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**AN ASSESSMENT OF GHANA'S EFFORTS
TOWARDS THE ATTAINMENT OF SDG 4 AND 16:
A CASE STUDY OF THE PROHIBITION OF
CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN GHANAIAN BASIC
SCHOOLS**

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DECLARATION

I do hereby declare that this dissertation is the true findings of my independent investigations conducted under the supervision of Ambassador Dr. Kodzo Alabo. I further declare that, apart from material obtained from other sources which have been duly acknowledged, no part of it has been previously submitted by anyone else for the award of any degree at anywhere else to the best of my knowledge.



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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to God Almighty, who is my strength and ever-present help.

Also to my parents, Mr. Benjamin Dsane and Mrs. Christiana Dsane, and my siblings,

Richard Kotey Dsane and Richmond Kotei Dzane, for their encouragement and support.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ECOWAS	-	Economic Community of West African States
EU	-	European Union
FCUBE	-	Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education
GES	-	Ghana Education Service
GES	-	Ghana Education Service
MDGs	-	Millennium Development Goals
NATO	-	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OOSC	-	Out of School Children
SDGs	-	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	-	United Nations
UNESCO	-	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	-	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	-	United Nations International Children's Fund
WTO	-	World Trade Organization
IOs	-	International Organizations
DESA	-	Department of Economic Social Affairs
CSOs	-	Civil Society Organizations
ODA	-	Official Development Assistance

GNI	-	Gross National Income
AAAA	-	Addis Ababa Agenda for Action
UNGA	-	United Nations General Assembly
TAG	-	Technical Advisory Group
OWG	-	Open Working Group
SHS	-	Senior High Schools
BECE	-	Basic Education Certificate Examination
WANEB	-	West Africa Network for Peace building
GPPAC	-	Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict
NGOs	-	Non Governmental Organizations
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
FGD	-	Focused Group Discussions
GACA	-	Ghanaians Against Child Abuse
PTA	-	Parent Teacher Association
SMCs	-	School Management Committees
CAMFED	-	Campaign for Girls Education
DOVVSU	-	Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit
ASPNET	-	Associated Schools Project Network.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	i
DEDICATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
ABSTRACT	ix
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.0 Background to the Study	1
1.1 Statement of the Research Problem	4
1.2 Research Questions	5
1.3 Research Objectives	5
1.4 Rationale of the Study	6
1.5 Scope of Study	6
1.6 Thesis Statement	7
1.7 Limitation of the Study	7
1.8 Theoretical Framework	8
1.9 Literature Review	11
1.9.1 <i>The Concept of School Violence</i>	11
1.9.2 <i>Corporal Punishment in Schools from a Historical Perspective</i>	13
1.9.3 <i>Nature and Forms of Corporal Punishment</i>	15
1.9.4 <i>Perceptions about corporal Punishment (Teachers/Parents/ Students)</i>	16
1.9.5 <i>Global Prevalence of Corporal Punishment</i>	18
1.9.6 <i>The Effects of Corporal Punishment on Children</i>	19
1.9.7 <i>Overview of Ghana’s Educational System</i>	21
1.10 Research Methodology	22
1.10.1 <i>Research Design – Case Study Approach</i>	22
1.10.2 <i>Target Population</i>	23
1.10.3 <i>Sampling Method</i>	23
1.10.4 <i>Sample Size</i>	24
1.10.5 <i>Sources of Data</i>	25

1.10.6	<i>Data Collection</i>	25
1.10.7	<i>Data Analysis</i>	25
1.11	Ethical Considerations.....	26
1.12	Arrangement of Chapters	27
	Endnotes.....	28
	CHAPTER TWO	31
	AN OVERVIEW OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 4, THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 16 AND THE BAN ON CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN GHANAIAAN BASIC SCHOOLS	31
2.0	Introduction	31
2.1	Overview of the SDGs	31
2.2	Overview of SDG 4.....	36
2.3	Overview of Ghana’s Efforts towards Achieving SDG4.....	41
2.4	Overview of SDG 16.....	45
2.5	Overview of Ghana’s Effort towards Achieving SDG 16.....	48
2.6	An Overview of the Ban on Corporal Punishment in Ghanaian Schools	50
2.7	Conclusion.....	52
	Endnotes.....	53
	CHAPTER THREE	56
	ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS	56
3.0	Introduction	56
3.1	Background to the Analysis	56
3.2	Awareness of the Ban on Corporal Punishment in Schools.....	58
3.3	Capacity Building.....	62
3.4	The Current State of Discipline in schools.....	67
3.5	Enforcement Mechanisms	71
3.5.1	<i>Monitoring</i>	71
3.5.2	<i>Reporting</i>	73
3.5.3	<i>Sanctions</i>	76
3.6	Collaboration between Stakeholders/Other Measures taken by stakeholders.....	78
3.7	Challenges of implementing the Ban	81
3.7.1	<i>Challenges faced by teachers</i>	81
3.7.2	<i>Challenges faced by head teachers</i>	83
3.7.3	<i>Challenges faced by GES</i>	84

3.8	Successes of the Policy	85
3.8.1	<i>Contribution of the Ban Towards the SDG 4</i>	85
3.8.2	<i>Contribution of the Ban towards the SDG 16</i>	88
3.9	Way Forward.....	89
	Endnotes.....	93
	CHAPTER FOUR	94
	SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	94
4.0	Introduction	94
4.1	Summary of Findings	94
4.2	Conclusions	98
4.3	Recommendations	99
4.4	Areas for future studies	101
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	103
	APPENDICES	111

ABSTRACT

The United Nation's SDG 4, Target 4.a and SDG 16, Target 16.2 respectively stipulate the provision of "safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environment for all" and an "end to abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children". In pursuant of the United Nations convention on the Rights of the Child (UNHCR), a directive from the Ghana Education Service (GES) officially banned all forms of corporal punishment of children in Ghanaian schools in 2017. Three years after the ban, it is crucial to assess the extent of implementation, systems put in place to ensure adherence, the successes and challenges faced. This study focuses on assessing the efforts towards implementing and monitoring the ban on corporal punishment in basic schools in Ghana, in conformity with SDG 4 and SDG 16. This dissertation is a case study research which employs a qualitative approach using both random and purposive sampling techniques. In addition to secondary data, semi-structured interview guides were used to collected primary data from target population in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. The qualitative content analysis was chosen as a tool for analysing data for this research. The findings of the study reveal that although head teachers, teachers and a majority of pupils were aware of the ban on corporal punishment in Ghanaian schools, they had limited knowledge with regard to what the policy actually entailed. Findings further revealed that GES field officers and circuit supervisors through periodic visits and supervision do monitor all other educational activities in schools, including but not exclusively corporal punishment. Reporting systems established by GES and Ministry of Gender were mostly not resorted to by both parents and students, mainly attributed to a lack of awareness on these channels. The study also shows that students, teachers and parents are aware of the ban on corporal punishment; and the observance of the ban has led to a significant increase in school enrolment and reduction in school based violence against children. In conclusion, the study recommends that the GES should continuously educate stakeholders of education on the rights of the child as well as sensitize them on the implications of corporal punishment and alternative ways of correcting the child. Future research works on the implementation of the ban on corporal punishment in second cycle schools in Ghana could be explored with a statistical analysis of the impact of the ban on enrollment and retention of students.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the Study

Over the years, states have come together under different international organizations such as the WTO, EU, ECOWAS, and NATO, among others, to find solutions to international issues. These organizations often meet to discuss difficult challenges experienced not only by member states but the world at large. These include climate change, disease outbreaks, hunger, poverty, natural disasters, among others. The United Nations is one such international organization, and the largest, committed to maintaining world peace, security and sustainable development.

In order to achieve this, the United Nations adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in September, 2000 to guide development in its member states. The year 2015 marked the conclusion point at which an overall evaluation of achievements was made leading to a transition from the MDGs to the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which were to reinforce the MDGs.

The SDGs, otherwise known as Agenda 2030, consists of 17 goals which serve as blueprints for development across the globe. Governments of most member countries, often translate these goals into national development visions and plans as well as creating fiscal and social policies aimed at bringing these plans into fruition. In Africa, states such as Sierra Leone, Togo, Ethiopia, Angola, South Africa, Madagascar, Liberia, Uganda etc, are examples of countries that have integrated the SDGs into their national development plans. Uganda's Government for instance estimates that 76 per cent of the SDGs targets are reflected in its national plans and adapted to the national context.¹

As mentioned earlier, the SDGs hope to enhance national and global development and education is seen at the heart of this and very crucial in ensuring that all the other sustainable development goals are achieved. When people are able to get quality education, they can break from the cycle of poverty and be empowered against other inequalities in societies. Education is also essential in promoting tolerance among people and in effect contributes to a more peaceful world.² Further, Tiongson (2005) in his work points out that findings resulting from research on the returns of education, supports reasons for which education is critical for development. From an economic perspective, based on the endogenous growth theory, economic growth is seen as a function of investments in human capital; education being a major investment.³

In light of these, the international community has embarked on a number of global educational agendas such as the Universal Primary Education, Education for All, Competency Based Education, the MDG goal 2 as well as the current Sustainable Development Goal 4. However, globally the 2019 UN sustainable development goal report shows that about 617 million children and adolescents do not meet the required minimum proficiency in reading and mathematics, 750 million adults are still illiterates and every 1 out of 5 children between the ages of 6 and 17 are not attending school.⁴

The Government of Ghana has shown commitment towards the achievement of these goals by embarking on various national policy directives and interventions. In order to increase school enrollment, in 1995, the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education Programme (FCUBE), which aimed at abolishing school fees and making basic education mandatory was introduced. This programme was later followed by the 2005 Capitation Grant which provided schools with a small grant of US\$ 3 per enrolled child and also aimed at eliminating all forms of levies

charged by schools at the time.⁵ Subsequently other initiatives including the 2005 Nutrition and School Feeding programmes, and the current Free Senior High School policy were introduced, all in the bid to ensure access and expansion of education in Ghana. Due to these measures, other important indicators of education, such as, Gross Enrollment Rates, Net Admission Rates, Gender Parity, among others improved notably.⁶

However, in spite of all these successes, Ghana continues to face certain bottlenecks particularly in terms of students learning outcomes and retention of students in school. Some students along the way end up dropping out of school. The Global-OOSC report Ghana, suggests that, school-based violence is one of the many factors that negatively affects the retention of students in school. The report goes further to state that, children who experience abuse in schools are often truant, resulting in low academic performance which in turn may lead to their early dropping out from school.⁷ School-related violence in all its forms is an infringement of children's and adolescents' rights to education, health and well-being. No country can achieve inclusive and equitable quality education for all if learners experience violence in school.⁸

School violence is prevalent in almost all countries and a vast number of children experience it. Peers, teachers, and other school staff alike are often perpetrators of school violence. UNESCO categorizes school violence to encompass physical, psychological and sexual violence. Physical attacks, physical fights, corporal punishment and physical bullying are all forms of physical violence whereas psychological violence entails emotional and verbal abuse. Sexual violence involves all forms of unlawful sexual acts.⁹ Among these various forms of physical violence against children in school, the most common form that affects children globally is corporal punishment. If the world is going to succeed at reducing violence against

children, while at the same time ensuring that the SDG targets on education are achieved, then the elimination of corporal punishment in schools is paramount.¹⁰

As of 2016, an estimated 128 countries have prohibited corporal punishment in schools, including all of Europe, and most of South America and East Asia. Yet, approximately 69 countries still allow corporal punishment in schools, including parts of the United States, some Australian states, and a number of countries in Africa and Asia.¹¹

With the aim of promoting a safe and protective learning environment for children, and in pursuant of the United Nations convention on the Rights of the Child (UNHCR), a directive from the Ghana Education Service (GES) officially banned all forms of corporal punishment of children in Ghanaian schools in 2017.¹²

1.1 Statement of the Research Problem

The United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal 4, target 4.1 is to ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes by 2030.¹³ Yet, physical violence in schools can be a roadblock in achieving this goal and can result in students' inability to concentrate in class, truancy, avoidance of school activities, or even school drop-outs.¹⁴ An atmosphere of anxiety, fear and insecurity is incompatible with learning and unsafe learning environments can, therefore, undermine the quality of education for all learners.¹⁵

If the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are to be achieved, and if children are not only to be enrolled in schools but also helped to reach their full potential, then it is necessary to create safer learning environments by ending all forms of violence against children in schools.

This includes a shift in societal norms, values and beliefs that support the use of violence, including corporal punishment.¹⁶

In a recent news article,¹⁷ the Ghana Education Service, GES, observed that, “it was becoming public knowledge that teachers continued to apply the cane even though the GES had banned the practice. Concerns are that, there have been instances where in the course of administering corporal punishment, the teachers ended up deforming the pupils.”

Thus, this study aims at assessing the efforts towards implementing and monitoring the ban on corporal punishment in basic schools in Ghana, in conformity with Target 4.a of the SDG 4 - “provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environment for all.” and the Target 16.2 of the SDG 16 - “end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.”

1.2 Research Questions

- To what extent is the ban on corporal punishment being implemented in basic schools in the Greater Accra Region?
- What are the systems put in place to ensure adherence to the ban on corporal punishment?
- What are the successes and challenges faced in implementing this policy?

1.3 Research Objectives

- To ascertain the extent to which the ban on corporal punishment is being implemented in basic schools in the Greater Accra Region.

- To find out the systems put in place to ensure adherence to the ban on corporal punishment.
- To identify the successes and challenges faced in implementing the policy.

1.4 Rationale of the Study

In keeping with the ban on corporal punishment in schools, which is a recent development incorporated into our current national policies, it is imperative to assess the degree to which it is being carried out and monitored. This research seeks to provide an insight into the implementation of the ban on corporal punishment in Ghanaian basic schools towards ensuring a non-violent learning environment and ending violence against children. It will serve as a body of knowledge, which will help provide the opportunity for policy makers to respond to the short falls of policies thus helping to achieve the SDG 4 and SDG 16 in the country by addressing the challenges of the policy.

1.5 Scope of Study

Recognizing that there are different forms of physical violence, and different settings of violence against children, this study will focus on corporal punishment specifically caning but with a cursory consideration on the awareness of its other forms. The study focuses on the implementation processes of the ban on corporal punishment in Ghanaian basic schools from 2017 to 2020 since the directive on the ban of corporal punishment was given.

The study will also focus only on basic schools within the Teshie town which is located in Ledzokuku Municipal Assembly in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana, due to its proximity to

the researcher. The study will look at school violence in the context of the targets 4.a and target 16.2 as well as the Indicator 16.2.1: Percentage of children aged 1–17 years who experienced any physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by caregivers in the past month, due to the integrated and indivisible balances between the SDG goals 4 and 16.

1.6 Thesis Statement

This study argues that with the prohibition of corporal punishment in Ghanaian basic schools, stakeholders will adopt effective measures and policies in accordance with the ban to ensure the attainment of SDG 4 and SDG 16. This study hypothesizes that other interventions might be needed to ensure that the ban on corporal punishment is adhered to.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

The data presented in this study were collected at the time of the Covid-19 Pandemic, which left the academic calendar disrupted, thus making access to students as well as teaching staff quite challenging. For some reasons some targeted institutions for interview were not reached. These, including the relatively smaller size of the sample used for this study may not allow for generalizing the findings of this study. Further, most participants consented to respond to interview questions but because it was related to a government policy, they refused the disclosure of the identity of schools for fears of the information being traced to them. Some heads of schools did not consent to the disclosure of the names of their schools. This study also lacks the views of parents with regards to their experiences with and inputs towards the implementation of the ban on corporal punishment in Ghanaian schools, as such future studies may probe further into this area.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical model used in this study is that of Liberalism. Liberalism as an International Relations theory, originated in the 1970s as a critique of realism.¹⁸ The end of the cold war, as well as shifts in power relations within the international system, was perceived as a validation of liberalism's fundamental claims.¹⁹ Liberal thinkers at the time pointed to the emergence of transnational forces, regional integration, economic interdependence, etc. in places where war seemed impossible as evidence for which realism had lost its purpose²⁰. Notable liberal thinkers include John Locke, Immanuel Kant, Woodrow Wilson, Robert Keohane, among others.

Although contradictory dynamics have given rise to variant dimensions of liberalism, with different theories focusing either on its political, its economic, or its normative dimension²¹, liberalism, in general is composed of a set of assumptions and principles which explains how the world works. Whereas Realism focuses mainly on explaining power relations, war and competition in the international system, liberalists on the other hand, concentrate more on democratic peace theory, integration, regime theory, and means of global governance rather than conflict.²²

In addition, liberalism images a pluralist view of global politics as opposed to the realist notion of the state as a unitary actor. Liberalists recognize international and nongovernmental organizations, multinational corporations among others, as relevant actors, having substantial influence in areas such as agenda settings in the international system²³. IOs are not just organizations constituted by member states, but also actors that could shape how states define their interests as well as their policy choices. Consequently, for liberalists the line between "domestic" and "International" politics is blurred: one is an extension of the other²⁴. The significance of this assumption of Liberalism to this study is seen in the various policies and

strategies adopted by various developmental states around the world (Ghana included) towards the attainment of the SDGs, an agenda set by the United Nations which is an International Organization. Further, the processes by which the SDGs were developed were based on “extensive global and country-specific consultations²⁵”. Again in 2014, the SDGs were subjected to negotiation by member states through the UN Open Working Group on SDGs²⁶. Thus, although the SDGs are global goals, they are an extension of domestic policies, while at the same time influencing domestic policies of member states. The ban on corporal punishment in Ghanaian basic schools, is one such domestic policy geared towards the attainment of the SDG goals 4 and 16.

