

Punishment in English Language Classroom: Forms and Effects

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Abstract

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Students should be cared for with tender love and kindness in the basic level classes. However, we experience the use of punishment. A teacher's punishment can create multiple effects on the students' learning. Considering this, the present article aims to find out the forms of punishment and their effects on students' learning of English. It has been developed out of the research work on the issue of punishment in English language teaching. The study followed a phenomenological research design using the qualitative interpretative method. The data were elicited by using participant observation, focus group discussion and exit interviews. A basic level school in the Gorkha district was selected and the ten different classes of English teachers were observed. A Focus group discussion was held with the students and finally, an exit interview was taken with the teacher. The findings of the study depict that teachers exercised punishment on the students in the forms of scolding, slapping, disguising, threatening, and advising. The students' experienced that their teacher was not friendly to them as he exercised punishment to control

their behaviours. However, the teacher shared his compulsion to use punishment due to the students' insincerity. Both the students and the teachers realized the formative and destructive role of the punishment tools according to the situation. The results enabled us to conclude that although teachers and educators prefer learner-centred pedagogy in basic level classes, still they are using punishment as a strategy to take control over the class and to discourage the students' misbehaviours.

Keywords: Classroom discipline, punishment, forms, effects, sincerity

Introduction and Problematizing

Generally, the students are expected to perform well-disciplinary behaviours in the classroom. The teachers also want to see students' punctuality, regularity, sincerity and cooperation in the English language classroom. However, some students often exhibit disruptive behaviour. They may breach

the rules of classroom discipline. They may be irregular in the classroom and neglect the classroom tasks given to them. Some students may be insincere in their studies or some may be guided by ill-disciplinary behaviours. Teachers need to handle the ill disciplinary and disruptive behaviours of the students. The activities and manner of the students which breach the general code of conduct for the students and which are beyond the rules of classroom learning are ill-disciplinary behaviours (Brown, 2009). Teachers use punishment as one of the strategies to control or restrict the students' ill disciplinary behaviours (Rosen, 1997). Punishment is an act of punishing someone. It's the application of an unpleasant stimulus or penalty to eliminate or correct undesirable behaviour (Gershoff, 2002). The punishment can be corporal or verbal. Corporal punishment makes use of physical force. It is a sort of violence in the sense that it is a violation of children's rights to feel comfortable with dignity and live in the world of physical integrity (Elbla, 2012). On the other hand, verbal punishment is related to scolding, yelling, or derogating (Sroufe et.al. 2005). However, the practice of physical or verbal punishment on the students in a classroom can be linked with the reflection of poor teaching and discipline (Freire & Macedo, 1995).

We can see the use of different forms of punishment in schools as an indication of the absence of meaningful access to quality education. Physical punishment is undesirable from the perspective of learner-centeredness and child-friendly education. Punishment is against the rights of the children that are well considered in the convention on the Rights of Children (CRC) which is ratified by most governments including Nepal. In this regard, the UN (1989) also mentions that all nations worldwide are aiming to achieve the goals of the Rights of Children by the year 2015. Hence, it has been seen that in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990; 95), the countries of the world have promised to protect children's rights. The Convention explains that all children have the right to get an education without being forced in either way. For example, in article 40, the convention states, "Children accused of breaking the law have the right to legal help and fair treatment. There should be lots of solutions to help these children become good members of their communities". The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN, 1948) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989) were the most outstanding international documents advocating for human/children rights protection.

The issue of punishment is deeply rooted in the concept of discipline. Discipline is the state of a conducive environment for learning (Ur, 2013). The school environment is expected to be pleasant for learning. It should be healthy, attractive, safe and supportive for the children. In a safer and supportive environment, the students get the opportunity to be socialized, well-guided, thoughtful, creative, interactive and educated. The classrooms should be pedagogically safe houses (Shor, 2016) for all the children. In the 21st century, schools are more than simply physical places for teaching subjects of knowledge or practising skills. The teachers are sought to play the roles of supporting and guiding the learners to develop their potential (Kinhole, 2008, p. 45). Teachers as managers need to manage all the learning activities of the students and attempt to maintain discipline. Similarly, the schools' administrators and educators believe that discipline is needed in schools if the aim is to produce well-educated and disciplined pupils (Crookes, 2013). In this sense, discipline is necessary to provide obedience to school rules and correct pupils' misbehaviours. This could be one of the reasons why many believers of punishment in school find a link between punishment as a means of managing

pupils' problems on the one hand and school's discipline on the other hand (Brown, 2009).

