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Influence of Corporal Punishment on English Language Students in Enugu Education Zone

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Abstract

There seems to be a belief that ‘if one spares the rod, a child gets spoilt’. This notion seems to negate effective learning. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the influence of corporal punishment on secondary school students in the English language in the Enugu Education Zone. Three purposes of the study and the corresponding research questions guided the study. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design. Education Zone has 36 public secondary schools and a student population of 56,620. Out of this number, a sample size 397 was drawn using the Yaro Yamane formula for sample size determination. The instrument used for the collection of data was a questionnaire designed on a Likert scale of strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), and strongly disagree (SD). The instrument was validated by lecturers from Enugu State College of Education (Technical), Enugu. The test-retest method was adopted for the reliability test. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was the statistical tool for the computation. The result was 0.796, showing a positive correlation. The mean was used as a tool for data analysis. The decision rule is that it is accepted when the calculated mean in each cluster is 2.50 and above. The reverse prevails when the calculated mean is less than 2.50. Corporal punishment affects class participation in the English language in secondary schools in Enugu Educational Zone. Again, the government should organise workshops on alternative forms of corporal punishment. This is very expedient because there seems to be this inherent notion in Africa and perhaps other climes that if one ‘spares the rod, the child will be spoilt.’

Keywords: *Corporal punishment, Education, Enugu State, Language.*

Introduction

Educational institutions have the unique attribute of ensuring that those who pass through the system must be found worthy in character and learning. Schools set the standard rules of engagement to achieve the set goals. Punishment is equally meted out to students who contravene the rules. Thus, punishment could be viewed as an action taken to correct and re-focus students’ activities for a better result. However, there are situations where the punishment awarded to students who failed to abide by the rules is beyond the age of the students, or the punishment given is not in tandem with the offence committed. This is referred to as corporal punishment. Bogacki (2015:193) noted that corporal punishment uses physical force to cause a child to experience pain, but not injury, to correct or control the child’s behaviour. Such physical force includes patting, hitting, punching, spanking or other forms of punishment. Educational psychologists have added verbal abuse, such as insults and threats, as forms of corporal punishment to students.

Every teacher expects an outstanding learning outcome from students. To this end, teachers would constantly assess class participation by questioning the students in a situation where students fail to understand what the teacher is teaching because of some indiscipline behaviour like noise-making, failure to do take-home assignments, and careless personal hygiene, among

others. This may trigger actions from the teacher to the students that may be called corporal punishment. Such include but are not restricted to inflicting physical pains like flogging, hitting, and verbal abuse, among. This type of unruly behaviour is common in general subject classes like the English language class because students are often large in number and, at times difficult to call them to order. The immediate action of the teacher may trigger corporal punishment on the students to draw their attention.

Eya and Ebene (2014:175) affirmed that a negative physical and social environment significantly influences students' comfort level participation. Such a negative environment includes the reaction of the teacher at every provocation. Eya and Ebenebe (2014) further pointed out that where the school is large, and classes are too crowded so that the teacher does not even know their students, many students tend to hide behind the cover of anonymity and engage in the behaviour they normally would avoid. Under such circumstances, the teacher may dish out punishment with all intents and purposes to control the students. Some punishments may be corporal punishment like flogging or using derogatory words on students. Ritchie (2018:1) affirmed that corporal punishment reflects a failure on the part of the teacher, and from the pedagogical disposition, the author noted that corporal punishment is an assault on the dignity of the teaching profession; hence any act that inflicts physical or emotional pain on the learner lead to anti-social behaviour which ultimately makes the entire efforts of teachers.

Corporal punishment impedes students' listening skills in the English language class and in all other subjects. Listening involves receiving language through the ears. It involves identifying the sounds of speech and processing into words and sentences. When listening, the ears receive sounds like letters, rhythm and pauses (Nnamdi et al., 2019). Listening sends a signal to the brain for interpretation under normal conditions; the brain receives the signal and gives it meaning. However, under an abnormal condition that may be perpetrated by corporal punishment, the brain may be receiving the wrong signal, as may be caused by fear and anxiety. As Seaward (2019) noted, anxiety or fear induces worries, loss of self-confidence, loss of focus, forgetfulness, nightmares, loss of sexual interest, sleeplessness, increased heartbeat, and irritability with others, among other mental health challenges. Owen (2013), buttressing the position, affirmed that identifiable factors impede effective listening. These include the mental state of the listener and lack of listening preparation. Sometimes, students suffer emotional trauma not even from the teacher but probably from family violence. This could trigger mental torture and mind absence from the class. A teacher who may not be observant could throw a question to the challenged student only to receive an unthinkable response or, at best, complete silence from the student. The teacher may, out of ignorance of the students' mental challenge, award verbal abuse or physical injury to the student to redirect the student's mindset. Such correction may not be effective but rather induce more fear and anxiety in the learner.

The social environment where learning occurs is crucial for effective learning outcomes. Part of the social environment is the relationship between the students and the teachers. Baker (2016:09) maintained that a strong teacher-student relationship is one of the most critical environmental factors in changing a child's educational path. Establishing good social relationships can seriously impact effective teaching and learning and give room for accurate student evaluation by teachers. When teachers employ corporal punishment, it breeds tension and fear. Attendance to class under such circumstances may suggest a nightmare to students. In their nature, human beings abhor pains and easily adapt to pleasure. Shaikhngang, Assan and Locate (2015) stressed that even if corporal punishment discourages misbehaviour, it does not foster appropriate behaviour. For the authors, corporal punishment affects relationships and deters a positive mindset; it sets the mental state of the students negatively against the teachers.

