

**THE PERSISTING USE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT FOR LEARNER
DISCIPLINE AND CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT: A CASE STUDY OF A RURAL
SCHOOL CONTEXT OF BAHLALOGA CIRCUIT, CAPRICORN NORTH
DISTRICT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA**

BY

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the dissertation that is submitted in my original work and has not been submitted to any other institution of higher education or research. Furthermore, I affirm that all the sources used are indicated and acknowledged according to the style of reference recommended by the institution and a list of comprehensive references is provided.

Matlala Paul Thabiso

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Matlala', written over a horizontal line.

Signature

27 June 2025

Date

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- I am humbly grateful to the Almighty God for enabling me to start, write and finish this study till the last word.
- I would like to dedicate this study to my late mother; may her soul rest in eternal peace.
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List of acronyms

UN	United Nations
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers Union
DoE	Department of Education
DBE	Department of Basic Education
SACE	South African Council for Educators
WHO	World Health Organisation
SMT	School Management Team
DH	Departmental Head
SAPS	South African Police Services
Cs1 Educator	An educator at Post Level 1

Abstract

Maintaining discipline and classroom management enhances the quality of teaching and learning in the school and outside, as learners grow up to be socially and economically competent individuals. Educators use different disciplinary measures to curb bad learner behaviour in schools, however, some resort to corporal punishment. Corporal punishment in South Africa is considered and deemed unlawful and educators still use it for discipline and classroom management. Educators find it hard to maintain discipline with the current alternative disciplinary measures, thus they use corporal punishment which ultimately brings more harm than good.

As a result, educators get implicated by being suspended, fired, and convicted and unfortunately some get fined or blackmailed by some families. In addition, learners also experience negative outcomes due to being subjected to corporal punishment, such as injuries, dropping out and worsening of bad behaviour. With that being said, the aim of the study is to alert educators about corporal punishment being a corporal offense and find ways to better discipline learners and also highlight the ineffectiveness of the currently proposed disciplinary measures in schools.

The researcher used a descriptive qualitative research design, and collected data through purposive sampling comprising of 12 educators and amongst them are 10 CS1 educators and 2 SMT members, and through interviews, the researcher gathered qualitative data and used thematic analysis to analyse the responses of the interviewees. The results revealed that some educators across the grades share the reasons for using corporal punishment while others adhere to the law and directive of banning corporal punishment. Some are not aware of the implications related to using corporal punishment while others have no other option but to use it, it can be considered as proof that corporal punishment is used under different justifications.

The study further recommends that educators should use the proposed disciplinary measures for their protection and respect of children's human rights. Moreover, the law enforcement agents should collaborate with educators to draft new possible and applicable disciplinary measures, more especially immediate intervention measures. Also, educators and the government should be familiar with indigenous African ways of discipline and instil them in learners at an early age.

Key words: corporal punishment, disciplinary measures, classroom management, rural secondary school

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CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction

In accordance with the democratic constitution relating to children's basic rights post 1994, South Africa's educational system signed and mandated a policy that provided for the banning of corporal punishment in schools in 1996 (Power & Veriava, 2019). The policy was drawn from the perspective of learners' rights being violated when educators used corporal punishment against them. The policy aimed to protect their rights. Prior to the implementation of the policy, educators, on a large scale saw the need to use corporal punishment on learners for better classroom management and discipline (Maphosa & Shumba, 2019). Although many educators argue that the banning of corporal punishment opened a huge gap in discipline, behaviour, mindset, and classroom management, learners are now relaxed and motivated that the educators are restricted by the law to use corporal punishment against them (Maphosa & Shumba, 2019).

Gershoff (2017) highlights that in 2007, the United Nations (UN) declared that corporal punishment is a violation of children's rights across the world, thereof it was abolished and deemed unlawful. The global perspective by the UN also contributed to the banning of corporal punishment worldwide, and it was declared an offense whenever an educator uses corporal punishment. Gershoff & Font (2016: 45) state that, "In the United States of America, more than 100 000 learners from 19 states are lawfully subjected to corporal punishment". Some parts of USA see the need for corporal punishment as a form of discipline to misbehaving learners like those who come to school with alcohol or fight in the school premises. Few states in the USA deem corporal punishment unlawful compared to other 19 states at both private and public schools (Gershoff & Font, 2016). Munson (2023) argues that the reason why some states still allow corporal punishment is that they are still in the process of transition, because in February 2023, several bills were introduced to restrict the use of corporal punishment in New York.

In South Africa, corporal punishment was banned in 1996, yet there are still schools and educators that see the need to use corporal punishment for discipline (Maluleke,

2021). According to Maluleke (2021), there is a great concern from educators about making corporal punishment unlawful in South Africa because there are endless cases of learners who fight, kill one another, bully others, and fight with educators. The dignity of educators is no longer recognised by the learners and the community due to lack of disciplined learners (SADTU, 2023). A greater concern in South Africa is having many schools breaking the law through corporal punishment and learners retaliate as they are aware that they are protected by the law and educators are arrested (SADTU, 2023). This study focuses on alerting educators on the implications of using corporal punishment and finding more strategies for discipline that can help educators and learners to work in accordance with the constitution of South Africa. The banning of corporal punishment continues, though measures to curb the failure rate, misconduct in classrooms and threats to educators and learners are formed and expected to be implemented (SADTU, 2023). Using other strategies except violence against learners is viewed to minimise extreme misconduct and hatred of learners towards educators, because children become violent, suicidal, and even drop out of school (WHO, 2021).

1.2. Research problem

Corporal punishment is banned and deemed unlawful in South African schools (Power & Veriava, 2019). South African Democratic Educators' Union urged all educators that are members of the union to never resort to corporal punishment as it is considered a criminal offence (SADTU, 2023). According to WHO (2021), corporal punishment disturbs learners' interest in academics because it creates tension between educators and learners. In most cases, schools in rural areas still resort to corporal punishment for discipline and classroom management while others in townships and urban areas uphold the current law of banning corporal punishment (Segalo & Rambuda, 2018).

South African Council for Educators (SACE) also emphasizes the prohibition of corporal punishment, and should educators be found guilty of the offence, their certificates shall be withdrawn (SACE, 2011). Educators use corporal punishment aiming to change learners' behaviour and attitude; however, they are not informed about the implications of using corporal punishment (Obadire & Sinthumele, 2021). Obadire and Sinthumele (2021) attest that learners' home backgrounds are the

primary cause of bad behaviour and discipline problem. Educators attempt to change how learners behave through the use of corporal punishment. Educators that administer corporal punishment are at a risk of being charged and sentenced while in their capacity are trying to discipline learners who misbehave (DBE, 2017). The persisting use of corporal punishment by educators, with the justification of disciplining the current kind of a generation, is not effective as there are many cases of misbehaving learners, resulting in severe casualties.

1.3. Preliminary literature review

This section provides different global perspectives on corporal punishment and give an insight on the use of South African policies, reasons for persisting use of corporal punishment in secondary schools, how educators can get implicated from using corporal punishment and strategies in place to reduce cases of using corporal punishment.

1.3.1. South African Policy on Corporal punishment

The Constitution of South Africa's Department of Education declared that schools should transition from the kind of education system that was provided during apartheid. Discourses arose pertaining to the system of education before 1994, which was oppressive and used violence as a means of order (Power & Veriava, 2019). The South African policy was supported by the UN and prohibited any torture or punishment of children as they described corporal punishment as "inflicted bodily and emotional harm". From 1996 to date, recommendations to terminate corporal punishment have been amended to further abolish it and not to bring up any justification to make it lawful.

1.3.2. The use of corporal punishment in rural secondary schools

In the Department of Basic Education, policy makers and unions agreed that the termination of corporal punishment would lead to a rise in other humane disciplinary methods such as suspension and verbal warnings (Davids, 2013). However, the rise in misconduct of learners has brought distraught to schools as educators feel undermined by learners who rebel against them (Segalo & Rambuda, 2018). As most of the schools in South Africa have adopted Christianity, the Bible is used as a

reference to practice corporal punishment as it states that, “Children should be raised according to how parents see it fit” (Grobbelaar & Jones, 2020). Educators believe that they are the secondary parents to learners, hence they consider it right to guide them through some form of punishment (Segalo & Rambuda, 2018). Debatewise (2020) argues that, although corporal punishment has been banned in many countries, it should be legally reintroduced since in the past people grew up well because of such punishment. Segalo & Rambuda (2018) outline that most educators believe that there is no better way to discipline a child undergoing different stages of life than to inflict physical pain on them and that sends strong message and a mark to the child. The South African Department of Basic Education has a code of conduct that manages learners so to avoid being punished, but learners tend to infringe that code, hence they get into trouble with educators (Segalo & Rambuda, 2018).

1.3.3. The implications of corporal punishment in rural secondary schools

The Department of Education views the practice of corporal punishment as unlawful, thus it is treated as a criminal offence that deserves a trial and a conviction (DBE, 2017). This implies that should an educator be charged with assault, the Department of Education would distance itself from that educator because practicing corporal punishment is against the policy. WHO (2021) argues that corporal punishment may seem correct before the eyes of educators and parents, but it has negative effects on the learners because they begin to develop bad attitudes towards education and educators. The exposure of the internet and media gives them ideas of getting back to their educators or anyone who inflicts pain to them, hence there are cases of learners stabbing educators (Juma, 2024). Moreover, learners also commit suicide because of fear of getting beaten should they not do their work under reasonable occasions.

1.3.4. Strategies to substitute corporal punishment

The change of disciplinary measures by the Minister of Education in 2000, brought the inception of a booklet or a guide that was published with alternative measures to corporal punishment in the classroom (Davids, 2013). According to Sekhwama (2019), the abolishment of corporal punishment by the Department of Basic

Education recommended ways in which learners can be motivated to behave and for educators not to rely on corporal punishment. The strategies are categorized according to the levels of offense. For instance, a verbal warning or physical work for a minor offense such as failure to write schoolwork and expulsion or suspension for a major offense like fighting in the school were among the list of strategies (Shaikhmag & Naidoo, 2020). This suggests that learners receive punishment that has no physical, emotional, and mental inflictions. They also protect educators from using corporal punishment that may lead to their imprisonment. In addition, Sekhwama (2019) argues that the other way to curb the use of corporal punishment is through educators being advised about best ways to handle learners, especially when they are using words to reprimand them. Some educators are not well informed about how harsh and deep corporal punishment can take them and what other alternatives are there to better assist them.

1.4. Theoretical framework

As this study aims to alert educators about corporal punishment for being classified as a criminal offence and to find better and acceptable ways to discipline learners, educators should understand that they need to change from using corporal punishment for better measures as suggested by B.F Skinner's Behaviourism theory. The researcher has established an alignment of this study with this theory.

Skinner's theory of behaviourism constitutes a behaviour system called Operant Conditioning, wherein organisms live according to their will in a certain environment but receive an aversive stimulus which decreases the chances of a certain behaviour from happening again (Madden, 2013). Likewise, educators use corporal punishment to minimize the chances of misbehaviour being repeated by learners. Through the aversive stimulus, learners tend to develop a behavioural conditioning, wherein they start to get used to develop the ability to reprimand themselves before the educator could. In this way, the educators stop using excessive corporal punishment.

Skinner's theory of behaviourism also presents the idea of negative reinforcement, which implies that punishment to an organism is not effective as it does not eliminate bad behaviour but suppresses it (Chance, 2014). In other words, corporal punishment may lead learners to change their behaviour toward certain educators or

at home because their habits are suppressed and not eliminated. Punishment is not ideal to be used because it has bad effects rather than positive effects that causes emotional disorders, inflicts pain onto learners. They also develop aggression towards the punisher and do not engage in class discussions because of fear of being punished.

This theory of behaviourism by Skinner consists of better alternatives, because punishment brings unfavourable effects on the organisms (Skinner, 1969). It destroys many things than the intended behaviour. For example, when an educator punishes a learner for being disruptive, the learner would not only keep quiet but become emotionally unstable. One of the alternatives that Skinner proposes is letting the organism continues with the bad habit until they get tired of it (Skinner, 1969). In the classroom, an educator can let the learner disrupt the lesson, and eventually they will get bored of being disruptive especially when the learner has no support from other learners.

The idea of partial reinforcement requires a long period of time to be effective, but it is the best way to curb bad habits in organisms than resorting to punishment (Skinner, 1969). Partial reinforcement builds learners into being good learners as they receive good contributions than punishment from educators. Learners may be given awards as a way of reinforcing good behaviour and opportunities to do what they love so that they may feel loved and noticed. Skinner believed that things like giving a lot of study materials that learners cannot comprehend or having a full classroom are likely to produce learners that are disruptive (Skinner, 1969).

1.5. Purpose of the study

1.5.1. Research Questions

- What is the justification for the persisting use of corporal punishment for learner discipline and classroom management in rural secondary schools?
- What are challenges of using corporal punishment in rural secondary schools?
- What are the educators' perceptions on abolishment of corporal punishment in rural secondary schools?

1.5.2. Research Objectives

The objectives of the study are:

- To determine and investigate the justification for the persisting use of corporal punishment for learner discipline in rural secondary schools.
- To explore the challenges originating from the use of corporal punishment in rural secondary schools.
- To establish educators' perceptions on the abolishment of corporal punishment in rural secondary schools.

1.6. Research methodology

In this study, the researcher used the qualitative approach to research as suggested by Cresswell (2014), which allowed field interactions with the participants to collect, interpret and analyze research data, and then create knowledge that is generated from the participants' understanding of the phenomenon. The researcher was able to use interviews and document analysis.

1.6.1. Research Design

Miller (2019) advises that qualitative research provides more content that is useful for practical application. It also uses a smaller sample size. The researcher had access to information from a smaller number of participants. The researcher used a case study design which is a tool used to gather specific information about something using different ways (Bhandari, 2020).

1.6.2. Sampling.

Purposive sampling was used to recruit participants who can provide detailed information about an aspect that is being investigated and which focuses on specific characteristics within the chosen participants (Michalos, 2014). One school was identified around Bahlaloga Circuit in Polokwane and participants were chosen from that schools. Ten (10) educators and (2) School Management Team (SMT) members, specifically 1 departmental head and 1 principal to participate in the study were selected through purposive sampling. These are the educators who teach Grade 8-12 and only two (2) educators per grade were accepted to participate in the

study. An equivalent number of one (1) female educator and one (1) male educator per grade were considered to constitute the sample of the ten educators. Through purposive sampling, the researcher managed to access thorough targeted information efficiently from the participants.

1.6.3. Data Collection

The study relied on semi-structured interviews and document analysis as the primary data collection methods. Interviews allowed the researcher to interact with participants when collecting primary data. As elucidated by Blackstone (2018), interviews are relevant in qualitative data since they can take the form of a semi-structured interview format. In addition, some of the questions are open-ended, wherein the interview questions are based on asking the participants about their views on corporal punishment and ask them about possible and alternative ways to better discipline learners (Anozie, 2017). Participants interviewed were educators, as they were the primary sources for information about the phenomenon. Educators experience different behaviors from learners thus, they were relevant for providing insight about the phenomenon.

Ji (2024) highlight that document analysis are relevant in qualitative research since it offers background and historical insights, assists in explaining trends, provides depth and complexity that descriptive studies need. In this study, documents that were analyzed were public records such as policy documents and media content such as news papers and social media posts. Policies that were used are policies that give insight into the abolishment of corporal punishment in South Africa. The media content used was social media posts of educators that were charged with hitting learners and newspapers that highlighted incidents of educator and learner fights at school. Document analysis supports interviews since the content in the documents attest to participants' responses.

1.6.4. Data Analysis

The study adopted the inductive thematic data analysis method for identification of patterns or themes in the qualitative data (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Inductive thematic data analysis allowed the researcher to study and analyze the responses other than taking the responses as the themes or patterns (Nowell, Norris, White &

Moules, 2017). Interview responses were used for analysis of common patterns and themes and finally draw conclusions from the data.

Firstly, responses from the interviews were carefully and repeatedly read and aligned with the points of interest. Secondly, codes were generated from phrases and sentences with points of interest. Thirdly, codes were developed to themes, wherein codes which illustrate a pattern will be identified across the data. Lastly, a brief report of the ideas or stories represented by the data across the themes were written.

1.7. Quality criteria

Quality criteria refers to the values and benchmarks that are used to assess the consistency of a study and help to determine whether the research process and findings are credible, reliable and meaningful.

1.7.1. Credibility

Credibility is the accuracy and worthiness of the study's findings. Credibility was shown when the researcher uses qualitative results to guide the study throughout (Stahl & King, 2020). The researchers indicated how they determined that whichever data they acquired and used as evidence was deemed valid, true, unbiased, and accurate through signed consent forms from the participants.

1.7.2. Transferability

Transferability is the extent to which the research findings can be applicable in other contexts and was recognized by giving readers the proof and evidence that the findings of the study could be applied to other situations, period, and people (William, 2020). In this study, the researcher provided the results in a manner that can allow other people to use in their studies. For instance, interpretation of the collected data was thoroughly evaluated, and results were provided.

1.7.3. Dependability

Dependability is the constancy of data over different conditions and time. According to Stahl and King (2020), dependability is proven by having another researcher outside the data collection and data analysis to assess the processes of data collection, analysis and results. In this study, it was done for the confirmation of

accuracy of the findings and to see the link between the findings and the data collected.

1.7.4. Confirmability

Confirmability is the extent to which research results could be confirmed by others and serves to verify that the findings are from participants and not the researcher. William (2020) recommends that researchers use an audit trail to establish confirmability. The researcher has documented the procedures for a continuous checking of data throughout the study.

1.8. Significance of the study

The study aims to warn educators about corporal punishment as a criminal offence and to find acceptable and better discipline measures for learners and highlight the ineffectiveness of the currently proposed disciplinary measures in schools. Educators are made aware that they are committing a crime by resorting to corporal punishment and an awareness is needed for the educators to be cautious and kept safe from being imprisoned. Educators need to be cautious towards inflicting pain on learners as it would jeopardize their jobs or be imprisoned while the learner continues to be mischievous at school. Educators are encouraged to come up with strategies that would better assist them to deal with troublesome learners without the use of corporal punishment. Regular and continuous beating of learners may lead to them developing low self-esteem and hatred, fear, and withdrawal as suggested by several studies such as by (Gershoff & Font, 2016). David (2013) argues that learners should be treated with care like children at home, thereby molding them into better people.

1.9. Ethical considerations

1.9.1. Respect, dignity and standard of care.

The researcher treated the participants with dignity and respect by listening to their points of view. The researcher recognized the disagreement and kept discussions and comments in line with the study phenomenon without using offensive language, sarcasm or raised voices (Kumar, 2019).

1.9.2. Informed Consent and permission.

Consent letters were given to participants for their permission to participate in the study. The researcher provided the letter to the principal of the sampled school asking for permission to conduct interviews with the sampled participants by the researcher. Capricorn North District Director was also approached seeking permission to conduct interviews with educators at the sampled school.

1.9.3. Anonymity

Participants' names were hidden and not published. The researcher used alphabets or phrases and numbers to ensure anonymity. For instance, an educator's name was represented as educator A. The participants' identifying information were kept anonymous to prevent participants from being personally identified. The researcher ensured that the privacy of the participants' right to decide when, how, and to what extent their personal information will be shared. The researcher respected the autonomy and dignity of the participants by acknowledging their right to control their personal information.

1.9.4. Privacy and Confidentiality

The researcher ensured that all identifying information of the research participants are kept separate and used codes or pseudonyms to connect data back to specific participants. The data collected during the research process was stored securely to prevent it from unauthorized access. The face-to-face interviews were conducted among only selected educators who participated in the study. The researcher chose the interview location that was comfortable for the participant. The researcher conducted the interviews in a familiar place for the participants. A quiet and private location used for the interviews was ideal to avoid noise and distractions.

1.9.5. Benefit and Risks/Harms

Participants were given significant insight about corporal punishment and help to curb the elevating incidents of corporal punishment. Risks such as learners going home later than expected time was managed through brief and concise interviews. There were risk management plans put in place for any risk that may arise.

1.10. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this chapter addresses the significant issue of the persisting use of corporal punishment in rural secondary schools. It aims to determine and investigate the reasons for learner discipline through corporal punishment in rural secondary schools, explore the challenges originating from corporal punishment in rural secondary schools, investigate teachers' perceptions on the abolishment of corporal punishment. The study employed the qualitative study method, which seeks to uncover reasons for the persisting use of corporal punishment which could benefit the world of education for educators' professionalism and learners' well-being. The sampled population are the best fits for the study as they are the closest witnesses to the use and effects of using corporal punishment in the classroom and around the school.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Introduction

Despite the banning of corporal punishment by the government of South Africa and Department of Basic Education, educators are still experiencing rapid growth of unruliness and contempt by learners in rural secondary schools. This chapter reviews reasons why corporal punishment persists, why it was initially banned and the necessity of its prohibition. In addition, it also aims to alert educators about the implications of corporal punishment and support the speculations of the ineffectiveness of the currently proposed disciplinary measures in rural secondary schools. The review will include an international, national, and local perspective and the specified areas around Bahlaloga Circuit in Polokwane municipality in Limpopo Province. This chapter discusses the themes of this study which include the justification for the persisting use of corporal punishment, the challenges of using corporal punishment, the educators' perceptions on abolishment of corporal punishment in rural secondary schools in Bahlaloga Circuit.

2.2. Theoretical framework

2.2.1. Conceptualisation of Behaviourism Theory

Behaviourism is an area of psychological study that focuses on observations and analytics of how controlled environmental changes can affect behaviour (Braun, Fox & Robinson, 2018). The main goal of the theory is to observe whether the manipulation of the environment can change the behaviour of subject. The theory was developed by many psychologists with the aim of emphasising the relationship between an environment and behaviour. For instance, Ivan Pavlov's study explored the theory of classical conditioning, wherein dogs salivate when they hear a sound of a bell indicating time for food, and that stimulus causes responses and the brain caused the reaction by dogs (Ibraheem, Navid, Terrence & Chaudhry, 2023).

B.F Skinner's theory of radical behaviourism is a broad theory that consists of different disciplines of behaviour and how to best manage them. This study focuses on a behaviour system called operant conditioning, wherein organisms live according to their will in a certain environment but receive an aversive stimulus which

decreases the chances of a certain behaviour from happening again (Madden, 2013). In this case, educators use corporal punishment to minimise the reoccurrence chances of misbehaviour by learners. Mcloed (2024) emphasises that, through the aversive stimulus, learners tend to develop a behavioural conditioning, wherein they start to get used to reprimanding themselves before the educator could, and in this way, the educators will also stop using excessive corporal punishment.

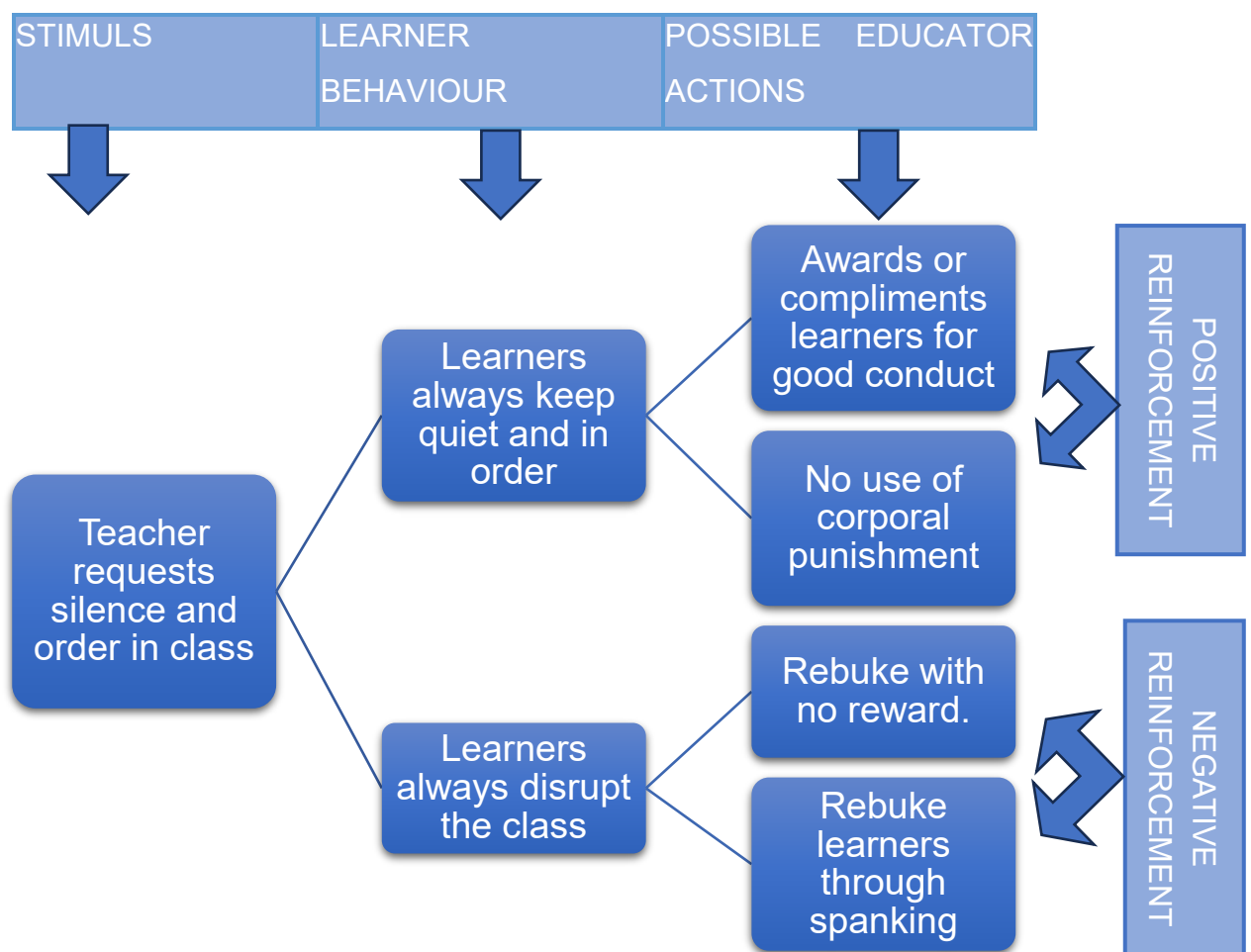


Figure 1. Operant Conditioning system model. (Adapted from <https://thepeakperformancecenter.com>)

Figure 1. shows what the educator requires the stimulus, followed by learner behaviour which can either be bad or good towards the request of the educator and ends with possible actions from the educator as a response to what the learner does, which can be positive or negative reinforcement.

