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EXTENT OF PRINCIPALS' ENFORCEMENT OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT LAWS IN MISSION-OWNED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the extent of principals' enforcement of corporal punishment laws in mission-owned secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. One research question was stated while one null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The researchers adopted the descriptive survey research design for the study. The study was conducted in Anambra State with particular interest in the mission-owned secondary schools within the six education zones in the State. The population for the study was 567 respondents consisting of 27 principals of Mission owned secondary schools in Anambra State, and 540 teachers from the same 27 Mission secondary schools in Anambra State obtained from the six education zones in the State. The population of the study is not only too large, it is also manageable and therefore was studied. According to Ifeakor (2018), depending on the nature of the study, one can study an entire population. The instrument for data collection is a self-structured four point scale questionnaire which has two sections. Section A of the questionnaire deals with the respondents Bio-Data while section B is made up of items statements specifically designed to provide answers to the research question and for testing the null hypothesis. To validate the instrument it was presented to three experts: two from education management of Nnamdi Azikiwe Universty Awka and one from measurement and evaluation from Chukwuemeka Odiemegwu Ojukwu University Igbariam. The Cronbach alpha (α) method was used to determine the internal consistency of items in the sections of the instrument. The copies of the instrument of data collection were administered to the respondents in the six education zone in Anambra State. Three of the education zones were covered by the researchers while the other three zones were covered with the help of three research assistants who were NYSC members serving in the areas and given orientation for the purpose. The research question was answered using mean score ratings and standard deviation. In the same vein, t-test was used the hypothesis at o.5 level of significance. Findings indicated that there is a high extent of principals' implementation of education laws on enforcing corporal punishment in mission - owned secondary schools in Anambra State. Accordingly, it was among others recommended that church leaders and the entire society propagate disciplined life style to encourage the young ones particularly the students to live disciplined life style.

Keywords: Principal; Enforcement; Corporal Punishment; Education Laws; Mission-Owned; Secondary Schools.

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Introduction

Schools need peaceful environment to operate successfully. For a peaceful environment to be attained however, calls for rules and regulations aimed at bringing about disciplined conduct among the participants in the given environment. Education laws anticipate a teaching and learning environment where order and discipline reign supreme particularly among the students' population of every school. Thus, the need for disciplinary control of students in any school environment cannot be overemphasized. As observed by Kayode (2010), disciplinary control is an element of managerial task necessary for effective management of individuals in the school system it makes them well adjusted, happy and tenured towards achievement of schools goals. Students' discipline being part of the socialization is given priority since the priceless and most essential assets in education. Indiscipline of students (collective misbehaviour) therefore, attracts punishment in an attempt to deal with repeated misbehaviour capable of threatening the success of teaching-learning process.

Violation of the rules and regulations guiding behavior of students in schools come with certain price. Student's act of indiscipline and misconduct are usually melted with varying degrees of punishment as sanctions. From time to time corporal punishment is applied as a tool of deterrence towards students' bad behaviour. Rigby (2011) agreed that, most often, corporal punishment is inflicted on students but with caution since such chastisement may be sadistic, cruel and even excessive.

Ekanem and Edet ((2013) are of the view that the commonest tool of disciplinary control in Nigeria is corporal punishment. It involves international intentional application of physical force with caution as a means of changing unwanted behavior. This means, that it needs to be reasonably administered according to regulations and laws of the school management board, the proportion of the offence and ability of the child (age, size, health and not excessive). They affirmed that the right and authority of a school administrator and teacher to inflict punishment on students was enhanced by section 34 sub-section (1) of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Corporal punishment is for correctional purpose and not to injure or torture. In Nigeria corporal punishment is still in use for enforcing established rules and regulations in secondary schools. Once these rules and regulations are made and the students availed of them, the onus is on students to abide by and be guided by such rules, floating of which is tantamount to indiscipline and attracts sanctions of varying degrees (Uzoechina, Oguegbu, Akachukwu and Nwasor, 2015). The revised education laws of Anambra state of Nigeria, 1991 permits the use of corporal punishment in sections 46 and 48; sub-sections 9(1) and (2).

