

# Teacher Perceptions About Impact of Corporal Punishment on Student Performance in Secondary Schools of Karachi (Pakistan)

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## Abstract

*Corporal punishment describes applying physical and psychological discipline to influence children's behaviour in preferred ways. This study looks into discrepancies in corporal punishment from teacher's perspectives during their professional work in schools. Research has indicated that physical punishment profoundly influences student's academic performance. It has been located with exceptional subjects that instructors used to provide corporal discipline to the students. This practice has resulted in a decrease in students' mastering attitude. Information was collected from educators using a quantitative approach in this investigation. A sample of 110 educators was selected using simple random sampling from all secondary institutions in District Korangi, Karachi, Pakistan. Descriptive statistics, such as the mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage, were employed to analyze the data in SPSS version 22. The research findings indicated that corporal punishment substantially affects the academic achievement of secondary school pupils. Active learning, psychological impact, and participation in activities are all diminished as a result of corporal discipline in Karachi, Pakistan, according to secondary school instructors. It is suggested in this study that educators be incentivized to refrain from using corporal punishment in the classroom setting and that efforts be made to inspire both faculty and students.*

**Keywords:** Corporal Punishment, Student's Performance, Psychological Impact.

## Introduction

In every nation, children are the nation's future. They can only mature into responsible citizens when raised in an environment conducive to their development. For the development of a child, it is necessary to have a family environment that is cooperative and expressive, a peer group environment that is constructive, and a school and classroom setting that is beneficial. Children's emotional, psychological, and social development improves when they ride to school after spending time with their families. Students are believed to be in a college or schoolroom since it is thought to be a location where they can learn, socialize, express themselves, and progress throughout their academic careers. As a result of this element, teachers have the utmost

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significance in playing a good part in the growth of a country or use by generating excellent pupils and extraordinary education. The term "corporal punishment" refers to employing both physical and mental forms of discipline to bring about desired changes in children's behaviour. When motivating children to act more appropriately, most teachers believe physical punishment is exceptionally effective. When it comes to disciplining students, they think that they are doing the right thing. Educators and even adolescents are no longer aware of the implications of using physical punishment. Children repeat all of these from their teachers in college and school rooms, which sends them a hidden and lengthy message. Because of this, children contemplate whether or not it is OK to beat other people, and they also prefer to use anger and violence as a means of problem-solving (Naz et al., 2011).

Evidence shows that using physical force to punish individuals dates back hundreds, or perhaps hundreds of years, to the time of the barbarians and the Greeks and Romans. This is one of the first remarks documented concerning physical punishment. The words of Solomon were as follows: "Foolishness is certain to be present in the heart of a child; however, the rod of correction shall press it much further away from him." Physical punishment by a teacher in the classroom, such as putting a rod on a student because the student did not appropriately comprehend the material, is another recommended method. Throughout thousands of years, up until the late 20th century, teachers were known to abuse students physically. Throughout history, teachers have been known to be extremely severe and to abuse their students frequently and physically. In the Middle Ages, self-discipline was likewise considered to be of a high standard. In Tudor colleges, the punishments consisted of hitting boys with rods or birch twigs. These punishments were ruthless. It was a stick that had birch twigs connected to it that the trainer was using. Instructors were permitted to strike students until the latter half of the 20th century. Beating young men and women with a bamboo cane became increasingly common during the nineteenth century.

During the 20th century, the cane was utilized in all of the most significant secondary schools that were in existence. It was common practice for secondary schools to make use of the slipper. The term "slipper" is a euphemism. Young people were smacked on the rear end by a coach whom the teacher employed. In the meantime, during the 20th century, the leather strap was utilized in a few prestigious English educational institutions. It has been noted that children have either been struck across the fingers or on the backside. On top of that, during the nineteenth century, children were struck while working (Bauer et al., 1990).

From ancient times till the present day, most parents have hit their children. On the other hand, public opinion shifted against physical punishment in the latter half of the 20th century and the early 21st century. As a result, the practice was outlawed in several countries. So, this study examined the teachers' views about corporal punishment in schools.

### **Research Objectives**

- To examine the teacher perceptions about corporal punishment at the secondary level in Karachi.
- To evaluate corporal punishment from their demographics at the secondary level in Karachi.

### **Research Questions**

- What are the teachers' perceptions about corporal punishment at the secondary level in Karachi?

- What are teachers' perceptions about corporal punishment from their demographic perspective at the secondary level in Karachi?