Within the Operant Conditioning system, there is positive re-enforcement, which conditions a learner to maintain good behaviour through rewards and awards (Mcloed, 2024). Contrarily, Chance (2014) stresses that there is negative re-enforcement, wherein a learner is subjected to change from bad behaviour through chastisement. In this case, educators use negative re-enforcement to curb the bad behaviour that hinders teaching and learning. In addition, Leeder (2022), claims that punishment to learners is not fully effective as it suppresses bad behaviour than eliminating as expected, however, it is better as bad behaviour gets curbed. Educators prefer to use negative re-enforcement as it has bigger impact on bad behaviour than positive re-enforcement, because pain has a bigger effect than a compliment (Heekes, Kruger, Lester & Ward, 2022).

Negative reinforcement as part of Operant Conditioning, may be referred to as a Continuous Reinforcement, wherein disruptive learners are punished until they behave according to the code of conduct (Main, 2021). The aim of having a continuous reinforcement is to quickly get the learners into the desired behaviour before they make mischievousness a habit. Contrarily, Dwarika (2019), argues that partial reinforcement builds learners into being good learners as they receive good contributions like compliments than punishment from educators. However, this method requires a longer timescale as learners are awarded when they answer correctly in the classroom or when they change from bad to good conduct. Dwarika (2019), advises that, learners may be given awards as a way of reinforcing good behaviour and opportunities to do what they love so that they may feel loved and noticed.

The theory of Radical Behaviourism by Skinner consists of better alternatives, because punishment brings unfavourable effects on the learners (Skinner, 1969). It destroys many things than the intended behaviour, such as, when an educator punishes a learner for being disruptive, the learner would not only keep quiet but be emotionally unstable due to humiliation or pain. One of the alternatives that Skinner proposes is letting the learner continue with the bad behaviour until they get tired of it (Kendra, 2023). Dwarika (2019), also adds that, an educator can let the learner disrupt the lesson, and they will get bored of being disruptive especially when the learner has no support from other learners and less attention from the educator.

As partial reinforcement serves to maintain good behaviour, educators tend to use awards, encouragement, and compliments whenever learners have done well, such as good conduct without being told or when a learner has given a correct answer (Mcloed, 2024). In addition, Jiyani (2023) elaborates that, when educators use positive strategies to encourage good conduct, learners respond with positive attitude than retaliating, getting worse, or developing social disorders and emotional breakdowns. According to Kinyanjui, Aloka and Mutisya (2015), learners tend to change for the better through partial reinforcement than continuous reinforcement as learners have a volatile attitude and changes as they grow up. Moreover, rather than inflicting pain for discipline, educators should show good spirit and motivate learners to conduct themselves accordingly (Madden, 2013).

With B.F Skinner's theory of Radical Behaviourism receiving great recognition, there are also criticisms and limitations. Operant Conditioning theory assumes that humans are comparable to animals and ignores the internal cognitive processes such as emotions that trigger behaviour, so humans respond differently (Brau, Fox & Robinson, 2018). Emotions, thoughts, conscious state, prior knowledge and experiences, social relations and moral of the learners are not considered when studying and exploring learners' behaviour. According to Ivancic and Belisle (2019), such elements are variables that should be accounted for should human behaviour is to be projected and understood precisely. McCarthy (2019) accounts that punishment does not modify or rectify behaviour as a learner may misbehave due to emotions and the approach of discipline an educator uses towards that learner.

2.3. Comparative literature on the origins of corporal punishment in schools (International, National and Local contexts)

2.3.1. The European, Asian, and African school contexts

Corporal punishment can be defined as a historically common form of discipline in schools, which also has varied applications and meanings across cultures and societies across the world. It has been viewed as both a necessary tool for maintaining order and morality in children and as an abusive practice that educators and parents use to mainly order and good behaviour (Moen & Sterri, 2024). The evolution of corporal punishment in schools in Europe, Asia, and Africa provides

significant insight into the social, political, and cultural contexts of education in these continents (Zitková, 2024). Furthermore, the use of physical discipline in schools has not only shaped educational systems but also influenced attitudes toward children, authority, and the state's role in schooling.

2.3.1.1. Corporal punishment in Europe

Corporal punishment in European schools can trace its roots to the medieval period, deeply influenced by religious doctrines that stressed obedience, discipline, and moral correction (Allison, Beers & Peterson, 2023). Based on a book of Bunge (2024), it can be judged that in the Christian tradition, physical punishment was often justified as a means to instil virtue and discipline in children, aligning with religious teachings about the importance of suffering and submission. Christian schools, both monastic and later parish schools, were places where corporal punishment was implemented as a way of enforcing moral behaviour.

Throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, physical punishment was used not only to enforce educational standards but also to guide the spiritual development of children, (Tufescu, 2023). Catholic and Protestant religious leaders alike preached the importance of chastising children to mould their character. This form of corporal punishment was rooted in the belief that children, by nature, were prone to sin and needed correction from an early age (Buore, Ouma & Mwita, 2023).

2.3.1.2. The Enlightenment and reform movements against corporal punishment

The Enlightenment in the 17th and 18th centuries brought about significant changes in European attitudes toward education and discipline. With an elaboration by Gianoutsos (2023), philosophers such as John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau argued for more humane and rational approaches to child-rearing and education, suggesting that children were not inherently sinful but rather had the capacity for reason and understanding. Rousseau's seminal work as highlighted by Gianoutsos (2023), advocated for a more compassionate and respectful approach to child development, which would later influence educational reformers throughout Europe.

Despite the philosophical shifts, corporal punishment continued to be widely accepted in European schools into the 19th century. The industrial revolution and the rise of state-controlled education systems saw a tightening of discipline in schools (Shrestha, 2018). Moreover, Dorji and Wangchuk (2021) add that corporal punishment was increasingly institutionalized, with educators relying on physical methods to maintain control over large classrooms filled with children from different social backgrounds. This was especially true in working-class schools, where authority figures sought to establish order and instil discipline.

2.3.1.3. Ignition of abolishing corporal punishment

The 20th century saw a gradual shift away from corporal punishment in Europe, driven by changes in educational philosophy, human rights movements, and the growing recognition of children's rights (Cook, 2017). The abolition of corporal punishment began in some European countries as early as the 19th century. USA, for instance, became the first country in the world to legally ban corporal punishment in 1866. Other countries followed, though often slowly and unevenly (Cook, 2017).

By the mid-20th century, many European countries had banned corporal punishment in schools. The United Kingdom, for instance, officially abolished corporal punishment in state schools in 1986 (Allison, Beers & Peterson, 2023). Norway, Finland, and Denmark had already taken steps toward prohibition before this, with Finland becoming one of the first to do so in the early 20th century. Allison, Beers and Peterson, (2023) conclude that the influence of international conventions, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), also played a significant role in the gradual move away from corporal punishment.

2.3.1.4. Present-day context

Today, corporal punishment is banned in schools throughout most of Europe, with the notable exception of a few countries where it remains legal under certain conditions (Baumgarten, Simmonds & Mason-Jones, 2022). The emphasis is greatly on alternative forms of discipline that focus on respect, dialogue, and restorative justice. In addition, Heekes, Kruger, Lester and Ward (2022) add that despite the official bans, there are still reports of corporal punishment being used informally in

some educational settings, though such practices are increasingly rare and subject to public scrutiny.

2.3.2. Corporal Punishment in Asia

2.3.2.1. Historical Roots and Confucian Influence

In Asia, the use of corporal punishment in schools has deep historical roots, particularly influenced by Confucian philosophy, which emphasizes the importance of discipline, respect for authority, and the cultivation of moral virtues (Dorskii & Ma, 2024). In Confucian thought, education was not merely about imparting knowledge but about shaping character and ensuring moral development. Educators, as the moral guides of society, were often granted authority to discipline learners, including through physical punishment (Dorskii & Ma, 2024).

Throughout imperial China, corporal punishment was seen as an effective means of instilling respect for authority and maintaining social harmony. Yuan, Chia and Gosling (2022) add that the same principles were applied in schools, where educators were empowered to use physical discipline to correct misbehaviour and ensure obedience. The use of corporal punishment was similarly prevalent in other East Asian countries influenced by Confucianism, such as Korea and Japan, where respect for elders and adherence to strict hierarchical structures were central to educational philosophy (Yuan, Chia & Gosling, 2022).

2.3.2.2. Colonialism and Education Systems

The advent of colonial rule in much of Asia further institutionalized corporal punishment. European colonial powers, particularly the British and the French, implemented Western-style educational systems that incorporated physical punishment as a tool of control and discipline (Dorskii & Ma, 2024). For example, in British India, corporal punishment was widely practiced in both British-run schools and indigenous institutions. In addition, Yuan, Chia and Gosling (2022) highlight that the colonial education system, which often emphasized rote learning and obedience, reinforced the use of corporal punishment as a means of maintaining discipline and order.

In Japan, the Meiji Restoration (1868-1912) brought significant educational reforms, including the introduction of Western pedagogical methods, which still incorporated corporal punishment (Chen, 2024). During the 20th century, particularly after World War II, Japan's education system became more structured, and physical punishment continued to be used as part of the disciplinary system as (Chen, 2024).

2.3.2.3. Shifting attitudes and legal reforms

Throughout the 20th century, many Asian countries began to reevaluate the role of corporal punishment in education. Japan, for instance, formally abolished corporal punishment in schools in 1947, after World War II, in line with reforms implemented by the American occupation (Lou, 2024). According to Chen (2024), in countries like South Korea and Taiwan, corporal punishment was gradually phased out throughout the second half of the 20th century, as the influence of human rights organizations and international norms increased.

However, in some parts of Asia, corporal punishment has remained a common practice in schools into the 21st century. Countries like India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh still allow or unofficially tolerate the use of corporal punishment in educational settings, despite efforts to ban it (Lou, 2024). In India, the Supreme Court ruled against corporal punishment in schools in 2000, but enforcement has been inconsistent, and corporal punishment continues in some regions (Ujjwal, 2024).

2.3.2.4. Current debate and practice

In contemporary Asia, as noted by Lou (2024), corporal punishment remains a divisive issue. In some countries, it is still used as a means of maintaining discipline in overcrowded and underfunded schools, where educators feel it is necessary to enforce order. However, Chen (2024) argues that there is increasing pressure from global human rights organizations and child advocacy groups to end the practice. As of the early 21st century, countries like Thailand, South Korea, and Japan have laws in place that prohibit corporal punishment in schools, but enforcement remains inconsistent in some areas (Chen, 2024).

2.3.3. Corporal Punishment in Africa

2.3.3.1. Colonial legacy and traditional practices

The history of corporal punishment in Africa is shaped by a combination of traditional practices and colonial legacies. In many African cultures, the family and community played central roles in child-rearing, and physical punishment was sometimes seen as a necessary method for ensuring children grew up to be responsible adults (Manu, 2024). Traditional forms of corporal punishment were often used in African villages and were part of broader social structures that emphasized respect for elders and authority (Bhana, 2024).

Colonialism, particularly the British and French empires, imposed new educational systems that integrated corporal punishment as a tool of discipline (Abaogye, 2019). In many African colonies, European administrators introduced schools that followed Western educational models, including the use of corporal punishment. Furthermore, Ordway (2023) highlights that these systems were often authoritarian, with a focus on obedience, discipline, and the reproduction of colonial values, including the subjugation of indigenous cultural practices.

2.3.3.2. Post-independence and educational reforms

After many African countries gained independence in the mid-20th century, there were efforts to reform education systems. While corporal punishment was still commonly used in schools, post-colonial governments began to question its role in education (Okon, 2022). The rise of global human rights awareness in the late 20th century contributed to calls for reforms, and several African nations began to review their educational policies in line with international human rights standards (Glacer, 2019).

In 1996, the South African government officially abolished corporal punishment in schools following the end of apartheid. Other countries followed suit, although enforcement of bans has varied significantly. In some African countries, particularly in rural areas, corporal punishment continues to be practiced despite legal

prohibitions, as traditional attitudes towards discipline remain ingrained (Asare, 2024).

2.3.3.3. Challenges in abolishing corporal punishment

One of the significant challenges in abolishing corporal punishment in African schools is the persistence of traditional views on child-rearing, where physical discipline is often seen as essential to instilling respect and obedience (Gibson, 2017). In many cases, educators who were themselves subjected to corporal punishment as children continue to use it as a tool of control, often without recognizing its harmful effects. Additionally, Gibson (2017) adds that overcrowded classrooms, insufficient resources, and high educator-student ratios can contribute to the continued use of corporal punishment in some schools.

Despite these challenges, there has been progress as several African countries, such as Ghana, Uganda, and Kenya, have made significant strides toward abolishing corporal punishment in schools, though the enforcement of these laws remains an ongoing struggle. Education reform movements across the continent are increasingly focused on non-violent forms of discipline that promote positive behaviour through guidance, counselling, and conflict resolution techniques (Mahgoub & Alawad, 2014).

2.3.3.4. Present-day Situation

Today, the use of corporal punishment in African schools is still prevalent in some regions, especially in rural or underserved areas. However, many countries have either abolished the practice outright or have implemented strict guidelines to reduce its use (Bhana, 2024). International organizations, such as UNICEF and Save the Children, continue to work alongside governments and local communities to promote alternatives to corporal punishment and to raise awareness about the long-term effects of physical discipline on children's mental health and well-being (Bhana, 2024).

2.3.4. South African history

Corporal punishment, defined as physical punishment intended to cause pain as a means of discipline, has a long and complex history in South Africa. This practice has been deeply intertwined with the country's educational systems, reflecting broader societal values, cultural norms, and political contexts (Mayisela, 2017). The evolution of corporal punishment in South African schools reveals significant shifts in attitudes toward discipline, authority, and children's rights.

2.3.4.1. Colonial and early 20th century practices

The roots of corporal punishment in South Africa can be traced back to the colonial era when European settlers imposed their educational practices on indigenous populations. Schools established by colonial authorities often adopted strict disciplinary measures, including corporal punishment, as a means of enforcing authority and maintaining control over students. This approach was justified under the guise of moral and civilizational duty, with educators believing that strict discipline was essential for teaching obedience and respect (Fourie, Mpeta & Inwood, 2018).

The 20th century progressed, and corporal punishment became a normalized part of school discipline across various educational systems. Both missionary schools and state-run institutions employed physical punishment, often using methods such as caning or slapping. The occurrence of these practices reflected broader societal attitudes toward discipline and the belief that corporal punishment was an effective means of instilling respect and order among students (Duncan, 2022).

2.3.4.2. Apartheid era and institutionalization

The introduction of apartheid in 1948 solidified racial segregation and inequality in South African society, and this was mirrored in the education system. Schools were divided along racial lines, with white students receiving a far superior education compared to their Black, Indian, and Coloured counterparts. In this context, corporal punishment was often more harshly applied in non-white schools or public rural schools, reflecting the systemic oppression and dehumanization faced by marginalized groups (Terblanche & Breakfast, 2023).

During the apartheid era, the use of corporal punishment was institutionalized in the educational system. The South African Schools Act of 1966 explicitly allowed for corporal punishment in schools, leading to widespread acceptance and use of physical discipline. Educators often resorted to corporal punishment as a quick and authoritative means of maintaining order, especially in schools serving disadvantaged communities. The practice became not only a tool of discipline but also a reflection of the authoritarian governance that characterized apartheid (Mayisela, 2021).

2.3.4.3. The struggle against corporal punishment

As resistance against apartheid grew, so did the discourse around children's rights and the role of education. The 1980s marked a pivotal period in South African history, with increased activism and advocacy for reform in various sectors, including education. Anti-apartheid movements began to question the legitimacy of corporal punishment, arguing that it perpetuated cycles of violence and trauma, particularly in communities already affected by systemic oppression (Obadire & Sinthumele, 2021).

Organizations such as the Black Consciousness Movement and later the South African Council of Churches began to highlight the need for more humane and constructive forms of discipline. The recognition of children's rights began to take root, influenced by international frameworks such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). Advocates argued that education should promote respect, dignity, and personal development rather than fear and obedience (Afrika, 2019).

2.3.4.4. Post-Apartheid reforms

The end of apartheid in 1994 ushered in a new era of hope and reform, including a complete overhaul of the educational system. The new democratic government, led by the African National Congress (ANC), prioritized human rights and equality, and this was reflected in the legal framework governing education. In 1996, the South African Schools Act was amended to prohibit corporal punishment in schools. This marked a significant turning point, as it acknowledged the importance of protecting children's rights within the educational context (Motala, 2006).

Despite the legal ban, the practice of corporal punishment did not immediately cease in many schools. Cultural attitudes and entrenched behaviours proved difficult to change, and some educators continued to rely on physical punishment as a form of discipline. Reports of resistance emerged among educators, particularly in rural and disadvantaged areas, where traditional forms of discipline were still widely accepted (Omotoso, Adesina & Ololade, 2022).

2.3.4.5. Current Perspectives and Ongoing Challenges

Today, corporal punishment remains a contentious issue in South Africa. Although it is legally prohibited, there are ongoing debates regarding its effectiveness and the challenges of enforcing the ban. Many educators still grapple with classroom management issues, leading some to revert to physical punishment despite its illegality (Strohwald, 2022).

Furthermore, Strohwald (2022) articulates that the legacy of corporal punishment continues to impact educational environments. Reports of violence and abuse within schools highlight the need for comprehensive training for educators on alternative disciplinary methods and the importance of creating safe and supportive learning environments.

The shift toward restorative justice practices, positive behaviour support, and social-emotional learning represents a move away from punitive measures toward approaches that emphasize understanding, respect, and personal growth. Various NGOs and government initiatives work to promote these alternatives, aiming to reshape the culture of discipline in South African schools (Mayisela, 2021).

The history of corporal punishment in South African schools reflects broader societal changes, from colonial imposition to the struggle for children's rights in the post-apartheid era. While legal prohibitions have been established, the challenge remains to shift cultural attitudes and practices toward discipline in education. As South Africa continues to navigate its complex legacy, fostering environments that prioritize respect, dignity, and understanding will be crucial in shaping a more equitable and just educational system.

2.3.4.6. Conclusion

The history of corporal punishment in schools across Europe, Asia, and Africa illustrates the complex interplay of cultural, political, and educational factors that have shaped disciplinary practices over time. While corporal punishment was once widely accepted and institutionalized as a necessary means of discipline, attitudes have shifted in many parts of the world, with growing recognition of children's rights and the harmful effects of physical punishment (Moen & Sterri, 2024).

Europe led the way in abolishing corporal punishment, with many countries banning the practice in the 20th century. In Asia, the history of corporal punishment is more varied, with some countries adopting Western reforms while others continue to tolerate or even endorse the practice (Holden, Wright & Sendek, 2018). Furthermore, Akyina and Manu (2024) accentuate that, Africa's history of corporal punishment is shaped by both colonialism and indigenous traditions, and while progress has been made, the struggle to abolish corporal punishment in schools is ongoing in many regions.

As we move further into the 21st century, the challenge remains to ensure that all children, regardless of their geographic location, receive an education that respects their dignity and rights. While the history of corporal punishment reflects deeply ingrained attitudes toward discipline and authority, the global trend toward non-violent forms of education suggests that positive change is possible, and that the future of schooling lies in fostering environments of respect, care, and understanding.

2.4. Contextualisation of corporal punishment

2.4.1. General context

Corporal punishment in the context of education is best defined as the practice of using physical force, such as spanking and hitting with a cane or a belt with an aim to punish a learner (Gudyanga, Mbengo & Wadesango, 2014). The use of corporal punishment is regarded as a traditional practice from ancient times, because through pain, a person or an animal was able to obey orders knowing the consequences of not adhering to given orders. In most cases, learners that are likely to experience

corporal punishment are from 12 to 18 years and are in senior phases of schooling (Burton, 2020).

Such age groups are of children under the adolescence stage and require more attention like before as they undergo emotional, psychological, and physical changes, hence, they behave differently and are likely to be punished through corporal punishment (Gershoff, Sattler & Holden, 2020). Corporal punishment was banned as it posed negative effects on the emotional and physical well-being of the learners, and it was deemed inhumane and unethical to inflict pain as a way to discipline (Burton, 2020). There are organisations and policies that guard against the use of corporal punishment and many countries are in adherence to the new constitutional law, while some still consider corporal punishment necessary as a result of unruly learners in rural secondary schools (Mahlangu et al., 2021).

Burton (2020) advises that there are different examples of punishments with various levels of intensity comprised in the list of corporal punishment and may include:

- Spanking/ padding

Smacking buttocks/ backside with a hand or an object like a ruler or stick, resulting in itching pain, striking stripes/ marks.

- Canning

Hutting a person with a cane, typically on the hand, arm, thighs, or buttocks, resulting in swelling or bleeding.

- Whipping and Flogging

Using a whip or a similar instrument like a belt to strike a body, often on the buttocks, neck, back or calves. It is used in various cultures and legal system such as the Zulu culture, named “Isikhali”. It results in bleeding, cuts and scars.

- slapping

Hitting a person on the face or body with an open hand and is usually considered as a quick response to provocation.

- Kneeling, standing, or squatting for a long period

An individual holds uncomfortable positions for a long time and experiences pain on the legs, knees, calves and thighs.

- Rough exercises

Making a person run long laps or carry a heavy object, and eventually coughs, run out of breath, paining arms and sore feet.

- Hard labour

Making a person to dig a hole and cove it back, clean a block of four to five classrooms, wash a car, sweep a field or pack piles of books, resulting in exhaustion, sore hands, arms and shoulders. Potential injury due to heavy lifting.

2.4.2. European country context (United States of America)

In the United State of America, corporal punishment is best defined as physical punishment intended to cause pain or distress as a disciplinary measure (Holden, Wright & Sendek, 2018). The significance of using corporal punishment in the United States of America differs with perspectives and areas, wherein it is commonly used in relation to cultural perspectives (Holden et al., 2018). For some of the people, corporal punishment is regarded as a traditional method rooted in cultural practices and beliefs of childbearing.

In addition, educational and legal perspectives bring an argument of corporal punishment being allowed in some public schools, however, some are against the use of corporal punishment as it takes away learners' integrity and compromises their well-being. In the United States of America, it is heavily debated by scholars such as Dulit (2020) that the effectiveness of corporal punishment may not result in long-term behaviour change, while Font and Gershoff (2016) highlight that corporal punishment result in immediate compliance, whether with force or will.

The influence of the past practices led to other people preferring corporal punishment than any other alternatives as they have witnessed the effect it has on their victims. Many studies such as of (Klavens et al., 2019) highlight that authorities

noticed that the learners were being victimized by corporal punishment like slaves were controlled and forced to obey during colonialism era, hence there was a great movement of banning corporal punishment to change practices of colonialism to democracy.

2.4.3. Asian country context (India)

Corporal punishment in India refers to an excessive use of physical force to correct or discipline learners and it often involves actions such as paddling and slapping. In India, the practice of corporal punishment in secondary schools has been a controversial issue for decades due to various socio-cultural, legal and educational factors (Rashmi & Jaya, 2024). Generally, as Ujjwal (2024) highlights, corporal punishment has been deeply embedded in Indian education and social structures, wherein, it was customarily used as a tool of discipline and control which reflected broader societal attitudes toward authority, respect, and obedience. In the pre-independence era, British colonial rule that had taken over India also encouraged strict forms of discipline in rural schools, which were then inherited by the Indian educational system after their independence (Deb, 2018).

In rural and small-town in India, corporal punishment was often seen as an effective way to instil discipline and ensure academic success. Ujjwal (2024) argues that educators, who were often highly regarded as considerable authority figures used corporal punishment and has usually been justified as a means to uphold respect for this authority, and it still remains as the case. According to Muhammad, Panhyar and Shar (2024), India's education system is categorized by a high level of competition, overcrowded classrooms, and pressure on students to excel academically. Such conditions have often created an environment where educators resort to corporal punishment as a quick solution to manage disruptive students or to enforce strict academic standards (Muhammad, Panhyar & Shar, 2024).

The pressure on learners to perform well in exams and the emphasis on rote learning also contribute to an environment where corporal punishment is sometimes seen as a necessary tool to maintain discipline, even though it can be counterproductive in terms of emotional and psychological development as in other countries (Maiti, 2021). In addition, Deb (2018) advises that the legal system and

human rights organisations of India, have taken steps and different legislative measures to ban corporal punishment in schools, due to the attention of the rapid growth of using corporal punishment during directives to ban it across the world. Such measures include The Right to Education Act (RTE) 2009 of India, which is a law that provides compulsory and free education and prohibits the use of corporal punishment in schools for all learners with ages between 6 and 14 (Ujjwal, 2024). Moreover, the law mandates and directs that schools must adopt and use child-friendly and non-violent approaches to discipline (Sheokand & Vajpayee, 2023).

According to Kahnovich and Rezki (2022), the National Commission for Protection of Child's Rights (NCPCR) 2010 issued procedures and strategies to prevent the escalating use of corporal punishment and further urged states and educational authorities to establish complaint mechanisms and ensure adherence to the banning of corporal punishment. Despite the laws and legislative measures to ban corporal punishment, it is still used due to various reasons such as inadequate enforcement, lack of awareness, and entrenched cultural attitudes and it is still justified as necessary for maintaining discipline and enhancing academic performance (Kahnovich & Rezki, 2022).

In India, respect for authority figures, such as educators and parents, is deeply ingrained in the culture. This cultural context often results in a resistance to challenge or question disciplinary practices, including corporal punishment (Humd, Umar & Khan, 2022). In many cases, learners and their families may view physical punishment as a legitimate means of maintaining order and academic focus. In addition, as Humd, Umar and Khan (2022) add, rural or economically disadvantaged areas, have low access to quality education and educators might not have the resources or training to manage classrooms without resorting to corporal punishment. The lack of professional development opportunities for educators in such areas can contribute to the continuous use of corporal punishment (Sheokand & Vajpayee, 2023).

The practice of corporal punishment in Indian rural and small-town secondary schools has declined due to legal and social efforts, however, it persists in some areas. Maiti (2021) highlights that a shift in societal attitudes such as admitting to the bad effects of corporal punishment against cultural beliefs, effective and consistent

enforcement of laws, and the promotion of alternative and practical methods of discipline are essential to eradicate the use of corporal punishment.

2.4.4. African country context (Ghana)

Ghana as one of the African countries regards corporal punishment as an intentional infliction of physical pain on a person as a way of reinforcement, discipline or punishment (Akyina & Manu, 2024). Corporal punishment was and is still used as a tool to correct bad behaviour and enforce authority, thus as substantiated by Akyina and Manu (2024) it is commonly used at school and at home and learners grow up knowing how to behave towards adults. Ghana has tried and made efforts to address and eradicate the use of corporal punishment, particularly in schools.

Though corporal punishment is not completely banned in all settings and contexts, Dapuri (2020) advises that the authorities have taken steps to limit its persisting use. Among the steps taken, Ghana's Ministry of Education issued an instruction forbidding the use of corporal punishment in schools. However, corporal punishment is still used in schools for different reasons, thus there is a rapid emphasis on the banning and prohibition of using corporal punishment (Abonyi & Salifu, 2023). Educators are encouraged to use non-violent methods of discipline, rather use constructive approaches such as awarding learners for best behaviour (Akyina & Manu, 2024).