Further, liberalism also points that, military-related security issues are not the only agenda for international politics: social, environmental as well as economic issues are also of importance²⁷. As such liberalists tend to advocate for human rights, freedom, education among others. John Locke often considered as the intellectual founder of liberalism, argued that, civil governments are instituted to safeguard the basic human rights of life, liberty and possession²⁸. To him, Governments that grant these rights and enforce laws benefit the world. This initial conception of liberalism is perhaps what has persisted and transformed into the various social, economic and environmental dimensions of international politics. The SDGs as will be discussed later in an overview in this work, cover such matters related to human rights, education, and poverty, among others. Further, another significance of the ‘multiple agenda’ focus of international politics as espoused by liberalists to this study particularly with regards to the pursuance of human rights is the case of the United Nations Conventions on the rights of the Child, to which most member states including Ghana have ratified. The Article 28.2 of the UNHCR admonishes state parties to adopt adequate measures to ensure that school discipline is carried out in conformity to and recognition of child's human dignity.²⁹ The focus

of this study which is the prohibition of Corporal Punishment from Ghanaian Schools by the Ghana Education service, is one such measures.

Another focal point of liberalism is that of Regimes. Neoliberals like Keohane argue that institutions and regimes are relevant in international politics since they empower states to do things, they could otherwise not do³⁰. Hence, although realists consider regimes as restrictions on state behavior, neoliberals perceive regimes more favorably as allowing states to achieve results that are mutually beneficial faced with the increasing level of interconnectedness and independence on the global scenes.³¹

More often, Realism has been Skeptical of Liberalism. According to Jack Donnelly, Realism is a theory that “emphasize the constraints on politics imposed by human selfishness (“egoism”) and the absence of international government (“anarchy”), which require the primacy in all political life of power and security”³². One of the critiques of Liberalism by Realists is that, international organizations may desire a place in the international system, however, they believe that such actors will not have any significant effect on what goes on in world affairs³³. Closely linked to this critique is the criticism that, international organizations only exert a minimal influence on states and that states will only remain in them for their own selfish-interest³⁴. However, liberalists have maintained that, in making decisions collectively in global governance, a consensus can effortlessly be reached and implemented on the most complex of agendas, when they enjoy interest-based support.³⁵

Another relevant critique by realists is that, liberals rely excessively on the assumption of voluntarism thus, the impression is created that international cooperation can be arrived at if only leaders wanted to³⁶. This conclusion of realists may stem from the fact that, liberals often

focus on the domestic level of analysis, which consists of the study of individual actors and the various values held by policy makers³⁷. The SDGs for instance are not legally binding nor constraining, however, they require the commitment, not only of governments, but of other stakeholders and even individual citizens.

In spite of these criticisms, the theory of Liberalism is relevant to my work because of its ability to explain the agenda setting role of IOs and their ability to influence state preferences. The SDGs are a global agenda set by the United Nations and the ban on corporal punishment in Ghanaian schools is one of Ghana's efforts towards improving education and reducing violence against children as spelled out in the SDG 4 and the SDG 16 targets.

1.9 Literature Review

Corporal punishment and its application in different contexts have attracted several attentions in various scholarly works and literature on school learning environments and child rights. This section aims at providing a broad overview of the literature that exists in the area of study and to situate the study in the context of research on corporal punishment and school violence.

1.9.1 The Concept of School Violence

In addition to the many challenges facing educational goals such as the lack of resources and facilities, is situated school violence. However, most discussions on school violence usually tend to focus on 'peer' violence with less attention paid to victimization perpetuated by school authorities. For instance, Jackson Toby (1983) in his work, "violence in schools", identifies two kinds of violence particularly in schools found in the United States. The first kind being perpetrated by trespassers from the neighborhoods, and the other kind being perpetrated by enrolled students against their fellow students and other members of the school community.

Among the violent acts identified by the author are; robbery, assaults and petty extortions. The author, through this work, brings into light, another interesting dimension of school violence; the fact that teachers also experience violence. However, as noted earlier, the author's work is limited as it doesn't consider school violence as carried out by school authorities. Contrarily, more recent works, have categorized school violence to include those perpetuated by teachers and these include sexual harassment, verbal assaults with corporal punishment, being the most widespread.

Stuart Henry (2000), in his definition of the nature and scope of school violence, argues that a focus on only interpersonal violence alone impairs attempts to deal with the problem. In addressing the concept in a wider context, the author identifies five different levels of school violence, the second of which makes clear the fact that, teachers, administrators and even the policies and practices of a school can constitute those who exercise power to harm others.³⁸

Similarly, Mncube and Tchilidzi in their research carried out in South African schools reveal that, violence in schools could arise from several sources and could take many forms such as; verbal abuse, sexual harassment, and physical violence, among others. The authors identify corporal punishment as a more direct and widespread form of violence against learners in schools. Further, the authors remark that, learners need safe learning environments devoid of violence. Thus, corporal punishment, is a cause for concern when it comes to dealing with school violence and providing a more conducive educational environment.³⁹

Cliver Harber (1996) in discussing "Educational violence and education for peace in Africa" argues that, although schools in Africa have existed in violent contexts in terms of being sites for violence in the past, they, in themselves often perpetuate violence in terms of physical,

psychological and structural violence. The author explains that, schools have generally been authoritarian, which is manifested in the widespread use of corporal punishment. He notes that, corporal punishment is inconsistent with achieving quality education and thus recommends democratic forms of learning. He further opines that organizing learning in a more democratic way can lead to an overall peaceful society, teaching values that are consistent with peaceful conduct.⁴⁰ It is therefore significant to prohibit corporal punishment in schools.

1.9.2 *Corporal Punishment in Schools from a Historical Perspective*

A historical analysis of corporal punishment, although is not a solution in itself, is necessary to understand the reasons for its continuous use albeit the recent policies and laws to eliminate it. The reasons for which it is necessary to abolish its use. An overview of the history of corporal punishment, reveals that, corporal punishment has been a common practice in education, for centuries.

John Martin Rich (1989) in discussing “The use of Corporal Punishment”, remarks that, corporal punishment was an integral part of Egyptian and ancient Jewish education and has been the principal mode of discipline in most western educational institutions. He explains that, in Europe, during the sixteenth century, some schools had begun to associate punishment with Calvinistic beliefs. Citing an example of the seventeenth century, Connecticut and Massachusetts he observes that, there were laws that provided that children who resisted corrections from their parents could be put to death.

In a like manner, Jacob Middleton⁴¹ (2008) affirms the long history of corporal punishments in schools, in his study to examine the experiences of many late nineteenth and early twentieth century school goers in Britain. He argues that corporal punishment was a widely accepted

form of discipline in the educational process. Drawing from the accounts given to him by respondents, the author noticed that, school corporal punishment, was a frequently occurring theme in the memories of his respondents. In citing a claim by Henry Bompas Smith, Middleton makes known that, in the early twentieth century, teachers were charged with ensuring that orders were obeyed by school children even if it meant resorting to ‘unpleasant methods of compulsion’. Nonetheless, the author did not tarry in adding that, whilst corporal punishment appeared to be accepted as a normal aspect of schooling during that era, there existed some resentment not only on the part of students but also by parents towards its administration, which much later in 1947, led to discussions, concerning the abolishment of the practice. Further, other literature on school discipline, with regards to Africa, have linked its origins to colonial practices. David Killingray’s (1994) work on corporal punishment as administered in British African colonies, shows how corporal punishment was exported to African colonies by Europeans and subsequently co-opted in schools. The work explains that, in the late nineteenth century, corporal punishment had an established place in British social order and judicial system. Thus, Colonial officials resorted to physical punishment otherwise termed as; “flogging”, in rewarding recalcitrant conducts of African subordinates and in emphasizing hegemony. He adds that, since Africans belonged to societies with the belief that children could only be disciplined with a whip, Africans recognized its application. The author remarks that, in 1948, penal reforms in the British Metropolis subsequently lead to arguments for the abolishment of judicially awarded physical punishment in the colonies as well. Nonetheless, Killingray argues that, although the reform was met with opposition from colonial officials and white settlers, the practice reduced in some colonies, but was confined as punishment for juveniles and in schools. In spite of the long history, corporal punishment, has been recently proven to have negative effects as to be discussed in the next sections, and as such a policy for its elimination is in the right direction.

1.9.3 Nature and Forms of Corporal Punishment

It is necessary to know the various forms in which corporal punishment takes, to be able to determine which mode of discipline of children constitutes corporal punishment as would warrant banning or even sanctions. Many societies, settings employ different methods and ways of administering corporal punishment. However, there seems to exist some convergence in terms of “physical pain infliction”.

Alison D. Renteln (2010) in her work, “Corporal Punishment and the Cultural Defense”, argues that, literature on the phenomenon use many distinct terms and may connote different meanings depending on the field of scholarship. She explains that, in philosophy the term “may refer to the punishment of either adults or children”, whereas in the social sciences the term may refer to the discipline of children with reference to settings such as the home, prisons or schools. In spite of the discrepancies in connotation of the term, the author explains, corporal punishment involves physical discipline of varied techniques. These according to the author, often involve, methods such as “birching, flogging, belting, kicking, shaking or throwing children, scratching, pinching, biting, pulling hair or boxing ears”, among others. The author reinforces the forms that corporal punishment takes by citing the definition of the term by the United Nations Committee on the Convention on the Rights Child which defines corporal punishment as "any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light."

Ba-Saddik, A. S., & Hattab, A. S. (2013) also in their work; “Physical abuse in basic-education schools in Aden governorate, Yemen: A cross-sectional study.” observe that school children in Yemen are forced by teachers to stand in painful positions, to stand in the sun or sit in an

‘invisible chair’ for long periods, to hold or carry heavy objects, to dig holes, to kneel on small objects such as stones or rice, to exercise excessively without rest or water, and to ingest noxious substances (e.g. cigarettes). Other works also support this finding.

David R. Dupper and Amy E. Montgomery Dingus (2008) in “Corporal Punishment in U.S. Public Schools: A Continuing Challenge for School Social Workers”, hold that, corporal punishment is an intentional pain inflicted on a child’s body, and covers a variety of methods including; shoving, spanking, hitting, paddling, punching, electric shocks, painful body postures, use of various objects, as ways of penalizing children for misconducts. He mentions that injuries such as “welts, blood blisters, severe bruising, skin discolorations, hematomas, blood clots, and broken veins” may be experienced by recipients of corporal punishment. Thus, corporal punishment may take many forms, and a ban on corporal punishment will have to apply to any of the forms it may take.

1.9.4 Perceptions about corporal Punishment (Teachers/Parents/ Students)

The persistence of school corporal punishment is a function of Perception. Its place in the life of the child is hotly debated. Karen J. Ripoll-Núñez and Ronald P. Rohner in their work; “Corporal Punishment in Cross-Cultural Perspective: Directions for a Research Agenda” report that, cultural values and adherence to religious beliefs are significant factors in determining support for corporal punishment as a disciplinary technique. They found that, Christians often practice corporal punishment, based on the meanings they draw from Bible scriptures which seem to urge parents to discipline their wards with the rod. To the authors, the ideology; “spare the rod and spoil the child” has been embraced extensively in the U.S and in other states as well. They cite Benjet & Kazdin, (2003) in stating that, these moral and religious underpinnings

in most situations tend to make people unwilling to accept empirical finding on the negative effects of corporal punishment.

David R. Dupper and Amy E. Montgomery Dingus (2008) in their work, ‘Corporal Punishment in U.S. Public Schools: A Continuing Challenge for School Social Workers’, also assert that disciplinary practices in schools, are often a reflection of the beliefs of the local cultures, and it may be costly to publicly question these values. In essence, any attempt to reform disciplinary practices as to consider a complete ban, will have to consider, a reform in the general belief system of that society.

Further, Gerald, N. K., Augustine, M. K., & Ogetange, T. B. (2012), explore: “Teachers and Pupils Views on Persistent Use of Corporal Punishment in Managing Discipline in Primary Schools in Starehe Division, Kenya”. The authors found that, Head teachers, teachers, and students perceived corporal punishment as part of a tradition and culture of schooling. Some head teachers believed that, corporal punishment helped to inculcate in children good behavior and morals.

In an article on “Children’s perceptions of physical punishment in Ghana and the implications for children’s rights”, Twum Danso observes that, although it is often assumed that children’s perspectives will correspond with dominant discourse on children’s rights, in certain cases, children’s views antithetically challenged these discourses. In her study, although some children regarded physical punishment as abusive, majority of the respondents were in support of its use based on several reasons. One of such reasons, was the perception children had of themselves as being ‘stubborn’ and therefore required physical correction in order to become well-behaved members of their societies. Further, other children perceived physical punishment as an act of love expressed by parents and caregivers towards them. The author

observes that, these children's views in support of physical punishment may be a result of socialization as well as children's lack of awareness about alternatives in child-rearing practices. From this work, it may thus be assumed that, children's support for physical punishment may affect reporting of physical punishment experience by same. Thus, my study seeks to find out how the ban on corporal punishment in schools is being implemented in terms of socialization and reporting, given that some children, specifically students may endorse it.

These perceptions may explain why corporal punishment continues to be a preferred means of discipline in schools, in spite of policies and programs banning its use.

1.9.5 Global Prevalence of Corporal Punishment

In "School corporal punishment in global perspective: prevalence, outcomes, and efforts at intervention", Gershoff, provides an overview of the extent to which school corporal punishment is prevalent globally, its outcomes and global interventions towards its elimination.⁴² In her article, Gershoff, observes that Corporal punishment is legally prohibited in schools in 128 countries and allowed in 69 (35%). Nonetheless, school children of all ages around the world are subjected to corporal punishment at the hands of teachers and school personnel. The author concludes by stating that although it is a positive thing that some countries have banned its use; much is left to be done in terms of "legal reforms, advocacy and education", to ensure that corporal punishment is abandoned in its entirety.

Schmueli, presents a comparative analysis of the world's legal systems as pertains to punishment meted out by both parents and teachers and discusses the variation between corporal punishment as meted out by same in theory and practice.⁴³ The author remarks that, although physical punishment by teachers has been banned in about ninety countries, there is

a global controversy over the legality of the employment of corporal punishment in education, due to a distinction often made between corporal punishment and child abuse in most countries. Schmueli observes that, although many states have shown willingness to ban corporal punishment in schools, it is hard to convince a society that makes such a clear distinction. He concludes by recommending that, when it comes to school corporal punishment, state interventions must be decisive and unequivocal.

Gorea, in discussing the status of school corporal punishment and its remedies, remarks that, physical punishment in schools is a worldwide problem.⁴⁴ He adds that, many people are becoming more conscious of the adverse effects of corporal punishment, and as such many states have outlawed its use in educational settings. To Gorea, a mere ban does not solve the problem entirely and thus he concludes by recommending effective reporting mechanisms of school corporal punishment, the training of police officials and the involvement of the media in helping to educate people on the illegality of school corporal punishment.

1.9.6 The Effects of Corporal Punishment on Children

There exists some controversy over the effects of corporal punishment on children. However, an even more increasing study, provide an overwhelming evidence that corporal punishment affects children negatively. Gershoff's work, summarizes research studies on the intended and unintended effects of corporal punishment on children.⁴⁵ Her study found that, corporal punishment tends to be applied by parents with the goal of increasing children's compliance as well as reducing aggressive and anti-social behavior in children. Based on the reviews of these studies, the author observes that, instead of the intended effects, corporal punishment, results in undesirable effects. She notes that, most physical punishment intended to discipline a child often degenerates to the point of physical abuse. Other negative effects, mentioned by the

author include; mental health problems, reduced cognitive ability, eroded quality of children's relationships with their parents, increased adult aggression and antisocial behavior among others. The author found no peer reviewed empirical data on the effects of school-administered corporal punishment, but, however, concludes that, in as much as campaigns against the harms of corporal punishment are needed, it may take a legal ban to effect dramatic changes in attitudes towards it.

Addison, for instance, in his work, showed that, although the intended purpose for the use of corporal punishment in schools is to discipline students and control their behavior, it adversely affects enrollment and female education.⁴⁶ The author observes that, corporal punishment leads to school dropouts and minimizes girl's retention in schools. The author concludes that there is the need for workshops to create awareness on the effects of corporal punishment for both teachers and students alike.

