

**PERCEPTIONS OF HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS  
REGARDING SELECTED TYPES OF PUNISHMENT**

**BY**

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PERCEPTIONS OF HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS REGARDING  
SELECTED TYPES OF PUNISHMENT

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in Education

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by  
Brenda Jeanine Hemenway

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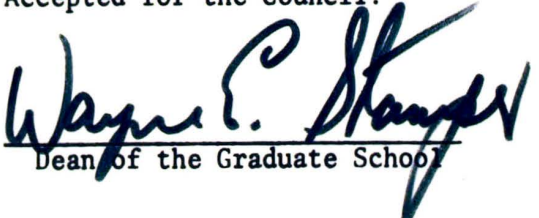


To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a Research Paper written by Brenda Jeanine Hemenway entitled "Perceptions of High School Seniors Regarding Selected Types of Punishment." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Education, with a major in Guidance and Counseling.

  
Major Professor

Accepted for the Council:

  
Dean of the Graduate School

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Throughout history punishment has been used in an attempt to control the behavior of men. Types of punishment have varied from subtle, critical comments to lashes with a leather strap to death in an electric chair. Concurrent with society's utilization of punishment has been the employment of punishment in institutions of learning. Many types of punishment are considered effective approaches to discipline today, and across the nation punishment is administered daily in most schools. With some students punishment has proven effective in correcting unacceptable behavior while application of punishment with others has been in vain.

#### Statement of the Problem

Although research is not conclusive concerning the effectiveness of punishment, there is sufficient evidence to indicate that punishment can be effective in suppressing or changing behavior. Research has also shown that punishment often elicits detrimental side effects. It is possible that some types of punishment administered in our schools are constructive and effective, while others, although they may be effective, create adverse side effects. Since students are the recipients of the punishing behavior in the schools, it was deemed important to determine how the students view punishment as a deterrent or change agent of behavior.

#### Purpose of the Study

Often the behaviors of students of the classroom are difficult



to contend with and are disruptive to the learning process. The teacher's desire to modify the behaviors is justified. However, it is possible that the indiscriminate use of certain punishments for the purpose of modifying behavior may be a waste of time and, more importantly, may be harmful to the student, to the teacher, and to the learning process. It was the purpose of this study to determine how students perceive both the effects and the effectiveness of certain punishments utilized by their teachers and administrators. In order to obtain the perceptions of the students, a questionnaire was devised and administered to students. It was hoped that the responses of the students to the items on the questionnaire would provide information which could enable educators to work more effectively with students.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The effectiveness of punishment has been studied extensively. However, because of a reluctance to subject human beings to punishment, most of the experiments have been conducted with animals. Many of the studies with human subjects have involved relatively weak physical stimuli or negative symbolic cues, such as, reproof or pronouncing the word "wrong."

Hurlock (1924) initiated the great surge of study of praise and blame as incentives for school children. Using praise and reproof with elementary school children, she found that neither was superior in improving performance on an intelligence test, but both were more effective than no incentive. She also found that older children responded more to both incentives than younger children did. Reproof was more effective with white students and with students who were rated as superior in school work. Black students and students who rated average and inferior in academic achievement responded better to praise.

In a more extensive study Hurlock (1925) studied the effectiveness of continued use of praise and reproof. Both were found to be more effective than no incentives over an extended period of time, but the effectiveness of reproof declined somewhat after the initial stages.

Studying the effectiveness of external incentives on children, Chase (1932) concluded that some incentive is better

than none. In their review of the literature on praise and reproof, Kennedy and Willcutt (1964) concluded that blame generally has a debilitating effect on the performance of school children. However, it has proven effective with underachievers, with black students performing under black examiners, and with very bright adolescents.

Hilgard and Bower (1966) concluded that punishment can be used to hold a response at low strength, but that it does not eliminate a response. For most effective use, they advocated intermittent application of the stimulus for an indefinite period of time. Aronson (1966) argued that compliance by punishment or rewards is a very inefficient way of maintaining control because of the necessity of continual use. Van Den Haag (1968), discussing crime and punishment, contended that punishment places persons in danger and that human beings generally respond to danger by restraining from activity. He believes that fear of punishment controls the behavior and that the stronger the punishment is, the greater the fear is. He advocated raising the penalties so that the impulses to misbehave are lowered.

Bandura and Walters (1965) maintained that confiscation of privileges as opposed to physical or verbal stimuli is an effective punishment. The initial response to loss of privileges is an increase in the desired behavior so that the reinforcers can be reinstated. As the child approaches the punisher in an attempt to regain the privilege, the punisher has the opportunity for social training of the child.

