Institutional and Individual forms of Instrumental Violence: Variations across Culture and Gender

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Country and gender differences were examined in the acceptance of three very different forms of violence. Attitudes about war, penal code violence, and corporal punishment of children were investigated, using items taken from the Revised Attitudes toward Violence scale (RATVS). The survey was administered to 1336 college-aged participants (age<30) from Japan, China, South Korea, and the United States. Significant country-level differences in acceptance of violence were observed for all three forms of violence. For violence in war, China and the United States were the most accepting. For penal code violence, Japan and South Korea were the most accepting. For corporal punishment of children, Japan (for women) and Japan and South Korea (for men) were the most accepting. Significant gender differences were also observed such that men were more accepting than women of all three forms of violence. Significant gender by country interactions were not observed. Differences observed between countries and genders as well as implications and limitations of the research are discussed in terms of nation-level indicators and previous psychological research.

Keywords: violence, war, penal code, corporal punishment

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Violence can be small-scale such as individual forms of violence like corporal punishment of children at home and school or it can be large-scale such as institutional forms of violence including national and international aspects of war and the penal code (Brady, 2007).

There is evidence that cultures vary in their attitudes toward various forms of violence (Segall, 1983). Lansford et al., (2012) conducted a study from nine countries of children's self-reports measuring physical and relational aggression and found significant main effects of culture for both forms of aggression. What is illegal and immoral in one country may not be in another.

Our argument is that such country-level differences correlate with the attitudes people hold regarding different forms of violence. In this paper, we attempt to predict these cultural differences in violence attitudes by looking at objective data about violent behavior within each country we study. Indicators such as imprisonment rates, adherence to Confucianism, and military spending are considered.

Our analysis is based on undergraduate perceptions of violence with data from Japan, China, and South Korea with comparison data form the United States. This work expands upon earlier analyses such as Bond (2004) which looked at violent behavior both at the individual and the societal levels using culture as an explanatory measure. We maintain the same focus on cultural explanations for violence, however, with violent attitudes not violent behavior. Attitudes toward institutional forms of violence has not seen as much focus in research as other forms of violence nor have Asian samples been common which is where our research expands upon current research.

In addition to analyzing culture as a predictor of violence attitudes, we consider whether gender interacts with culture and is considered in the country by country comparison of violence attitudes. It is clear that men are more supportive than women of many forms of violence in the United States (e.g. Frieze & Li, 2010).

Theories about Country Differences

It is important to study violence in war, penal code violence, and corporal punishment of children because of their focus on state-regulated relationships. Disapproving attitudes toward these forms of violence could result in policy change affecting an entire society, not just a few individuals and policy should reflect society's views.

All three of these scales have been shown to have correlates with a number of attitudes.

In a study of U.S. undergraduates, Benjamin (2006) found that right-wing authoritarianism, as defined by submissiveness to authority, conventionality, and propensity to engage in authoritysanctioned aggression was significantly correlated with all three scales.

Using two samples of U.S. undergraduates responding to different versions of the Big 5 personality measurement, Barlett and Anderson (2012) found that Openness and Agreeableness both significantly negatively correlated with attitudes toward violence and physical aggression and violent behavior.

Violence in War.

We measured the acceptance of violence in war, revolution, and national defense and the extent to which the violence is seen as necessary and therefore justifiable (Velicer, Huckel, & Hansen, 1989). We determined how much of a priority the military is to a country based on the percentage of total GDP they choose to allocate to military spending. As opposed to strictly looking at the monetary amount allocated, the percentage takes into account the varying size, wealth, and economic power of the countries in our survey. Countries with a higher military spending as percentage of GDP should be more likely to endorse violence in war items.

The CIA ranked military spending of each country as a percentage of GDP based on estimates from 2005 and 2006. China was ranked 21st with 4.30% and the United States was close with a ranking of 23rd at 4.06% (Central Intelligence Agency, 2012). South Korea was ranked 51st with 2.70% and Japan 149th with 0.80% (Central Intelligence Agency, 2012).

Another predictive factor for support of war was the ranking on the Global Peace Index, which is a combination of three categories of 23 qualitative and quantitative indicators: ongoing domestic and international conflict, societal safety and security, and militarization (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2012). A country high on these indicators should be willing to endorse the use of violence in war to continue protecting itself as it has in the past. Japan ranked 5th in the world on the Global Peace Index, and thus should be the lowest in support for war. South Korea was ranked 42nd, and the United States and China followed at 88th and 89th respectively (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2012).

