



A STUDY OF ATTITUDES OF TEACHERS ON PUNISHMENT OF MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Introduction

Education means knowledge in basic skills, academics, technical, discipline, and citizenship. Our society says only academic basics are important and that is based on collecting knowledge without understanding its value. These skills are associated with understanding the value of knowledge. Education in the largest sense is any act or experience that has a formative effect on the mind, character or physical ability of an individual. In its technical sense, education is the process by which society deliberately transmits its accumulated knowledge, skills, and values from one generation to another. Common punishments used by teachers include reprimands, withdrawal of privileges such as recess, time-out from a rewarding environment, or suspension from school. If the mis-behaviour is rewarding to the student, then that behaviour is likely to continue after the punishing stimulus is withdrawn. In order to permanently decrease a behaviour, an appropriate replacement behaviour must also be taught (**Bowen, Jenson and Clark, 2004**). Punishment in the classroom setting is directly related to and usually referred as the discipline and classroom management style of the teacher. **Charles Wolfgang** refers to three types of classroom managers: Relationship Listening, Confronting Contracting, and Rules and Consequences (**Wolfgang, 2001**). Class room punishments or physical punishments or other forms of verbal scolding's intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort either physical or psychological for bringing discipline, correction and control, changing behaviour or in the belief of educating, bringing up the child. Physical pain can be caused by different means such as hitting the child with a hand or other object, kicking, shaking or throwing the child, pinching or pulling the hair, caning or whipping.

Like many developed and developing countries the Government of India also banned all forms of punishments both inside and outside the class room. Further several steps have been initiated under **Sarva Siksha Abhian and Rajiv Vidya Mission** to make class room environment learner friendly and support the learner in his attempt to enhance his knowledge and skill. Even then we frequently come across incidents of class room punishments in some corner or other of the country in print and electronic media. We often hear anecdotes and incidents of class room humiliation. Hence this problem that is "Attitude of teachers on Punishment of Middle School Students" is contemplated.

This study helps to understand the reasons behind class room. Punishments and understanding these reasons can help in communicating with teachers about the need for prohibition and in putting in place appropriate measures to ensure implementation of prohibition. But none of these reasons should be used as an excuse for retaining class room punishments, even as a 'last resort' and none changes the obligation to prohibit all class room punishments. Class room punishments in schools harm children and damage their education. The practice almost always causes immediate pain, and can result in lasting physical injury. It humiliates and degrades students and may leave them depressed or withdrawn. Class room punishments teach students that violence is acceptable, it can make students aggressive, angry, and more likely to lash out against their peers or educators, and it can teach them that domestic violence is permissible. Furthermore as a result of being physically punished, students can become less engaged in school, less motivated to succeed, and may become more likely to drop out. Many educators we spoke with said that class room punishments are ineffective in addressing students underlying misbehavior.

Objectives of Study

1. To study the attitude of teachers on punishment.
2. To study the impact of the following variables on punishments.
 - a). Gender b). Geographical location c) Type of School
3. To study the attitude of teachers on physical punishments.
4. To study the impact of the following variables on Physical punishment.
 - a). Gender b). Geographical location c) Type of School
5. To study the attitude of teachers on verbal punishments.
6. To study the impact of the following variables on verbal punishments.
 - a). Gender b). Geographical location c) Type of School

Review of Related Literature

According **Carmen Lopez and others (1999)** Physical punishment is a form of interfamilial violence associated with short and long term adverse mental health outcomes.

Scarr (1995) , Flynn (1996) and Ransburg(1997) state that corporal punishment or spanking is usually considered as a primary discipline method in most countries, including the USA. **Robinson et al(2005)** question the effectiveness of corporal

punishment and underline the side effects of corporal punishment such as running away, fear of teacher, feelings of helplessness, humiliation, aggression and destruction at home and at school, abuse and criminal activities. **Gershoff (2002)** also attributes corporal punishment to increased aggression and lower levels of moral internalization and mental health and adds that adults who were corporally punished when children are more likely to be criminals, be violent with their Genderual partner and spank their own children. **Leach (2003)** agrees with Abebe and Hailemariam stating that schooling is more than just teaching subject knowledge and employable skills. She suggests that subjects such as citizenship and democracy, life skills, guidance and counseling, and personal and social education should be included in the curriculum. If corporal punishment may adversely affect a students self image and school achievement and may contribute to disruptive and violent student behaviour, why, then do the teachers, administrators and other school staff, in the name of discipline, often contribute to student's misbehaviour and aggression? This study aims to seek answer to this question.

