

CHAPTER-I
INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

“Children do not lose their human rights by virtue of passing through the school gates...Education must be provided in a way that respects the inherent dignity of the child...that respects the strict limits on discipline...and promotes non- violence in school”.

UN Committee on the Rights of the Child

Corporal punishment – violence inflicted on children by parents, teachers, carers and others in the name of “discipline” – is experienced by a large majority of children in many states worldwide. Some children, including children with disabilities and young children, are particularly likely to experience it. Corporal punishment is a violation of children’s rights and international human rights law requires prohibition of all corporal punishment, including in the family home. There is no need to look for evidence of the negative effects of corporal punishment in order to know that it must be prohibited and eliminated – just as there is no need for research to show that violence against women is harmful before efforts are made to end it.

Conventionally, the schools have been the centers of learning and bringing behavioral modifications among children so as they become acceptable members of the society. However, discipline among students has become central to the entire schooling process. The issue of discipline has become a contentious issue among parent communities, judiciary and child rights organization. The term discipline in itself generates certain practices in school classrooms that have a major say on the personality development of the child. The discipline practices, when tends to be punitive, physical and mental, they inflict pain among school children. Moreover, Supreme Court of India and various International organizations such as UNICEF have out rightly given verdict against any kind of punishment in school. However, the punishments in school, generally known a corporal punishment or negative discipline practices are still present in schools and there is ample research evidence

that school children undergo punishments in school. In this context the role of teacher is much debated.

Teacher plays a very important role in society. After parents, teachers are the one who nurtures a child. Teachers are the basic need of society without who the development of society is next to impossible. They are the backbone of the society. Hence, it is the full responsibility of the teachers to take care of the students. Generally teachers deal nicely with the students but sometimes situations arise where teacher have to punish students in order to maintain discipline of the class. Earlier punishment was given in the form of some vocational task but gradually other form of discipline practices like physical punishment, mental torture and discrimination came into existence. These discipline practices have a very high impact on behaviors' of school children, their interest towards school and eventually on the way they perceive life in the school. Moreover, discipline practices may also impact various dimensions of personality of a child such as self esteem.

1.2 Conceptual Framework

Discipline practices (corporal punishment) in school are a worldwide phenomenon. Children are physically punished in almost all societies. Violence is at the extreme end of a range of punishments that are inflicted on children by parents, teachers, peer group members, and justice systems. Many justice systems have removed beatings as a punishment for breaking the law, but beatings are still administered for breaches of rules at school and home. Yet many behavior theorists question the validity of any punishment as a tool for learning, recommending instead systems of reward for positive behavior. When parents and teachers equate "discipline" with "punishment" and couple this with violence, the consequences for children can be catastrophic. Every developed, industrialized country in the world and many developing nations in Asia and Africa have made the violent punishment of school children illegal. In India too corporal punishment of children is "illegal", but there remains much more to be done.

All forms of corporal punishment are harmful to the child. Currently, there is no statutory definition of corporal punishment of children in Indian law. Definition of corporal punishment can at best be only indicative. In keeping with the provision of

the RTE Act corporal punishment could be classified as physical punishment, mental harassment and discrimination. Corporal punishment is defined as the use of physical force towards a child for the purpose of control and/or correction, and as a disciplinary penalty inflicted on the body with the intention of causing some degree of pain or discomfort, however mild. Punishment of this nature is referred to in several ways, for example: hitting, smacking, spanking, and belting (Cashmore & de Haas, 1995). Although most forms of corporal punishment involve hitting children with a hand or an implement (such as a belt or wooden spoon), other forms of corporal punishment include: kicking, shaking, biting and forcing a child to stay in uncomfortable positions (United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2006). The desired outcome of physical punishment is child compliance with adult directives (Gawlik, Henning, & Warner, 2002; Smith, Gollop, Taylor, & Marshall, 2004). The degree of physical punishment that a parent or carer can use with a child is subject to legal regulation in Australia. In most states and territories, corporal punishment by a parent or carer is lawful provided that it is carried out for the purpose of correction, control or discipline, and that it is "reasonable" having regard to:

- the age of the child;
- the method of punishment;
- the child's capacity for reasoning (i.e., whether the child is able to comprehend correction/discipline); and the harm caused to the child (Bourke, 1981).