De Cecco (1968) contended that the experimental evidence indicated a definite place for punishment in the techniques teachers use to control the behavior of students. He believed punishment to be a very



effective procedure under particular conditions, especially when the individual is allowed to make "an alternative response which is desirable and incompatible with the punished response (p. 155)." Ullman and Krasner (1969), recognizing the potential effectiveness of punishment, agreed that an alternative operant must be available and be positively reinforced in order for punishment to be effective.

Baer (1971), using electric shock to inhibit undesirable behavior, claimed that punishment is one of the fastest and most effective techniques for eliminating unacceptable behavior. However, he cautions about secondary punishments; it is possible that the punisher will elicit the same response as the punishment.

That punishment can elicit unwanted side effects has been supported by others. Bandura (1969) cited three possible results of punishment if it is used indiscriminately:

1. Generalization of conditioned inhibition. When punishment contingencies are too ambiguous, punishment of one behavior (aggression) may stifle a more desirable one (assertiveness).
2. Emotional conditioning. In an effort to relieve fear of punishment, the punished child may produce worse behaviors which may be more difficult to eliminate.
3. Behavioral inflexibility. The adult may be unable to produce behavior appropriate for an adult because of punishment of the behavior when he was a child.

Ginott (1967) maintained that "one of the worst side effects of physical punishment is that it may interfere with the development of a child's conscience (p. 108)." Spanking relieves the guilt easily, and

the child feels that he has paid for his misbehavior and is free to repeat it.

Kounin and Gump (1961), in a study comparing elementary students who had punitive teachers to those who had nonpunitive teachers, found that children who had punitive teachers had more aggression and their targets suffered more physical harm than those students with nonpunitive teachers. Vance (1965) concluded that punishment generally indicated failure to a child and that cumulated failure experiences reduce general intellectual performance.

Fantini (1966) maintained that punishment in the classroom is frequently without meaning. It often alienates rather than helps students. Howard (1965) warned against publicly reprimanding students. Such punishment humiliates the child, makes him bitter, and sometimes causes the rest of the class to side against the teacher. In accordance with Howard, Ohlsen (1964) stated that sarcasm and public humiliation may produce conformity at the expense of hurting the child and making him hate the teacher.

Symonds (1956) concluded that punishment may elicit aversive behavior and "that there is a spread of these effects in response to surrounding stimuli and to encompass wider disruptive responses in the the organism (p. 57)." He believes that critical remarks interfere with the learning process because they serve to hurt the child, stimulating him toward counter-attacks or self-defense.

Krumboltz and Krumboltz (1972) stated that punishment does work sometimes, for a while, and that there are rare times when punishment is necessary. There are certain serious dangers, however, which may

accompany unwise and unnecessary use of punishment:

1. Attempted punishment may actually serve as reinforcement. A teacher who punishes a child by making him sit in front next to her desk or by writing his name on the blackboard calls attention to the child. Other children notice him. Such attention may actually be reinforcing, thereby increasing rather than reducing his undesired behavior.

2. Punishment may produce intense fears and anxieties which may last a lifetime.

3. When a child receives frequent punishment and sees no course of action that will enable him to escape that punishment, a foundation is laid for later neurotic behavior.

4. Children tend to resist punishment by fighting back, by actively escaping, or by withdrawing into passive apathy. Vandalism, truancy, and uncooperativeness are the names frequently given such forms of resistance when they occur in school. They are the direct result of the punishment adults mete out to children.

5. The child tends to avoid the punisher whenever he can (p. 195).

Much of the literature on punishment indicates that punishment can be an effective way to inhibit or to suppress, but not to eliminate a response. Studies have shown the degree of effectiveness to be affected by age, sex, intelligence, and the availability of desirable, rewarded alternative responses. Others, while sometimes recognizing the effectiveness, condemn the use of punishment because of the adverse side effects it elicits.



## CHAPTER III

### PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

#### Subjects

The subjects for this study were the students of the senior class at Montgomery Central High School, Cunningham, Tennessee. Montgomery Central High School is a rural high school with a total enrollment of 845 students. From the senior class of 102 students, 79 were present and responded on the day the survey was conducted. The senior class was selected because, as the oldest students, they were considered more mature and likely to have been exposed to more punishment.

#### Instrument

The data collected for this study were obtained from the student responses to a questionnaire. The instrument used was constructed by the researcher and employed the form of the Osgood Semantic Differential (Osgood, 1957). A copy of the questionnaire and the directions is included in the Appendix.