Perception varies among teachers and even students, who are the direct recipients of corporal punishment on whether corporal punishment is good or not. Ojo (2018) noted that in Nigerian schools, corporal punishment is perceived as an integral part of education, holding a place in school teaching. The perception has been that corporal punishment that has the potential to decrease misbehaviours amongst children to increase the likelihood that the children will subsequently engage in desirable behaviour in the future, even when parents or adults are not around to discipline them. Others, however, perceive corporal punishment as bad and retrogressive. Opponents of corporal punishment noted that instructors may discipline children by assigning non-abusive physical tasks. They state that teachers can ask students to perform light chores like fetching water, weed a school farm or fixing what they have broken (Human right Watch, 2018:11). The opponents further argued that if we are legally prohibited from striking other adults, why is it okay to strike a child.

Corporal punishment has been associated with a variety of psychological and behavioural disorders in children and adults, including anxiety, depression, withdrawal, low self-esteem, impulsiveness, delinquency and abuse of substance. Despite the apparent negative implication of awarding corporal punishment as means of correcting students, in some parts of the world, it is used extensively freely, partly because teachers do not know any other method to discipline students due to the low level of education and partly because there are no measures in existence to restrain its use (Mwamwenda, 2015). However, in 1989 governments worldwide promised all children their rights by adopting the United Nations Convention on the child's rights (CRC). The convention stipulates that school discipline has to be consistent with the child's human dignity and conformity with the present convention. Article 28(2) dictates that "it is without using corporal punishment". (UNICEF 2010 in Dlamini, Dlamini & Bhebhe, 2017).

Despite the criticism leveled against the use of corporal punishment in schools, some teachers and even parents believe it is the best way to inculcate desired value on young minds. Against this backdrop, the researcher investigated the influence of corporal punishment on secondary school students in English language in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State.

Statement of the Problem

The use of corporal punishment to inculcate the right values and attitudes in students seems to have become a norm in schools, particularly in our time, where there is a strong belief that if one spares the rod, he or she will spoil the child. It is no longer news that a child comes home with wounds resulting from flogging, hitting or other physical injuries from teachers or school heads. Some parents or guardians have staged a war against teachers or school authorities that inflict such punishment on their children or wards. Sometimes, too, children come home from school completely traumatised by verbal abuse from teachers or other school authorities. The bottom line of these actions on students is ensuring that learning occurs.

However, the mental torture arising from such action from teachers and or school authorities seem to hurt students' learning outcome. In an English language class, for instance, teachers often ask students to recite or read out texts before the class. At any mistake from the student, the teacher may flog, hit or rain insults on the students, particularly when corrections have severally been given on how to carry out the exercise is almost a daily occurrence. The impact is that students dodge the English language class, among other subjects, to avoid possible punishment, many of which are corporal punishment from the teachers of those subjects. Scholars have studied the impact of corporal punishment on learning outcomes for students, corporal punishment and student-teacher relationships. However, few of these studies have

dealt with the influence of corporal punishment on secondary schools students in English language. This is the gap in knowledge that this present study was poised to undertake.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of corporal punishment on secondary school students in the English language in Enugu Education Zone. The specific purposes of the study include:

1. To investigate how corporal punishment influences class participation of students in English language class in secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone.
2. To find out how corporal punishment influence listening skills in English language in secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone.
3. To examine how corporal punishment influences student-teacher relationship in English language class in secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study;

1. How does corporal punishment influence students class participation in English language class in secondary schools in Enugu Education zone?
2. How does corporal punishment influence listening skills of students in English language class in secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone?
3. How does corporal punishment influence student-teacher relationship in English language class in secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone?

Review of Literature

Concept of Corporal Punishment

Strans & Mouradian (2018) defined corporal punishment as intentional application of physical pain as a method of behavior change. It includes a variety of methods such as hitting, slapping, spanking, punching, kicking, pinching, shaking, sharing and chocking, use of various objects like wooden paddles, belts, sticks, pins, other painful body posture such as placing in closed space, use of electric shock, use of excessive exercise, drill or prevention of urine or stool elimination (Gershoff & Bitemsky, 2017). United Nations Committee on the Right of the child 2006 cited in UNICEF (2015) conceptualized corporal punishment as any punishment in which physical force is used and intend to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light, most involving hitting, smacking, slapping, spanking children with hand or with an implement-whip-stick, belt, shoe, wooden spoon etc. But it can also involves; for example, kicking, shaking or throwing children, scratching, pinching, burning, scalding or forced ingestion. These definitions present central focus conceptualization of corporal punishment and that is corporal punishment aims at inflicting pains on the recipient with the ultimate aim of infusing desired discipline. Helper & Gilles (2022) define corporal punishment as the physical punishment of students by teachers when students have disobeyed a class rule. The major forms of corporal punishment include slapping, paddling and punching. The American Academy of child and Adolescent psychiatry (2023) defines corporal punishment as a discipline method in which a supervising adult deliberately inflicts pain upon a child in response to a child's unacceptable behavior and inappropriate language. The immediate aims of such punishment are usually to halt the offence, prevent its re-occurrence and set an example for others.

