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I. Introduction

In the Eritrean education system, disciplining misbehaving students is understood as interchangeable with punishment. Student discipline refers to a decent and well-mannered conduct of learners that stimulates peaceful coexistence, core values, respect, "orderliness, eagerness to discharge duties with regularity and efficiency to high sense of responsibility that develops a sense of social conscience" (Mumthas, Munavvir and Abdul, 2014, p.301). On the contrary, punishment is an act of intimidating students through several means including unpleasant verbal insults and corporal punishments. Straus and Donnelly (in Naz, Khan, Daraz, Hussain, & Khan, 2011) define corporal punishment as "the use of physical force intended to cause pain, but not injury, for the purpose of correcting or controlling a child's behavior" (p. 130). However, the current study realized a distorted understanding of student discipline of students almost synonymous to sheer obedience to school authorities and teachers. In the Eritrean school system, punishment is used to discipline students in the aforementioned tone.

The way teachers interact with students directly or indirectly impact the emotional intelligence, academic performance and related facets of the learner's life (Rahimi and Karkami, 2012). The practice of students' corporal punishment in schools negatively affects the academic involvement and the social interactions of the students. This paper mainly focuses on the consequences of the existing school based disciplining techniques on students' behavioral, psychosocial, socio-emotional, academic performance and relationships mosaics in Eritrean secondary schools. The study further examines the fact that teachers use corporal punishment not only to correct misbehavior but also to vent one's aggression. The paper addresses the implications of the consequences of corporal punishment as a disciplinary practice on the different aspects of the students' lives.

II. Literature Review

Students' reactions and consequences of using corporal punishments in schools receive extensive scientific research coverage. However, the effort to halt the practice of corporal punishment in schools still remains a challenge. Greydanus et al. (2003) estimate the yearly number of student cases of physical punishment in schools to about 1.5 million. The researchers noted that the actual number is equal to 2 to 3 million cases annually. The findings by the researchers further indicate that about 10,000 to 20,000 students seek "subsequent medical treatment each year" (p. 386).

Often unwise student disciplining techniques in schools elicit confrontations from students. Corporal punishment of students is positively correlated with students' aggression and misbehaviors in classrooms and negatively correlated with students' responsibility and promotion of desired behaviors (Elgar et al., 2018; Lewis, 2001). Student victims of serious corporal punishment exhibit detrimental psychosocial consequences (Elgar et al., 2018). Educational researches confirm that exposing students to corporal punishment provokes neurotic reactions (Gudyanga,

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Mbengo and Wadesango, 2014). According to Mumthas et al. (2017), students noted that corporal punishment exposes learners to "shame, anger, sadness, fear, pain, tension, feeling hate to teachers, low self-esteem, mental fatigue and hate to the subject" (p.306).

Paradoxically, adults (parents and teachers) who were physically punished as children are more supportive of corporal punishment than those who were not. Some cultures and beliefs about punishment have high influence on how one should behave after being punished and accept punishment as part of their culture in the society (UNESCO, 2006). Teachers and school principals still believe that the practice does not yield long-term negative effects. A report by Save the Children – Swaziland (December 2008) disclosed that in the study conducted (in Swaziland) 60% of the student participants rated corporal punishment as "good" practice and 94.2% of the teacher participants noted that the practice of corporal punishment in schools "is aimed at developing a child's own self-discipline" (p. 5). From the researchers' observation and personal experiences, the Eritrean situation with regard to the practice of corporal punishment at home and at school belongs to the above context.

The most useful techniques for generating positive reactions are recognition and reward for responsible behavior and discussions with students where a negotiated outcome is achieved (Lewis, Romi, Katz, and Qui, 2008). When students lose motivation to learn in class, a number of reasons converge to the problem including the way they are treated in school. Students' treatment determines their vision and motivation to learn. Students interested in learning and high achievers rarely misbehave in school or classroom (Lopes and Oliveira, 2017). Lewi, Romi and Katz (in Rahimi and Karkami, 2012) noted positive interaction of teachers and school principals with students as "a potent force to promote students' sense of responsibility in the classroom" (p. 58). Students claim that their misbehaviors are reactions to their experiences of school based discriminatory behaviors and unfair treatments.

