

ATTITUDE OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS TOWARDS THE USE OF PUNISHMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KALOLENI DISTRICT OF COAST PROVINCE, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

This study was carried out in 14 secondary schools in Kaloleni District. A descriptive approach was employed. Data were collected through the questionnaires designed for the teachers and students. The target population consisted of 215 teachers and about 5600 students in 14 secondary schools. A sample of 42 teachers and 206 students were proportionately selected in the sampled schools. There were four hypotheses, which were tested through inferential statistics of Chi Square and Point Bi-Serial Coefficient. Frequency and simple percentage were employed to the establish attitude of students and teachers towards punishment in secondary schools in Kaloleni District. The study found out amidst others that students and teachers actually felt that punishment was important in helping maintain discipline in secondary schools. Hence it was proposed among many things that teachers should be impressed upon to be fair when punishing students and must accompany it with explanation or rationale for the punishment.

INTRODUCTION

People running schools use punishment to maintain discipline yet nobody is interested in knowing the attitude of teachers and students towards punishment. Thus, it was very important to find out what the attitude of students and teachers towards the use of punishment in secondary school actually was. What constitutes punishment, theories of punishment, factors that influence the effectiveness of punishment, some side effects of punishment as well as the useful types of punishment?

If the attitude of students towards the use of punishment was positive, they would appreciate the use of punishment and actually their behaviour would be changed positively by its use as opposed to when their attitude was negative. Teachers' attitude towards the use of punishment in schools is also vital in the maintenance of discipline in secondary schools as it will guide them in the correct usage of punishment. Thus this research was aimed at finding the attitude of teachers and students towards the use of punishment among students in selected secondary schools

of Kaloleni District of Kilifi County in Coast Province, Kenya. In order to effectively achieve the primary aim of this work, the following research questions were formulated.

- i Is there any significant correlation between the gender of the students and their attitude towards the use of punishment in secondary schools?
- ii Is there any positive correlation between the class level of students and their attitude towards the use of punishment in secondary schools?
- iii Is there any positive correlation between the gender of the teachers and their attitude towards the use of punishment in secondary schools?
- iv Is there any correlation between the level of training of teachers and their attitude towards the use of punishment in secondary schools?

The following hypotheses were generated from the research questions:

- i There is no significant correlation between the gender of the students and their attitudes towards the use of punishment in secondary schools.
- ii There is a negative correlation between the class level of students and their attitude towards the use of punishment in secondary schools.
- iii There is a negative correlation between the gender of the teachers and their attitude towards the use of punishment in secondary schools.
- iv There is no correlation between the level of training of teachers and their attitude towards the use of punishment in secondary schools.

PARTICIPANTS AND PROCEDURES

This study employed a descriptive survey and inferential designs. Pre-test approach was employed as eight schools were visited to seek permission from the respective head teachers of the sampled schools. One teacher each from the sampled schools was selected to assist in the administration of the questionnaire for the purpose of data collection. These teachers were given proper orientation on how to select the respondents to fill the questionnaire. The study was conducted in the fourteen public secondary schools in Kaloleni District of Coast, Kenya to find the attitudes of teachers and students towards the use of punishment.

Sample consisted of 8 schools (2 from each stratum namely Girls boarding, Boys boarding, mixed day, and mixed day and boarding as given on table 1) selected through stratified random sampling from the 14 schools. The questionnaire was preferred for data collection due to its suitability. The sample size was a total of 42 teachers and 206 students. Proportionate random sampling was used to find out how many students were selected from each of the sampled schools and also how many teachers and of which gender. The students were selected from form 2 and 4 classes. The selected teachers and students were given copies of the questionnaire to fill. The sampled class was gathered and students picked papers printed 'yes' and others 'no'. The number of 'yes' were equal to the needed sample size. These were then given instructions and then questionnaire to fill. After the collation, data were collected

and analysed, presented, and observations and recommendations given. The district was selected for study because it has good secondary schools and yet their performance is not up to the required standards. There have been some school strikes in the district. Besides, the researcher has a wide range of geographical knowledge of the area arising from his long stay in the district.

Singleton (1993) observes that the ideal setting for any study is that which is directly related to the researchers' interest. All responses from the questionnaires were analyzed and compiled by use of descriptive and inferential statistics. In order to test the hypotheses, the marks were awarded to each of the responses and a final score given. Therefore the hypotheses were tested, each at a time. Chi Square Coefficient was calculated for all the responses of boys and girls, for each of the 15 statements to find out if there was any significant relationship. It was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The responses of section 3 of the questionnaire for the students were used to find out whether the attitude of male and female students differed significantly. The calculated values are given on tables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Distribution of schools in Kaloleni District

Zone	Girls B	Boys B	Mixed D	Mixed D& B	Total
Kaloleni	2	1	3	1	7
Mariakani	1	2	-	1	4
Rabai	1	-	1	1	3
Total	4	3	4	3	14

