4	4	1	20
4	H	4	4	1	20
	Total	32	32	8	160

Source: Field data (2017).

Table 2. Sampling procedure and sample size.

Stakeholders	Population (N)	Sample (n)	Percentage (%)	Sampling Technique
Class Teachers	32	32	100%	Purposive Sampling
PTA	32	32	100%	Purposive Sampling
Students	1560	160	10.25%	Stratified Random Sampling
Principals	4	4	100%	Purposive
Total	1790	232	13%	

Source: Field data (2017).

Table 3. Summary of data analysis.

Objective	Methods of Analysis	Statistics Used	Method of Presentation
1) Form of punishment in schools	Descriptive	Percentages	Tables and Charts
2) C.P and discipline	Descriptive	Percentages	Table and Charts
3) C.P and performance	Descriptive	Percentages	Tables and Charts
4) C.P and Arson	Descriptive	Percentage	Table and Charts
5) Alternative to C.P	Descriptive	Percentage	Table and Charts

Source: Field data (2017).

was discussed with the research experts from the directorate of research and innovation in the University of Venda. A pilot study was then done in two (2) schools through which the instruments were tested and validated so as to help yield reliable data. The central goal of the pilot study was to test as many of the instruments as possible in order to correct any that did not work well. Reference [13] recommends a thorough of research instruments before they are used to carry out an investigation and 2 - 3 subjects to be used as respondents in the pre-test. The results of the pilot were then fed into the final research design.

6) Limitations of the study

Data on indicators of the severity of the corporal punishment on students were not collected. Respondents were only asked to select from the alternatives forms of punishment used to maintain discipline in schools and to mention who administers punishment. They were not asked to indicate the severity of the forms of punishment. For instance, the study did not account for differential effect of corporal punishment that results in serious physical injuries that may drive children to drop out of school, or less severe punishment. Gender of the students was not also considered in the study to give variation of forms of punishment given to girls and boys. The study also did not include other forms of punishment like verbal abuse, being forced to kneel or stay in other uncomfortable positions as indicated by [14] [15] [16]. Children often describe finding humiliating punishment, especially if carried out in front of peers, as bad or worse as corporal punishment [17].

4. Results

Stakeholders of the study involved: one hundred and sixty (160) students 32 parents, 32 teachers, and 8 principals from public secondary schools in western region of Kenya participated in the study. Their attitudes were determined by gauging their feelings beliefs and intended behaviour regarding the use of corporal punishment in school. The research findings are presented based on the five research questions.

The first research question was to establish the common forms of punishment used to maintain discipline in schools. **Table 4** shows the response of stakeholders.

Table 4 shows the responses of stakeholders on different forms of punishment used in schools. Seventy percent (70%) of the stakeholders (students) indicated that caning was most commonly used, while 11% indicated that slashing of grass is used as a form of punishment. Thirty percent (30%) of the students pointed out that most of indiscipline students are guided and counseled by school counselors. Thirty percent (30%) of the students indicated that teachers give more assignments as a form of punishment to weaker students who didn't complete their homework. The stakeholders (teachers) agreed that they gave out more assignments as a means of motivation to uplift students' academic attainment and corporal punishment enhances students' academic achievement it helps to create a conducive teaching and learning environment. They reported challenges in schools as: lateness, chronic absenteeism, truancy, rudeness, insubordination, disrespect, dissatisfaction, abuses, noncompliance to rules and regulations, drug abuse, destruction of property, bullying, assault among others.

In light of the Social Learning Theory, schools should address the root cause of negative behavior of students in order to mitigate against indiscipline cases. The theory emphasizes that schools should nurture and inculcate concept of self-discipline among students to make them intrinsically motivated to obey school rules and regulations. The social learning theory suggests that instead of corporal punishment, teachers should endeavor to provide appropriate environment for teaching, learning and enhancing positive behaviour. Twenty six out of 32 parents agreed that students who are punished in school conform and change their behavior.

However, all 100% of the interviewed school principals reported that caning is the routine punishment for misconduct. They retaliated that punishment can be

Table 4. Common forms of punishments administered in school.