Corporal punishment leaves short-term and long-term undesirable consequences on students ranging from emotional stress like humiliation accompanying corporal punishment to inability of solving problems rationally. Thus, corporal punishment affects students mentally and physically. The phenomenon severely affects the learners' human dignity and personality development by inflicting feelings of helplessness, hopelessness and worthlessness. Corporal punishment reduces self-esteem and self-confidence of students. Corporal punishment turns students vulnerable to distrust, sense of guilt, outbursts of aggression, dissilience, revengefulness and weakening of learning interest (Smith, 2006). Researches reveal that corporal punishment in schools interrupts the normal sensory and emotional development of learners (Kambuga, Manyengo and Mbalamula, 2018). Students develop personality problems and dropout of school to escape the situation of corporal punishment (Mumthas, Munavvir and Abdul, 2014).

III. Research Method

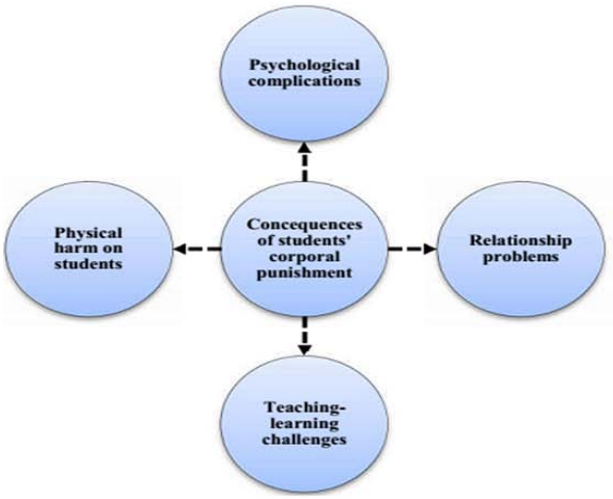
The study explored the students' reactions and potential consequences of practicing corporal punishment by teachers and principals in the pretext of disciplining misbehaving students in schools. The qualitative and quantitative data were collected from five secondary schools in Asmara involving different groups of school community and stakeholders. Specifically 67 school teachers and 403 secondary school students took part through self-administered questionnaire. On the other hand, 56 key informants from school leadership, members of parent-student-teacher association, the discipline committees of the selected schools and educational psychology students from the College of Education participated in the study through FGD. All the FGDs conducted were audio taped, carefully transcribed and thematically organized. The study also used school based field observations to gather relevant data. The quantitative data of the study were analyzed using descriptive data analysis techniques.

IV. Results

This section represents the thematic categories and the connections of the qualitative data as well as the descriptive analysis of the quantitative data associated with the consequences of disciplinary measures being practiced in the schools by teachers and principals. Fig.1 summarizes the views of students and teachers from the qualitative data with respect to the adverse and unwanted consequences of corporal punishment as a disciplining technique in the schools.

The major concepts of the findings displayed in the fig.1 below are highly interconnected and influence one another in determining students' behaviors. Corporal punishment is most commonly used students' disciplining technique in the schools. Physical harms, psychosocial complications, relationship problems and decreasing academic interest of students are among the major consequences of corporal punishment in schools. These are highly interrelated issues in affecting the learners' schooling.

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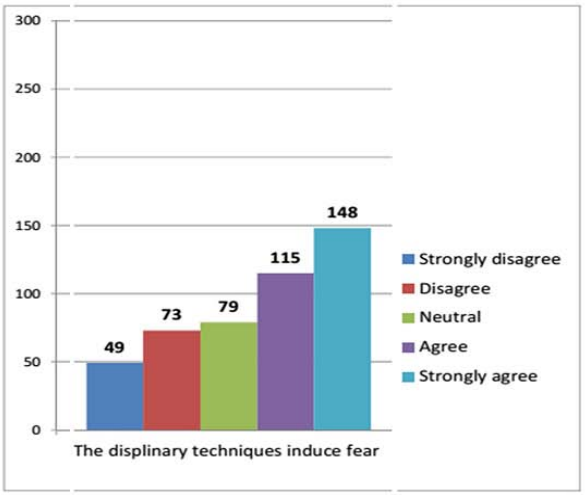


Fig. 1: Consequences of corporal punishment *Fig. 2:* Fear as negative consequence of corporal punishment

The bar graphs in Fig. 2 portray the descriptive results representing the views of teacher and student participants about the adverse consequence corporal punishment as a source of fear in students. The figure summarizes the collective responses to one of the major questions representing the research questions of the paper. Thus, the bars indicate the responses to the question about the negative consequences induced by the disciplining techniques of corporal punishment of students.