With these factors in mind, we predicted that Japan would be the lowest in acceptance of violence in war and that China or the United States would be the highest.

Penal Code Violence.

Along with violence in war, penal code violence is another institutional form of violence. The penal code violence scale was designed to measure the extent to which an individual endorses the use of violence by an authority as necessary for the punishment of criminal behavior (Velicer et al., 1989).

Rates of imprisoning criminals reveal the harshness of laws and the level of enforcement in a society and thus should relate to penal code violence. The United States had the highest imprisonment rate in the world with 730 prisoners per 100,000 based on 2010 estimates (prisonstudies.org, 2012). It was estimated that China had 120-170 prisoners per 100,000 (prisonstudies.org, 2012). South Korea had 94 per every 100,000 (prisonstudies.org, 2012). Japan had the one of the lowest imprisonment rates in the world with 55 prisoners per 100,000 (prisonstudies.org, 2012).

Another factor that we proposed was predictive of attitudes toward penal code violence was the number of death sentences and executions. Violence is being acted out in a society in which prisoners are sentenced to death and those sentences are executed.

In 2009, two-thirds of nations had abolished the death penalty in law or in practice with 58 nations retaining it (Amnesty International, 2010). The four countries in our sample all retained the death penalty although varying widely in practice. China did not disclose formal data on executions, but it is likely that thousands were executed in China in 2009, according to Amnesty International estimates (2010). In the United States, at least 105 people were sentenced to death and 52 were executed during the same time period (Amnesty International, 2010). In Japan, there were 34 were sentences and seven executions and in South Korea, at least five were sentenced although none were executed (Amnesty International, 2010).

Considering these indicators, we predicted that the students in the United States would be the most accepting of penal code violence and that those in Japan would be the least.

Corporal Punishment of Children.

Yet another form of violence is corporal punishment of children. We measured the extent to which participants find it acceptable for parents and teachers to use violence to punish children's unwanted behavior (Velicer et al., 1989). We defined corporal punishment as strictly physical violence.

Lee, Jang and Malley-Morrison's 2008 study of European American, South Korean American, and South Korean college students revealed differing views on mild, moderate, and extreme

forms of child abuse. The study found that when asked to write about forms of aggression, European and Korean Americans were more likely to emphasize physical aggression as child maltreatment ($F=7.59$, $p<.001$) whereas Koreans emphasized neglect ($F=8.28$, $p<.001$) (Lee et al., 2008). Only when the abuse was serious enough to be considered extreme abuse was it called abuse by Koreans (Lee et al., 2008).

The rate of child abuse may reflect and therefore predict attitudes. Data from the World Health Organization (WHO) on child abuse stated that the rate of severe violence against children as measured by the Conflict Tactics scale and reported by Chinese mothers was 461 per 1000 (World Health Organization, 2002). Chinese children in primary school using the Conflict Tactics scale indicated a prevalence of 22.6% while in South Korea the rate reported by schoolchildren was 51.3% (World Health Organization, 2002). In a study published in 1998 in South Korea, about two-thirds of parents admitted to whipping their children, and 45% admitted they hit, beat, and kicked their children (Hahm & Guterman, 2001). A 1998 study conducted in South Korea showed that 91.8% of mothers and 82.9% of fathers held positive attitudes toward the corporal punishment of children (Hahm & Guterman, 2001).

A cross-cultural study of 32 sites in 17 countries revealed variations in acceptance of spanking across cultures (Douglas, 2006). Pusan, South Korea was the highest among the sites studied with 85% agreeing or strongly agreeing with the spanking of children (Douglas, 2006). Hong Kong, China had 35.8% agreeing or strongly agreeing, and a small college in Pennsylvania had 24.5% agreeing or strongly agreeing (Douglas, 2006).

There may be several cultural reasons for these differences in punishment and acceptance of punishment. Confucianism, which is prevalent in Southeast Asian culture, may influence the acceptability of corporal punishment because of its emphasis on filial piety—part of the Five Ethical Principles of Confucius (Chan, Lam, & Shae, 2011). It is considered impious and deserving of punishment to disobey or not meet parental expectations (Chan et al., 2011). Punishment is used to train a child in discipline, integrity, and morality (Chan et al., 2011). According to Chan et al. (2011), the prevalence of child mistreatment in Hong Kong is related to Confucian teachings especially the idea of filial piety.

