



Philosophy of School Punishment

فلسفة العقاب المدرسي

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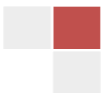
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Abstract

The relevance of punishment to the school situation is quite obvious. Discipline and general state of order have to be maintained if teaching is to proceed **in a smooth manner**. However, such conditions **are** not always **guaranteed**. **The** teacher then has to revert to punishment. The main objective of this paper is to highlight the meaning of "punishment" and ways in which it can possibly be justified, besides pinpointing the relevance of punishment to the educational process. For that purpose, philosophical and analytical method have been used in addition to reference to current literature on the subject. The conclusion that has been **arrived at** is that: if punishment is to be ataljustified, special considerations have to be paid to the issue concerning the aim or aims punishment is supposed to achieve. Punishment is normally justified in view of three broadly opposed approaches: the retributive, which is some sort of "hitting back", the utilitarian which is mostly associated with deterrence and the reformative which has special consideration for reform and rehabilitation. The retributivist approach is unacceptable in the educational environments while there is something to be said about determent and reformative theories. In the school situation, the absence of deterrence may cause, disorder on a large scale. The reformative approach is much more acceptable. Punishment can **play** a role in children`s moral and personal development when it is inflicted in appropriate situations on "offending" children **on condition that** they are shown the reason **why it is inflicted** upon them. However, Punishment, whatever form it may take, may be a necessary evil, **or** it is an evil nonetheless. It would, therefore, seem desirable punishment could be avoided as far as possible and only as a last resort, **provided that the reasons and aims behind it are first examined and evaluated**.

مستخلص

مناسبة العقاب في المدارس تبدو واضحة. النظام والحد الأدنى من الظروف المساعدة شئ لازم إن كان لعملية التعليم أن تستمر. ربما لا تكون الظروف مواتية في كل الأحوال في المدارس، وفي هذه الحالة لا مناص للمعلم من أن يستخدم أسلوب العقاب. يتمثل الهدف الرئيس لهذه الدراسة في إلقاء الضوء وتوضيح معنى العقاب المدرسي، وكيف يمكن تبريره، بالإضافة إلى استكشاف طبيعة العلاقة بين العقاب والعملية التربوية. لهذا الغرض استخدم

المنهج الفلسفي التحليلي الوثائقي مع الاعتماد على المتوافر من الأدبيات ومصادر المعلومات في مجال الدراسة. توصلت الدراسة إلى أهم النتائج الآتية: إن كان للعقاب في المدارس من تبرير، يجب أن يوضع في الاعتبار الهدف أو الأهداف التي يرجى للعقاب المدرسي أن يحققها. في الغالب، يتم تبرير استخدام العقاب في المدارس في ضوء ثلاثة اتجاهات متقابلة: الاتجاه الانتقامي والذي يركز على فكرة الانتقام من المخطئ، والاتجاه النفعي والذي يرتبط أكثر بالجانب الوقائي، والاتجاه الإصلاحي والذي يعطي اعتبارات أكثر للإصلاح والتأهيل. الاتجاه الانتقامي يعتبر غير مقبول في البيئة التربوية، ولكن هناك الكثير من الوجاهة في ما ذهبت إليه الاتجاهات النفعية والإصلاحية. إن غياب الردع في المدارس لا محالة يؤدي إلى الفوضى وعدم النظام، بينما يعتبر الاتجاه الإصلاحي هو الأكثر قبولاً حيث أن للعقاب دوراً يلعبه في التنمية الخلقية والشخصية للأطفال عندما يستخدم بشكل صحيح وفي المكان الصحيح، وذلك لأنه ينبه الأطفال إلى دواعي العقوبة. إن العقاب المدرسي في أي شكل من الأشكال شر ولكنه شر لابد منه. كلما كان تفادي العقاب ممكناً، كان ذلك أفضل، كما يجب أن يكون التزوع للعقاب هو الملاذ الأخير.

