

TAKING STUDENT PROTECTION TO THE NEXT LEVEL: ARE THE ALTERNATIVES TO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT EFFECTIVE?

By

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated factors influencing effectiveness of alternative discipline strategies to corporal punishment in secondary schools in Imenti North District, Kenya. The study utilized descriptive survey design. Stratified sampling technique was used to select 286 participants including 52 teachers and 234 students from 13 schools in the District. Data was collected using questionnaires for the teachers and students. Mixed methods involving qualitative and quantitative techniques were used to analyze the data. The major finding was that majority of teachers (80%) believe that alternatives to corporal punishment are only rarely or occasionally effective. 55% of teachers have no training on alternatives to corporal punishment whose prevalence was reported by 88% of the students. In addition, 59% of teachers proposed reinstatement of corporal punishment in schools. It is recommended that Kenya's Ministry of Education strictly enforces the law and makes in-service and training mandatory among practicing teachers and education students respectively.

Key Words: Discipline, Corporal punishment, Counseling, Modeling, Gender, Children rights

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The debate on the use of non-violent methods in handling student discipline has received top priority among education stakeholders from the mid 20thC to date. Behavioral psychologists and Children rights movements have been in the front line arguing in favor of alternative discipline strategies to corporal punishment (Nassau, 2005). So far many countries including Poland, Britain, Half of the States in America, South Africa, Nigeria, Namibia, Botswana, and Kenya have declared corporal punishment illegal (Franklin, 1995). In Kenya the ban was arrived at in 2001 and was later upheld in the 2010 constitution and subsequent legislations. According to the Basic Education Act, 2013 for instance, a person who contravenes this law risks a fine of up to one hundred thousand Kenya shillings or imprisonment for up to six months or both upon conviction (Republic of Kenya, 2013).

Despite the ban of corporal punishment in Kenya and the emphasis on the use of its alternatives such as guidance and counseling, suspension from school, and involving parents or guardians, status quo has been maintained in many schools according to studies by African Network for Protection Against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPCAN) Kenya Chapter, (2005) and Rukaria (2009) among other studies. A recent report by UNICEF (2015) indicates that three quarters of children in Kenya (76%) have experienced physical, sexual or emotional violence. Two in three girls and three in four boys have suffered at least one episode of physical violence before age 18, which happens especially in school and at home. Review of literature did not satisfactorily explain this state of affairs. The factors that influence effectiveness of the alternatives to corporal punishment were not clearly understood and it is this gap in knowledge that spurred the undertaking of this study.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Methods of Student Discipline

Mbiti (1984) defines discipline as the capacity that enables the individual to use the voice of reason in making the right decision even when the natural desires are pulling towards the other direction. Student discipline is therefore a very important component of an educational institution because no progress can be made without it. Both violent and non-violent approaches to student discipline have been used all over the world since the classical civilization. Corporal punishment for example involves a purposeful infliction of pain or confinement as a penalty for an offence. Kenya inherited this form of punishment from the British colonial system of education and was used legally up to 2001. The 1980 Education Act allowed Head teachers or a teacher in the presence of the head to use a cane, a smooth light switch or a strap not less than one and half inches on breadth to whip a student who misbehaved. Head teachers were required to keep the record of each case of corporal punishment (Education Act 1980).

The fight against use corporal punishment in school started in the 19th century with Children rights movements and prominent scholars such as Skinner (1969) and Bandura (1986) condemning it as a means of controlling behavior. They argued that any physical punishment denies the person the opportunity to make amends and it merely teaches children to avoid getting caught. It may stop bad behavior but it will not motivate the start of a good one (Nassau, 2005). These views have been supported by research conducted later. A study by UNESCO in 2005 for instance revealed that corporal punishment was consistently related to poor mental health, including depression, unhappiness, anxiety and feelings of hopelessness in children and youth. The method of punishment legitimizes violence; it teaches both boys and girls that violence is acceptable when it is used against a weaker person and it has a connection with domestic violence later in life (Nassau, 2005).

Article 19 of the international convention on the rights of the child requires States to protect children from all forms of physical or mental violence when in the care of parents or others such as teachers. In line with the convention corporal punishment has been explicitly outlawed in Korea, New Zealand, Canada and nearly all of Europe (Nowel 1989). In Africa countries like South Africa, Nigeria and Kenya have also banned corporal punishment in schools. In Kenya the ban was arrived at in 2001 and it has since aroused a lot of debate from the general public, media, school administrators as well as politicians. At that time many head teachers blamed the Ministry of Education for taking away the cane without consulting them but the 2010 constitution of Kenya upheld the illegality of corporal punishment under the Bill of Rights. Every person has a right not to be subjected to any form of violence, torture, corporal punishment or cruel inhuman treatment, from either public or private sources; whether physical or psychological.

