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**Exploring the Forms, Causes and Consequences of
Physical Punishment in Migrant Schools: A Case Study of
Myanmar Migrant Children in Mae Sot, Thailand**

YRI Working Paper Series [1/2025]

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Abstract

Myanmar migrant school in Mae Sot, Thailand, focusing on migrant students from Myanmar. Using a mixed-methods approach to obtain useful insights. In quantitative approach, data were collected from 75 migrant students through surveys, and in qualitative approach, semi-structured interviews with 14 migrant teachers and 5 parents were participated, selected via snowball sampling. The result highlights main perspective among teachers: most of them consider physical punishment to be excessive and damaging, while others regard it as an essential method for correcting behavior, and some teachers believe physical punishment is essential for straighten discipline and respect. The findings emphasize the harmful impacts of physical punishment on children's mental and physical health, indicating the necessity for intervention programs that encourage nonviolent disciplinary methods. Finally this paper suggests providing training for teachers on different positive disciplinary approaches, increasing awareness of children's rights, and implementing capacity building training.

Keywords: *physical punishment, migrant school, migrant student, positive discipline*

Introduction

Physical punishment in educational settings remains one of the most pervasive issue globally. Despite international frameworks such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 2007) explicitly prohibit physical punishment, children particularly those in marginalized and migrant communities continue to experience violent disciplinary practices in schools (OHCHR, 2012). This issue is especially acute in Thailand's migrant learning centers, where weak in policy enforcement, cultural norms, and post-coup displacement crises have created an environment where physical punishment persists despite legal prohibitions (UNHCR Mae Sot Field Office, 2023).

The 2021 military coup in Myanmar, worsening political restrictions, economic instability, and security concerns have further accelerated migration. Thailand is emerging as a safe place for Myanmar people, especially in border areas like the Mae Sot area (IOM, 2021) with over 40,000 school-aged children, currently attending Thai public schools and migrant schools (Frontier Myanmar, 2023).

As student numbers grow, so do challenges, including inadequate facilities, insufficient resources, and a lack of formally qualified teacher remain pressing issues. Despite these challenges, there remains a demand for volunteer teachers to balance the student-teacher ratio in the classroom. However, teachers' low salaries, less teacher training, and the absence of government-recognized certificates further complicate efforts to improve education standards (Teacher Focus, n.d.). Reports indicate that teachers in migrant learning centers overwhelmed, resort to caning, slapping, and forced kneeling as common discipline (Throsvoutis, 2019). This practice persists even though research conclusively shows that physical punishment harms cognitive development, increases aggression, and perpetuates cycles of violence (AACAP, 2018)

Research Background and Problem

In the academic year 2019-2020, Thailand's Tak District had 65 migrant learning centers with 11,616 students taught by 665 teachers (EQF Annual Report, 2019-2020). With a surge in Myanmar migrant children, a shortage of teachers is observed, prompting a call for volunteer teachers, including displaced Myanmar educators (Frontier Myanmar, 2023). On the other hand, teachers express the need for updated training and government-recognized certification for quality education (Throsvoutis, 2019). Challenges include limited access to training in child and educational psychology affects class management and discipline. Among various methods, physical punishment is employed to shape students' behavior despite its controversial nature (AACAP, 2018). Of these methods, physical punishment is the most frequently employed.

The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child defined physical punishment as “any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain

or discomfort, however light” (UNCRC, 2007). Although the Thailand National Education Act (1999) explicitly prohibits physical punishment in schools that align with the CRC’s Article 19 (National Education Act B.E.2542, 1999), physical punishment used to be common and is still happening in migrant areas. Studies show it is not good for children's short-term and long-term well-being. It can cause stress and later violent behavior, affecting a child's mental health and school performance. (World Health Organization, 2022). OHCHR (2012) and WHO (2022) classify corporal punishment as a form of child maltreatment, linking it to depression, anxiety, and poor academic performance. In migrant communities, physical punishment is often culturally normalized as an acceptable teaching method (Throsvoutis, 2019). Teachers in migrant learning centers, including Myanmar nationals with minimal training, view caning as necessary for classroom control, especially when dealing with misbehaviour and overcrowding (Teacher Focus, n.d.).