Ghana contextualises the use of corporal punishment as an African tradition and belief, aiming to encourage respect for elders, and hierarchy occasionally emphasises the use of corporal punishment. Akyina and Manu (2024) confirm that parents and educators in Ghana view corporal punishment as an effective way to maintain order and enforce rules, especially in communities that values communal principals and respect for authority. Communities often promote and support the use of corporal punishment because it associates with societal norms about discipline, honour and respect. In support of that, educators that do not resort to corporal punishment may get criticized by the community members (Abaogye, 2019).

The banning of corporal punishment was a worldwide directive, many countries took heed to that directive. However, countries such as Ghana ceased to use it in a few regions and the rest of the country continued (Abaogye, 2019). Quansah, Kudadze

and William (2022) provide a few reasons for Ghana to use corporal punishment while a worldwide directive was given, and such reasons include generational continuity of traditional practices. Old people used corporal punishment from way back, thus it is passed down through generations as they believe and testify that it is effective for shaping behaviour and moral (Arthur, Gyamfi & Appiah, 2024). In addition, the study by Qansah, Kudadze and William (2022) testifies that communities suggest that there are no overt and clear laws that directly and explicitly ban corporal punishment.

The legal framework in Ghana, predominantly under the Children's act of 1998, stipulates that learners have a right to protection from physical abuse, hence, some regions in Ghana ceased to use corporal punishment (Zuure & Taylo, 2018). Nevertheless, Kuyini and Mahama (2021) further motivate that there are debates that the act does not specifically outlaw corporal punishment in schools. That allows people to have different interpretations of discipline and punishment, causing the children's act a topic of continuing legal and social debates.

2.4.5. South African context

Corporal punishment in South Africa is considered as a premeditated infliction of pain on learners as a form of discipline and behaviour change, especially at school as learners spend most of their active time (Calvino, 2021). The Constitution of South Africa that was drafted in 1996 clearly indicated that corporal punishment was outlawed. In addition, it further guarantees the right to bodily integrity, wherein, the right not to be tortured or being subjected to inhumane and cruel treatment should be observed (Dube, 2020)

Furthermore, the constitution and human rights principles, supported by Khangala (2024) suggest that corporal punishment is judged to be inconsistent with regulations within the constitution, thus, the state has taken steps to protect learners' rights and from violence, exploitation and abuse. It also argued that learners are subjected to corporal punishment as a result of educator that are not willing to change to the new system of discipline (Dube, 2020). Educators with the support of parents resist the change in introducing new disciplinary measures in rural secondary schools, with

reasons that it is the only way they deem possible and effective to raise a child (Mayisela, 2017).

Moreover, there are still traces of corporal punishment in South African schools, even in the midst of its ban. Heekes, Kruger, Lester and Ward (2022) infer that the persisting use of corporal punishment reflects a societal and generational tension between traditional disciplinary practices and modern understanding and respect of children's rights. In addition, Dube (2020) urges that some of the people in rural communities believe that corporal punishment is still necessary to maintain discipline and classroom management. The practice was seen as a culturally acceptable form of enforcing authority, discipline, and obedience, creating a strong foundation for the continuation of corporal punishment in schools.

Others argue that should corporal punishment be left unused, children have a greater potential of growing up undisciplined and disrespectful, like it is evident currently as (Vohito, 2020). In a contrary, Ngubane, Mkhize and Balgob (2019) highlight that many child advocacy groups and professionals argue that corporal punishment is ineffective in promoting long-term behavioural change, rather it has greater impacts such as instilling fear, hatred, and aggression. Furthermore, there is an ongoing debate within South African society about the role of corporal punishment in child-rearing and schooling, wherein, most of the people are heavily resistant towards the eradication of corporal punishment. Dube (2020) supports current argument which regard to corporal punishment as a necessary tool in disadvantages or violent areas where educators lack other options and methods to curb unruly behaviour.

2.5. Global offences by learners in the classroom

Global learner offences in schools refers to common types of misconduct or behavioural violations by learners in a school or any educational institution. Offenses differ based on legal, social and cultural context, and may be common across many different regions (Segalo, 2022). Such offenses may include the following:

2.5.1. Disruptive behaviour in class

A learner may be offensive when they talk out of turn or at will, wherein, they speak when not pointed or permitted to talk and in return a peer or an educator gets disrupted while talking. In addition, disrupting a lesson and disregarding educators' instructions and commands shows lack of disrespect for educators, thus, it is regarded as an offense. In some cases, learners would deliberately use gadgets such as cell phones or make jokes and mock others to raise loud noise in the classroom that interrupts teaching and learning, hence, the educator exercise discipline (Nyasani & Wawire, 2023).

2.5.2. Sexual misconduct and bullying

An offense that may qualify discipline is sexual harassment. For instance, a learner may need to be disciplined should they make sexual comments, gestures and physical contact towards another learner or an educator. Additionally, engaging in romantic and sexual relationships while in school is also an offense which may need an educator to act as a parent. Moreover, since there are cases of learners committing suicide due to bullying, it is regarded as an offense. For instance, should a learner be found guilty of hitting or fighting with other learners, insulting or name-calling or using digital platforms to threaten and harass peers, they qualify to be intensively disciplined (Kostikova & Guzenko, 2024).

2.5.3. Cheating, plagiarism, and misuse of technology

Learners tend to copy answers using unauthorized materials and collaborating with others during informal and formal assessments, and such is regarded as an offense which needs discipline. In addition, there are schools that use technology gadgets, such as smart screens and projectors and should learners be found tampering with those gadgets, they may be rebuked (Sozon, Pok, Sia & Alkharabsheh, 2024).

2.5.4. Substance abuse and violence

When learners bring and use alcohol, drugs and other substances such as illicit chemical substances on the school premises poses danger to other learners and educators, thus it can be regarded as an offense. In most cases, due to overuse of

substances and smoking weed, learners tend to start physical violence and are sometimes aggressive towards peers and educators (Ngozi & Adeogun, 2015).

2.5.5. Bunking classes and being absent

It is regarded as an offense when learners bunk classes or lessons whenever they like and not coming to school in some areas is regarded as an offense. Also, when a learner leaves the class without the educator's permission shows that the authority of the educator is undermined. In addition, an educator may also administer punishment should a learner be found having not written any informal assessments such as homework and assignments, as it hinders academic success (Frimpong & Yendukwa, 2024).

2.5.6. Vandalism

One of the most concerning offenses is vandalism. For instance, learners take pleasure in writing and scratching on the desks, walls and windows and such acts minimize the sustainability of the property. Others may deliberately break windows, swing on the burglar doors, or even dance on the desks which may result in damage (Otukho & Amunga, 2024).

2.5.7. Violation of the school's code of conduct

A code of conduct is used to maintain equality among learners, maintain uniform quality and outlines rules and boundaries which learners must adhere to. Going against the code of conduct by learners threatens the integrity of the school as an institution and ruins its public image (Zondo & Mncube, 2024).

2.6. Frameworks, policies and organisations against corporal punishment

2.6.1. Constitution of a country

A constitution is a set of fundamental principles that determines and establish how a country should be governed (Noah, 2022). Among a few purposes of a constitution, one of them is that it outlines the rights and responsibilities of citizens and preserves protection of individual freedom. According to Lenta (2022), using corporal

punishment, violates the rights of learners, wherein pain is inflicted, and learners' protection and freedom are compromised.

2.6.1.1. Constitution of USA

In the United States of America, the constitution does not explicitly address the use of corporal punishment (Godsoe, 2017). Thus, it has been interpreted to related to practice in certain contexts according to the 1977 Eighth Amendment named "Cruel and Unusual Punishments" (Smentkwoski, 2024). The Eighth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America forbids cruel and unusual punishments, the clause has been dominant to traditional and legal debates about corporal punishment, especially its use in all settings (Smentkwoski, 2024).

The Eight Amendment's interpretation does not necessarily apply to all forms of corporal punishment, hence, the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that corporal punishment in schools does not violate the Eighth Amendment (Smentkwoski, 2024). He further explains that corporal punishment was a common practice in schools at the time of the amendment and was not deemed to be extreme or excessive, thus it did not meet the threshold for "cruel and unusual". Although the amendment was in the late 18th century, the U.S government has not made any recent amendments to the constitution regarding corporal punishment, however, there has been an introduction of Bills such as "Ending corporal punishment in schools Bill and "Protecting our students in schools act, to address the issue of corporal punishment (Godsoe, 2017).

2.6.1.2. Constitution of India

The Constitution of India does not address corporal punishment in schools. However, it provides a framework for the protection of children's rights, which indirectly impacts the use of corporal punishment. There are several constitutional laws that prohibit the use of corporal punishment in secondary schools, and they may include Article 14, "Right to equality", which guarantees the right to equality before the law (Sharma & Pal, 2024). Discrimination and human brutality, such as using corporal punishment, could be seen as a violation of the equality principle, as corporal punishment can lead to unequal treatment and harsh use of force to learners.

In addition, Sharma and Pal (2024) found that, Article 21, “Right against cruelty” of the constitution provides the right to life and personal freedom. According to Alam and Raza (2023), the Supreme Court of India, has interpreted this to include the right to protection from brutal, inhuman or degrading treatment, which can be extended to the use of corporal punishment. Furthermore, Sharma and Pal emphasise that any form of corporal punishment may be viewed as a violation of the child’s right to dignity and personal safety. Furthermore, conferred by Balasubramanian (2020), article 39(e) & (f), “Directive principles of state policy”, ensures that children are not abused, and that childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral and material neglect. Thus, corporal punishment is implied to cause harm to learners and is not consistent with the principle of article 39.

The right to education act of 2009, prohibits the use of corporal punishment and mandates free and obligatory education for children aged 6 to 14 years and stresses the creation of a child-friendly and safe environment in schools (Veeraraghavan, 2020). Any form of corporal punishment is deemed a violation of the Act, and schools are required to ensure that children are not subjected to physical or mental harm. Article 23 “Protection from exploitation”, prohibits trafficking and forced labour, which may also be interpreted as extending to any form of exploitation or cruel treatment, including corporal punishment, since some educators force learners to do hard labour as discipline (Balasubramanian, 2020).

2.6.1.3. Constitution of Ghana

Ghana’s constitution does not plainly mention corporal punishment, however, it contains provisions that are relevant to its practice and legality, more specifically in relation to human rights and treatment of children at home and at school (Dapuri, 2022). Relevant provisions may include the right to dignity, which is Article 15 of the constitution, and it guarantees the right to personal dignity, wherein no person shall be subjected to torture or inhumane, or degrading punishment (Dapuri, 2022). Such provisions protect individuals from corporal punishment, thus the constitution is against it.

Article 28 of the constitution of Ghana, named “Protection of Children”, protects the rights of children. It implies that every child has the right to be protected from acts of

torture, so it enforces the idea that learners should not be subjected to corporal punishment that violates their dignity and human rights (Dapuri, 2022). The Constitution of Ghana may not openly eradicate the use of corporal punishment, hence most people still resort to it, however, the constitution is against learners being subjected to cruel acts of torture (Abonyi & Salifu, 2023).

2.6.1.4. Constitution of South Africa

South African constitution, which was drafted in 1997, comprised of different sections, such as section 12 of freedom and security of a person (Sang, 2024). The section guarantees the right to freedom and security each person is entitled to. The constitution explicitly prohibits the use of corporal punishment on learners, thus, there are movements such as eradication of gender-based violence and conviction of people that use corporal punishment (Veriava, 2014). The South African schools act (SASA) of 1996 is a crucial fragment of legislation that governs schooling in South Africa.

Section 10 of SASA specifically prohibits corporal punishment in schools, which includes secondary schools, which states that no person may administer corporal punishment in schools, which applies to educators, principals, and school staff (Edu & Osei, 2022). The constitutional court in the case of Minister of Education v. Syfrets Trust Ltd (1996) as Boakye and Kwarteng (2018) highlight, solidified the ban of corporal punishment in schools, and the court ruled that corporal punishment in schools is unconstitutional and a violation of the rights of learners. Furthermore, the judgment reinforced that children should be protected from physical harm, including at school (Boakye & Kwarteng, 2018).

2.6.2. Policies against corporal punishment

2.6.2.1. United States of American Educational Policy

United States of America's educational policies regarding corporal punishment vary by states, as the legality and regulation of the practice are determined at the specific state and local levels. However, Stunder (2020) argues that there has been a general shift away from corporal punishment in schools, with a significant number of states banning it and an expanding trend toward alternative disciplinary approaches.

Federal Regulations state that in the absence of federal law that directly prohibits corporal punishment, the U.S. Department of Education monitors and reports on its usage across the country (Power-deFur, 2023). For instance, in 1977, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Ingraham v. Wright* that corporal punishment in public schools did not violate the Eighth Amendment's prohibition against cruel and unusual punishment (Makhambetsaliyev, 2021). However, this decision has not prevented many states from choosing to enact their own bans on corporal punishment. Furthermore, Makhambetsaliyev (2021) supports, legal and ethical considerations and critics of corporal punishment and argues that it can lead to abuse, increase the likelihood of violence, and create an environment of fear rather than respect.

In the United States of America, there are still schools that use corporal punishment and still remains legal in 19 states, primarily in the South and parts of the West. Some of these states include Texas, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Arkansas. In these states, corporal punishment may be used under certain conditions, such as with parental consent, and typically requires that it be administered by an administrator such as a principal rather than an educator (Stunder, 2020).

2.6.2.2. Indian Educational Policy

India has also taken noteworthy steps recently so as to address corporal punishment in schools through legal and policy measures, reflecting a broader movement toward child protection and rights-based education. Indian's "Right of children to free and compulsory education (RTE) act" of 2009, mandates compulsory and free education for children aged 6 to 14 years and emphasizes creating a safe and non-violent educational environment and prohibits any form of corporal punishment and physical or mental harm in schools.

While the original National Policy on Education does not explicitly ban corporal punishment, it stresses the importance of an environment that fosters the well-being of children. It advocates for child-centered learning, which implicitly discourages punitive measures like corporal punishment. In the 1992 revision, the emphasis shifted further toward promoting education systems that respect the rights and dignity of learners, creating pressure on states to adopt stricter measures to prevent corporal punishment.

In 2000, the Supreme Court judgment on corporal punishment in India, ruled in the case *Vishaka v. State of Rajasthan* that corporal punishment in schools violates the fundamental rights of children under the Indian Constitution, particularly their right to life and dignity under Article 21 of the constitution. This judgment set a strong instance for discouraging corporal punishment across the country and the court's recognition of the mental and physical harm caused by corporal punishment catalysed the creation of explicit guidelines and protocols for addressing school violence and learner aggression.

The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Women and Child Development, has issued guidelines to prevent corporal punishment in schools. These guidelines emphasize the need for educator training on child rights, psychological impacts of punishment, and alternative disciplinary measures. Furthermore, these guidelines serve as a resource for state government and educational authorities to create awareness and take concrete steps to protect children from severe impact of corporal punishment.

2.6.2.3. Ghanaian Educational Policy

In 2004, the Ghana Education Service (GES) issued a directive that formally banned corporal punishment in schools, which emphasized the need for educators to use alternative disciplinary methods such as counselling, dialogue, and behaviour management strategies. Educators are encouraged to treat students with respect and dignity, rather than resorting to corporal punishment. In addition, the educators' code of conduct, developed by the GES, emphasizes the importance of educators adhering to professional and ethical standards. It explicitly prohibits corporal punishment and underscores that educators should employ non-violent means to manage student behaviour.

Ghana passed the Children's Act in 1998 (Act 560), which is a key component of legislation aimed at protecting children's rights. This Act includes provisions that prohibit all forms of physical abuse, including corporal punishment, in educational settings. Moreover, the Ghanaian Education Service has issued clear guidelines that prohibit the use of corporal punishment in schools, thus, these guidelines were developed to foster a safer and more supportive environment for students, focusing

more on using positive disciplinary methods. The Education Act of 2008 (Act 778) reinforces the principle of creating a conducive and non-violent environment for children in schools. It mandates that schools should foster discipline through positive behavioural approaches, rather than resorting to corporal punishment. The Education Act also empowers the Ghana Education Service (GES) to monitor schools' practices to ensure compliance with child protection standards.

2.6.2.4. South African Department of Basic Education Policy

Department of Basic Education of South Africa has pledged to protect the integrity and health of learners by abolishing corporal punishment in schools. DBE (2017), emphasises that, post 1994 and attainment of a democratic government, Section 9 of the South African education policy was amended to Section 10 to uproot corporal punishment from schools as to bring a safer and healthier teaching and learning environment for educators and learners. Power & Veriava (2017) state that, "Section 10 of the Schools Act proscribes the use of corporal punishment in schools, and should anyone resort to corporal punishment to a learner and disregards that subsection will be charged with a criminal offense." According to Thomas (2022), learners are given a privilege than educators, and that makes it hard for educators to adhere to the policy as learners are not also adhering to the code of conduct.

South African Constitutional Court and the Department of Basic Education had a consensus that corporal punishment should be abolished as a way to show movement from a violent history into a system without pain and violence (Burton, 2020). Moreover, psychologists and medical practitioners argued that corporal punishment is harsh and inhumane hence the support for the abolishment of corporal punishment in schools to preserve dignity, morality, physical and emotional stability of learners (Durrant & Ensom, 2012). Furthermore, Calvino (2021) accentuates that, corporal punishment is an ancient tradition wherein children did not have a say in a manner of discipline and currently some of the children develop low self-esteem, they become violent and always want to prove a point to certain educator, especially those that are always using corporal punishment.

2.6.2.5. United Nations (UN) Policy

United Nations' (UN) verdict on corporal punishment is that a covenant on Human rights prohibits all forms and practices of corporal punishment (UN, 2020). UN has expressed strong opposition to corporal punishment in schools, including in secondary education, as part of its broader human rights framework. The key stance of the UN is rooted in the recognition of children's rights to be free from violence and abuse, including within educational settings. According to UN, institutions should device means of discipline other than inflicting pain, and that there should be committees and protocols of discipline so that human, social and political rights can be preserved and upheld. Worldwide, UN aims to protect children's rights, health, education, and their future and disregards any action that inflicts pain to children and might result in imprisonment should an adult be found guilty (UN, 2020).

There are a lot of debates and arguments all around the world about the privilege that is given to learners that are mostly rebellious and not adherent to the code of conduct in their respective institutions because they are not disciplined (O'Neal, 2018). The fact of learners being involved in gang fights, property vandalization at school, fighting and killing educators and their peers, bad academic performance and drug abuse conveys the lack of support that the constitution has for educators and education (Holland & Holden, 2016). Font and Gershoff (2017), argue that since corporal punishment was abolished, learners tend to move away from the core concept of education, respect and upholding responsibilities as law abiding citizens, which the UN fights to instil in young people.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which is the most widely ratified international human rights treaty, explicitly emphasizes children's rights to protection from violence, including corporal punishment. Particularly, article 19 of the CRC, requires governments worldwide to take measures to protect children from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury, abuse, or exploitation. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, which monitors the implementation of the CRC, has consistently urged countries to prohibit corporal punishment in all settings, especially in schools. Furthermore, the committee has issued multiple general comments on children's rights, urging all countries to ban corporal punishment in all forms. It highlights the need for alternative disciplinary methods that are based on respect, dignity, and non-violence.

In addition, the committee has frequently recommended that nations outlaw corporal punishment in schools and adopt more positive approaches to discipline. It considers corporal punishment to be a violation of children's dignity and their right to be protected from violence. In recent years, the Human Rights Council (HRC) under UN, has passed resolutions and statements that call for the elimination of corporal punishment worldwide, emphasizing the need for educational systems that foster respect and dignity. The Council and other UN bodies have also called for raising awareness about the negative effects of corporal punishment on children's mental health and overall development.

2.6.3. International organisations

2.6.3.1. Save the Children International

Save the Children International is a worldwide humanitarian organisation that was founded in 1919 by Eglantyne Jebb and Dorothy Buxton after World War I, so as to grant relief to children affected by the war and still aims to develop children's lives around the world (Scott, 2010). It has grown to over 100 countries, with a focus on issues such as child protection, health and nutrition, education, emergency retorts, poverty, conflict, and children's rights (Scott, 2010). The organisation has also pledge to fight against corporal punishment as it operates on a network of different national organisations, local communities, governments to implement policies, programs, and initiatives (Tucci, Mitchell & Goddard, 2006). In addition, as the organisation was formed to protect and preserve a children's lives and dignity, they deem corporal punishment as a cruel way of raising children, rather, educators should use organisations such as Save the Children International as mediators to better save and discipline children (Tucci, Mitchell & Goddard, 2006).

Scott (2010) confers that the organization advocates for training educators and school staff in non-violent forms of discipline. It also includes educating them on the harmful effects of corporal punishment and providing them with the tools to handle classroom behaviour in constructive ways. According to Atige, Nduhura, Wafula and John (2023), Save the Children works to raise awareness about the harmful effects of corporal punishment. They seek to shift cultural attitudes, challenging the belief that physical punishment is a necessary or effective form of discipline.

2.6.3.2. Global initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children

The Global initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children is an international organization dedicated to advocating for the universal prohibition of corporal punishment in schools and other schools, such as homes and juvenile prisons (Rowland, Gerry & Stanton, 2017). Furthermore, it monitors and campaigns for the legal prohibition of corporal punishment globally, offering resources and support to governments and organizations working to eliminate it. The initiative works to promote the rights of children and to ensure that they grow up in environments that are free from violence and abuse (Bassam, Marianne & Berbaka, 2018).

Legally, the initiative pushes for national governments to enact laws that explicitly prohibit corporal punishment in all settings, ensuring that children are protected by law. According to Magwa and Mayisela (2024), over 60 countries have legally banned corporal punishment in schools, and a growing number are prohibiting it at home and in institutions. In addition, the initiative aligns its work and goals with international human rights frameworks, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which emphasizes children's rights and to protection them from all forms of violence, including corporal punishment (Strohwald & Horsten, 2024).

Moreover, the initiative provides resources, research, and technical assistance to help countries, lawmakers, and organizations to adopt effective policies and practices for non-violent discipline and positive parenting alternatives to curb the growing use and favour of corporal punishment (Magwa & Mayisela, 2024). For quality and assurance for adherence to the banning of corporal punishment in schools, Strohwald and Horsten (2024) attest that the initiative provides tracking and reporting on the global progress towards eliminating corporal punishment, publishing annual updates and reviews of countries' legal frameworks and their implementation of child protection policies.

2.6.3.3. Human Rights Watch

Human Rights Watch is an international organisation that investigates and advocates for the protection of human rights (Myanmar, 2021). The organisation has

consistently advocated against the use of corporal punishment in schools, including secondary schools. The organization argues that corporal punishment violates children's rights to protection from cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment. According to Magwa & Mayisela (2024) in reports and campaigns, Human Rights Watch has highlighted that corporal punishment can lead to long-term physical and psychological harm, reinforcing harmful power dynamics and negative discipline methods that often disproportionately affect vulnerable children, such as those from marginalized communities or those with disabilities. The organization has called for a global ban on corporal punishment in schools, emphasizing that positive, non-violent discipline strategies are more effective in promoting learning and good behaviour (Adenuga & Johnson-Odusanya, 2024).

2.7. Common causes of learner bad behaviour and unruliness

With the persisting use of corporal punishment in schools, it can be argued that there are common causes of bad learner behaviour and unruliness, which leads to educators being vulnerable and such causes should be addressed. According to Ogwo (2017), poor parenting and lack of support at home breeds inconsistent discipline, whereby learners are not taught or shown clear boundaries and consequences at home. Meier and Marais (2013) assert that learners should be taught good behaviour at home from a young age and the likelihood of them changing when they get older is less likely. Chitakunye and Mahiya (2020) attest that in most cases, learners that are from families that do not have proper upbringing and discipline treat educators like they treat their guidance at home, unlike learners that are from more strict guardians. Moreover, Alho (2023) found that learners that are subjected excessive abuse at home tend to develop anger and violent attitude, which lead them to being violent and disobedient at school. Such learners may also express their experience and emotions through bad behaviour.

Secondly, Chitakunye and Mahiya (2020) indicate that peer influence is one of the most contributing factors to learners being unruly in the classroom and outside as most wish to fit in groups or gain social approval from peers. In such cases, there is development of social pressure to learners who aim to prove points to their peers, hence there are gangs and bullying in schools (Alho, 2023). Social factors such as a

learner's luxurious background make them act out and try to gain dominance over others, thus bullying and confronting educators to prove dominance. Such learners tend to fail in their academics, constantly change schools and continue with their bad behaviour.

Thirdly, Marennyenya (2023) articulates that lack of engagement and loss of interest in schoolwork makes learners to disengage and act out due to frustration or boredom. Educators are advised to make lessons interesting and engaging as to hook learners to enjoy learning, unlike using material that are hard to comprehend or using an educator centred approach. Learners tend to fail to engage and behave in a proper manner when they do not see the value in what they are learning due to complicated materials and irrelevant information. In addition, Ogwo (2017) highlights that some learners have learning difficulties such as dyslexia that educators may not be aware of in rural schools and those learners tend to misbehave due to frustrations caused by peers or educators being impatient with them.

Fourthly, Gumbi and Nkoane (2019) attest that inconsistent and poor learning environment, such as lack of educator authority or control, makes learners act as they wish as they are aware that the educator struggles to establish authority. Educators must set clear rules and manage a classroom effectively so that learners may not feel unattended and choose to misbehave. In addition, Obadire and Sinthumele (2021) articulate that learners make it a tendency to misbehave when an educator does not enforce discipline consistently, an educator should have a single stance and should not change so that learners get used to her superiority. Beets, Van Schalkwyk and Kirsten (2022) suggest that educators may find it hard to verbally establish or claim authority in an overcrowded classroom, hence, some use corporal punishment or only focus on learners at the front, as learners at the back find an opportunity to misbehave.

Fifthly, Abanihe et al. (2015) elucidate that adolescence stage is also an emotional and psychological contributor to unruliness and bad behaviour in school, such that adolescents are in a critical phase of seeking and forming their individualised identity. Such a phase may lead to exploration and experimentation of behaviours, attitudes and values, and such may manifest as defiance, rebellion and risky behaviours in an attempt to assert independence. Moreover, Chatty (2020), attests

that adolescents experience hormonal changes which may cause moods swings, emotional volatility and irritability and they may struggle to regulate and control their emotions. Thus, Abanihe et al. (2015) add that learners failing to control their emotions may result in impulsive behaviour and conflict with peers and educators.

