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**Perception, Use, and Abolition of Corporal Punishment  
Among High School Teachers in a District in Southwestern Nigeria**

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### Abstract

Students in many regions of the world experience corporal punishment in multiple settings, although what is currently known about corporal punishment is derived from parental corporal punishment. Using a convenience sample of 271 teachers in 14 public and private secondary schools in a district in southwestern Nigeria, this article describes the associations between perception, use, and support for abolition of corporal punishment. Results suggest that having children, more corporal punishment of own children, and higher frequency of corporal punishment by colleagues were associated with frequent use of corporal punishment. Frequency of corporal punishment by colleagues accounted for the strongest variance in frequent use of corporal punishment. Lower corporal punishment of own children was associated with higher endorsement of abolition of corporal punishment from schools, whereas being male was associated with higher endorsement of abolition of corporal punishment from society. Teachers endorsed abolition of corporal punishment not only from schools but also from society. These findings highlight the “bandwagon” effect and teacher characteristics as potential risk factors for sustained perpetration and transmission of corporal punishment and draw attention to the need for intervention on alternative approaches to corporal punishment that could facilitate the abolition of corporal punishment from home and schools.

**Keywords:** corporal punishment; abolition of corporal punishment; physical abuse; teachers; schools; student disciplinary practices

## **Introduction**

Corporal punishment (i.e., any form of disciplinary practices that is aimed at inflicting physical pain or discomfort on children) of children is practiced in many regions and banned in 53 countries of the world (Global Initiatives to End All Corporal Punishment of Children [GIECPC], n. d.). In some regions, children are susceptible to corporal punishment in multiple settings (e.g., at home, at school, and in the community) and in others corporal punishment is permitted only at home, although support for its abolition continues to be on the increase. Nevertheless, debilitating consequences from corporal punishment in multiple settings is real for many children, although increasing attention is generally concentrated on violence perpetrated at home (Frank-Briggs & Alikor, 2010).

The perception and use of corporal punishment by teachers in school setting remains a neglected topic, especially in regions where corporal punishment is practiced at home and school and where the consequences for students are pronounced. For example, school teachers in Nigeria utilize corporal punishment to discipline students and recent reports suggest that students suffer physical and mental consequences, including hospitalization, death, eye injuries, and blindness from corporal punishment (e.g., Oluwakemi & Kayode, 2007). Despite being a signatory to the Child's Rights Act (CRA) of 2003, little is known about prevalence, perception, and beliefs associated with continued use of corporal punishment in multiple settings in Nigeria. The present study examined perception and use of corporal punishment in school and determined factors associated with its perceived abolition in Nigeria.

## **Decisions to Use Corporal Punishment**

In countries where corporal punishment is yet to be prohibited, it is possible to understand the decisions to use corporal punishment on children by examining the personal

characteristics of parents. Although it has been suggested that “men were more accepting of corporal punishment than women” (Lambert, Jenkins, & Ventura, 2009, p. 51), an analysis of nine countries suggests that “mothers used corporal punishment more frequently than did fathers” (Lansford et al., 2010, p. 1), with boys being more likely to experience corporal punishment than girls (Lansford et al., 2010). A similar analysis of 14 European countries found that “the existence of laws prohibiting physical punishment of children [was related to ] lower levels of acceptability of physical punishment of children,” whereas being male, being older, being less educated, and the presence of lower perceived frequency of corporal punishment in the society was associated with higher acceptability of corporal punishment (Gracia & Herrero, 2007, p. 210).

In countries where corporal punishment is prohibited, beliefs about the efficacy of corporal punishment have not necessarily faded. For example, after banning corporal punishment in South African schools, Cosmas and Almon (2010) found that teachers reported disempowerment and diminished disciplinary capabilities. Specifically, “Educators revealed that learners do not fear or respect educators because they know that nothing will happen to them. Although educators are aware of alternative disciplinary measures, they view them as ineffective and time consuming” (p. 387). Teachers attributed a similar ban in Kenya to “increased indiscipline, challenges in classroom management, poor academic performance and relationship between teachers and students” (Maina & Sindabi, 2016, p. 850). In Taiwan where a similar ban was enacted, teachers expressed concerns regarding the “difficulty in disciplining students and respecting the students’ human rights” (Lwo & Yuan, 2011, p. 137).