Introduction:

The topic of punishment fascinates men, learned and unlearned alike. This is real and not philosophical. For instance, the fiction of crime and punishment has always been perennially popular.

This intense interest is perhaps perplexing. Many fanciful explanations for it have been given. Some psychiatrists say that our fascination with punishment is a vicarious satisfaction of certain unconscious mental states e.g, the desire to inflict punishment (or at least hurt) on others or the fear that we ourselves may come to suffer a kind of punishment. Philosophers of an existentialist persuasion claim that we see (and envy) the criminal as a paradigm of a completely free person - autonomous from the chains of social obligation. And theologians see, in punishment, an earthly cosmic example of the drama of sin and redemption.

No doubt there is some truth in all of these claims - at least as explanations of why crime and punishment capture popular imagination.

It is also argued in some circles that punishment is either a wicked or inappropriate crime- a form of social disease for which it's perpetrators cannot be held responsible.

In a school situation a proclivity to punish people is often confused with discipline. This is actually confusing discipline with ways of preserving it. "Discipline", etymologically speaking, is rooted in a learning situation; it conveys the notion of submission to rules or some kind of order. In the widest sense , discipline (in one aspect) may be described as a relationship of submission or obedience to some sort of order, with all the effects of this relationship.

In a school situation, to have a good discipline in a classroom is to have control of the situation in such a way that teaching objectives are not hindered by factors such as lack of attention and misbehavior. Here, discipline is taken to be a means to an end. The proof of the discipline would be in learning.

As Peters has put it "Ideally speaking" children should come to school eager to be initiated into the mysteries of civilization. In fact many of them do not.⁽¹⁾

Nevertheless even the most inspiring and stimulating teachers sometimes come across pupils who will not submit to the discipline of the learning situation. On such occasions their authority on its own may be ineffective; it may have to be backed by power in order to maintain or bring out those minimum conditions of order without which progress in learning is not possible. This naturally introduces the question of punishment.

1) The meaning of "Punishment":

The punishment, under investigation here, is School punishment and not legal punishment. Both kinds of punishment are sometimes confused with one another. This is because punishment in school has a resemblance to legal punishment.

"Punishment ... is a much more specific notion which is usually only appropriate when there has been a breach of rules. It involves the intentional infliction of pain or of something unpleasant on someone who has committed such a breach of rules. The pain also must be inflicted by someone who is in authority, who has the right to act in this way. Otherwise, it would be impossible to distinguish "punishment" from "revenge". People in authority can, of course, inflict pain on people at whim. But this would be called "spite" unless it were inflicted as a consequence of a breach of rules on the part of the sufferer. ⁽²⁾

Broadly speaking "Punishment" includes (i) the intentional and purposeful infliction of pain (of some kind), (ii) by a person or persons in authority. (iii) it is inflicted as a penalty for what the authority believes to be some wrong done (iv) by the offender. ⁽³⁾

This, in effect, means that punishment is normally inflicted and administrated by somebody who has the authority to do so. It is directed as penalty against someone who deliberately makes unpleasant things to remind him not to do it again. This would probably be a strained use of "authority" and "Punishment". Punishment in that sense must also be a voluntary and purposeful act of an authority. It is not a mere natural effect. A person may get a thick head by eating or drinking much, or venereal disease by sexual promiscuity.

These are not, in any way, considered to be cases of punishment, they are only natural effects. Parents and teachers, sometimes, believe that they punish their children and pupils by letting them suffer the natural effects of their misbehaviors. This is doubtfully called "Punishment".

Authority, here is present, but in so far as the effects are natural, they are not an intentional infliction of pain and so not punishment. That is to say, the person (s) punishing must be in authority and punishing must be done from that authority. Mere vindictiveness or spite is not a motive of proper punishment.