Each student has the right to learn in a democratic way for developing his or her consciousness (Freire, 1974). Moreover, the global concerns on Education for All (EFA) in 1990 and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000 have stressed the issue of providing children with a meaningful quality education that promotes their future well beings in a peaceful environment. It can be interpreted that the global concerns of EFA expect a punishment free state of learning in the classroom. Any form of punishment can harm the behaviour and personality of the learners. The Government of Nepal, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology also encourages the teachers, administrators and educators for prohibiting punishment in schools as it is seen spelt in the country education policies. Students enroll in basic schools at critical stages (may be at the age of four to thirteen years in the common trend of schooling the students in Nepal). They are admitted for their personality development and the academic skills (Bartolomé, 2004), so, they should be treated in friendly manner.

However, in my own experience of learning and teaching practices inside the classroom, I come to experience several forms of punishments like physical, emotional, social, verbal, preventive, and repressive are some to name here. During my long experience of observing the classes of trainee teachers, school visits and even in my bygone days of student life, I observed that the teachers in different classes presented themselves as if they had been practicing punishment. Their punishment, I guess, may be for the purpose of taking control over the students, for maintaining quiet and calm, and may be for the sake of classroom discipline. This sort of my personal experience, observation of others classes, and self-motivation in the issue of punishment in classroom evoked me to work on this problem. In this regard, I have concentrated my energies to explore what different forms of punishment do teachers use in the basic level classes, why do they select or use punishment as a preventive or repressive strategy to control the classroom, and how do the teachers and the students, both feel about the effects of punishment in teaching and learning of English.

The Review of Literature

Many theorists attempted to define school discipline and punishment, for instance, Rosen (1997), Eggleton (2001) and Cameron (2006) defined school discipline as a branch of knowledge-training that develops self-control, character, efficiency to enforce obedience and compliance to school authority and the rules. Kelishadroky (2016) argues that rewards and punishment are the two techniques used in many environments in order to maintain the discipline. The study of Evertson and Weinstein (2006) shows that compared to reward, various forms of punishments are seemed to be highly exercised in a foreign language classroom. However, Evertson argues that some teachers use reward intrinsically and extrinsically to prevent negative behavior of the students. According to Kohn (2006), "Punishment is done to change student behavior in the future by preventing them from doing something they want to do and encouraging students to do something better". (p. 110). Though negatively perceived, punishment has an aim to bring change in the behavior. Punishment can be done by giving advice and reprimand too without causing physical violence or psychological torture which is attuned by the positive behavioral theory (Cameron, 2006). As an external factor to influence the learning and disciplinary behavior of the students, punishment may suffer the students or often leads them to develop a sense of revenge (Robinson et.al., 2005).

It means, punishment is a less pleasant act.

Broadly, two types of punishments have been discussed in the literature (for example, Evertson & Weinstein, 2003; Kelishadroky, et al., 2016; Mila, 2018). They are preventive and repressive. Evertson and Weinstein (2003) explain that preventive punishment is free of violence. It is intended to prevent the students from committing misbehavior in the classroom learning. In this punishment, the strategies like giving advice, giving reprimand, providing counselling, and complaining are used. The purpose is to make students understand that making noises, mistakes or committing violence is wrong (Robinson et al., 2005). Repressive punishment, on the other hand, is related to corporal punishment. It promotes physical violence. In this punishment, the students are punished physically after their mistakes (Mila, 2018). Repressive punishment can be seen in the form of bullying, asking students to stand in front of the class, bend their head and neck, slapping and so on (Feinstein & Mwachombela, 2010). It shows that different forms of punishments are exercised in the school classes to control the students unwanted behaviors. Regarding the forms of punishment, the study by Bordin (2006) indicates that teachers and administrators used corporal, verbal, emotional and symbolic punishments, for example, they threaten the students, scold harshly, beat by using stick or by hands, bullying, disguising, complaining to the authority and the guardians, and forcing them to leave the class. Punishment is purposively used in the classroom. Regarding the purpose, the study of Ilegbusi (2013) explained that both the corporal and verbal punishments are administered to the students for getting them careful on academic, behavioral, administrative and managerial aspects.

The meaning and use of punishment has been interpreted from psychological, social, academic and critical pedagogical perspectives. For example, from a psychological point of view, Skinner (1968) perceived punishments as unpleasant and painful events (stimuli). He stated that punishment, if administer after the occurrence of certain behavior will decrease the likelihood of that behavior to occur again. For Skinner rewards are found to be practically more effective than punishment in enforcing and strengthening positive behaviors and emotions among the young learners. Similarly, from the critical perspective, punishment is a form of domination to suppress the students in the class. Punishment violates the principle of getting classes as pedagogical safe houses (Kinchole, 2008). Critical pedagogy prefers dialogic engagement (Shor, 2016) and negotiated instruction (Norton & Toohey, 2004) instead of punishing the students. Similarly, the theory of social justice perceives punishment as an offensive, often a violence and unwanted act (Cameron, 2006) in a classroom.

