

**A STUDY OF ATTITUDE OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS ABOUT
CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN SCHOOL EDUCATION WITH SPECIAL
REFERENCE TO BURDWAN DISTRICT IN WEST BENGAL, INDIA**

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to analyze the attitude of parents and teachers about corporal punishment of students in secondary level schools of Burdwan district in West Bengal. The study covers one hundred sixty parents comprising of APL and BPL households and one hundred forty teachers including trained as well as untrained categories both in urban and rural areas of Burdwan district in West Bengal. The results of 'Chi-square' test expressed that there is no significant differences of opinion among parents and teachers in favour of corporal punishment for betterment of education of students. A multiple response analysis has been used to compare the opinions of parents in APL and BPL sections of households and also among trained and untrained teachers. Finally, it is concluded that moderate punishment is necessary for improvement of education of students to create congenial atmosphere in school and home environment.

Key Words: Corporal punishment, parent-teachers' attitude, environment, effective alternatives

Introduction

Corporal punishment has been defined as the use of physical force with the intention of causing a child to experience bodily pain or discomfort so as to correct or punish the child's behavior (Gershoff, 2008). This includes: spanking, hitting, pinching, squeezing, paddling, whopping, smacking, slapping, forcing a child to stand sit in painful position for long times. There is no statutory definition of corporal punishment of children in India law. According to the RTE Act, 2009 it could be clarified as physical punishment, mental harassment and discrimination. In other words, corporal punishment is a form of particular type punishment that involves the deliberate infliction of pain as retribution for an offence, or for the purpose of disciplining or reforming a wrongdoer, or to deter attitudes or behavior deemed unacceptable. The term usually refers to methodically striking the offender with the open hand or with an implement, whether in judicial, domestic, or educational settings.

According to UN Committee on the rights of child, corporal punishment is defined as:

"Any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light." (UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2001).

Corporal punishment may be divided into three main types:

- Domestic corporal punishment within the family—typically, children punished by parents or guardians;
- Corporal punishment in school within schools, when students are punished by teachers or school administrators, or, in the past, apprentices by master craftsmen;
- Judicial corporal punishment ordered by a court of law.
- However, the legality of various forms of corporal punishment differs by jurisdiction. Most laws against parental corporal punishment of children are very recent, having been enacted during the past few decades (Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia, 2014).

Objectives

The study entails the following objectives-

- i) To examine the nature of corporal punishment prevalent in school education of India.
- ii) To assess the view of parents about corporal punishment to students in school.
- iii) To find out the concept of teachers about corporal punishment to the students for better performance in education.
- iv) To enumerate the effective alternatives as well as steps to be taken by the parents for balanced development of their children.

Hypotheses

The hypotheses selected in our study are-

Null Hypotheses

The null hypotheses is the following -

H₀₁: There is no difference of opinion about corporal punishment of students in school education among the parents and the teachers.

Alternative Hypotheses

The alternative hypotheses is –

H₁₁: There exists significant difference of opinion about corporal punishment of students in school education among the parents and the teachers.

Data Source and Methodology

The study is mainly analytical in nature. The primary data has been collected during 2013-2014 from 160 parents comprising APL and BPL sections of households and 140 teachers in secondary level both in urban as well as in rural areas in Burdwan district in West Bengal. A self made structured questionnaire was used by interrogating the respondents to obtain their views about corporal punishment of school students on undergoing proper education.

Analysis and Discussion

Corporal Punishment in School Level Students: A Non-Parametric Analysis

The present study has attempted to make an assessment of perceptions of the parents, teachers about corporal punishment among the students in secondary schools in terms of non-parametric ‘Chi-square’ analysis. The opinions of the respondents collected from the field survey can be expressed in the following table (vide table- 1).

Table No – 1: Opinions of different Respondents selected for the study

Respondents	Yes	No	Total
Parents	97	63	5
Teachers	90	50	10
Total	187	113	15

Source: Field Survey, 2013-14

The calculated value and the tabulated values of ‘Chi-square’ are shown in the table-2.