## Literature Review

Physical force as a form of discipline is referred to as corporal punishment. This type of punishment often consists of beating or spanking the offender. Over many years, it has been a subject of discussion, with various perspectives regarding its efficacy and the ethical implications it may have. When it comes to dread and anxiety, the use of physical punishment can have psychological and emotional repercussions for the individuals who are subjected to it.

**Fear:** Fear is frequently the initial response that occurs in response to physical punishment. It is possible for children or persons who are subjected to physical punishment to acquire a phobia of authority figures or a general fear of being punished. The mental health of these individuals may be negatively impacted for a long time by this worry (Dupper & Dingus, 2008).

According to the findings of Goodman et al. (1998) children who were subjected to harsh punishment, particularly harsh corporal punishment, they exhibited increased levels of anxiety and hostility. In addition, the study found that children who had been subjected to physical punishment in the past had symptoms of anxiety and discomfort. Mitchell (1999) stated that students' behaviour in the classroom is related to their academic progress. When viewed in this light, the function of the teacher is highly significant since teachers assist pupils in a specific subject and offer them direction.

Swan et al. (2000) suggested that the classroom environment affects the pupils. Students in an authoritarian and rigid classroom environment feel sad about their studies and do not participate enthusiastically in their studies and other activities. On the other hand, when they are in a friendly classroom setting, they take an interest in activities. This is the pattern of students' beliefs and feelings associated with the classroom environment, according to (Swan et al., 2000), who explained that students' attitudes toward learning are the methods of students' performance related to the classroom environment.

Daskalogianni and Simpson (2000) discovered that the learning of students in the classroom setting and students' learning depends on the teacher's behaviour, extracurricular activities, and other factors. The research conducted by Boser (2001) revealed that pupils who were subjected to physical punishment developed negative attitudes towards learning and learned aggressive characteristics. According to Pandey (2001), children who are subjected to corporal punishment experience damaging psychological and physical effects, including a loss in their self-esteem, feelings of helplessness, sadness, anger, guilt, tension, and other negative emotions. Planning everything out very carefully and carrying out the process with great attention is necessary.

It was discovered by Kopansky (2002) that the schools that utilized corporal punishment to enforce discipline on the children had the lowest records of discipline. Furthermore, it was demonstrated that there are more effective methods of disciplining children than corporal punishment. He believed that the engagement of parents, the setting of the classroom, and teachers who had received training would help to improve student conduct.

It was suggested by Russow (2003) that children who are subjected to physical punishment by their professors display evidence of depression in their academic performance, have low overall performance on tests, and do not actively participate in the process of learning and acquiring knowledge. Discipline is crucial in developing a kid into a social and responsible adult. When it

comes to disciplining children, there are many different methods available, and one of those methods is punishment. One component of punishment is physical punishment.

According to Richard (2003), a teacher's kind and motivational behaviour can improve students' interest in their studies. Additionally, the classroom environment can boost students' interest in learning if the classroom atmosphere is pleasant and students feel safe. Straus (2003) discovered that students whose teachers bully exhibit a lack of confidence, as well as a depressed attitude toward their academic performance and a reluctance to take part in activities that are designed to foster learning. On the other hand, Roos (2003) observed that the use of physical punishment instills a strong belief in the minds of impressionable college students that it is OK to exert pressure to influence undesirable or undesirable behaviours. In the long run, this contributes to disseminating the mindset among young people that using force or hostility is acceptable behaviour in society.

### **Attitude Towards Learning in Class**

Physical punishment can also lead to anxiety, which is another symptom that its use can bring on. People can have elevated levels of anxiety as a consequence of the fear of being subjected to physical forms of punishment. It is possible that this anxiousness, which can manifest itself in a variety of different ways, will have a detrimental effect on their mental and emotional state. Problems with Trust: Individuals exposed to physical punishment may develop trust issues, mainly if the punishment is administered by individuals expected to provide them with care and support. The deterioration of trust can have an impact not just on their relationships but also on the way they interact with other individuals. It is possible for the use of physical punishment to have a long-lasting impact on an individual's sentiments, which can lead to feelings of humiliation, low self-esteem, and even melancholy. The emotional toll may be especially severe if the punishment is carried out in a manner considered harsh or unfair. Many specialists working in child development and psychology advocate for alternative methods of discipline that emphasize positive reinforcement, open communication, and the establishment of appropriate limits. This is something that should be taken into consideration. When encouraging long-term behaviour change and maintaining positive relationships, positive discipline practices are more effective than traditional methods (Dlamini et al., 2017).

