

**DISCIPLINE AND PUNISHMENT IN A SECONDARY SCHOOL:A
SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY**

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RAJANI SHARMA

Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies

School of Social Sciences

Jawaharlal Nehru University

New Delhi- 110067

India

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SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI-110067**

DECLARATION

27th July, 2012

I, **Rajani Sharma**, declare that the dissertation entitled "**Discipline and Punishment in a Secondary School: A Sociological Study**", submitted by me in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of **Master of Philosophy** of Jawaharlal Nehru University, is my bonafide work. I further declare that the dissertation has not been previously submitted for any other Degree of this university or any other university.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rajani S', is positioned above the printed name.

RAJANI SHARMA

(Candidate)

CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this dissertation may be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Khadria', is positioned above the printed name.

Prof. Binod Khadria

(CHAIRPERSON)

**CHAIRPERSON
Zakir Husain Centre for
Educational Studies
School of Social Sciences
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi - 110067**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Srinivasa Rao', is positioned above the printed name.

Dr. S. Srinivasa Rao

(SUPERVISOR)

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Discipline forms one of the underlying threads of human society, and it is practiced in various forms in different stages of our lives. One of the crucial institutions that primarily discipline an individual is the school. If schools are supposed to train people for their lives then discipline is the core element of that which is imparted to children. Discipline is manifested in different practices, be they punishment or rewards. There is a system of constant surveillance, especially in schools where there is a minute by minute description of what a child should be doing and should not be doing. The study looks at the practice of discipline in schools, to analyze the consequences of indiscipline and to see how discipline and punishment are perceived by children, teachers.

Discipline is practiced in the everyday life of the school; it is also a product of a hierarchical structure of power flow. Thereby the study looks at punishment in the school to analyze the act of discipline. Discipline as discussed has been one of the cornerstones of education and the society as a whole. The need for order and the need for discipline in society cannot be denied, what is important is the dilemma between freedom and discipline. To what extent are our actions guided by rules, are these rules just and are the means of ensuring discipline legal. These are some of the questions that the study seeks to address. Punishment as a means of ensuring discipline as well as bringing order to society is as old as times. Punishment be it physical or mental has always been used in societies, from death to corporal punishment there is nothing new, punishment is also an institution that the society supposedly has mainly to bring about law and order. What punishment does is that it reinforces the norms.

Yet nowadays there is a perceived negativity attached to the notion of 'punishment', the term is rarely used by schools, policy makers and teachers. Punishment has also to some extent become synonymous with torture. It symbolizes the ills of a society, which is why it makes headlines every now and then in the popular media. But the same is not with a scenario where the alternative model of education is not a reality where the idiom 'spare the rod spoil the child' still finds takers. Corporal punishment is a reality in most schools, be they private, government or public. While the media provides for us instances of corporal punishment it ignores the myriad ways in which punishment is carried out in the school. A child is punished not just with a stick but also with a look. The system also allows the child very little freedom, in a system where learning is memorizing and the teachers word the law.

The school is thus the most important feature of the education system. It is the most visible face of the system to the society at large. Discipline and punishment form the core of the school as an institution, the classroom can also be seen as the field where acts of indiscipline and punishment occur. It is the classroom where there is interaction between teachers and children. Punishment is the medium through which the broader idea of discipline can be understood. When a child is punished it is not just the teacher alone that is doing so, but also the peer group as well as the legitimacy and authority of the teacher that comes into play. Over a time period teachers form relationship with children and vice versa, it is these interrelationships that mediate acts of indiscipline and its consequences. Primary to this is the definition of a situation¹, who defines the situation, is important as this then decides the nature and course of punishment.

¹ David Hargreaves(1972) provides for us the understanding of the concept 'definition of a situation'. This concept is used to examine the impact of definitions and meanings on the structure of social action. Each participant in an interaction is trying to establish a definition of the situation, there can be consensus, modification of the definition of a situation.

DISCIPLINE AND THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN INDIA

Further in the Indian society, going by the *guru-sishya* (Sarangapani, 1999) tradition, discipline is total subservience to the wishes of the teacher as was seen in the case of Dronacharya and his disciple. This idea is also present in our modern education system, the teacher has authority over the classroom, as Krishna Kumar points out, they become meek dictators (Kumar, 2005) and they are the sole judge and jury in the classroom. Their authority stems from the institution of the school, teachers in this system are seen as the knowledge givers and children as seeker, what this system does is that it automatically places children in a powerless position, by marking them as those who do not know. The child- patron or the adult-child relationship also plays a role in determining the distribution of power; children are often placed in this patronizing relation where teachers assure them that their actions are in the best interest of the child. The assumption made is that children do not know what is good for them hence teachers can then dictate the action of children. This combined with the treatment of children as ‘innocent’, ‘not- knowing’ and ‘naïve’ places them in a powerless position in society; transmit this to the classroom and the children’ position in the power hierarchy falls very low.

This is not to say that there is no resistance, there is, and in small ways children try to disobey the teacher or try to change how a situation is defined. This can be seen in small acts, for example, pretending to not hear the teacher, etc. The peer group and how it functions is very important in this dynamic. For if the peer group accepts the definition of a situation given by the teacher there can be no resistance, if the peer group supports the action then he/she becomes a ‘cool’ person in the class.

Education and the education system has seemingly gone beyond this, yet it would not be fair to say that the teacher is the dictator in the classroom, there are many a times when the children do not obey. The negotiation in a classroom space is complex; undoubtedly the teacher has an upper hand in terms of authority, yet the teacher's authority can be undermined and children do to an extent negotiate their reality. How is this done, when does a child not obey, when does an act become an act of indiscipline in the teachers' perception and is the teachers authority intact when the class as a whole challenges it are the questions that need to be discussed.

CONTEXT AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Punishment allows one to be aware of the norms of behavior. We have a variety of range of punishment, some may be just a gesture, a reprimand or caning, all of these are used in the classroom and school. Punishment in the form of corporal punishment has been abolished by international and national bodies. For example, convention on the Rights of the Child by the UN clearly states in Article 19², that States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

It is interesting that it was only in 2000 that corporal punishment was banned by the Supreme Court. Delhi High Court upheld the ban the same year while Calcutta High Court banned caning of children in 2004. But despite the apex court's decision, only Tamil Nadu and

² <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm>, accessed on 5/12/2011 at 8.09p.m

Andhra Pradesh amended their education laws in 2003 and 2002, respectively, to implement the ban — necessary to lay down a definite punishment for offenders. Section 23 of new Juvenile Justice Act, 2000 provides punishment for cruelty to juvenile or child. Whoever, having the actual charge of or control over, a juvenile or the child, assaults, abandons, exposes or willfully neglects the juvenile or causes or procures him to be assaulted, abandoned, exposed or neglected in a manner likely to cause such juvenile or the child unnecessarily mental or physical suffering shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months, or fine, or with both³. Laws over punishment however are very vague and unspecific and it is only in extreme cases that people take recourse to courts or NGOs. The question is whether we have replaced repressive painful punishment with different forms of punishment which may be more silent and unconscious yet no less effective.

The prevalence of acts of discipline and punishment in school is seen from personal experiences to reports in the popular and visual media. Cases like that of Rouvanjit Rawla, a child of La Martiniere Boys School, Kolkata, who committed suicide due to alleged mental and physical torture by the principal and three other teachers show us that violence in school is prevalent. The cause in the La Martiniere case was seen as constant humiliation and caning for pulling off pranks in the classroom. The school is an elite school and is considered the best for 'all round development of the child'⁴. Another case is that of Shanno, a Class II child in a government run school in Bawana in Haryana, who died of a heat stroke after she was made to squat in the sun. Shanno, was punished by the teacher allegedly after she failed to recite the full English alphabet string. In another incident, during a field visit to Alwar district in the month of

³ <http://www.legalservicesindia.com/articles/punish.htm> accessed on 14/9/2011 at 4.50p.m

⁴ www.telegraphindia.com/1100215/jsp/calcutta/story_12105753.jsp, accessed on 21/9/2011 at 8.20p.m

March 2011 in Rajasthan, the researcher has seen and observed instances of caning and beating in the classroom right in front of the researcher. The cane or stick is seen as a source of power in the classroom by the teachers and the head teacher. It was clear from interviews with the teachers that they believed in the power of the rod; there was constant surveillance and punishment was a regular feature. Children were punished for reasons ranging from being noisy to insubordination, etc⁵.

The classroom and the school form the field of the research, it is in the schools that authority, domination and its culmination into punishment can be clearly seen. Classroom discipline is how discipline is maintained, negotiated in a school environment, it provides us the lenses to view and understand the larger reality. Discipline is based on the interpersonal relations between teachers and pupils, discipline is carried out in the classroom situation; it is a part of classroom behavior. But one also has to consider that discipline is also a feature of the larger structures, for example, a teacher's authority in the school comes from the systemic location of power (Kumar, 2005). They are low in the status hierarchy, have no control over the curriculum and yet have entire control of the school and classrooms. The study assumes that children do have agency, but it proposes to study to what extent this agency manifests itself in the school.

Punishment (or negative sanction) allows one to be aware of the norms of behavior and it is that which is other than the rewards (or positive sanction) one of the most used instruments of discipline. Moreover, the questions raised by acts of disciplining leads us to the dilemma and paradox of discipline and freedom. How much or what degree of discipline can be considered as right, when does discipline impinge on a child's freedom. What are the acts that society

⁵ There are also many acts that go unreported, the report by the Ministry of Women and Child Development 2007 states that 65% of school going children reported facing corporal punishment i.e. two out of three children were victims of corporal punishment.

considers as indiscipline? How does a teacher in the classroom reach the conclusion that the said act is one of indiscipline? How does the teacher/principal/institution decide what punishment is right/just for an act?

These are the questions that the research explores. These questions require us to not only look at overt acts of both teachers and children and their manifestations but also to analyze the covert rules of behavior⁶ inside and outside the classroom. What are the rules that govern the classroom behavior? Are they written or unwritten? Who enforces them? And how and why? What are the consequences in terms of punishment?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This section primarily consists of a review of literature in the International and Indian contexts. The major chunk of literature dealing with the framework of study has been explained in Chapter II.

Review of studies in the International Context

Discipline and punishment has been a topic of discussion within sociology of education internationally. Different approaches, theoretical perspectives, practice oriented studies have been carried out through a period of time. A few of these have been highlighted here in order to clearly understand how discipline and punishment has been conceptualized and studied. To begin with, Michael Apple (1984) in his work argues that the problem of discipline is a part of a larger economic and social dilemma. He argues that there is a need to look beyond the institutional need for discipline but to look at the perspective of children as well. He relates subversion of discipline to unemployment and argues that it is mostly the inner- city youth who are seen as

⁶ By this we understand that there are given rules of behavior in the school say concerning uniform etc, yet there are also rules which are written but are present in practice.

trouble makers and this is the same group with the highest rate of unemployment. He points out that it is the 'Blacks', 'Browns' and Latinos who mostly face the vicious circle in the United States. In a major part, lack of discipline is tied to the economic requirements. Although Apple provides for us a link, it is looked at from very narrow angle for he only focuses on the relationship between discipline and unemployment. It provides only the economic angle.

Noguera (2003) argues, like Apple (1984), that school frequently punishes children who have greater economic, social, academic and emotional needs. He argues that an examination, of which children are most likely to be suspended, expelled, or removed from the classroom for punishment, reveals that minorities (especially Blacks and Latinos), males, and low achievers are vastly over- represented. The argument is that with the adoption of zero tolerance policies in school there has been an increase in expulsions and suspensions from school. He provides for us clear instances of principals punishing children on the basis of family backgrounds and attaching labels of failure even before the child commits serious disciplinary infractions.

Disciplinary practices in school have a striking similarity to the methods used to punish adults in society. Consistent with the way we approach crime in society, the assumption is that safety and order can be achieved by removing "bad" individuals and keeping them away from others who are presumed to be "good" and law abiding (Noguera, 2003). Not surprisingly, those most frequently targeted for punishment in school often look-in terms of race, gender, and socioeconomic status - a lot like smaller versions of the adults who are most likely to be targeted for incarceration in society. Thus Noguera (2003) argues that there is a similarity between the school and prison especially in terms of maintenance of order.

Peter Woods (1983) and Hargreaves (1972) work is different from Apple and Noguera, they use the symbolic interactionist framework to look at classroom discipline. David Hargreaves conducted a study of Lumley Secondary Modern School and in his work he clearly states that class played an important role in determining who the deviant were. Working class pupils were allocated to lower streams; they felt that as a result of their allocation to low streams they had been denied formal academic status within the school. Their responses resulted in the development of powerful anti-school peer groups in the lower streams where pupils would seek to regain status informally by "messing around" and general opposition to teachers' authority. Teachers often responded with further ill-considered criticism and a disinclination to prepare lessons effectively for low stream classes which provoked even more pupil rebellion such that even children who wanted to learn would be prevented from doing so in such a difficult classroom environment. By contrast pupils who had been allocated to the higher streams accepted the aims of the school and were in general prepared to work hard and accept teacher authority without criticism. He describes the culture of these groups as academic. Although he argues that it is the streaming of children one has to acknowledge that the basis of streaming is linked to the social background of the child especially in terms of class (Hargreaves, 1967).

Peter Woods (1983) work on '*Coping at School through Humour*' frames an important strategy in classroom practices. Humour is a powerful resource in interpersonal relationships, it is especially effective in the classroom. One of the most important characteristics of humour is its coping nature; this coping includes a constructive and creative ability. It provides social comic relief which is similar to the ripple effect produced by disciplinary measure from a teacher. Can this humour also be disciplining, for humour directed at a certain child may actually be a reprimand by the teacher and the group by laughing along concretises or approves it.

Sharing a joke means making an alliance against reality or the institution or differences in authority or status.

Woods argues that humour in the form of risqué jokes etc might also be used by the children for pupils to clarify how a teacher defines the situation and for them to be able to behave correctly within the teacher's framework. These tests are carried out especially when there is new teacher. Humour also provides legitimate respite for children they can through humour negotiate the situation without undermining the authority of the teacher (Woods, 1983).

Humour can also act as a tool of resistance, they are also a form of coping strategies but can take a negative turn- sexist jokes, jokes on the infirmities of others etc. This can be seen in Paul Willis's (1981) study of working class male children argues that laughter integrated the 'lads' as a group and was a condition for membership. Resistance to school gives the lads humour a different quality- playing with authority, mocking teachers or conformists. Willis argues that their behavior is a part of adaptation to the structure (Willis, 1981).

There has also been work in the field of discipline and punishment which looks at it on the basis of the idea that it is the traditional models of schooling in which problems of discipline crop up. This can be seen in works like that of Charles Clark (1998) who advocates a child-centered approach to schooling as a solution to indiscipline. This approach is problematic as it does not take into account the fact that the larger society and its dominant ideologies also have to be taken into account, merely a change in approach will lead to different means of discipline as argued by Foucault (1991).

What these works suggest is that there have been a comprehensive and yet a diverse set of ideas of analysing discipline and punishment, from macro to micro levels of the education

system. To pick up these and apply them to the Indian context would be superficial and misleading, that is not to say that the ideas are not important to our work, though these studies may form a background when we look at how discipline and punishment may be understood in the Indian scenario be it by teachers, children and the community at large

Review of Studies in the Indian Context:

There are a few empirical studies available in the Indian context that have dealt with the issue of schools and their organisation. Though these studies are not focused on discipline and punishment, they have reflected upon the issue in their larger attempt to understand how the schooling in the Indian scenario is organised. The review presented here deals with three ethnographic studies which were carried out in India - in a village school, in a madrasa and in an elite school.

Padma Sarangapani's work 'Constructing School Knowledge' is based on the ethnographic study of a government primary school in Kasimpura in the northern outskirts of Delhi. Sarangapani's work provides us with instances of how children were punished in the classroom, how they were isolated and excluded from the classroom discussions. She reports a case of a young child who was horrified when the researcher asked whether discipline should be done away with, he stated that it is discipline which is the most important characteristic of a school.

Punishment was meted out to children especially those considered as 'failures', they were placed in the last row hence spatially segregating them from the rest of the classroom. These failures essentially also belonged to lower castes and working class families (Sarangapani, 2003). Failure is seen as a lack of moral character, it lead to the stigma of being illiterate. The

teacher uses this stigma in the classroom to justify tedious work and draw a relationship between morality and learning through discipline. The contrast between a '*bade admi*' and an '*anpadh*' is constantly used to reinforce identities, for example model children are seen to be aspiring to the status of *bade admi*. Sarangapani looks at the class profile of children who are seen as failures they were from scheduled caste or migrant families who were unemployed or employed in the unorganised sector (Sarangapani, 2003). This provides for us an in depth understanding of stigmatisation, labeling and how these labels stick to the children for the rest of their school careers. This labeling or stigma becomes an important punishment for failure in school work. Punishment need not only be in terms of physical abuse, mental abuse and punishment is far more critical it shapes the identity of the child his/ her dreams and hopes of the future.

Meenakshi Thapan's work 'Life at School' is an ethnographic study of Rishi Valley School in Andhra Pradesh. Thapan's work on the other hand provides us a vivid picture of the structure and flow of power in the institution, she shows how the school committee had an upper hand in the broader concerns, but when it came to the daily activities it was the headmistress who had the decision making power. Two forms of deviance or being 'different' are described by the author, one positive and the other negative. By positive deviants the teachers and children meant those who had a special interest in the ideology and were therefore considered 'serious' and 'sensitive' in their attitude to both school work and the ideology (Thapan,1991). Thapan describes instances of negative deviance in her work, she outlines the idea that children who were disinterested in school work and in school goals in general were seen as deviant. 'One boy who was considered definitely deviant and treated in a casual manner by the teachers due to his total lack of interest in school work' (Thapan, 1991: appendix b).

Arshad Alam's work 'Inside a Madrasa: Knowledge, Power and Islamic Identity in India' uses the Foucauldian notion of power to analyse how power works at localised level that is at the level of interaction of children and teachers, amongst children. The mechanisms of discipline employed are for example by assigning a supervisor (Nazir Dar al- Aqama) to each child⁷. Control and authority is exercised by teachers, it can be seen in terms of corporal punishment which was a regular feature of the madrasa (Ashrafiya). He argues that there was a common belief amongst parents that children will not learn without being beaten; the teachers and the madrasa authorities argued that beating reinforces the authority of teachers over children. Subtle ways of disciplining were also used – lowering of the gaze, and the child's bodily postures. Control and discipline of the child's body also forms a core concern, disciplinary practices within the Ashrafiya also impinge on the child's body by imposing ways of talking, dressing, hygiene, food etc. However he argues there is still place for child agency, the association with the madrasa also grants them agency (Alam, 2011).

These studies provide for us a comprehensive analysis of schools; they look at the day to day activities of school through various perspectives or lenses, their chief concern though is not discipline and punishment, although it figures in their work as an intrinsic part of the school system. Each of the three studies are also problematic at the level of theory, approach, etc.