Education laws pervade all facet of school administration including staff discipline, students' discipline and punishment. Although some people may wish to argue that punishment could be used

to instill discipline in students, and some tend to consider discipline and punishment as being synonymous, there is a world of difference between punishment and discipline. Discipline is different from punishment and could impact on the learner in distinct ways. Disciplined behavior means ways of behaving that show respect and responsibility. Thus, the goal of discipline is for the learner to develop self-discipline through their own efforts rather than through the efforts of another by means of monitoring, threats, fear and force. Discipline comes majorly from within while punishment is external and does not promote or allow self-discipline to be achieved. Punishment generally only stops the unwanted behavior for the moment but does not have positive long term outcomes.

Okafor (2018) described punishment as either involving or making the unpleasant happen or removing some reward or privilege. He also agreed that the effect of punishment is to suppress the respect of that behavior on which punishment is administered. Punishment can take the form of verbal chastisement or physical chastisement. But care must be taken to ensure that punishment is not inflicted with malice, revenge and cruelty as this will be going against education laws. In Nigerian law, the human right principles which also apply to students as citizen of the country are described in sections 30-42 of the 1999 constitution. Rules and regulations for legal enforcement must be tailored along these sections of the constitution. For infringement of the rights of the individuals, unless such practices are proved reasonable and justifiable in the eyes of the law, the individual may disagree and challenge disciplinary measure.

In schools, rules and regulations are made to cover many grounds affecting the students and violation of these rules needs to be questioned and sanctioned to maintain order and safety of students in schools. Education laws therefore need to be enforced and punishment needs to be administered against erring students from time to time. Thus, the administration of punishment cannot be ruled out in the control and discipline of students. The right and authority of teachers to punish students who breach school rules and regulations is enhanced by section 34, sub-section (1) of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999) which specifies peoples' right to personal liberty and instances in which a person who has not attained the age of eighteen may be deprived of his right to personal liberty especially, for educative and welfare purposes.

Nevertheless, punishment should be aimed at correcting students' bad behaviours rather than punitive (inflicting mere injury or pain). It must be reasonable and properly administered to the erring student on account of the offence committed. Punishment should be moderate and consummate with offence committed. It should not be aimed at dehumanizing, intimidating or humiliating. Although, it has been emphasized that the school authorities have the right to punish students for breach of school regulations, the administration of punishment that entails physical chastisement needs to be done with caution. Corporal punishment must not be inflicted in such a way or with such force as may be considered sadistic, cruel, excessive or amounting to child abuse as well as

deliberate denial of fundamental human rights. Punishment should not be as a result of racial, political, cultural or religious discriminations.

In this study, punishment refers to sanction(s) meted to erring students for breaking laws or going against the established rules and regulations governing teaching and learning in schools, while corporal punishment refers to the deliberate infliction of pain in the student to deter him/her from further engagement in unacceptable behaviors that offend the rules and regulations of the school. Punishment is designed to weaken behaviors by pairing an unpleasant stimulus to a behavior. Receiving a detention for bad behavior is a good example of a punishment. It has been found that efficient teachers practice rewards more than the punitive manners in controlling students' behaviour in the classroom stations. Therefore, for every episode of punishment there is a need for approximately, four encounters of rewarding (Ofunwa, 2021). They explained that punishment involves wide variety of practice. It is a complex process and unpredictable phenomenon. It is required to be skillfully and carefully employed. Although, the faulty use of punishment may produce side effects, it should be a choice for dealing with the problem creating students who often involve with behaviors that are desirable. In fact, it is effective when practiced as a natural consequence of students' misbehavior, and while combined with other techniques, e.g. positive rewards. On the positive side, they mentioned that the use of punishment enables the teacher to suppress unacceptable behavior, as such, giving an opportunity to establish more suitable behavior through informative to the students to return to an understanding that they have done wrong. It has also the advantage of stopping behavior immediately and as every teacher knows, that there are occasions when they have to stop some of the behaviors of the students abruptly. This is for one important reason that punishment provides learning to other classmates not to imitate the disruptive behaviour. Several studies have been conducted on corporal punishment law enforcement.