Stakeholders	Common Punishment in School			
	Caning	Slashing	G/C	Assignments
Student	70%	11%	7%	13%
Class Teacher	14%	10%	26%	50%
Parents	15%	30%	51%	6%

Source: Field data (2017).

a double-edged sword depending on the students' desire for attention and is more effective in establishing and maintaining student discipline. The principals argued that students would not listen to instructions unless there was some form of sanction. They explained that other than the use of the cane, other methods of punishments such as: guidance and counselling, slashing, digging, uprooting stumps, weeding, trimming the fence, sweeping the paths and mopping are used but they are time wasting. Fifty (50)% of the stakeholders (parents) exclaimed that corporal punishment was good and necessary to enable schools maintain "proper discipline" and schools have formed discipline committees to oversee and check on discipline in schools. Parents discipline committee members in schools meet whenever there are incidences of indiscipline and the choice and manner in which forms of punishment are chosen and implemented is carefully considered by both parents and teachers.

The stakeholders were asked who has the authority to administer punishment in schools. **Table 5** shows these the results.

Table 5 shows that seventy two (72) out of 160 of the stakeholders (students) reported that the deputy principals do much of the caning because they are discipline masters of schools. This implies that more often students are punished because of indiscipline cases. Fifteen (15) out of 32 teachers indicated that the principals administered corporal punishment. All (100%) of the interviewed principals agreed that as head of schools, they have a right, if not a duty, to physically punish misbehaving children as a belief that corporal punishment builds character, develops children's conscience to have respect for adult authority. This is in line with the general old belief of the nineteenth century that the use of corporal punishment exterminates the evil part of the child leaving the good in the child to flourish. The principals explained that corporal punishment is used as a negative reinforcement to suppress certain behavior in students and maintain classroom control since other forms of correcting behaviour are time wasting; it is also considered to be best suited tool for controlling over large classes. Social learning theory emphasizes that teachers should be fair and prompt when using punishment to suppress the undesirable behaviour of students. In most cases, teachers do not listen to children's problems before they administer punishment. The results on whether punishment influence discipline in schools are shown in **Table 6**.

Table 6 shows that more than half 140 of the students out of 160 informed the study that corporal punishment has negative influence on students because it makes them have low self-esteem, becomes more defiant, increases the risk for physical abuse and inflates both physical and emotional pain. Thirty (30) out of 32 teachers indicated that corporal punishment has positively improved discipline in schools. The teachers explained positive discipline as: students learn the boundaries of what is acceptable and what is not acceptable, brought punctuality, well-disciplined personality, student's awareness of the values and actions that are acceptable in their school, family and society. This implies that although corporal punishment was abolished, stakeholders still use it to manage student

Table 5. Administration of punishment to student.

Stakeholders	Administrator of Punishment			Total
	Principal	Deputy Principal	Class Teacher	
Students	58	72	30	160
Teachers	15	11	6	32
Parents	10	11	11	32

Source: Field data (2017).

Table 6. Punishment and its influence on discipline.

Stakeholders	Discipline		Total
	Yes	No	
Students	20	140	160
Teachers	30	2	32
Parents	26	6	32

Source: Field data (2017).

discipline in schools. Twenty six (26) out of 32 parents' representatives indicated that corporal punishment has a positive change in students' discipline. Responses on whether punishment influences students' performance are shown in **Figure 1**.

One hundred and thirty students (130) out of 160 stakeholders (students) indicated that punishment negatively influences students' performance. Corporal punishment decreases the learner's motivation and leads to low academic achievement. This is because it creates fear, anxiety, aggression and frustration. Thirty (30) out of 32 (stakeholders) teachers indicated that punishment has a lot of influence on students' performance. They pointed out that severe punishment impedes class participation; create unpleasant relationship with their teachers; decreases the attendance and increases dropout rate of students. Twenty (20) parents out of 32 agreed that punishment has a negative influence on student's education because the students who are punished frequently run away from school and their education is not continued. Parents agreed that corporal punishment has negative effects on students' confidence as it creates fear, hinders learning and these results in poor academic performance. The results on the influence of corporal punishment and its influence on student's strikes and arson in schools are shown in **Table 7**.

