Abolition of Corporal Punishment as a Form of Discipline in Cameroon's Secondary Schools: "Constraint or Enhancement" of Appropriate Behaviors

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ABSTRACT

Discipline in the educational milieu is a contemporary issue of national and international interest. Cameroon is not left out in the national picture of handling the problem of discipline in the educational sector. In a bid to implement appropriate disciplinary measures in schools, the government of Cameroon has put in place some procedures to guarantee the physical and moral integrity of students in the educational system. These, include among others, the substitution of corporal punishment with counseling in schools. However, this decision has in a long and short run been said to jeopardize the morals and lives of the teachers and students and in effect the future of Cameroon. In this paper, we seek to investigate the constraints or enhancements of the abolition of corporal punishment on the behaviors of students in secondary schools in Cameroon; the root causes of school disciplinary problems, the behavioral challenges teachers face in class, the effectiveness of disciplinary reasoning and proposals from school administrators on better disciplinary strategies to be implemented in secondary schools. The study was limited to Buea in the South West Region of Cameroon and a descriptive survey in which both qualitative and quantitative methods were used in analyzing the data. The sample included a total of 155 respondents: 20 counselors, 15 administrators, 20 discipline masters and 100 teachers. Open and closed ended questionnaires were used as tools for data collection. Findings suggested that: the abolition of corporal punishment alongside other factors such as an un-conducive school environment was responsible for highly noticeable deviant behaviors such as truancy, delinquency and recalcitrance marked with insults from students on teachers and administrators who try to discipline them. The idea of counseling is highly welcomed by the teachers and administrators but corporal punishment will better do the trick especially in the African context. The abolition of corporal punishment is therefore a constraint on students' behavior. The study strongly suggests that corporal punishment should be reinstated but should be carefully administered.

INTRODUCTION

Discipline is a worldwide phenomenon considered as a springboard to the development and exhibition of an appropriate behavior. The globalization of the world in the 21st century does not successfully homogenize respective cultures, practices and belief systems as far as instilling discipline in education is concerned. Differences in norms, beliefs and values in disciplinary measures still exist in concepts such as punishment. The need for children/learners to be disciplined which is a major ingredient for proper socialization, education and development has caused parents, teachers and other administrators in charge of child welfare in Cameroon to rely on different forms of punishment in order to enhance good manners. Pertinent amongst the numerous punishment types is corporal punishment. To an African parent "you spare the cane and spoil the child" likewise "the ears of an African child are on the buttocks when canned". Corporal punishment in Cameroon is not seen as an act of child abuse but an exhibition of love, and an endeavor to bring to self-consciousness and memory, the effects of inappropriate behavior.

Background

In the span of history, discipline has been implemented based on the different cultural values that shape parental opinion and constitute a significant part of cultural or religious belief. Corporal punishment has been condemned by both national and international bodies as an abuse to human right or the child. However, the long term psychosocial and emotional benefits remain a topic for debate by educational stakeholders such as parents, teachers, school administrators and the government. Egwunyenga (1994) sees discipline as the training that enables an individual to develop an orderly conduct and self-

control as well as direction. According to Abubakar (2000) discipline is the ability and willingness to do what one ought to do without external control. For him, discipline is therefore a product of one's volition to do whatever one desires which maybe right or wrong. This choice however, is born from an extensive work on discipline to shape the mind and build good morals in the developing being using different methods of which corporal punishment is the main strategy to most Cameroonian parents and teachers.

Gershoff (2008) defines corporal punishment as physical punishment which uses physical force intending to cause bodily pain for the purpose of correcting or punishing a child for their behavior. According to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (2001), corporal punishment is any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light. Corporal punishment is a punitive act that inflicts pain (Muhammad and Muhammad, 2007). Corporal punishment is one of the methods that have for long been used in homes, schools and even churches to curb bad behaviors and manners and ensure good discipline. For a child or adult to demonstrate proper behavior without external control, huge work must have been done to build the mind towards identifying what is correct or not.

