



SOUTH KOREAN EFL TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN SCHOOL: CULTURAL VS. EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM FACTORS

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Abstract: This paper aims to explore the perceptions of South Korean English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers on the use of corporal punishment in the classroom, including cultural factors and factors stemming from the educational system that lead Korean EFL teachers to use corporal punishment, whether Korean EFL teachers believe that benefits of corporal punishment outweigh the negatives, and whether Korean EFL teachers use corporal punishment because they truly believe it helps their students, or because of factors stemming from the educational system. An interview-based, qualitative study method was used in a Korean public middle school; six Korean EFL teachers were interviewed. It was determined that educational system factors led Korean EFL teachers to use and/or support the use of corporal punishment—rather than the belief that corporal punishment helped their students. The teachers acknowledged some of the negative effects, but most of them believed the benefits outweighed the negatives, which in turn led them to perceive corporal punishment as beneficial in managing Korean EFL classrooms—particularly classrooms with 40 or more students.

Keywords: corporal punishment, South Korea, culture, EFL, negative

Özet: Bu çalışma Güney Koreli yabancı dil öğretmenlerini sınıf içinde fiziksel şiddete yönelen ve özellikle de eğitim sisteminden kaynaklanan faktörleri yabancı dil öğretmenlerinin sınıf içi fiziksel şiddet uygulamasıyla ilgili algılarını ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Güney Kore'deki bir devlet ortaokulunda yüz yüze görüşmeler yoluyla bir nitelik bir araştırması yapılmış ve altı İngilizce yabancı dil öğretmeni ile görüşüldü. Fiziksel şiddetin öğrencilere yardımcı olduğu inancı yerine eğitim sistemi faktörlerinin Koreli İngilizce öğretmenlerini fiziksel şiddet uygulamasına ya da bunu desteklemesine yönelttiğine karar verildi. Öğretmenlerin fiziksel şiddetin olumsuz etkilerinden bir kaçını farkettiler ancak bunların çoğunun yararlarının olumsuz yönlerine ağır bastığını ve bu da Kore'deki İngilizce sınıflarında özellikle de 40 ya da daha kalabalık olan sınıfların yönetiminde fiziksel şiddetin yararlı olarak algılanmasına yol açtığı görülmektedir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: fiziksel şiddet, Güney Kore, kültür, İDÖ, olumsuz.

Introduction

Historical Perspective

It is well-known that “Korean society is strongly rooted in Confucian ethics” (O'Donnell, 2006, p. 2). In fact, Kalton proposed that “In Korea, Confucianism is practiced more rigidly than any other society” (as cited in Aubrey, 2009, p. 34). Shinn explained that Confucianism focuses on human relationships to offer “a simple guide for order in society” (as cited in Aubrey, 2009, p. 34). Within Confucianism, there are hierarchal relationships between parents and offspring and between teachers and students. Children are subordinate to their parents; this subordination extends into the physical relationship between parents and children.

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Parents, for example, are permitted to strike a child in the face without question from the child (Ginny, 2008). Similarly, within Confucianism, students are subordinate to their teachers. According to Oak & Martin, Confucian ideals “create a hierarchal teacher-student relationship that grants the teacher unquestioned authority in a teacher-centered classroom” (as cited in O’Donnell, 2006, p. 2).

Modern Korean relationships reflect their Confucian roots both in and out of the classroom. Janelli & Lee proposed that “teachers commonly control their students with both legitimated authority and Confucian ethical values that are somewhat analogues to those between parents and offspring” (as cited in Lee, 2001, para. 5). The hierarchy between teachers and students within the classroom, analogous to the hierarchy between parents and their offspring, creates teacher-student relationships that discourage students from questioning a teacher’s disciplining or instructional authority. Breen stated that “It is often noted that questioning and analyzing is not highly valued and that questioning in [a Korean] class can be viewed as an insult to the teacher” (as cited in O’Donnell, 2006, p. 2). Modern Korean hierarchal relationships and their Confucian roots are critical factors to consider when exploring the perceptions of Korean EFL teachers on the use of corporal punishment.