Furthermore, Ayinde and Olorunfemi (2021) attest that learners tend to experience peer pressure during this stage as they are highly influenced by social groups and usually engage in disruptive behaviour to fit in their peers. Also, as adolescents seek independence within groups and in the world, they often resist authority, rules and structure in the school environment. Moreover, during the adolescent stage, there is a great impact of social media and technology influence as learners may experience cyberbullying, inappropriate conversation, and distractions in class due to adopted online behaviour or social trends (Chatty, 2020). The adolescence stage also includes stronger social relations like dating and introduction to sexual orientation, and as such, learners experience pressure from parents and educators against their bodily desires caused by exposure to social media (Ayinde & Olorunfemi, 2021).

Lastly, Marennya (2023), adds that the influence of what learners are exposed to in the community and social media also contributes to bad learner behaviour. For instance, a casually violent community inspires learners to adopt such actions and brings them into a classroom. In addition, social media exposure also poses a threat of good behaviour as learners view or read about educators fighting with learners and they too condone such behaviour by confronting their educators (Chatty, 2020). In support of that, in recent cases, learners intentionally provoked an educator for social media recognition, which in return, those learners were expelled for humiliating an educator. Furthermore, Maree and Warnock (2023) argue that some educators tend to give more attention to learners that pay attention in class and ignore the troublesome learners as a way of teaching them a lesson rather than using physical punishment. However, such practices lead to learners perceiving the educator as biased and selective and they lack educator and learner connection (Marennya, 2023). Also, such educators may experience stress or burnout as they would get overwhelmed by constant disruption from the unfavoured learners.

2.8. Reasons for the persisting use of corporal punishment in rural secondary schools

2.8.1. Curbing bad learner behaviour and unruliness

In the United States of America, the Supreme Court deemed corporal punishment constitutional, making it legal in 19 states, however, the majority of the victims are African Americans found in black populated communities (Green, Dickens & Thurman, 2024). According to Font and Gershoff (2017), there are cases that have led to the court to dispute the banishing of corporal punishment in some of the states, such as young educators being intimidated by learners, gang fights, and the increasing number in drug users in the school premises. The main aim is to bring order and coherence in the classroom and the school yard, and to mould young people into being responsible and law-abiding citizens (Gershoff, Sattler & Holden, 2020). Moreover, corporal punishment brings unfavourable consequences to learners, hence educators use it to control or manage learners' behaviour to fit their preference and in that way a classroom can be managed without any disruption (Cruz, Firestone & Rodl, 2021). Arguments from journalists such as Ordway (2023) show that even in the mist of banning of corporal punishment, its usage somehow grants educators with consistency of control and authority over learners, hence, in most cases, learners obey educators that tend to use more corporal punishment than other alternatives such as verbal warnings.

In Africa, Ghana still permits the use of corporal punishment and considers it necessary for emphasising the role of discipline and education, as well as respect for authority figures and Ghanaians believe that corporal punishment is within the merits of their culture (LADA, 2018). Buckler (2018) attests that new Ghanaian educators carry canes to class proclaiming that it is the only language that learners understand, and it is the way things should be. Quansah, Kudadze and Agoke (2022), also highlight the use of corporal punishment as being a traditional practice in Ghana, however, they dispute that view in the midst of debates and abolishment recommendations from the society and the law enforcement.

Moreover, educators in Ghana with the support of parents use corporal punishment to impart and emphasis the idea of authority between educators and learners, and by so doing, learners develop the interest in respecting elders in school and at home, which is what parents desire (Buckler, 2018). Furthermore, a study by Amoako, Otchere and Opoku (2020) gives an insight that Ghanaian educators and schools in

general use corporal punishment to attain total classroom control, and maintain a conducive teaching and learning environment because corporal punishment is not used each and every day, but whenever there is a need to eradicate bad behaviour, and it leaves a mark that learners do not forget.

In South Africa, Corporal Punishment in schools was initially introduced to control and minimise bad behaviour, to uphold best discipline, to encourage learners to take school seriously and to try and mould learners to become responsible people (Mayisela, 2017). Be that as it may, the government of South Africa and the Department of Basic Education banned the use of corporal punishment in school after 1994 with an aim of changing the discipline system of apartheid, of violence. Consequently, Mahlangu et al. (2021) argue that some educators continued with corporal punishment as learners' behaviour got worse than before, such that there were cases of gang fights, educator and learner fights and drug abuse in the school premises. Educators use corporal punishment to protect themselves from the unruly learners as those learners know that they are legally protected from getting beaten (Mahlangu et al., 2021). Some learners may even go to an extent of opening an assault case, which would disadvantage an educator.

Furthermore, Sibisi, Sibisi and Mpofu (2024) argue that some of the offenses that learners commit are far complicated than others, such as fighting with educators using sharp weapons and they require police and parents' interventions. However, some parents fail to take accountability, such that they verbally promise to rebuke their children and never do practically, hence educators and police tend to claim respect and authority before learners can be contemptuous. It can be argued that some parents rely on educators to raise and mould their children into better people as learners spend most of their time at school (Ngubane, Mkhize & Singh, 2019).

2.8.2. Maintaining classroom management

A conducive classroom allows teaching and learning to take place, hence some of the schools in the United States of America use corporal punishment to maintain a conducive classroom (Heekes et al., 2022). Maintaining classroom management in schools where there are unruly learners may be very hard as indicated by Baker, Meeks and Chang (2009) thus educators resort to corporal punishment as it is

regarded as an instant method of solving a problem than using verbal rebuking or positive reinforcement. In black dominant communities, as according to, schools request consent for using corporal punishment from parents and should the majority grant that permission then learners are to be subjected to corporal punishment (Straus & Donnelly, 2017).

In addition, schools or regions that use corporal punishment have clear rules and guidelines, that guide an educator when and when not to use corporal punishment (Greene & Winkler, 2019). Such rules and guidelines indicate the applicability of using corporal punishment and other alternatives, looking at the extent of the fault that learner has committed. In most cases, Klika, Fleckman and Melissa, (2020) attest that, corporal punishment is used in cases where a learner has beaten a fellow learner or an educator, or had vandalised the property of the school, or sells drugs in the school premises. The guidelines further explain the significance of a principal or deputy principal being the ones to administer corporal punishment, wherein educators are protected from the law enforcement (Klika, Fleckman & Melissa, 2020). In a contrary, in some of the regions, especially in the white dominated communities, schools rather use other alternatives, however, Eggleston, Green, Abel, Poe and Shakeshaft (2021), highlight that such schools in some regions host the most rebellious learners as they are used to easy and manageable punishments like detention and suspension.

In Ghana, educators use corporal punishment when learners are late, poor performance or disrupting lessons by talking loudly or not complying to the instructions of the educator (Nana & Adam, 2021). Corporal punishment is regarded as the most effective instantaneous technique that learners tend to respond to than verbal communications. Thus, Dapuri (2022) adds that Ghanaian schools depend on corporal punishment whenever there is a need to attend a matter of discipline immediately. Abaogye (2019) substantiates that learners are aware that they will be subjected to corporal punishment should they be rebellious or unruly, hence they always take instructions, and they strive to do well in their academics.

Similarly to the United States of America, Ghanaian school management engage parents before they can use corporal punishment on their learners (Dapuri, 2022). The consent from parents gives educators authority over the learners, however,

educators are advised to use corporal punishment wisely and only when it is necessary. For instance, educators should firstly use other alternatives before resorting to corporal punishment, as the implications related to excessive use of corporal punishment may include suspension of the educator or a great severe injury to the learner (Quansah, Kudadze & William, 2022). Moreover, educators in Ghana stand with their cultural beliefs, wherein, a child is subjected to corporal punishment for any fault, even when it does not deserve a beating or flogging. According to Ward, Petersen, Kupchik and Pratt (2021), the law enforcement established government initiative that aim to change the educators' mindsets about their beliefs as learners experience pain and suffering instead of changing from their bad habits of disrupting lesson or bullying other learners.

Post to Ghana's liberation of colonialism, education specialists and managers banned corporal punishment in schools as it was one of the colonial practices and were considered inhumane (Killingray, 2009). Continuous use of the colonial practice in the classrooms made it hard for corporal punishment to be banned as educators know the positive impacts and effects that come with the use of corporal punishment as supported by (Ordway, 2023). Many of the regions in Ghana are rural areas and there is less monitoring of educators in adhering to the regulation of banning corporal punishment in the classrooms. Thus, educators spank or slap learners that are unruly or disruptive and they act accordingly to avoid pain or being laughed by their peers (Abonyi & Salifu, 2023).

In South Africa, educators resort to inflicting pain to learners in a classroom with a purpose to keep order and encourage other learners to behave in a proper manner (Ngubane, Mkhize & Singh, 2019). Zondo, Mncube and Emmanuel (2023), advise that, classroom management is key to an effective teaching and learning hence educators may see a need to harshly punish those few unruly learners to benefit the majority in a classroom. Educators use corporal punishment such as uncomfortable exercises and hard labour to maintain discipline in the classroom (Ngubane et al., 2019). In rural areas where there is weak law enforcement, educators tend to overuse corporal punishment as the community condones it as a way to raise children. Most of the rural communities allow their children to be subjected to corporal punishment for classroom order and discipline (Mahlangu et al., 2021).

Amongst reasons for that, one of them is that parents rely on the judgement of the educators about their children, hence, they allow educators to use corporal punishment instead of more humane and appropriate disciplinary measures (Mthanti & Mncube, 2014).

Similarly to the United States of America and Ghana, educators in South Africa regard corporal punishment as a quicker way to gain control and order in the classroom and learners take it to consideration not to mess with that particular educator or they change their behaviour completely (Mayisela, 2017). In that way, corporal punishment makes learners abide by force or willingly, hence most of the time, learners that are subjected to corporal punishment in the classroom fight back or they change their bad habits towards one particular educator or all of them (Nkuna, 2022). In addition, Makhasane and Chikoko (2016), explain that educators that depend on corporal punishment in the classroom demand authority from the learners, or the educator clings on the idea of inflicting pain as the best methods to show superiority and to turn a learners' attitude and behaviour in a shorter time.

Moreover, post to the abolishment of corporal punishment in 1996, more black educators continued to use it as it was an inherited habit from apartheid. The influence of their experiences when they were learners themselves convinced them to use corporal punishment as they are the witnesses to the positive transformation that is brought by corporal punishment (Gumede, 2020). The inheritance further reached to the current generation of educators, wherein corporal punishment is the language spoken to seek and demand authority and compliance in the classroom. In addition, Glacer (2019) supports that corporal punishment is described to be effective when coming to encouraging learners to do better in their academics as they fear pain should they not write their work or pass a particular subject as expected similarly to the colonial era.

2.8.3. Traditional, cultural and religious beliefs

The United States of America has multiple tribes with their cultures and peculiar custom practices which are different and are considered valuable to every one of them. Having different cultures and beliefs permits corporal punishment to continue as some of those cultures and beliefs allow their children to be beaten or spanked as

a way of discipline (Gibbon, 2017). Some of the traditional beliefs may include hard and painful exercises such as running laps or push-ups as done in the military. By so saying, Gibbon (2017) substantiates that learners experience hardships similar to the army's training and is believed to make a person change from bad behaviour and set their own standards that are aligned with the honour of the military. Eventually, as Tilson and Thompson (2023) advise, learners develop positive mentalities towards education and morality, hence, most of these traditional and cultural practises are used at schools and are considered necessary.

Due to international movement of people from different countries settling in the United States of America over the years, there are different races with different origins and cultures that they live by. Thus, Lee and Watson (2017) attest that there are different communities with different dominant races and ethnic groups such as African Americans, Asian American and Hispanic, and each of those ethnic groups practise their respective cultural beliefs even when in a foreign country. For instance, in Africa, parents scold their children when they are at fault, hence, in African American dominated schools, corporal punishment is considered best for fixing or altering bad behaviour (Lapre & Marsee, 2015). Similarly to the Asian American communities, their children experience the appropriate and relevant cultural practices at school. However, the case differs when different races and ethnic groups attend a white dominant school, which does not use corporal punishment. All learners are subjected to the same treatment that is advised by the disciplinary committee of the school (Gershoff & Font, 2016).

In Ghana, corporal punishment is allowed on the bases of a cultural practice, wherein learners are bound to be hit, shouted at, and spanked for misbehaving at school (Alhassan, 2013). The same attitude and belief that parents have at home, educators have it also as they are parents too, hence the use of corporal punishment is not easily eradicated, parents and educators share the same view about discipline through corporal punishment (Alhassan, 2013). Ghanaians are traditionally and culturally inclined in a sense that they raise their children with the aim to impart respect for elders and obedience so that they grow into responsible adults, hence they raise their children the way they were raised (Antwi, 2020). Traditionally, should a child be left to spoil, the community would disown them and be cast out, rather

they be punished and moulded through pain than words. One other factor that contributes to the continuation of corporal punishment in Ghana is the adopted religion of Christianity, which many priests and scholars interpret corporal punishment as a way of the past and inhumane, however, educators still refer to the Bible and use corporal punishment, “You spare the rod, you spoil the child” (Opoku, Manu & Wiafe, 2015).

Ghana is one of the countries with rich African culture, origin and spirit, wherein, most of the elders perceive every teaching from their forefathers as a way to life (Antwi, 2020). Thus, many of the rural schools in Ghana still use corporal punishment as the educators still use the cultural mentalities of their forefathers guiding them to a fruitful life (Alhassan, 2013). For instance, (Abaogye, 2019) illustrates that a male learner could be scolded for holding or hugging a female learner in the school premises as such actions are not allowed in their cultures. In addition, a learner may be scolded or slapped for not standing while greeting an educator, thus learners in Ghana know their cultures and they abide by it. Asante (2021) argues that using corporal punishment in Ghana is the way to preserve honour and origin of the Africanism, as Ghanaian learners approve of being reprimanded through corporal punishment.

Amongst many tribes and ethnic groups in Ghana, one of them practises public shaming as a way of discipline. For instance, an educator may shame a learner through exclusion of some activities in the presence of their peers, aiming to let the learner reflect on their mistake and make amends with the whole class (Antwi, 2020). In addition, a learner may lose his privileges as a way of discipline, wherein, the learner may not be allowed to eat lunch, or play with their peers, so as to teach that particular learner the correct way of behaving around other people. According to Antwi (2020), most of the communities in Ghana believe in extended family, wherein, any elder person in the community is allowed to reprimand any child that needs discipline, hence, parents give educators consent to use corporal punishment in schools.

On the other hand, South Africa has different tribes and races and every one of them have different practices, values and principles of discipline and may include the use of corporal punishment (Maluleke, 2012). As in other developing countries, the

government is transforming aspects such as education from an oppressive state to a free and developing state, wherein life threatening and inhumane practices are banned (Prins, Joubert & Prevo, 2019). However, the implementation of abolishing corporal punishment is not as effective as expected by the government. Grobbelaar and Jones (2020) argue that the implementation of the national directive against corporal punishment is weaker in rural area schools than in urban area schools. Also, Prins, Joubert and Prevo (2019), indicate that schools in urban areas prioritise credibility and their image, hence, they do not allow any cultural practices that may seem to favour a certain group than others. Thus, educators adhere to the regulations of refraining from the use of corporal punishment and all learners are treated the same through common school code of conduct.

Contrarily, schools in rural areas prioritise child development, academic excellence and traditional practices continuation, thus, schools in rural areas still uphold their cultural beliefs. Du Plessis and Mestry (2019) substantiate that, parents support schools in rural areas through giving consent to use corporal punishment on their children. Moreover, Madhavan, Myroniuk, Kuhn and Collinson (2017) attest that, educators prefer using corporal punishment as the majority of parents give consent, however, the expectations are not met as some of the learners drop out due to refusing to comply and show respect to their educators. In most cases as supported by Pini, Moletsane and Mills (2014), most of the learners reside with their grandparents, and old great uncles, and their parents are absent in their everyday lives. Having such a case where a learner is raised by a grandparent as one of the cultural practices for a rich upbringing, they tend to be disruptive and unruly as a result of absence of a parent (Pini, Moletsane & Mills, 2014).

While some educators and parents may be against corporal punishment due to awareness, knowledge and civilisation, revised cultural and traditional customs compel them to use alternative effective measure of discipline which in rural areas are not adequately effective due to most people being, historically, culturally and traditionally motivated (Super, 2023). The School Governing Body (SGB) represents the community where the school is based and is comprised of old and young people and have the authority to choose certain practices to manage the school. Hence, most of the rural schools permit the use of corporal punishment as they believe that

is it the best way to raise their children (Ngubane, Mkhize & Balgob, 2019). Although, Quan, Magaya and Harding (2022), differ by highlighting that Section 27 of South Africa recommends that cultures should change some of their customs in accordance with the law and civilisation, so that no one is implicated by their actions based on cultural and historical practises.

In relation to religious beliefs, schools which practise Christianity use corporal punishment, for it is believed that sparing the rod spoils the child, and as such, it provides a way for corporal punishment to be used on the bases of a belief (Van der Walt, 2016). Christianity has diverse perspectives, wherein, the bible supports physical punishment as a symbol of parental love, as using a rod or a stick to discipline a child saves them from harm and derailment (Ntho-Ntho & Nieuwenhuis, 2019). Other biblical passages contradict the use of physical discipline, as such passages advise people about non-violence and gentleness, the abolishment of corporal punishment in schools (Serfontein, 2020). In many South African rural public schools, Christianity is dominant and adhered to, and prohibition of corporal punishment is infeasible as educators and parents prefer to use corporal punishment to control and minimize unfavourable behaviour from learners (Ntho-Ntho & Nieuwenhuis, 2019). In addition, Gershoff and Font (2016) argue that discipline should guide learners towards moral development and that all the non-violence methods align with Christian principles of love, compassion and mercy.

Within the Islam religion, there is a law, which is titled “Sharia” which is considered to allow the use of corporal punishment, especially at schools (Rahman, 2022). The religion itself does not directly address the call for corporal punishment in schools, as certain schools in Muslim dominated areas may employ it as a disciplinary measure (Rahman, 2022). Likewise, Judaism also upholds the traditional views on corporal punishment, particularly in the school context for learner discipline, however, its use is allowed under the condition that it is carried out in a controlled and moderate manner (Chen & Li, 2024). In addition, in some traditional Hindu, families and communities still use corporal punishment as a method of discipline, although it is more based on cultural norms more than religious doctrine. Moreover, Hindu scriptures do not necessarily advocate the use of corporal punishment in schools,

but the majority of the parents and schools may still consider the importance of using physical punishment for children at home and school (Sil, 2020).

However, there is a common issue of beliefs avoiding to specifically direct the ban of using corporal punishment at home or school. All religions do not have a stance in their regulations and precepts about the abolishment or usage of corporal punishment, thus many of the followers have different views and interpretations regarding the use of corporal punishment (Clark, 2020). Although all the religions avoid giving a straightforward directive to ban corporal punishment, they refrain from using it as they regard it as an inhumane act against people and it goes against their principles and values. With regard to Sharai of the Islam religion, Rahman (2022) confers that the interpretations that many Muslim communities have are worth nothing as they vary and everyone wants to justify their interpretation, hence many scholars and activists advocate for non-violent forms of discipline. Judaism, like other religions, has evolved over time and current views among Jews reject the use of corporal punishment (Chen & Li, 2024). It currently promotes conducive and exclusive education and positive reinforcement as a way to limit the use of harsh and inhumane forms of discipline. Hinduism emphasizes non-violence through a growing movement among Hindus to reject corporal punishment in support of compassionate discipline (Sil, 2020).

In addition, there is a great contradiction between religion and cultural beliefs, wherein, views and beliefs of a certain religion about corporal punishment cannot be heard and taken into consideration due to the weight carried by cultural beliefs. According to Bois (2019), the persisting use of corporal punishment is greatly influenced by cultural beliefs than religion, because religions change their stances and beliefs judging from how people are supposed to be treated according to their morals and values. On the other hand, cultural inclined people resist to change, hence they refuse to abolish corporal punishment as they emphasise its importance in raising children the right way (Bois, 2019s). For instance, in Israel, corporal punishment in schools is illegal, although there are existing cultural variations across the Jewish diaspora.

2.8.4. Result of Colonialism

During the ancient times, USA and other European countries used corporal punishment in their colonies as to own and control the native people, so that continued to be an adopted custom practice that is considered most effective. In addition, people from other countries were brought to Europe as slaves, and others adopted European cultures while others remained to their native traditions (Green, Dickens & Thurman, 2024). Moreover, schools were built in the local communities where those slaves were set free and their adopted traditional practices continued, such as African American when they use corporal punishment for discipline, and they use English as the medium of instruction (Green, Dickens & Thurman, 2024).

Ghana was once named the “Gold Coast” when it was under the British colonial rule, and it adopted a formal legal system grounded on the British models. Then there was an introduction of harsh disciplinary methods in schools and the criminal justice by the British colonial administration (Kambala, 2022). Such methods included the use of corporal punishment as a means to maintain order and discipline at school and in prison. Moreover, Kambala (2022) assert that, the British colonial administrator established laws that allowed for corporal punishment to be used as a legal form of discipline, especially in the school context. Ghana’s colonial -era schools, which were usually ran by colonial authorities or missionary organisation, employed corporal punishment to enforce discipline (Ansah, 2023). The practice of corporal punishment was greatly influenced by the British philosophy that emphasised obedience, conformity and authority. Thus, Ansah (2023) state that educators were habitually required to use physical punishment to maintain control and instil proper behaviour in learners, and such has become the legacy that has continued in Ghanaian schools even after independence and liberation.

Currently, corporal punishment in Ghanaian schools is still used under the influence of the inherited colonial practices. Authorities in Ghana persist to see corporal punishment as way of discipline, to establish and distinguish authority and to control learners’ behaviour (Quansah, Kudadze & William, 2022). Among many reasons for the resist in change from corporal punishment to more humane methods, many people attest to corporal punishment being one of the best methods for control, obedience and for authority, hence it is very hard for the government and law makers

to completely abolish corporal punishment (Quansah, Kudadze & William, 2022). Although there are efforts towards the reform from corporal punishment, the deep history of colonialism, whereby, fear and pain are used for control makes it difficult to eradicate the justifications of using corporal punishment. According to Danvers and Schley (2023), the increasing number of bad behaviour incidents in Ghana compels the educators and parents to use corporal punishment as they regard other alternatives as modern and ineffective towards moulding good behaviour.

South Africa was one of the countries that were colonised, likewise to Ghana, colonialism led to native South Africans adopting European cultures and customs such as corporal punishment in schools as South Africa initially used other means for discipline such as restorative justice (Mathebula & Ndofirepi, 2017). In a contrary, Super (2023), argues that corporal punishment was used even before colonialism, however, the difference is that in the past it was only used when a person committed a criminal offence, rather than now when it is used for classroom management. Mathebula and Ndofirepi (2017) indicate that South Africa was colonized by the Dutch and British companies, and they introduced the Western legal systems, which were more disciplinary and emphasised corporal punishment as a legitimate and most effective means of maintaining order and discipline. Moreover, under the British colony, corporal punishment was institutionalised, particularly in schools, more in prisons and the military (Super, 2023).

Such practices were profoundly rooted in the colonial arrangement as colonizers sought to maintain control over the indigenous population and the African workforce. For instance, the British colonial law made extensive use of corporal punishment in schools for discipline and obedience, and such influence still remains even after South Africa became a republic (Allison, Beers & Peterson, 2023). In South Africa, colonial powers used corporal punishment as a tool for social control, particularly the black and indigenous populations. Thus, the racial hierarchy imposed by the colonial rule viewed African people as inferior and used corporal punishment to reinforce that suppression (Maphosa & Shumba, 2019). For instance, black learners were subjected to harsher forms of corporal punishment, such as hitting with a stick on the fingertips in winter, than their white counterparts. Currently, rural public schools still

use corporal punishment as they used to in the colonial era, while private schools and urban schools use other means of discipline similarly to the colonial era.

However, Mathebula and Ndofirepi (2017) argue that currently, urban public and private schools are comprised of different races and the unruliness cases rise like in rural public schools. Unruliness is not based on race or colour, but by the exposure to elements that influence unruliness, bad academic excellence and bad behaviour, such as peer pressure and learners' luxurious backgrounds (van der Walt, 2023). Before the colonial era, punitive mindset that merged with South African traditions of punishment was introduced, wherein, the societies traditionally had systems of justice and discipline, which were restorative and rehabilitative. However, Chitakunye and Mahiya (2020) indicate that the introduction of corporal punishment contributed to a swing towards more physical and coercive measures of discipline. This suggests that, schools and families blended the indigenous ways of teaching and disciplining with Western corporal punishment practices, leading to normalization of corporal punishment. Lack of knowledge about indigenous methods of discipline gives way to the usage of corporal punishment as most of the youth- young educators, know only about corporal punishment (Mathebula & Ndofirepi, 2017).

2.8.5. Ineffectiveness of currently proposed alternative discipline strategies.

Globally, there have been introductions and proposals of non-pain inflicting disciplinary measures to replace and eradicate the use of corporal punishment in schools. The following are examples of the proposed disciplinary strategies as described and explained by studies of Boudreau (2019) and Padayachee and Gcelu (2022):

- **Preventative measures**

Strategies used to prevent unwanted behaviours and violations at school aim to address potential issues before they arise and create a culture of accountability and responsibility. Such measures may include clear policies and expectations, wherein, a school establishes a well-documented code of conduct that outlines expected behaviour and possible consequences for violation. In addition, there should be an orientation of the code of conduct, wherein learners are introduced to the rules and

regulations of the school and furthermore revise those rules constantly to ensure understanding and consistency so as to prevent learners being unruly (Moen, 2019).

Furthermore, educators can also use positive reinforcement, whereby, they encourage desirable behaviour through praises, recognition and rewards, so as to let learners get used to being awarded for good behaviour. Also, educators can promote engaging lessons, in which learners can engage in and reduce boredom and behavioural problems, students that are interested in a lesson are less likely to be unruly. Preventative measures require an educator to create a positive learning environment, such that no learner should be left out, and should make means of preventing possible cases of misbehaviour (Moen, 2019)

- **Restorative measures**

Policy makers and quality regulators also proposed restorative measures, which are approaches to discipline and focuses on repairing harm, rebuild educator and learner relationship and fostering accountability, rather than punishing the learner who has caused harm. Such restorative measure may include restorative circle, wherein, all people that are involved in an incident sit together, express their feelings and stance, and work towards a solution. Educators and learners that are involved in an incident can sit and work towards common understanding and restore their relationship. Additionally, it was suggested that parents should be involved in the disciplinary process of their children so that an educator does not use corporal punishment (Reyneke, 2015).

