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**THE EFFECTS OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT ON CHILDREN IN THE
KUMBUNGU DISTRICT**

BY

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**THIS DISSERTATION IS SUBMITTED TO THE CENTRE FOR SOCIAL POLICY
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my investigations and that it does not contain any material previously published by another person for an award of other degree at any University. All sections of the text and results, which have been obtained from other authors/sources, have been duly referenced.

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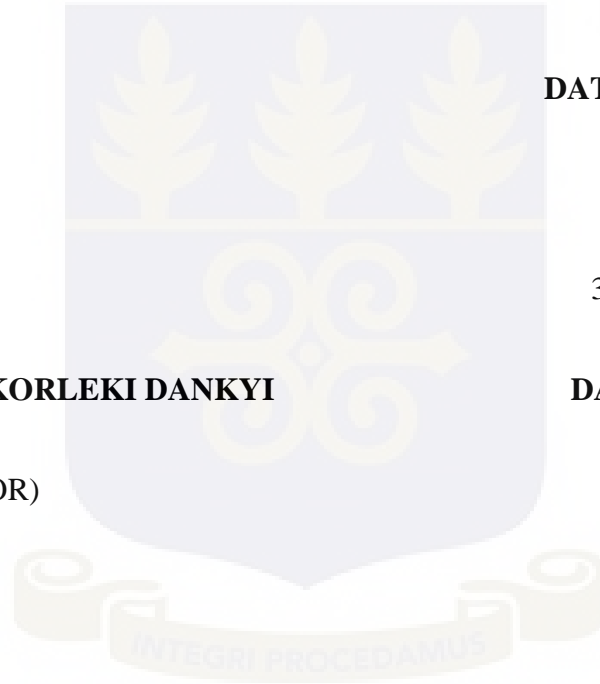
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DEDICATION

I am pleased to dedicate this dissertation to God Almighty for all His abundant blessings and grace for my entire life, but for Him my story would have been different.



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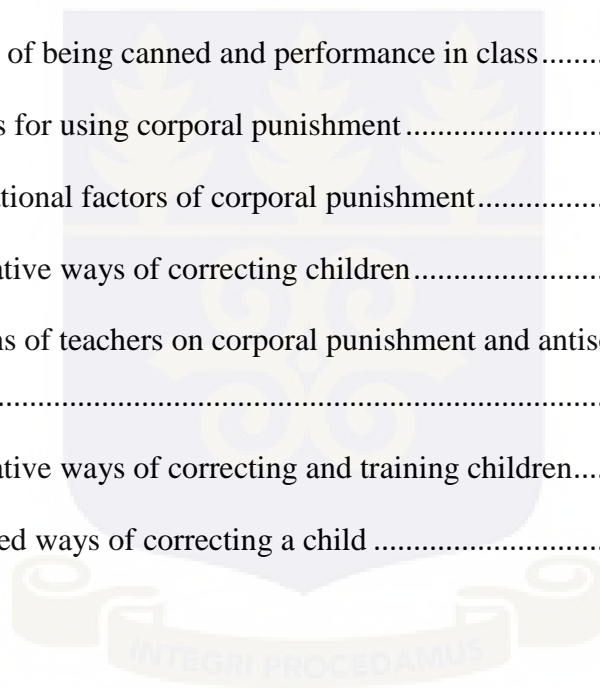
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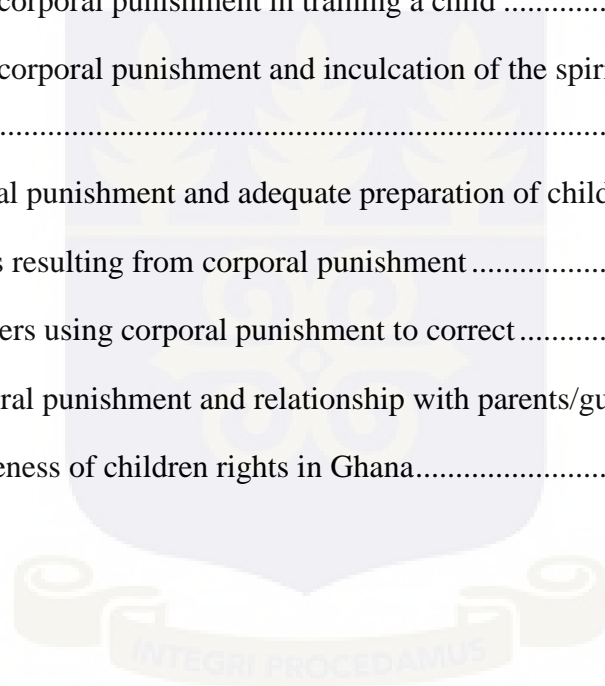
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CP	Corporal Punishment
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
ACRWC	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
NCCE	National Commission on Civic Education
MOGCSP	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
GOG	Government of Ghana
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
CCFC	Christian Children's Fund of Canada
UPR	Universal Periodic Report
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Education Fund
ILO	International Labour Organisation
CAN	Child Abuse Network
WVI	World Vision International
CHRAJ	Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice
BECE	Basic Education Certificate Exam
PG	Plan Ghana

ABSTRACT

The effectiveness of corporal punishment in child raising remains one of the hotly contested social issues in many societies including Ghana. Despite the many efforts by governments and civil society organizations to check the menace of corporal punishment, it is still practiced in ways that are unacceptable in many areas of the country, especially the area for this study work; Kumbungu District in the Northern Region of Ghana. The study sought to find out how corporal punishment adversely affects children's health and educational development. A survey research design was employed in collecting data from 150 respondents comprising 100 children (50 in school and 50 out of school) and 50 adults (25 teachers and 25 parents) using questionnaires. The study found that children indeed received corporal punishment at home and school. The study also found that the main reason for meting out corporal punishment was for correction purposes. Thirdly, the study revealed that corporal punishment though did not pose significant danger to children's health, a small proportion of them had sustained injuries through the practice. Another key finding of the study was that the awareness of child rights was limited to only teachers, and that parents and children were unaware of the rights of the child as provided for by law. The study therefore concludes that corporal punishment to a minimal extent had adverse effects on children's health and educational development of the children in the Kumbungu District in the Northern Region of Ghana. Based on the above findings, the study recommends that, government of Ghana, through Ghana Education Service should revise the GES principle on discipline which still allow caning up to six strokes. Secondly, the national institutions like the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) and the National

Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) which are responsible for protecting and educating the citizenry.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Increasingly, corporal punishment as a way correcting children has become a global human rights issue that deserves attention of all adults who wish to make positive difference in the lives of children. Corporal punishment is variously defined. For example, the National Association of School Nurses (NASN) 2010, sees corporal punishment as causing physical pain deliberately to change behaviour that could be in the form of hitting, punching, spanking, slapping, and pinching using objects such as sticks, belts and paddles. On his part, Geoffrey Scarre (2003), defined corporal punishment as any punishment applied on the body including assault or any means that are meant to cause physical pain or humiliation.

It is often said that children are the future of any given society or country and the importance of their health to national development cannot be overemphasized. Cognizant of how crucial children's social, health and economic wellbeing is to the future of any given society. In 1989 United Nations came out with a set of regulations to protect the health, social, economic and spiritual development of children in all its member states. Since the coming into effect of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), most states parties including Ghana have made efforts to abolish the practice of corporal punishment in their societies, schools, work places and homes. In Ghana, mention can be made of the national Constitution of 1992, the 1998 children's Act and a host of others which seek to protect children from being subjected to violent acts which can have a heavy toll on their growth and well-being Brown, (2002). For the Constitution in article 28(3)

gives the guidelines or circumstances in which adults may use commensurate punishment on children when they do wrong. Likewise, the 1998 Children's Act (560), following from the 1992 Constitution, equally recognized children as people who need protection and care.

The practice of corporal punishment is common in many Ghanaian schools and homes. Even though it is proper to correct children when they go wrong, the method through which that is done should not be that which will hamper their welfare and development. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child UNCRC, (1989), specifically Article 19 laid the foundations for the protection of children from all forms of mental and physical violence. Even though it has been almost thirty years since the Convention was passed, only a hand full of children worldwide live in countries that have fully abolished corporal punishment in all settings leaving more than 2 billion children with limited or no legal protection, Committee on the rights of the Child United Nations Convention of Rights of the Child (UNCRC Gen comm no. 8, 2006) In Ghana, and indeed in many other countries, corporal punishment is associated with a variety of negative effects on children Plan Ghana, 2008; Kyei-Gyamfi, (2008).

1.2 Problem statement

For about thirty years now there has been a growing concern about the use of corporal punishment as a tool for child correction in many countries of the world, due to its perceived negative effects on the growing children Twum-Danso,(2010). It is generally believed that, many parents and teachers regard corporal punishment as a disciplinary measure or tool with which children's misbehavior could be corrected. Etymologically, the word "discipline" is originated from the Latin word "disciplina", which means instructions given to discipline Brouwer J. (2010). Hence with regards to child raising it refers to the actions

implemented by those who have legal guardianship or parenthood of children to develop or model children's behaviour for good. In order to show her commitment to the fight against the use of harsh corporal punishment against children, Ghana was the first to sign and ratify the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child in February, 1990.

The UNCRC (Art.19) among other things requires state parties to adopt every possible means to abolish corporal punishment in all its forms and adopt alternate means which are child-friendly and which recognises and respects the fundamental human rights of children. Corporal punishment violates the rights of children to decent treatment and respect as full human beings Hindberg (2001). Many published literature on the topic in Ghana are of the view that corporal punishment has a very little potency in achieving a desired lifestyle from children. Instead, it has a high tendency of causing harm, pain, low self esteem and in some cases adverse health implications Kyei-Gyamfi, (2008).

Despite the efforts by the Ghana Government to reduce the practice of corporal punishment in Ghanaian homes and schools, available evidence on the literature suggests that the practice is rather on the increase in many public schools and homes. Some of the specific steps government embarked on to support and protect children include the School Feeding Programme, the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP), as well as creating a Cabinet Ministry in charge of Women and Children. For instance, in a study conducted between 2002 and 2006 by the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police Service, about 12,212 assault cases against children were reported, an indication that the practice of corporal punishment still persists in Ghana (MOWAC), 2007. After signing the United Nations Children's convention, Ghana developed several instruments out of her constitution in order to stop the use of corporal punishment as a main

way of correcting children's misbehaviour. The development of the Ghana Education Service code of discipline, the creation of a Cabinet Ministry in charge of Women and Children affairs in addition to the numerous social intervention programmes are some of the efforts government made to protect and provide for children and other vulnerable groups in the country. Prior to the passing of the UN convention on children's rights, some countries of the world had already outlawed corporal punishment as a means of child discipline. Despite the fact that corporal punishment is losing its potency in child raising, many parents and teachers still believe that corporal punishment is necessary in child training and upbringing.

In Ghana, there is almost a general consensus about the necessity of corporal punishment in child training be it at home, school or any other setting where children are raised. Apart from the national Constitution of 1992 and the Children's Act of 1998 supporting what they called "reasonable" and "justifiable" corporal punishment, the traditional Ghanaian society also endorses the use of corporal punishment as a way correcting children. When children have a feeling that their mistake shall not be taken kindly either at home or at school they become truants at home and this will definitely impact negatively on their educational and professional development.

According to United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, "children do not lose their human right by virtue of passing through the school gate" UNCRC general comment no 1, (2001). This means that whether children are in school or at home they remained human beings and therefore must be accorded the necessary rights as all others. But whether the future of a country will be good or not good, will to a large extent, depend on the

perception both parents and children develop about corporal punishment as a disciplinary tool. Arab & Khan, (2011).

Corporal punishment is the commonest method of child discipline for many teachers and parents. It is believed by many people that corporal punishment is still practiced in many homes and schools making many children to play truancy. Even though there are a lot of legislative instruments and Acts both locally and internationally prohibiting the use of corporal punishment on children in all settings, the practice is still very much rife in many homes and schools in Ghana which many people believe is the cause of poor general well-being of children Agbenyega, (2006).

1.3 Objectives of the study

The main objective of the study is to find out how corporal punishment can affect children's health, education and social development. The specific research objectives are:

1. To examine the children's experience of corporal punishment.
2. To identify the reasons why teachers and parents use corporal punishment.
3. To identify the dangers associated with the use of corporal punishment.
4. To determine the awareness of child rights among teachers, parents and children.

1.4 Relevance of the study

Forty-seven countries have outlawed the practice of corporal punishment in schools and homes as at December 2015 (Global Report, 2015). Ghana after ratifying the convention on the rights of the child in February 1990 has made some noticeable efforts toward achieving the tenets of the convention. The 1992 Constitution, the 1998 Children's Act, Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service and a host of child-right

support organizations fighting the cause of children's rights are some efforts made by government and private sector to check abusive use of corporal punishment. Despite these efforts, the practice of corporal punishment has not stopped over these years. Even in some of the countries where the practice is said to have been abolished or outlawed, corporal punishment is still widespread Covell & Becker, (2011). This part of the study looks at the relevance of this research.

To start with, this study is going to help appreciate the perceptions that traditional and modern societies in Ghana have about children. Tender and inexperienced as they are, some perceive childhood as a period in which the God-given potentialities and abilities must be put to work through the process of practical learning Afranie, et al, (2017). A study of children's and parents' perception of corporal punishment is even more important considering the value the knowledge of it will have in child raising. It is shown in this research work from the various literature reviewed that corporal or corporal punishment is not the best method to deal with children's wayward lives. Therefore the knowledge of it will equip parents and teachers the modern and violent-free means through which children can be trained Kochanska & Thompson, (1997).

The people at the centre of this research work are the children and things that have to do with their well-being. Children's knowledge about their rights and the existence of legal laws to enforce those rights are virtually nonexistent, especially those at the country-side. This study is of greater use to children as victims of corporal punishment, parents and teachers as the most perpetrators of corporal punishment and policy makers as a reference material.

Lastly but very important, this research work is the researcher's modest contribution to the depth of knowledge in the subject of corporal punishment in Ghana and beyond.

1.5 Scope and limitations of the study

Corporal punishment is one of the social phenomena that merit the attention of policy makers and policy implementers because of its potential of either negatively or positively affecting the future of children. Owing to how important the knowledge of the dangers of corporal punishment is, this study concentrates on every aspect of corporal punishment; its meaning, history, prevalence and dangers. Again, even though corporal punishment is widespread in Ghana but for the purpose of close attention the study area is based in the Kumbungu municipality in the Northern region of Ghana.

The researcher faced a number of limitations during the data gathering stage. Firstly, it was very difficult getting many parents to answer the questionnaires. This was largely as a result of the fact that they were at the peak of the farming season at the time. On the part of the teachers many of them were unwilling to sacrifice their contact periods to answer the questionnaires. As a result some of them were visited more than twice before they could get time to answer the questionnaires. Thirdly, many of the children were uneasy answering the questions, even though permissions were always asked for from their parent(s). The above limitations affected the time within which the study should have been conducted and also some the children gave answers that did not reflect the reality on the ground because the presences their parents and teachers. The researcher however corrected this challenge by reassuring respondents about the confidentiality of the exercise. This increases their confident level in responding the questions. The researcher also visited most of the parents

and teachers at their leisure time which afforded them the time and space to respond to the question appropriately.