There have been two studies that have been conducted in terms of corporal punishment in India one in Chennai and the other spanning four states in India. Both studies point out to the prevalence of corporal and other forms of punishment. Bhutia (2006) conducted a study of 20 schools in Chennai, she interviewed teachers, children, principals and journalists. Although there was a large consensus that corporal punishment was negative, it was still used in schools. The

⁷ Due to this there was constant surveillance of the child both in school and hostel.

children especially seniors felt that the junior children could be disciplined only through corporal punishment. A study conducted by Mehta (2006) on behalf of Plan International looked at 41 schools in four states namely- Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan. Almost all the parents accepted that children invited punishment by their behavior, but whether they should be punished moderately or severely depended on the stamina the children possessed. The research team saw a stick in the classroom or in the hands of teachers everywhere it went. The most common forms of punishments were hitting with hands and stick, pulling hair and ears, and asking the children to stand for long periods in various positions. Threatening to be physically violent is also used as a punishment to create fear among children. The team also came across more severe forms of corporal punishment afflicted on children such as being kicked severely, making them starve, tying them with a rope to chairs/ poles followed by beatings, assigning physically strenuous work both at home and outside, etc. A child often faces a series of punishments for the same single 'offence'. At schools, the incidence of corporal punishment was found to be quite common and alarmingly frequent. It was found that there were 05 beatings per day per class, not counting the other moderate forms of punishment. Inflicting punishment on children was a part of the teachers 'tool kit' or a 'justified' extension of the teacher's repertoire.

What is interesting is that these studies show the compliance of parents in terms of punishment given, although there are contestations. The lacunae in these studies is that they do not question 'who' gets punished, there is no analysis of the social background of those who are punished. The work also depends largely on interviews which do not give us the nuances of social practice of discipline and punishment. These questions can be best answered only through an in- depth study whose main focus is discipline and punishment.

This study therefore focuses specifically on the issue of discipline and punishment in schools, it looks into classroom interaction. The study is different from the reviewed studies as it focuses on discipline and punishment per say, and it does not only deal with corporal punishment which can be seen in most of the Indian studies. International studies have also analyzed discipline and punishment from the perspective of humour, unemployment, etc, this work goes beyond this. It looks at the contexts, processes and agencies in terms of discipline and punishment. The study is also mainly focused on the perception of children, and it seeks to understand acts of indiscipline and their consequences.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To understand and explore how disciplining practices are carried out in the school and in the classroom.
2. To understand the nature and forms of punishment and to examine consequences or implications of the punishment in the classroom or school.
3. To explore the perceptions of children primarily and teachers and the principal on the acts of discipline and punishment and to study how each actor in the school situation construct acts of discipline and punishment.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Baha'i Secondary School, a private English medium school located in Gangtok, Sikkim (The Chapter II provides the detailed profile of the school). The school is near the government college and is ten minutes away from the main bazaar in the town. The school primarily has children belonging to different caste and tribal groups and regions-

Nepali, Tamang, Rai, Bhutia, Lepcha, Subba , children from Andaman and Nicobar Islands and others.

The study is both descriptive and interpretative. Descriptive accounts involve a reporting and detailed portrayal of events observed in the classroom and the school. The interpretive refers to how we group the facts observed and how do we define them. Interpretative studies incorporate the participants' perspectives and their diversity. They do not predefine variables but explore the making of self and meanings in 'naturalistic' settings. It is in this sense that the research methodology is ethnographic.

The level of analysis is micro and it is a multi classroom study. The sample chosen for this study is children from class VI to VIII, with sections A and B in each standard. There were a total of one hundred and fifty children. The school is a secondary school, but the research looks at only classes VI, VII and VIII. These classes were chosen due to the idea that children at this stage are able to give a comprehensible account. Also they are at an interesting juncture, the middle, where they are considered as children but are also asked to behave as adults. The study was conducted over a time period of two months; the first preliminary visit was in November 2011 when the researcher gained access to the school. Due to the earthquake that had struck Sikkim in September and which was followed by a long mourning and emergency holiday for almost a month. Since the examination time was approaching the researcher was directed to come in March for the study. The second field trip proved to be more effective as the researcher had already established contact with the teachers and children, the researcher then became a familiar figure.

As mentioned earlier, the study primarily used ethnography as its basic methodology. Ethnography as a methodology does not transcend other methods but is the most suitable to

answer the objectives of the study. Methodologies are not just statements about the method but are also philosophical positions on the nature of knowledge and how we come to know it. What the ethnographer finds out is inherently connected with how she/he finds out. Reflexivity that is the role that the researcher's own subjectivities play in the process is also an important concern. The researcher scrutinised one's own role throughout in the research by keeping *reflexive memos and journaling*. These are ethnographic tools that allowed the researcher to be aware of their emotions as they become a part of the setting and culture under study. Ethnography has been a much contested terrain especially given the crisis of anthropology, but it is the primary tool for us as it takes us closer to the micro reality, allows us to observe the day to day activities and hence interpretation became much more nuanced.

The method used in the study is moderate participation⁸ and in-depth interviews. A majority of ethnographic studies are based on moderate participation. In this case, the researcher assumed an intermediate position between being a complete insider – a member of the group studied (as in complete participation) – and being a complete outsider (as in non-participation). This method is used especially in classroom observation for the observer is not a complete participant but is present in a certain area of the field for a definite time say for forty five minutes, hence the mode of participation is moderate participation. The researcher was present in classrooms and observed the transactions in it. Also the spaces in schools like the play ground, etc was also observed.

In-depth interviews are complementary to observation, they are more nuanced and detailed. They provide us data that may have been missed out in observation. It also gives observation a

⁸ Moderate participation occurs when the researcher balances between insider and outsider experience. Most ethnographic studies use this method. Moderate participation is at a level that does not include becoming a regular participant, who is involved in activities that are taking place.

direction; it is through in-depth interviews that the task of interpretation becomes clearer. In-depth interviews are conducted with teachers and children and families of the children with the help of an interview guide. There were separate interview guides for teachers, children and parents. Transcribed data from these interviews is used to provide a thick descriptive account.

Throughout the study the researcher was constantly being watched by children and teachers in the initial days. Most teachers were hostile while children were very welcoming. The atmosphere in the classroom changed as soon as the researcher entered the classroom, thereby it can be stated that one of the limitations of the method was that the actors i.e. teachers and children behaved according to what they thought that the researcher expected. A few classes were stopped or diverted, with teachers unwilling to teach a chapter in the presence of the researcher. While children described to the researcher what acts were likely in the classroom, there was a moderation of the same from the teacher's side. The children were easier to talk and gain information from as soon as they were assured that the teacher or the principal would not be informed. Although after the first week the teachers were less hostile and a little oblivious to the researcher's presence. There were also times when the researcher got pulled into the classes wherein the researcher became a non- observing participant.

CHAPTERISATION

The first chapter introduces the study, its context and rationale. It basically provides a background for the study, its objectives and the methodology that was used. It also highlights the problems encountered by the researcher in the field. The review of literature focuses on the studies that have been conducted on discipline and punishment both in international and in the Indian context. The chapter basically sets the stage for the following chapters.

Theories form the material for the second chapter. It deals with the theoretical ideas that were used by the study to examine, understand and analyze discipline and punishment in the school. The first section looks at the Durkheimian idea of punishment. The idea of how punishment functions to bring about social solidarity is discussed here. Symbolic interactionism has always been the foremost theory applicable to a school and classroom study. The actors and their points of view are important hence a focus on the definition of a situation, perspectives of different actors and labeling. The symbolic interactionists provide for us a methodology to analyse the field, but there is no cohesive macro understanding. This is provided for us in Foucault's work, his approach to discipline and punishment leads us to argue that discipline is the new punishment. The idea of the panopticon, the interplay of power and knowledge, the idea of normal, etc allows us to give a wider perspective of discipline and punishment.

The school and its ethos are dealt with in the third chapter. The school is a Baha'i school and the chapter seeks to understand the role of the faith in the school. The chapter argues that although the school is missionary in terms of its administration, it functions more in terms of the Sikkimese society and its ethos rather than that of the faith. In this chapter a broad range of theories and discipline are dealt with, it seeks to understand studies conducted earlier and the theoretical paradigms used in those earlier works.

The fourth chapter is based entirely on the fieldwork. The acts of indiscipline and their consequences are the focus of the chapter. Primary importance is placed on the children's perspectives with inclusion of data from the teachers and the principal. The chapter argues that typing of teachers and labeling of children are important factors which determine whether an act is an act of indiscipline or not. The definition of a situation, interpersonal relations allow us to

look at discipline and punishment from a different angle. The processes and agencies through which disciplining occur are classroom humour, disciplinary gaze and disciplining of the body.

The last and final chapter presents a summary of the findings and draws conclusions and implications in terms of the theory and literature on discipline and punishment in the context of the school.

CHAPTER II

DISCIPLINE AND PUNISHMENT: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A few sociological thinkers have deliberated on the aspects of discipline and punishment in the society and in the school systems. These works are few and far in between starting from Emile Durkheim to the symbolic interactionists and recently to the works of Michel Foucault. When one comes to the sociology of education per say it is essentially Durkheim and the symbolic interactionists who provide for us means of analyzing discipline and punishment in the school system. Foucauldian theory looks at discipline and punishment from the point of view of prisons, but his work gives us one of the major structural frameworks of this study. It is a combination of these three schools that the study considers to understand discipline and punishment in schools especially in terms of the classroom. Theories and concepts are but tools that have been used to shed light on the problem.

FUNCTIONALIST APPROACH TO DISCIPLINE AND PUNISHMENT

Emile Durkheim has been one of the foremost sociologists interested in the question of discipline and punishment. He is also the first classical sociologist who concentrated on the question of education. Education for Durkheim was to be moral, by this he does not mean religious but humanistic education. Durkheim looks at discipline as a spirit that the child must imbibe. According to him,

‘.....there is a whole system of rules in the school that predetermine the child’s conduct. He must come to class regularly, he must arrive at a specified time and with an appropriate bearing and attitude. He must not disrupt things in class. He must have learned his lessons, done his homework, and have done so reasonably well, etc. There

are, therefore, a host of obligations that the child is required to shoulder. Together they constitute the discipline of the school. It is through the practice of school discipline that we can inculcate the spirit of discipline in the child' (Durkheim, 1925: 148).

Durkheim clearly sees discipline in terms of a set of obligations that a child must carry out in his or her day to day living. Tasks that are assigned by teachers or homework and their completion, etc constitute a marker for discipline. This is interesting as one of the markers of discipline in the present day system of education is 'homework'. The incompleteness or completion of the assigned work forms an important criteria of discipline for teachers and the school. The spirit of discipline that a child imbibes is an important idea, schools are seen as the makers of future adult citizens and discipline is supposed to be one of the major values that schools impart to children. The functionalist model looks at discipline or the imparting of discipline in children as a function of the school. This has major implications for the school as an institution for it needs to consider and formulate overt and covert ideas of what is considered as discipline.

For Durkheim, punishment above all is a moral process, what it does is it maintains social solidarity. Punishment is the social and visible face of discipline; it imposes sanction and reinstates norms. The functionalist perspective looks at punishment as a morally-affirming and solidarity producing mechanism which is grounded in collective sentiment. Durkheim in his work *The Division of Labour in Society* (1893) states that punishment is a feature of every society, it reinforces norms. Simple societies had mechanical solidarity and thereby repressive laws, by repressive laws we mean laws which gave, say, death for stealing or corporal punishment. The complex society is characterised by organic solidarity and restitutive laws, these laws try to bring the person back into the folds of society by offering them a chance at redressal. Durkheim argues that an act is considered criminal only when the collective

conscience of the society deems the act to be criminal. Punishment and crime have an intrinsic relationship; crime determines the characteristic of punishment. 'Punishment consists then essentially in a passionate reaction of gradated intensity that society exercises through the medium of a body acting upon those of its members who have violated certain rules of conduct'(Durkheim, 1893: 96). He argues that the forms of punishment may have changed but the function of punishment remains the same, it is an institution that produces social solidarity (Durkheim, 1893).

The problem however with the functionalist approach is that it is one dimensional and concerned only with the moral aspects of punishments, its moral consequences, it does not look at wider forces that may influence punishment. There is very little of the actual apparatus and instrumentalities of punishment. Durkheim stresses on the public ritual of punishment yet one has to consider that although declaration of punishment is carried out in public space the delivery of punishment is carried out in private spaces. The other criticism also ensues from his idea that society as a whole makes laws and punishes the law breakers, this is not true for there are a select group of people who influence these decisions, the collective conscience is made up by a few (Ritzer, 2011) Punishment may be functional for one group in society and dysfunctional for another.

CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE, DEVIANCE AND LABELING: SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONIST PERSPECTIVE

The functionalist approach came under attack from the symbolic interactionists on various grounds. Symbolic interactionist perspective is very different from Durkheim's notions of discipline and punishment. Symbolic interactionist perspective in sociology and specifically sociology of education traces its roots to the Chicago school comprising primarily of George Herbert Mead and his protégée Herbert Blumer. In sociology of education specifically symbolic interactionism led to a focus on classrooms, in the 1970s and 1980s there was a rush of educationists going back to schools and classrooms. Children in this time period(in Britain) were also seen as disruptive, there were a large number of children not going to school especially in secondary school. It seemed that the academic and disciplining standards were declining; the teachers were worried due to the physical threats. The education system was going through turmoil. The media also turned their wrath to education, claiming that indiscipline in school was mirroring and contributing to declining standards throughout society (Reid, 2012). This is what gave birth to studies of the school and the classroom with special focus on secondary schools. The focus was on interaction, social background and discipline and these can be seen in the works of David Hargreaves (1972), Howard Becker (1963), etc.

Hargreaves (1972) a symbolic interactionist, analyzed the school and children from a symbolic interactionist perspective. He also saw the decline of symbolic interactionism which was to a certain extent replaced by phenomenology and ethnomethodology, there was also a concerted effort by many sociologists to bring these micro approaches together. This was not very fruitful and though these approaches give us a micro perspective they remain embedded in their own theoretical beginnings. The symbolic interactionist approach has a complex of

strengths and capacities. Its appreciative capacity is 'its readiness to explore and explain social action from the point of view of the actor, with empathetic fidelity' (Hargreaves, 1989: 148). It is this aspect of the recognition of the actor and his action from the point of view of the actor that becomes important in this particular study.

Discipline, according to interactionists like Hargreaves, is an interpersonal concept, it 'refers to a set of rules or norms specifying acceptable forms of classroom conduct, which is either imposed by teachers on pupils or agreed between them. It is a form of social control' (Hargreaves, 1972: 229). Discipline becomes a problem basically due to the fact that we do not understand the process by which it is established or maintained. The evaluation of discipline also depends on our own values and educational philosophy and thereby can mark 'good' and 'bad' forms of it.

Discipline is based on the interpersonal relations between teachers and pupils and is carried out in the classroom situation; it is a part of the classroom behavior. The interaction between the teacher and the child in the classroom is important to understand what actually occurs in the classroom. This interaction is shaped by the fact that children's' presence in the classroom is at first involuntary although they might like it later. Children have no choice they are required to enter into interaction with the teacher. The same can be seen in the relationship between the prisoner and prison officials and in mental hospitals.

Another feature of the teacher- child interaction is the enormous power differential between the two participants. In the classroom, most decisions are made by the teachers and his/ her power is derived from various sources: status as an adult, traditional authority as a teacher, from his legal authority and from his expertise on the subject matter that he is teaching. The power differential shows itself in the asymmetrical rights (Hargreaves, 1972) of the two parties,

for example, there is no privacy for the child in the school. The child can be asked to show say his bag, lunch box or be asked to empty his/her pocket at any time where as a child cannot ask the teacher the same, he would be punished for insolence. If a child wishes to speak to the teacher he has to catch the teachers' attention and permission while it is not so for the teacher. The outcome of these differential characteristics of teacher pupil interaction gives into the inequality of the two parties in defining the situation; the dice is already loaded in favour of the teacher. Discipline forms a major part of 'definition of the situation' (Hargreaves, 1972: 229) in the classroom. What this concept argues or allows us to delve into is the impact of definitions and meanings on the structure of human action. The world of one's daily life is not a private world of one's own making but is an intersubjective world. Thereby the definition of a situation encompasses the social norms, customs, etc. Each actor also brings to this common situation his/her biography, culture and social mores, these then also have to accommodate in the definition of a situation.

Clearly there is a structure in which the definition of situation is carried out; it is defined by common culture and role expectations. A child by the nature of the position is confined to a certain form of expected role behavior and the same goes for the teacher. The teacher as is argued later has more influence in the definition of a situation purely based on the virtue of their position. The child's classroom behavior then is usually a product of and a response to the interpretation of a teacher's behavior and teaching style. Yet children do not also easily accept the definition of a situation by the teacher, there is a constant challenge of the teacher's definition through small acts of rebellion or resistance. This definition of situation by a particular person can also be challenged leading to alternative definition of situation say it can be teacher-centered or learner-centered, direct, traditional, dominative, indirect, progressive, interactive etc.

The children also at times manage to define a situation but usually it is the teacher who has an upper hand or it is a working consensus between teacher and children. Children and teachers may agree to work towards the same goal, compromise is usually done when there is a conflict but the teacher gives in only when it is not seen as a fundamental neglect of his duty, imposition is done when compromise would be a neglect of duty and finally counter imposition this is a situation where the children's' definition prevails, this arises when children have dominant power (Hargreaves, 1972).

One of the tools that children often use in the classroom is 'pleasing' (Hargreaves, 1972) the teacher, most acts of children are towards this aspect. They in order to please the teacher answer in class whether they know it or not this gets them into the good grace of teachers. Another tool that the children use is disobedience, there is passive disobedience that is failing to do as the teacher instructs, and negative disobedience is indulging in an activity that the teacher disapproves and positive disobedience that is doing something of which the teacher approves but at a time or in a manner which is forbidden by the teacher. Each teacher has their own set of rules and expectations. By secondary level a child is well aware of what pleases a particular teacher and what does not and this can be used by the child to succeed in the school (Hargreaves, 1972).

Hargreaves (1972) uses the beginning teacher in order to look at the process of discipline in a classroom in terms of how it is established and maintained. Hargreaves provides us with case studies that show that teachers who were easygoing with the classroom in the beginning were not treated well by the children. He argues that 'every teacher is pressured by the pupils to exert his own dominance sooner or later' (Hargreaves, 1972: 234). Usually the tool of disciplinary illusion is employed by children, they play a game of watching and waiting meanwhile the teacher perceives

that he is in control of the class, there are minor and then major infractions by the end of which perceived discipline is transformed into indiscipline. Herein he argues that it is the disjunction between children's and teacher's perspectives that cause the child to ill- favor teachers.

Legitimacy of the teachers' authority is important, when the situation is being newly defined the teacher uses formal authority which is derived from the possession of adult status and legal rights. After the situation is defined the teacher can then establish his personal authority which is based on the teacher's personal qualities and the special relationship he develops with the pupils. This change from a dominant teacher to a less 'tough' teacher has to be a gradual one where the teacher slowly gives up his 'play act', for in order to gain respect and acceptability from colleagues and children the teacher has to act tough or play act in the initial stages.⁹ The source of his new power then is based on the pupil's desire to maintain and establish a good relationship with the teacher and on the liking and respect and admiration that the pupil have for him (Hargreaves, 1989). The problem with this approach is that it is a very top-down approach, it presumes the action of children and the good will of teachers.

