

Public Attitudes toward Domestic Violence against Women in China and Spain: A Cross-Cultural Study

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Abstract : Domestic violence against women is one of the most serious social problems in the world. Attitudes toward domestic violence against women play an important role in the perpetration of violence against women, the way that victims respond to the violence, and how the community responds to violence against women. China and Spain are countries which have been influenced by the culture which males hold power and dominance over the female for a long time. However, as more connected with other European countries, the legal enforcement related to domestic violence against women developed earlier in Spain, and consequently, social awareness of violence against women evolved differently in two countries. The present study aimed to explore and compare the attitudes toward domestic violence against women across China and Spain, and their influence factors, such as gender equality attitudes and coercive control. Totally 506 participants, 255 from China and 251 from Spain completed questionnaires, including attitudes toward domestic violence against women, definition of violence behavior, justification for violence, gender equity attitudes, and coercive control. Results demonstrated that Chinese participants were less aware of domestic violence against women issue but more agreed that such issue was a crime than Spanish participants. In addition to cultural difference, gender equality attitudes, coercive control, gender, and age also affected attitudes toward domestic violence against women. Our findings imply attitudes toward domestic violence against women differ from countries along with the difference in gender equity attitudes and coercive control; such a difference may arise from cultural, traditional belief and current justice system influence. Despite the developed justice system, male dominance culture may lead to maintain the belief that domestic violence is domestic and private issue which police and justice force may not get involved.

Keywords : cross-cultural differences, domestic violence, public attitudes, violence against women

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