Peterson and O'Connor (2014) say there are three types of corporal punishment: judicial corporal punishment, parental or domestic corporal punishment and school corporal punishment. These three types take place in different settings as their names suggest. Judicial corporal punishment is the type of punishment that takes place in courts ordered by the law, parental or domestic corporal punishment is the type that takes place at home exhibited by parents, older siblings and other relations. School corporal punishment is the type of punishment that takes place at school exhibited by teachers, school prefects and school administrators. Corporal punishment in Cameroonian schools and homes can take the following forms: slapping, hitting, kneeling without carrying a load, kneeling with a load such as a stone on the head, pick a pin, flogging, rebuke, carrying the hands on the head, standing for a duration of time, extensive manual work (cultivation of the school garden while classes are going on, fetching of water from a distant area, sweeping the class for a duration of time) suspension from classes with extensive manual labour which usually lasts between 2 to 8 days, starvation from a meal and reduction of allowances just to name some of these methods.

The United Nations and the European Union have advocated the child's rights to a non-violent upbringing and encouraged member states to enact legislations banning all forms of corporal punishment (No GC et al, 2013). The European Commission for Human Rights views corporal punishment "as a total lack of respect for the human being, it therefore cannot depend on the age of the human being…. The sum total of adverse effects, whether actual or potential, produced by corporal punishment on the mental and moral development of the child is enough to describe it as degrading…." Physical punishment only becomes degrading when it passes a certain degree of severity. Some organizations like the UNICEF and UNESCO have opposed the use of corporal punishment in schools on bases of ethical and moral arguments against this use of force on children, physical and emotional danger to students and modeling

aggressive behavior. However, if it is administered justly, it is essential to discipline (Veriava and Power, 2016).

According to Veriava and Power (2016), corporal punishment breeds aggression and hostility and makes learners unhappy which in turn contributes to absenteeism and learners dropping out of school. It perpetuates the acceptance of violent behavior in society. It does not encourage learners to behave appropriately. It has the potential to weaken the relationship between learner and educator, which is crucial for the development of the learner and causes psychological harm. In Cameroon, Corporal punishment is unlawful under the Law of Cameroon National Educational Guidelines No. 98/004 1998 (article 35) which states; "The physical and moral integrity of the student is guaranteed in the educational system. Therefore corporal punishment and all other forms of violence, discrimination of any kind…, are prohibited." Banning corporal punishment has led to a reduction in the levels of discipline, poor and ill-mannered learners Veriava and Power (2016). Invocavity and Josephine(2014) holds that corporal punishment should be reinstated and continued as a means of disciplining students because students respond more to corporal punishment. African students start experiencing corporal punishment when they are young so without punishing them, they will not act appropriately. In order to work by the law on the abolition of corporal punishment, the state has instituted school counselors who have been deployed to provide counseling services in a majority of state owned schools. It is however observed that most schools especially private and denominational schools do not make use of this disciplinary strategy (counseling) as counselors are hardly noticed on their campuses. The continuous occurrences of aberrancy in schools, leaves one to question the efficacy of these counselors.

Statement of the Problem
The Cameroon educational system in the past especially before the abolition of corporal punishment experienced high levels of morality and discipline as was and is still prescribed by our African culture and belief. The story today is told as belonging to the past because of the opposite happenings in our schools. Standards have fallen; immorality, disrespect and deviancy now define secondary schools. At the time of the ban on corporal punishment, many studies had indicated the negative consequences of corporal punishment which ranged from truancy, school dropouts to deviancy. Although these cases existed, they were however limited in number and occurrence. After the ban of corporal punishment in 1998, schools in Cameroon have been continuously plagued with many disciplinary challenges demonstrated by students. Before the ban, discipline in schools was firm and respect for hierarchy, teachers, school administrators and self were top on the disciplinary agenda. With this abolition, schools have experienced deviant behaviors like drugs taking such as marijuana and tramadol and possession of arms like knives and cutlasses by students. This has resulted to deaths and severe handicapping conditions to both teachers and students. Students now welcome teachers to a fist fight and vice versa. Teachers come to school in fear of the unknown because the students can demonstrate their deviancy at any time. Teachers therefore are at risk in the hands of the same children they are to groom to be responsible citizens in future. Lies telling, absenteeism from classes, late coming