There are techniques that the teacher employs to maintain discipline in the classroom, usually when their authority is seemingly negligible. Some of these techniques are positive, they aim to cure as well as stop behavior. They are signal interference- catching the child's eye, clearing one's throat, etc; interest boosting- rekindle children's interest in the work; restructuring the situation- change of activity say a lecture becomes a quiz; humorous decontamination- jokes made by the teacher; non-

⁹ While reading the book 'Interpersonal Relations and Education' the reader feels that it is directed towards teachers who are entering the field and have had some sort of liberal education or child centred approach, the book is essentially a guide for them. This is one theme that is consistent with other books written in the same time period, they claim that their focus is on the child but they focus more on how teachers can discipline children, and are hence guide books for teachers.

punitive exile- sending a child outside. The same can also be used in a negative manner humorous decontamination can turn to ridicule and interest boosting to a reproof.

Peer to peer relation is another defining feature of a classroom situation, peer groups are also important in terms of discipline and defining of a situation. The group that a child belongs to is a marker of behavior that can be expected from children. These groups for the children are informal they have their group culture which is manifest especially during break hours. Their solidarity in the face of the teachers' authority is an important factor, whether the group supports a teacher's action or not has a number of implications. There are also children in the classroom that assume the mantle of the teacher when the teacher is late or absent, they draw legitimacy from the teacher and usually are seen in negative terms by the group per say.

Application of Deviance and Labeling Theories to Classroom Contexts

Deviance as a concept allows us to look at discipline, especially in terms of the social background of those whom society considers as deviating from the norm (Becker, 1963). Deviation from the standard, homogenised practices, etc is considered as not normal and are considered pathological. Discipline is applied to those who do not conform to the normal, standard and the homogenised models. Howard Becker (1963) through his theory of labeling, allow us to explore the social background of those who are disciplined or punished. For instance, Becker (1963) argues that 'social groups create deviance by making the rules whose infraction constitutes deviance' (Becker, 1963: 1). Deviant behavior is that behavior which is labeled by society as deviant. Labeling theory argues that punishment usually depends on who commits the crime and who feels harmed by it. Thereby it is not the act but the interaction between the actor and the wider social group that is important.

Deviants or those who have been labeled as deviants do not form a homogenous entity. Children who may not have broken a rule may be labeled as deviants and those who have broken rules may never be labeled as deviants. The researcher then has to look into instances when the labeling is applied or not. For example there are more chances of a lower class children being labeled as deviant than a middle class child. Labeling is done on the basis of caste, class, race and gender (Becker, 1963).

A child who is labeled as '*troublemaker*', '*chatterbox*' or '*badmash*' (troublesome) in one or two occasions will not consider this label as a part of his/her identity. But if a single label is repeatedly used by a number of teachers in different situations, at a minimum the child is under no illusion about the conception of the teacher. This lays the groundwork for a child in acceptance of the label. As Hargreaves interestingly argues that his teachers called him a '*chatterbox*' and states that 'as an adult I have converted deviant talkativeness in school into the professional skills of a lecturer' (cited in Hammersley and Woods, 1976: 201). Most children are not as lucky as they go through with life carrying these labels, as being labeled as deviant has consequences. Acceptance of a label also depends on whether the child cares about the opinion of the teacher, and more importantly the extent to which others (peer group and classmates, other teachers) support the label. It is interesting that teachers in staffroom grumble about children they consider as deviant. This staffroom gossip paves way for a prejudiced conception of a child, the child is seen as deviant before the teacher even interacts with the child (Hammersley and Woods, 1976) In the same way children also type their teachers through their own sources say history, reputation etc.

Studies using concepts like labeling have been carried out by Hargreaves, William Chambliss, Paul Willis etc, although there are many limitations these studies nonetheless need to

be analyzed in order to understand social reality. In the 1970s, William Chambliss studied two groups of high school boys to find out how strongly labels affected them. The eight boys in the group Chambliss called the *Saints* came from middle-class families. Society expected them to do well in life. The six boys in the other group, the *Roughnecks*, came from lower-class families in poorer neighborhoods. The community generally expected them to fail. Both groups engaged in deviant behavior—skipping school, fighting, and vandalizing property—but suffered different consequences. The teachers, the police, and the community excused the Saints’ behavior because they believed the Saints were good boys overall. The same people saw the Roughnecks as bad and prosecuted them for their behavior more often. Chambliss discovered that the boys’ social class had much to do with the public’s perception of them and the ways the public perceived their acts of deviance.

Robert Wegmann(1976) through his work gives us an interesting idea of the practices involved in the process of maintaining discipline by high school teachers in their classroom. He takes the case of extreme indiscipline in a classroom and uses Garfinkel’s idea that ‘an insult which is not recognized as an insult is not, interpersonally an insult’ (Wegmann, 1976: 3). What is considered important is the ‘how’ of speaking whether it is jokingly or seriously. The idea of imposing a definition of the situation is very important, the teacher needs to define the situation with the means at his/her disposal and in this case ‘by ‘hearing’ insulting comments as serious, by ignoring what children were saying; by continuing to ask questions, give homework, correct tests, and collect assignments’ (Wegmann, 1976: 3).

The major criticism of symbolic interactionists stems from the resistance theorists who argue that theories like labeling are deterministic. They treat the individuals as if they were no more than passive organisms, herded into behavior by the acts of label being given to it, and

following behavior patterns as a mere result of behavior patterns being ascribed to it (Liazos, 1972). There is no allusion in their work to frameworks of power. Thus deviance theorists miss out on the fact that even children negotiate these disciplinary practices, in this context it is important to analyze that 'when a child does not follow the teacher's request how the other children react can be crucial. If they react negatively, the child then faces the disapproval of both the teacher and his peers, and is not likely to continue' (Wegmann, 1976: 77). The child in effect by disobeying his teacher is trying to define the situation or proposing a counter definition of reality and this task is much harder without the support of his peers. There are a number of ways of challenging the teacher's authority, for example, coming late to classes, insulting the teacher, etc.

Stephen Ball's study of comprehensive schools and Paul Willis work in this regard are important. These studies move away from the deterministic position taken by deviant theorists and argue that there is resistance as well. Children do not meekly accept, but they also negotiate their reality. In 1980s, Ball conducted a study of comprehensive school which he fictitiously called Beachside Comprehensive School. The findings of his study are very interesting for us; he argues that even after the introduction of common education many children continued to be allocated to bands often on the basis of their social class background rather than their academic potential. Teachers continued to use positive and negative labels in relation to children in high and low bands. This provoked disruptive behavior especially among middle band children. It is interesting that the children in band 3 the lowest in the hierarchy who were considered useless belonged to lower classes, there was negative labeling by the teachers.

Paul Willis (1981) describes the resistance of working-class "lads" in an English high school who refused to cooperate with and legitimize the middle-class competitive system of

schooling. Instead, they created a subculture that reflected the macho, shop floor values of their manual laborer fathers and ultimately contributed to the reproduction of socio economic inequalities.

The link between categorization of pupils into groups, and their social background is made explicit in Nell Keddie's (1971) work too. She focuses on the problem of what teachers know about their pupils and how that knowledge is related to the organization of curriculum knowledge in the classrooms. The teachers already had implicit ideas of what a normal pupil should be, it reflected middle class ideals, for example –'working at your own speed', 'individualistic and competitive approach to learning'(Keddie, 1972). The streaming of children based on ability was derived largely from social class judgements of pupils, social, moral and intellectual behavior. The children of stream A allowed the teacher to define the situation unchallenged; it is children of stream C (seen as deviants by the teachers) who challenge the teachers' definition of a situation and the nature and boundaries of what is to count as knowledge. The C stream children were seen as disruptive and presented teachers with the problem of social control; the teachers see this behavior as inappropriate and not normal. What this leads to is the C stream pupil are not given the same focus and attention by the teachers, what is taught by the teachers in stream A is academic and in stream C is said to be 'commonsense'. While children in stream A are prepared for higher levels of education, children in stream C are seen as vocational children.

Nell Keddie (1971) highlights for us the connection between ability and social class and the idea that by challenging a teacher's definition of the situation in the classrooms certain children are seen as not normal or as deviants. Knowledge is also used to control situation in classrooms and to discipline children by making them docile recipients of knowledge. The new wave of

sociology allows us to draw a broader picture of social reality to look at how the idea of deviants are dealt with in school, what these studies miss out is a broader framework of analysis that allows us to look at discipline and punishment in the school.

MICHEL FOUCAULT: DISCIPLINE THE NEW PUNISHMENT?

In understanding Foucault one arrives at an approach that is both contradictory and dialectical, and this is also the beauty of Foucauldian approach. Foucault's family tree in terms of thought is difficult to trace and he was hostile towards any such effort. Clearly, Foucault does not give us a clear and profound truth nor does his work attempt to do so. He is influenced by the phenomenological theory, but does not agree with its main idea that the centre of meaning is an autonomous subject. His writing evinces a strong structural element, but he rejected the model that develops in his writings, and refused to create a uniform model with rules of its own (Ritzer, 1988). Foucault was influenced by Weber and Marx, but unlike them he did not feel committed to a comprehensive analysis of organizations or of economic aspects: he chose each time to analyze a different social institution. Despite his claim that he prefers to focus on the micro-politics of power, his theory is suffused with structural macro principles (Ritzer, 1988). Following the same principle this work does not take up only a particular theory to understand reality, for it is complex and dynamic. It allows the flexibility of lifting concepts from both micro and macro approaches.

It is this Foucault that this work emulates by incorporating different theories, not accepting one premise as the truth and hence looking at both individual and structural dimensions of the phenomenon of discipline and punishment in school. This study utilizes his work '*Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*' specifically to address the problem that

has been raised. Foucauldian theory in this regard is mainly concentrated from the above text and it has been a conscious effort to do so. *'Discipline and Punish'* is more close to sociology of education than any of his other works that is not to say that other texts of his may not be considered important, what this particular text does is that it allows us to enquire into the heart of the matter. The text brilliantly juxtaposes the school and the prison and allows us to broaden our viewpoint to the structure rather than only a micro study of the phenomenon.

There are two important sources that Foucault draws from are Nietzsche and his own political activism. *'Discipline and Punish'* provides for us a history of the modern penal system, it looks at punishment in a social context and analyzes how changing power relations changed the nature of punishment. There is the use of the genealogy idea to trace the evolution and change that was seen in terms of punishment. So in this order he begins by analyzing the situation before eighteenth century when punishment comprised of public execution and corporal punishment along with torture were legitimate forms of punishment. This punishment was ceremonial, ritualistic and directed at the body of the prisoner. There was a reform to this system primarily in making a theater of punishment a space where punishment was given and this led to the birth of prison. Punishment was related to crime but also served as a warning to future lawbreakers.

In this context, Foucault's work is important as it provides for us a larger picture of discipline and its practice. The body-soul shift is central to *Discipline and Punish*. The shift from body to soul also marks the end of the public idea of punishment, because whilst the body has to be tortured in public, the soul is a private thing.

The disappearance of public execution marks the decline of the spectacle; but it also marks a slackening of the hold of the body. The body now serves as an instrument or an intermediary: if one intervenes upon it to imprison it, or to make it work, it is in order to

deprive an individual of liberty that is regarded both as right and as property. Physical pain, the pain of the body itself, is no longer the constituent element of penalty. If the penalty in its most serious form no longer addresses itself to the body, on what does it lay hold? The expiation that once rained down on the body must be replaced by a punishment that acts in depth on the heart, the thoughts, the will and the inclination. Punishment if I may so put it, should strike the soul rather than the body (Foucault, 1991: 11-16).

There are limits to how you can punish the body, but the soul had new possibilities. It allows one to consider why the crime occurred; the motives that drive the criminal to commit the act becomes knowable, and hence the subject of investigation. It also becomes possible to consider the criminal beyond the crime and its punishment but to look at the cause of his/ her action. Instead of inflicting say a painful penalty, or giving the death sentence, it becomes possible to supervise and investigate. What this does is it attacks the soul it looks into the why of the crime. And instead of death, physical punishment the system seeks the soul, its restitution and normalization.

This shift from punishment of the body to the soul is very important. When a criminal is condemned to be executed, the judge alone passes the sentence. When he is sent to prison, he is also evaluated by doctors and psychiatrists. With the development of human sciences psychiatry, social work, medicine, etc, these professions are those who assess and judge people according to standards called norms: they ultimately decide what is normal and abnormal. This process involves judging not a crime but an individual, making decisions about his sanity, his treatment, and even when he should be released. According to Foucault, the modern world has given the important power to judge to a shadowy body of professionals whose role is sometimes uncertain. Punishment then can be understood as a political tactic situated within the general field of power relations. Punishment is thereby intimately and internally linked with the development of the

human sciences (psychology, sociology, criminology, etc.) and not merely influenced by them from the outside. Punishment is thus about power, it is about power-knowledge; and it is about the ways in which technologies of power-knowledge come into contact with the bodies of offenders and exercise power in and through them (Foucault,1991).

Disciplinary power

Modern punishment, and especially the modern prison deploys a distinctive kind of power that Foucault describes as "disciplinary"(Foucault, 1991:131):

methods which made possible the meticulous control of the operations of the body which assured the constant subjection of its forces and imposed upon them a relation of docility and utility, might be called disciplines. Many disciplinary methods had long been in existence-in monasteries, armies, workshops. But in the course of seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the disciplines became general formulas of domination, thus discipline produces subjected and practiced bodies, docile bodies, it disassociates power from the body (Foucault, 1991: 136-137).

Discipline, for Foucault, is a method of mastering the human body and rendering it both obedient and useful. This disciplinary power permits time and labor to be extracted rather than wealth. Schools are the prime example of institutions that have disciplinary power to extract time and labor from children. It operates on the smallest scale of control, paying attention not primarily to the whole body but to its individual movements and gestures, aiming to increase the efficiency of each movement and develop its coordination with others. This training of the body is accompanied by a constant, uninterrupted supervision that is alert to the slightest deviation and thus facilitates a meticulous control of the individual who is being disciplined.

Foucault (1991) in his work argues that the first act of discipline occurs through distribution of individuals in spaces. Discipline requires an 'enclosure' (Foucault, 1991: 141), a space that is cut off from the rest of the society. 'It is the protected place of disciplinary monotony...there were the colleges or secondary schools...military barracks' (Foucault, 1991: 141). This space is also organized in terms of partition, 'each individual has its own place and each place its own individual' (Foucault, 1991: 143). This distribution of individual was based on rank be it age, status etc it formed a hierarchy of knowledge. The time table is an important means of classification of ordering a multitude of aspects into a seemingly coherent whole. Foucault argues that time table has been one of the most important disciplining tools. The time-table which is a legacy inherited from monastic communities is based on three methods- 'establish rhythms, impose particular occupation and regulate the cycle of repetition' (Foucault, 1991:149) and this came to be the mainstay of schools, workshops and hospitals. Activities then are governed by a time table which accounts for every minute of the pupil's time. Foucault argues that this minute by minute detail of what a child should do is one of the biggest acts of discipline.

The chief function of the idea of disciplinary power that Foucault elaborated was

to train, it trains the moving, confused useless multitudes of bodies and forces into a multiplicity of individual elements. Discipline 'makes' individuals; it is the specific technique of a power that regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its exercise (Foucault, 1991: 170).

The disciplinary power links forces together so as to enhance and use them; it creates individual units from a mass of bodies. Disciplinary power depends on three elements they are hierarchical observation, normalizing judgment, and examination (Foucault, 1991). In

hierarchical observation, the exercise of discipline assumes 'a mechanism that coerces by means of observation' (Foucault, 1991:171). During the classical age 'observatories' (Foucault, 1991: 171) were constructed. They were part of a new physics and cosmology; new ideas of light and the visible secretly prepared a new knowledge of man. Observatories were arranged like a military camp, a model also found in schools, hospitals and prisons. Disciplinary institutions created a mechanism of control and the structure of observatories. The perfect disciplinary mechanism would make visible everything all the time. The problem that was faced was breaking surveillance down into parts. In a factory, surveillance becomes part of the forces of production, with a supervisor always checking if the work is being done. The same thing occurred in the schools. It becomes possible then for "a single gaze to see everything constantly... a perfect eye" (Foucault, 1991:173); supervision then is continuous and intense, and "it is the apparatus as a whole that produces 'power' and distributes individuals in this permanent and continuous field" (Foucault, 1991: 177). Discipline operates by a calculated gaze, it is this gaze or the perfect eye that sees everything and ensures discipline without force but a look that is important for the study. The gaze or what in this study has been termed as the disciplinary gaze (Foucault, 1991: 174) is an important tool in the process of discipline in the school, the gaze allows the teacher to maintain discipline without even raising his/her voice.

Normalizing judgment: - At the center of all disciplinary mechanisms is a small penal system, with a micro-penalty of time, behavior and speech. Even slight departures from what was considered as correct behavior were punished.

The disciplines....defined and repressed a mass of behaviors that the relative indifference of the great systems of punishment had allowed to escape. *The workshop, the school, the army were subject to a whole micro-penalty of time (lateness, absences, interruption of*

tasks), of activity (inattention, negligence, lack of zeal), of behavior (impoliteness, disobedience), of speech (idle chatter, insolence), of the body (incorrect attitudes, irregular gestures, lack of cleanliness), of sexuality (impurity, indecency). At the same time, by way of punishment, a whole series of subtle procedures was used, from light physical punishment to minor deprivations and petty humiliations (Foucault, 1991:178) (emphasis mine).

Discipline's method of punishment is similar to that of the court, but non-observance is also important. Whatever does not meet the rule departs from it (Foucault, 1991). Another important feature of disciplinary punishment is that it has to be corrective. It favors punishment that is exercise. Punishment is considered as an element of a double system that of gratification-punishment, which defines behavior on the basis of good-evil. The distribution according to acts and grades has a double role. It creates gaps and arranges qualities into hierarchies, but also punishes and rewards. Discipline rewards and punishes by awarding ranks (Foucault, 1991). This ranking is important as it places hierarchies the top of the ladder being that which epitomizes the normal.

This art of punishing refers individual actions. It measures individuals and places them in a hierarchical system; it also traces the abnormal. The perpetual penalty essentially normalizes. This is opposed to the juridical penalty that defines the individual according to a corpus of laws, texts and general categories. Disciplinary mechanisms create a 'penalty of the norm' (Foucault, 1991: 180). The normal, which exists in medicine, factories and schools, becomes one of the great instruments of power towards the end of the classical period. Marks of status were replaced by ideas of belonging to a normal group. Normalization makes people homogeneous, but it also makes it possible to measure differences between individuals.

Examination:-Examination represents ‘the combined techniques of an observing hierarchy and those of a normalizing judgment. It is a normalizing gaze, a surveillance that makes it possible to qualify, classify and punish. It establishes over individuals a visibility through which one differentiates them and judges them. That is why in all the mechanisms of discipline, the examination is highly ritualized (Foucault, 1991: 184). It is a ritualized innovation of the classical age; the organization of the hospital as an examining machine is one of the features of the eighteenth century. A similar process is evident in the development of examination in schools. Examination introduced certain new features: first, it transformed the economy of visibility into the exercise of power. The subject, and not the sovereign, becomes seen. Second, examination introduces individuality into the field of documentation; a mass of writing fixes the individual. Third, each individual becomes a case ‘as effect and object of power, as effect and object of knowledge’ (Foucault, 1991: 192) that can be analyzed and described.