Punishment, so conceived of, is closely associated with maintenance of discipline and order as far as the situation is concerned. Psychologically speaking, discipline is rather conflated with control, and the complementary treatment of punishment and reward as though they were agencies of psychological manipulation rather than features logically implicit in the notion of "discipline" itself. Thus Ausabel, forexample, writes.

"By discipline is meant the imposition of external standard and control on individual conduct... When external controls are internalized we can speak of self –discipline, it is clear, nonetheless, that the original source of the controls, as well as much of their later reinforcement, are extrinsic to the individual". ⁽⁴⁾

"Punishment", correspondingly, is just the pain or, aversive motivation, which helps the individual to realize what these external controls are and which thereafter induces him to, "internalize" them, In other words punishment teaches him to control himself rather than to go on suffering the pain of asking others to do for him.

The morally distinctive feature of discipline is that it is a form of order which is sought for its intrinsic value. Punishment and reward as forms of pain and pleasure which a person deserves, are sought for their disciplinary value.

According to Sears and Hilgard , Punishment and reward are only "techniques of control".⁽⁵⁾

They are only methods of preserving discipline. Punishment, when administered in schools, should not be confused with discipline, as it is only a device to which teachers and parents as well often resort in order to maintain discipline. It is therefore a frequent empirical condition of discipline.

"Punishment", being seen in such context, is retributive by definition. It is part of the meaning of the term that or it must involve pain or unpleasantness and that it must be as a consequence of an offence.

Here, it can be argued that it is not a law of nature that if people commit offences pain is inflicted on them. This happens regularly only because we have instituted legal systems which ordain that offenders will have pain inflicted on them.

This being so, the real question that one has to address oneself to is: How can these normative demands be built into the concept of "Punishment" be justified?

It is one thing to understand what is meant by, "Punishment" it is quite another to give good reasons why punishment should exist.

(ii) Justification of Punishment:

It is crucially important for the teacher to ask himself now and then: why do I give impositions, inflict pain and penalties?

How do I justify punishing my pupils?

To answer such a question Reid points out three types of answers, which may overlap here and there. As Reid puts it, "Punishment may be imposed: as retribution, in order to deter, in the hope that it may lead to reformation of the offender."⁽⁶⁾

The retributionist holds that some forms of wrong - doing should not only be blamed but the blame should be expressed through the infliction of pain. This amounts to saying that it is wrong that some misdeeds should be ignored and get off scot – free, without punishment. Violence and cruelty deserve punishment, deserve retribution.

In the words of Kant:

"Judicial punishment can never be inflicted simply and solely as a means to forward a good, other than itself, whether that good be the benefit of the criminal, or of civil society; but it must at all times be inflicted on him, for no other reason that because he has acted criminally. A man can never be treated simply as a means for realizing the views of another man.. He must first of all be found to be punishable before there is even thought of deriving from punishment any advantages for himself or his fellow –citizen".⁽⁷⁾

Walking within a retributionist framework Hegel has provided a justificatory theory of punishment, on Kantian lines though in a more rigid formula, in which he treats punishment as annulment of the

wrong. He writes:

".. Crime is to be annulled, not because it is the producing of evil, but because it is an infringement on the right as right, and secondly, the question of what the positive existence in which crime possesses and which must be annulled, it is this existence which is the real evil to be removed, and the essential point is the question of where it lies".⁽⁸⁾

Along their lines go the intuitionists who see it morally fitting that those who commit offences should have pain inflicted on them. Those who do not see this are morally blind.

The utilitarians, on the other side have come with another promising justification of punishment. Their claim is that, although the infliction of pain is prima facie a mischief because pain is evil, a small amount of pain on offenders is less of an evil than the larger amount of pain which would be caused by the refusal to attach sanctions to socially important rules.

The utilitarians see that less sanctions have to be resorted to the better, because of the pain involved. It is the threat of punishment, as well as its actual infliction, that should be deterred. Counter to such arguments, Westermarck⁽⁹⁾ holds that "punishment is the expression of a retributive emotion. It has therefore some kind of natural basis in the species and its self –evidence is connected with this".

