

Attitude of Youth towards Corporal Punishment – A Case of Karachi

Prof. Dr. Memoona Saeed Lodhi*, Prof. Dr. Jawaid Ahmed Siddiqui**

* Deputy Director and Head of Social Sciences Department, FH&SS

**Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (FH&SS), Hamdard University Karachi, Pakistan

Abstract: *The practice of corporal punishment is widespread across the world. Asian countries in particular are facing this issue due to poor administrative and managerial policies. The most significant population, affected by any form of punishment is youth. Their social and psychological development is greatly affected by the negligence attitude of teachers and parents. The decision of youth and their attitude towards this practice are central to find, to what extent, they shore up this idea. The study was conducted to find the attitude of youth towards corporal punishment. The population of the study consists of all the students, studying in public and private schools in Karachi. Through convenient sampling, 200 youth were selected from 20 schools, located in Karachi Pakistan. Attitude was judged through questionnaire, which was designed and validated by the experts. The results show that majority of the respondents are not in favor of corporal punishment. Majority of the respondents said that their institutions are practicing corporal punishment and that they have been its victim. Majority of the respondents are neutral that they feel embarrass when their teacher use corporal punishment. All the respondents supported positive moral appreciation from teachers. The researcher suggests government to draft policy for all the schools to avoid this practice. It was also suggested to provide training to teachers for learning alternative approach towards discipline practices. Similarly, it should be the part of curriculum of every school.*

Key Words: *Attitude, Youth, Corporal Punishment*

I. Introduction

Children are interactive and creative. Their social, moral and psychological development is very crucial at the early age (Hurlock, 2001). They are sensitive to external environment. There are many problems face by them in society. The nature of these problems varies. These challenges often provoke their decision making skills and shape negative attitude towards various ideas and perceptions.

Children spend most of their time at home, with friends and in school. Intrinsically, they have some innate characteristics, while they learn most of the behavioral attributes from external sources. Most of the learned behavior is greatly impacted by the environment they receive at home and school (Atwater, 2008). If there is a use of abusive language and punishment at home, then it is likely that children will learn the same and will retort in return. Similar case is with school settings. If teachers are motivators and encourage students, their moral, social and psychological development will reach the peak; however, if institutions fail to tackle their needs, one cannot expect best possible development.

Parents, in particular are unaware about all the challenges, children face in educational institution. Bullying and verbal abuse is commonly practiced in schools and society, but the most common problem, children face in school from teachers' side, in particular is corporal punishment.

Various researchers have provided different dimensions of corporal punishment. It is defined as a practice associated with maintaining discipline among the children (Greven, 1991; Pervin, 1997) by the misuse of power. In educational institutions and in society, corporal punishment takes various shapes.

In either form, corporal punishment leave scars in the memories of children which are unforgettable and unhealed. A research study was conducted to find the impact of corporal punishment on children. The results show increase in aggression, violent behavior and emotionally impairment among children. A mega study was conducted which also share that it develop mental illness and affect developmental areas (Talwar, 2011 and Afifi, 2012). One of the authors evaluated various global researches on the effect of corporal punishment on children and concluded that it highly affect children psychologically for long term (Dorpat, 2007). These researches give insights that corporal punishment is not correlated with positive behavioral outcomes.

In Asian countries, the severity of corporal punishment is highlighted by media and research reports on various occasions (SAIEVAC, 2011). In South Asia alone, the practice of corporal punishment is common and contributing reason for behavioral problem and drop out of children. Most commonly, untrained teachers use this form of abuse, which hamper the development of children in many ways. It affects either gender or misled

children in many ways. More than that, children facing disability facade more challenges. Although Asian countries are in support of eradicating this practice and has also ratified various global treaties, but its practice is rarely seen.

Pakistan is one of the few countries where corporal punishment is severely practiced and least reported due to lack of awareness about it. Government and other organizations are also showing no interest to ban this practice. UNICEF conducted a survey based research in Pakistan to find about the experience of corporal punishment face by children in schools. Majority of the children indicated that they received punishment at school (Pate & Gould, 2012). One of the research studies was conducted in Pakistan which says that it deeply affected the academic performance of students and de-motivated them towards studies (Naz, Khan, Daraz, Hussain, & Khan, 2011).

Human behavior is unpredictable. It can only be understood on average by finding the attitude of people towards this problem, which would provide foundation to the social needs of people. Our attitude towards social events can be drawn through our attitude, which can direct our behavior to be molded in a specific pattern (Mann, 1985). The attitude of children, in particular is greatly significant to understand their decisions. The study is planned to know, how children view corporal punishment in Pakistan.

