

# Attitudes and Opinions of Teachers towards Corporal Punishment

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## Abstract

*Corporal Punishment yields negative impact on the behaviors of students and thus their learning achievements remain lower. Sometime, in a particular situation, students' exhibit relatively better results but they actually get fed up with the learning enrolment and intrinsically intend to go away from teaching learning process. This study was under taken to get the opinion of primary school teachers and their practical behaviors towards corporal punishment at primary level in the Govt. Schools of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. In order to collect data, a questionnaire containing 35 questions was developed in Urdu for seeking opinion of primary school teachers. The questionnaire had two parts; the first part pertained to information about different aspects related to the classroom situation while the second part contained an open-ended question asking for suggestions. Stratified random sample technique was used but only those school were selected which were willing to respond and easy to approach. Data collected through questionnaire were tabulated and analyzed. Although difference of opinion was found among the teachers on all issues yet an overall majority opined that corporal punishment must not be there as it was the greatest negative variable for creating a conducive environment for teaching learning process.*

**Key words:** Punishment, Learning Achievements, Learning Environment, Motivation, Satisfaction.

## **Introduction**

The purpose of this study is to get opinion from primary school teachers with regards to whether or not they use corporal punishment, to what extent they use it and with what effect. Do they think that corporal punishment is an important agent of controlling the behavior of children?

The purpose of this study is to get information from teachers as to what type of punishment do they use? The researchers also intend to investigate that if the teachers use corporal punishment to suppress certain behavior and whether or not they are successful in controlling that behavior.

Corporal punishment has been generally defined as “The infliction of pain by a teacher or other educational official upon the body of a student as a penalty for doing something, which has been disapproved by the punisher”.

Corporal punishment at home and school has been widely debated. Some believe that it is a means of discipline while others call it abuse. Some hold that corporal punishment is harmful to children and may lead to emotional and physical problems.

It is believed that early years of the child are very important in his life. And the goal of the classroom control is to motivate the shape of pupils that they do not create discipline problems. Positive motivation is a preventive measure that is real key to class control. When pupils are working well, control and discipline takes care of them. Nevertheless, even in the best of classes, the behavior of pupils is less than desirable and needs to be turned into new directions. In spite of being dramatic and impressive corporal punishment has not proven to be very effective in the long run. Situations and extinctions are seldom practicable measures for correcting unseemly behavior in schools. Therefore, teachers often depend only on incompatible alternatives, negative reinforcement and punishment to correct misbehavior.

Corporal punishment in the home and school are banned in a number of countries i.e.; Austria, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Italy, Norway, Sweden and England. Govt. of Germany, Ireland, Poland, and Spain are currently debating bans. There is a proposal to repeal section 43 of the Canadian Criminal Code which permits parents to use “reasonable force” when disciplining children. About 20 states in the US prohibit corporal punishment in public schools. Yet many continue to authorize corporal punishment in their schools.

## **Significance of Study**

Corporal punishment has not proven to be very effective in the long run. It humiliates students, creates feelings of resentments and hostility, and generally disrupts one’s attempt to build a favorable classroom environment. In addition it is fraught with danger. Sometimes this type of punishment has resulted in student’s injury. As Masters, Burish, Hollon and Rimm point out, “Many therapists feel that a minimal number of mild shocks is more humane than the continual but ineffective spanking or shaming of a child”.

Overall corporal punishment is by enlarge don’t have positive effects. Most people don’t have in favor of corporal punishment. Some researches are in the favor of corporal punishment. Psychologist’ opinions are against the corporal punishment.

## **Sample**

Schools from different Socio-economic level were taken as representative. It was considered that schools from every area should be taken. The schools which were selected, they belong to

different areas. Availability and willingness was major consideration in the representation of the every school.

### Methodology

In order to collect data one questionnaire was developed. A questionnaire containing 40 questions was developed in Urdu and English seeking opinion of Primary school teachers. The questionnaire had two parts the 1<sup>st</sup> part pertained to information about different aspects related to the classroom situation while the 2<sup>nd</sup> part contained an open ended question asking for suggestions.

The questionnaire was discussed with an expert and was amended in the light of her suggestions. Subsequently the questionnaire was pilot tested on a sample of primary school teachers. It was again amended in the light of feedback and analysis. The sample for pilot testing was other than the one included in the sample. The questionnaire was revised in the light of feedback received on pilot testing. Some questions were deleted and in some cases language of the questionnaire was simplified and ambiguities identified by the teacher were removed. In its final form, the questionnaire had 35 questions and was divided into two parts.

