



## AN ACTION RESEARCH ON FAMILY RELATIONSHIP PROGRAM OF ABORIGINAL XINMEI TRIBE IN TAIWAN

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### Abstract

This research applied the action research method. In the spring of 2018 and the spring of 2019, 12 sessions of family relationship growth courses were conducted each year in the Xinmei tribe, the indigenous people of Alishan township in Taiwan. A total of 17 students participated steadily in the two-year course and completed self-assessment after the course each year. As a result of the text analysis of this study, it was found that this course improves students' skills and abilities in expressing love and care, emotional management, and dealing with interpersonal relationships. The results of the self-assessment after class each year have directly proved that the courses help the Xinmei participants to deal with family relationships. This study compared the two-year participants' self-assessments after course each year, the result indicated that

after completing the course in the second year, the student's ability to handle family relationships has been further significantly improved than in the first year. The results of the implementation of this program support the Taiwan Ministry of Education's long-term encouragement and subsidization of family education programs for indigenous people. It is suggested that promoting relevant courses in the aboriginal areas should strengthen subsidies and develop local resources, including using aboriginal church resources, setting up official family education professionals in aboriginal schools, and hiring tribal elders and tribal manpower to join the program team.

Key Words: aboriginal tribe, family relationship, family education

### Research Background and Purpose

There are many indigenous people related issues, for colonization, inclusive of land and cultural dispossession, has disrupted virtually every aspect of indigenous life, including family life. But there are not many studies related to family education (Robila and Taylor, 2018). Smyth, Hunter, Macvean, Walter, and Higgins (2018) cited the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia as an example, mentioning that the family life is lived within an Indigenous-framed set of constraining socio-economic, political, and broader society cultural circumstances. These include very high rates of poverty, low levels of educational attainment, poorer housing access and conditions, poorer health, and significantly lower life expectancy. These differences tend to be explained in terms of deficits among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people rather than the impact of sociocultural, economic, and political marginalization. This pejorative positioning means indigenous families are in high need of family programs and interventions but are also at high risk of being least well served in the delivery of appropriate services. Such programs, however, are always subject to

the ongoing uncertainty of funding decisions, often resulting in a series of short-term initiatives rather than sustained interventions. In Taiwan, family education for indigenous peoples is the same situation. This article is devoted to improve the status of family relations of a very small number of indigenous peoples in Taiwan, and is involved in family education program according to the current situation. We designed and implemented family relationship education program based on the current situation. The results hope to serve as a reference for other indigenous peoples.

“Xinmei” in Tsou language is Niahosa, the meaning is ancient tribe. Xinmei tribe is an indigenous Tsou tribe with a total of four hundred people in Alishan township of central Taiwan. Most people are engaged in labor-based agricultural production or temporary labor work, and the economic capacity of the tribal people is generally poor (Xinmei Elementary School, 2017, August 21). Tsou is a patriarchal society, marriage sovereignty is their parents, and children and their patriarchal parents' relatives live together. In the tribe, the male clubhouse is the “Kuba.” It is the place where tribe people negotiate important

things, hold “Mayasvi” celebration, and learn cultural knowledge such as hunting and combating. Women are also prohibited to enter. From marriage to worship, the whole tribe follows a strictly instituted domestic system. The Tsou people highly respect team work; they emphasize loyalty and obedience in tribe, and some people thought this is the reason Tsou people can easily integrate and work effectively together (Indigenous Resources Classroom, 2019, November 22) .

Some literature mentioned about Tsou people history, geographic ecology, ancestral norms, society organization, religions, ritual and cultural characteristic, but few mentioned Tsou people’s family relationship. Wang (2011) thought that Tsou people are modest, not show off, being obedience to fate, value cooperation, emphasize groupness, and seldom flaunt individualism and selfishness. Life in tribe is harmonious and cooperative. In the time that the researchers stayed in Tsou tribe, they found out that Tsou people are introverted and shy. When spouse came to the class together, they would sit separately with gender, they seldom sit together; Tsou people who joined the class were shy to answer questions. Therefore, during the class, the researchers did not force them to share their opinions with their family in group discussions. They also did not force them to raise their hands to answer questions.