Punishment can have a big impact on students' behavior. Regarding the impact, the study of Agbenyega (2006) indicated that majority of the teachers where the study was conducted administer corporal punishment to students who perform poorly in academic work. Regarding the effects, Beggan and Allison (2018) have discussed both the strengths and weaknesses of punishment from the findings of his study. Accordingly, the punishment makes students aware on not committing mistakes because they do not want to be punished. It forces the students complete the task on time, controls the ill disciplinary practices and helps to create peaceful atmosphere. However, the students feel embarrassed and deterred because of the punishment given to them. From the review of the study by Robinson et al (2005), it has been seen that students had many side effects of punishment. The findings show that they had a sense of fear of teacher, they had feelings of helplessness, humiliation, aggression and destruction at home and school, they thought for being running away from the classes, and felt nervous to interact in the classroom. Being closed to the findings of Robinson et al. (2005), Gershoff

(2002) claimed that the more harshly a child was hit, the more likely he/she is to be aggressive or to have mental health problems. In her study, Gershoff found linkage between spanking practiced by parents on their children and 10 negative behaviors including aggression, antisocial behavior and mental health problems. The only one positive result identified in her study was the quick compliance with parental demands.

Considering the side effects of punishment and its harmful consequences on children's behaviors and future life, child psychologists, educational psychologists and behavioral learning theorists emphasized the importance of examining children/pupils' behavioral problems and solving them through the positive support and procedures rather than using punishment as tools for discipline in schools (Travers et al, 1993). The students at the basic as well as advance level are affected by the punishment of the teachers, school administrators and the parents. One of the studies, for example, Kilimici (2009) reported that "children are the victims of corporal punishment at elementary schools. The study's observations and the interviews proved that children's rights were abused"(p. 242). Kilimic's findings confirmed with the previously mentioned results too. All the arguments discussed and explored from the review emphasized the point that punishment (verbal/corporal/preventive/repressive) in schools causes harm and produces negative side effects on learners' behavior and self-esteem. However, a sort of controversy can be observed on whether punishment is discipline or an abuse. Some people understood it as the discipline itself (Brown, 2009) and some others may understand it as the abuse of power (Busienei, 2012). In this regard, Bassan et al. (2018) studied on Corporal punishment of children: Discipline or Abuse. The findings of the study indicate that less than 50 % of the participants accepted punishment for the discipline, however, 60% of them viewed punishment as the abuse of power that has adverse effects on physical, social and psychic health of the children. Punishment has specific role in language teaching and shaping students' behavior. Khaliq and Ahan (2016) examined the role of Reinforcement or punishment in learning English language and concluded that teacher's punishment enhanced the learning process because they made hardships in learning to be safe from the punishment. Punishment can have direct and indirect relation with the student's behavior and learning achievement. The study of Kaylor (2005) revealed that the association of corporal punishment and children's externalizing behavior. Accordingly, the preventive punishment controls the misbehavior of the students and the repressive punishment creates a sense of fear for not committing mistakes in learning.

From the review, it has been noted that punishment to the students in a classroom has been a research backdrop, however very little work has been made on the forms and effects of punishment in an English language classroom. The large-scale quantitative studies undertaken earlier only explored the perceptions of the stakeholders on punishment and some qualitative studies discussed above only focused on the impact of punishment in physical, mental and emotional health. It shows the gaps in research literature regarding the study of forms and the effects of the punishment in a language classroom. Talking about the context of Nepal, no significant study has ever been carried out addressing the forms and effects of punishment, both in an English language classroom incorporating the data from multiple sources. In this sense, this study is supposed to be relevant to bridge the existing gaps in the research literature and to contribute the field of English language teaching and learning.

Research Questions

Almost all the studies reviewed in this work were conducted in the foreign context. But this study has unlocked the issue of punishment as it has been practiced at the basic level classes in the context of Nepal. The study mainly addressed the following questions:

- a. How are the students at basic level classes treated on the aspects of classroom discipline and the learning behaviors?
- b. What different forms of punishment are exercised to the learners in the English language classroom?
- c. What do the teachers and the students view on the effects of punishment in learning and shaping behavior?
- d. What could be the effects of punishment in students' manner of being, behaving, and learning?

Methodology

This study was guided by qualitative interpretive paradigm which puts emphasis on exploring multiple realities (Bryman, 2008). It claims that individuals are complex to understand and different people experience and understand the same objective reality in different ways. The study followed transcendental phenomenology as the research design as it presents the things as they are seen and appear on one's consciousness. Creswell (2007) states that the type of problem best suited for phenomenology research is one which is important to understand individual's common or shared experiences of phenomenon. It would be important to understand these common experiences in order to develop policies, or to develop a deeper understanding about the features of the phenomenon (p.60). Participant observation and the shared information from teacher and students constituted the sources of knowledge for the study. Similarly, my own experience of the punishment in the classroom recollected through the observation of student teachers' classes at the time of teaching practice and through the interactions with students supported me to interpret the problem in depth.

