


Investigating Attitude towards Corporal Punishment as a Predictor of Personality traits and Self-efficacy in public and private sector school teachers

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Abstract

Teaching, a challenging occupation, incorporates the inherent components of self-efficacy, personality traits, lack of energy, and thoughts of inner discomfort. It encouraged the current study to explore the part that predicts how teachers feel about physical punishment in terms of personality traits and self-efficacy. A non-probability convenience sample of 140 school teachers from the public and private secondary sectors, utilising a correlation design, individuals with ages ranging from 22 to 66 years ($M = 38.4$, $SD = 10.8$) were recruited. Following APA criteria, participants presented sociodemographic information and responses to research variables on the Big-Five Personality Scale, Teacher's Sense of Efficacy Scale, and Teachers Questionnaire to assess attitudes towards Corporal Punishment. The results indicated that extraversion, neuroticism, and effectiveness in teaching methods were the personality traits that positively predicted attitudes toward corporal punishment. At the same time, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and openness were the personality traits that negatively predicted attitudes toward corporal punishment. Teachers in public schools typically report having a favourable opinion of corporal punishment. Additionally, male educators usually report having a favourable attitude toward physical punishment. The results included the requirement to report the factors responsible for the teachers' views on using physical punishment.

Keywords: Self-efficacy; Attitude towards corporal punishment; personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness).

1 Introduction

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In recent years, the support for adoration education in schools has increased. The consensus is that punishment undermines the educational values of equal opportunity and democracy and has far too many adverse effects on students' mental and physical well-being. When teachers imposed discipline, the combined impact of both educational philosophies produced a "chaotic state". Thus, educators unaware of the proper use of punishment tend to downplay the significance and value of discipline in the classroom (An, [2022](#)). Corporal punishment is both an emotional and physical maltreatment of students, as well as an insult to their brains and personality. Physical punishment and other forms differ significantly (Syafriadi et al., [2021](#); Jain et al., [2022](#)). Instilling dread or suffering in students is the aim of corporal punishment (Dng et al., [2020](#); Solomakha, [2020](#)). Punishment emphasises students' introspection and regret, but it also prevents psychological problems and generally positively affects students (Morales et al., [2020](#)). All teachers' Personality traits are different, which may influence teachers' performance (Bardach et al., [2022](#); Wu et al., [2020](#)), and it also influences their attitude towards punishment. People's distinctive thoughts, feelings, and behaviour patterns comprise their personality. It originates from within the person and typically holds steady during a lifetime (An, [2022](#)). Personality qualities are constant and dependable. A person who scores well on traits like extraversion is expected to be gregarious and outgoing under various circumstances eventually.

Consequently, the foundation of trait psychology is the notion that individuals vary from one another based on stable, consistent personality traits that endure throughout time and under many circumstances (Diener & Lucas, [2020](#)). In addition, teachers' personality traits are most significant and predominant in the classroom rather than course material and assessment techniques (Kreitzer et al., 2021; Omolara & Adebukola, [2015](#)). The primary characteristic of a successful teacher is their level of efficacy. High, efficacious teachers optimistically handle their classrooms. High self-efficacy encourages more optimistic outcomes, endorses motivation and introduces more significant teaching practices (Noreen et al., [2019](#)). According to Fischer et al. ([2021](#)), teachers with high self-efficacy didn't use physical punishment compared to teachers with low self-efficacy (Shukla et al., 2020). The American Academy of Pediatrics suggests that parents, teachers or guardians should refrain from using any punishment with children. AAP report that CP may be effective for a day or two but is ineffective over the long term, resulting in adverse outcomes (Morin, [2018](#)). Schunk et al. ([2021](#)) also explained self-efficacy in another research study: "self-efficacy is the belief in someone's capabilities to organise and execute those actions which are required to achieve specific goals and desires".

We lack sufficient information about teachers' personality factors, self-efficacy, and attitudes regarding corporal punishment in the classroom from earlier studies. The study aims to determine whether attitudes regarding corporal punishment, self-efficacy, and personality factors are related to one another. Further research should be carried out in this area of interest so that people can know more about corporal punishment and its positive and negative effects on students. Keeping in mind the following are the main objectives of the present study:

- Examine the relationship between attitudes regarding corporal punishment, self-efficacy, and personality traits.
- To look into how self-efficacy and personality traits relate to attitudes about corporal punishment.