### **Physical, Psychological, and Behavioural Effects of Corporal Punishment**

Corporal punishment has many effects on children. In a study of 186 children in Nigeria, Adegbehingbe and Ajite (2007) found that 89 (47.8%) had ocular injuries. Approximately 27 (30.3 per cent) of the 89 were found to sustain corporal punishment-related ocular injuries in various locations including schools ( $n = 13$ , 48.2 per cent), homes ( $n = 8$ , 29.6 per cent), market place ( $n = 3$ , 11.1 per cent), workshop ( $n = 2$ , 7.4 per cent), and worship houses ( $n = 1$ , 3.7 per cent). Two of the children sustained severe visual impairment and three suffered blindness (Adegbehingbe & Ajite, 2007).

Beyond immediate physical injuries, corporal punishment was associated with internalizing and externalizing problems (e.g., depression, anxiety, anger, aggressiveness, delinquency, impulsiveness, antisocial behaviour) for children in the long run (Berlin et al., 2009; Human Rights Watch and the ACLU, 2010). Corporal punishment also has effects on educational outcomes of children. For example, in the United States, it was noted that schools in states where corporal punishment was allowed performed worse in American College Testing (ACT) than schools in states where corporal punishment was prohibited (National Child Protection Training Center, 2017; Human Rights Watch and the ACLU, 2010). School-related behavioural problems ranging from poor attendance, dropout, skipping school, and poor attendance to oppositional defiant behaviour have been associated with corporal punishment. For example, students who are victimized by corporal punishment have a tendency to avoid or drop out of school (Human Rights Watch and the ACLU, 2010).

### **Theoretical Framework**

Of the many theoretical frameworks for understanding the use of corporal punishment, social learning provides a robust explanation for why parents and teachers perceive or use

corporal punishment to discipline children or students. Through reciprocal interaction with their immediate environment, people act and respond to behaviours through observation, imitation, and modelling (Bandura, 1986). Through the socialization process, people learn specific behaviours by observing the behaviours and consequences arising from them in the social context (Bandura, 1986). By observing, learning, and directly experiencing behaviours, people become accustomed to those behaviours and are more likely to repeat them at various points in their lives. At home, parents who were exposed to corporal punishment as children learned then that corporal punishment was an appropriate form of parental discipline; thus, they may be predisposed to use corporal punishment on their own children. In the school setting, new teachers who have been exposed to use of corporal punishment by senior teachers conclude that corporal punishment is an appropriate and acceptable form of discipline and an effective mean of controlling students' behaviours. Allowing corporal punishment in schools may therefore create a "bandwagon" effect, a situation whereby colleagues who are not predisposed to corporal punishment are encouraged to use it on students.

Several socializing forces (e.g., family background, religion, social environment, community membership) demonstrate the potency of social learning in understanding the behaviours and actions of humans in the social setting. For example, social learning is supported when one realizes that the propensity to use corporal punishment on children is associated with one's community of residence. Thus, "parents from communities where spanking was more normative were more likely to use spanking themselves" (MacKenzie, Nicklas, Waldfogel, & Brooks-Gunn, 2012, p. 11). Religion constitutes another driving force behind corporal punishment. For example, Ellison, Bartkowski, and Segal (1996) found that "parents with

conservative scriptural belief use corporal punishment more frequently than parents with less conservative theological views” (p. 1003).

### **Present Study**

Based on the above review, the present study states the following hypotheses to examine relation between perception, use, and abolition of corporal punishment by teachers:

Hypothesis 1: Having children, corporal punishment of own children, and frequency of corporal punishment by colleagues are associated with frequent use of corporal punishment.