According to the first paragraph of the summary discussion of Child Maltreatment, “In 2021, 67.0% of reports on child abuse and neglect were submitted by professionals, encompassing teachers, police officers, lawyers, and social services staff. Law enforcement personnel contributed the highest percentage (21.8%), with education personnel at 15.4%, and medical personnel at 12.2%.” (Child Maltreatment, 2021). Frontier Myanmar (2023) highlighted cases in which Myanmar refugee children were punished with bamboo sticks for speaking their native language or failing to memorize lessons. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that "no one shall be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment" (UDHR, 1948). To address student disciplinary issues and misbehavior, teachers employ physical punishment. This reflects a lack of awareness of child safety and a disregard for the principles of child rights. Therefore, it is crucial to address these issues and protect the child’s rights. This study investigates what factors interact to use of physical punishment using field data from Mae Sot migrant schools.

Research Objectives

The specific objectives of this study are:

1. To identify the specific forms of physical punishment commonly used on students in Mae Sot migrant schools.
2. To examine the underlying causes and factors contributing to the use of physical punishment of students in Mae Sot migrant schools.
3. To investigate the consequences of physical punishment on students in migrant schools.

Research Questions

1. What specific forms of physical punishment are commonly used on students in Mae Sot migrant schools?
2. What are the causes of physical punishment of students in Mae Sot migrant schools?
3. What are the consequences of physical punishment on students in Mae Sot migrant schools?

Literature Review

Despite growing opposition from human rights organizations and psychological research, physical punishment remains a widely used disciplinary method in schools worldwide. The Committee on the Rights of the Child (2007) defines physical punishment as "any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light." According to UNICEF (2021), approximately 67% of children aged 2–14 worldwide experienced physical punishment in the past month, with higher rates in certain regions. In schools, 23 countries still legally permit corporal punishment, including parts of the U.S., some African nations, and parts of Asia (UNICEF, 2021). The Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children (2023) reports that over 60 countries legally allow corporal punishment in schools, including Nigeria, India, and 19 U.S. states where paddling remains lawful. National surveys highlight alarming trends. In Ghana (2017

MICS), 90% of children reported experiencing physical punishment in schools, while in Pakistan (2018 PDHS), 75% of parents supported teachers using physical discipline. In the U.S., the Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC, 2020) documented that around 70,000 public school students were subjected to corporal punishment, predominantly in Southern states. Recent studies indicate that about 30% of students in Southeast Asian schools have experienced some form of physical punishment (Smith, 2020).

In many classrooms, teachers frequently resort to physical discipline to manage and correct student behavior. This includes striking students with sticks, straps, or wooden boards, as well as engaging in other aggressive acts such as pinching, ear-pulling, hair-pulling, face-slapping, and object-throwing. Additionally, students may be subjected to punitive measures such as maintaining painful postures, prolonged sun exposure, sitting in an 'invisible chair,' carrying heavy objects, digging holes, kneeling on small items, enduring excessive physical exercise without rest or water, and consuming harmful substances (Gershoff, 2017). Cultural and religious beliefs often justify these practices. In some Muslim-majority countries (e.g., Sudan), interpretations of hadd punishments influence school discipline. Ritualized practices such as ear-twisting ("maputi") in Zimbabwe and "flogging" with rulers in Jamaica further illustrate cultural variations (Vockell, 2017).

Physical punishment in schools persists due to a combination of cultural traditions, institutional practices, and misconceptions about discipline. Researchers have identified several key factors that contribute to its continued use despite evidence of its harmful effects. Many societies view physical punishment as an acceptable and even necessary method of instilling discipline. In some cultures, corporal punishment is deeply rooted in traditional beliefs that associate physical discipline with moral upbringing (Gershoff, 2017). For example, in parts of Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, teachers and parents often justify physical punishment as a way to "correct" misbehavior and prepare children for future challenges (Ogando Portela & Pells, 2015).

Teachers may resort to physical punishment as a means of asserting control in classrooms with limited resources or large student-teacher ratios (Morris & Gibson, 2011). The hierarchical structure of many school systems reinforces the idea that educators have the right to use physical force to maintain order (Harber, 2008). In some cases, teachers who lack training in classroom management strategies default to punitive measures (Durrant & Ensom, 2012).

A common justification for physical punishment is the belief that it is an effective and immediate way to modify behavior. Some educators argue that non-physical disciplinary methods are "too soft" and fail to produce long-term compliance (Straus, 2010). However, psychological research contradicts this view, showing that physical punishment often leads to increased aggression, anxiety, and lower academic performance (Gershoff & Grogan-Kaylor, 2016).