Examination is at the center of processes that constitute the individual as an effect and object of power. The disciplines mark the move from a situation where individuality is greatest in the higher ranks, to one where those on whom anonymous power is exercised are more individual. The child is more individual than the man, the patient more than the healthy man. If you want to individualize a man, ask how much of the madman he has in him.

Disciplinary Punishment, is what Foucault says is practiced in the modern era. Disciplinary punishment gives "professionals" (psychologists, programme facilitators, parole officers, etc) power over the prisoner. The school at least in its structure then can be seen as similar as a prison that is a panopticon and, in this, disciplining force is used which sometimes seems to be sanctioned both by society and the state. The teachers act as agents of surveillance, the

architecture to the organisation reflects the power of the teacher who from a single vantage point can deploy the disciplining gaze.

Foucault also suggests that schools form systems of surveillance and that they are like panopticons (Foucault, 1980). Foucault then discusses Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon, which is a building with a tower at the center, and from which each cell is visible. Visibility then becomes a trap, each individual is seen but cannot communicate with the warders or other prisoners. A sense of permanent visibility is induced by the panopticon, and it is this that ensures the functioning of power. Bentham's idea was that power should be visible but unverifiable. The prisoner can always see the tower and hence believes that every moment is supervised, this leads to fear of any untoward action on his part. The plague-stricken town that Foucault uses to elaborate his ideas and the panopticon represent the transformations of the disciplinary program. The first case that is in the plague-stricken town is an exceptional situation, where power is mobilized against an extraordinary evil. The panopticon is a generalized model of human functioning, a way of defining power relations in everyday life. The panopticon is not a dream building, but a diagram of power reduced to its ideal form (Foucault, 1991). It perfects the operations of power by increasing the number of people who can be controlled, and decreasing the number needed to operate it. 'The panopticon was also a laboratory; it could be used as a machine to carry out experiments, to alter behavior, to train or correct individuals' (Foucault, 1991: 203). This is also interestingly true for the school, for the school in its architectural and spatial features do represent a panopticon, the principal's office is always located in such a position that the entire school can be observed, there are cameras, and constant surveillance.

Foucault's conception of power forms one of his most important concerns, the questions about who has power when, where and the exercise of power has been one of his major preoccupations. Essentially, power is a relationship between people in which one affects another's actions. Power differs from force or violence, which affect the body physically. It involves making a free subject do something that he would not have done otherwise: power therefore involves restricting or altering someone's will. Power is present in all human relationships and penetrates throughout society. The state does not have a monopoly over power, because power relations are deeply unstable and changeable. Having said that, patterns of domination do exist in society: for example, the modern power to punish was established through the action of the human sciences. The relationship between power and knowledge is also an important one. The human sciences are able to control and exclude people because they make claims to both knowledge and power. To claim that a statement is true is also to make a claim to power because truth can only be produced by power. Criminology can make claims that exclude the delinquent, for example, because a system of power relations exists in which the delinquent is dominated (Foucault, 1980).

Foucauldian account of discipline and punishment, like any singular interpretation, has definite weaknesses and limitations. In focusing on the relations of power and knowledge that structure modern punishments, Foucault neglects other issues such as the sensibilities, moral values, and emotional forces that form the cultural framework in which penal power is exercised, the social support and political legitimacy on which punishment depends, and even the day-to-day political struggles and negotiations that shape policies and institutional regimes (Garland, 1991).

The theoretical discussion presented so far spans various approaches and perspectives – functionalists, symbolic interactionists, resistance, to new waves in sociology of education, each of these paradigms and thinkers are also problematic, they have their own internal limitations due to the context and the purpose with which these theories came about in sociology. These discussions form the broad base of looking into social reality, which is complex. A single theoretical explanation will not give us a clear picture. Thus the study combines different approaches to study, analyze and interpret the phenomena of discipline and punishment for a single approach would be misleading and the interpretation may not be as nuanced.

The theoretical discussion thus allows us to contemplate on the various interpretations of discipline and punishment, the functionalist perspective looks at the role and function punishment plays in terms of social solidarity. One of the most important contributions of symbolic interactionists to sociology has been their methodology; the study uses the methodology of symbolic interactionism especially through the works of Howard Becker and David Hargreaves. The essential framework of the study is Foucauldian in nature; it uses concepts and ideas provided by Foucault to delve into the macro issue of discipline and punishment.

The third chapter describes the culture, context and ethos of the Baha'i Secondary School in Gangtok, where the study was conducted.

CHAPTER III

BAHA'I SECONDARY SCHOOL: A PROFILE

The chapter primarily presents the ethos and ideology of the school chosen for the study. It is divided into two parts. In the first part description of the Baha'i faith, its philosophy, ideology its perception and its history and growth in India and specifically in Sikkim are discussed. The Baha'i faith has a specific understanding of the system of education which is highlighted in this chapter. The second part of the chapter looks at the ethos of the Baha'i secondary school, in terms of its spatial arrangement, architecture, history, rules, culture and teachers and children.

PART I

WHAT IS THE BAHAI FAITH?

Baha'ism and its predecessor Babism grew from the religious environment of the Shi'ite Muslims in Persia, it grew out of the sect and went on to become a religion. India has been associated with the Baha'i faith since its inception as one of the eighteen people who recognised the Bab were from India.

The first period of the Baha'i movement, which we have called here the period of proclamation, is clearly divided into two halves, the one from 1844 to 1850, from the declaration of the Bab to his execution, and the other from 1850 to 1892, from the beginning of the succession struggle after the death of the Bab to the death of Baha'u'llah, in whose favor this struggle was resolved. The whole period, however, is characterised by the passionate intensity of the proclamation that they expected on has indeed arrived and is now living in the midst of men. With the death of Baha'u'llah the content of the Baha'i message found its point of orientation in the past and ceased to be

that breathless proclamation of the divine wonder to be found here and now with which the movement began (Berger, 1954: 2).

The Bab or the 'gate' is the precursor to the establishment of Baha'i faith in the world. A section amongst the Shi'a Muslims, the Shaykhis, in Persia believed that the Q'aim of the House of Mohammed or the Mahdi or the gateway of truth was resurrected. The Bab was questioned, examined and then declared as the Mahdi. Within five months, eighteen members of the Shaykhis declared Bab as the manifestation of God. Due to the Bab's growing influence in the country, the Islamic clergy first placed him under house arrest, then confined him in different parts of the country, he was pronounced as insane and executed by a firing squad. The Bab had announced that there would be a prophet after him to continue his work; there were twenty five claimants to this position one of them being Baha'u'llah. Baha'u'llah, who is considered as the founder of the Baha'i faith, belonged to a noble family. He was exiled and from there (Acre, Adrianople) he addressed the world leaders through letters preaching the unity of human kind. After he passed, his eldest son was declared as the chief interpreter and was given the name 'Abdu'l Baha which means the servant of God. He was the one who consolidated the Baha'i faith. He appointed his grandson Shoghi Effendi Rabbani as the Guardian and the interpreter of Baha'i faith. During these thirty-six years he translated many of the writings of the founder's Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha into English. He interpreted their meanings and encouraged the establishment of local and national Baha'i institutions. Shoghi Effendi also played a crucial role in spreading the faith and its ideals throughout the world. He passed away in 1957.

The Universal House of Justice, was founded in 1963, it was ordained by Baha'u'llah. It became the legislative authority of the Baha'i faith. It is a nine-member body which is elected at five-year intervals, this is done by the entire members of the National Spiritual Assemblies of

Baha'is throughout the world. The House of Justice is charged with the task of directing the spiritual and administrative affairs of the Baha'i International Community. It serves as custodian and trustee of the Baha'i Holy Places and other properties in the Holy Land. It was endowed by Baha'u'llah with the authority to legislate on all matters not specifically laid down in the Baha'i scriptures. The Universal House of Justice is now the caretaker of the Baha'i faith.¹⁰

The history of the Baha'i faith in India can be traced to the Bab period, when the Bab in 1844-45 appointed one of the Indian believers as the Letter of Living. Baha'u'llah, in order to spread the religion send one of the well known teacher Jamal Effendi¹¹ to India, where he converted a number of nobles like the Nawab of Rampur, etc into the faith. Thus Jamal Effendi established an elitist method of spreading the Baha'i faith in India which continued for the next decade. Syed Mustafa Rumi accepted the faith and later became distinguished in his manifold services and was appointed as a Hand of the Cause of God.

In 20th century there was a focus on mass preaching, whereby villages were converted, this led to a new phase amongst the Baha'is in India. During the first century of the religion in India there was no prominent increase in the numbers. As of today India has the largest Baha'i population in the world. Though the number of Baha'is in India as reported on social sites seem to be 2 million. There is no such figure given in the official website. There have also been controversies on the actual numbers of Baha'is, for example, people may accept the Baha'i faith

¹⁰ <http://www.bahai.in/bahai-faith/introduction/history.html> , accessed on 17/7/2012 at 5.40p.m

¹¹ <http://www.h-net.org/~bahai/bhpapers/india1.html>, accessed on 17/7/2012 at 6.07p.m

without having to leave their earlier faith. The faith may be Baha'i but the practices are Hindu, Buddhist, etc in nature.¹²

The basic principles of the Baha'i faith as practiced today were laid out by Baha'u'llah and his successors.

There are five greatest foundations for the government of the nations that was laid out by Baha'u'llah: the promotion of the Most Great Peace by the House of Justice; *a universal language; the practice by all of love and unity; the levying of taxes for universal education; and promotion of agriculture*. Other specific recommendations is that Baha'is must obey all governments, that all clergy and monasticism must be abolished, that the sciences "which lead and conduce to the elevation of mankind" be studied, and that each man must have an occupation in which to serve God (Berger, 1954: 5).

The basic principle that the Baha'i faith had was the promotion of world peace, this idea was basically important as the Baha'i as a religious community had faced persecution since its inception most of its leaders were executed. The idea of a universal language was to bring about the oneness of humanity. Education and its importance in the faith form one of the core doctrines of the faith, and are clearly seen in terms of a shift from monastic and clerical education to scientific education.

BAHA'I EDUCATION POLICY

There is as such no clear and coherent policy of the Baha'i faith on education. They do not present a definite and detailed educational system, but simply offer certain basic principles and set forth a number of teaching ideals that should guide future Baha'i educationalists in their efforts to formulate an adequate teaching curriculum which would be in full harmony with the

¹² http://bahai-library.com/nolley_bahai_population_india, accessed on 17/7/2012 at 6.35p.m.

spirit of the Baha'i teachings and would thus meet the requirements and needs of the modern age (Universal House of Justice, 1999: i)¹³. Therefore what we have here is quotations from the tablets, holy books, and letters written by the Universal House of Justice through which we understand the idea of education amongst the Baha'is.

One of the basic principles of Baha'i faith on education is the idea that education be used to bring about unity amongst the citizens of the world, this education is both religious and scientific, passages from the tablets argue that a child has to learn that which is helpful for him in terms of a vocation.

The learned of the day must direct the people to acquire those branches of knowledge which are of use, that both the learned themselves and the generality of mankind may derive benefits therefrom. Such academic pursuits and begin and end in words alone have never been and will never be of any worth. The majority of Persia's learned doctors devote all their lives to the study of a philosophy the ultimate yield of which is nothing but words (Universal House of Justice, 1999: 4)¹⁴.

There is a stress on practical education or more hands on approach to education; the passage clearly gives importance to the field practitioners rather than theorists. The need of practical education along with theoretical education can be seen in all Baha'i schools. There is a lot of stress laid on extracurricular activities especially those that involve social action among the Baha'i schools. As a teacher of the Baha'i School, Gangtok inadvertently puts it 'this is the only school where there is so much extracurricular activity'¹⁵.

¹³ This excerpt is from a letter written by the Universal House of Justice on behalf of the Guardian to an individual believer on 7th June 1939.

¹⁴ This excerpt is from '*Tablets of the Baha'u'llah Revealed after the Kitab-i-Aqdas*'.

¹⁵ This was stated by a new teacher in the school, who had attended government and other schools in the town. It is based on interview with the teacher on 13/03/12.

According to the Baha'i literature there are three kinds of education, they are: material, human and spiritual.

Material education is concerned with the progress and development of the body, through gaining its sustenance, its material comfort and ease. This education is common to animals and man. Human education signifies civilization and progress- that is to say, government, administration, charitable work, trades, arts and sciences. Divine education consists in acquiring divine perfections. We need an educator who will at the same time be a material, human and spiritual educator, and whose authority will be effective in all conditions (Universal House of Justice, 1999: 10-11)

The manifestation and the words of the prophet were seen as the laws of the faith. In one of the books addressed to teachers it is argued that

while reasons can and should be given when possible, it is also necessary to explain that there are some laws which should be obeyed without much questioning. This is important when talking about instructions from a source of authority, especially from the Manifestation of God. With repetition and perseverance, children will learn obedience and see these instructions as habits they have to form for lives (Furutan, 2000: xi).

The faith argues that the torment and punishment inflicted on a criminal only increases his or her depravity and that penal institution and houses of detention increase rather than prevent crime. In one of the tablets it is argued that

the individual be trained from his infancy, in such a way that he will never undertake to commit a crime. Children must be most carefully watched over, protected and trained. Otherwise, the children will turn into weeds growing wild, become the cursed, knowing not right from wrong, distinguishing not the highest of human qualities from all that is mean and vile (Universal House of Justice, 1999: 18)

It further argues that in the process of this training it must be made clear to the children that possessing an evil character is the greatest sin. The root cause of wrongdoing as seen in the text of Abdu'l- Baha is ignorance and hence education as a tool of knowledge and perception is important. From this it follows that

the children's school must be a place of utmost discipline and order, that institution must be thorough, and provision must be made for the rectification and refinement of character; so that in his earliest years, within the very essence of the child the divine foundation is laid (p.20)

Although Shoghi Effendi clearly states that only love and kindness have for greater influence than punishment (Universal House of Justice, 1999) it is argued that

sometimes love and encouragements are not enough to change the bad behavior of a child. Some form of punishment may be necessary. A good way of punishing a child is to take away something from him that he likes or to stop him joining activities that he enjoys (Universal House of Justice, 1999: 26)

Women and their education is given primary importance amongst the Baha'is. One of the people to accept Bab and spearhead the movement was Tahirih who had removed her veil in a male gathering and declared that the new age would require women and men to work in equal partnership. Following this the faith always prescribed that women along with men have to be educated.

The National Spiritual Assembly carried out their administrative, religious work based on the directives from the Universal House of Justice. At present in India there are seventeen regional and 600 local councils working under the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of India. The Baha'i House of Worship or the Lotus temple in Delhi is symbolic of the presence of Baha'is in India, it is seen as a symbol of unity of God, religion and humankind. The focus of the

assembly is on devotional gatherings, spiritual education of children, junior youth social empowerment, participatory group study, social action and participation in discourses of society.

The junior youth social empowerment looks at the age group 12-15 and the aim is to empower young people to understand their purpose in life. 'It helps them to analyse constructive and destructive forces operating in society' (NSA, 2011: 4). The program basically looks at the youth going through emotional and physical changes and seeks to help them through this transition. India also hosts a number of Baha'i inspired socio- economic projects such as BARLI Development Institute for Rural Women (Indore), New Era Teacher Training Centre and New Era High School (Panchgani, Maharashtra), Rabbani School (Gwalior), Foundation for Advancement of Science (Lucknow), Sikkim Baha'i schools and other community and private schools (NSA, 2011).

The Local Spiritual Assembly that the school in question belongs to is the Assembly of Sikkim. Baha'i faith reached Sikkim around the early 1950s. One of the earliest Sikkimese to accept the faith was the school principal's grandfather. The Baha'i population in Sikkim is small, yet their impact through the school is wide. As per the 1991 census, there were 192 Baha'is in Sikkim, 112 male and 80 female¹⁶. The Baha'i Secondary School caters to these families and other non- Baha'is in the town of Gangtok.

¹⁶ There has been no detailed census of Baha'is in Sikkim after this and since in the religious category they are counted as others it is difficult to establish the numbers.

PART II

BAHA'I SECONDARY SCHOOL, GANGTOK

Interestingly, though the school is affiliated to the Baha'i faith at an administrative level, it does not function as a missionary school. The children at the most have learned songs which are also secular in nature, the principal reads out passages from (the holy book), yet the lessons have not so much to do with religion but with values. There are around five Baha'i teachers in the school; the stress is clearly on secularism. Yet the underlying principle with which the school is undoubtedly based on is the Baha'i faith, most teachers see their visit to the Baha'i Lotus temple in Delhi as a mark of achievement. The moral education classes which are conducted weekly are based on the Baha'i faith. The hostellers on Sunday have classes where the faith is preached, they learn songs which sounds universal in nature but are actually embedded in the faith. The school hence is missionary to an extent but the preachings are not overt. They come under the mask of teaching universal values; say unity in diversity, value of punctuality, respect, self discipline, basically building mores and spiritual values in child.

The Ruhi books (published by the Baha'i publishing house, Delhi) are basically moral science books from a Baha'i perspective. These books are used for moral education classes, for youth empowerment. These books have stories, for example, of a boy in Africa dealing with poverty. The principal argues that as the children grow up, especially at the level of IX and X they have no idea of what is right or wrong, good or bad, they are unable to make decisions, these stories then help them to decide what is good or bad for them.

The moral education classes are based on books published by the publishing house of the Baha'i in New Delhi, these books deal with peace education which is part of the curriculum for classes I to IV. Through game and various other activities, these books try to engage children with peace education. 'Peace education helps children sit quietly in the class and the idea of making peace and not fighting is preached through games for the lower classes'¹⁷. Peace has always been a major issue for the Baha'is, with the persecution of Baha'i from the time they were founded including the killing of their founder and the historical conditions have all shaped to make this as a major part of the faith. These books also help them for making career decisions, they become spiritual and thoughtful about their environment and since these classes also include activities outside the school like visiting orphans, tree plantation, visiting the poor, etc.

A visit to the Baha'i official website states that Baha'i School, Gangtok, 'endeavors to create a healthy, disciplined and inspiring atmosphere for children to grow and develop, free from religious bigotry and fanaticism'¹⁸. One of the often repeated themes is that of the oneness of humankind. This is one of the basic parameters of the school, songs opposing the apartheid are still sung in the school. The assemblies conducted are mostly based on the concept of unity in diversity (this was characteristic of Baha'i faith all along). The school buildings have these themes painted over them. Sikkim as a society is a communally harmonious state and there have been no issues of communal violence, this however, is not to say that there are no ill-feelings, differences in social status of communities, etc. The oneness though preached by the school is more in terms of oneness of entire humankind, hence the coming together of all human beings

¹⁷ Interview with the principal 9/3/12 at 1.30pm

¹⁸ <http://www.bahai.in/social-action/education/bahai-secondary-school-tadong.html>, accessed on 8/4/2012 at 10.30a.m

for all of us 'bleed ruby red'. This is one of the songs that was being taught to the hostellers during a Sunday.