1.6 Organisation of the study

This research project is organized around five chapters. The first chapter comprises of the background of the study, statement of the research problem, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study and the organization of the study. Chapter two comprises of an introduction, definition of corporal punishment, the conceptual frame work guiding the study, history of corporal punishment, types of corporal punishment, corporal punishment at the global, regional and national levels. The chapter also contains arguments for and against the practice of corporal punishment, followed by conclusion. The third chapter looks at the methodology that is used to study corporal punishment and its effects on children's well-being. Specifically, the chapter contains population of the study, sampling technique, research design and tools and profile of the study area among others. In chapter four, the demographic characteristics of the various groups of the respondents, findings, discussion of important themes are presented. Finally, chapter five concentrates on summary of salient points, conclusion and recommendations based on the outcome of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses a review of relevant literature on the topic of corporal punishment. Specifically, the chapter comprises of definition, history and types of corporal punishment. Also, it looks at the definition of children and corporal punishment at the global, regional and national levels. Not only that, towards the end of the chapter are arguments for and against the usefulness of corporal punishment as a method of correcting children.

2.2 Definition of Corporal Punishment

Like many other terms or concepts, corporal punishment defies a single definition. The differences in opinions about the meaning of corporal punishment are as a result of a multiplicity of factors. For example, by their culture and geographical location, the western countries may classify as child abuse or corporal punishment what Africans with their different culture and geography will regard as necessary ingredients for child training.

According to Scarvey (2003), corporal punishment refers to punishment applied on the body including assault or any means that are meant to cause physical or humiliation. On their part, Straus & Donnelly (2005) defines corporal punishment as the use of physical force intended to cause pain, but not injury, for the purpose of correction or controlling a child's behavior. Whatever the case may be in corporal punishment there always is a use of force with the perceived aim of correcting the child's misbehaviour. Following from the above therefore, it can be said that corporal punishment is the use of force in order to correct children's misbehaviour.

The question about whether corporal punishment has any positive effect on children's learning has been around for a long time now. Whereas some people are of the view that corporal punishment has nothing and will not achieve the desired child behaviour and that it only causes childhood aggression, anti-social behavior and truancy Brouwer, (2010), others are of the opinion that when it is properly and immediately done, it can produce desired results. Thorndike (1935) and Skinner (1953) claimed that punishment is not effective for producing significant and lasting behavioral change and that it may only succeed in ensuring an immediate compliance to rules and regulations.

As part of its negative effects, corporal punishment has serious implications on children's mental capabilities and internalization. It increases child delinquency, creates unfriendly behaviour and the chance of children becoming abusive adults in their later lives Gershoff, (2002). Belsky (1999) cited in Brouwer, (2010) work on corporal punishment is of the view that adults or parents who constantly indulge in intrusive, over stimulating and rejecting lifestyle have their children grow up to also engage in insecure and repulsive behavior. In a radio documentary of Joy FM on Sunday 16th April 2017, which is part of the Multimedia Communications Group Limited) on child prostitution in some parts of Accra, most of these child prostitutes admitted that they were forced to run away from either their parents or foster parents due to intense maltreatment they had to endure. Finding themselves in the city they have no choice than to indulge in either prostitution, or doing menial jobs in order to survive in the city. Not only do they indulge in prostitution, they also suffer beatings from the hands of strong boys who not only abuse them sexually, but exploit them financially, all in the name of protecting them.

With respect to their style of parenting, Baumrind (1975) identified four patterns of parenting by parents; authoritarian, authoritative, permissive and uninvolved or neglectful parenting styles. Each of these parenting styles or patterns distinguished between parental levels of responsiveness and permissiveness. He explains further that, authoritarian parents are the most demanding, valuing obedience and engaging in forceful implementation of their will and desires on children. Permissive parents are the most responsive, yet not intrusive, valuing child freedom and autonomy.

Furthermore, Baumrind (1975) explained that uninvolved or neglectful parents, like the permissive parents also value child freedom and autonomy. But the difference between neglectful parents and permissive parents is essentially that the neglectful parents are less passive and exert more control than the permissive parents do. Authoritative parents combine the features of both authoritarian and permissive parents in enforcing discipline into their children. They are both responsive and demanding, and also put premium on independence while attempting to modify children's behavior through rational explanation and modeling. Children's lives whether immediate or future are affected by the type of parenting or disciplinary measure their parents or teachers adopt in training them.

Schools and homes are supposed to be places of learning and safety respectively. In order to ensure a conducive learning environment for children in schools, there suppose to be a cordial relationship between pupils and their teachers. Much the same way, children cannot be properly trained and developed at home settings if the relationship between parents, or caregivers and children are that of hostility. Even though Ghana has shown interest in abolishing all forms of cruel and inhumane treatment to all children in all settings, this desire has remained largely on paper than on the ground. There are many reasons why the

practice of corporal punishment seems to continue in homes and schools and some correctional centers. One of such reasons is that both the 1992 Constitution of Ghana and the 1998 Children's Act support "justifiable and reasonable" corporal punishment. For instance, Article 13(2) of the children's Act of 1998 confirms the concept of "justifiable and reasonable" correction of a child.

It seems clear, that, the constitution and other provisions stated above cannot be interpreted as prohibiting all corporal punishment in child training. During the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Ghana in 2008, the Ghana Government defended the legality of "reasonable" corporal punishment. Mean while, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Ghana was the first to signed in Article(19) lays the foundation or guidelines within which member states should operate in their quest to guarantee, recognize and practice of children's rights. The Article states that, "states parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child". The understanding one gets from the fore-going is that even though Ghana has shown interest in combating all forms of corporal punishment as stipulated in the UNCRC(19), but she is being careful about it partly because of its' strong cultural values regarding child upbringing.

This lack of will on the part of the government may be understandable due to the fact that in Ghana there is almost a near universal acceptance of corporal punishment when it comes to child upbringing despite the effects it may have on the proper growth and well-being of

children. Corporal punishment is linked with negative outcomes in child victims. Negative outcomes such as aggression, delinquency, and psychological maladjustment in children,(Greven 1991; Kandel, 1991; Turner & Finkelhor, 1996). Harsh corporal punishment, in particular has been correlated with increase display of aggressive behaviour by children. Children if they received harsh training in their early years there is likelihood that they will display such tendencies in their adult life Howes & Elderedge, (1985). Furthermore, Bryan and Freed (1982) reported that college students who reported receiving a high level of corporal punishment when they were younger were significantly more likely to report problems with aggression. Aside these behavioral problems, corporal punishment is equally associated with poor self-esteem and emotional problems of youths (Sternberg et al, 1993).

However, literature has shown that linking corporal punishment with negative behaviours in children have some glaring methodological challenges which make it difficult to make such conclusion (Erlanger, 1979; Kandel,1991). They contend that the correlation between childhood punishment and adult violence was in fact very low. Baumrind (1973) and (1994) argued that when corporal punishment is used within a loving family environment, it is effective in reducing unwanted behaviour without increasing aggression. It is also observed by some researchers that, corporal punishment is associated with higher rates of child delinquency only when the demand placed on children are inconsistent (Agnew, 1983). The practice of corporal punishment goes beyond home and school setting; it is also used in alternative care settings such as foster care, institutions, places of safety, emergency care among others.

According to a report prepared by the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children (GIEACPC, 2016), prohibition is still to be achieved in the home, alternative care settings, day care, schools and some penal institutions. Contrary to what the 1992 Constitution of Ghana and the 1998 Children's Act called "justifiable" or "reasonable" correction of a child, the report, supported by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child advocates for a complete prohibition or abolition of all forms of corporal punishment in schools, day cares, alternative care settings, penal institutions and other places where corporal punishment is practiced. Corporal punishment is an assault on the dignity of individuals and makes the teaching profession undignified job Ritchie, (1981). Further, corporal punishment whenever it is used in a school exposes the weakness of the teacher concerned (McGrath, 1999). Corporal punishment has consequences on children's adult lives. It is believed by some people that, children, if they received a harsh training, either at home or at school become aggressive themselves during their adulthood (Sugarman & Giles-Sim, 1997). Even though some people believe that corporal punishment can be detrimental for children's health, there is however some debate about whether it is associated with negative outcomes (Baumrind,1997; Larzelere, 2000). Given the amount of passionate disagreements surrounding the practice of corporal punishment, it is important to find out the effects of it in a factual and objective manner. Apart from the problems of corporal punishment mentioned above, other potential effects of corporal punishment that have not received sufficient research attention include cognitive effects of it. Corporal punishment may either enhance or retrogress the cognitive development of children (Smith and Brooks-Gunn, 1997).

2.3 History of Corporal Punishments

The concept of corporal punishment has a long history. Indeed throughout history until recently most parents and teachers hit their children. However, in the late 20th century and early 21st century, public opinion turned against corporal punishment and in many countries today the practice has been outlawed. According to Tim Lambert (undated), corporal punishment is derived from a Latin word whose meaning is body. In the ancient era the Puritan belief that humankind is innately tainted by the original sin of Adam and Eve and this led adults to see children as contaminated by an evil element that needed to be driven out by force. Puritans further believed that all disobedience and academic errors was the work Satan, and children's innate proclivity for evil had to be destroyed through pain and humiliation. Religiously, the two main or dominant religions in Ghana; Christianity and Islam have lessons on corporal punishment. The new testament of the Holy Bible (John 19:1) teaches that Jesus was flogged before he was crucified. Islam, likewise also admonished its followers to corporally punish (among other punishments) people who commit adultery (Sharia law).

In Europe and other places such as Africa, whipping was a common way through which people were punished for minor crimes. In the 18th century, according to Tim Lambert (undated), whipping or flogging was a common punishment in the British army. However the practice was abolished in 1881. In using corporal punishment as a tool for child rearing, the underlying aim for those who use it is to ensure discipline both at home and in school (Nukunya, 2003; Azu, 1974). Writing on the history of corporal punishment, Jacob Middleton (2012) explained us that, by 1890, many parents in America and other places began to object to the use of corporal punishment in the first cycle school system. Aside

caning, children in government funded schools were being subjected to other corporal punishments such as being struck across the knuckles with slates, receiving blows on their heads or backs and many others. Even though some people are of the view that corporal punishment came as a result of man's sin at the beginning of creation, some have an entirely different opinion. For example, Scott (1938) and Yelyr (1941) are of the view that corporal punishment has a far more complex history than a long and steady fall from grace, an inverse trajectory as it were to the progress of humanity. It is clear from the fore-going, that, corporal punishment has really a long and somewhat mythical history. For all through these years corporal punishment has been used by rulers, parents, teachers and governors as a tool for punishment or correction as the case may be.

2.4 Types of corporal punishment Used in Schools and Homes

In throwing more light on the concept of corporal punishment, the Committee on the Rights of the Child in the General comment NO. 8 define corporal punishment as “any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light”. Most corporal punishments involve hitting (smacking, slapping, spanking) child with the hand or with an implement. There are basically two forms of corporal punishment; violent and nonviolent corporal punishments. The violent corporal punishment involves caning, slapping, spanking, putting of pepper into girls private parts, dipping of children's hands into boiling water and many others. The non-violent corporal punishments are those that do not involve physical force on the part of the one meting out the punishment but which are equally not good for children's socialization in to the society. Some of the non violent corporal punishments include but not limited to those which belittles, humiliate, denigrates, threatens, scares or ridicule the child. The specific punishments that may result

in the above mentioned consequences are; causing children to kneel on stones on a polished surface, making other children to hoot at those who did not do well in a given task, starring at the sun for a given time among others.

It is important to mention that some of these forms of punishments form violation of children's fundamental human rights and is also at variance with the provisions of United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child which ascribed to children the right to be protected and provided for. Kyei-Gyamfi (2008), argued that when it comes to children's matters, the saying that corporal punishment is harmful is even more "truer" considering its negative consequences on their education, health and social welfare.

2.5 International Human Rights Provisions Which Speak Against Corporal Punishment

Children, it is believed are the wealth and future of any giving society. But in order to bring out this worth in them there is the need for parents, teachers, caregivers, society and indeed the country to take good care of them. Children have clean and fertile minds and therefore whatever they are taught or told at that period of time cannot easily be forgotten. It is like making a mark on a stone, it cannot be easily erased. This goes to suggest that corporal punishment for children is not the best way to train or correct their misbehaviors. When children are given corrections for their mistakes in lovely and in ways that respect their fundamental human rights they will not easily forget those ways. It was in recognition of this very important fact that the international community through its respective bodies initiated discussions on how its member states could take up children's issues seriously in order to assure to them clean and dignified lives just like any other human being.

Specifically, the main international human right provisions that are seriously speaking against corporal punishment are briefly stated and discussed below;

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child(UNCRC); the CRC by far is the biggest international body that is fighting the cause of children's rights at least in all its member states that have signed on to the convention. The UNCRC is the most ratified international instrument. This is largely because the world leaders recognised that children or people who are below 18 years are vulnerable and therefore need special help and protection more than adults need. Owing to the importance of the convention, it received a unanimous adoption on the day that it was proposed at the UN General Assembly on the 20th November 1989. The Convention, among other things outlines a comprehensive and holistic protection for children in the areas of education, food and nutrition, religion, family and national care and provision, including many others.

States parties are required to ensure the provision or presence of these facilities for all it's children without any discrimination whatsoever. Through the efforts of the UNCRC, about 193 countries have so far ratified the convention and a good number of countries are in the process of enacting laws to prohibit the use of corporal punishment in all settings. Not only that, the UN, through its affiliate bodies such as The United Nations International Children's Education Fund(UNICEF), The International Labour Organization(ILO) and many others have done a lot through funding and capacity building to many Nongovernmental Organizations to fight for the cause of the children's rights. In Ghana for example, the UNICEF was very instrumental in providing financial and technical support to the Ghana Education Service (GES) for it to review the head teacher's handbook in which the recommendations regarding school discipline was made.

The other programs which UNICEF spearheaded in Ghana toward eradicating corporal punishment were the facility that advocated for eradication of corporal punishment in schools and other settings through its Child Abuse Network (CAN) (UN, 2006). Apart from the provision of funding and technical support, the UN also does periodic monitoring and evaluation in all the countries which are receiving its support to fight for the recognition of children's rights. The roles that UN is playing in the fight against corporal punishment are inexhaustible. What has been mentioned here is just a few of the many things it is doing as a world body to protect not only children, but all humanity.

2.6 African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC)

After several years of deliberations and waiting, the African Union finally decided to enact a policy which will guide member countries to properly cater and provide for their children. This decision was born out from the African Union's (AU) recognition of the fact that the future of Africa will depend on the quality of training that African children received and in what environment. Therefore on November 29th, 1999, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child came into force. Among other things the Charter recognises the roles parents and country must play in order to create an environment in which children can enjoy their fundamental human rights. It further emphasized that children will grow and develop well if they are surrounded with a peaceful, loving and caring atmosphere.

In fact, according to Afranie, et al, (2017 pg 84), "such an environment should be inspired by the cultural heritage, historical background and the values of African civilization as well as the modern concepts of child rights and protection." This goes to suggest that at this age and civilization, the old crude way in which children used to be beaten well in order to be thought good lessons must give way to modern violent-free means of child raising. As a

regional body which seeks to protect the rights of children, AU recommends to all its member states to seriously treat child rights issues with the respect it deserve.

