

# Who's Behind the Aggression, and Who's Behind the Support?

Exploring K-12 Teacher Victimization and Support  
Networks Across China, South Korea, and the U.S.

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# Introduction

- **Teacher victimization** encompasses a wide range of aggressive behaviors that teachers face, primarily from students (Espelage et al., 2013; Yang et al., 2019a).
- A significant increase in threats and aggression toward teachers has been noted, with incidents nearly doubling from 4.8% in 2009–2010 to 9.8% in 2019–2020 in the **U.S.** (NCES, 2022).
- It's a global issue, with studies showing high rates in Canada, **China**, and **South Korea** (e.g., Moon & McCluskey, 2016; Wilso et al., 2011; Yang et al., 2019b).



The screenshot shows a BBC News article. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the BBC logo, a search icon, and links for 'Register' and 'Sign In'. The article title is 'Teachers speak out over rising pupil violence'. Below the title, it says '3 days ago' and has a 'Share' button. The author is 'By Louise Hosie, BBC News'. The main image is a dark, low-key photograph of two people in profile, facing each other, with a large play button overlay in the center. Below the image, there is a video player with a timestamp of '0:17'. A caption reads: 'An anonymous Aberdeen teacher says a violent incident at work left her with concussion'. At the bottom, a text box states: 'Teachers in Aberdeen have told BBC News they are traumatised, fear for their safety and are scared to go to work because of escalating pupil violence.'



# Introduction

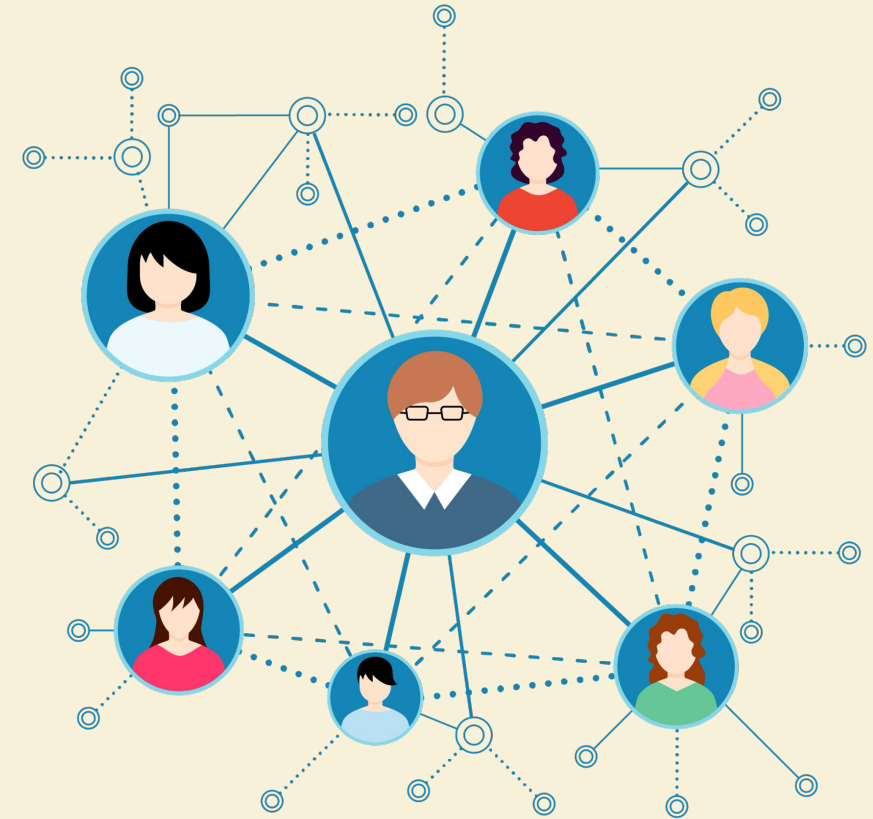


- The consequences of teacher victimization are significant leading to impaired mental and physical health, decreased commitment, increased burnout and stress, and reduced self-confidence among teachers (Moon & McCluskey, 2016; McMahon et al., 2024b; Moon et al., 2016; Rho & Yang, 2025).
- Moreover, it has been linked to negative impacts on teacher retention (Curran et al., 2019; MacMahon et al., 2024a; Moon et al., 2019), further exacerbating the chronic issues of teacher turnover (Will, 2023).



# Introduction

- Building on the recent publication (Rho & Yang, 2025<sup>1</sup>), which was the first to apply egocentric network analysis to understand teacher victimization, this study expands our research trajectory to a comparative and cross-national lens.
- Applying egocentric network analysis cross-nationally would offer critical lens to into cultural variations in teacher aggression and support networks, ultimately informing targeted and culturally responsive interventions and policies.



<sup>1</sup>Rho, E. & Yang, C. (2025). Tracing silent struggles: Examining the characteristics and correlates of teacher victimization through egocentric network analysis. *School Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1037/spq0000699>



# Purpose of Present Study

1. To examine the centrality of aggressive and supportive alters within K-12 teachers' networks.
2. To investigate cross-national differences in victimization and support network structures.



# Methods

| Demographics           | U.S.<br>(N=504) | China (N=455) | South Korea<br>(N=392) |
|------------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------------|
| Data Collection        | Fall 2024       | Summer 2024   | Fall 2024              |
| Mean Age (SD)          | 40.53 (10.22)   | 31.00 (7.54)  | 35.74 (7.34)           |
| Gender (%)             |                 |               |                        |
| Female                 | 75.79           | 71.65         | 71.8                   |
| Male                   | 24.21           | 28.13         | 27.0                   |
| Non-binary             | –               | –             | 0.8                    |
| Prefer not to say      | –               | –             | 0.5                    |
| Ethnicity (%)          |                 |               |                        |
| Asian                  | 17.46           | 100           | 100                    |
| Caucasian/White        | 65.67           | –             | –                      |
| Black/African American | 5.16            | –             | –                      |
| Hispanic/Latino        | 7.14            | –             | –                      |
| Other                  | 4.56            | –             | –                      |



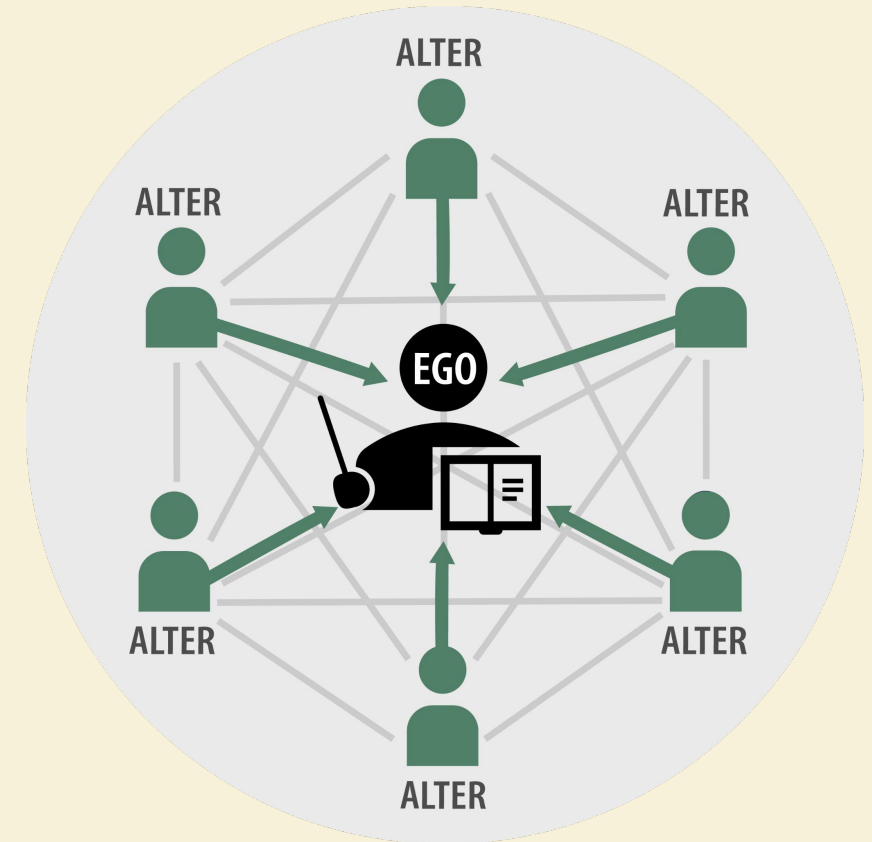
# Methods: Data Analysis

## Egocentric Network Analysis

- **Degree of Centrality** – The number of *alters* tied to an *ego* (Freeman, 1979)
  - Most fundamental measure in egocentric network analysis (Carolan, 2014) (though additional network measures will be examined in future analyses)

## Statistical Analysis

- ANOVA:
  - Used to examine overall differences in the degree of centrality across countries
- Tukey HSD Post-Hoc Test:
  - Conducted to identify specific pairwise differences between countries after significant ANOVA results



# Setting up an Egocentric Network Survey

Please list the pseudo initials of up to 6 students who have directed such challenging behaviors. Please do not use the real initials of any students.