- **Corrective measures**

Corrective measures are steps or actions taken to address a problem or an issue to prevent it from occurring again in the future, and such measures are used after identifying a mistake or an expected undesirable behaviour from a learner with a goal to change or improve it. Corrective measures may include verbal warnings, which is a formal conversation between an educator and a learner outlining the bad behaviour and the expectation to improve, and a few verbal warnings should be given to a particular learner before they can be suspended or expelled from the school (Motseke, 2020).

In addition, should the learner fail to improve or change, then the educator and the school governance can give that learner a written warning, which is regarded as a more serious written notice of the infraction and is placed in the learner's record. Moreover, a learner that fails to adhere to rules and constant verbal and written warning can be subjected to probation, loss of privilege, suspension and eventually be expelled and never attend school for that academic year (Motseke, 2020).

- **Supportive measures**

Supportive measures are proactive strategies and interventions aimed at helping educators to stop using corporal punishment and learners to understand and correct their bad behaviour. Such measures are designed to encourage growth, learning and positive change in educators and learners. Supportive measures include workshops, wherein, educators can be advised and educated about the importance of maintaining positive disciplinary measures, harsh consequences of using corporal punishment. Learners can also be encouraged to always be at their best behaviour and can be made aware of the outcomes of their negative actions (Zondo & Mncube, 2024).

In United States of America, the eradication of corporal punishment by the law enforcement was considered the first step into taking a path of humanity and a non-violent way of discipline (McCarthy, 2019). However, Green, Dickens and Thurman (2024) attest that many states still practice corporal punishment and still deem it necessary, especially towards African American and disabled learners. Using corporal punishment in the presence and reach of other alternatives proves that they are not as effective as expected, such as verbally rebuking a learner for bullying their peers in the presence of an educator. McCarthy (2019) advises that alternatives such as verbal warning be used for discipline and educators differ as they experience unexpected responses from the learners. Gershoff (2017) also indicates that learners tend to develop a certain attitude of contempt towards educators that are struggling to maintain their classrooms, they get marked for being fragile, hence, some of them use corporal punishment as to instil fear and claim authority.

Additionally, the U.S law enforcement proposed other alternatives such as suspension and detention of learners than hitting or spanking, nevertheless, bad

behaviour persists, reckoning suspension and detention ineffective (Boudreau, 2019). Psychologists such as McCarthy (2019), advise that educators should have expectations of their learners, such as their childish behaviour as well as the conduct during the adolescent stage, so as to know how to handle those learners. The adolescent stage, drives learners to being unruly in response to a desire to impress their peers or humiliate educators as a way of seeking a sense of belonging in that age group of learners McCarthy (2019). Such behaviour requires a firm disciplinary measure, which educators view to be non-existent, except for corporal punishment which makes learners obedient forcefully or willingly (Armstrong, Elliott, Hallet & Hallet, 2016).

In addition, a parent and police interventions were also proposed as one of the ways to discipline learners, however, some parents allow their children to be disciplined through corporal punishment or suspension, and they do not approve of being summoned to attend hearings of their children (Homer & Fisher, 2020). With the proposed strategies that the government brought for educators, there is less implementation than required, due to the ambiguity of some of the strategies such as expulsion as it is violation of a child's right to be denied education. Also, detention may not be as effective as it should as other learners prefer to be detained than be in class as in their minds, they think that it is useless to be in class under the educator's command (Welsh & Little, 2018).

Ghana's government also recommended that corporal punishment should be banned in their system of education due to high rates of societal and health reasons, wherein communities and law enforcement agencies saw that severe corporal punishment affects children mentally and socially as they develop anger and violence attitude (Quansah, Kudadze & Agoke, 2022). For instance, learners have developed a tendency of retaliating towards their educators whenever they use corporal punishment or using verbal warning. Moreover, as Quansah, Kudadze and Agoke, (2022) add, learners also made it a norm to despise educators that usually use corporal punishment or use vulgar words when rebuking them. As a result, learners become less interactive in the classroom and uninterested in good behaviour.

Abonyi and Salifu (2023) highlight that, even in the midst of corporal punishment eradication movement, spanking and hitting children still continue with spiking rates

due to many incidents of unruly learners and high failure rate in schools. It further supports that the proposed strategies such as parent intervention and suspension are not effective, because learners are getting worse in terms of bad behaviour and misconduct (Abusamra, Suyanto & Wibawa, 2021). As any other country, Ghana has young people that go through adolescence, thus, there are many cases of unruliness and bad behaviour due to influence of the factors such as peer pressure and public recognition by learners (Baidoo & Adomaa, 2021). Using time out or waiting to call a parent in situations where a learner throws a book at a peer in the presence of an educator is considered inoperable because failing to discipline that learner conveys contempt towards the educator and the process of teaching and learning (Baidoo & Adomaa, 2021).

Moreover, due to traditional reasons, some parents recommend that educators should use corporal punishment onto their children as educators have more contact time with them than their parents. Other educators prefer to use positive reinforcement to condone an inclusive and healthy teaching and learning environment, although, some learners overlook such gestures from educators and still misbehave (Abonyi & Salifu, 2023). With the proposed strategies failing in Ghanaian schools, educators resort to corporal punishment as it makes a difference in controlling and managing learners. However, it also damages learners' minds and confidence, hence there is a great need for effective ways to curb bad behaviour without inflicting pain (Kumah, Dapaah, Dwumah, Hubert & Isaac, 2023).

Strategies proposed by the South African Department of Basic Education are meant to protect educators and are encouraged to adhere to the regulations of a violent-free school environment. The banning of corporal punishment was successful after 1994, although it is hard for educators to adhere to the regulations (Magabane, 2021). Alternatives such as educator-learner intervention, social workers intervention and suspension, are slightly effective as learners do not open up and their misconduct may not be caused by their backgrounds but peer pressure and adolescence (Moyo, Khewu & Bayaga, 2020). Similarly to USA and Ghana, adolescence influences learners to act in a way that they regard as best for that moment than later (Shegs, Afzal, Sasiragha & Ronel, 2017). For instance, in recent cases of educator and learner altercations, learners retaliate and somehow illustrate

that educators cannot rebuke them however they prefer. However, such incidents are a result of educators using force or physical discipline due to failure of positive or suggested disciplinary measures towards learners in the adolescent stage.

In addition, Magabane (2021) emphasises that educators do not adhere to the policy and the law keeps educators away from using corporal punishment, however educators find it hard to manage unruly learners using a policy paper without action. Through studies such as of Sefolo (2023), it is evident that educators are in short of effective disciplinary measures to maintain their lessons and discipline learners as there is a rise in cases of learners fighting with educators and drug abuse in the school premises, unlike in the era of corporal punishment. In addition, Padayachee and Gcelu (2022) indicate that should the proposed disciplinary measures been effective, then there would be a complete abolishment of corporal punishment in schools, however, it is persisting to be used.

With regard to expulsion, it was recommended that learners should undergo a verbal disciplinary measure before a learner can be expelled, wherein, learners should be verbally warned three times (SADTU, 2018). According to Mugari (2021), the process before expulsion takes time to set a record straight, as a learner may commit a serious crime against a peer or an educator during the second or third verbal warning. That's more reason for educators not to depend on such measures, although these measures are for their protection against being imprisoned for using corporal punishment. In addition, expulsion makes learners to miss lessons and may be argued to be learner exclusivity and some of the learners prefer expulsion as a reason to stay home, hence there is a high rise of school dropouts and drug use (Makendano & Mahlangu, 2023).

2.8.6. Lack of law enforcement

In the United State of America, states that are populated by African American learners, educators still use corporal punishment even when the government has banned it, and the reason is that the officials do not enforce that law in those states (Gershoff, Sattler & Holden, 2020). In other states, there are monitors which are assigned to observe the practise of corporal punish and educators do not resort to it as they are adherent to the policy, unlike in black populated states. Furthermore,

Miller (2020), attests that, observing implementation of the anti-corporal punishment policy in schools emphasises the significance of prohibiting educators from inflicting pain onto learners, however, there are none in the black populated communities. Contrarily, educators from the black community schools deem it unnecessary to use other alternatives as they are law against corporal punishment is not enforced (Thomas, 2022).

Moreover, education psychologists such as Renick and Tocci (2023) advise that, there are legal challenges, wherein, opponents argued that banning corporal punishment infringes other people's religious beliefs and parental rights or choices regarding the way in which their children are disciplined, some prefer corporal punishment than verbal warnings. In some states, local communities argue that corporal punishment is the way to discipline their children, so it means that the law is not enforced due to the communities' decisions in regard to the use of corporal punishment on their children at school (Koon, 2002). In addition, due to cultural beliefs, some regions still regard corporal punishment as an acceptable and necessary method of discipline, thus, it is very hard to advocate the abolishment of corporal punishment to pass and enforce laws against it. Moreover, Anderson (2018) attests that political influence also has an effect on the abolishment of corporal punishment as local leaders often resist to change, observing the issue through a point of parental rights and local autonomy like in areas such as Texas and South Carolina.

Furthermore, there is less faith in the justice system, hence there is limited reporting of incidents of corporal punishment, wherein, schools are hesitant to admit to using corporal punishment for fear of legal repercussions or negative publicity (Coley, 2019). Parents and learner also feel reluctant to report incidents of corporal punishment due to fear or retaliation and the weak justice system, wherein, their reports may not be taken into consideration since there is not clear laws against the use of corporal punishment in some states (Renick & Tocci, 2023). According to Anderson (2018), it can also be argued that lacking awareness about the movement of abolishing corporal punishment causes weak law enforcement as educators persist in using corporal punishment rather than adhering to the laws and regulations. It also becomes difficult to eliminate corporal punishment due to many

educators and parents resisting to change and justifying the use of corporal punishment by cultural, political and social rooted preferences, which contradict the emphasis made by the government (Renick & Tocci, 2023).

In Ghana, the Constitution commands that corporal punishment should be abolished in all settings, especially at school, however, officials turn away from monitoring the implementation and adherence of the anti-corporal punishment policy (Matshela, Binza & Mukonza, 2023). One of the major reasons for the ignorance is that most of the officials believe that curbing the practice of corporal punishment is in vain as many educators take corporal punishment as a traditional way to discipline learners (Rush & Lazarus, 2018). Through history, cultural norms and attitudes in Ghana permitted the societies to prosper to their expectations, thus many parents and educators still believe that corporal punishment is necessary as it promotes respect for authority. Nyarko (2017) adds that, such beliefs make it difficult for laws against corporal punishment to be completely embraced and adhered to as the community does not aim to enforce the law against corporal punishment.

In addition, Asante (2021), adds that resources required, such as human resources and funding to monitor and observe the banning of corporal punishment are limited in Ghana as it is a less developed country, hence there is lack of an anti-corporal punishment practise enforcement. Moreover, there is also lack of educating parents and educators about alternative disciplinary measures, and the absence of such training and awareness through programs weakens the enforcement of abolishing corporal punishment (Quansah, Kudadze & Agoke, 2022). Without awareness, parents allow their children to be punished through corporal punishment as they consider it the best tool as they also use it at home (Quansah, Kudadze & Agoke, 2022). Law enforcement is effective only when there is consistency and emphasis, however as Asante (2021) highlights, there are weak legal consequences for using corporal punishment or they are not well enforced. There is less attention paid to cases that are reported and the perpetrators such as educators face minimal consequences allowing the continuation of corporal punishment with fear of facing serious repercussions.

In South Africa, the government has also signed and vowed to stop and ban corporal punishment in schools and at home, however, schools still allow corporal punishment to be used since educators give less attention to the policy that prohibits the use of corporal punishment (Magabane, 2021). Similarly to Ghana and USA, corporal punishment in South Africa is perceived as a long-standing cultural method of correcting behaviour, and it hardens the process of abolishing corporal punishment in schools. In addition, Mayisela (2021) articulates that, educators with the help and encouragement from parents, resist the change, arguing that corporal punishment is most effective means of discipline, and its ban leads to lack of respect for authority and a rise in uncivilised citizens as currently seen in local communities. Seoka (2019) highlights that educator's resistance undermines the enforcement of laws against corporal punishment as it overrules the national law due to educators' justifications.

Mnisi (2021), attests that educators are not aware of the intensity of corporal punishment penalties and how they can alternatively use other strategies for discipline. Moreover, one of the reasons is that there is no thorough awareness and supervision of the implementation of the anti-corporal punishment policy in schools. Malahlela and Sadiki (2024) enunciate that law enforcement officers also overlook the severity of the impact of using corporal punishment in rural areas, hence, there is less supervision compared to urban schools as there is priority of the school's public image in urban schools than rural schools. In addition, there is also challenges in learners not reporting cases of corporal punishment in rural secondary schools caused by fear, influence from peers, educators and parents, and lack of trust in the authorities (Seoka, 2019).

Same as Ghana, South Africa has inadequate resources to better facilitate monitoring and observation of whether educators adhere to the anti-corporal punishment policy, or they still use corporal punishment (Mnisi, 2021). Funds and skilled human resources are needed on the ground to monitor and enforce the need to adhere to the anti-corporal punishment policy by providing better and effective disciplinary measures, and there are no adequate resources such as that (Nkuna, 2022). One other factor that contributes to the lack of law enforcement in South Africa is institutional weakness, wherein the Department of Basic Education is not

reliable in maintaining the adherence of educators and learners regarding discipline and corporal punishment. Nkuna (2022), further indicates that the Department of Basic Education lacks to balance educator to learner ratio to a manner where educators handle lesser number of learners, and should that be accomplished then the educator can effectively manage a classroom.

2.9. General outcomes of corporal punishment on educators and learners

2.9.1. Long term outcomes of corporal punishment on educators and learners

2.9.1.1. Educators' outcomes

Long-term outcomes of corporal punishment on educators may be complex, judging from corporal punishment as not only a disciplinary measure but an action that requires an educator to exercise brutality and it may bring unexpected long-term consequences (Allison, Beers & Peterson, 2023). Such outcomes may include:

- **Emotional and psychological outcomes**

With relation to emotional and psychological outcomes, educators that usually use corporal punishment become desensitized to violence from corporal punishment, wherein educators lose empathy and become less sensitive towards the needs and emotions of the learners (Watakakosol, Suttiwan, Wongcharee, Kish & Newcombe, 2019). Moreover, using corporal punishment brings emotional burden which may cause stress, burnout, lack of job satisfaction and loss of interest in teaching. According to Watakakosol et al. (2019), such emotional burden results from guilt, regret or shame as educators realize and observe that their use of corporal punishment leads to negative results as learners' trauma, severe rebellion and dropping out from school. In addition, educators may experience internal conflict due to recognizing that corporal punishment is inhumane, and it has ethical and moral implications, which may challenge an individual's personal values and principles of civilization (Watakakosol et al., 2019).

- **Work/ profession implications**

As corporal punishment is deemed unlawful, possible consequences that educators may face is damage of reputation or loss of work and imprisonment. Educators get arrested, suspended and even pay heavy fines for using corporal punishment in regions where law is heavily enforced and implemented (Park, 2024). Moreover, pressure and responsibility that comes with corporal punishment can lead to educators losing interest in their work, especially when they constantly use it and that proves that the learners are not obedient and will not be willingly. Eventually, Ward, Peterson, Kupchik and Pratt, (2020) add that, according to educators disengage and lose passion for their work as they constantly resort to corporal punishment without getting expected results from learners. Durrant (2021) indicates that educators that use corporal punishment tend to be hated and disliked by learners, due to the pain and fear that learners experience from such educators. Effective teaching and learning can be hindered due to lack of trust and respect between educators and learners.

- **Negative classroom environment**

Corporal punishment may temporarily stop unwanted behaviour, however, it can also promote conflict in the classroom, wherein a learner can confront or fight with an educator as self-defense. There can also be an increase in cases of deliberate lesson disruptions due to the resentment and hostility that the educator breed through the use of corporal punishment and it becomes hard for the educator to maintain control in a more constructive manner (Mayisela, 2021). In addition, educators may feel frustrated due to feeling ineffective and less progressive in their role, as learners who are subjected to corporal punishment disengage in their academics, which leads to a decline in academic motivation and excellence (Durrant, 2021).

- **Less educator development**

Educators that use corporal punishment are less likely to develop better humane disciplinary measures as they always cling and rely on physical punishment. Their professional growth gets limited as they lack skills in conflict resolution, positive reinforcement and empathy, thus, such educators lose interest in their work

(Kartono, 2024). In addition, Allison, Beers and Peterson (2023) add that educators that constantly use corporal punishment inflict mental and emotional exhaustion to themselves as they feel guilty, they question their authority and role, and leave the profession earlier than planned due to loss of confidence in themselves.

2.9.1.2. Learners' outcomes

The long-term outcomes of using corporal punishment on learners is considered negative, wherein there is a significant influence on their emotional, psychological, social, and academic development as conferred by (Shaikhmag, Assan & Naidoo, 2021). While corporal punishment may seem to offer immediate compliance, its long-term consequences are harmful to learners and such outcomes may include:

- **Psychological and emotional consequences**

Learners that are constantly subjected to corporal punishment may adopt violence as an acceptable way of resolving matters or retaining respect and authority from other people (Zubair & Bangash, 2024). Growing with such mentality makes learners turn aggressive and always consider other disciplinary measures such as verbal reprimand to be useless and unknown to them. In addition, Zubair and Bangash (2024) add that constant pain infliction and harsh words towards a learner makes their self-esteem to be low. Learners tend to feel helpless, unloved and unworthy as educators always beat them, especially for doing poorly in their academics and arriving late at school, thus, they have less self-confidence.

Moreover, Eid, Marianne, Rabbaa and Gerbaka (2018) comment that learners that are always subjected to corporal punishment develop mental issues such as hatred, depression and anxiety, due to fear of being beaten or shouted at. According to Gershoff (2017), learners develop hatred towards educators that use corporal punishment, hence, learners disengage or lose interest in the educator's subject. On the other hand, learners develop fear around the educator that use corporal punishment, and learners fear to even ask question, which proves that learners are not free and not allowed to make mistakes so they can learn (Cramm, Elgar & Pickett, 2023).

- **Negative impact on academic performance**

Learners that experience corporal punishment often develop a negative attitude towards school, educators and academics, wherein, learners become disengaged and view school as a hostile environment, hence some of them drop out. Anwar, Zeeshan, Sajjad and Gill (2021) recommend that Rather than helping learners to perform and behave better through positive reinforcement, educators use corporal punishment and reduce learners' motivation to participate in class and perform better. Since corporal punishment discourages positive student-educator relationship, student often perform badly academically and miss schools or bunk classes due to fear or embarrassment (Anwar, Zeeshan, Sajjad & Gill, 2021).

- **Negative social behaviour**

Subjecting learners to corporal punishment allows them to be more disruptive or rebellious to get back to the educator, and by so doing, learners grow their disruptive behaviour even outside the classroom or on other educators as advised by (Shaikhmag & Assan, 2014). Moreover, learners tend to withdraw and isolate themselves and try to have people's attention by being more rebellious in the classroom. Being exposed to corporal punishment leads to learners having it difficult to form healthy relationships as they use violence for communication and conflict resolution (Shaikhmag & Assan, 2014).

- **Increased physical harm**

Besides corporal punishment being a method for immediate physical pain, it can lead to long-term health issues such as chronic pain and bumps and physical scars. In addition, subjecting learners to corporal punishment desensitizes learners to abuse, wherein, they get more vulnerable to future violence or mistreatment from other adults outside the school context (Zitková, 2024).

2.9.2. Short-term outcomes of using corporal punishment on educators and learners

- **Better classroom management**

Short-term outcomes of corporal punishment can be regarded as either good or bad, given the perspective at which it is motivated and argued. It is viewed as a good

practice as learners tend to be at their best conduct when they know that they will be harshly punished, so it encourages good learner behaviour and excellent academic performance (Dlamini, Bhebhe & Dlamini, 2018). According to Osai, Amponsah, Ampadu and Commey-Mintah (2021), using corporal punishment in rural schools makes it feasible for having order in the classroom as most of the classes are crowded. There are more learners in a classroom than an educator is expected to have and manage due to the development of that area and the school infrastructure.

- **Immediate change of behaviour**

Learners from secondary school experience bullying and negative peer pressure, and corporal punishment assists in curbing such conduct and attitudes from learners. Such bullies and rebellious learners are aware of the outcomes of taking advantage of others which is a severe punishment, and as such, all learners will come to school freely (Kambuga, Manyengo & Renatus, 2018). In a nutshell, corporal punishment helps educators and learners to limit bad behaviour and unfavourable conduct such as contempt towards young educators, peer bullying, learner to educator bullying, drug use and high failure rate due to deliberate loss of interest in learners during adolescence (Chatty, 2020).

Corporal punishment can contrarily be viewed as a bad way of discipline, wherein, learners experience bad effects that may even turn to be short-term or long-term outcomes that impact their lives on a negative scale. Firstly, corporal punishment brings physical harm, wherein learners get bruises, scratches, bumps, and cuts from the harsh beating, kicking or spanking and it may even escalate to a degree of physical abuse (Mnisi, 2021). According to Ephias (2014), corporal punishment also threatens the psychological wellbeing of learners as they start to fear and develop anger or violent attitude as a way of defence from constant beating, harsh mistreatment, and vulgar words. With such treatment, a learner can develop anxiety, trauma and have low self-esteem resulting from humiliation during punishment in the classroom full of peers (Kruger & Heekes, 2022). Thirdly, Mahlangu et al., (2021) accentuate that the school environment climate negatively changes due to the constant exposure of violence to learners, fights between educators and learners emerge, teaching and learning gets compromised as educators and learners turn

into enemies and punishing learners takes away the lesson's time, learners tend to lose interest in the subject that the particular violent educator facilitates as the educator gets hated. Lastly, (2024) strongly emphasizes that educators get implicated while using corporal punishment because it is official that using corporal punishment in schools is a criminal offense, so educators get arrested, suspended, and lose their jobs for that short and long period of time.

Corporal punishment has more bad outcomes than positive outcomes as it causes emotional disorders, anti-social disorders, physical and emotional agony, learners' aggression development towards educators and may also lead to others not engaging in class discussions because of fear of being punished should they be wrong (Madden, 2013). In most cases, educators that tend to rely much on severe corporal punishment are hated by learners, because they occasionally inflict pain to many learners even when it is unnecessary (WHO, 2021). Furthermore, Makiwa (2021) attests that, severe corporal punishment leads to resentment of the subject and the educator and extends to learners misbehaving deliberately to prove an anti-corporal punishment attitude. Partial reinforcement allows an educator to better emphasize good behaviour in a classroom and turns into a habit that learners adopt in their everyday lives, even though it may take longer than expected.

2.10. Societal assumptions on corporal punishment in rural secondary schools

2.10.1. SBG, guardians' assumptions.

The School Governing Body (SGB) in secondary public schools has a few significant roles that are aimed at promoting excellent learner performance, learners' wellbeing through implementation of policies guarding against any harm and injustices (Dhlamini, 2023). The SGB is the voice of parents and the learners around the community, meaning that the SGB mediates between the learners, parents, and educators for better management of the school and mutual interests of the three parties (Barry & Stwayi, 2017). In the midst of abolishment of corporal punishment in public secondary schools, parents give consent to the SBG and educators to use corporal punishment to discipline their children as they see it fit. According to Dhlamini (2023), it is often assumed that corporal punishment in schools is

necessary for teaching and emphasising respect, obedience and proper behaviour, thus, there is an idea of tough love or discipline through pain.

Most of the guardians and parents in rural schools are old and also resort to corporal punishment, hence, they are the supporters of corporal punishment as they also grew up under the experience of being hit and harshly punished (Gomba, 2017). Through cultural and traditional practices, it is assumed by communities that, corporal punishment is acceptable as a form of discipline, hence they allow their children to be subjected to corporal punishment (Abaogye, 2019).

In addition, the effectiveness of corporal punishment is considered to surpass other alternatives, hence, it is highly regarded as a quicker solution to maintain discipline in a challenging educational environment. Moreover, Ngidi and Kaye (2022) found that it is perceived that fear of punishment stop bad behaviour prevents future misbehaviour, leading to stronger and better outcomes for learners. It is also assumed that generational continuity of corporal punishment is regarded essential as there is preservation of human values and principles. Moreover, new ideas and alternatives of discipline is seen as foreign or threatening to the current way of life (Ngidi & Kaye, 2022).

In rural schools, there is less access to additional educational resources and support, psychological support and emphasis on alternative disciplinary methods, such as counselling and restorative justice. (Bester and Kuyper, 2020). Thus, there is an assumption that corporal punishment is the only viable tool for teaching children proper behaviour towards the educators. Bester and Kuyper (2020) further add that with less access to information in the rural areas, people tend to turn a blind eye in seeking information about the negative outcomes and effects of corporal punishment for discipline and classroom management.

In addition, some rural areas have resistance to change, wherein, it is assumed that learners need to be taught a lesson through corporal punishment like in the times before the abolishment of corporal punishment (Bekink, 2019). Moreover, Peté (2020) highlights that educators that may advocate non-violent discipline methods may be seen as soft in their approach of discipline. Religious beliefs in other areas are considered to shape corporal punishment as necessary, wherein, certain

religious teachings support the use of corporal punishment. Thus, Bekink (2019) attests that there is an assumption of corporal punishment as part of fulfilling moral and spiritual obligation to raise children correctly.

Contrarily, Ganira, Okech and Odundo (2019) found that, some of the parents and guardians are against their children being hit at school due to their awareness of legal and policy framework of corporal punishment. They often report to the principal or the circuit office about incidents of an educator beating their child. In addition, some parents restrict the use of corporal punishment as they witness their children developing anger and aggression, losing interest in academics, and being extremely mischievous (Kabungo, 2020). However, the number of parents that are against corporal punishment is less than those that prefer it and that makes the use of corporal punishment to be favoured.

2.10.2. Educators' assumptions.

Many rural schools are situated in communities that practice corporal punishment for learner discipline, thus, educators in such schools also use corporal punishment for learner discipline and classroom management. It is assumed by educators that corporal punishment is necessary for child-rearing and educational purposes, especially in overcrowded classrooms where resources and support system may be inadequate. In addition, educators view the proposed alternative disciplinary measures, as there is less intervention to assist educators, such as workshops and inductions (Mkandla, 2019). Mnisi (2021), highlights that, educators still see corporal punishment as a way to manage a classroom and it really keeps learners in check as they fear to be beaten. In some instances, educators use corporal punishment to protect themselves from learners that are unruly or that might have the capability of being violent, so with the educator showing authority through a cane or a stick learners tend to behave accordingly (Mangena , 2022).

Educators may assume that students in rural schools are more likely to retort to corporal punishment due to perceived respect for authority figures or a stricter structure within the community (Moabelo, 2019). Thus, educators also believe that students are accustomed to firm methods of discipline and expect corporal punishment to be an accepted and common practice. In addition, educators resist

reform initiative that advocate against corporal punishment, as a result of an assumption that such reforms do not align with the realisms of their specific educational context (Mnisi, 2021). According to Allison, Beers and Peterson (2023) educators in rural schools may also perceive the absence of corporal punishment to the cause of learners lacking accountability, where there is an increase in unruly behaviour and hindering of teaching and learning.