Table No - 2: Testing of the Hypotheses

Variables compared	Calculated value (χ^2)	Critical value (5% level)	Critical value (1% level)	Degrees of freedom	Remark	
					1 %	5%
Opinion of parents and teachers about corporal punishment	0.426	3.841	6.635	1	Significant (P> 0.01)	Significant (P>0.05)

Source: Authors' calculation based on field survey, 2013-14

It should be noted (Vide table- 2) that the observed value of Chi-square (χ^2) i.e., 0.426 is less than the critical value both at 1 % and 5 % level of significance (i.e., $\chi^2_{.01, d.f. 1} = 6.635$ and $\chi^2_{.05, d.f. 1} = 3.841$) for degrees of freedom 1, therefore the null hypothesis is accepted and the alternative hypothesis is rejected. So, we can conclude that there exists no difference of opinion among the parents and teachers in favour of corporal punishment of students. This finding is consistent with the findings of Ellinan, 2000; Gershoff, 2002 and Andrew, 2004.

Corporal Punishment and Attitude of Parents as well as Teachers: Multiple Response Analysis

Table-3: Attitudes of parents under APL and BPL section of households towards the corporal punishment of students in school education: A multiple response analysis

Respon dents	Househ olds	No of Samples	Gen der	In favor of corporal Punishment(CP)	Not favor of corporal punishment	In favor of C.P. Combined	Not in favor of C.P Combined	
Parents	APL	40	M	23 (57.5)	17 (42.5)	36 (45)	44 (55)	
		40	F	13 (32.5)	27 (67.5)			
	BPL	40	M	35 (87.5)	05 (12.5)	61 (76.25)	19 (23.75)	
		40	F	26 (65)	14 (35)			
	-	-	120	-	97 (80.83)	23 (19.17)	97	23

From the above analysis (vide table 3), we can not always conclude that parents belong to higher economic status (i.e., APL) have more consciousness about education through corporal punishment than the BPL level households. All that it means that both types of parents (i.e., APL and BPL) are in favour of corporal punishment while pertaining proper education of their children with little variation in case of female respondents. This indicates that the percentage of

APL level female respondents (i.e., 67.5 %) dominate the APL level male respondents not in favour of corporal punishment in school education. During field survey, it has been observed that most of the boys and girls having the same educational and socio-economic background of the families but some guardians (particularly in case of APL female respondents) have too much softness about their children irrespective of education. This conclusion supports the views of Durant, 2012 and Gershoff, 2008.

Table- 4: Attitudes of teachers under trained and untrained categories towards the corporal punishment of students in school education: A multiple response analysis

Respondents	Type of Teachers	No of Samples	Gender	In favor of corporal Punishment (CP)	Not favor of corporal punishment	In favor of C.P. Combined	Not in favor of C.P Combined
Teachers	Trained	35	M	27 (77.14)	08 (22.6)	47 (67.14)	23 (32.86)
		35	F	20 (57.14)	15 (42.86)		
	Untrained	35	M	24 (68.57)	11 (31.43)	43 (61.43)	27 (38.57)
		35	F	19 (54.28)	16 (45.72)		
	-	140	-	90 (64.28)	50 (35.72)	90	50

It is evident that (vide table 4), a significant part of trained teachers (i.e, 77.14 % and 68.57 %) are in favour of corporal punishment as compared to untrained teachers both in case of male and female teachers. The overall percentage of trained teachers is considerably higher than the untrained teachers in favour of corporal punishment (i.e., 90% and 50 %). Again among the male and female teachers, the percentage of opinion of male teachers is higher than the female teachers in favour of corporal punishment. During field survey, it has been found that most of the

trained teachers are psychologically more aware than the untrained teachers about the students in the schools. This finding is consistent with the views of Bitensky, 2006; Katan, 1961 and Nobes, 1999.

