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Effects of Corporal Punishments on Students' Learning: A Case of Selected Secondary Schools in Tanzania.

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Abstract

The paper presents the practice of corporal punishment on students' learning in Tanzania secondary schools. Specifically, the study examine how corporal punishment affects students' learning. The study adopted a qualitative research approach with multiple embedded case study design. Data were collected from 76 participants selected purposefully from Morogoro Municipal, Mvomero District, Sumbawanga Municipal, and Nkasi District. The participants were students, teachers, Regional Educational Officers, District Secondary Educational Officers, and school board members. In-depth interviews, focus group discussions, observation, and documentary reviews were applied to collect data while thematic analysis was used to address the research question. The findings revealed that corporal punishment affected students' psychological, social, and physical well-being and academic underachievement. Students were withdrawn from schools because of escaping from corporal punishments. It is recommended that the government, through the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, should conduct seminars and awareness workshops for in-service teachers on how to administer corporal punishment and adopt alternative punishment. The study also recommends developing a curriculum for teaching pre-service teachers in Colleges and Universities strategies for appropriately punishing students. The researcher concludes that alternative punishment should be encouraged and adopted while teachers should adhere to corporal punishment rules and regulations in administering punishment.

Keywords: Corporal punishment, school discipline, behaviour, learning, alternative punishment

Introduction

Corporal punishment has been socially accepted in the education system worldwide as means of controlling students' discipline (Mackenzie et al., 2015; Muhammed et al., 2018; Ojo, 2018). The practice is supported and even encouraged by teachers and parents as method of maintaining students' discipline (Gomba, 2015; Batool et al., 2017). Discipline and punishment have been a contentious matter of debate among educational stakeholders at various levels worldwide. School discipline aims to create a severe and conducive learning environment and develop students' self-control and self-direction (Lukman & Hamudi, 2014). It is unarguable that teachers are responsible for providing a safe and orderly learning environment for all

students by cultivating discipline among learners. This is mainly done through the use of various methods, including the use of corporal punishment in school.

However, in the recent past, corporal punishment has received significant criticism and debate worldwide from parents, educationalists, psychologists, and human rights activists (Gershoff, 2017; 2013). There have been two competing schools of thought about corporal punishment in schools. The first school of thought that supports the practices believes that when negotiations fail, try to use force (Batool et al. 2017). They maintain that corporal punishment in schools serves a child to learn, whereby anti-social behaviours go with punishment (Chemhuru, 2015; Muhammed et al., 2018). They continue that light punishment is given to correct the students' discipline for their minor wrongs (Khanal & Park, 2016; Chemvalath & Tripathi, 2015; Tas, 2016). They connect corporal punishment with class and educational institution norms like low performance in studies, bullying, and harassing other students for misbehaving with teachers and elders (Semali & Vumilia, 2016; Ogbe, 2015).

The second group opposes the use of corporal punishment, arguing that the practice must be abolished with immediate effect as it is both inhuman and abusive (Hapanyengwi-chemhuru, 2015; Taylor et al., 2017). They also explain that the practice has negative consequences, such as dropping out of school, particularly during the early years of education. It further creates enmity between the teacher and students, thus affects schools' teaching and learning processes (Gudyanga et al., 2014; Maina & Sindabi, 2016). They believe that the use of corporal punishment insults or disrespects and adds injury to human dignity. Moreover, they believe that corporal punishment is associated with a variety of psychological and behavioural harassment among children and affects their learning in school (Tran, 2015; Breen et al., 2015; Ahmad et al., 2014).

Recently, there has been an increasing protest against corporal punishment in schools (Human Rights Watch, 2017). In this respect, the United Nations Committee, for example, has consistently appealed for the prohibition of corporal punishment because of being violent (GIEACPC, 2015). Similarly, it has endorsed alternative methods to corporal punishment as a non-violent form of disciplining learners (UNICEF, 2015). In 1979, Sweden was the first European country to abolish corporal punishment in schools (GIEACPC, 2015). This was due to the realization of the increase in parents' and students' complaints of physical and psychological traumatism. In addition, other countries, including Norway, Denmark, and Finland, later passed laws banning corporal punishment in schools at different times (Gershoff et al., 2015). However, in the recent past, there have emerged activist groups that condemn corporal punishment practices with school children (Rowland et al., 2017).