The data for this study were collected by adopting qualitative research strategy using Participant Observation (PO), Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and the Exit Interview (EI) (Harry & Klingner, 2005). The choice of the qualitative design allowed me to deepen my understanding of why and under what circumstances do some basic school's teachers opt to use different forms of punishment in the classroom. In the same strength, the understanding of how do students react and feel about this punishment was also investigated through this qualitative research design. Therefore, the focus of the study centered around hearing the voices of both teachers and pupils, hence comes the suitability of qualitative research as argued by Bryman (2008) "qualitative research is a research strategy that usually emphasizes words rather than quantification in collection and analysis of data" (p. 266).

To attain the objectives of the study, Shree Jana Prabhat Basic School (Pseudonym) was selected as research site. A class of grade six was chosen for the purpose of observation. The samples for the study were selected by using judgmental sampling strategy. Based on my own experience of visiting the school several time and having informal interaction with the students of the school, I selected the site and the samples purposively. I had a belief that the site and sample could provide me the information that I expected to bring out. Altogether eight students (four male and the equal number

of female students of grade six within the age of 11-13) and one basic level English teacher were selected as the participants.

Three specific tools including participant observation, focus group discussion and exit interview were employed for data elicitation. The consent was taken and the purpose of the study was clarified before the class observation. The participants for FGD were selected voluntarily. The time for FGD and EI was fixed in negotiation. The FGD was held in November, 2021 and the interview was taken in December, 2021. The choice for these instruments were based on what Kalve and Brinkmann (2009) have pointed that; through interview's conversations and discussions about what people are saying researchers get to know them, understand their world, learn about their experiences, perceptions and feelings which enrich the research undertaken and make knowledge generated from it more solid and trustworthy. The subjects for discussions were based on the issues of punishment, purpose of punishment, forms of punishment, effects of punishment, teacher-students' awareness on the consequences of punishment, and the alternatives of punishment to be adopted in the class for discipline and shaping expected behavior.

The collected data was analyzed in the spirit of the qualitative interpretative analysis. Based on the ideas of Bryman (2008), the data from the research questions, data analysis has been made with the vignettes of the observation, and the transcriptions of FGD and EI data. The significant statements have been highlighted and are supported with the sentences, quotes to provide the rigor of analysis. So, the significant statements from the PO, and the themes from FGD and EI have been put together including the researcher's understanding of the phenomena for the qualitative interpretative description.

Results and Discussion

This section of the study focuses on presenting the data, discussion of the results and the interpretation of the meaning of data and the results that had been collected from the classes, students and the teachers. The discussion has been made as consistent as possible with the research questions and the subjects of discussions during the study. From the observation, FGD and EI, the following aspects were emerged:

Punishment seen in the classroom

One of the objectives of the study was to observe how the students at the basic level English classes were treated for the perspective of maintaining discipline and shaping good learning behavior, and to see the forms of punishment used by the teacher. Discipline is always sought in the classroom (Ur, 2013) and the teachers make use of different strategies to maintain the discipline in the classroom including. For the purpose of observing how the students are treated in the classroom and whether teachers use punishment to maintain discipline and shape students' behavior, and the forms of punishment exercised ten different classes of a teacher at grade six were observed following the norms of participant observation. Diary keeping was maintained during the observation for the record of the activities. During the observation, I found the use of both the verbal and non-verbal punishment. The teacher used the following strategies to maintain the discipline and reshape the students' learning behavior:

Advising and reprimanding the students

In the first class of the observation, the teacher started the class with a request for being keep

and quiet. He asked the students about the homework and checked for them. However, only nine students among twenty one present in the classroom were with the homework. He reprimanded those students who were with incomplete homework in this way:

You are always without homework in the class. You don't know the importance of homework. It is for your practice and remembrance. If you don't complete tomorrow, I will punish you. [Classroom vignette-23 November, 2021]

Then, the teacher started the topic. The students remained quiet however, two of them turned the pages of the book unnecessarily and looked at the picture. I went in their seat and asked for the reason of turning the pages and looking at the picture. They remained calm. The teacher looked at them steadily for a while. The students bent their head and remained silent. The teacher came to me and said:

These are not decent students. They have no interest in the study. I have been convincing them time and again but the thing is same. [Classroom vignette-23 November, 2021]

The teacher spoke himself for a while and continued the class and concluded with the remark: You've to study it at your home, tomorrow I will ask you the questions given in the exercise.