For those who make the consideration of interests a fundamental principle, deterrence is not the only reason for punishment. There is also prevention, which involves in some way isolating the offender so that he cannot trouble the community in this way.

A case, too, could be made for reformation if it could be established that people are actually made better by being punished.

If deterrence and prevention are assumed to be enough for the justification of punishment, it would be more desirable to arrange the conditions of punishment in such a way that there is some possibility of a person being reformed while he is being punished.

In the school situation, "It is often argued that when one is dealing with children a much stronger case can be made for reform for punishment than at adult level. Many adolescents live in a world of fantasy and, it is argued, that the "sharp shock" involved in punishment may bring them to their senses and help to establish them in socially more desirable forms of conduct. There is also the point that, in a school situation, the fact that education is in the main a business of the school lends weight to considerations connected with reform. For "education" is like "reform" in that it applies some change for the better."⁽¹⁰⁾

There may be a stronger case for punishment in a school situation in the sphere of general rules rather than in the sphere of school work. Such an assumption is based on the grounds of deterrence than on the individual being punished. Here three types of situations can be distinguished: the first relates to the breaches and infringements on rules and conditions of order under which the educational process can proceed. The second relates to breaches of rules regarded by school and community as important. The third is in relation to rules which are considered locally important for

the smooth running of the daily school work, just like running and making noises in the school corridors.

In all these types of situations, it is always hoped that keeping the rules is always morally justifiable, and also necessary to avoid the inconveniences with which schools are beset if they lack them.

It is to be hoped too, that the traditions of the school and the authority of the teachers, together with moral exhortation will be in the main sufficient to present this fabric in order. But there usually has to be a system of punishment in the background to act as deterrent. "such punishments have to be unpleasant and they have to be predictable. The more predictable they are, the less unpleasant they need be".⁽¹¹⁾

The relevance of this to the school situation is quite obvious. Discipline and general conditions of order have to be maintained if teaching is to proceed. Unfortunately however, such conditions do not always obtain. The teacher may not be very inspiring, there may be a group of pupils who are determined to disrupt proceedings, or they may be so used to this way of enforcing discipline that they do not take anyone seriously who refuses to employ it. The teacher then has to have recourse to punishment. If he does so he will have to employ forms of punishment that are both unpleasant and predictable, for, if he does not, punishment will fail to function as a deterrent.

It would be more appropriate if forms of punishment could be devised which have both these qualities and also have a reformative effect on children.

This being so, in school situations, where the emphasis should always be upon education, and where personal influence is much more intimate, reform, as regarded by many, is more fitting and appropriate than were deterrence and retribution.

(iii) The justification of punishment in Education:

A Close Focus:

It has been argued that the major justifying theories of punishment come under the headings of retribution, deterrence and reform.

It has been maintained that retributionist theory of punishment does not offer a sufficient justification of punishment and it has been rejected on the grounds that it does not offer a justification but only a definition of punishment. Even if punishment is regarded necessarily retributive or an act "striking back" so to speak, there must be some sort of measure to match the exact offence with the exact degree of severity of punishment which has to be inflicted in return. But it is seemingly obvious that the severity of an offence and the degree of punishment are incommensurable.

This being so, the theory leaves no room whatsoever for forgiveness and mercy as it firmly sticks to the principle, "An eye for eye and a tooth for a tooth".

The utilitarian approach, is preferred to the retributive approach largely because it seeks to justify

punishment in terms of the beneficial consequences that follow from it, namely deterrence and reform. It can be argued that they both give great consideration to the advantages to be gained from punishment, but, on the other hand, they do not themselves give a sufficient justification of punishment as the evidence is not "all in" to show that punishment can deter and reform offenders. Nonetheless, there seems a stronger case for deterrence than for reform.