For example, instead of entering your student (Johnson Doe)'s full name, you could enter "JJ". If you have more than one "JJ" in your student list, you can use other pseudo initials that are not repetitive with others in your list of pseudo initials.

After listing your students, we will ask you questions about each student. Next, we will ask you about the connections between each of the named students (up to 6). Please try to remember how these pseudo initials are associated with the named students.

★ 1

★ 2

★ 3

★ 4

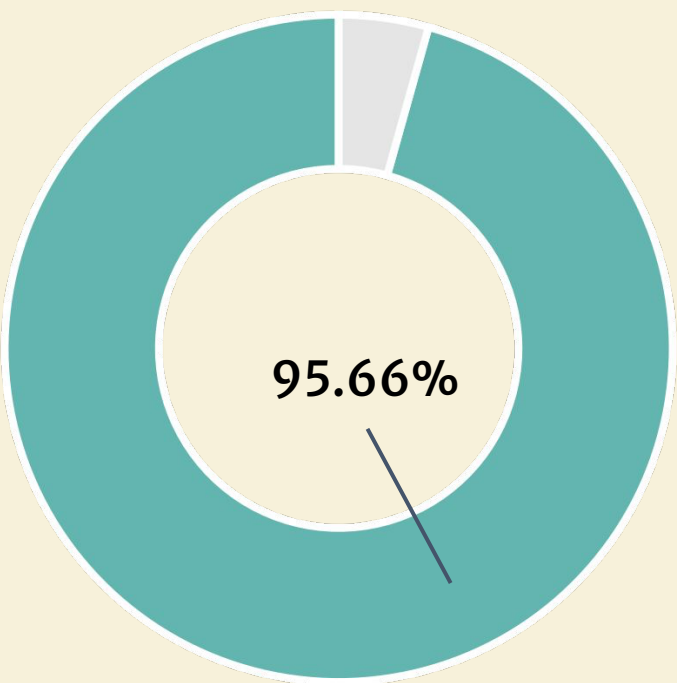
★ 5

★ 6

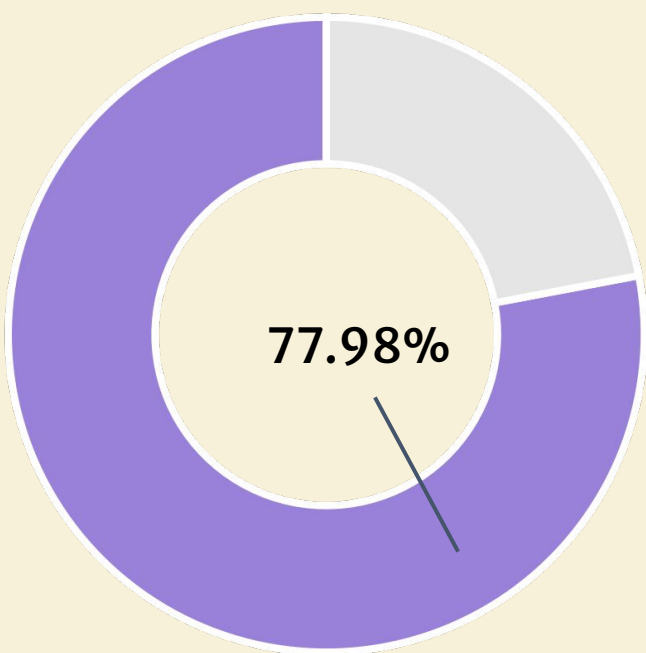


# Results: Prevalence Rates

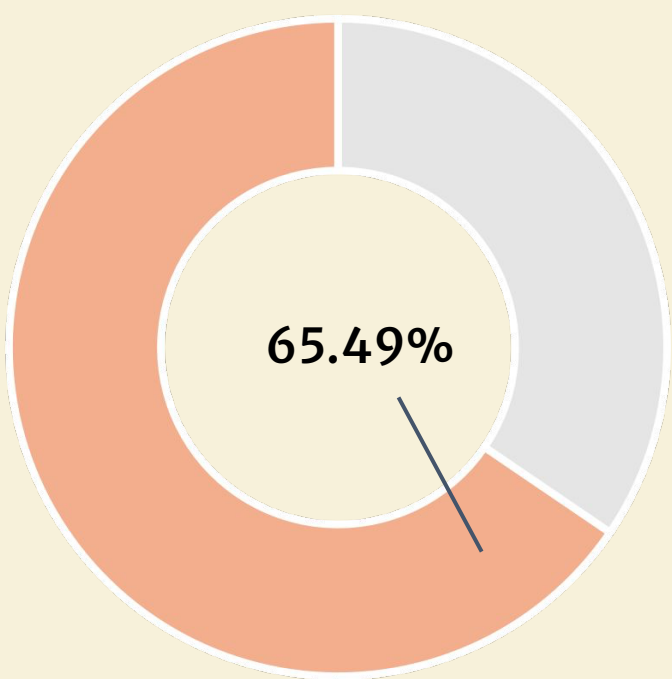
South Korea



United States



China



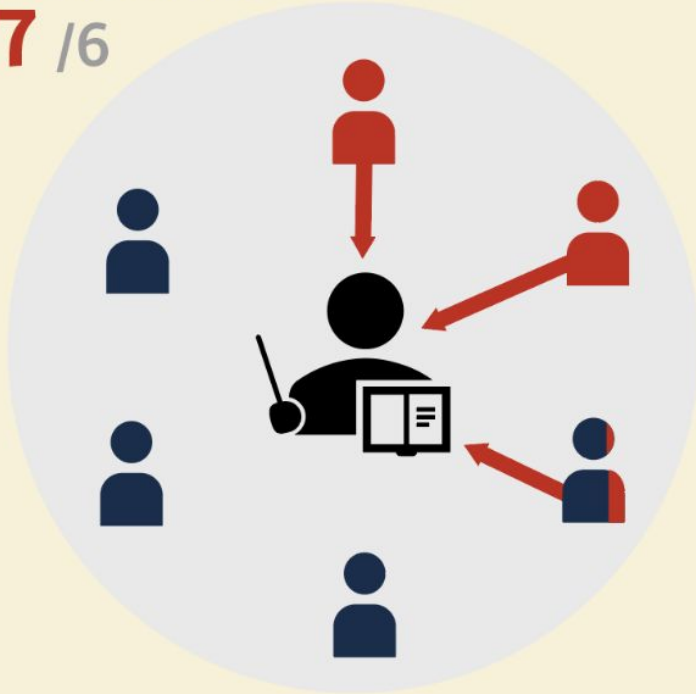
The percentage of teachers who reported having at least one student who showed aggression or violence toward them



# Results: Chinese Teachers' Network

Degree of Centrality - Number of Students Displaying Violent and Aggressive Behaviors towards Teachers:

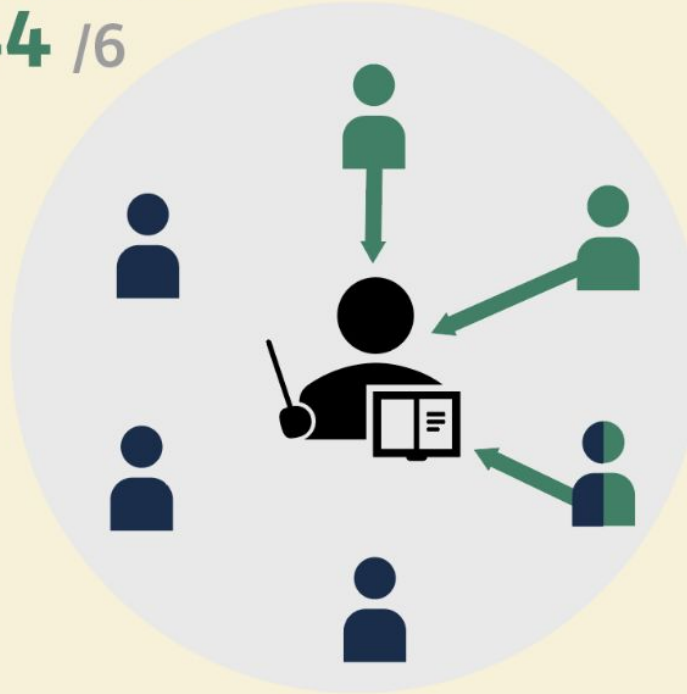
**2.27** /6



Challenging Student Network

Degree of Centrality - Number of People Whom the Teachers Seek for Social Support:

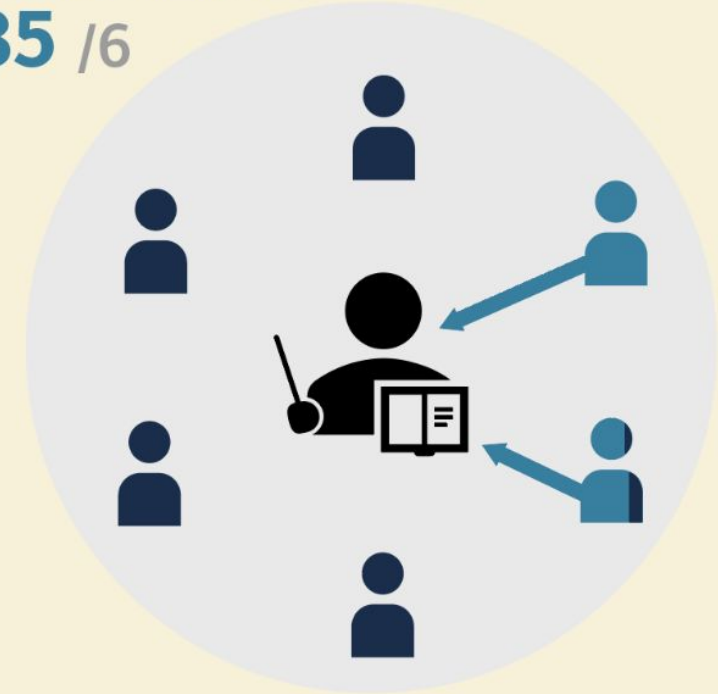
**2.44** /6



Social Support Network

Degree of Centrality - Number of People Whom the Teachers Seek for Professional Support:

**1.85** /6



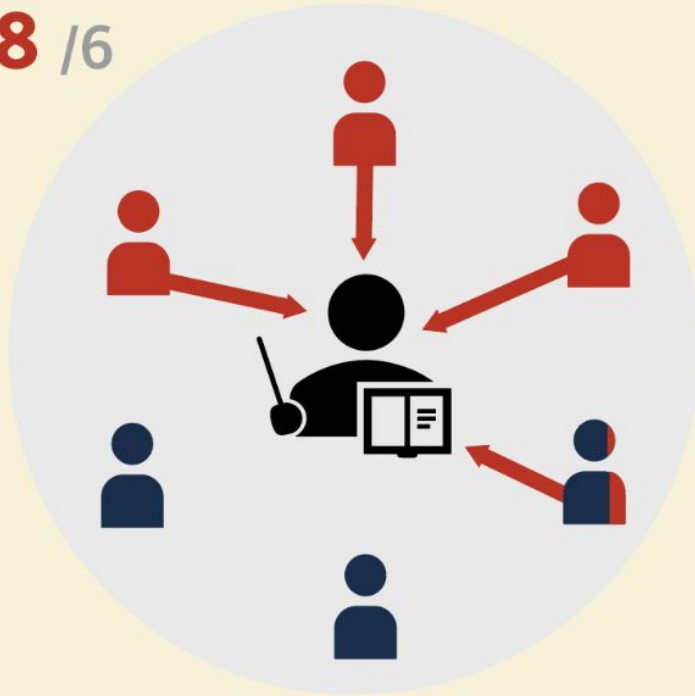
Professional Support Network



# Results: Korean Teachers' Network

Degree of Centrality - Number of Students Displaying Violent and Aggressive Behaviors towards Teachers:

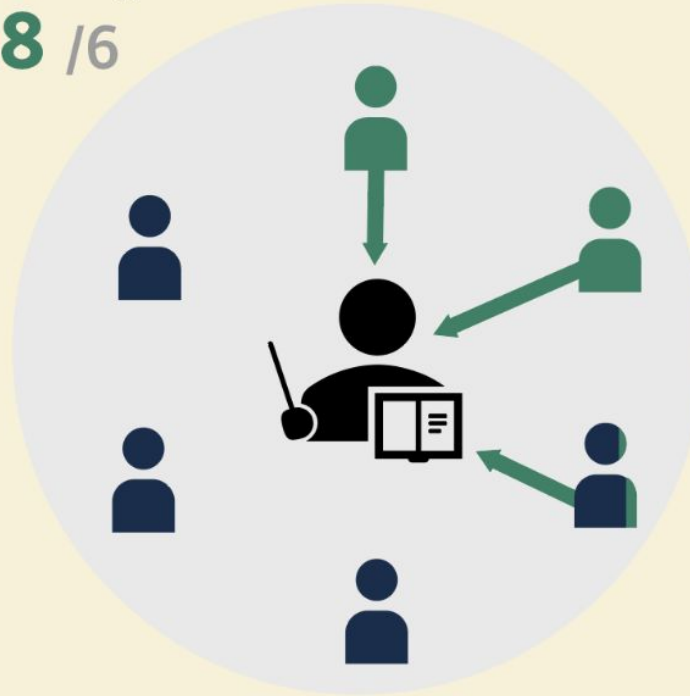
**3.28** /6



Challenging Student Network

Degree of Centrality - Number of People Whom the Teachers Seek for Social Support:

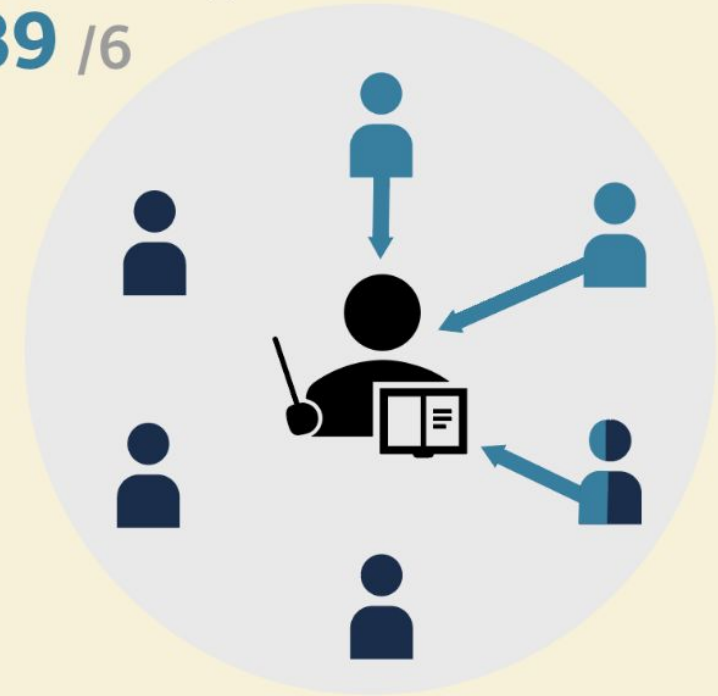
**2.18** /6



Social Support Network

Degree of Centrality - Number of People Whom the Teachers Seek for Professional Support:

**2.39** /6



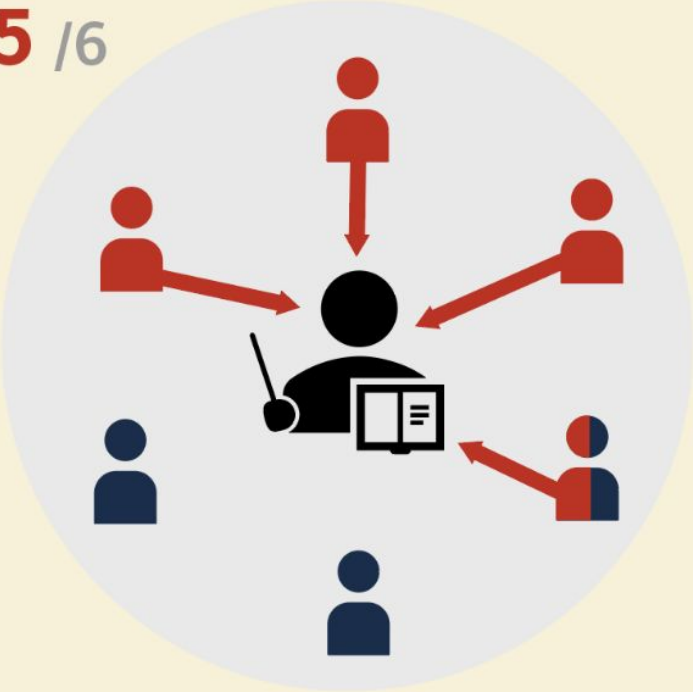
Professional Support Network



# Results: U.S. Teachers' Network

Degree of Centrality - Number of Students Displaying Violent and Aggressive Behaviors towards Teachers:

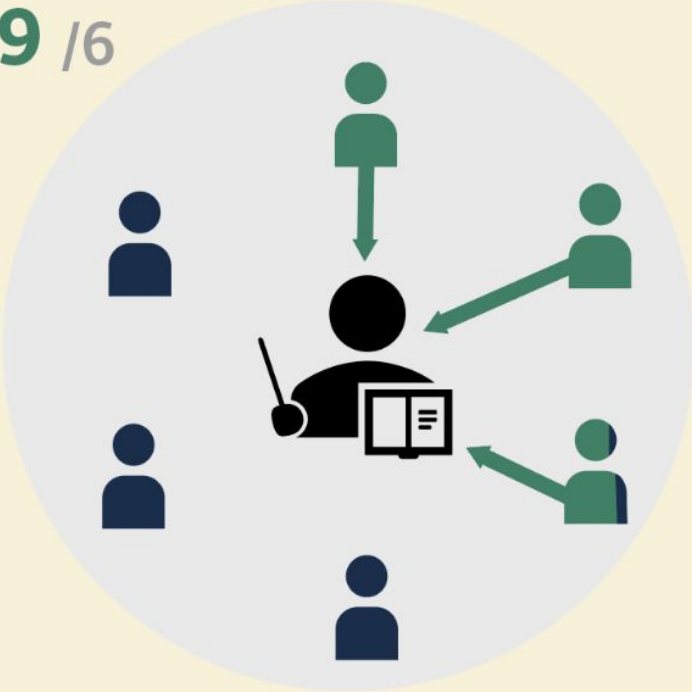
**2.65** /6



Challenging Student Network

Degree of Centrality - Number of People Whom the Teachers Seek for Social Support:

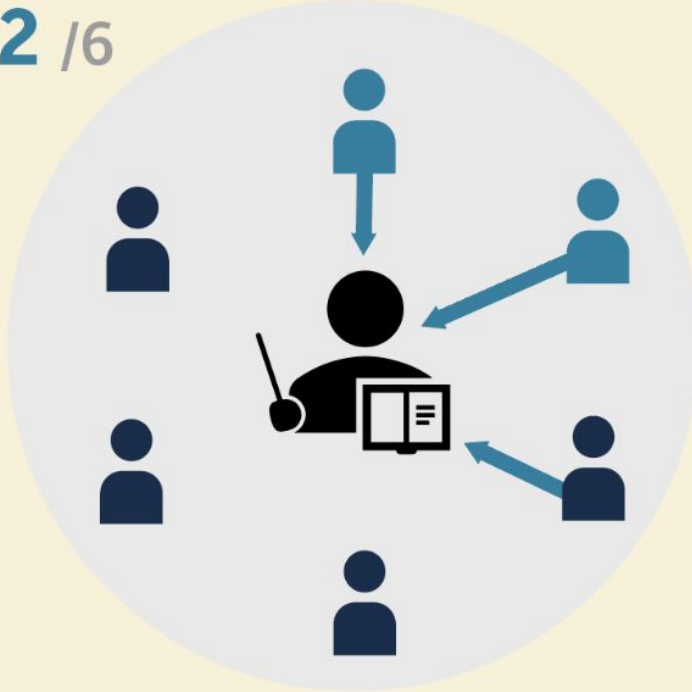
**2.89** /6



Social Support Network

Degree of Centrality - Number of People Whom the Teachers Seek for Professional Support:

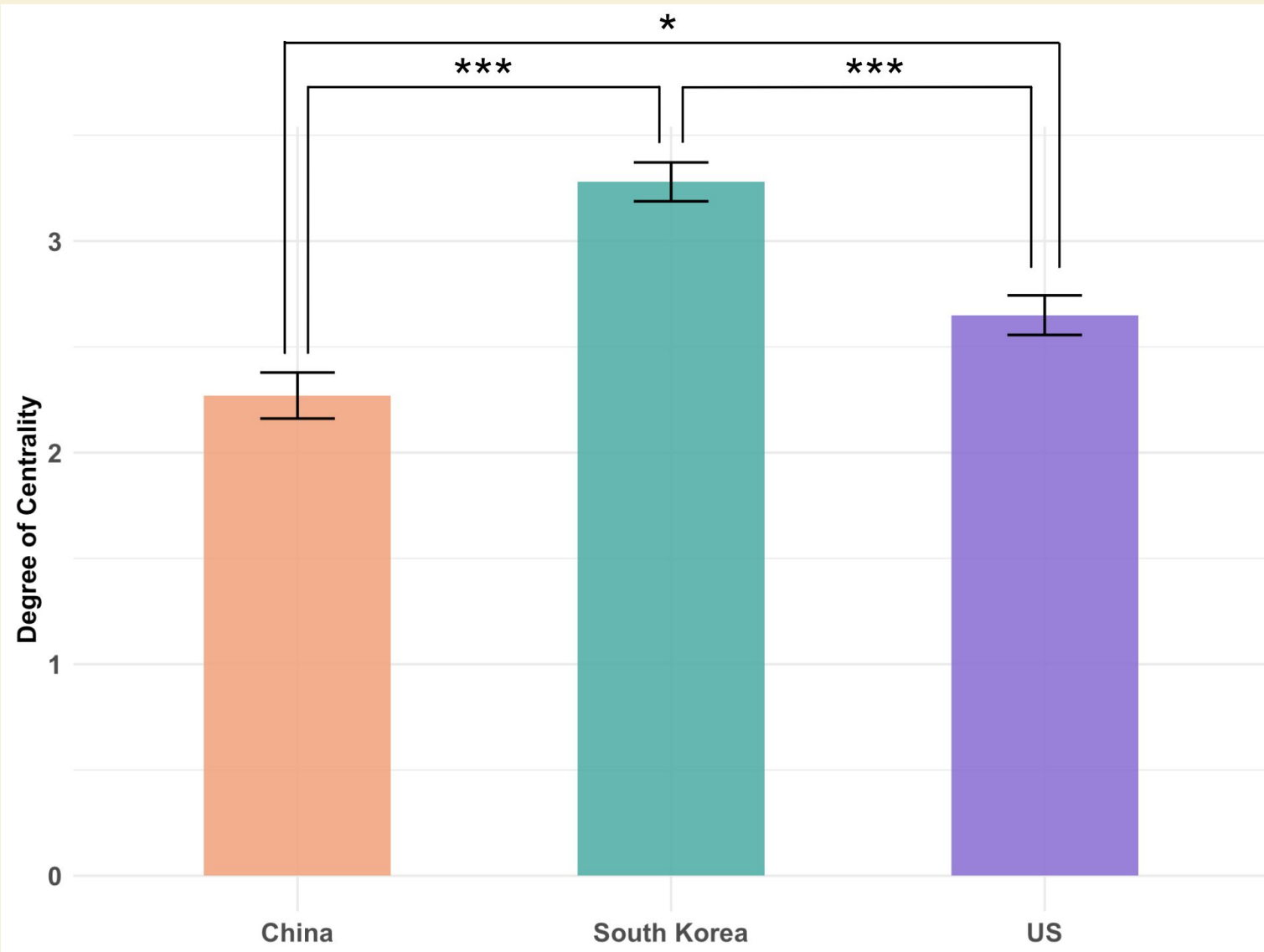
**2.02** /6



Professional Support Network



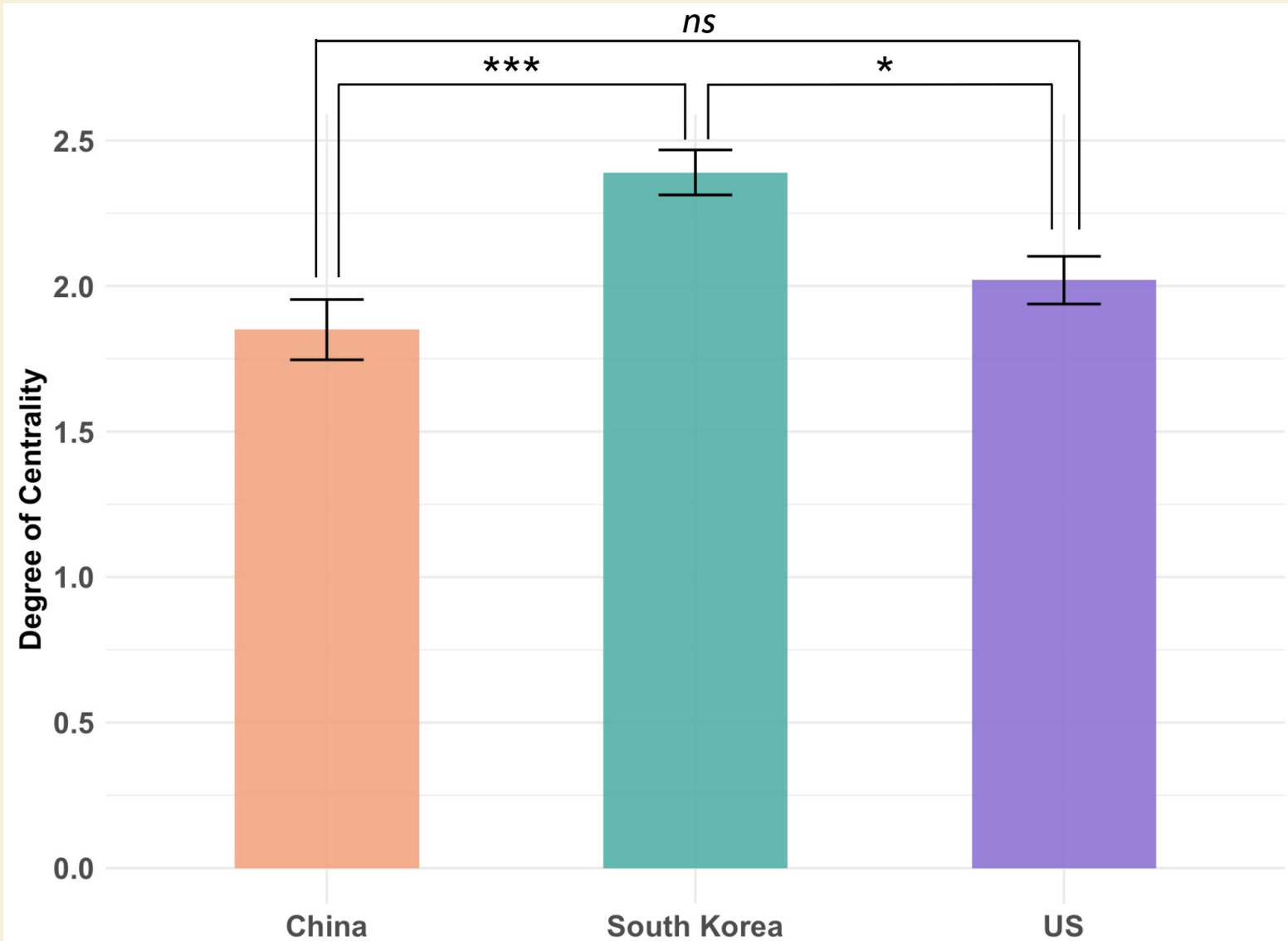
# Results: Challenging Student Network



**South Korea > U.S. > China**



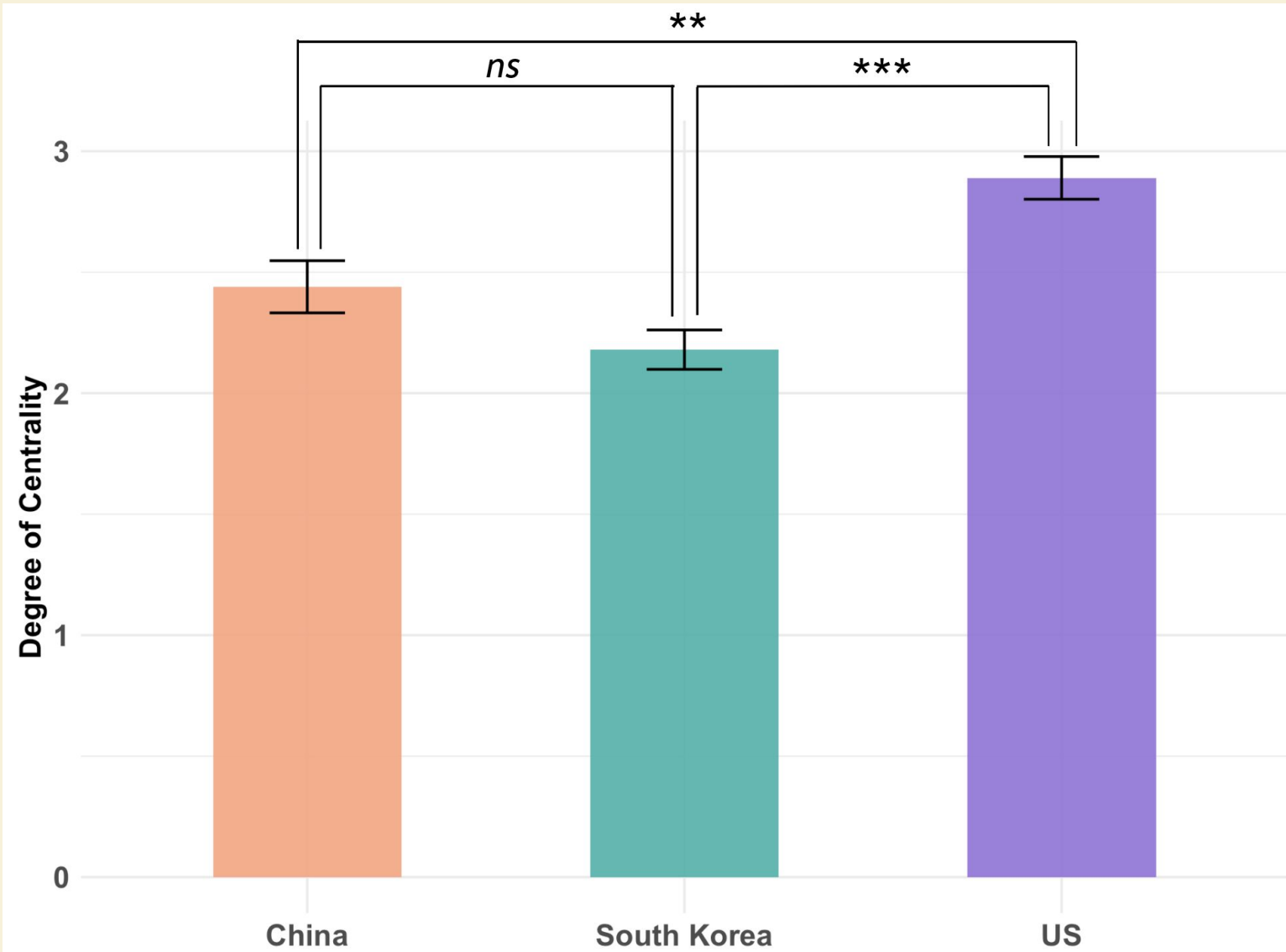
# Results: Professional Support Network



South Korea > U.S.  $\approx$  China



# Results: Social Support Network



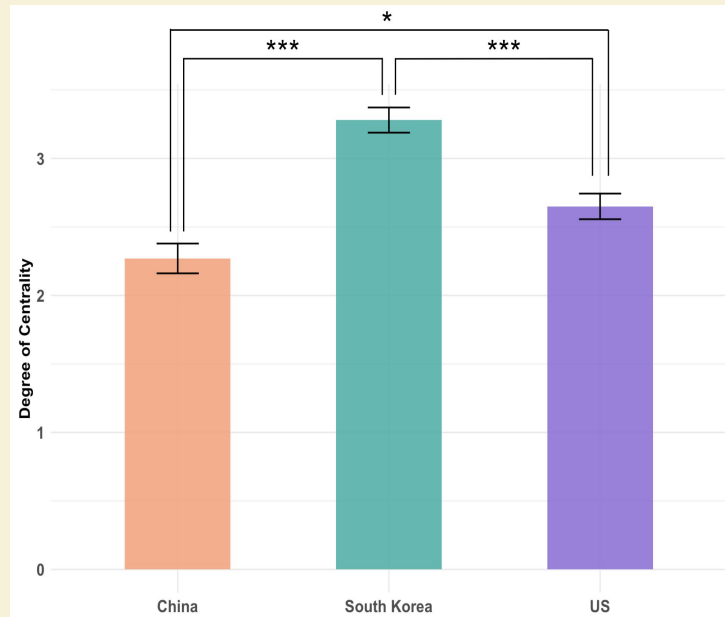
U.S. > China  $\approx$  South Korea



# Results: Cross-country Comparison

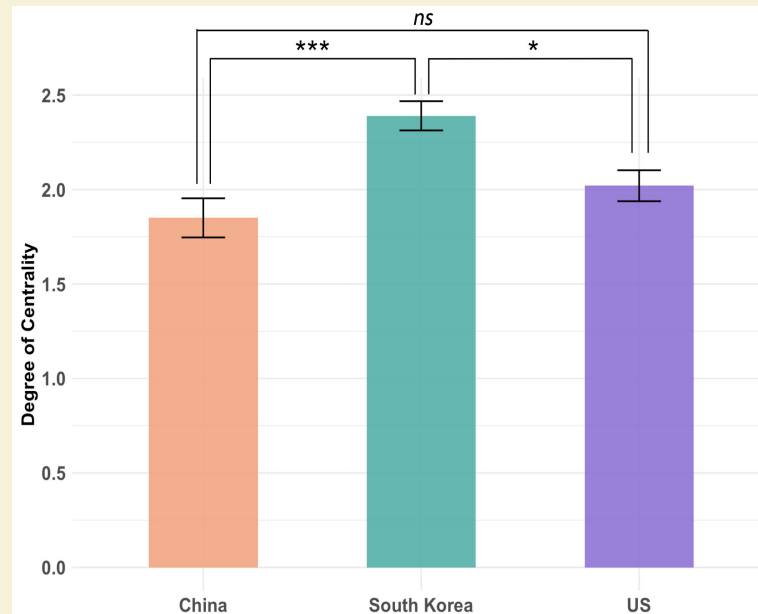
## Challenging Student Network

South Korea > U.S. > China



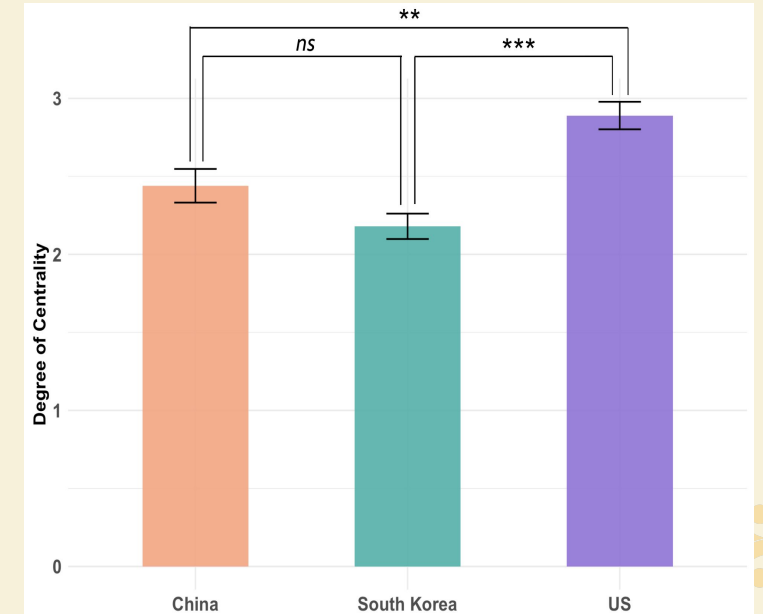
## Professional Support Network

South Korea > U.S. ≈ China



## Social Support Network

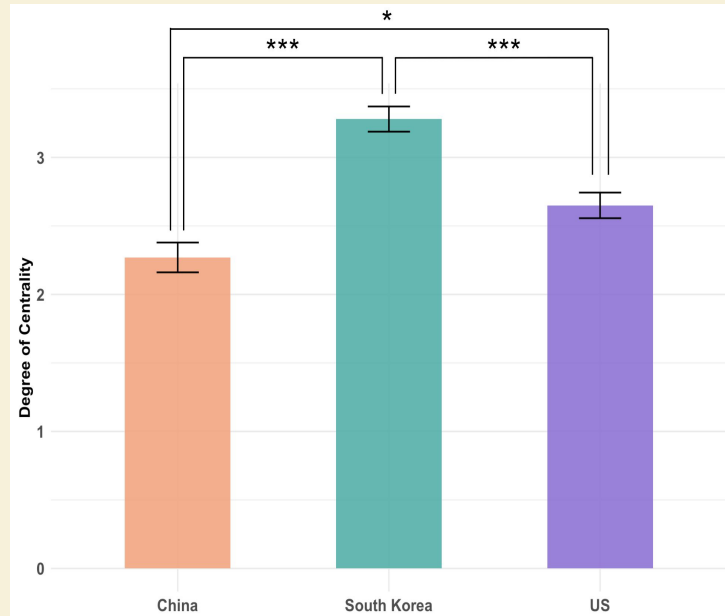
U.S. > China ≈ South Korea



# Results: Cross-country Comparison

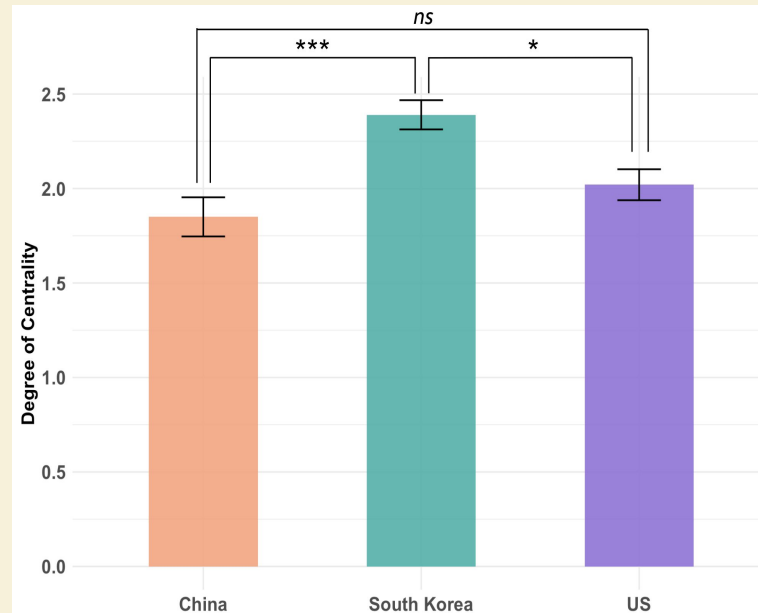
## Challenging Student Network

South Korea > U.S. > China



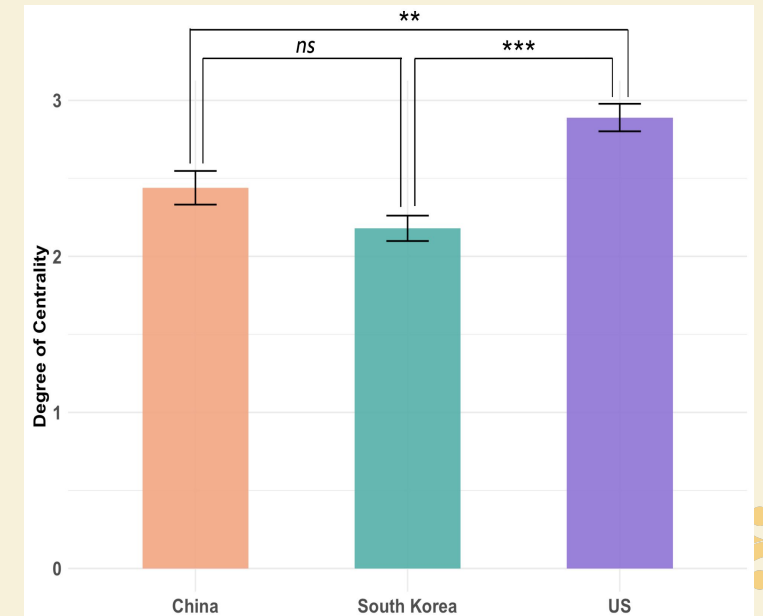
## Professional Support Network

South Korea > U.S. ≈ China



## Social Support Network

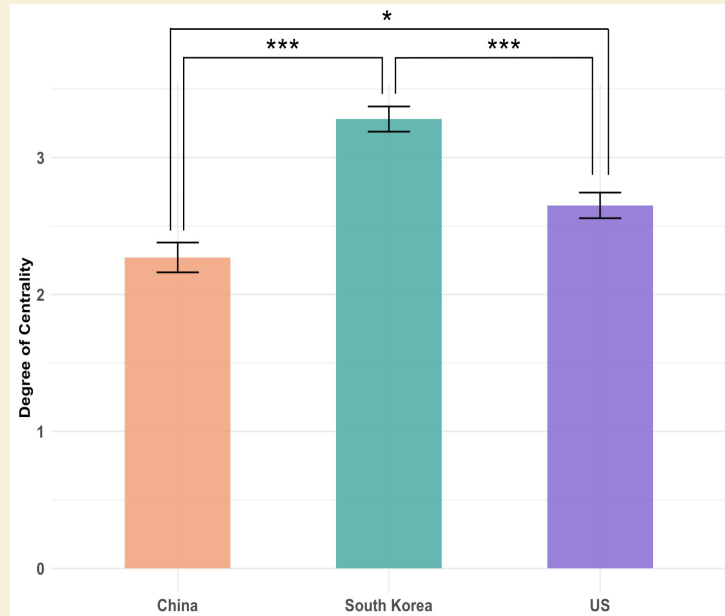
U.S. > China ≈ South Korea



# Results: Cross-country Comparison

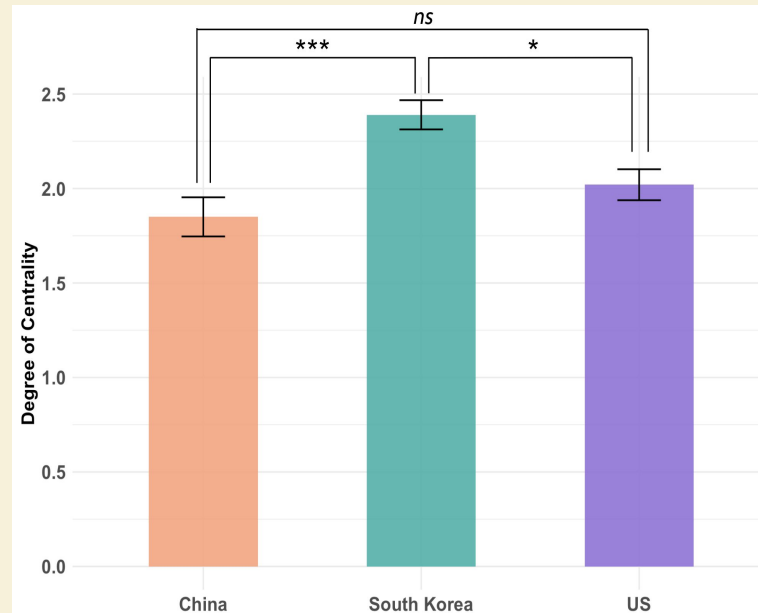
## Challenging Student Network

South Korea > U.S. > China



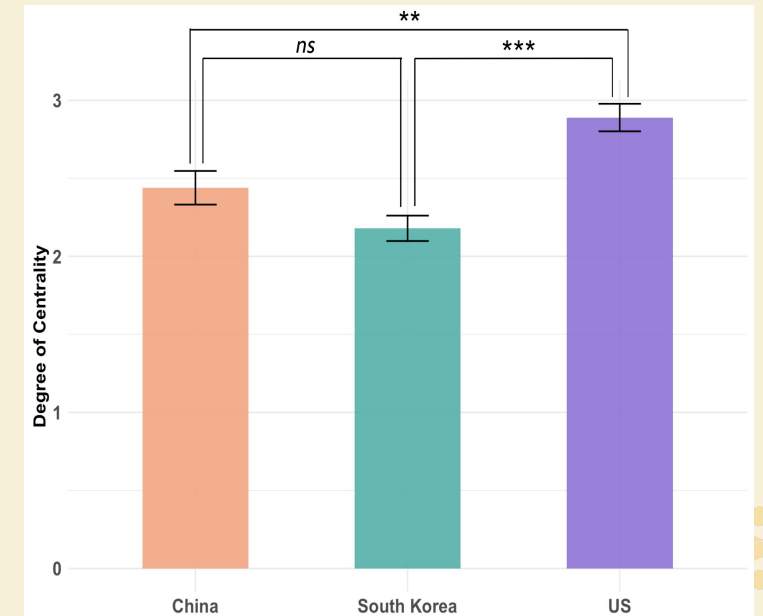
## Professional Support Network

South Korea > U.S. ≈ China



## Social Support Network

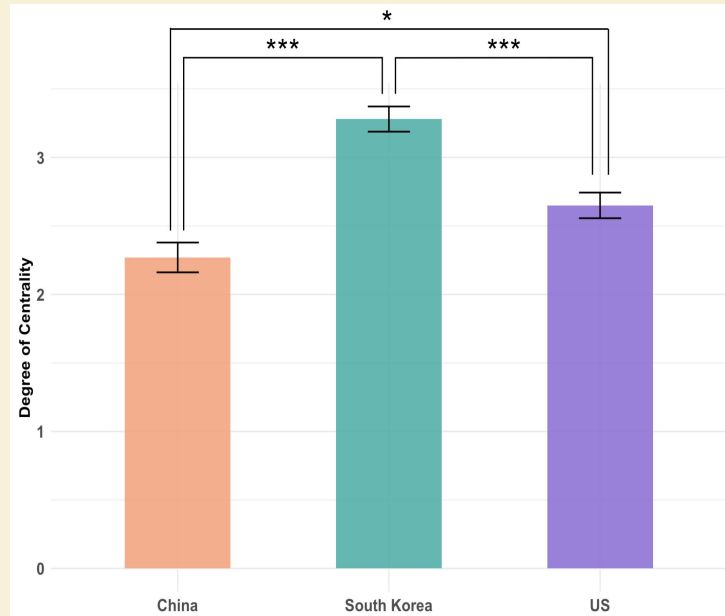
U.S. > China ≈ South Korea



# Results: Cross-country Comparison

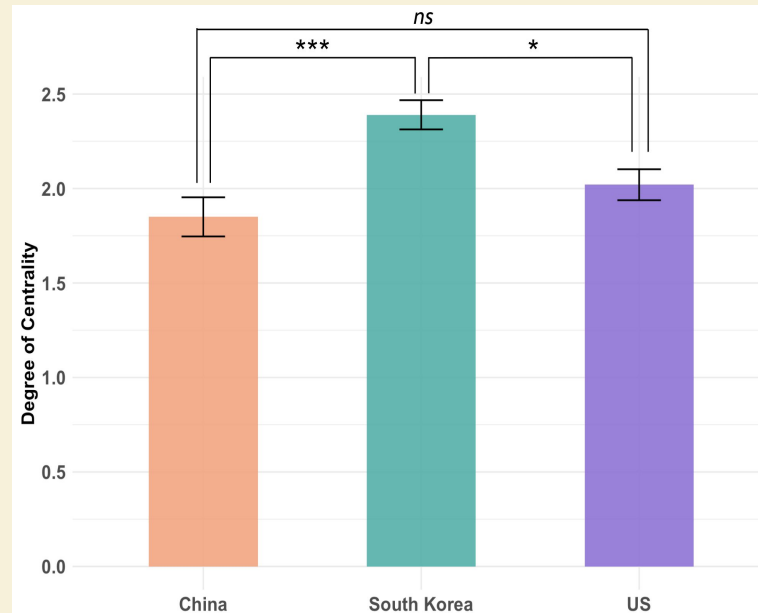
## Challenging Student Network

South Korea > U.S. > China



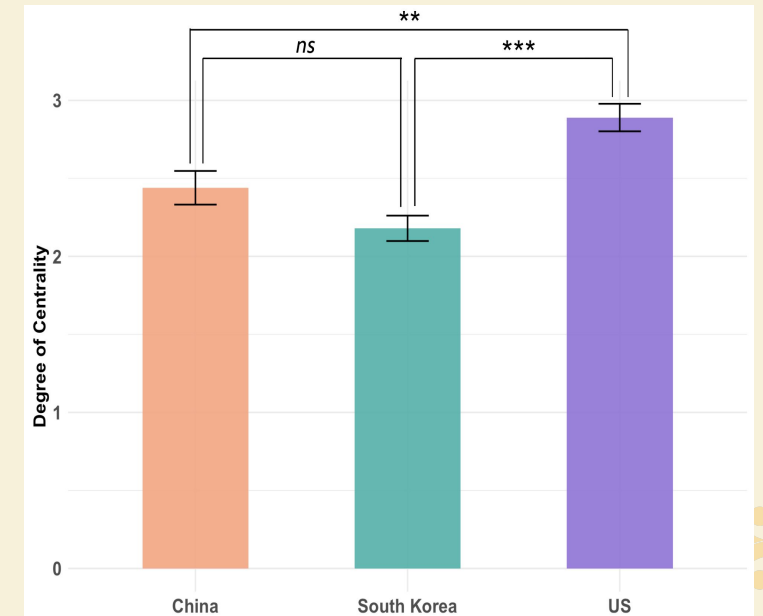
## Professional Support Network

South Korea > U.S. ≈ China



## Social Support Network

U.S. > China ≈ South Korea



# Results: ANOVA and Tukey HSD Post-Hoc

|                                     | ANOVA                                      | Comparisons (Mean Differences)                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Challenging Students</b>         | $F(2, 1348)=24.34$<br>$p<.001, \eta^2=.04$ | South Korea > China (1.01***),<br>South Korea > U.S. (0.63***),<br>U.S. > China (0.38*)        |
| <b>Professional Support Network</b> | $F(2, 1348)=8.70$<br>$p<.001, \eta^2=.01$  | South Korea > China (0.54***),<br>South Korea > U.S. (0.37*),<br>U.S. vs. China ( <i>ns</i> )  |
| <b>Social Support Network</b>       | $F(2, 1348)=14.76$<br>$p<.001, \eta^2=.02$ | U.S. > China (0.46**),<br>U.S. > South Korea (0.71***),<br>China vs. South Korea ( <i>ns</i> ) |



# Discussion

- **Paradox among South Korea teachers** : despite having the highest professional support centrality, South Korea teachers also face the highest centrality of student aggression targeted at teachers.
- **South Korea teachers** may also lack informal emotional outlets and thus rely heavily on formal help that may not address burnout or relational stress.