One hundred and tow (102) students, twenty eight teachers and 25 parents agreed to it that corporal punishment (caning) is the cause of student's strikes and arson in schools. They indicated that poor diet, insufficient numbers and professionalism of teachers, in-adequate learning facilities, and principal's authoritarian attitudes are some of the causes of students' unrest that lead to students' strikes, hence schools ablaze. The principals mentioned: peer pressure, fear of examinations, poor administration, food and use of mobile phones as the

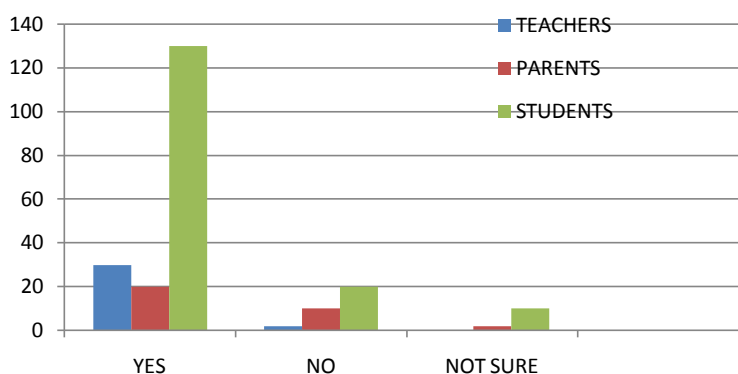


Figure 1. Punishment and students' performance.

Table 7. Corporal Punishment and students' strikes and arson.

Stakeholders	Strikes/Arson		Total
	Yes	No	
Student	102	58	160
Teachers	28	6	34
Parents	25	8	33

Source: Field data (2017).

leading causes of students unrests. The study was informed by stakeholders that the ring leaders of students' unrests are the planners of rampage, strikes and arsons in schools and schools with high rates of caning have high rates of students' suspension as a disciplinary measure. They indicated that students who are frequently punished develop indiscipline model aggressive behavior so it is unlikely that corporal punishment in school will decrease their misbehavior. Parents interviewed indicated that aside from the infliction of pain and the physical injuries which often result from the use of physical punishment, violent disciplinary methods also impact on students' feelings of sadness and worthlessness, suicidal thoughts, outbursts of aggression, intense dislike of authority, tendency for school avoidance, school drop-out, and negative high-risk adolescent behavior.

5. Discussions

5.1. Corporal Punishment (Caning) and Discipline in Schools

Stakeholders informed the study that corporal punishment (caning) is the most common tool used to maintain discipline in schools compared to other forms of punishment. This is because it is found to be more effective in establishing and maintaining students' discipline in most schools. It implies that despite the ban, corporal punishment (caning) is still widely used and favored by stakeholders in schools. Studies done by [18] concur that school heads are the implementers of policies at the school level and discipline management methods can only have an effect on student discipline level if they are fully implemented. The study was informed that corporal punishment (caning) is used as a negative communica-

tion to modify learning behaviour, maintain stability and order in a school environment. For instance, the use of corporal punishment is used in controlling noise making, late coming, exam cheating and students unrests. It was mentioned that Students cheat in examinations because of pressure from teachers and parents.

The stakeholders argued out that without corporal punishment, schools would become chaotic as students would become unruly. They reported that corporal punishment (caning) is used to keep order in class as the teacher continues to teach. It is used as a negative communication to maintain order and exercise control over the students. Reference [6] agrees that corporal punishment enhances moral character development, increases students' respect for teachers or other authority figures and offers greater security for teachers. Accordingly, corporal punishment gives the teachers power over pupils, produces upright and academically sound individuals who can be reintegrated back into society [19]. The stakeholders believed that corporal punishment is used to maintain academic standards otherwise syllabus coverage would deteriorate.

5.2. Use of Assignments to Maintain Discipline

Stake holders informed the study that giving assignments was another form of punishment that teachers use to maintain classroom discipline. Interviewed teachers reported that assignments assist students to be self-discipline, better managers, more inquisitive, more independent and more problem solving. Academically, weak students are punished by being given more assignments than bright students. This therefore means that teachers in schools set target marks that students are supposed to achieve, and students who fail to reach the target are given more assignment to do. Conversely, studies done by [20] show that more assignments can lead to undesirable behaviors such as cheating, either through copying of assignments or receiving assistance with work that involves more than tutoring. Poverty and home life might contribute to student's inability to comply with a teacher's wishes to complete their homework or learn their lessons, regardless of whether the children had the necessary books or materials, or opportunities to complete their homework [21].