Similarly, Ampiah & Adu-Yeboah, in examining the incident of school dropouts in the Northern region of Ghana, note that dropping out of school involved a series of factors. In their research, it was revealed that corporal punishment was among the key contributory factors which put students at risk of dropping out from school.⁴⁷ In making schools a pleasant place, and ensuring that students remain in school, there is the need to address the risk-factors and as such corporal punishment. Thus, the study of the implementation of the ban on corporal punishment, is put into perspective, as the ban addresses the need to ensure a safe learning environment.

1.9.7 Overview of Ghana's Educational System.

Formal educational in Ghana can be traced back to European colonial era which sought to promote missionary activities and maintain colonial governance. However, after Ghana gained independence, education later gained recognition as a machinery to enhance Ghana's development⁴⁸. The present educational structure and form reflect the several programmes and policies undertaken by successive indigenous governments in the post-colonial era. Currently, Ghana operates a 3 component educational framework which comprises of basic education, secondary education and tertiary education⁴⁹.

Basic education covers a duration of 11 years consisting of two (2) years of Kindergarten education (Ages 4-6), Six (6) years of Primary education (Ages 6-11) and three (3) years of Junior High School Education (Ages 12-14) which ends with students taking the Basic Education Certificate Examinations⁵⁰ (BECE).

The Secondary education is composed of either an academic education, i.e. Senior High School (SHS) education or a Vocational and Technical Education (TVET). The Senior High School Education, which previously lasted 3 years, went through certain reforms in the years 2007 and 2009 leading to its duration vacillating between 3 and 4 years^{51,52}. The SHS education is concluded with the West African Senior School Certificate⁵³ (WASSCE).

From the Secondary education level, students can proceed to pursue Tertiary education which usually spans a period of 3 to 4 years or as specified in the chosen programme of study. Ghana's tertiary institutions include universities and colleges, polytechnics, and other post-secondary education institutions that offer various professional and academic programmes leading to the award of certificates, diplomas and degrees⁵⁴.

The discussed levels of education above, represent the various categories of educational progression and classification within the Ghana's educational structure and system.

1.10 Research Methodology

Leedy & Ormrod define research methodology as “the general approach the researcher takes in carrying out the research project”.⁵⁵ There are three broad approaches in carrying out research namely the quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods. This research will employ the Qualitative research approach. According to Boateng, qualitative research is “one which tends to explore the meanings, attitudes, values and beliefs that people associate with a phenomenon in order to establish a better understanding, rather than to test or either support or disprove a relationship”.⁵⁶ The adoption of the qualitative research approach is to understand the attitudes and perceptions of the subjects on the ban of Corporal punishment in Ghanaian Schools in order to gain insight in the area of study.

Anderson further indicates that, central to the qualitative method are interpretative ways of analyzing data wherein the researcher studies the situation and makes judgments on the data reported.⁵⁷ Thus this study employs the qualitative research method to enable the researcher describe while drawing conclusions on the practice and implementation processes of the ban on corporal punishment in Ghanaian basic schools. However, Fraenkel and Wallen indicate that, the qualitative approach is limited in scope since it does not employ large samples in its data gathering unlike the quantitative approach.⁵⁸ Irrespective of this demerit, the qualitative method is considered ideal for this study for the above-mentioned merits.

1.10.1 Research Design – Case Study Approach

This research employs the case study approach. According to Merriam, a case study “an exploration of a bounded system or a case over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information and rich in context”.⁵⁹ In addition, Anderson suggests that case studies, are concerned with how and why things happen, allowing the

researcher to analyze realities within their natural context⁶⁰ Thus this research focuses on studying how the elimination of corporal punishment in Ghanaian basic schools is being implemented, as part of the many other efforts to ensure the attainment of the SDG 4 and 16 goals. The ban of corporal punishment in schools is selected as a case study to represent state strategies and commitments that will aid Ghana to attain the SDG 4 and 16. The study focuses on the examination of the practice and application of the ban on corporal punishment in the Teshie town within the Greater Accra Region of Ghana.

1.10.2 Target Population

The population for this study is 69 which includes: Officials from the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, the Ghana Education Service, United Nations International Children's Education Fund (UNICEF) who were purposively selected for interview because the personnel from these organizations, based on sound judgment, are the appropriate sources for the information and data needed to conduct this inquiry.

The second group of target population is the teaching staff as well as students from purposively selected schools within the Teshie town. This population is selected because they are the first-hand recipients of the policy on the ban on corporal punishment and as such can give details as to how it is being implemented and impacts their lives.

1.10.3 Sampling Method

Both random and purposive sampling technique were used for this study. According to Patton, "purposeful sampling is employed for the purposes of identifying and selecting information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources".⁶¹ In addition Creswell asserts that purposive sampling involves identifying and choosing respondents that have informed

knowledge and experience with regards to the phenomenon under study.⁶² Thus the selection of some officials purposively for the study is based on the fact that, they are the direct policy implementers and planners of the policy on the ban of corporal punishment in school. Further, the selection of schools within the Teshie town were purposefully selected due to their proximity to the researcher as well as the reasons by Patton above. On the other hand, the simple random technique was used in sampling students from the selected schools based on the fact that, and as asserted by Gravetter and Forzano, “it removes bias from the selection procedure and should result in representative samples.”⁶³

1.10.4 Sample Size

Specifically, 5 basic schools within the chosen district were selected for the study. In all, a representative of 69 respondents were used for the study and are outlined as follows:

2 teachers and 1 head teacher from each purposively selected school. Thus, 15 teachers, the head teachers included, were chosen for data collection to help find out the approaches and practices adopted to meet the ban on corporal punishment in schools.

Secondly, 10 students (5 girls and 5 boys) were randomly selected from each school for data collection through a focused group discussion in order to help ascertain how discipline was being handled in the schools in line with the ban on corporal punishment.

Also, 2 officials from the Ghana Education Service were interviewed in order to gain insight into the policy on the ban on corporal punishment in Ghanaian basic schools. Furthermore, 1 official each from the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, and UNICEF, were interviewed to solicit their views on the implementation of the ban on corporal punishment in schools.

1.10.5 Sources of Data

Data for this research stems from both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data collection was conducted using focused group discussions and semi-structured interview guides employed to interview respondents from schools and other stake holders. Secondary sources include data from articles, journals, reports, newspapers, books, dissertations and internet sources. These sources were reviewed to gather the necessary information for this research.

1.10.6 Data Collection

The instruments that were used to gather information from participants are mainly interviews and focused group discussions. Semi-structured interview guides were employed to solicit information from respondents. The choice of semi-structured interview was made because it provides an avenue for the researcher to probe further into the responses of participants, requesting for clarifications where needed, while at the same time keeping focus in the area of data collection. The selected students sampled from each school were engaged in a focus group discussion to encourage ‘group synergy’, necessary to uncover emotional experiences. It also helps to save time, since a larger number of respondents are reached out to at a sitting.

1.10.7 Data Analysis

Specifically, the analysis in this study, involved the use of the qualitative content analysis, which has been defined as an approach to analysis that focuses on interpreting and describing, meaningfully, the topics and themes that are evident in the contents of communications when framed against the research objectives of the study. (William & Johanson, 2017)⁶⁴ In so doing, data were carefully grouped along thematic lines, taking note of development of patterns, in support of the objectives of the research objectives of this study.

According to Philipp⁶⁵ (2000), “transcripts of interviews, discourses, protocols of observations, video tapes, and documents” among others, can be the object of qualitative content analysis. Further, Moretti et al.⁶⁶ (2011) described it as a method to classify written or oral materials into identified categories of similar meanings. Thus, for this study, audio-recorded data collected from participants’ interview and focus group discussions were transcribed and read thoroughly to facilitate analysis.

The qualitative content analysis was chosen as a tool for analyzing data for this research due to the fact that, it allows for the understanding of a social reality through the interpretation of various verbal or written recorded communication materials. In addition, with the element of coding in qualitative content analysis the researcher is able to construct the manifest and the latent content meaning of the data collected.

1.11 Ethical Considerations

In conducting a scientific research study, ethical considerations have considerable effects on the participants as well as the data collected. Patton⁶⁷ (2002) holds that researchers are responsible for upholding the anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents of a study. Thus, specific characteristics and sensitive details traceable to respondents were duly excluded from the information presented in this study.

Another key guideline of ethics in this study is informed consent. Corti et al.⁶⁸ (2000) hold that in seeking informed consent, the intended participants should have an understanding of their right to refuse to participate; be cognizant of the extent to which confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained; and be reminded of their right to renegotiate consent during the research

process. Therefore prior to the data collection for the study, consent was sought from all participants, while explaining the reason for which the research was being conducted. This was to ensure the willful participation of respondents and to enhance openness.

1.12 Arrangement of Chapters

The study is comprised of four chapters. Chapter 1 is an Introduction to the entire research. Chapter 2 is an overview of the SDGs 4 and 16 and Ghana's efforts at achieving them. The third chapter focuses on the research findings on the ban of corporal punishment in Ghanaian basic schools towards the attainment of the SDGs 4 and 16 as well as the challenges facing the policy. Chapter 4 discusses the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

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CHAPTER TWO

AN OVERVIEW OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 4, THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 16 AND THE BAN ON CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN GHANAIAN BASIC SCHOOLS

2.0 Introduction

On the international scene, the SDGs is one of the universally- accepted plan of action in ensuring global development through collaborative efforts by different governments and other stakeholders. This chapter takes a look at the Sustainable Development Goals. Thereafter, it presents an overview of the SDGs 4 and 16, as well as some major efforts made so far by Ghana towards their achievement. It also offers an overview of the ban on corporal punishment in Ghanaian schools.

2.1 Overview of the SDGs

At the commencement of the year 2000, the world was presented with a remarkable development agenda, by the General Assembly (GA) of the United Nations (UN), dubbed: “The Millennium Development Goals” (MDGs). The MDGs comprised 8 clearly set out development framework with the broader aim of combating poverty in its diverse dimensions. These goals were expected to be achieved within a space of 15 years, spanning from year 2000 to 2015. At the end of the year 2015, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) of the UN led an Inter-Agency and Expert Group on MDG Indicators to compile a report, as the world reached the end of the MDGs, on the successes or otherwise of the goals. The expert report indicated that the world has cause to celebrate as the goals have saved lives of millions and improved the wellbeing of many others. For instance, the report showed that the primary school net enrolment rate in the developing regions increased from 83 per cent in 2000 to 91 per cent in 2015. The report, however, indicated that there were uneven accomplishments and

shortcomings in many areas. For example, according to the report, sub-Saharan Africa achieved tremendous success in youth literacy, notwithstanding, only a smaller proportion of its men and women could read and write than any other region. The authors of the report acknowledged that the work load of the MDGs could not be accomplished, and that it must continue in the new development era.¹

The report presents a clear assessment of the MDGs and recommends a deeper action as the world hopes to eradicate extreme poverty and its adjoining problems. In his forward to the report, the then Secretary General- Ban Ki Moon admitted that progress had been uneven. At the end of the report, the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon made a profound statement which set out the dawn of a new development framework that would build upon the unfinished work of the MDGs:

“2015 is a milestone year. We will complete the Millennium Development Goals. We are forging a bold decision for sustainable development including a set of sustainable development goals. And we are aiming for a new, universal climate agreement.”²- UN Secretary General; BAN Ki- Moon

On the 25th September, 2015, at the 4th plenary session of the General Assembly, the UN adopted a resolution which gave birth to a new development framework dubbed, “Sustainable Development Goals”³ (SDGs).

The UN describes the SDGs as a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity and also seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom. The SDGs are 17 in number and are being measured against 169 targets and 232 official indicators. The SDGs seek to build upon the foundations of the MDGs and complete what it did not achieve. The SDGs are integrated and

indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental.⁴ The 17 SDGs include:

“Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere.

Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.

Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.

Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.

Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.

Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries.

Goal 11: Make cities and human settlement inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production pattern.

Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact.

Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

Goal 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable development.”⁵

Apart from building on the MDGs, it is worth noting that the SDGs incorporate bits and pieces of decades of development frameworks adopted by the UN including the UN Department of Economics and Social Affairs (UN-DESA). Mention can be made of the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 1992 where more than 178 countries adopted “Agenda 21.” Agenda 21 was a comprehensive plan of action aimed at building global partnership for sustainable development to protect the environment and improve human lives. Moreover, it is conspicuous that the SDGs has its root in the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Plan of Implementation which was adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in South Africa in 2002. During the summit, the global community reaffirmed their commitment to end poverty, among others.⁶

Sanjiv Kumar, Neeta Kumar and Saxena Vivekadhish, in their work: “Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Addressing Unfinished Agenda and Strengthening Sustainable Development and Partnership” posit that 7 major differences exist between the MDGs and the SDGs. Among the differences, the scholars, for instance, were quick to mention that unlike the SDGs, the MDGs were drawn up by a group of experts in the “basement of the UN headquarters” whereas the SDGs came out of a long and extensive consultations with 70 Open Working Groups, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), country consultations, face to face meetings with nationals of member states, surveys among others. What can be inferred from this is that the SDGs had a broader consultation than the

MDGs and this has the possibility of being accepted and acted upon by member countries. Additionally, the authors reveal that the focus of the MDGs was on developing nations with funding from rich countries, contrarily, with regards to the SDGs, all states, both developing and developed are committed to it.⁷

The SDGs, unlike the MDGs, add 9 extra goals to make up for 17 goals which have the capacity to address several issues the MDGs could not sufficiently address. Among these extra goals include issues on climate change, reduction of inequalities within and among countries, promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies among others. The SDGs 4 and 16, which are the focus for this study, moving from MDG 2 to SDG4, effort is required not only to ensure universal primary education but ensure inclusive equitable quality education and promotion of life long opportunity for all. The SDGs are integrated and as a result one action in one area will affect the results of the other areas.⁸

Other significant feature of the SDGs has to do with the emphasis on implementation plan which focuses on partnership among and between states in achieving the goals. For instance, the SDG 17 categorically indicates that to be able to achieve the targets of the SDGs, developed countries are required to commit 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance (ODA/GNI) to developing countries and 0.15 to 0.20 of ODA/GNI to least developed countries.⁹It is the ultimate aim of the framers of the SDGs not to leave any country or target behind in achieving the targets.

Some critics are of the view that the 17 SDGs are too many for the 15-year period. From this stand point, critiques are of the view that the MDGs which had 8 goals could not achieve the desired results thus, achieving 17 goals within the same time frame is not practicable. For

instance, David Cameron of UK publicly called for not more than 12 goals. In his position, 10 goals would be enough. He however did not clarify which goals he would want scraped.¹⁰ In short, although majority seem to like the goals, a handful of member states including the UK and Japan were not impressed with the goals indicating that they were too many to sufficiently implement. In the opinion of the researcher, the most relevant issue about the implementation of the goals has to do with political commitment. It is up to national leaders to commit themselves to the goals, raise the needed capital and human resources for implementation, monitoring and supervision.

On how to fund the SDGs, a third international conference on how to finance the agenda dubbed: “Finance for Development; Time for Global Action” was held in Ethiopia’s capital Addis Ababa from 13-16 July 2015. At the said conference: Addis Ababa Agenda for Action (AAAA), the 193 UN Member States agreed that domestic resource mobilization is central to achieving the means to finance the agenda. The conference, under the leadership of Ethiopian Foreign Minister, Tedros Adhanom Ghebresyeous, enjoined member countries to ensure widening of revenue base, to combat tax evasion, improve upon tax collection and check illicit financial flows of which mention can be made of money laundering.¹¹ These and many others are criticisms levelled against the SDGs. However, in spite of the numerous criticisms leveled against the SDGs, it is no doubt one of the greatest development agenda put forward by the world body.

2.2 Overview of SDG 4

The SDG 4: “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all,” is viewed as an extension of the MDG 2: “Achieve universal primary

education.” Both the MDG 2 and the SDG 4 border on education. The MDG 2 had a single target:

“Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.” There were three (3) indicators to monitor the achievement of the MDG 2 by 2015:

Indicator 1, “net enrollment ratio in primary education,”

Indicator 2, “Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach last grade of primary” and

Indicator 3, “Literacy rate of 15-24-year-olds, women and men.”¹² The indicators are measuring rod based on which to assess whether the targets are being realized.

The SDG 4 on the other hand has 10 targets and 11 official indicators. The targets include:

“1: By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.

2: By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education.

3: By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university.

4: By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.

5: By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations.

6: By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy.

7: By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable

development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

8: Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.

9: By 2030, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, Small Island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries.

10: By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing states.”¹³

It is relevant to reiterate that under the SDG 4, the focus of this research is on target 4.a – “provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environment for all.” Thus, the study seeks to find out the extent to which Ghanaian schools are complying with the ban on corporal punishment with the hope of avoiding violence and abuse in our schools with respect to corporal punishment.

For the targets to be said to have been achieved, the Agenda 2030 (SDGs) is monitored by 11 global indicators as a yardstick to measure the SDG 4 and its targets. These indicators stipulated in the Resolution 71/313 of the UNGA are as follows:

“1: Proportion of children and young people (a) in grades 2/3; (b) at the end of primary; and (c) at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex.