There is an elementary school with 25 students in Xinmei tribe, where 92 percent of the total students are Tsou, so it is a typical remote aboriginal school. There is no public transportation within the tribe, and the

researchers can only drive by ourselves. In the spring of 2018, with the support of Ministry of Education of Taiwan, we designed and implemented family education courses in Tsou tribe. We designed family relationship growth courses for six Sunday mornings and afternoons with a total of 12 lessons. They were going to be held in the elementary school of the tribe; however, in order to match the living habits of the tribal people, they have been integrated into local church. After the course has successfully moved into local church. The program was revised due to the increase in participants, and the teaching progress was slowed down because of their learning characteristics. By Spring 2019, this program has revised, amended and improved according to the actual class condition of the past year. Depending on the fact that tribal learners are not used to sit, not able to keep up with the teacher’s Mandarin speed, embarrassed to express in the public, and have rarely taken family relationship courses before, we continued to improve this program based on these s tried to understand the effects of this programs in the Xinmei tribe.

#### Literature Review

##### *Lack of Family Life Education Programs for Aborigines in Taiwan*

Yeh (2017) cited the data from Council of Indigenous People of Taiwan showed that in the year 2015, there were 740 Aboriginal tribes approved by the Taiwan government. Total Aboriginal population in 2016 was 553,228 (Council of Indigenous People, 2019, November 21) . The most common problems that exist in

tribe family are financial difficulty, single parent family and grandparenting family, and parents working far away, that cause family function to work improperly. As a result, children and teenagers have poor academic performance, lack of learning motivation, and low self-esteem problems. Family factors in indigenous students' academic performance are multi-dimensional, which include social status, learning experience of sibling, investment in education from parents, and cultural traits. ( Smyth, Hunter, Macvean, Walter, and Higgins, 2018; Yeh, 2017) . The indigenous people are different from general people in term of cultural and knowledge system, world outlook, and education perspective; therefore, the family education's needs cannot be integrated into the whole country. Taiwan has no specific and complete aboriginal family education programs.

In 2003 Taiwan passed the Family Education Law, to define the family education as parents' education, filial education, marriage education, loss of parental child education, family ethics education, multicultural education and family resource and management education. However, under the cultural difference between Taiwan general people and indigenous people, what is the scope of indigenous people education? It is still an indefinite question. To focus on this, Guo Li (2011) considered inviting experts to focus on indigenous people's family education. For family education programs of different races and tribes, there should be more detailed strategy investment.

There is little literature to promote family education in Taiwan's

aboriginal communities. However, it is very important to promote family education in the Aboriginal areas. Chang and Kao (2000) took a survey of 269 families of another "Say-Siyat" aboriginal group in Taiwan. There was a high correlation between pro-drinking behavior, parenting attitude, getting along with the degree of care and children's drinking behavior; and the father's influence is greater than that of the mother. The relevance of parental behavior and child behavior illustrates the importance of family education. In the category defined by the Taiwan Family Education Law, the Ministry of Education promoted the "Indigenous Peoples' Parental Education Program" from 2014 to 2016. For this reason, the Ministry of Education commissioned the "Indigenous and Minority Information Network Project" and established results report website (K-12 Education Administration, Ministry of Education, 2019, November 8) . It is a pity that most of these achievement reports are presented with activity photos, and there are few educational activity programs designs and effectiveness reports, which can only provide limited applications and promotion for posterity.

#### *Localize Family Education Programs*

Jian (2010) thought that the most important resource of family education is "local people"-local promoters, schools, people in the community. Before family education professionals enter education activities, they need to consider the regional characteristics of the participants, such as: occupation, education standards, living practice, etc. , in order to provide appropriate education content and infor-

mation; in the teaching scene needed to adjust course content based on participates reaction, after the activity ends, it is necessary to take students feedback as reference. From a long-term business point of view, cultivating local people who have the courage to devote themselves to family education to become “family life education professionals” is a worthy investment.

Applying the concept of "localization" of family education programs to the indigenous tribe, Lai, Wu, Kuo and Wang (2013) interviewed the three Bunun aboriginal principals in Xinyi Township of Taiwan and found that to strengthen cooperation between aboriginal schools and civil society welfare institutions, it is also necessary to increase the number of indigenous teachers and train talents of local aboriginal schools.

Research by Lasong (2009) , Liu (2016) , and Y. -H. Huang (2016) all believed that it is necessary to look at indigenous education and government involvement in indigenous related services from the perspective of indigenous people. Instead of imposing the mainstream values on what should be done and how to approve them, they should be imposed on the indigenous people. From this perspective, Guo Li and Wu (2011) suggested that government agencies not only subsidize Aboriginal money, but provide opportunities for Aboriginal school parents to stay in the tribe. After reducing the burden on parents, we must implement family functions.