Four factors based on Confucianism have been found to contribute to the mistreatment of South Korean children: filial piety, overt parental expectations for the success of children, the belief that sons should be raised in a masculine way and daughters in a feminine way, and a belief that corporal punishment is an expression of concern or caring for a child that should

be endorsed (Hahm & Guterman, 2001). A study by Hahm and Guterman (2001) related statistics from a Gallup survey in 1983 showing that 98% of South Korean parents believed sons should be raised in a strong and tough way and girls in a soft and domestic way whereas only 85% of Japanese and 77% of U.S. parents believed this.

Furthermore, in a study of culture's effect on disciplining patterns, Giles-Sim & Lockhart (2005) identified types of parenting. Hierarchal parents are responsible for showing children the single correct way of doing things and punishing them when they do not do so (Giles-Sim & Lockhart, 2005). All three of the Asian countries of the sample stress hierarchy as well as patriarchal authority and cohesiveness within the family and would fall within this category (Hong, Lee, Park, & Faller, 2011). Hong et al. (2011) claims that hierarchal subordination is associated with child abuse. Giles-Sim and Lockhart (2005) stated that hierarchal parents rely on corporal punishment more frequently than individualistic parents found in the United States. In the individualistic parenting system, there is more than one way of doing things, and parents are relatively permissive in comparison to hierarchal parents, allowing children to learn through trial and error (Giles-Sim & Lockhart, 2005). Thus, individualistic parents would be less likely to resort to physical punishment than hierarchal parents.

Based on the occurrence of child abuse, approval rates of spanking, the acceptance of Confucian ideas, and the difference between individualistic and hierarchal parenting, we predicted that South Korea would be the most accepting of corporal punishment of children and the United States the least accepting.

Theories about Gender Differences

We were also interested in the gender differences in the acceptance within each country. In the United States, that males are more aggressive than females is one of the strongest held gender stereotypes (Frieze & Li, 2010; Lightdale & Prentice, 1994). When male and female students were asked to name an instance when they "acted in a masculine way," a common response for both genders included a description of an aggressive or violent act, suggesting that this stereotype is held by members of both genders (Frieze & Li, 2010). The existence of a cultural stereotype linking masculinity with aggressiveness is one reason that we predicted that men would be more accepting of all the violence scales.

There is much evidence that men tend to behave in more aggressive ways than women do (Frieze & Li, 2010, p. 312). Sex differences in violence appear in several cultures (Geen, 1990). Although most of the studies that support this hypothesis were conducted in the United States

and other western nations, we are extending the hypotheses about gender to the Asian countries in our sample on an exploratory basis [e.g. Smith, 1984; Bourne et al., 1996; Cochran & Sanders, 2009].

Hyde's (2007) review of 46 meta-analyses showed that aggression is one of the areas in which men and women differ, albeit moderately. A study by Huesmann and Guerra (1997) of 1,015 children in grade school showed a link between beliefs about the acceptability of aggressive behavior and aggressive behavior. Extending such a link to adulthood lends support to the idea that men's greater expression of violent behavior is reflective of greater support of violent attitudes.

Examining polls conducted in the United States, men were more supportive of a violent option that women were 87% of the time (Smith, 1984). The biggest differences between men and women occurred when questions had to do with law enforcement and criminal punishment. Smaller differences occurred when looking at indirect military matters such as military spending. However, the smallest differences occurred in areas of interpersonal aggression such as items about spanking children although men were still more approving than women (Smith, 1984).

In a study with a U.S. sample conducted by Bourne et al. (1996), participants were provided with a scenario in which they chose the response of the United States to its ally being attacked by another country (Bourne et al. 1996). Half the students were told the two historically enemy states had recently signed a peace treaty, and the other half were told nothing (Bourne et al. 1996). Even when controlling for dominance-submissiveness, researchers found that men in the treaty condition responded with a higher level of reciprocal action than men in the control condition, whereas women in the treaty condition responded with a lower level of reciprocal action than women in the control condition (Bourne et al. 1996). From this we can conclude that men find justice requires the use of violence even at the expense of relationships whereas women do not war (Bourne et al., 1996).

A study of attitudes relating to peace and war using a sample of 812 college-age students in the United States and Denmark showed that women were grouped as anti-war respondents proportionally more than men (Van der Linden et al., 2011).

There is also evidence for gender differences in support of criminal punishment.