- 2: Proportion of children under 5 years of age who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being, by sex.
- 3: Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by sex.
- 4: Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex.
- 5: Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill.
- 6: Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintile and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples and conflict-affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated.
- 7: Proportion of population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills, by sex.
- 8: Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in (a) national education policies; (b) curricula; (c) teacher education; and (d) student assessment.
- 9: Proportion of schools with access to (a) electricity; (b) the Internet for pedagogical purposes; (c) computers for pedagogical purposes; (d) adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities; (e) basic drinking water; (f) single-sex basic sanitation facilities; and (g) basic hand washing facilities (as per the WASH indicator definitions).
- 10: Volume of official development assistance flows for scholarships by sector and type of study.
- 11: Proportion of teachers in (a) pre-primary; (b) primary; (c) lower secondary; and (d) upper secondary education who have received at least the minimum organized teacher training (e.g.

pedagogical training) pre service or in-service required for teaching at the relevant level in a given country.”¹⁴

A critical comparative study of SDG4 and MDG2 reveals that whereas the MDG 2 emphasized on achieving universal primary education, the SDG 2 goes beyond that to include equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all. This indicates that the SDG4 is inclusive and focuses not only on primary education but secondary and tertiary education and all other forms of learning.¹⁵

As indicated earlier on in this study, the MDG 2 had a single target. However, the SDG4 has 10 clear targets. These targets resonate with the inclusiveness and equitable distribution of lifelong learning opportunities for all. Among the targets, the SDG 4 goes a long way to include issues such as teacher quality and training, educational facility development, gender equality, non-violent learning environment for all, among others.¹⁶

On the official indicators, whereas the MDG 2 had 3 indicators, the SDG 4 had 11 official indicators as earlier mentioned in the study. The increase is to ensure wider coverage on issues that might have been neglected under MDG 2. It is worth noting that, besides these official indicators of the SDG 4, the Technical Advisory Group on Post-2015 Education Indicators (TAG) which was established by UNESCO in the year 2014, developed a set of Thematic indicators to monitor the SDG 4 goals. The endorsement of these thematic indicators was further done in March 2017.¹⁷ The Target 4.a ‘...provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all’ which this study will focus on, has 3 thematic indicators¹⁸. Its thematic indicator 4.a.2 which looks at the “Percentage of students experiencing bullying, corporal punishment, harassment, violence, sexual discrimination and

abuse” is relevant to this study because the researcher is assessing Ghana’s commitment to end corporal punishment in Ghanaian schools at the basic schools.

2.3 Overview of Ghana’s Efforts towards Achieving SDG4

Ghana showed obvious commitment towards achieving the SDGs from the onset. Ghana was chosen as a member of the 70 countries which constituted the Open Working Group (OWG) which was responsible for drafting the 17 SDGs together with the targets for adoption by the UN general Assembly (UNGA).¹⁹ Besides, the current president of Ghana, His Excellency Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo is currently a co-chair of the 17 member SDG Advocate Group.²⁰ The members of the Advocacy Group, also known as “SDG Advocates” were chosen by UN General Secretary, Antonio Guterres, to raise global awareness of the SDGs and the need for expedited action. They are strong public figures who are committed to peace, prosperity and the planet.²¹ They are from diverse leadership, religious, continental, gender backgrounds among others.

Nana Akufo-Addo’s commitment to the Advocacy Group of Eminent persons is an indication that Ghana is fully committed to fulfilling the goals and targets of the SDGs especially the SDG 4 which bothers on education, the foundation for national development. This is summed up in his position, “The SDGs are about the future that we all want and indeed the future that we all need. It is not just desirable. It is indispensable investment for our future- the future of our youth and that of our children. We cannot and should not fail them.”²² Given Ghana’s dedication to the SDGs, the country has laid down realistic measures to facilitate the successful implementation of the SDGs by the year 2030.

One most significant measure was the creation and inauguration of the Inter-Ministerial SDGs Implementation Committee on Thursday, 07 September, 2017.²³ The Committee was made up of 15 members and was chaired by Professor Gyan Baffour, the Minister for Planning. Their duty was to ensure efficient and effective implementation of the all the SDGs so that Ghana could become a shining example to the rest of the world.²⁴ The following ministers were the members of the committee: Minister for Planning (Chairman), Ministers for Trade and Industry; Food and Agriculture; Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration; Finance; Education; Sanitation and Water Resources; Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation; Local Government and Rural Development; Employment and Labour Relations; Gender, Children and Social Protection; Monitoring and Evaluation; Attorney General and Fisheries and Aquaculture.²⁵

According to Amenorhu, in his work, “Transition from MDG 2 to SDG 4: A Study of the Contribution of the Right to Play in Promoting Quality Education in Ghana,” the government of Ghana’s commitment towards achieving the SDG is demonstrated by increase in the budgetary allocation in the Education Ministry. The author indicates in his work that, in the 2016 financial year, an amount of GHC 6, 532 million representing 64.7% of the budget of the social sector was allocated for the Education Ministry.^{[26][27]} Amenorhu goes on to indicate that the budget allocations for the Education Ministry were increased for the 2017 and 2018 financial years to GHC 8330 million and GHC 10.18 billion respectively.²⁸ The scholar’s work indicates that the astronomic increase in the budget allocation of the Education Ministry is to enable government fund flagship programmes such as the Free Senior High Schools (Free SHS), construction of Community Day SHS, restoration of nurses and teacher trainee allowances, among others.²⁹ President Akufo-Addo has also reiterated that, achieving the SDGs requires a heavy and prudent financial commitment and has emphasized the need for the

citizenry to honor their tax obligations and a proper utilization of the resources with respect to the avoidance of corruption, embezzlement, among others.³⁰ This position of the President is timely in the sense that copious misappropriation and diversion of public funds prevailing in many public institutions without proper monitoring and supervision will make the future we want become bleak.

In March 2017, President Akufo Addo emphasized that education remains his topmost priority. The president indicated that Ghana's dream to become the star of Africa would be unachievable if Ghana does not invest in her human resource.³¹ This explains why budgetary allocation to the Education Ministry has always rocketed higher. To empower Ghana citizens, the President launched the Free SHS Policy in September 12, 2017 at the West Africa Senior High School in Accra.³² The President indicated that the Free SHS Policy is in conformity with SDG 4. – “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.” The policy, in the opinion of the researcher, resonates with Target 4.1- “By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes,” which is a major focus for this paper. The president indicated that the Free SHS is relevant because, his checks revealed that for the 4 years preceding the implementation of the policy, an average of 100,000 Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) graduates could not take up their positions at the secondary school level because of their parents' inability to pay their required fees.

Under the Free SHS, no student pays any form of fees as government has taken care of the cost of education at the pre-tertiary level. In 2017 when the programme started, around 424,092 students benefited from the programme.³³ According to Finance Minister, Ken Ofori Atta, government has invested about GHC 3.2 billion in the implementation of the Free SHS and

about 1.2 million Ghanaian children at the Senior High School (SHS) level have been the beneficiaries. He made this declaration on the floor of parliament during the presentation of Mid-year budget review.³⁴

Infrastructure in education marks another success story for Ghana in reference to SDG 4. The increase in population intake among SHS students has called for the need to beef up the infrastructural edifices of schools around the country especially at the SHS and the tertiary levels. At the SHS level, the influx of thousands of students has forced government to adopt “Double Track” intervention measures to, in the interim, accommodate these teeming students. Under the track, students are categorized into Green and Gold Tracks. While the Green track will be in school, the Gold track will be at home.³⁵ When the Green vacates, the Gold track will begin their term. Government is working around the clock to end this shift system. As a result, various infrastructural projects have been completed while others are on their way to completion. In all, President Akuffo Addo indicated that 962 infrastructural projects are under way in senior high schools around the country.³⁶ Down the lane on Wednesday, October 14, 2020, the Minister of Education, Mr. Matthew Opoku Prempeh noted that, a total of 1011 SHS projects had been initiated, including 222 new classroom blocks, since the commencement of the Free SHS policy.³⁷ These projects are meant to end the double-track systems in our junior high schools. Government has also begun massive infrastructure works in universities to be able to accommodate the first batch of Free SHS students who are expected to hit the tertiary institutions by the end of year 2020.

Teacher recruitment and upgrading has been phenomenal in realizing the SDG4. On Wednesday July 10, 2019, Honorable Matthew Opoku Prempeh indicated that with the introduction of the Free SHS, enrollment at SHS increased by 31% in 2017 and 2018. Between

2017 and 2019, 59000 teachers were employed of which 8000 were specifically meant to handle the Double-track system.³⁸ To ensure teacher quality and efficiency, the Minister has indicated that prospective teachers entering the colleges of education from 2019 would graduate with a 4-year degree certificate and not the usual 3-year diploma certificate.³⁹ He also said that, to be able to teach at the University level, one must possess a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) certificate. Although government hopes to ensure efficiency, the policy has been criticized by the academia that it is not the solution to Ghana's education problems. Others think the policy is harsh given that there are not enough PhD holders in Ghana. Eric Fredua-Kwarteng and Samuel Kwaku Ofori have challenged the policy by indicating that time, money, planning and monitoring are key to improving standards.⁴⁰

In spite of the numerous strides in the education sectors toward the attainment of SDG 4, this paper posits that there are still some challenges that may hinder the country's efforts at the SDG 4. These include, child marriages, schools under trees and most importantly for the purposes of this research, a violent and unsafe learning environment in schools.

2.4 Overview of SDG 16

SDG 16: "Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels," has 12 targets which include:

Target 16.1: "Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere

Target 16.2: End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.

Target 16.3: Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.

Target 16.4: By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime.

Target 16.5: Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms

Target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels

Target 16.7: Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels. Target 16.8: Broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance.

Target 16.9: By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration

Target 16.10: Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements.

Target 16.11: “Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime.

Target 16.12: “Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.”⁴¹

SDG16 has a total of 23 global indicators with which to evaluate each of the 12 targets.

The Targets and their corresponding indicators are listed below:

16.1.1: “Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, by sex and age

16.1.2: Conflict-related deaths per 100,000 population, by sex, age and cause

16.1.3: Proportion of population subjected to physical, psychological or sexual violence in the previous 12 months

16.1.4: Proportion of population that feel safe walking alone around the area they live

16.2.1: Proportion of children aged 1-17 years who experienced any physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by caregivers in the past month

16.2.2: Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age and form of exploitation

16.2.3: Proportion of young women and men aged 18-29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18

16.3.1: Proportion of victims of violence in the previous 12 months who reported their victimization to competent authorities or other officially recognized conflict resolution mechanisms

16.3.2: Unsentenced detainees as a proportion of overall prison population

16.4.1: Total value of inward and outward illicit financial flows (in current United States dollars)

16.4.2: Proportion of seized, found or surrendered arms whose illicit origin or context has been traced or established by a competent authority in line with international instruments

16.5.1: Proportion of persons who had at least one contact with a public official and who paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials, during the previous 12 months

16.5.2: Proportion of businesses that had at least one contact with a public official and that paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials during the previous 12 months

16.6.1: Primary government expenditures as a proportion of original approved budget, by sector (or by budget codes or similar)

16.6.2: Proportion of the population satisfied with their last experience of public services

16.7.1: Proportions of positions (by sex, age, persons with disabilities and population groups) in public institutions (national and local legislatures, public service, and judiciary) compared to national distributions.

16.7.2: Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability and population group

16.8.1: Proportion of members and voting rights of developing countries in international organizations

16.9.1: Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority, by age

16.10.1: Number of verified cases of killing, kidnapping, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention and torture of journalists, associated media personnel, trade unionists and human rights advocates in the previous 12 months

16.10.2: Number of countries that adopt and implement constitutional, statutory and/or policy guarantees for public access to information

16.a.1: Existence of independent national human rights institutions in compliance with the Paris Principles

16.b.1: Proportion of population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed in the previous 12 months on the basis of a ground of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law.”⁴²

As a result of what the research seeks to study: “Corporal Punishment in Ghanaian Basic Schools” emphasis will be placed on Target 16.2 of the SDG 16: “End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children”. An examination of the ban on corporal punishment thus becomes relevant as part of the efforts Ghana is making to stop all forms of violence against children particularly in schools.

2.5 Overview of Ghana’s Effort towards Achieving SDG 16

On Ghana’s efforts towards the SDG 16, it can be said that the creation of certain state institutions as well as the adoption of certain policies and legal frameworks constitute some of

the interventions aimed at peaceful, just and inclusive societies within the country. The National Peace Council (NPC) which was established in 2011 is tasked with preventing, managing, and resolving conflict to build sustainable peace.⁴³ Other interventions include the National Social Protection Policy, the Creation of the Office of the Special Prosecutor, and the Domestic Violence and Victim support Unit of the Police Service among others.⁴⁴

Currently, as part of what Ghana is doing on ending all forms of violence against children, the SGD's Budget Report in July 2019 indicated that government begun a process in 2018 towards the setting up of One-Stop-Centres to provide counselling, healthcare, collection of forensic evidence, criminal investigation, referral and psychological support services to people who suffer violence and abuses of all forms, especially children.⁴⁵ This research therefore, assesses the ban on corporal punishment in Ghanaian schools as one of the attempts to end all forms of punishment against children in the country.

A survey conducted by the West Africa Network for Peace building (WANEB), a civil society in the West Africa sub region, in collaboration with the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), from January to March in the year 2019 revealed that, 64.7 percent of the Ghanaian population wants SDG 16 prioritized. The study was captioned as “National review of progress on Implementation of SDG 16+ Peace Goals in Ghana and role of Civil Society Organizations.”⁴⁶ The study recommended that government intensifies awareness creation on SDGs as most respondents had no knowledge of the SDGs and ensure that the SDGs are properly integrated in both local and national level agenda.⁴⁷ It can be posited that lack of knowledge or ideas about the SDGs including SDG 16 will lead to people abusing others right without any justice being sought.

2.6 An Overview of the Ban on Corporal Punishment in Ghanaian Schools

Historically, Ghana's educational system incorporated corporal punishment as a principal mode of maintaining discipline in schools. This practice mirrored the means of maintaining control by the British colonial administration. Although corporal punishment took various forms in schools, caning was one of the best-known forms it took. The use of Corporal punishment continued in Ghana decades after the post-colonial era. However, by the 1970's, corporal punishment was seen as injurious to students and thus the Ghana Education Service partially prohibited its application in Ghanaian Schools.⁴⁸ Nonetheless, head teachers were allowed to personally execute caning, or appoint their deputies to do so, with the end of reducing the incidence of the abuse of caning by teachers.⁴⁹

In 1990, Ghana became a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child which sets out to protect child rights. These rights are articulated in 54 articles of the convention. Article 28 of the convention generally recognizes education as a right and as such establishes measures to ensure that this right of the child is achieved. The paragraphs 1 and 2 of the UNCRC, unambiguously, charge states to 'take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates' and to 'take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention, respectively.'⁵⁰

In pursuance of the convention as well as the recognition of the right of the child, the educational system in Ghana witnessed several policy directives and measures over the years. In 2008, the GES drew up a Code of Conduct for teachers, to regulate the conduct of teachers. Part 3 section 8a of this code considered physical harm as constituting a grave infringement on the rights of the child. Consequently, the code categorically states that: 'Teachers shall not

administer any act of corporal punishment, or any act that inflicts physical pain on the children or causes physical harm to their pupils/students...’⁵¹ Subsequently, teachers were cautioned from time to time, via news articles as well as signed letters from GES that corporal punishment was unacceptable.⁵² For instance in 2017, a statement signed by the Director-General of the GES Mr. Jacob Kor, warned that any GES staff, who applied corporal punishment was going to be sanctioned in accordance with the policy guidelines and then referred to the appropriate body.’⁵³

Since the year 2018, Ghana made further add-ons to the existing policy decisions on the prohibition of corporal punishment in schools. In July 2018, the GES published the Teacher’s Handbook on Safe Schools, which recognized that corporal punishment was still prevalent and admonished teachers to refrain from its use.⁵⁴ In addition, a letter dated January 2019 which was issued by the GES, announced that all forms of corporal punishment in pre-tertiary schools had been banned in 2017 and admonished all schools to use ‘the Positive Discipline Toolkit.’⁵⁵

As recently as the year 2019, Ghana was named among the 15 countries that endorsed the Safe To Learn initiative aimed at ending school violence and improving learning outcomes. This initiative constitutes a call to action which expects states to develop and implement laws and policies that protect children from all forms of violence. The initiative commits states to ‘prohibit corporal punishment in schools and promote positive discipline.’⁵⁶ As such this research seeks to, among other things, assess the implementation of these policy measures.

It is worth noting that, in spite of all these policy directives and the various commitments to international norms to end corporal punishment, there existed some conflicts and ambiguity with regards to some legal provisions. For instance, Article 13 of the Children’s Act 1998

outlaws “cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment including any cultural practice which dehumanizes or is injurious to the physical and mental well-being of a child”. However, it permits “reasonable” and “justifiable” punishment of children.⁵⁷ Thus, whereas the Ghana Education Service policy directives and codes have abolished corporal punishment in schools, certain provisions in the constitution of Ghana, seem to legitimize its application.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the SDGs, its inception, goals and targets. All these goals and targets are an international concern which are hoped to spur global development. Thus, Governments of the UN member states are expected to develop strategies and policies towards the attainment of these goals. The SDGs 4 and 16, were also examined with focus on the efforts made by Ghana towards their attainment so far which demonstrated that, Ghana is committed to implementing the SDGs although much effort is still required. The Ban on Corporal punishment in Ghanaian Schools is therefore seen as one of the numerous efforts that can help Ghana to achieve the SDGs 4 and 16, by ending all forms of violence against children in schools and ensuring quality education.