In order to locate the types of punishment most frequently administered at Montgomery Central High School, a random sample of 24 seniors were asked to list three ways their teachers or principals had punished them or their classmates. The five types of punishment most frequently named were incorporated into the survey instrument. The items were paddling, taking points off an academic grade, embarrassment in front of the class, suspension from school, and cleaning up the school and grounds.

A series of seven 5-point scales were constructed to describe each punishment item. The scales are reproduced below.

- |    |  |                        |                                     |                        |  |
|----|--|------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| 1. | <u>          </u><br>A<br>causes you<br>to stop<br>misbehaving                                 | <u>          </u><br>B | <u>          </u><br>C<br>no effect | <u>          </u><br>D | <u>          </u><br>E<br>causes you<br>to keep on<br>misbehaving                              |
| 2. | <u>          </u><br>A<br>causes you<br>to want to<br>do better                                | <u>          </u><br>B | <u>          </u><br>C<br>no effect | <u>          </u><br>D | <u>          </u><br>E<br>causes you<br>to want to<br>do worse                                 |
| 3. | <u>          </u><br>A<br>causes you<br>to regret<br>doing what<br>you were<br>punished<br>for | <u>          </u><br>B | <u>          </u><br>C<br>no effect | <u>          </u><br>D | <u>          </u><br>E<br>causes you<br>to be glad<br>you did what<br>you were<br>punished for |
| 4. | <u>          </u><br>A<br>causes you<br>to respect<br>the teacher                              | <u>          </u><br>B | <u>          </u><br>C<br>no effect | <u>          </u><br>D | <u>          </u><br>E<br>causes you<br>to lose<br>respect for<br>the teacher                  |
| 5. | <u>          </u><br>A<br>causes you<br>to like the<br>teacher                                 | <u>          </u><br>B | <u>          </u><br>C<br>no effect | <u>          </u><br>D | <u>          </u><br>E<br>causes you<br>to dislike<br>the teacher                              |
| 6. | <u>          </u><br>A<br>causes you<br>to like<br>school                                      | <u>          </u><br>B | <u>          </u><br>C<br>no effect | <u>          </u><br>D | <u>          </u><br>E<br>causes you<br>to dislike<br>school                                   |
| 7. | <u>          </u><br>A<br>causes you<br>to like<br>yourself                                    | <u>          </u><br>B | <u>          </u><br>C<br>no effect | <u>          </u><br>D | <u>          </u><br>E<br>causes you<br>to dislike<br>yourself                                 |

The purpose of scales 1, 2, and 3 was to determine the effectiveness

of each type of punishment in altering behavior. The purpose of scales 4, 5, 6, and 7 was to measure the effectiveness of each in creating desirable attitude responses.

On each scale responses to parts A and B indicated that the punishment was effective in stopping undesirable behavior or had attitude effects which were desirable. The percentage of all the students responding to parts A and B was computed for each scale in order to determine the portion of students who perceived the type of punishment as effective.

Responses to parts D and E indicated that the punishment was not effective in inhibiting undesirable behavior or had effects on attitude which were not desirable. Responses to part C indicated that the punishment had neither desirable nor undesirable effects. The percentage of responses to items C, D, and E were calculated for scales 1, 2, and 3 in order to determine the portion of students who viewed the type of punishment as an ineffective method for altering behavior.

The percentages of responses to C on scales 4, 5, 6, and 7 were calculated to obtain the portion of students who perceived the punishment as having neither desirable nor undesirable effects on attitude. The percentages of responses to D and E on scales 4, 5, 6, and 7 were computed to ascertain the proportion of students who felt the punishment had undesirable effects on attitude.

#### Procedure

The subjects were all administered the questionnaire by the researcher in one 20-minute meeting during the regular school day. Copies of the directions were distributed to each student and were read



aloud by the researcher. The directions attempted to motivate the students to respond honestly. The students responded to each of the seven scales under each of the five punishment items, producing a total of 35 responses from each student.

### Analysis of Data

The percentage of students responding to paddling as a means of modifying behavior is presented in Table I.

Table I  
Effectiveness of Paddling on Behavior

Extremes of Scales	Effective	Ineffective
1. Stops misbehavior --does not stop misbehavior	36.7%	63.3%
2. Desire to do better--desire to do worse	40.5%	59.5%
3. Regret punished behavior--pleased about punished behavior	32.9%	67.1%

Table I shows that the majority of the students, approximately 65%, responded that paddling did not stop misbehavior. Approximately 60% indicated that this type of punishment did not make them want to do better, and about 70% indicated that they felt no regret because of the punished behavior. From scales 1, 2, and 3 it can be concluded that the majority of the students perceived paddling as an ineffective way

to alter behavior. However, between 30% and 40% responded to each scale that paddling was effective in behavioral change.