- **U.S. teachers** rely strongly on social support that may buffer against moderate level of aggression but lack institutional protection or advocacy with lower professional support
- **Silent burden among Chinese teachers:** they report low centrality across all networks
- Take away message: **Structure and diversity of support networks matter.**



# Implications

- **Culturally responsive strategies** are critical.
- **Social support networks** need strengthening in China and South Korea (e.g., mentoring, peer affinity groups, and safe spaces for dialogues)
- **Professional supports** need expansion and trust-building in the U.S. and China (e.g., training, leadership development, and mental health infrastructure)
- Further research questions need to be explored.
  - e.g., **Why** do these patterns occur?
  - How** do policy, school culture, and social norms influence teachers' experiences and responses?



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# Multidimensional Teacher Victimization Scale (MTVS)

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## Multidimensional Teacher Victimization Scale (MTVS) Items and User Guide

**Author(s) / Creator(s)**  
Yang, Chunyan

**Abstract / Description**  
The Multidimensional Teacher Victimization Scale (MTVS) is a 24-item self-report rating scale for measuring teachers' perceptions of how often they have been victims of violent behavior perpetrated by students. It consists six subscales, which reflects six forms of teacher victimization (TV): (1) physical TV, (2) social TV, (3) verbal TV, (4) cyber TV, (5) sexual harassment, and (6) personal property offenses. Individual subscales can be used as an individual score or be added into one composite score to represent overall teacher victimization. This measure is available in both English and Chinese versions and this is an English version.

**Persistent Identifier**  
<https://doi.org/10.23668/psycharchives.15514>

**Date of first publication**  
2024-10-18

**Language of content**  
English

**Publisher**  
PsychArchives

**Citation**  
Yang, C. (2024). *Multidimensional Teacher Victimization Scale (MTVS) Items and User Guide*. PsychArchives.  
<https://doi.org/10.23668/psycharchives.15514>

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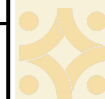
## Multidimensional Teacher Victimization Scale [English Version]

To help us understand your experience with the challenging behaviors directed from students towards you, please choose the response that best describes how often the following incidents happened to you during the \_\_\_ school year. During the \_\_\_ school year, how often has this challenging behavior been directed towards you from students?

| Subscale                 | Items                                                                                               | Never | 1-2 times | 3-4 times | 5-6 times | 7 or more times |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------------|