Hypothesis 2: Corporal punishment of own children and abolition of corporal punishment from society are associated with abolition of corporal punishment from schools.

Hypothesis 3: Being male and abolition of corporal punishment from schools are associated with abolition of corporal punishment from society.

### **Method**

#### **Procedure**

For this cross-sectional study, survey questionnaire was applied to 275 teachers in eight private and six public secondary schools in a local government area in South-West Nigeria. A convenience, non-probability sampling method was used to identify public and private schools to participate in the study. The directory of schools (63 public schools and 101 private schools) (stratified by urban vs suburban areas) was obtained from the local education district. Because many schools in the suburban areas have fewer teachers than schools in the urban areas, attempt was made to collect data from a convenient sample of schools known to have large numbers of teachers in both areas. Similarly, because private schools have fewer teachers than public schools, private schools were oversampled to ensure adequate sample size of teachers in private schools. Research assistants visited several schools that met these criteria to obtain

administrator's (principal) approval to collect data from teachers. Only schools (eight private and six public secondary schools) that granted approval for data collection were included in the study.

To administer the questionnaire research assistants visited the teachers in their classrooms. To minimize response bias and ensure that teachers completed the questionnaires without fear of political or disciplinary repercussions, the teachers were informed that the data collection was for research purposes. Participation in the study was voluntary and anonymous. The university's logo on the questionnaires and information about funding were also helpful in addressing any concerns that the teachers may have about any political undertone of the study. On average, 81% of questionnaires distributed were completed. The Institutional Review Board of Westfield State University, Massachusetts approved the study.

### **Sample**

The sample ( $N = 271$ ) consisted predominantly of Yoruba ( $n = 218$ , 80.4 per cent) or Christian ( $n = 224$ , 82.7 per cent) teachers (Table 1). There were more female teachers ( $n = 161$ , 59.4 per cent) than male teachers ( $n = 110$ , 40.6 per cent). There were more private school teachers ( $n = 146$ , 53.9 per cent) than public school teachers ( $n = 125$ , 46.1 per cent). The majority ( $n = 217$ , 80.1 per cent) were married, divorced, or widowed who reported having a child/children ( $n = 205$ , 75.6 per cent) and a postsecondary school educational background ( $n = 227$ , 83.8 per cent). The average age was 38 years ( $SD = 8.94$ ). The class size varied; about half ( $n = 128$ , 47.2 per cent) reported having fewer than 40 students in the classroom, although many ( $n = 73$ , 26.9 per cent) reported having as many as 80 students.



### Measures for Parametric and Multivariate Tests

In addition to answering questions on demographic characteristics, respondents answered questions on examined variables. The questions regarding corporal punishment were developed for the present study using previous work in this area as a guide.

*Corporal punishment of students* measured the extent to which respondents utilized corporal punishment to discipline students in school, operationalized as, “*I beat, punch, or slap students when necessary*” (Fakunmoju & Bammeké, 2015). Response choices were *never* = 1, *rarely* = 2, *sometimes* = 3, *always* = 4.

*Necessity of corporal punishment* (partly adapted from Gerald, Augustine, & Ogetange, 2012; Ogbé, 2015) measured the extent to which respondents agreed that corporal punishment is necessary in schools; it was operationalized in three questions: (a) *Without corporal punishment, schools would be unmanageable for teachers*; (b) *Without corporal punishment, students would be disrespectful to teachers*; and (c) *Without corporal punishment, students would hardly comply with instructions*. Response choices were *strongly disagree* = 1, *disagree* = 2, *neither agree nor disagree* = 3, *agree* = 4, *strongly agree* = 5. Lower scores in the form of *strongly disagree* indicated lower necessity of corporal punishment and higher scores in the form of *strongly agree* indicated higher necessity of corporal punishment. Cronbach’s alpha for the measure was .89.