2.7 The National Legal Instruments For Child Rights Protection

Since Ghana's ratification of the Convention on the rights of the Child in February 1990, the successive governments over the years have taken some steps in order to address violence against children in society, including schools and other institutions. In most parts of the legal provisions that protect child rights, a lot is expected from parents and state in protecting children's rights. Parents are required to provide for the maintenance and sustenance of their children while state protects their rights. Specifically the 1992 national constitution of Ghana, the 1998 Children's Act, 560, the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service, the Criminal Code of 1960, 14(e), the Juvenile Justice Act 2003(Act 633), are some few examples amongst the lot that directly address the issue of violence against children. The 1998 Children's Act has a holistic coverage of all issues affecting the welfare of children in Ghana.

In order to demonstrate its commitment to the fight against child abuse and violence against children the government of Ghana has created a cabinet ministry in-charge of Women, Children and Social Protection to augment the activities of the already existing institutions such as the Department of Social Welfare and other child welfare activities at the regional and district level offices. The legal instruments, or provisions listed above serve as the pivot around which the activities of the ministry and its affiliate agencies revolve.

2.8 Definition of Child

Different countries and organizations define the concept “child” differently according to their local and organizational cultures. For example at the regional front the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child in (Art 2) defines a Child as any human being under the age of 18. The 1992 republican constitution and the 1998 Children’s Act (560), of Ghana both define child as any human being who is below the age of 18 years. Therefore in this study the concept “Child” is used to refer to any human being below the age of 18. People under this category are deemed not to have developed fully, both physically and mentally and are therefore in need of a special care and protection from their parents and the state. In this case, both the Ghana constitution and the Children’s Act make the children the right holders while their parents and the state are the duty bearers with an obligation to provide for them and protect them respectively.

2.9 The State of Corporal Punishment in Ghana

2.9.1 The Legality of Corporal Punishment

In Ghana, as in many other countries, especially those of the developing world, corporal punishment is desirable for proper child raising both at school and at home. As mentioned earlier on, most people- parents, teachers, foster parents caregivers etc are of the view that corporal punishment is a necessary tool in child upbringing. They are of a believed that when children are not beaten enough during their early ages, they will grow up to be lazy and disrespectful. This feeling about the necessity of corporal punishment by most parents and teachers in Ghana have had an enforcing effects on the provisions of the 1992 constitution of Ghana and the 1998 Children’s Act when they both allow what is come to known as “reasonable” and “justifiable” In fact to the extent that the corporal punishment is

not “cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment including any cultural practices which dehumanizes or is injurious to the physical and mental well-being of a child is totally allowed as lawful(Article 13(1) of the Children’s Act of 1998, and 1992 constitution of Ghana in Article 28(3).

2.9.2 Alternative Care Settings

The report under the alternative care settings was not different from that under home. It maintained that corporal punishment is lawful in alternative care settings under the provisions allowing “reasonable” and “justifiable” corrections in Article 13(2) of the Children’s Act of 1998. Corporal punishment is lawful in day care under provisions allowing “reasonable” and “justifiable” correction in Article 13(2) of the children’s Act, 1998. Pursuant to the Education Act 1961, the report was of the view that corporal punishment is lawful in schools. The Ghana Education Act of 1961 provides for the Ghana Education Code of Discipline for second cycle schools to cane up to six strokes by a head teacher or a person authorized by the head.

The Government of Ghana, in its 2014 report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, confirmed that the practice of corporal punishment was still widely and lawfully used in schools and other institutions, with caning being the most common corrective measure.

Mean while in order to ensure that schools become conducive place, the National Child Friendly School Standards for Basic schools have been drafted by the Ghana Education Service (GES). The document states, among other things that, “school is a safe environment for teaching and learning for all children and staff free from any form of intimidation, violence and abuse regardless of race, sex, background and abilities and that national

standards were expected to be rolled out in 2012. A code of conduct for teachers was also developed by the Ghana Education Service which defined physical violence as including corporal punishment. Classically, corporal punishment involves hitting, caning, spanking and many other ways by which pain, physically or emotionally could be inflicted into a child to correct his or her misdeed.

The challenge that has always been the case is that when parents, teachers, foster parents, caregivers get angered by a child's action or inaction they do not usually measure their actions against the so-called "justifiable" or "reasonable" punishment, but they normally will measure it against the level of anger. In this way many parents, and teachers end up using implements such as ladles, coal pots broken pots, hammers, boiling waters, hot soups or even hot oils on the fragile bodies of their children or pupils. In some traditional homes in Ghana, especially the rural areas, it is common to hear some parents, especially foster female parents threatening their girl children (some actually do) of putting pepper in their vagina should they ever be caught with a man with an expressed desire to indulge in premarital sex.

On the question of "justifiability" and "reasonability" these type of parents (as described above) may think they are justified inflicting this pain into the young girls because it is their duty train them to be good and responsible women who will keep only to their husbands in future when they get married. Most of the things for which children will normally be corporally dealt with are being done or committed by adults but nobody beats them when they do. Crimes such lateness to school or workplace, inability to answer question, breaking of plates or glasses, dirtying of dress, telling a lie, stealing, insulting among others are

committed by both young and old but nothing is done against the adult who commit any of these crimes.

The foregoing shows clearly that, there is a discrimination against the “person” of a child compared to that of an adult. It is the belief of many people, that, corporal punishment only succeed in bringing children to an immediate compliance, and that it doesn’t actually make children to build good and desirable characters. In addressing a workshop on the “Dissemination of the Child Family Welfare Policy and Associated Documents” in Ho Mr Sylvester Kyei-Gyamfi, the Head of Research at the Department of Children criticized the wide-spread use of corporal punishment in many homes and schools in the country. He reiterated the opinions of many when he said” corporal punishment was wrong and inhumane and that it only hardens children the more”.

2. 9.3 Usefulness of Corporal Punishment

Having laid the foundation on the meaning of corporal punishment, it is imperative to look at the usefulness or importance of the practice. It was mentioned somewhere in this research that, corporal punishment is almost universally accepted in the Ghanaian society as a major means of child raising process. Notwithstanding the perceived negative effects associated with the practice of corporal punishment, there still are some benefits to derive from it.

To start with, in the traditional Ghanaian society, adults or parents consider certain attitudes or characters must-have values for their children. These values among others include; respect for all elderly, honesty or truthfulness, hardworking attitude, obedience, humility, reliability, fear of God, etc. It is believed that it is the parent’s responsibility to imbibe these very important values into their children during the process of child raising (Twum-Danso,

2010). In the traditional Ghanaian setting parents are very keen in imbining the said values into their children and will normally not compromise on anything that will stand on their way to doing just that. Normally the behaviour children put up are directly linked to the families they come from. This means that if your child behaves and comport him or herself well outside the home the respect and praise will be credited to the parents for having done well in training her to behave that manner. On the other hand, if a child goes outside his home and put up a behavior that is insulting and insolence to the elderly the blame and dissatisfactory commends will be squarely put on his parents for not giving him good training in a way that is acceptable to the society.

In order to maximize their chance of being praised and drastically reduce their chances of being insulted in the society, parents will normally adopt any means, including corporal punishment in training their children. Many parents also hold the view that corporal punishment will actually prepare children for future lives. They are of the view that when children are subjected to hardship in the early stages of their lives they get seasoned and are able to stand any challenge that they may face in the cause of their lives after their parents are no more. It is maintained in some societies in Ghana, especially in the northern part of the country, that suffering does not kill a child; instead it breeds in him a character. This explains why as early as 8 years many children are exposed to rearing of animals, normally cattle or sheep, or given a small portion of land at the farm to tilt.

As mentioned earlier on in this research work, there are some who think corporal punishment has a religious benefit to both the child and his or her parents. This again explains why some times parents of some children either disown or subject them to persistent intense beating for not praying their (parents) way. For example, in the Islamic

religion, male adult children of a deceased is supposed to take part in a congregational prayers for him or her (deceased) before burial, but if the male children are not Muslims, they cannot take part in such a prayer, which is normally seen as a shame. In order to avoid this, among other risks, such as not going to heaven, Muslim parents will adopt any means, including corporal punishment to get their children pray. It so happened somewhere in the north, where a young man, Abu (not real name) converted from Islam to Christianity, and his father attempted a couple of times to kill him. Abu had to be relocated to a far unknown community in order to avoid his father's wrath. The father openly asked that anyone who comes across Abu should do him a favor by just killing him.

In essence therefore, this event confirm the assertion that many people rely on traditional and religious precepts to justify the strict application of corporal punishment, without considering the fundamental human rights of the children. Additionally, corporal punishment persists because of inadequate awareness of child rights on the part of some parents, especially those at the countryside.

In order to popularize the concept of child rights and the inefficiencies of corporal punishment in child training, the National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE) should do more than they are doing now. They should use the local radio stations to educate the people in the languages they can understand.

2.10 Arguments against Corporal Punishment

The usefulness or otherwise of corporal punishment by parents and teachers have over the years been a subject of controversy. It seems from the literature that the disadvantages of corporal punishment seem to outweigh any possible merits it may have. For those who

support the practice of corporal punishment, they are of the view that it brings about immediate compliance on the part of children (Gershoff, cited from the Newsom, Flavell & Rincover, 1983). As explained below, even though parents and teachers who use corporal punishment as a disciplinary tool may get an immediate compliance from their children, but instilling and molding a lifestyle that will be long lasting in children should be the utmost concern for parents and teachers and not just to force children to immediately obey their wishes (Grolnick, Deci & Ryan, 1997; Hoffman, 1983; Lepper, 1983).

A proper and efficient method of child discipline is the one that instills good moral internalization into children in a way that is friendly to them. This means that children should be taught or trained to understand the reasons why they should or should not do certain things. When children are taught or corrected in an atmosphere of love, they can and will internalize whatever they are taught than when they are intimidated to do so. According to Grusec & Goodnow (1994), moral internalization is taking over the values and attitudes of society as one's own so that socially acceptable behavior is motivated not by anticipation of external consequences but by intrinsic or internal factors.

Children learn and internalize good societal morals best when parents, teachers, caretakers and senior family members use child-discipline strategies that use minimal parental power, promote choice and autonomy and provide explanations for desirable behaviours Kuczynski & Hildebrandt, (1997). Expressing their views on the same topic, Kochanska and Thompson (1997) were of the conviction that when children are made to internalized good social morals through gentle training that will boost the development of their social and emotional competences.

In addition to what been said so far, corporal punishment might not facilitate moral internalization or development because it does not teach children the reasons for behaving correctly or acceptable lives, it does not also communicates the effects of their behaviours on others, it only teaches children the desirability of not getting caught (Hoffman,1983; Smetana, 1997). Opinions are varied about the interconnectedness of corporal punishment and children's aggressive adult lives Coie & Dodge, (1998).

Over the years most research works have come to a conclusion that corporal punishment associated with increases in children's aggressive behaviorurs (Patterson, 1982; Steinmetz, 1979). Corporal punishment has been shown to predict increases in aggression because it models aggression, promotes hostile attribution, which predicts violent behaviours and has a tendency of ruining children's future relationships (Walters and Grusec, 1977; Dodge et al, 1986). According to White and Straus, (1981), early experience of corporal punishment may model and legitimized many types of violence throughout an individual's life. Most often than not children are said to be the future of the society but they are not being given such lovely training and grooming that will make the to assume that future role they are expected to take. Instead of being touted as the future leaders, children rather want to enjoy their rights which is free from violence and intimidation Paulo & Pinheiro, (2007).

As has already been mentioned somewhere in this research, one of the reasons why corporal punishment is perceived to be widespread in Ghana is that most people, parents and teachers have come to accept it as a cultural or religious obligation. When teachers, parents, caregivers and society feel they have cultural or religious responsibilities to discipline their children through the use of physical violence, the fundamental human rights of children suffer. Corporal punishment has been associated with many negative behaviors, especially

during the adult life of children who receive serious corporal or corporal punishments. Writing under the topic “Corporal punishment by parents: A Risk Factor in the Epidemiology of depression, suicide, alcohol, Abuse, child Abuse and spousal beating”, Straus and Kantor (1991) found a positive relationship between corporal punishment and the above listed negative behaviours.

Corporal punishment for children’s misbehaviour only succeeds but temporally. It does not inculcate into children a sense of responsibility and understanding. Considering the seeming failure of corporal punishment in child raising and welfare, and the number of international and national human rights provisions advocating against the use of corporal punishment, a modern and more workable method will have to be adopted if parents, teachers, caregivers and indeed the larger society have to succeed in enhancing the welfare and development of children. Methods that recognised the fundamental human rights of children and which will make them to understand and internalised the lessons their parents and teachers teach them.

A scientific study and understanding of how children behave has gone far to the extent that corporal punishment is no longer necessary or needed in child training. Children’s lives and actions can be shaped with reinforcement and ways which are corporal punishment- free (Baum & Kupter, 2005). As part of the traditional view of corporal punishment of children, another dimension is that using corporal punishment to get children obey their parents’ commands or wishes is necessary, especially if the child failed to respond positively to their parents’ oral and non-oral messages which are geared toward influencing the child’s actions and inactions. Consequently, Infante (2005) quoting from Donnelly and Straus, said that essentially corporal punishment is seen as social-influence strategy of last resort, used when all other strategies fail.

The negative behavioral and health impacts of corporal punishment can be far-reaching for children. A lot of researches conducted on the concept of corporal punishment indicate that some of the acts associated with corporal punishment can be very stressful for youth and children. For example, Straus (1991) found that children who received “ordinary” corporal punishment were 3 times more likely to assault siblings than those who were never physically punished. It was also found by Bryan and Freed (1982), that, college students who were physically or corporally punished in childhood manifested several long-term effects, including having fewer friends and a greater frequency of negative social interactions, as well as elevated levels of depression and anxiety. This is normally as a result of the feeling that other people are the cause of his parents or teachers punishing him. This normally put in children a feeling of wanting to also pay back to his children or other people’s children during their adult lives. Furthermore, according to the learning by example theory, children will learn violence by example if they see adults practiced corporal punishment and this will increase the likelihood of future violence (Moussa and Al Ayesh, 2009).

2.11 The Role of Civil Society and Nongovernmental Organizations in Fighting against Corporal Punishment in Ghana

The role of civil society organisations in the fight against corporal punishment in Ghana has been commendable over the years. The civil society refer to organisations or agencies not so much linked to government but who complement and support government activities, especially in the areas of implementation and monitoring. These include the activities of media, both print and electronic, juvenile justice courts, faith-based organizations and nongovernmental organizations. In Ghana there are 120 private FM stations excluding those that are owned by the state. Each of these media stations has programmes that specifically

educate listeners on the issues affecting children and how to solve them. Normally during these programmes cases of child abuse and violence against children are reported from some schools and homes.

In this way they are calling the attention of government as well as its development partners to those violations to take action in protecting the rights and privileges of children. Aside the FM stations, the print media is also doing well in reporting cases of child abuse and child right violations. Many radio stations have specific days in a week where issues related to child protection, issues such as child labor, prostitution, corporal punishment, pornography, abusive traditional practices amongst others are discussed Kyei-Gyamfi, (2012).

Apart from the efforts of the FM stations and the print media, the many public and private television stations have also greatly helped over the years. The educative child-friendly programmes that are being aired, the reportage on child violations as well as government actions and plans to dealing with issues of child rights are constantly being aired. Quite recently, it took the efforts of an investigative TV journalist, Anas Aremeyaw Anas to bring to the public attention the horrendous treatment some orphaned children were been subjected to at the infamous Osu Children's Home saga in Accra.