An overview of the Ban on Corporal Punishment in Ghana, also revealed that Ghana is also committed to the UNHCR, which also prioritizes education as a right, and advocates for an end to be put to corporal punishment in schools. However, this overview also brings to bear the legislative discrepancies that surrounds the policy. In light of these, the findings of the study will reveal how the ban on Corporal punishment is being implemented, particularly towards the attainment of the SDGs 4 and 16, in line with the objectives of this study.

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CHAPTER THREE

ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses data gathered from interviews with Teachers, Head teachers, Students and Officials from the Ghana Education Service, in line with the research questions and the objectives of this work. Alongside the aforementioned primary data, other relevant secondary sources on the implementation of the ban on corporal punishment in Ghanaian basic schools as well as the SDGs were also used.

3.1 Background to the Analysis

By adopting the resolution 71/11, all member states endorsed the agenda 2030 and are thus, expected to work towards achieving the SDGs. Further, although the SDGs are intergovernmental commitments, they have gained saliency among various non-state actors such as NGOs and other private organizations¹. Allen et al., in emphasizing the need for states to localize the SDGs observe that, “Integrated, nationally-owned SDG strategies will be at the centre of national efforts to implement the new sustainable development agenda²”. Again, former UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, recognizes this in his statement: “our struggle for global sustainability will be won or lost in cities.³”

In the wake of these, the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments, UNDP and UN Habitat drew up a roadmap for localizing the SDGs in general⁴. One of the strategies identified by the roadmap was awareness creation. Here, awareness creation was not only limited to communicating the SDGs to the public but also empowering citizens to participate actively towards their attainment. In addition, the roadmap observed the need for a cooperative

governance which involves a multi-stakeholder approach and civil societies to better facilitate the implementation of the SDGs through consultation, coordination, partnerships, among others. The road map also identified capacity building, mobilizing financial resources, monitoring and evaluation as part of the strategic mechanisms required in the implementation of the SDGs at local level. Further, with regards to the SDG 4, the aforementioned elements by the roadmap resonates with UNESCO's outline of the policy implications for educational development which further indicates the need to adjust or strengthen national legislation and adequate financing to ensure a successful translation of the educational goals into local context.⁵

Specifically, and in relation to ending corporal punishment against children, the Global initiative to end all corporal punishment against children, certain intergovernmental organizations like the Global initiative to end corporal punishment against children have identified the following:⁶

- “Wide dissemination and explanation of the law and its implications”
- “Detailed guidance, for all involved, on how the law prohibiting violent punishment should be implemented in the best interests of children”
- “Communication of children's right to protection from corporal punishment and all other cruel or degrading forms of punishment to children and adults”
- “Promotion of positive, non-violent forms of discipline to the public, children, parents, other caregivers, teachers, etc”
- “Dissemination of information on the dangers of corporal punishment”
- “Integration of implementation/enforcement of the prohibition into the national and local child protection system”

- “Identification of key public figures and a wide range of partners who can support implementation of the law and transformation of attitudes”
- “Attraction of necessary resources”
- “Evaluation of the impact of law”

Thus, this current section aims at probing the implementation process of the SDGs within the policy context of the ban on corporal punishment in Ghanaian basic schools. In so doing the discussion of the findings are analyzed based on the following themes: Awareness of the Ban on Corporal Punishment, Capacity building, the current state of Discipline in schools, Collaboration between stakeholders, Enforcement Mechanism, Challenges faced in the implementation of the ban, Contribution of the ban towards the SDG 4 and the SDG 16 and the way forward.

3.2 Awareness of the Ban on Corporal Punishment in Schools

One of the essentials that facilitates and propels the effective implementation of a policy is the awareness of a policy. People cannot comply with policies they are not aware of. In addition, the misunderstanding of any policy would naturally have an impact on the implementation of the policy.

On awareness of the corporal punishment, officials from the GES pointed that, students, teachers, head teachers and even parents had been made fully aware of the ban. The Director of the Guidance and Counselling Unit of the Ghana Education Service made it known that teachers were informed via letters as well as spelt out in the revised teachers code of conduct. The Director asserted:

“the director general wrote a letter informing everybody about the ban. These letters were distributed electronically and then hard copy. When you go to any school now, and you ask the head to produce the letter. The very proactive heads have even pasted it on the walls. Even though the ban was piloted in the 20 UNICEF districts, because we had trained regional directors and their guidance and counselling coordinators, they also went to spread the news. So, the news spread.”

Another official from the GES Municipal Directorate, in finding out how teachers were informed on the directive also stated:

“They were informed in writing. Not only in writing, but at any available gathering or forum, we shared that information with them so apart from the directors issuing circulars, when we met them, they were told, and we ensure that they adhere to those directives.”

Indeed, findings from the research showed that all 10 teachers and 5 head teachers from the selected schools who were interviewed were aware of the ban on corporal punishment and based on this they were responding to the directive, albeit in different ways. The head teachers consented to receiving letters and circulars on the directive. Majority of the teachers also indicated that they were informed by their heads during meetings and some workshops. Below are some of their responses:

“We had a workshop and the heads were also briefed, so they came back to tell us. I wasn't in this school anyway” (Teacher 1, October 2020)

Another also stated:

“In one of the different seminars and meetings we had previously from the education ministry with the Nungua and Teshie Zones.” (Teacher 3, October 2020)

Contrarily, 3 of the teachers also revealed that they got to know of the ban by means other than official means. A teacher shared; *“They have not given us a letter. But it’s a hear say.”* (Teacher 2, October 2020) Others added that, they got to know from the newspapers, the television and the internet.

Further, in an attempt to find out the awareness of the ban on corporal punishment in schools on the part of students, findings revealed that, out of the 50 students who were engaged in the focused group discussion from selected schools, 44 had knowledge about the ban while 6 of them didn’t know about it at all. Questions to find out how students got informed about the ban on corporal punishment revealed that students got to know about it mainly from their parents, friends, neighbors, news and on a few occasions’ teachers. Some of the students stated: *“My grandmother came for PTA meeting and she told me”* (FGD 1, October 2020) Another also stated: *“Our class teacher told us”* (FDG 2, October 2020).

Further deliberations during the discussions with students also revealed that, teachers rarely informed students about the ban on corporal punishment. The few occasions where they did, it was to serve as a warning that, they would go contrary to the ban under certain circumstances. A student stated: *“Sometimes, the teacher tells us that they said they shouldn’t cane, but if you fool, they will cane you”* (FDG 1, October 2020).

To find out the understanding that respondents had of the ban, both officials from the GES and the participants from selected schools were asked what the ban entailed and the extent to which they knew about it. Interviews from officials of the GES revealed that, the ban had abolished all forms of punishment that caused harm to the child, not just caning, and that all teachers including head teachers were no longer allowed to use corporal punishment. The director of the Guidance and counselling section of the GES stated that:

“...corporal punishment is not only caning. Slapping the child, beating him, biting, kicking, kneeling down in the stones, you know, all those things. Anything that causes harm to the child is put under corporal punishment. They used to say that, the head teacher had to sanction the caning and they shouldn't give more than four strokes. All those things are no more there. We want total absence of corporal punishment in the schools.” (The Director, Guidance and Counselling Unit of the GES, November 2020).

Also, according to one official from the Municipal Directorate of the GES the ban was not only limited to caning, or other physical abuses, but also verbal abuse. He asserted: *“Somebody can mark a child's work and then write on the paper 'momoni' (rotten fish), so all these are part of the abuse. We want both the physical and verbal abuse to stop”.* (Official, Municipal Directorate of the GES).

However, it was interesting to find out that teachers had different interpretations of what the ban entailed, as per what the directive had meant it to be. A few others admitted that they did not know what the ban entailed. Some teachers had this to say about the policy:

“What I know is that, the teacher is not supposed to beat the student. So even if you want to punish the student, you cannot cane but use any form of punishment such as kneeling down, weeding or sweeping” Another teacher also stated: *“We were informed 2 years back that it has been banned completely out of the system. If the need arises,*

then the teacher should alert the head and the discipline should be done solely by the head, the head should be the one to use the cane. The teacher cannot on his own accord use the cane.”

Even more striking was the different interpretations head teachers had of what the ban entailed. Others believed that they as head teachers were still permitted to sanction caning. This is what a head teacher stated:

“What they told us was that, they want us to stop caning the children and find other ways of disciplining them. As to the details of it, I can’t say because it was not revealed to us.” (Headteacher 1, October 2020). Another headteacher asserted: *“It is entrenched in the universal something something of the child, that the child should not go through any form of abuse and the dg goal or something, it is also there. Once Ghana is a signatory to those, you are bound to go by it. So, the corporal punishment is not approved by the GES. We are not to abuse the child. And even if you use the cane, the head should be there and you should log it.* (Headteacher 3, October 2020).

With regards to students understanding of what the ban entails, findings revealed that student also had limited knowledge on what the ban actually entailed. Most of the students who were asked about what they knew about the ban said all they knew was that they were not supposed to be caned. This was how one student responded to questions; *“Madam please what I know is that they said they shouldn’t cane us.”*

3.3 Capacity Building

According to Gordon & Chadwick the purpose of capacity building is to “build the understanding, skills, and knowledge base of individuals and organizations...”⁷ The SDG

target 17.9; “Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building...” recognizes the significance of capacity building to the whole sustainable development agenda⁸. The approaches to capacity building differ across disciplines.⁹ These approaches could range from provision of appropriate training, retraining, provision of necessary resources and materials, mentoring systems, skill-building among others¹⁰¹¹.

In light of this, Officials from the GES were asked if there were any training given to teachers with regards to the ban on corporal punishment in Ghanaian schools. Responses from the officials revealed that teachers had been given training through seminars and workshops on alternative ways of ensuring discipline as outlined in the positive discipline tool kit. In addition, it was pointed out that the existing programs at the teacher training colleges which churns out teachers include training on classroom management. The Director of the Guidance and counselling unit of the GES asserted that:

“You know, before we banned it, we came up with the positive discipline tool kit. Which has four levels. 1st offense, 2nd, 3rd and 4th. The first one involves warning and advice and everything. And the last one ends with counselling. Serious counselling, one on one. So, we trained teachers on these different levels of this positive discipline tools even before the Director General sent the letter. When the letter went, it went attached with the positive discipline tool. So, any teacher who is having difficulties, does not want to use the positive discipline tools. For instance, a child who is at the back disturbing, may just require attention, so as a good teacher what do you do? You move him forward. And once attention is on him, he will behave. But our teachers are taught these things in training college, at the university when their doing education. But when they come to the classroom, it’s a different ballgame all together. They are very much

aware; they just don't want to adhere to it". (The Director, Guidance and counselling unit, GES). The table below shows the classifications of the toolkit.

Tab.3.1: Table showing the various levels of application of the toolkit.

Classification – Level of Misbehaviour	Response
Level One – Creating a disciplined environment	Proactive/preventive measures: Clearly spelling out rules and setting expectations from students, expressing approval of and encouraging good behaviour, setting an environment of mutual respect that recognizes the authority of the teacher. This should also be part of the orientation given to students at the beginning of every academic year and reinforced at the start of each school term
Level Two – Minor/first time offences	Early detection/intervention: Non-punitive actions intended to remind students of laid out standards of behaviour and expectations and the importance of conforming to them. The teacher would also need to, at this level, investigate the reasons behind the identified misbehaviour or the conditions that encouraged it in order to address
Level Three – Repeated/more serious offences	Corrective Measures: Attention of the student is drawn to the severity of the offence or the fact that it has been repeated several times. The teacher at this level must combine deterrent measures with counselling, agreements and consistent follow ups on the student's response to the actions taken
Level Four – Chronic, dangerous and disruptive behaviour	Rehabilitative Measures: Invite other members of the school administration and the child's family to support in the assessment of the child's behaviour and determination of an appropriate response. Intensive counselling and monitoring must be undertaken at this level.

The positive discipline tool goes further to detail the tools for positive discipline for each level of misbehavior. With regards to level 3 the suitable corrective measures have been stated to include; a reflection period for the child at a designated room, giving the child lines to write, cleaning (e.g. picking litter, arranging seats in the classroom, but not the toilets), a designated seating position, counselling, agreeing with the child on a particular behavior and its consequence, and giving the child extra tasks such as extra home works.

It was also revealed that students were also given some form of training on positive behavior in schools. The Director further explained that:

“The children are also trained. We train them on assertive skills, responsibilities. Rights go with responsibilities. So we train them. Another way is that we developed the S4Ds (sports for development). We realized that children like games so, when they are at games how do they put to practice the things they learnt, how will the teacher control the students without caning them, how will they respect each other, it’s my ball no its not yours, how do you share, how do you wait your turn, all those things come to make the school a safe place to be in”.

However, it appeared training had not been organized specifically for teachers in the Teshie town. An official from the Teshie municipal directorate of the GES added that:

“Yes, there has been training. From the district where I used to serve, before I came here, the guidance and counselling unit and the Girls’ Education Coordinator organized a 2-day session for the teachers. I think it was sponsored by the UNICEF. In this district we are yet to do that. But from what I heard, I think when the program started and the positive discipline tool kit was introduced, there was something like that. But it wasn’t formalized like it was in the other district I came from. But it’s something that, we are thinking of doing.”

When teachers were asked if they had received training on the policy, about 6 of the respondents denied having received training. According to one of the teachers; *“I don’t think any teacher has been trained, they just placed it out there”*. Another also responded: *“As for that one, we have not been trained, but I have heard about the policy.”* Other teachers concurred to having received some form of information on how to implement the ban. One teacher shared:

“yes, yes, during a workshop we were given reasons why corporal punishment is not the only way to go. There are other ways of instilling discipline among your pupils. Not only caning, as the older people used to do. So at least we were trained. Even at training college. If you are really a professional, you know that you don’t have to be always hitting and hitting, so even before we came out of school, I am sure most of us heard something about that. When the ban was imposed too there were workshops in between to remind us of it. That even if you are to do it, you should be very professional, discipline with love.” Another teacher also believed that they had been receiving training from their heads. He stated; *“It is our heads who normally go for such meetings. And whenever they come whatever the director tells them, they also come to tell us. We have something called in-service training at the school level. So, every meeting they have with the director, our head also comes to relay it to us. Normally we have our meetings first week when school reopens and mid of the term and then the last week of the term. So that if a teacher is going wayward, he or she is brought to book.”*

Thus, there were varied opinions with regards to the issue of training on the policy directive.

Some head teachers also had this to say when asked if they had trained teachers on the policy; *“I have been trained at a workshop on education administration which I attended. We had a*

resource person from GES. I do not recall the year but I was the head at a different school. During our staff meetings I do remind teachers that they should be mindful that the law is still in force so they should give the child any form of punishment other than the cane. But I do not disallow a teacher from sending a cane to the classroom. Using a cane in a classroom does not mean you are going to cane them. It can be used to call for attention.” This goes to show that, teachers were secondary recipients of the training received by heads, mostly received as reminders during meetings.

Further, from the responses from both teachers and head teachers, it is seen that although GES officials made mention of a positive discipline tool kit, none of the respondents both teachers and heads made reference to it, nor training on its application. This shows that more is required in the area of training and capacity building with regards to the positive discipline tool kit. This goes to suggest training gaps that need to be filled in order to ensure a successful implementation of the ban on corporal punishment.

3.4 The Current State of Discipline in schools

As mentioned earlier, the liberal theory which is the theoretical framework for this study, often focuses on the domestic level of analysis, which consists of the study of individual actors and the various values held by policy makers¹². The Policy directive on the ban was given in 2017 and since teachers, head teachers as well as students are aware of the policy directive on the ban on corporal punishment, it may therefore be anticipated that, the policy will be embraced and implemented in Ghanaian schools as directed. Thus, in an attempt to find out whether or not the ban was being adhered to, students engaged in the focused group discussion were asked how often they break schools' rules. Findings revealed that, almost all students sometimes go contrary to expected behavior although 3 students responded that they had never broken school

rules. Among the recurrent responses were: *“Once in a while”, “Sometimes”, “not all the time”*. Further discussions revealed some of the behaviors considered as breaking school rules. The following behaviors were mentioned: *“...being late to school”, “Maybe teacher is teaching and you are talking”, “madam sometimes I didn’t pass his test”, “Not doing your homework”, “Noise making in class.”* These responses by the students show that, the problem of student misconduct exists (although a few of these responses may not be categorized as indiscipline) and as such may require appropriate approaches to prevent or resolve these misconducts.