In practice, Y. -H. Huang (2000) and Jian (2010) both believed that

when promoting the family education for indigenous tribe, they must first conduct a needs assessment and survey of ethnic characteristics of the tribe in order to organize a family education course that suits the characteristics of the tribe's residents. In order to enhance the confidence of the indigenous parents and the quality of family education, family educators can do the relationship building in advance, and make proper use of the ethnic characteristics of the tribe's indigenous people and cultivate the indigenous tribe to promote volunteers. Through the participation of tribal residents, improve the quality of tribal life, form tribal cohesion, and construct tribal culture. Through the cultivation of local seed teachers, they can better respond to urban-rural gaps with regional characteristics, and promote localized family education work with subjectivity, so that the residents of this tribe will pay more attention to family education due to the promotion of family education activities. The prevention effect family education is more than the treatment effect.

The research of Guo Li (2011) suggested that the closest to the Aboriginal family of government unit may be the tribal schools, and the schools must also understand the tribal culture to assist the development of Aboriginal family education. Therefore, the Ministry of Education can give schools more autonomy to create favorable conditions for the integration of schools and indigenous tribes (Y. -H. Huang, 2000) . Guo Li and Wu (2011) also have the same views. They believe that teachers should be trained to understand the indigenous culture, living environment and background, and to

strengthen teachers' care for students and students' families, and let parents and teachers work together to help indigenous students grow up successfully.

Above all, to promote family education related programs in Taiwan's indigenous tribes, localized needs assessment, curriculum design, implementation and feedback, and the cultivation and investment of teachers who understand tribal culture are necessary.

### Research Methods

#### *Action Research*

Action Research is a combination of "action" and "research." It is a research conducted by practical workers on practical work processes in order to solve problems facing the workplace. Stenhouse uses the "teacher as a researcher" approach to develop the curriculum, emphasizing the importance of teachers' participation in curriculum development. Teachers must play the role of researchers in classroom contexts, and treat "curriculum" as a "hypothesis to be tested by teachers in classroom contexts" and take

Action Research to test the curriculum hypothesis (Tsai, 2000).

In this study, the teacher of the course is the researcher, who visited tribal schools and churches to understand the actual family problems, learning needs, and learning barriers of the tribe, and designed the program and implementation methods accordingly. During the course implementation, we constantly observed, interviewed, and recorded the learning characteristics and learning difficulties of participants, proposed solutions, and continuously modified the course content and implementation methods in order to achieve learning goals.

#### *Participants*

A total of 17 participants completed the program and conducted self-assessment after the class in the past two years. The basic information of them is shown in Table 1. The Tsou tribe is small in number. In order to protect the privacy of our participants, the Table 1 only presents the pseudonym, age, gender, marital status, family living status, and couples who participated in this course together.

Table 1. Participants Background

Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Marital status	Family living status	Participant coding
A	62	male	married	wife, primary-school daughter	A-husband 1
B	58	female	married	husband, primary-school daughter	B-wife 1
C	61	male	married	wife, son, daughter in law and preschool grandchild	C-husband 2
D	60	female	married	husband, son, daughter in law and preschool grandchild	D -wife 2



E	58	male	married	wife and two primary-school sons	E-husband 3
F	51	female	married	husband and two primary-school sons	F-wife 3
G	84	male	married	wife, son, daughter in law and two primary-school grandchild	G-husband 4
H	86	female	married	husband, son, daughter in law and two primary-school grandchild	H-wife 4
I	78	male	married	wife, son, grandchild and his wife, and kindergarten grandchild	I- husband 5
J	76	female	married	husband, son, grandchild and his wife, and kindergarten grandchild	J-wife 5
K	61	male	single	cohabitator passed away, step son and his family moved out.	K-male single
L	58	male	married	wife, primary-school son, high-school daughter come home on weekend	L- male married
M	57	female	widow	son, two primary-school grandchildren	M-widow
N	70	female	widow	son, daughter in law, college grandson come back on weekend	N- widow
O	74	female	married	daughter, son in law	O- widow
P	61	female	separation	adult son	P-female separation
Q	45	female	widow	adult son	Q-widow

Those who are steadily participating in our program were 17, among them, 5 spouses, one is single, one is separation, one is male married, and four are widows. We practiced the concept of changing the relationship from changing yourself (Huang, 2010), so we encouraged one of the married, even unmarried, to come to improve their family relationships and interpersonal interaction.

#### *Action Research Procedure*

#### (1) Finding the Problem: Difficulties in Family Relations in the Xinmei Tribe

Promoting family education has its own difficulties. Primarily, tribal divorce rate is higher than the statistic from official department. According to ministry of the interior census demographic, Since 2009 to 2018 almost a decade, the divorce demographic ratio of Alishan Township (the annual divorce ratio /annual marriage ratio), compared with the national divorce ratio in Taiwan. There were 8 years in

total, except for 2013 and 2015, the divorce ratio in Alishan Township (average 52.4%) is higher than the divorce ratio in Taiwan (40.9%). In 2018, Alishan Township divorce ratio is 61%, while Taiwan divorce ratio is 40%. (National Population Database Demographic, 2019, October 25). It can be inferred that the divorce rate of the Tsou aboriginal people is indeed relatively high.