Indeed the efforts of the mass media in championing the cause of children's rights and its enjoyment over the past years can never be under-said. They have served as community watchdogs not only for children's welfare, but every people group in the Ghana society. Not only do they report child right violations, they also in many instances follow up the reported cases to see their logical conclusions. Their activities have led to the arrest and sometimes prosecutions of some perpetrators at the law courts. Another group of organizations that

have done very well in the fight against violence against children are the numerous nongovernmental organizations working in every district of the country.

The nongovernmental organizations make up the largest private sector effort in championing the fight against practices that are considered violations against the growth and well-being of children. Fortunately, different organizations tackle different aspects of the children's rights. Whereas some concentrate on children's right to education, others are concerned with child marriage, corporal punishment, child trafficking, and a host of other important areas. Their mode of delivery varies from advocacy, funding, lobbying, researching, publication among others.

Some notable NGOs whose efforts in this regard over the years are so impressive and visible include but certainly not limited to; World Vision International(WVI), Plan Ghana(PG), Christian Children's Fund of Canada(CCFC), Send Ghana, Children and Youth in Broadcasting(CURIOUS MINDS), The United Nation's International Children's Fund(UNICEF) and its numerous affiliates etc.

2.12 Conceptual Framework

This research work basically is about child rights protection which is anchored in three areas, namely the best interest of the child, participation of children in decisions making concerning them and creating an enabling environment for the children to grow up to be useful to their families and country. The best interest of the child as stipulated in the UNCRC 1980 (Art.19) largely recognized children as right holders and parents and country as duty bearers. Parents are supposed to provide the needs of their children whiles their rights are supposed to be protected by the nation. Children are the future of any given

society, based on this; this research work is of the view that given the importance of their position as future leaders of the society it is necessary to involve them in whatever decisions that are going to be made concerning them. It is would be important to include children in decision concerning them because they are would be the beneficiaries of whatever decisions today's old generation make for them. Again, children as young they are have wonderful and useful ideas when it comes to their own welfare and development. This study therefore is anchored on the belief that if children are the future of society, then it is needful to seek their full participation in all decisions concerning them. Based on the above, this work can best be explained by the principle of the best interest of the child, participation of children in decision making concerning them and making sure that all impediments on their way to healthy growth and development are removed. This is the reason why this study explores the perceptions of both children and adults on the possible effects of corporal punishment on the children in the Kumbungu District of the Northern Region.

2.13 Conclusion

Corporal punishment seems to have a near universal acceptance, in not just Ghana, but many other places across the world. In this chapter we have learnt that corporal punishment has a very long history. Indeed some people think corporal punishment is linked to the fall of man in the beginning of time. That group of people represent the school of thought that has it that the sufferings that man is confronted with today can be traced or linked to the sinful nature of man. Closely linked to this view of the history of corporal punishment are those who have ascribed religious obligations to it. To them, parents and guardians have a God-given responsibilities toward their children, and so for many who are Christians, Romans 13:24(Whoever spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to

discipline him) is quoted as the basis upon which they will violently discipline their children. We also have learnt in this chapter, that, corporal punishment was used in the days of Jesus. However, with the passage of time it has now become apparent, that, the efficacy of corporal punishment in training or teaching children good lessons have virtually disappeared. Corporal punishment has a tendency of thwarting the future of children due to the fact that in schools where corporal punishment is rampant children who think they cannot stand the pain or humiliation of being corporally dealt with will rather choose to loiter about in the community instead of being in school and this can affect his or her intellectual development.

Corporal punishment, it was seen, also is associated with anti-social behaviors such as bullying of siblings, spousal beating, disrespect and many others. It equally has a negative influence on children's educational, spiritual and economic lives.

It was in the light of these and many consequences of corporal punishment against children that the international community, acting through the United Nations came out with a comprehensive policy declarations on children's rights and privileges to be adopted and implemented in the member state countries in order to assured to children the enjoyment of their fundamental human rights. Not only that, locally, the efforts by the current and past governments in promoting and protecting the rights of all groups of people are noticeable. Civil society organizations such as the mass media and the nongovernmental organizations as briefly discussed above have done well in advocating for the recognition and respect of children's rights issues. In conclusion, this chapter has delved deep into the nature and effects of corporal punishment. Specifically, the chapter looked at the definition, history, survey and arguments against corporal punishment. Not only that, we have also looked at

some selected international, regional and national human right provisions that fight against corporal punishment of children and other vulnerable groups. The UNCRC, ACRWC, the 1992 constitution of Ghana, the 1998 Children's Act and few other instruments were some of the provisions the chapter looked at.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology the study used in addressing the objectives of the study. In this chapter, the population for the study, sampling technique, research design and tools for analysis and the profile of the study area are looked at.

Corporal punishment seems to be on ascendency in many parts of Ghana, especially in Kumbungu district of the northern region. Different shades of opinions are involved in discussions on why the practice persisted after all the efforts by Government and its development partners to address it. Studies have shown over the years, that, corporal punishment is not an efficient tool in correcting or training children for the future. Based on the above background, this research seeks to collect data from the people who are directly involved in this phenomenon. Specifically, children are victims of corporal punishment, parents or guardians and teachers as the most perpetrators of this practice.

3.2 Research Design

The approach for this study is mainly quantitative. Quantitative research methods as posited by Lincoln and Guba (1985) attempts to maximize objectivity, replicability, and generalisability of findings, and are typically interested in prediction. Integral to this approach is the expectation that a researcher will set aside his or her experiences, perceptions, and biases to ensure objectivity in the conduct of the study and the conclusions that are drawn. They further stated that key features of many quantitative studies are the use of instruments such as tests or surveys to collect data, and reliance on probability theory to test statistical hypotheses that correspond to research questions of interest. Quantitative

methods are frequently described as deductive in nature, in the sense that inferences from tests of statistical hypotheses lead to general inferences about characteristics of a population. Quantitative methods are also frequently characterized as assuming that there is a single “truth” that exists, independent of human Perception (Lincoln & Guba, *ibid*). Quantitative data were therefore be generated through the use of both closed and open ended questionnaire on corporal punishment and its effects on children growth and development.

3.3 Profile of the Study Area-Kumbungu District

The Kumbungu District is one of the districts in Northern Region created in 2012. The District has a total of 79 communities, with Kumbungu being the administrative and traditional capital of the District. Overwhelming majority (95%) of the inhabitants of the area is Dagombas by tribe who speak a language called Dagbani. The main occupation for the majority of the people is farming, with a hand full of them working in the formal sector. The study is limited to the four basic schools in the district, two Islamic (Nibrasiat and Sunia), and two non Islamic (Local Assembly Primary and Demonstration Primary Schools) which together have a total pupil population of a little over 1000 in 2016/2017 academic year.

3.3.1 Population

According to the 2010 Population and Housing Census (PHC), the Kumbungu District has a total population of 39341, with 50% being men. The population is largely youthful (44.8%) (GSS, 2010). Being the headquarters of the district, the town is a host of many offices, both public and private. It is about 15 minutes drive from Tamale North Constituency. It is also a host to one Senior High School, Kumbungu Senior High School, located along Kumbungu-Tamale road and five basic schools located within the township.

It is also note worthy, that, the District hosts the water treatment plant (located at Dalun) that supplies potable water to every part of the district and to the Tamale and its environs. The district doesn't have much tourist attraction centers, with the exception of the Bontanga Irrigation Dam (BID), the traditional artifacts at Logshegu and the night market at Gbulun.

Religiously, the traditional and Islamic religions are the two dominant ones; with few Christians scatted around the district (GSS, 2010).

3.3.2 Education

Educationally, the District is making progress. Currently there are more than 50 Primary Schools in the District. Within the study area alone, there are seven primary schools and five Junior High Schools. Currently, there is only one Senior High School in the district, without any tertiary institution. Generally the literacy level in the district is low as few people are educated to the university level. As mentioned earlier on, all the schools have a combined population of little over 1000 during the time of the study.

3.4 Sampling Techniques

There are so many areas and schools that could be selected to part take in this research, however, for want of time and resources it was not possible for the researcher to engage all these areas and schools, even though corporal punishment is perceived to be highly practiced in those settings as well. Therefore the research adopts a simple random sampling to select the four basic schools and areas in which to carry out the studies. The names of areas and schools selected were chosen from among a group of other areas and schools written on pieces of paper folding and decisions made randomly. In this way all the six

suburbs or areas and five basic schools within the Kumbungu district had equal chances of being selected for this study.

The researcher administered questionnaires to 100 (50 in school and 50 out of school) children drawn randomly from classes 5, 6 and form two (2) of the Junior High. This was intended to find out the type and level of corporal punishment in schools and at homes levels. Classes 5 and 6 were chosen because at that level they considered matured enough to appreciate the concept of corporal punishment. At the Junior High level, the class form two was chosen because at that time and level, the students would have become so used to the school's rules and regulations and hence are expected to behave well and acceptably. The Form Ones and Threes were not chosen because some of the students would have moved from different primary schools to join the junior high and so may not accustomed themselves to the rules and regulations of the new schools, while form threes are considered too close to the final Basic Education Certificate Exam (BECE) and so need time to study. The out of school children were also picked using systematic random sampling in the community. On the part of the parents and teachers, a total of 50 of them were chosen, 25 teachers picked randomly from the four schools and 50 parents who were not teachers but were also picked from the community using simple systematic random sampling from every 5th house encountered to respond to questionnaires on violent and non violent forms of corporal punishment. This was done by counting by jumping every four houses and for considering the fifth house for answering of the questionnaires.

3.5 Data Collection Tools

To collect data for the research, the researcher made use of the following tools, questionnaires. A questionnaire is a set of questions, normally printed and which are administered to chosen respondents in order to elicit their views or opinions of a particular topic in a research process. The advantage for using questionnaire to collect data is that, it keeps the respondent on track so that he or she does not give you answers, which are irrelevant to the phenomenon that is being studied.

3.6 Methods of Data Analysis

The raw data collected from the field was compiled, summarized and grouped for editing purposes. The data processed involved cleaning of data to reduce the margin of error. After data cleaning, the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) solution version 16.0 was used to process the data for analysis in addition to the use of Microsoft Excel. In the light of this, the data was entered in the variable view window of SPSS as part of the data entry process. Tables and pie-charts for analysis and discussion were generated from the data. The analysis was mainly descriptive on the key variables of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents analysis and discussion of field data. The analysis and discussion are done in relation to the perception of the effects of corporal punishment on children welfare. The presentation is in three sections namely the background information of respondents; presentation of case by case analysis of field data with tables and pie charts and discussion of findings of the field data.

4.2 Background Information of Respondents

This section of the study presents the background information of respondents. Table 4.1 contains information on teachers and parents whilst Table 4.2 presents information on the children. The tables present the sex, age, religion, educational level, occupation and marital status.

4.2.1 Teachers and Parents

As in Table 4.1, in terms of sex, majority (64%) of teachers respondents are males whilst on the other hand, females dominate (56%) parents' respondents. This balanced representation of both sexes will give a fair representation of opinions regarding corporal punishment of children both at school and home. In terms of age, the data showed that both teachers (48%) and parents (64%) are within the age cohorts 36-40 years. This suggests that respondents are mature and will appreciate how corporal punishment is meted out to children and how this affects their growth and development. With respect to religion greater percentages (80%) of teachers is Christians whilst 76% of the parents is Muslims suggesting that both group of will show different religious undertones (if any) maybe unveiled when it comes to child

training and development. In terms of the educational level of both categories of respondents, greater majority of them are educated, because aside the teachers some of the parents also had high educational training and will show better understanding of corporal punishment both at school and home. The field data further revealed that majority of the respondents are in formal employment particularly the teaching where a greater majority (86%) find themselves in both categories.

Table 4.1: Background Information of Teachers and Parents

Bio-data	Category	Teachers N (%)	Parents N (%)
Sex	Male	16(64)	11(44)
	Female	9(36)	14(56)
	Total	25(100)	25(100)
Age	25-30	1(4)	5(20)
	31-35	3(12)	3(12)
	36-40	12(48)	16(64)
	41+	9(36)	1(4)
	Total	25(100)	25(100)
Religion	Christianity	20(80)	4(16)
	Islam	5(20)	19(76)
	Traditional	-	2(8)
	Total	25(100)	25(100)
Educational level	Certificate A	-	2(8)
	Teacher's Diploma	11(44)	12(48)
	Degree	14(56)	4(16)
	Non(without any formal educationa)	-	7(28)
	Total	25(100)	25(100)
Occupation	Formal(depends on monthly pay)	25(100)	18(72)
	Informal	-	7(28)
	Total	25(100)	25(100)
Marital status	Married	19(76)	24(96)
	Single	6(24)	1(4)

	Divorced	-	-
	Total	25(100)	25(100)

Source: Field data, June 2017

4.2.2 In school and out of school

From Table 4.2, in terms of sex presentation of respondents, children in school were equally represented in the study. On the other hand, majority (60%) of children not in school were females which still fuels the perception that very little importance is attached to girl-child education. This further gives the indication these girls are given all sort of work at home to do which does not permit them the opportunity to go school. Also, more than half (55%) of the respondents were between the ages 12 to 14 years. This implies that they are able to give detail information on how they are punished either at school or home. Furthermore, more than 80% of the respondents were Muslims and will appreciate the kind of training they go through particularly at home.

Table 0.1: Background information of children in school and those that are not in school

Bio-data	Category	In school N (%)	Out of school N (%)
Sex	Male	25(50)	20(40)
	Female	25(50)	30(60)
	Total	50(100)	50(100)
Age	12-14	28(56)	27(54)
	15-17	22(44)	23(46)
	Total	50(100)	50(100)
Religion	Christianity	2(4)	8(16)
	Islam	42(84)	41(82)
	Traditional	6(12)	1(2)
	Total	50(100)	50(100)
Educational level	Primary	47(94)	-
	Junior High School	3(6)	-

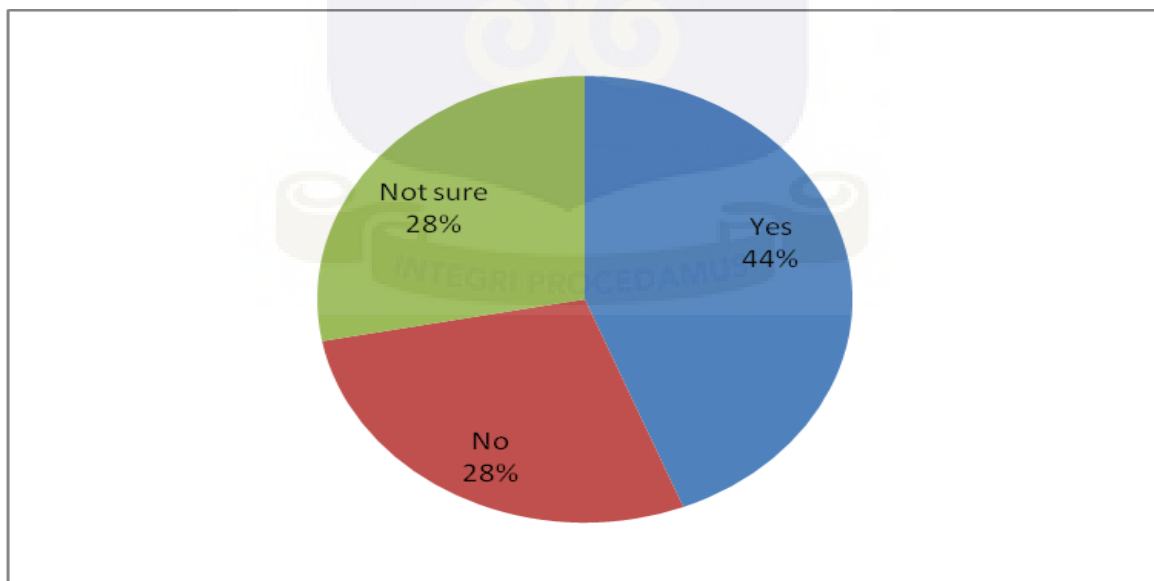
	Non	-	50(100)
	Total	50(100)	50(100)

Source: Field data, June 2017

4.2.3 Level of education and violence against children

From Figure 4.1, a question was raised to ascertain whether one’s level of education has an influence on violence against children. From this, majority (44%) of the respondents indicated the level of education indeed had an influence on violence against children. On the reverse, those that are less educated are more likely to perpetuate violence against children. In contrast, 28% of the respondents believed that the level of education of a person had no bearing with violence against children. This suggests that no matter the person’s level of education, he/she can still perpetuate violence against children.