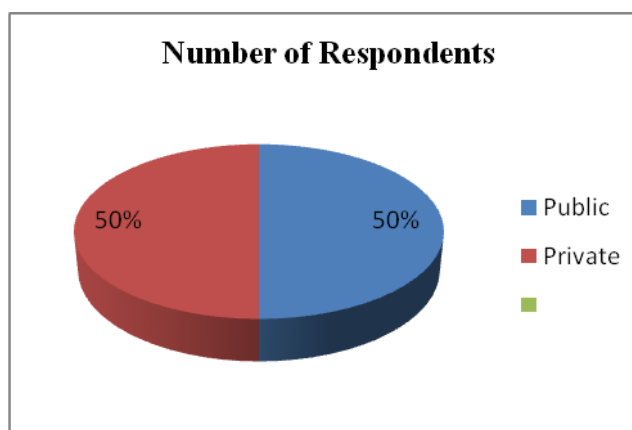
II. Population And Sampling

The population for the study consists of all the students studying in private schools in Karachi. The sampling consists of all the students of class 8th standard, who are studying in public and private schools. Total twenty schools were selected, out of which, two hundred sample size (10 from each school) was selected through convenient sampling. A questionnaire of ten questions was designed. The questions were modified as per context, where required. It was also validated by the experts. The results are later analyzed with the help of tables and graphs, wherever applicable.

III. Data Analysis

Table 1 Number of respondents participated in the study

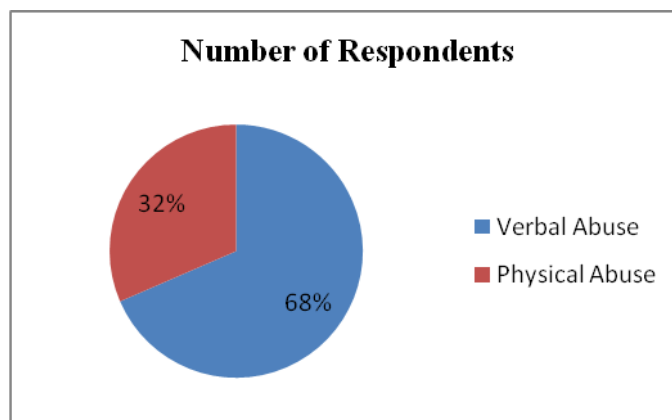
S. No.	Nature of School	Number of Respondents
1.	Public	100
2.	Private	100
	Total	200



The students selected for the study are equally taken from public and private schools

Table 2 Punishment faced by students

S. No.	Forms of Punishment	Number of Respondents
1.	Verbal Abuse	137
2.	Physical Abuse	63
	Total	200



Majority of the students (32%) faced verbal abuse in school by their teachers, but a good number of respondents also faced physical abuse of various forms. All in all, all the respondents faced either form of punishment during their lives.

Table 3 Showing the Responses of the Number of Students for each item

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
Corporal Punishment is one of the breach of children rights	152	36	12	0	0
Corporal Punishment is good to maintain discipline	2	13	7	77	101
Corporal Punishment is practiced in our school	124	49	9	7	11
I fear of Corporal Punishment	39	48	14	56	43
I faced corporal punishment during school	92	88	2	7	11
I felt embarrass when I was punished	47	56	63	12	22
My teachers try to make me feel ashamed or guilty	25	45	78	40	12
I prefer those teachers who praise me for behaving well	200	0	0	0	0
Corporal Punishment has affected my personality	54	36	107	3	0
Corporal punishment should be banned	178	21	1	0	0

IV. Results

Majority of the respondents said that corporal punishment is one of the violations of children rights. Majority of the respondents strongly disagree that this practice is good to maintain discipline. Some of the respondents share that corporal punishment take place in their educational institutions. Few of the respondents do not fear of corporal punishment due to its practice. Majority has faced corporal punishment at school. Majority of the respondents are neutral that they feel embarrass when their teacher use corporal punishment. Most of the respondents are neutral in their view that their teachers make them feel ashamed in front of others. All the respondents said that they like teachers praising them for their good behavior. Majority of the respondents are neutral in their view that corporal punishment has affected their individuality. Majority of the respondents said that corporal punishment should be banned.

V. Discussion

The development of children personality is crucial for their social interaction. Their decisions are interchangeable whereas their power of taking decision is mostly influenced by the challenges they come across in their routine lives.

Discipline is considered as one of the most significant areas of child behavioral development (Damon, Lerner & Eisenberg, 2006). It is defined as a strategy to obey rules (Chandra & Sharma, 1996). Chambers (1983) define it as an internal control which begins from the individuals.

In the view of parents and teachers, children need strictness and require punishment to maintain discipline, whereas, children prefer soft skills to tackle with them. This idea was also supported by Gershoff who says that punishment is basically use to control the behavioral attitude of children, without knowing the fact that it exaggerates behavior and makes them furious, aggressive and detaches them from society in many ways (2002).

There are various methods, used by schools to maintain discipline. Few of the educational institutions encourage modern practices to provide healthy discipline skills among students. In against of that, there are few schools, which are very strict and use punishment to maintain discipline. Unfortunately, discipline maintenance itself has raised many disciplinary issues among the institutions, as most of the students are not in favor of harsh discipline maintaining rules (Damon, Lerner & Eisenberg, 2006).