disrespect of teachers and senior students, high alcoholic consumption, cultism, drug abuse, stealing, vandalism, violence, bullying, dropouts, gangs, promiscuity and insults/assaults, talking out of tone and physical abuse just to name a few, are slowly becoming the order of the day in schools today. It is based on these exigencies that we seek in this work to question the effectiveness of disciplinary reasoning against corporal punishment which has been abolished in its favor and to verify if corporal punishment should be reinstated and continued or not.

Objectives of the study
1. To investigate the root causes of school disciplinary problems in Cameroon's secondary schools today.
2. To find out the behavioral challenges teachers face in class in the course of disciplining their students.
3. To investigate the effectiveness of disciplinary reasoning in secondary schools in Cameroon.
4. To seek proposals from school administrators on better disciplinary strategies to be implemented in schools.
5. To verify teachers' stance on the abolition of corporal punishment in schools.

Instrument for data collection
The instruments constructed to collect data were questionnaires that utilized the structured and the unstructured format. The instruments were constructed in sections. Section one was a letter of introduction where the researcher introduced herself and the topic and assured respondents on the confidentiality of their responses. This section carried the demographic information of respondents. Section two carried the items developed and presented following research objectives. The unstructured questions provided room for respondents to further explain their responses in depth to the structured questions thus providing answers to the raised questions.

Methods of Data Processing and Analysis
The study is a descriptive study in which both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed in analyzing the collected data. Quantitative data indicated how much of the variable under study was present. Quantitative data were analyzed using a pre-designed EpiData Version 3.1 (EpiData Association, Odense Denmark, 2008). Database which has in-built consistency and validation checks was used to enter the data. Further consistency, data range and validation checks were also performed in SPSS version 21.0 (IBM Inc., 2012) to identify invalid codes. Qualitative data were analyzed using coded entries and further explanations were made with the use of highlighted text directly presented as extracted from the responses of the participants.

Sample of the study
A total of six schools in Buea, South West Region of Cameroon, were chosen for the study. Below is a table that shows the sample of schools and respondents used in the study.

Table 1: Total Number of Administrators, Discipline Masters, Counselors and Teachers.

School	Administrators	Counselors	Discipline masters	Teachers	Total
Bilingual grammar school, Molyko	3	6	4	24	36
Inter comprehensive secondary school	1	1	1	10	13
Government Technical High School, Molyko	2	5	4	10	21
Summerset Molyko Buea	1	1	1	10	13
Baptist High School, Buea	1	2	5	12	20
Government high school Bokwaongo	3	2	1	15	22
Jules Peeters college	2	1	1	9	13
St Therese Molyko Buea	2	2	3	10	17
Total	**15**	**20**	**20**	**100**	**155**

Total number of government schools 3, lay private schools 3 and denominational schools 2.

Table 2: Demographic analysis of all respondents' level of education

Level of Education	Counselors		Teachers		Administrators and discipline masters	
	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (n)	Percentages (%)	Frequency (n)	Percentages (%)
DIPES I	-	-	4	4%	3	8.5%
DIPES II	4	20%	24	24%	8	22.8%
Diploma	-	-	10	10%	6	17.1%
Degree	6	30%	34	34%	8	22.8%
Masters	3	15%	10	10%	4	11.4%
Others	7	35%	18	18%	6	17.1%
Total	**20**	**100%**	**100**	**100%**	**35**	**100%**

From the above table, 6(30%) respondents had undergraduate degrees and 4 (20%) were holders of DIPES II. Three (15%) were Masters degree holders, 7 (35%) had other qualifications not mentioned and there was no respondent with a DIPES qualification or Diploma. Thirty four (34%) of the teachers were undergraduate degree holders and 24(24%) of these teachers were equally holders of the DIPES II. Eighteen (18%) of the teachers did not specify their qualification. Ten (10%) teachers had the Masters qualification with a diploma and only 4 (4%) teachers had the DIPES I. A greater number of the administrators and discipline masters 8 (22.8%) were degree holders and equally holders of the DIPES II. Six (17.1%) were holders of a Diploma and other qualifications while 4(11.4%) had the Masters degree and 3 (8.5%) were DIPES I holders.