Threatening the students with symbolic punishment

In the next day, the teacher briefly revised the earlier class and asked the questions in group based on the text that he taught in the previous class. Only a few students responded and the others remained unspoken. The teacher noted those who were active and asked individual questions to 4 of the students. In response, one of them gave answer and others did not speak at all. The teacher treated them like this:

What do you do at your home? Neither you complete your homework nor give the answer. I will talk with your parents. You lazy students, you...you are not punctual, what to do...! [Classroom vignette-24 November, 2021]

The teacher became aggressive and looked at those students for a while and asked them to have concentration. He was quite attentive for the noises from the side of the students and told 'be silent' hey you, why are you talking...no one speak while asking question but everyone makes noise in the classroom. The teacher kept on teaching and gave homework to them at the end. He wrapped up the class with a remark, I will see tomorrow how many of you do the homework tomorrow.

Verbal and non-verbal punishment (Scolding and slapping)

In the third day, the teacher was in the class with a small stick. He greeted the students and reminded them the task given for the homework. He requested them put their exercise book in front and checked one by one. The students state of doing homework was not different from the earlier class. Then, he used the stick to beat the students who were there without homework and with partial completion. He tickled just a single hit on their hand and disguised them like this:

How many times should I need to say, you foolish, you lazy, I have never seen you like students, you only know to talk, laugh and make noises in the class, what do you do at the home, you don't know anything... [Classroom vignette-25 November, 2021]

Meantime, he praised the students who were punctual and obedient in doing homework. He thanked them and said the others: 'You look at your friends, they have done well, these are obedient, I appreciate, but the lazier ones, you learn from them.

- Getting students stand in front and asking to bend the head at knee with a rounding of hands
In rest of the classes observed, the teacher repeated the same forms of punishment as he employed in the earlier classes. However, in the seventh class that I observed he used both corporal and verbal punishment to maintain the discipline, reshape their habit of being regular and calm attentive in the study, and to take control over the class. When five of the students (a group of girl students) entered lately in the class, the teacher became furious and ordered them to stand in front of the class for a while. One of the students started responded like this:

Sir, we were in washroom and in the tap for refreshment and drinking water. We don't know when you entered into the room. We did not make any delay intentionally but it happened. Sorry sir, excuse us!

The teacher didn't agree for the reason and said: You have too many things to lie, I know you are good in pretending, especially you, girl! You stay there for a while and you have to promise for not to repeat such again. [Classroom vignette-29 November, 2021]

In the same class, while keeping on teaching writing to the students, he paid attention towards the students sitting at the corner. He noticed that three students of the adjacent benches torn the pages of copy, writing something different and throwing the piece of paper with unclear verbal response. The teacher indulged in temper and called those students to come in the front. He ordered them to bend the head at knee with a rounding of hands and scolded:

You fool, naughty, don't you know what is going in the class, what I am saying and what your friends are doing. Now be like a hen and see how panic it will be. Umm...it is easier to have talk and misbehavior. You start!., What a sense !, how many times should I say be disciplined. [Classroom vignette-2 December, 2021]

At the end of the class, the teacher convinced the students to obey the rules of the classroom patched on the wall and persuaded them to be well disciplined for his happiness and for their own personality development.

Expulsion, detention scolding, disguising, asking to repeat the task, and praising

In the other classes observed, the teacher followed exclusion, detention scolding, repetition of the same task again, and disguising the students in public as the forms of punishment or the strategies to get students disciplined in the classes. During the time of interaction, the teacher observed the incorrect use of language of the students in both speech and writing. Then, he became angry and used verbal expulsion as:

You leave the class, you go outside, you have no meaning of this kind of learning. You are not sincere. You never remember and even understand what I am saying. So, it is better not to come from tomorrow. [Classroom vignette-3 December, 2021]

The above vignette also shows the teacher's disguise to the students in public. Similarly, the teacher used detention scolding quite often as a strategy to punish the students. One of the events of using this strategy was related to the misbehavior of students each other. When the teacher noticed two students sitting together quarreled each other during the class time, the teacher became aggressive and shouted:

Look...what a, what a manner. Are not you friends/ Why are you fighting to each other? Oh I see,...you are stronger and can fight. Do you think that classroom is the boxing ring? It is total

nonsense; you come here and sit in the first bench. [Classroom vignette-4th March, 2022]

Another form of punishment exercised frequently in the class was asking students repeat the task. In case of the mistakes in students' classwork and homework, the teacher asked the students repeat the task by looking at the book or checking with their colleagues. The teacher had verbal assurance while asking for repeating the tasks like this:

You rewrite it. First look at the book, study at once and write. You can also take support of your friends and correct the incorrect things pointed in your exercise book. This is how you can improve your writing or speech. You must have to use correct form to get good marks ok. I will be happy if you correct them yourself. You are not always bad. Thank you, good boys and girls, for obeying what I am saying [Classroom vignette-5 December, 2021].