2 Literature Review

The social cognitive theory inspires the present study, as this theory explains how cognitive or personal factors, behaviour, and environment work together reciprocally. This theory relates all three variables under study. The mental process includes self-efficacy and personality attributes. One's personality determines one's attitude. Our attitudes are learned behaviours from past

experiences and are included in the second component of SCT, i.e., the environment. Attitude, in turn, is one of the critical indicators of Self-efficacy. This study examines the relationship between self-efficacy, personality attributes, and teacher attitudes regarding corporal punishment. The subjects of this study are teachers' personality qualities and self-efficacy in using physical punishment in schools. Using this methodology, the current study examined how individuals' personality traits and self-efficacy influence their opinions toward corporal punishment. The current study examined the relationship between self-efficacy, attitude toward corporal punishment, and personality variables in school teachers. Participants in this study were asked how various personality types influenced their attitudes about physical punishment and their sense of self-efficacy.

Humaira, A., & Mahmood, S. (2023) conducted a study in Pakistan to examine secondary school teachers' attitudes toward and actions when using corporal punishment on their students. Forty-eight instructors and their randomly chosen students from 137 schools in Pakistan's District of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provided the data. Data were analysed using SPSS and Pearson. The study's conclusions showed a somewhat significant correlation between teachers' attitudes on punishment and their behaviour. It was also observed that teacher training towards students' character building is highly associated with their self-efficacy. According to the study by Abood et al. (2020), there is a noteworthy correlation between conscientiousness, agreeableness, and extrovertism with the efficiency of instruction. Effective teachers have a negative attitude toward using physical punishment. The attitude toward corporal punishment and self-efficacy are significantly inversely correlated. Additionally, corporal punishment develops embarrassment and guilt in students, which further affects their academic performance and psychological well-being (Sulaiman et al., 2020). Therefore, recent studies and policies emphasise more careful behaviour from teachers towards their students as it highly impacts their development physically and psychologically.

Jabeen & Khan (2021) conducted a study in Pakistan on teachers' attitudes about physical punishment and their level of self-efficacy. This study uses a validated questionnaire on teachers' attitudes and a sample of 300 government teachers from primary schools. The study's conclusions indicated a strong correlation between corporal punishment and students' decision to drop out of school. Furthermore, the relationship between corporal punishment and the school dropout rate is strongly moderated by self-efficacy. Based on these findings, it was determined that to lower the school dropout rate, teachers needed to foster a supportive environment in the classroom. Additionally, the school administration should play a significant part in reducing this issue and implementing strategies to encourage instructors to refrain from corporal punishment of their pupils (Khurshid et al., 2021).

The survey was conducted by Choiroh & Marwantika (2021) to ascertain how high school instructors felt about using corporal punishment. Teachers in Indian high schools make up the study's sample. A straightforward random selection procedure was used to pick a sample of 75 secondary school teachers to collect data. The data was analysed using the T-test, ANOVA, Chi-Square, and percentage analysis. The results showed that instructors' attitudes toward physical punishment varied significantly based on gender. The majority of male educators have a remarkably positive attitude toward using corporal punishment. The report also offers suggestions for significantly altering educators' perspectives on the use of corporal punishment.

The studies mentioned above indicate that instructors' attitudes toward corporal punishment are influenced by their personality traits and sense of self-efficacy. Teachers who are highly Self-sufficient didn't use Corporal Punishment on students. They find an alternative way to discipline and manage their students (Khurshid et al., 2021). Low-efficacy teachers often use Corporal Punishment because they think they can't handle students without physical punishment. Teachers who at their time were physically punished for maintaining discipline and for doing hard work felt

that it was the best possible way to handle students. Teachers with Neurotic personality highly use Corporal punishment to discipline students (Zemichael, 2021). Teachers with extrovert Personality traits moderately use Corporal Punishment on students, according to the 34 literature as mentioned earlier. This study aims to determine the personality traits of teachers who used physical punishment on students and whether teachers' self-efficacy influences their attitude toward corporal punishment.