While some educators may see corporal punishment being the best method to keep order in class, others differ since they know and are aware of other better discipline methods and for them, they are effective, although some argue that the experience an educator has adds as an advantage as they have a reputation in that school, or their physique speaks authority (Moabelo, 2019). According to Mohlala (2021), the persisting use of corporal punishment shows that educators still do it silently to an extent that it does not reach high places, or the incidents are not too implicating such as cases of learners ganging up on an educator.

2.11. Consequences of abolishing corporal punishment

Abolishing corporal punishment in rural secondary schools can have a diversity of negative and positive consequences, which are influenced by people's perspectives, community values and culture, and approaches to discipline. Such consequences as suggested by Padayachee & Gcelu (2022) may include:

2.11.1. Adverse consequences

- **Disruption of recognised authority and discipline**

Removing corporal punishment from rural secondary schools disrupts the currently established power and authority dynamics, wherein, educators may lack the tools to effectively maintain order and discipline. As such, the abolishment of corporal punishment could lead to a rise in classroom disorder or loss of respect for the educator's authority. Since it is also believed that corporal punishment instils fear in learners which encourages good behaviour, banning it gives way to learners being disruptive at will without fear of being punished (Padayachee & Gcelu, 2022).

- **Resistance of abolishing corporal punishment by educators and communities**

Educators are accustomed to corporal punishment as a way of proper and appropriate discipline, and they may show a great deal of resisting change from corporal punishment to other alternative measures. In addition, with support from the community, educators' resistance could appear as a derailment against the implementation of alternative disciplinary measures, which makes the process of change to be less effective and slower (Lenta, 2022). In addition, success and effectiveness of abolishing corporal punishment depend on the availability and effective use of proposed alternative disciplinary methods. For instance, in rural areas, there may be few resources and less access to professional development for educators, such as counselling about restorative justice, and workshops on how to better approach misbehaving learners in the classroom (Lenta, 2022).

- **Extreme educator stress and anxiety**

Educators that are used to using corporal punishment tend to feel stressed and anxious in handling disruptive or unruly learners in the absence of corporal punishment. In such a case, educators withdraw from disciplining learners even when they are introduced to other alternative disciplinary measures, which may lessen the quality of education they provide. On the other hand, learners lose focus of the idea of going to school and study as expected, which leads to low academic achievement (Adlem, 2021).

- **Potential rise in bad behaviour**

In the absence of corporal punishment, there might be a possible shift in how learners engage with each other and the educators. For instance, there might be a rise in bullying and gang fights which may result in other learners dropping out and committing suicide. In addition, learners would deliberately confront educators and cause conflict in the classroom, thus, abolishing corporal punishment changes learners' attitudes towards educators' roles and authority (Chauke, Malatji & Mphahlele, 2021).

2.11.2. Positive consequences

- **Improved mental and emotional well-being of learners**

In the absence of corporal punishment, learners experience less anxiety, stress and fear, which in return leads to a conducive and positive learning environment. In addition, learners are more likely to feel valued, accepted and respected by the educators, and that improves their self-esteem and confidence (Lenta, 2022).

- **Better educator-learner relationship**

Abolishing corporal punishment helps to build more positive relationship between educators and learners, which may encourage better performance and positive classroom management. With educators using other alternatives, learners tend to feel more comfortable and open to communicate with educators. It also opens for the use of positive reinforcement and constructive disciplinary measures to foster cooperation and respect (Chauke, Malatji & Mphahlele, 2021).

- **Better academic performance**

Exclusive of the use of corporal punishment, which brings trauma and distraction to learners, they focus better on their academics, which results in improved academic outcome. In addition, Nakate (2024) highlights that learners do better and excel when they favour educators, thus, the abolishment of corporal punishment breeds improved academic excellence. Moreover, it encourages creativity and critical thinking, wherein, learners are more likely to engage in creative problem-solving cases and questions, which in the end leads to greater academic excellence (Ramasaco, 2024).

- **Reduction in violence and aggression**

Corporal punishment increases violent behaviour and contrarily, its ban reduces aggressive and disruptive behaviour, wherein, learners learn about new acceptable ways of discipline and that violence is not the way of discipline. In addition, learners learn more about peaceful and effective methods of solving conflicts, improve interpersonal skills such as teamwork and communication (Adlem, 2021).

- **Promotes inclusive education**

Abolishing corporal punishment creates a conducive and enlightened environment for learners with different abilities and learning modes. It also promoted equal treatment among learners, wherein, all learners receive the same discipline methods for different faults. Since some educators take time when they administer corporal punishment which in the end depletes lesson time, banning corporal punishment reduces cases of losing lesson time (Mpu & Adu, 2021).

- **Adherence to preserving human rights and policies**

Abolishing corporal punishment aligns with international human rights ideals, such as United Nations, which protects the rights of children from all forms of physical and mental violence. In addition, abolishing corporal punishment proves compliance with national laws that prohibit the use of corporal punishment in schools (Mohlala, 2021).

Although the potential adverse and positive consequences are worth considering, they should be regarded in the context of broader benefits of abolishing corporal punishment, such as promoting a safer and more conducive learning environment. According to Mpu and Adu (2021), there would be positive educator-learner relationship and encourage more effective humane ways of discipline. With the support from the community, and proper effective training, such challenges can be mitigated over time.

While these potential adverse consequences are worth considering, they should be viewed in the context of the broader benefits of abolishing corporal punishment, such as promoting a safer, more supportive learning environment, fostering positive educator-student relationships, and encouraging more effective, humane forms of discipline (Maina & Sindabi, 2016). Effective training, community involvement, and well-designed policies can help mitigate many of these challenges over time.

There have been cases of learners fighting with educators, especially female or young educators and they cannot do anything to those learners as they are trying to adhere to the anti-corporal punishment policy of South Africa. The ban of corporal punishment had led to a spike in violent incidents of learners being too disrespectful and mischievous towards educators as those learners are aware that it is within their

rights not to be hit or be expelled without the proper procedure of warnings before suspension (Maina & Sindabi, 2016). It is for such reasons that educators withdraw from teaching with passionate efforts and parental motives, learners have turned to be educators' enemies and threats.

With emphasises from Ampofo (2022), educators no longer find it important to rebuke learners verbally as they are always undermined, rather, they disengage and protect themselves by staying away from rebellious learners. In addition, learners now find it easy to carry drugs and alcohol into the school premises, especially in schools where there is no security, they are convinced that they will not be caught or be done anything should they be found in possession of those drugs and alcohol (Nzama & Ajani, 2022).

In a way, that has led to an increase in bullying, failure rate, school dropouts, intense drug and alcohol abuse, fights in the school premises and loss of life as a result of overdoses or suicide (Nzama & Ajani, 2022). Corporal punishment may be said to cause mental, physical, and emotional harm to learners, however, one would argue that even the banning of corporal punishment causes other unfavourable outcomes that leads to a country without skilled and enthusiastic youth, leads to families without discipline, leads to more of the youth under drug abuse and without responsibility (Erdem & Kocyigi, 2019).

Corporal punishment as a worldwide disciplinary practise remains as an issue in many ways. Despite the abolishment of corporal punishment, educators continue to use it aiming to control learners and curb bad behaviour. In addition, countries such as United States or America, Russia, Ghana and South Africa use corporal punishment in schools due to cultural, traditional, religious and social reasons. Such factors hinder the development and implementation of laws and directives that ban the use of corporal punishment, whereby, the law enforcement agencies cannot emphasise and instil the importance of banning corporal punishment due to different beliefs and attitudes.

It can be argued that educators contribute to the disruption and unruliness of learners in the classroom and the school. Educators use corporal punishment to define authority, and learners retaliate with being worse, by dropping out or by fighting with

educators. In addition, parents also have a hand in turning corporal punishment to be a norm and a way to discipline as they grant educators permission to beat or hit their children. According to the literature of this study, learners are more at harm than good when corporal punishment is use, because there are other alternative methods of discipline. However, such proposed alternative methods are found and deemed to be useless of are farfetched when in need of immediate response, thus it is regarded important to seek new methods to fill the gap and ban corporal punishment for good.

The literature collected in the study also highlight that there are gaps and shortcomings regarding the ban and use of corporal punishment in secondary schools. For instance, there is a lack of longitudinal studies to understand how attitude towards corporal punishment change over time, and how the implementation of proposed strategies and policies fail. In addition, there is lack of empirical evaluations of interventions aimed at reducing or eliminating the persisting use of corporal punishment.

The study provides more insight for the motive of banning corporal punishment for the better benefit of the well-being of educators and learners. Thus, this study encourages the further banning of corporal punishment and recommends for more effective and practical disciplinary measures that educators can use for discipline and classroom management.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

Research methodology can be best described as the systematic process involving specific and direct techniques and methods used to identify, process, analyse data and develop new information Pendey and Phendy (2015). Methodology in research has significant purposes that provide authenticity such as devising a framework that guides a researcher like a blueprint map, ensuring objectivity which avoids biasness and allow other researchers to access and assess the findings with confidence. In addition, research methodology provides a detailed map that a researcher can use to stay on track to smoothly and effectively reach sound findings (Bahisht, 2022). Tomaszewski, Zarestky and Gonzalez (2020) accentuate that, firstly, there should be a clear outlining and definition of the research objectives as they emphasize the focus of the study, and thus methodology guides a study. Secondly, Creswell and Poth (2016) advise that, the methodology that the researcher uses should be relevant and appropriate to address the research objectives and questions and also be relevant to the chosen area. Thirdly, Coleman (2021) articulates that, the methodology should employ techniques that ensure validity and reliability, such as being consistent to data collection and analysis methods and the use of an appropriate research designs as they are significant elements that certify the study's quality.

This study utilised the qualitative research approach, which according to allows the researcher to access information from participants without constrains as they express themselves freely (Yadav, 2021). In this study, the researcher supported qualitative research approach by using the interpretivist paradigm, which can be defined as a perspective that focuses on understanding human behaviour and social interactions, and how they are shaped by different experiences that people have Pervin & Mokhtar (2022). This study further used a single case study design, wherein Priya (2021) describes it as a research design that allows a researcher to distinctively study a certain phenomenon or an event and in this study the phenomenon is the re-emergence of corporal punishment in schools. Moreover, this study employed purposeful sampling as it permits the researcher to identify and

select relevant participants that are most likely to give meaningful and appropriate insight (Shaheen, Pradhan & Ranajee, 2019). Also, purposeful sampling saves time and minimized workload as it focuses on a smaller number of sampled participants and quality is assured as those participants are the representatives of the population at large and are not biased.

Furthermore, this study used interviews for data collection method as interviews allow the researcher to interact with the participants and also grant them opportunities to express themselves more than what the interview question requires (Rutledge & Hogg, 2020). The study used the semi-structured interview structure for its flexibility, as Sahoo (2022) indicates that it allows the switching and manipulation of questions based on the responses of the interviewees. In that way, the interviewees can feel comfortable and express their responses freely, and the interviewer changes questions that may sound inappropriate to a particular interviewee.

In addition, the study also used document analysis for data collection, as the content comprised in the documents is regarded as evidence to the claims made by the participants. Also, the documents that were used in the study have great credibility and are authentic with real life occurrences.

This study also adopted the thematic data analysis method for identification of patterns or themes, and it allowed the researcher to study and analyse the responses other than taking the responses as the themes or patterns are presented (Nowell, Noris, White & Moules, 2017). With regard to quality criteria, this study aims to uphold quality standards through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, as Stenfors, Kajamaa & Bennett (2020) conscientize that, quality criteria ensure trustworthiness, relevance, value and meaning to the study. Moreover, this study considered ethical considerations to protect rights, dignity and integrity of the participants as well as the study and also confirms validity and reliability of the study findings as advised by (Mirza, Bellalem & Mirza, 2023).

3.2. Research approach

The research approach adopted by the study is qualitative research approach, which can be referred to as a systematic study that focuses more on people's experiences,

perceptions, ideologies and how they relate with the reality that brought about those experiences (Denzin & Lincon, 2020). Scholars such as Marshall, Rossman and Blanco (2021) indicate that qualitative research allows the researcher to interact with the participants for thorough and precise responses that the researcher will use to gain insight with confidence and develop new knowledge. In addition, qualitative research approach permits the researcher to systematically identify a problem or a challenge that hinders required practices, create a plan to address that problem, collect and analyse the required data, reflect on the findings, and then make recommendations to overcome the challenge and have a societal change (Marshall et al., 2021).

The aim of qualitative research is to bring societal transformations through collaboration, reflection, and application of possible strategies (Denzin & Lincon, 2020). The use qualitative research permits the researcher to collaborate with participants and recommend possible and applicable approaches or strategies for discipline without an educator inflicting pain onto learners and without getting arrested for assault. According to Marshall et al. (2021), qualitative research approach is flexible in a way that a researcher can study emerging phenomena and also give insight with reason for such cases to emerge as researchable issues. Although the sample size is small, through qualitative research, quality of the findings and reflection is guaranteed to make a great impact.

3.3. Research paradigm

Interpretivist paradigm is a philosophical approach that underlines the significance of understanding and interpreting meanings and perspectives of individuals or groups attribute to their sole actions, experiences, and social interactions (Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022). In this study, the researcher used interpretivist paradigm as it is applicable to addressing the re-emergence of corporal punishment, wherein, the researcher examined how and why educators resort to corporal punishment and reasons for learners' unacceptable behaviour through actions and experiences.

Interpretivist paradigm allowed the researcher to investigate various complexities behind reasons for the continuation of corporal punishment in schools. According to Alharahsheh and Pius (2020), through interpretivist paradigm, the researcher can

identify justifications of why corporal punishment is still used and possible consequences that educators may expect thereof. Moreover, Dean (2018) adds that interpretivist paradigm acknowledges that people may differ on how they interpret corporal punishment due to different factors such as culture, experience, and social interactions.

In the context of this qualitative study, the paradigm permits the researcher to be flexible in a way that various methods such as interviews and observation can be employed to explore the research questions from multiple points of view as Nguyen (2015) substantiates. In addition, interpretivist researcher prioritises validity of the research findings from the sampled participants, for accuracy and authenticity of the interpretations, more willingly than generalizing findings of a larger population (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020).

Interpretivist paradigm involves interactive participation from the individuals sampled in the study and by giving voice to every participant to articulate their different perspectives to gain more insight. This paradigm puts a strong emphasis on ethical considerations such as respecting rights and views of the participants through informed consents and confidentiality.

3.4. Research design

The study employed case study research design to allow the researcher to conduct an in-depth investigation through an examination and analysis of a particular idea, event, or phenomenon such as the emergence of corporal punishment in rural secondary schools (Fahmi, 2024). The purpose of the study is to investigate reasons of re-emergence of corporal punishment in rural secondary schools and how to best discipline learners without the use of corporal punishment, hence the case study design is used as a guide. Thus, the study adopted the descriptive case study design, wherein the researcher outlined a thorough detailed description of the phenomena or challenge.

Moreover, the study seeks to evaluate the applicability of the currently proposed disciplinary measures and to alert educators about the implications that come with resorting to corporal punishment. According to Whitt (2017), the descriptive case

study design allowed the researcher to provide a comprehensive and detailed description of the anti-corporal punishment movement.

With different incidents of violence between educators and learners due to lack of discipline, or of a learner pressing charges against an educator, the case study design fitted well as the researcher studied such incidents and studied a case at a school that uses corporal punishment.

3.5. Population and sampling

The study intends on investigating corporal punishment in secondary schools, thus, educators are the suitable participants for the study, as Adeoye (2023) suggests that sampling requires a smaller and manageable sample size when conducting qualitative research. Moreover, according to Ahrens & Zascerinska (2014) sampling requires a precise aim which helps the researcher to select right participants that give deep depth insight, therefore this study employed purposeful sampling.

3.5.1. Purposeful sampling

Purposeful sampling permits the researcher to identify and select relevant participants that are most likely to give meaningful and appropriate insight (Subedi, 2021). Campbell, Greenwood and Prior (2020) also add that purposeful sampling saves time and minimized workload as it focuses on a smaller number of sampled participants and quality is assured as those participants are the representatives of the population at large.

As an advantage, the researcher can obtain deep meaningful insight from the selected few participants, as they have the characteristics and experiences that are at a higher proximal level with what the researcher requires for data collection (Douglas, 2022). In support of the same notion, Nyimbili and Nyimbili (2024) attest that through purposeful sampling, participants have different experiences and backgrounds that allow the researcher to gain a variety of perspectives to give the study more depth and meaning.

3.5.2. Sampling size

In this study, one rural secondary school and participants were identified around Bahlaloga Circuit in Polokwane. The sampling of the study consists of 12 participants who are organized in the following order:

- 10 educators from grades 8 – 12
- 2 School Management Team (SMT) members, specifically 1 principal and 1 departmental head (DH).

Among the group of participants, gender equality was observed, because gender inequality may jeopardize the subjectivity of the study. In addition, the sampled educators have different age differences, young and older, and reason being that educators experience different treatment and attitude from learners, more especially female educators, or young and newly appointed educators.

3.6. Data collection strategies

Data collection is one of the crucial and significant aspect in qualitative research for theory or information development, wherein, the researcher collects and analyse data through identifying patterns, themes and relationships (Busetto, Wicks & Gumbinger, 2020). In addition, Jeannine (2022) recommends that data collection ensures trustworthiness and quality in the findings of the study as data is genuine and not altered in any way. This study employed semi-structures interviews and thematic document analysis for data collection. Creswell and Poth (2018) confirm that primary expressive responses from the participants are considered best.

3.6.1. Semi-structured interviews

An interview is a data collection technique that the researcher uses to converse with participants and gather new information through their experiences, views, and beliefs, and can be either structured, semi-structured or unstructured Creswell & Poth (2018). Thus, this study adopted the semi-structured interviews for data collection. Semi-structured interviews are known to be effective through their flexibility, Adams (2015). The interviewer can manipulate some questions to better fit the personality of the interviewee or to accommodate their preference of questions

than the interviewer has set. In that way participants remain comfortable and confident in their responses and the researcher can accumulate over-expected relevant responses.

The researcher maintained that the interview questions differ with the level of seniority or authority among the participants, for instance, questions for a principal are about management and monitoring of the school acts and policies, compared to questions for an educator which are about classroom management and how they perceive discipline and corporal punishment. For the participants to fully give consent and be comfortable to be interviewed the researcher upheld honesty and sincerity with every detail, such as the rights that the interviewees have.

3.6.2. Thematic document analysis

Thematic document analysis is a qualitative research method that is used to identify, analyse and interpret different patterns and themes found in textual data, such as articles reports and policies (Ji, 2024). The study adopted thematic document analysis for data collection in support of the semi-structured interviews. Even though documents analysis may be regarded to have less effect since content in some documents may be falsified or biased, the researcher used it for its potential of the content being authentic in line with the standing of the study (Ji, 2024). The researcher used policies such as national school code of conduct, articles highlighting incidents of educators fighting with learners and social media post wherein educators show their concerns regarding discipline in their classrooms.

3.7. Data analysis

Data analysis is a systematic technique in research which involves the examination and interpretation of non-numerical data to reveal patterns, themes and meaning (O'Connor & Gibson, 2018). Through data analysis, the researcher can discover the voices of multitudes by using results from the few participants, hence data analysis requires transparency and unbiased judgment. This study employed thematic data analysis, because it is relevant for bringing sense to qualitative data, and uncovering meaning hidden in people's views and perceptions.

3.7.1. Thematic analysis.

Thematic analysis is a data analysis technique in qualitative research that allows the researchers to analyse the data from the participants and to find the core meaning and insight to form new knowledge or information (Naeem, Ozuem, Howell & Ranfagni, 2023) Jnanathapaswi (2021) adds that, thematic analysis is adaptable and flexible, such that it can be used in various research topics, data types, such as interviews and surveys, and research questions. In addition, inductive thematic data analysis was used in this study because, meaning emerges from what the participants responded with rather than predefinitions from the researcher (Naeem et al., 2023). Inductive thematic analysis allowed the researcher to look at the phenomenon in a holistic view, broadening the context and the correlation of themes within the data and makes the findings to be eloquent and informative (Jnanathapaswi, 2021).

Thematic analysis as a systematic approach, has a few steps that are simplified as follows as Jnanathapaswi (2021) highlights:

- **Data preparation**

The primary or raw data as responses from the interviews was carefully and repeatedly read and aligned with the points of interest or research questions and objectives.

- **Coding**

Codes of the data were generated from phrases and sentences based on their context. The coding process assisted in organizing data and identifying patterns or themes.

- **Theme classification**

Codes were developed to themes, wherein codes which illustrated a pattern were identified across the data. The researcher searched for patterns or themes among the coded pieces. The researcher grouped similar codes to form themes as themes are referred to as recurring patterns of meaning that emerge from the data.

- **Data interpretation**

Consequently, to identify and group themes, the researcher interpreted their significance, and it involved the inspection or examination of the relationship between themes such that the context in which they emerge is considered and sightsee its implications. In addition, data interpretation involved comparing findings to existing knowledge or literature data.

- **Verification and confirmation.**

Strategies to ensure trustworthiness and validity of the findings were employed by the researcher, such as an extra member being involved in checking the correlation between the initial responses of the participants and the context of the findings.

- **Findings report**

The researcher engaged in the write up of the findings, wherein quotations from the data are included to illustrate key themes. A coherent and cohesive narrative that communicates insights and information gained from the analysis was finally written.

3.8. Quality criteria

3.8.1. Credibility

Credibility is the accuracy and worthiness of the study's findings. Credibility is seen when the researcher uses qualitative results to guide the study throughout (Stahl & King, 2020). The researcher indicated how the research results determined that whichever data was acquired and used as evidence was deemed valid, true, unbiased, and accurate through signed consent forms from the participants.

3.8.2. Transferability

Transferability is the extent to which the research findings can be applicable in other contexts and will be recognised by giving readers the proof and evidence that the findings of the study could be applied to other situations, period, and people (William, 2020). In this study, the researcher provided the results in a manner that can allow other people to use in their studies. For instance, interpretation of the collected data was thoroughly evaluated, and results are provided.

3.8.3. Dependability

Dependability is the constancy of data over different conditions and time. According to Stahl and King (2020), dependability is proven by having another researcher outside the data collection and data analysis to assess the processes of data collection, analysis, and results. In this study, this was done for the confirmation of accuracy of the findings and to see the link between the findings and the data collected.

3.8.4. Confirmability

Confirmability is the extent to which research results could be confirmed by others and serves to verify that the findings are from participants and not the researcher. William (2020) recommends that researchers use an audit trail to establish confirmability. The researcher has documented the procedures for a continuous checking of data throughout the study.

3.9. Significance of the study

The study aims to alert educators about corporal punishment for being regarded as a criminal offence and to find ways to better discipline learners. For educators who commit the same crime by resorting to corporal punishment, an awareness is needed for them to be cautious and safe from being imprisoned. Educators need to be cautious towards inflicting pain on learners as it would jeopardise their careers or attract imprisonment while the learners continue to be mischievous at school. Educators should initiate acceptable strategies that would better assist them to deal with troublesome learners without the use of corporal punishment. Regular and continuous beating of learners is viewed to lead to low self-esteem and hatred, fear, and withdrawal from studies. David (2013) argues that learners should be treated with care like children at home, thereby moulding them into better people. Additionally, the study acts as a voice for multitudes of educators, outlining the ineffectiveness of the proposed alternative methods of discipline.

3.10. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS.

3.10.1. Respect, dignity and standard of care

The research was able to treat the participants with dignity and respect by listening to the participants' points of view. The researcher recognized the disagreement and kept discussions and comments in line with the study phenomenon without using offensive language, sarcasm or raised voices (Kumar, 2019).

3.10.2. Informed Consent and permission

Consent letters were given to participants for their permission to partake in the study. The researcher wrote a letter to the principal of the sampled school to obtain permission to conduct interviews with the sampled participants.

3.10.3. Anonymity

Participants' names were hidden and not published to protect the identification of the participants. The researcher was able to rephrase their names as their identities. For instance, an educator's name was represented as educator A.

3.10.4. Privacy and confidentiality

Consent forms were issued to the participants for collection and usage of the data obtained from the participants. Participants' privacy was protected throughout the study. The researcher conducted interviews in selected isolated offices at the sampled schools. After the data was collected, it was safely stored in a laptop and was ethically used by the researcher without altering the data and the release of the identities of the participants.

3.10.5. Benefit and risks/harms

Participants were given significant insight about corporal punishment and how to curb the elevating incidents of corporal punishment. Risks such as educators going home later than expected time were managed through brief and concise interviews. The risk management plans for any risk that may arise were put in place.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter offers comprehensive and detailed results obtained from semi-structured interviews that were scheduled between the researcher and the educator participants. The researcher was able to consolidate and describe each and every participant's experiences and perceptions through a detailed and thorough in-depth data collection method that is paramount in context. The participants' cases allowed the researcher to prompt insight and perception by providing rich description of their peculiar experiences. Through other studies with the same focus and cases, the researcher was able to substantiate the findings.

Furthermore, in this chapter, an analysis from documents was outlined, as the research was able to use relevant documents for data collection. The documents that the researcher used had content that related to the study and to the type of participants used.

A. Interviews

4.2. Participants' details

The study sampled 12 educator participants as stipulated in Chapter 3, wherein, the participants were sampled according to grade, age, gender and designation or role. Educators from different grades with different ages have different experiences and learners tend to respect older age group educators than younger educators. The identification details of the educator participants are recorded in Table 4.2. below:

Educator Participants	Grade	Age (years)	Gender	Designation or role
A	8	47	Male	Cs1 Educator
B	8	25	Female	Cs1 Educator
C	9	27	Male	Cs1 Educator
D	9	28	Female	Cs1 Educator

E	10	38	Male	Cs1 Educator
F	10	26	Female	Cs1 Educator
G	11	30	Male	Cs1 Educator
H	11	27	Female	Cs1 Educator
I	12	32	Male	Cs1 Educator
J	12	40	Female	Cs1 Educator
K	11	55	Female	Departmental head
L	12	56	Male	Principal

Table 1: Educator Participants Identification Details

4.3. Data analysis and interpretation

4.3.1. Interviews with educator participants

As Mashuri, Sarib, Alhabsyi and Syam (2022) propose, interviews between the researcher and the participants should be ethical and conducive, thus, the researcher has to follow basic steps of ensuring that the interview sessions yield required results and expectations.

The basic steps are referred to as:

- **Preparations**

The researcher ensured that the participants were aware of the purpose and the objectives of the study by describing the goal and the expectations of the study. The researcher also guaranteed to the participants the freedom of all the ethical practices involved in the study, such as participants having the right to revert from the study at any time should they feel uncomfortable or unease.