The first four questions provide information about the use, type and the effect of the punishment. The remaining were so designed that five questions were related to discipline, 16 were related to the education system, 5 to interpersonal relationships of children and 4 to attendance/dropping out of school and last question was open ended which was included to take the suggestions of teachers about the punishment.

### Data Analysis

Data collected through questionnaire was analyzed. Data was classified. As the sample of teachers included only the female teachers, the data was analyzed on frequency and percentages basis accordingly to indicate the opinion of the teachers about corporal punishment. The questionnaire had two parts; the 1<sup>st</sup> part of the questionnaire was related with the discipline, attendance, and the dropouts, educational system and relationship between teacher and student and among the students. It contained 34 questions.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> part of the questionnaire consisted of one question and pertained its teachers view about corporal punishment. This last question was open ended. The data collected from questionnaire was analyzed and tabulated. Graphic representation of the data is also given.

### Results

The major findings of the study were following:

**Table 1: Use of Punishment for Students**

Item No	Item	No Response		Always		Often		Rare		Never	
		Fre q	%	Fre q	%	Fre q	%	Freq	%	Fre q	%
1	Do you use punishment?	0	0	0	0	4	1 3	23	7 7	3	10

The table 1 indicated that 77% teachers use punishment very rarely while 13 percent teachers said that they often used punishment and 10% said that they never use punishment. The table showed that 86% teachers almost use punishment as rarely and never.

**Table 2: Type of Punishment used for Students**

Item No	Item	Freq	%						
2,3	Which Punishment you use?								
	1. Ear Twisting	4	13						
	2. Slapping	7	23						
	3. Caning	4	13						
	4. Cocking	6	20						
	5. Standing on bench	2	7						
	6. Standing while keeping hands up	14	47						
	7. Standing in one leg	0	0						
	8. Holding tongue	2	7						
	9. Any other punishment	0	0						
Item no	Item	Very Much		Very Less		Little Bit		No Effect	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
4	What is the effect of punishment that you use?	8	27	5	16	15	50	2	7

Table 2 showed that 47% teachers use standing while keeping hands up in the air. 23 percent teachers use slapping as a punishment. 13 percent teachers said that they use the ear twisting as a punishment. 13% teachers use canning, 20% percent use cocking as punishment, 7% use standing on bench as punishment, 7% use to hold tongue as punishment. No one responded on the standing on one leg. Most commonly used punishment was standing while keeping hands up and slapping. 50% said that the punishment has little bit effect. 27 percent responded that the effect of the punishment is very high. 16 percent responded that effect of punishment is very low. 7 percent said that punishment does not effect at all. Most of the teacher said that punishment has a little bit effect.

**Table 3: Corporal Punishment in our Educational System**

Item no	Item	No Response		Yes		No	
		Fre q	%	Fre q	%	Fre q	%
5	Our educational system depends on C.P.	0	0	14	47	16	53
6	C.P is necessary to maintain discipline.	0	0	20	67	10	33
7	Education and C.P are closely related.	4	13	9	30	17	57
8	Due to C.P relationship among children is bad.	1	3	13	43	16	53
9	C.P is the only way to maintain discipline.	1	3	13	43	16	53

					3		
10	C.P is helpful in decreasing the discipline problems.	0	0	18	6 0	12	40

The table 3 depicted that 53% teachers were against it that our educational system depends upon punishment while 47 percent answered in favor. 67 percent said that corporal punishment is important in maintaining discipline and 33 percent responded against it. 57 percent were against it that education and corporal punishment is interrelated and 30 percent responded in the favor. 53 percent teachers were against it that interpersonal relationships of children are adversely affected due to corporal punishment and 43 percent responded in the favor. 53 percent said that corporal punishment is not the only way to maintain the discipline and 43 percent were against it. 60 percent said that corporal punishment is helpful in decreasing the disciplinary problems and 40 percent responded against it.

