

Cultural Violence against Women in Thai Films: Perspective from Multi-Sector Stakeholders

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ABSTRACT

There are many forms of violence in films regarding culturally unique factors that are expected to influence attitudes towards violence against women. The purpose of this study is to examine cultural violence against women in three films directed by a prominent Thai film director, Bhandevanov Devakula: *The Eternity*, *The Outrage*, and *Jan Dara*. A series of in-depth interviews with informants who are the stakeholders at the civil society level was conducted in Thailand. The informants were three policymakers, five academics, three non-governmental organisation (NGO) leaders, two film critics, two film directors, and a newspaper editor in Thailand. The data were analysed thematically using NVivo 10 software. The results of this study indicated that the informants identified cultural violence in the form of marriage bondage, power acceptance, cynical attitude, keeping women in customary roles, self-control, and gender bias. The cultural violence was depicted in the form of direct violence. This study also found that the stakeholders from diverse backgrounds noticed and framed the meaning of cultural violence in different ways. The significance of this study is in providing a deep understanding of the circumstances associated with cultural violence against women in Thai films that reflect the Thai context from the perspectives of stakeholders from multiple sectors. This study benefits the film industry and film classification by drawing attention to the cultural violence against women in films and thereafter minimizing it. The future researchers may extend examining cultural violence against women in terms of indirect and direct violence in Asian based films.

Keywords: *Gender violence, Thai films, films, interview, framing.*

INTRODUCTION

Violence against women is a widespread problem and human rights violation. Media is one of the factors in violence towards women because it influences attitudes (Jones, 2017, Kaul, 2012). Therefore, the media's presentation of violence against women is important to public understanding of this social issue (Morgan & Politoff, 2012). However, some cultural norms state that violence against women is natural and associated with deep-rooted beliefs and attitudes (Kaur & Garg, 2013).

Films are not only entertainment but a form of expressing national power (Kolker, 2006; Louisyapong, 2013). Films have been a popular media for over one hundred years. Television and films are filled with scenes of women being threatened, raped, beaten, tortured and killed (Emmers-Sommer, Pauley, Hanzal & Triplett, 2006). Therefore, films are one reliable source to study violence against women. Thus, Bernard-Hoverstad (2013) stated that the studies on the representation of violence on women should offer deeper analyses of the patterns of violence that are found in the form of films produced in different

countries. Therefore, a deep exploration of forms of violence towards woman in different countries is required to understand them in diverse cultures. Thailand was reported as a case study on violence against women in several reports and has been researched at the international (Corben, 2013; Iwanaga, 2008) and national (The Planned Parenthood Association of Thailand, 2013) levels. Moreover, many parties in Thailand are also worried about the rising problem of violence against women, and it is believed that the film is one of the main causes of this problem (Thairath, 2013).

However, to reduce or end violence against women requires a collective response from all stakeholders (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2014). Moreover, Morgan and Politoff (2012) stated that improving the representation of violence against women in the media needs to be addressed by engaging the perspectives on violence against women of multiple sectors of stakeholders, such as organisations, journalists, media, government sectors, and media trainers. In line with this, the study aims to explore the perspectives of all stakeholders who are involved in violence against women and media violence in Thailand. Therefore, this study explores the perspectives of film directors, film critics, film scholars, women's studies scholars, and NGOs representative, towards cultural violence on women in selected Thai films.

This study investigates Thai films directed by Bhandevanov Devakula, the award-winning director. After he stopped directing films in 1996, he made a comeback in 2009. From 2009 to 2013, there were four films directed by him that contained scenes of violence against women. Bhandevanov's films are enjoyed by large audiences both domestically and abroad. All four films received a high domestic gross revenue and net income from the international sale of the film copyright (Boonruangpanao, 2014). This study applies the framing theory to examine the cultural violence on women in the selected Thai films from the frame of stakeholders in multiple sectors.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Stakeholder

All sectors of society are required to engage in ending violence against women (United Nations Headquarters, 2012). According to The United Nations Children's Fund (2000), violence against women emphasises the need for coordinated and integrated partnerships between stakeholders at the civil society level. The stakeholders include a range of partners, like professional groups, women's groups, NGOs, the private sector, media, academia, and so on, as they ensure there is a greater responsibility on governments to eliminate violence against women and girls (The United Nations Children's Fund, 2000). In keeping with this idea, civil society brings the issue of violence against women to the fore at national and international levels (United Nations Headquarters, 2012). Moreover, Devries et al. (2011) put forth that, with multiple stakeholders involved, the most success is possible in transforming deeply rooted attitudes and behaviours and addressing factors comprising violence against women and the representation of violence on women in the media (Morgan & Politoff, 2012).