What is left to be considered now, with respect to the relevance of punishment to the school situation, is to see, "whose interpretation of a situation in school is right" as Moore has put it.⁽¹²⁾

To start with, it could be argued that if it is accepted that the major aim of education is development of children in various ways what seems to follow is that more attention has to be given to the interests of children as individuals which have to be regarded as more important than the interests of the community at large. Although the interests of all citizens as individuals are not neglected by the ruling authorities, the public good of the whole community at large seems to constitute the major overriding aim. On the other hand the interests of individual children in school are taken to override the interests of the community as far as educational matters are concerned.

This contract between society and school can be said to have tremendous implications for the general justification of punishment in education.

In society punishment is inflicted particularly to protect itself and the individuals who live in it against the evil that comes either from itself or from individuals in it. As a school is generally considered to be a unit of society, it may possibly be argued that the same purpose is to be kept in mind, but only with respect to the general order of the school. In this concern the aim of both society and a school can, more or less, coincide. But there are dimensions of punishment in the school situation that go beyond this simple identity of purpose. This punishment can, in many cases, serve as an effective aid to teaching particularly when it is used as an effective reinforcement of a special kind or as an aid to facilitate the general moral development, or social consciousness of young children in particular.

In respect of the retributive justification, one seems to be fully justified in arguing that it is insufficient and entirely unacceptable as far as educational institutions are concerned.

The retributive view that it is more "morally fitting" or "justice demands" that offender should be punished is totally irrelevant in the school situation simply for the reason that in a school situation, being what it is, punishment is never inflicted for the sake of punishment.

If punishment is so inflicted for no other reason than that it is "deserved" then obviously it is pointless as it does not attempt to deter or to positively affect, in some way, those who receive it. Besides, the retributive model was and is never found in schools in its purest form.

However, teachers do punish their children, in rare cases, at whim if they are confronted with a serious "offence" in their school. They may punish mainly to emphasize the enormity of the "offence" being committed without adhering to any other considerations at the time of the punishment, but in a case like this they usually reconsider and try to rationalize such punishment afterwards e.g. by

giving good reasons to their children as to why punishment has been inflicted on them. The giving of reasons in itself can help to make children realize the wrongness of their actions and subsequently lead to the prevention of similar "offence" in future.

Moreover desert seems to be of no relevance in school. The fact that a particular person is found guilty and blameworthy gives us the right to punish him. Before punishing a child, we may take into account a whole range of considerations relating to responsibility and there may be other considerations which we take to constitute extenuating circumstances which are wider than those in society at large.

In schools, considerations are, so often, given to things like the children`s home background and the effect of the environment in their lives.

Finally, the notion of "retribution" itself is incompatible with "education". The major aim of education is to initiate children into "worth –while activities" which implies that something is being or has been intentionally transmitted in a morally acceptable manner.⁽¹³⁾

If this is the point of education then it must be accepted that any task or practice in the educational process should be carried out with greater consideration to the effect that it may have on the development of all children in schools is to be regarded as an end to be aimed at, then the retributive notion of punishment is not of much help as punishment is then inflicted for no reason other than it is "deserved" regardless of what may follow from it.

Justification in terms of utility, although it might not be accepted without objections, is much more acceptable than retribution particularly in the school situation. Punishment as it is so often resorted to in schools is not an end in itself, but only a means without which it is hardly conceivable that education could successfully go on. Teachers would seem to be fully justified in exercising the right to punish "offending" children in their schools in order to maintain order and discipline the absence of which will undoubtedly results in undermining the interests of those who want to learn and to achieve good standards. Offending children who breach the rules, threaten the environment in which educational attainment can become possible.

As relates to the view that punishment is regarded as a deterring element in school, it could be argued that the actual punishment, itself, whatever form it may take, is an "evil", which ought if possible to be avoided, even if it is a necessary "evil". This being the case it would seem that all teachers should practice economy in distributing punishment rather more than legal authorities or any other law – enforcing bodies in that punishment, when inflicted by teachers on children, should be kept to a minimal degree and at the same time in attempt to see that it achieves beneficial consequences.