Table 2: Calculated Chi Square values of Boys and Girls

Question	df	Chi Square value	Critical Value
16	4	9.039	9.488
17	4	0.963	9.488
18	4	5.751	9.488
19	4	1.671	9.488
20	4	12.897	9.488
21	4	14.643	9.488
22	4	2.262	9.488
23	4	5.807	9.488
24	4	0.742	9.488
25	4	2.521	9.488
26	4	14.539	9.488
27	4	6.322	9.488
28	4	6.290	9.488
29	4	3.128	9.488
30	4	2.574	9.488

The distribution of schools are as shown on table 1. Therefore since, there are only three statements (20, 21, 26) out of the fifteen statements tested whose calculated Chi Square values are greater than the critical values, one could conclude that there is no significant correlation between the gender of the students and their attitude

towards the use of punishment in secondary schools in Kaloleni District. The responses of form 2 and 4 students were correlated by calculating Chi Square coefficient of each of the 15 statements testing the attitude of students towards the use of punishment in secondary schools. This was tested at 0.05 level of significance as shown on table 3 below

Table 3: Calculated Chi Square values of form 2 and form 4

Question	df	Chi Square value	Critical Value
16	4	6.361	9.488
17	4	1.324	9.488
18	4	3.492	9.488
19	4	4.092	9.488
20	4	7.220	9.488
21	4	4.775	9.488
22	4	6.789	9.488
23	4	7.914	9.488
24	4	1.553	9.488
25	4	5.523	9.488
26	4	2.474	9.488
27	4	2.572	9.488
28	4	3.823	9.488
29	4	15.294	9.488
30	4	2.133	9.488

Similarly only one question (29) has calculated value of Chi Square larger than the Critical value, therefore the attitude of students do not depend on their class level. The hypothesis that there is a negative correlation between the gender of the teachers and their attitude towards punishment was rejected. This was tested by Point Bi-Serial because the data was both continuous and dichotomous. The scores for both male and female teachers were correlated and tested at .05 level of confidence.

The responses of section 3 of the questionnaire were used to find out whether the attitude of male and female teachers differed significantly. To test this, all the responses were converted into marks. All strongly agree were awarded 5 marks, 4 marks to all agree responses, Undecided were given 3 marks, 2 marks to disagree responses and all strongly disagree were awarded 1 mark. The marks were calculated for all teachers.

Dichotomy: 0 Female, 1 Male.

Mean of 0 (Female Teachers) = 54.0, Mean of 1 (Male Teachers) = 52.65

$P = \frac{23}{42}$, $q = \frac{19}{42}$, $s.d = 7.22$, $r_{ptbis} = 0.093$

Point Bi-Serial Coefficient of the teachers (male/female) was calculated. The calculated value was .093. This value meant that a weak positive correlation exist between the attitudes of female and that of male teachers. Therefore we reject the null hypothesis. There is correlation between the level of training of teachers and their attitude towards punishment. Attitude for graduate and diploma trained teachers was correlated. Again two sets of data were generated, namely, dichotomous and continuous thus as in the previous cases, Point Bi-Serial was used. This was tested

at .05 level of confidence.

Dichotomy: Diploma Teachers 0, B. Ed Teachers 1

M0 (mean of Diploma Teachers) =54.67, M1 (Mean o B. Ed Teachers) =55.03

SD=6.24, $P=9/42$, $q=33/42$, $r_{ptbis} =0.024$

Students' Research Findings

Respondents (Students) were punished in their school life; Students are not too often punished. On occasion however students said that teachers punish them in groups for mistakes of a few. This made them feel very bad. Students said being firm on discipline is very vital. Most of the respondents said that they owed their successes on their teachers' firmness on discipline. Most students had been punished over the last one term. However students said they have only been punished a few times. Some students felt very bad towards those who punished them. Being firm on discipline is very vital. Most of the students said that they owed their successes on their teachers' firmness on discipline. Students said that punishment made students change their bad behaviour which led to their having been punished. The students also gave a list of punishments which could be used to maintain discipline.

On statements of how they felt about discipline, the respondents agreed on the first four statements.

- i Students should be punished in order to correct their bad behaviours. Students agreed of them agreed.
- ii Punishment is vital if students are to be disciplined. Most of them agreed.
- iii Punishing students normally brings down the indiscipline cases to very low levels. Most of them agreed with the statement.
- iv Punishing students is not the same as torturing students. Most of the respondents agreed with the statement.
- v Punishment is capable of rectifying students' bad behaviour. Respondents disagreed with the statement.
- v Punishment is effective, necessary and human. Respondents disagreed

On statements on opinions of students on the effects of punishment, here students agreed on others and disagreed with others.