Previous studies on audiences of Thai films mostly focused on marketing factors that looked at the audiences' behaviour in watching Thai horror films. However, the perspectives of stakeholders regarding audiences' attitudes to violence against women in Thai films are not widely known. Therefore, multiple sectors of Thai stakeholders at the civil society level that work in concert with the media and violence against women were selected to take part in this research to learn about their perspectives on violence towards women in

Bhandevanov's films. This study will investigate M.L Bhandevanov's film because previous research has looked at other Thai film directors (Jakkapak, 2003; Jindawong, 2011).

Framing Study

Framing is the study of how the media tells a story that changes audiences' attitudes, and not only the issue that the media presents. For example, in a news framing study, framing provided a way to study the function of editorial news and how it influenced media reports. This will affect the content and direction of news content and either convince (or not convince) the reader to accept it (Siriwasak et al., 2013). Framing can also occur within multiple parts of the communication process, specifically the communicator, the text, the receiver, or the culture (Scheufele, 1999). Therefore, framing can also be used to identify how a film director, as a communicator, uses film texture to present something in a film's story to the audience.

The concept of media framing is at the centre of a dynamic research program in the field of communication. According to Thomas (2014), framing was important in human cognition and communication because reality itself is too multifaceted to be understood wholly. Druckman (2010) stated that frames appear in various guises, including in speech, writing, pictures, and new media. Moreover, D'Angelo (2017) stated that the communicators use a media frame, such as a written or visual message, to establish a frame to contextualise an issue to transmit to receivers by means of mediation, which are the production and distribution of print, film, and electronic mass media. Thus, a frame is a pattern or data organisation that manages several sections of information.

Framing has been described in many different ways in terms of its concept, approach, and analytical technique; however, the word *theory* is interesting (D'Angelo & Kuypers, 2010). Framing Theory was first advanced by Goffman (1974) through "frame analysis". In agreement with this, Scheufele (1999) claimed that framing can be classified with respect to the focus on media frames or audience frames. Hence, the study of media framing was carried out in several ways. For instance, the researcher might seek to determine an audience's perception and what kind of media influence it or how the process works (Scheufele, 1999). Therefore, in agreement with the proposition of the framing theory, this study intends to examine the perception of the audiences by studying the frame of cultural violence in individual-level perspectives of the stakeholders.

Cultural Violence

Cultural violence is a form of violence where aspects of culture are deeply rooted in people's faiths, the symbols of religion, ideology, language, art, etc. Cultural myths powerfully shape people's perceptions of victims and perpetrators (Campbell, 2010). It supports direct/personal violence and structural violence in that it makes it socially acceptable for so long that violence becomes the right thing to do, or at least not wrong (Galtung, 1990). According to Galtung, when we are talking about violence, it must come from two sides asking how to use violence and render it legitimate. Cultural violence is the prevailing attitude and belief that we may have been taught since childhood and that surrounds us in daily life. These are considered the scope of cultural violence adjudication, focusing on the forms and methods where all kinds of violence become justified and acceptable in society.

In the framing study, there is remarkable creativity in terms of the theoretical integration of the framing analysis (D'Angelo & Kuypers, 2010), for example, with the study of the framing analysis integrated with the gender and feminist theory (Hardin, Simpson, Whiteside & Garris, 2007) and framing studies related to media sociology connecting media production and content (Reese, 2008). Moreover, visual framing studies can add unique theoretical statements to framing analyses (Coleman, 2010). As such, this study focuses on integrating the framing study with the concept of cultural violence from the triangle of violence by Johan Galtung (Galtung, 1990) to explore cultural violence against women in the films.

According to the violence triangle by Galtung (1996), cultural violence is the form of violence where the aspects of culture are deeply rooted in the faith of the people. Cultural violence is exemplified by religion, ideology, language, art, and so on. Cultural myths powerfully shape people's perceptions of victims and perpetrators (Campbell, 2010). It supports direct violence and structural violence in that it makes it socially acceptable for so long that violence seems to become the right thing or at least not wrong (Galtung, 1990). Cultural violence relates to gender discrimination or attitudes that keep women's opportunities limited (Muthien & Combrinck, 2013). With this phenomenon, women accept violence without arguing or questioning. These are considered the scope of cultural violence adjudication, focusing on the forms and methods subjected to all kinds of violence that become righteous and acceptable in society. Galtung's model of violence also supports practitioners and theorists working with violence against women (Confortini, 2006). Along these lines, to support the framing theory, this study applies Galtung's violence model that explains or identifies cultural violence against women.