The American Civil Liberties and other associations, by the 1970s, sponsored a conference and passed a formal resolution for banning corporal punishment in school. These associations established the task force on children's rights to deal with this issue. In the 1980s, they continued with an active movement to create awareness of abolishing corporal punishment in schools (Rowland et al., 2017). In 1989, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child criticized governments worldwide for permitting corporal punishments in public and private schools, as reported by the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

(UNICEF) (2015). It promised that all children have the same rights by adopting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) of 1994. The Convention on the Rights of the Child requires all school discipline to be consistent with the child's human dignity, as with the present convention on a child's rights. Article 28 (2) prohibits corporal punishment in schools and homes (UNICEF, 2010). Corporal punishment has been banned in thirty states, but it is still widely used by at least twenty states in the United States of America (Holden et al., 2014).

Moreover, different African countries introduced the Education Act, with the aims of controlling corporal punishment and establishes alternative punishment for certain behaviours in the presence of witnesses. In Kenya, for example, the Educational Act of 1972, the Zimbabwe Educational Act of 1998, and the Tanzania National Educational Act of 1978 introduced regulations for controlling the administration of corporal punishment in schools (GIEACPC, 2015; Ministry of Education and Culture, 1995). For example, after independence, the Ministry of Education in Kenya banned corporal punishment in 2001 through Legal Notice No.56 of 2001 with the realization that it was being indiscriminately applied in schools.; However, surprisingly, children were continuously suffering from injuries and even death because of corporal punishment (Kindiki, 2015). Despite the efforts made to ban corporal punishment worldwide and in African countries in particular and establishing alternative punishment in countries like Kenya, Nigeria, Botswana, and South Africa, still the practice of corporal punishment continues to increase in their school contexts and leaving social, emotional, and intellectual adverse effects among school children (Maina & Sindabi, 2016; Kindiki, 2015). Furthermore, there is enough evidence from literature which shows that educators in countries where corporal punishment has been abolished are now using corporal punishment as a method of controlling students indiscipline behaviours (Ndembu, 2013; Ali, et al. 2019; Musa & Martha, 2020).

Corporal punishment in Tanzania has been legally acceptable as a means of disciplining students at schools. However, there is an increasing rate of students who suffer severe injuries and deaths at schools due to the use of corporal punishment by teachers. Despite the efforts made by the government, including laying down corporal punishment regulations and emphasizing alternative strategies to corporal punishment that must be enforced, there is still insufficient documentation of effects of corporal punishment administered by teachers in Tanzania secondary schools. Thus, how corporal punishment affects students learning remain a question for exploration. Indeed, the recurring use of corporal punishment administered by every teacher in secondary schools without considering corporal punishment regulations reveals a gap between policy intentions and actual practice on the ground. Therefore, it is from this motive that the study was conducted to examine the effects of corporal punishment on students' learning in Tanzania secondary schools.

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by the theory of operant conditioning developed by Skinner (1904–1990), a behaviourist who suggests that learning occurs through rewards and punishments for behaviour modification. The primary objective of operant conditioning is to increase the occurrence of behaviours by reinforcing or punishing them. Through operant conditioning, an association is made between behaviour and the consequences of that behaviour. Behaviour that is reinforced tends to be repeated (i.e., strengthened), while behaviours that are not reinforced tend to die out or be weakened (Olson & Hergenhah, 2013; Slavin, 2015). In this case, behaviours can be changed by using reinforcement or punishment for effective learning.