The purported long-term goal is change in the child's behavior and make it more consistent with the adult's expectations. Other non-physical forms of corporal punishments can be cruel and degrading, and thus also incompatible with the convention, and often accompany and overlap with physical punishment. These include punishments which belittle, humiliate, denigrate, scapegoat, threaten, scare or ridicule the child (World Health Organization). Corporal punishment encompasses all types of physical punishment including spanking, slapping, pinching, pulling, twisting and hitting with an object, it equally includes forcing a child to consume unpleasant substances such as soap, hot sauce or hot pepper (Adah, 2022). Corporal punishment is the act of padding, spanking or other forms of physical punishment imposed on a student (Morgan, 2022). Topper (2022) stressed that corporal punishment stops many students from maximum performance in leaning situations. A student may not be good at studies but finds pleasure in some other activities. If he or she is forced to do something with corporal punishment, his or her natural talents may not find a way to flourish.

Concept of Student

Cambridge dictionary (2023) conceptualized a student as a person who is studying at school, college or university, someone who knows about a subject and is interested in it, but may not have studied it formally. A student is a person who is studying at a place of further education, at a university or college. A student is a person who goes to school to learn something. Students can be children, teenagers or adults who are going to school.

Concept of the English Language

English is a West German language first spoken in Anglo-Saxon England in the early Middle Ages. It is now the most widely used language in the world. It is spoken in many countries worldwide and is the first language of the United States, Canada, Australia, Ireland, New Zealand, and several Caribbean nations (Seth, 2017). The English language is the official language of the country; that is to say, the language of parliament and the law court, as well as the language of communication and illustration in all educational institutions and stations (Maduabum, 2014, p. 56). Etema (2014:24) stated that the ownership of the English language rests with the people who use it; however multilingual or monolingual, English is the mother tongue of nations.

Corporal Punishment and Class Participation of Students

Corporal punishment impedes student's interest in learning. It retards motivation to focus in the learning process and consequently affects the healthy personality development of students in academic life (Ahmad, Said, & Khan, 2013:32). Corporal punishment injects fear in children and makes them focus on the consequences of not doing well in class work or not behaving accordingly instead of focusing on class activities. Chikwature and Oyedele (2016:19) stressed that dropout rates increase as students leave school to save themselves from punishment and miss classes, leading to academic failure. Tapper (2022:113) observed that corporal punishment stops many students from flourishing in the way they would have done. A student may not be good at studies but finds pleasure in other activities. If he or she is forced to do something with corporal punishment, his natural talents may not find a way to flourish. The child's mind is very sensitive, and corporal punishment may result in serious consequences, including absence from school, bullying of fellow students, and pilfering, among other anti-social behaviours.

Corporal punishment puts fear in students, causing them to scream, pee, vomit and run out of school to go home (Goodman, 2020, p. 5). A child who is punished beyond his or her capacity to bear will never be friendly to the environment. Even when that child has left school, the memory of what he or she passed through while in school remains indelible. Mawhinney and Peterson (2016:131) noted that overuse of punishment in harsh and unskilled ways can have undesirable, dangerous and long-lasting effects on children who may develop negative personality traits such as disliking the punishing person, developing intense fear and anxiety and obstacles with learning. Global initiatives to end all corporal punishment of children (2012), as cited in *Amolo*, Ganira and Okech (20119:113), pointed out that learners subjected to corporal punishment tend to be aggressive, bully peers in school, predisposed to anti-social behaviour and commit violent crimes. Further still, the Committee on Economic, social and Cultural Rights (2013) found that corporal punishment is less effective in behavioural management than positive role modelling in developing character, respect and values among children. As a result, schools that advocate for corporal punishment experience increased aggressive and destructive behaviour, vandalism, inadequate learning achievement, detest being asked questions in class and would always prefer to engage in odd activities in school even when others are in class.

Human Rights Watch (1999), cited in (Ojo, 2018, p. 23), states that educators psychologists, teachers and caregivers can oversee classroom activities and develop students' knowledge, skill and aptitude through means other than corporal punishment. For example, praising students' good behaviour, imposing non-physical punishments, and involving children in making the school rules significantly reduce disciplinary problems. Implicitly, children who feel cherished

would always open up; even on personal challenges to the adult person. This would not be so in a situation where corporal punishment is awarded to learners to inculcate desired behaviour and good learning outcome. Corporal punishment is linked to a range of negative outcomes for children across countries and cultures; including physical and mental ill-health, impaired cognitive and socio-emotional development, poor educational outcome, increased aggression and perpetration of violence (WHO, 2021). Generally, punishment in schools seems to be an ineffective, dangerous and unacceptable method of controlling and maintaining discipline as it brings negative rather than positive consequences in the whole process of teaching and learning. It increases anti-social behaviour, lower intellectual achievements, enhances poor quality of parents or student-teacher relation and causes mental health problems (Godlove, 2021, p. 8). A child who constantly receive corporal punishment as a measure of correction will develop resistance to the punishment and to that end, become a social mischief and ultimately do away with school and its disciplinary method.

