

What Is The Impact Of Corporal Punishment In The Schools

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Children are subject to corporal punishment in schools; institutions designed to care for and protect children, such as hostels, orphanages and juvenile homes; and even in the family setting (India Development Gateway, 2020). Corporal punishment prevalence is evident from a number of research studies and is published in both print and electronic media. Enlightened teachers have reported many instances of corporal punishment. However, a considerable number of them go unnoticed due to lack of concern and acceptance.

According to the India Development Gateway (2020), documentary evidence indicates the persistence of discrimination inside the school on the basis of social, economic, linguistic and religious identities. Discrimination based on disability and disease was also reported. Psychological abuse (i.e. manipulating or punishing conduct that causes the child to feel psychological pain) is often documented to be more common than spanking and physical punishment.

Child discipline is treated in all settings as natural and appropriate whether in the family or in institutions. It is also considered important for children to grow up to be capable and responsible individuals. It is widely used by teachers and parents irrespective of its obvious lack of efficacy and potentially deleterious side effects. Its very ineffectiveness tends to lead to a spiral of escalation which leads to both a culture of rationalization by those in authority and passive acceptance of the situation as evidence of children's 'caring.'

The reason for corporal punishment is so prevalent that a child might not realize that his/ her rights have been abused. Even if the punishment hurts, the child does not know how necessary it is to report the accident. There are also layers of values and traditions that hide corporal punishment under the umbrella of affection, care and security, when it is simply an abuse of power that hurts the child. It comes from the presumption that those in whose custody children are sent to school or other institutions are 'in loco parentis' and thus should therefore behave in the child's interest (India Development Gateway, 2020).

One of the major reasons why corporal punishment persists is that most of us find it difficult to differentiate and understand that it is different from "discipline." While corporal punishment seeks to stop a child from behaving in a certain way, positive discipline techniques can be used to make a child understand and learn desirable/acceptable behaviour without the fear of punishment. Another big explanation is that during their clinical training teachers are still not encouraged to consider and focus on why children misbehave and how to handle them in a constructive manner.

Such actions will be the basis for the methods of an instructor. Many times when a child feels that its needs, such as the need for attention, are not being met, he or she misbehaves. The anger caused by the abuse of the child, and the lack of skills to cope with it, makes many teachers strike out against children and use physical, verbal, mental or other types of emotional retribution. It is now recognized globally

that punishment in any form in school is impeding the development of children's full potential. When adults use corporal punishment, it teaches their kids that hitting is an acceptable means of conflict management.

The more kids get hit, the more rage they show as adults, the more they hit their own kids while they are parents and the more likely they are to approve of hitting. Corporal punishment results in adverse physical, psychological and educational effects. These effects include increased violent and destructive behaviour, increased disruptive behaviour, vandalism, poor school performance, limited attention span, higher dropout levels, school avoidance and school phobia, low self-esteem, anxiety, somatic symptoms, depression, suicide and retaliation against teachers and as a result emotionally scar the children for life.

Children subject to discipline prefer violent tactics for dispute resolution with peers and siblings and do not find it a violation of their freedoms. There is an association between corporal punishment inflicted on children and later life patterns of maladaptive behaviour, such as aggression and delinquency. The results of different types of psychiatric abuse or psychological mistreatment showed that combinations of physical violence and cognitive neglect continue to produce the most profoundly negative results; psychological maltreatment is a greater indicator of the adverse developmental consequences for young children than the extent of their physical injury.

It is the most important predictor for children and adolescents with behavioral problems; and psychological neglect is a greater indicator of both depression and poor self-esteem than physical maltreatment. A systematic pattern of psychological violence undermines a child's sense of self-reliance and personal security. Subtle and overt forms of prejudice are both known to have a negative effect on the mental and academic health of children.

India Development Gateway(2020) states that recognizing the negative effects of corporal punishment on the child, the General Statement on Corporal Punishment in India said, "There is no ambiguity: 'all types of physical or mental abuse' leave no scope for any degree of legalized abuse against children. Forms of violence are corporal punishment and other cruel or degrading forms of punishment, and States must take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to eliminate them."

Research carried out by Bauld (2019) states that despite the adverse effects of physical punishment on the development of a child, including increased antisocial behavior and higher risks of depression and other mental health problems, the practice was banned by only 53 countries. In reality, in Colombia, a country which has been rocked by civil war for more than half a century, many still see corporal punishment as an appropriate punishment for children.

It was unknown how widespread corporal punishment in Colombia was until educational student Jorge Cuartas made it his task to shed a light on his home country's tradition and seek to prohibit its use. An economist, Cuartas was a research assistant who studied the effect of the Colombian Civil War on displaced civilians when he started to track the connection between violence occurring at the national level and violence impacting children.

Despite the shock of parents' testimonies citing the use of violence to discipline their children, Cuartas was also stunned by the lack of research highlighting Colombia's problem of corporal punishment. Using data from the Demographic and Health Surveys in Colombia, Cuartas produced one of the first studies to make the prevalence of corporal punishment visible in the country. He found that in 2015, nearly 1.7 million children, or almost 40% of children under the age of 5, were exposed to physical punishment.

In a research published by the University of Missouri, Clare (2011) emphasizes that, for all public schools corporal punishment should be banned. Research shows how negative the effects of corporal punishment are and there is no proof of positive outcomes for the students receiving corporal penalty. School boards should enact constructive policies related to school discipline policies Positive school discipline policies can increase student outcomes and create a positive school climate for students and staff.

Such policies will proffer alternatives to physical punishment. School staff should be educated in different ways to deal with inappropriate learners' comportedment. Training in alternative approaches would give school staff the skills to prevent corporal punishment due to unacceptable behavior (Clare, 2011).

References

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