In Operant Conditioning theory, reinforcing desired behaviours is considered in a way that will cause a student to repeat the desired behaviour. Skinner's experiment led to the discovery that reinforcement can be used to change behaviour and encourage the occurrence of it in the future. In this study, the theory suggests that for students to continue repeating the desired behaviour or for the behaviour to be eliminated, it depends on the type of reinforcement given. Rewards and punishments that are connected to the behaviour are more potent than those that are vague or inconsistent. Since operant conditioning is regarded as applicable to school settings, other stimuli can be used besides corporal punishment. It has been argued by those who support corporal punishment that you can change the behaviour of students by beating them. Instead, you can change it using other approaches, such as rewards. The study suggests that corporal punishment is not an effective reinforcement capable of changing behaviours because it draws on student intimidation. Though it is legal, students can continue to misbehave.

The theory of operant conditioning emphasises that educators should consider other alternative stimuli to modify the behaviour of learners. This theory implies that conditioning students' behaviour through rewards in the learning process is much more critical than corporal punishment. During the learning process, students acquire unpleasant experiences and may become conditioned by the subject teacher and classroom. Students may dislike the subject and the teacher because of the punishment. The most effective way to eliminate undesirable behaviours is to determine what students need to develop positive reinforcement. In turn, this can lead to the desired behaviour.

Tanzania Policy of Corporal Punishment

Tanzania has an international and regional human rights obligation to prohibit all CP of children, including through the new global commitment to ending violence against children in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Global Partnership to End Violence, 2022). Similarly, Africa's "Agenda for Children 2040: Fostering an Africa fit for children" requires all state parties to the African Charter in the Rights and Welfare of the Child to prohibit CP as a form of discipline or punishment in schools (GIEACP, 2019).

In Tanzania, corporal punishment in schools is legal in the Education system as per the dictates of the school guide and procedures of the Education Act of 1978 under the National Education

(CP) Regulation 1979 under article 60 of the National Education Act 1978, which authorises the Minister to make regulations "to provide for and control the administration of CP in schools" (GIEACP, 2020). The administration of CP is permitted in the context of family and school (GIEACP, 2020). The Tanzania Education Act, Number 25 of 1978, section 60 (O), prescribes the conditions of expulsion or exclusion from schools of students on the grounds of age, discipline, or health and provides for and controls the administration of CP in school (GIEACP, 2016). In 2002, there was a paradigm shift whereby the Ministry of Education and Culture issued a circular policy that advocates for proper discipline of school students on corporal punishment (Education Circular No. 24 of 2002 on corporal punishment) (MoEC, 2002).

In the school setting, a study conducted by Human Rights Watch (2017) revealed widespread and sometimes brutal use of CP in Tanzania schools. Teachers were reported to punish students with the use of corporal punishment irrespective of their gender or disability in school. Senior school officials and teachers reported canning students and not following government regulations on the infliction of CP in schools (Human Rights Watch, 2017). The study conducted by Hecker et al. (2014) shows that nearly all children in Tanzania primary schools have been experiencing corporal punishment which has affected their school learning and the study by Hassan and Bali (2013) shows that every teacher administered CP without consider regulations and approval from the head of school.

Effects of Corporal Punishment in Schools

Teachers have used corporal punishment to control students' discipline, though it was associated with adverse effects. The studies have indicated that corporal punishment has been associated with students externalised and internalised behaviours, including anxiety, delinquency, and depression (Sagar & Archana, 2013). Moreover, studies have revealed that corporal punishment practiced at school or the home environment against children by teachers or parents has effects on students' psychosocial well-being and academic achievements (Breen et al., 2015; Tran, 2015; Frechette & Romano, 2015; Ahmad et al., 2014). In that regard, the study has reported adverse psychosocial effects from corporal punishment on students, including feelings of worthlessness, reduced self-esteem, and a lack of confidence in learning (Tran, 2015). Additionally, corporal punishment is associated with adverse effects such as aggressiveness and withdrawal from peers among students in schools, dropout of students from school, and poor relationships between students and teachers (Coley et al., 2014; Han, 2014; Addison, 2015; Maina & Sindabi, 2016) Students' learning is affected by corporal punishment, which impedes better performance in schools. In schools where teachers use corporal punishment, students report experiencing extreme worries about performing completely well; meanwhile, they are so self-conscious and often misinterpret or overstate the importance of the condition (Hayden, 2016). The study by Banaeipour et al. (2016) in Iran indicated that the prevalence of anxiety was higher among students who experienced corporal punishment at schools.

