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# INFLUENCE OF SPANKING AS A CORRECTIVE AND PREVENTIVE TECHNIQUE ON STUDENTS' MISBEHAVIOUR IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OGBARU LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA

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## Abstract

There has been an under tone about use of spanking as disciplinary technique for students' classroom misbehaviours. Notwithstanding, it seems an effective chastening for students' classroom misbehaviours and still acceptable across cultures and nations of the world. In view of the varied opinions about this phenomenon, there is a need to empirically investigate the perception of teachers who are the classroom managers on the influence of spanking as a chastening for misbehaviour among secondary students. This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of this study consisted of 288 teachers from 10 public secondary schools in Ogbaru Local Government Area Of Anambra State, Nigeria. The sample of the study comprised of 45 teachers selected using simple random sampling. A 13-item questionnaire titled "Spanking a corrective chastening for students' misbehaviour questionnaire (SACCFSMQ)" developed by the researchers was the instrument used for data collection. The instrument was validated by five experts in educational Management and Policy at Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The reliability of the questionnaire was established by sharing the questionnaire to a sample of 15 teachers away from the area of the study. The scores obtained were computed using Cronbach Alpha statistics which gave internal consistency reliability value of 0.78, showing that the questionnaire was reliable for conducting the study. Data collected were analyzed using mean scores rated at 2.50. From the findings of this study it was revealed that spanking is a corrective and preventive classroom management technique for students' misbehaviours.

**Keywords**: Spanking, Misbehaviours Correction, Secondary School etc.

## Introduction

Maintaining discipline is one of the vital role teachers are entrusted with so as to discharge their primary responsibility in the classroom. This is because discipline according to Okeke-James, Igbokwe, Oguejiofor and Ogbuanya (2023) helps to regulate students' behaviours and conduct in the classroom for purposeful learning. Moreover, classroom discipline helps in maintaining conducive, healthy and safe environment where teaching-learning exercise can freely take place without disruptions. Misbehaviour is unacceptable behavior and expression that is against the school and classroom norms. Okorji (2013) identified various misbehaviours that common among secondary school students. Thus, the need for use of teachers' classroom disciplinary technique. There are various techniques of maintaining classroom discipline one among them is spanking. Although many scholars have advocated against spanking, many have also suggested the use of non-spanking and alternatives to spanking as a better classroom management but there seems a dwelt in knowledge about seeking the opinion of the secondary school teachers who are the helm of classroom management.

Spanking is a form of corporal punishment in child's discipline. In the context of this study, spanking is seen as a retributive and physical punishment given to a student for misbehaviour. It is important to note that spanking though punitive but when appropriately used seems effective for maintaining classroom discipline. In the views of Ebenebe and Unachukwu (1995) spanking is imposing unwanted consequences in order to reduce a behaviour. Spanking according to Donally and Stratus (2008) is defined as the use of physical force with the intention of causing a child to experience pain but not injury for the purpose of controlling the child's behaviour. This is to say that the reason for spanking is to stop or reduce occurrences of an unacceptable behavior in the school.

In countries like Nigeria, spanking when properly employed is still an acceptable punishment used by teachers to discipline students' classroom misbehaviours. It is important that teachers note some salient ideas about the use of spanking as an effective management tool for students' misbehaviours. Actually, there are some salient ideas when efficiently expressed and appropriated serve as either preventive or corrective disciplinary technique to students' misbhaviour.

First and foremst, spanking as a preventive technique to students' misbehaviour is employed by teachers to serve as a deterrent to students from misbehaviours. This is to say that teachers use spanking to stop what causes disruptions and distraction to occur in the classroom. The practical application of the use of spanking as preventive technique is to know that spanking is a form of discipline that should be done in love not out of anger. There is no doubt that teachers are classroom managers and thus, are seen as role models for most students. In this thought line, most students trust the judgment of their teachers more highly than others.