It has been observed that the teacher used punishment in every class I observed in either of the way as per the response of students' bad behaviors and wrong activities. This finding goes in line with the result of Evertson (2003) which shows that compared to reward, various forms of punishments are seemed to be highly exercised to prevent negative behavior of the students in a foreign language classroom. The use of both the verbal and non-verbal punishment has been observed. Teacher gave more emotional and verbal punishment compared to physical punishment to the students. This result equates with the finding of the study by Brown (2009) which subsumed that the teachers used creating fear, threatening the students by raising finger and using bitter statements, reporting the behavior to the head teacher and the parents though they sometimes tickled and slapped the students as physical punishment. Two types of punishments as repressive and preventive were discussed in the literature (for example, Evertson, 2003; Kelishadroky, et al., 2016; Mila, 2018) and the result of the observation shows that the teacher used both of them considering the degree of misbehavior.

Advising and reprimanding the students, threatening the students with symbolic punishment, verbal and non-verbal punishment (Scolding and beating), getting students stand in front and asking to bend the head at knee with a rounding of hands, expulsion, detention scolding, disguising, asking to repeat the task, praising, and assigning more tasks and questions were the major forms of punishment exercised in the basic level classes. These results are in line with the findings of the study by Bordin (2006) that indicated the use of corporal, verbal, emotional and symbolic punishments, for example, they threaten the students, scold harshly, beat by using stick or by hands, bullying, disguising, complaining to the authority and the guardians, and forcing them to leave the class by the teachers and the administrator.

Punishment was seen formative to do homework, classroom work and to be quite and attentive in the class. Still the punishment had adverse effects so far, I observed on the students as that created fear, anxiety, hurt and sadness in the students. The other studies reviewed in this research also came up with the similar findings. Beggan and Allison (2018) have discussed both the strengths and weaknesses of punishment from the findings of his study. Accordingly, the punishment made students aware on not committing mistakes because they do not want to be punished. It forced them complete the task or assignment on time, controls the ill disciplinary practices and helps to create peaceful classroom atmosphere. However, the students felt embarrassed and deterred and they also felt harassed because of the punishment given to them in the classroom.

The study by Robinson et al (2005) present many side effects of punishment. The findings show

that they had a sense of fear of teacher, they had feelings of helplessness, humiliation, aggression and destruction at home and school, they thought for being running away from the classes, and felt nervous to interact in the classroom. Being closed to the findings of Robinson et al. (2005), Gershoff (2002) claimed that the more harshly a child was hit, the more likely he/she is to be aggressive or to have mental health problems. The data from my observation also indicate both the constructive and adverse effects of punishment on the students.

Punishment in the eyes of the students

Besides the observation, I talked with 8 of the students regarding the issue of discipline and the types of punishment administered to them from their teacher during the Focus Group discussion (FGD). In my questions regarding the forms of punishment administered to them by the teacher as they experienced, they freely shared their ideas.

At the beginning, the students were asked to discuss and share their views on the value of discipline and later on the experienced of being punished in several ways. Summing up their ideas, the responses were found to be mixed. Six of the participants among 8 were found to be aware on the value of discipline for effective learning and personality development while two of them had no ideas. As they reported, discipline is the characteristic of student and it is to be followed inside and outside the classroom. They wanted to present themselves as punctual, sincere, obedient, and good in the class because they could get the love and affection from the teacher. They argued that discipline also helps improve learning and becoming a good learner of the classroom. However, 2 of them just agreed their friends but did not share anything else. Regarding their sincerity in the classroom all of them said that they present themselves as sincere students; they obeyed whatever their teacher asked them to obey; they practiced doing classwork and homework, both but lack of ideas and the time they were unable to complete all as expected. None of the students discarded that they are insincere in classroom. Concerning to the forms of punishment exercised by the teacher, they shared their unanimous voice. According to them, their teacher mostly used verbal punishment like scolding, reprimanding, disguising, threatening, asking difficult questions, asking for repeating the tasks, being angry and aggressive, looking fiercely, ordering, advising not to make noise and not to show misbehavior, shouting, convincing and asking to stand for a while. They also experienced the repressive punishment like having slap on head and cheeks, twisting the ears, poking, bullying hair, beating by stick on hands and legs, being like a hen by bending head to knee and wrapping with the hands, pointing the finger to create fear, and yelling in case of their misbehavior, disobedience, and violation of classroom rules. To validate their ideas, here is a part of view from two of the students:

Discipline is important to us to show good behavior. It makes us sincere. Our teachers, parents and the friends show their care and love to me if I am disciplined. ... I try to be sincere as far as possible. Umm, punishment...sir scolds us and often use stick. He convinces me not to be talkative and insincere. He sometimes creates fear by threatening and sometimes becomes positive by advising. [Translated and reduced FGD data of P-7, December, 2021]