Table 2 demonstrates the percentage of student responses to the effects of paddling on attitude.

Table 2  
Effectiveness of Paddling on Attitude

Extremes of Scales	Desirable Effects	No Effect	Undesirable Effects
4. Respect for teacher--loss of respect for teacher	20.6%	20.5%	59.0%
5. Like the teacher-- dislike the teacher	3.8%	30.4%	65.8%
6. Like school--dislike school	12.7%	31.6%	55.7%
7. Like one's self-- dislike one's self	17.8%	65.8%	16.4%

The results of scales 4, 5, and 6 indicate that the majority of the students perceived paddling as a punishment which results in a depreciation of attitude toward the teacher and the school. Fifty-nine per cent of the students responded that paddling resulted in a loss of respect for the teacher. Over 65% indicated that paddling caused them to dislike the teacher, and about 55% replied that it caused them to dislike school. Approximately 65% of the students responded that paddling had no effect on their liking themselves.

The results of student responses concerning the effectiveness of

taking points off a grade in eliciting behavioral change are presented in Table 3.

Table 3  
Effectiveness of Reducing Grades on Behavior

Extremes of Scales	Effective	Ineffective
1. Stops misbehavior-- does not stop mis- behavior	53.2%	46.8%
2. Desire to do better --desire to do worse	51.9%	47.1%
3. Regret punished behavior-- pleased about punished behavior	41.8%	53.2%

More than half of the students, approximately 55%, viewed taking points off grades as an effective way to stop misbehavior. Over 50% responded that this type of punishment created a desire to do better. The majority, approximately 55%, felt it to be an ineffective method of causing regret over the punished behavior.

Table 4 demonstrates the results of student responses concerning the effect of taking points off grades on attitude.

Table 4  
Effectiveness of Reducing Grades on Attitude

Extremes of Scales	Desirable Effect	No Effect	Undesirable Effect
4. Respect for teacher-- loss of respect for teacher	17.7%	26.6%	55.7%
5. Like the teacher-- dislike the teacher	7.6%	21.5%	70.9%
6. Like school --dislike school	7.6%	42.3%	50.0%
7. Like one's self--dislike	22.8%	59.5%	17.8%

Taking points off grades was perceived as detrimental to attitudes about the teacher, according to the results from scales 4 and 5. Approximately 55% responded that this punishment caused them to lose respect for the teacher, while over 70% replied that it caused them to dislike the teacher. A dislike for school was the result of taking points off grades for 50% of the students. Nearly 60% of the students responded that this type of punishment had no effect on attitude toward the self.

The results of the student's responses to embarrassment in front of the class as a method for altering behavior are presented in Table 5.



Table 5

Effectiveness of Embarrassment in Front  
of the Class on Behavior

Extremes of Scales	Effective	Ineffective
1. Stops misbehavior--does not stop misbehavior	38.0%	62.0%
2. Desire to do better--desire to do worse	34.2%	65.8%
3. Regret punished behavior--pleased about punished behavior	30.4%	69.6%

The majority of the students indicated that embarrassment in front of the class was an ineffective punishment. Approximately 60% replied that embarrassment did not stop misbehavior. More than 65% indicated that this type of punishment did not produce a desire to do better, and nearly 70% responded that embarrassment in front of the class did not elicit regret due to the punished behavior.

Table 6 presents the data collected from the responses of the students concerning the effect embarrassment in front of the class has on attitude.

Table 6

Effectiveness of Embarrassment in Front  
of the Class on Attitude

Extremes of Scales	Desirable Effect	No Effect	Undesirable Effect
4. Respect for teacher--loss of respect for teacher	4.8%	39.2%	57.0%

Table 6 (continued)

Extremes of Scales	Desirable Effect	No Effect	Undesirable Effect
5. Like the teacher-- dislike the teacher	3.9%	25.6%	70.5%
6. Like school--dislike school	5.0%	48.1%	46.9%
7. Like one's self-- dislike one's self	12.6%	70.0%	16.4%

More than half the students indicated that embarrassment in front of the class harmed their attitudes toward the teacher. Nearly 60% responded that embarrassment resulted in a loss of respect for the teacher, and over 70% indicated that this punishment caused them to dislike the teacher. Approximately half of the students, 48%, felt embarrassment had no effect on how they felt about school, while over 45% responded that it caused them to dislike school. Over 70% replied that embarrassment had no effect on their attitude toward themselves.