Synopsis of Films

a. The Eternity

In 1933, Yuppadee, a widow from Bangkok, a capital city in Thailand, married an old rich man. She moved to stay with him at his logging operation located deep in the forest in a small village in Thailand. In that house, she met her husband's nephew Sangmong, who graduated from Yang Kung University in Myanmar. Yuppadee and Sangmong fell in love quickly and developed an uncontrollable passion. Later, her husband discovered their secret relationship from Makhin, his former mistress who is now a housemaid. He then apprehended and handcuffed Yuppadee and Sangmong together. In the beginning, they were happy that they could stay together forever, but later they started to feel stifled and asked the husband to release them. He did not give them a key to the handcuffs but instead a gun. Yuppadee made the decision to release herself through suicide and left Sangmong to go crazy with her rotting corpse. Sangmong went insane and sometimes cried and bemoaned his sadness from the loss of his eternal love.

b. The Outrage

This Thai film is adapted from the Japanese novel *Ra Sho Mon*, written by Akutagawa Ryūnosuke. In the year 1567, at a city in the northern part of Thailand near Myanmar, there was a warlord's wife named Kamkeaw. She was a daughter of one of the housemaids in the warlord's house, and she married him. One day, while they were travelling to another city through the jungle, a bandit attacked them. He killed the warlord and raped Kamkeaw. Later, the bandit was caught. The judge brought the bandit and Kamkeaw to the judgement park and had a ritual to invite the spirit of the warlord to give testimony. Their testimonies

created confusion for the governor, who was the judge, and the people who came to listen to the judgement. The bandit admitted that he killed the warlord after raping his wife; however, the warlord's wife also confessed that she killed her husband. Nevertheless, the spirit of the warlord came to tell the story via a spiritualist. He said that he had decided to commit suicide himself for his honour. A monk who participated in the judgement wondered why everybody told different stories. Finally, he realised that the truth was that human beings attempted to present themselves in the best way; thus, we cannot judge people from their appearance.

c. Jan Dara (Jan Dara the Beginning and Jan Dara the Finale)

These two films, *Jan Dara the Beginning* and *Jan Dara the Finale*, are sequel films about the story of "Jan Dara", or Jan, a boy born into an upper-class family in 1915 in Bangkok, Thailand. His mother passed away after giving birth to him, so his father blamed Jan for that and usually punished him. *Jan Dara the beginning* is the story of when he was young until his early teenage years. His father was licentious and almost all females in his house were his sex objects, including Wad, Jan's auntie who was his mother's cousin. His father and Wad had a daughter named Keaw. Later, his father brought Boonlaung, a modern woman, to stay at the house as his wife, and she was bestowed with a status higher than Wad. Jan almost had a sexual relationship with Boonlaung because he needed the touch from his mother, stemming from his Oedipus complex (Chaochuti, 2015). At the end of this episode, his father told him that he was the son of a thief who raped his mother. Subsequently, his father expelled him from the house.

In *Jan Dara the Finale*, the sequel of this story, Jan returned to the house and married Keaw who was pregnant. To protect the family's image, Keaw needed to marry someone, and that person was Jan. Jan took this opportunity to take all properties from his father. Jan also took his father's authority and then began to imitate his behaviour. Jan Dara started molesting and violating women and had a sexual relationship with Boonlaung. Jan wanted to have his heir with Boonlaung, but she wanted to end the relationship with him. Jan was then very angry and sad, so he raped Keaw. Later, his father passed away, and Boonlaung left the house afterwards. Jan still had hope because Keaw was pregnant with his child. Nevertheless, Keaw decided to commit suicide. In the end, Jan had to live alone until the end of his life.