Even in countries where corporal punishment is legally banned, enforcement remains weak, particularly in under-resourced schools (Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, 2023). Some education systems allow loopholes, such as permitting physical discipline under the guise of "reasonable force" (United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2006).

In certain communities, religious teachings are cited to justify corporal punishment. For instance, some interpretations of religious texts promote the idea that "sparing the rod spoils the child" (Greven, 1992). Such beliefs reinforce the idea that physical discipline is not only acceptable but morally obligatory.

The persistence of physical punishment in schools stems from a complex interplay of cultural, institutional, and psychological factors. While some educators and parents genuinely believe it is an effective disciplinary tool, research consistently shows that it has detrimental

effects on children. Addressing these root causes requires legal reforms, teacher training, and community awareness programs to shift societal attitudes toward non-violent discipline.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, covers all aspects of a child's life. According to Article 4, governments must do all they can to make sure every child can enjoy their rights by creating systems and passing laws that promote and protect children's rights. On the national level, in Thailand, regarding child treatment, assistance, and welfare protection, provided in Chapters 2-4, which include Sections 22- 47 of the Child Protection Act, 2003. Section 40 states that the children to be provided welfare protection are tortured children, children at risk of wrongdoing, and children in circumstances that require welfare protection as prescribed by the Minister's Regulation.

The Rule of the Ministry of Education on penalization of pupils and students, 2005, in Clause 10 enumerates that performance of activities with a view to behavioral adjustment shall be employed in the case where pupils and students have committed a wrong reasonably entailing behavioral adjustment. The organization of activities shall be by guidance prescribed by the Ministry of Education (Ministry of Education, 2005). Furthermore, Clauses 4,5, and 6 of the Rule provide the penalization for a disciplinary purpose and commission of a wrong by a pupil or a student in violation of a rule or regulation of an educational institution or of the Ministry of Education or a Ministerial Regulation on conduct of pupils and students. However, clause 6 prescribes the limit of penalization, stating that "there shall be any penalization of pupils and students by a violent or persecuting method or out of anger or retaliation. In considering penalization, the age of a pupil or student and the gravity of the circumstances shall also be considered. Penalization shall be carried out to correct bad behavior and conduct of the pupil or student to engender his or her repentance for the wrong and restoration to further good conduct".

However, there is no explicit law that completely prohibits physical punishment in all settings. The Penal Code of Thailand does not specifically address physical punishment within families or other non-educational institutions. Therefore, the issue of physical punishment falls under general laws related to child protection. It is necessary to raise awareness about the negative consequences of physical punishment and promote positive discipline techniques for the protection of children from physical punishment as a fundamental human rights issue (Ministry of Education, 2005).

Physical punishment in schools has been found to have significant negative impacts on students across multiple domains. Research demonstrates that corporal punishment contributes to increased anxiety, depression, and lowered self-esteem among students, creating a hostile learning environment that undermines emotional well-being (Gershoff & Grogan-Kaylor, 2016; Afifi et al., 2017). Academically, such punishment correlates with reduced motivation, impaired cognitive functioning, and higher dropout rates, particularly in developing countries (Ogando Portela & Pells, 2015; UNICEF, 2014). Behaviorally, students subjected to physical discipline often exhibit increased aggression and poorer conflict resolution skills, likely due to social learning of violent behaviors (Bandura, 1977; Durrant & Ensom, 2012). Furthermore, the effects extend into adulthood, with longitudinal studies showing associations between childhood corporal punishment and later mental health issues, substance abuse, and intergenerational cycles of violence (Gershoff, 2017; Afifi et al., 2012). These findings collectively suggest that while physical punishment may produce short-term compliance, it ultimately harms students' psychological development, academic achievement, and social adjustment, highlighting the need for alternative disciplinary approaches that promote positive behavior without resorting to violence.

Teachers should build supportive relationships, create a positive environment, and optimize learning opportunities for an inclusive and conducive atmosphere, fostering student success (Elkadi E. & Sharaf R., 2023). In classroom management, teachers often implement

disciplinary measures to shape student behavior, employing diverse strategies to foster a positive learning environment. These efforts aim to create an atmosphere conducive to learning, promoting students' well-being and academic success within the classroom setting. Various methods, including reinforcement, are employed in shaping students' behavior, despite the controversial nature of some approaches (AACAP, 2018).