Figure 0.1: Level of education and view on violence against children



Source: Field data, June 2017

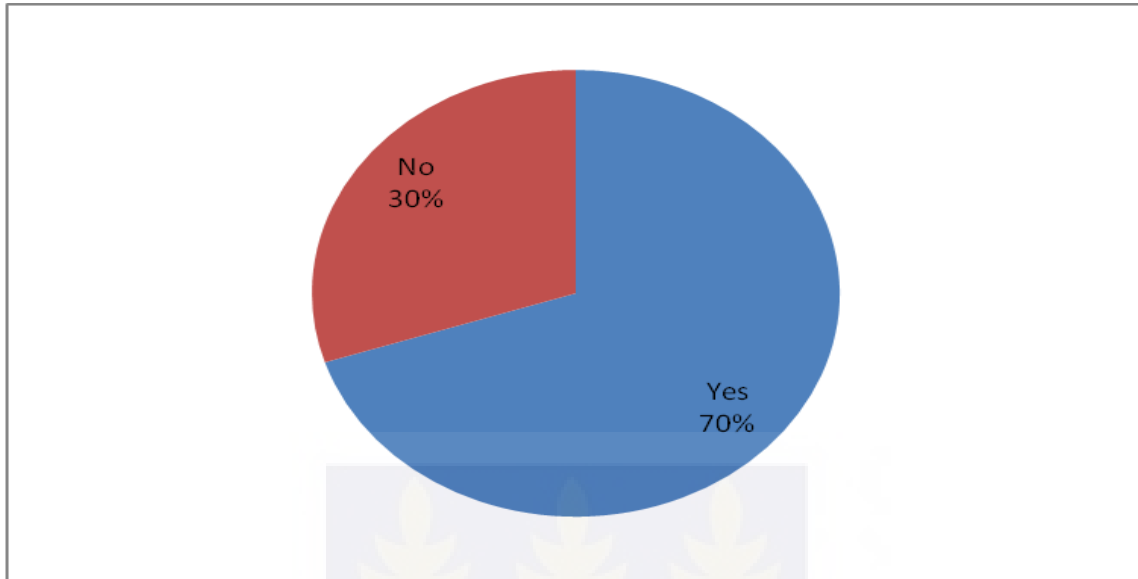
4.3 Objective 1: Experiences of children resulting from corporal punishment

This section of the study assesses the experiences of children resulting from corporal punishment which includes administration of corporal punishment in schools; persons responsible for corporal punishment; pains children suffer from corporal punishment; frequency of punishment; persons responsible for punishment as well as fears of being punished and its effects on the academic performance of children as discussed in the following sub-sections.

4.3.1 Views of children in school

As in Figure 4.2, greater percentage (70%) of the children in school indicated that they had suffered some pains as a result of corporal punishment. This gives an indication corporal punishment is still pronounced and the main method mostly used by teachers in correcting children in school. The field data on the other hand shows that, 30% of the respondents did not suffer any pains resulting from corporal punishment. This implies that though these children could be punished in one way or the other, it was probably not very mile and as such they did not suffer any pains.

Figure 4.2: Experience of corporal punishment by children in school



Source: Field data, June 2017.

Frequency of punishment

As in Table 4.3, a question was posted to find out how often children get punished in school. The results in this case showed that children at all times were punished in school. However, this mostly happened once a week. Some children were also punished monthly. This means that these children hardly go wrong or fowl the school rules and regulations that explains why they were hardly punished. It is worrying to note that some children were punished on daily basis attributable to lateness to school, fighting and not doing well in class. This could affect their academic performance because they may not have full concentration in class to learn.

Table 4.3: Frequency of punishment

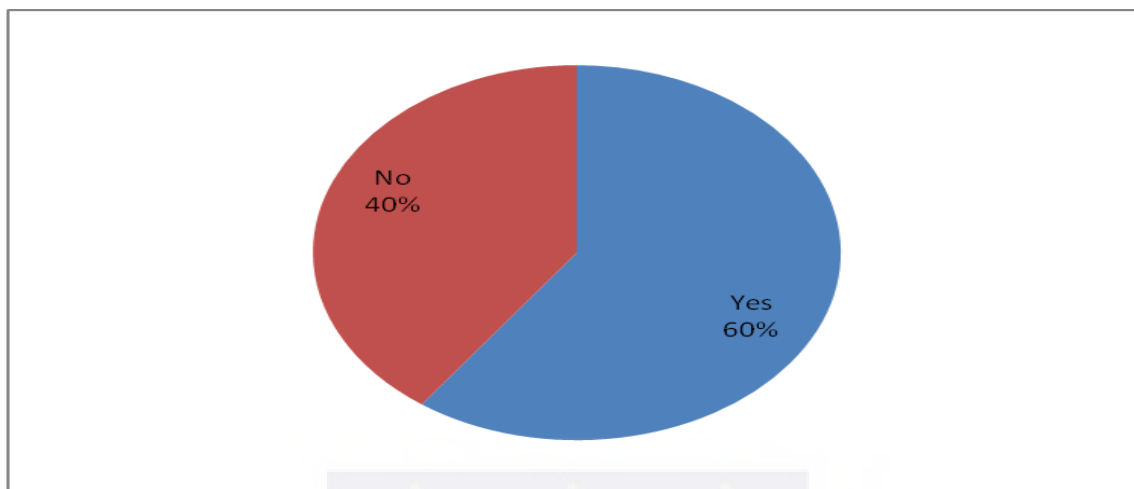
Frequency of punishment	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Everyday	8	16.0
Once a week	28	56.0
Monthly	14	28.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: Field data, June 2017

4.3.2 Views of children at home

Figure 4.3 shows that greater majority (60%) of the respondents experienced corporal punishment at home. This in most cases takes the form of canning, slapping among others. As a result, some children sustained some injuries as a little over half (52%) of them revealed this. Statistics further indicate that the prime culprits in these acts are the fathers. This is followed by mothers and uncles. This suggests that corporal punishment on children does not only take place at school but also at home and as such these violent acts could psychologically affect their proper growth and development. It is also interesting to note is not all children experience corporal punishment at home as 40% of them indicated this. This means that these children follow the basic rules at home including respecting their parents and elders and doing what is expected of them.

Figure 0.3: Experiences of corporal punishment at home



Source: Field data, June 2017

Offences of corporal punishment at home

Table 4.4 shows that corporal punishment against children does not happen by accident but due to certain reasons. In relation to this, majority (44%) of the children were punished due to stealing. This is followed by disrespecting elders at home and also children failing to do their household chores. This means that some children are naturally notorious and are not prepared to obey their parents though corporal punishment is not the best option for training children.

Table 0.4: Offences of corporal punishment

Offence	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Stealing	22	44.0
Disrespecting elderly	13	26.0
Failing to do home chores	11	22.0
Not going to farm or shop	2	4.0
Other	2	4.0

Offence	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Stealing	22	44.0
Disrespecting elderly	13	26.0
Failing to do home chores	11	22.0
Not going to farm or shop	2	4.0
Other	2	4.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: Field data, June 2017

4.3.3 Administration of corporal punishment in school

As shown Table 4.5, it is that one person does not carry out corporal punishment in schools. Various people in the school were involved in this act. As part of the Ghana Education Service rules of who is supposed to issue punishment to pupils in school, the head teacher/master is the only authorized person. Under a normal circumstance if a child goes wrong, it is supposed to be reported to the head teacher and the head will now have the responsibility of issuing the appropriate punishment and record the specific punishment in a lock book. However, the field data shows that class teachers and other senior pupils were also involved in punishing students in the school thereby indicating an abuse of the lay down procedure of punishing pupils.

Table 0.5: Administrators of corporal punishment

Administrator of punishment	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Head teacher	13	52.0
Class teacher	9	36.0
School gardener	2	8.0
Others	1	4.0

Administrator of punishment	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Head teacher	13	52.0
Class teacher	9	36.0
School gardener	2	8.0
Others	1	4.0
Total	25	100.0

Source: Field data, June 2017

4.3.4 Persons responsible for punishment in school

Table 4.6 shows that one person but different persons did not punish children in school. The class teachers however were in the majority. This could be attributed to their regular interaction with children in class. It is also worth noting that colleague pupils who are prefects, also punished children in school. Under normal circumstance, prefects are not supposed to punished their colleagues pupils but report the case to the teacher-on-duty who in-turns lays the complains to the head teacher for appropriate punishment. It is also true, however, that in some schools the head teachers were responsible for punishment instead of the teachers or prefects.

Table 0.6: Persons responsible for punishment

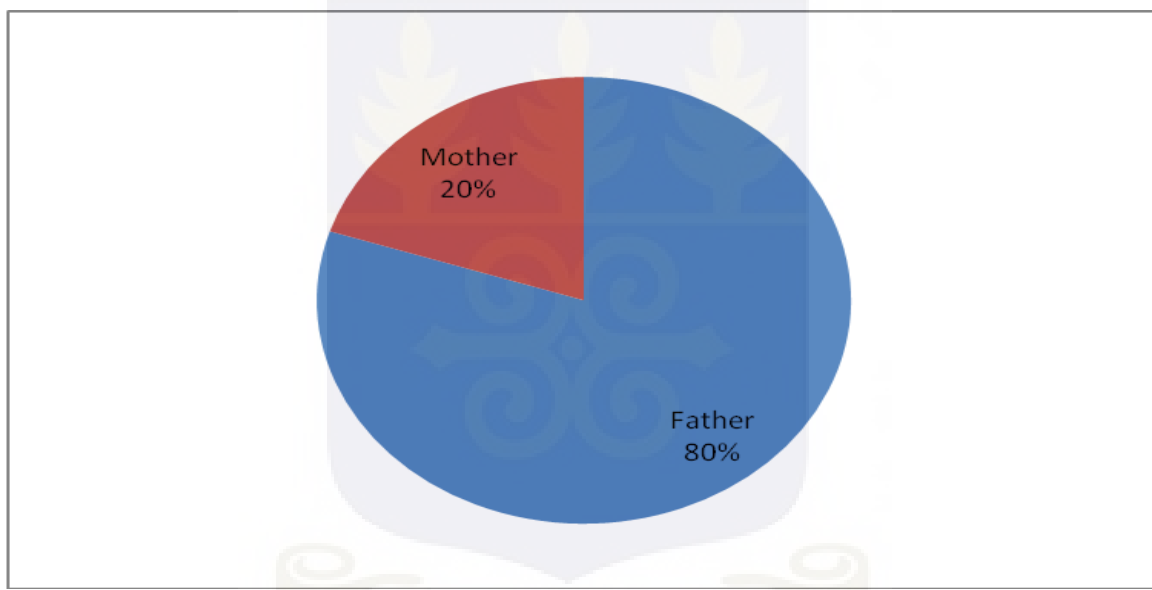
Person responsible for punishment	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Head teacher	11	22.0
Class teacher	32	64.0
Senior prefect	7	14.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: Field data, June 2017

4.3.5 Person responsible for punishment at home

Figure 4.4 presents data on who is responsible for punishing children at home. The data shows that the punishment of children is carried out by both parents (Father and mother). However, the fathers do it more frequently than the mothers. This is because, traditionally, fathers are mainly responsible for instilling discipline of children at home and this could explain why fathers are more involved in this than the mothers.

Figure 0.4: The person who carries out punishment at home



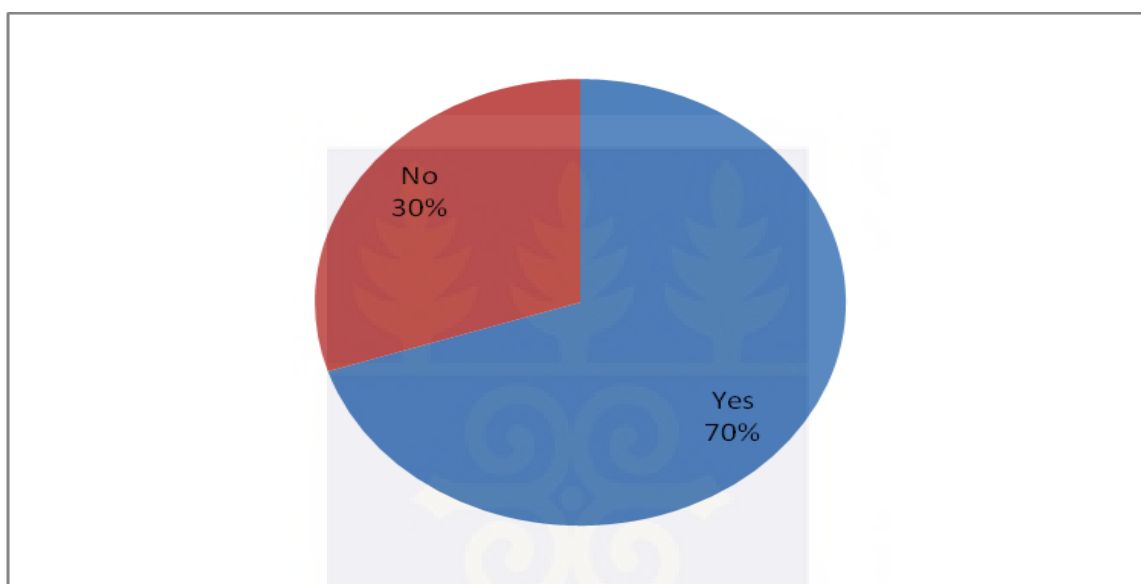
Source: Field data, June 2017

4.3.6 Pains children suffer resulting from corporal punishment

Figure 4.5 looks at whether children ever suffered any pains resulting from corporal punishment in school. In this regard, greater percentage (70%) of the respondents indicated that they had indeed suffered some pains as a result of corporal punishment. This gives an indication that corporal punishment is still pronounced and the main method mostly used by

teachers in correcting children in school. The field data on the other hand shows that, 30% of the respondents did not suffer any pains resulting from corporal punishment. This implies that though these children could be punished in one way or the other, it was probably very mild and as such they did not suffer any pains.

Figure 0.5 : Experience of corporal punishment by children in school



Source: Field data, June 2017

4.3.7 Frequency of punishment

As in Table 4.7, a question was posted to find out how often children get punished in school. The results in this case showed that children at all times were punished in school. However, this mostly happened once a week. Some children were also punished monthly. This means that these children hardly go wrong or fowl the school rules and regulations that explains why they were hardly punished. It is worrying to note that some children were punished on daily basis attributable to lateness to school, fighting and not doing well in class. This could

affect their academic performance because they may not have full concentration in class to learn.