I don't know exactly what is discipline but I know it is important to me. It is the ornament. I follow the rules of classroom and obey my teacher. My teacher scolds me and my friends. He sometime asks us to stand until he asks to sit down. He sometimes pokes the skin and beat by stick to the noisy friends. He becomes angry to us and looks at us with different eyes. He also suggests us to do homework and do good things. [Translated and reduced FGD data of P-2, December, 2021]

The above excerpts of the students in FGD shows the use of both the preventive and repressive punishment to the students. Convincing students to be sincere and attentive in the class, suggesting and advising them for obeying classroom discipline is preventive whilst scolding, threatening, asking for standing in front of other students for a while, and using stick to control their misbehavior is repressive punishment. Punishment used by the teacher in the classroom has both the constructive and destructive roles as perceived by the students. During the FGD, I asked them to talk about their feelings towards the punishment and two of the participants expressed like this:

I am afraid with committing mistakes in the class. I was badly scolded by the teacher once in the classroom because of talking with friends at the time of teaching. The teacher reported for my behavior to my parents. He discouraged me with his statement, you never come to the class...you silly students! Even, at the home my parents threatened me not to repeat such acts in school. I was really disappointed at that time and I still remember it. [Translated and reduced FGD data of P-5, December, 2021]

Punishment made me sad in the class and I still had a fear of getting punishment from my teachers. I got slapped badly from the teacher as I was in the class without completing homework. But that event has a big lesson. Now, I am worried for doing homework and complete it every day. Now I know what I have to do and what not to do in the class. [Translated and reduced FGD data of P-7, December, 2021]

Two of the above FGD excerpts are the evidence on how students feel about punishment in the class. None of the students favored punishment. They had a fear of being scolded and slapped in the class which was also a matter of being disguised. During FGD, the students opined that they get punishment for not doing homework, making noises, distracting their classmates, and being irregular in class while teaching learning activities. They further opined that they have got verbal, emotional, physical punishments.

However, teacher's punishment had constructive role as it made them sincere in doing homework and being quiet and calm in the class. In this regard, the study of Khaliq and Ahan (2016) concluded that teacher's punishment enhanced the learning process because they made hardships in learning to be safe from the punishment. However, the participants argued that the teacher should play the role of a facilitator in providing all guidance with related material in the same time must play the strict role as per the required situation. The findings related to the effects of punishment confirmed with the arguments of child psychologists, educational psychologists, behavioral learning theorists and researcher that different forms of punishment administered to the students have side effects on children behavior and self-esteem. The positive effectiveness is seen in correcting the misbehaviors (Skinner, 1968; Gershoff, 2002; Robinson et al., 2005; & Kilimici, 2009). However, the negative effect

is seen in their emotional behavior. The students in the interaction mentioned that they developed when punished like feeling angry, inferior, disappointed, frustrated and despair. This finding is similar with one of the results of the study by Elbla (2012) which indicates that the basic level students in Tanzania developed the feelings like being aggressive, hatred to the lesson and the teacher, sad, violent, isolated, less confident and hesitant to take initiatives for the interaction as the adverse effects of punishment. The students of both the elementary and advance level get affected by the punishment. One of the studies, for example, Kilimici (2009) reported that "children are the victims of corporal punishment at elementary schools. The observations and the interviews proved that children's rights were abused"(p. 242). Kilimici's findings confirmed with the previously mentioned results too.

Punishment and the purpose of use to the teacher

Considering the objectives of the study, an exit interview was taken with the teacher after the observation. The concern was to explore how does the teacher perceive punishment, forms and their role, and effects up on the students. It was also held for the data triangulation. The teacher perceived punishment as both desirable and undesirable classroom behavior and said:

It depends on the students. I know the better is convincing, suggesting, and reporting. However, it is not applicable in case of some stubborn and talkative students. Punishment is used to control students' misbehaviors and maintain discipline in classrooms. The students of lower grades are more talkative in the class and make unnecessary noises. I think, the students who repeatedly show foolish behavior must be punished...[Class teacher interviewed in December, 2021].

The teacher expressed his obligation of using punishment being irrespective to his will. As he shared, he was not in favor of using punishment as a strategy to control but the students' behavior made him doing so. The teacher expressed:

I follow the principle of learner friendly teaching. I know the importance of love and care to the students in gentle way but some students perform undesirable behavior and my advice does not work to them. I know the students should not be discouraged with punishment but their irregularity, disobedience, disruptive behavior and laziness enforce me to choose punishment as a controlling strategy [Class teacher interviewed in December, 2021].