### **Psychological Impact**

Using physical force to discipline or punish someone is known as corporal punishment. This punishment can have various psychological effects, particularly in schools, homes, or institutions. It is essential to remember that the psychological impacts differ from one person to the next. Cultural and societal factors influence how people perceive and react to physical punishment. The expectation of being subjected to physical punishment can result in persistent stress and worry, which can hurt mental health (Turner & Finkelhor, 1996).

The research shows that persons subjected to physical punishment may be more likely to engage in aggressive behaviour. This can give rise to greater hatred and rage, as well as a propensity to resolve problems through violent means. The consistent use of physical punishment can be a factor in developing poor self-esteem. People can internalize negative messages about themselves, resulting in lower self-worth and less confidence in their abilities (Chong & Yeo, 2018).

There is a correlation between the use of physical punishment and an elevated level of depression. With thoughts of helplessness and inadequacy, the emotional toll of physical punishment can lead to the development of depressive symptoms. This is especially true when combined with feelings

of helplessness. The stress and worry linked with physical punishment can potentially interfere with cognitive functioning and focus, which could ultimately result in poor academic achievement (Rimal & Pokharel, 2013).

### **Interest Towards Studies**

It is vital to acknowledge that the use of physical punishment is a taboo subject that is the subject of substantial discussion. This is something that must be acknowledged. Nevertheless, it is generally discouraged in many educational and psychiatric circles due to the potential harmful repercussions that it may have on a child's overall well-being as well as their academic achievement. This is because of the potential adverse consequences that it may have. When it comes to influencing students' level of interest in their academic pursuits, punitive tactics are less effective than positive motivation and a helpful learning atmosphere. Students may develop a bad attitude towards education, fear, and anxiety as a result of being subjected to corporal punishment, which may potentially hinder their intrinsic motivation to learn. Students may develop a negative attitude towards education (Ahmad et al., 2013).

According to research, providing students with positive reinforcement, encouraging them, and developing an environment conducive to learning are some of the tactics that are more likely to result in a genuine interest in academic pursuits. By cultivating a strong relationship between the teacher and the student, recognizing the traits that each student possesses, and utilizing teaching methods that are participative and engaging, it is possible to have a pleasant experience while learning. It is of the utmost importance to consider and contemplate alternative techniques of discipline and incentives because they are centred on children's overall well-being and development (Tiwari, 2019).

### **Academic Performance**

It was discovered by Kopansky (2002) that the schools that utilized corporal punishment to enforce discipline on the children had the lowest records of discipline. Furthermore, it was demonstrated that there are more effective methods of disciplining children than corporal punishment. He believed that the engagement of parents, the setting of the classroom, and teachers who had received training would help to improve student conduct. It was suggested by Russow (2003) that children who are subjected to physical punishment by their professors display evidence of depression in their academic performance, have low overall performance on tests, and do not actively participate in the process of learning and acquiring knowledge (Naz et al., 2011).

Discipline is crucial in developing a kid into a social and responsible adult. When it comes to disciplining children, there are many different methods available, and one of those methods is punishment. One component of punishment is physical punishment. Richard (2003) states that a teacher's kind and motivational behaviour can raise students' interest in their studies. Additionally, the classroom environment can boost students' interest in learning if the atmosphere is pleasant and students feel comfortable.

### **Methodology**

Research instrument techniques, population sampling size, sample procedure, design, information gathering methods, and data processing methodologies are all topics encompassed in this area. Using a survey that solicited responses from teachers working in public secondary schools in Korangi, Karachi, this study utilized a quantitative research approach to acquire data (Ahmad &

Hamid, 2021). The respondents themselves produced the survey questionnaires. In order to obtain the answers concerning the topic that was being investigated, the researcher utilized a survey sample that was based on descriptive method questions. The researcher was able to determine the level of knowledge of the perspectives of public secondary school teachers regarding the use of physical punishment. Secondary school teachers, male and female, from the district of Korangi Karachi in Pakistan made up the entire study population. Within the district of Korangi, a random selection was made from among 110 male and female instructors working in secondary schools. A survey research questionnaire consisting of fifteen items is the primary instrument utilized in this study to investigate educators' perspectives regarding the use of physical punishment. Teachers were given a total of one hundred fifty questionnaires, with the instruction that they should carefully read the presented statements and select the appropriate response using a Likert scale with five points, where one indicates that they strongly disagree. Two indicate disagreement, three indicate neutrality, four indicate agreement, and five indicate strong agreement. The questionnaire for the research project was divided into two parts. In the first part of the survey, we took into account the gender of the teachers as well as other demographic information. In the second part, we inquired about their opinions regarding using physical punishment. A total of one hundred ten responses were received, and some individuals declined to participate in the research program. A total of 73% of people responded to the survey. A pilot test was conducted prior to the collection of data, and the results showed that the scale was reliable at 0.725 Cronch's Bach Alpha. The overall reliability of the scale is presented in Table 1, which may be found here.

