



**PARENTS', TEACHERS' AND HEAD-TEACHERS'  
VIEWS ON ABOLISHMENT OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT  
IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS  
IN KASAMA URBAN OF NORTHERN ZAMBIA**

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**Abstract:**

The purpose of the study was to establish views of parents, teachers and head teachers on the abolishment of corporal punishment in schools. Three objectives guided the study which were; to assess parents', teachers' and head-teachers' views on the authority of teachers over pupils following the abolishment of corporal punishment; to establish views of parents, teachers and head-teachers on whether loco-parentis existed among teachers following the abolishment of corporal punishment; to explore the views of parents, teachers and head-teachers on the need to incorporate parents on school disciplinary committee as a way of managing pupils' behaviour in the school system. A descriptive design using qualitative research approach was used to conduct the study. The sample consisted 28 participants comprising 3 head teachers, 15 teachers and 10 parents from 3 selected secondary schools and communities in Kasama district. Purposive procedure was used to select parents and head-teachers while teachers were selected using simple random sampling. The study used semi-structured interviews as data collection tools. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data. Major findings indicate that the authority of teachers was drastically reduced and affected by the policy. Loco parentis among teachers who taught at the day secondary schools did not exist while it existed at a boarding school due to the nature of the school. In light of these findings, the study recommended incorporation of parents on the school disciplinary committee and strengthen counselling services in schools.

**Keywords:** loco-parentis, teachers, influence, performance, corporal punishment

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## 1. Introduction

Provision of education in a modern world is guided by numerous policies. Among such policies is corporal punishment policy of 2011, re-entry policy, quality education for all and many others. These policies support and produce intended results in education system. Corporal punishment among them was seen as a weapon of instilling discipline in learners. Hyman (1990) provides a definition that reflects practices in school situations by stating that corporal punishment in schools is the infliction of pain or confinement as a penalty for an offense committed by a learner. The abolishment of corporal punishment in educational institutions, however, has brought mixed feelings among stakeholders. In this vein, Gershoff (2002) states that, corporal punishment has remained a common and controversial method of correcting children's behaviours both at school and at home, thereby creating no mutual understanding among stakeholders such as parents and teachers on the type of punishment to be given to pupils in schools.

In 1966 the government of Zambia came up with the Education Act of 1966 which stipulated that *"corporal punishment as it applied to the beating of children was permissible but could only be applied by the head of school or one designated member of staff to do so"* (MOE, 1970,p.26). During this period, corporal punishment was extensively used in schools because teachers and parents thought it was a quick and possible method to discipline pupils. Furthermore, teachers were regarded as parents at the school, hence they acted in loco-parentis within the school and used corporal punishment to discipline pupils. By that time, teachers had authority over pupils and discipline was highly maintained in schools and teachers were equally respected. Similarly, Mwanakatwe (1974) observed that degrading forms of punishment such as canning, manual work such as kneeling down for a long time, digging pits, uprooting a tree were common. Therefore, this trend led to the abolishment of corporal punishment in schools worldwide due to the growing consensus among human rights advocates that corporal punishment violates one's rights enshrined in United Nations in Article 19 which says unequivocally that *"Corporal punishment and other cruel or degrading forms of punishment are forms of violence"* (United Nation, 1989, p.57).

In response to the United Nation demands on respecting human rights, the Zambian government, being a signatory, banned all forms of corporal punishment in schools in 2003. Although this was affected, it was difficult to implement because the Education Act of 1966 which was still in force allowed it. However, the treaty was domesticated in Education Act of 2011 under Article 28 which stipulates that:

*"A teacher, employee or other person at an educational institution shall not impose or administer corporal punishment or degrading or inhuman treatment on a learner or cause corporal punishment or degrading or inhuman treatment to be imposed or administered on a learner"* (GRZ, 2011,p.23).