Despite extensive research on physical punishment in educational settings, several critical gaps remain in the existing literature. First, while many studies document the prevalence and effects of corporal punishment, there is a lack of longitudinal research tracking its long-term impacts into adulthood, particularly in low- and middle-income countries (Gershoff, 2017; Ogando Portela & Pells, 2015). Second, student perspectives are notably underrepresented; most studies rely on teacher or parent reports rather than capturing children's own experiences and perceptions (Durrant & Ensom, 2012). Third, there is limited exploration of how intersecting factors like gender, socioeconomic status, and disability influence experiences of physical punishment, despite evidence that marginalized groups may be disproportionately affected (Global Initiative, 2023). Fourth, while alternative disciplinary approaches are increasingly promoted, rigorous comparative studies evaluating their effectiveness across different cultural contexts remain scarce (Morris & Gibson, 2011).

Finally, research often fails to examine the institutional and systemic factors that perpetuate physical punishment, such as teacher training programs, school leadership norms, and gaps between policy and practice (Harber, 2008). Addressing these gaps through mixed-methods, longitudinal, and participatory research could strengthen evidence-based interventions and policy reforms aimed at eliminating corporal punishment in schools worldwide.

Methodology

This study used a mixture of qualitative and quantitative research methods to explore the forms, causes, and consequences of physical punishment in migrant schools, focusing on Myanmar migrant children in Mae Sot, Thailand. The rationale for using mixed methods is to collect comprehensive insights from both quantitative and qualitative data.

In qualitative data research, Google Form was used to create a survey to assess students' feelings, reports, and opinions about physical punishment. The form included multiple-choice questions on attitudes toward physical punishment and open-ended questions wherein students could specify their thoughts, stories, and emotions. Confidential follow-up interviews were conducted to collect detailed information from students who provided serious feedback. A cluster sampling method and snowball sampling method were used and made sure all eligible students within the chosen clusters were included in the survey. After that, the quantitative data collected from the survey were analyzed using Microsoft Excel to identify key trends and relationships.

In qualitative data research, the interview questionnaire was designed to understand teachers' and parents' experiences and perceptions of physical punishment. Open-ended questions in group discussions with 6 teachers and 5 parents facilitated sharing experiences and feelings of physical punishment. School observations were conducted in 6 schools for 3 months, focusing on the interactions between teachers and students. These qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring themes. Consent forms were developed and the research process was thoroughly explained to ensure informed participation. The study aims to contribute to academic discourse and provide practical insights into targeted interventions and policy recommendations for migrant schools in Tambon Mae Sot.

The participants of this research study were teachers, students, and parents in migrant schools in Tambon Mae Sot, Mae Sot. The sample of the study consisted of 94 participants, with groups of students, including teachers and parents. The participants included 75 members of students, with 27 males (36%) and 48 females (64%) divided by gender, these students were

selected from six migrant schools, and provided for the diversity of educational experiences and their backgrounds. The teachers consisted of 14 individuals, of whom 5 were male (36%) and 9 were female (64%). Their educational qualifications varied: 9 teachers had a bachelor's degree in education (B.Ed.), 1 teacher had a diploma in education, 1 had a degree in a non-educational subject, and 3 had a higher education school certificate only. The parent group consisted of 5 individuals, of whom 2 were male (40%) and 3 were female (60%). These parents were involved in the study to provide perspective on their children's educational experiences and challenges. Participants were recruited using the cluster and snowball sampling methods, with initial participants referring to others who met the study criteria. Additionally, recruitment was facilitated through training sessions, providing more opportunities for participation.

Before data collection, participants were comprehensively informed about the ethical considerations of the research process and requested to sign a consent form indicating their comprehension and willingness to take part. All sensitive information obtained is meticulously encrypted logged organized to guarantee privacy. The identities of participants and any possible side effects are kept anonymous to ensure privacy. For students younger than 18, permission was acquired from their parents or guardians, and feedback was requested from teachers and school principals to guarantee a thorough ethical consideration.