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**Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha**

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Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
0.752	15

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### **Data Analysis of Study**

The obtained data was entered into SPSS version 22 to perform screening and determine frequency and percentage distribution. Among the many methodologies utilized in the data analysis, descriptive statistics, frequency distributions, and percentage distributions were utilized.

## **Data Analysis and Results**

### **Demographics**

Table 2 contains information regarding the demographics of the people who participated in the research. The table shows that 58.2% of male instructors and 41.8% of female teachers participated in this research. Furthermore, a decent amount of teachers (50.9%) had between one and five years of teaching experience, with the majority of them (45.5%) being qualified for graduation.

**Table 2: Demographic Information**

Demographics	Frequency.	Percent.	
Gender	Male	64	58.2%
	Female	46	41.8%
	Total	110	100%
Experience	1-05 yrs	56	50.9%
	6-10 yrs	40	36.4%
	11 yrs and above	14	12.7%
	Total	110	100%
Academic Qualification	Graduation	50	45.5%
	Masters	47	42.7%
	M Phil.	13	11.8%
	Total	110	100%

**Table 3: Attitude towards Learning in Class (ATLC)**

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Conclusion
ATLC1	110	4.145	0.917	Strongly Agree(SA)
ATLC2	110	3.936	1.228	Agree(AG)
ATLC3	110	4.045	1.086	Strongly Agree (SA)
Attitude Towards Learning in Class	110	4.042	0.798	Strongly Agree (SA)
Overall				

In Table 3, the information shows teachers' opinions on how physical punishment in public secondary schools affects kids' attitudes toward learning. This item, called "ATLC1," got the highest score of 4.145 from the survey respondents. This is followed by ATLC3 (4.045) and ATLC2 (3.936). 4.042 was the total mean score the respondents received when asked about their attitude toward learning in a classroom full of children.

**Table 4: Psychological Impact (PSI)**

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Decision
PSI_1	110	4.018	0.777	Strongly Agree(SA)
PSI_2	110	3.809	0.760	Agree(AG)
PSI_3	110	4.090	0.963	Strongly Agree(SA)
Overall Psychological Impact	110	3.972	0.706	Agree(AG)

As shown in Table 4, which is titled "Perception of Psychological Impact Factors of Corporal Punishment of Children in the Teaching Profession of Public Secondary School Teachers," the item "PSI\_3" is put at the top level by the respondents, with a mean score of 4.090. This is shadowed by PSI\_1 (4.018) and PSI\_2 (3.809). There was a mean score of 3.972 for the overall opinion of the teachers regarding the psychological impact of corporal punishment from the teachers' point of view.

**Table 5: Interest towards Studies (ITS)**

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Decision
ITS-1	110	3.954	0.871	Agree (AG)
ITS-2	110	4.190	0.840	Strongly Agree (SA)
Interest towards Studies Overall	110	4.072	0.700	Strongly Agree (SA)

Table 5 shows that teachers think there is a lot of interest in studying how children are beaten in public secondary schools. The item "ITS\_2" got the most points from the respondents, with a mean score of 4.190. It was followed by "ITS\_1," with a score of 3.954. Overall, participants' perceptions about children's interest in studies on corporal punishment with a mean score of 4.072.

**Table 6: Participate in Activities (PIC)**

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Decision
PIC-1	110	3.881	0.985	Agree (AG)
PIC-2	110	3.936	0.960	Agree (AG)
PIC-3	110	3.981	0.784	Agree (AG)
Participate in Activities Overall	110	3.933	0.794	Agree (AG)

As shown in Table 6, the respondents gave the item "PIC\_3" the highest score for how teachers feel about students' participation in activities related to physical punishment at public secondary schools. It got a mean score of 3.981, followed by PIC\_2 (3.936) and PIC\_1 (3.881). Overall perceptions of teachers are about students' participation in activities in corporal punishment, with a mean score of 3.933.