According to our research advisory committee members, who are also local church shepherds, they said many tribe people are married earlier and there are many divorced and remarried people. When they first got married they will go to household administration to sign up, but the divorced or the remarried will not change their registration in the household administration. Some who work in other counties will not move their registration. Attitude of taking children out to study with Taiwanese children which is conservative. Children born formerly and currently marriage were left in the tribe, which easily became grandparenting families. None of this is known about the current status of household statistics. It can be said that the Tsou divorce rate and family instability are higher than the official record.

The researchers has been cooperating with Chiayi County—where Alishan Township is located-- ministry of education family to promote parenting education and marriage education. We understood that there are difficulties for tribal schools to engage in student life counselling or tribal family education. Taiwanese teachers leave home to teach in the tribe, and they must go down the mountain to return home on

Friday evening. Most of tribal school teachers are Taiwanese. They live in total difference live style compare to the tribe children, not having enough comprehension to tribe families and cultural background. In addition, Tsou people personality tendency is introvert. They are not good at expressing their own feelings and reluctant to speak about their own family business, which makes it hard for school and family to communicate. In August 2017, the researchers visited the school principal and teachers, and once of the Taiwanese teachers said that she did not think the tribe people have any family problems. It cannot tell from students' information. Meanwhile, another Tsou teacher talked about Xinmei tribe's families background, characteristics, difficulties in family education, and the school's vision for Aboriginal families. Tribe teachers mentioned that there are nearly half of single parent family. Early marriage has cause marriage instability, conflict between spouse communication, divorce, reassemble, half siblings, and domestic violence. These family problems, "always exist like air, but they are of poor quality and affect the lives of tribal people." The principal of the Tsou described the marriage and family problems of parents in the tribe.

In summary, from the tribal school prospective, these problems are so commonplace that they have become superficial. In fact, these family problems have been existing for a long period of time, but due to the troubles and the fear to express, communication is most difficult. These problems have been passed down from generation to generation. The tribe has never had the specific course for family education.



Therefore, the study designed family relationship program for the tribe, in hope of improving tribe participants to deal with family and marriage relationship.

## 2. Diagnosing Problems: Difficulties and Solutions in Program Implementation

### (1) Solve the Obstacle of Learning Time and Motivation among Tribe People

As suggested by the tribal school principal: Tribe people began to organize bamboo garden in the early April. Bamboo shoot was gathered from mid-April to May. Tsou collected tea also. They are even too busy to join Mother Festival because they were too busy at harvesting. In respond of the busy season, our program held from January to march in first year. Tribal people are not used to using mobile phone and communication equipment. They can only be connected on foot through tribal people. In this course, three assistants were hire by tribe to help during our program. During the courses, the researchers actively contacted school principle and those who involved in the courses, but participation rate is not satisfactory. In the first day of class, there were only five students who attend the class.

After visiting with school principle and the participants, the researchers learned that those who signed up for class had some obstacles that they faced: Some students admitted that they will be busy and could not attend the first six classes. Some promised to come but failed to attend in the end. Some could not confirm

whether they can come or not. There were low willingness to learn overall, and several students preferred to sleep at home. There was even one drunk who missed most of the classes.

After discussion with school principle and tribal elders about solution, we decided to move our program into the local church in the tribe. To match tribe people routine to go to church, there were no restriction on the busy harvest season. Attendance rate had become stable at 17 or more.

### (2) Solve Learning Disability in Tribe People

We continued to amend the action program as we continuously observed and reflected. Curriculum and implementation are to reflect on actual learning process from students. After class suggestion from students, and suggestion from expert advisory committee, the specific suggestions to promote learners in this program are as follows:

First of all, it is hard for tribe students to accept family relationship-relevant programs, so the course began in basic interpersonal relationship and reduced theoretical explanation to enhance actual example in life. The teacher applies related video, stories, picture books music, learning sheet and practical practice to guide students, not wanting to teach a lot but to help students to fully understand useful skills. The teacher increased learning sheet and time to practice in group in hope of cultivating students ability to cope with family relationship, and also to apply to daily life with their family. The second year we continu-

ously deepen the course, to help students to self-reflect, express and share to experience family relationship.