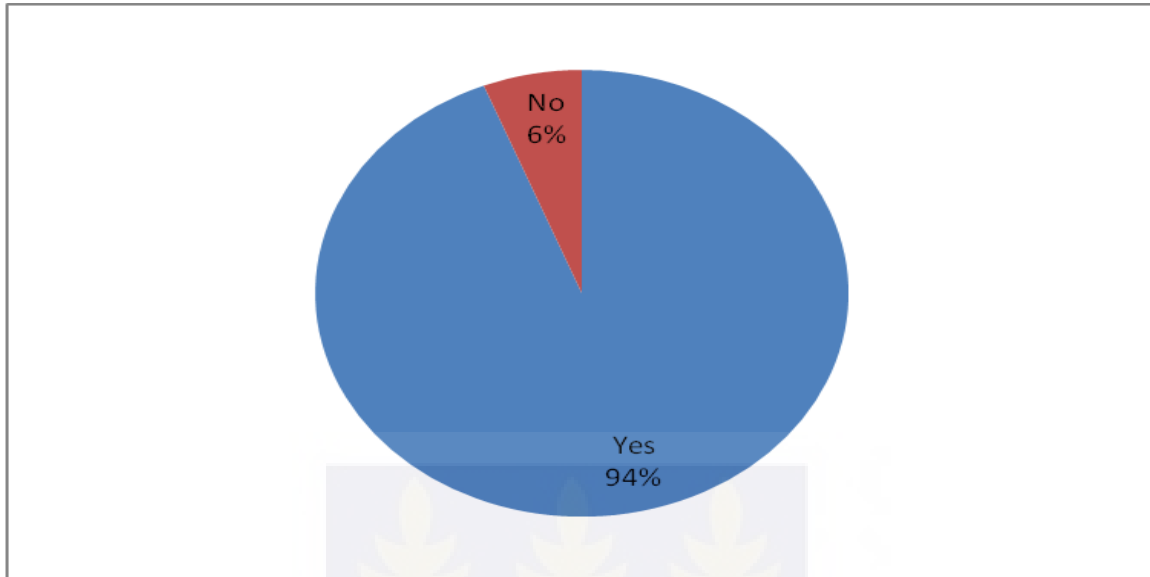
Table 0.7: Frequency of punishment

Frequency of punishment	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Everyday	8	16.0
Once a week	28	56.0
Monthly	14	28.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: Field data, June 2017

4.3.8 Fear of being punished and academic performance

Figure 4.6 seeks to find out from children whether the fear of being punished could influence their academic performance. The results showed that more than ninety percent (94%) of the respondents indicated the fear of being punished will force them to learn and improve their academic performance.

Figure 4.6: Fear of being punished and academic performance

Source: Field data, November 2017.

In the same vein, as in Table 4.8, 66% of the respondents agreed that the fear of being caned makes them to perform well in class suggesting that though caning is no more permitted in schools it has some positive influence on children's learning. Despite this, a negligible proportion (6%) of the respondents was of the view that corporal punishment in any way did not influence them to learn. In further interrogation to the earlier question raised, it has been affirmed by respondents that the fear of being caned forces them to sit and learn. Added to this, 20% of the respondents disagreed that the fear of being caned makes them to improve their academic performance in class. This means that though children might do well in class, it is not the influence of the cane. More so, fourteen percent (14%) of the respondents were indifferent which indicates that they could not tell whether the fear of being caned make them do well in class or not.

Table 0.8: The fear of being canned and performance in class

Level of agreement	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Agreed	33	66.0
Disagreed	10	20.0
Not sure	7	14.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: Field data, June 2017

4.4 Reasons for using corporal punishment

As shown in Table 4.9, the principal reason for teachers using corporal punishment is correction. This is followed by discipline. In this regard, children are given all kind of punishment with the dominant ones being caning, hitting of toes with a rule, pinching, pulling of ears and kneeling on stones. It is important to mention that some teachers asked children to dig pits to their heights. This implies that corporal punishment is still used in most schools in the study area as a way of correcting children. It is however interesting to note that some teachers thought that the best way to correct a child is to counsel.

Table 0.9: Reasons for using corporal punishment

Opinion	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Discipline	8	32.0
Correction	15	60.0
Counselling	2	8.0
Total	25	100.0

Source: Field data, June 2017

4.4.1 Motivational factors of corporal punishment

As in Table 4.10, a question was posted to find out why teachers punish children at school. The results showed that most of the punishment occurred as a result of children going contrary to the school rules that normally angers teachers to meet out punishment. The field data further revealed that some teachers transfer their anger from home to school and therefore with the least provocation by children, the children are punished.

Table 0.10: Motivational factors of corporal punishment

Motivational factors	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Anger as a result of the misconduct of the student	21	84.0
Anger transferred from home	4	16.0
Total	25	100.0

Source: Field data, June 2017.

4.4.2 Alternative ways of correcting children besides corporal punishment

As illustrated in Table 4.11, a question was asked to ascertain alternative ways teachers can correct children aside the corporal punishment. Following from this, more than half (56%) of the respondents indicated that counseling children was most appropriate. This is followed by 32% of them who indicated motivating good deeds of children was another way one could correct a child instead of the good old corporal punishment. This implies that teachers are aware of more efficient way to train children though they still resort to corporal punishment as way of correcting children at school.

Table 0.11: Alternative ways of correcting children

Ways of correction	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Denying of opportunities	1	4.0
Counselling	14	56.0
Motivating good deeds	8	32.0
Others	2	8.0
Total	25	100.0

Source: Field data, June 2017

4.5 Objective 3: Dangers Associated with Corporal Punishment

This objective of the study sought to find out from teachers, parents and children about the dangers associated with corporal punishment. These include how corporal punishment affects the behaviour of children; use of corporal punishment as a method of training children among other variables.

4.5.1 Teachers Views

From Table 4.12, there was a divided opinion among teachers regarding excessive corporal punishment and antisocial behavior of children. Some believed that excessive corporal punishment would lead to antisocial behavior of children while others thought otherwise. In this case, more than half (56%) of the teachers disagreed that excessive corporal punishment on children could instigate anti-social behavior in them. This means that teachers are of the opinion that no matter the level of corporal punishment on children, it would not build antisocial behaviour in them. However, more than forty percent (44%) of teachers were of the view that excessive corporal punishment could result in children develop anti-social behaviour. This suggests that through intensive corporal punishment, children will be timid, introvert and would not want to associate with even their peers.

Table 0.12 Opinions of teachers on corporal punishment and antisocial behaviour of children

Opinion	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Strongly agreed	7	28.0
Slightly agreed	4	16.0
Disagreed	12	48.0
Strongly disagreed	2	8.0
Total	25	100.0

Source: Field data, June 2017

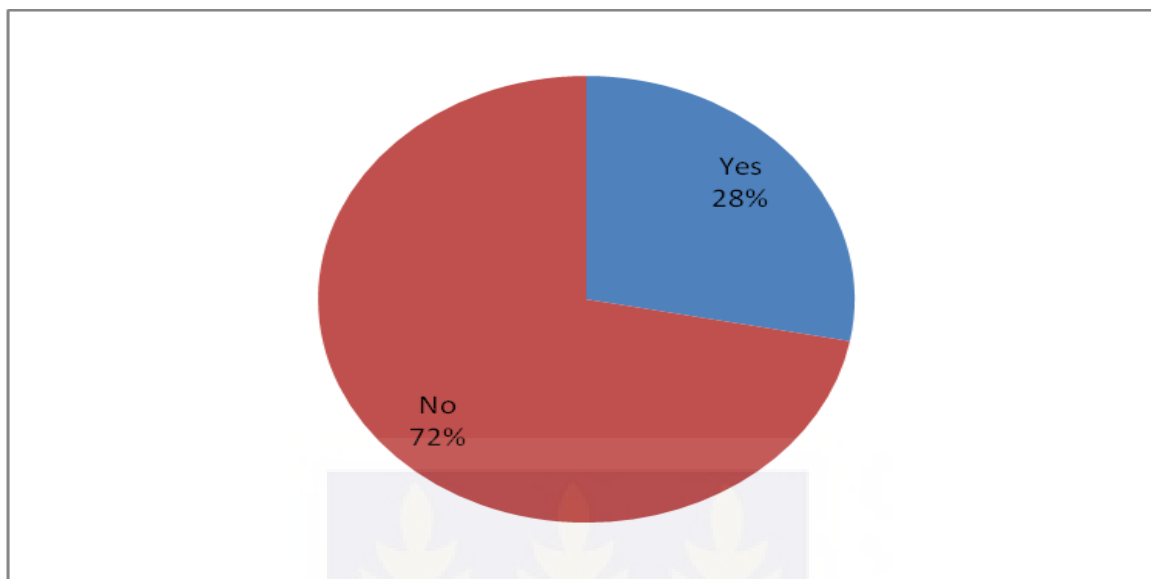
4.5.2 Parents Views

This section of the study presents field data on parents' views and opinions on corporal punishment at home. These include using violence as a means of training children, perpetrators of violence at home, religious beliefs and the use of physical violence against children. These are explained in further detail in the following subsections.

Use of corporal punishment in training children

From Figure 4.7, significant majority (72%) of the parents indicated that it was not appropriate to use violence means in training children. This indicates that they frown against using violence means to correct children when they go wrong. On the other hand, 28% of the respondents were of the view that it is prudent to use violence means to train children. Principally, the main method used by respondents in correcting children in this regard is by canning followed by using their hands to hit children and this could cause injury to children. This gives an indication that they still believe in the old adage that “spare the rod and spoil the child” and as such the only means to correct a child is by corporal punishment.

Figure 0.7: Use of corporal punishment in training a child



Source: Field data, June 2017

Religion and the use of corporal punishment of children

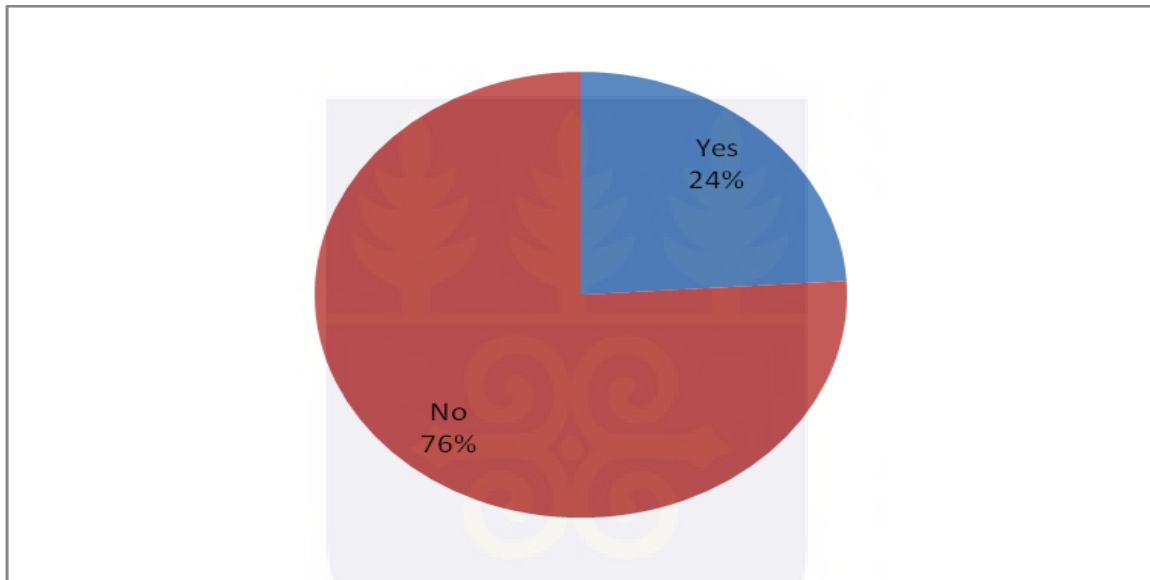
There were mixed responses with regard to how religion has influenced corporal punishment against children. In this case, a little over half (52%) of the respondents indicated that their religious beliefs had no influence on corporal punishment against children. On the other hand, 44% of the respondents indicated that religion has influence on corporal punishment against children.

The use of corporal punishment and inculcation of the spirit of hard work in children

Figure 4.8 illustrates the opinions of parents on the corporal punishment and inculcation of the spirit of hard work in children. With regard to this, the data shows that majority (76%) parents were of the view that corporal punishment cannot in any way bring about the spirit of hard work in children. Accordingly, the spirit of hard work is not as a result of corporal

punishment but motivational training and counseling from parents. On the other hand, 24% of the respondents indicated otherwise. Parents believed that corporal punishment can imbibe the spirit of hard work in children. In this regard, they perpetuate corporal punishment as a means of correcting children.

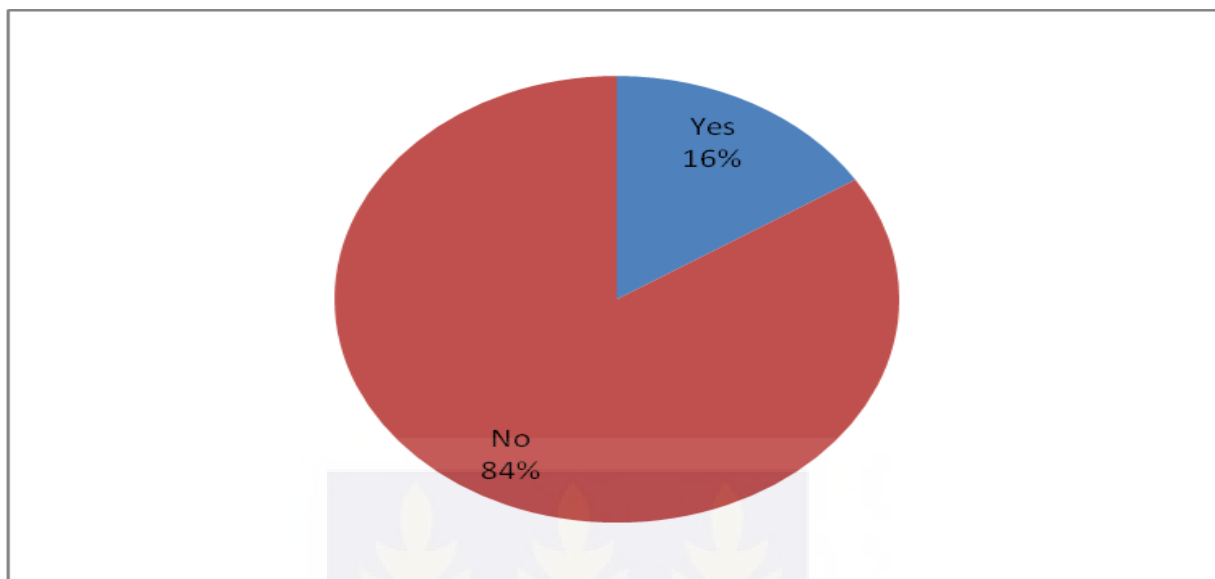
Figure 0.8: Use of corporal punishment and inculcation of the spirit of hard work in children



Source: Field data, June 2017

In furtherance to this, 84% of the parents indicated that corporal punishment was not the best option for the adequate preparation of children for the future as illustrated in Figure 4.9. This means that alternative methods of punishment are required to prepare children for the future. This notwithstanding, 16% of the respondents were of the view that excessive corporal punishment could lead to adequate preparation of children for the future. This suggests that this group of respondents still use corporal punishment as a means of correcting children at home.