Again, spanking as a preventive technique should be given with a singular intention to achieve classroom objective. This is to say that spanking is used as management technique that helps the teachers to control disruption that may pose as a hindrance to classroom instructional delivery. In other words, spanking is used for the same reason, to exact classroom discipline. No wonder, Ezeugbor and Anozie (2019) stated that discipline helps to direct the behaviour of students towards achieving optimal goals of teaching and learning.

Also, in using spanking as a preventive classroom management technique, the teacher should ensure clarity in stating of the expected classroom rules, attitudes and behaviours alongside the penalties for defaulter. This is to say that a teacher can use spanking to exact discipline when the expected classroom behaviours is ignored by any student.

On the other hand, spanking as corrective technique to classroom misbehaviour is to be used by the teacher to instruct and chastise an erring student. To achieve effective use of this technique, means that spanking is given with an intention to help to redirect wrong behaviours of students. Practically, teachers are to make the erred student to understand the nature and effect of the misbehaviour exhibited. It is important that the teacher be aware that the aim of the rebuke through spanking is to point out wrongs and clearly show the student how such behaviour can hinder instructional delivery.

Moreover, spanking should be given by the teacher as corrective technique when the parents and guardians of the students are notified at the initial registration of their ward that spanking is a means of correcting an erring student in a particular school. This technique is strengthened by the school management by asking parent, guardian or care givers to sign or write an undertaking regarding misbehaviour before a child is given admission into the school. In the same vein, punishment book is among the official school record expected to be kept in secondary school in Nigeria. Among the information in the punishment book include the name of the misbehaved child, registration number, class, details of the nature of the offence a student committed, punishment given and the teacher involved.

It is important to note that spanking is to be used as a last resort to handle students' classroom misbehaviours when other alternative seemed abortive. More importantly, the teacher should be aware that when a misbehaved student shows remorse before the spank, the teacher should restrain from the punishment but show pardon. When the above aim is defected spanking becomes just a punitive.

Although the intention of the use of spanking is to use pain to correct a misbehavour but nonetheless the teacher is implored to exact carefulness not to injure the child while spanking. The

teachers are to be considerate and compassionate with the intention to chastise misbehaviour and bring out the best attitude, character and behavior from the child.

**Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose this study was to investigate the perception of teachers on the influence of spanking as preventive and corrective disciplinary technique on students' classroom misbehaviour in secondary schools in Ogbaru Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria.

**Method**

The study adopted a survey design. The population of the study comprised 288 teachers. 45 teachers were drawn from 10 secondary schools in Ogbaru Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria using simple random sampling technique. The instrument used for data collection is structured questionnaire of 4-point rating scale. For validation of the instrument, five experts validated the instrument while reliability was established using Cronbach Alpha method with the co-efficient index of 0.76, showing that the instrument is suitable for the study. The instrument was used to collect data from the respondents in relation to the objective of this study. All copies of the instrument were administered and collected on the spot by the researchers so as to ascertain high percent rate return. The research questions were answered using arithmetic mean. Any response with the mean score of 2.50 and above was regarded as being used to a positive response, while any item with mean score below 2.50 was be taken to have attracted negative response.