Mbiti (2007) observes that Guidance and counseling is one of the most emphasized non-violent approaches to student discipline following the ban of corporal punishment. Counseling however is a professional advice and therefore it can only be effective if administered by a professional in the area. Peer mediation and Assertive Discipline are other alternatives to corporal punishment. Peer Mediation involves selecting and training of some students, giving them encouragement and space to mediate the less difficult inter-pupil conflicts. The mediation is usually done in a rather private place. Assertive Discipline on the other hand involves the whole school in a concerted effort to improve and maintain discipline through a clearly understood behavior framework (unambiguous rules) and continuous positive feedback. It involves sanctions taking the form of warnings which lead to detentions and letters to parents while simultaneously positive behavior is noted and rewards issued.

The other non-violent student discipline approaches include involving the parents and encouraging them to play a proactive role in the discipline of their children, having open discussions with children, having appropriate activities to actively engage children, motivation of students and teachers, good teaching practices and commitment by teachers. Further, learning about children's normal development states, modeling and reinforcing positive behavior, recognizing anger triggers and forming strategies for managing them promotes non-violent discipline (ANPCAN, 2005). One of the questions which this study sought to answer concerns the extent to which Kenyan teachers are qualified or trained to use the above referred alternatives to corporal punishment effectively.

2.2 Role of the Teacher in Student Discipline

The role of the teacher in school discipline has become quite challenging following a rise in school violence and changes in the traditional strategies and policies of discipline. On top of being conversant with the laws governing education such as children rights, teachers need adequate skills in order to be able to control school discipline and prevent disruptive behavior of students. The Kenya Task Force on Student Unrest and Discipline of 2001 reported that the training of teachers at all levels did not provide the teacher with adequate knowledge and skills particularly in guidance and counseling, and therefore recommended in-service courses for teachers (Republic of Kenya, 2001). One of the objectives of this study was to find out how teacher professional qualifications influence effectiveness of alternative discipline strategies to corporal punishment over a decade since this recommendation.

Teachers further need to clearly understand the existence of gender role stereotypes for masculinity and femininity in regard to matters of student discipline. According to a study by Panko-Stilmock (1996), the manner in which school discipline is implemented is largely a factor of teacher value systems, philosophical orientation, tolerance levels as well as gender. Boys are for instance naturally expected to be unruly whereas girls are expected to be quiet and polite. When punished,

boys are likely to get harsher penalties even for the same crime. Girls are less likely to receive reprimand and abuses in classrooms. This study further sought to establish the extent to which teacher/student gender and awareness of children rights influence effectiveness of the alternatives to corporal punishment in schools.

2.3 Knowledge Gaps in Student Discipline Policy

In a survey carried out by UNICEF MENARIO (2005) in seven Middle and Eastern and Northern Africa countries, a third of the students said that they had been caned because their class had not done well in examinations. Most children reported to have been punished with a cane at school in front of a class. Boys reported being subjected to corporal punishment to a larger extent than girls did. It also became clear that children would like teachers to talk to them and explain other than using corporal punishment or other forms of humiliating and degrading punishment. A different survey conducted in Kenya established that corporal punishment is still common in Kenyan schools. The study suggested that there is no evidence that corporal punishment makes student discipline better since in many cases, schools where corporal punishment was rampant had the worst indiscipline records (ANPPCAN Kenya Chapter, 2005). According to another study carried in Meru, Kenya by Rukaria (2009), kneeling, caning and slapping were reported at 72.8%, 62% and 53.6% respectively. In boys' schools caning was reported at 95% while in girls' schools it was reported at 20.3%. Student respondents from boys' schools (61.4%) said they did not want corporal punishment while 59.4% from girls' schools said so. The study also revealed that boys received harsher punishment than girls.

The pertinent question that arises from the above cited research is why the status quo? The findings indicate an outright discrepancy between the documented discipline policy and the policy in practice in schools. Both the legal and the illegal methods of discipline are being used in schools at the expense of children rights which the ban of corporal punishment sought to protect. As the main implementers of educational policies, what factors in regard to teachers lead to the status quo? As the objects of discipline methods, what factors of students could lead to the gap? How could the problem be about the alternative strategies of discipline themselves, teachers'/students' gender or ignorance of children rights? This research was carried out in Imenti North District, Kenya to provide answers to these questions.

