

THE HEALING OF A RELATIONAL TRAUMA: A CASE STUDY OF A YOUNG ADULT WHO WITNESSED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN TAIWAN

**Wu, Dong-Yann
Huang, Tsung-Chain**

Domestic violence has been defined as the familial interactional pattern in which physical violence is one of several behaviors and also a continuous/constant pattern that batterers used to control victims (Burge, Katerndahl, Wood, Becho, Ferrer, & Talamantes, 2016). We argued that social and cultural structures play a very crucial role in the development and healing of domestic violence. For instance, contrary to the "individualization" perspective of self in the western culture, the "relational self" is the core of selfhood in traditional Chinese context. Moreover, the expectations of the father's roles in a family are very different from the western perspectives. Thus, this study concerned that how do these Chinese culture's perspectives influence on the father's domestic violence and its impact on the children. Data were collected using semi-structured in-depth interviews. The methodology of this research was based on hermeneutic phenomenology, and took the thematic approach in text analysis to restore the essence of the recovering experience.

Data from the analyses showed several unique features of participants' family were: the power-responsibility struggle of marital subsystem; perpetual conflict of marital subsystem; dysfunctional co-parenting; pains and blames among parental relationship; the stereotyped expectations of gender role; their parents were more likely to place a greater emphasis on obedience, and the acceptance of family obligations, in contrast to the emphasis on independence and assertiveness.

In addition, the results also revealed the following characteristics of their close relationships: ambivalence toward emotional attachment; difficulty experiencing being worthy of love; maintaining distance from emotional expression; afraid of long term relationships and the similarities between himself and his father.

The results indicated that social and cultural structures play a very crucial role in the development of domestic violence. Throughout the therapy, the participant finally can accept and understand why his father had to behave so violent and authoritarian. Although the results drawn from this study should be considered inconclusive and experimental, the findings of the present study may be applied as an exploratory framework for examining the development of domestic violence in Chinese. The influential cultural-specific effects such as filial piety, social responsibility, wholeness of the family, as well as clinical applications were discussed.