| <b>Social/Relational</b> | Students destroyed my reputation by spreading rumors about me.                                      | 1     | 2         | 3         | 4         | 5               |
|                          | Students challenged my authority by spreading rumors about me.                                      | 1     | 2         | 3         | 4         | 5               |
|                          | Students incited others not to listen to me.                                                        | 1     | 2         | 3         | 4         | 5               |
|                          | Students incited others to say bad things about me.                                                 | 1     | 2         | 3         | 4         | 5               |
| <b>Cyber</b>             | Students sent other people messages, pictures or videos that intended to insult me.                 | 1     | 2         | 3         | 4         | 5               |
|                          | Students sent me messages, pictures or videos that intended to insult me.                           | 1     | 2         | 3         | 4         | 5               |
|                          | Students pretended to be me online to post messages, pictures or videos that intended to insult me. | 1     | 2         | 3         | 4         | 5               |
|                          | Students insulted me online by forging my personal information.                                     | 1     | 2         | 3         | 4         | 5               |

Yang, C. (2024). *Multidimensional Teacher Victimization Scale (MTVS) Items and User Guide*. PsychArchives. <https://doi.org/10.23668/psycharchives.15514>

|                                   |                                                                        |   |   |   |   |   |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Physical</b>                   | Students pushed, pinched, or tripped me intentionally.                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|                                   | Students kicked me or beat me.                                         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|                                   | Students harmed me using dangerous items, such as knife.               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|                                   | Students incited others to hurt me physically.                         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <b>Verbal</b>                     | Students threatened me.                                                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|                                   | Students made fun of me by calling me names.                           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|                                   | Students swore at me.                                                