*“A teacher, employee or other person who contravenes subsection (1) commits an offence and is liable, upon conviction, to a fine not exceeding one hundred thousand penalty units or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding one year, or to both.” (GRZ, 2011, p.23).*

Therefore, it seems that the abolition of corporal punishment has left a gap in terms of how to manage the behaviour of children and seems to create discontent among stakeholders such as parents, teachers and school administrators such that there seems to be no clear alternative in dealing with pupils' misbehaviour by teachers and parents. Phiri (2012) also contends that the legislation that abolished corporal punishment has not provided an effective alternative to punishment. Further, the situation where children come from homes where corporal punishment is culturally accepted and the legislative law was rarely trespassing because the home was considered a private realm had contributed to the discontent encountered by stakeholders in the school system. Gomba (2015) conducted a study from a sociological perspective on whether corporal punishment was culturally accepted. The study revealed that most of the parents from a social angle supported it and cited the Biblical verse to support their argument as a measure of correcting behaviour of their children at home as well as in institutions of learning.

Furthermore, these stakeholders seemed to be divided on the use of corporal punishment in schools by teachers. Some studies found that parents were of the opinion that learners be taught of their rights to protect them from abusive teachers (Makwanya, Moyo and Nyenya, 2012). Others were of the view that corporal punishment was necessary and an effective way of disciplining pupils, and to some learners it was the only language they understood best in relation to discipline (Shumba, Ndofirepi, and Musengi, 2012). Yang (2009) also contends that, Korean parents generally think that corporal punishment and strict disciplinary methods were accepted as a positive expression of parents' concern and care for their child rather as a problem. This perception was equivalent to the biblical verse in proverbs 13:24 which says, *“He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him”*. This therefore had sociologically and psychologically created disharmony and conflicts among stakeholders in the process of disciplining children.

## **2. Review of Related Literature**

Stakeholders involved in education provision hold different views on abolishment of corporal punishment in schools worldwide. For example, the study by Mamatey (2010) aimed at exploring the perception of South Korea teachers on the use of corporal punishment in schools. The results of the study indicated that educational system factors led Korean EFL teachers to use or support the use of corporal punishment. The teachers acknowledged some of the negative effects of administering corporal punishment such as pupils being emotionally affected. However, most of them believed that the benefits outweighed the negatives in managing Korean EFL classrooms particularly classrooms

with 40 or more pupils. One of the positive effects of punishment highlighted in the study was that it reduces the recurrence of the undesirable behaviour and increases the likelihood of desirable behaviour in the future. In Nigeria Umeziwa and Eledu (2012) assessed teachers' perception on the use of corporal punishment. Umeziwa and Eledu argued that the teachers perceived scolding and verbal assault to a pupil, making a pupil stay back after school dismissal, pupil's fetching of water, pupil cleaning of school toilet, sending the pupil out of the class, and seizing or denying the pupil his or her belongings as unacceptable forms of punishment. Giving the pupil a knock on the head, slapping or beating the pupil with hands, kicking and pushing the pupil with legs, and pulling the pupil's ear or hair are unacceptable to the teachers. The teachers perceived the pupil kneeling down or standing for a long time, the pupil scrubbing the floor of the class, flogging the pupil with stick or cane and the pupil sweeping the whole class as acceptable punishment measures.

In a study entitled 'Is punishment an effective means of discipline in schools?' Elbla (2012) investigated the reasons that led to some teachers' support and use corporal punishment in basic schools in Khartoum state, Sudan though they were aware of its prohibition as it was spelt in the country's education policy. Pupils' opinions and perceptions about the use of punishment in schools were also looked into. The data for this study was collected by adopting qualitative research design. The study was conducted in two basic schools in Khartoum state (one governmental and one private school) from which ten teachers were selected and interviewed in addition to a group discussion held with ten pupils in grades seven and eight. The study findings revealed that some teachers knew that punishment had negative impact on pupils' behaviour and personality but there were no other alternatives they could follow. Other teachers believed that they punish their pupils due to the stress and frustration they experience. The school environment was poor and lacking all facilities that might be useful for modelling pupils' behaviour and absorbing the unwanted behaviours. Pupils on the other hand saw no justification for their teachers to hit, kick, slap or call them with bad names. Some of the pupils mentioned that they had developed sense and feelings of fear, frustration, aggression, low self-esteem, low confidence and lacked motivation for learning as a result of the continuous punishment.