2.4 Statement of the Problem

Since the ban of corporal punishment in Kenya, emphasis has been put on the use of alternative discipline strategies in schools. Despite this, research by ANPCAN Kenya Chapter (2005), Rukaria (2009) and UNICEF (2015) indicate that status quo has been maintained in most secondary schools. This means a discrepancy exists in regard to school discipline policy. It further means that law is being broken in schools at the expense of children rights which the ban of corporal punishment sought to protect. In addition the status quo is evidence that the alternative strategies of discipline have not been effective. This research, therefore, sought to find out factors that affect alternative discipline strategies to corporal punishment in secondary schools in Imenti North District, Kenya.

2.5 Purpose and Objectives of the Study

Based on the problem under reference, the study was to find out factors that influence effectiveness of alternative discipline strategies to corporal punishment in secondary schools in Imenti North District. The study had four objectives, namely:

- i. To identify the alternative discipline strategies to corporal punishment used in secondary schools.

- ii. To find out how the teacher's/student's gender affects the alternative discipline strategies in secondary schools.
- iii. To establish the extent to which the teacher's professional qualifications and experience affect the alternative discipline strategies in secondary schools.
- iv. To find out the extent to which teacher's/student's awareness of children rights affect the alternative strategies of discipline in secondary schools.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by two theories namely: the Social Learning Theory and the Dreikurs' Social Discipline Model. According to the Social Learning theory what we learn depends on the presence significant role model. People learn by observation, imitation, and modeling of the behavior of significant others, especially if the model has positive characteristics such as attractiveness perceived competence and some reward. For example, parents model aggression when they discipline their children by slapping, beating and shouting and the children tend to take that as a method of dealing with problems (Bandura, 1986). This view helped the researcher to establish the extent to which the concept of modeling the right student behavior as opposed to use of corporal punishment is effective in secondary schools. The Dreikurs' Social Discipline Model on the other hand emphasizes on the use of the philosophy of democracy and logical consequences when dealing with children misbehaviors. If a student for instance does not study for a test and does poorly, it would be logical for a teacher to require that the student continue studying the material and take a makeup test before being permitted to go on. The consequence must be seen to relate to the appropriate behavior (Dreikurs, 1968). This view clearly advocates the use of methods of student discipline other than corporal punishment. The researcher therefore was interested with determining factors that influence effectiveness of the "democracy and logical consequences" approach as alternatives to corporal punishment in handling student discipline secondary schools.

3.0. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The study utilized a descriptive survey research design to investigate factors that influence effectiveness of alternative discipline strategies to corporal punishment in secondary schools. The design was considered appropriate because it provides a detailed description of the existing phenomena without manipulation and employs the collected data to justify the situation (Orodho, 2012). The design therefore enabled the researcher to collect information about attitudes and opinion of teachers and students regarding the use alternatives to corporal punishment in their schools. A stratified sampling technique was used to sample thirteen (29.5%) secondary schools from a population of 44 schools. Random sampling was then use to select 52 teachers (12%) and 234 students (10) from a population of 432 and 2340 teachers and students respectively, yielding a sample size of 286 participants (10.3%). Data was collected using two sets of questionnaires; one for the teachers and the other one for students. The researcher obtained a letter of introduction from the university which enabled him to obtain permission from the Ministry of Education before conducting the research. All schools in the sample were visited in advance to make arrangement on when to administer the questionnaire. The respondents were cooperative and thus the data collection exercise which took five weeks was successful. The quantitative data from questionnaires was analyzed using the computer programme known as Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.00. The generated data was presented in frequency distribution tables, percentages, charts and bar graphs while the qualitative data yielded was directly reported in summary form and inferences drawn from it.

4.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 4.1 below gives a summary of the participants' characteristics which include their gender, academic and professional qualifications.

Table 4.1

Education and Professional Achievement	Females	Males	Total	Percentage (x/sample)
STUDENTS				
Form 2			78	36
Form 3			66	30
Form 4			75	34
Total	110	99	219	93.5
TEACHERS				
Masters in Education			4	7.7
Bachelors of Education			25	48
PGDE			02	3.8
Diploma			10	19.2
Continuing University Student			4	7.7
Other			4	7.7
Total	23	26	49	94.2
WORK EXPERIENCE				
1-5 Years teaching experience			20	38.4
6-10 Years teaching experience			11	21.1
Above 10 Years experience			18	34.6
Total			49	94.2

Table 1 shows that there was negligible variation in gender, thus the findings of the study were generally not affected by gender imbalance. Student respondents' literacy enabled them to respond to the questionnaire items. Majority of teachers (over 80%) are qualified to teach in secondary school since they hold Diplomas, Degrees or Masters Degrees in Education. Further majority of teachers (over 55.7%) have a teaching experience of above five years which means information in this research is reliable having been collected from well informed respondents.