Current Perspective: Laws Regarding Corporal Punishment in South Korean Schools

This paper investigates modern Korean EFL teachers’ perceptions of corporal punishment in the EFL classroom, and the reasons behind the continual use of corporal punishment—despite its negative effects on the child. Corporal punishment is defined as “a method of discipline by which a supervising adult deliberately inflicts pain on a child in response to a child’s unacceptable behavior and/or inappropriate language” (American Psychiatric Association, 1989). The current law regarding corporal punishment in Korean schools states the following:

Corporal punishment is lawful in schools under article 18 of the Act on Primary and Secondary Education, which allows the head of a school to discipline students “as deemed necessary for education”. The Enforcement Decree for the Act provides for the use of “such disciplinary or admonitory methods as not causing physical pain to pupils except in cases unavoidable for the purpose of education” (article 31). (as cited in the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, 2009, Current Legality of Corporal Punishment, section, para. 2)

In 2002, the South Korean Ministry of Education stipulated specific guidelines about the use of corporal punishment, stating that the punishment

must “take place at a separate place, accompanied by a third person, where the instrument of punishment must be a straight piece of wood which has a diameter not exceeding 1.5cm, and a length not exceeding 60cm. Corporal punishment must be restricted to buttocks (for boys) and thighs (for girls). The number of strikes per punishment must not exceed 10”. (as cited in the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, 2009, Current legality of corporal punishment, section, para. 3)

Despite the specific laws set forth by the Ministry of Education, the practice of corporal punishment in Korean schools does not always follow these guidelines. Modern corporal punishment in Korean schools includes striking the students’ palms, legs, feet, arms, and buttocks with bamboo rods, having students hold uncomfortable positions for extended periods of time, and having students hold their desks or chairs high in the air. In more extreme (and less common) cases, Korean teachers strike students in their faces, heads, shoulders, and backs.

Literature Review: Effects of Corporal Punishment on Students

Numerous studies have been conducted on the effects of corporal punishment on students' learning and behavior. Arif & Rafi (2007) reported that research "indicate[s] that there are more reasons to oppose the use of corporal punishment and to support alternative discipline methods" (p. 172). Arif & Rafi (2007) stated that "in the long run, [corporal punishment] does not work; it carries with it many negative effects" (p. 172). Straus argued that "the long-term use of corporal punishment tends to increase the probability of deviant and antisocial behaviors, such as aggression; adolescent delinquency and violent acts inside and outside the school" (as cited in Arif & Rafi, 2007, p. 172). Arif & Rafi (2007) went on to say that "one explanation is that after living with violence that is considered 'legitimate', people expand this to accept violence that is not considered legitimate" (p. 172). McCord indicated that "corporal punishment has been associated with a variety of psychological and behavioral disorders in children and adults, including anxiety, depression, withdrawal, low self-esteem, impulsiveness, delinquency, and substance abuse" (as cited in Arif & Rafi, 2007, p. 172).

Other studies have demonstrated that, while corporal punishment often has the desired effect of immediate compliance from the child, long-term results show a decrease in moral internalization (Gershoff & Bitensky, 2008, p. 234). Hoffman & Lepper argued that "the primary goal of any socialization should be to promote children's internalization of the reasons for behaving appropriately rather than to behave solely to avoid punishment" (as cited in Gershoff & Bitensky, 2008, p. 234). Gershoff & Bitensky (2008) supported this argument by stating that "the research to date indicates that physical punishment does not promote long-term internalized compliance. In contrast ... the findings [show that corporal punishment is] associated with less moral internalization and long-term compliance" (p. 234).

Gordon noted that using corporal punishment to discipline children "is damaging [to] their physical, emotional, and social well being" (as cited in Kilimci, 2009, para. 3). Robinson et al. identified "side effects of corporal punishment such as running away, fear of teacher, feelings of helplessness, humiliation, aggression and destruction at home and at school, abuse and criminal activities" (as cited in Kilimci, 2009, para. 5).