2.1 The Proposed Conceptual Model

The study's relevant, reviewed literature served as the foundation for the conceptual framework. Self-efficacy and personality traits are the study's independent variables. The outcomes of this study's attitude towards corporal punishment are the dependent variable. From the related literature, the variables were conceived as shown in the figure:

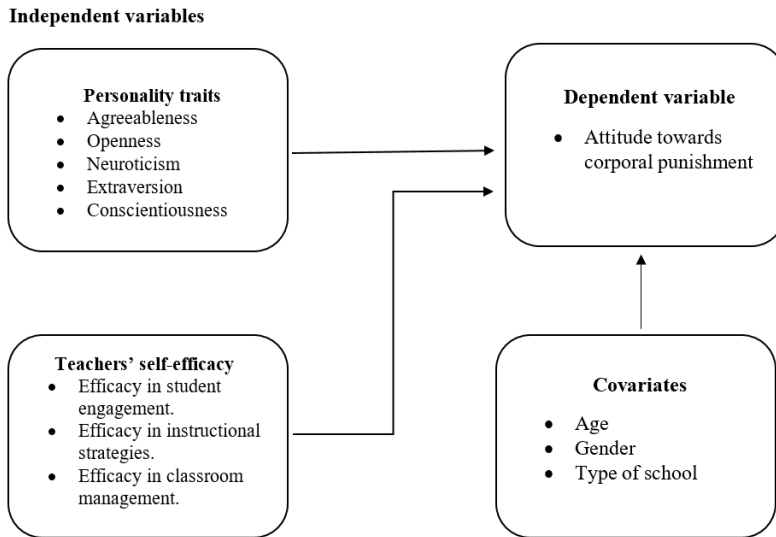


Figure 1: Hypothetical model of self-efficacy, personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness), and attitude towards corporal punishment in school teachers.

Note. Personality traits and self-efficacy predict attitudes toward corporal punishment.

2.2 Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypothesis has been investigated in the study.

- Extraversion and neuroticism are two traits of personality that are likely to link to one's attitude toward corporal punishment favourably.
- The attitude toward corporal punishment is likely to be adversely correlated with personality qualities (conscientiousness, openness, and agreeableness) and self-efficacy (efficacy in student engagement, instructional tactics, and classroom management).
- The attitude toward corporal punishment is significantly predicted by personality traits (extraversion, neuroticism, conscientiousness, openness, and agreeableness) and self-efficacy (efficacy in student engagement, instructional tactics, and classroom management).

3 Methodology

By applying a correlational research design, a sample of 140 (as suggested by G- power analysis) certified private and public sector school teachers were recruited (including n =70 men and n=70 women teachers) through non-probability convenience sampling technique, having a minimum of one year of teaching experience and an age range of 22–66 years ($M = 38.4$, $SD = 10.8$). Strict adherence to APA-mandated guidelines was observed throughout the research process. It involved getting approval from the Departmental Doctoral Program Committee (DDPC), seeking permission from authors to use their respective scales, getting formal consent from all the participants and maintaining confidentiality regarding their responses. Data collection was followed by statistical analysis through SPSS version 22, which provided empirical context for the proposed model and hypotheses of the current study.

3.1 Assessment Measures

3.1.1. Sociodemographic Characteristics

The participants were asked about their basic sociodemographic information, including age, sex, marital status, family system, regional affiliation, monthly income, education level, duration of teaching experience, type of school, working hours, medium of transport and use of physical punishment.

3.1.2. Big-five Personality Scale

Rammstedt and John (2007) developed the Big-five Inventory, which consists of 10 items with a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5, with one being 'strongly disagree' and five being 'strongly agree'. It is divided into five subscales: neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness, openness, and conscientiousness, with two items for each subscale. Items 1, 3, 4, 5, and 7 are scored reversely. The reliability indices of all five scales are .89, .86, .82, .74, and .79 (Rammstedt & John, 2007).

3.1.3. Teachers sense of Self-efficacy scale (TSES)

This 12-item scale is based on a nine-point Likert scale format where a score of 1 represents 'nothing', and 9 indicates a great deal' (Tschannen-Moran, 2001). It is divided into three subscales with four items: efficacious classroom management, instructional strategies, and productive student involvement. Sum scores were utilised for analyses. The reliability of the scales was .81, .86, and .86, respectively.