Upon further questions to ascertain how teachers responded to these behaviors, students were asked what their teachers do to them when they break school rules. The findings revealed that teachers employed a variety of methods including administering corporal punishments. One student stated; *“madam, you kneel down or you do ‘moto’ (squatting)”*. Another student in explaining what their head teacher does when the break school rules asserted:

“Madam when you fight, and he sees the two of you, he calls you, talks to you and gives you a punishment”

Upon further clarification to find out what the said punishment entails, the student continued; *“sometimes he makes them kneel down till closing or maybe he canes you then you go back to the class and learn.”* Other students from other selected school had this to say: *“sometimes when you come to school late, they ask you to bring dusters, standing brooms, canes or markers.”*

To confirm the assertions made by students on the disciplinary measures applied by teachers and head teachers, further discussions were had with teachers and head teachers on how they

ensured discipline in school in the absence of corporal punishment. Findings revealed the various strategies and alternatives which teachers have adopted. One teacher explained that: *“when students are late sometimes, we ask them to pick the rubbers that they have littered around. Sometimes we ask them to bring stones. Other times we ask them to sweep. Some pupils are asked to sweep the classroom a whole week for coming to school late. Depending on the offence. Sometimes we ask them to fill a whole book with ‘I will not come to school late again’. Those are some of the measures.”* Another teacher also added: *“By giving out punishment to the children, not necessarily caning. You can let them kneel down or you give them warning not to repeat that mistake again”*. Yet another teacher explained: *“I may ask the child to leave the class for a few weeks and once they are not in class, they get worried and immediately they leave you ask them to do a classwork which will go against them. That will caution them not to go against your rules.”*

One headteacher responded; *“The first thing is we issue a warning to the students, if they don’t obey, we call in the parents.”* Another headteacher also stated; *“First of all we caution the child, if it happens the second time, we invite the parents and they sign bonds to the effect that they will not put up such behaviour anymore.”*

In addition, findings revealed that, students were also guided and counselled on how to behave in accordance with the rules and regulations of the school. One teacher noted; *“Once in a while, the guidance and counselling section meets the children and talks to them about how they should comport themselves in the school. You know this place is an indigenous town and it’s a fishing community. So, most of the things, they are not aware of. A teacher will be talking and you have students having conversation with someone outside the classroom. All those things are indiscipline. At least the way they dress, the way they talk. So once in a while they go round*

to talk to them". From these responses, it is evident that teachers are using alternative discipline strategies other than corporal punishment although a few of the alternatives are not endorsed by the positive discipline tool kit, for instance kneeling down.

To further ascertain the extent to which teachers were adhering to the ban, teachers and head teachers were asked how they were implementing the ban in their schools. Findings revealed mixed results; majority of teachers and headteachers are adhering to the ban sparingly, whereas a few are totally adhering to it. Although some heads admonished teachers to avoid corporal punishment, they sanctioned teachers taking canes to the classroom for the purposes of putting fear in students. One head teacher had this to say; *"At first when a child is late, you give him maybe 3 or 4 canes for being late. Presently in my school, some small weeding, picking or manual work will do, not the canes. I have told my teachers and they are implementing it. But at the same time, we have the canes, we go to the class with the canes just to scare them. But we won't use it to cane you, just to deter you"*. (Head teacher 3, October, 2020). This was confirmed by another teacher who stated that; *"In our school we don't use the cane, we don't use it for caning purposes, we use it for pointing and then to also frighten the children, but we don't use it on them. It is not always that we bring the cane to class too."* (Teacher 4, November, 2020).

Other headteachers admitted to not having fully done away with corporal punishment. This is what a head teacher had to say; *"First it is not easy to let go of a practice that has been there, so we do our best to reduce the caning, I won't say we have eliminated it completely, but we are working on eliminating it. I think the reason behind the abolishing of the act is when students get you worked up, so you get so worked up and if you are not careful you injure a child. But we are finding other ways of disciplining them."* Likewise, most teachers admitted to not having eliminated it totally. One teacher disclosed; *"To be honest, we are not obeying*

the directive, but we have reduced the level at which we were using it. But we haven't taken it away entirely. To some extent, we have reduced the use of the cane". These responses indicate that in spite of the ban on corporal punishment in Ghanaian schools, it is still administered in the selected schools albeit in moderation.

3.5 Enforcement Mechanisms

Enforcement is an important part of policy implementation. Enforcement strategies such as, Reporting and Sanctions may improve compliance of policies. The objective of this section is to ascertain the various enforcement mechanisms adopted by policymakers (that is the GES and head teachers) to ensure adherence to the ban on corporal punishment.

3.5.1 Monitoring

Monitoring can be explained as a structured process for the collection and analysis of information with the objective of continuous standardized supervision of a process¹³. Monitoring seeks to determine whether a policy is being carried out properly and if it is achieving its expected goals¹⁴. In finding out the systems put in place to monitor the ban on corporal punishment in schools, officials from the GES stated that, monitoring was an integral part of the activities of the GES. They explained that monitoring of GES educational activities including the ban on corporal punishment involved supervision and periodic visits by GES officials to schools. According to an official from the Municipal Directorate of the GES; *"We do check our policies through the monitoring of our teachers. We have monitoring officers who go round to the schools to check."* The Director of the Guidance and Counselling unit of the GES also asserted:

"Yes we do continuous monitoring. Even for the communities who say we are spoiling their children, when we go, we talk to them. We ask them, do you see how drivers behave

when these traffic lights here get spoiled, aha, because the traffic light is not there to control them, the police man is not there. So, when you keep caning the child, if you are not there, he will misbehave. The cane doesn't correct anything. It is an easy way out for disciplining the child. So, we monitor all over. Every single director and coordinator here, wherever you go, you do monitoring. If I go to a school now, I will monitor everything. I monitor issues concerning girls, concerning special education, so we try to connect the dots in monitoring."

This basically meant that, monitoring involved observing everything that takes place in the schools as well as the classrooms including but not exclusively on corporal punishment. Further an official from the Municipal Directorate of the GES also added:

"we have field officers and circuit supervisors who are always in the Schools. So, they are close to the situation on the ground. So that is one measure that we as an institution are taking to ensure that there is compliance with regards to the directive. And then prompt reporting. When there are such cases of corporal punishment in the schools, they have to report it so that quickly we can take whatever sanctions we have to take."

Apart from the GES officials, headteachers were also asked if there has been any monitoring on the ban. 2 headteachers stated that there was external monitoring from GES officials on the implementation of the ban. One headteacher had this to say:

"The circuit supervisor for instance visits the school at least once a week. She finds out from myself whether there has been any behavior that may have called for corporal punishment and what we have done about it. Sometimes when she comes around, she also interviews the children as to whether some of these issues are still going on and knowing that they come to ask about it, we are cautious."

Invariably, the other headteachers noted that, GES officials do go to the schools for monitoring however; *“their visits might be for other purposes other than the ban”*. This assertion was confirmed by the responses from the teachers when asked if there was any monitoring on the ban on corporal punishment. One teacher had this to say: *“The GES people come to monitor, when they come, they tell us what they have observed. Their observations are not on corporal punishment, but on how we can engage the children when teaching and other things.”*

On internal monitoring, all headteachers asserted that they do monitor the implementation of the ban in their schools. One headteacher stated *“I do monitor, I make sure we don’t even have canes around. What we have are pointers, they are so thick that you can’t even use them to cane them”*. Responses from teachers were however varied. While some attested to internal monitoring by their heads, others denied having been monitored with regards to the ban on corporal punishment.

3.5.2 Reporting

Officials from the Ghana Education Service reported that measures have been put in place to ensure effective reporting of corporal punishment. According to the Director of the Guidance and Counselling unit of the GES, they had provided reporting channels where students could send their concerns. She stated:

“You know, we have provided reporting systems, the Ministry of Gender for instance has a number you can call, Ministry of Communication has it, Girls Education has it, we use the same number as the GACA. So those are the numbers that people call when a child is abused physically. We tell the children to call. We give them the numbers anytime we have programs with them. Some heads have written the numbers on the

notice boards. You can call and your issues will be addressed. But we have them knowing that their guidance and counselling coordinators in the school are the first point of call, then the heads, then it goes on and on and on, until it reaches headquarters. Then apart from that too, the PTAs and the SMCs (school management committees) are aware and they know that if a child is caned, you know sometimes the teachers cane and you can see the bruises, parents can report.”

Students were also asked if they report caning. Findings revealed that majority of the students, although they are aware of the ban on corporal punishment (at least on the caning aspect), are not willing to report corporal punishment for a number of reasons. First, students did not report corporal punishment because through socialization, they have accepted corporal punishment as an appropriate means of corrections whenever they do something wrong. One student stated:

“Madam, if I have done something that I am not supposed to do and they cane me I don’t report, I put it inside me (meaning, she keeps it to herself).” Another student replied while laughing; *“madam to whom? because it is normal”*. Yet another replied: *“No, I don’t report, because when the teacher canes you, it means you did the wrong thing, in you, you know that you didn’t do the right thing.”*

Interestingly responses from some students revealed a financial face of reporting. One of the students explained: *“Madam, if like we were rich, I will go and report, I can send you to court because I have money.”* Another also added: *“It will be like you are wasting your time because you don’t have money to take them to court.”*

The few, who did report mentioned that, they normally reported to their parents, older siblings, or other relatives. This finding raised the question of what happens when they report corporal

punishment. Responses showed that some parents approved of corporal punishment in schools as a corrective measure and thus did not pursue reporting. One student responded: *“Madam please I reported to my parents once and they asked me that is my teacher mad that every day he will get up and beat me? So, me I stopped.”* Another student also replied; *“My father, he will ask me what I did before the teacher caned me. If what I did was wrong, he will add another cane.”* This supports Morrel’s observation that the support for corporal punishment in schools exists because parents still practice it in their homes¹⁵. Yet another student replied: *“They will just tell me that it is part of schooling so I should endure, I will finish the school soon.”*

Further, findings also revealed that students felt uncomfortable reporting corporal punishment because some parents or those they report to, do not pursue their reports appropriately. A student asserted; *“sometimes if you go home and tell your parents, sometimes they will become angry and come to the school to insult or fight the teachers and I don’t like that”*. Other students also shared that they didn’t like the situation where their parents quarreled or exchanged words with their teachers and thus, they didn’t feel comfortable reporting corporal punishment.

In addition, the responses from students revealed that they do not report because of the negative reactions they get from their teachers. A student explained: *“The teacher becomes angry when they realize you have reported, they will say you are a bad girl, you don’t respect, you’ve gone to report a teacher.”* Another student also stated: *“when you report your teachers, they will not like you and you will not be comfortable in the school, you will want to leave the school.”* Others also stated that: *“sometimes you will be scared if the teacher comes to the class to teach, because you reported him, he will even hate you.”* This shows that students desired some form of acceptance from their teachers and thus would not want to do anything that would prevent that. This could be dwelt on to get children to be disciplined. These findings suggest that, the

inability of students to report corporal punishment may be more a function of the lack of appropriate interventions to pursue reports rather than a reflection of an actual decrease in the use of corporal punishment in schools.

Indeed, when teachers were asked if they had ever been reported for flouting the ban, 6 of them responded in the negative. Since some teachers themselves admitted to not having eliminated corporal punishment completely, as well as some students mentioning caning as some of the punishments meted out to them by teachers, this may not be interpreted as being a result of total adherence but the lack of reporting on the part of students. When headteachers were asked if students had reported any teacher to them, they responded in the negative. 3 headteachers however, admitted to having received complaints from parents and guardians but not directly from students. One headteacher stated: *“I receive phone calls from parents who call to make complaints”*. Another stated: *“There has been a few times when parents walk in to the school in search of a teacher who has hurt their child, I try to calm them down and then solve the issue.”*

3.5.3 Sanctions

Regarding the sanctions available for the flouting of the policy, the GES officials mentioned that, the Ghana education service has rules and regulations. The mentioned that sanctions for flouting any GES policy can be found in the headteachers handbook and the teachers code of conduct. The official from the Municipal Directorate of the GES stated that:

“Teachers have a code of ethics to guide them. Per the new code that teachers have, it is unethical to apply corporal punishment now. If you abuse a child, you can be made to face a disciplinary committee. Because once it is unethical the code of ethics frowns on it. Depending on the severity of it, sanctions can be applied. For instance, if you are

a headteacher and you do such a thing you can be demoted from the head teacher status. There are cases where teachers who mete out corporal punishment to students were withdrawn from the classroom. So that they disengage from the day to day interactions with the children. Disciplinary procedures will start at the school level then to the municipal level, then it can go to the regional level, then to the national level, depending on the severity. You will be warned or cautioned officially. But if it goes on then the teacher will face the disciplinary committee.”

Apart from these sanctions the GES officials noted that teachers who flout the policy could face other reactive measures such as fines or prosecutions. The Director of the Guidance and counselling section of the GES opined that:

“If your child is caned, you are free to go to the police. It is assault simple. That is what we have told them. You know the Form 2s are in school, and a teacher has caned a student such that there is a cut. I got to see a picture of it and I have been asking them to tell me which school it is and up till now, nobody has said anything. So, a colleague was telling me he suspects that they have quickly gone to the family to talk to them, so they will not get back to us. But we are still working on finding out. But if that teacher continues in that vein, a family may not condone it and then he may end up charged. We have had two teachers being charged. They have not been put to jail yet but they were charged a huge amount of money to pay. So those are the sanctions that are in place. It is law. Assault is assault.”

A greater proportion of the teachers who were asked if they had ever been sanctioned said they have never been sanctioned. One teacher stated:

“I know people are sanctioned but I have never been part of it. In GES, I think the highest level is to be transferred. People are even called to the office and spoken to. But I know people are transferred if it gets worse”. Two teachers however, admitted to having been given verbal warnings by their headteachers. One of them stated: *“oh I was only given a verbal warning that the policy is still in force.”*

Invariably headteachers indicated that they have not had to sanction their teachers because: *“usually after the first warning, they adhere to the instructions”*. However, further probe revealed that head teachers may not have sanctioned teachers due to a concealed support for corporal punishment by headteachers. One headteacher, when asked if he had sanctioned any of his teachers stated: *“Not at all. On an occasion a child used abusive words on a teacher, so the teacher was forced to give him some 4 or 5 canes and he got some marks, but it was solved at the school level. It’s because the teacher was infuriated by the insubordination of the child.”*

3.6 Collaboration between Stakeholders/Other Measures taken by stakeholders

As noted earlier, several scholarly works on the implementation of the SDGs, identify collaboration and partnerships with various stakeholders as vital in the pursuit of the SDGs. The United Nations underscores the need for different actors at different levels to cooperate in order to achieve this new global agenda. This stands to reason that implementation of the ban on corporal punishment towards the attainment of the SDG4 and 16, will require collaboration among stakeholders, since the GES alone may not be able to effectively implement it.

Officials from the GES revealed that, they are teamed up with other partners and stakeholders to ensure that the policy directive is implemented. The Director of the Guidance and Counselling Section revealed that UNICEF plays a key role in the fight against corporal

punishment in schools. She further explained the various contributions UNICEF has made towards the implementation of the policy. *“We work with UNICEF. They are our lead partner. They help us financially too. So, with the positive discipline tool, UNICEF sponsored us and we designed it with the help of a consultant. The safe schools resource pack was also developed with support from the UNICEF.”* She also added that recently they have started working with UNESCO on the policy. The official from the Municipal Directorate of the GES also mentioned that, UNICEF sponsored a training section on corporal punishment which was organized by the Guidance and Counselling Unit in the district he used to work in. The officials further revealed that, CAMFED (Campaign for Girls Education) also helps in creating awareness as well as giving monetary support.

With regards to collaboration with governmental Agencies, the officials mentioned that GES also works closely with the Children’s Department of the Ministry of Gender who collaborate with the GES *“when the issues come up and it has to do with the schools. If it involves a pupil, they call us. Even when the caning is done at home, eventually we handle it together with the ministry.”* Other state agencies which according to the GES officials collaborate with GES include the Social Welfare and community development, the Ministry of Communication and Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit. (DOVVSU)

In a follow up interview, a respondent from the Children’s department of the Ministry of Gender confirmed their collaboration with the GES with regards to corporal punishment in a statement that:

“Sometimes we do collaborate with the GES to ensure that the policies they have are implemented. We do more of advocacy. We go to schools, and communities to educate both teachers and students on the fact that corporal punishment should not be used in

correcting the child. Surprisingly we got children asking us to explain the difference between punishment and correction. They didn't seem to understand why we said punishment is not correction. When it comes to sanctions, we only do more of mediation. Legally, there is no law to say that when a teacher punishes a child at school, we should do this to him or that. What we normally do is to advocate for it not to be used at all.” She also added that the Gender Ministry also does research on children and violence and submits them to international bodies such as the UNICEF.

An official from the Ghana National Commission for UNESCO also made mention of how UNESCO the APSNET clubs in schools contribute towards creating safe schools in Ghana as well as other countries. He stated:

“We have the ASPnet (Associated Schools project Network) clubs where we inculcate every part of the SDGs into their curriculum. We go to a school, we tell them about ASPnet, and when the school is ready to accept the club, we engage with both teachers and students. We do teach children on discipline and how to comport themselves. We have guidance and counselling and mentorship sections with students. So, through these sections, students are taught how to behave. What we are trying to do this year, which is the first of its kind is to observe what we call the International day against violence and Bullying in schools on 5th November, with a highlight on cyber bullying. So, we are telling kids, teachers, parents that, bullying is against the basic human rights. Whether in school at home.”