4.2 Major findings

4.2.1 The Alternative Discipline Strategies to Corporal Punishment used in Secondary Schools

The first objective was to identify the Alternative Discipline Strategies to Corporal Punishment used in Secondary Schools. The following were identified by both teachers and students as the common alternatives to corporal punishment: guidance and counseling, withdrawal of privileges, suspension from school, involving parent/guardian, giving manual work to the student (sweeping, collecting litter, cleaning), expulsion from school, sending the disturbing student out of class, standing up, warning in writing, modeling and reinforcement of good behavior and peer counseling. The findings confirm the views of Mbiti (2003) and ANPCAN (2005) that most the above mentioned methods of discipline are used in schools after the ban of corporal punishment.

Guidance and counseling, giving of manual work and sending the misbehaving student out of class are the most often used alternative discipline strategies in secondary schools. Majority teachers (57%) and students (68%) rated guidance and Counseling, involving the parent/guardian and suspension from school as more effective than the rest of the alternatives order. Teachers however noted that without consistency the alternatives to corporal punishment are not effective. The respondents were further asked whether caning was still alive in their schools and if yes what they thought was the reason the alternative discipline strategies had not completely replaced it. An alarming majority of teachers (84% and students (88%) respectively concurred that corporal punishment was prevalent in their schools. This confirms similar findings of an earlier research by Rukaria (2009) in the same District in which caning and slapping were reported as the most prevalent forms of corporal punishment in boys' schools while kneeling was most prevalent in girls' schools.

Some of the reasons the respondents gave for prevalence of the outlawed form of punishment include: Caning is quick way of correction, some students seem to understand caning and respond to it more effectively than any other method of discipline, high indiscipline in schools, inefficiency of guidance and counseling, caning solves minor indiscipline cases instantly, teachers do not have enough time for other methods, teachers were not consulted when the ban was done, some parents encourage corporal punishment, some school administrators encourage corporal punishment and even cane students, teachers were not in-serviced on the alternatives to corporal punishment following its ban, most teachers are of the old school of thought which believes that in 'spare the rod and spoil the child', some schools lack clearly defined alternative strategies of discipline to corporal punishment.

Student respondents also reported that sometimes teachers take advantage of their status and of the students' lack of awareness of their rights, caning wastes no class time, teachers know that students fear to be caned, so they use the method to deal with indiscipline, there is high indiscipline which cannot be handled using alternative strategies only. The issue of caning being an instant solution to many indiscipline cases came out clearly from both categories of participants. It is clear that punishment laws were changed but the attitudes of both teachers and students remained unchanged at the expense of children rights. These findings confirm the statement of this research problem, that there exists a discrepancy between the documented school discipline policy and the discipline policy in practice in schools.

4.2.2 The effect of gender on the effectiveness of the alternatives to corporal punishment

The second objective was to find out how the teacher's/student's gender affect effectiveness of alternative discipline strategies in secondary schools. Majority of the teachers (64%) reported that the effectiveness of some alternatives to corporal punishment such as guidance and counseling depend the teacher's and student's gender. For instance given an option majority of the girls (58%) and almost half of the boys (43%) would go for counseling to a female teacher. The major reason was that female counselors are motherly and can understand students' concerns better. Further, more female teachers (56%) than males (42%) believe it is possible to manage student discipline using alternative strategies only. This is an indication that male teachers tend to use the cane more often than female teachers. Indeed, more male teachers (68%) than females (48%) said corporal punishment should be reinstated in schools. Nassau's (2005) observes that in some societies it is believed that it is desirable or noble to accept pain without protest. Perhaps this is the case with male teachers in secondary schools.

On the other hand, both girls and boys generally had similar opinion that student discipline can be managed effectively using alternatives to corporal punishment only irrespective of school type or

category. Contrary to the teachers views, 69% boys and 57% girls said that corporal punishment should not be reinstated. It is interesting however, that more girls (42%) than boys (20%) wants corporal punishment reinstated. It is clear boys abhor the cane than girls. These findings confirm the results of a study by Rukaria (2009) in which he established that boys in secondary schools receive harsher punishment than girls. The above findings also generally confirmed the results of another study by Panko-Stilmock (1996) in which gender was found to be one of the factors that determine the manner in which discipline is administered in schools.