Saavedra, McDonald, Fevra, Quota, and Wodon (2021:2) observed that in Francophone Africa, one-third of teachers (both male and female) in grade 6 reported using corporal punishment in the classroom. On the students side almost two-thirds of children or youths reported being beaten by teachers. Students declared being afraid at school, which had a large and statistically significant negative effect on their class participation and general poor learning performance, Saavedra et al (2021:2) further noted that corporal punishment is also a factor which is associated with student dropout, bullying and other anti-social behaviors. It impacts negatively on outcomes such as social and emotional well-being and leave permanent scars that affect productive later in life. Eya and Ebene (2014:171) stressed that, for school to achieve its set goals, school education must exclude fear and coercion to achieve end defined by teachers, parents or society, putting child in unsafe situation under adult supervision and doing damaged to child's confidence through the atmosphere at school of ridicule, punishment or failure or communication of incapacity. Corporal punishment can create a mindset of fear in a student. Rule by fear may become embedded in the students life, if it is inculcated as mere punishment. Out of fear, the student would try to perform well and not out of sheer interest to learn and grow. Fear paralyzes students mind as not to exercise their creativity up to maximum extent in their own right (Ani, 2013:3) further stated that students develop an attitude to avoid a challenge even without trying. Such students inflicted with corporal punishment tend to quit easily from academic challenges, making self-critical comment such as "I am good at nothing", "why am I not important?", "I am such a failure". Implicitly when such occupies the thought process of a student, it becomes quite difficult to be part of the academic activities.

Corporal Punishment and Listening Skills of Students

Kapanadze (2019:68) affirmed that listening is a skill that encompasses comprehension and thinking skills. Listening should not be considered more convenient to thinking. Listening is a means of identifying the sounds produced by a speaker, perceiving intonation patterns and interpreting the level of relation between spoken words. A child who is subjected to corporal punishment may not be in the right frame of mind to understand word notations hence he or she lacks the listening skills that aid understanding of words. Pandey (2021:28) noted that corporal punishment has been associated with a variety of psychological and behavioral disorders, mental harassment, feeling of helplessness, worthlessness, inhibition, aggression among other mental health challenges. Implicit from this position is that there is a direct link between ability to listen and the mental alertness of individual. A child who is subjected to corporal punishment may not be focused in the class. Most of the time, his or her mindset is occupied by the type of punishment he or she may receive at any mistake. The attitude of the teacher, his behavior, his manner of speaking, his dressing, briefly everything, is so important.

It is very effective on the students attention (Cokun & Kopru, 2021). Listening is practiced for the purpose of pleasure, persuasion, perception and comprehension (Gunes, 2016:147). If students are not conscious, they do not want to listen to the teacher during lesson and they can be more interested on the things outside of the school. Part of the things that makes students to be conscious in the class is the ability to understand the child at all times not by coercion but persuasion. This cannot be fully internalized when learners are subjected to corporal punishment. Through corporal punishment temporal change may occur at the onset because of fear and anxiety, but will degenerate in the long run.

Eya and Ebene (2014:134) stressed that one of the most important skills in learning English language is reading, especially, comprehension, but one cannot achieve good comprehension without mastering how to listen. A child subjected to corporal punishment may find it difficult to adopt and adapt the listening skill and to that end affect comprehension which ultimately reduces if not blocks learning outcome. Adesope, Olusegun, Ogunwuiy, Olorode and Adelayo (2017:69) observed that there is a significant negative correlation between school corporal punishment and students' motivation towards education. Students who receive corporal may not see any reason for going to school. Obeying instructions will not be anything good particularly when they have developed thick skin resulting from the corporal punishments received overtime. Mere telling a pupil that you will give him something good will make the child to behave in a desired way including proper adaptation to ways to achieving good listening skills. (Eya & Ebene, 2014:149).

Perception of Corporal Punishment

Corporal or physical punishment is highly prevalent globally; both in homes and schools. Around 60% of children age 2-14 years regularly suffer physical punishment by their parents or other caregivers. In some countries, almost all students report being physically punished by school staff. Evidence shows that corporal punishment increases children's behavioural problems overtime and has no [positive outcome (WHO, 2021). The American Academy of Pediatricians condemned the use of corporal punishment on children because of devastating effects it has on growth and development of children, The organization, however, recommended healthy forms of discipline such as positive reinforcement of appropriate behaviour, limit setting, redirecting and setting future expectations (Adah, 2021, p. 19) . Despite the opposition by health experts and the public on corporal punishment like spanking, a survey conducted by the Harris Poll in 2013 discovered that 81% of Americans privately support spanking with 88% of mature parents, 85% of baby boomers and 82% of parents approving corporal punishment (Morin,2022). Maphosa (2013) noted that there have been students misconducts in schools. The author noted that today, schools face more complex acts of misconduct than previously. While some teachers argue that corporal punishment is the answer, others perceive corporal punishment to be repugnant. The latter group prefers instilling discipline among learners (Mugabe & Maphosa, 2013). People who are for corporal punishment in schools perceive physical force as an ineffective and or unethical method of controlling human beings (Goodman, 2020). Some students perceive corporal punishment as a measure to monitor their discipline. Yet, other students view corporal punishment as not good for students as it causes them to escape from classroom and may lead into dropouts and can instill fear to learner and therefore contribute to poor academic performance in their subjects (Baraka & Samwel, 2017). Ogbe (2015) drew a theological viewpoint on corporal punishment which Christians draw from the bible that it is wrong to barn corporal punishment in schools and at home. To Christian believers, restoring corporal punishment in school will reduce moral decadence and the associated ills. Despite various talks by teachers and parents, the attitude of some parents going to school to confront teachers over inflicting corporal punishment on their

children/wards and instituting court cases of corporal punishment between teachers and board of education on one side and parents/civil right group on the other side. Napodia (2007) cited in Ogbe (2015: 24) analysed the conceptual etiology of corporal punishment when he stated thus:

Corporal punishment entails physical chastisement of Students/pupils for behaviour. It is punitive in nature The Holy Bible is in support of reasonable corporal Punishment as can be seen in the Book of Proverb chapter 22 Verse 15 and Proverb Chapter 23 verse 12-44'' Foolishness is Bound in the heart of child but the rod of correction shall drive it from him...''

Christian's perception of corporal punishment suggests that one must mortify the flesh to improve. Thus, a child should receive some strokes of cane to remind him or her of the consequences of negative behaviours. Such measures serve as deterrent not only to the recipient but to other children. Marrow and Singh (2014) affirmed that corporal punishment may involve striking learners across the buttocks or palm by use of a wicker cane, wooden paddle, slippers, leather strap or wooden yardstick. Marcus (2014) opined that spanking or smacking learners with an open hand, especially in junior schools due to undesirable behaviour, is a form of corporal punishment that should be prohibited. Marcus (2014) maintained that despite the negative consequences, teachers and parents acknowledge that use of corporal punishment provides an immediate response to indiscipline, enabling the learner to continue learning, unlike when suspended from school. Grogan (2016:66) perceived corporal punishment as a violation of the fundamental rights of the child, it violates the human dignity and physical integrity among learners.

The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) has decried the ill-treatment meted on school children, saying that 85% of them between the ages of one and 14 experience violent discipline in schools, with nearly one in every three children experiencing severe physical punishment in the very institution that are entrusted to keep children safer, develop respect for human right and prepare them for life in a society that promotes understanding, peace and conflict resolution through dialogue. If we use corporal punishment for correction, then we are inciting the child's attitude; they will feel like, after all, it is just flogging. Thus, it conditions a permanent result on that behaviour (Adedigba, 2021, p. 1). In Nigeria, corporal punishment is slowly disappearing from schools. However, teachers, parents and other stakeholders disagree on the potential negative effect of corporal punishment on the development of the pupils.

In a study by Anwar, Zeeshan and Sajja (2021) entitled 'Impact of Corporal Punishment on Students' Academic Performance at Elementary School Level' the study was a survey design. Data were elicited from the respondents through the use of a questionnaire. A total of 125 teachers and 457 students were randomly selected, and data was analysed using the mean. The result showed that corporal punishment negatively affects academic performance. The students punished by teachers lack class concentration and coordination and perform poorly in the final examination. Those students who were not trained with corporal punishment showed resilience and focused in their academic activities. As a result, they perform very well in external examinations.

In another study by Batool, Ali and Mehmood (2017) entitled 'Corporal Punishment and its Effect on Students' Learning: A study of Selected Schools in Rawalpindi and Rawat, the study adopted a mixed method as the research design. The study population was 1145, and the sample

size was 312 from six schools. Questionnaires and interviews were instruments for data collection. The study found that students who received corporal punishment resigned from school. The study further found that corporal punishment has serious negative implications on students' behaviour. In a study by Addison (2015) entitled 'Effect of Corporal Punishment on Girls' Enrolment and Retention in the Techiman Municipal, Ghana, the study adopted a descriptive survey design. A sample of 120 junior high school students from six public schools was selected. A questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. The finding revealed that corporal punishment negatively and positively affected students. The study further found that physical punishment makes some students stop school and impairs their retention. Such students lose interest in classroom activities as they prefer playing truancy outside of the school than being in the classroom for their studies. In another study by Mohammed, Mero and Jang (2017) entitled 'Corporal Punishment and its Implication on Motivation of Students to Learn: A Study of Public Secondary Schools In Jos Town,' The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design. The sample size for the study was 422 students selected across ten schools. A questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. The finding of the study was that students who receive corporal punishment are demoralised; they find it difficult to concentrate in class and at times, seek revenge against the teacher.

In a study by Coskun and Kopru (2021) entitled 'An Overview of Listening Skills of Secondary School Students: Barriers and Suggestions, the study adopted a cross-sectional survey design. Data were collected through a semi-structured interview. A purposive sampling method was adopted. The study found that students listen to their lectures when a teacher adopts the play method and without inflicting injury on the physical or mental body of the students. This implies that corporal punishment retards the listening skills of students and when this is hampered upon. Learning becomes complex and indeed challenging for learners.