Second, tribe students are not used to sitting in the classroom. Last year and this year, the course had six full days, totaling twelve lessons each. In the process of the lesson day, the morning class is divided into two sections. During the middle of the class, there are cuisine and food sharing time in order to help students raise their interest in family sharing and interaction. The afternoon section is also divided into two. The second section focuses on interpersonal relationship practice and sharing.

Third, tribe students are not used to fast speed mandarin. The older generation of Tsou people went to church for worship and read the Tsou Bible. The rate of understanding of the Mandarin course was slow. From the beginning of the class last year, the researchers deliberately slowed down talking speed twice, at the same time, using different ways and stories to explain to help students increase comprehension to improve effectiveness the course.

Fourth, the course focuses on student's self-reflection, group practice, and group sharing to improve effectiveness of family relationship expression and communication. Before the implementation of the class, the researchers knew that the Tsou people were shy to express in public, so the researchers respect their privacy, hoping not to make them feel pressured and affected their willingness to learn. So the class changed its mold to encourage, practice and share. Students

are encouraged to write down on the application study sheet. They can choose their partner freely, and group size is not limited. If there is someone who did not want to talk, it is ok. The teacher made herself as example to encourage students to learn. In this year, students were more willing to reflect, share, and present in class compared to last year.

### 3. Program Planning: Practical Action

This study designed a specific family relationship program to try to improve the family problems of tribal people due to early marriage. In 2018, the researchers designed six full day program, 12 family relationship courses in total.

The main structure is based on the marriage education curriculum of the "Journey to Intimacy" organization (Huang, 2016) . The main content of the course is contained in the book "Listening is Love. " (Huang, 2010) , which contains the connotation of " love, five language of love, affirmative language, gender difference and conflict, origin family, emotional type, self expression, listening to others, emotion adjustment, relationship amendment, forgiveness, and love action ".

### 4. Review and Revise Action Plan

The researchers recorded videos, participated in observations, interviewed students, arranged students group discussions, and invited students to speak in each teaching session. The researchers revised the course design and implementation methods by visiting students, visiting expert advisory committees, and continuously reflect-

ing after teaching. This is a cycle of introspection, action improvement, and completion of the course and data collection.

### Data Collection

#### 1. Participate in Observation

The first author is the main instructor in the program. All the process was filmed by teaching assistants. After the classes, the researchers choose video segment and convert into text.

#### 2. Learning Sheets

Learning sheet is designed to guide students to introspect and practice in group, which is the main focus of the curriculum. Actual writing from students is limited. Also, some elder students are not able to write, so the course did not include too much text requirement.

#### 3. Interviews

The researchers interviewed students after class or before class unofficially to collect class opinions from students. Three advisory committee experts of the program gave advice on course design and implementation. During the class, the advisor gave adjustment to lecturer. After the class, the advisor conducted effectiveness review and provide suggestions on future class.

#### 4. Invite Students to Express

The researchers invited students to express openly by giving speech about their self-reflection and group practice content as much as possible. In the course to conjunct with curriculum question, students are invited to give their answers, which are also recorded on text.

#### 5. Teaching Reflect Diary

Course design, interaction with students in class, and reflection in each course all recorded in reflection diary of the teacher, including course design pros and cons, effectiveness of process of class, method of continue the class and ways to revise it, to promote indigenous family education plan, revise and suggestion.

#### 6. Self-Assessment after Class

After completion of two years programs, students wrote down "Family Relationship Growth Courses Self-Assessment Scale" to evaluate their improvement of family relationship. For those who did not understand mandarin, tribal students translated and recorded their answers.

The scale is revised base on Journey to Intimacy International (2018) group members curriculum assessment, Likert Scale; the answers to each question ranged from 1 to 6 points, with 1 representing a great disagreement and 6 representing a strong agreement. In order to improve the validity of the questionnaire, the Self-Assessment was anonymous. The focus of the topic is on measuring the growth of the students' ability to deal with family relationships. The following seven questions are included:

(1) I know better how to communicate with my family

(2) I learn better how to express concerned and grateful to my family

(3) I learn better how to express my emotion and my feeling toward my family

(4) I know better how to confront family conflict

(5) This course is helpful for maintaining family relationship

(6) After this course, I have shown more concerns and feelings to my family

(7) After this course, my family relationship has improved

### Data Analysis

#### 1. Text Analysis

The Research focused on the tribal characteristics to design and continuously improve the family relationship growth course, and attaches importance to the growth of each tribe student's ability to handle family relationships after participating in this course. Therefore, whether it was from participant observation, learning sheets, interview, invitation to publish, or the texts related to the student mentioned in the teaching reflection notes, it is written in the text or the participant code was marked after the text, so that readers can easily understand.