*Efficacy of corporal punishment* (partly adapted from Gerald et al., 2012) measured the extent to which respondents agreed that corporal punishment is effective in managing or controlling students’ behaviours in school. It was operationalized with five questions: (a) *Corporal punishment ensures immediate compliance from students*, (b) *Corporal punishment instils discipline and respect in students*, (c) *Corporal punishment prevents students from repeating the mistake/misbehaviour*, (d) *Corporal punishment is more effective than verbal*

*reprimand*, and (e) *Corporal punishment is more effective than any alternative forms of discipline.*” Response choices were *strongly disagree* = 1, *disagree* = 2, *neither agree nor disagree* = 3, *agree* = 4, *strongly agree* = 5. Lower scores in the form of *strongly disagree* indicated lower efficacy of corporal punishment and higher scores in the form of *strongly agree* indicated higher efficacy of corporal punishment. Cronbach’s alpha for the measure was approximately .89.

*Frequency of corporal punishment* measured the extent to which respondents use corporal punishment to discipline students. It was operationalized in a question: “*How frequently do you use corporal punishment to discipline students?*” Response choices were *extremely infrequent/never* = 1, *moderately infrequent* = 2, *slightly infrequent* = 3, *neither frequent nor infrequent* = 4, *slightly frequent* = 5, *moderately frequent* = 6, *extremely frequent* = 7.

*Frequency of corporal punishment by colleagues* measured the extent to which respondents observed or presumed that other teachers use corporal punishment on a frequent basis. It was operationalized by a question: “*How frequently do you think other teachers use corporal punishment in disciplining students in your school?*” Response choices were *extremely infrequent* = 1, *moderately infrequent* = 2, *slightly infrequent* = 3, *neither frequent nor infrequent* = 4, *slightly frequent* = 5, *moderately frequent* = 6, *extremely frequent* = 7.

*Corporal punishment of own children* measured the extent to which respondents use corporal punishment in disciplining their own child or children. It was operationalized by a question: “*How frequently do you use corporal punishment to discipline your own children?*” Responses choices were *I don’t have a child* = 0, *extremely infrequent* = 1, *extremely frequent* = 2, *moderately frequent* = 3, *slightly frequent* = 4, *neither frequent nor infrequent* = 5, *slightly infrequent* = 6, *moderately infrequent* = 7.

*Abolition of corporal punishment from schools and society* measured the extent to which respondents agreed that corporal punishment should be abolished from schools and society.

Abolition of corporal punishment from schools was operationalized by a question: (a) “*Would you support any law banning corporal punishment in schools?*” Abolition of corporal punishment from society was operationalized by a question: (b) “*Do you think corporal punishment as a form of discipline to children should be banned in the society?*” Response choices were *no* = 1, *don't know* = 2, *maybe* = 3, *yes* = 4.

### **Data Analysis**

To determine factors associated with frequency of corporal punishment, a multivariate test, multiple regression analysis was performed. Frequency of corporal punishment was the criterion variable. Hierarchical entry was used to enter the variables into the analysis. To determine factors associated with abolition of corporal punishment from schools and society, a multivariate test, multiple regression analysis, was performed. Abolition of corporal punishment from schools and society were the criterion variable. Simultaneous entry was used to enter the variables into the analysis. Ipsative mean imputation (Schafer & Graham, 2002) was used to address missing values in which the missing cases were not more than 25 per cent for efficacy and 33 per cent for necessity of corporal punishment. Thereafter, listwise deletion was applied to remaining cases, resulting in a final sample of 271 response sets for analysis. SPSS 20™ (IBM Corporation, 2011) was used to perform the analyses.