Phiri (2012) conducted the study entitled 'Punishment and discipline in schools: an assessment of the impact of abolishing degrading punishment on discipline'. The purpose of the study was to find out whether the ban on degrading punishment in schools was being effectively implemented and to assess the impact of the abolishment of corporal punishment on discipline in high schools in Solwezi district. Teachers and school head teachers were participants in the study. The study adopted qualitative approach. Focus group discussion and interviews were used as research instruments. The findings revealed that the abrupt imposition of the ban on corporal punishment without provision of alternative and less harmful forms of punishment has led to the sudden deterioration of discipline in high schools. This study was important because it provided a background on the ban of corporal punishment in schools in Zambia. The present study

intended to look at incorporating parents on school disciplinary committee, establish the authority and loco parentis of teachers after the ban of corporal punishment.

The concept of in-loco-parentis has historically been used by teachers and school administrators as an important component for disciplining pupils under their charge. In Nigeria, Nakpodia (2012) also carried out a study entitled, 'Teachers' responsibilities in loco parentis in secondary schools in delta state'. The study adopted a mixed method and 124 teachers were involved as participants. The results of the study indicated that in Nigerian educational system, teachers were placed in a position to discipline and care for pupils' safety through reasonable roles and regulations under the in-loco-parentis doctrine. He further argues that, under the same doctrine disciplinary measures were effective in the rural schools because there was room for personal interaction. Nakpodia (2010) adds that teachers who took the roles of parents in Nigerian school system acted reasonably and their actions were in accordance with the general and approved educational practice in that country. Teachers assumed the role of loco parentis once children were dropped at the school gates. Furthermore, many teachers kept breakfast supply for pupils especially at preschool and primary school in many educational institutions in Nigeria.

Loco-parentis among teachers following abolishment of corporal punishment in schools has never been explored in Zambia, therefore, it was important for the present study to ascertain the views of parents, teachers, and school administrators on the matter. The present study differed with previous study on methodology. The present study adopted qualitative approach with 28 participants in order to get a deeper and holistic understanding of the phenomenon being studied while the previous study used mixed method.

Despite the polarization that appeared to exist among stakeholders on the abolishment of corporal punishment in schools, it was the intention of the present study to assess the views of parents, teachers and school administrators on the abolishment of corporal punishment in schools.

### **3. The Problem of the Study**

Since Zambia got independence in 1964, corporal punishment was used in schools to discipline pupils until the time it was outlawed in 2003 (Phiri, 2012). Before then, parents trusted the teachers and considered them capable of disciplining pupils when they misbehaved using, where possible, reasonable force. Further, teachers were regarded as parents at school; hence they acted in loco-parentis within the school and used corporal punishment to discipline pupils (Mwanakatwe, 1974). The introduction of the Education Act (2011) however, brought sociological and psychological controversy among stakeholders in that any educational employee who administers corporal punishment had to be imprisoned for a period not exceeding one year or fined or both. The argument has been that the move had created serious disharmony among stakeholders on how to handle pupils. However, previous studies done by (Phiri, 2012; Simango, 2012) revealed

that abolishment of corporal punishment had led to the sudden deterioration of discipline in schools. In Zambia however, little was known what views teachers, parents and head-teachers held on loco parentis and authority of teachers following the abolishment of corporal punishment in schools, a gap that the present study intends to fill through an assessment of their views on the same. The following objectives guided the study:

- 1) To assess parents', teachers' and head-teachers' views on the authority of teachers over pupils following the abolishment of corporal punishment.
- 2) To establish views of parents, teachers and head-teachers on whether loco-parentis existed among teachers following the abolishment of corporal punishment.
- 3) To explore the views of parents, teachers and head-teachers on the need to incorporate parents on school disciplinary committee as a way of managing pupils' behaviour in the school system.

### **3.1 Significance**

It was hoped that the views from the stakeholders may help educational institutions in developing effective methods and techniques of behaviour management as alternative approaches to abolishment of punishment. Therefore, the study might be the platform to establish harmony and strengthen the relationship among stakeholders on how best they should work together to address the gap the law has left in schools. Lastly, it was anticipated that the findings from the study would add information to already existing body of knowledge in this area.

## **4. Theoretical Framework**

This study was guided by operant conditioning theory (behavioural theory) developed by Skinner in 1958. This theory is based on the idea that learning is the function of change in overt behaviour (Feldman, 2009). Changes in behaviour are the results of an individual's response to events (stimuli) that occur in the environment. Therefore, Skinner reaffirms that operant conditioning has a powerful means of controlling behaviour. In this study the researcher focused mainly on punishment.