Table 7 gives the results of student responses to suspension as a means to change behavior.

Table 7  
Effectiveness of Suspension on Behavior

Extremes of Scales	Effective	Ineffective
1. Stops misbehavior-- does not stop mis- behavior	56.9%	43.1%

Table 7 (continued)

Extremes of Scales	Effective	Ineffective
2. Desire to do better-- desire to do worse	39.8%	60.2%
3. Regret punished behavior--pleased about punished behavior	46.8%	53.2%

Over 50% of the students responded that suspension stopped misbehavior. However, more than half, 60%, indicated that suspension did not create a desire to do better, nor did it cause regret about the punished behavior, according to nearly 55% of the students.

Table 8 demonstrates the results of the students' responses regarding the effects on attitude of suspension from school.

Table 8

## Effectiveness of Suspension on Attitude

Extremes of Scales	Desirable Effect	No Effect	Undesirable Effect
1. Respect for teacher-- loss of respect for teacher	19.0%	26.6%	54.5%
2. Like teacher-- dislike teacher	7.6%	32.9%	59.5%
3. Like school-- dislike school	12.7%	40.5%	46.8%
4. Like one's self-- dislike one's self	15.2%	67.1%	17.8%



The data in Table 8 indicates that the majority of the students perceived suspension as a punishment which caused undesirable attitude changes toward the teacher. Nearly 55% responded that suspension caused them to lose respect for the teacher, and nearly 60% indicated that they disliked the teacher as a result of the punishment. Over 40% of the students responded that suspension had no effect on their attitudes toward school, while over 45% replied that suspension elicited undesirable attitudes toward school. The majority of the students, over 67%, indicated that suspension had no effect on attitudes toward the self.

The results of the students' responses to cleaning up the school and grounds as a means of modifying behavior are presented in Table 9.

Table 9  
Effectiveness of Cleaning up School and  
Grounds on Behavior

Extremes of Scales	Effective	Ineffective
1. Stops misbehavior-- does not stop misbehavior	21.5%	78.5%
2. Desire to do better--desire to do worse	24.1%	75.9%
3. Regret punished behavior--pleased about punished behavior	22.8%	77.2%

There was a definite trend in the student responses regarding cleaning up the school and grounds. More than 75% of the students viewed this punishment as an ineffective method for changing behavior, for

creating a desire to do better, and for eliciting regret as a result of the punished behavior.

Table 10 presents the data obtained from the student responses concerning the effects on attitude of cleaning up the school and grounds.

Table 10  
Effectiveness of Cleaning up School and  
Grounds on Attitude

Extremes of Scales	Desirable Effect	No Effect	Undesirable Effect
4. Respect for teacher-- loss of respect for teacher	16.5%	43.0%	40.5%
5. Like teacher-- dislike teacher	12.7%	45.6%	41.7%
6. Like school-- dislike school	14.0%	50.6%	35.4%
7. Like one's self-- dislike one's self	17.4%	72.0%	10.7%

The general trend indicated in the data in Table 10 is that cleaning up the school and grounds had either no effect or undesirable effect on the attitudes of students toward the teacher and toward school. Approximately 45% of the students responded that the punishment had no effect on the respect they had for a teacher or how they liked a teacher. About 40% indicated that the punishment resulted in a loss of respect and dislike for the teacher. Fewer students, 35%, replied that cleaning up the school and grounds caused them to dislike school, while over 40% felt the punishment had no effect on their attitude toward school.

Nearly 75% of the students responded that this type of punishment had no effect on feelings toward the self.

#### Interpretation of Data

Of the five types of punishment about which the students responded, only taking points off grades and suspension from school were perceived by the majority of the students as effective ways to stop misbehavior. Only suspension was viewed by the majority of the students as a means of producing a desire to do better.

While the majority of the students responded that paddling and embarrassment in front of the class are ineffective methods for behavioral change, a substantial number of students, between 30% and 40%, viewed both types of punishment as effective methods of stopping misbehavior, creating a desire to do better, and causing regret for the punished behavior.

More students viewed cleaning up the school and grounds as an ineffective type of punishment than any of the other items. Less than one fourth of the students responded that it changed behavior.

