Corporal Punishment and the long road ahead

35,000
“In 2010 it was estimated that every year 35,000 students dropped out of school due to corporal punishment.”

75%
“Corporal punishment is practiced in at least 75% of schools, including public, private and religious institutions.”

94%
“94% of children reported some form of physical punishment on a daily basis. 65% children in madrassas also reported corporal punishment by their maulvi/teacher.”

70%
Over 70% of teachers in Pakistan agreed that corporal punishment is useful for disciplining students.

250
“More than 250 studies show associations between corporal punishment and a wide range of negative outcomes, while no studies have found evidence of any benefits.”

The Scars of Corporal Punishment
Normalizes Violence
Long term mental health issues
Increased anxiety
Affects academic performance
Damages relationships with others

What we can do?
Children can be disciplined in non-violent ways in order to teach them why misbehaving is wrong.

Time-outs and revoking privileges are an effective way to get children to comply with commands. In school, detention and community service can serve as positive discipline. Having children write apology letters and explaining to them what they did wrong shows them what they did wrong and helps develop empathy. Raising Voices has developed a ‘Good School Toolkit’ which thoroughly explains alternative forms of discipline that can be utilized in school.

Ending Corporal Punishment: Next Steps

With the landmark decision of the National Assembly in Islamabad, we must now look towards the next steps to eradicate the inhumane practice of corporal punishment across Pakistan.

Legislation

While ICT is currently in the process of prohibiting corporal punishment, a lot needs to be done in other provinces.

Gilgit-Baltistan and Sindh passed the Prohibition of Corporal Punishment Acts in 2015 and 2016 respectively, however the implementation of these laws still remains to be seen.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa passed a Child Protection and Welfare Act in 2010, as did Azad Jammu and Kashmir in 2016, both ban corporal punishment but unfortunately allow the legal defense provided by Section 89 of the Penal Code.

Punjab and Balochistan have standing administrative orders to prohibit corporal punishment, but there is no legislative policy to proactively ban and criminalize corporal punishment.

Implementation and Monitoring

Creating a law alone is not enough, it must also be enforced through rules and regulations.

The rules of implementation and business must be formulated for all territories that have passed Acts to prohibit corporal punishment.

The mechanisms of referrals, complaints, monitoring and training must be clarified and informed to the appropriate authorities.

Teachers and Education Departments must officially be made aware of the legislation, sensitized to the harms of corporal punishment and trained in alternative forms of discipline.

Awareness and Sensitization

To change our mindset and culture of corporal punishment, people must be made aware of the logic behind banning it.

All individuals should be informed that there are laws in place to protect children from corporal punishment.

Workshops and trainings to should be instituted for all educators and individuals in child care settings, where they are told how corporal punishment affects children and taught positive disciplinary measures.