Cochran and Sanders (2009) conducted a study using data from the National Opinion Research Center and General Social Surveys in the United States from 1972-2002. The data revealed that 74.6% of men and 63.2% of women were in support of the death penalty (Cochran & Sanders, 2009). This difference remained significant even when controlling for socioeconomic status, gender inequality, gender socialization, religion, political ideology, positions on social issues such as right-to-life, fear of crime and victimization experience, experience with the penal system, philosophies of punishment, and attribution styles (Cochran & Sanders, 2009).

In a study of 117 Chinese college students studying in China and the United States, researchers found that when asked if they were in favor of the death penalty for a criminal offense, men were significantly more in favor than women (Liang, Lu, Miethe & Zhang, 2005).

Looking back at the study by Douglas (2006) with a sample of 32 sites in 17 countries, for the sample overall, men approved significantly more of spanking than did women.

Hypotheses

1. For the violence in war scale we predicted a significant country effect such that the United States or China would be the most accepting and Japan the least accepting.
2. For the penal code violence scale we predicted a significant country effect such that the United States would be the most accepting and Japan the least accepting.
3. For the corporal punishment of children scale we predicted a significant country effect such that South Korea would be the most accepting and the United States the least accepting.
4. We predicted that males would agree more than females on penal code violence, violence in war, and corporal punishment of children.

Method

Sample and Procedure

The sample consisted of 1336 college-age participants (no older than 30) from four countries: Japan, China, South Korea, and the United States. Table 1 shows a summary of demographic information from each country including gender, age, and year in school.

Table 1: Demographics by Country

Country	Men	Women	Missing	Total	Modal Age	Year in School Range	Modal Year in School

Japan	164 (32.9%)	332 (66.7%)	2	498	18-20 (82.7%)	1st to 5th	1st year
China	65 (35.1%)	120 (64.9%)	0	185	21-22 (55.2%)	1st to 2nd	2nd year
South Korea	190 (52.2%)	174 (47.8%)	0	364	23-30 (72.0%)*	1st to 4th	4th year
United States	163 (56.6%)	125 (43.3%)	1	289	18-20 (94.55%)	1st to 5th	1st year
Total	582 (43.7%)	751 (56.3%)	3	1336	---	---	---

**South Korean age begins to be counted at conception thus South Korean participants identifying as 2330 would be considered 22-29 in Japan, China, and the United States.*

Japan

There were 496 participants. The Japanese version of the survey was translated and back-translated by two collaborators proficient in both Japanese and English. The survey was administered at four different universities. Approval was obtained from ethical review boards at these universities.

China

The Chinese sample consisted of 185 participants, which was the smallest sample. The survey was translated and back-translated by two collaborators who were proficient in both Chinese and English. Participants were administered the survey in classes and did not receive credit or payment for their participation.

South Korea

There were 364 participants who completed the survey in Korean after being translated and back-translated. This was the largest and oldest sample along with being the sample in which participants had completed the most years of college study. The South Korean data was gathered from five different universities located in the Seoul Metropolitan area with some students being compensated with gifts of a $10 value.

United States

For the United States, there were 289 total participants from a large university. The Internal Review Board of the university approved the study. Participants received course credit for voluntarily completing the survey. Nine surveys were excluded from analysis either because

of a suspicious pattern of responses or because students did not meet the specified age requirement.

Measures

The survey was designed to measure violent attitudes by utilizing three separate scales. Respondents were asked to indicate agreement on a five-point Likert scale with 1 corresponding to "disagree strongly" and 5 correspondingly to "agree strongly."

The three scales are taken from the violence in war, penal code violence, and corporal punishment of children subscales found in the RATVS, which was a modification of Velicer's ATVS (Anderson et al., 2006; Velicer et al., 1989). Alphas can be found in Table 2.

Table 2: Alphas for Scales by Country

	Penal Code Violence	Violence in War	Corporal Punishment of Children
Japan	0.77	0.84	0.87
China	0.60	0.70	0.81
South Korea	0.78	0.80	0.84
United States	0.81	0.86	0.90

Violence in War Scale

The violence in war scale measures the extent to which violence in war, revolution, and national defense can be justified as necessary (Velicer et al., 1989). An example of one of the 12 items used in our scale is "War can be just." The violence in war scale obtained an acceptable alpha in all four countries

Penal Code Violence Scale

The seven items in this scale measure the acceptance of violence used by an authority to punish criminal behavior (Velicer et al., 1989). An example of one of the items is "The death penalty should be a part of every penal code." The penal code violence scale obtained an acceptable alpha in the United States, Japan, and South Korea; however, in China the scale failed to reach an acceptable alpha.

Corporal Punishment of Children Scale.