Though studies are mounting against the use of corporal punishment to discipline students, its use continues to be prevalent in Korean schools. Beazley, H., S. Bessell, et al. (2006) reported that 93.6 percent of Korean children interviewed during a research study had experienced physical punishment in schools (as cited in the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, 2008, Republic of Korea section). This study explores Korean EFL teachers' perceptions of corporal punishment. The specific research questions are as follows: What are the cultural factors and other factors stemming from the educational system that lead Korean EFL teachers to use corporal punishment? Do Korean EFL teachers believe that the benefits they may find from using corporal punishment outweigh the negative factors of using corporal punishment? Do Korean EFL teachers use corporal punishment because they truly believe it benefits the students, or because of factors stemming from the educational system? By exploring Korean EFL teachers' perceptions, light can be shed on the degree to which culture plays a part in the continual use of corporal punishment in schools, particularly a culture that values hierarchal teacher-student relationships. A greater understanding of how culture factors into the use of corporal punishment could be a stepping stone to the creation of healthier, violence-free schools across the globe.

Methodology

Participants

The participants in this study were six female Korean EFL teachers of English in the same Korean public middle school, though the amount of time they had been working in the school varied. All six teachers agreed to participate in the interview process. All had been teaching in the Korean public school system for eight years or more, except for two, who had been teaching in this system for less than a year (see Table 1). The ages of the teachers ranged from early 30s to mid-50s (see Table 2). All had grown up in Korea and attended grade school only within the Korean public school system—never traveling outside of Korea during their grade-school years. In consideration of personal trust, the participants' names have been kept anonymous here. They will be referred to instead as T1, T2, T3, T4, T5 and T6, with the letter "T" representing the word "Teacher."

Data Collection

This study used a qualitative research method with semi-structured interviews conducted in the school where the teachers worked. The interviews were done in the same room on different days. The interviewer and participant were the only two people in the room at the time of each interview, which lasted from 25 to 50 minutes. After being provided the definition of corporal punishment (as defined in the "Current Law Regarding Corporal Punishment in South Korean Schools" section of this paper), each teacher was asked her opinions of corporal punishment in the EFL classroom. The questions aimed at eliciting a) the reasons (cultural and educational) why these teachers used corporal punishment in the classroom; b) whether or not they recognized any negative effects on their students from using corporal punishment; c) whether the teachers believed that the benefits they found outweighed the negative effects of using corporal punishment in the classroom; d) whether the teachers used corporal punishment because they truly believed that it benefited their students, or because they felt that there was no better option because of educational system limitations.

Findings

First Reason for Using Corporal Punishment in the EFL Classroom: Class Size

While only two of the six teachers used corporal punishment in the classroom at the time of the interviews, five of the six believed that corporal punishment was beneficial in large EFL classrooms (of 40 or more students). See Table 3 for all findings on participants' perceptions of corporal punishment. Four of the six had used corporal punishment at one time or another as EFL teachers. Five of the six recalled receiving corporal punishment as students in Korea. The participants did not perceive cultural factors as the main reason for the usefulness of corporal punishment in EFL classrooms; all six cited classroom size as the primary reason.

There are three grades (first, second, and third) within Korean middle schools. Students entering the first grade of middle school are divided by level in their EFL classrooms. The lowest level first-grade EFL classrooms have 20–25 students per class. The medium and higher level first-grade EFL classrooms each have 30 students per class. Second- and third-grade middle school students have 40 or more students per class. Three of the teachers interviewed (T1–T3), taught only first grade; the other three (T4–T6) taught only third grade.