3.1.4. Teachers Questionnaire

Twenty items are on the five-point Likert scale, with one denoting strongly disagree and five denoting strongly agree. Although sum scores were used, the results on 10 of the items were inverted. The reliability of this scale was 0.97 (Wairuri, 2004). According to norms, this scale can only be applied to school teachers.

Table 1a: Descriptive Statistics of the Demographic Variables (N = 140).

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>f</i>	%
Age (22-66 years)	38.4	10.8		
Gender				
Male			70	50
Female			70	50
Marital Status				
Unmarried			38	27.2
Married			94	67.1

Divorced			8	5.7
Number of Children (1-6)	1.86	1.66		
Regional Affiliation				
Rural			9	6.4
Urban			131	93.6
Family System				
Nuclear			69	49.3
Joint			71	50.7
Type of residence				
Own house			88	62.9
Rent			52	37.1
Education	16.2	2.10		
Occupation				
Teacher			140	0
Reason for choosing teaching as a profession				
Recommended by someone			23	16.4
Personal Interest			101	72.1
No reason			16	11.4

Table 1b: Descriptive Statistics of the Demographic Variables (N = 140).

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Age at Joining School	23.76	4.84		
Teaching Experience	13.1	9.81		
Number of jobs in past	1.56	.93		
Number of years in the present job	10.04	8.14		
Type of school				
Public			70	50.0
Private			70	50.0
Working hours	6.3	1.15		
Medium of transport				
Car			40	28.6
Bike			70	50
Local transport			30	21.4
Monthly salary in PKR	41885.66	16964.55		
Monthly Family Income in PKR	80785.65	32313.58		
When you were a child, did your mother or father ever use physical punishment?				
Yes			79	56.4
No			61	43.6

4 Results

Results showed that the mean age for the school teachers was 38.4 years ($SD = 10.8$). The sociodemographic characteristics of the participants (Table 1) showed that most of the participants, women (50%) and men (50%), belonged to the joint family system (71%), were married (94%), had teaching experience of 1-15 years (13.1%), medium of transport was bike (70%) taught senior classes at school (39.5%) and earned between 41K to 60K.

As shown in Table 2, among demographic variables, age, gender, more number of children, and high monthly salary showed positive attitudes towards corporal punishment. Compared to their

female colleagues, male teachers demonstrated a more negative attitude regarding corporal punishment.

Public schools showed more attitudes towards corporal punishment than private schools. The results showed that extraversion and neuroticism showed a positive relationship with attitude towards corporal punishment. Furthermore, a negative correlation was found between the attitudes towards corporal punishment and agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness, student involvement efficacy, and classroom management.

Table 2: Table showing Pearson Product Correlations among demographics and study variables (N=140)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Age	-	.14	.62***	-.27**	.54***	-.02	.03	.10	.37**	-.05	-.32**	-.42**	-.43**	.24**
Gender		-	.18*	-.02	.41***	.10	-.05	.02	.13	-.05	-.20*	-.08	-.14	.21**
No of children			-	-.18*	.40***	.05	-.01	.03	.26**	-.16	-.20*	-.21*	-.18*	.17*
Type of school				-	-.06	.08	.12	.05	-.24**	-.05	.28**	.18*	.17*	-.30**
Monthly salary					-	-.10	.05	-.02	.26**	-.14	-.31**	-.23**	-.27**	.16*
Extraversion						-	-.33**	-.07	.00	-.09	.14	.17*	.17*	.27**
Agreeableness							-	-.18*	.07	-.07	.07	.10	.02	-.20*
Conscientiousness								-	-.22**	-.02	.16	.14	.15	-.29**
Neuroticism									-	.21*	.29**	.30**	.29**	.38**
Openness										-	-.11	-.17*	-.18*	-.19*
Efficacy in student engagement											-	.75**	.78**	-.25**
Efficacy in instructional strategies												-	.83**	-.15
Efficacy in classroom management													-	-.29**
Attitude towards Corporal Punishment														-

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$, PKR= Pakistani rupees; Gender, 1=women, 2=men; type of school, 1= public, 2= private.