METHODOLOGY

The stakeholders in civil society play important roles in solving the issue of violence against women (Devries et al., 2011; United Nations Headquarters, 2012). Thus, the respondents in this study were the main stakeholders in civil society in Thailand in multiple sectors. Sixteen respondents were engaged in Chiang Mai and Bangkok, Thailand, for in-depth interviews in May and June 2015. Following an additional clarification call, the film (*The Eternity*) was sent out to them. The informants included two film directors, two film critics, three policymakers, three NGO leaders, a newspaper editor, and five academics from media studies, women's studies, film studies, religious studies, and peace studies. Each informant was asked to watch the selected films (*The Eternity*, *The Outrage*, *Jan Dara the Beginning*, and *Jan Dara the Finale*) in their own place over a period of a month. Following the viewing, in-depth interviews were conducted with each participant by the researcher. Interviews focused on the film and scenes in which there was cultural violence against women. Table 1

presents the 16 respondents of this study, whose names have been changed to letters for anonymity.

Table 1: Profile of interview respondents based on work sector, gender, age, and length of work experience.

Alias	Social Role	Gender	Years of Working
SC1	Academic	Male	16
SC2	Academic	Female	10
SC3	Academic	Male	20
SC4	Academic	Male	40
SC5	Academic	Male	9
FC1	Film critic	Male	5
FC2	Film critic	Female	20
FD1	Film director	Male	10
FD2	Film director	Male	3
PM1	Policy maker	Male	10
PM2	Policy maker	Female	35
PM3	Policy maker	Female	20
JR1	Newspaper editor	Male	20
NGO1	NGOs leader	Male	2
NGO2	NGOs leader	Female	11
NGO3	NGOs leader	Female	19

*Source: Author.

At this stage, the researcher transcribed the interview and then translated it from Thai to English. Since coding involves gathering related words or phrases mentioned by the informants or in the documents and traditionally, researchers done the coding by hand, colour pens and then cut and categorised these data (Hilal & Alabri, 2013). In order to enhance a high level of perfection and adequacy, NVivo software was used to analyse the data. Nvivo is a software package for qualitative data analysis that helps manage data and ideas, queries data, visualizes data and reports it (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). The thematic analysis finally generated cultural violence theme that is distinctive based on each film from the interview with the informants, which were: (1) cultural violence (marriage bondage, power acceptance, patriarchy system) in *The Eternity*; (2) cultural violence (cynical attitude, keep women in customary role) in *The Outrage*; and (3) cultural violence (self-control, gender bias) in *Jan Dara*. From the interviews, the researcher achieved an understanding of the perspectives of the stakeholders at the civil society level towards cultural violence against women in the selected Thai films, which is the research objective of this study.

FINDINGS

Cultural Violence in the Eternity

According to Galtung (1990), cultural violence is the aspect of culture, religion, ideology, language, art, and formal science that can be used to justify direct or structural violence. The study of cultural violence highlights the way in which direct violence and structural violence are reasonable and thus rendered acceptable in society (Galtung, 1990). Therefore, the evidence from this study's interview showed three aspects of cultural violence through *The Eternity* as indicated in Figure 1.

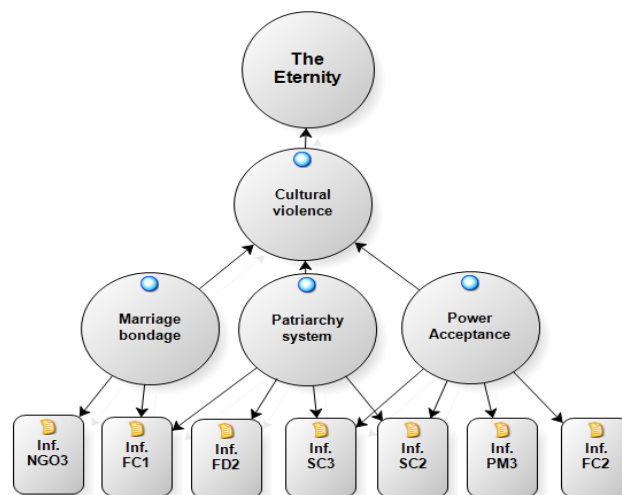


Figure 1: Thematic mapping of cultural violence in *The Eternity*.

a. Marriage bondage

According to Wall (2014), in societies, the finances and decision-making are controlled by men, making divorce difficult for women to achieve. The husband's relatives control the wife's ability to get married again, and polygamous marriage is permitted. In line with this, *The Eternity* shows scenes related to marriage bondage, as Informant FC1 said:

When women get married, it means her life has already stopped. I do not mean that I suggest women to sin, but in this film, Yuppadee chose to get married and she cannot start a new life, even if her married life is unhappy and she falls in love with another guy. It shows that when a woman has sex or gets married to a man, her life will be under him forever although she is unhappy.