T1 and T2 said they had discontinued corporal punishment in their EFL classrooms. They had used it early in their teaching years, when their EFL classrooms were larger (40 or more students per class). T3 had been teaching in the public school system for only about a year,

and had never used corporal punishment. Though they had stopped using corporal punishment, T2 and T3 both said they felt it was beneficial in “controlling” large groups of students. T2 and T3 did not perceive their current classrooms as large. They were medium- and higher-level first-grade classes with 20–30 students per class; as such, the class sizes influenced their decisions not to use corporal punishment.

T4 and T5 (both third-grade teachers in larger classrooms of 40 or more students) said they currently use corporal punishment in their EFL classrooms, citing classroom size as the main reason. T6 had been teaching in the public school system for only about three months; she said she hasn’t used corporal punishment in the classroom “yet.” T4 and T5 both indicated that if they had smaller classrooms, they would not need to use corporal punishment. T4 said, “If I [had] only 10 or 20 students, I [wouldn’t] need it [corporal punishment]. I could just let them stand [up or I could just] call them out and privately talk to them.” T5 spoke similarly, stating, “If I [had] enough time to talk with them, I could persuade them [instead of using corporal punishment but] we don’t have enough time [due to large classroom sizes].”

T2–T6 discussed the effectiveness of corporal punishment in managing larger classrooms. Several of the participants mentioned that corporal punishment was an efficient way to show a large group of students how not to behave. After being asked to imagine a smaller class size, wherein a student behaved inappropriately, and whether or not corporal punishment would still be beneficial in such a case, all the participants said no. All of them also identified talking and reasoning with a student as a more effective method of discipline than corporal punishment; however, T2–T6 felt that the time required to reason with difficult students would be available only in smaller classrooms.

Second Reason for Using Corporal Punishment in the EFL Classroom: Time Restraints

Interviews of the participants determined that the second major reason for the continual use of corporal punishment in the EFL classroom was time restraints. The participants discussed time restraints within their classrooms and the need to cover designated material (material that would be on the numerous school exams) within the allotted class time. These time restraints are due, in large part, to the Korean educational testing system, which exerts significant pressure on EFL teachers to cover a certain amount of material within their classes.

As an American living and teaching English in South Korea for more than five years, I have witnessed the country’s testing system firsthand. Students often are tested within their EFL classrooms as well as in their other classes. District-wide tests are administered four times annually; the tests include a significant English component. Students and teachers alike deem these test scores as hugely important to the students’ futures; much of the EFL class time is spent preparing for the tests. Due to Korea’s large population relative to its small size, reputable universities are fiercely competitive and require nearly perfect test scores on their entrance exams—particularly the English portion of the exams. Preparation begins at an early age, even while children are still in the womb. Preparation in the womb includes activities such as pregnant mothers playing English tapes or speaking to their unborn children in English to prepare them for future English exams.

With the intense competition to earn high scores on English exams, all the participants in this study felt pressure to cover the required material within the given class time. When one or more students became “noisy,” (the word that many of the teachers used to describe disruptive students), during class time, the teachers felt that corporal punishment was the “quick[est]” way to solve the problem. “I have too many students, not enough time, and too much work,” T4 stated. “Corporal punishment is necessary to control the class.” T5 voiced a similar opinion, pointing out that corporal punishment allowed her to solve the immediate behavior problem quickly so that she could proceed with teaching the class material. “We

don't have enough time to improve their [English] ability," she said. "We must improve their ability quickly." Pressure the participants felt from time restraints in the classroom led them to believe that using corporal punishment was an efficient way to manage problems within larger EFL classrooms.

Cultural Factors

While the participants identified educational system factors, rather than cultural factors, as the main reason they believed corporal punishment was beneficial, culture did play an important role in the discussion for several of them.

The participants' ages varied, with four of them (T1, T3, T5, and T6) being from older generations than the other two. The four older participants referred to culture during their interviews; the two younger participants did not. T1, T3, T5, and T6 stated that during their grade school years, their classrooms had 70–80 students per class, EFL classes included, and that their former EFL teachers absolutely needed corporal punishment to "control" the students. They each recalled vivid, unpleasant experiences of having received corporal punishment, but emphasized that they harbored no resentment toward their former teachers for administering the punishments.