Table 3: Multiple Hierarchical Regression Analysis predicting conduct problems from parental acceptance-rejection & aggression (N=140)

Variables	Attitude towards Corporal Punishment	
	ΔR^2	β

Step 1	.15***	
Age		.14
Gender		.18*
Type of school		-.25**
Step 2	.30***	
Extraversion		.20**
Agreeableness		-.20**
Conscientiousness		-.25***
Neuroticism		.19**
Openness		-.19**
Efficacy in student engagement		.05
Efficacy in instructional strategies		.35**
Efficacy in classroom management		-.53***
Total R ²	.46***	

β = Standardized Co efficient; ΔR2= R Square change; R2= R Square; gender (1=women, 2=men); type of school (1= public, 2= private)

Table 3 demonstrated that 58% of the variance was explained by the overall model, Fchange (10,189) = 10.04, p <.001.

When gender, teaching experience and teaching classes were entered in block 1, model 1 explained 8% of variance Fchange (3, 196) = 5.99, p<.001. In this step, teaching classes was the positive predictor of tedium. Gender and teaching experience were not predictors of tedium. Thus, the hypothesis that teaching classes is likely to predict tedium was supported.

Personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness) and techno-stress were added in block 2. Model 2 explained 50% variance, Fchange (6,190) = 26.4, p < .001. Personality traits (extraversion and neuroticism) and techno-stress were the positive predictors of tedium. Personality traits (conscientiousness) are the negative predictor of tedium. Personality (agreeableness and openness) were not the predictor of tedium. Thus, the hypothesis that techno-stress would likely predict tedium in school teachers was accepted. Also, personality (extraversion, conscientiousness, and neuroticism) is likely to predict redundancy, and the hypothesis was accepted.

Based on these findings, the current investigation model in Figure 2 is as follows.

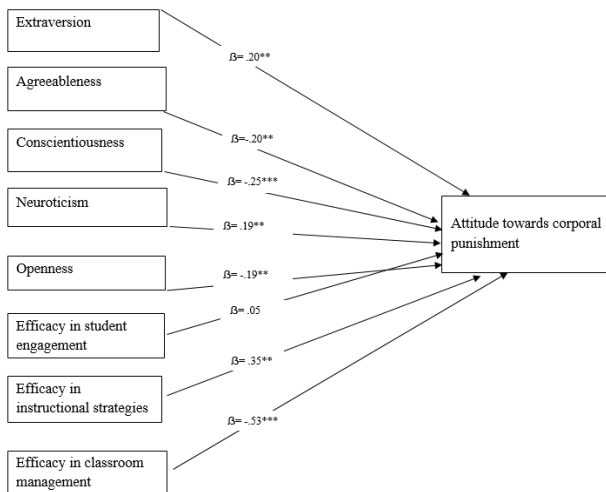


Figure 2: An emerged model predicting attitudes toward physical punishment based on

personality traits and self-efficacy

5 Discussion and Conclusions

The purpose of the current study was to determine the association between attitudes toward corporal punishment, self-efficacy (defined as the ability to engage students, implement effective teaching strategies, and maintain order in the classroom), and personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness). Teachers and parents are two critical figures in children's lives. Both have a significant influence on how someone develops their personality.

The study's initial premise was that attitudes toward corporal punishment were positively correlated with two personality traits: extraversion and neuroticism. The study's conclusions demonstrated the association between attitudes toward corporal punishment and two personality traits: extraversion and neuroticism. The results align with other research suggesting that extraversion and neuroticism—two personality traits—may be related to attitudes toward physical punishment (Bardach et al., [2022](#)). We can infer from the results above that teachers who are neurotic and extroverts punish their students physically.

A negative relationship between attitude toward physical punishment and personality qualities (conscientiousness, openness, and agreeableness) and self-efficacy (efficacy in instructional tactics, student engagement, and classroom management) was hypothesised. The current study consistently demonstrated that an individual's attitude toward corporal punishment is influenced by their high levels of self-efficacy (efficacy in instructional strategies and student engagement) and personality traits (conscientiousness, openness, and agreeableness). Additionally, earlier research revealed conclusions aligned with the findings (Bardach et al., [2022](#)).