Table 3: Ages of all Respondents

Age range (years)	Counsellors		Teachers		Administrators and discipline masters	
	Frequency (n)	Percentages (%)	Frequency (n)	Percentages	Frequency (n)	Percentages
21-25	-	-	6	6%	-	-
26-30	4	20%	21	21%	3	8.5%
31-35	4	20%	36	36%	4	11.4%
36-40	2	10%	20	20%	5	14.3%
41-45	3	15%	6	6%	4	11.5%
46- 50	3	15%	-	-	10	28.5%
50 years+	4	20%	11	11%	9	25.7%
Total	20	100%	100	100%	35	100%

A cluster of 4 (20%) counsellors were within the age ranges of 26-30, 31-35 and above 50 years. Three (15%) were within the age ranges of 41-45 years and 46-50 years while two (10%) were within the age range of 36-40 years and no respondent was within the age range of 21-25 years. As for teachers, a majority of the teachers 36 (36%) were within the age range of 31-35 and 21 (21%) were within the age range of 26-30 years. Twenty (20%) teachers were within the age range of 36-40 years while teachers at the age of 50 who took part in the study were 11 (11%) and 6 (6%) were within the age range of 21-25 years. For administrators and discipline maters, a greater number who participated in the study were between the ages of 46-50 years with a proportion of 10 (28.5%), 9 (25.7%) were above the age of 50 while 5 (14.3%) were within the age range of 36-40 years. Those who were within the age ranges of 31-35 years and 41-45 years had the same proportion of 4 (11.5%) each and a few of the respondents were within 26-30 years with a proportion of 3 (8.5%).

Table 4: Gender of all Respondents

Gender	Counsellors		Teachers		Administrators and discipline masters	
	Frequency (n)	Percentages (%)	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Male	8	40%	44	44%	20	57.1%
Female	12	60%	56	56%	15	42.8%
Total	20	100%			35	100%

Most of the counsellors and teachers who took part in the study were females with a proportion of 12(60%), while there were more male administrators and discipline masters 20(57.1%). Only 8(40%) and 44(44%) of counsellors and teachers respectively were males and 15(42.8%) of administrators and discipline masters were females.

Table 5: Working Experience of all Respondents

Working experience	Counsellors		Teachers		Administrators and discipline masters	
	Frequency (n)	Percentages (%)	Frequency (n)	Percentages (%)	Frequency (n)	Percentages (%)
Less than 5 years	7	35%	30	30%	5	14.2%
5-10 years	3	15%	40	40%	4	11.4%
11-15 years	2	10%	12	12%	4	11.4%
16-20 years	4	20%	18	18%	6	17.1%
Above 20 years	4	20%	-	-	16	45.7%
Total	20	100%	100	100%	35	100%

The table above shows working experience of counsellors, teachers and administrators/discipline masters who took part in the study. Most of the counsellors had not worked for up to five years with a proportion of 7(35%). More of the respondents had worked for 16-20 years and above 20 years with a proportion of 4 (20%) for each of these ranges. A few had working experience of between 5-10 years with a proportion of 3(15%). The least of the respondents had worked between 11-15 years with a proportion of 2 (10%). Most of the teachers were those who had worked between 5-10 years with a proportion of 40 (40%). While those who had less than five years working experience had a proportion of 30 (30%), respondents with above 15 years of working experience had a proportion of 18 (18%). A few of the respondents with a proportion of 12 (12%) had worked between 11-15 years. The administrators and discipline masters who had worked for more than 20 years dominated the study with a proportion of 16 (45.7%). This was followed by those who had worked within 16-20 years with a proportion of 6 (17.1%). Respondents who had worked for less than 5 years were represented with a proportion of 5 (14.2%) while a few respondents who had worked for 5-10 years and 11-15 years were represented with a proportion of 4 (11.4%).