The corporal punishment of children scale consisted of 8 items designed to measure the acceptance of violence used against children as punishment for unwanted behavior (Velicer et

al., 1989). An example of an item used is "Children should be spanked for temper tantrums." The corporal punishment of children scale was of acceptable alpha in all samples.

Results

Descriptive data indicating means and standard deviations for all scales by gender and country can been seen in Table 3. Of the scales, the corporal punishment of children scale was the least accepted with every country having a mean below 3 (neither agree nor disagree). The most accepted scale was the penal code violence scale; however, it is important to note that the violence in war scale had two countries (China and the United States) with means above three while the penal code violence scale had only one country (Japan) with a mean above three.

The MANOVA for the three scales as dependent variables revealed significant country differences on the violence in war scale, $F(3, 1308)=137.74$, $p<.01$, the penal code violence scale, $F(3, 1308)=37.72$, $p<.01$, and the corporal punishment of children scale, $F(3, 1308)=32.41$, $p<.01$.

Table 3: Means and Standard Deviation by Country and Gender

		Japan	China	South Korea	United States
Men	Violence in War	2.53 (0.67) b	3.27 (0.57) a	2.62 (0.56) b	3.11 (0.67) a
	Penal Code Violence	3.05 (0.73) a	2.60 (0.57) b	2.91 (0.72) a	2.65 (0.73) b
	Corporal Punishment of Children	2.30 (0.74) b	2.32 (0.62) a b	2.61 (0.70) a	2.09 (0.79) b
Women	Violence in War	2.16 (0.56) b	3.05 (0.38) a	2.29 (0.50) b	2.90 (0.59) a
	Penal Code Violence	3.01 (0.57) a	2.43 (0.43) c	2.78 (0.72) b	2.52 (0.76) c
	Corporal Punishment of Children	1.99 (0.66) b	1.96 (0.54) b c	2.28 (0.70) a	1.73 (0.67) c

Table Note: Significant main effects for country and gender. Scale ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Different subscripts indicate statistically significant post-hoc differences.

There were also significant differences for gender on the violence in war scale, $F (1, 1308)=69.43$, $p<.01$, the penal code violence scale, $F (1, 1308)=8.58$, $p<.01$, and the corporal punishment of children scale, $F(1, 1308)=67.36$, $p<.01$ such that men were more accepting than women.

A third MANOVA was completed to examine the effect of country and gender together. No significant multivariate interactions between country and gender were observed for the violence in war scale, F (3, 1308)=1.32,p =.27, the penal code violence scale, F (3, 1308)=0.56, p=.64, or the corporal punishment of children scale, F(3, 1308)=0.11, p=.96.

Discussion

The purpose of the study was to determine if there were significant country and gender differences on violence in war, penal code violence, and corporal punishment of children and what country-level factors were predictive of acceptance of these attitudes. As predicted, significant country and gender differences were found on all measures of violent attitudes although not always in the direction expected.

Violence in War

Acceptance of violence in war was as predicted in hypothesis 1 with China and the United States being the highest in acceptance; however, Japan was predicted to be the lowest in acceptance when in fact Japan and South Korean were the lowest in their acceptance of violence in war.

A less peaceful ranking on the Global Peace Index and a higher military spending as a percentage of GDP were good predictors of acceptance of violence in that China and the United States were correctly predicted to be more accepting than the other countries. The two measures were also able to predict an insignificant difference between China and the United States since they were close in both rankings (Central Intelligence Agency, 2012; Institute for Economics and Peace, 2012). However, how far countries were from each other in the rankings was not consistently a good predictor of significant differences. South Korea and Japan were separated by 37 other countries on the Global Peace Index (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2012). For military spending as a percentage of GDP, the two countries were separated by 98 others (Central Intelligence Agency, 2012). These large differences in ranking would suggest that there would be a significant difference between South Korea and Japan on acceptance of violence in war, which was not found, indicating that these are not the only factors contributing to acceptance of violence in war.

Penal Code Violence

There was also a significant country difference on penal code violence but not in the direction expected in hypothesis 2. Japan was the most accepting for women; for men, Japan and South

Korea were the most accepting. China and the United States were the least accepting of penal code violence for both men and women.

The imprisonment rate was the best predictor of this result such that the higher the imprisonment rate, the least accepting of penal code violence. The number of death sentences and executions was the next best predictor such that the fewer death sentences and executions, the more accepting of penal code violence.