These older participants (namely T3, T5, and T6), particularly during their grade school years, saw corporal punishment as beneficial to students. "Now the social mood is different" T1 acknowledged. "Parents get angry if we hit [the students]," T5 said. "These days," T5 continued, "parents don't trust teachers to change [their] children's behavior. Sometimes, I wanna give up Parents should trust [teachers. Then,] I will teach the children even [if] I use the stick." T5 also said that, "it's my responsibility to control their children." T5 voiced her frustration at not having the complete freedom to discipline her students as she saw fit. T3, T5, and T6 all expressed dissatisfaction with the Korean Ministry of Education's laws regarding corporal punishment; they perceived these laws as a hindrance to teaching.

The older participants cited positive associations between corporal punishment in the classroom and Korean society at large. T3, T5, and T6 each lamented the country's recent social changes. Their opinions suggested that a general breakdown in Korean social structure was occurring, with teacher-student hierarchies no exception. T3 referenced a recent incident in which three lawyers were found to have accepted bribes in return for some services. T3 felt that this kind of behavior was due, in part, to the reduced use of corporal punishment within classrooms. T3 elaborated:

These days, students don't listen to any advice. Adults [too] have lost their authentic power. Authentic power [comes from] a great person who has a broad mind [and is] trustworthy. We need some kind of respectful leader [whom] we can trust. These days we only care about grades and universities, not [students'] behavior. It will be a sad future if [both] teachers and parents don't scold for that [bad behavior].

T3 identified bad behavior as rude language or other "inappropriate" actions on the part of students. Corporal punishment, T3 said, was a good method for correcting these bad behaviors in students, thereby "helping their [the students' and Korea's] future[s]."

T6 said that, in recent times, students "go against elders." T6 stated that, "these days they [students] are very free. They say what they want ... they follow America ... I think we need more corporal punishment."

T3, T5, and T6 discussed their former grade-school teachers (who had administered corporal punishment) with a degree of affection and respect because they believed the teachers had

sincerely been trying to help them. T3 stated, “Sometimes I miss that atmosphere [of a teacher who used corporal punishment] because it makes me to react in a right way.” T6 discussed “tiger teachers,” or teachers who “have passion to the students [and are] scary but full of love.” T6 conveyed that “tiger teachers” are not afraid to use corporal punishment in order to help students realize their mistakes.

It appeared difficult for the older participants to distinguish corporal punishment from other forms of discipline. They noted that corporal punishment, like any other form of discipline, would be effective only in certain conditions; specifically, a) trust was established between the teacher and student; b) the teacher already had proven him/herself as being honest and diligent in terms of work ethic (i.e., coming to class on time, preparing the lesson well, etc.); c) the teacher used corporal punishment with common sense, i.e., without excessive physical force and anger; d) the teacher made sure that the student understood why the corporal punishment was being administered beforehand. If these conditions were in place, the older participants said, corporal punishment, like any other form of discipline, could be highly effective in helping students correct their mistakes. Still, when asked if corporal punishment would be beneficial in smaller classrooms (now, as well as in each participant’s grade-school years), each participant said no—an indication that factors stemming from the educational system, rather than from a belief that corporal punishment is beneficial to students, are the reason the participants supported using corporal punishment in the classroom.

Korean EFL Teachers’ Perceptions of the Effects of Corporal Punishment on Students

Several of the participants identified possible negative effects of corporal punishment on students; however, T2–T6 said the benefits outweighed any potential negative effects. The negative effects identified by the teachers included a) the student having a feeling of being treated unfairly by the teacher who administered the corporal punishment; b) the student not remembering the mistake, rather, only the punishment received for the mistake; c) the student continuing to repeat negative behaviors (for which the corporal punishment was received) as an adult; d) the student correcting the negative behavior only temporarily, without any long-term effect or benefit; e) the student becoming accustomed, or numb, to receiving corporal punishment, thereby rendering the punishment ineffective in the classroom; f) the general notion that corporal punishment is a form of violence or physical abuse; g) the potential threat of parents getting angry at the teacher for administering corporal punishment.