The above theoretical explanation appears in a way suitable for controlling behaviours of learners or children by their parents, teachers and school administrators. The use of alternative discipline methods such as counselling can effectively influence the children to develop skills, knowledge and good morals. There are two types of punishment: positive punishment and negative punishment. (In both cases, "positive" means adding something, and "negative" means removing something). Positive punishment weakens a response through the application of an unpleasant stimulus (Feldman, 2009). For instance, canning a child for misbehaving is positive punishment. Negative punishment happens when a certain desired stimulus or item is removed after a particular undesired behaviour is exhibited, resulting in the behaviour happening less often in the future. For example, a child that really enjoys a specific class, such as physical

education or music classes at school, negative punishment can happen if he or she is removed from that class and sent to the school administrator's office because he or she was misbehaving. The theory, therefore, fitted well with this study as it focuses on the punishment.

#### **4.1 Topographical Features of Study Site**

Our research area was Kasama district in Northern Province of Zambia. It is one of the 10 provinces in the Republic of Zambia. As a country, Zambia is divided into 105 districts and 10 provinces. It is also a land-locked nation. It is surrounded by several countries namely; on the southern front; Zimbabwe and Botswana; on western side; Namibia; Angola and on the northern front; Tanzania; Democratic Republic of Congo and on the eastern front, Malawi and Mozambique. The country has approximately, 752, 614 square kilometres with a national population of 14.97 million (CSO, 2010). The Northern province in which Kasama district- study area is located has a population of 807,111 (MoGE, 2013). Out of the total population of Northern Province, 102, 653 (53, 404 females). The students stand at 324, 144 (13, 483 at secondary level of education) (MoGE, 2013- Education Bulletin). In terms of teacher population, there province has 6, 559 (1, 039 are at secondary level of education). The study district has 10500 pupils and 1847 teachers from which the sample was drawn. The district itself has had rich soils and a good rainfall pattern. Majority of its population is involved in substance farming or self-employment with merging commercial farms. It has a good road and rail network. The study area has a high potential of becoming agricultural/ industrial base. Its population is quite youthful and hence, has the quite labour force for industrial growth besides, farming and informal employment.

#### **5. Materials and Method**

The present study was informed by the assumptions of social constructivism which hold an assumption that an individual seeks understanding of the world in which they live and work. The goal of the research in social constructivism is to rely as much as possible on the participants' views of the situation being studied hence the research design selected for the present study was descriptive. Descriptive design is a method used to collect information about people's attitudes, opinions, habits or any of the variety of education or social issues (Kombo and Orodho, 2002). Therefore, this design fitted well with this study because it involved the experiences and perceptions of parents, teachers, and school administrators towards abolishment of corporal punishment in schools.

The study population consisted of head-teachers, teachers, and parents. Purposive sampling was used to come up with, parents and school administrators who were involved in the study. In this case, parents and school administrators were believed to be familiar with the abolishment of corporal punishment in schools. Parents were drawn from the surroundings of the selected schools where pupils were learning from. However, there was no direct relation between parents and pupils in those selected

schools. The teachers present in the school at the time of the visit by the researcher were organised according to their department. A simple random procedure was conducted in each department to make sure teachers had equal and independent chance of being selected as a member of the sample. Each department produced a teacher for interview. Furthermore, schools and communities were selected conveniently on the basis of geographical location which was near to the researcher.

In the present study, the sample consisted of twenty eight (28) participants: three head-teachers, fifteen (15) teachers from three (3) secondary schools, ten (10) parents from two communities in Kasama Township who had children in the three schools.