Nakpodia (2012) for instance examined the principals' attitude towards corporal punishment in Delta State secondary schools. The question addressed in the study was whether corporal punishment has been effective in disciplinary control of secondary school students. The study adopted a qualitative design. It discussed an overview of corporal punishment in schools, justification and criticism of corporal punishment, guidelines imposing corporal punishment in schools; effects of corporal punishment on students, and reason why school corporal punishment should be banned. It is therefore recommended that government should introduce and pass legislations prohibiting the use of corporal punishment in public schools, and that teachers' and school administrators should be provided with tools and resources necessary to develop safe and effective methods for encouraging positive student's behavior. It also recommended that the use of corporal punishment be discouraged in the school system and there is need for principals to employ better disciplinary techniques that would yield better results.

This study by Nakpodia is relevant to the present study in that it focused on corporal punishment in secondary schools in Delta State, Nigeria. Corporal punishment is of the major variables under consideration in the present study. However, the study was conducted in Delta State and not in Anambra State which tends to limit its recommendations. It also adopted a qualitative design rather than quantitative design, and this is bound to limit its findings. It does not examine the extent of implementation of education laws guiding administration of corporal punishment in secondary schools, but rather advocated a complete ban on the use of corporal punishment in secondary schools in Delta State, Nigeria. All these created some gaps which will be addressed in the present study.

Ekanem and Edet (2013) conducted a study titled: Effects of corporal punishment on disciplinary control of secondary school students in Calabar metropolis of Nigeria. The purpose of the study was to determine the effects of the use of corporal punishment on the disciplinary control of secondary education students in Calabar Metropolis to their good performance in academics. Survey design was adopted for the study. The study argued that administration of corporal punishment in secondary schools tends to be cruel, inhuman and could result in child abuse. The study was designed to provide baseline information for micro policy management on education in order to enhance disciplined behavior of students at secondary education level. Two research questions and one hypothesis guided the study while related literatures were reviewed. A sample size of 250 was drawn from a population of 1,666 secondary school teachers using a stratified random sampling technique. A well validated 18 item questionnaire was designed using the likerts' scale to collect information from respondents. Data collected were statistically analyzed using percentage, mean and independent t-test statistics. Result obtained revealed that corporal punishment was most frequently used among varieties of schools punishment but it was not effective disciplinary control punishment on disciplinary recommendations were made.

The study is relevant to the present study in that if focused on the effects of corporal punishment on disciplinary control of secondary school students which is a variable studied in the current study. However, the previous study was not conducted in Anambra State but in Calabar metropolis of Nigeria. The previous study was carried out in public and not in mission owned secondary schools. The study also failed to consider the extent of implementation of extant education laws in the administration of corporal punishment on disciplinary control of students in secondary schools. These gaps are being addressed by the current study.

In another related study, Ukpai and Mkpandiok (2016) conducted a study with the title: Knowledge of Education Laws and Human Rights Violations among Secondary Schools Personnel in Nigeria. The study investigated the knowledge of education law and human rights violation among secondary school personnel in Nigeria. The objective of the study was to examine the relationship between knowledge of education law and human rights violations among school personnel in Nigeria. Two research questions

guided the study and one null hypothesis was tested. Survey design was adopted for the study. Questionnaire was used to collect data for analysis. A sample of 92 respondents were selected using stratified random technique from a population of 1458 secondary school personnel, which comprised of principals, vice principals, compound masters and labour masters.

Findings showed that secondary school personnel do not possess knowledge of the basic principles of law related to education. Again, secondary school personnel violate students' rights in Nigerian schools. The study concluded that the extent of the violations of the human rights of the students' was contingent upon the ignorance of secondary school personnel of the basic principles of laws related to education.

The study by Ukpai and Mkpandiok has relevance to the current study by focusing on education law and secondary school students' human rights violation by school personnel as a result of lack of knowledge of the basic principles of education laws. However, the study did not specifically focused on the extent of knowledge and implantation of education laws as with regard to corporal punishment, feeding of students', keeping of students' school records and classroom accommodation. This gap is to be addressed by the current study.