It is to be noted that the deterrent effect that punishment is supposed to have in schools cannot be very easily predicted beforehand mainly for the reason that prediction depends on many factors mostly of psychological nature.

Thus the deterrent effect of punishment on children may be said to depend, for instance, on the

personality of the teacher, his attitudes towards his children. A slight punishment inflicted by a popular and respected teacher may have greater effect than the punishment inflicted by another teacher who is disliked and not very highly regarded. Not only to psychological considerations of the nature referred to render prediction difficult, there is also the fact that the educational process is both complex and lengthy and hence the more previous effects of punishment on the general development of children cannot easily be foreseen.

Second, in schools, punishment which is supposed to serve as a deterring element, may well have negative consequences. That is to say, children can be punished for particular offences such as smoking or swearing in an attempt to deter them from repeating the same or similar "offences", but it might well be the case that, instead of being deterred by such punishment, they repeat the same "offences" behind their teacher's back or they might see the punishment as unfair and consequently begin to distrust their teacher. As Peters puts it:

"Punishment produces estrangement. It separates teacher from taught and evokes hostility to the "holy ground" that stands between them."⁽¹⁴⁾

In respect of the reformatory theory of punishment, it could be argued that at the first sight it seems more plausible and acceptable as it tries to treat punishment as part of an educational process directed towards the reformation of those who are punished. But this view does not seem to be entirely right. Both education and reform can be seen as similar process in that they are both concerned with improvement and attainment of better standards, but they are not the same: To reform a particular criminal is to give him a special kind of treatment with the hope of bringing him back to certain standards from which he has departed. Obviously this cannot be said of education as it attempts to bring all children to standards which they have not attained before.

In other words, to reform a criminal is to bring him to a standard which he has already achieved before committing his crime, namely a standard of leading a normal law - abiding life in society, but as far as the educational process is concerned, the hope has always been that children can be made to achieve standards which they have not yet attained and of which they have no knowledge or appreciation.

It therefore seems more appropriate to conceive of punishment in education as an effective aid to the education of children which helps in bringing children to desirable standards in the future. In this sense, it seems more acceptable to talk about a "formative" theory of punishment in education rather than a reformatory theory.

If this point is taken, then it would be a mistake to conceive of punishment, in itself, as an educational process but only as an aid or a means which ensures the appropriate conditions and environment in which the process of education can proceed.

It would also be a mistake to conceive of punishment as a teaching process and not simply as an aid to teaching.

The traditional view is that punishment in schools constitutes a part of a teacher's job and that punishing children is actually part of teaching a lesson.

But, in fact, it is very misleading to say this simply for the reason that the concepts of punishment and teaching are logically and conceptually different from each other. Unlike punishment, "teaching" implies the transmission of knowledge, understanding and skills. This can be done in a variety of ways e.g: explaining, demonstrating, telling, setting problem - situations, and so on. This being so, a child can be taught that the triangle has three sides and that the total of its three angles is 180° . This cannot be said of punishment because punishment itself does not teach anything. A boy who does not know how to bisect a straight line is not likely to know any better after being caned or flogged. Having said this, it seems more appropriate to regard punishment in schools as an effective means of getting children to do, as T.W Moore has put it, what their teachers want them to do. When we punish a child who comes to school improperly dressed, we are not teaching him anything more than that what he has already learned, namely that he should come to school properly dressed. All that the teacher does when he punishes one of his boys is to press or get him to do what he already knows in his duty to do.

The upshot of the whole argument is that punishment in schools can be used as both positive and negative reinforcement to teaching but one cannot say for sure that its beneficial effects are always guaranteed, given the unpredictable nature of children who are not yet fully mature.

It is sometimes held by some that punishment can help in the moral education of children.