**Table 1: Profile of the Participants**

Location	Gender of Participants		Total
	Male	Female	
Urban schools/ community	1 school administrators (4%)	2 school administrators (8%)	3 (11%)
	6 teachers (21%)	9 teachers (32%)	15 (54%)
	4 parents (14%)	6 parents (21%)	10 (25%)
<b>Total</b>	13 (39%)	17 (61%)	28 (100%)

In the study were 39% of male participants while 61% was for the female participants. The researchers did not place much emphasis on gender in the study. The study used semi-structured interview guide to collect data. Semi-structured interview guide is a set of questions which are personally and verbally given (Sidhu, 2013). Semi-structured interview was chosen due its ability to probe, determine attitudes, discover the origin of the problem and involves the interviewee in an analysis of the problem. Punch (2012), adds that semi-structured interview is a good way of accessing people's perception, meanings, definitions of situations and constructions of reality. It is one of the most powerful ways researchers understand others. Two schools and the community surrounding the schools were selected to conduct a pilot study in Kasama District. The aim of the pilot was to determine the effectiveness of the proposed data collection process, and the instruments. After the pilot study the questions on semi structured interview which were not well phrased were rephrased while others were removed in readiness for the final data collection. To ascertain the trustworthiness and credibility of the study, the researcher used Guba's four trustworthy strategies which are ideal for all qualitative studies. To achieve credibility, triangulation was done through individual participants' views and experience which were verified against each other and ultimately a rich picture on the abolishment of corporal punishment in schools was established. Data analysis was done using qualitative approaches. The study analysed data from the interview guide by grouping the emerging themes with emphasis on the main variables from the research questions and the objectives of the study. The participant teachers were coded with numbers from 1 to 15, participants parents were coded with numbers from 1



to 10 and head-teachers were coded using the names of schools which were coded as schools A, B and C.

## 6. Results and Discussion

We now present the findings of the study which aimed at assessing parents', teachers', and head-teachers' views on the abolishment of corporal punishment in schools. The findings and discussion are presented according to the objectives.

### 6.1 Parents', teachers', and head-teachers' views on the authority of teachers following the abolishment of corporal punishment in schools

The findings from the study showed that 13 teachers out of 15, 8 parents out of 10 and all three school administrators interviewed expressed that the authority of teachers had been drastically reduced. They said that, in this era of human rights they felt the authority and dignity of teachers had been compromised by the policy. The authority of teachers who taught at day secondary schools were more reduced than the colleagues who taught at the boarding school. They further said that pupils did not respect teachers and consider them as parents knowing no stiff punishment would be administered on them. Furthermore, the corrective measures given to pupils were not effective to restrain them from misbehaving as revealed by the participants. For example, teacher 1 argued,

*“For our teacher there days and times where you might find their hands are tied because they will have done everything, they used to do to control the pupils. I witnessed the cases where a pupil is supposed to be punished by the teacher, but the pupil says let me think about it. Generally, from the human point of view it is like the pupil has belittled your authority as a teacher. It is not surprising to see that the authority of teachers has been reduced and they have removed active framework for teachers but expect teachers to perform effective. Teachers nowadays usually say let the system take care of itself as long as we are not affected. We can still move on....”*

The findings from two teachers who indicated that teachers still had authority regardless of the ban of corporal punishment were in line with the findings from two parents. They argued that the authority of teachers depended on the personality of the teacher. Those with strong or aggressive personality did manage to control the behaviour of pupils with less difficulty. For example, teacher 4 disclosed that,

*“for me I have the authority whenever I enter the classroom, the pupils they know that this teacher is difficult. I have told them if you come late, you should go out and they obey. Therefore, I feel it depends on the personality of someone. Some teachers are weak you hear some noise while teaching and learning is taking place.”*

The revelations by the study, therefore, confirm the works of several scholars. For example, Naong (2007) whose study indicates that the abolishment of corporal in South Africa had made teachers loose authority. He further argued that the passion and joy teachers had for their work had been affected since the decision of abolishing corporal punishment in schools. Gladwell (1999) also argued that teachers' authority had been taken away and attributed mainly to disruptive behaviour of pupils following the ban of corporal punishment.

In the present study parents who were more protective of their children contributed to the reduction of authority of teachers. Some parents reported teachers to victim support unit or airing their grievances on a local radio station contributed to the reduction of teachers' authority and instilled fear in them. However, those teachers who experienced of being reported to the victim support unit indicated uncaring attitude toward pupils' welfare at school both academically and behaviour.