Miles and Huberman mentioned that in qualitative research analysis, interviews or texts with clear objectives can be analyzed using "Pre-built coding", which is an inductive coding method compared to Grounded Theory (Chang, trans. 2006). The purpose of this article was the effectiveness of the implementation of the curriculum on the family relationship of the indigenous peoples in Taiwan. Therefore, two major directions, "The effect of programs design and implementation on participants" and "Effectiveness of the course on tribal students' ability to handle family relationships", were pre-built to induct the research text.

#### 2. Self-Assessment after Class

After the 12 lessons of the 2018 and 2019 of these courses, students are required to fill out the "Family Relationship Growth Courses Self-Assessment Scale". This study applies the nonparametric statistics Wilcoxon Sign Rank to test whether the participants have evaluated their "improvement of family relationships" after class, and whether there have been significant differences in the past two years.

### Ethics Issue of Indigenous People Research

According to the information of the Taiwan Aboriginal Committee on May 31, 2019, the total population of Tsou in Taiwan is 6,663. Currently, among the 16 indigenous peoples in Taiwan, the population with the sixth smallest population (Council of Indigenous Peoples, 2019, October 25).

According to the pastor of the tribal church and the principal of the tribal school, the Tsou people is naturally shy and introverted and is not good at expressing themselves. Xinmei tribe has few people and the whole tribe almost knows each other. Therefore, although the important concepts of family relations can be publicly communicated, the participants may not be willing to share their family affairs and private affairs publicly. Last year's course, although researchers tried their best to invite students to express their own reflections, they also tried to invite tribal students to share in groups, but the results were limited. Many students mostly just laughed and did nothing.

The researchers conducted family relationship courses at the Tsou

tribe, respecting students' privacy and willingness very much. Although the course invited and encourages students to express in public, we always offered alternatives for students, such as writing instead of speaking; another example, students who go home to say words of affirmation to family after class can share and receive prizes publicly, but they could also come to receive prizes privately.

During the Thanksgiving Dinner of the last class, the expert advisory committee members also respected the opinions of the students, and to the joy of everyone, the students did not need to come to stage to share lessons learned, but only had to fill in the Self-Assessment anonymously. In the same way, this research participant's background table also strives to protect participant privacy.

## Research Results

### 1. Text Analysis

This study analyzed the text from participation observations, study sheets, interviews, invitations to students for publication, and texts recorded in teaching notes to illustrate the effectiveness of this course.

#### (1) This Program Enhanced Participants' Skills and Ability to Express Love and Care

This course cooperated with the group exercise of the learning sheets and the implementation of inviting students to share their thoughts in public. It has a good learning effect. For example, in the third class, the family group or group members played each other's family. After practicing positive words with each other, the teacher in-

vited in public: Is there any student willing to share it? But since it was only the beginning of the course, the teacher added: "Don't force yourself, but if you'd like to share it, welcome!" When the teacher encouraged the students to welcome the sharing for the second time, one student raised her hand and stood up and said:

"my father in law, I heard of what he told me that make me feel so joyful. My father in law appreciate that I did not leave the family, he said, when the time my husband pass away I was young and beautiful, he said he always thought I will remarried, I am in my family, take care of my children effort, I was so touched, I have never listen to him say such word to me. (Q-widow)"

It can be seen that even under one roof every day, love cannot be felt unless the family speaks out of gratitude and praise each other. In addition to participant Q, several other students also mentioned participating in this course and learned the skills of expressing love and care (A-husband 1; M-widow; O-widow; I-husband 5) .

#### (2) This Program Improved Participants' Ability to Manage Emotions

This course is designed to include related courses to improve Emotional Intelligence, including the expression of self-perception, listening to others, and emotional regulation. During and after the course, several participants mentioned improvements in emotional management skills. For example:

". . . . . My family is when I face alcohol, and in my place , home, if the children do not go out to work, they will almost always quarrel, and then I will almost always run upstairs to rest, and then I almost When I didn't take this class, . . . , I would throw things angry, but now when I come across this, I will think of the class taught by the teacher, . . . I think of what to do . . . (M-widow) "

Some students also mentioned in their end-of-class sharing and post-assessment their favorite courses is emotional management (J-wife 5; A-husband 1) , and some mentioned them after the class they actually adjusted their mood (s H- wife 4; B-wife 1) . It can be seen that this course actually improved the student's ability of emotional management.