Concerning the effects of the various types of punishment on attitude, the results show that the majority of the students felt that all of the types of punishment, except cleaning up the school and grounds, produced undesirable effects on the students' attitudes toward the teacher. For the majority of the students, the four punishments--embarrassment in front of the class, paddling, taking points off grades, and suspension--resulted in loss of respect for the teacher. Even more students indicated a dislike for the teacher as a result. Suspension brought about fewer responses indicating dislike for the teacher than the



other three punishments, perhaps because the administrator is usually responsible for suspending students from school, and the teacher is not directly affected.

Fewer than half of the students viewed embarrassment as a cause for dislike for school, perhaps because the negative attitude is directed directly at the teacher who administers the embarrassment. Suspension, also, tended to cause a dislike for school in fewer students.

Less than half of the students viewed cleaning up the school and grounds as a punishment which elicits undesirable attitude effects toward the teacher and the school. Most of the rest perceived it as a punishment which had no effect on attitude.

The data obtained showed that the majority of the students responded that none of the types of punishment had any effect on attitude toward the self.

In summary, the results of the scales indicate that all of the types of punishment were effective in stopping the misbehavior of some of the students, but only suspension and taking points off grades were effective with a majority of the students. However, even though the two punishments were effective, they produced undesirable attitudes toward the teacher and the school. Of the two, suspension tended to create negative attitudes in fewer students. Paddling and embarrassment in front of the class were perceived by the majority not only as ineffective methods for modifying behavior but were also viewed as being detrimental to attitudes toward the teacher. Cleaning up the school and grounds was perceived by the greatest majority as ineffective, but the responses indicated that this type of punishment was less destructive to attitudes,

with there being no effect with many. None of the types of punishment were viewed as having either a desirable or an undesirable effect on the self.

## CHAPTER IV

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

The primary purpose of this study was to determine how the students of the senior class at Montgomery Central High School, Cunningham, Tennessee, perceived selected types of punishment utilized in the school in terms of (a) effectiveness in stopping undesirable behavior and (b) effects on student attitudes toward the teacher, the school, and one's self.

Seventy-nine students responded to a questionnaire composed of five types of punishment, with each followed by seven, 5-point scales requesting student judgment on the effectiveness and effect on attitude of each punishment. The types of punishment were selected from the responses of a random sample of senior students who were asked to list the most common types of punishment administered in their school. Paddling, taking points off grades, embarrassment in front of the class, suspension from school, and cleaning up the school and grounds were listed most frequently by the students.

The percentage of students responding to each punishment as either effective or ineffective in altering behavior was calculated. Percentages were computed, also, to determine the students' perceptions of the effects of each punishment on attitude in terms of desirable effects, no effect, and undesirable effects.

The results of the study identified suspension and taking points off grades as the punishments which the majority of the students viewed



as effective methods for modifying behavior. Paddling, embarrassment in front of the class, and cleaning up the school and grounds were perceived by the majority as ineffective means for altering behavior although a considerable percentage of students responded that paddling and embarrassment were effective for them.

All of the punishments, except for cleaning up the school and grounds, were seen by more than half of the students as stimuli which elicited undesirable attitudes toward the teacher. The majority of the students indicated that paddling and taking points off grades caused a dislike for school. Cleaning up the school and grounds was viewed by most as a punishment which had no effect or caused adverse attitude changes toward the teacher and the school. All of the types of punishment were perceived by a majority of students as having no effect on attitude toward the self.

### Conclusions

Due to the small number of subjects, generalizations should not be made on the basis of this study alone. However, certain conclusions can be drawn from the data obtained.

1. With the senior students surveyed, the use of suspension from school and taking points off grades provided types of punishment which were effective in modifying the behavior of more than half of the students. The chances of affecting desirable behavioral change tended to be great enough to merit the use of these types of punishments as methods for altering behavior.

2. According to the responses of the majority of the students, none of the punishment items studied accomplished both desirable behavioral

changes and desirable effects on student attitudes toward the teacher and the school. Even with the use of suspension or taking points off grades which were the only two punishments viewed as effective, the administrator of the punishment risked eliciting undesirable attitudes toward the school and the teacher. Such negative effects could be detrimental to the students emotional development and to the learning process.

3. The fact that some students viewed each punishment as an effective means of stopping misbehavior implies that all the types of punishment were effective with some students. Some students, also, indicated that the punishments had desirable effects on attitude. However, without knowledge of which students respond favorably to the different types of punishment, administration of punishment can be a chance, "hit or miss" method for modifying behavior.

4. Since more than 70% of the students perceived cleaning up the school and the grounds as an ineffective method for eliciting desirable behavioral changes, it can be concluded that this type of punishment has little value.