- i The severe the punishment, the better the desired behaviour outcome in students. Students agreed with the statement that the severe the punishment the better the outcome.
- ii A punished student cannot develop neurotic reactions such as fear, anxiety, depression and stress as some people say. Students disagreed with the statement that a punished student cannot develop neurotic reactions such as fear, anxiety, depression and stress as some people say.
- iii Punishment does not hurt the dignity and self-respect of the student. The respondents disagreed with the statement.
- iv Punishment does not breed violence, aggression and brutality in school and in the wider society. The students disagreed with the statement that punishment

does not breed violence, aggression and brutality in school and in the wider society.

- v Punishment sets examples for potential offenders. The respondents agreed with the statement that punishment sets examples for potential offenders.
- vi Punishment has not been the cause of major school drop-out as some people say. The students agreed with the statement that punishment has not been the cause of major school drop-out as some people say.

On statements of students' opinions on the use of certain type of punishments, the responses were:

- i Human beings are naturally evil, and it is correction of students' bad behaviours through consistent punishment like caning, that would make them become disciplined ones. Students agreed with the statement.
- ii Expulsion and dismissal should be used as punishment for serious offences. Students disagreed with the statement that expulsion and dismissal should be used as punishment for serious offences.
- iii Psychological punishments like ridiculing, abusing, etc. are good and should be used. The students disagreed with the statement that psychological punishment like ridiculing, abusing, etc. are good and should be used.

These results were very similar to the results obtained from teachers as indicated below on teachers' findings.

Teachers' Research Findings

Teachers felt that punishment was very vital and in fact most of the respondents said that they owed their successes on their teachers' firmness on discipline. Most of the teachers considered punishment as very vital in disciplining students and actually many felt the government erred in abolishing caning in schools. On statements of how student felt about discipline, the respondents agreed on most of the statements.

- i Students should be punished in order to correct their bad behaviours. All of them agreed.
- ii Punishment is vital if students are to be disciplined. Most of them agreed.
- iii Punishing students normally brings down the indiscipline cases to very low levels. Most agreed with the statement.
- iv Punishing students is not the same as torturing students. Most of the respondents agreed with the statement.
- v Punishment is capable of rectifying students' bad behaviour. All were in agreement.
- vi Punishment is effective, necessary and human. Respondents agreed.

On statements on opinions of teachers on the effects of punishment, here teachers agreed on others and disagreed with others.

- i The severe the punishment, the better the desired behaviour outcome in students. On this teachers disagreed with the statement.
- ii A punished student cannot develop neurotic reactions such as fear, anxiety,

- depression and stress as some people say. They also disagreed with this statement.
- iii Punishment does not hurt the dignity and self- respect of the student. The teachers agreed with the statement.
 - iv Punishment does not breed violence, aggression and brutality in school and in the wider society, here respondents agreed with the statement.
 - v Punishment sets examples for potential offenders. The respondents agreed with statement that punishment sets examples for potential offenders.
 - vi Teachers agreed with the statement that punishment has not been the cause of major school drop-out as some people say.

On statements of teachers' opinions on the use of certain type of punishments the responses were:

- i Human beings are naturally evil, and it is correction of students' bad behaviours through consistent punishment like caning, that would make them become disciplined ones. Respondents disagreed with this statement.
- ii Teachers agreed with the statement that expulsion and dismissal should be used as punishment for serious offences.
- iii The teachers disagreed with the statement that psychological punishment like ridiculing, abusing, etc. are good and should be used.

This study has maintained that discipline is important especially if students are to succeed academically. Punishment is vital for students to be disciplined. The teachers' attitude towards the use of punishment is positive but it should be professionally done. This means that it should be commensurate with the mistake and teachers must use it as the last resort. Students are also in agreement that discipline in school is important and that at times punishment should be used to maintain this. Thus the attitude of students towards the use of punishment in schools is positive. The findings have revealed that punishments such as expulsion should be rarely used. They also maintained that psychological punishments must not be used.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study framework based on three theories of punishment. The attitude of students towards the use of punishment and that of teachers were positive. In other words they felt or know that it's necessary to use punishment if discipline was to be maintained. There were however certain types of punishment especially psychological punishments which should be avoided. The hypothesis that there was no correlation between the gender of the teachers and their attitude towards the use punishment in secondary schools was rejected. There was also a correlation between the professional training of teachers and their attitude towards the use of punishment in secondary schools.

In case of students there was no correlation between the gender of students and their attitude and their attitude towards punishment in all statements except:

Punishment is capable of rectifying students' bad behaviour; Punishment is effective, necessary and human; and Punishment sets examples for potential offenders. Also on class level, there was no correlation except on the statement, which says that expulsion and dismissal should be used as punishment for serious offences. Arising from the study, it recommends that:

- i Teachers should be impressed upon to be fair when punishing students and must accompany it with explanation or rationale for the punishment.
- ii Teachers must never punish students in groups and especially for mistakes of others. If it is not possible to identify the culprit then they had better not punish anybody.
- iii Teachers should avoid psychological punishments as they are demeaning to the students.

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