Research Findings

Quantitative Data Findings: Forms of physical punishment are commonly used on students in Mae Sot migrant schools

Table 1: Students' Experience of Physical Punishment in the School

Variable	Students' Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Have you ever been physically punished at school or in the classroom?	Total	75	100%
	Yes	62	83%
	No	13	17%

In Table 1, out of the 75 students who responded to the survey, 62 (83%) responded experienced physical punishment in school or the classroom, while 13 (17%) stated that they did not receive such punishment. This indicates a significant proportion of students experiencing physical punishment in their educational environment.

"If you have experienced physical punishment, in what manner were you disciplined?" The survey results showed that 22% experienced squat sitting, 26% were hit with a stick or bamboo, 26% had to hold their hands up in front of the class, and 20% were slapped on the face, head, or ears. In oral interviews with 10 students who had negative experiences, additional forms of punishment were mentioned: throwing objects (5%), cleaning toilets or classrooms (3%), hair pulling (4%), flogging (2%), push-ups (1%), and singing a song (1%). Some female students became sad while recalling these painful memories. Most students experienced more than one form of physical punishment.

Table 2: Types and frequencies of physical punishment encountered by students

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Response</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
<i>How often have you experienced physical punishment?</i>	Often	7	9%
	Sometimes	51	68%
	Only four times	2	3%
	Only one time	2	3%
	Never	13	17%
Total		75	100%
<i>If you have ever been physically punished, in what form have you been punished?</i>	Squat sitting	36	22%
	Hitting a part of the body with a stick or bamboo stick	42	26%
	hand up in front of the class	26	16%
	Slapping on the face, head, or ears	32	20%
	Throwing with things in seen	8	5%
	Cleaning the toilet or classroom	6	3%
	Hair Pulling	7	4%
	Flogging	3	2%
	Push up	2	1%
	Sing a song	1	1%
Total		167	100%

Source from fieldwork, 2024

Qualitative Data Findings

In exploring participants' views on physical punishment, the following findings were found. Teachers are denoted by Tr1, Tr2, and so on. Students are indicated by St1, St2, and parents are labeled as P1, P2, and so forth respectively.

Teachers' Perspectives

Tr1, Tr2, Tr12, and Tr3 believe that physical punishment is excessive and aimed at causing physical harm to children. Tr4, Tr11, Tr6, Tr7, and Tr9 view physical punishment as a method of coercion and preparation, encompassing not only physical but also occasionally mental aspects, to alter a child's behavior. Tr5, Tr10, and Tr8 argue that physical pain and discipline are essential for fostering discipline, respect for teachers, and enhancing children's behavior and learning.

Students' Perspectives

St3 and St10, among all respondents, stated that physical punishment is a disciplinary measure to guide individuals onto the correct path, emphasizing the importance of making the punishment effective to prevent future mistakes. Conversely, the remaining students expressed that physical punishment should be avoided as it is detrimental to the individual being punished, causing feelings of stress and embarrassment among peers.

Parents' Perspectives

Parents believe that physical punishment is necessary for their child's education and discipline, but they also emphasize that it should be moderate. When asking the students for their opinions, P1 responded and shared his opinion as follows:

"Of course, I was punished. I made a mistake in class once, so they made me raise my hands in front of the class and scolded me. Even after class was over, my friends laughed at me, so I ran away from school that day."

In addition to being forced to stay after class, other forms of physical punishment were reported. Another student mentioned, "Not now, but years ago, the teacher called students from another class, who were a little younger, and forced them to throw rubber bands into the mouths of students who had not finished their homework. It was so scary." However, there were also positive opinions about physical punishment. One student shared, "I have been punished. I had to squat sit in front of the class with my friends, finding some joy in it. This, in itself, is also a sin. By punishing me like this, I can reflect on my wrongdoing."

In the eyes of most migrant teachers, physical punishment is considered a common and conventional method used to discipline students, both behaviorally and academically. However, Tr 4 mentioned that upon applying for a teaching position in most of the migrant schools in Mae Sot, he had to sign a child safety and security policy contract. Therefore, if teachers in these schools engage in physical punishment, they may face consequences according to the policy. Despite this, physical punishment continues in many forms in migrant schools. This study has found some of the worst-case scenarios and patterns. Tr 3 shared, "There is a lot of physical punishment in these migrant schools. I experienced myself in school a student being punished by being left in the sun for a long time for not doing his homework. It's a very bad punishment." Tr 12 said, "Physical punishment usually involves hitting an inconspicuous part of the child's body with a stick. In my experience, the child was forced to place his hands on his knees while small seeds were placed under his knees."