## **6.2 Parents', teachers', and head-teachers' views on loco-parentis among teachers following the abolishment of corporal punishment**

The concept of loco-parentis has been used by teachers and head-teachers as a prominent component of the legal and sometimes ethical rationale for the disciplinary of pupils under their charge since time in memorial (Nakpodia, 2012). This is the doctrine the Zambian education system had been following; however, the findings from the present study on the above item indicated that teachers who were teaching at the day secondary schools had been drastically reduced or to some extent it did not exist in some teachers. All three groups of participants said that children of nowadays did not respect teachers and sometimes threaten to beat them, they attributed this to the policy in place which had given pupils more rights which educational institutions were constitutionally bound to uphold and protect. For example, parent 5 responded:

*"From my observation us parents we are too protective. We defend our children in the name of human rights even if they have misbehaved at school hence destroying the spirit of loco-parentis among teachers. Teachers do not feel like parents nowadays."*

Furthermore, teachers also feared that if they override constitution rights there would be no justification for not using other means of discipline such as counselling. The above sentiments in the present study are in line with Grover (2015) who argued that in recent years loco parentis has been drastically changing. For example, in United States and Europe the doctrine of loco parentis has been declining due to the fact that children, just like the adults have rights which institutions like schools are constitutionally bound to uphold and protect. The study further established that, parents accused their fellow parents of favouring their children who in turn reported teachers to human rights commission or victim support unit once corporal punishment had been administered on them. This was confirmed by parent 2 who stated that,

*"In my view us parents have contributed to reduction of teachers' loco-parentis. I witnessed one incident where the child after being punished she reported the case to the parent, apparent the parent went to the head teacher and shouted at him. The head teacher failed to defend his teacher. It's like children are at liberty to do whatever they want."*

This had also eroded the spirit of loco-parentis among teachers hence they did not feel as parents anymore.

The revelations by the present study on the loco-parentis among teachers who taught at day secondary schools were inconsistent with Gomba (2015), whose findings indicated that, teachers in Zimbabwe were regarded as parents at school hence they acted in loco-parentis within the school and used corporal punishment to manage the behaviour of pupils. It was the method they used to discipline their own children at home. But this method of managing behaviour was not in line with some parents in the present study who over protected their children in the name of human rights and eroded the spirit of loco-parentis among teachers as discussed earlier. In contrast to the earlier findings, the study by Human Rights Watch Kenya (1999) also argued that some countries such as Botswana and Kenya, teachers used corporal punishment because it was endorsed by parents as sign of transferring their roles to teachers. In addition, Nakpodia (2012) in his study stated that in Nigeria's educational system, teachers were placed in a position to discipline and care for pupils through reasonable roles and regulations under the loco-parentis doctrine, in place of a parent.

On the other hand the findings of Gomba (2015) were consistent with the views of teachers who taught at a boarding school in this study because the teachers revealed that loco-parentis still existed among them due to the nature of the school and parents trusted them. Teachers in that school did take the roles of parents in their absence, for instance they did care and nurse pupils who fall sick and admitted in hospital. For example, school administrator A disclosed,

*"...teachers here go to extreme length. Being a boarding school the loco-parentis among teachers is huge here. Teachers here are forced even at 24 hours to go and attend to the pupils. Probably it is because of the nature of the school. When parents are not here, we take their roles. Parents also trust us."*

Parents could send food stuff and school fees through teachers. Parents also communicated with their children through teachers' phones. This was an indication that parents did trust teachers and transferred their roles to them. Nakpodia (2012) also pointed out that, teachers in Nigeria assumed the role of loco parentis once children were dropped at the school gates. Furthermore, many teachers kept breakfast supply for pupils especially at preschool and primary school in many educational institutions in Nigeria.

The difference in studies, therefore, could be due to the areas where the studies were conducted. The present study was conducted in a peri-urban area in Kasama district where the pupils seemed to be more influenced by the human rights embedded

in a policy as cited earlier by the teachers hence disregarding the roles of teachers as parents at school. While Gomba (2015) showed that the government of Zimbabwe through the Ministry of Education still emphasised the role of loco-parentis among teachers and use of reasonable force to maintain discipline among pupils regardless of the abolishment of corporal punishment as eluded earlier in the study.