V. Discussion

There is an acute absence of empirical information in literature about the impact of harsh disciplining techniques used by teachers and school leaders in Eritrea. However, in the Eritrean schools, a teacher rarely goes to class or approaches students without a stick in hand. Hitting the students on the hand or other parts of their bodies is a common disciplining practice in the schools. Though school based disciplining students is part of the teaching-learning process, unwise disciplining consumes considerable amount of the instructional time. Furthermore, if students' disciplining is not handled appropriately, it leads to confrontations between students and teachers/school leadership and counterproductive behaviors of students.

Empirical literature about the negative impacts of corporal punishment on children shows that it affects especially young students in a number of dimensions (Kambuga, Manyengo and Mbalamula, 2018). It was clear during the school based observation that the confidence of students, the relationships and communication styles between the teachers and the students are hampered. The practice of corporal punishment in schools "rarely produces the desired result," i.e., it fails to positively and permanently change the misbehavior of students. On the contrary, the practice "can have very dire negative consequences" for the learner and the punisher (UNESCO, 2006, p. 19). The practice corporal punishment in schools induces negative consequences of physical harms, psychological scar and behavioral impacts on students. Research findings reveal that students with experiences of corporal punishment mock aggressive behaviors, face mental health problems, experience academic challenges and become victims of cognitive deficits (Elgar et al., 2018; Naz et al., 2011).

Physical Harms: Exercising corporal punishment as a disciplining strategy "can easily slip into physical abuse" (Gudyanga, Mbengo and Wadesango, 2014, p. 500). Physical harm and emotional effect in a sense include inflicting injures and pain as the result of corporal punishment. Studies reveal that corporal punishment practices induce negative consequences of physical harms and somatic complaints following punishment (Asare, Ousu-Mensah, Prince and Gyamera, 2015; Rahimi and Karkami, 2012; Greydanus et al., 2003).

Practicing corporal punishment to discipline students at home and school is known for its adverse behavioral and somatic impacts on the students' lives. Disciplining techniques of corporal punishment are "ineffective and harmful" (Gudyanga, Mbengo and Wadesango, 2014). Thus, participants reiterated physical harm on students is often observed as consequence of the corporal punishment. Children with the experience of harsh corporal punishment can "turn violent and physical at the slightest provocation" (Obiero, Kalai and Okoth, 2018, p. 41). According to Greydanus et al. (2003), though rare, there are serious physical injuries and student death incidents as a result of harsh corporal punishments.

Psychosocial complications: Corporally punished students are exposed to accompanying psychological

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frustrations as the result of the punishment itself and inflicted problems connected to the physical harms. Researches indicate multifaceted psychological effects of corporal punishments on students (Obiero, Kalai and Okoth, 2018; Makhasane and Chikoko, 2016; Marciniak, 2015; Rimal and Pokharel, 2013). The effects are linked to pushing students to lying, induced fear, anxiety, low self-confidence to express themselves, hatred and revenge mentality among the students (Obiero, Kalai and Okoth, 2018; Gudyanga, Mbengo and Wadesango, 2014). Students' lives become precarious and the situations thrust the students to mental harassment especially when parents fail to empathically understand and unconditionally accept them.