Causes of Physical Punishment of Students in Mae Sot Migrant Schools

The conditions that lead to physical punishment mentioned above can be categorized into three factors: the teacher's attitude, the student's basic needs and parental shortcomings, and policy weaknesses.

Teacher's Attitude

Due to the increase in the number of children displaced by the war from Myanmar in Mae Sot, Thailand, there is a growing need for teachers in migrant schools. To address this shortage, volunteer teachers are being recruited. These volunteers include individuals with educational backgrounds and those from other fields. According to Tr 8, "I am also a volunteer teacher. Previously, I was a nurse's assistant. I had to take courses to teach at school. However, some courses are offered after school hours, and not everyone can attend due to limited availability."

Due to the lack of training, there is insufficient knowledge about child psychology among teachers. As a result, physical punishment is often used to maintain discipline in the classroom. In this migrant region, married female teachers, in particular, face marital difficulties. These personal stresses are often projected onto the children at school. Tr 4 noted, "Usually, married teachers project unresolved issues from home onto the children at school and vent their frustrations. I see this as a way for the teacher to reduce stress rather than as a response to any wrongdoing by the child." In addition, the teachers live illegally in the relocation area, facing struggles for food and security. Tr 1 shared her experience as follows:

"Being married brings marital stress, and living illegally means sometimes teachers get arrested on their way to school, creating a constant security concern. When I arrive at school feeling uneasy, I yell at the students and hit them. Some have even been hit."

A teacher's attitude is one factor that can lead to physical punishment. According to the interviewed teachers, some migrant school teachers hold conservative views, believing that physical punishment can lead to improved academic performance, respect, and behavior change in students. However, some teachers also acknowledge that physical punishment is only a temporary solution and can have long-term effects on a child's mental health.

The student's Basic Needs and Parental Shortcomings

Because the majority of students in migrant schools come from diverse family backgrounds, teachers often resort to physical punishment as a disciplinary measure. According to Tr 9, "Children come from many different backgrounds, and some older students don't want to show respect to the teacher. To gain their respect, we sometimes have to use physical punishment." Tr 10 also mentioned that physical punishment is used to achieve good academic results and to ensure regular writing practice. Students have been punished physically for not completing their homework, being late for school, talking in class, fighting with each other, and not listening to the teacher, however, some interviewees believe that physically the penalty applied depends on the context. "There's a reason why most students only follow the teachers who hit them. It has left an impression that students will only respect teachers who punish them physically", said Tr 14. Tr 5 noted, "Even if the teachers don't hit the students, they must show the stick to maintain respect." The study observed that many parents, due to their need to work and earn a living, often had to leave their children in school hostel or with relatives, such as grandparents. Some parents were forced to stay in factories, limiting their ability to supervise and engage with their children. As a result, these parents entrusted the school with the discipline and education of their children, effectively turning over the responsibility to the teachers. According to parents Pt3 and Pt4, "We are still looking for a business, so we can't take care of the child very much. We have to leave him at home with his grandmother. And school is only for the child to learn. We also accept beatings, as long as the legs are not broken." This reflects a level of acceptance of physical punishment, provided it does not result in severe physical harm, due to their inability to be actively involved in their children's day-to-day lives.

Policy weaknesses

Tr 4 said, "We have to sign a contract such as the Child Safeguarding Policy in migrant schools. According to that contract, schools are no longer allowed to use physical punishment." Studies have shown that when applying for a teaching job in most Mae Sot migrant schools, teachers sign a contract agreeing to abide by the Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct (CSG). The contract includes general child safety guidelines for volunteers and other staff at schools in the Thai-Myanmar border area. The Child Safety Policy adopted by the Migrant Learning Center's Child Safety Task Force (MLCs-CSG Taskforce) aims to provide a safe learning environment for primary education students in migrant schools along the Thai-Myanmar border (MLCs Child Safety Policy, 2021-2022). The policy defines physical abuse as the use of physical force, intentional or unintentional, that causes pain or injury to a child. In Tr 11's response, "Some migrant schools require signing the CSG, but some do not. I am not even aware of it. It depends on the teacher's attitude whether to follow it or not. There are even schools that do not participate in the CSG. However, in some schools, they do not sign the CSG and do not receive training." Tr 1 mentioned, "Children's rights and child protection are taught in these transit schools. In the training, we provide contacts for reporting any issues. However, this does not work in reality. Teachers are focused on making a living, so they are not concerned about such matters."