Hypotheses of the Study

1. Male and female teachers differ in their attitude on punishments.
2. The following variables make a significant difference on the attitude of teachers on punishments.
 - a). Gender b). Geographical location c) Type of School
3. Male and female teachers differ in their attitude on physical punishments.
4. The following variables make a significant difference on the attitude of physical punishment.
 - a). Gender b). Geographical location c) Type of School
5. Male, female teachers differ in their attitude on verbal punishments.
6. The following variables make a significant difference on the attitude of teachers on verbal punishments.
 - a). Gender b). Geographical location c) Type of School

Design of the Study

Research method is of utmost importance in a research process. It describes the various steps of the plan to be adopted in solving a research problem such as the manner in which the problems are formulated, the definition of terms, the choice of subjects for investigation, the validation of data gathering tools, the collection, analysis and interpretation of data and the process of inferences and generalizations. The researcher has selected survey method for the purpose of this study. The tool used for the present investigation is open ended questionnaire. It consists of fifty items. These items are from two areas. The areas covered are physical and verbal punishments. The respondent has to answer on a two point scale that is YES/ NO. As a first step the researcher has collected several statements from working teachers and headmasters working in different schools stating their attitudes towards punishments pertaining to the two areas mentioned. All these statements are arranged in an order and subjected to expert scrutiny. The expert's panel consisted of five working teachers and five teacher educators. All the suggestions made by them are incorporated. The tool prepared thus attained face validity. Reliability of the tool is established following Spearman Brown Prophecy formula as given in Garrett (1983). The reliability coefficient is 0.82.

Teachers working in middle schools are the population. For the purpose of this study sample has been drawn from teachers working in and around Vijayawada city. The sample consisted of 75 teachers with due provision for variable induction.

The variable considered for this study is:

1. Gender : Men Vs Women
2. Geographical location : Urban Teachers Vs Rural Teachers
3. Type of school management: Teachers from Government Management Vs Non Government Managements.

The questionnaire prepared was given to 75 teachers who are teaching Sixth, Seventh and Eight classes in Vijayawada Rural and Urban areas. The investigator met the teachers personally in their places of work and explained to them the purpose of this study and sought their cooperation. The questionnaire is given to them with a request to tender their frank and unbiased opinions. They are given the clarification asked and allowed sufficient time to record their responses. Of the 75 items served it was found that 11 were defective in some or the other aspect. Hence they are excluded from the final study and analysis. The responses of all the 64 individuals are tabulated for statistical treatment and reporting.

Statistics Tools

Mean, Standard Deviation and 't' test are used for analysis and interpretation of data.

Analysis and interpretation of data

Area of study	Variable	Finding
Punishments	Male teachers and Female teachers	Significant in favour of female teachers
	Teachers working in Rural and urban schools	Significant in favour of teachers working in Rural schools.
	Teachers working in Govt and Private schools	Significant in favour of teachers working in government schools.
	Male teachers and Female teachers	Significant in favour of male teachers
	Teachers working in Rural and urban schools	Significant in favour if teachers working in Rural schools



Physical Punishment	Teachers working in Govt and Private schools	Not significant
Verbal punishment	Male teachers and Female teachers	Significant in favour of male teachers
	Teachers working in Rural and urban schools	Significant in favour of teachers working in rural schools
	Teachers working in Govt and Private schools	Significant in favour of teachers working in government schools

Limitations of the Study

1. This study is limited to two types of classroom punishments viz Physical and verbal only.
2. This study is limited to the three selected variables only.
3. This study is confined to Vijayawada rural and urban school teachers only.

Findings

1. Teachers differ in their attitudes towards punishments.
2. Gender difference is seen in the attitude of teachers towards punishments and it is noted that female teachers have a more favourable attitude towards punishments.
3. Teachers working in rural schools have a more favourable attitudes towards punishments compared to their urban counterparts.
4. Teachers working in government schools have a more favourable attitude towards punishments compared to the teachers working in private schools.
5. Male teachers have amore favourable attitude towards physical punishments compared to their female counterparts.
6. Rural teachers have more favourable attitude towards physical punishments compared to their urban counterparts.
7. Teachers working in government schools and private schools do not differ in their attitude towards physical punishments.
8. Male teachers have a more favourable attitude towards verbal punishments compared to their female counterparts.
9. Rural teachers have more favourable attitude towards verbal punishments compared to their urban counterparts.
10. Government schools teachers have more favourable attitude towards verbal punishments compared to private schools teachers.

Suggestions for Teachers

1. This study emphasizes the need to reorient the attitude of teachers towards punishments.
2. This study focuses the need to incorporate the provisions of the law against punishments of school children in the teacher training programmes.
3. There is a need to refresh working teachers against punishments through in-service training programmes.
4. Teachers need guidance and counseling to manage stress in the class room and outside the classroom as stress has been identified as a potential source of class room aggression.
5. There is need to enhance the organizational climate of schools to make the working environment friendly and pleasant.

Suggestions for further Study

1. Correlative studies may be taken up to associate class room aggression with personality variables of the teachers and students.
2. Length of service, professional and general qualifications, socio economic status, size of the class work, load of the teacher etc., may be taken as variables in future studies.
3. Studies may be conducted taking into consideration the organizational climate of the school, leadership style of the head of the institution etc.,

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