Also, the Ghanaians Against Child Abuse (GACA), is a joint Programme of Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, UNICEF and other partners, which seeks to advocate against violence against

children and protect children from all forms of harm.¹⁶ In achieving its goal, GACA focuses on 11 thematic pillars including corporal punishment and adopts the safe schools program as part of its campaign areas.¹⁷

Further, at the National Education week 2020 organized at the Accra Conference Centre on the 27th October 2020, printed fliers published by the Ghana Education Service in collaboration with UNICEF on corporal punishment were distributed at the GES stand as part of awareness creation on corporal punishment. The contents of the fliers covered areas titled: STOP Corporal Punishment, what is corporal punishment, a table which covered what people say (in defence of corporal punishment) and the reality (in debunking these beliefs). However, it seems more of these fliers may not have reached a vast majority of the study population from selected schools, per the responses received by participants on some of the research questions.

3.7 Challenges of implementing the Ban

The advancement of any policy objective makes it necessary to investigate and take into consideration the challenges encountered by the target population in the implementation of a policy. Knowledge of these challenges can help to create a more effective approach towards the implementation of the policy. This section discusses the challenges faced in the implementation of the ban on corporal punishment in Ghanaian basic schools which needs to be addressed in order to effectively implement the policy.

3.7.1 Challenges faced by teachers

The findings of this study revealed the challenges teachers face in implementing the ban. These challenges are discussed below.

To begin with, teachers raised concerns about not having enough understanding of the policy and the alternative measures to discipline. According to one of the teachers who were interviewed: *“You see they did not explain that thing very well to us. They should educate us more. Give us forms of other punishments then. As far as I am concerned, if you teach a child and the child is not able to answer, the child should not be caned for that. You only cane the child when the child misbehaves. Like fighting somebody or hurting somebody. Because we use the cane to correct the child, not to hurt the child.”* Another teacher also commented; *“The understanding of the policy is not there so we don’t even know the motive for implementing such a policy. You know, students always misbehave. If you say we shouldn’t cane them, what should we do then? There should be a way of controlling the children.”* This shows that teachers not only lacked understanding of the negative effects of corporal punishment, but also lacked information on the alternative measures of discipline as stipulated in the positive discipline toolkit by the GES. In effect it may be expected that, teachers who lacked these information are more likely to support the use of corporal punishment and as such may not adhere to the ban. Further, another challenge which teachers pointed out was the parental support for corporal punishment. According to one teacher: *“Sometimes the community disagree with the policy, so the Parents will tell you to use it. Some will come and tell you: “He’s my child, cane him for me”. We are working with GES, GES says no, Parents say yes, so what happens? You see there is a conflict over there.”* This situation, teachers asserted makes it difficult for them to adhere to the ban. Other teachers simply pointed out that they have become addicted to it and as such adherence to the policy becomes quite difficult for them. One teacher stated: *‘Before the ban I was caning students who misbehaved. I was used to that kind of punishment. So now that I am trying to implement it, I find it difficult.’* Also, some teachers also made known that, another challenge they face is the loss of instructional time in trying to use the alternative means of discipline. One teacher mentioned that: *“Imagine*

I have to stop in the middle of the lesson to warn about 4 or 5 children who are misbehaving, by the time I finish, half the lesson period would have gone waste. With the cane, you don't even have to tell them anything, once they see it, they will behave properly. If you misbehave too, I give you some 2 or 3 canes and then I continue with my teaching". Finally, the attitude of students towards the ban was a running theme with regard to challenges. Teachers complained about the increased indiscipline of students, since students became aware of the ban. According to one of the teachers, *"there has been gross indiscipline, because we don't cane them, and they are also aware we should not cane them. They come to school late, some even come to school without their homework done, because they know even if they don't do it, nothing will happen to them."* Other teachers confirmed this challenge as they explained that: *"students have become disrespectful nowadays; they break school rules without any fear. But because of the ban we can't cane them. They hide under the policy to misbehave knowing very well that you can't do much. I will say our hands are tied."*

3.7.2 Challenges faced by head teachers

Some of the challenges of the headteachers resonated with those expressed by the teachers. Some head teachers also concerted to facing challenges with regards to the rising indiscipline of students but also added that the alternative means to discipline were quite cumbersome. One headteacher stated this: *"Disciplinary actions have become very laborious. Because it involves a very long process. For instance, if you have to punish a child for misbehaving, there is a procedure where you have to record the offense and a whole lot in administering the sanctions. And the children themselves knowing that there is a ban on corporal punishment, their behaviour has become terrible. They come to school anytime they like. And if I have to go through all these processes, I will just leave them and concentrate on teaching them, instead of incorporating discipline."*

Other headteachers mentioned the resigned attitude of some teachers as the main challenge.

According to one headteacher: *“Some teachers ignore the undisciplined acts of the students, they sit and allow the students to talk and make noise, because they can no longer use the cane.*

They are accustomed to the caning, and once they can’t use the cane, they ignore it.”

Headteachers complained of the insufficient training teachers had on the policy. They asserted that, although they tried their best to inform teachers, it was not technical enough to make their

teachers understand better the policy. One headteacher stated: *“The GES should train the teachers other than the headteacher alone being the resource person. Right now, it is only on paper and then it is the headteacher who is now psyching and telling the teachers not to use the cane. But there should be proper training for the teachers. Then the message will go deep.”*

3.7.3 Challenges faced by GES

The Ghana Education Service which formulated and implements the policy on the ban on corporal punishment is also faced with some challenges. One of these included funding. The Director of the Guidance and Counselling unit of the GES, although she contended to receiving financial support from other stake holders as well as government, revealed that more funding was needed to aid with retraining as well as the training of new teachers.

Another difficulty according to the GES officials was the fact that teachers were *“not adopting and owning the policy.”* According to one official from the GES; *“Interestingly some teachers disagree with GES on the ban because they think we are spoiling the children. They think that without the cane, controlling the children will be very difficult and so they keep flouting the ban. But let’s draw the lines carefully between discipline and punishment. They are two different things. We are saying that corporal punishment is an abuse.”*

The Director of the Guidance and Counselling unit of the GES also lamented the religious and cultural reasons teachers put out in defense of corporal punishment. She stated that: *“You see some of them will tell you it is part of our culture. I always say, it is not our culture, it was the colonial masters who used to apply it when they went around catching people to go to school, they used the rod. Our fathers only had to look at you in a certain way to let you know you are going wrong”*. The Akans say *“Oba nyansafo, ye bu ne be, yenka nasem. That’s what our fathers lived by”*. By this she meant that children were actually spoken to wisely and not punished in the pre-colonial days.

GES officials also raised serious concerns with regards to complaints about students’ behavior. They mentioned that, they had been notified by teachers that some students were trying to take advantage of the policy to do whatever they liked. The GES officials however, mentioned that, they were trying to develop a students’ code of conduct as well so that: *“everybody knows where they stand”*.

Notably, the responses from the respondents above, to a large extent substantiates the hypothesis of this study that, other interventions might be needed to ensure that the ban on corporal punishment is adhered to.

3.8 Successes of the Policy

The successes of the policy on the ban on corporal punishment for this study will be measured in terms of its contributions towards the SDG 4 and the SDG 16. These are outlined below:

3.8.1 Contribution of the Ban Towards the SDG 4

GES officials stated that the purpose of the ban on corporal punishment was to provide a safe learning environment for students and to stop abuse against the children. They maintained that

corporal punishment puts fear in children and may affect not only learning outcomes, but attendance to school. The officials noted that, there isn't much statistics, however, they believed that the ban was definitely going to have a positive effect on school turn out and learning in general. They mentioned that, some students gave so many excuses to stay home just to avoid caning. An official from the GES stated: *"There were many who stopped schooling because of caning. I even personally know some mates of mine. Some of us didn't like participating because the teacher will come to the class and be caning us. So, it's part of the safe school environment. To make the school welcoming such that the child would want to come to school when he wakes up in the morning. And when a school is welcoming to a child, it means we are going to have continuous schooling and no dropouts. When there is continuous schooling it means you are going to have a longer interaction and contact period with the teacher and then it means we are going to have improved learning outcomes and the attainment of the global goal of life-long learning, as in the SDG 4."* The Director of the Guidance and counselling unit of the GES also added that she thinks the ban has helped with enrollment and retention, although there isn't much statistics to show. She stated: *"You know the fact that the child knows that he or she will go to school and not be assaulted and be treated with respect and kindness, that alone makes the child go to school. We haven't done the statistics yet specifically about what this ban has achieved regarding enrollment and the others, we may not get the right figures, but we will look at it. But I think that we have achieved better enrolment, better stay in the schools and we are turning out people from the different stages. And with the girls, now the girls are more comfortable going to school, imagine a girl in her "period" who has to be lashed. Many of them have had their beads torn around their waist and as for the girl, once you embarrass her that way, she may not come back to school. Girls are more sensitive. Many girls have stayed out of school because of that. But this is helping. With our monitoring we've seen that it is helping."* To confirm the responses of the GES officials, the

study sought to ascertain the impact of corporal punishment on the students themselves. Students were asked how they feel when they are caned. The responses of students showed that, they felt pain and even hatred for their teachers. Indeed a few of the students responded that they felt like *“not going to school.”* This confirmed the earlier views that corporal punishment made students uncomfortable and less eager to attend school, thus in its absence students would ‘feel like going to school’, thereby improving on attendance.

Contrarily, responses from teachers differed with regards to the effects of the policy on learning and by extension the SDG 4. Majority of the head teachers and teachers interviewed commented on the low academic performance of students with the introduction of the ban. One teacher complained: *“There’s been low level of achievement seriously. You know, everything we do here is holistic, from reporting time, staying in class, break time, to closing. And we use the cane to restrict them from certain things. Right now, the child comes in anytime, walks in anytime, stays at break anytime, returns anytime. If a child comes in let’s say 15 minutes after break and we’ve already started lessons, what happens to him? definitely there will be low performance.”* A head teacher also added: *“You know during our time when we were attending school, we used to fear our teachers, because when you see the cane you fear them, and that also makes us smart, you know when I was in Primary 4, I could recite my times table. But now you have students in Form 3 who don’t know their times table. I am doing my best that I can but they are not changing. But during our time, right after assembly in the morning you have mental exercise, and in the afternoon dictation, and that always made you smart. But now they are dull.”* This shows that, the teachers’ motive for using corporal punishment was not only to ensure discipline but to make students learn better in order to gain better academic results. This is consistent with the Agbenyega’s findings which indicated that one of the motives behind the use of corporal punishment in Ghanaian schools was to motivate students to learn and improve

academic standards¹⁸. Contrarily, Canter points out that corporal punishment should not be applied because there is no proof that it results in better academic nor moral outcomes¹⁹.

However, one teacher and one other headteacher revealed that, the ban on corporal punishment was proving positive. One teacher noted that previously, in the absence of the ban, academics lessons could be disrupted by furious parents. He recounted: *“Initially, before the ban, parents used to troop in to fight teachers, and it distorts classes, but this time, it flows.”* The head teacher also asserted that the ban had helped in the area of enrollment and punctuality. According to her: *“Some students avoided school because of caning. They tell their parents they are going to school, and they never arrive because they would be caned for lateness. The child may not end up in school at all. But because of the ban, they know they are always welcome and so they come to school.”*

3.8.2 Contribution of the Ban towards the SDG 16

With regards to the SDG 16, the ministry of Gender and Social Protection acknowledged the potential of the ban in contributing towards the reduction of violence against children, although admitting that there isn't enough statistics to show if the ban on corporal punishment in schools had contributed to decreasing violence against children. An official from the Children's Department of the Ministry of Gender however noted that there are statistics concerning violence perpetuated against children in all other setting in general, but not solely on the ones perpetuated in schools especially since the ban on corporal punishment was introduced. She noted that *“it is something we are thinking of doing to see how maybe 5 years after the ban things are going in terms of statistics.”* She was however positive that the ban was going to bring down the injuries and violence children experienced at the hands of caretakers. According to her: *“we currently do not have statistics on what is happening in terms of figures after the*

ban was placed, however, yes teachers seem to be conscious and careful in its application. They don't use the cane as before. I think it has helped reduce violence against children."

Further, a recurring theme that came up in the responses from GES officials, as well as some of the headteachers, was the fact that teachers sometimes inflict bruises or injuries to students, especially when they punish students in anger. An official from the Municipal directorate of the GES stated that the ban also served the purpose of protecting the child and safeguarding his/her rights. He stated that: *"we are obliged to protect the child from all forms of abuse. We realized that corporal punishment was not serving any good, but rather making the children feel unwanted and traumatized."* He further noted that, since the ban was placed on corporal punishment, there has been a reduction in cases of children being physically abused or injured in schools within the Teshie town. It can therefore be inferred that, the ban on corporal punishment in schools has contributed to the reduction of violent punishments experienced by children.

3.9 Way Forward

Respondents for this study suggested diverse strategies needed to effectively implement the policy on the ban on corporal punishment towards the achievement of the SDG 4 and the SDG 16.

Officials from the GES suggested the need for a greater sensitization of the general public on the rights of the child as well as the SDG goals. The Director of the Guidance and counselling unit of the GES stated that: *"I would recommend that, every Ghanaian buy into the idea. Ghanaians must educate themselves about child rights, about the SDGs. We are all not literates but at least we could help our brothers and sisters who are not literates to understand what it means when we say child rights and when we talk about the SDG goals. Then we will be moving*

forward. But without that kind of education, people will be talking about the myth of disciplining the child with a cane and misquoting the bible. So, I would wish that more education goes on.” They also suggested that more funding is needed to undertake this education and sensitization. They further identified greater collaboration and assistance from other stakeholders such as other state agencies, non-governmental institutions as well as the media to help in the awareness creation and education on the policy. Additionally, they identified the need for parents to be involved in the fight against the violent punishment of children by pursuing reports of abuse by their children.

Teachers also shared their opinions on the way forward. They recommended that parents train their wards properly at home to make them behave responsibly in school. They asserted that, when children are disciplined at home, there would be no need to discipline them in school. One teacher observes *“We spend few hours with the children. Almost all the time they are with their parents. And there are some pupils in the class you will never cane until you are caning the whole class. How come? But with others, you will have to be using the cane all the time. Do you understand? So, it’s from home.* Other teachers recommended the need for parents to be educated on the policy so that they do not insist on teachers applying corporal punishment. Also, teachers suggested the need for them to be educated on the policy and the alternative means of maintaining discipline. According to one teacher: *“The policy should be well explained to the teachers. We need to be educated on what we should do, if they don’t want us to use the cane. There should be a way of controlling the children.”* Other teachers posited that, corporal punishment should be regulated and not done away with entirely. One teacher asserted: *“I think we should be allowed to use it sparingly, because you see, when you spare the rod, you spoil the child. There must be a guideline on how to use it. But a total ban on the use of the cane is what has actually brought down discipline in our schools.”* Another also

added: *“You know we are Africans, and there are certain things that do not apply to us and cannot be taken away from us. Blacks are blacks. You can use any other method but if the cane is taken away, you will be surprised. Come to class 5 weeks, don’t use the cane, you will see what will happen. So, it should rather be regulated, not taken away entirely. They should come up with certain behaviors that should be corrected with the cane. I don’t cane children when I am teaching. When you misbehave, I ask you to go out for some few minutes and come back. But when we were children, mental they will cane you, dictation they will cane you, exercises they will cane you, no it’s not the best, that one I agree with the ban, but taking it away entirely, I disagree with them. I have a cane in the house, I cane my children when they misbehave, but it’s not always.”* Thus, a majority of the teachers, desired for caning to be allowed in Ghanaian schools.

From the perspective of headteachers, there is the need for adequate training of teachers on the policy for them to be able to understand and put to practice the demands of the policy. They noted that, there should be occasions where teachers are met and trained on the need to avoid corporal punishment by appropriate resource persons, other than heads just relaying information to them. They also recommended the need to educate students on the policy as well as the need for the students to be counselled on how to behave appropriately in school. One headteacher stated: *“The children need to know about the policy to let them know that it is for their own good. They must know that, even though we are not supposed to cane them, it is their future, so they shouldn’t wait for someone to prompt them before they reason up. Sometimes we advise them. But if people from outside the school, who students are unfamiliar with could come and talk to the students, it would be effective.”* They also suggested that need for corporal punishment to be abolished from homes to make the ban in schools effective. One headteacher recounted: *“At home, the child is being canded for doing this or that. We know*

that some students are even slapped and abused at home. So, when the child crosses the wall to school and realizes that we are not using the cane, they feel liberated and they don't fear you, then they start misbehaving. So, if it must achieve its aim, then it should go deep into the households." A few others also concurred on the view that, corporal punishment should be regulated and not taken away entirely. One headteacher posited that: "If it is lessoned, I am in favor. But it shouldn't vanish entirely. To me at the basic level, the cane should be seen there. But those at the senior high schools are more matured, they can understand things. But at the basic level, the cane should be seen there."