Furthermore, a study by Anand (2014) in India and Batool et al. (2017) in Pakistan indicated that the majority of students reported experiencing a high incidence of corporal punishment in their school and the resultant physical and mental pain caused them. Ekanem and Edet (2013) in Nigeria reveal that corporal punishment was most frequently used among varieties of school punishment. However, it was ineffective in disciplinary control of students in secondary schools. In Botswana, a study on corporal punishment identified that students underwent various social and psychological problems, including confusion and anxiety, developed low self-esteem, had difficulty making friends, and feared their teachers (Elkazaz et al., 2017). The study by Anand (2014) revealed that corporal punishment impedes students in class participation and attendance and decreases academic performance. In addition, a study by Ahmad et al. (2013) revealed that students who were victims of corporal punishment became less motivated towards their classroom activities. The study also indicated that students lack confidence, hesitate to teachers to become involved in group discussions, and are less motivated toward their studies (Khan et al., 2014). However, the study by Morrow and Singh (2014) found that the practice of physical punishment had an impact on a child's mind and affected academic performance badly, thus resulting in a low level of class participation and interaction.

Several studies have indicated that there is a positive association between the act of using corporal punishment and psychological distress, especially anxiety, depressive symptoms, and aggression, increased odds of mood disorder as well as mental disorder in later adulthood (Affifi et al., 2013; Tran, 2015; Olusegun et al., 2017). Corporal punishment has been associated with adverse effects on internalising behaviours. These behaviours, such as anxiety and depressive symptoms, have been reported to be the most common of all mental illnesses, and they can have life-long damaging effects on the learning process, especially for students in school settings (Afifi et al., 2013). Corporal punishment administered to students has been reported to affect learning among learners in schools, including lack of interest in their work, hostile behaviours, and their academic progress (Ahamad et al., 2013; Dlamini et al., 2017; Olusegun et al., 2017). The study conducted on the effects of corporal punishment on children in Cambodia, Korea, and China reveals that thousands of children get killed through corporal punishment every year due to physical, psychological, and emotional distorts that child experience in the name of discipline (Nho & Seng, 2017). These effects reduce students' confidence and interest in learning at school. Corporal punishment in primary schools leads to psychological torture and physical injuries. It creates fear of the learners in the classroom, hence missing lessons due to corporal punishment practice in school. The study by UNICEF (2015) and Anwar et al. (2021) in Ethiopia, India, Peru, and Vietnam reported that corporal punishment leads to poor performance and significantly negatively affects learner learning. It creates a lack of concentration of students in the classroom and discourages the learning process.

Furthermore, the study by Najoli et al. (2019) revealed that the majority of students who experienced corporal punishment had a negative influence on teachers because it made them have low self-esteem, become more defiant, increase the risk for physical abuse, and cause both physical and emotional pain. This study is supported by the incidence of CP reported by

Bashaya (2018) that it causes injuries and even death; for instance, a student passed away because of being subjected to corporal punishment with a piece of wood as an alternative to a stick by his teacher due to suspected of being stolen teacher's pocket at Kibeta Primary school in Bukoba Municipality, Tanzania. These incidences of corporal punishment have been affecting students' learning, causing poor academic performance at school, causing hate for the school, and drop out of the school.

Methodology

The study adopted a qualitative research approach with multiple embedded case study designs to examine the effects of corporal punishment on students' learning in secondary schools. It enabled the researcher direct contact between the researcher and the participants to solicit first-hand information (Cohen et al., 2018). It also attempts to make sense of or interpret the phenomenon in terms of meanings people bring to them, reinforcing deep understanding and interpretation of the phenomena in natural settings. The design choice was helpful because it involved two or more cases that increased the possibility of direct replication in the study (Yin, 2018; Stake, 2013) and provided a systematic way to collect data and analyse information in great depth. This study includes cases from different secondary schools where data were collected in natural settings.