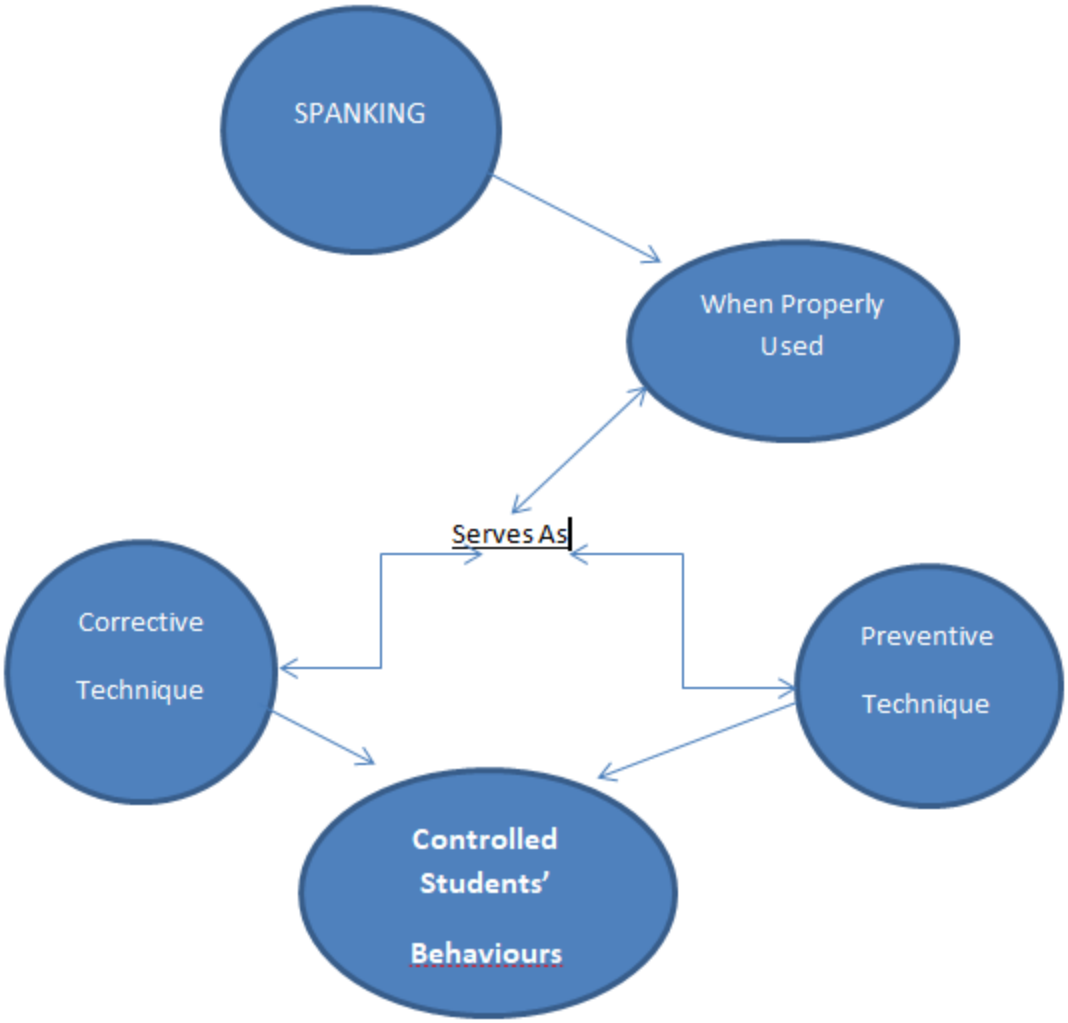
**Result**

**Table 1:** Mean rating of respondents on the influence of spanking on students' classroom misbehaviours

| S/N | To determine the positive Influence of spanking | SA<br>4 | A<br>3 | D<br>2 | SD<br>1 | TOTAL | MEAN | DECISION |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Spanking as a disciplinary technique deter students from disrespecting teachers in the school | 13<br>52 | 18<br>54 | 9<br>18 | 5<br>5 | 45<br>129 | 2.9 | Agree |
| 2 | Spanking as a disciplinary technique reduces students bullying their peers in the school | 17<br>68 | 17<br>51 | 5<br>10 | 6<br>6 | 45<br>135 | 3.0 | Agree |
| 3 | Spanking makes students to feel sober for their misbehaviour | 5<br>20 | 29<br>87 | 9<br>18 | 2<br>2 | 45<br>127 | 2.8 | Agree |
| 4 | Spanking is used to discipline students who use hard drugs in the school | 13<br>52 | 9<br>27 | 19<br>38 | 4<br>4 | 45<br>121 | 2.7 | Agree |
| 5 | Spanking is used to correct aggressive behaviours among students | 11<br>44 | 19<br>57 | 11<br>22 | 4<br>4 | 45<br>127 | 2.8 | Agree |
| 6 | Fear of being spanked makes students behave responsible in the school | 19<br>76 | 21<br>63 | 5<br>10 | 0<br>0 | 45<br>149 | 3.3 | Agree |
| 7 | Spanking as disciplinary measure helps to reduce wrong association among students e.g cultism | 17<br>68 | 10<br>30 | 14<br>28 | 4<br>4 | 45<br>148 | 3.3 | Agree |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | Spanking is used to deter students from vandalizing school properties | 16<br>64 | 19<br>57 | 8<br>16 | 2<br>2 | 45<br>139 | 3.1 | Agree |
| 9 | Spanking makes students who often disobey school rules to turn new leaf | 12<br>48 | 23<br>69 | 6<br>12 | 4<br>4 | 45<br>133 | 3.0 | Agree |
| 10 | Spanking creates fear in students not to disobey school rules | 13<br>52 | 24<br>72 | 8<br>16 | 0<br>0 | 45<br>140 | 3.1 | Agree |
| 11 | Spanking serves as corrective tool to students' classroom distraction | 15<br>60 | 21<br>63 | 8<br>16 | 1<br>1 | 45<br>140 | 3.1 | Agree |
| 12 | Fear of being spanked makes most students to decide to shun misbehaviours in the school | 14<br>56 | 20<br>60 | 7<br>14 | 1<br>1 | 45<br>131 | 3.0 | Agree |

As shown in the Table above, the teachers' response from each of the items show that the mean scores of each item is above the acceptable mean score of 2.50. This shows that spanking influences students' misbehaviour. Therefore, the findings indicate that spanking is both corrective and preventive disciplinary technique for managing students' misbehaviours from the opinion of teachers.




