

THE PRACTICE OF ZHONG YONG ON MARITAL ADAPTATION PROCESS IN TAIWAN: A CRITICAL REVIEW

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Abstract:

From the paradoxical philosophy of I Ching, this study is to explore how Zhong Yong thinking, a self-regulated beliefs about life events, and phenomena regarding the world, which is applied on interpersonal interaction in daily life (Chou, Chu, Yeh, & Chen, 2014; Yang, 2010), works on marital adaptation process of couples in Taiwan. A critical literatures review was used to conduct the conflict attitudes and conflict coping strategies on marital adaptation process of couples with Zhong Yong thinking style in Taiwan. The spirit of Zhong Yong is to achieve 'equilibrium and harmony', a state of dynamic harmony which is pursued by individual through reaching both 'inner self' and 'outer interpersonal' harmony (Chou et al., 2014; Yang, 2010). The 'equilibrium and harmony' is established by a holistic perspective, transpositional thinking, and the consideration of the ever-changing universe, which refers to the Yin-Yang perception (Chou et al., 2014; Yang, 2010). Individuals with higher Zhong Yong thinking use less high-arousal negative emotion words and more low-arousal positive words than lower Zhong Yong thinking individuals when imaging experiencing a negative life event (Lin, Huang, & Lin, 2015). Therefore, Zhong Yong thinking helps individuals to evaluate the situation and behave properly, in order to achieve the state of inner and interpersonal harmony, which also have impacts on individual's emotion regulation process when dealing with negative life events.

The results show that for individuals with higher Zhong Yong thinking, they tend to use the holistic perspective, transpositional thinking, and the Yin-Yang perception, to deal with the martial conflict. The extended sense of time, space, and roles, the belief of ever-changing situation, and the internal and interpersonal harmony oriented concerns are considered before they take the actions to marital conflict situation, rather than acting on impulse. Thus, indirect coping strategies, such as compromise, and forbearance (endurance), are used by higher Zhong Yong thinking individuals, which also help them on emotion regulation process. Therefore, individuals with higher Zhong Yong thinking experience less high-arousal negative emotions and more low-arousal positive emotion during their marital adaptation process. Compared with higher Zhong Yong thinking individuals, individuals with lower Zhong Yong thinking reacts with impulse on marital conflict, such as fighting and arguing, or, with the emphasis on interpersonal harmony but without achieving internal harmony, such as suppressing personal feeling and avoiding conflict, which make them experience high-arousal negative emotions more and longer during the marital adaptation process.

The author argued that the Zhong Yong thinking helps the couple in Taiwan on marital adaptation process by reframing the conflict situation with holistic perspective, transpositional thinking, and the Yin-Yang perception. The future study will based on this critical review to investigate how (1) Zhong Yong thinking works on marital adaptation process and (2) how it influences marriage life and individual's mental health in Taiwan.

Keywords: Zhong Yong, marital conflict, marital adaptation process

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