The study involved 76 participants who were purposively selected from six ordinary secondary schools in Morogoro Municipal and Mvomero district found in Morogoro region; Sumbawanga Municipal and Nkasi district in Rukwa region in Tanzania. The Morogoro region was selected based on the highest number of students with indiscipline cases. In contrast, the Rukwa region had the lowest number of students with indiscipline cases compared to other regions in Tanzania (PO-RALG, 2020). The study involved two Region Education Officers, 22 teachers, 46 students, 3 school board members from ordinary level secondary schools and 2 District Secondary Educational Officers. These participants were included because they had rich and relevant information and knowledge on the problem being studied, their knowledge was crucial in shaping the study's findings (Cohen et al., 2018).

Data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews, documentary reviews, and focus group discussions (FGDs) and analysed thematically. Under the participant's consent, interviews and FGDs were recorded and later translated. The researcher also took field notes to supplement interviews. The themes generated for the first and second research questions are presented and discussed in the following section.

Results

The Effects of Corporal Punishment on Student Learning

The study examined how corporal punishment affects students' learning in ordinary secondary school. The findings indicate that students were affected by psychological and physical well-being, social relationships with their teachers, and underachievement in academic studies. The students who experienced corporal punishment had psychological effects, including being discouraged to participate in classroom activities actively, developing low self-esteem, being less motivated towards learning, and dropping out of studies in school. Moreover, it was found

that students develop negative attitudes toward learning, feelings of anxiety, and low concentration on learning because of corporal punishment. Corporal punishment was found to be an obstacle to the development of teacher and student relationships. Furthermore, corporal punishment frustrated students and decreased their interest in classroom learning activities. Physical effects caused by corporal punishment to students included developing their injuries and remaining with permanent scars on their bodies.

Psychological Impact

Corporal punishment administered by teachers was found to affect students psychologically and cause students to lack concentration in learning in the classroom and school. Some students reported developing fear, frustration, low self-esteem, and low confidence, and feeling motivated to learn in the classroom and school context. The students felt a sense of helplessness when they faced corporal punishment administered to them and, therefore, accepted the punishment provided by their teachers. It affects students' academic performance and trait-based psychological and behaviour-based personality development.

The findings from the participants indicated that corporal punishment affected students negatively and there was a lack of attention in the learning process after punishment. The response from the participants shows that student seems to have low self-esteem, feelings of anxiety, fear of teachers, especially the subject teacher, and feelings of insecurity in general in the classroom and school environment. During FGD with students at school 'D,' students agreed together and said that;

> *Some students fear corporal punishment because of being punished and have dropped school. It makes a student scared and trembling, especially when a teacher walks around with a stick in the classroom. This depends on the teacher; there is a strict and regular teacher. A sharp teacher is coming in with a stick. You are terrified; you see better that he would not enter the classroom. Sometimes, "when a strict teacher does not enter the classroom, we are happy because we fear corporal punishment. (FGD with students at school 'B')*

The data gathered from FGD with students indicated that they experienced anxiety characterized by tension, feelings of fear, and worries about school student's responses. The findings from the study revealed that students who were punished experienced psychological effects, including trembling when the teacher entered the classroom and walking around with a stick, hence disturbing students' minds concentration. Students experienced unsettled minds because of fear of the sticks that may be administered to them by a teacher at any time during teaching in the classroom. The response from FGD indicates that once students see teachers with sticks enter the classroom, they start trembling, scared, and becoming afraid of the teacher due to fear of punishment. The responses revealed that 78 percent of students reported experiencing fear and worry when their teachers either entered the classroom with sticks or when they were punished with strokes. They explained that there was frequently a state of tension during the teaching and learning process in the classroom.