Consequences of physical punishment on students in Mae Sot migrant schools

When students are physically punished in migrant schools, they experience numerous impacts and consequences. The first effect is physical harm and injury. When a student is hit with a stick or other object, the injury remains at the site of impact. Sometimes the injury is severe enough to cause bleeding. St 1 said, "I used to be unable to concentrate in school all day because of the injury I got from being beaten. And I'm afraid of being hit again." Additionally, punishments such as raising hands in the sun or squatting can cause physical damage like aching joints, muscle stiffness, and sunburn.

The second impact is psychological damage. St 5 shared, "Being punished is embarrassing, scary, and can cause trauma. Some things were not my fault, but I was punished, and they didn't accept my explanation. It hurts my feelings." In addition, after being physically punished, self-confidence decreases, leading students to see themselves as losers. St 2, 3, and 4 mentioned that they avoid showing their faces even among friends due to embarrassment. Responses to the survey revealed that physical punishment is psychologically debilitating, with peers often making fun of those punished, calling them losers.

Third, physical punishment has negative consequences such as making children irritable or causing them to become quiet and introverted. It can also lead to more severe outcomes like dropping out of school, becoming violent, or bullying others. According to St 2's experience, "A friend sought revenge on the teacher who hit him. To cause trouble for the teacher on her way back, he punctured her bike wheel and called to make verbal threats."

Discussion

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (General Comment 8, 2008) defines corporal or physical punishment as "any form of punishment that uses physical force and is intended to cause some form of pain or discomfort, no matter how slight." In this study, physical punishment refers to a disciplinary action that causes a student physical pain or discomfort, or emotional distress. This form of punishment has a profound social and cultural impact on educational settings, especially in migrant schools on the Thai-Myanmar border. This highlights a cultural and institutional challenge. This study examines the types, causes, and consequences of physical punishment by students in migrant schools in Mae Sot, Thailand. This is a special case study examining the causes of physical punishment and its subsequent effects on students.

The finding results mentioned the forms of physical punishment faced by students in migrant schools in Mae Sot, Thailand. That includes squat sitting, hitting a part of the body with a stick or bamboo stick, holding hands up in front of the class, slapping on the face, head, or ears, throwing objects, cleaning the toilet or classroom, hair pulling, and flogging. Based on the findings, the view of participants' and in their mindset on physical punishment can be categorized into three types. First, Tr1, Tr2, Tr12, and Tr3 believe that physical punishment is a severe form of discipline, often performed by teachers who purposely want to harm children to reduce their tension, influenced by their various backgrounds and mental states. Second, Tr4, Tr11, Tr6, Tr7, and Tr9 view physical punishment as a means of enforcing control and authority rather than positive discipline. Physical punishment was used aiming to modify behavior through fear and prepare students for future challenges, encompassing both physical and psychological aspects. Finally, In Tr5, Tr10, and Tr8 point of view physical punishment was used to discipline students, encouraging respect for teachers and to improve students' behavior and academic performance. They believe that physical pain is an essential part of maintaining order and fostering respect for teachers' authority.

Several factors contribute to the cause of physical punishment in migrant schools. Cultural norms play a significant role in many Myanmar communities, physical punishment is a culturally accepted method of disciplining children. This cultural background influences teachers' attitudes and practices in migrant schools. Additionally, many teachers lack formal

training in alternative disciplinary methods. The insufficiency of resources and supports for positive behavioral interferences often leaves physical punishment as the default option to discipline students and classroom control. Moreover, overcrowded classrooms and high stress levels among teachers, exacerbated by the unwarranted living conditions of migrant communities, contribute to the use of physical punishment as a means to quickly address behavioral issues.