Questions
What disciplinary strategies do you propose should be used in schools?
School administrators, discipline masters and Counsellors proposed a range of disciplinary strategies that will work best for them in curbing the challenging issues surrounding the attitudes of students in school. Amongst others were, the provision of

guidance counselling to students, kneeling, hard labour and cleaning of the campus during break and after school hours. Some of the respondents further explained "*I will like counsellors to be employed in schools to guide and counsel students on disciplinary issues*". Another respondent commented that "*the use of hard labour in appropriate situation is also good... that is ask students to work around the campus during break and early in the morning*". Others also proposed open condemnation of the students in the presence of their parents and peers as a good disciplinary measure. A majority of the administrators proposed canning and hard labour. A few suggested suspension of students and or even dismissal depending on the gravity of the crime.

What is your impression on the abolition of corporal punishment in schools?
Most of the respondents maintained that, the abolition of corporal punishment in schools has not solved the problem. They opined that, students are more recalcitrant with the knowledge that there are limited and lighter disciplinary measures to be taken on them and tend to equate themselves to their teachers. They also held that, the abolition of corporal punishment has made most students to be more delinquent, truant and become bullies to their classmates and friends. Some respondents maintained that corporal punishment should not have been abolished as some students only understand the language of the cane. A counsellor explained, "*It is not a good idea because students will just commit crimes without any real fear of being punished since they already know corporal punishment has been abolished.*" Other respondents lamented the abolition of corporal punishment as can be seen from this respondent; "*I wish it should be reversed. Some students can only understand certain rules after the pain of a cane.*"

However, a few of the respondents were of the opinion that, the abolition of corporal punishment is a good thing. Some held that, "*it is good they abolished it because some teachers will prefer correcting their students by words and not using the cane*". Another respondent explained that "*corporal punishment is not the best because some teachers can kill a student through beating... I am not for it at all.*"

Table 6: Administrators, Discipline Masters and Counsellor's Opinion on the Abolition of Corporal Punishment and the Effectiveness of Recent Methods Used

Question	Response option		Total
	Yes/percentage	No/percentage	
Since the abolition of corporal punishment in schools, do you think the students' behaviours have improved?	19 (34%)	36 (65.5%)	55 (100%)
In your opinion was corporal punishment more effective in shaping students' behaviour than the methods we use today?	38 (69.1%)	17 (30.9%)	55 (100%)

A majority of the respondents 36 (65.5%) stated clearly that, there was no improvement in student's behaviour since the abolition of corporal punishment hence corporal punishment was more effective in shaping learners' behaviour than other methods of discipline. A lesser number 19 (34.5%) maintained that students' behaviours have improved and insisted that corporal punishment was not effective in shaping behaviours of learners. Respondents further explained that, "*the abolition of corporal punishment in schools has brought a nightmare to teachers and other staff, as students even come to school with indecent uniforms and even knives*" as maintained by one of the respondents. Another great proportion of the respondents acknowledged that, students have been more afraid of the cane but since its abolition students now find pleasure in being outside and turn to disrespect their teachers. This respondent maintained that "*most students are scared of corporal punishment and turn to respect their teachers*" another respondent held that "*nothing frightens them more than the cane. Since it was banned, they find pleasure in being outside*". Others opined that "*with the abolition of corporal punishment in schools things have gotten worse, violence in schools have increased*" another respondent questioned that "*can we all agree that the crime rate has instead worsened?.*"

Table 7: Do you think it is preferable to continue using corporal punishment in schools?

Response option	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
It should be totally abolished	8	14.5%
It should be maintained	14	25.5%
It should be carefully administered and maintained	33	60.0%
Total	55	100%

Most of the respondents 33 (60.0%) were of the view that corporal punishment should not be completely eradicated but should be carefully administered and maintained while more of the respondents 14 (25.5%) held that corporal punishment should be maintained in secondary schools and a few 8 (14.5%) held that corporal punishment should be totally abolished in secondary schools.