- **Engagement**

The researcher started by having small conversations with each of the participants to make them familiar to the focus of the study and in that way the participants got

confident, comfortable and the ice was broken. The researcher explained the interview guide by going through each of the question to make the participants more at ease. The researcher also ensured that the participants knew the time they had to complete the interviews, as they were guided on how to answer the questions straight and to the point responses with brief substantiation.

During this engagement stage, the researcher is expected to uphold confidentiality, sympathy, flexibility, neutrality and avoid biasness as elucidated by (Laryeafio & Ogbewe, 2023). The researcher ensured that there were no criticisms or biasness towards the responses of the participants. The researcher was expected to show sympathy towards the participants especially when they share deeply expressed experiences so that the participants can relax more and answer the questions.

The researcher noted down all the responses from the participants as Laryeafio and Ogbewe (2023) explained that the researcher must either record or write down notes for data compilation. During the writing of the research notes, the researcher observed time that was allocated to each participant, though flexibility was employed as others were providing deeper insights and more time was required for them.

- **Post Interview Reflection**

The researcher thanked all the participants after the interviews and highlighted how significant their responses were to the study. The participants were reassured that their responses were for research purposes and not for personal purposes.

The participants were able to answer the questions according to the expectations, the questions were simplified and open-ended allowing the participants to narrate more than what the questions required. For fairness and equality, English was the preferred and commonly used language for the duration of the interview sessions.

4.3.2. Educator participants' responses

The educator participants' responses were recorded by the researcher as raw as they were conveyed by the participants. With emphasis, the responses were not altered with, influenced or manipulated by the researcher, they were presented with confidence in the arrangement of themes, sub-themes and categories in relation to the number of questions that were asked. According to Annells and Whitehead

(2017), analysing responses from educator participants is very critical as raw data is transformed into meaningful insights that address the research question.

4.3.2.1. CS1 Educators responses

- **Perceptions regarding the abolishment of corporal punishment**

Most of the educators' responses were classified according to the following categories of data themes:

- EB, EC, ED, EF, EH, EG, EI, indicated that, *"It was not a good idea to abolish corporal punishment."*
- EA, EE, EJ stated that, "It was a good initiative by the Department of Education (DoE) to abolish corporal punishment in schools."

The seven (7) young educators regarded the abolishment of corporal punishment in schools as a bad idea as learners become unruly and there is an incline in drug abuse in rural schools. Among those young educators, four (4) of them are females and they strongly suggested that banning of corporal punishment is a wrong turn towards moulding competent and civilised citizens.

The three (3) educators who are older viewed the abolishment of corporal punishment as a good move to redeeming democracy and protecting learners' human rights.

- **Challenges faced by educators regarding discipline and classroom management**

Almost all of the educators' responses included and limited to the following:

- EB, ED, and EF expressed that, *"Learners are hard to discipline as they are aware that educators are not supposed to hit, or shout at them. They rather disrupt lessons intentionally and some are taller."*
- EC and EH indicated that, *"Overcrowded classrooms are very hard to manage and that is where most of the disruptive and boisterous learners are found."*
- EA, EG, EI, highlighted that, *"There are no challenges regarding discipline and management because learners do as I say, and they tend to be"*

mischievous outside the classroom, like smoking week before coming to class.”

- EE, EJ expressed that, *“I see no challenge as I allow them to do whatever they want and at the end I get their attention when I require, we understand each other.”*

Five (5) of the young educators, comprising of four (4) females and one (1) male, indicated that they find it hard to manage their classrooms and discipline learners because they are aware of the outcomes that educators may face should they bring harm to them. In addition, overcrowded classrooms breed ill-behaved and unruly learners that tend to eventually lose interest in academics and only come to school to cause havoc so they may get attention. Furthermore, three (3) of the young female educators have highlighted that they fear to reprimand learners because some of them are taller and bolder than they are.

In a contrary, the other five (5) educators, comprising of four (4) males and one (1) female, highlighted that learners adhere to their instructions, and they tend to let them do what they want so that those learners may feel comfortable and welcomed. One of them highlighted that having a noisy class does not mean they are disruptive or ill behaved, unless they do so when the educator is presenting a lesson, and no one is abiding to the instructions from the educator. Moreover, one of the educators argued that fighting with learners or being aggressive towards them tends to make them retaliate and educators regarded that as being unruly.

- **Regarding abolishment of corporal punishment beneficial or not**

Educators’ responses regarding this theme were:

- EB and ED pointed out that, *“The abolishment of corporal punishment is not beneficial as there is a great increase in the cases of learners challenging young educators physically and ethically, compared to the era of corporal punishment.”*
- EF and EH expressed that, *“It is not beneficial because educators fear learners that they should be guiding to a better life, and the government prioritizes learners more than us.”*

- EB, ED, EF, EH emphasised that, *“Many of us educators lose interest in our work due to being threatened and disrespected unlike back in the days where an educator was never confronted by a learner. Corporal punishment instilled respect and compliance in learners towards educators unlike right now.”*
- EC, EG, EI stated that, *“Sometimes it is necessary to use corporal punishment, not always but sometimes. Plus, how can we form part of the disciplinary committee and have unruly learners around the school?”*
- EA, EE mentioned that, *“It is very beneficial because learners are not going to feel pain from a stick or humiliation from insults and name calling and educators will not be labelled as abusers of children. Learners’ rights and well-being are significant than commanded respect.”*
- EJ said with belief that, *“I believe that it is beneficial because violence is not the only way to discipline learners, there are safer and convenient ways to curb unruliness in the classroom than using a stick or a slap on a cheek.”*

The four (4) female educators who had highlighted that the abolishment of corporal punishment was a bad idea, also added that it is not beneficial as many educators go to school for compliance and to do justice to the curriculum, they do not enjoy their work due to unruly learners. In addition, they have stated that they do not use corporal punishment due to fear of losing their jobs or learners hitting them back like in recent cases. One of them indicated that she would rather befriend learners than to turn into their enemy, in that way, learners respond to the positive energy and attitude of the educator. The challenge is that most of the learners do not respond as expected.

In addition, the three (3) young male educators that had also highlighted that the banning of corporal punishment was a bad idea, indicated that they “sometimes” use corporal punishment when it is necessary, especially that they form part of the disciplinary committee. They argue that the abolishment of corporal punishment is not beneficial as there is a large number of learners who do not adhere to the instructions of young educators. However, with that little intervention of using corporal punishment, learners tend to bulge and be obedient towards them.

In a contrary, the three (3) older educators who saw the abolishment of corporal punishment to be a good move, added by regarding it as beneficial as the law is

against people to abuse women and children, either at home or at school, so educators will not be charged with assault should they only refrain from using corporal punishment. Moreover, they highlighted that in the midst of the law enforcement introducing new humane ways for discipline, it would be a great misfortune to charge an educator for assaulting a learner. One (1) of them also emphasized the importance of building a relationship with learners as educators are parents, they should practise being parents than enemies to learners.

- **Effectiveness of currently proposed disciplinary measures for discipline and classroom management**

Educators' responses regarding this theme were:

- EB and EG stated that, *"The currently proposed measures are not necessarily effective and there are processes involved, like countless verbal warnings or calling parents to school countless times for one thing or same kind of learners. Unruly learners usually get away with bad cases due to many verbal warnings, a week's period suspension that they have gotten used to."*
- EE and EC stated with concern that, *"The department of education has long promised educators that through training and workshops we shall be provided with best discipline measures, however no measure has been seen to be best than spanking or beating. Learners are left to get away with faults because there is no effective immediate intervention that can instantly discipline those learners."*
- EB articulated that, *"What other measures? When were they introduced? One thing I know is to keep my hands-off from the learners."*
- EI said that, *"Rebuking learners verbally also has its disadvantages because a parent or a learner can accuse an educator for emotional harassment."*
- EF and EH indicated that, *"Other learners are not willing to listen or comply to what the educator requests which benefits the learner. It is also time consuming to always talk to uninterested learners in the middle of a lesson"*

and it is against the law to put the learner outside the classroom. There are not immediate interventions.”

- EJ stated that, *“It is better to suspend the learner that same moment so that other can keep quiet and learn from his/ her mistake”*

In a contrary, EA responded by saying, *“Every measure has its bad and good sides, it is up to an educator to find the best way to deal with a situation in that instance, so that a case can be solved. So, the tricky part is getting what to do, and I say that we should do what is necessary that time, we will defend ourselves afterwards, and we have learners as witnesses to the unruliness in the classroom, even if it involves an educator breaking the law.”*

The nine (9) educators, comprising of five (5) females and four (4) males, indicated that the currently proposed disciplinary measures are not as effective, as corporal punishment was an immediate intervention strategy than verbal warnings that may not have instant impact as expected. One (1) of the educators further strongly asserted by making a scenario, wherein a learner wants to fight with an educator, it is either an educator be smart by running away and all learners start to see that educator as a coward, or the educator stands to fight the learner which may solved the issue temporarily and harshly implicate the educator later.

The main concern raised by the educators was the emphasis by the Department of Education on the educators' integrity and security and the learners' safety that corporal punishment be abolished. On that note, all interviewed educators prefer immediate interventions rather than long processes that may even be thrown away as a misunderstanding while the educator remains dishonoured. Some educators agree that they are unaware of the measures of discipline proposed for educators, simply because those measures are not effective as expected. In addition, two (2) of the educators highlighted that the process taken to finally suspend a disruptive learner involves many steps, such as a couple of verbal warnings, written warnings, parent involvement and finally suspension or expulsion. That process of disciplining learners is very long for an immediate intervention, hence the proposed measures are deemed ineffective and favour the learner more than the educator.

However, one (1) educator added that even with the disciplinary measures at hand, as ineffective as they are, an educator needs to adapt and find an appropriate lawful way to better deal with cases that need immediate intervention rather than going through all the proposed measures. As one (1) of the educators further explained, they highlighted that the nature of a fault or case determines the appropriate disciplinary measure, which may lead to an educator taking a decisive measure that best fits that fault at that instance. One (1) educator responded to a follow up question of an example of an immediate intervention, by saying that they would rather suspend that learner than use corporal punishment and other learners will take note that they too can be suspended should they be at fault.

The table below illustrates the main themes, sub-theme and sub-categories that are established from the participants' responses. The themes are extracted from the raw data that is provided by the participants in their own understanding and are as follows:

Theme	Sub-theme	Categories and Sub-category
Perceptions on the abolishment of corporal punishment in rural secondary schools	Advantageous	Some educators deem it as a good initiative and support the use of alternative disciplinary measures
	Disadvantageous	Some educators argue that it is not a good idea and demand the Department of Education to provide effective ways of disciplining learners

Challenges of discipline and classroom management	Discipline	Unruly and disruptive learners
	Types of learner behaviour	Classroom disruptions Mischievousness Humiliation and insults Name calling of educators Lack of attention in class Educator and peer bullying
	Classroom management	Overcrowded classrooms host disruptive learners Ineffective disciplinary measures Department's intervention processes
Significance of abolishment of corporal punishment	Beneficial	The abolishment of corporal punishment is regarded beneficial and supported
	Non-beneficial	The abolishment of corporal punishment is not regarded beneficial and is not supported
Effectiveness of the currently proposed disciplinary measures	Effective for learners and educators	Proposed disciplinary measures protect to educators and learners from harm Providing and maintaining safety in schools
	Not effective for learners and educators	Educators are not able to discipline learners and manage overcrowded classrooms

	Absence of effective immediate strategies	Educators need immediate and effective intervention strategies than long processes of implementing discipline The long-term disciplinary interventions for educators
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Table 2: A summary of CS1 educator participants' responses

4.3.2.2. SMT Members responses

- Responses on the abolishment of corporal punishment**

The SMT members' responses regarding the theme were:

- EL responded that, *"The banning of corporal punishment is an advantage to the movement of teaching and equipping a black child with skills. In the era of corporal punishment, learners used to drop out, others were beaten due to being slow or failing many times, now there is no such thing. Learners can fail as many times or be as slow as they are, no one is to beat them up for that. It may be a great calamity for an educator to be charged for hitting a learner."*
- EK expressed that, *"Personally, I feel like corporal punishment was able to drive people towards excellence and morality even though it is inhumane. Sometimes it is necessary because educators carry a heavy weight upon them with many learners who disrupt lessons and fail for not having interest in academics but come to school. I am on the fence, but step more on the abolishment of corporal punishment."*

The two (2) SMT members comprising of older male Deputy Principal (DP) and a female Departmental Head (DH), highlighted that the abolishment of corporal punishment is rather advantageous looking at what the educators may lose should they be charged and sentenced. They urged that learners' rights should be considered and that is the right to education. Others may drop out or fight back due to harsh inhumane discipline from educators through corporal punishment. On the

contrary, one of the educators further argued that educators are having the heavier end of the bar as they are responsible for multiple heads that need to pass and also be good citizens. So, using corporal punishment may do some justice for them in a long run, however, not all may see it that way.

- **Suggestions to intensify learner discipline and classroom management**

The SMT members' responses to the theme were:

- EL stated that, *"One of the possible ways to enforce discipline and classroom management is to draft common classroom rules across the school so that learners may be aware that they are expected to adhere to those rules. Also, learners, educators and parents should sign and bind themselves with the code of conduct, that each and every one of them should follow responsibly."*
- EK highlighted that, *"Schools should establish relations with other stakeholders like police department, correctional services, and life coaches to come and help educators to mould learners into what is expected. Also, the stakeholders could motivate learners about good behaviour so that they do not end up in jail because of their habits of being unruly."*

The two (2) SMT members highlighted that it is very important to have a code of conduct that learners, educators and parents can use to direct how educators should interact with learners in regarding to discipline and classroom management. Should any of the two parties fail to adhere to the code of conduct, they shall receive immediate punishment that shall settle the issue at hand. In addition, having classroom rules also binds learners to remain disciplined and in that way the educator can be able to teach effectively. One of the educators explained further and said that not all learners will adhere to the classroom rules so educators must expect such conduct and have an alternative to use to curb bad behaviour, such as reporting the learner to a senior so that the educator can remain safe from harm.

A suggestion was made that all schools should have relations with other external stakeholders, except for parents and the school governing body. Involving bodies such as the police and nurses to assist, educators have a potential of making an impact on learners. *"Hearing words from a former convicted individual about*

unruliness and bad behaviour may greatly impact learners' lives and might change their ways and attitudes.", said one of the SMT members. Learners need to hear different voice and see different faces for them to believe that the educators are their immediate day-time parents. In addition, it is advised that for educators to remain as a unit, they must be consistent and positive, so that they can be treated the same way, and they can easily show care and compassion towards learners.

- **Supporting educators to improve learner discipline and classroom management**

The SMT members' responses to this theme were:

- EL highlighted that, "Educators are encouraged to attend code of conduct for educator workshops and must be familiar with the policies and procedures regarding learner discipline and classroom management."
- EK, illustrated that, "The governance of the school always encourages educators to always know when to react and how to react. Educators should be familiar with all the policies that govern how they are supposed to react in accordance with discipline, so such information is shared during empowerment meeting we usually hold."

Another educator (EK) responded to a follow-up question in regard to support that the governance gives to educators when they report cases of unruly learners as a way for an educator to uphold professionalism and avoid violence. The response was:

- *"We rather call the learners to the office, interrogate them along with that educator and decide what to do afterwards, but in most cases, we call their parents and explain to them how their children have become hindrances to teaching and learning."*

The educators highlighted that they support educators by organizing empowerment meetings and encourage them to attend workshops that are organized by the Department of Education. In addition, policies like the "Bella Bill" are drafted to emphasize the abolishment of corporal punishment and educators are advised to

adhere such policies. Compared to the responses from CS1 educators, such policies do not solve the problems that they have in the classroom because they do not solve a case that need an immediate attention.

One (1) of the educators responded by saying that whenever an educator reports ill-behaving and disruptive learners to the SMT, they follow procedures of obtaining two sides of the story and notifying the parents so that they get involved in reprimanding those learners. By so doing, learners either change or they continue, making the efforts of the educator to be useless.

- **Effectiveness of the current policies on learner code of conduct**

The SMT members' responses to the theme were:

- EL responded that, *"The policies are reasonable and unoppressive, however, some learner would choose to otherwise, like they miss school when they are supposed to attend every day, or they are expected to listen and pay attention to educators during teaching and learning but they disrupt lessons and be contemptuous towards educators. There are general issues of bullying and drug use across the country in the midst of policies of conduct."*
- EK highlighted that, *"Policies of conduct in my opinion are drafted to control and sway learners to behave in the best manner possible so that the process of teaching and learning to take place for the educators to play other roles in learners' lives. They are more effective in senior phase than in FET phase because of many influences like adolescence and peer pressure. To confirm that they are not as effective as expected in FET phase, there is high drug abuse and high failure rate in grades 10 and 11."*

One educator (EL) replied to a follow-up question regarding the access that learners have to the school's code of conduct.

- "Learners are notified with the contents of the policy and outline how they should conduct themselves when they are at schools, but they do not have them where they can refer to them and practise what is required. I think that is a loophole."

The two (2) SMT members indicated that the policies for learner conduct are suitable for human beings and there are no oppressive laws that demand learners to do inappropriate or unlawful activities, like returning home if they arrive late at school. Be that as it may, there is still some slacking off when it comes to awareness and implementation of the policy by learners and educators. Learners tend to go astray from what the code of conduct requires especially in Grades 10 and 11 and the possible reasons according to one of the educators is that they are in their adolescence stage and there is also peer pressure.

Moreover, educator (EL) insinuated that the learners are not paying attention to the code of conduct because they do not have it as documents that they can recite and abide by. Thus, the effectiveness of the policies can be influenced by a few factors than those already mentioned. One would argue that learners tend to follow the consistency of the educators than their will, wherein if there is consistency of educators reminding and emphasizing the code of conduct to learners during assembly, learners would less likely be unruly.

- **Involvement of educators in the development process of policies of conduct**

The SMT members' responses to the theme were:

- EL indicated that, *"Educators are less involved in the development of school policies of conduct. Everyday challenges of educators about learner conduct are rarely considered when drafting the policies, there is a great gap of fully engaging all stakeholders in the formation of policies."*
- EK stated that, *"As an educator I am well aware of the challenges that other educators go through, however, generalizing these challenges hinders educators to voice out their concerns. In that account, I say that they are not involved, they are not consulted unless a case emerges then we strategize on how to ethically and morally handle the situation. I must say that is it unfair on them, they too should be involved, great ideas are within them, and we deny them that chance."*

It was indicated by the two (2) SMT members that educators are not consulted when drafting policies for learner conduct, whilst educators can give more insight into how such policies can be best drawn to accommodate everyone, educators are the closest sources to support the design of policies of learner conduct. They are contacted or involved when there is case that should be handled through the code of conduct, and from that it can concluded that should there be no case of assault by a learner on an educator or learners carrying knives in the school premises, then educators' views and strategies for better discipline and classroom management will not be heard.

Theme	Sub-theme	Sub-category
Opinions on the abolishment of corporal punishment	Positive responses	Observes learners' rights, to education, well-being and mental health
	Negative responses	Learners lose interest in education, and attitude towards academic excellence changes Learners drop out of school
Suggestions on intensifying learner discipline and classroom management	Code of conduct for learner behaviour and better classroom management	Implementation of a school code of conduct for common problematic behaviour
	Immersion and involvement of more stakeholders	Invite other stakeholders such as police and life coaches for better exposure and motivation Awareness campaigns of bad learner behaviour and

		unruliness
Support for educators to improve learner discipline and classroom management	Department of Education (DoE) workshops	Regular organized awareness and motivation workshops for educators Present educator counselling
	Awareness and knowledge of policies	Educators to be empowered to have knowledge of policies and educators adhering to them
Effectiveness of current policies on learner conduct	Promotes and support good learner behaviour	Policies are developed and implemented for directing learners to behave accordingly
	Persisting unruliness and disruptions amidst implementation of policies	Learners still continue to be unruly even when they are aware of the consequences of boisterousness Intentional unruliness

Educator involvement in the development process of policies of learner conduct	Educators are not involved and consulted	Educators are not involved in the development and implementation of learner conduct policies to improve the discipline of learners
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Table 3: A summary of SMT members participants' responses

B. Document analysis

4.4. Data analysis and interpretation

4.4.1. Objectives

The objectives of using document analysis are to identify key themes through extracted qualitative data, and to compare and contrast findings from the interview responses and the documents. The relevant documents to be analysed were policies, media reports or and content. The process of extracting data from the documents was informed by the research questions, which are:

- What is the justification for the persisting use of corporal punishment for learner discipline and classroom management in rural secondary schools?
- What are challenges of using corporal punishment in rural secondary schools?
- What are the educators' perceptions on abolishment of corporal punishment in rural secondary schools?

4.4.2. Data derived from documents

- In relation to the justification of using of corporal punishment for learner discipline and classroom management, educators highlighted that the current generation is lazy, sulky and always expects things to be done according to their will (Millanes & Alcopra, 2025). In support of that, the National Education policy (1996) deemed the use of corporal punishment to be unlawful as a result of educators using corporal punishment as to curb the loss of authority in the classroom. Mischievous, lazy or uninterested learners are likely to seek to hold authority in the classroom, hence educators use a violent way of

discipline (Millanes & Alcopra, 2025). From a study by Moyo, Khewu and Bayaga, (2020), a participants stated that, “In many rural areas, corporal punishment is not only accepted but expected by both parents and community members as a means of ensuring discipline and respect among learners.

- In recent events, educators lost their jobs, were blackmailed and some suspended due to reports made to the department of education and to the police by learners and parents pertaining the use of corporal punishment (Matlala, 2011). Another challenge highlighted by educators in a study by Moyo, Khewu and Bayaga, (2020) is that learners fear educators that use corporal punishment, to an extent that learners cannot consult or ask questions when they need clarity, hence the high failure rate. In addition, from analyzing recent reports, the use of corporal punishment encourages violence and aggression between learners and educators, which in the end threatens the learner and educator relationship. According to Zitkova (2024), a participant stated that, “Learners subjected to corporal punishment often experience emotional distress, which negatively affects their academic performance and self-confidence”
- Reports highlight that educators use corporal punishment claiming that it is a cultural way of discipline and is very effective (Millanes & Alcopra, 2025). Additionally, educators find it hard to abolish corpora punishment due to the proposed ways of discipline. From the 2018 SAHRC document, one of the participants stated that, “We do not know any other way if disciplining learners, corporal punishment is what we grew up with, it worked for us.” Moreover, educators persist using corporal punishment so as to retain authority in the classroom as learners misbehave knowing that educators are not allowed to inflict pain on them. According to a study from South African Journal of Education by Kangala, Indongo, Pooe and Mhlongo (2020), a participant stated that, “Learners are out of control now because they know we can’t punish them properly”

4.5. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.5.1. Literature of the study

Literature of the study indicated that most of the educators across the world are aware of the abolishment of corporal punishment and not all of them support and adhering to that directive. Different countries have different reasons for the persistent use of corporal punishment, commonly being unruly learners, drug abuse, curbing possession of dangerous weapons and substances.

It is also evident that educators deem it necessary to use corporal punishment than implementing most of the recommended disciplinary measures which in most cases are not effective or can be used as immediate interventions. Educators prefer immediate intervention strategies than processes of making learners think that they can do whatever they want, such as being verbally warned and sent back to the classroom.

4.5.1. Qualitative research enquiry

The responses from the educator participants are complementary to the literature as some of the educators' participants resort to corporal punishment to gain control of learners and to have a conducive teaching and learning environment in the classroom. In addition, educators regard the recommended disciplinary measures ineffective likewise to the literature of this study, wherein there is little confidence towards the proposed disciplinary measures by the Department of Education as they only favour learners than educators.

The challenges that educators face are similar to the ones mentioned in the literature of this study, and it serves as evidence that the abolishment of corporal punishment is a global issue which needs to be seriously reviewed for the sake of improving future human resources and civil society through education.

Below are the research questions and the analysis of whether they were answered or not.

- What is the justification for the persisting use of corporal punishment for learner discipline and classroom management in rural secondary schools?

- What are challenges of using corporal punishment in rural secondary schools?
- What are the educators' perceptions on abolishment of corporal punishment in rural secondary schools?

The data collected through participants and literature highlight that, educators face challenges such as lack of support from parents, lack of policy implementation and enforcement of anti-corporal punishment regulations. Educators support the use of corporal punishment for different reasons such as cultural inclination and enforcing discipline. It may be concluded that the research questions were answered through literature and data collection by using interviews and document analysis.

Furthermore, with the data collected, the study has the potential to be used to make informed justification or modification of existing policies on the banning of corporal punishment in classrooms. In addition, the study can be used to guide professional behaviour, wherein educators adopt the movement of abolishing corporal punishment for learner discipline and classroom management. Also, the study has the probability of raising awareness against the use of corporal punishment by educators in their classrooms, rather, new measures of discipline may be used to accommodate learners' and educators' well-being and security.

4.5.2. Perceptions of educators

Some educators expressed that the abolishment of corporal punishment is fairly a good idea or a bad idea, wherein other educators prefer to use it as it brings their expected learner behaviour, whilst other educators have refrained from using corporal punishment due to fear of being attacked by learners or getting arrested for assault, and also refrain from it due to adhering to the policies like the Bella Bill and other policies that introduced the banning of corporal punishment. Some educators highlighted that the banning of corporal punishment had various consequences such as high failure rate, advance drug abuse, educator and learner physical fights or confrontations, learners detaching from the core idea of academic excellence and educators losing interest in their work.

4.5.3. Challenges faced by educators and suggestions for intensifying learner discipline and classroom management

Educators indicated that they faced challenges such as being bullied by unruly learners, lessons being disrupted by disorderly learners and learners excessively using drugs in the school premises. Thus, the school governance suggested a few measures that the educators and learners can be applied to reach the common goal of inclusive and beneficial teaching and learning. The suggestions include drafting and implanting a code of conduct that learners should abide by so that educators can adhere to the policy of no corporal punishment. Nonetheless, educators have indicated that with such suggestions, many cases are not solved, and learners persist in being unruly as they are aware that the processes are long for the learners to be taught a lesson, hence the use of corporal punishment. Some educators highlighted that there is a need for immediate reaction, such as suspending a learner that very moment, however, that reaction is also wrong as it suggests exclusivity of learners from being educated.

4.5.4. Significance of abolishing corporal punishment and effectiveness of the proposed disciplinary measures

Most of the educator participants deemed the abolishment of corporal punishment as not beneficial as learners continue being unruly and disruptive even when they are aware and familiar with the code of conduct of the school. One of the codes in the policy are that learners should not come to school with their cell phones, because they can capture and record other people and turn them into jokes and it eventually leads to physical and cyber bullying. Once learners adhere to such codes, no cell phone shall interrupt lessons with music or learners watching explicit content during an informal activity writing.