## **Results**

### **Model Predictive of Frequency of Corporal Punishment**

The overall model for predicting frequency of corporal punishment was significant,  $F(13, 257) = 33.87, p < .0005$ . The final model accounted for 64.3 per cent (adjusted  $R^2 = .624$ ) of the

variance in frequency of corporal punishment. Having children ( $\beta = .211, p = .004$ ), higher corporal punishment of own children ( $\beta = .221, p < .0005$ ), and higher frequency of corporal punishment by colleagues ( $\beta = .633, p < .0005$ ) were associated with frequent use of corporal punishment (Table 2) (Hypotheses 1). Corporal punishment of students and corporal punishment of own children accounted for approximately 25 per cent of the variance in frequency of corporal punishment, whereas frequency of corporal punishment by colleagues accounted for approximately 35 per cent of variance.

### **Model Predictive of Abolition of Corporal Punishment**

The overall model for predicting abolition of corporal punishment from schools was significant,  $F(12, 257) = 24.993, p < .0005$ . The final model accounted for 55 per cent (adjusted  $R^2 = .528$ ) of the variance in abolition of corporal punishment from schools. Lower corporal punishment of own children ( $\beta = -.158, p = .014$ ) and higher abolition of corporal punishment from society ( $\beta = .705, p < .0005$ ) were associated with higher endorsement of abolition of corporal punishment from schools (Table 3) (Hypotheses 2). Similarly, the overall model for predicting abolition of corporal punishment from society was significant,  $F(12, 257) = 27.07, p < .0005$ . The final model accounted for 57 per cent (adjusted  $R^2 = .549$ ) of the variance in abolition of corporal punishment from society. Being male ( $\beta = -.096, p = .031$ ) and higher abolition of corporal punishment from schools ( $\beta = .674, p < .0005$ ) were associated with higher endorsement of abolition of corporal punishment from society (Table 3) (Hypotheses 3).

### **Discussion**

The present study examined the associations between perception and use of corporal punishment among teachers in secondary school and determined factors associated with abolition of corporal punishment. Multivariate analysis indicated that having children was associated with

how frequently teachers used corporal punishment to discipline students in schools, a finding that is consistent with cultural practices of physical punishment of children in the region. In Nigeria, many parents beat their children as part of the child-rearing process and many reports indicate that as high as 90 per cent of children have been beaten by parents (GIECPC, 2017). Having children entails the responsibility of raising and disciplining them, and parents often rely on religion and culture for guidance on how to raise and discipline their children. Because religion and culture encourage the use of physical discipline in Nigeria, it is not surprising that having children was associated with higher frequency of corporal punishment of students. The influence of religion was particularly unique in light of the fact that the majority (approximately 83 per cent) of teachers reported Christianity as their religious background and were more likely to report corporal punishment of their children in this study. Empirically speaking, religion is a consistent predictor of endorsement of corporal punishment (Ellison & Bradshaw, 2009): Conservative Protestants or those subscribing to literal interpretation of Biblical verses on corporal punishment endorse and use corporal punishment more than non-Protestants (Gershoff, Miller, & Holden, 1999), although Lee and Altschul (2015) did not find any association between religiosity and corporal punishment.

Having children may not be enough to explain the frequency of corporal punishment of students. Using corporal punishment on own children was an additional factor in the higher perception of how frequently teachers used corporal punishment on students. Regrettably, Nigerian parents and teachers rely on corporal punishment as the main technique for disciplining children and students (Ofoha & Saidu, 2014; Ogbe, 2015) because the majority has probably experienced corporal punishment during childhood. Their use of corporal punishment on their children and students is not particularly surprising given the realization that childhood

experience of corporal punishment is a major risk for perception, use, and endorsement of corporal punishment during adulthood (Bammeke & Fakunmoju, 2016; Bell & Romano, 2012).