5. Most students felt that none of the punishments had any effect on their feelings about themselves. Therefore, it would seem that the types of punishment studied were not damaging to the self-concept. It is possible, however, that the punishment studied had little effect on building internal self-control in the majority of the students.

#### Recommendations for Utilization of Punishment

According to the results of this research, certain recommendations concerning the use of the types of punishment studied can be made.

1. In certain classroom situations, it may become necessary to

sacrifice a student's attitudes toward the teacher and toward the school in order to provide a better learning atmosphere for the other students. Taking points off grades or suspension from school provides the greatest chance for affecting desired behavioral change. Because of the possibility of adverse attitude changes resulting, the teacher or administrator needs to evaluate the situation and to determine whether or not this is the only course of action available to him.

2. Paddling and embarrassment in front of the class should be used with even more caution than suspension and taking points off grades. Fewer students responded to paddling and embarrassment as an effective punishment and yet many perceived them as stimuli which elicit undesirable effects on attitude. The chances of causing no behavior change while producing adverse effects on attitude tend to be too large to justify the use of these punishments indiscriminately or casually.

3. It is recommended that cleaning up the school and grounds be eliminated from the teacher's choices of punishment for undesirable behavior. There was not sufficient support for its effectiveness to merit the time and disruption to class required in the administration of the punishment.

4. In view of the review of the literature, it is suggested that, following the use of punishment, the student should be taught the correct response and rewarded for his behavior. Such actions tend to result in more effective inhibition of response.

5. Because of the risks involved in the administration of any punishment with any student, it is recommended that the teacher or administrator observes the student behavior following the punishment.



If there is a favorable behavioral change, it can be concluded that the punishment is effective with that student. If there is not change or if worse behavior occurs, the punishment should be eliminated as a method of modifying the student's behavior.

#### Recommendations for Further Study

1. It is recommended that a study of this nature be done on a larger population before generalizations regarding the perceptions of students on the effectiveness and effects of punishment are made.

2. It is recommended that future studies should be concerned with the variable factors of age, sex, race, past experiences of punishment, and the relationship of the teacher or administrator to the punished student. Comparison of the various groups could prove beneficial in obtaining knowledge concerning the type of student who responds favorably to a particular type of punishment.

3. It is recommended that future studies limit the persons responding to those students who have experienced the punishment items. Therefore, the results would not be contaminated with responses of students who could not honestly indicate the effectiveness and effect of the punishment.



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## APPENDIX



Dear Students,

I would like your assistance in a study I am conducting as part of my work at Austin Peay State University. I am studying the effects different types of punishment have on students. By marking each of the items as honestly as possible, you can help me find out some information which may help teachers work better with students.

Please do not put your name on this form.

Please do not allow anyone else to see how you mark the items.

DIRECTIONS: Five types of punishments are listed on the following pages. (The punishment types were suggested by some of you as the punishments most commonly used by teachers in your school.) Following each punishment, there are 7 different items consisting of 5 blanks; three of the blanks, A, C, and E, have phrases under them. You are to mark an X over the phrase which best describes how the punishment makes you feel. If the punishment does not effect you as strongly as the phrase suggests, you may mark an X over B or D.

EXAMPLE

A. Punishment: PADDLING

(1)

          A            
causes you to  
stop misbehaving

          B          

          C            
no effect

          D          

          E            
causes you to  
keep on misbe-  
having

Mark "A" if being paddled does cause you to stop misbehaving.

Mark "E" if being paddled causes you to keep on misbehaving.

Mark "B" if the effect on you is closest to "A".

Mark "D" if the effect on you is closest to "E".

Mark "C" if you feel that being paddled does no effect you either way (if you are indifferent to it).

MARK ONLY ONE OF THE FIVE BLANKS

Continue marking each item about "Paddling." Then mark the items about each of the other punishments. Please consider each punishment and its effect on you carefully.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

A. Punishment: PADDLING

(1)

---

A  
causes you to stop  
misbehaving

---

B

---

C  
no effect

---

D

---

E  
causes you to keep  
on misbehaving

(2)

---

A  
causes you to want  
to do better

---

B

---

C  
no effect

---

D

---

E  
causes you to want  
to do worse

(3)

---

A  
causes you to  
regret doing what  
you were punished  
for

---

B

---

C  
no effect

---

D

---

E  
causes you to be  
glad you did what  
you were punished  
for

(4)