According to the research, someone more open-minded—that is, receptive to new experiences—might be able to put up with more misbehaviour from pupils and employ less coercive tactics, like physical punishment, to modify conduct. According to the study by Abood et al. ([2020](#)), there is a noteworthy correlation between conscientiousness, agreeableness, and extrovertism with the efficiency of instruction. Effective teachers have a negative attitude toward using physical punishment. The attitude toward corporal punishment and self-efficacy are significantly inversely correlated (Sulaiman et al., [2020](#)). It is known that teachers with high self-efficacy are more likely to agree to employ positive discipline strategies (such as explaining and reasoning), disagree with the use of punishment, and most commonly utilise effective classroom guidance strategies.

The data also showed a strong correlation between the application of punishment procedures and the effectiveness of student participation (Lodi et al., [2020](#)). The total sample's usage of positive punishment was significantly correlated with the efficacy of the instructional tactics used. Lastly, there was a strong positive association between the use of discipline and classroom management efficacy (Lazarides et al., [2020](#)). The study also tested the hypothesis that attitudes toward corporal punishment are likely to be predicted by personality traits such as extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness, as well as by self-efficacy measured in instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement.

According to the current study's findings, attitudes toward corporal punishment are likely to be predicted by personality traits such as extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness, as well as self-efficacy, including efficacy in instructional strategies and classroom management. Furthermore, research has indicated a relationship between teacher efficacy and stress levels, professional commitment, and classroom management techniques (Valente et al., [2020](#)). High-effective educators have low-stress levels and a strong sense of professional dedication. They also employ various classroom management strategies to prevent the use of

punishment (Burden, [2020](#)). It might be challenging for a teacher to show warmth to a student if their personality is devoid of morals, empathy, and emotional stability.

Furthermore, it is difficult for a teacher to refrain from using corporal punishment if they exhibit antagonistic and violent tendencies. Teachers with a pleasant disposition are kind, cooperative, trusting of others, and optimistic. They avoid confrontations; thus, it's difficult for them to feel favorably about physical punishment. Comparable to those with conscientiousness (competent, goal-oriented, and self-discipline) and openness (openness to new experiences) personality qualities. According to earlier research, there was a moderate correlation between extraversion and the use of physical punishment. It was discovered that, in comparison to female instructors, male teachers had a more assertive attitude about corporal punishment among the demographic characteristics.

This result was in line with earlier research (Garg, [2017](#); Heekes et al., [2021](#); McMahon et al., [2021](#)), which demonstrated that male teachers tended to have a more negative attitude toward physical punishment. When it came to demographic factors, it was discovered that teachers at public schools had a more negative opinion toward physical punishment than private school teachers. The current study's results aligned with earlier research, which revealed that public schools tended to have more of an attitude toward corporal punishment (Abid, [2022](#)). Every school has its policy, according to the 2003 poll; some permit teachers to employ corporal punishment, while others forbid it. In 2003, corporal punishment was permitted in 40.7% of public schools and 35.4% of private schools. Compared to private school teachers, government school teachers discipline their pupils more frequently. A one-way ANOVA was conducted on the rationale behind selecting teaching as a career among the demographic variables. The results of this study showed a substantial disparity between the attitudes about physical punishment and the reasons for selecting teaching as a career. Compared to teachers who enter the teaching profession out of personal interest, those who chose the profession based on a recommendation from someone have a more favourable view toward corporal punishment.

5.1 Limitations and Suggestions

The present study included only secondary schools. Higher secondary schools should be added in future research to include diverse information in the research study. It is a correlational study, and cause and effect cannot be determined. Self-report questionnaires were used. Biases may exist. So, it is suggested that the sample should include primary schools with secondary schools. The study should be done using a longitudinal research design. Observational and in-depth interviews should be conducted to find out accurate results.

5.2 Implications

This study can help teachers increase their awareness of the teaching profession. If teachers find out they can teach students new learning techniques without punishing students, they should choose teaching as a profession. Institutes should arrange workshops to prepare teachers to manage the classroom and students with practical and new learning techniques. Future research should be done in schools to see if corporal punishment is effective and if students are affected by it.

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