Thus, the main goal of any disciplinary strategy is to educate children about acceptable and unacceptable behavior. Corporal punishment is one disciplinary technique.

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child has adopted a comprehensive definition of corporal punishment: "The Committee defines 'corporal' or 'physical' punishment as any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light. Most involves hitting ('smacking', 'slapping', 'spanking') children, with the hand or with an implement – a whip, stick, belt, shoe, wooden spoon, etc. But it can also involve, for example,

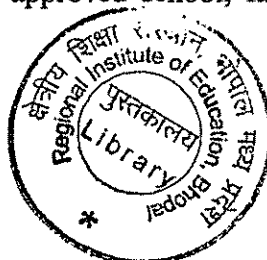
kicking, shaking or throwing children, scratching, pinching, biting, pulling hair or boxing ears, forcing children to stay in uncomfortable positions, burning, scalding or forced ingestion (for example, washing children's mouths out with soap or forcing them to swallow hot spices). In the view of the Committee, corporal punishment is invariably degrading. In addition, there are other non-physical forms of punishment that are also cruel and degrading and thus incompatible with the Convention. These include, for example, punishment which belittles, humiliates, denigrates, scapegoats, threatens, scares or ridicules the child." (Committee on the Rights of the Child (2006), General Comment no. 8: the right of the child to protection from corporal punishment and other cruel or degrading forms of punishment, para. 11).

1.3 Legal Provisions

The Supreme Court banned acts of corporal punishment on children on 1 December 2000 when it directed the State to ensure "that children are not subjected to corporal punishment in schools and they receive education in an environment of freedom and dignity, free from fear". In the year 2009, the Parliament of India made elementary education a fundamental right for every child of this country. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 states in Chapter IV, titled Responsibilities of Schools and Teachers, under: Clause 17: Prohibition of physical punishment and mental harassment to the child– (1) No child shall be subjected to physical punishment or mental harassment. (2) Whoever contravenes the provisions of sub-section (1) shall be liable to disciplinary action under the service rules applicable to such person. This prohibition is an important step forward – it reinforces and enshrines in law the growing consensus against corporal punishment in schools. However, the provision does not criminalize corporal punishment; it does not resolve contradictory provisions in criminal law in favor of an absolute ban. Nor does it lay down a standardized penalty for corporal punishment that should be incorporated in service rules to punish corporal punishment. In practice, this could mean corporal punishment is penalized very lightly, which would have little deterrent effect, given how widely it is accepted as a method of discipline. The Global Initiative to End Corporal Punishment

recommends that respecting a legal ban on corporal punishment should become a contractual condition, so that teachers and others who continue to use corporal punishment risk losing their jobs. The cases in which teachers and others, after warning, continue to use corporal punishment, prosecution should be incorporated as a legitimate and necessary response. Contradicting Commitments In contrast with the growing policy consensus, Indian law pulls in conflicting directions on corporal punishment. A number of legal provisions under the Indian Penal Code can be used to prosecute someone who inflicts corporal punishment on a child in school or a custodial institution. These include, inter alia: • Section 305: Abetment of suicide committed by a child • Section 323: Voluntarily causing hurt • Section 325: Voluntarily causing grievous hurt • Section 326: Voluntarily causing hurt by dangerous weapons or means • Section 352: Assault or use of criminal force otherwise than a grave provocation • Section 354: Outraging the modesty of a woman • Section 506: Criminal intimidation • Section 509: Word, gesture or act intended to insult the modesty of a woman The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2010 is the only statute that criminalizes acts that may cause a child mental or physical suffering. Section 23 of the JJ Act, 2000 states as follows: “Whoever, having the actual charge of, or control over, a juvenile or the child, assaults, abandons, exposes or willfully neglects the juvenile or causes or procures him to be assaulted, abandoned, exposed or neglected in a manner likely to cause such juvenile or the child unnecessary mental or physical suffering shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months, or fine, or with both.”