The negative psychological effects of students' punishment are related to the loss of trust in the teachers and development of feelings of resentments and revenge mentality. The revenge mentality itself has its own effect of hatred and desire to retaliate for the punishing teachers and school authorities associated with the pain and harm. Psychological complaints that lead to neurotic reactions such as fear, anxiety, withdrawal, tension, depression, stress, timidity and submissiveness are often reported by students (Rimal and Pokharel, 2013; Rahimi and Karkami, 2012). Punishment teaches students fear and inability to express their ideas and opinions. Students develop low confidence and low self-esteem that deter their involvement in classroom participation and academic presentations. Students punished at school loss courage and learn lying behavior being unable to boldly tell the truth both at home and school to avoid punishment (Obiero, Kalai and Okoth, 2018; Gyan et al. 2015).

Students do not confidently express their dissatisfactions individually and through meaningful arguments. Rather student murmur and use other mechanisms of disapproval and dissatisfaction that negatively affects classroom activities and later lives. Students utter bad words in the classroom when a teacher comes to classroom to teach them. Teachers punish the whole class or refuse to enter the class for days. Therefore, teachers attempt to discipline the whole class by using force and threatening. In the current study, only 26% of the participants disagreed disciplinary practices of corporal punishment in the schools induces fear in the students as a negative consequence in the learners (see Fig. 2).

Using empowering approaches to discipline misbehaving students "would build an effective teacher-student relationships" in schools (Asare, Ousu-Mensah, Prince and Gyamera, 2015, p. 8). The use of recognition and discussions with students are related to less distraction, greater liking of teachers and enhancement of relationships (Lewis, Romi, Katz and Qui, 2008). Students' readiness to keep school rules and eagerness to behave accordingly is a desirable behavior valued by teachers and school leaders. The appreciation of students' desired behavior by teachers and principals in school stimulates students' responsibility, self-learning, self-control, problem solving, decision making and relational communication skills (Kirera, 2015; Lewis, 2001). Therefore, teachers and school principals need to recognize students' behavioral challenges in order to minimize potential adverse consequences in the students' lives. But teachers need to communicate clear expectations from students in orders to develop their sense of responsibility (Lewis, Romi, Katz, and Qui, 2008).

Relationship and Behavioral Problems: Corporal punishment hinders the personal development and social relationships of learners (Lopes and Oliveira 2017; Naz et al., 2011). Practices of physical and psychological punishments have adverse consequences on the students' lives and interpersonal networks (Save the Children-Swaziland, December 2008). Corporal punishment gives teachers and school principals a wrong and misleading impression about the students' behaviors because the students seem to temporarily obey as the consequence of the punishment. The obedience observed for a while following corporal punishment encourages teachers to punish. However, the students do not change their misbehavior permanently (UNESCO, 2006). On the contrary, there is a tendency for the students to develop tolerance to punishment and repeat the undesirable behaviors in the absence of the punisher. Thus, corporal punishment is a mechanism that can temporarily halt a learner's undesired behavior (Save the Children – Swaziland, December 2008). The phenomenon of corporal punishment makes students become unconditionally obedient in school and in their lives beyond the school context. Being challenged at school, students continue to conflict and fight with their parents/guardian at home. Furthermore, the disciplining techniques being used in schools mainly focus on controlling than disciplining the students and the practice makes them wilds rather than wises.

Valuing and respecting teachers as equal as one's parents is a well-established culture in Eritrean community that contributed a lot to promoting education in the society. Nowadays this noble culture and tradition is being eroded in the student community. The act of corporal punishment in schools is complicating the teacher-student relationships in the schools (Rahimi and Karkami, 2012). Unnecessary confrontations between teachers and students in schools are among the effects of corporal punishment practices. Corporal punishment in schools negatively affects the relationship between teachers and parents and their partnership to support students' learning. Corporal punishment of students increases confrontation and fighting with teachers. Incidents of students' aggressive behaviors, tensions

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and teacher-student confrontations are becoming common. Teachers' and school leadership's ineffective dealing with students' misbehaviors encourages students to further misbehave (Marciniak, 2015). As the result of the punishing measures of disciplining students used in schools, students develop negative attitudes towards the punishing teachers and ruffled emotional intelligence. Thus, corporal punishment is aggravating the students' misbehaviors instead of improving.