Although having children and using corporal punishment on them are risk factors for corporal punishment of students, witnessing the use of corporal punishment by colleagues was equally relevant in understanding the frequent use of corporal punishment by teachers. This has implications for social learning perspectives regarding the effects of observation, modelling, learning, and imitation on behaviour (Bandura, 1986). In schools where corporal punishment is not prohibited, teachers are susceptible to “bandwagon” effect, in which the propensity to use corporal punishment is influenced by the prevailing use of corporal punishment by colleagues. A teacher may believe in the necessity and efficacy of corporal punishment and use corporal punishment on own children without necessarily being able to use corporal punishment on students in schools where corporal punishment is prohibited. But a teacher may be predisposed to use corporal punishment in schools where colleagues are observed using corporal punishment, with the exposure being instrumental to activation of beliefs regarding the use and efficacy of corporal punishment.

Despite the prevalence of corporal punishment in Nigeria, it should not be assumed that it is practiced by all or that no attempts have been made for its abolition. Regrettably, knowledge about factors that may enhance support for its abolition is currently limited; however, findings in this study suggest that being male and lower corporal punishment of own children were associated with abolition of corporal punishment from schools and society. These findings may particularly be motivated by several factors, including the realization that some teachers may perceive the use of corporal punishment to be too frequent and were therefore predisposed to endorsing its abolition from schools and society. It is also possible that some teachers perceived

corporal punishment to be ineffective in controlling the behaviour of students, especially recalcitrant students and repeat offenders. Some teachers may have felt repulsed by the rate at which corporal punishment is frequently applied with impunity, with the majority of victims being students from poor socioeconomic backgrounds.

Another possible explanation for why being male and lower corporal punishment of own children were associated with higher endorsement of abolition of corporal punishment from schools and society relates to the realization that some teachers and parents tend to engage in excessive use of corporal punishment to the extent that children and students sustain serious injury. Teachers that are privy to this observation, those that are employed in schools where corporal punishment is prohibited, and those that do not utilize corporal punishment on their own children may be more encouraged by this realization to endorse abolition of corporal punishment from schools and society. By collecting data from public and private schools the present study was able to reach this broader perspective unlike previous studies that utilized responses from public schools.

### **Strengths and Limitations**

This study has some strengths, as well as limitations. The first known strength relates to fresh knowledge generated about risks for corporal punishment of students and factors that may enhance its abolition from schools. Similarly, the study advanced knowledge beyond prevalent reports of corporal punishment in schools by examining associations among its perception, use, and abolition among teaching professionals. By drawing data from public and private secondary schools, the study generates representative knowledge that may be relevant for policy, practice, and training decisions on corporal punishment in secondary schools in the region.

Despite the above strengths, known limitations are acknowledged. The first limitation relates to the data being drawn from a convenience sample of teachers from public and private secondary schools in a locality in southwestern Nigeria. Because the majority of teachers in the sample identified Christianity as their religious background, findings may not be generalizable to non-Christian teachers or teachers in other regions. In addition, findings may differ for elementary school teachers, teachers in rural areas, or teachers in the northern regions of the country, where corporal punishment is perceived to be more frequent and severe and perceived support for its abolition is probably less widespread than reported in this study. As a result, the risk of underreporting of perception and use of corporal punishment is likely greater than the risk of overreporting. Because empirically validated measures to operationalize the examined variables are lacking, valid conclusions from the questions developed to examine the relationships in this study cannot be reached.

### **Implications for Education, Policy, Practice, and Research**

Findings in this study have implications for educational and legislative measures for addressing the menace of corporal punishment and abolishing it from schools. The line between corporal punishment and physical abuse is very thin, as practical use of corporal punishment is not comparable across societies. Corporal punishment involving minor spanking with the hand or soft objects in some societies cannot be compared to excessive and severe use of hard objects and weapons in other societies. In societies where corporal punishment is permitted, evidence of injury from spanking often escalates judgment from corporal punishment to physical abuse. Given that the term *corporal punishment* evokes less-abusive connotations than *physical abuse*, integrating knowledge about long-term negative effects of corporal punishment in training school personnel might increase the sensitivity needed to refrain from corporal punishment and



