

**INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF
CAVITEÑAS**

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ABSTRACT

Title of the Research: **INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE FROM
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The purpose of this study is to describe the experiences of women in intimate partner violence (IPV) and to identify the processes they go through in order to arrive at a decision about how to optimize intimate relationships. In addition, it aims to generate a theory or a framework arising from the core concepts that evolved from the collected data. IPV affects the lives of many women, sometimes in ways we have yet to understand. There are data that describe IPV in global perspective. However, in a culture where respect, shame, emotional toughness and sense of family unity are paramount, IPV is not completely explained. This lack of explanation can lead to an outright pain which can bring about fear, disrespect, anger or isolation or it can develop a cyclical pattern of disparaging behavior.

The central research question is: ***What are the processes (cognitive, affective, behavioral) that Cavitenas have been through in dealing with intimate partner violence?*** (“Anu-ano ang mga proseso na pinagdadaanan mo sa pagpapasya mong pagtiisan o tapusin ang Karahasan Laban sa Karelasyon na iyong nararanasan?”). From these processes, the study proceeded in answering the question: ***What postulates can be formulated as far as intimate partner violence is concerned?***

This grounded theory research generated data both from the lived experiences and perspective of women from diverse groups in Cavite. The key informants are described as Caviteñas: 1) who were within the reproductive ages of 15 - 49 years old; 2) who were born and raised residents in municipalities of Cavite (where the cultural values are still preserved and nurtured because of low intermigration characteristics) particularly the first district (Kawit, Rosario and Cavite City) and the seventh district (Alfonso, Gen. Aguinaldo or Bailen, and Indang); 3) who had suffered physical abuse in intimate relationships at least once; and 4) who were willing to signify their intention to be participants in the study by signing an informed consent.

Intimate partner violence (IPV) in this research includes the physical kind of violence (in combination with other forms such as emotional, psychological, sexual or economic violence) women have experienced from

their husbands or intimate partners. The description of the phenomenon is grounded on Caviteñas' diverse and cyclic processes in going through IPV. These may be cognitive, affective and behavioral processes or responses.

This study intended to identify theoretical connections among concepts - the processes Caviteña women undergo in maintaining or terminating abusive intimate relationships. By clarifying and generalizing their connections, a theory was then developed.

The study utilized qualitative method, particularly grounded theory. This made use of both theoretical sampling and purposive sampling in the selection of participants – 11 abused women from Cavite. To gather qualitative data, unstructured/informal interviews and observation of participants' non-verbal behaviors were done. The audiotaped interviews were then transcribed verbatim and each transcription was carefully analyzed through open, axial and selective coding.

From the emic view of the Caviteñas, the dominant themes established in relation to intimate partner violence revolve around the concept of intimate partner violence, gender differences, processes, consequences/effects and interventions.

The following postulates evolved after carefully analyzing the findings of the study:

1. Emotional violence is the most damaging to the core of being of a Caviteña who has experienced IPV.
2. The following are the identified cultural characteristics of Caviteñas relevant to IPV: strong belief on lifetime marriage, shame-based perspective, culture of silence, sense of family unity, fortitude, and the capacity to subsume one's needs over the needs of the family.
3. IPV has intergenerational pattern that allows tolerance of abuse at a certain point in a woman's life.
4. IPV occurs with either emotional or financial dependency by the abused Caviteñas on their partners which makes them hold on the relationship out of a need for nurturance, loyalty or indebtedness.
5. The abused Caviteñas feel disrespect of their sense of being as if they are powerless individuals.
6. The victims of intimate partner violence isolate themselves from deeper social connections causing them to set aside their needs for social relationships.
7. IPV comes out of fear of losing the person the woman considers as special and of losing herself in the relationship she considers sacred and lifelong.
8. Leaving the relationship is usually considered as the last option contingent on the empowerment and readiness of the victim. Many Caviteñas need

to experience a crisis point in their situation before they are made to realize that it is not worthy remaining in the relationship anymore. Deciding to stay, leave or go back to the relationship is predominantly due to children's welfare.

9. Caviteñas are hopeful that their abusive situation will change. There is openness for forgiveness, healing and legal interventions.
10. IPV affects not just the woman and the perpetrator but the children, the entire family and the community as well. The roles of biologic family and of the in-laws are greatly indispensable.

In all these, it can, therefore, be concluded that Intimate Partner Violence is a by-product of the interaction of men's dominance (machismo), women's subservience (marianismo) and society's indifference. It is prominently caused by infidelity of the husband and dependence of his biologic family which cause significant marital conflicts. IPV is perpetuated by the society's indifference and the women's selfless regard for familial welfare. All these create extreme pain penetrating all the way to the woman's emotional core. However, the woman is able to protect herself from such pain because of her spiritual submissiveness and emotional toughness in favor of her love for family.

In reference to the findings of the study, the theoretical framework offers several important implications in the following areas: Caviteñas, their

children, their biologic families and in-laws, Local Government Units (LGUs), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Philippine National Police (PNP), Department of Health (DOH), support groups and self-help groups, counseling psychologists/guidance counselors, nurses and future researchers. And these put forward several recommendations.



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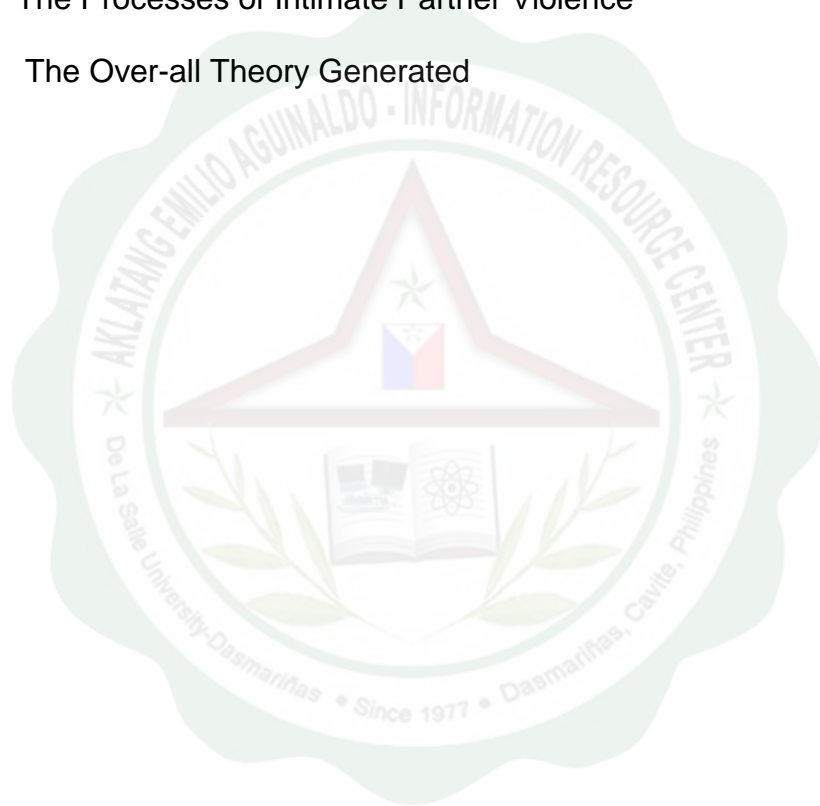
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