Similarly, Informant NGO3 also said that 'a good wife must be patient (laughs). Marriage is based on the needs of the parent'. All the informants who made statements about marriage bondage were male, while the female informants did not mention this kind of cultural violence.

b. Power acceptance

Cultural violence makes direct and structural violence looks right or at least not wrong. According to Galtung (1990), one way cultural violence works are by shifting the ethics of an act from wrong to right or at least to accept. The shape or inculcated feelings or norms of superiority/inferiority that convince people about the way they must act, based on class, race, sex, religion, and nationality, comprise cultural violence (Hathaway, 2013). In line with this, the power acceptance that can be found in *The Eternity* is the acceptance of superiority over them. Informant SC2 said that 'cultural violence is being able to kill anyone you want. It is a culture of violence that society accepts'. Moreover, the acceptance of the inferiority of women can also be found, for instance Informant SC3 stated that 'this shows that the mind set of Makhin that determines that women must follow what the man has set. When men are not given the value of herself and she admitted that with no question'.

c. Patriarchy system

Patriarchy is about the social relations and that the beliefs of male, heterosexual dominance lie at the root of gender-based violence. Traditional culture about how to treat women is supported by patriarchy and causes violence and justifies gender inequality (Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence, 2015). According to Informant FC1:

This film tends to present that a man has power and can use this power to punish anyone. The film presents that Yuppadee is unfaithful so her husband has the right to use violence on her, and nobody can argue with him. This film would like to represent that the man (Papo) is a wise man. He believes that he knows everything, such as a couple may be in love now, but then they will separate. The film is guided that this man (Papo) is all good and also promotes the power structure or patriarchy. Man knows the truth and can be a judge. He makes a decision for the couple to be handcuffed and believes that they will not be happy. In real life, it might not be like that.

In line with this perspective, Informant SC2 also said that 'I feel like the film indirectly tells us about love tragedy, the woman can control the situation at the beginning but in the end, there is a man who controls above her'. Four of 16 informants mentioned patriarchy as cultural violence towards women, and three of those four were male informants. It may be assumed that patriarchy is clearly happens in Thai society and the males also noticed that.

Cultural Violence in the Outrage

According to Aghtaie and Gangoli (2014), culture comprises the patterns of behaviour and beliefs shared by a social group. Culture shapes the way of understanding, gives meaning to actions, and affects the perspectives towards violence. For example, in some cultures, traditional gender roles are used as a tool to disempower women. Meanwhile, based on the interviews with stakeholders, the following two sub-themes of cultural violence in *The Outrage* are indicated in Figure 2.

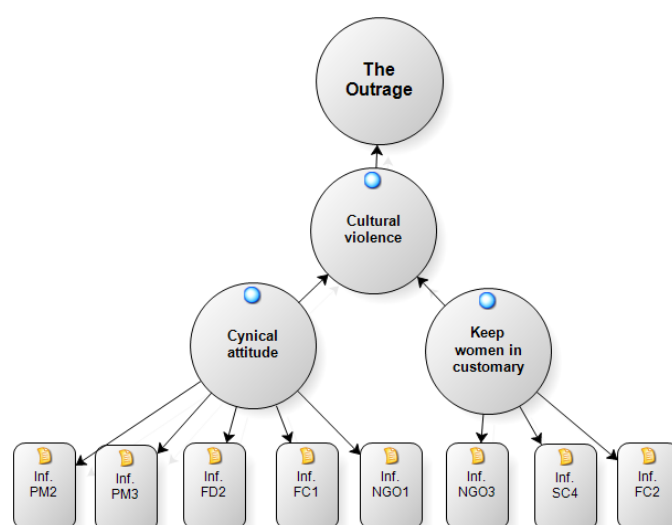


Figure 2: Thematic mapping of cultural violence in *The Outrage*.

a. Cynical attitude

According to Nagel, Matsuo, McIntyre, and Morrison (2005), the effect of rape on a woman is not limited to the act itself. There is a secondary victimisation that can cause harmful experiences to her society members, such as negative attitudes, for example, victim blaming, questioning the victim's credibility, and indicating that the victim deserved being raped. From the informants' perspectives, *The Outrage* also has scenes of negative attitudes towards victims of rape. For example, Informant FC1 and FD2 shared the same viewpoint of the scenes in which the husband (lord warrior) blames his wife (Kamkeaw, the rape victim); thus, 'in this film, even though Kamkeaw was raped by a bandit but her husband still shunned her and asked her to kill herself'.

