

Student Opinions on Corporal Punishment by Teachers'

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The purpose of our study is to reveal the reasons for which teachers punish their students from the point of view of the students in a physical education and sports university. We extracted the groups that accept or reject corporal punishment from 1,722 freshmen, and asked them to judge the pros and cons for 10 types of corporal punishment scenes. As a result, we found that characteristic differences were observed in the five scenes, and that the corporal punishment scene was composed of three factors.

key words: corporal punishment, teacher, student

Purpose

The exercise of corporal punishment on children and students is clearly prohibited by the law of Article 11 of the School Education Act. There are a number of reports on the tolerability of corporal punishment, such as the violence effects by leaders (Ae, 2000), the exclusion of violence based on educational understanding of the actual situation (Tanigama et al., 2016), the prevention measures for teachers (Fujita et al., 2018), and the check of physical punishment in club activities (Uchida et al., 2020). The research is still in progress from various viewpoints to inhibit corporal punishment.

The present study was conducted with first-year students in a physical education university. The research purposes were to investigate the permissible level of corporal punishment of students, analyze its relationship with the reasons for exercising corporal punishment by teachers, and reveal the factors of exercising it. Clarification of the essence of corporal punishment from the students' viewpoints will be very meaningful to understand the future policy of university education and guidance, and the educational effect.

Method

1. Subjects : The subjects of the survey were 1,722 first-year students (males : 1,050, average age : 18.1 years :

females : 672, average : 18.0 years) who enrolled in Nippon Sport Science University in April 2019.

2. Survey method and period : The survey was conducted using the collective survey method, an original questionnaire based on past surveys on corporal punishment was employed. The surveyors first explained the survey purpose, the entry method, and the protection of personal information to the students, so that the research subject and purpose could be correctly understood, and then received the anonymous answer sheets only from those who agreed to participate. The survey was conducted during the freshman orientation period at the beginning of April 2019.

3. Survey items : After completing the face sheet (age, gender, department, club activity, acceptance level to corporal punishment, and so on), students were requested to choose five answers from the batches of questions asking why teachers tend to commit corporal punishment (Table 1: 10 types from Q1 to Q10). The VAS(Visual Analogue Scale) evaluation was used as a measure of corporal punishment. In VAS, a horizontal line with a length of 100 mm is used for the scale where the left end is "0" (for example, "No") and the right end is "100" (for example, "Yes"). The answer for the question was indicated with a vertical line (|) on the horizontal scale to show the extent of feeling (thought).

Results

1. Comparison of reasons for teachers' corporal punishment

Regarding the judgment of the acceptance level for corporal punishment, the subjects whose VAS value was more than 50 mm were classified into the "corporal-punishment accepting group (AG)." Since the number of members in the group was 194, the same number of people were randomly selected from the subjects with VAS value less than 50 mm, and they were classified as the "corporal-punishment rejecting group (RG)." Analysis was carried out for the accepting and rejecting groups. Table 1 shows the mean values of the answers to Q1 to Q10, which were classified into those of the AG and RG groups, and an unpaired t-test was performed. In Q1 and Q2, the values of RG were significantly higher than those of AG. In Q6, Q9, and Q10, AG showed appreciably higher values than RG.

Table 1 Results for AG and RG groups (Q1~Q10)

	AG			RG			Effective size (<i>d</i>)
	mean	SD	Significant difference	mean	SD	<i>t</i>	
Q1	2.5	1.28	<	2.8	1.36	2.20	0.23
Q2	2.7	1.38	<	3.0	1.39	2.25	0.22
Q3	3.1	1.27		3.1	1.31	0.22	0.02
Q4	3.5	1.22		3.5	1.30	0.39	0.04
Q5	3.7	1.08		3.6	1.19	0.83	0.09
Q6	3.7	1.08	>	3.4	1.22	2.14	0.22
Q7	3.2	1.17		3.4	1.30	1.50	0.16
Q8	3.1	1.31		3.2	1.35	1.18	0.12
Q9	3.9	1.07	>>	3.6	1.20	2.36	0.25
Q10	3.9	1.09	>	3.6	1.21	2.05	0.21