### (3) This Program Improved Participants' Ability to Deal with Interpersonal Relationships

The course uses simple short term lectures, including love-related scientific research study and simple common language, to explain relationship conflict and spouse conflict. Also, the course tries to guide students to analyze themselves and family members, then practice in group on how to express one self, how to listen to others, and how to repair relationships. Students have affirmed the effectiveness of the course:

"After completing the course I learned how to use communicating skill, using action and language in coincidence, express

each other feeling and repair relationship (B-wife 1)

We are race that is poor at express our self, such learning is in great help of spouse, parents, family and friends (E-husband 3)  
The part I love the most is family interaction, in the course I learned how to communicate with my family, and learn how to express my concern, for better understanding for my family. (A-husband 1)

The course gave me sense of idea..... of how important and how to face conflict (M- widow)

In parent-child relationship, I took what teacher said, to learn, slowly improve my relationship. ( P-female separation)  
.....I have learned before you do something, you have to change yourself; you must do it for good first. (O- widow)

I love this course in the part that family and friend's communication and love each other. (I- husband 5) "

In summary, participants have improved their skills of facing interpersonal conflict and practical communication skills, which not only enhance the ability to deal with family relationship but also help relationship with friends.

### *Self-Assessment Analysis*

This program was conducted in Xinmei tribe for two years with the same participants and the same af-



ter-class " Family Relationship Growth Courses Self-Assessment Scale". This study further compares the results of the two-year after-school assessment scale side by side to understand the effectiveness of the programs. In order to improve the validity of the Self-Assessment Scale, the scale is

anonymous, so it is not possible to compare the score differences between the same person's score of the two years. The average score of all the students who answered the questions is used to compare the score differences between the two years.

Table 2. The 2018 and 2019 Participants' Self-Assessment Comparison of the Item Average of Questions about "the Ability to Deal With Family Relationships"

Indicators of the increasing ability to deal with family relationship	A Spring 2018 (N=17)	B Spring 2019 (N=17)	B-A
1 I learned how to communicate with my family.	5.5	5.4	-0.1
2 I learn better how to express concerned and grateful to my family	5.4	5.6	0.2
3 I learn better how to express my emotion and my feeling toward my family	5.4	5.7	0.3
4 I know better how to confront family conflict	5.4	5.8	0.4
5 This course is helpful for maintaining family relationship	5.6	5.9	0.3
6 After this course, I have shown more concerns and feelings to my family	5.4	5.8	0.4
7 After this course, my family relationship has improved	5.5	5.9	0.4

As we can see from the above table, from 2018 to 2019, participant's self-assessment about their family relationship grew after class. Among these 7 questions, each question has an average of 5.4 or more on the 6-point scale. Except for the first question, the average score decreased by 0.1 points, the average number of other questions from 2018 to 2019, and the second year all increased compared to the first year. In other words, the students took this course for the second time and felt that they were "expressing gratitude," "expressing emotional feelings", "facing conflicts", "maintaining relationships", "number of expressions" and

"relationship improvement." It was an average of 0.3 points higher than the first year.

Does this indicate that the Tsou people's self-assessment about their family relationship growth, after they've joined the course, had "significant" increase compared to the 2018 class? We uses the Wilcoxon Sign Rank to test whether there is a significant difference in the self-assessment of handling family relationship ability between group A and group B in the above table. The results of the test are shown in the following table:

Table 3. 2018 and 2019 students self-assessment of differences in "handling family relationships" Wilcoxon Sign Rank results table

The ability to deal with family relationship	Number of indicators	Item average	Standard deviation	Z test	P
Spring 2018	7	5.46	0.08	-2.05	.040
Spring 2019	7	5.61	0.17		

As the Table indicated, the result of Wilcoxon Sign Rank can show that, The Z value was -2.22, and the significance (P value) was .027 ( $P \leq .05$ ), which was a significant difference. This means that the results in Table 3 above are statistically significant.

The researchers believe that the above results have at least two meanings: first, it directly proves the effectiveness of this program on the growth of Tsou participants; second, it supports the Taiwan Ministry of Education to encourage localized family education programs that are more than two years in aboriginal tribe. The results are worthy of reference in the future to promote education programs for indigenous families in Taiwan.

#### Discussion, Conclusions And Recommendations

##### *Effectiveness Of The Program*

(1) In terms of program design, implementation, and learning effects for participants, this course improves students' skills and abilities to express love and care, emotional management, and interpersonal relationships.

In order to achieve the effects of real life applications, this program was designed for self-reflection,

self-expression, listen to others, group exercises, and group sharing activities. Tsou people are not good at Chinese. The teacher have slowed down the pace of speaking, using simple life words to express past research results and effective research methods. They also applied easy-to-understand movies and life examples. Because people are shy and introverted, this course encourages expression but not coercion, but provides alternative ways to write it down or share it privately. The Tsou people are not accustomed to sitting for long periods of time. This course was designed for short lectures, and the activities are held in turns dynamically and statically. People are not used to attend classes at elementary schools. This course moves activities to the church.