The findings revealed that depression is among the subthemes that emerged, including mental health problems that involve a low mood and a loss of interest in learning activities. It also includes issues like mood disorder that causes persistent feelings of sadness, emptiness, and loss of joy in learning. Student's responses reflected the symptoms of depression marked by losing hope and interest in spending time away at school, hence avoiding and staying away from teachers because of corporal punishment. The findings from the study revealed that corporal punishment administered to students affects the mental health of students and results in feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, worthless, depression, and inadequacy in the learning process. The FGD students were complaining about the way corporal punishment was administered to them by their teachers. Students in FGD agreed together and informed that;

> *It affects us psychologically because the student's mind shifts when a teacher's habit of punishing enters the classroom with sticks. A student knows that whenever I will be asked a question and if I fail, then I will be beaten. Students' thoughts of being whipped and their minds shift, and they lose learning concentration. When students are afraid, they feel anxious and miss the attention of listening to the teacher (Students in FGD at school 'B')*

The voice quoted above in the student's conversation implies that they hate teachers and the classrooms because of their teachers' endless corporal punishment for being frequently punished. The findings from the current study indicate that corporal punishment administered to students disturbs students' minds, especially when teachers administer strokes during teaching. Most of the students become feared and feel hopeless, lose tension, and become depressed with avoiding strokes that teachers may administer during the teaching and learning process. The response indicates that sometimes students fail to answer questions asked by the teacher due to fear of being punished with strokes if they answered incorrectly. The study findings indicated that most students, 69 percent, lost hope and interest and decided to spend time out of school in to avoid meet with teachers who frequently punished students in the classrooms. Corporal punishment administered by teachers in school is a primary contributor to child abuse and promotes violent behaviour between students and others.

Physical Effects

The administration of corporal punishment has been associated with physical pain in students. The information gathered in this study from students through FGD suggests that corporal punishment affects their physical well-being. Response from students revealed that corporal punishment administered by teachers in school had physical impacts and caused psychological distress, injuries, and permanent physical disability and was associated with long-term physical or mental ill-health in students. The interview with head of school at school 'C' said as follows,

> *We have been receiving many cases of teachers punishing students and getting injuries. Parents come here every time to school, reporting incidences of their children being punished and injured. You find a student is punished and feels like a teacher is angry. You find a teacher hitting the student's finger until it breaks, and the blood is leaking. Sometimes, even a student holding a pen becomes a problem (Interview with head of school at school 'C')*

The findings from the quoted voice statement indicated that corporal punishment administered by teachers affected negatively, including direct physical harm and injury to students on their physical health. Corporal punishment was associated with harming students on their part of the body and inflicting pain. The response from the quoted voice suggests that canned students suffer physical well-being, which causes difficulty holding a pen during the learning process. It also indicated that corporal punishment administered by teachers in schools injured students on their bodies, including hitting fingers.

Social Relationship Effects

The student-teacher relationship is crucial, especially during the teaching and learning process. The findings from participants in in-depth interviews and focus group discussions revealed that the use of corporal punishment created a negative relationship between teachers and students. It created fear in students, leading them to avoid learning and even run away from the classroom or school to escape punishment. The interview with the school board chairperson at school 'B' narrated as follows;

> *It makes the students hate the teacher even when they see him/her. You will find there is a lack of readiness to learn. Even some students will start to hate the subject and ignore him, even if the subject does not like it because of hating the teacher (Interview with school board chairperson at school 'B')*

The study results suggest a poor relationship between students who were punished and teachers who administered corporal punishment. This makes students hate the teacher and the subject by demotivating them in the learning process. The poor relationship between students and teachers makes students not ready to attend lessons in the classroom and sometimes in school because they fear the teacher. The findings indicated that corporal punishment created a negative interaction between students and teachers, whereby students hated the teachers.