This point has been emphasized by Plamenatz when he says: "We do not "blame" or "punish" our childish victims in order to reform them, for they are as yet innocent; and we do so only to some extent in order to deter them. Our immediate purpose is to train them to "feel" as they ought and we may think it as important that they should have these feelings as that they should do or refrain from doing what their feelings encourage or discourage.

They are still blameless but are already able to hurt others and themselves, and will soon be even more able; we therefore "blame" and punish them, and thus put an end to their innocence, by causing them to feel as they ought while they yet not old enough to be reasoned with.⁽¹⁵⁾

Conversely, there are those who see that there is much evidence showing that punishment can have some moral effects on the child's character. There may be some evidence to show this.

"Punitive aggression by parents leads to aggression by the child, but no evidence that it leads to moral learning".⁽¹⁶⁾

Anyhow, if there is not much evidence to show that punishment can have favorable effects on the child's moral development, it could, at least, be argued that it can be used to channel their conduct along lines which are morally acceptable.

By the same token, if there is not enough evidence at hand that shows that it contributes to children's moral development, there is also no evidence to show that it does not.

(iv) Summary and Conclusion:

It has been shown earlier that "punishment" is a complex concept which cannot be tied down to one definition or meaning. It could be described as a wide concept which is "open textured", as Waismann has put it. ⁽¹⁷⁾ Therefore it is not surprising to come across situations in which it is very hard indeed to draw a sharp line between what is properly called punishment and what is not. As far as the educational situation is concerned, many occasions which are sometimes referred to as occasions of punishment in schools are not, strictly, speaking, punishment at all but perhaps they can be seen as cases of school manipulation or correction. Historically, such occasions which we usually take to be occasions of punishment in schools antecede the institutionalized cases of punishment, and in our development they are the first occasions which we come to understand by using the term "punishment", they are the first examples we happen to have of the concept, and our concept of "punishment" proper is more or less based upon such instances, and early on concept of the standard case of punishment can be seen as a refinement of them.

We come to have a gradual grasp and understanding of the notion of "punishment" at an early stage of our lives when those who are responsible for our development in preferred ways seek to guide our impulsive behavior along favorable lines which are both socially acceptable and in our interest. Such situations are loose and not codified and more often they do not operate within one to one relationship. Thus, if it is agreed that this is the nature of punishment in schools, it is much more sensible to conceive of "punishment" in schools in a sub –standard sense which approximates to the institutionalized case of "punishment" as it is understood in legal terms.

By the standard cases of punishment is meant those cases in which punishment is sanctioned and practiced when there is an actual breach of rules, infringement on rules and when there is some sort of infliction of pain or something unpleasant on the person who has actually broken the rules; Besides, such punishment has to be intentionally exercised by someone who is in authority, and, finally, any infliction of pain or something unpleasant or undesirable should, in effect, be a consequence of a real offence and not for any other reason. Otherwise, it would be very difficult to distinguish cases of punishment from, for example, cases of revenge.

As to the question of the general justification of punishment, the argument has been centered on the issue concerning the aim or aims punishment is supposed to achieve. Special consideration has been given to the two broadly opposed approaches to punishment, the retributivist and the utilitarian. The general conclusion arrived at was that retributivism is untenable and that whilst there is something to be said for reformative theories, there is more to be said for deterrent theories. That is to say, in the absence of deterrence, crime and disorder on a large scale would be inevitable and, undoubtedly would lead sooner or later to the breakdown of all societal rules which punishment is supposed to preserve.

"The world is a worse place the more evil there is in it and perhaps the more suffering there is in it.

But it does not seem to me necessarily a worse place whenever men are deprived of something they would like to retain, and this is the essence of modern punishment".⁽¹⁸⁾

The question arises now as to how relevant this discussion about what is generally meant by "punishment" and its justification is to the issue of punishing children in schools and other educational institutions. In short, it could be argued that punishment has more to do with the upholding of the general rules of the school and ought to be necessary in maintaining discipline and order rather than with school work itself. Punishment should be regarded as a teaching aid and not, by any means, as a part of the educational process.