In addition to the above proposals by respondents, UNICEF Ghana and the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection recommends an amendment of existing legal provisions in Ghana's laws to explicitly disallow the use of corporal punishment in all settings in Ghana. They further identified a vigorous education campaign targeted at the general public on the legality and the negative effects of corporal punishment as well as the positive means of correcting.²⁰

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CHAPTER FOUR

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.0 Introduction

This research assesses the implementation of the ban on corporal punishment in Ghanaian basic schools as part of the efforts towards the attainment of the SDG 4 and the SDG 16. Specifically, to ascertain the extent to which the ban on corporal punishment is being implemented in basic schools, the systems put in place to ensure adherence to the ban on corporal punishment and the successes and challenges faced in implementing the policy using the qualitative data collection; focus group discussions and guided interviews. The purpose of this chapter is to present a summary of the research findings and draw the conclusions of this study. Based on the findings, it also offers some recommendations on the issues raised in the study and in relation to areas for further research.

4.1 Summary of Findings

First of all, results from this study show that, although all teachers/headteachers as well as a majority of the students who were interviewed were aware of the ban on corporal punishment in Ghanaian schools, they had limited knowledge of it with regard to what it entails: whereas GES officials stated that the ban entailed all forms of punishment that cause harm to the child, it was realized that, majority of teachers believed it was limited to just caning. Students also shared this opinion. Again, whereas GES officials noted that corporal punishment was totally banned, some heads as well as teachers believed that, headteachers were still allowed to sanction corporal punishment, specifically caning. This goes to suggest educational gaps that need to be filled.

Secondly, on capacity building, the results from this study showed that, although GES officials stated that teachers had been trained on the policy as well as alternative means of ensuring discipline as outlined in the positive discipline tool kit, majority of the teachers denied having received training on the policy. Even though a few teachers acknowledged the fact that their heads had given them some form of training on the policy, none of the participant teachers made reference to a positive discipline tool kit. It appeared the training given by heads as referred to by the few participant teachers, served as a means of informing and reminding teachers of the existence of such a policy and to admonish adherence. Indeed, some headteachers acknowledged that their teachers needed adequate training from professional resource persons. It was therefore perceived that training given to teachers in the Ledzokuku Municipal Assembly was inadequate.

Furthermore, on the current state of discipline in schools, the study showed that the problems of indiscipline still exist in schools and as such required appropriate approaches to tackle them. Most of the student respondents concerted to breaking school rules sometimes. It was therefore imperative to find out how these behaviors were tackled in the wake of the policy. It was discovered from the responses of both teachers and students that a variety of methods were used, some of which were in line with the positive discipline tool kit, whereas others still fell under corporal punishment, as student respondents made reference to caning and kneeling down as part of the punishments given out to them when they break school rules. Indeed, on adherence to the ban on corporal punishment in Ghanaian schools, findings revealed that, corporal punishment was still applied in schools, albeit in moderation. Some headteachers as well as teachers admitted to not having eliminated corporal punishment completely from their practices. They were of the view that, the cane was needed, to put fear in students to get them to conform to expected behavior.

On Monitoring, findings revealed that the GES' field officers and circuit supervisors, through periodic visits to schools and supervision do monitor all other educational activities in schools, including but not exclusively corporal punishment. However, although some teachers and headteachers concerted to being monitored on corporal punishment, majority of the heads and teachers stated that, the monitoring done by the GES might be for other purposes, other than to monitor the ban on corporal punishment. With regard to internal monitoring, the study revealed a mixed reaction from teachers on monitoring done in schools by heads although all heads concerted to monitoring adherence of the ban in their schools. While some teachers confirmed internal monitoring by heads, others were yet to see such monitoring from their heads.

In addition to the above, findings revealed that, the GES, as well as other government stakeholders such as the Ministry of Gender have provided reporting systems which include telephone lines to reach out to as well as reaching out to the guidance and counselling coordinators in the schools. However, it was discovered that, these channels were not resorted to by both parents and students. This could be attributed to a lack of awareness on these channels. It was also found out that students were less likely to report corporal punishment due to the unfavorable reactions they received from reporting and in some cases lack of finances to pursue reports.

Further, on sanctions, the study revealed that teachers could face the disciplinary procedures per GES regulations should they flout the ban. These include: cautions, withdrawal from classroom, facing the disciplinary committee, transfers, among others. They could also face charges on assault albeit not on the use of corporal punishment, since there are no clear-cut

state legislations to criminalize corporal punishment. On the part of students, it was revealed that development of a student's code of conduct to regulate students as well was underway.

Another major finding was that, there has been other interventions from some state and non-state agencies such as the Ministry of Gender, UNICEF, CAMFED, UNESCO, among others in ensuring that corporal punishment is eliminated. However, there are still some challenges which serve as bottlenecks to the implementation of the ban on corporal punishment. These challenges include inadequate training on the policy and alternative means of corporal punishment, parental support of corporal punishment in schools, teachers' as well as community religious beliefs in support of corporal punishment, students taking advantage of the ban to be indisciplined, limited funds for retraining of teachers on the policy as well as the loss of instructional time in using the alternative means of discipline. The way forward to these challenges from the point of view of GES officials is for increased sensitization of the general public on the SDGs, the involvement of parents in the fight against corporal punishment, more financial assistance, as well as increased stakeholder collaboration. Teachers suggested training on the policy, the regulation of the use of corporal punishment, as well as the right upbringing of children by parents. Headteachers also concurred with Teachers on the need for adequate training for teachers. UNICEF and the Ministry of Gender also proposed legal reforms to entail a prohibition of corporal punishment.

In addition, this study revealed that, the ban on corporal punishment in Ghanaian Basic schools has contributed positively towards the attainment of the SDG 4, specifically in the areas of enrollment and retention. Responses from GES officials revealed that, the ban has helped to curb the incidence of truancy, school drop-outs and has increased student contact hours with teachers. This was further confirmed by responses from some students who expressed hatred towards school, due to corporal punishment. Although a teacher and a headteacher admitted to

the ban's contribution towards enrollment and learning, the other teachers and head teachers revealed that the ban has impacted minimally towards learning in schools. According to them, the ban on corporal punishment has contributed to low learning outcomes due to increased indiscipline of students.

Finally, on the SDG 16, this study also reveals that, the ban on corporal punishment has contributed to the reduction of violence against children, specifically those perpetrated in schools. Responses from the official from the Ministry of Gender revealed that caretakers had become conscious and careful in the application of corporal punishment. Officials from the GES also pointed out the fact that with the ban, the incidence of physical injuries of children has and is expected to reduce due to the ban on corporal punishment in Ghanaian basic schools.

4.2 Conclusions

The SDGs are a global agenda aimed at ensuring the general prosperity and peace of the world. The United Nations, recognizes the need for individual states to adopt these goals and incorporate them into their domestic policies and developmental plans. Thus, this research studies Ghana's efforts at achieving the SDG 4 and the SDG 16 using the prohibition of corporal punishment in Ghanaian basic schools, specifically basic schools in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana as a case study. The study also examines how the ban on corporal punishment in Ghanaian basic schools is being implemented as well as the contributions that the ban has made towards ensuring 'inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all' (SDG 4) as well as 'ending all forms of violence against children' (SDG 16.2).

The findings of the research reveal that although there is much awareness of the policy on the ban on corporal punishment in Ghanaian schools, corporal punishment in schools has not been totally eliminated, due to limited knowledge on what the ban entails, negative effects of corporal punishment on children, alternative means of ensuring discipline, reporting systems as well as certain religious and cultural beliefs, among others. The study also reveals that although the ban has impacted positively on enrollment, retention and punctuality, the reduction of physical violence against children, and generally provided a safe learning environment, it has had minimal effect on student learning in Ghanaian basic schools. The study therefore brings out the need for further action to be taken by the government, the GES and other stakeholders to ensure an effective implementation of the ban on corporal punishment in Ghanaian basic schools. This is necessary as part of the efforts aimed at realizing the SDG 4 and the SDG 16. The findings of this study thus, lend credence to the hypothesis of this study that, that other interventions might be needed to ensure that the ban on corporal punishment is adhered to.

4.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings and the conclusions of this research, the study proposes the following recommendations:

To start with, since there seems to be some kind of divergence in terms of what the ban entails, with heads thinking they are still allowed to sanction caning, and some teachers viewing kneeling down as outside corporal punishment, there is the need for more education on the policy directive in terms of its scope, purpose and objectives, to ensure clarity and remove misconceptions that affect the effective implementation of the policy. In tandem to this, since the majority of teachers seem to be in favor of a regulation of corporal punishment instead of

its complete elimination, there is the need for more emphasis to be placed on the dangers and negative repercussions of corporal punishment in educating teachers about the policy.

Secondly, other than verbal alerts or admonishing, the GES should build the capacity of teachers within the Ledzokuku Municipal Assembly through professional training and workshops on the alternative means of discipline as outlined in the positive discipline tool kit, to enable them know how to handle the undisciplined actions of students. This will ensure that teachers do not revert to using the traditional methods of discipline where they have to resort to physical punishment.

Further, the GES should make efforts at quickening the students' code of conduct to enable students to know the responsibilities which go with the rights they are enjoy. Since discipline seems to be the main reason the cane is used by teachers, efforts should be made at counselling and socializing students to behave appropriately. As suggested by some teachers, parents and guardians, should help in inculcating discipline in children at home, so as to ensure that students behave responsibly at school. Thus, intervention should also focus on children and how to make them less defiant. In line with this, there is also the need for schools to promote discussions between students and teachers in order to do away with the authoritarian position of teachers where respect is derived through the use of corporal punishment.

In addition, the GES in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection and other stakeholders can, through the media, and religious bodies, organize programs to debunk the religious and cultural beliefs that seem to support the use of corporal punishment in childrearing. The amount of education teachers and parents get will never be effective, if they continue to hold these beliefs. This can be done by finding aspects in the

Ghanaian culture and values and religion that support the protection of children to counter the notion of punishment.

To add to the above, the GES should pay greater attention to the adherence of the policy directive on corporal punishment in Ghanaian basic schools during their monitoring of educational activities in schools. This will serve to improve compliance to the policy as teachers and heads will become aware that they are being monitored.

Further, there is the need to create more awareness on the appropriate channels of pursuing reports on corporal punishment made by students in order to encourage reporting of its incidence. In cases where parents are unable to follow up on reports due to financial constraints, social welfare services could step in to provide support.

Also, to enable the GES to retrain its teachers as well as organize sensitization programs on the policy, there is the need for funds. The government of Ghana as well as other civil society organizations should give financial support to the GES to help it undertake these interventions. Finally, there is the need for legal reforms in Ghana's constitutional laws that explicitly prohibit the use of corporal punishment in schools in Ghana, in order to effect changes in the attitudes of locals towards the use of corporal punishment.

4.4 Areas for future studies

- In the future, the implementation of the ban on corporal punishment in second cycle schools in Ghana can be explored.
- Further, a statistical analysis of the impact of the ban on corporal punishment in schools on enrollment, retention of students can be done.

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Focus Group Discussion with 10 students at Vichrist Parents School- FGD 3 (NOVEMBER 2020)

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Teacher –T1, June 2019

Teacher –T2, June 2019

Teacher- T3, June 2019

Teacher- T4, June 2019

Teacher – T5, June 2019

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LEGON CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND DIPLOMACY

Topic: An Assessment of Ghana's Efforts Towards the Attainment of SDG 4 and 16: A Case Study of the Prohibition of Corporal Punishment in Ghanaian Basic Schools.

My name is Naa Dei Dsane, an M.A student from the Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy (LECIAD), University of Ghana. I am conducting a study on the above topic for the purposes of my dissertation. It specifically aims at examining the implementation of the Policy on the Ban on Corporal Punishment in Ghanaian schools towards the attainment of SDG 4 and the SDG 16. This research is solely for academic purposes, thus the confidentiality of any information provided is assured. No Personal identity, or location will be disclosed in the study. Thank you for your participation.

INTERVIEW GUIDE: STAFF OF THE GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE.

Office/ Position of respondent:

Number of years at post:

Objective 1. To ascertain the extent to which the ban on corporal punishment is being implemented in basic schools in the Greater Accra Region.

1. What does the policy on the ban on corporal punishment entail?
2. What is the purpose of the policy on the ban on corporal punishment?
3. Have you officially informed schools about the policy on the ban on corporal punishment
4. How did you inform them?
5. Do you think the ban is being adhered to in basic schools?

Objective 2. To find out the systems put in place to ensure adherence to the ban on corporal punishment.

1. What measures have you put in place to ensure compliance with the policy on the ban on corporal punishment?
2. Is there any monitoring on the adherence of the ban in basic schools in Ghana?
3. Has the ministry organized any training for teachers on the policy?
4. Are there any sanctions to teachers who flout the ban? If yes, what are they?
5. Have you received reports from basic schools on teachers who flout the ban?
6. If you have, how did you handle such cases?

Objective 3. To identify the successes and challenges faced in implementing the policy.

1. Is the ban achieving its purpose? If yes, how? And If no, in your opinion, why is it not achieving its purpose?
2. How has the ban contributed in achieving the SDG 4 goal on Education?
3. What are some of the complaints you receive from teachers concerning the policy?
4. What are some of the challenges you face in ensuring adherence to the policy?
5. How do you address these challenges?

APPENDIX II

INTERVIEW GUIDE: TEACHERS SELECTED SCHOOLS

Office/ Position of respondent:

Number of years at post:

Objective 1. To ascertain the extent to which the ban on corporal punishment is being implemented in basic schools in the Greater Accra Region.

1. Are you aware of the policy on the ban on corporal punishment in Ghanaian Basic Schools?

If yes, to what extent are you aware of the policy?

2. In what way are you implementing it in your school?

3. How do ensure discipline in your school in the absence of corporal punishment?

Objective 2. To find out the systems put in place to ensure adherence to the ban on corporal punishment.

1. Have you been trained on the Policy on the ban on corporal punishment?

2. Is there any monitoring on the adherence of the ban on corporal punishment by authorities?

3. Have you ever been sanctioned for flouting the policy?

4. Have any of your colleagues been sanctioned for flouting the policy?

5. Has any of your students reported you for administering corporal punishment?

Objective 3. To identify the successes and challenges faced in implementing the policy.

1. Are you in favour of the policy on the ban on corporal punishment in schools? Why?

2. In your own views, do you think the ban is achieving its purpose?

3. What has been the effect of the ban on students learning in your school?
4. What are some of the challenges you face in implementing the policy?
5. What do you recommend as remedy for the aforementioned challenges?

APPENDIX III

INTERVIEW GUIDE: HEAD TEACHERS OF SELECTED SCHOOLS.

Office/ Position of respondent:

Number of years at post:

Objective 1. To ascertain the extent to which the ban on corporal punishment is being implemented in basic schools in the Greater Accra Region.

1. Are you aware of the policy on the ban on corporal punishment in Ghanaian Basic Schools?

If yes, to what extent are you aware of the policy?

2. In what way are you implementing it in your school?

3. How do ensure discipline in your school in the absence of corporal punishment?

Objective 2. To find out the systems put in place to ensure adherence to the ban on corporal punishment.

1. Have you been trained on the Policy on the ban on corporal punishment?

2. Is there any monitoring on the adherence of the ban on corporal punishment by authorities?

3. Have you ever been sanctioned for flouting the policy?

4. Have any of your teachers been sanctioned for flouting the policy?

5. Has any of your students reported any teacher for administering corporal punishment?

Objective 3. To identify the successes and challenges faced in implementing the policy.

1. Are you in favour of the policy on the ban on corporal punishment in schools? Why?

2. In your own views, do you think the ban is achieving its purpose?
3. What has been the effect of the ban on students learning in your school?
4. What are some of the challenges you face in implementing the policy?
5. What do you recommend as remedy for the aforementioned challenges?

APPENDIX IV

INTERVIEW GUIDE: STUDENTS FROM SELECTED SCHOOLS.

Class or form of student:

Age and sex:

Objective 1. To ascertain the extent to which the ban on corporal punishment is being implemented in basic schools in the Greater Accra Region.

1. Are you aware of the ban on corporal punishment in schools in Ghana?
2. If yes, what do you know about it?
3. How often do you break school rules?
4. What does your teacher do to you when you break school rules?
5. What does your headmaster do to you when you break school rules?

Objective 2. To find out the systems put in place to ensure adherence to the ban on corporal punishment.

1. How did you get to know about the Ban on corporal Punishment?
2. How do you feel when you get caned?
3. How do you feel when your colleagues get caned?
4. Do you report caning?
5. Who do you report it to? (colleagues, parents, other teachers?)

6. When you report caning what happens?

Objective 3. To identify the successes and challenges faced in implementing the policy.

1. In your opinion, do you think the ban on corporal punishment is good?

2. If yes why? If no, why?

3. Do you feel comfortable reporting caning?

4. What challenges do you face when you report a teacher for caning you?