Baha'i faith stresses on the importance of socio economic development, it is considered as one of the important principles of the religions. And one of the major ways of doing this is through education, which is one of the reasons why in a small state like Sikkim it has two schools. Baha'i school, Gangtok is the older school, its establishment as a school is seen due to the lack of educational institutions in the state and a means of socio economic development. The Baha'i school is self financed; it does not take any funding from the government and has never seen the need to do so. The school thus becomes an agency of social development, this idea then forms the crux of the social system. The school thereby becomes missionary in nature.

One of the interesting features of Baha'i faith is the stress on universal education, especially the stress on girl's education. Abdu'l Baha, the successor to the founder argued that it is only with gender equality that a society could move forward and the ultimate goal as seen by him was that with feminine influence there would be world peace. For instance, the principal argues that

One of the basic principles of Baha'i faith is universal education, it says that both the son and the daughter should be educated and then more priority of education should be given to the daughter. Also it caters to the need of the needy/ poor so right now also we have about forty children under concession and consideration. These are children from the surrounding area from Linkey from Pakyong and then from Ranipool from Pandam.¹⁹

Although the school and the religion stresses on education of girls, the ground level scenario shows that in the senior classes there is disparate male to female ratio, say in class VIII B in a class of twenty eight there are only eight girls in the classroom. As you go higher, girl

¹⁹ Interview with the Principal

children slowly disappear from the classroom. Although in classes VI and VII the ratio is good. Though educating girls is on priority both in terms of religion as well as national goals, these goals are not translated into reality.

Spatial location and arrangement of the school

Baha'i Secondary School, located in the town of Gangtok in Sikkim, was established in 1975. The land on which the school stands is one and a half acres, it is surrounded on three sides by private buildings, and the road to the school is narrow and congested. The surrounding buildings have small shops that cater to children. There are small gardens all over the compound as well as many fruit trees. The school has small notices/signboards that say 'we are punctual', etc, placed all over the school. The school has a small canteen where children eat during short break and lunch break. The school has high walls and there are two entry/exit gates which are guarded, the boundaries are wired and at the time of the observation, there were construction activities taking place right outside the school boundary, due to which there as a lot of noise, dust, etc.

The school comprises of five buildings – nursery which is the first building if one enters from the north gate, it has two floors and the ground floor serves as a dormitory for senior boys, the next building is for the primary section of classes I -II and VA, this is a cottage structure which also contains the fee counter and is right next to the gallery. The gallery has a basketball court and the next building is the principal's office. The main administrative building has three floors; the ground floor contains an in-door sports room. The second floor has the principal's office, a guest room, and her assistant's room. The third floor is the principal's residential quarters. Another building has the middle and secondary sections which have children from class

V – X, on the ground floor there is a dormitory for girls and junior boys, the first floor has classes V, VI, VII and the top floor has classes VIII – X. The next building closest to the south gate was earlier the hostel but it was abandoned due to the earthquake. It now has children of classes III and IV, a library, teachers' room and the mess. It is interesting to note that the principal's office is situated in a prime location, from her office all the blocks can be seen very clearly. This is where the Foucauldian notion of the 'panopticon' is invoked, like the prison guard the principal's office is located at a position of maximum surveillance.

History of the school

This section is primarily based on the life stories and narratives provide by the principal for us on the history of the school which is both objective and subjective. What allows us to use this method is firstly due to the paucity of data on the history of the school and secondly to the fact that the principal has been a part of the school right from the day it was stated till date except for five years when she was principal of another school, during the entire life of the school so far. The stories and the principal's recollection provide us with an excellent resource to construct a historical account of the school, the problems that were faced, the values it echoed, etc.

Baha'i school started off as a primary school in 1975 in the month of February as the academic session starts form February in the state. The school was built on land purchased by the National Spiritual Assembly²⁰ and the Baha'is of Sikkim. It was not purchased with the goal of establishing a school; but was purchased with the idea that it would become a place where Baha'i friends would stay. In the year 1975 the area was converted into a school. There were very few

²⁰ The National Spiritual Assembly is the highest decision making body of the Baha'is.

schools in Gangtok around the 1970s and also the area had no school. It was then that the Baha'is decided to establish a school in the same area.

One of the first building that was built in the premise was the audio-visual with LKG nursery block which was built in the year 1976-77, the principal's building was built in 1980 and the hostel building was built in 1983-84. At that point of time the school did not have a ground, there were only small pavements which led to a small wooden gate and the area where the ground now stands was a huge block of mountains which was later slowly levelled to create a ground for the school.

At first, the school had only the nursery section. Then it had LKG and UKG, the school grew grade by grade, along with the first batch of children of which the principal was a part. When the batch reached class four, they had no classroom so the children sat under a mulberry tree and when it rained which it often does in Sikkim they were taken to the principal's office. This trend is visible in a lot of low scale private schools where the senior most class sits in the principal's room and even their daily classes are conducted there. Classes were also conducted in the garage, the jeep was kept out during the day and there was a blackboard and pavement for children to sit and in the evening it was used as a garage again

School administration and decision making

There are three tiers of decision making in the school, at the top is the National Spiritual Assembly of India in Delhi. This is the highest religious authority of the Baha'i faith in India. These assemblies which are present in every country form the church of the Baha'is. This assembly is the caretaker of the Baha'is in India and it is the body which decides the overall framework of education. One of the principles of Baha'i faith has always been universal

education. It was under this that the establishment of schools in far flung areas of the country took place. The in house publishing house brings out books on moral education for the school curriculum, for example, the 'Ruhi' books are for standard IX-X, 'Breezes of Confirmation' for classes VI,VII and VIII. Mostly these books contain stories that offer moral lessons.

A Chart on the decision making process

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF INDIA

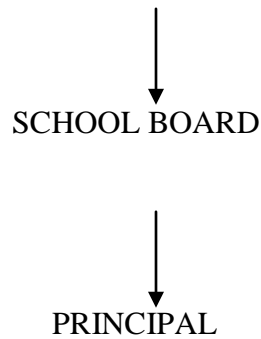


Diagram 3.1

The body that functions especially in terms of education is the School Board which comprises of the principal, parents and teachers although at present there are no teachers. It is mostly principal and the parents that are there on the board. The parent's on the board as of now do not have children who are currently attending the school. The school board has nine members including a chairman, secretary, advisor and treasurer.

The day to day activities are handled by the principal, this includes decisions for hiring teachers, deciding salaries and firing teachers. The principal is in charge of both the school and the school hostel. She deals with the daily decision making in the school, presides over assembly,

takes care of teaching and non teaching staff and is basically the head of operations in the school. Disciplinary problems are brought to her attention, with teachers usually sending the children to the principal. The principal is also the basic bridge between the school and parents, it is her duty to hold parent- teacher meeting thrice a year. When an act of indiscipline is conducted by the children the principal is a judge and the jury.

The social background of children and teachers

The school comprises of children who come from the lower middle sections of society. These are children whose families pay a fee of 750 per month. One of the repetitive themes that cropped up during the interview with the teachers is that there are many children who come from broken families²¹. The children from these families are essentially seen as the troublemakers. The teachers describe them as attention seekers, they are seen as highly volatile, aggressive, inattentive and mischief mongers. The children are from various regions from across the country. From places as far as Bihar, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and also from the towns as well as interiors of the Sikkim.

A divide can be seen in the treatment of children from different regions especially in peer relations, children from Bihar are generally seen to be low in the social hierarchy, they are considered as '*padaku*' i.e. 'studious' which equates with boring, these are children who are always studying and do not usually disobey any command of the teachers, principal and monitors. They are considered as children who will never get into any trouble. The '*pettus*' are also similar to the studious, but they differ in the aspect that their goal is to 'please' (Hargreaves,

²¹ Teachers use this term to refer to single parent families usually the mother and child, in most cases it is seen that the father leaves the family, or is an alcoholic, or in case of domestic violence etc. they are not usually divorced but rather separated. Although teachers refer to families which are not separated where there are alcoholic, drug abuse cases as also broken families.

1972) the teacher, it may or may not have to do with studying. To be 'studious' is looked at in terms as a deterrent to social status, but the '*pettus*' in the peer circle occupy a lower position in the hierarchy, for there is fear that the '*pettus*' may report acts of indiscipline to the teacher. The Andamanese children drift in the middle of this 'coolness' social ladder, they to a certain extent look like the locals (mongoloid), play basketball, football seemingly are the 'cool ones' in the school. This can be ascertained by the number of children who congregate around them during the break timings.

The social background of teachers is essentially middle class; most of them seem to have stumbled upon the profession of teaching. A few took up teaching in the school because their houses were nearby but mostly it was economic reasons that underlined their decisions. Some joined the profession because they could not get government jobs, while others joined because their friends were working in Baha'i school. The teachers have mostly done their graduation from Government College, Gangtok, which is situated at ten minutes walking distance from the school. A few teachers have done their B.Ed course and Masters.

The quality of the teachers can be judged by the way they communicate with children, although they may not have their education degrees, their communication skills as well as getting their children to concentrate in class is high. For example, most of the teachers who are considered as good by the children do not have a B.Ed degree. In some of classes that were observed teachers who did not have B.Ed degrees were very successful in drawing and keeping the children attention, there was no restlessness or fidgeting in their classroom, children did not make noise or gesture to each other when the teacher was teaching. This is interesting as in most other classes even when the teacher was teaching the children were restless, inattentive and spent most of the time gesturing or talking. Teachers especially of the senior section (VIII,IX,X) are

very 'good' in their teaching abilities, the same is not the case with teachers that teach standard V,VII. The idea of 'good' teacher is drawn from observation based on knowledge of the subject, communication and ability to keep the children's interest in the lesson as well as from verbal grading of teachers by children which came out in the interviews.

Children and teachers come from different backgrounds; they come with different issues of caste, colour and creed. There is a Sikkimese and a non Sikkimese divide which is very prominent and is a characteristic of the larger society as a whole. This social divide is seen basically amongst the peer groups in the school, the so called non Sikkimese are described on the basis of racial features, colour and region, they become ostracized. In peer group dealing and interactions, they become the 'other'. Some peer groups do transcend their categories mainly on the basis of language and adaptation to culture, yet for an outsider these divisions are clear. They become manifest especially in terms of racial slur- '*madise*' which translated literally means 'from the plains' which basically signifies the mainstream inside and is the hallmark of an outsider. These are evident during the interactions and spatial groupings of children during their break periods.

School as perceived by the children

The school as the children perceive is neat and clean²². The imagery of the school as filled with beautiful flowers. From their point of view the school is big, although children who have studied in schools outside the state argue that the school is small. The school is small it is cramped and the playfield is small, the school is surrounded by buildings on three sides and the roadway leading to the school is small and congested. But in comparison to other private schools it is relatively big. The school canteen is important for the children this is the place where

²² The notion of clean is very important, the Baha'i faith puts a lot of stress on the notion of cleanliness, the school has a number of signboards that state cleanliness is important.

bonding and fight over food occurs. There is only a small window that is accessible to the children so usually there is a lot of pushing and pulling, some help their classmates if they are near the window. Children also share their food with their classmates and friends, since they may not have money every day they take turns which cements their relations.

Discipline is seen as one of the major characteristic of the school. In school, one is neat, one follows rules, there are time tables, classes, etc. That makes up the idea of discipline in the school. There are many rules behind such emphasis on discipline. For instance, speaking in English is seen as one of the most important rules of the school. Children in their description of the school discuss this from the point of view of the strictness of the teachers and also how they then learn to converse in English. *'If anyone is caught talking in Nepali there will be strict punishment'*, argues a child of standard VIII A. Although the children converse in Nepali most of the time they are very conscious of the fact that they have to talk in English. This rule however widely flouted, yet in the presence of *'pettus'*, the teachers and the principal the rule is strictly adhered to. Even some teachers, especially during the games, converse in Nepali to explain the finer points. The language becomes a concern for outsider (non- nepali speaking) children who are to a certain extent ostracized by the local due to their inability to speak in Nepali.

The school has a number of extracurricular activities despite the inadequacy of space. The children also seem to associate the school with games. This is seen in children of class VI, VII and VIII. *'We can participate in any games like football, basketball, table tennis'*, states a child of class VII A. This is also based on the fact that the school is considered as good in sports;

it has very strong basketball and football teams. The school has its own environment club- 'project smile',²³ where the children usually plant trees and clean the school surrounding.

The nostalgia of the primary classes is evident in the childrens narratives. They wish that they could play more and not be constricted to games only once a week, the children find every opportunity to request the teachers to let them go out in the playground. Children of class VI and VII stated that they wanted to go to the playground and play all the time. *'When I was a child I like this school much more because we always played'* says Md Aslan Hussain a child of class VII B.

Friends are one of the most important aspects of the school, it is the peer group that you are a part of or not that decides your school experience to large extent. One of the concerns for children is their peer group, which makes their break time the most valued part of the day spent in the school. Where do you sit during break with whom, what do you eat from the canteen decides your social position in the school.

Punishment also forms an important part of the school life. Most children know that a 'disciplinary copy' is maintained by the principal. The records are kept of acts of indiscipline and the consequences thereof. There also exists a network of children who are the principal's informers. Acts of indiscipline like smoking outside the school premises, etc are brought to the principal's ears by these children, and hence there is a fear among children. The children usually acknowledge that discipline is very important and they state that it is what makes a school. Although on further elaboration, 'discipline' becomes synonymous with 'punishment'.

²³ Project Smile is an environmental group formed by the school, they have been instrumental in cleaning up the surroundings of the school.

FAITH AND THE SCHOOL

Although the school by the very nature of its construction is Baha'i this link is mostly administrative in nature. As argued earlier on a theoretical level it functions as a missionary school, in practice it functions as any other private school. The faith does see the importance of discipline and order but is clearly against corporal punishment but as seen from teachers and children's interviews corporal punishment was practiced until it got prohibited by law. Corporal punishment is still practiced on the school which goes against the text as given by the Guardians of the faith.

The school also did not look to convert, rather it lays stress to universally accepted values-unity of mankind, cleanliness, discipline etc. But one also has to consider that these are the values mostly preached by the Baha'i faith. Especially in terms of cleanliness which is given a lot of importance by the faith, the school also laid great stress on it. The signboards, the 'project smile' all concentrated on the idea of cleanliness of children and their surroundings.

The moral education classes, morning assembly, school diary were the only external manifestations of the religion. The ideals preached by the religion are highly vague and moralistic and as such seem as universal values of goodness. The idea of secularism was thoroughly ingrained amongst children. The moral education classes as observed were not taken seriously by the children and the teachers who taught these lessons were not very clear in their explanation of the lessons. One place where this differs is the Sunday classes where the hostellers learn Baha'i hymns, lessons. The children seemed quite at home with the Baha'i ideals and lessons. The hostellers were divided into groups according to their classes and there was an intense one hour session with the Baha'i teachers in the school, after which all children

congregated to the gallery where lead by the principal they sang hymns. These children actually were able to provide comprehensible answers when asked about the Baha'i faith. While the day scholars could only point out that Baha'i was linked to the Lotus Temple when questioned about what the Baha'i faith was.

Although the religion places emphasis on the oneness of human kind and is taught by teachers in practice it is not so, there are regional and linguistic groupings. There is a clear divide between Sikkimese and non- Sikkimese children. Interestingly the group of children who were seen kneeling outside their classes (English, Science and Social Studies) three days in a row belonged to a single racial group. This is not to suggest that this was deliberate but it also points out to the larger society as a whole where preconceived notions are present. The caste and tribe stereotypes are still present in children's jokes and their preconceptions. For example, tribal children are stereotyped as '*laddu*' which translates to dumb, they are seen as children who cannot understand their lessons are weak in mathematics etc, while the stereotype about the Nepali especially those belonging to the upper castes is that they are seen as bright children. These preconceptions are denounced by teachers yet in the interaction of children in the class it becomes obvious that they consider it true. For example in mathematics class most children gave up with the problem halfway even the teacher expected only one child to be able to solve it and incidentally he belonged to the upper caste. After which it was observed that children instead of trying to solve it just copied from the child's copy. This occurred in other classes as well. In case of tribal children there were jokes about how '*maasu khayera dimag moto bhayo*' i.e . because you eat meat your brain has also thickened. Although these were jokes that were passed on between children themselves especially in class VI where children where lower caste surnames were shortened to make them sound ridiculous. When questioned the children clearly did not really

understand that their behavior was inappropriate, but rather saw it as just a joke so did the kids whose names were called.

The Baha'i as a religion places value on practical rather than knowledge that comprised of just words. Although the principal stressed on the practical aspects of learning like taking the children for gardening etc, inside the classroom, the method of learning is still rote learning. Only a handful of teachers explain their lessons with practical and local examples, most teachers make children read the chapter, explain it in the words used by the text, make children write down the words from the text and in examination judge the children on how well can they replicate the text. Copying homework is rampant amongst children yet teachers do not complain or punish a child for this, usually in the first period children collect copies of those who have done their homework and then copy from them. This phenomenon in class goes against the idea of learning as conceived by the religion.

The chapter thus argues that although the religion is a part of the school ethos and philosophy it is overtly present in some aspects and covertly in others. Influence of religion on the ethos of the school is not as substantial as it could be if it was primarily a missionary school. The school is situated in the town, it is a private school run with minimum interference from the higher authorities. The chapter looked at the dimensions of the Baha'i faith and its ideology. As regards to the education policy it is still not yet fully formulated and cannot be seen as a coherent whole. It is in context of the school with its philosophy, ethos and culture, where the acts of indiscipline and their consequences are analyzed.

CHAPTER IV

DISCIPLINE AND PUNISHMENT: CONTEXTS, PROCESSES AND CONSEQUENCES

The chapter primarily examines the idea of discipline and how it is imparted to children in a school. What are the acts which constitute 'acts of indiscipline', what is the broader framework within which these acts become defined as acts of indiscipline? Examples from the field is used to argue that what constitutes acts of indiscipline is to a large extent based on the ethos (as discussed in chapter III), interpersonal relationships, peer interaction and the definition of a situation of the school. These factors contribute largely to the decision of whether an act constitutes a norm or an act of indiscipline. The processes and agencies through which the acts of disciplining occur are seen in terms of disciplining of the body, disciplinary gaze and classroom humour. The chapter essentially focuses on the perspective of the children, but the role of teachers and the principal is also discussed at some length.

The chapter is organised into five sections each of which deal with different aspects of discipline and punishment. The first section looks at the idea of discipline through the eyes of teachers, principal and children. It basically analyses how these three categories understand the idea of discipline. The second section brings this understanding to the school specifically the classroom where these ideas interact. This section concerns itself with the children's perspective in terms of how children type and categorise teachers and classes, it looks into the social network of teachers and children. It focuses on the peer to peer acts of discipline, the interrelationships between children and teachers and analyses these in terms of definition of a situation.

Descriptive accounts of acts of indiscipline are narrated and analysed in the next section. The acts of discipline that are discussed are based on homework, alcohol and drug abuse, anger, bunking and other acts of indiscipline. The fourth section deals with the classroom discipline, the processes and agencies in terms of the disciplining gaze and disciplining through humour. The last section looks at the act of indiscipline in terms of consequences or punishment. It gives a brief overview of children and teachers perspectives on punishment. The instruments of punishment employed by the teacher are also discussed in this section.