Another type of negative attitude towards rape victims that can be found in this film is the blurred message of the presentation that the victim may enjoy being raped. Informant PM2 said:

There was clearly a rape scene but the film also shows that women feel good. The film is trying to say that women are waiting for a good feeling like that. However, in the truth, nobody wants to be raped. This film is unclear (Informant PM2).

Moreover, informants also gave their perspectives towards the attitude of women that may be a hidden message in this film. For instance, Informant FC1 argued that:

When women were raped, they will become bad women in society with no more success in life. For example, once the maid of one of heroines was raped, she became a prostitute. Actually, men raped women is a direct violence, men have power to rape women is structural violence, but women's life after being raped is cultural violence (Informant FC1).

Corroborating this view, Informant NGO1 compared the original Japanese film, *Ra Sho Mon* directed by Akira Kurosawa and the Thai adapted film, *The Outrage* by Bhandevanov (both based on *Ra Sho Mon*, written by Akutagawa Ryūnosuke). He said:

When we compare the Thai and Japanese versions of the literature, the Thai version presents that women accept men power more than the Japanese version, and there are many bias on sex issues hidden in the films in order to make the audiences think that the woman is not a good person. I think it is the culture that tries to present the neat women in order to make the audiences feel pity or present the women who are flirting so that the audiences do (Informant NGO1).

b. Keep women in customary roles

Customary norms and practices transcend people's relations including with family relations (Kamau, 2014). This worrying relates to customary practices against women in these films, which were also expressed by the stakeholders at the Thai civil society level. For example, Informant NGO3 said that 'a good wife must be patient, cannot argue with her husband. Marriage is based on the needs of the parent. A woman was attacked by the popular culture

with a forced marriage'. Similarly, Informant FC2 also stated that 'this film presents that women should be loyal with this husband. Because of her affairs with other guy, so the problem happened. The norm is women should not have physical relation with another guy, although it is rape'.

Cultural Violence in Jan Dara

Additionally, Alesina, Brioschi, and Ferrara (2016) studied cultural factor effects on violence against women and found that primitive cultures can shape contemporary attitudes and experiences towards domestic violence. The value and beliefs that violence is the ultimate form of power are maintained and supported by cultural violence; we are surrounded by it in daily life from books, movies, school, traditions, and so on (Hervás, 2015). From watching *Jan Dara*, the informants highlighted two sub-themes of cultural violence against women, which are self-control and gender bias, as indicated in Figure 3.

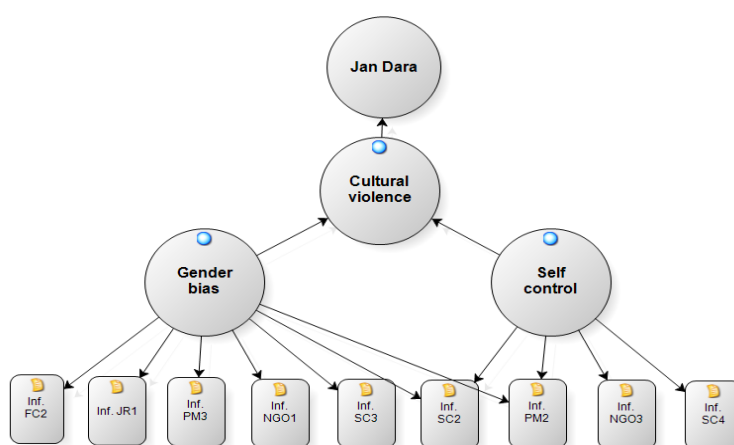


Figure 3: Thematic mapping of cultural violence in *Jan Dara*.

a. Self-control

In this film, informants stated that one instance of cultural violence against women is the myth that women must control themselves in line with cultural and social values, as Informant SC4 stated:

Jan Dara shows that both males and females have sexual desires, but the key is that the authority, which mainly men, acclaim that the women who show the sexual desire were peculiar and evil. However, men can have sexual needs, and use cultural constraints to limit that the women could not, only men can do it (Informant SC4).

In line with this, Informant PM2 explained that:

Sai Soi (one of the female housemaids) wanted to have sex then many guys came to have sex with her, this is cultural violence. She had no value because of her willingness to have sex. She is being devalued as a toy for those men. This is cultural violence that if women show her desire, she will not have value while other women who hide her lust are kept as wives (Informant PM2).