The consequences of physical punishment are profound and multifaceted. Students' physical, emotional, and academic well-being can affect from bruises to more serious injuries. Physical damage can occur immediately. While many teachers view physical punishment as the most effective form of reinforcement, the reality is that it can have long-term negative effects such as physical punishment generally increases attendance and truancy, as students come to view schools as unsafe places. Furthermore, it causes anxiety and can lead to long-term emotional and psychological trauma, for example depression and low self-esteem. These effects can completely impair children's ability to learn and participate in school activities. (Ekhorutomen, 2021) Some teachers believe that physical punishment improves students' behavioral performance, but the evidence suggests otherwise. Fear and anxiety associated with physical punishment can impair cognitive function and concentration. Finally, academic outcomes can be disrupted. Physical punishment can increase aggression and antisocial behavior among children, perpetuating a cycle of violence and conflict within the school environment. (WHO, 2021)

Limitations of the study

Limitations of this study include a small sample size. As well, there may be potential biases in data collection, such as social desirability bias, where participants may correctly or incorrectly report their experiences of physical punishment, incorporating a wide variety of examples, and emphasizing the need for further research with rigorous data collection methods.

Policy Implication

The findings highlight the urgent need for policy reform and practical interventions. It is important to implement clear policies that prohibit physical punishment and encourage positive disciplinary practices. These policies should be supported by a regulatory framework and consistently implemented in all educational settings. There is a need for comprehensive training for teachers in positive behavioral interventions and classroom implementation strategies. Training programs must be culturally sensitive and address specific challenges faced by immigrant schools. Establishing support systems for teachers, including access to mental health resources, stress management programs, and professional development opportunities, can reduce reliance on physical punishment. It is important to engage with and change immigrant communities' cultural attitudes towards physical punishment and promote alternative disciplinary approaches. Community meetings and awareness campaigns can provide a collaborative approach to the discipline. Regular monitoring and evaluation of disciplinary practices in schools can ensure adherence to policies and identify areas for improvement. Feedback from students, parents, and teachers should inform ongoing policy changes and support programs.

Recommendations

The findings of this study on the forms, causes, and results of physical punishment in migrant schools spotlight critical concerns that need to be addressed to improve the quality of Myanmar migrant schools in Mae Sot. Thailand's educational situation has stepped forward. The subsequent hints are based on the insights gained from this study. The following recommendations are supposed to inform coverage policymakers, educators, and community

stakeholders about powerful techniques to reduce physical punishment and promote more supportive and nurturing academic environments.

To create a positive learning environment, local authorities and educators should collaborate to set up a clear policy prohibiting physical punishment. This ban needs to extend beyond public faculties underneath Thailand's Ministry of Education to include all academic settings, specifically migrant schools. It is recommended to reinforce present child protection frameworks to ensure the rights and well-being of migrant students are safeguarded, with clear tips for reporting and addressing violations. Collaborating with nearby infant protection agencies and NGOs to develop and implement these regulations effectively, ensuring they're culturally sensitive and contextually suitable, is likewise recommended.

It is crucial to improve the capacities and knowledge of instructors to eliminate physical punishment. In addition to offering complete schooling applications for instructors on nonviolent disciplinary techniques and powerful classroom control the usage of the knowledge of nearby and global educational institutions, for ongoing professional development possibilities, is needed to assist instructors adapt to new methods of coping with student behavior.

Educational seminars and workshops should be organized to inform stakeholders, instructors, students, and parents of disciplinary practices and child rights. Community outreach campaigns should educate parents, instructors, and the community at massive approximately the poor results of physical punishment and the advantages of high-quality reinforcement.

Community engagement plays a crucial role in driving sustainable exchange. Local network leaders and organizations should be actively involved in initiatives geared toward promoting nonviolent disciplinary practices and protecting child rights. Engaging network stakeholders will assist in constructing a collective dedication to fostering a supportive educational environment for migrant students.

Regular monitoring and evaluation are essential for ensuring that regulations and interventions are effective and accountable. Regular inspections should be performed to ensure compliance with regulations regarding physical punishment. This step will help track progress and make important changes to make sure that the desired results are performed.

It is recommended to encourage further research into the prevalence and long-term impacts of physical punishment in migrant schools.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study sheds light on the prevalence, mechanisms, causes, and consequences of physical punishment in Myanmar migrant schools in Me Sot, Thailand. The Findings suggest that physical punishment has become a more culturally accepted form of discipline in schools. Efforts to address this issue, which has negative impacts on student's physical and psychological well-being, leading to fear, aggression, and disengagement from classes, should draw focus on promoting positive disciplinary practices, teacher training, and creating safe and supportive learning environments for immigrant children.

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