The low imprisonment rate may relate to high acceptance of penal code violence because participants are unlikely to know a prisoner and unlikely to become a prisoner, which could make them less likely to sympathize with the harsh treatment of criminals. Additionally, with a higher imprisonment, death sentence, and execution rate, the probability rises that there are prisoners who are unjustly punished. Participants may be less likely to support a harsh penal code if the penal code that exists punishes the innocent.

Criminal activity may be considered deviant behavior and thus citizens may be more likely to endorse a harsh punishment for those few that are disrupting the peace. Indeed, Japan and South Korea are more peaceful countries than the China and the United States and may have more of a reason to be harsh on the deviant few (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2012).

Corporal Punishment of Children

Finally, our data revealed an overall significant country difference in the acceptance of corporal punishment of children, partially consistent with hypothesis 3. South Korea (for women) and South Korea and China (for men) were the most accepting of corporal punishment of children. China and the United States (for women) and China, Japan, and the United States (for men) were the least accepting of corporal punishment of children.

While there were many non-significant differences between countries, the general trend is that South Korea for both genders is very highly accepting compared to the other countries and the United States very low in acceptance for both genders. This is best explained by the approval of spanking being much higher in South Korea than in the United States (Douglas, 2006).

However, the more interesting finding is that of all the non-significant differences between countries. The shared Confucian background and the similar parenting styles among the Asian countries explain much, but not all, of the non-significance. However, the main reason the non-significance could not be predicted was that there were no quantitative predictors that covered all four countries.

Gender

As was predicted in hypothesis 4, there were significant gender differences on all violent attitudes. For war, opinions on past wars and escalatory responses in theoretical wars as well as general opinions on war and peace were good predictors of the gender effect we found. Acceptance of the death penalty in both the United States and China was a good predictor of men being more accepting of penal code violence than women. Finally, the study by Douglas (2006) on cross-cultural acceptance of spanking proved a good predictor of gender differences in acceptance of corporal punishment of children.

Implications of research

The importance of cross-cultural comparisons is that it helps researchers identify the underlying causes of attitudes by examining why these differences occur. This is what we have attempted to do by identifying nation-level differences between countries as indicators of differences in violent attitudes. Determining the reason for violent attitudes may help psychologists prevent the formation of violent attitudes and weaken those already held. Better programs for reducing and preventing violence and violence can be implemented with the gained knowledge about cultural and gender differences in the acceptance of these attitudes.

Additionally, when trying to enlist other nations as allies in war, approval of certain attitudes toward war might be inferred based on the predictors we identified as possibly relating to attitudes. This would inform the best line of persuasion. Alternately, attacking the attitudes that lead a country to consider war and the institutions that support it would be a good line of preventing warfare. Similarly, when international guidelines are created, it would be helpful to keep in mind the national indicators that may relate to a country's willingness to accept, for instance, a ban on the death penalty.

Having a history of child abuse is related to becoming a run-away (Lee et al., 2008). It seems not only is corporal punishment of children more accepted in South Korea, but it may also be used more than in other countries. South Korea has one of the fastest-growing number of run-aways (Lee et al., 2008). By recognizing the existence of positive attitudes toward corporal punishment that may influence abuse and run-away rates, the government and other organizations may take aim at these negative views in a framework that is consistent with cultural values, for example, Confucian ideas.

Limitations and Future Directions

The assumed relationship between violent attitudes and violent behavior is a limitation of our study. While research has been done linking attitudes and behavior [e.g. Huesmann and Guerra, 1997], to our knowledge there has been no research done linking attitudes about violence in war, penal code violence, and corporal punishment of children to violent behaviors. However, given that country-level differences can be used as predictors of the acceptance of these attitudes, the link between acceptance of these attitudes and behavior is likely to exist and future research may expand upon our findings. Future research might take up the relation of behaviors, such as voting practices, military enlistment, and child abuse, and violent attitudes as well as to delve more systematically into the influence of the factors that we identified.

Further limitations of the study involved the samples. The Chinese sample did not obtain an acceptable alpha on the penal code violence scale, which means that the scale may not be generalizable to Chinese culture. Additionally, participants across the samples did not have a similar age or level of schooling. The effects observed between the countries may not have been entirely cultural since we could not control for these two variables. Similarly, another limitation that applies to all cross-cultural research is the representativeness of the entire culture. The competitiveness of entrance and socio-economic status of students may differ between the universities used in our sample and between universities in the respective countries. Future research could obtain samples better for comparison between cultures and generalization to the entire culture.

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