Figure 0.9: Corporal punishment and adequate preparation of children for the future



Source: Field data, June 2017.

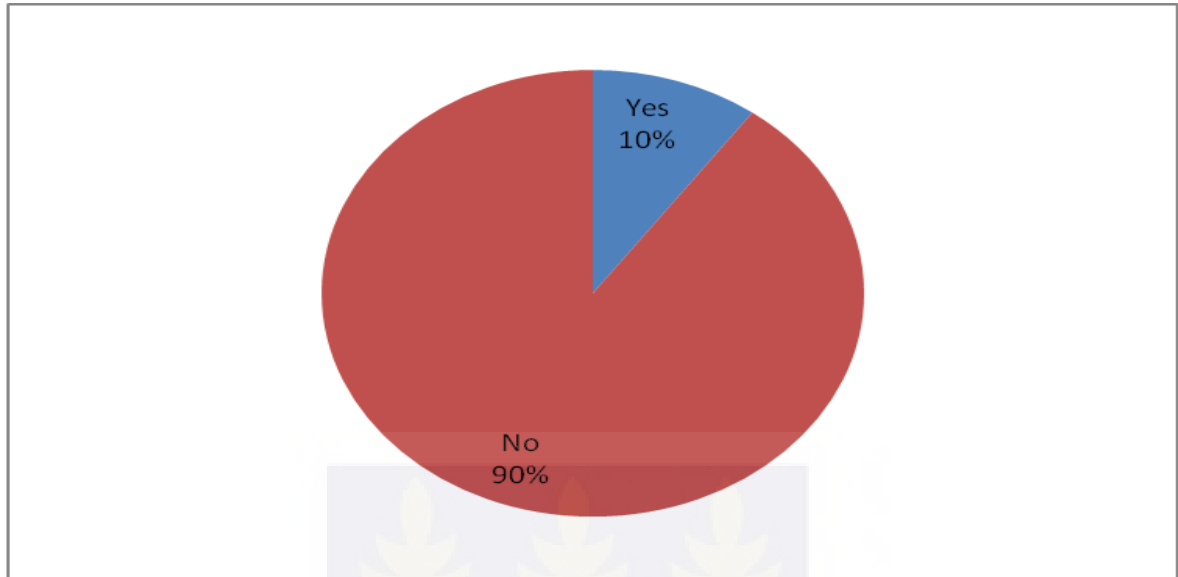
4.5.3 Views of children in school

This section also presents field data on children views on corporal punishment. These includes: illness resulting from corporal punishment; teachers using corporal punishment as a means of correction; pains that they suffer as a result of corporal punishment; how often they get punished; persons responsible for punishing them in school and how they feel when get punished.

Illness resulting from corporal punishment in school

As shown in Figure 4.10, though children undergo various forms of punishment in school, significant majority (90%) of them never sustained any injury resulting from corporal punishment. This implies that punishment is being administered with care by the teachers. Despite this, very few (10%) of them indicated that they ever sustained injury as a result of corporal punishment in school.

Figure 0.10: Illness resulting from corporal punishment

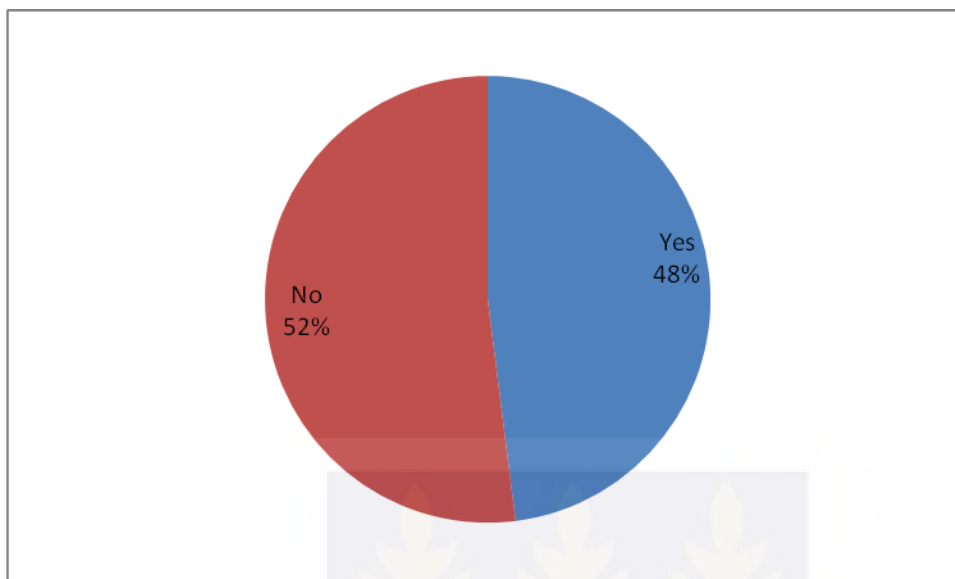


Source: Field data, June 2017.

Teachers using corporal punishment to correct

Figure 4.11 shows children views on the use corporal punishment as a means of correcting them. From the field data, respondents had quite a divided opinion on the issue. A little over half (52%) of the respondents were of the view that the best way to correct a child is through corporal punishment. It therefore gives the impression that children do not see corporal punishment as punishment but a way of correcting them for their own good. On the other hand, 48% of the respondents thought otherwise. They are opposed to the notion that the best way to correct a child is by corporal punishment.

Figure 0.11: Teachers using corporal punishment to correct



Source: Field data, June 2017.

Alternative ways of correcting and training children

Table 4.13 intended to find out children opinion on the best alternative ways of correcting them when they go wrong. Various options were given in this regard. Key amongst them is counseling followed by rewarding good performance. This implies that children as they are also know that there are alternative ways of correcting children either than the traditional corporal punishment.

Table 0.2: Alternative ways of correcting and training children

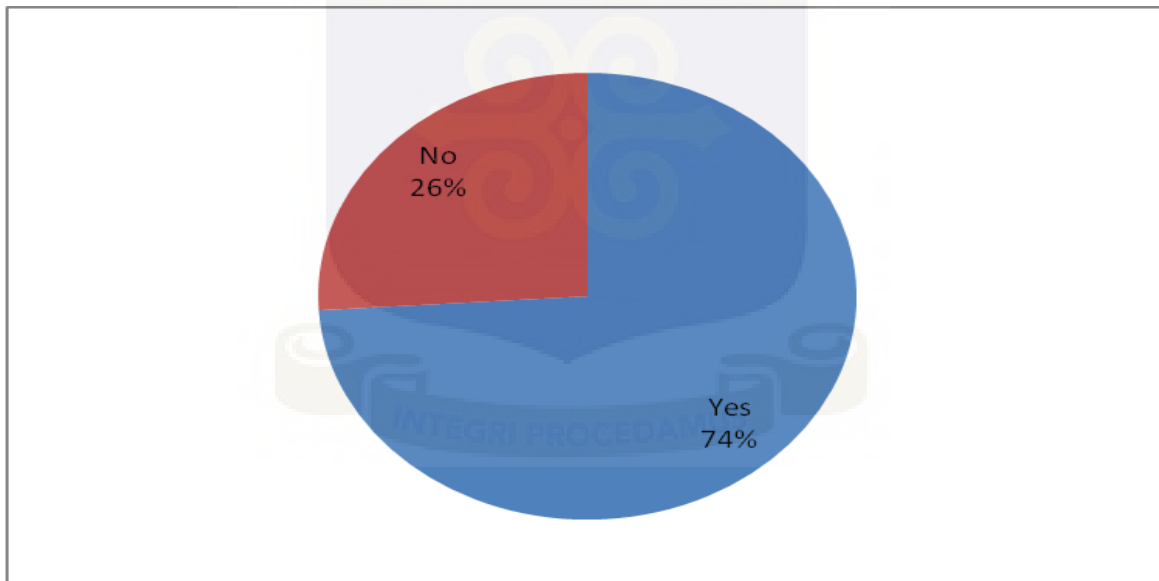
Opinion	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Rewarding good performance	11	22.0
Counselling	30	60.0
motivating good character	9	18.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: Field data, June 2017.

Corporal punishment and relationship with parents/guardians

Figure 4.12 shows that though parents did punish their wards it did not strain their relationship. Significant majority (74%) of the respondents indicated that though they were punished by their parents they still had good relationship with them. This implies that children see corporal punishment as not punishment but a way of correcting and preparing them for the future. In contrast, 26% of the respondents revealed that corporal punishment had strained the relationship they had with their parents. This clearly suggests that these children see corporal punishment as a way of harm but not training.

Figure 0.12: Corporal punishment and relationship with parents/guardians



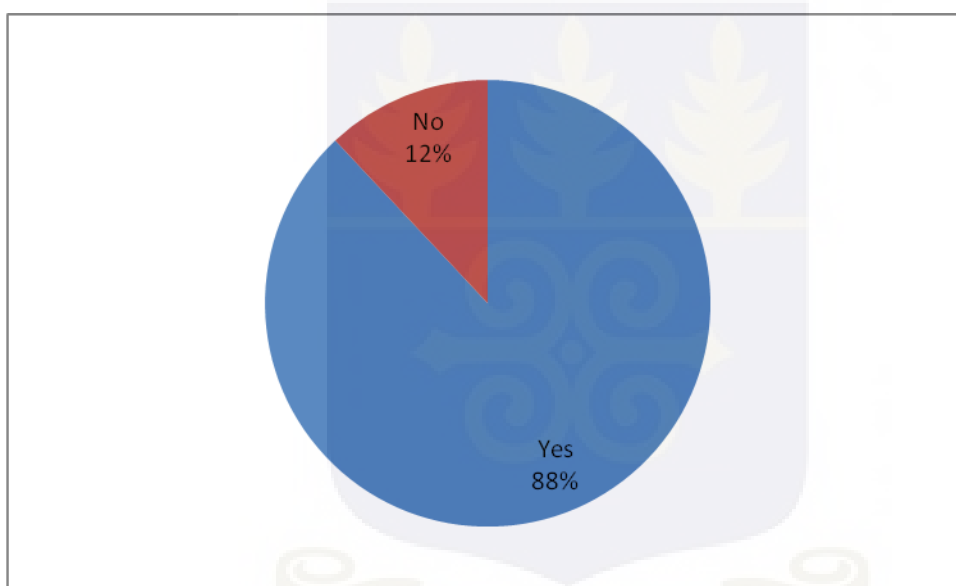
Source: Field data, June 2017.

4.6 Objective 4: Awareness of children rights in Ghana

As illustrated Figure 4.13, teachers were asked if they were aware of children's rights in relation to corporal punishment. In this regard, it is obvious that significant majority (88%)

of the respondents were aware of child rights which include the right to play, freedom of association, right to freely express themselves and right to education. This is an indication that teachers are carrying out corporal punishment with impunity. A small portion, 12% of the respondents were not aware of child rights which is an indication that more education still needs to be done on the rights of people including children because they are also people.

Figure 0.13: Awareness of children rights in Ghana



Source: Field data, June 2017

4.6.1 Preferred ways of correcting a child

From Table 4.14, more than 80% of the respondents indicated that the preferred ways of correcting children were by motivating good deeds and counseling. This indication therefore raises issues regarding teachers' commitment to alternative ways of correcting children. This is because despite the fact that they are aware of these alternatives, they still resort to all kinds of punishment as way of correcting children. A small (12%) proportion of the respondents still thought that there were no better ways of correcting a child except caning.

Table 0.14: Preferred ways of correcting a child

Preferred ways	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Canning	3	12.0
Motivating good deeds	11	44.0
Counseling	11	44.0
Total	25	100.0

Source: Field data, June 2017

4.7 Discussion of findings

This section of the chapter discusses the views and opinions of various respondents on corporal punishment in relation to the research objectives.

4.7.1 Experiences of violent corporal punishment by children

The first task for this research work was to find out the experiences children have of corporal punishment both in school and out of school. According to the Committee on the Rights of the Child (n.d.) corporal punishment involves caning, slapping, spanking, putting of pepper into girls private parts, dipping of children's hands into boiling water and many others. The field data suggests that children in Kumbungu District indeed experienced or are experiencing corporal punishment both at school and at home. At the school level though not all the children experience corporal punishment, greater majority (70%) of them indicated that they had suffered corporal punishment.

According to Kaczynski and Hildebrandt (1997) children learn and internalize good societal morals best when parents, teachers, caretakers and senior family members use child-discipline strategies that use minimal parental power, promote choice and autonomy and provide explanations for desirable behaviours. The analysis of individual cases confirms this

assertion as children were punished by teachers, parents and school prefects. Whilst at the school level children were mostly punished by class teachers; at household level corporal punishment was mostly carried out by the biological fathers of children. Therefore for any policy intervention on child protection, it should be targeted at both teachers and parents.

4.7.2 Reasons for corporal punishment

As postulated by Grolnick, Deci and Ryan (1997); Hoffman (1983) and Lepper (1983) even though parents and teachers who use corporal punishment as a disciplinary tool may get an immediate compliance from their children, instilling and molding a lifestyle that is worthy of emulation in a child should be the utmost concern for parent teachers and not just to force children to immediately obey their wishes. In this case, various opinions were expressed by the various respondents regarding the preferred options for correcting children whether at school or home. Though others had contrary opinions, majority of the respondents preferred counseling and rewarding good deeds/character.

The field data further revealed that some children were corporally punished almost on daily basis attributable to lateness to school, fighting, theft, disrespecting elderly, laziness, not going on errands, not being hardworking enough and many others. Even though the children confirmed they do suffer corporal punishment from their teachers and parents, but it was not a bother to them because a large majority of them thought that it was important for their teachers and parents to punish them for their own good. On the question of why teachers and parents use corporal punishment in raising children a large majority of both children and adults indicated that it was largely for correction and building of good character for the children. According to the children corporal punishment makes them to be hard working both at home and in school.

4.7.3 Dangers associated with corporal punishment

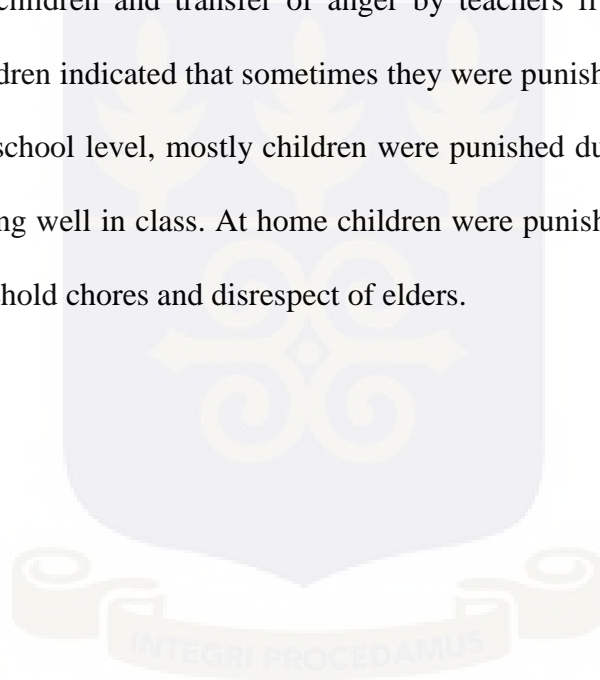
On the dangers of corporal punishment, the study found a contradictory relationship between what the literature says and what the children themselves indicated. In the literature, a lot of adverse effects are tied to corporal punishment on children. However, even though a few of them confirmed that they have sustained various degrees of injuries resulting from corporal punishment, a vast majority of the respondents disagreed that corporal punishment has dangerous consequences. Regarding these differences in opinions about the dangers of corporal punishment, it is possible that the differences in cultures and type of training between the western children and the African children could be the reason considering the fact that majority of literature reviewed for this study was of western origin.