---

A  
causes you to  
respect the teacher

---

B

---

C  
no effect

---

D

---

E  
causes you to lose  
respect for the  
teacher

(5)

---

A  
causes you to like  
the teacher

---

B

---

C  
no effect

---

D

---

E  
causes you to  
dislike the teacher

(6)

---

A  
causes you to like  
school

---

B

---

C  
no effect

---

D

---

E  
causes you to  
dislike school

(7)

A  
causes you to like  
yourself

B

C  
no effect

D

E  
causes you to dis-  
like yourself

B. Punishment: TAKING POINTS OFF YOUR GRADE

(8)

A  
causes you to stop  
misbehaving

B

C  
no effect

D

E  
causes you to keep  
on misbehaving

(9)

A  
causes you to want  
to do better

B

C  
no effect

D

E  
causes you to want  
to do worse

(10)

A  
causes you to  
regret doing what  
you were punished  
for

B

C  
no effect

D

E  
causes you to be  
glad you did what  
you were punished  
for

(11)

A  
causes you to  
respect the teacher

B

C  
no effect

D

E  
causes you to lose  
respect for the  
teacher

(12)

A  
causes you to like  
the teacher

B

C  
no effect

D

E  
causes you to  
dislike the  
teacher

(13)

A  
causes you to like  
school

B

C  
no effect

D

E  
causes you to  
dislike school

(14)

A  
causes you to like  
yourself

B

C  
no effect

D

E  
causes you to  
dislike yourself

C. Punishment: EMBARRASSMENT IN FRONT OF THE CLASS (scolding, standing with nose in a circle, standing in the corner, putting gum on the end of your nose, etc.)

(15)

A  
causes you to stop  
misbehaving

B

C  
no effect

D

E  
causes you to keep  
on misbehaving

(16)

A  
causes you to want  
to do better

B

C  
no effect

D

E  
causes you to want  
to do worse

(17)

A  
causes you to  
regret doing what  
you were punished  
for

B

C  
no effect

D

E  
causes you to be  
glad you did what  
you were punished  
for

(18)

A  
causes you to  
respect the teacher

B

C  
no effect

D

E  
causes you to lose  
respect for the  
teacher



(19)

A  
causes you to like  
the teacher

B

C  
no effect

D

E  
causes you to dis-  
like the teacher

(20)

A  
causes you to like  
school

B

C  
no effect

D

E  
causes you to  
dislike school

(21)

A  
causes you to like  
yourself

B

C  
no effect

D

E  
causes you to  
dislike yourself

D. Punishment: BEING SUSPENDED FROM SCHOOL

(22)

A  
causes you to stop  
misbehaving

B

C  
no effect

D

E  
causes you to keep  
on misbehaving

(23)

A  
causes you to want  
to do better

B

C  
no effect

D

E  
causes you to want  
to do worse

(24)

A  
causes you to  
regret doing what  
you were punished  
for

B

C  
no effect

D

E  
causes you to be  
glad you did what  
you were punished  
for

(25)

A  
causes you to  
respect the  
teacher

B

C  
no effect

D

E  
causes you to lose  
respect for the  
teacher

(26)

A  
causes you to like  
the teacher

B

C  
no effect

D

E  
causes you to  
dislike the  
teacher

(27)

A  
causes you to like  
school

B

C  
no effect

D

E  
causes you to  
dislike school

(28)

A  
causes you to like  
yourself

B

C  
no effect

D

E  
causes you to  
dislike yourself

e. Punishment: CLEANING UP THE SCHOOL AND GROUNDS (picking up paper, etc.)

(29)

A  
causes you to stop  
misbehaving

B

C  
no effect

D

E  
causes you to keep  
on misbehaving

(30)

A  
causes you to want  
to do better

B

C  
no effect

D

E  
causes you to want  
to do worse

(31)

---

A  
causes you to  
regret doing  
what you were  
punished for

---

B

---

C  
no effect

---

D

---

E  
causes you to be  
glad you did  
what you were  
punished for

(32)

---

A  
causes you to  
respect the  
teacher

---

B

---

C  
no effect

---

D

---

E  
causes you to lose  
respect for the  
teacher

(33)

---

A  
causes you to like  
the teacher

---

B

---

C  
no effect

---

D

---

E  
causes you to  
dislike the  
teacher

(34)

---

A  
causes you to like  
school

---

B

---

C  
no effect

---

D

---

E  
causes you to  
dislike school

(35)

---

A  
causes you to like  
yourself

---

B

---

C  
no effect

---

D

---

E  
causes you to  
dislike yourself