In a study by Noreen, Rehman, Naz, Gul Bakhtawar and Kausar (2021) entitled 'Relationship between Corporal Punishment and Academic Performance and Well-being of School Students of Gojal Hunza, Pakistan' the study adopted a cross-sectional survey design. A sample of 110 students was selected across one private and two public schools. A questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. The study, among others, found that students subjected to corporal punishment perceive school to be very difficult. It was equally found from the study that such students drop out easily from school. In a similar study by Ojo (2018) entitled 'Corporal Punishment in Nigeria Schools from Psychological Perspective; Issues and Recommendations', the study adopted a cross-sectional survey design. A sample of 561 students was selected. A questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. Mean and standard deviation were statistical tools for analysis. The study found that students trained with corporal punishment hate attending classes. They perceive punishment given to them as an answer for their not being good. It was equally found that such students are dejected and lack internal cohesion. In a study by Baraka & Samwel (2017) entitled 'Students' Perception on Corporal Punishment and its Effect on Learning: A Case Study of Secondary Schools in Babati Rural District of Tanzania' the study adopted a descriptive survey. Data were collected using a questionnaire. A sample of 511 students was randomly selected. The study found that corporal punishment causes students to drop. The majority of the students perceive corporal punishment not as a corrective measure but as a deliberate act from the teacher to inflict pain on students he or she hates.

Theoretical Framework

The following theories were adopted as the theoretical framework for the study. The theories include the Social Learning Theory and the Functionalist theory.

Social Learning Theory

The theory was a brainchild of Albert Bandura in 1977. Bandura conducted series of experiments to determine whether social behaviour (aggression) could be accrued by observation and imitation. The basic assumptions of Social Learning Theory include:

1. People learn through observation. Learners can acquire new behaviour and knowledge by merely observing a model.
2. Reinforcement and punishment have indirect behavioural effects and people form expectations about the potential consequence of future responses based on how current responses are reinforced or punished.
3. Learning does not necessarily lead to change. Just because a person learns something does not mean they will have change in behaviour.

Relating the theory to the present study, corporal punishment; though in most instances is to correct someone; the negative effect of such is enormous. Students who receive corporal punishment as a means of correction develop into recidivism; a situation whereby punishment like flogging would not mean anything to the recipient. Again, where a child is trained through the award of corporal punishment, there is the tendency for such a child to uphold to violence as the only option to resolving issues. One of the criticisms raised against Social Learning Theory is that commitment to the environment principally influences behaviour. It is limiting to describe behaviour solely in terms of either nature or nurture and attempts to do this underestimate the complexity of human behaviour, (McLeod, 2016). However in spite of the criticism raised against the Social Learning Theory, the researcher found the theory very much relevant to the study.

Functionalist Theory

The theory was popularised by French sociologist Emile Durkheim (1855-1917). Durkheim was interested in studying the society. He theorised that society is like a biological organism which has parts, and all these parts are interrelated. When one part is affected, it affects other component units that comprise the whole. Functionalists believe that all the component units must be in equilibrium for progress to be achieved. For them, the change could occur but must not be allowed to destabilise the balance, instead the internal mechanism should be allowed to absorb the changes.

Relating the theory to the present study, the essence of education is to change the behavioural pattern of the recipient. Thus, every positive step should be taken to ensure that the learning environment is functional enough for a positive outcome. Implementing corporal punishment as a means of learning will be dysfunctional to the learning process and negate the ultimate aim of educating the child.

Functionalism has been criticised because society is not static. Society is instead in a state of flux and varies based on internal dynamics. Thus, what favours one may not be so in the other. Therefore, the internal mechanism of one society cannot be fitted into the other. However, despite the criticism, the researcher found the theory relevant to the study.

Research Method

Research Design.

The research design adopted for the study was cross-sectional survey design. Ezeah (2014) noted that cross-sectional survey design is an aspect of a descriptive survey. This is the

situation whereby the researcher collects data on variables of interest at a particular point in time. Ezeah (2014) noted that cross sectional survey design is appropriate when one is studying the perception, belief, system, values and demographic characteristics of people. The design takes a photographic situation of a particular issue or phenomenon under investigation. The study under reference is by no means an exception as it investigates the influence of corporal punishment on secondary school students in English language in Enugu education zone.

Area of the Study

The area of the study was Enugu Education Zone. The zone is one of the six educational zones in Enugu State. The zone is comprised of three local government areas; Enugu North Local Government Area, Enugu East local government Area and Isi-Uzor Local Government Area. The choice of the area of the study was because of relative concentration of teachers in Enugu Education Zone which often gives academic edge to other students in the other zones

Population of the Study

Enugu Education Zone has a total of 36 public secondary schools. The population of the study was 56620 students (Office of Planning, Research and Statistics, Enugu State Post Primary School Management Board, 2022).

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample size for the study was 397 students. This was determined using Taro Yamen formula for Sample Determination

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

- n – Sample size
- N – Population
- I – Constant.
- e - error margin

$$n = \frac{56620}{1 + 56620(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{56620}{1 + 56620 \cdot 0.0025}$$

$$n = \frac{56620}{139.05}$$

$$= 397$$

The researchers adopted a multi-stage sampling technique for the study. The schools were stratified based on local government areas. A simple random sampling technique was adopted to select two schools from each of the three local government areas comprising the zone. Thus, 6 public junior secondary schools were selected for the study. Because there are variations in the population strength of each school, the researchers adopted a proportional sampling procedure to determine the actual sample size.

Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument used for the collection of data was a questionnaire. It was structured on the four-point scale of strongly agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly disagree. The questionnaire contained 20 items and four clusters. Each cluster contained five items. The title of the

questionnaire was ICOPUOSSEL derived from the study title ‘Influence of Corporal Punishment on Secondary School Students in English Language in Education Zone

Validation of instrument

The instrument was validated by three experts’ one from measurement and Evaluation and two lecturers from Language Studies, all from the Enugu State College of Education Technical, Enugu. From the validity established, it was found that the socio-demographic data of respondents was not necessary since no hypothesis was to be tested. There were some typographical errors dictated. All these findings and corrections were incorporated in the instrument.

Reliability of Instrument

The researcher adopted the test-retest method to determine the reliability of the questionnaire. The researcher administered 20 questionnaires to 20 students in the Nsukka Education Zone (outside the area of the study). Two weeks later, the same instrument was re-administered to the same set of students. Using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient to calculate the two data sets, the result was 0.76, showing a positive correlation and that the instrument was reliable enough for the study.

Method of Data Collection

The questionnaire was administered and collected through the help of three research assistants, two males and two females. The criteria for selecting these research assistants were that they should be senior secondary school graduates and residents in the selected area of the study. The research assistants were told to be patient with the respondents and allow them to fill the questionnaire without intruding on the responses. When the respondents were indisposed to respond to the questionnaire immediately, the research assistants were told to agree on when to return. The research assistant carried out all the instructions as expected.

Method of Data Analysis

The mean was adopted as the statistical tool for data analysis. The decision rule is that where the calculated mean in each questionnaire item is equal to or higher than 2.5, it will be considered significant. However, if the calculated mean in each questionnaire item is below 2.5, it is considered insignificant. The researcher equally adopted grand means to determine the respondents' cumulative opinions.

Data Presentation and Findings.

Research Question 1: How does corporal punishment affect class participation in the English language in secondary schools in the Enugu Education zone?

Table 1: Mean Response on the Influence of Corporal Punishment and Students Classroom Participation in English Language.

S/N	Questionnaire item								
		SA	A	D	SD	N	EF X	X	Decision
1	Corporal punishment makes students to be very active in the English	41 164	61 183	98 196	197 197	397	740	1.8 6	Disagree

	Language class; ask and answer questions								
2	The use of corporal punishment makes student to understand the English Language teacher and can easily add value to the lesson.	44 176	68 204	104 208	181 181	397	769	1.9 3	Disagree
3	Corporal punishment makes students to have interest in the English language lesson and as such contribute in the lesson	39 156	43 129	116 232	199 199	397	716	1.8 0	Disagree
4	Through the use of corporal punishment students easily adapt to the corrections in the use of English Language class.	41 164	52 156	109 218	195 195	397	733	1.8 4	Disagree
5	Fear of punishment has no impact on students' participation in the English Language class. Thus, students bare their minds on issues raised in class.	57 228	66 132	119 238	155 155	397	753	1.8 9	Disagree
	Grand Mean							1.8 6	

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Research question 1 sought to find out how corporal punishment affect class participation in the English language in secondary schools in the Enugu Education zone. Data were elicited in a cluster of five questionnaire items as contained in numbers 1,2,3,4 and 5 and presented in Table 1. The questionnaire items had a mean of 1.86, 1.93, 1.80, 1.84 and 1.89, respectively. The grand mean was 1.86. Since all the questionnaire items had a mean less than the 2.5 critical regions, and the calculated grand mean of 1.86 was less than the 2.5 stipulated critical region, it implies that corporal punishment negatively affects class participation in the English language in secondary schools in the Enugu Education zone

Research Question 2: How does corporal punishment influence students' listening skills in the English language in secondary schools in Enugu Education?

Table 2 : Mean Response on the Influence of Corporal Punishment and Listening Skills in the English Language Class

S/N	Questionnaire item	SA	A	D	SD	N	EFX	X	Decision
6	The use of corporal punishment like caning students makes them to listen attentively while English Language lesson is going on	49 196	58 174	124 248	166 166	397		2.06	Disagree
7	Through the use of corporal punishment, students overcome the challenges of not being able to identify sounds of speech in the English Language and thus improve in listening skills	36 144	80 240	110 220	171 171	397	775	1.95	Disagree

8	The use of corporal punishment makes students to send the correct signal to the brain thereby facilitating listening skills in the English language.	32 126	44 132	128 256	193 193	397	707	1.78	Disagree
9	When teachers employ corporal punishment in learning listening skills in the English Language, speed and accuracy in listening skills are enhanced	49 196	56 168	121 242	171 171	397	777	1.95	Disagree
10	Use of corporal punishment in learning listening skills in the English Language boosts the morale of students to learning the English Language	52 208	38 114	119 238	188 188	397	748	1.88	Disagree
Grand mean								1.92	

Field Report,2023

Research question 2 sought to find out how corporal punishment influences listening skills in the English language in secondary schools in Enugu Education. Data were elicited in a cluster of five questionnaire items in numbers 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 and presented in Table 2. The questionnaire items had mean of 2.06, 1.95, 1.78, 1.95 and 1.88 respectively. The grand mean was 1.92. Since all the questionnaire items had mean less than the 2.5 critical region, and the calculated grand mean of 1.92 was less than 2.5 stipulated critical region, it implies that corporal punishment negatively affect listening skills of students in English language in secondary schools in Enugu Education zone