4.2.3 The effect of teachers' professional qualification and experience on effectiveness of alternatives to corporal punishment

This section discusses the results on the third research objective. Teacher respondents were asked if they any special training on the management of student discipline such as in guidance and counseling. In response, over half of the teachers (55%) said that they did not have any special training on management of student discipline. This means majority of teachers are not adequately trained to handle student discipline using the alternatives to corporal punishment of which guidance and counseling is key. The respondents were further asked to rate the effectiveness of the strategies using the scale: Always effective, occasionally effective, rarely effective and not effective. The table 4.2 below shows a cross tabulation of data to indicate the relationship between the independent variable academic qualification (training in guidance and counseling) and the effectiveness of alternative discipline strategies (Dependent variable).

Table 4.2 Effect of Training in Guidance and Counseling on alternative discipline strategies

INDIPENDENT VARIABLE: Academic Qualification (Training in Guidance and Counseling)		DEPENDENT VARIABLE: Effectiveness of Alternative Discipline Strategies to Corporal Punishment				
		Always Effective	Occasionally Effective	Rarely Effective	Never Effective	TOTAL
With Training	Count	4	16	2	0	22
	% Within the group	18	73	9	0	100
Without Training	Count	3	12	8	4	27
	% Within the group	11	44	30	15	100
TOTAL	Count	7	26	12	4	49
	% Within the group	14	53	25	8	100

From this table there is a clear pattern on how the respondents' perceive the effectiveness of alternative discipline strategies. More teachers with training in guidance and counseling than those without the training for instance rated the alternatives as always effective and occasionally effective. Fewer of them rated them as rarely effective and none of them rated the alternatives as never effective. To the contrary a total 35% of teachers without training in guidance and counseling rated the alternative strategies of discipline either rarely effective or never effective. These findings confirm a serious concern by Canter and Marlene (1992) that teachers as professionals receive minimal, if any, comprehensive training in behavior management, yet ironically they are required to work more and more with children who have more and more problems.

In regard to teachers' teaching experience majority of teachers (59%) and students (72%) reported that teachers with more years of teaching experience use alternatives to corporal punishment more effectively. The reason given for this was that such teachers happen to have encountered similar misbehaviors by students and therefore they are usually better placed to choose the best discipline strategy for various indiscipline cases. A senior Principal however claimed that a good number of teachers are of the old school of thought, that is, they started teaching before corporal punishment was banned and therefore they tend to be custodians of the status quo. The other teachers felt that teaching experience had little impact on the effectiveness of alternatives to corporal punishment since teachers were not in-service following the introduction of the new discipline policy.

4.2.4 Effect of teacher's/student's awareness of children rights on the effectiveness of alternative discipline strategies

This was the fourth objective of the study. Most teachers and students are aware of children rights according to majority of teachers (64%) and students (70%). Only 13% of the teacher respondents felt that some teachers lack awareness on children rights. The following are some of the comments teachers made on this issue: Sometimes students tend to ignore instructions from the teacher if they know they have a right not to be caned, forced caning sometimes trigger unrest and even strikes in schools, very few students take guidance and counseling serious since they know they will not be caned, and teachers tend to ignore some indiscipline cases and misbehaviors as they would prefer solving them through corporal punishment, children are caned at home; why not at school? Student respondents on the other hand observed that "teachers know children rights but break them", "students who stand by their rights (refuse to be caned) invite more trouble such as suspension from school" These finding confirm the claim by the Children Rights Movement campaigners that many teachers still believe in a 'right' to violence against children (Mbiti, 2003).

Finally the respondents were asked to tell how they thought discipline could be improved in Kenyan secondary schools. Teachers gave the following suggestions: Strengthen guidance and counseling in schools, involve parents in discipline matters, teachers to be role models of good behavior, in-service teachers on the use of alternatives to corporal punishment, give teachers freedom to use any method of discipline they deem appropriate including moderate caning, emphasize religion and moral values among students, reward good discipline, allow students to express their views freely, create awareness on children rights to students, teachers and parents, have clear and practical student discipline policies, eradicate the culture of violence in the society, use dialogue to solve discipline problems, reinstate corporal punishment but moderate it; define who and to what extent it should be administered. On the other hand, student suggested suspension of misbehaving students from school, removal of caning, discipline seminars for both students and teachers, teachers to understand students' backgrounds and try to cope with them, involve parents and respect students.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to establish factors that influence effectiveness of the alternative discipline strategies to corporal punishment in secondary schools in Imenti North District. In respect to what the alternatives to corporal punishment secondary schools have in place the following methods were identified: guidance and counseling, withdrawal of privileges, suspension from school, involving parent/guardian, giving manual work to the student (sweeping, collecting litter, cleaning), expulsion from school, sending the disturbing student out of class, standing up, warning in writing, modeling and reinforcement of good behavior and peer counseling.