Value of inequality sign is significantly larger on open side.
(>, 5% level; >>, 1% level)

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Table 2 Results of factor analysis

Questionnaire		F1	F2	F3
Q4	When students stopped listening	0.92	-0.06	-0.03
Q3	When a good student suddenly took a rebellious attitude	0.60	0.10	0.04
Q5	When the student did not follow the guidance, and began to act or play arbitrarily	0.59	0.03	0.18
Q7	When the student did not follow what the teacher said	0.50	0.26	0.14
Q2	When a student did not meet expectations or provided unsatisfactory results	0.01	0.93	-0.06
Q1	When the student did not receive good grades (results)	0.00	0.83	0.00
Q8	When the student repeated the same mistakes	0.16	0.47	0.21
Q10	When the student did not follow the rules of school and club activities	-0.03	0.01	0.80
Q9	When the student's language or attitude was bad	0.08	-0.03	0.75
Q6	When the student did not act seriously	0.27	0.05	0.48
Inter-factor correlations		F1	0.58	0.66
		F2	—	0.45
		F3	—	—

Table 3 Mean value of each factor for AG and RG

Factor Name	AG	RG	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Effective size (<i>d</i>)
HINEKURE	3.4 (0.91)	3.3 (1.11)	0.82	370.63	0.1
URAGIRI	2.7 (1.12)	2.7 (1.23)	0.39	386	0.01
ZONZAI	3.8 (0.86)	3.4 (1.1)	4.3	361.79***	0.44

*** $p < .001$; Value in the bracket indicates standard deviation.

2. Factor analysis of the reasons for teachers' corporal punishment

For Q1 to Q10, factor analysis was performed for the answers of all subjects with the principal factor method and the promax rotations. The same factor analysis was performed for AG and RG, and they converged on the same three factors, although the respective factor loadings were different. Therefore, the first factor was named as the "Twisted attitude (HINEKURE)" factor toward the teacher. The second and third factors were named as the "Betrayal (URAGIRI)" and the "Dishonest (ZONZAI)" factors, respectively. The reliability coefficients (Cronbach's α) were 0.86 for the first factor (4 items), 0.85 for the second factor (3 items), and 0.82 for the third factor (3 items) (Table 2).

Table 3 shows the scores for each factor for AG and RG by summing up the item scores of each factor and dividing by the number of items. There was no significant difference in AG and RG scores on the first and second factors, but the third factor "ZONZAI" in AG was significantly higher than that in RG ($t(361.79) = 4.30, p < 0.001, d = 0.44$).

Consideration

From the perspective of students, teachers appear to use corporal punishment on their students when they use "bad language or attitude" or "do not follow the rules," or when teachers feel that "students do not behave seriously." The score is notably larger in the AG group than in the RG group. Since these student actions were never what the teachers wanted, such student actions caused the corporal-punishment accepting students to deny such behaviors. On the other hand, the corporal-punishment rejecting students tend to admit the punishment by teachers for the action of "not getting good grades (results)" and "suddenly taking rebellious attitudes." It is presumed that negative emotions were evoked by unpleasant behaviors, which were notably different from normal actions or inconsistent with the expected results.

From the results of the factor analysis, it is clear that the factors that lead teachers to corporal punishment of students are composed of three components, and it is based on the common pattern regardless of the tolerating or reject-

ing of corporal conducts. We presume that the three attitudes, "twisted attitude," "betrayal attitude," and "bad attitude," trigger the corporal punishment. In particular, "disgusting attitude" is strongly seen in AG; the attitude is, however, a "negative expression" of "representing the unpleasant emotion and expression," as Nishio (1998) pointed out. The attitude is accordingly unacceptable for the physical education students who attach much value on "the mentoring and hierarchical relationships." Therefore, the results are considered to be students' recognition that teachers tend to discipline students on these occasions.

It is still unclear if "the three-factor structure" that causes teachers to use punishment is the same as the one recognized by students, and future research will be required to understand this further.

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