It is sometimes wrongly held that punishment constitutes a part of a teacher's job but obviously this view is very mistaken simply because both "teaching" and "punishment" are logically and conceptually different. It is a central objective of a teacher's job to transmit knowledge and understanding to his pupils from an early age, but proper conditions do not always obtain to enable him to carry on with his job in a sufficient way. So, in situations like these, a teacher has to have recourse to punishment, not to make his pupils acquire what he teaches them because punishment in itself does not "teach" them anything, but in the hope that he can possibly preserve the appropriate conditions under which the content he intends to pass on can be transmitted in a way in which it can be well understood and appreciated by the taught.

It has also been argued that punishment can have a role to play in children's moral and personal development. The idea is that punishment, when it is inflicted in appropriate situations on "offending" children, may have the effect of showing them the "reason why" of its infliction, or, to put it differently, that it may make them realize the wrongness of their acts and eventually make them honestly regret what they have wrongly done. Of course, as was pointed out earlier, empirical evidence relating to this claim is scanty and open to different interpretations, but all in all there does seem to be a distinct possibility that punishment is contributory to the "more development" end.

Finally, although punishment seems to be the only effective means that schools can adopt to maintain discipline and order inside and outside classrooms, the less it is used the better. Punishment, whatever form it may take, may be a necessary evil, but it is an evil nonetheless and it would therefore seem desirable if it could be avoided as far as possible and used only as a last resort.

For punishment may well have undesirable and negative effects which can militate against crucial educational aims particularly if it is harshly imposed on children in schools in the form of corporal punishment. First, punishment is no doubt regarded by every child in school as an evil and an unpleasant thing to be exercised on him by his teacher, and so there is always a danger in punishment, particularly if it is persistently imposed on children, spoiling the friendly atmosphere conducive to the establishment of satisfactory relationships between teacher and those who are taught. It may well evoke hostility to a teacher and eventually to the subject he teaches as well. Second, in most cases almost all teachers have recourse to punishment in their schools whenever

they are confronted with an "offending" child or a broken school rule or principle. But often such instant resort to punishment can prevent our finding out the reasons behind children`s misconduct particularly if we allow for the fact that most children involuntarily do things which might not win the approval of their teachers. Instead of instant resort to punishment and imposition of unpleasantness teachers can make their resort to persuasion and simple reasoning with their children when they do wrong in an attempt to show them the right ways of behaving.

Notes and References:....

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- (3) Reid, L.A, Philosophy of Education, Heinemann, London, 1962, p.136.
- (4) Ausable, D.P. Educational Psychology: A Cognitive View, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968, p.459.
- (5) Sears, P.S, and Hilgard, E.R, "The Teacher`s Role in the Motivation of the Learner", 1964, in Hilgard (ed.), 1964, p.54.
- (6) Reid, L.A, op.cit, p.138.
- (7) Quoted by Bradley, F.H. Ethical Studies, 2nd. Edition, 1927. P. 28.
- (8) Knox. T.M, (trans), Hegel`s Philosophy of Right, N.Y, 1979, para. 99, p.70.
- (9) See Westermarck, E., Ethical Relativity, London, Kegan Paul, 1932.
- (10) Peters, R.S., op, cit, p.272.
- (11) Peters, R.S, op.cit, p.274.
- (12) Moore, P., "Perspectives on Punishment", in the Proceedings of the philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain, vol, viii, No.1, January 1974, p.97.
- (13) Peters, R.S., op. cit., p.25.
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- (15) Palmenatz, J., "Responsibility, Blame and Punishment", in laslett, P., and Runciman, W., (eds), Philosophy, Politics and Society, 1967, p.175.
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- (17) Quoted by Flew, A., "the Justification of Punishment., 1969, p.83.
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