

# **Corporal Punishment In Zimbabwean Schools: Aetiology And Challenges**

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***Abstract:** Corporal punishment has become a very controversial issue to eliminate in schools locally and internationally. The problem appears to be due to the parallels between what happens at home and in schools. Some child-rearing practices within the home mandate parents to use corporal punishment when disciplining their own children but the laws and regulations within the schools forbid teachers from using corporal punishment. This study is a part of a larger study that examined the epidemiology and aetiology of child abuse in Zimbabwean primary schools. This study seeks to determine: (1) pupils' myths and beliefs on why teachers use corporal punishment in schools; (2) if pupils have knowledge of the laws and regulations that protect them against corporal punishment in schools; and (3) recommend possible alternatives that could be used by teachers to discipline pupils in schools. A self-administered Pupil Questionnaire (PQ) was administered to a convenient sample of 200 Form one pupils selected from five rural secondary schools in Masvingo province of Zimbabwe. The questionnaire used was first pilot studied to an equivalent sample of Form one pupils to determine if the questions used were clear to the respondents. The study found that the majority of the respondents (84.5 %) believe that teachers physically abuse them because 'they want to control pupils who do wrong things'. The study also found that pupils hold various myths and beliefs on why teachers use corporal punishment in schools. The implications of these findings are discussed in detail in this paper.*