These studies revealed that indiscipline students from lower-socioeconomic homes are likely to have more difficulty completing assignment than their more well-to-do peers because they may not have a quiet, well-lit place to do assignments. The stakeholders agreed with studies above that assignments involve parents and the broader community into schooling, and increase parents appreciation of education allowing them to reinforce students' achievement; however, parental involvement often can confuse children if the teaching methods employed differ from those of teachers. These studies revealed that indiscipline students from lower-socioeconomic homes are likely to have more difficulty completing assignment than their more well-to-do peers because they may not have a quiet, well-lit place to do assignments. A study by [22] suggests that the concept of classroom climate implies the intent to establish and maintain a posi-

tive context that facilitates classroom learning, but in practice, classroom climates range from hostile or toxic to welcoming and supportive and can fluctuate daily and over the school year.

5.3. Guidance and Counseling

Stakeholders informed the study that schools have guidance and counselling departments that have counsellors who guide and counsel students. They observed that a small number of the students turn out for counseling. They reported that not all teachers are trained for guidance and counselling, so it becomes difficulty to deal with many indiscipline cases in schools. The study was informed that schools that have implemented corporal punishment ban tend to have high level of discipline. In such schools, teachers guide and reason with students and the students see the need for discipline. The students become self-disciplined with subsequent increase in student discipline. Reference [23] observed that schools that have implemented physical punishment ban have high level of discipline because teachers use alternative methods of discipline management like guidance and counseling. On the other hand, [23] also observed that, although teachers used alternative methods to corporal punishment, they believed that they are less effective compared to corporal punishment. The students will not rebel against methods that they find acceptable and pro-human rights. A teacher is more likely to elicit appropriate behavior if he understands the situation that the child faces and offers guidance and counseling to the student. If the learner knows that there is someone who cares about his or her problems, the problems become easier to carry, even if there is no way to change them.

Stakeholders mentioned to the study that counselors are not adequate in schools; and counsellors' services are viewed negatively as time wasting and ineffective. The policy makers were blamed for banning the use of cane in schools without putting in place alternative approaches to deal with indiscipline and the department of guidance and counselling lacks supportive policies to make it more effective and a better replacement to the cane. For full implementation of corporal punishment ban, teachers should be trained in guidance and counseling as it helps to make students see the need to be disciplined and self-disciplined student does not need to be coerced to behave well [24].

Reference [25] concurs that the use of verbal methods such as guiding and counselling of students through explanation and reasoning are likely to provide the child with more cognitive stimulation than the use of corporal punishment without induction. This means that indiscipline outcomes may result if teachers who physically punish students make less use of inductive methods of discipline, such as explanation and reasoning procedures that are likely to enhance cognitive growth. Since these methods are learner friendly, the students will cooperate with the teachers. Teacher counsellors are expected to identify and assist learners who manifest personality profiles such as unhappiness, anger, violence, carelessness, inability to meet personal needs, loneliness, anxiety neurosis, excessive frustration, ignorance, underachievement and total failure among others [26].

The students will not rebel against methods that they find acceptable and pro-human rights. Furthermore, the guidance and counseling will make students to be self-disciplined [27].

The study was informed that both the administrators and the teaching staff administer corporal punishment (caning) which has resulted into positive communication in schools. Positive communication includes teaching children boundaries of what is acceptable and what is not acceptable and this makes them aware of the values and actions that are acceptable in their family and society. Studies done by [28] and [29] agree that corporal punishment (caning) enables children to take responsibility for themselves when they are older. As heads of schools, the Principals informed the study that they have a right, if not a duty, to physically punish misbehaving children because they have a belief that corporal punishment builds character, develops a child's conscience and has respect for adult authority. Deputy Principals do much of the caning because they are the discipline masters of schools and chairpersons of the disciplinary committees in the schools. They also keep records of all disciplinary cases in schools. Class teachers indicated that corporal punishment is a tool of the classroom control and teachers punish students for a wide range of infractions, some serious, some extraordinarily minor. Stakeholders cited students' misconducts as: making noise in class, truancy or absenteeism, bullying, fighting, stealing, disobedience or rudeness, and leaving the classroom or school. Less frequent grounds for punishment included selling or using drugs in school, smoking, jumping over the school fence and using profanity. Parents embraced the use of the cane as an enforcement by its use in the home and they expect teachers to use it. However, 50% of the students informed the study that punishment (caning) makes learners more defiant; increase risk for physical abuse and experience physical and emotional pain, which decreases learning capacity.