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|                                   | Students laughed at my looks, dress or other personal characteristics. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <b>Sexual Harassment</b>          | Students called me or texted me in a way that was sexually harassing.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|                                   | Students made obscene gestures, actions or words at me.                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|                                   | Students molested me.                                                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|                                   | Students intentionally told me dirty jokes.                            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <b>Personal Property Offenses</b> | Students intentionally broke my stuff.                                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|                                   | Student stole my personal belongings.                                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|                                   | Students hid my personal belongings intentionally.                     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|                                   | Students soiled my personal belongings intentionally.                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |



# MTVS Validated in the United States

## **Social/Relational Victimization**

1. Students attempted to undermine my credibility by spreading rumors about me.
2. Students attempted to undermine my authority by spreading rumors about me.
3. Students influenced others to say bad things about me.

## **Cyber Victimization**

4. Students sent me messages, pictures or videos that intended to insult me.
5. Students pretended to be me online to post messages, pictures or videos that intended to insult me.
6. Students called me or texted me in a way that was sexually harassing.

## **Physical Victimization**

7. Students kicked me or beat me.
8. Students harmed me using dangerous items (e.g., knives, scissors, chairs).
9. Students made unwanted physical contact with me (e.g., grabbing, touching, and groping).

## **Verbal Victimization**

10. Students threatened me.
11. Students insulted me by calling me names.
12. Students swore at me.

## **Personal Property Offenses**

13. Students broke/attempted to break my personal belongings.
14. Students hid/attempted to hide my personal belongings.
15. Students soiled/attempted to soil my personal belongings.





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# Thank you!

## Comments or Questions?

**Dr. Chunyan Yang**

yangcy@umd.edu



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**JACOB'S  
FOUNDATION**