These alternative discipline strategies however have not yet replaced corporal punishment in the schools because caning is viewed as a quick way of correction, teachers were not in-serviced

following the ban of corporal punishment, and the alternative strategies are not clearly defined in many schools and are not harmonized. Majority of teachers and students view the alternative discipline methods as being occasionally effective. Teachers are not at home with the ban of corporal punishment; that is why they have not fully embraced the use of alternative strategies of discipline. Majority of the teachers demand reinstatement of corporal punishment.

With regard to gender it was established that it affects the manner in which the alternative discipline strategies are administered and hence their effectiveness. Guidance and counseling work better when the teacher and student are of the same sex. Further, given an opportunity majority of students would choose to go for counseling to a teacher of same gender as theirs. In addition, majority of students would go for counseling to a female teacher and interestingly, almost half of the boys would do so as opposed to very few girls who would choose a male counselor. The conclusion is that female counselors are in high demand in secondary schools. More girls than boys would want corporal punishment reinstated but more male teachers than female teachers want the method of punishment back. It is concluded that boys are victims of caning more than girls and that male teachers like using the cane more than female teachers in handling student discipline.

In respect to the qualifications and work experience of teachers, this research established that Inmenti North District secondary schools have a majority of well qualified teachers; holders of Diplomas, Degrees or Masters Degrees in Education. More than half of the teachers however lack special training in the management of student discipline such as guidance and counseling. From the views and opinions of participants, this study concludes that professional qualification of teachers affect the alternative discipline strategies, with training in Guidance and Counseling having a greater effect on the effectiveness of the alternative strategies of discipline. Teachers trained in guidance and counseling rarely use the cane in disciplining students. In regard to teachers' work experience, this research concludes that teaching experience has little effect on the effectiveness of alternative discipline methods because teachers were not in-service following the ban of corporal punishment. Finally, on the awareness of children rights, this research concludes that the prevalence of corporal punishment in secondary schools is not due to lack of awareness of children rights. Majority of teachers and students specifically know that caning was banned in schools. Teachers therefore intentionally break the law claiming that corporal punishment is a quick way of correction. They further claim they were not consulted when the cane was withdrawn and even majority of them demand for reinstatement of corporal punishment. Students accept corporal punishment for fear of more serious consequences such as suspension from school. Teachers sometimes give blind eye to student misbehaviors since corporal punishment is illegal whereas they would like to use it. Students sometimes misbehave because after all they have a right not to be caned.

Guided by these findings it is recommended that:

- i) The Ministry of Education provides a clear Student Discipline Policy which should explain clearly the alternatives to corporal punishment to be made available in every school, both to prevent and to deal with indiscipline. It should state unequivocally what a teacher should do in case a student breaches any of the school rules.
- ii) Guidance and Counseling in schools is strengthened at the teacher level. Proper training in guidance and counseling and in special courses on the management of school discipline should be made compulsory in the teaching profession. Teacher Colleges and Universities to design the courses so as to meet the discipline demand in secondary schools. This should be followed by a compulsory in-service of all teachers currently teaching in both public and private schools.
- iii) A Task Force is set to look into the demand to reinstate corporal punishment by over half of the teachers; perhaps they have a genuine concern.

- iv) Schools appoint teachers of guidance and counseling of both genders so as to provide students with the opportunity to consider gender when seeking counseling services. Teachers should be sensitized on fairness in regard to administration of punishment to students of both genders, to prevent the boys, for instance, from feeling that they are victims of harsher punishment.
- v) Students are sensitized on children rights, not only in regard to corporal punishment but also on other areas to ensure they are safe while in school and while outside school. Extend the sensitization to teachers, B.O.M and parents as important stakeholders in education.
- vi. Conduct further research to establish the perceptions of other stakeholders such as parents regarding effectiveness of the alternatives to corporal punishment in handling student discipline.

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