The stakeholders were convinced that use of the cane is necessary because it is used against students for a wide range of disciplinary infractions. Children may receive corporal punishment for coming to school late, missing school without permission (even for unanticipated illnesses), having a dirty or torn school uniform, rudeness, and any form of disruptive classroom behaviour. Teachers set target marks that students are supposed to achieve, and students who fail to reach the target are given more assignment or caned. The fact that a student's poverty and home life might contribute to his or her inability to comply with a teacher's wishes, it is generally not seen as grounds for excusing the child's behaviour. Many teachers punish students who fail to complete their homework or learn their lessons, regardless of whether the children had the necessary books or materials, or opportunities to complete their homework.

Reference [21] on the other hand argue that adults who inflict corporal punishment are often angry: their anger increases the level of force used beyond what was intended, and their intent may be retaliatory as well as punitive. The use of corporal punishment against students creates an overall threatening school atmosphere that impacts students' ability to perform academically [30].

The study was informed that teachers who physically punish students should make less use of inductive methods of discipline, such as explanation and reasoning procedures that are likely to enhance cognitive growth. Social, learning theory emphasizes that a combination of reward, positive motivational techniques and appropriate, nonphysical punishments prevent most misbehavior. These tend to improve the teacher-child relationship and decrease the need or utility of corporal punishment.

Stakeholders also rated corporal punishment and its influence on students' performance. The study results indicate that corporal punishment is used in schools when all other means have failed because it is the most effective means for correcting student misbehavior, as it brings order, control, and discipline in the classroom. It also prepares a learner's mind in readiness for the learning process. This can only be more effective if the one punishing is more respected by the one being punished. Reference [31] argues that corporal punishment does not deter misbehavior as revealed by the fact that the same child is normally caned frequently. Equally, the British psychologist [32] maintains that corporal punishment is not a deterrent because giving the child punishment only leaves the child feeling that the problem is over, but it is never reformatory. Reference [31] study suggests that a competent teacher should be able to control the learners in the classroom without resorting to violence in form of corporal punishment. Instead, their discipline should emerge from ethics of school, their personality and their traditional role like teachers.

Reference [4] agrees with Smith's study above that it is respect and co-operation between teachers and learners that can restore order in the classroom and schools, not the use of force in the form of corporal. While stakeholders may feel it is necessary for a child to experience pain in order to learn, a significant amount of research has shown to the contrary that the use of corporal punishment may hinder learning, encourage or lead children to drop out of school, and generally undermine the purposes of education [33]. The study found out that corporal punishment is used against students who cheat in exams. Studies suggest that the problem of cheating in examination is best solved by students being sent home to call their parents [33]. The parents, together with the teachers and the students, jointly set achievable objectives according to the student ability. This implies that teachers should instead use positive verbal communication methods of discipline through explanation and reasoning which are likely to provide the child with more cognitive stimulation than the use of corporal punishment without induction [25]. Teachers informed the study that they give more assignments as a means of punishment especially on weaker students who don't complete their homework. This assists indiscipline students to be better managers, more inquisitive, more independent and more problem solving.

On the question of whether punishment is the cause of strikes and arson in schools, Stake holders responded that schools with high rates of corporal punishment have high rates of suspensions and are generally more punitive in all

discipline responses than schools with low rates of corporal punishment. They pointed out causes of school strikes as: peer pressure, refusal to do mock exams, abusing of drugs, transfer of popular teachers, and rigid rules. This concurs with studies by [33] who agree that corporal punishment (caning) has influenced strikes and arsons in schools as schools do not have strong internal mechanism of dealing with student disciplinary problems. Grievances about inadequate and harsh conditions in schools, poor diet, and insufficient number of teachers, in-adequate learning facilities, and principals' authoritarian attitudes toward students were the most commonly cited reasons for strikes in schools.