The benefits teachers identified from using corporal punishment in larger classrooms were: a) quickly ending any negative behaviors from students who caused problems; b) quickly sending a message to other students (who didn’t cause problems) of how not to behave in the classroom; c) creating an atmosphere that allowed all students to focus on the class material; d) creating an atmosphere that allowed the teacher to complete the designated material so that students could earn high scores on their exams.

Though the participants were able to identify possible negative effects of using corporal punishment, they did not appear to attach significant importance to these effects. T2–T6, in particular, felt that the benefits of corporal punishment were more important than potential negative effects.

Discussion and Conclusion

Connecting the Findings with the Literature Review

Although the participants of this study identified some possible negative effects of corporal punishment on students, they demonstrated a lack of concern about the negative consequences of it. T4 explained that “[using] corporal punishment helps many students focus; [not using

corporal punishment] only helps one student.” Most of the other participants shared similar views. Corporal punishment, according to T2–T6, was the most efficient discipline method available to create a focused classroom environment in larger EFL classrooms, regardless of possible negative effects.

The word *efficient* is defined as “being or involving the immediate agent in producing an effect” (Miriam-Webster’s online dictionary, n.d.). Studies reveal that corporal punishment is efficient, in the sense that there is often immediate compliance from the child after using it. This immediate compliance is what led the participants to continue to use corporal punishment within larger EFL classrooms. However, as Arif & Rafi (2007) stated, “in the long run, [corporal punishment] does not work; it carries with it many negative effects” (p. 172). Findings show that using corporal punishment results in “anxiety, depression, withdrawal, low self-esteem, impulsiveness, delinquency, and substance abuse” (as cited in Arif & Rafi, 2007, p. 172).

With massive numbers of students experiencing corporal punishment, it is highly likely that Korean society at large is affected. The World Health Organization (2008) ranks South Korea as number eight on the list of countries by suicide rate and number two on the list of OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries by suicide rate (as cited in Wikipedia). Although the causes for South Korea’s high suicide rate may not be perfectly clear, given the negative effects of corporal punishment and its continual widespread use in Korea, it cannot be ruled out as a major contributing factor.

The use of corporal punishment affects not only the child receiving it, but that child’s society at large, when long-term effects are taken into account. Weighing the long-term negative effects of using corporal punishment against its immediate efficiency reveals that not using corporal punishment does, in fact, help more than one student.

Conclusion

The findings of this study have revealed that modern Korean EFL teachers see corporal punishment as beneficial, but only in large classrooms (with 40 or more students). Such findings suggest that factors stemming from the educational system, rather than cultural issues or the belief that corporal punishment benefits students, are the main reasons for the continual use of corporal punishment in Korean EFL classrooms.

Although the participants have not outwardly identified culture as a major reason for their support of corporal punishment, there are obvious cultural factors at play here. It could be argued that the participants’ culture, including their belief that corporal punishment benefits students, has been so embedded in their psyches that they may not have been able to perceive it at work within their EFL classrooms. They have simply identified class size and time restraints as the main reasons they support the use of corporal punishment.

Culture also may have played a significant role in the participants’ apparent lack of concern about the possible negative effects of corporal punishment on their students. Korean culture values the needs of a group over the needs of individuals within that group. This group-think mentality could have led Korean EFL teachers to disregard the significance of corporal punishment’s potential negative effects on individual students in light of the perceived benefits corporal punishment had for the group; the group included the whole classroom and Korean society at large. And while the participants have not listed culture as the main reason they supported corporal punishment in larger EFL classrooms, the reality could be that culture is in fact a major factor—if not *the* major factor.