The design and implementation of this course have successfully implemented 12 lessons in each of the two years, successfully guiding students to participate, reflect, express, listen, and share what they have learned, as well as the feelings and benefits of participating in the program. Huang (2000) and Jian (2010) both believed that family education professionals need to consider the regional characteristics of the participants before entering educational activities, so as to provide appropriate educational content and information; in the educa-

tion scene, timely adjustments should be made according to the response of the participants after the pre-set teaching content, we need to review the effectiveness of the strategies and education activities based on the feedback from the participants. This study also demonstrates the effectiveness of the curriculum, which matches the characteristics of the participants and can be modified at any time.

(2) In terms of self-assessment of participants, this program significantly improved the ability of tribal participants to handle marriage and family relationships, including "expressing gratitude," "expressing emotional feelings," "facing conflicts," "maintaining relationships," "expression Growth" and "relationship improvement."

After completing the program in 2018, the tribal participants "strongly agreed" that they had increased their ability to handle all aspects of family relations; after completing the program again in 2019, the participants considered that their "ability to handle family relations" was "significant" improvement to reach statistically significant levels. This directly proves the effectiveness of this program, and also supports the Taiwan Ministry of Education's policy of continuously subsidizing the development of indigenous ethnic family education programs for more than two years, which is necessary and effective.

The promotion of home education-related courses in Taiwan has been effective (Li, Hsiao, Chen, Teng, & Ting, 2018). However, there have been few studies on the implementation of family relationship related pro-

grams and the promotion of family education programs in aboriginal areas. This study demonstrates the effectiveness of the programs developed to promote family education in indigenous tribe.

#### *Some Suggestions To Promote Family Education In Aboriginal Tribes*

(1) It is recommended that relevant courses be promoted in the aboriginal areas, and resources of the aboriginal churches can be used.

This study confirms the role and function of tribal churches as social education institutions of indigenous peoples. Aboriginal family education programs will be more effective if they can use Aboriginal church resources to meet the needs and lifestyle of tribal people. In Australia, indigenous people local tribal churches play a significant role too. In mainstream churches, white women would be essential to the conduct of missions as personal supporters of white men's endeavors, as appropriate mentors and teachers of Indigenous women and children, and as agents in the implementation of government-initiated policies surrounding Aboriginal peoples. (Cruikshank & Grimshaw, 2019)

Jian (2010) thought the most important resource in family education is local people. From the tribe's perspective, the force behind family education are tribe promoter, tribe people, and tribe school. Just next to the Chashan tribe, a neighbor of the Xinmei tribe, Lai (2006) recorded the education work of the Chashan Church. They trained local aborigines at Sunday school and class tutors, and gath-

ered children who are idle on the road to write homework. They taught ethnic languages, ethnic culture, character education, life education, and talent learning.

So, the suggestion is that, to promote family education in indigenous area, local churches can be the location to hold programs. Only in this way can the programs meet the learning needs and daily life of the indigenous people, and improve the participation rate and effectiveness of the programs.

(2) Aboriginal schools should set up specific "family life education professionals" who are responsible for the promotion of family education in tribal schools and the connection between schools and families.

The results of the implementation of this course support the Taiwan Ministry of Education's subsidy of localized long-term education for indigenous families, which has had more in-depth results. But the tribe's deep cultivation is not easy. While potentially in strong need of relationship and parenting supports, the lessons learned from previous decades is that programs developed for non-indigenous populations are unlikely to either attract aboriginal families or be effective for those that do use them (Smyth, Hunter, Macvean, Walter, and Higgins, 2018). Therefore, it is worth investing to train local people who are enthusiastically engaged in family life education to become "family life education professionals" (Jian, 2010)

Some researchers believe that it is necessary to train school teachers to

understand the inhabitants' culture in order to help the tribal family education progress (Guo Li & Wu, 2011; Huang, 2000). However, according to the researchers' experience to promote family education in the tribe, the school teachers in the aboriginal areas did not understand family education. The Taiwanese teachers returned home during the holidays, the tribal parents were not aware, and the tribal grandparents were unable to actively communicate with the teachers. Guo Li (2011) and Yeh (2017) and others believe that the lack of connection between Taiwan's indigenous school education and family is one of the difficulties faced by indigenous family education. Therefore, it seems necessary to train tribal teachers to become qualified family education professionals of the Ministry of Education; or to hire family education professionals in tribal schools to plan and promote tribal family education.

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