Academic performance

The findings from this study revealed that corporal punishment adversely affected students' academic performance. It was found that corporal punishment discouraged student's learning because it created fear, inattentiveness, truancy, and running away from the classroom and school. It was revealed that corporal punishment makes students unsettled minds in the classroom, hate their teachers, experience anxiety, and lose concentration in the learning process. These developments lower school achievement and do not predict nor encourage academic success. During FGD with students at school 'C,' they agreed together and said that;

> *It affects us academically because when a teacher has a habit of punishing students entering the classroom with a stick and the student's lack of concentration. The student knows that whenever I will be asked a question and if failed, then I may be punished. If a student is afraid, lacks concentration on listening to the teacher, and avoids him even in the classroom, it leads to failure of the teacher's subject due to fear of corporal punishment (Student in FGD with students at school 'C')*

The findings obtained from students through FGD revealed that they experienced psychological effects that affected their minds and lack of concentration in the classroom, hence discouraging their learning. The findings from the above-quoted voice statement indicate that most students, 83 percent of this study, did not support being punished because they lost concentration on listening for fearing corporal punishment in the classroom. They expressed their great concern that corporal punishment hurt students' minds and affected academic performance badly because of worry and anxiety. This creates low-class participation and interaction in the classroom and school environment. As reported above, the response voice makes students fear corporal punishment, whereby a student avoids and skips the classroom or school.

Moreover, the students lose self-worth and self-esteem by fearing being physically punished. This indicates that corporal punishment does not motivate students to learn; instead, it discourages them and creates hate among the students and the teachers who use such methods of discipline. This negatively affects students' performance due to poor concentration and attention to listening in the teaching and learning process.

Furthermore, the findings from most participants, 76 percent of this study, suggest that corporal punishment has been associated with the underachievement of students' learning. Exposure of the students to anxiety or stress and the physical pain caused by corporal punishment can discourage students from learning and reduce their academic outcomes, promoting fear and mistrust in the classroom and ultimately causing them to disengage from school. The study findings indicated that very few participants, 24 percent, supported corporal punishment as a beneficial and effective tool for modifying students' behaviours and helping students with academic performance.

Discussion of Findings

Effects of Corporal Punishment on Students Learning

The study findings from the data gathered revealed that corporal punishment affected students psychologically, including developing some symptoms of depression, anxiety, and withdrawal from the classroom and school due to fear of being punished by teachers. The current study found that students who were corporally punished both at home and school had moderate or severe levels of stress, anxiety, and depression. The study by Olusegun (2017) indicated that many students feared not attending school, and most of those seeking admission later left the school due to physical punishment. The study by Dlamini et al. (2017) revealed that corporal punishment made students drop out of school, and some become stubborn while others fear punishment. This kind of thinking also appeared in this study, which aligns with a study conducted by Olusegun et al. (2017). Their findings show that corporal punishment dramatically affects students' academic performance, creating friction and making them show a lack of interest in their work. For instance, the study by Morrow and Sing (2014) on their findings shows that corporal punishment affects a child's mind and academic performance badly, thus resulting in low-class participation and interaction.

Moreover, the current study is in line with various studies that revealed that corporal punishment practiced at school or in a home environment against children by teachers or parents has effects on students' psychosocial well-being and academic achievements, as revealed by Ahmad et al. (2014); Breen et al. (2015); Frechette and Romano (2015). The use of corporal punishment has been affecting students psychologically in the learning process, including feelings of stress and anxiety (Tran, 2015). Apart from that, other adverse effects caused by CP, as reported from the previous studies on psychosocial well-being, include aggressiveness and withdrawal from peers among students in schools and poor relationships between students and teachers as indicated by Coley et al. (2014); Maina and Sindabi (2016).