The teacher was also asked about the forms of punishment that he used in the class and the purpose. Regarding the forms and their purpose, he shared:

I punish students according to the rules of school. I use punishment like manual work, expulsion, detention scolding, threatening, umm... sometimes I tell them to write homework clean the classroom in the break time as a punishment, sometimes asked them to say 10/20 words within one minute, I ..umm.. ask them the questions frequently, ask them to tell the summary of the lesson, like these. The purpose is making them disciplined, punctual, obedient and to discourage for unwanted behavior [Class teacher interviewed in December, 2021].

The teacher experienced both the formative and counterproductive roles of the punishment given to the students in the classroom and said:

In my experience punishment produces some immediate change in the students' behavior of being quiet in the classroom and doing homework. It helped to take control over the class but these changes are temporary. Some punished students become more aggressive and become

violent with their peers. But some of them realized their mistakes and don't repeat the same mistake again I use positive punishment. After I punish them, they change their behavior and take active participation in learning activities. So, it's effective to punish students in a positive way. I also experience that physical punishment cause fear and anxiety on students' mind. [Class teacher interviewed in December, 2021].

The entire responses of the class teacher entail that he uses both the verbal and physical punishment to the students. The data from the observation and FGD also indicate the same results. The effect of the punishment is seen positive in correcting the misbehavior. The poor academic performance of the students and the unnecessary noises have been noted as the factors causing punishment to the students in the opinion of teacher. This finding confirms with Feinstein and Mwahombela (2010) and Busienei (2012). Both of the study confirmed that the poor academic performance of the students and the disruptive behaviors provoke the teachers to exercise punishment in the class. Similarly, the study of Kaylor (2005) revealed that the teachers are forced to use punishment as a preventive strategy to control the misbehavior of the students and get them decent in the classroom.

The teacher in the exit interview shared that he uses alternative means of punishment as asking students not to go for the break and stay inside the class to complete the homework. In line with this, the study by Agbenyega (2006) suggests that teacher could use alternatives like asking students not to go for the break and stay inside the class to write and complete homework, asking them for cleaning the board and the classroom, ask them to do more homework, and let them stand back of the class and think of how to improve his/her behavior. Regarding the purpose of punishment, it has been explored that the teacher gave punishment to realize students' mistakes and to change their bad habits. This finding is similar with what Kohn (2006) said as 'punishment is done to change student behavior in the future by preventing them from doing something they want to do and encouraging students to do something better' (p. 110). Regarding the purpose and the effect, Robinson et.al., (2005) in their study concluded that though negatively perceived, punishment has an aim to bring change in the behavior. As an external factor to influence the learning and disciplinary behavior of the students, punishment may suffer the students. The purpose must be making students understand that making noises, mistakes or committing violence is wrong (Robinson et al., 2005).

The teacher realized different roles of punishment as it supported to improve some children's thoughts, behaviors and learning when teachers gave punishment to their students which has tie up with the finding of the study of Ilegbusi (2014). Ilegbusi's study argues that both the corporal and verbal punishments play roles in getting students careful on academic, behavioral, administrative and managerial aspects. Sometimes, a sort of controversy can be observed on whether punishment is discipline or an abuse. Some people understood it as the discipline itself (Brown, 2009) and some others may understand it as the abuse of power (Busienei, 2012). In this study, the students perceived punishment as the discipline as well as abuse of power (in case of corporal/regressive/physical punishment) but the teacher argued it as a strategy to maintain discipline by controlling the undesirable behavior of the students. Similar kind of case is seen in the study of Bassan et al. (2018) which indicates that less than 50 % of the participants accepted punishment for the discipline, however, 60% of them viewed punishment as the abuse of power that has adverse effects on physical, social and psychic health of the children.

Conclusion and Implications

The discussion of the results depicts that the use of punishment as a strategy or tool to get students sincere, obedient, attentive, decent, and take the control over their disruptive or undesirable activities is a reality of an English language classroom in the context of Nepal. Teachers' punishment in the class has been found as the response of students' bad behaviors and wrong activities. During the observation, I found the use of verbal and non-verbal, preventive and regressive, and corporal and convincing punishment. Teacher gave punishment to the students realize their mistakes, change their bad habits, for not doing homework, making noises, distracting their classmates, and being irregular in the class. However, the approach of teacher was formative. The classroom vignettes and FGD as well as the interview excerpts enabled me to conclude punishment as an imperative and deliberate force for bringing changes in students learning and personal behavior which can have both the formative and destructive roles. The participants of the study also realized positive and negative roles of punishment.

Based on the classroom reality, so far observed, and the findings derived from the discussion, it has been suggested/implies that instead of using regressive punishment like reprimanding, threatening with symbolic punishment, and having slap on head and cheeks, the teacher should use the alternative ways like advising the students to show good performance, asking to repeat the task, praising, assigning more tasks, asking questions from the exercise, asking to provide the summary of the lesson and asking for regret as the part of punishing the students for undesirable behaviours.

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