SECTION I

DISCIPLINE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE PRINCIPAL, TEACHERS AND CHILDREN

Discipline as a concept for the children stems from a moralistic understanding, the language that most children use in order to explain what discipline is structured by textual language. Their understanding is shaped basically by their moral science lessons, assembly speeches and the teacher's idea of what constitutes discipline. For teachers and children, obedience and respect seem to be the cornerstones for their perception of discipline. Behavior is another major dimension of this, although the conception of teachers and children vary in this aspect, while for teachers attention in class is important for children mannerisms, etiquette also seems to be important. Nonetheless children understand that discipline is one of the criteria by which they are judged and it is a part of the examination process, a way to earn or lose marks.

Form the point of view of most teachers a disciplined child is basically a child who submits his homework on time, pays attention to the teacher in the class. Most of them see discipline as a

very important part of the school. Teachers also argue that discipline is a two way process ‘to make them disciplined I also have to be disciplined in my life’²⁴. Teachers state that the most important thing in their school is the friendly relation between teachers and children.

Discipline for children thus largely revolves between three major concepts obedience, behavior and respect. Children state that, for them ‘to obey’ the teachers, and their parents are the most important aspect of discipline. The children point out that when they obey the teachers, they get more marks as well.

Discipline for a child of class VII B is ‘the practice of training people to obey rules and punishing them if they do not control their behavior’²⁵. A few more children argue on the same theme that discipline is training, training the way we behave. It is about how we behave as one child from the same class writes, ‘for example, when we eat something at our friend’s house we should know how to talk and respect and how to sit’²⁶. All children however are not as specific as the above example. Most seem to state good behavior and this notion of good behavior when delved into further is basically again in terms of respect and obedience to not just the teachers but elders too. This is interesting for the broader category that they seem to classify this behavior is in terms of elders²⁷, thus age is a category by which respect and obedience is mandated for the children.

²⁴ Interview with Sunita on 15/03/2012

²⁵ Questionnaire class VII B, no. 22

²⁶ Questionnaire class VI A, no.8

²⁷ Although two children towards the end point out that children and classmates should also be respected.

‘Discipline means the training of people to obey rules or a code of behavior’²⁸ argues a child of the same class. It is interesting to note that children understand that they are being trained for life in the school especially in terms of discipline; they state that with discipline they can be successful in the future. Character is linked to discipline according to the children, discipline shows their character, and it shows whether a person is good or not. Children usually specify acts like doing their homework, obeying their elders, speaking politely as good. One point that all children agree on is that discipline is important for them, it is a part of school life, this idea is expressed in various different ways but all seem to think that discipline is a very important aspect especially in terms of their future and becoming a good human being.

SECTION II

THE IDEA OF DISCIPLINE IN THE SCHOOL: DEFINITION OF THE CLASSROOM SITUATION BY CHILDREN

As mentioned earlier, in the classroom, an act of indiscipline is determined by the interplay of multiple factors. Firstly, the type of the teacher with the class as well as the reputation of the teacher; the class in terms of peer group relations; the interrelation between the class and the teacher; the teacher’s social network in the school and the definition of a situation.

The interplay of all these factors combine to determine not only the very idea of discipline present amongst children and teachers, but also determine the labeling of any given act as one of ‘indiscipline’ or ‘deviance’. The presence of such a range of factors indicates the very complex nature of discipline in the school, wherein the identification and definition of any act as one of

²⁸ Questionnaire class VI A, no. 12

indiscipline consists of a combination of factors, with certain factors playing a greater role than others. An analysis of which factors have contributed to the process of discipline help us to understand the structure of discipline in schools and the role of various players in the school setting in the process of discipline. Further, an examination of the degree to which each of the factors influence and affect the idea of discipline would also be highly revealing in terms of power and agency in the school setting.

Type and reputation of teachers, class and children

In terms of the type of the teacher what is important is the precedent that has been laid by her or him; children expect certain behavior from certain teachers. For example, children of class VIII are all seated in a disciplined manner as soon as Ismail²⁹ sir enters. They do not talk amongst themselves. Homework is done by all the children. But in the case of Hindi teacher most children are talking in the class and usually have not done their homework. This leads us to the idea that the type of the teacher is very important.

Through the type of the teacher in the school a certain reputation gets built. Children classify teachers into strict, lenient and volatile categories. The term 'strict' is used for the Nepali vernacular term '*chuchi, chucha*', by this the child means teachers who they consider as dangerous, who do not take silly excuses and punish them severely for acts of indiscipline. The 'strict' teachers are those that the child never disobeys or crosses. One factor that is seen as common amongst all the so called 'strict' teachers is that they are good at teaching. These teachers know their subject, are compassionate and do not hand out punishment for every little act of indiscipline but when they do hand out punishment they are severe. This is the quality that

²⁹ Name changed

makes them as 'strict' teachers for children. 'Lenient' teachers or in vernacular '*sidha*' are considered by children as those who rarely punish and rarely take offence. These teachers are easy to approach and are not strict. Children are very clear about what they can get away with and what not. Acts of indiscipline are structured around these criteria, for example not doing their homework is an act of indiscipline in the class of a 'strict' teacher but in the case of a 'lenient' teacher it is not a punishable offence. The vernacular term and category '*gan gane*' is represented by 'volatile' category which is also used as a binary term, these are teachers who wish to be strict but fail to make the same impact as strict teachers. They are teachers who make a lot of allegations in the classroom, they could punish a child for the same act of indiscipline or not. They punish indiscriminately for small to big acts of indiscipline, yet never hand out severe punishment. Most of these teachers believe that corporal punishment i.e. beating up children is wrong yet they do partake in light punches or swats on the head which they do not consider as serious. These acts of punishment occur frequently in their classes and though they try to establish their authority they usually fail. The class is usually bored when they teach and it is in these classes that children give a counter definition of the situation. This reputation of the teacher as 'strict', 'lenient' and 'volatile' is based on various factors and is mostly associated with their early phase of teaching.

As a new teacher, a teacher faces numerous difficulties in the classroom, the children test the teachers in order to figure out how far they can go without being punished. Due to the reputation of the strict teacher usually there are less acts of indiscipline that occur in these classrooms. This sometimes is due to fear of the consequences and in a few cases where children genuinely like the teacher. This liking is not based on the friendliness quotient but on how good the teacher is in his/her subject. For example, in the case of Ismail, children were clearly more

disciplined while the same class was unruly for other teachers. The children during the interview clearly pointed out that they were scared of him but they respected him because he knew his subject and was good at teaching it.

These categories, typing and reputation stick to teachers as these ideas are passed on from one generation to the next. Children are usually found in groups during their break discussing how such and such teacher was today in the classroom. Slowly over a period of time reputation of the teacher gets built up and this reputation is a decisive factor in terms of acts of indiscipline.

It is also based on a perception of the children that is passed on from one teacher to the next. For example, class VI B was considered as the most noisy and notorious class by almost all the teachers. Yet they were no different in their behavior from the children in Class VI A. Certain categories of children over a period of time gain a reputation which could be negative or positive. This label then follows them from class to class; it also has an effect that is children overtime behave according to the expectations of these labels.

Social network of children and teachers

The teachers' and the children's social network in the school are also important in judging acts of indiscipline. The social network that the teachers have decides which acts are of 'indiscipline' and which are not. The social network of teachers in the school can be primarily seen in terms of the senior class teachers mingling together, the primary section teachers form a group while teachers of the middle level have a social network that usually comprises of them and senior class teachers. It is here through gossip and talk that the labels teachers attach to children get affirmed or rejected. If more than one teacher grumbles about a particular child then the larger group accepts him as an indisciplined child. It is this gossip which creates prejudiced

view of certain children amongst teachers who have not had a chance of interacting with the child. This network is important as it is here that one gets legitimacy and approval/ disapproval of acts and their consequences. It is also this group that decides the teacher's idea of what is a disciplined class and who is a disciplined child. It is the interaction in these social groups that forms the core idea of discipline in a school.

This social network also functions in terms of children, for children have a peer group within the school and the class. This broader group may include children from the class as well as children not from the same class. This group could also be a deciding factor in determining what acts can be committed without it being categorized as that of indiscipline. And if as a group it applauds a certain act then for the child concerned it is an act of 'bravery' and 'rebellion' and not an act of indiscipline.

Peer to peer discipline

The class in terms of peer to peer relationships is very important. How the children treat each other is an important criterion in looking at acts of indiscipline. This aspect of discipline is interesting as well as quite a complex process. By peer to peer discipline we mean how children amongst themselves verbally or through gestures either support the teacher's disciplinary measures or exert discipline on other children. As Wegmann puts it, 'when a child does not follow the teacher's request how the other children react can be crucial. If they react negatively, the child then faces the disapproval of both the teacher and his peers, and is not likely to continue' (Wegmann, 1976: 77). For example if a teacher considers an act impertinent then the reaction of the peer group is very important. If they agree through gestures and laughter with the teacher then the child changes his/her behavior. If an act has the support of the peer group then

the act is not seen as one of indiscipline by the child, rather it gives him a raised social status in the peer group. The child then challenges the definition of a situation given by the teacher; it allows the child a moral superiority when the group sees the act as daring and accords him/ her social status accordingly. Yet most of the time through gestures or laughter children support the definition of a situation by the teacher, they reinforce the authority structure unknowingly.

There are also a group of children in the class who are called the '*pettus*'. As mentioned earlier they are the children who are always running behind teachers, carrying their books, writing names of children who talk in class, are the first ones to raise their hands when a teacher asks a favour/ task, they are not usually the brightest children in the class, their social status is low but when the teacher is present in class there is a rise in their status. It is here that the idea of interpersonal relation of teachers and children plays a very important role. This group of children rarely commit acts of indiscipline and, if they do, it is considered as an aberration and such acts are not taken seriously. This group also supports teachers' decisions in the class; it is always ready to be the replacement of the teacher in disciplinary matters. For example if a teacher is late for the class they control the class by writing names on the blackboard, etc. They act as 'teachers' in the classroom in the absence of teachers and validate the teachers action verbally or through gestures. What the '*pettus*' do in the classroom is 'pleasing' (Hargreaves, 1972) their acts are towards gaining the favor of the teacher.

Interpersonal relations between children and teachers

Interpersonal relations are an important cornerstone for deciding which acts are acts of indiscipline and which aren't. The interaction of teacher and the child in the classroom and the

school space is an important constituent of what makes an act an ‘act of indiscipline’. Discipline is an interpersonal concept, it ‘refers to a set of rules or norms specifying acceptable forms of classroom conduct, which is either imposed by teachers on pupils or agreed between them. It is a form of social control’ (Hargreaves, 1972: 229). However the idea/ definition is not just static. What constitutes an act of indiscipline is both static and dynamic. It is based on the interpersonal relation between the children and teachers, it is this interpersonal relationship that determines to a large extent whether a child will get punished or not, to what extent will he be punished. For example, the ‘*pettus*’ in the classroom could get away with talking in the class, or not doing homework. If he/she had not done their homework there was no punishment. Teachers were close to these children. Further, talking was not considered as an act of indiscipline in certain classes, in class VI B in Social Studies class, children would talk, and the teacher permitted this as long as the noise level was low enough to not attract the attention of the neighboring class, teacher or principal. The relations between a teacher and the child goes a long way in determining whether an act is an act of indiscipline and whether it would be punished or not.

Definition of a situation

Hargreaves’ concept of definition of situation³⁰ is also important in certain ways. The children covertly and overtly challenge the teacher’s definition of the situation. For example, when the teacher asks a question the children tend to give a variety of different answers for questions like ‘*how many words have we underlined*’³¹, it was obvious to the researcher that the children knew the correct answer from the smiles and gestures that were passed on between them. They tried to challenge the teacher’s definition of situation by confusing her premise. The

³⁰ Originally the concept is from W.I Thomas

³¹ Classroom observation social studies , class VI A on 5/03/2012

child in effect by disobeying his teacher is trying to define the situation or proposing a counter definition of reality and this task is much harder without the support of his peers. There are a number of ways of challenging the teacher's authority, for example, coming late to classes, insulting the teacher, etc. Children usually challenge the definition of situation by teachers who are considered as lenient, although for example with the maths teacher (who was considered as strict) there was always a challenge to the teachers' definition of the situation.

When a child runs out of class or screams an answer, it is through his/her classmates smiles and gestures that the child realises that he/she has the support of the class i.e. they understand the classroom situation in a similar manner. This can be better understood from the following incident which was observed in class VI B. Karma, Sa Dawa, Gyatso and Jigme were talking in the classroom, the teacher punished them by sending them out of class, although the entire class was responsible for the noise. They (Sa Dawa, Karma, Gyatso and Jigme) left the classroom very slowly, wandered about, smiled at the rest of the class. They peeped in from the window, door and were constantly trying to talk through gestures with the rest of the class. While walking out of the classroom these children were very aware of the rest of the class, and the class through smiles and laughter shows that they also understand and see the definition of a situation in the same manner as the children punished.

SECTION III

DESCRIPTIVE ACCOUNTS OF ACTS OF INDISCIPLINE

The following paragraphs provide for us a descriptive account of the acts of indiscipline some of which are considered serious and others which are a daily occurrence in the school³². This section primarily gives us an account of acts of indiscipline, especially those that have been noted in the 'disciplinary copy'. What makes these acts as acts of indiscipline is decided mainly by history, ethos and ideology/ philosophy of the school, the principal maintains a diary of what the school considers as serious acts of indiscipline. This diary is passed down to all the principals; it is a legacy of sorts. The disciplinary copy contains acts of indiscipline as well as the consequences meted out by the principals. The copy was shown to the researcher by the principal only for very short periods of time and it was difficult to access the book for it was under lock and key. The present copy contains seven years worth of information. A descriptive analysis of the acts that are considered as acts of indiscipline allows us to understand the various acts that a child usually gets punished for in the school. There also seems to be a functionalist interpretation of the term discipline which is seen as something like a spirit that the child must imbibe and that this discipline is basically imbibed in a school atmosphere. Punishment is also used to reinforce the norms; the teacher makes a case of a particular child so that the school, class may learn from this. The acts of indiscipline have been categorised on the basis of the character of these acts, for example, under homework, drugs, anger, etc. These categories allow us to document and describe acts in a cohesive manner as well as understand why, when and how of the concerned acts of indiscipline.

Homework

³² That is not to say that the daily acts are not serious or taken seriously.

Homework is one of the most important criteria in terms of discipline for teachers. It is seen as one of the markers of discipline, the first thing a teacher is concerned about when he or she enters the classroom is whether children have done their homework or not. The incompleteness of this homework counts as a negative point against children. Incompletion of homework as an act of indiscipline is the first act the teachers and the children cite. The completion or incompleteness of this homework frames the classroom dynamics for the first few minutes of every class.

Homework assignments were done by children usually in the classroom, most of them copied from the few who had done their homework. Most of them stated that there was no time to do homework, while others forgot and some did not have the resources to do their homework at home and others just preferred to copy off their friends³³. Copying homework was not a problem amongst peer group as well as teachers; the idea was that at least children wrote something. There were instances when teachers allowed children to complete their homework during class hours. Homework hence was for teachers one of the most important categories for judging how disciplined a child is and they marked them accordingly. Children stated that this was one of the acts that they were always punished for.

Interestingly though for a few teachers who were considered strict, homework was always complete and submitted on time, while for the category of lenient teachers even children considered as good by the teachers did not bother to always do their homework. For the volatile teachers children other than the 'pettus' did not complete their homework, they were never sure if the teacher would let it go or take action. For example, when the researcher entered the class of a teacher considered by the children as lenient, there were always a few children who hadn't

³³ Classroom discussions Class VIII A

done their homework. The teacher in charge made them kneel outside the classroom but the peer group as well as the child did not consider this as serious punishment, they seemed happier to be outside kneeling with their friends, when they entered the class after the teacher had left they had a smirk in their face, which leaned towards the fact that they had outsmarted their teacher³⁴. But when it came to a strict teacher the children had mostly done their homework, or they gave reasons and were willing to do it in the break period. The children were keen to avoid punishment from these teachers as it would be severe.

Most children stated that they were punished for not bringing the relevant book or copy to school; most of the time punishment was on the basis of this factor. This was interesting for in every class that the researcher observed there were children who had failed to bring their books. What is interesting is that children often pretended that they did not have the relevant book. The teacher thus had no option but to ask the children to share. The children then huddled up with their friends and then they talked with their friends, and this was legitimate for the teacher had asked them to sit side by side³⁵. What this also did is to disrupt the class for at least a few minutes, and in a class of half hour duration that was a lot of time for children. But the children were very wary of doing this with the teachers whom they considered strict and usually if they had forgotten to get their books they opened a similar looking book and pretended throughout the class that they were on the similar page with the rest of the class. The teachers mostly were exasperated with this act, they did not really have means to deal with this for in every class there would be one or the other child who had failed to bring the relevant book. Although it was a little

³⁴ Classroom observation Class VII B on 12/03/12

³⁵ Classroom observation Class VII A on 17/11/11

confusing for the children only those who sat in the front bench or those who were very attentive to the teacher would know what copy and book were to be bought to school tomorrow.

Alcohol and drug abuse

Another important category of acts of indiscipline is alcohol consumption; this act is taken very seriously by the school disciplinary committee, the teachers and the principal. Alcohol is a part of Sikkim's society culturally and historically. There is wide spread consumption of liquor in the state, with every other shop being a liquor shop, it is also the way of life that is prevalent in the state, alcohol is used in religious rituals, marriages and also offered to gods. Over the years there has been a rise in liquor consumption in the state especially amongst the youth in the state. Alcohol is freely available, the bans of age do not work and alcohol consumption is not a taboo and not frowned upon by society unlike the rest of India.

One of the instances of alcohol consumption was in 2010³⁶; it was during the child's farewell to the passing out batch that two children turned up to the school drunk. This occurs in a lot of schools as the children think that they are now out of school and hence think that no disciplinary measure can be taken against them. They vomited in the school premises and created a lot of ruckus. From the child's perspective this act is very interesting as it suggests that a core assumption behind the act was that these children could now rebel for they were no longer under the jurisdiction of the school. By this they assumed that the school had no disciplinary power over them. This is interesting for these children did not commit serious³⁷ acts of indiscipline earlier when they were scared of the school's reaction. What do children fear in school, and why

³⁶ As recorded in the disciplinary copy. December, 2010

³⁷ By this I mean acts that are considered as serious by the school

does this fear take the form of rebellion after they think that they are clear of the power that the school has over them are some fundamental questions that need to be raised.

In another instance in 2006 a child from class IX had come drunk to school; his parents owned a hotel with a bar in town. He came to school and after assembly as everyone was entering he bashed up his friend, the friend started bleeding from his nose and got cuts on his forehead. The child was suspended. After a few days he got a bunch of '*bhattus*'³⁸(rowdy boys) from the neighbourhood, the guard was at first apprehensive to let the children in but they argued that they were there to pick up their sister, since it was already time, the guard agreed. The principal happened to come out of her office and she saw guys with long hair, chains all over their body and earrings. On seeing the principal the boys ran behind the principal's building near the primary section, when asked by the principal what they were up to, they started calling her names – 'chuchi' which basically when translated means 'very strict'. They threatened her and also said 'mero bhai lai school bata kasari nikalyo' i.e 'how dare she kick out our brother from the school' and they stated that she will be taught a lesson for this act.