These findings are related to the study conducted by Ahamad et al. (2013), who indicated that corporal punishment negatively affected the students' learning, motivated by fear of punishment, and usually stopped work once the fear was removed. It was observed that corporal punishment was complex, effectively motivating students' learning. The study by Dlamini et al. (2017) revealed that corporal punishment causes lower class participation and creates distraction, leading to inhibition of learning and creativity, loss of self-confidence, fear, and dropping out of school. In another study that is related to the current findings, they were revealed that the use of corporal punishment caused students to develop negative feelings, thoughts, and behaviours towards both themselves and other people by negatively affecting their feelings, thoughts, and personality structures as reported (Tran, 2015). The findings of the study show that corporal punishment inhibits learning and decreases students' success in academic activities, as revealed by Ahmed et al. (2013), and makes them unhappy (Morrow & Singh, 2014). The results from research findings concurred with another study, which suggests that students who were subjected to and experiencing corporal punishment were at risk of having mental health problems, as revealed by Silas (2021). The outcomes of corporal punishment include antisocial behaviour, external behaviour problems, low moral internalization, aggression, and impaired cognitive ability. The study by Gershoff (2013) indicates that physical or corporal punishment of students in school increases antisocial attitudes among students and decreases students' capacity to learn the behaviour that corporal punishment is intended to promote. The findings from the study are supported by the study by Devries et al. (2014), which found that corporal punishment was associated with physical, academic, poor mental health, and behavioural problems among students in schools.

The study findings are in line with a study conducted by Elkazaz et al. (2017), which found that the majority of secondary school students who were exposed to physical punishment at school experienced all levels of anxiety, which increased among adolescents. However, it was noted that some students started trembling and feeling anxious when they saw the teacher entering the classroom to teach with sticks. This is consistent with a study by Khanal and Park (2016), who indicated that students who were punished with corporal punishment both at home and in school found a significant association of corporal punishment with psychological trauma, including moderate or severe levels of depression, anxiety, and stress. The present study is in line with different studies, which revealed that corporal punishment administered to students experience extreme worries about performing completely well; meanwhile, they are so self-conscious and often misinterpret or overstate the importance of the condition, as Hayden

(2016) indicated. Moreover, a study by Banaeipour et al. (2016) indicated that the prevalence of anxiety was higher among students who experienced corporal punishment at schools.

Furthermore, a study conducted by Anand (2014) in India and Batool et al. (2017) in Pakistan on corporal punishment in schools indicated that the majority of students reported experiencing a high incidence of corporal punishment in their school and the resultant physical and mental pain caused to them. In Botswana, a study on corporal punishment identified that students underwent various social and psychological problems, including confusion, anxiety, and developed low self-esteem, and had difficulty making friends and feared their teachers, as reported by Elkazaz et al. (2017); Anand (2014). The findings from this current study are supported by various studies which have indicated that corporal punishment has been associated with students externalised and internalised behaviours, including anxiety, delinquency, aggressive behaviour, conduct problems, hyperactivity, and depression, as revealed by Sagar and Archana (2013); Gershoff (2013).

Conclusions and Recommendations

The study concludes that, corporal punishment was administered inappropriately without considering rules and regulations, has a significant negative impact on students learning. It affects them psychologically, leading to disturbed concentration, anxiety, and symptoms of depression during learning. Furthermore, it causes physical injuries and harms to the students who were punished, thus, creating a poor relationship between teachers and students. The study also established that corporal punishment leads to dropouts and truancy, which lowers academic performance. However, it is essential to note that corporal punishment also impedes students' class participation, as it allows some students to drop out of school.

Based on the study findings, this study recommends that teachers be persuaded to minimize the use of corporal punishment in controlling students' misbehaviour and encourage the use of alternatives to corporal punishment. Practical guidance and counselling should be introduced in secondary schools instead of corporal punishment, which should give advice and study students' psychological problems. Through the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, the government needs to organize and conduct awareness workshops and seminars about the effects of corporal punishment on students and teachers. Moreover, the study recommends facilitating school workshops to change teachers' attitudes towards positive discipline, such as using alternative punishment. It is suggested that measures to raise awareness about the harmful effects of CP engage the government, non-governmental organizations, and human rights groups. It also recommended that the government, through the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and Tanzania Institute of Curriculum, should establish a curriculum development for pre-service teachers in teachers' colleges and Universities about effective optimistic administration of disciplines such as alternative punishment and the effects of corporal punishment on the mental and psychological development of students in schools.

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