### **6.3 Parents', teachers', and head-teachers' views on incorporating parents on disciplinary committee**

With regard to the concept of incorporating parents on the school disciplinary committee the study revealed that the concept would be a good idea because teachers and parents would be speaking the same language. The corporation between teachers and parents would strengthen the relationship in managing the behaviour of pupils in the absence of corporal punishment. They further stressed that whatever decision the disciplinary committee would arrive at for an offender, teachers would receive blessings from parents through their representatives on the committee hence bridging the gap the policy had left between teachers and parents. In short there would be consensus approach on managing the behaviour of pupils from parents and teachers respectively. This was through the following responses by parent 3: *"...definitely it will help and bridge the gap between the teachers and parents in managing the behaviour of children. It will also foster good relationship between teachers and parents that will enhance good behaviour in children. Any decision the disciplinary committee will arrive at will have blessings from parents. Parents will not complain because they will be part of the decision."* which was said by one parent during interview. The parents lamented that most of the time parents were left out on school programs by school management. They further emphasised the need to work together for the benefit of pupils or children.

The study further revealed that, two teachers and head-teacher disagreed with the concept of incorporating parents on disciplinary committee. They argued that, the concept would lengthen the disciplinary procedure. For example, head-teacher B said,

*"...it will take time to disposal off the cases. The parents are quite busy for instance if you request them to come and attend to the offence their child has committed at school, they are always reluctant. Very few parents show concern over such matters."*

The participants further suggested that at least four (4) parents could be on the committee to represent their fellow parents.

The above establishment is in accordance with Morrell (2001) who noted that at policy level, the South African government attempted to fill the vacuum left by the abolishment of corporal punishment in schools by forming school governing body similar to the disciplinary committee discussed in the present study. These were constituted as a major vehicle to transform schools into more democratic institutions. It allowed parents as stakeholders to be part of disciplinary committee at school. This approach toward corporal punishment stressed consensus, nonviolence, negotiation and

development of school communities. In addition, Mahlangu (2008) observes that involving parents on the disciplinary committee was the most important and decisive area of governance in a modern education system.

This concept of incorporating parents on school disciplinary committee had never been explored in Zambia, regardless of the MOE (1996) emphasised on decentralization policy in schools. The concept of incorporating parents on disciplinary committee received overwhelming response from the participants during interviews. This showed a clear expression of democratic ideas from participants which could give the parents an opportunity to make important decisions regarding behaviour management and governance of the schools to which they were attached through their children. It is at this stage parents could have a say in the education of their children especially in the area of discipline and must be given full responsibilities in the form of the school disciplinary committee functions as suggested earlier by the participants. Therefore, there is need to fully incorporate parents on a disciplinary committee in the area where the study was conducted.

## **7. Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, we recommend that; the Ministry of General Education needs to formulate a policy that would allow parents to be incorporated on the school disciplinary committee. The concept would stress a consensus approach of managing the behaviour of pupils and address the gap that had existed between the school managements and parents. Secondly the study revealed that, the authority and loco-parentis of teachers had been adversely affected by lack of discipline and respect by pupils, the study recommends that, the Ministry of General Education need to come up with a deliberate policy that would strengthen the authority and loco-parentis doctrine among teachers. Thirdly there is need to adopt a consensus and negotiation approach among stakeholders towards managing the behaviour of pupils. This would help in maintaining the authority teachers had lost. Lastly the study recommends that schools need to open channel of communication for parents and involve them fully in any educational activities that would benefit their children at school both academically and behaviour.

## **8. Conclusion**

It is evident that the authority of teachers who taught at day secondary schools was more reduced than the colleagues who taught at the boarding school. Loco parentis among teachers who taught at day secondary school did not exist due to lack of respect from pupils following the abolishment of corporal punishment in schools. In this era of human of rights participants felt that the authority, dignity and loco parentis among teachers had been compromised by the policy. Pupils enjoyed rights embedded in the Education Act of 2011 hence teachers did not feel like parents. Teachers also attributed lack of loco

parentis among themselves due to parents who over protected their children hence they refrain themselves and felt not appreciated for the effort they do. While teachers who were teaching at the boarding school loco parentis among them still exist because of the nature of the school. Teachers spent a lot of time with pupils at the school. Furthermore, parents trusted them, and this has created good relationship between them and parents. In the absence of parents, teachers took their roles as immediate parents. Lastly the study revealed that incorporating teachers on school disciplinary committee would strengthen the partnership between teachers and parents in managing behaviour of pupils following abolishment of corporal punishment in schools.

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