**Table 7: Academic Performance (APR)**

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Decision
APR-1	110	3.854	0.989	Agree (AG)
APR-2	110	4.502	0.804	Agree (AG)
APR-3	110	4.245	0.950	Agree (AG)
APR-4	110	4.409	1.051	Strongly Agree (SA)
Academic Performance Overall	110	4.229	0.707	Strongly Agree (AG)

Table 7 shows what teachers think about how well students do in school when they are physically punished at public secondary schools. With a mean score of 4.502, respondents put item APR\_2 at the top level. It was followed by item APR\_4 (4.409), item APR\_3 (4.245), and item APR\_1 (3.854). With a mean score of 4.229, teachers' overall thoughts on how well students do in school when they are physically abused show that physical abuse has a big effect on student's academic work at the secondary level in Karachi, Pakistan.



**Table 8: Factor wise Corporal Punishment**

Factors	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Decision
Attitude Towards Learning in Class (ATLC)	110	4.042	0.798	Agree(AG)
Psychological Impact (PSI)	110	3.972	0.706	Strongly Agree(SA)
Interest towards studies (ITS)	110	4.072	0.700	Agree
Participation in activities (PIC)	110	3.933	0.794	Strongly Agree
Academic Performance (APR)	110	4.229	0.707	

Table 8 shows how teachers in public secondary schools feel about using physical punishment in the classroom. With a mean score of 4.072, respondents put the factor "interest in studies" at the top of the list. It was followed by "attitude towards learning in class" (4.042), "the psychological impact of corporal punishment" (3.972), "participation in activities" (3.933), and "impact on student's academic performance" (4.229).

### Concluding Remarks

All of the points that were made based on the findings of the study may be seen from the perspective of the demographics of the respondents, who were predominantly

- male secondary school teachers (58.2%),
- held graduate degrees 45.5% of the time, and
- had one to five years or more of teaching experience 50.9% of the time.

The first research question addressed by this study was as follows: "What are teachers' perceptions regarding corporal punishment at the secondary level in the Karachi area?" Based on the study's findings, it was discovered that instructors in secondary schools exhibited the most significant level of teacher perception of the influence of corporal punishment on students' academic performance at the secondary level (4.229). The work of (Naz et al., 2011) (Akhtar & Awan, 2018; Ali et al., 2022) supports this relationship between students' academic performance and corporal punishment. Interest in studies is the second-highest category (4.072). This is supported by (Ahmad et al., 2013; and Tiwari, A. (2019), who state that corporal punishment decreases the students' interest in studies in the classroom by secondary school teachers to support. Attitude Towards Learning in Class was a third major factor of corporal punishment at the secondary school level, with a mean (of 4.042), which also reflects that students' attitudes towards learning in class were significantly impacted by corporal punishment (Mirza & Ali, 2014; Ahmad et al., 2023; Dlamini et al., 2017).

The psychological impact of corporal punishment from secondary school teachers' perspective (3.972) was derived as the factor along with the fourth place. This element similarly imitates the psychological impact of corporal punishment on children's health and well-being from secondary school teachers' perspective (Turner & Finkelhor, 1996; Chong & Yeo, 2018; Rimal & Pokharel, 2013; Ahmad et al., 2023). The research quoted in this piece states that teachers from secondary school have perceptions about the psychological impact of corporal punishment. Secondary school teachers put participation in activities at last with a mean score of (3.933), which reveals that students' participation in activities was reduced in corporal punishment. This argument was supported by (Tong et al., 2015 Takahashi et al., 2020 Fleckman et al., 2021), indicating that respondents agree because they know, as teachers, the effect of corporal punishment at the secondary school level in Karachi, Pakistan. So, the answer to the first study question is yes. The

second question of the study was: How do teachers at the secondary level in Karachi feel about physical treatment based on their demographics? Based on the findings, more demographic information has been added to Table 2 of the study.

### Recommendations

According to the study's findings, it is recommended:

- As a result of this study, it is recommended that teachers be encouraged to refrain from using physical punishment.
- It would not be insufficient for the government to do away with using physical punishment in schools. It is necessary to continue monitoring the atmosphere and the ongoing activities of the schools.
- Students will receive guidance on being courteous and respectful to their instructors via awareness programs. Students will receive instructions on punctuality, completing assigned assignments, maintaining quiet in class, and refraining from physical altercations with their peers.
- The role of the parent is highly significant in instilling discipline and responsibility in their children.

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