Maltreatment of students in school results in deteriorating peer relationships, augmentation of suicidal thoughts, juvenile delinquency, antisocial behaviors, intense dislike of authority and passive disobedience to parents and authorities (Obiero, Kalai and Okoth, 2018; Rimal and Pokharel, 2013; Greydanus et al., 2003). The negative consequences of corporal punishment as a disciplinary practice might not be immediately observed. Learners who are subjected to corporal punishment are often prone to use violence as a way of dealing with age mates, teachers and develop the character beyond adolescence in their romantic relationships and parenting styles. On the contrary, teachers claim that corporal punishment does not yield long-term negative effects on learners' later life (Save the Children-Swaziland, December 2008).

Academic Challenges: Punishment decreases students' motivation to learn and weakens their academic performances. Authoritarian classroom environment contributes very little to boost students' achievement motivation or set long-term personal goals (UNESCO, 2006). Students lose interest in learning in general and learning certain subject areas in particular associating subjects with the teachers teaching the subjects. Disliking the subject the punishing teacher teachers, students feel uncomfortable in the classroom of a punishing teacher and consequently get poor score in the subject he/she teaches. Whenever students come late and notice the usual practice that someone is punishing late comers at the gate of the school, they decide to miss classes (Kambuga, Manyengo and Mbalamula, 2018). Punishment in schools simply contributes to the distraction of the teaching learning process and decreased engagement of students in learning (Kambuga, Manyengo and Mbalamula, 2018). However, lack of students' learning motivation was found to be both as the complicated cause and effect of students' misbehaviors and the consequences of mistreatments.

Teacher's disciplinary techniques influence adolescents in their short-term and long-term educational plans (Lewis, 2001). Punishment adversely affects academic performance and long-term career orientation of learners (Lopes and Oliveira 2017; Naz et al., 2011). Students frequently fight with parents and such disagreements lead to students' difficulty with classroom concentration, lowered school achievement (Obiero, Kalai and Okoth, 2018) Mistreatment of students at school promotes students' negative attitudes towards schooling. Corporally punished students develop a tendency for school avoidance and school dropout (Greydanus et al., 2003). Students develop stress to the extent of dropping out of school to avoid the punishment and the teachers associated with the punishment. The participants of the study indicated that punishment makes students wild to spend their time out of school and aggravates the already worsening dropout rates in the schools. Therefore, using corporal punishment as a disciplining measure has undesirable effects on students' learning orientation.

In Eritrea, a donkey plays a great role in transporting goods in the rural areas. The villagers are known to drive out donkeys by beating a lot with a stick, sometimes bitterly. Thus, the donkey is presumed the most bitten animal in serving human beings. Observing the beating of students with a stick in schools, students mock writing on the walls of their school compounds "had it been by a stick, a donkey would have been a professor [perceived as the most educated one]." The students know the fact that beating doesn't make any positive difference in the academic life of the misbehaving students. The overall consequence of practicing corporal punishment as a technique of disciplining misbehaving students is blamed for its adverse effect on the teaching learning process. Students' disturbances triggered by corporal punishment not only hamper the classroom teaching-learning process but also undesirably affect the learning interest of students. The study found that corporal punishment decreases students' learning motivation and academic performances. Therefore, researches indicate that promoting an appropriate measure of disciplining misbehaving students "devoid of physical pain creates a harmonious teaching-learning environment" (Asare, Ousu-Mensah, Prince and Gyamera, 2015, p. 10).

VI. Recommendations

The study forwarded the following recommendations:

- The MoE needs to develop up-to-date and inclusive nationwide working rules and regulation about student disciplines and ensure their implementation.
- The curriculum should be revised at national level in a way to engage students in learning.
- The MoE should reconsider motivating and encouraging teachers to be committed in cultivating disciplined students and increasing students' learning motivation.
- Teacher training colleges in the country should train teachers on student discipline management using positive disciplining strategies.

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- Schools should practice positive strategies of shaping undesirable behaviors and avoid corporal punishment of students.
- MoE needs arrange workshops for teachers, principals and other members of school leadership on using alternative strategies of dealing with misbehaving students and raising teachers' awareness about the negative impacts of corporal punishment on students.
- Schools are required to empower the triangular relationship of parents, school and students to nurture desired behavior.
- Schools should be equipped with well-trained counselors to deal with students' misbehaviors.

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