One of the most common punishment uses in educational institution is corporal punishment. It is one of the forms of violence, which is used by teachers as the last resort. It is also defined as the strategy, use to control or correct the unstructured behavior of children with the help of physical exertion. This issue commonly lowers moral internalization and promotes anti-social behavior among students (Bomar, 2004). According to one of the organizations, corporal punishment is the force or assertion to shape behavior, which causes discomfort (Saunders & Goddard, 2009).

The most common types of punishment use in schools include spanking, humiliation, verbal abuse and threatening (UNICEF, 2007). It also includes standing under sun, hitting buttocks, slapping, insulting, cane hitting, etc. It is believed by most of the people that it helps to regulate discipline, but in the reality, it creates frustration and indiscipline practices among students. They feel inferior and engage in more violent and abusive behavior in their lives. There are many supporters of punishment; however, Nakpodia (2007) cited that it is cruel and inhumane to discriminate others by giving punishment for the sake of correcting behavior.

Corporal punishment is abolished in many developed countries. But in the developing countries, the use of punishment continues unabated (Thakuri, n.d.). One of the researchers share that corporal punishment is still the part of educational practice in many countries due (Denmark, Gielen, Krauss, Midlarsky, & Wesner, 2006) to weak policies.

Corporal punishment is commonly used in Asian countries. In many countries around the world, corporal punishment is a socially accepted method of discipline. In order to gain a deeper understanding as well as explore the deeper roots of corporal punishment and violence against individuals and children, historical perspective based studies were conducted which also point out its existence (Ritz, n.d). It is also believed that corporal punishment takes place due to gender discrimination. One of such study was conducted with says that different racial students face different level of corporal punishment (Richardson, 2012).

One of the study suggested that it is the responsibility of the government to introduce such measures which should discourage such practices. It is also recommended that disciplinary techniques should be introduced (Nakpodia, 2012). Education system and institutions have very significant role in allowing such practices. There are several schools in Pakistan, where corporal punishment is strictly prohibited; but in majority of the institutions, this practice is routinely taking place. In one of the study, the researcher highlighted that in the past, indiscipline and misbehavior were controlled through physical work with no negative impact on the mental capabilities of child, whereas the trend is now changed. This view point provides an idea that discipline can be maintained effectively through positive strategies to support students learning.

Pakistan is facing the problem of corporal punishment since long. From the present research it was found that children are not in favor of corporal punishment. Their attitude is negative towards abuse of any form. The results also show that neutral number of respondents feels humiliation and embarrassment, when they face punishment. This view is supported by a research study, which was conducted to find the attitude of triangulation, i.e., parents, teachers and students towards punishment. The results show that punishment created horror and humiliation among children, however in majority of the cases, this practice was functional from adult side to maintain discipline (Kumar & Lakshmi, 2014).

Although several laws exist in Pakistan which reject the practice of corporal punishment in schools, but still, the practice is at peak. The Prohibition of the Corporal Punishment Act 2013 and several other bills was passed to strengthen the vision of eradicating this practice; but, due to weak policies, this practice is under-shadowed.

The issue of punishment is also common at homes. In one of the study, it was evaluated whether parents punish children to maintain discipline or not. The youth revealed that they are being punishment several times in their lives by their parents for the purpose of maintaining discipline (Deater-Deckard, Lansford, Dodge, Pettit, & Bates, 2003). According to one of the study conducted in Pakistan, parents of middle class mostly favor corporal punishment. This view was also supported by the teachers. Although, there is a ban to chastise children in schools in Pakistan but the law is not properly implemented (Shaukat, 2013).

The results also share that majority of the respondents are not in favor of punishment as a medium to maintain discipline. A research study was conducted to find about corporal punishment attitude. The results indicate that majority of the respondents do not favor corporal punishment (SKDS, 2009).

Majority of the educational institution practice corporal punishment and that the respondents have faced it in their life. One of the studies highlighted the attitude of classroom teachers towards punishment in one of the provinces of Pakistan. The students said that teacher's attitude and behavior towards punishment is significantly related to each other. Additionally, it was also studied that punishment is more common in public than private schools (Ali & Shah, 2011).

From the study, it was also found that respondents felt bad when they were punished. Their personality has greater link with their self- respect. It points out the idea that it may affect their academic performance and lower their self-esteem. Many times, students lose interest in the studies when they face punishment at school. One of such national research was conducted in Pakistan to find the impact of punishment on the motivation

level of students. The results show that students were de-motivated when face punishment (Ahmad, Said & Khan, 2013).

Conclusion: The researcher suggests that punishment should be banned from educational institutions. Government should take this issue seriously and draft policy for all the schools to avoid this practice. Teachers training should be introduced to teach them how to maintain positive discipline skills among students. One of the educational institutions suggests that each institute should be fair enough to treat and respect all the students equally to maintain healthy development of children (http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/HE/mf_classdisckansasnea.pdf). Bear (n.d.) also supports this idea that it is good to use positive strategy to maintain discipline for the intellectual and moral development of children.

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