In Kenya students' strikes have been on the increase. For instance, in 2001, 240 cases of strikes were recorded while 360 cases were recorded in 2008. In these cases, young people were obsessed with burning, vandalism and destruction of their own institutions [27]. In these incidences poor management skills were partly to blame for cases of indiscipline that are rising sharply in secondary schools now, which in some cases has led to several deaths and injuries. Many of the fires are set by students protesting harsh discipline, poor teaching and dictatorial leadership. There are incidences when dormitories are burned down in schools. For example instances at a boarding school in western Kenya as indicated in **Figure 2** and **Figure 3**.

The burning of the school dormitory was as a result of students' anger as they were not allowed to watch a live broadcast of a Euro 2016 football match. Many people thought that there must have been a more profound reason. Some suggest that this is a matter of indiscipline, caused by poor parenting, and that caning should be reintroduced.

Kenya's education minister said that arson was to blame for school fires. "It was not an accident, it was arson", the Minister said. Students who were interviewed complained about poor food, scarce teaching materials, harsh teachers, and management that ignored their concerns. Many students compared their schools to prison and said they destroyed their schools so that they could go home. The Stakeholders informed the study that strikes occur because schools



Figure 2. Arson of a school dormitory in Western Kenya [27].



Figure 3. Burning of students' property in a school in Western Kenya [27].

do not have a strong internal mechanism of dealing with student disciplinary problems. There is need to develop leadership in schools to appreciate the importance of dialogue and democratic approaches that would be of essence in solving the problem of students' unrest. Reference [26] reports suggest that measures taken by schools to reduce unrests were open forums or barazas between the students and the school administration during which students could air their grievances. Other measures included addressing student concerns, and encouraging parents to play their roles. But given the gravity of students' unrests and the backgrounds of students who participated, there is an urgent need for counselling in schools.

6. Conclusion

The above findings have confirmed that the stakeholders' attitudes towards the use of corporal punishment in school have an impact on the practice of corporal punishment in secondary schools in western Kenya. Despite the ban of corporal punishment by the government in 2001, the study found out that stakeholders still have positive attitudes towards the use of corporal punishment as it is more effective in establishing and maintaining student discipline in most schools. They have a strong belief that corporal punishment builds students character, develops students' conscience and makes them have respect for adult authority. On the other hand stakeholders mentioned that high rates of the use of corporal punishment lead to high rates of suspensions and are generally more punitive in all discipline responses. They pointed out that severe punishment impedes the class participation; decreases the attendance and increases dropout rate of students. They explained students who are punished frequently, avoid school and also create unpleasant relationship with their teachers. The more frequent students experience corporal punishment, the more severe it is, the more they are at risk for problems like aggression and depression, strikes and arsons in schools. The study confirmed that the practice of corporal punishment was maintained in the selected schools, and was highly favored by schools' stakeholders.

7. Recommendations

The study results indicate that schools still use the cane despite the ban. The policy has not been sensitized to students, parents and teachers. School administrators believe that corporal punishment builds child's character, conscience and respect for adult authority. It is critical that teachers receive adequate training to help them effectively maintain classroom control without resorting to corporal punishment. Seminars and in-service courses should be organized for teachers to be enlightened on alternative approaches in managing student discipline and bench marking trips be encouraged where teachers would visit schools that have successfully implemented physical punishment ban.

The government, through MOEST should strengthened guidance and counselling to provide a new way of managing student discipline. This can help to increase students' self-awareness and foster emotional growth and maturity. Counselling can also help students to articulate their issues, and bring more understanding on the problems. Schools should encourage counsellors and students to have a close relationship that would ensure that students are free to consult the counsellors.

There is need to develop leadership in schools that appreciate the importance of dialogue and democratic approaches in solving the problem of students' unrest. This can be done through forums or barazas between students and school administration. Parents should be involved more closely in the dispensation of discipline at the school level, preferably under the auspices of Parents Teachers Association (PTA). The study recommends corporal punishment to be reinstated since the stakeholders' attitudes and society demands towards it remain positive.

8. Further Study

The religious books such as the Holy bible in the book of Proverbs 23:13-14, portrays corporal punishment as a method of instilling corrective behaviour to wrong doers. "Do not withhold discipline from your child, if you punish him with the rod he will not die. Punish him with the rod, and save his soul from death". A study could investigate on how schools use religious teachings to emphasize on the discipline of children to put them right.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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