Conclusion and Policy Implications

Conclusion

This paper pinpoints the general attitudes of parents and teachers about corporal punishment in education among the students of secondary level schools of Burdwan district in the state of West Bengal. The result revealed a significant association of opinion in favour of corporal punishment in education of students in the study area. The results further indicated that both types of parents (i.e., either APL or BPL) and both types of teachers (i.e., trained or untrained) are in favour of corporal punishment in school education although there exist some variation of attitudes among the respondents.

Policy Implications

Effective alternatives to corporal punishment: Following are the effective alternatives to corporal punishment provide parents and care-givers with immense understanding of children's development, their controlled behaviour which will be helpful to parents, educators and others to remove frustrations in this regard (Nandi, 2014; Strauss, 2010).

(i) Parents need to careful approach for their children: An exhausted, stressed and careerist parents have low patience and less able to impose effective non-physical approaches to discipline. Practically parents have no quality time to spend with their children, therefore, it results a distant relation between them. To balance with the stressed situation of life, parents are frequently take alcohol which also dramatically decreases parental frustration, tolerance and increases impulsivity and resorting to violence.

(ii) Nurturing of good habits and teaches by example: Nurturing of all good habits begins at home as it is the pleasant place for a child. At home, affection and love always surrounds him. So it is easier to him to acquire the good habits if it is provided him properly. Parents are the role model to every children and they always try to imitate the behaviour of their parents. So parents

should behave honestly and properly. Wrong manners degenerate good habits and values to our children. Parents should always set a good example for the child and he/she will follow the parents lead.

(iii) Taking, listening and explaining: One of the most useful ways to achieve healthy child development is to promote using words instead of actions. (a) Talk instead of hit. Talk with the child about the acceptable or non-acceptable behaviour, what is safe or dangerous for them and why? (b) Listening to the child:- Listen what he/she speaks about an incident or about his actions in a particular situation. Parents should find out by their thoughtful ideas why he/she did or did not do something. (c) Explaining the reasons:- It will help to improve the decision making capacities of the children.

(iv) Positive Reinforcement: Rewards and praise will enhance the child's self-esteem when appropriate functional standards are met. Positive reinforcement is more effective in obtaining long term behavioural compliance than punishment that evoke feelings of fear and shame.

(v) Label Feelings: Parents should help their child to label his/her feelings with words. Different feelings such as anger, fear, disgust, distress, interest, enjoyment, surprise etc. should be labelled with words. These are the important aids to regulate emotions in more mature way and facilitate the tension regulations.

(vi) Discipline as Learning: Discipline is the process that focuses on feelings and behaviours of human beings. Having realistic expectations of the level of self-control, patience and judgement a child has at a given level of discipline must enhance his/her disciplinary position.

Things to do by parents

The following measures should be taken by the parents to create healthy and congenial home atmosphere (Kvols, 2013):

(i) Get calm:- When parents feel angry and out of control for certain activities of their child, they should leave the situation if possible. Calm down and get quiet. In that quiet time he/she should often find an alternative or solution to the problem.

- (ii) Take time for yourself:- It is important for parents to take sometimes for themselves to exercise, read, sink, take a walk or pray.
- (iii) Take firm decision:- It is often observed that child does not listen the repeated requested of their parents. When such situation arises, parents should get down to their child's level, make eye contact, touch him gently and tell him, in a short, kind, but firm phrase.
- (iv) Give choices:- Sometimes it is observed that the child does not obey the instructions of their parents immediately. In this situation parents should give choices or option to their children, do this or do that, choose one option as he/she likes.
- (v) Withdraw from conflict:- When a conflict arises between a child and his parents about any matter, parents leave situation immediately without anger or defeating attitude.
- (vi) Logical consequences:- If a child do his assigned work haphazardly and does not get result up to the mark, parents should break that work in several steps with firm logical consequences and should understand them how will do that work.
- (vii) Give information to the child previously:- When a child is prepared for doing something, parents should inform their child about pros and cons of that work as he/she completes the work in scheduled time. In this regard, parents should successful for the regulation of the behaviour of their child instead of spanking.
- (viii) Execute promises:- To get better result from their offspring parents should execute their promises which will give earlier to their child for enhancing their performances.

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