alter the prevailing support for its use in schools. Such education and training is expected to be successful because a similar parent education program reduced the use of physical discipline by parents in Nigeria (Ofoha & Saidu, 2014). Another intervention in Uganda using Good School Toolkit was effective in reducing physical violence by school staff, helped increase students' wellbeing and sense of safety at school, and contributed to changing the school environment (Devries et al., 2015). Similarly, integrating human rights education into the high school curriculum would enhance the sensitivity needed for teachers to refrain from corporal punishment of students. Efforts geared toward educating teachers on the inefficacy of corporal punishment may be helpful in lowering the perception of its necessity and use and in gaining support for its abolition from schools.

It is a welcome relief that teachers are willing to adopt alternative approaches to corporal punishment. Therefore, instead of relying on reactive approaches to behavioural problems that often lead to physical abuse of students, teachers may be taught proactive approaches to classroom management and disciplinary alternatives to corporal punishment that include verbal reprimands, classroom relocation of offending students, nonverbal reprimands, nonphysical punishment and reward techniques tailored to each child, withdrawal of rights and privileges, group reward, group nonphysical punishment, and contact with parents (Jambor, 1988). Broad-based policy banning corporal punishment in schools may be implemented at all levels of education.

One of the factors responsible for some resistance to abolition of corporal punishment relates to the tendency to equate discipline with corporal punishment and corporal punishment with physical abuse. Undeniably, both corporal punishment and physical abuse have negative psychological consequences. While universal abolition of corporal punishment is fundamentally

feasible, improving socioeconomic conditions that permeate corporal punishment across societies will achieve faster realization than forceful imposition of abolition policy that adherents of religious beliefs may perceive as an attack on their religious freedom. A combination of education (e.g., about empirical evidence of negative effects of corporal punishment), moral suasion, improvement in socio-economic conditions, and legislation will achieve faster results in abolishing corporal punishment.

To gain additional knowledge about perception, use, and abolition of corporal punishment, future studies should draw from proactive reactive perspective by integrating provocative student behaviors that teachers are reacting to or specific behavioral and educational goals that teachers are striving to achieve in using corporal punishment in schools. Knowledge about differential exposure of students to corporal punishment in different settings as well as differences in mental health and educational outcomes of the differential exposure would go a long way in demonstrating the differential effects of corporal punishment and in providing empirical justifications for its abolition. Such comparative knowledge will provide the knowledge base needed to implement the policy aimed at banning corporal punishment or help provide a better rationale for teaching professionals to embrace alternative approaches to corporal punishment.

In conclusion, in societies where children are susceptible to corporal punishment in multiple settings, practitioners may consider teachers' status as a parent, teachers' use of corporal punishment on own children, and teachers' frequent use of corporal punishment by colleagues as risk factors for corporal punishment of students. Understanding teachers' beliefs on the efficacy of corporal punishment is crucial for gaining teachers' support for abolition of corporal punishment from schools. In general, knowledge generated may help lay the

groundwork for teaching policy and measures that could improve classroom management skills of teachers in controlling student behaviours that are often instrumental to physically abusive disciplinary measures in schools.

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Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Sample characteristics	<i>n</i>	per cent
<b>Age</b>		
38 years (SD = 8.94)		
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	161	59.4
Male	110	40.6
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single (never married)	54	19.9
Married and others (divorced, widowed)	217	80.1
<b>Ethnic background</b>		
Yoruba	218	80.4
Others (Igbo, Hausa, and others)	53	19.6
<b>Religious background</b>		
Christianity	224	82.7
Others (Muslim/Islam, traditional religion, Atheist, and others)	47	17.3
<b>Educational background</b>		
Secondary school	44	16.2
Others (OND/NCE, Bachelor/HND, Post-graduate)	227	83.8
<b>Secondary school status</b>		
Public secondary school	125	46.1
Private secondary school	146	53.9
<b>Parent status</b>		
Has a child/children	205	75.6
Has no child/children	66	24.4

Table 2: Hierarchical multiple regression analysis of predictors of frequency of corporal punishment.