The purpose of this study was to explore Korean EFL teachers' perceptions with respect to the use of corporal punishment in the EFL classroom. Although each participant identified large classroom sizes and time restraints as the primary reasons corporal punishment benefits Korean schools, the degree to which culture (including a belief that corporal punishment benefits students) versus educational factors led the participants to support corporal punishment is unclear.

Limitations

Conducting the study as a foreigner living in Korea created some limitations for me during the interview process. First, the participants may have felt a reluctance to share their opinions openly and freely due to the general knowledge that Westerners often disagree with the use of corporal punishment. For example, T1 asked at the beginning of the interview, "Can I be honest [when giving my answers]? You [may] think our country is very low." T1's question demonstrated a potential fear of disapproval among the participants, which could have affected their responses. They may have felt more comfortable sharing their opinions with a Korean interviewer.

Another limitation was that the interviewer was a coworker of the interviewees; we all worked together in the same Korean middle school. Strong hierarchal relationships exist within employees of the Korean school system, as well as between the teachers and students. For instance, T1 was my immediate superior, which generated some reluctance in me to create tension while conducting T1's interview. The knowledge that we (the interviewer and all participants) needed to continue our working relationships long after completion of the interviews led to the fear of disapproval on the part of both the interviewer and interviewees, which may have affected the interviewees' responses. However, it could be argued that the working relationships between the interviewer and interviewees were a strong point, rather than a limitation during the interviews. The working relationships may have led the interviewees, particularly the older ones, to feel more comfortable in sharing their perceptions of a current degradation in Korean society.

Implications

Some implications have been revealed through this study:

- Reducing classroom size would greatly reduce the perceived need for corporal punishment in both EFL classrooms and schools in general (parallel to the views of T1-T6).
- By reducing classroom size, other problems within societies, such as delinquency and substance abuse, also would be reduced, as corporal punishment has been proven to be a factor in these behaviors (based on the views of T3, T5, and T6).
- Cultures that value hierarchal relationships should be educated more on the negative effects of corporal punishment, not only on individual students, but on societies at large. Such education could lead to a significant reduction in the use of corporal punishment in schools where hierarchal relationships are valued (based on the views of T3, T5, and T6).
- By making education a greater priority and allocating the funds necessary to reduce classroom sizes across the globe, a long-term benefit likely would be a significant reduction in worldwide violence and the use of physical abuse as a means to resolve problems (based on the views of all six study participants).

Future Research

Additional studies are needed to adequately explore factors that contribute to the use of corporal punishment in schools. In-depth studies that examine the views of modern students toward corporal punishment would provide greater depth in understanding its effects. Future research also should focus on the positive effects of using alternative methods of discipline (other than corporal punishment). A study that reveals effective methods of discipline in classrooms of 40 or more students would equip modern teachers (EFL and otherwise) with healthier ways to manage larger classrooms.

Studies geared toward documenting the specific benefits of not using corporal punishment also would help reduce its use in schools. For example, a study that revealed higher test scores in EFL students who did not receive corporal punishment, versus the lower scores of students who did, would be hugely successful in Korea. As researchers continue to provide evidence of the negative effects of corporal punishment on students, the next step will be to provide culture-specific alternatives. This would reveal the benefits of alternative methods of communication—methods involving not only teacher-student relationships, but relationships among all human beings.

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Appendix

Table 1. Number of Years Teaching in Public School

Participant	Years
T1	15
T2	8
T3	11 mos.
T4	11
T5	10
T6	3 mos.

Table 2. Age Ranges

Participant	Age Range
T1	mid 40's
T2	early 30's
T3	mid 40's
T4	mid 30's
T5	early 50's
T6	mid 50's

Table 3. Perceptions of Corporal Punishment

Participant	Recalled Receiving	Used in the Past	Currently Using	Found Beneficial in Larger Classes
T1	Y	Y	N	N
T2	Y	Y	N	Y
T3	Y	N	N	Y
T4	N	Y	Y	Y
T5	Y	Y	Y	Y
T6	Y	N	N	Y