**Table 4: Corporal Punishment in our Educational System**

Item no	Item	No Response		Yes		No	
		Fre q	%	Fre q	%	Fre q	%
11	An artificial discipline is imposed on children due to C.P.	0	0	13	4 3	17	57
12	C.P put good impression on the mind of children.	1	3	3	1 0	24	87
13	C.P is helpful in improving the attendance rate in the school.	0	0	16	5 3	14	47
14	C.P puts good impression on the personality of the children.	0	0	1	3	29	97
15	C.P improves the educational capability of the children.	0	0	6	2 0	24	80

Table 4 indicated that 57 percent said that an artificial discipline is not imposed on children due to corporal punishment and 43 percent were against it. 87 percent said that corporal punishment does not put good impression on the mind of the children and 10 percent responded against it. 53 percent responded that corporal punishment is helpful in the improvement of attendance rate in schools and 47 percent were against it. 97 percent responded that corporal punishment does not put good impression on the personality of the children and 3 percent were against it. 80 percent said that corporal punishment does not improve the educational capability of the children and 20 percent responded against it.

**Table 5: Corporal Punishment in our Educational System**

Item no	Item	No Response		Yes		No	
		Fre q	%	Fre q	%	Fre q	%
16	Due to C.P the relationship among children are very pleasant	0	0	3	1 0	27	90
17	C.P develops more interest in the children.	0	0	3	1	27	90

					0		
18	C.P motivates the children to get education.	0	0	9	30	21	70
19	C.P enhances hatred in children against education.	0	0	16	53	14	47
20	C.P means to embarrass the children.	0	0	23	77	7	23

Table 5 showed that 90 percent said that due to corporal punishment relationship among children are not very pleasant and 10 percent were against it. 90 percent said that corporal punishment does not develop interest in the children and 10 percent responded against it. 70 percent responded that corporal punishment does not motivate the children to get education and 30 percent were against it. 53 percent said that corporal punishment enhances hatred in the children against education and 47 percent responded against it. 77 percent teachers responded that corporal punishment created hatred in the children against the teacher and 23 percent were against it.

**Table 6: Corporal Punishment in our Educational System**

Item no	Item	No Response		Yes		No	
		Fre q	%	Fre q	%	Fre q	%
21	Education is continued through the process of C.P.	0	0	21	70	9	30
22	Continuous C.P maintains the respect of the teacher.	0	0	7	23	23	77
23	C.P is helpful in making a child a good citizen.	2	7	4	13	24	80
24	C.P is solution of every educational problem.	0	0	4	13	26	87
25	The children who get C.P frequently they run away from school.	0	0	22	73	8	27

Table 6 depicted that 70 percent responded that corporal punishment means to embrace the child and 30 percent were against it. 77 percent said that education is not continued through the process of corporal punishment and 23 percent responded against it. 80 percent teachers said that corporal punishment is not helpful in making a child a good citizen and 13 percent responded against it. 87 percent responded that corporal punishment is not the solution of every educational problem and 13 percent were against it. 73 percent teachers said that children who get corporal punishment frequently they avoid going to school and 27 percent were against it.

**Table 7: Corporal Punishment in our Educational System**

Item no	Item	No Response		Yes		No	
		Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%

		q		q		q	
26	C.P creates a pleasant relationship between the teacher and the student.	0	0	6	20	24	80
27	Children who get C.P leave their education.	0	0	22	73	8	27
28	C.P helps in improving the creative abilities of children.	0	0	6	20	24	80
29	C.P improves the mental capabilities.	0	0	5	17	25	83
30	You can increase the literacy rate of children through C.P.	0	0	5	17	25	83
31	C.P raises the standard of education.	0	0	6	20	24	80
32	We can achieve our educational goals with the help of C.P.	0	0	9	30	21	70
33	The students are willing to do the same for which they are punished.	2	7	11	36	17	57

Table 7 depicted that 80 percent responded that corporal punishment does not create a pleasant relationship between the teacher and the student and 20 percent were against it. 73 percent children who get more corporal punishment leave their education and 27 percent were against it. 80 percent teachers said that corporal punishment does not help in improving the creative abilities of children and 20 percent were against it. 83 percent responded that corporal punishment does not improve the mental capabilities of the children and 17 percent were against it. 83 percent teachers said that we can't increase the literacy rate in children through corporal punishment and 17 percent were against it. 80 percent said that corporal punishment does not raise the standard of education and 20 percent responded against it. 70 percent responded that we can't achieve our educational goals with the help of corporal punishment and 30 percent were against it. 57 percent teachers said that children are not willing to do the same for which they are punished and 36 percent were against it.

### Discussion:

Although difference of opinion was found among the teachers on all issues, yet an overall majority opinion went against the use of corporal punishment. The only aspect where most teachers thought it was effective for maintaining discipline.

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