Variable	$\beta$	t	Sig.	95.0 per cent C.I	
				LB	UB
Step 1-4					
Age	-.008	-.147	.883	-.023	.020
Gender <sup>a</sup>	.029	.722	.471	-.188	.405
Marital status <sup>b</sup>	-.072	-1.099	.273	-.910	.258
Religious background <sup>c</sup>	-.003	-.068	.946	-.387	.361
Secondary school status <sup>d</sup>	.003	.068	.946	-.325	.349
Parent status <sup>e</sup>	.211	2.869	.004	.278	1.493
Step 5					
Corporal punishment of own children	.221	3.954	<.0005	.085	.254
Corporal punishment of students	.045	1.118	.265	-.082	.297
Step 6					
Frequency of corporal punishment by colleagues	.633	14.049	<.0005	.568	.753
Step 7					
Efficacy of corporal punishment	.072	1.138	.256	-.020	.075
Necessity of corporal punishment	.049	.765	.445	-.044	.100
Step 8					
Abolition of corporal punishment from schools	.042	.737	.462	-.107	.235
Abolition of corporal punishment from society	-.068	-1.161	.247	-.283	.073

Note: CI = Confidence interval; LB = Lower bound; UB = Upper bound. Correlation among the variables ranges from  $-.214$  to  $.765$  ( $p < .0005$ ). The covariates entered the analysis as follows: age, gender, and marital status entered in Step 1, religious background entered in Step 2, secondary school status entered in Step 3, and parent status entered in Step 4.

<sup>a</sup>Female = 1, male = 0. <sup>b</sup>Single (never married) = 1, Married and others (divorced, widowed) = 0. <sup>c</sup>Christianity = 1, Others (Muslim/Islam, Traditional religion, Atheist, and others) = 0. <sup>d</sup>Public school = 1, Private school = 0. <sup>e</sup>Has a child/children = 1, Has no child/children = 0.

Table 3: Multiple regression analysis of predictors of abolition of corporal punishment from schools and society.

Variable	Abolition from schools					Abolition from society				
	$\beta$	t	Sig.	95.0 per cent C.I		$\beta$	t	Sig.	95.0 per cent C.I	
				LB	UB				LB	UB
Age	.030	.500	.618	-.012	.020	-.006	-.109	.913	-.016	.014
Gender	.036	.788	.431	-.131	.305	-.096	-2.167	.031	-.435	-.021
Marital status	-.120	-1.653	.100	-.787	.069	.114	1.597	.111	-.078	.744
Religious background	.053	1.195	.233	-.108	.439	-.070	-1.596	.112	-.474	.050
Secondary school status	.026	.497	.620	-.184	.308	-.013	-.253	.800	-.267	.206
Parent status	-.009	-.107	.915	-.479	.429	-.059	-.723	.470	-.595	.275
Corporal punishment of own children	-.158	-2.471	.014	-.143	-.016	.057	.902	.368	-.033	.089
Frequency of corporal punishment	.053	.746	.456	-.057	.127	-.079	-1.129	.260	-.139	.038
Frequency of corporal punishment by colleagues	.014	.203	.839	-.082	.101	-.040	-.599	.550	-.114	.061
Efficacy of corporal punishment	-.008	-.119	.906	-.037	.033	-.121	-1.754	.081	-.063	.004
Necessity of corporal punishment	-.056	-.783	.434	-.074	.032	.016	.229	.819	-.045	.057
Abolition of corporal punishment from society	.705	14.897	<.0005	.623	.813					
Abolition of corporal punishment from schools						.674	14.897	<.0005	.574	.749

Note: CI = Confidence interval; LB = Lower bound; UB = Upper bound. Correlation among the variables ranges from  $-.177$  to  $.718$  ( $p < .0005$ ).