In addition, some educators indicated that the proposed measures such as verbal and written warnings prolong the handling of matters with immediate effect. One of the educators has made a scenario where a learner fights with an educator, then verbal warning comes in, after a week that learner hits a fellow learner, then another verbal warning, eventually that learner stabs an educator or another learner due to the school governance taking a longer time to intervene in changing that learner to

act according to the code of conduct. It can be argued that using corporal punishment or suspending that learner on the first instance of his unruliness, can have an effect on him and persuading him to change his behaviour.

4.5.5. Support for educators and involvement of educators in designing of learner code of conduct.

One of the SMT members indicated that educators are supported through workshops organized by the Department of Education, wherein educators are advised and conscientized about the consequences of using corporal punishment. Rather they are given alternative measures that they can use in case there is a need to discipline a learner. The SMT members also highlighted that educators are not involved when developing and drafting a school code of conduct policy for learners and the rationale was that the whole process is the responsibility of the SMT. The SMT members concluded that excluding educators in the process makes it useless as educators are the closest sources to why and how the code of conduct for learners should be and they are also implementers of the school laws.

4.6. Integrated discussion of interviews and document analysis

Both data from the interview responses and document analysis indicate that educators use corporal punishment under different reasons and the most common justification is disciplining mischievous learners. According to the data from the interviews and the documents, challenges faced by educators and learners are complex and depend on individuals, and the common challenges are experiencing emotional distress, loss of academic interest and poor academic performance. With the data extracted from the documents and the responses from the interviews, it is highlighted that educators regard the abolishment of corporal punishment as ineffective to discipline since learners get out of control knowing that they are not going to be punished. The most common finding is that educators regard corporal punishment as an immediate and cultural way of discipline.

4.7. Conclusion

This chapter focused on the document analysis and semi-structured interviews between the interviewer and twelve (12) educators, comprising of ten (10) CS1

educators and two (2) SMT members. All participants expressed their views according to the questions and a few follow-up questions. The researcher was able to identify the rationale that leads to the persisting use of corporal punishment in rural secondary schools. Responses from the participants and the data from three documents revealed that most educators are deprived of their rights as though that the learners' rights supersede theirs.

Educators signed consent forms (**Appendix A**) to allow the researcher to interact with them for a productive and comprehensive interview session. Permission from the school and district was sought through the permission request letters (**Appendices B and C**). The researcher was allowed to conduct interviews with the educators at the selected school and the interview guides for educators (**Appendix D**) and SMT (**Appendix E**) were used. E The summary of the educators' responses is tabled in **Table 2 and Table 3**, and comprises of themes, sub-themes and sub-categories that guide the findings of the study.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, LIMITATIONS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a brief description of how and why educators persist in using corporal punishment which by law is considered to be a criminal offence. The responses from the educators provided the rationale of using corporal punishment, the ineffectiveness of the proposed disciplinary measures and how educators feel about the abolishment of corporal punishment. All educators expressed different comprehensive views with regard to discipline and classroom management and suggested their personal possible ways to curb unruliness and manage classrooms for a conducive teaching and learning environment.

5.2. Summary of findings

5.2.1. Findings based on the literature study

In Chapter 2, the literature was conducted to gain deeper understanding of the abolishment of corporal and the persisting use of corporal punishment for discipline and classroom management in rural secondary schools. The topics that were reviewed were: South African policy on corporal punishment, reasons for discipline through corporal punishment, implications of corporal punishment and implemented strategies for substitution of corporal punishment.

From these reviewed topics, it is evident that corporal punishment is reasonably used across the world, wherein, some countries strictly adhere to the banning of corporal punishment to respect the human right of learners and to stop using colonial methods of control and influence. With the insight extracted from different studies, it can be fairly argued that banning of corporal punishment has caused more damage than good, thus other educators persist in using corporal punishment with reasons of culture, distinguishing between educators and learners, and a way to mould a child into a responsible adult.

In countries such as United States of America, rationale for using corporal punishment is said to be based on people's colour, whereby, most black populated schools use corporal punishment than white dominated schools. In Ghana, parents

permit schools to use corporal punishment for discipline and classroom management as their societies believe that it is necessary as they aim to raise and mould their children to being better people and, in most cases, learners are not likely to be subjected to spanking or beating as they follow and adhere to the code of conduct of the school and teaching from their parents.

Since it was declared unlawful and inhumane to use corporal punishment in all schools, educators have been arrested, trialled, blackmailed, fined or convicted due to learners and parents pressing charges of assault against them. Moreover, educators get fired or suspended due to the allegations or being trialled for assaulting learners, however, learners are given a free pass when they fight with educators, like in recently published cases. One would argue that the persisting use of corporal punishment occurs as a result of the proposed disciplinary measures being ineffective, should they be effective and beneficial, educators would not be resorting to corporal punishment.

Another implication that comes with the use of corporal punishment is the mental, physical and social harm that learners experience. Literature from different sources highlights that learners tend to develop violent behaviours, low self-esteem due to name calling and shouting from educators, they bunk classes and eventually drop-out. That is more reason for abolishing corporal punishment in rural schools, to protect the well-being and right of the learners. Learners' and educators' fights that rose due to learners and educators exchanging words or fists were ignited by anger, frustrations and demand for adherence to the instructions given to the learners.

5.2.2. Findings based on the empirical study

According to the data collected during the semi-structured interviews, most of educators consider the abolishment of corporal punishment as detrimental as beneficial when looking at the current affairs in both rural and urban schools, wherein educators lose their honour and integrity. According to literature reviewed in chapter 2, Gibson (2017), educators experience negative outcomes, such as losing their jobs and honour around the community. Educators count on the use of corporal punishment for better learner discipline and classroom management as it give them

authority over learners, even though they are highly likely to lose their jobs and social status.

Learners tend to worsen in being mischievous and rebellious, and there is a higher rate of failure compared to a few years back, and most male learners drop out and end up in the streets. The judgment from the responses given by the educators, assumes that learners respect or fear older educators and take advantage of the younger educators, especially female educators, reason may be that they are familiar with the learners, or their age difference is less than 5 years. Among the educators four (4) young female educators that were interviewed, indicated that they do not use corporal punishment as they fear retaliation from the learners, and they do not wish to lose their jobs. According to literature collected in chapter 2, Ordway (2023) show that even in the mist of banning of corporal punishment, its usage somehow grants educators with consistency of control and authority over learners, hence, in most cases, learners obey educators that tend to use corporal punishment as they fear them. Learners tend to fear educators that usually use corporal punishment and that are older, and younger educators fear to use corporal punishment because of the age differences between them and learners.

Educators experience different challenges for maintaining discipline and managing their classrooms. According to other educators, those challenges take away their interest, ambition and energy for their work as they always expect issues with learners when they go to class. Among the number of challenges, the common one is disruptive and unruly learners during the lessons, which would require the educator to impose discipline. Educators find it hard to control and manage such learners that always disrupt lessons through verbal warning or verbal intimidation, because learners are aware of the banning of corporal punishment which had a potential to make that learner controllable. According to literature studied in chapter 2, Baker, Meeks and Chang (2009) highlight that educators resort to corporal punishment as it is regarded as an instant method of solving a problem than using verbal rebuking or positive reinforcement. When a learner is not attended to when being unruly by all educators to address their bad behaviour, they tend to have an impression that they can do as they please.

The development of new disciplinary measures that are in accordance with the human rights regulations resulted in the abolishment of corporal punishment. However, in a long run, those measures are flawed, they are currently ineffective in maintaining discipline and classroom management. One of the reasons may be argued to be the change in learners' attitudes and mentalities about academic excellence and education being the top crafter of better futures. With reference from Boudreau (2019) as indicated in chapter 2, there have been introductions and proposals of non-pain inflicting disciplinary measures to replace and eradicate the use of corporal punishment in schools. Therefore, there is a need for new effective and applicable disciplinary measures and immediate intervention strategies that educators can use in cases of dire need, so that teaching and learning cannot be disrupted, and educators can retain their honour as important people in the society and learners can behave in a proper manner.

The School Management Team (SMT) overlooks the designing, drafting and implementation of the learner code of conduct. However, the SMT members realised that there is a need to include and involve educators in the whole process of developing and implementing learner code of conduct. In this study, the SMT members are older educators, which learners fear or respect and they do not get the same challenges as the younger CS1 educators, hence they need to involve every educator so that the challenges they have can be addressed and immediate intervention strategies can be collectively agreed on. According to Chauke, Malatji & Mphahlele (2021), as reviewed in chapter 2, abolishing corporal punishment through code of conduct opens for the use of positive reinforcement and constructive disciplinary measures to foster cooperation and respect. By so doing, every educator will be able to use their preferred applicable methods of discipline which by law and merit do not involve inflicting pain, name calling, frustrations towards learners or intimidations. Strategies such as making learners shift from their desk to the front, redirecting the focus of the learners from listening to doing, or use eye contact to signal the learners to behave without disrupting the lesson could be implemented.

Schools also need to establish relationships with other stakeholders such as the South African Police services (SAPS), life coaches and Correctional Services to motivate, persuade and convince learners to always behave at their best so that they

can get educated and gain skills and knowledge that they need to use in their different life career journeys. Such stakeholders can use proximal testimonies and experiences that can potentially impact learners so that they can change their mentalities and attitudes about academic excellence, good behaviour and respect of educators. With the reference from Zondo and Mncube (2024), learners can also be encouraged to always be at their best behaviour and can be made aware of the outcomes of their negative actions (Zondo & Mncube, 2024). For learners to be at their best behaviour, there is a need for multiple parties to enforce a need for a conducive learning environment, positive thinking and unleashing one's potential for academic and social excellence.

5.3. Justification of themes

Themes are patterns or overarching ideas that emerge from the data and are very critical when interpreting and presenting findings. The study themes were derived from the interview questions and from the research questions for document analysis. The researcher read the data from the participants and documents thoroughly to gain a deeper understanding, grouped codes or responses into categories and themes were developed. Below is a tabulated brief description of how themes were developed.

INTERVIEW		
Interview Question	Category(s)	Theme
What is your perception regarding the abolishment of corporal punishment?	Some educators deem it as a good initiative and others deem it differently	Perceptions on the abolishment of corporal punishment
What are the challenges that you face regarding discipline and classroom management?	Unruly learner, classroom disruptions and lack of attention in class	Challenges of discipline and classroom management
Is the abolishment of	The abolishment is	Significance of

corporal punishment beneficial for learner discipline and classroom management? Provide the reasons for your response.	regarded as beneficial and to others it is not beneficial	abolishment of corporal punishment
Are the currently proposed disciplinary measures effective for learner discipline and classroom management? Provide the reasons for your response.	Some say it is effective and some say it is not effective.	Effectiveness of the currently proposed disciplinary measures
As part of the school governance, share your opinions on the abolishment of corporal punishment?	Some regard the abolishment to have a positive impact, others argue that it has a negative impact	Opinions on the abolishment of corporal punishment
What are your suggestions on intensifying learner discipline and classroom management?	Implementation of code of conduct, inviting stakeholders and awareness campaigns	Suggestions on intensifying learner discipline and classroom management
How do you support teachers to improve learner discipline and classroom management?	Motivation, awareness and empowering	Support for educators to improve learner discipline and classroom management
How effective are the current policies on learner code of conduct?	Lack of implementation by educators and learners, some learners and educators respond positively when	Effectiveness of current policies on learner conduct

	implemented	
To what extent are teachers involved in the development process of policies of conduct?	Educators are not involved in the development and the implementation of learner code of conduct	Educator involvement in the development process of policies of learner conduct

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS	
Research question	Theme
What is the justification for the persisting use of corporal punishment for learner discipline and classroom management in rural secondary schools?	Cultural and most effective way of discipline
What are challenges of using corporal punishment in rural secondary schools?	Emotional distress and poor performance
What are the educators' perceptions on abolishment of corporal punishment in rural secondary schools?	Immediate and retains authority

5.4. Limitations of the study

5.4.1. Sample size

This study was only conducted in one secondary school with a small sample of 12 educator participants, thus the finding may not be generalized, however, most of the findings can potentially be applied to similar context for other researchers in other regions or countries. The researcher regards learners' inputs and views significant for the study to have both educators and learners' voices, however, due to time

constraints and it was advised that learners may over express or deliberately implicate educators they are not in accord with.

5.4.2. Research site and focus

A specific reference was given to one school in one Circuit, under one Province (Limpopo, South Africa) which is in a local area and the site was familiar to the researcher.

5.5. Recommendations

In an attempt to find the justification for the persisting use of corporal punishment for learner discipline and classroom management, to make educators and other stakeholders aware that the abolishment of corporal punishment is real and is considered a criminal offense, and to highlight that the proposed disciplinary measures are not effective as expected, the following recommendations are made:

5.5.1. Since the main cause for the persistent use of corporal punishment for learner discipline and classroom management is the ineffectiveness of the currently proposed disciplinary measures, it is imperative that the SMT and the policy makers to seek new measure which can be used to handle any case immediately and effectively, which may include the following:

- The establishment of relations with external stakeholders such as life coaches and police services.
- Engagement with guardians of the learners about their behaviour.
- Regularly advise learners to adhere to the code of conduct of the school.

5.5.2. Most educators are not aware of the implications that are associated with the cases of assaulting learners or having a fight with the learners, thus is it advised that educators should familiarise themselves with the policies on discipline of learners the country and how they can protect themselves from learners who are willing to fight or disrupt lessons. Such ways may include:

- Creating a positive teaching and learning atmosphere and establish a parent to learner relationship.

- Being consistent in advising and rebuking learners from doing wrong and to seek support and advises from other educators.

5.5.3. The SMT members should support educators in maintaining discipline and school management so that educators may not grow weary of ambitiously doing their work. Suggested ways may incorporate the following:

- Advising educators on how to better handle unruly learners through professional programmes and development.
- SMT members should collectively attend to ill behaving learners immediately when educators report them and must remain consistent to every educator and learner.
- Emotional support is necessary for educators as well as it is seen necessary for learners. Educators may lose hope and interest in their work due to fear of being stabbed or seeing poor performance in learners' studies and that needs professional services.
- The SMT can also implement restorative measures, wherein, they focus on restoring the educator to learner relationship between the learner and the educator to avoid continuous and unnecessary quarrels and future misbehaviour.

5.5.4. Another loophole is when educators are not involved in the designing, drafting and implementation of learner code of conduct. Thus, the STM and the educators should:

- Collaborate during the process of producing the learner code of conduct, wherein every educator substantiate why they need their rule to be included in the learner code of conduct.

- Be familiar with the learner code of conduct so that they can be able to frequently emphasise, advise and remind learners about the rules and regulations that they need to abide by.

5.5.5. Overcrowding is one the causes of hindering proper classroom management and creating a conducive teaching and learning environment. Hence it is imperative that educators utilise the following strategies such as:

- Having flexible sitting arrangements in a way that learners can be able to collaborate in informal activities and the educator moves around the classroom, even at the back.
- Encouraging learner driven lessons, wherein learners do much of writing and responding than listening to the educators. Moreover, it allows learners to work in groups and engage in peer tutoring.
- Promoting positive reinforcement in every lesson. Award learners for good behaviour, positive and confident responses to questions, and encourage learners to maintain good behaviour.

5.5.6. Above all, educators face challenges with learner discipline and classroom management, hence they resort to corporal punishment or to walk away from lessons in classrooms that are not manageable. For educators to have conducive and productive classrooms for effective teaching and learning without the use of violence and having disruptions, educators need to:

- Establish clear and comprehensive expectations during lessons so that they can agree on common ground.
- Create close and professional relations with unruly learners to find out why they act in the way they do, eventually those particular learners could change.

- Collectively assist one another in dealing with unruly and disruptive learners, where the whole staff have a session with those particular learners to reprimand them and encourage them to change their unacceptable habits.
- Involve parents in all the cases that the learners may have to reinforce the rules that learners need to abide by. Parents are able to do their part of emphasizing the importance of respecting educators.

The study also recommend that the education law makers and enforcement personnel should familiarize themselves with the indigenous ways of discipline which were used in South Africa prior to colonisation. Indigenous ways of discipline may include proverbs and storytelling, initiation rites, gentle interrogation by elders, mentorship by peers, public shaming and spiritual guidance. Contrarily, one would argue that corporal punishment was also a form of discipline in many countries, however, this study is conducted to address the use of such ways of discipline since it is inhumane, and it is unlawful across the world.

5.6. Conclusion

This study investigated the justification for the persisting use of corporal punishment for learner discipline and classroom management, and through qualitative research, the researcher was able to achieve the main aims and objectives in various chapters. Literature provided insight from across various international countries, which complemented the findings of the semi-structured interviews that were used to collect data.

Interviewed participants expressed their views, and challenges that make them to resort to corporal punishment or not at all. Such responses serve as evidence that corporal punishment still persists under various reasons, and unfortunately, the proposed disciplinary measures are ineffective. There is a great need for finding and exercising possible, reasonable and effective measures so that teaching and learning can take place. The analysed documents indicate that corporal punishment has been an issue from the proposal of its abolishment.

Proposing the establishment of relations between schools and external stakeholders should be a collective initiative and action which involve management of SMT and

senior level personnel such as the Circuit Managers and District Directors. Such stakeholders have a greater influence, and the impact of their contributions may be long term solutions.

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APPENDICE

APPENDIX A: TEACHER INFORMED CONSENT FORM



UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

To whom it may concern:

I.....

(full names of participants) give consent to be interviewed by Matlala Paul Thabiso for a research study titled: **The Persisting Use of Corporal Punishment for Learner Discipline and Classroom Management: A Case Study of a Rural School Context of Bahlaloga Circuit, Capricorn North District, Limpopo Province, South Africa.** I acknowledge that the information I will provide will be authentic and will not be biased. Should I feel threatened or uncomfortable, I will withdraw from the study with immediate effect and no longer take part in it. The researcher has given me all the protocols and pros and cons; therefore, I am fully aware of the things I am liable for.

Participant (Teacher)

DATE

APPENDIX B: DISTRICT DIRECTOR PERMISSION REQUEST LETTER

257 Ga-Matamanyane

Koloti

0702

08 November 2024

Capricorn North District Director

Department of Education

105 Blaauwberg St

Polokwane Ext 16

0700

Dear District Director

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA IN BAHLALOGA CIRCUIT

I (Matlala Paul Thabiso) am an Educational Studies Masters degree student at the University of Limpopo. I am writing this letter to request permission to collect data for a study titled: **“The Persisting Use of Corporal Punishment for Learner Discipline and Classroom Management: A Case Study of a Rural School Context of Bahlaloga Circuit, Capricorn North District, Limpopo Province, South Africa.”**

The sampled school in Capricorn North, Bahlaloga Circuit is Mamolemane secondary school. The researcher will conduct interviews with 10 teachers and 2 SMT members, particularly 1 Departmental Head and 1 Principal.

I hope my request will be taken into review and consideration.

Yours Sincerely.

Matlala Paul Thabiso

APPENDIX C: SCHOOL PRINCIPAL PERMISSION REQUEST LETTER

Stand No. 257

Moletjie Ga-Matamanyane

0709

12 November 2024

Mamolemane secondary school principal

Stand 502

Ga-Matamanyane

0821

Dear Principal

REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A STUDY

I (MATLALA PAUL THABISO) am requesting permission to interview teachers, and SMT members from this school. The interview are the tools that will be used to collect data for a study titled: **“The Persisting Use of Corporal Punishment for Learner Discipline and Classroom Management: A Case Study of a Rural School Context of Bahlaloga Circuit, Capricorn North District, Limpopo Province, South Africa.”** From the school, 10 teachers and 2 SMT (1 Departmental head and 1 principal) members will be asked to participate.

I hope my request will be taken into review and consideration.

Yours Sincerely

Matlala PT.

APPENDIX D: EDUCATOR INTERVIEW GUIDE



UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

This interview schedule is designed to interrogate individuals exposed to corporal punishment, other means of discipline and classroom management.

Study title: The Persisting Use of Corporal Punishment for Learner Discipline and Classroom Management: A Case Study of a Rural School Context of Bahlaloga Circuit, Capricorn North District, Limpopo Province, South Africa.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- What is your perception regarding the abolishment of corporal punishment?
- What are the challenges that you face regarding discipline and classroom management?
- Is the abolishment of corporal punishment beneficial for learner discipline and classroom management? Provide the reasons for your response.
- Are the currently proposed disciplinary measures effective for learner discipline and classroom management? Provide the reasons for your response.

APPENDIX E: SMT INTERVIEW SCHEDULE. (1 DH & 1 Principal)



UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

This interview schedule is designed to interrogate individuals exposed to corporal punishment, other means of discipline and classroom management.

Study title: The Persisting Use of Corporal Punishment for Learner Discipline and Classroom Management: A Case Study of a Rural School Context of Bahlaloga Circuit, Capricorn North District, Limpopo Province, South Africa.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- As part of the school governance, share your opinions on the abolishment of corporal punishment?
- What are your suggestions on intensifying learner discipline and classroom management?
- How do you support teachers to improve learner discipline and classroom management?
- How effective are the current policies on learner code of conduct?
- To what extent are teachers involved in the development process of policies of conduct?

APPENDIX F: DISTRICT DIRECTOR APPROVAL LETTER



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

CAPRICORN NORTH DISTRICT

Ref: 2/2/2 Enq: Mphaphuli AJ Tel No.: 015 285 7410/19 Date: 11 November 2024 Email: MphaphuliAJ@edu.limpopo.gov.za

To : Mr Matlala PT
257 Ga-Matamanyane
Koloti
0702

CC: University of Limpopo
Department of Language Education

SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT MAMOLEMANE SECONDARY SCHOOL AT BAHLAGA CIRCUIT IN CAPRICORN NORTH DISTRICT.

Title: 'The Persisting use of Corporal Punishment for Learner Discipline and Classroom Management'.

1. The above matter refers.
2. The Department wishes to inform you that your request to conduct research has been approved.
3. The following conditions should be considered:
 - 3.1 The research should not have any financial implication for Limpopo Department of Education.
 - 3.2 Arrangements should be made with both the Circuit Offices and Schools concerned.
 - 3.3 The conduct of research should not in any way disrupt the academic programs in schools.

105 CNR Blaawberg & Yster Street, Ladanna
Capricorn North District, Private Bag X 9711, POLOKWANE, 0700, Tel: 015 285 7300/7410

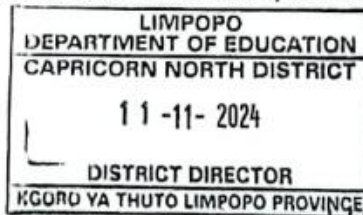
The heartland of Southern Africa-development is about people

**PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT MAMOLEMANE SECONDARY SCHOOL
AT BAHLAGA CIRCUIT IN CAPRICORN NORTH DISTRICT.**

- 3.4 The research should not be conducted during the time of examinations especially the fourth term.
- 3.5 During the study, research ethics should be practiced, in particular the principle of voluntary participation (the people involved should be respected).
- 3.6 Upon completion of research study, the researcher shall share the final product of the research with the Department.
4. Furthermore, you are expected to produce this letter at Circuit and Schools where you intend to conduct your research as evidence that you are permitted to conduct the research.
5. The Department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wish you success in your research.

Best wishes


MR MOTHEMANE KD
DISTRICT DIRECTOR



DATE

11/11/2024

APPENDIX G: MAMOLEMANE SECONDARY SCHOOL APPROVAL LETTER

MAMOLEMANE SECONDARY SCHOOL	
 POSTAL ADDRESS P O Box 2777 Koloti 0709	 E-MAIL ADDRESS mamolemane@yahoo.com District: Capricorn District Bahlaloga Circuit
 Enquiries: PRINCIPAL Contact- no: 079 924 0009	EMIS-NO: 0922220613

RE: permission to collect researcher data through interviews at Mamolemane Secondary School

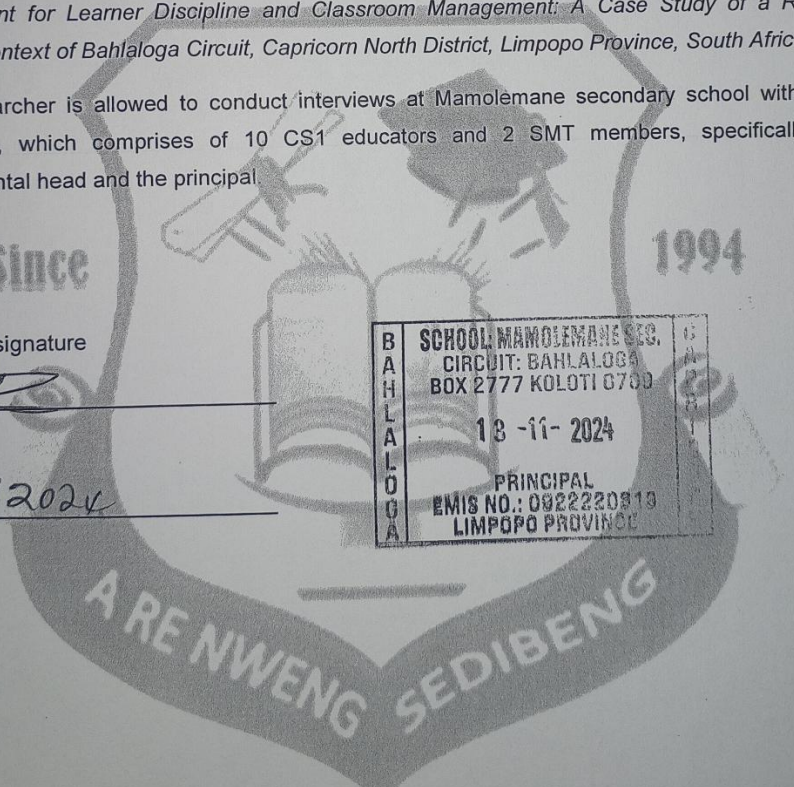
To whom it may concern:

This is to confirm that the researcher Matlala Paul Thabiso (201818869) from the University of Limpopo is permitted to collect data for the study titled: *The Persisting Use of Corporal Punishment for Learner Discipline and Classroom Management: A Case Study of a Rural School Context of Bahlaloga Circuit, Capricorn North District, Limpopo Province, South Africa.*

The researcher is allowed to conduct interviews at Mamolemane secondary school with 12 educators, which comprises of 10 CS1 educators and 2 SMT members, specifically 1 departmental head and the principal.

Principal signature _____

Date 13/11/2024



B A H L A L O G A	SCHOOL: MAMOLEMANE SEC. CIRCUIT: BAHALALOGA BOX 2777 KOLOTI 0709 13-11-2024 PRINCIPAL EMIS NO.: 0922220613 LIMPOPO PROVINCE	G A N G A
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