The act such as this is not one of a kind that occurs in schools, there have always been acts and rumours of children beating up their teachers and principals. What are the factors that lead to these acts is important; here the notion of the principal as being strict is important. This act also needs to be contextualized, for the previous principals of the same school were considered as being lenient, with a change of regime there has been a change in the disciplinary policies of the school as well.

³⁸ Bhattus- the term essentially refers to young adults or children who are rowdy who cause disturbance in society, most are school- dropouts and are considered as alcoholic, drug addicts and trouble makers.

There was another instance when a girl child filled coca cola bottles with breezer or other types of alcohol³⁹ and gave it to one of the hostellers. On the girl's part she offered this to hostellers as 'dasain ko bhag' which roughly translates into gifts for dussehra which is usually given to friends and neighbours. She had got this as a part of her dussehra gift to her friends. The prevalent social custom during dussehra usually encompasses gifting food, many a times alcohol, the families especially parents, uncles play cards and drink; this occurs at homes hence the act of the child. Since she gave it to hostellers so it also might have been the fact that hostellers wanted alcohol so as to celebrate. So in the hostel a few girls drank, and since according to the principal they felt guilty they came and confessed to her. The girls who confessed were from Bihar and Delhi and according to the principal they were not the girls of those backgrounds, who are not into drinking culturally or familially. The day scholar denied that she gave alcohol to the girls and stated that she had carried her brother's bag to school and hence the confusion.

First of all it is interesting how various assumptions and stereotypes are constructed in schools, there are stereotypes of children from Bihar and Delhi as simple girls who would not indulge in such acts. Furthermore, there is a widespread idea that it is the tribal children who are the trouble makers in the classroom. This can be seen in the instance of class VI B where a group of children were always kneeling outside the classroom regardless of the fact that the whole class may have been talking. Stereotypes also are not conjectures made in vacuum, they have some or the other historical prejudices attached to them. Hence it was assumed by the school that the girl children in the hostel did not actually ask their friend to get alcohol to school.

³⁹ The principal was not sure of this

Drugs or drug abuse is another act of indiscipline which is taken very seriously by the school. Drug abuse is another social issue that haunts the Sikkimese society, the youth especially school going children have been affected by this. Children also came from families with a history of drug abuse. There were instances when the researcher was approached by children who stated that they were punished because they were '*mast*'. The idea of *mast* roughly translates to a state of being high and happy, and usually used in the context of drug consumption. Although one has to be careful of this claim as to whether this was a ploy to gain attention or the real deal. Although the researcher did over- hear conversations that dealt with drug abuse. The children clarified to the researcher that by '*mast*' they meant that they were high, the children used gestures to explain this and never referred to the drugs being used. They referred to always being sleepy in class, which is one of the after effects, and this they said with a twinkle in their eye imploring the researcher to understand beyond what was being said. There have been instances of drug abuse throughout all schools in Sikkim, and this has become an important issue.

Anger

Anger is a very important issue in terms of discipline in the school, a lot of acts of indiscipline are in the context of a child being angry or showing his anger towards the teacher. Anger as the children put it is there inside them, they explain it in terms of something that is always present, and they say that they do not know the cause and that anything could make them angry⁴⁰. For example there was a child in class VIII he had been suspended for a week due to the fact that he broke the cupboard in the classroom. When asked why he did so the answer was that

⁴⁰ Discusson with children of class VIII A, where the researcher was given a proxy class

he was very angry. The child himself could not clearly explain it; all that he knew was that he was very angry when he broke the cupboard.

Anger stemming from family issues and their consequences in the school has also been an important dimension in the school. Around the year 2010, there were three cases of girls cutting their wrists, there was a trend of children cutting their wrists, when asked why, the answer was anger and fighting. A child from the Andaman recalls that 'I was irritated, I had fought with my parents and was very angry'⁴¹ and then she stated that she cut her wrist. The child concerned was facing family issues at that point of time.

Children also often do not listen to the corrections made by teachers and the principal, 'they react negatively, and they throw tantrums'⁴². There is one specific case that the principal brought forward. A child in the school was always angry so one day the principal asked him 'who taught you to be so angry'. The child replied that his dad was the angry man at home, he came late to home, was always drunk. Although the child came from a very good social and economic background he used to walk out of class suddenly, beat up other children. So anger forms one of the categories under which acts of indiscipline can be understood, although this feeling of anger is influenced by a number of factors as is true for other acts of indiscipline.

Bunking

Bunking school has been seen as one of the major acts of indiscipline from the point of view of teachers, principal and the administration. Usually children who have been caught bunking classes once are then put in the school bus. This gives them no opportunity to not to

⁴¹ Interview with a child on 1/04/2012 at 10.05a.m

⁴² Interview with the principal on 9/3/12 at 1.30pm

attend school, the bus picks them up from their house and gets them straight to the school. The principal keeps a very close track of children that she suspects of bunking school, this is based on prior record and information gathered from her child spy network. If the principal does not see the children in school, she immediately calls the parents whose numbers she has on her cell phone, she enquires whether such and such child have been sent from home and if yes the parents are asked to search for their wards as soon as possible as they are in their school uniform. In the year 2011⁴³, there was a child whose parents were divorced, the child lived with his father, and the principal did not see him in school so the father was called. The father immediately stated that he had sent his son to school, the father was very angry with his son and he went to all the places he suspected his son could be found. The next day the child came early to the school he met with the principal and told her that he had gone to visit his mother, the father was very strict about this hence the child had to bunk school to meet his mother. This is a very interesting case in point, although the act was considered as one of indiscipline, in the light of the reasons it draws sympathy rather than punishment. One of the criteria for looking at an act then is also the contextualization of the act.

Rakesh⁴⁴ a child of class VIII was caught bunking school during the time period that the researcher was present in the school. The principal had noticed that Rakesh had been absent for a number of days, he was not continuously absent but he would be present today and then absent tomorrow. The mother was called up to enquire if her child had come to school or not, the mother was then frantic with worry as she believed that her son had gone to school. She was asked to look for her child. In the mean time the principal questioned one of his friends and

⁴³ Interview with the principal on 9/3/12 at 1.30pm

⁴⁴ Name changed

found out that there was a den in town where 30- 35 school children gathered every day, they played pool, smoking was allowed and alcohol was sold in the premises. The principal immediately called the concerned police station and gave them the information of the place. Rakesh was suspended for a month and was given a warning that he would be expelled from the school next. The same child in an interview to the researcher had described his act of breaking the bench. The act in this case was clearly seen as an act of indiscipline, the fact that the child had already been warned for anger issues also points to the fact that history has an important role to play in this. Had this been the child's first attempt this would not have been noticed but due to the history of the child his absence in the school is looked at suspiciously. An act is an act of indiscipline only when the act is caught.

Other acts of indiscipline

When the researcher was in the school two children of class V were suspended for bringing cigarette⁴⁵ and a knife to school, another child recounted an incident when few girls were caught smoking in the hostel's bathroom⁴⁶.

In 2011 a child whose home town was Calcutta was caught with a phone in the hostel, children are not allowed phones in the hostel, and the staff saw a message that had been sent from the phone around midnight. In the message the guy claimed that he would commit suicide 'if you do not love me, if you do not come to meet me then I will take drugs'⁴⁷. The child was staying as a paying guest in town, his phone was confiscated and parents were called. This

⁴⁵ Interview with the principal 9/3/12 at 1.30pm

⁴⁶ Interview with a child on 1/04/2012 at 11.52a.m

⁴⁷ Interview with the principal 9/3/12 at 1.30pm

instance highlights the concern of the school not only in terms of drugs but affairs amongst children.

SECTION IV

THE ARCHITECTURE OF CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE: PROCESSES AND AGENCIES

Discipline, for Foucault, is a method of mastering the human body and rendering it both obedient and useful. It operates on the smallest scale of control, paying attention not primarily to the whole body but to its individual movements and gestures, aiming to increase the efficiency of each movement and develop its coordination with others. This training of the body is accompanied by a constant, uninterrupted supervision that is alert to the slightest deviation and thus facilitates a meticulous control of the individual who is being disciplined.

One of the often repeated injunctions in the classroom is to sit properly, by this it is usually meant a posture that is quite painful, it reinforces the idea of discipline, i.e. sitting the disciplined way. This was one of the most repeated rules in the classroom. First thing that the teacher was concerned in the class was the spatial distribution of children as well as their seating position. For different teachers children were seated differently, for example, with strict teachers children who were considered as undisciplined were made to sit in the front row, the teachers usually issued ultimatums and argued severe punishment to get children to sit according to their arrangements. But in the classroom of lenient teachers the children immediately changed their positions to what it was before. The teachers act as agents of surveillance, the architecture of the classroom organisation reflects the power of the teacher who from a single vantage point can deploy the disciplining gaze.

Disciplinary gaze

The disciplinary gaze (Foucault, 1975:174) is one of the most important tools employed by the teachers to maintain discipline in the classroom. This gaze is used to subdue individuals, groups and the class as a whole. It is used to make children stop talking, as a preventive measure, to reprimand child for asking the wrong question, etc. For example when there is noise in the classroom the teacher employs the gaze on the child, and there is immediate silence, this gaze works on individual as well as group basis. Children describe disciplinary gaze in terms of the 'look' that teachers give when they are not pleased about anything, it could be noise, less marks etc. For a child this gaze is the harbinger or the warning signal before a teacher awards punishment for what he/ she thinks is an act of indiscipline. This makes the gaze the most important tool of discipline in the classroom. Almost every teacher during the classroom employed the disciplinary gaze, it was useful mainly when the teacher in the presence of the researcher could not reprimand, beat the child for acts of indiscipline. In a social studies class of standard VI A, there was a lot of noise, the teacher was correcting her books. The class went silent as soon as the teacher looked up and employed the 'disciplinary gaze'.

Discipline through Humour

Peter Woods' (1983) work on 'Coping at School through Humour' frames an important strategy in classroom practices. Humour is a powerful resource in interpersonal relationships. It is especially effective in the classroom. One of the most important characteristic of humour is its coping nature; coping includes a constructive and creative ability. It provides social comic relief which is similar to the ripple effect produced by disciplinary measure from a teacher. Can this humour also be disciplining, for humour directed at a certain child may actually be a reprimand

by the teacher and the group by laughing along concretizes or approves it. Sharing a joke means making an alliance against reality or the institution or differences in authority or status.

Woods argues that humour in the form of risqué jokes etc might also be used by the child to clarify how a teacher defines the situation and for them to be able to behave correctly within the teacher's framework. These tests are carried out especially when there is a new teacher. Humour also provides legitimate respite for children. They can through humour negotiate the situation without undermining the authority of the teacher (Woods, 1983).

Humour can also act as a tool of resistance, they are also a form of coping strategies but can take a negative turn- sexist jokes, jokes on the infirmities of others, etc. This can be seen in Paul Willis's study (1981) of working class male children. Willis argues that laughter integrated the 'lads' as a group and was a condition for membership. Resistance to school gives the lads humour a different quality- playing with authority, mocking teachers or conformists. Willis (1981) argues that their behavior is a part of adaptation to the structure.

In the context of this it can be argued that humour is used not just by the teachers but by children as well as was evident in the field. Teachers used humour to reprimand children; it was usually sarcastic in nature. Children used humour usually to challenge the definition of the situation by the teacher. Humour was an act of resistance. For example, in the class VIII A, the exchange such as the following provides the case in point:

'Teacher- What is eight telling you?

Child- Nothing'

The entire classroom erupts at this, later as soon as the teacher exits the classroom the children joke about the beating that they got. Although when the class laughs along with the teacher it also supports the teacher's authority, the group gives the teacher's action legitimacy.

Humour is also used as a pedagogic tool, in order to correct children's pronunciation or spelling, humour is used often in the classroom. Teachers also understand that a certain amount of humour keeps the class lively and attentive. For example, in English class of VI B the teacher exasperated with children not writing the correct spelling of grammar used humour to explain the difference-

'Teacher- Is it grameer or is it grammar, do you say grameer or do you say grammar'

The children instantly burst out in laughter but the teacher's point was made.

If the teacher is not included in the joke it can also be disastrous. For example during a Hindi test a couple of children were laughing the teacher immediately stated 'laugh and I will give minus five'. In situations that the children are caught laughing amongst themselves the teacher resorts to threats, the gaze or punishment. For example, a child of VIII B got beaten for laughing in the class. Teachers also call children 'abnormal' when they were laughing in the class especially when the humour is not shared with the teacher. For example, in class VIII A in a mathematics period a group of children were laughing, the teacher immediately in a very threatening tone asked

'What is the joke, tell, tell? Am I funny? Is this chapter funny? Are you children normal? Laughing all the time, don't even answer in class.'

Humour is also used in a prejudiced manner, and usually in a negative tone. Negative humour is used to usually undermine the children's point of view, to make the questions raised by the children sound ridiculous hence again reinforcing the adult- child relationship where the child's questions are not considered important. This humour strengthens the teacher's authority in the classroom and undermines that of the child.

SECTION V

PUNISHMENTS: CONSEQUENCES OF INDISCIPLINE

The idea of punishment not just in the education system but in society is always based on the presumption that 'it is good for you, you may not realize this now but in the future you will understand'⁴⁸. This underlying sentiment of the punishment then is that it is for your own good. What is good for an individual? Has punishment ever led to this good? Who decides what is good for the individual in this case the child? What do we do to children in the name of this good? These are questions that need to be analyzed in order to understand the role that punishment plays in our society.

A functionalist understanding of punishment allows us to look at the role played by punishment in the school. One cannot deny that punishment reinforces the rules; it gives a warning to the childrens that certain acts of indiscipline will be severely punished while some acts may not be considered as such.

Studies on punishment are usually focused on either the penological or the philosophical aspect of punishment. Both these are ridden with inadequacies; therefore sociologists look at

⁴⁸ Interview with teacher, even children tend to reiterate this point in questionnaire

punishment as an institution in itself. Questions that arise are: how do specific penal measures come into existence, what social functions does punishment perform, how do penal institutions relate to other institutions, how do they contribute to social order, or to state power, or to class domination, or to the cultural reproduction of society and what are punishment's unintended social effects, its functional failures, and its wider social costs? Garland (1991) attempts to resolve a few of these questions. According to him punishment is understood as 'a cultural and historical artefact that may be centrally concerned with the control of crime but that is nevertheless shaped by an ensemble of social forces and has a significance and range of effects that reach well beyond the population of criminals. And the sociology of punishment has been concerned to explore the social foundations of punishment, to trace out the social implications of specific penal modes, and to uncover the structures of social action and webs of cultural meaning that give modern punishment its characteristic functions, forms, and effects (p.119).

What sociology of punishment does is to look at punishment as an institution that is not to say that there is a cohesive body of literature. What we have is a set of perspectives that look at punishment as an institution. Starting with the Durkheimian understanding, sociology of punishment looks at power and knowledge from a Foucauldian perspective. The present work utilizes these perspectives to understand the institution of punishment as prevalent in the school.

Teacher's perspective towards punishment

In a career of eight years, with a passion for teaching, the history teacher provides us with interesting ideas on discipline and punishment. Ismail sir is also the teacher who has been discussed in the earlier sections. Interestingly he is a member of the disciplinary committee; this committee aids the principal in taking decisions about rules and punishment in the school. He is

also one of the most revered and feared teachers in the school. Almost every class is scared of him, and this fear they argue arise not from the fact that he is strict but rather because he is very good at what he does in the classroom, that is teaching. According to the children, he has a very good understanding of his subject. It is seen that when he enters the class there is pin drop silence, and it is not that he looks intimidating. Children often have completed their homework and moreover are ready for the next lesson. This was not seen in any other class. Although the same class creates numerous problems for other teachers it is not so in Ismail's class. Children are quite well- behaved and avoided defining the situation in their terms or challenging the teacher's authority. There was very less punishment handed out in this class. Also there was a certain fear among children no one wanted to displease him. Ismail argues that punishment is not important, acts of indiscipline are not committed at random but rather there are problems that the child is facing that need to be addressed first. It is only when we understand where the child is coming from that one is able to solve these problems. Ismail argues that he rarely hands out punishment to children. 'We just do not teach, we deal with children's problems, their family and they are teenagers so they come with their own set of problems. If children do not do their homework I try to find out where they are lacking and deal with it'⁴⁹.

Another important idea is that of equality, a teacher should not be biased hence the teacher has to deal with child A the same way as he deals with child B. This is interesting as was observed in a classroom, the teacher in question rarely favored a certain child, there was no conception of '*pettus*'⁵⁰ in his classroom although most teachers had '*pettus*' in the classes that

⁴⁹ Interview on 30/03/2012 at 2.23pm

⁵⁰ This has been addressed to in the second chapter

they taught. He also acknowledges that children are scared of him, for example, if children encounter him in the market place they invariably hide or run away.

Interestingly, he is also the matron of the hostel for boys and it is in the hostel that the stories differ. Children state that he has handed out corporal punishment in the hostel, for various acts of indiscipline foremost among them being that of the suicide cases, the children argue that all those who were found to have cut their wrists were beaten with a cane. There are also other instances where the teacher used the cane especially on the boys due to the problem of smoking which had been a very important disciplinary issue in the school. There is a fear of him amongst all the children that were interviewed.

The Baha'i faith has to a certain extent has helped the children, taught them the value of tolerance and acceptance, argues one of the teachers. The concept of self-discipline is important in this regard. It is also an important part of the Baha'i faith and it is this concept that needs to be inculcated in the children forms the basic argument of teachers.

To deal with acts of indiscipline in his classroom, the Hindi teacher tries to keep the children's attention through stories, etc and when children do not do their homework there is a desire to punish but he argues that usually he gives the child a second chance. One of the problems that he and other teachers highlighted is that children are very talkative; they roam outside the classroom, go to the toilet unnecessarily and show temper. He has also called parents of children who stubbornly refuse to do their homework etc. What is interesting is that he does accept that the newer generation has different ideas and that there are arguments in class but the version that he accepts is the textbook as he considers the book to be ultimate source of knowledge. The class was afraid to overtly challenge the teacher in the classroom but children

usually did not pay attention to his teaching, punishment was handed out in almost every class. The teacher pinched child for not doing homework, some were made to kneel down in the class while others got humourously sarcastic comments. For example, a child of class VII A asked a question to the teacher and his reply was a slap and ‘apne kaam se matlab rakho sawal mat karo’⁵¹. Which is roughly translated into ‘mind your own business, do not ask questions’.

Another teacher, Pranita, who teaches social studies in class VI, argues that it is children from broken families who commit acts of indiscipline on a regular basis; she argues that sometimes she has to take strict action so that other children obey her. The children in her class challenge her definition of situation on most occasions and punishments like kneeling, standing, pinching are common in her classroom.