In this form of cultural violence against women, four of the informants who highlighted it were three females and one male. However, the male informant was a scholar in women's studies. It can be assumed that the cultural violence in which a woman must control herself might be noticed by a stakeholder who has knowledge or understands women's desire.

b. Gender bias

Gender bias is when people think that their own gender is better than the other. It is one of the main social problems in developing countries (Mahadevappa, 2012). Moreover, Jóhannsdóttir and Einarsdóttir (2015) said gender stereotypes of women are presented by the media; thus, relationships between media and women are a key to achieving gender equality. The media have the power to help as an agent to broadcast positive images of women through society; however, the way the media represents women sometimes help to reinforce the stereotype of women as victims, beauty contestants, and sexual objects (Lamidi, 2013). In line with this, informants of this study also emphasised gender bias presented in *Jan Dara*. For instance, Informant PM3 said that:

The film shows only one side of the female character, just know how to put red lipstick, which is the stimulus for the men erection. The films emphasise that the good woman is weak and loser... the movie show that women faced violence because of her sin. I think if we want to teach people about sin or law of karma, we can present it without sexual violence scenes (Informant PM3).

Informant SC3 also gave his opinion, saying 'the film makes the point that women have no other value by herself. It presented that the value of women belongs to men, men is the one who says she is good or bad'.

DISCUSSION

Cultural violence towards women includes marriage bondage, power acceptance, cynical attitudes, keeping women in customary roles, self-control, and gender bias, which presents the attitudes and beliefs of the male and female characters in this film. It appears that the cultural forms of violence against women in the selected Thai films are complex. According to Confortini (2006), Johan Galtung's model of violence, which explains all forms of violence regarding direct, structural, and cultural violence, offers a framework for violence that can be used for defining violence against women in the larger context of societal violence. Therefore, this study has provided findings using the concept of cultural violence in the triangle of violence by Galtung (1990) to study violence against women in films, and cultural violence may especially reflect the culture or belief in the Thailand or South-East Asian context.

One of the critical gaps that this study has responded to is what Cross (2013) highlighted, which is that the study of the invisible violence against women is necessary. Thus, this study showed that cultural violence, which is invisible violence, is harmful to women from the wider perspectives of stakeholders from multiple sectors. The concept of frames indicates that the meaning of the world is perceived by individuals based on their beliefs, experiences, and knowledge. Moreover, Scheufele (1999) explained that individual

frames influence individual perceptions of issues. Therefore, the individual-level framing process from the experiences and expertise of each stakeholder is reflected in their perspectives on cultural violence. For example, the male informant who is an expert in women's studies indicated his perception of controlling women's desire was cultural violence while the other male informants did not note this. In addition, the informant who had a background of intercultural living highlighted the cultural violence in the Thai film compared with the Japanese version of the film, which was adapted from the same novel. In addition to that, Bernard-Hoverstad (2013) stated that there is a lack of research on the framing of violence against women in films from different cultures, especially violence against women in Thai films (Siengsorn, 2014).

Consequently, the significant contribution of this study is that it provides the audiences' perspectives (which were the stakeholders in this study) to see how cultural violence on women was presented, while most of the previous research has examined media frames only in visible violence. The premise of this, how audiences understand and frame cultural violence against women in films, has been concretely examined in this study through the combination of the framing theory and the concept of cultural violence from Galtung's triangle of violence. This study will add to the body of knowledge regarding violence aimed at women in the context of Thai films.

CONCLUSION

Violence against women has been termed as (possibly) the most prevalent shameful violation of human rights (Garcia-Moreno & Watts, 2011). Undoubtedly, violence against women needs urgent corrective action because a life free from violence is a basic human right that all humans deserve. A study related to the invisible violence against women is needed (Cross, 2013). Thus, this study expands the understanding of the cultural forms of violence against women that hides in our social structure, culture, beliefs, or attitudes and supports direct violence. This research is significant for theoretical knowledge as well as for human rights.

The findings of this study provide useful information about the forms of violence on women that should be a concern for professionals or practitioners from the media as well as social workers and so on. For example, it is imperative for policymakers to be aware of how cultural forms of violence against women are reproduced in the media, especially in films. The policymakers may use the results of this study, which may lead to positive results, to manage media content or promote the concerns about watching violence in the media. Moreover, this study suggests that future researchers may extend examining cultural violence against women in terms of indirect and direct violence for popular Asian based films.

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