In a related study titled, "Violation of human rights of secondary school students and its impacts" Manzoor (2017) investigated the violation of human rights in schools. The study was conducted in India. The purpose of the study is to find out the multi-dimensional impacts of violation of human rights in schools on students like academic performance and personality development at secondary level. The question addressed in the research was whether there is a relationship between human rights violation and students' dropout level? The study adopted a survey research design. Data for analysis was collected from 180 respondents of high school students' using stratified random sampling technique through proportional allocation method using interview schedule in order to collect the information about human rights violation in schools. The responses were collected and evaluated to assess the impact of human rights violation on school going students at secondary level. Data for the study was analyzed using chi-square. The findings of the study revealed that violation of human rights in schools has multidimensional impact upon student's academic performance and personality development.

The study by Manzoor has relevance to the current study in that it focused on human rights violation of secondary school students which usually occur through application of corporal punishment to these students. However, the study did not focus specifically on the extent of application of education laws in handling the issues of corporal punishment. This identified gap is to be addressed in the current study.

Although the studies reviewed were carried out on punishment, the review however revealed gaps in knowledge. It is important to note that no study known to the researchers examined the extent of implementation of education laws on corporal punishment in mission owned secondary schools in Anambra State. The

need to fill this obvious gap in knowledge was the motivation for this study.

Research Method

The researchers adopted the descriptive survey research design for the study. The study was conducted in Anambra State with particular interest in the mission-owned secondary schools within the six education zones in the State. The population for the study was 567 respondents consisting of 27 principals of Mission owned secondary schools in Anambra State, and 540 teachers from the same 27 Mission secondary schools in Anambra State obtained from the six education zones in the State. The population of the study is not only too large, it is also manageable and therefore was studied. According to Ifeakor (2018), depending on the nature of the study, one can study an entire population. The instrument for data collection is a self-structured four point scale questionnaire which has two sections. Section A of the questionnaire deals with the respondents Bio-Data while section B is made up of items statements specifically designed to provide answers to the research question and for testing the null hypothesis. To validate the instrument it was presented to three experts: two from education management of Nnamdi Azikiwe Universty Awka and one from measurement and evaluation from Chukwuemeka Odiemegwu Ojukwu University Igbariam. The Cronbach alpha (α) method was used to determine the internal consistency of items in the sections of the instrument. The copies of the instrument of data collection were administered to the respondents in the six education zone in Anambra State. Three of the education zones were covered by the researchers while the other three zones were covered with the help of three research assistants who were NYSC members serving in the areas and given orientation for the purpose. The research question was answered using mean score ratings and standard deviation. In the same vein, t-test was used the hypothesis at o.5 level of significance.

Presentation of Results

Research Question One: To what extent has the education laws on enforcing corporal punishment in mission - owned secondary school in Anambra state, Nigeria, been implemented by Principals?

Table 1: Extent of implementation of education laws on enforcing corporal punishment in mission-owned secondary school in Anambra State

S/N	Items	$\bar{x}$	SD	Decision
1	Corporal punishment is usually implemented when serious offence is committed by students	3.30	0.70	HE
2	All punishments are usually reasonable as well as take into account the ages of the offenders as well as the nature of the offence	3.53	0.71	HE
3	Implementation of corporal punishment in mission secondary schools usually matches the sex of the offender to that of the one administering the punishment	3.47	0.70	HE
4	Corporal punishment is usually administered only by principal or a teacher authorized by the principal	3.22	0.75	HE
5	Usually no female students receives corporal punishment from a male teacher and vice versa	3.51	0.72	HE
6	A corporal punishment book is usually entered by the senior teacher present whenever corporal punishment is meted against a student who committed an offence against the rule and regulation of a school	3.13	0.73	HE
7	Corporal punishment is usually implemented in such a manner that does not create fear among student in the school	3.02	0.84	HE
8	Care is taken to ensure that the enforcement of corporal punishment does not lead to violation of human rights of the students	3.19	0.75	HE
Grand mean		**3.30**		**HE**

Table 1 above shows that teachers and principals agree that education laws on enforcing corporal punishment is implemented to a high extent by principals' in mission - owned secondary school in Anambra state.

Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent of implementation of education laws on enforcing corporal punishment in mission -owned secondary schools in Anambra state.