The Supreme Court in India may have banned corporal punishment for children but only some states have undertaken any efforts to follow that order. More specifically, according to the Indian law under the Free and Compulsory Education Bill, 2004 and the 86th amendment of the Indian constitution: (1) No child shall be awarded physical punishment in any recognized school. (2) Violation of sub-section (1) by a teacher shall amount to professional misconduct, and shall be liable to be punished in accordance with the disciplinary rules applicable to him / her (3) If a recognized school other than an approved school, fails to take action against a



teacher as provided in sub- section (2) above, it shall be liable to forfeit its recognition or State grant or both, in such manner as may be prescribed.

In the light of the above discussion, the present study makes an attempt to explore the effect of discipline practice on the self esteem of the students.

1.3 Need and justification of the study/Significance of the problem

Discipline in school continues to be a perennial problem that pervades the school life of students, teachers and parents. Research on school discipline practices have shown varied results. In certain research studies, school discipline practices have had positive effect on achievement and overall personality of a child. However, negative effects also do prevail and have immense effect on personality of a child. Eg: Self esteem is one such personality factor that affects child's orientation towards self, others, educational achievement and so on. Henceforth, this study aims at exploring various discipline practices that are prevalent in school and attempts to find effect of such practices on self esteem of students. Such a study may provide an in depth understanding as what discipline practices suits best keep in view the interest of teachers and students.

Furthermore, this kind of study would inform us about the school policies and acts. Thus, in light of NCF 2005, RTE 2009, a study on discipline practices is much relevant and significant in the school.

1.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

The problem of the proposed study can be worked as follows:

“INFLUENCE OF DISCIPLINE PRACTICES ON SELF ESTEEM OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS: A STUDY”

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY/ RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

- 1) To study the opinions of teachers on discipline practices in school.
- 2) To study the opinions of students on discipline practices in school.
- 3) To identify the types of discipline practices in school.
- 4) To study the self esteem of school students.

- 5) To study the influence of discipline practices on self esteem of school students.
- 6) To study the difference in self esteem of boys and girls due to discipline practices.

1.6 HYPOTHESES

A hypothesis is a form of testing wherein the researcher tests what he expects to find by doing the particular research. This assumption is often based on what has been shown by other empirical data (Kerlinger in De Vos, 2005: 36). In other words, a hypothesis is a formal statement of a prediction made by the researcher (Davis & Rose, 2003: 44).

- 1) There is no significant difference between self esteem of students undergoing high and low discipline practices.
- 2) There is no significant difference between self esteem of boys and girls due to discipline practices.

1.7 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1) What are the opinions of teachers on discipline practice in school?
- 2) What are the opinions of students on discipline practice in school?
- 3) What are the various types of discipline practices in school?
- 4) What is the status of self esteem of students?

1.8 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

- 1) Discipline: The process of subordinating immediate wishes, desires, impulses and interests for the sake of more effective and dependable action (Shidler, 2001). It differs from punishment in the sense that punishment is accompanied with force, pain and frustration while discipline implies training and helping the child reach required outcomes, set boundaries for behavior, and practice self-control (WHO, 2009).
- 2) Discipline practices: The practices that are enforced in school to maintain discipline.
- 3) Self esteem: It is a term used in psychology to reflect person's overall emotional evaluation of his or her own worth. It is a judgment of oneself as

well as an attitude toward the self. In fact, it is the positive or negative evaluations of the self.

- 4) **Opinion:** It is a judgment, viewpoint, or statement about matters commonly considered to be subjective, i.e. based on that which is less than absolutely certain, and is the result of emotion or interpretation of facts.

1.9 LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study is conducted under the following limitations:

- 1) Self esteem of an individual is affected by many other factors. But in the present research, those other factors i.e. extraneous variables are not neutralized.
- 2) The study is limited to Bhopal city only.
- 3) The study is limited to Model Higher Secondary School and Kamla Nehru School.
- 4) The study is limited to Class- XI (B & C) of Model Higher Secondary School.