

Investigating policy implications for the abolition of corporal punishment in secondary schools in Kenya

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Abstract

The main objective of this study is to investigate policy implications for the abolition of corporal punishment in secondary schools in Kenya. Adopting a survey design, using questionnaires, interviews and documentation, a sample of 355 was selected from target population of 3228 teachers, students and parents. The data were analysed thematically. Results indicate that awareness concerning abolition of corporal punishment is lowest among students with 80%; parents, 94% and teachers, 100%. Due to differences in attitudes towards the policy of abolition of corporal punishment, schools have been forced to evaluate other means of instilling discipline such as counselling and suspension which appeared to be regarded as the most effective alternative methods. Other alternative methods were ranked differently except suspension, pinching or pulling ears, which were ranked equally by all the categories of respondents. Despite the ban, corporal punishment is thriving illegally. The study recommends in-service courses for teachers, public education on harmful effects of corporal punishment and the promotion of positive non-violent, democratic, participatory approaches to child training and education at the national level. At school level the study recommends change of attitudes of teachers, parents and students, frequent open discussions in school gatherings and in special forums like staff, student and parent meetings.

Key words: Awareness, Attitudes, Policy, Practice, Implications, Corporal punishment.

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