Table 2: t-test of significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent of implementation of education laws on enforcing corporal punishment in mission - owned secondary schools

Status	N	Mean	SD	Df	t	P-value	Decision
Principals	27	3.45	0.48				Accept
Teachers	540	3.25	0.64	565	1.640	0.101	the null hyp

Table 2 shows that there is no significant difference was observed in the mean ratings of the principals and teachers, t (565) = 1.640, p > 0.05. The null hypothesis was therefore accepted meaning that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent of implementation of education laws on enforcing corporal punishment in mission owned secondary schools in Anambra state.

Summary of the Findings

The findings that emerged from this study include:

1. There is a high extent of principals' implementation of education laws on enforcing corporal punishment in mission - owned secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent of implementation of education laws on enforcing corporal punishment in mission owned secondary schools in Anambra state.

Discussion of Findings

The result of the test of hypothesis shows that there is no significant difference observed in the mean ratings of the principals and teachers, t (565) = 1.640, p > 0.05. The null hypothesis is therefore accepted meaning that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and teachers on the extent of implementation of education laws on enforcing corporal punishment in mission owned secondary schools in Anambra state.

This implies that the respondents of the study were in agreement that the education laws on enforcing corporal punishment in mission-owned secondary schools in Anambra State, are being implemented in accordance with the provisions of the 1991 Anambra State Education Laws. This is in line with the position of Kayode (2010) which posited that disciplinary control is an element of managerial task necessary for effective management of individuals in the school system which makes them well adjusted, happy and tenured towards achievement of schools goals. Students' discipline being part of the socialization is given priority since the priceless and most essential assets in education. Rigby (2011) maintained that, most often, corporal punishment is inflicted on students but with caution since such chastisement may be sadistic, cruel and even excessive.

Kanem and Edet ((2013) also were of the view that the commonest tool of disciplinary control in Nigeria is corporal punishment. It involves intentional application of physical force with caution as a means of changing unwanted behavior. However, corporal punishment needs to be reasonably administered according to regulations and laws of the school management board, the proportion of the offence and ability of the child (age, size, health and not excessive). They affirmed that the right and authority of a school administrator and teacher to inflict punishment on students for better behaviour is enhanced by section 34 sub-sections (1) of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Also, the responses of the respondents of the study to the questionnaire items on extent of implementation of education laws in enforcing corporal punishment in mission -owned secondary schools in Anambra State indicated reasonable compliance with the provisions of the extant laws (The Revised Education Laws of Anambra State of Nigeria, 1991) which include that: the authorization of the use of punishment against students who committed deserved offence in schools adding that, corporal punishment can be applied and that only the Principal/Headmaster or Teachers authorized by them can apply corporal punishment on student offenders provided that the gender of the offender and the one

applying the corporal punishment does not differ. To this extent 1578 CAP 43; Section 9, (1) and (2) state as follows: All punishment shall be reasonable taking into account the age and sex of the offender and the nature of the offence; Corporal punishment shall be administered only by the Headmaster or Teacher authorized by him: Provided that no female pupil shall receive corporal punishment from a male teacher. This is a clear indication that the State education laws allows the enforcement of corporal punishment in secondary schools in Anambra State provided that due process is followed in so doing and where otherwise is the rule, an infringement could be said to have been perpetrated against the students' human rights (Anambra State Government, 1991).

Conclusion

The study was conducted to determine the extent of implementation of education laws on enforcing corporal punishment in mission - owned secondary schools in Anambra State. Based on the analyses of the data collected through the questionnaire formulated to guide the study, it was revealed that mission -owned secondary schools in the State have to a high extent been implementing the 1991 education laws of Anambra State with regards to enforcing corporal punishment as investigated in the study. This implies that mission-owned secondary schools in the State are operating in conformity with subsisting education laws of the State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, it is recommended thus:

1. Use of corporal punishment in secondary schools in Anambra State should be enforced only as a corrective measure where and when it is absolutely necessary to ensure discipline and morality among the student population in secondary schools in the State.
2. Parents should collaborate with the school authority to fully enforce corporal punishment in secondary schools.
3. Church leaders and the entire society propagate disciplined life style to encourage the young ones particularly the students to live disciplined life style.

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