To support their response choices, most of the respondents held that corporal punishment should be carefully administered and maintained because it sharpens students' behaviour and helps in most cases where students are not so hardened. It worked in the past so it would not be different if it is reinstated, we should not spare the rod and spoil the child, it creates awareness in students and makes them conscious. Some also maintained that, it should be carefully administered and maintained because some students have phobia for the cane and will only behave well with the use of the cane.
However, a few of the respondents were of the opinion that corporal punishment should be totally abolished for the following views; "*corporal punishment makes a lot of students stubborn and some teachers flog carelessly causing more harm than good.*"

Types of corporal punishment proposed to be administered

Type of punishment	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Spanking		
Slapping	-	-
Paddling	-	-
Hard labour	38	69.1%
Canning	9	16.4%
Kneeling	7	12.7%
Pick a pin	1	1.8%
Lying on the floor	-	-
Total	55	100%

Hard labour, canning, kneeling, and "pick a pin" were the proposed punishment types with hard labour at the top of the proposal 38 respondents were for it giving a percentage of 69.1%.

Table 8: Effects of the Abolition of Corporal Punishment on Students' Behaviour

Items	Not noticeable (%)	Moderate n (%)	Very noticeable n (%)
Truancy	8 (14.5%)	16(29.1%)	31 (56.4%)
Student's self esteem	8 (14.8%)	8 (14.6%)	39 (70.9%)
Conflict amongst students	12(21.8%)	15 (27.3%)	28 (50.9%)
Conflict between teachers and students	38 (69.1%)	8 (14.6%)	9 (16.4%)
Respect for teachers	8 (14.6%)	13 (23.6%)	34 (61.8%)
Respect for school rules	40 (72.7%)	15 (27.3%)	0 (0%)
Child abuse	13 (23.6%)	21 (38.2%)	21 (38.2%)
Laziness of students	10 (18.2%)	15 (27.3%)	30(54.5%)
Use of drugs	34 (61.8%)	15(27.3%)	6 (10.9%)
Use of mobile phones	8 (14.8%)	8 (14.8%)	39(70.9%)
Possession of arms like knives	23 (41.8%)	6 (10.9%)	36 (47.3%)
Smoking	38 (69.1%)	10 (18.2%)	7 (12.7%)
School dropout	45 (81.8%)	6 (10.9%)	4 (7.3%)
Alcohol consumption	34 (61.8%)	0 (0%)	21 (38.2%)
Cultism	28 (50.9%)	20 (36.4%)	7 (12.7%)
Stealing	30 (54.5%)	15 (27.3%)	10 (18.2%)
Vandalism	0 (0%)	19 (34.5%)	36 (65.5%)
Violence	15 (26.3%)	20 (36.4%)	20 (36.4%)
Bullying	9 (16.3%)	10 (18.2%)	36 (65.5%)
Ganging	9 (16.3%)	13 (23.6%)	33 (60.0%)
Late coming	0 (0%)	9 (16.3%)	46 (83.6%)
Insult and assault	8 (14.8%)	9 (16.3%)	36(65.5%)

From the table above, respondents highlighted behaviours that were very noticeable in students due to the abolition of corporal punishment which included; truancy, conflict between students, disrespect for teachers, laziness of students, careless use of mobile phones, vandalism, violence, bullying, ganging, late coming and use of insults and assaults. Behaviours that were observed to be moderate included a boost to students' self-esteem, respect for teachers and child abuse. Respondents however reported some behaviours that were not noticeable and they included; conflicts between teachers and students, respect for school rules, use of drugs, possession of arms like knives, smoking, school dropouts, alcohol consumption, cultism, child abuse and stealing just to name some.

Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaires
What are the types of behavioural challenges you face in class/school?
Most of the respondents highlighted truancy as the main behavioural challenge they face in class. More specifically, respondents listed a long range of mild behaviours which included; noise making, bullying, fighting, failure in doing assignments, movement in class during lessons, lukewarm attitude towards assignments, eating in class, poor dressing, late coming, stubbornness, laziness, and insubordination. More severe behaviours highlighted by teachers included; wrong use of mobile phones in class during lessons, constant fist fighting resulting from drug addiction, stealing, gambling in class, smoking, rudeness and aggressiveness towards teachers, threats of life on teachers and fellow mates, brutalization and disruption of school programmes, breaking of bounds and violent and rebellious approaches from students.

What challenges do you face trying to shape students' behaviour and discipline?
The challenges teachers faced in shaping student's behaviour could be categorized as mild, severe or profound. Challenges which were seen to be mild amongst others included; resistance from parents for teachers to discipline their children, snobby attitudes from students, students talking back at teachers, failure to listen to advice, retaliation from students, rudeness of students to their teachers, disobedience and the influence of peer pressure. The severe challenges include; insults from

students, students talking back at teachers, threats to attack teachers out of school, students dropping out of school, threats of life, hatred from students, stiff resistance from students and even from parents of the students.

Table 9: Which methods do you usually use in disciplining students in class?

Discipline methods	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Counseling	28	28%
Kneeling	40	40%
Corporal punishment	16	16%
Standing at the back of the class	10	10%
Others	6	6%
Total	**100**	**100%**

Respondents highlighted many methods they use in disciplining students in class. Amongst these methods most of the respondents with a proportion of 40 (40%) pointed to kneeling as the main disciplinary measure used in class. This was followed by counselling with a proportion of 28 (28%). While 16 (16%) responded that they use corporal punishment to discipline students. Ten (10%) opined that they ask students to stand at the back of the class and a few respondents with a proportion of 6 (6%) did use other strategies such as canning, pinching and threats of reduction of marks. The respondents also affirmed that the methods they use have worked best for them.

Table 10: Which methods do you propose should be introduced and maintained as a disciplinary method in schools?

Methods proposed	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Use of cane	40	40%
Punishment by hard labour	20	20%
Counseling	32	32%
Others	8	8%
Total	**100**	**100%**

From the methods proposed by teachers, use of the cane (flogging) ranked first with 40 (40%) respondents. This was followed by counselling with 32 (32%). Some of the respondents, 20 (20%) suggested the use of punishment by hard labour as a disciplinary method to be introduced and maintained. A few respondents with a proportion of 8 (8%) suggested other methods such as kneeling, standing at the back of the class for the whole day, stiff checks at the entrance as students come to school with objects (drugs and weapons), threats of marks reduction, suspension and or dismissal. Respondents who suggested use of cane backed their methods by providing the following explanations. *"most students are scared of the cane and so when they see it they turn to follow instructions"* another maintained that "*though corporal punishment builds hatred and pain in the minds of the student, it will go a long way to strengthen their behaviour as they say a "mother beats with the right hand and consoles with the left hand."* Others held that, *"the language of the cane is the language students understands best"* while some respondents were of the opinion that *"you cannot spare the rod and spoil the child. …corporal punishment worked best in the past and as Africans it will still work well today."*

Those in support of counselling said it is less confrontational. They equally held that counselling brings out the reason for not continuing to do the wrong thing and also shows a positive change if the right counselling is done. Some respondents asserted that counselling strengthens the bond between the students and the teacher. However, some respondents remarked that students need a balance of both the use of the cane and counselling to keep them in line.

Analysis of questionnaires for Head of Schools and Discipline Masters

Table 11: Do you have counsellors in your school?