4.7.4 Awareness of children rights

The fourth objective of the study was to ascertain the awareness of child rights among the various respondents. The study found that the awareness of child rights was limited, some parents and almost all the children in the study did not have enough knowledge of child rights. This gives the impression that corporal punishment is still pronounced and the main method mostly used by teachers in correcting children in school. The field results also showed that corporal punishment did not only take place at the school level but also happened at home as majority (60%) of children who are at home experienced corporal punishment. This in most cases takes the form of canning, slapping among others. As a result, some children sustained some injuries as a little over half (52%) of them revealed this.

As stated by Baumrind (1973) and (1994) when corporal punishment is used within a loving family environment, it is effective in reducing unwanted behaviour without increasing

aggression. Though majority of teachers and parents did not support the use of corporal punishment as way of correcting children, they indicated that the main reason for punishing children is for correcting and instilling discipline. This also confirms the views expressed by children. Predominately, the method of punishment used was canning. However, at the school level other methods such as hitting the toes of children with a rule, pinching, pulling of ears, knelling on stones and digging of pits were used. It is very important to point out that some of the punishments issued to children at the school were triggered by misconduct on the part of the children and transfer of anger by teachers from home to the school. Admittedly, the children indicated that sometimes they were punished as a result of stealing. Despite this, at the school level, mostly children were punished due to lateness to school, fighting and not doing well in class. At home children were punished due to their failure to carry out their household chores and disrespect of elders.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.4 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the findings of the study, concludes on the findings and suggests recommendations to the Government and other stakeholders of Education in Ghana.

4.5 Summary of findings

The study found that corporal punishment is experienced by children both at school and home. At the school level though not all the children experience corporal punishment, greater majority of them indicated that they had suffered corporal punishment. The field data further revealed that some children were violently punished on daily basis attributable to lateness to school, fighting and not doing well in class. The field data further showed that corporal punishment did not only take place at the school level but also happened at home as majority of children who are at home experienced corporal punishment. This in most cases takes the form of canning, slapping among others. As a result, some children sustained some injuries as a little over half of them revealed this.

In terms of the reasons for corporal punishment, the study established that though majority of teachers and parents did not support the use of corporal punishment as way of correcting children, the main reason for punishing children was for correction and to instill discipline. This confirms the views expressed by children. Predominately, the method of punishment used is canning. However, at the school level other methods such as hitting the toes of children with a rule, pinching, pulling of ears, knelling on stones and digging of pits were used. The study further revealed that some of the punishments issued to children at the

school were instigated by misconduct on the part of the children and transfer of anger by teachers from home to the school. Generally children admitted were punished as a result of stealing. Despite this, at the school level, mostly children were punished due to lateness to school, fighting and not doing well in class. At home children were punished due to their failure to carry out their household chores and disrespect of elders.

The study revealed that corporal punishment did not post significant danger to children lives both at home and school. However, less than ten percent of them did indicate that they had sustained some injuries from corporal punishment. This could have future consequences on child wellbeing. It is therefore imperative that alternative ways are adopted in correcting children.

The study found that children were punished by teachers, parents and school prefects. Whilst at the school level children were mostly punished by class teachers; at household level corporal punishment was mostly carried out by the biological fathers of children. Additionally, the study showed that majority of respondents had preferred options for correcting children either than corporal punishment. These include counselling and rewarding good deeds/character.

The study established that awareness of children rights was limited to only teachers. From this, significant proportion (88%) of teachers interviewed indicated that they were aware of child rights which include the right to play, freedom of association, right to freely express themselves and right to education. On the other hand, both parents and children did not know that there exist child rights. This could lead to the sustained abuse of children rights particularly at home.

4.6 Conclusion

From the assessment and analysis of the field data, the study concludes that corporal punishment has adverse effects on children both in school and at home as policy guidelines for child protection is not properly adhered to by teachers and parents coupled with lack of awareness of child rights and welfare. More so, child protection policy and guidelines are not enforced by appropriate authorities in our society. As a result, children suffer various abuses culminating in injuries and other ailments. This to a large extent is affecting children welfare not only in the Kumbungu District but Ghana at large.

4.7 Recommendation

The following are recommended to address the issues of corporal punishment and enhance child rights and protection. If these recommendations are well implemented, it will lead to greater minimization of corporal punishment on children both at school and home, and increase the awareness of child rights and protection in our society.

First, there should be public education on child rights and protection by relevant institutions such as National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), Department of Social Welfare, Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), UNICEF, Christian Children Fund of Canada (CCFC) and other child rights Non-Governmental Organisations. This should be targeted at both teachers and parents on appropriate methods of correcting children when they go wrong. Additionally, children should be conscientised on their basic rights and also to instill the spirit of good attitude and behaviour towards adults and authority.

Second, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection in collaboration with the Ghana Education Service should revise the code of punishment for pupils particularly at the basic school level which should prescribe appropriate methods of correcting children in school and this should be enforced by all stakeholders including the District Director of Education, Circuit Supervisors and Head Teachers/ Masters. With this it minimize the manner in which children are punished in schools. Further, the Child protection Policy launched by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection in collaboration with UNICEF should be simplified and disseminated to all communities and schools within the country highlighting the need to avoid all forms of corporal punishment both at school and home. This will further deepen the awareness of child rights and protection among teachers and parents and will go a long way to reduce corporal punishments at all levels.

Third, divergence between the perceptions and practices of child upbringing among local people as they relate to conventional modern definitions and stipulated practices by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Social Welfare and UNICEF, provides a limitation to advocates of child protection. Efforts at navigating this hurdle should consider seriously the agency of local people and use participatory methods in the process of attempting to achieve change.

Forth, efforts to propel transition from the use of corporal punishment to persuasive and other “humane” methods of child correction should be well embedded within the framework of the theory of social change to ensure the design of appropriate strategies that gives relevance to the socio-cultural context and agency of local actors.

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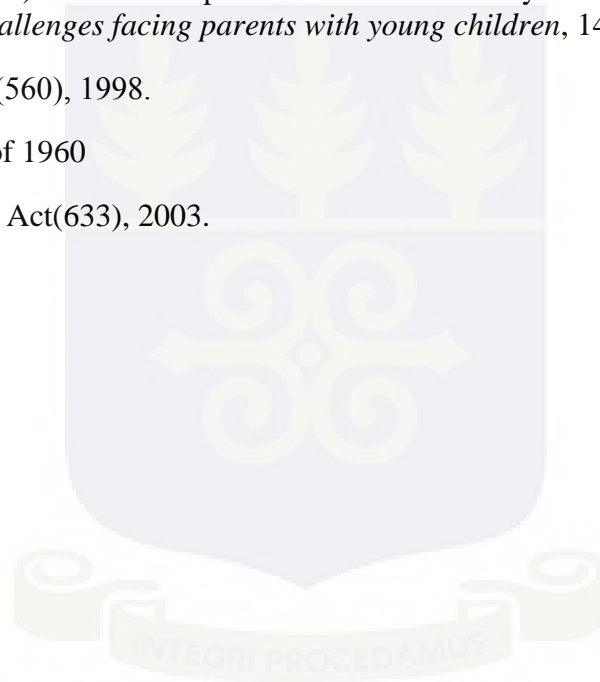
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The criminal Code of 1960

The Juvenile Justice Act(633), 2003.



APPENDIX ONE

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS

MA THESIS RESEARCH: EFFECTS OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT, A STUDY OF KUMBUNGU DISTRICT IN THE NORTHERN REGION.

Questionnaire for Teachers and Parents.

Purpose; As part of requirements for the award of a Master of Arts Degree, I'm conducting a study on the topic; **Perceptions of Effects of Corporal Punishment on Children.** You are assured of a strict confidentiality and that any information or comment you give will be treated as such. This research is purely for academic purposes. You are therefore not required to give your name. I hope you will offer me the required information. Thank you.

Instruction; please respond as you deem fit with a [tick] unless otherwise told to specify.

Corporal punishment is the use of violent means such as canning, slapping, burning with hot object/substance, beating with belt/wire, pulling of ears, hitting with wood or metal etc in order to control, train, educate, or inflict pain and discomfort into children.

Section 1 Bio Data of Respondent.

1. Age.

A [25-30] B [31-35] C [36-40] D [41+].

2. Religious belief.

[A] Christianity [B] Muslim [C] Traditional.

3. Educational level.

[A] Certificate A [B] Teacher's Diploma [C] University Degree.

4. Occupation.
[A] Formal [B] Informal.
5. Marital status.
[A] married [B] single [C] divorce

Section 2 for Teachers only.

6. Why do teachers use corporal punishment on their students?. [A] to discipline [B] to correct [C] to motivate [D] others.....
7. What are the two most frequently used forms of corporal punishment teachers use in child discipline? [a] Caning and pinching [b] pulling of ears and kneeling on stones [c] digging of pit and hitting tips of fingers with rule [d] others specify.....
8. What factors motivate teachers to use corporal punishment on their students? [A] anger as a result of the misconduct of the student [B] poverty [C] religious belief [D] anger transferred from home [e] others specify.....
9. Which other ways could children be corrected apart from corporal punishment? [A] denying of opportunities [B] advising [C] motivating good deeds [D] others specify.....
10. Who normally administer corporal punishment in school [A] Head Teacher [B] class teacher [C] school gardener [D] others specify.....
11. Do you know of children's rights in Ghana? [A] yes [B] no

12. If yes to 11 above, please state any three [A][B]..... [C].....
13. If you were a child, how would you have preferred to be corrected? [A] canning [B] motivating good deeds [C] advising [d] others specify.....
14. Corporal punishment can cause antisocial lifestyle in children when they grow up. [A] strongly agreed [B] slightly agreed [C] agreed [D] strongly disagreed [E] slightly disagreed [E] disagreed
15. Have you received training on any issue related to children? [A] yes [A] no
16. If yes to 15 above, which one?
[A] child abuse [B] child rights [C] corporal punishment [D] child protection [e] other specify.....
17. Where did you receive the training in 15 above?
[A] from church [B] from mosque [C] workshop by an NGO [D] from Department of social Welfare [E] others specify.....
18. Does the level of education change one's view of corporal punishment against children?
[A] yes [B] no [C] not sure

Section 3 for parents only

19. Do you normally use corporal punishment in your child training?
[A] yes [B] no.
20. If yes to 19 above which one of the following?
[A] canning [B] hitting with hand [C] beating with belt or wire [D] burning with hot object/substance [E] putting pepper in private part [f] others specify.....

21. Who normally carries out corporal punishment at home? [A] father [B] mother [C] senior relative [D] others specify.....
22. Does the use of corporal punishment against children accepted in your religion?
[A] yes [B] no [C] not sure.
23. Can the use of corporal punishment inculcate in children a spirit of hard work? [A] yes [B] no.
24. Does excessive corporal punishment prepare children adequately for the future? [A]yes [B]no



APPENDIX TWO

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CHILDREN

CENTRE FOR SOCIAL POLICY STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON

**MA THESIS: THE EFFECTS OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT ON CHILDREN, A STUDY
OF KUMBUNGU DISTRICT.**

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CHILDREN.

PURPOSE: As part of a requirement for my course, am conducting a study on the topic:

Perceptions of Effects of Corporal Punishment on Children.

You are assured of strict confidentiality and that any information or comment you give will be treated as such. This research is purely for academic purposes. You are therefore not required to give your name. I hope that you will offer me the required information. Thank you.

Instruction : Please respond as you deem fit with a [tick] unless otherwise told to specify.

Corporal punishment is the use of violent means such as canning, slapping, burning with hot object/substance, beating with belt/ wire, pulling of ears, hitting with wood or metal etc in order to control, train, educate or just to inflict pain and discomfort into children.

Section 1: **Background of respondent**

- 1 Sex
 - a. Male b. Female
- 2 Age.
 - a. 12-14 [] b. 15-17 []
- 3 Religion
 - a. Islam [] b. Christian [] c. traditional []
- 4 Educational level.
 - a. Primary [] b. Junior High []

Section 2. Reasons and types of corporal punishment in schools.

5. Have you ever suffered any corporal punishment in school before?

[a] yes [b] no.

6. If yes what did you suffer from?

[a] caning [b] beaten with hand [c] pinching [d] pulling of ears [e] others

specify.....

7. How often do you get punished at school?

[a] everyday [b] once a week [c] monthly

8. What will cause the teacher to give you the punishment you chose in 6 above?

[a] lateness to school [b] fighting in school [c] not performing well in class exercise [d]

[e] nonpayment of PTA dues [e] others

specify.....

9. Who normally carries out corporal punishment in school?

[a] Head teacher [b] class teacher [c] senior prefect [d] others

specify.....

10. How do you feel after been corporally punished in school?

[a] depressed and sad [b] useless and unwelcome [c] angry [d] fine and loved [e]

Others

specify.....

11. Does the fear of being punished causes you to be in school every day and on time?

[a] yes [b] no

12. The fear of being canned can cause you to do well in class exercises and end of term exams.

[a] agree [b] disagree [c] not sure

13. Have you ever felt sick because of corporal punishment from school?

[a] yes [b] no.

14. If yes to 14 above what type of sickness was it?

[a] bodily injury [b] stomach ache [c] headache [d] others specify.....

15. Does corporal punishment causes you to think bad things about yourself and the one who does the punishment?

[a] yes [b] no.

16. If yes to 16 above, state what you think about yourself and those who carry out corporal punishments in

school.....

....

17. Should teachers use corporal punishment to correct and train up their students?

[a] yes [b] no.

18. If no to 17 above, what alternate method should they use to correct and train their students?

[a] rewarding good performance [b] advising [c] motivating good character [d] others specify.....

Section 3 Reasons and types of physical punishment at home.

19. Have you experienced corporal punishment before at home?

[a] yes [b] no.

20. If yes, what type of punishment was it?

[a] slapping [b] canning [c] shaking [d] burning with hot object/substance [e] putting pepper in private part [f] others specify.....

21. Who normally carries out these punishments at home?

[a] father [b] mother [c] uncle [d] senior sibling [e] other specify.....

22. Which of the following will attract corporal punishment for you at home?

[a] stealing [b] disrespecting elderly [c] failing to do home chores [d] not going to farm or shop

[e] going to bed and waking up late [f] others

specify.....

23. Does corporal punishment makes you to do your work as expected of you by your parents?

[a] yes [b] no.

24. Can corporal punishment determines how close or otherwise you are with your parents or guardians?

[a] yes [b] no.

25. Does corporal punishment make you live a gentle and calm live?

[a] yes [b] no

26. Can excessive corporal punishment cause you to fall sick?

[a] yes [b] no.

27. If yes, have you ever fell sick as a result of corporal punishment?

[a] yes [b] no.

28. If yes to 27 above, what type of sickness was it?

[a] bodily [b] mental.

29. What are the things your parents and government suppose to be doing for you?

[a] food [b] sleeping place [c] education [d] health [e] water [f] others

specify.....

30. If you were an adult what method would you have adopted to train your children?

[a] corporal punishment [b] verbal abuse [c] advising them [d] motivating good deeds with gifts.