Children’s perspective

‘Punishment is something like torture’⁵², argues a child of class VII. Children often see punishment as a torturous device invented to make their life hard. They see punishment in simplistic terms, for most of them punishment is something you get when you are naughty or ‘badmash’ and this concept of naughtiness encompasses various acts from not bringing their copies to drug consumption. They look at it as a necessary evil, something that some children think that they deserved while for others punishment is unfair. Yet the margin of people who think punishment is fair among children is high, there is an acceptance of the teachers’ authority and their legitimacy to inflict punishment. Since teachers are the judge and jury in the classroom

⁵¹ Class VII A, questionnaire no 8.

⁵² Questionnaire no 9, 06/03/12

children usually do not commit certain acts for the fear of the consequences that follow. The challenge to teachers' authority is present but it is not vocal, it is usually gesture based and overt.

Punishment is also seen from the patron- child relationship; children argue that 'punishment is given by people who care for us'⁵³. This reinstates the notion that the adults know better, that they are better judges of what is right and what is wrong. They hand over the decision making power to the adult and in this case the teachers and the principal. The idea that punishment is good for us is the basis of children accepting punishment. The idea that teachers know best stems from the above patron- child relation, and due to this the child has limited or no agency in the school. Children also emphasize that the fear of punishment prevents them from questioning the teacher and the school.

A functional notion of punishment was also present in children's narrative. One child, after being punished for not finishing his project⁵⁴ in time, argues that after the punishment he always finished all his school work. This functional notion of punishment comes from a Durkheimian understanding of social solidarity. What punishment basically does is to reiterate the rules and re-inform people the consequences of certain acts. Punishment as a symbol becomes more important than punishment as such. There is a repetitive notion that children highlight, for example, once that they were punished for not bringing the relevant book to school, the child never committed the act again. A child states that 'punishment reminds us not to commit the same mistake'⁵⁵

⁵³ Questionnaire no. 8

⁵⁴ Project was for mathematics

⁵⁵ Questionnaire no11

Although most children gave a functional interpretation of punishment a few children argued that getting punishment in their mathematics period was fun as they did not have to sit in class and be bored. This is especially for their mathematic class, interestingly it was the same class where all the children had a unanimous answer to the question- when were you last punished. A few children argued that they would rather face punishment than sit in the teacher's class. As observed in the classroom the children were always ready to cause trouble. The moment the researcher entered the class the children recounted tales of misdemeanor in his class as well as their reasons. The class as a whole did not like the teacher, their grounds of grievance bordered on the fact that he was cocky, did not teach well, flirted with the girl children, etc. To be punished in this class, or to use humour to put down the teacher elevated the children's social status in the peer group.

Interestingly children state that the definition of punishment mostly includes the reaction that teachers have when children do not do their homework. This has been a running theme in most of the answers provided by children. Not doing of homework is one of the acts that almost all children state when answering the question as to why they have been punished. Homework is also a primary concern for the teachers; it is the first thing that they check upon their entry into the classroom. Children tend to do the homework of teachers they consider strict i.e. the teachers they fear and the ones who will punish them. While for the lenient teachers the children are careless, and the children seem not to mind being punished in these classes. In case of the volatile teachers, children are weary, for children do not know if the teacher will enquire about the homework or not. Most of the time their homework is not completed to annoy and challenge the teacher, the children are willing to sit outside the class.

Improvement of the self is also one of themes that stand out when children talk about punishment. As discussed earlier, they see punishment as something that occurs in school and is an essential part of the school. Punishment like discipline for children is essential for future although discipline is more important for them; punishment is clearly consequence of the acts that are considered bad and naughty.

Punishment is also seen as unfair by children. Their main argument is that the degree of the act and the punishment were not equal, although importantly it is only children of class VIII that argue that sometimes the punishment that the teachers' hand out is unfair. The junior classes do not really understand the concept of fair or unfair, for them punishment is fair, they do not grumble much about it, while the senior class children narrate many instances where they think that the teacher's actions were not justified.

Acts of indiscipline and their consequences

How do we punish children, what are the acts that are punished, what is the degree of punishment, how does a teacher understand the acts of discipline and allocate punishment, what are the subjectivities that are involved in this are important questions which will be understood and analyzed in the following discussion through instances from the field.

Fighting/bullying

Fighting amongst peers is a daily occurrence especially in classes VI and VII, as soon as the teachers leave the class fighting breaks out amongst children, they are very careful about the fact that teachers should not be witness to this. Fighting in terms of slapping, punching etc also occurs when the teachers back is turned to the class, children use every opportunity to beat each other. On the very first day that the researcher went to the classroom three children of class VI B

were kneeling outside when questioned, they stated that they were being punished for fighting with friends.⁵⁶ Interestingly children do not complain to teachers nor do they let the elders know how they got certain wounds for example in October a child Karan had to summon his parents to school as he had broken his fingers while all suspected this was due to fighting the child resolutely clung to the idea that he broke his fingers while playing hide and seek.

On further analysis and questioning of children it came to light that these fights usually occur amongst children over issues like teasing, stealing, there was also to a certain extent reaction to racist jokes. Although the children themselves saw no harm in this, mostly the children's spontaneous reply to why they fight is because they were joking. Fighting in terms of beating peers especially occurs during game periods where children hit their friends with basketball⁵⁷ etc, though this is taken in a very light vein by those who get hit.

Although the teachers and the principal chalk this to the restlessness of the age that the children are, some also look at this in terms of poor and unhealthy diet etc, most teachers try to turn a blind eye to this act. Yet if there is injury then the act is taken very seriously and can lead to suspension and expulsion.

Instruments of punishment

Pen as an instrument of punishment is a very interesting concept that is deployed by teachers to punish children. What is interesting is that the pen stands for non-violence; it stands against the might of the sword so to say. Yet in the hands of teachers it is a handy little tool to inflict punishment. Teachers use it indiscriminately; the pen is used in certain situations to show

⁵⁶ 4/11/11 class VI B English class

⁵⁷ 8/11/11 class VIII B

growing levels of disappointment and anger this is done by clicking the pen in a very rapid motion. It is also handy to smack children on their heads, for instance, if they do not copy correctly from the blackboard, are not paying attention in the classroom, etc. In English class of class VI B, the teacher beat the child with her pen for not writing the notice properly. In history class of VIII A children failed to answer questions on the preamble of the Constitution, the teacher kept clicking his pen as children failed to answer.

Beating, caning, pinching are the most used forms/ instruments of punishment in the school. These ways of punishment have been prevalent in Indian society for a long time be it Kodandam practiced in South India or the Victorian style of punishment inherited from the British and the missionaries. These systems have advocated corporal punishment and continuing this legacy there is widespread prevalence of this form of punishment. Although there is to a certain extent a negative image attributed to punishment especially in the glare of the media storm after the suicide cases that came to light. Nonetheless corporal punishment is practiced, although there seems certain reluctance on the part of teachers due to the new rules, societal pressure to practice extreme forms of corporal punishment.

One of the important instances of beating occurred at the time when there was a trend amongst children of slicing their wrists; the children concerned were mentally depressed and had family troubles. They were beaten by the teachers for committing such act. Hostellers recount more instances of beating than day scholars, because they live in close proximity with teachers and their every act is scrutinized. There were also instances when boys were beaten for being unhygienic and for instances of stealing.

Children were also beaten for acts such as not bringing their computer book. The child was beaten with a 'gauri bet', this is a very traditional instrument it is a branch of a tree and causes immense pain. A child got beatings on his hand for getting less marks in mathematics test. Many children get whacked on their head for not paying attention in class. In one instance Deependra a child of class VIII B got this punishment for writing what the teacher said⁵⁸. Another child Sandeep gets beaten for copying from the blackboard before the teacher had finished writing. Hostellers also recount instances of getting beaten due to less marks. This beating was administered by their erstwhile matron who also now works as assistant to the principal. The assistant also has a fearsome reputation and children are very scared of communicating with her or entering her room.

Usually children get pinched or slapped for not paying attention; they also get beaten for making fun of the teacher although this is not common. Lavish a child of class VII A got beaten on his back for laughing in class. The class as a whole also gets corporal punishment in terms of beating this usually occurs when the class as a whole makes noise or fails tests. A child recounts that one day their class was making a lot of noise so each one got ten sticks from the teacher, the child recounts that all of them cried.⁵⁹

The stick is also used to train children in the hostel especially the first timers, they are warned not to behave like animals and if it continues then they are beaten, for example a child caught smoking in the hostel was beaten up by the matrons. Children are also beaten for continuously not following the hostel rules.

⁵⁸ As observed on 8/11/11

⁵⁹ Class VI B, questionnaire no 4

The disciplinary copy provides for us numerous instances when certain acts which were considered serious were severely punished. The maximum punishment that the school as an institution gives is that of expulsion, this remains in the child's record and the child has to shift to another school. A child is rarely expelled from school, for he is first warned then suspended and is expelled as a last measure. Warning is first addressed only to the child and then the parents are also called. Warning is given in case of the first serious acts of indiscipline, for example, Rakesh was warned when he broke the furniture in the classroom his punishment was that he had to pay the amount that it would take to fix the bench, he was suspended when he was caught bunking school.

Negative mark on the report card is also given when children commit acts of indiscipline. A bunch of children from class VIII were made to kneel down in the corridors, they had come running from the down gate and in the process had injured children of the junior section, they got negative remarks in their report card and the down gate was barred to senior children after that.⁶⁰

Cheating is another such instance when punishment is handed out by the teachers although teachers are very lenient on this. There are only a few teachers who punish children for this act, these are the teachers who are considered as strict by the children. The children understand cheating in terms of teaching their friend, it is not seen by them as an act of indiscipline, children are usually verbally reprimanded, made to kneel outside or are awarded zero marks in tests. Kneeling down is one of the most used tool of punishment in the school, it is a punishment for various acts of indiscipline ranging from not bringing books, to homework, to talking in the classroom.

⁶⁰ Class VIII A, questionnaire no 14

Kneeling down also has a hierarchy, for example, there is kneeling inside class where only the class can see the punishment, then there is kneeling outside class where all the teachers that pass by can witness the punishment and the highest level would be kneeling outside the principal's office. The punishment usually depends on the seriousness of the act but since this is very subjective punishment is mostly arbitrary.

Children were usually made to kneel inside the classroom for not doing their homework, for not bringing the relevant book or copy⁶¹. For kneeling outside the class the acts usually are – making noise in the classroom, not bringing the relevant books to class⁶². Children were also made to kneel inside the classroom for not getting their parents signature on their diaries. Kneeling outside the principal's office signifies that the child has repeatedly committed the same offense as teachers state that they send a child to the principal when they have tried all means possible, it is then left to the principal's discretion. And since the principal's office is visible from all sections there is also a large degree of embarrassment for the child concerned, this also works as a warning to other children.

The chapter outlines the idea of discipline and punishment as perceived by teachers, children and principal. In doing so it also brings out the notions, typologies that children construct in their school life. The chapter provides for descriptive accounts of acts of indiscipline which allow us to analyse more clearly factors involved in the process of discipline and punishment as well as agency of the child. If a child can challenge the definition of a situation as provided by the teacher then the child has power thereby agency. Homework, anger, bunking, etc

⁶¹ Class VIII B . questionnaire no 1

⁶² 06/03/12 english class

are the most common acts of indiscipline and how different teachers deal with these acts is important especially in terms of punishment.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Discipline and punishment in school is a combination of many factors. The philosophy of the school, its ethos, form an important aspect in framing the perspective of children and teachers. The ethos of the school is an important factor when deciding which acts are acts of indiscipline. Punishment also is then decided on the basis of the ethos. The interpersonal relationship between children and teacher's is another factor. This is an important aspect of classroom discipline. In the classroom it is the interpersonal relationships which decide which acts are punished and who is punished.

The ethos of the school is an important aspect of discipline and punishment. The ethos of the school is understood in terms of its philosophy, ideology, etc. The school administratively is a Baha'i school, the faith is present in the philosophy but its effect in practice negligible. The faith essentially argues against punishment. Interestingly the faith takes a very Foucauldian point of view, the soul rather than the body becomes the target of disciplining activities.

The study essentially looks into the classroom processes that define acts of discipline or indiscipline, it analyses gestures, humour, gazes, actions which are the denominators used to draw the larger picture of discipline and punishment. Classrooms reflect the prejudices and the stereotypes. These are renewed, revived and used in the classroom. Acts of indiscipline like incompleteness of homework, etc are punished under different circumstances differently. The factors that are important in the decision of why, when and how acts of indiscipline are punished

is based on interpersonal relationship, definition of a situation, the school ethos, type of teacher and the history of such acts.

What occurs inside the school is important to us, for those who are outside the system it is difficult to know what factors shape teachers and childrens actions in the school. One of the most important factors in terms of how an act is considered an act of indiscipline depends on the teacher child relationships. The interrelationships that have formed in the school essentially decide who gets punished, when and why. As discussed in the study the children have their own typology of teachers, 'strict', 'lenient' and 'volatile', it is with these typologies in mind that a child knows that a certain act will be punished by a certain teacher. These factors help children. Also teachers have their own perspective on children and classrooms, for example, class VI B was considered as the naughtiest class in the school. Even a little noise from this class was met with severe punishment, while other classes made more noise, were talkative but the punishment was never severe. It is these relationships and types that shape acts of indiscipline in the classrooms.

Although it seems as if the teacher is the supreme authority in the classroom, it is not always so, especially in the case of new teacher, 'lenient' and 'volatile' teacher there are always chances for children to define the situation. Power relations are dynamic, they shift and although the teacher usually has the upper hand it is not always so. Children through little acts do reclaim some power but this power is momentary.

The study broadly covers the theoretical and field ideas of discipline and punishment. The study is child centric, yet it also takes into account the perspective of teachers and the principal. For it is the interpersonal relationships between them that make a school what it is. One of the

glaring limitations of the study is that it fails to look at the parents and their perspective, much of how the child behaves is also dependent on his/ her societal circumstances. Yet it was felt that if one were to look at the school and what occurs inside it, it would be well to limit it to the players inside.

The idea of the normal is important, this echoes in both Durkheim's and Foucault's work. The idea of normal in Durkheim is essentially common to the species and society anything that deviates from that which is pathological. 'Crime is normal' (Durkheim, 1982:99), for as he argues no society can be free of crime. For crime is nothing else but that which offends the collective conscience of the society. In the same manner a deviant is only deviant because of the rules of society. An act thereby is an act of indiscipline only because society considers it as such. Any act that goes beyond the conception of normal becomes a threat and hence must be eliminated through punishment. The definition of what a normal individual is, is defined by the society we live in. The collective conscience of the society is not formed by the entire society but only by certain elements. So what is normal in a school is decided by the larger society represented in the school by teachers, principal and the peer group. Foucault gives us an interesting take on the normal, for him punishment essentially normalizes. Through punishment normalization occurs, there is a construction of homogeneity. Each individual is measured against this norm, and if found lacking is punished so that the individual gets normalized. Abnormal is all that which is not normal and hence is punished. Punishment is then essentially used to create homogeneity, to make the souls and bodies docile.

What the school does is it trains the children, it tries to homogenize, the experiences of the marginal communities are put aside, and there is a code of behavior that is expected. Text books reflect the mainstream and although this is changing most of the text is alien to the child. The

child is trained to be docile body, powerless and homogenized. One of the most important aspect in terms of this debate is the idea of 'normal', what is normal behavior, when is the same behavior normal or not. Society lives on the basis of its norms and children are sent to school to be homogenized into this idea of the normal. An abnormal child then becomes an anomaly, he has to be 'made normal' and this is done through training. By training the rules of behavior are instilled into the child be it through the stick or other forms of punishment.

Prison and the school can essentially be compared; the idea of the panopticon is used here. As seen in the study there is constant surveillance which occurs both in prisons and schools, the guard or the principal, the teacher has a vantage point from where each individual can be observed, and activity can be directed from here. There is a minute by minute description of what an individual should be doing both in the prison and in the school, the routine, the timetable, the bell all contribute to this. There is enclosure and separation from the rest of the society, although in school it is only for a certain amount of time. Both children and prisoners are placed in an adult- child relationship, where it is assumed that the prisoner and the child do not know what is good for them. Like prisoners children do not have much agency in the school, they can flout the laws so far and no further. There are numerous rules and regulations to be followed. Hence supposedly adult members make decisions on their behalf. These similarities point to the fact that these institutions are mired in the same origin. The idea is domination over individualized masses, discipline becomes a tool for domination.

Punishment as accounted by Durkheim is repressive in simple societies and restitutive in complex societies. Are we a part of complex society? Punishment especially corporal is still practiced widely, there is no restitutive character of corporal punishment, it leads to torture, humiliation and children carry it as a physical and emotional scar. With teachers arguing that

children were beaten up, for example, to stop their animal behavior, can we see ourselves as a complex society? The wave of discipline rather than punishment is restitutive

Discipline and punishment are stages of the same process, the quest for domination and the quest for order. This idea of dominating by placing individuals in power relations has been an age long process, be it prisons, hospitals or schools, this idea has always been adhered to. Some theorists see discipline as the new face of punishment, Foucault using historical examples argues that punishment gave way to discipline in the modern society. He argues that if we understand punishment as physical torture then rules can be seen as discipline. Punishment in recent time in Indian society especially in terms of education has gained negative popularity; its connotation has become unacceptable to the modern system of education and is slowly becoming redundant. This is not to suggest that punishment does not occur in schools, it is just that the legitimacy it had is slowly declining.

Corporal punishment has become a taboo and is punishable by law, teachers have started to realize that children have rights and that they use these rights, such circumstances coupled with the glare of social media and influence of radical and liberal educators, punishment is slowly losing its sheen. What it is slowly being replaced is the idea of discipline, and although the concept of discipline was prevalent before, it is gaining more currency today. While for most people in education discipline and punishment seem synonymous. Discipline is different from punishment in the sense that the responsibility for order now lies with the individual himself while punishment allowed say the teacher to bring order or reform. Discipline especially the idea of self discipline is reiterated by all the players in the education system. Although these same individuals still punish their children they advocate self- discipline and in the case of this particular school the Baha'i faith is often cited for the value of self- discipline. Although one has

to argue that punishment has not faded away it is just hidden behind discipline, with both possessing implications that are similar.

If we are to argue that discipline is the new punishment we need to be clear that this is true if we understand punishment as physical torture only. It is not true if we look at other forms of punishment. Though the idea of discipline is more developed in terms of alternative schools, and progressive schools. It is also slowly invading private and government schools. But the distinct idea that policy and the present acts on this issue is that there is a move towards discipline rather than punishment, the soul rather than the body is the field that is trained. There is a move towards docile bodies and souls, the freedom of children is the important issue here. The body was attacked under punishment but discipline goes beyond this. Freedom or discipline is the issue here, how much freedom can children be given to decide their daily activities, their thought process. How much surveillance is needed and where do we draw the line between freedom and discipline? Discipline is order and domination while freedom is the opposite of this. Do we want our children to be free thinkers, able to criticize not just the acts of their teachers, the education system and society? Or do we want children who are homogenous, docile bodies, who act without questioning? And if the goal is freedom, then do we need schools, for if the most important function of the school is to impart discipline are we better off without the institution. Can children be trained without minute to minute surveillance, with their activities planned to the time table? Can the adult- child role play be balanced? These are the questions that this research poses for further analysis

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