Question	Response option		Total
	Yes / percentage	No / percentage	
Do you have counselors in your school?	23(65.7%)	12 (34.3%)	35 (100%)
Are there counselors always present?	23(65.7%)	12(34.5)	35(100%)
In your opinion, do you think their service is worth maintaining?	21(60%)	14(40%)	35(100%)
Do you think counseling should be continued as a method of discipline?	33(94.3%)	2(5.7)	35(100%)
With the institution of counseling as a major method of discipline, do you feel safe in school?	26 (74.3%)	9 (25.7%)	35(100%)

A majority of respondents 23 (65.7%) affirmed that their institutions had school counsellors and they were always present while 12 (34.3%) disaffirmed of their schools not having counsellors hence not present. A majority of the respondents 21 (60.0%) agreed to the effectiveness and maintenance of the counsellors but held that the counsellors had only impacted the students averagely. Fourteen (40.0%) did not see the need for their services giving that, their impact in discipline of students was minimal. However, 94.3% constituting a majority were of the opinion that counselling should be continued as a form of

discipline but should be done alongside other corporal punishment methods such as hard labour. The administrators felt safe in school with counselling being the main method of discipline as a majority of 26 (74.3%) reported.

Behaviours noticed on campus after the services of the counsellors?
School administrators and discipline masters reported that, respect for teachers and peers, humility and hard work, success in exams, decent dressing especially by the girls, increased consciousness to studies, were some of the positive outcomes observed and these served as major achievements of the counsellors. However, more negative behaviours were observed such as brutality, late coming, truancy, drug consumption, boycott of classes, fighting, lack of respect, stealing, smoking, vandalism, bullying and high alcohol consumption.

Table 12: The following factors are responsible for deviancy in Cameroon secondary schools

Items	Agree	Disagree	N
Strict school rules and regulation	33 (60.0%)	22 (40.0%)	55
Un-conducive school environment	44 (80.0%)	11 (20.0%)	55
Lack of extracurricular activities	10 (13.2%)	45 (81.8%)	55
Poor teaching performed by some teachers	17 (30.9%)	38 (69.1%)	55
Teachers' lateness and absenteeism	17 (30.9%)	38 (69.1%)	55
Overcrowded classrooms	30 (54.6%)	25 (45.4%)	55
Poor study habits	33 (60.0%)	22 (40.0%)	55
Students' restlessness	35 (63.6%)	20 (36.4%)	55
Poor leadership of some schools	40 (72.7%)	15 (27.3%)	55
Administrators	23 (41.8%)	32 (58.2%)	55
Emotional instability by students	40 (72.7%)	15 (27.3%)	55
Poor academic performance	35 (63.6%)	25 (36.4%)	55
Family background	30 (54.6%)	15 (45.4%)	55
Abolition of corporal punishment	45 (81.8%)	10 (13.2%)	55
Low self-esteem due to constant negative labels	30 (54.6%)	25(45.4%)	55
Abuse of seniority by prefects	34 (61.8%)	26 (38.2%)	55
Parental rejection of some children	36 (65.5%)	19 (34.5%)	55
parental over protection of children	26 (47.3%)	28 (52.7%)	55
Mass media/social media	38 (69.1%)	17 (30.9%)	55

Abolition of corporal punishment and un-conducive school environment topped the list of factors responsible for deviancy in schools with percentages above 80. This was closely followed by poor leadership of schools and emotional instability of students on an equal scale of 72.7%. Mass media, student's restlessness, parental rejection, poor academic performance, poor study habits and strict school rules and regulations were agreed on at a percentage ranging between 60-69%. Other factors averagely responsible for deviancy in Cameroon's schools included: Overcrowded classrooms, family background, and low self-image of some students due to constant negative labels.

Conclusion
From our field work, this study leads us to hold that, the abolition of corporal punishment has not solved disciplinary problems. It is actually the main cause of increasing deviant behaviours in secondary schools in Cameroon. Since its abolition, disciplinary problems such as truancy, conflicts between teachers and students, students and students, vandalism and ganging are on the high increase. Abolishing corporal punishment has rendered the teaching and learning process in a majority of our schools, according to our study, ineffective. It is on these notes that, a large portion of the teachers we came across in our study, strongly suggest that, corporal punishment be reinstated because students fear the cane more and by our African cultural tradition, we discipline effectively with the cane. This will do much good in ensuring more effective teaching and learning in our schools.

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