Research Question 3: How does corporal punishment affect student-teacher relationship in the English language class in secondary schools in Enugu Education zone

Table 3: Mean response on Corporal Punishment and student-teacher relationship in the English language class

S/N	Questionnaire items	SA	A	D	SD	N	EFX	X	Decision
16	Corporal punishment makes students to like teachers more and as such creates the understanding of the English Language lesson.	22 88	60 180	117 234	198 196	397	698	1.75	Disagree
17	The use of corporal punishment makes students to disclose their challenges to the teachers and this enhances learning of the English Language	38 152	42 126	133 266	184 184	397	728	1.83	Disagree

18	The use of corporal punishment makes students to open up their behaviour to teachers for appropriate measures to be taken for correction.	28 112	34 102	126 252	209 209	397	675	1.70	Disagree
19	Corporal punishment draws students closer to teachers and as such interest is easily developed for the subject	41 164	33 99	125 250	198 198	397	711	1.79	Disagree
20	Students dislike teachers who do not award corporal punishment but rather use subtle means to give corrections in the English Language class	24 96	41 123	121 242	211 211	397	672	1.69	Disagree
	Grand Mean							1.75	

Field Report, 2023.

Research question 3 sought to find out how corporal punishment affects student-teacher relationship in the English language class in secondary schools in Enugu Education zone

Data were elicited in a cluster of five questionnaire items as contained in numbers 16,17,18,19,20 and presented in table 3. The questionnaire items had mean of 1.75, 1.83, 1.70, 1.79 and 1.69 respectively. The grand mean was 1.75. Since all the questionnaire items had mean less than the 2.5 critical region, and the calculated grand mean of 1.75 was less than 2.5 stipulated critical region, it implies that corporal punishment negatively affects student-teacher relationship in the English language class in secondary schools in Enugu Education zone

Discussion of Findings

Research question 1 sought to investigate how corporal punishment affects class participation in the English language in secondary schools in the Enugu Education zone. It was found that corporal punishment negatively influences students' class participation in secondary schools in the Enugu Education Zone. The study's finding corroborates with Chikwature and Oyedele (2016), who stressed that dropout rates increase as students leave school to save themselves from punishment and miss classes, leading to academic failure. It equally agrees with the Functionalist theoretical postulation that corporal punishment is dysfunctional in students' learning behaviour. It breaks the expected bond of the student-teacher relationship, which is crucial to class participation.

Research question 2 sought to investigate how corporal punishment influences students' listening skills in the English language in secondary schools in Enugu Education. The finding was that corporal punishment negatively affects the listening skills of students in secondary schools in the English language in the Enugu Education zone. The finding is in tandem with Pandy (2021), who noted that corporal punishment has been associated with various psychological and behavioural disorders, mental harassment, feelings of helplessness, worthlessness, inhibition, and aggression, among other mental health challenges. Implicit from this position is that there is a direct link between the ability to listen and the mental alertness of an individual. A child subjected to corporal punishment may not be focused in class. It equally agrees with the functionalist theory that corporal punishment is not functional in the listening process of students.

Research question 3 sought to determine how corporal punishment affects the Student-teacher relationship in English language classes in the Enugu Education zone secondary schools. It was

found that Students have negative perception on teachers' use of corporal punishment in the English language class in secondary schools in Enugu Education zone. Students that receive corporal punishment are timid and find it difficult to speak up when challenged. The finding is in tandem with Rafique & Ahmed (2019: 34) who stressed that corporal punishment hampers children's emotional strength, increases aggressive behaviour, poor cognitive development, mental illness; especially anxiety and depression, lack of ambition, hampers creativity and attentiveness and cripples the person's ability to socialize or interact with teachers and other school subjects. This leads to impoverished academics that ultimately brings about school dropouts. It was also found that students do not show enough interest in their work as their mindset has been preoccupied with what action the teacher will take if they make a mistake. Again students would not forgive such teacher easily. The findings corroborate with Goodman (2020) who maintained that people who are not in favour of corporal punishment in schools perceive physical force as an ineffective and an unethical method of controlling human beings.

Conclusion

Corporal punishment has negative implications on learning the English Language in secondary schools in Enugu Education. It affects class participation as students find it pleasurable to stay out of the classroom as the slightest excuse. Corporal punishment negatively affects the listening skills of learners, and it hampers the learner-teacher relationship, which is fundamental in teaching learning encounters. The idea that the fear of punishment increases learning outcomes does not hold because corporal induces fear and anxiety in the learner, and when such happens, learning becomes difficult. Even when learning is assumed to have occurred, such is temporal and can fizzle out quickly. Learners do not internalise learning under the use of corporal punishment to inculcate values

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

1. There should be strict penalty on the use of corporal punishment as a way of inculcating positive values on students
2. Government should organize workshops on the corporal punishment alternative. This is very expedient because there seem to be this inherent notion in Africa and perhaps other climes that if one spares the rod the child will be spoilt
3. Government should help teachers to inculcate reading habits on students through the procurement of appropriate study aids so that learning becomes pleasurable rather than an uphill task

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