**Discussion of Findings**

The findings of the research question revealed that spanking as a disciplinary technique helps to; creates fear in students not to disobey school rules, makes students to feel sober for their misbehaviours, deter students from disrespecting teachers in the school, serves as corrective tool to students' classroom distraction, reduces student to student bully in the school, makes students to feel sober for their misbehaviour, deter students from vandalizing school properties, discipline students who use hard drugs in the school, discipline students with aggressive behaviour, to reduce

wrong association among students e.g cultism, fear of being spanked makes students behave responsively in the school, spanking helps students who often disobey school rules to decide to shun misbehaviours in the school. The finding also corroborated with the findings of Unahukwu and Okeke-James (2017) who observed that use of corporal punishment helps to make students to comport themselves in the classroom. In similar vein, Okoli, Bosah and Okeke (2023) stated that the aim of education is to influence people's knowledge and attitude and which helps to develop a cherished cultures, values and attitudes of the school community. This is not far from the intention of classroom discipline as stated by Okeke-James, Igbokwe, Oguejiofor and Ogbuanya (2023) that it helps to regulate students' behaviours and conduct in the classroom for purposeful learning.

## Conclusion

Spanking is a corrective technique that serves as a deterrent to students' misbehaviour.It should be given in love to correct, direct, rebuke and chastise erring students. The intention is also to humble the child while bringing out the best in the child. The study concludes that spanking is both preventive and corrective management technique for managing junior secondary school students' misbehaviours, but the teacher should be well guided when employing it.

### Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

1. Teachers and school administrators should undergo regular training on modern, evidence-based disciplinary techniques far beyond spanking as a way of getting aligned with child rights and effective behavior management strategies.

2. The Ministry of Education, in collaboration with school management, should establish clearer and acceptable disciplinary measures to follow when spanking becomes necessary.

3. Schools should establish monitoring measures to constantly review and identify areas where improvements are needed in the use spanking technique or any other appropriate disciplinary strategy.

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