

Inborn Extraordinary Power: Survey of 200 Taiwan Spirit Mediums

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Abstract

Although rich and various qualitative studies of Taiwan spirit mediums have been conducted, none provides quantitative details about these observations. Therefore, the purpose of this research was to survey Taiwan spirit mediums about specific information such as age, gender, etc. A questionnaire-based quantitative approach was used to collect data from an initial 200 participants. After eliminating 43 incomplete questionnaires, 157 participants successfully entered this initial, robust research. The questionnaire included nine items: gender, age, nationality, years of experience, number of disciples, job titles, names of main deities, whether sense power was inborn, and whether sense power was acquired or trained.

Although some results contradicted previous qualitative studies, they clarified current mediums' characteristics and explored their power source. For example, the gender of approved Taiwan spirit mediums was not mostly female, as was previously considered. Additionally, the response of 47 different deities not only indicated a diversified sample, but also affirmed the trend of "Mother Deity faith" in spirit mediums. More importantly, 142 (91.7%) participants asserted that their extraordinary power was totally or possibly inborn, which demonstrates that the inborn power is an important factor in their special and irreplaceable power. This study concluded that the inborn power is a key and indispensable characteristic for Taiwan spirit mediums, and therefore brings all the psychic movement for sentient beings' wholeness of personality.

Keywords: spirit mediums, sense power, folk religion, inborn power

投稿日期：106.8.17；接受刊登日期：106.11.24；最後修訂日期：106.12.8

責任校對：林鈞桓、何維綺

先天神能： 台灣兩百位靈乩之研究報告

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摘要

關於台灣宮廟神職人員（乩童，靈乩）的學術研究，十多年來雖然已經呈現豐富且多樣的質性研究，但卻缺少統計上的量化數據。因此，本文的目的是針對台灣的靈乩，進行具體情況的田野考查以獲得有效的統計數據。研究方法是問卷的方式從最初願意參與的神職人員收集數據。問卷的基本項目包括九個：性別、年齡、國籍、辦事總年資、門徒人數、工作職稱、主神名稱、靠先天啟發的通靈能力、靠後天訓練的通靈能力。除了工作職稱與主神名稱是由靈乩自行填寫外，其餘問項皆是單選題。

回收兩百份問卷，刪除四十三份未完全填答的問卷之後，得到一百五十七份有效問卷。研究結果摘取如下：雖然靈乩的女性比率是高的，但並非以女性為主；四十七個不同的主神，不僅證明本研究樣本的多樣化，且可說明民間的蓬勃多神信仰與靈乩界的母娘信仰風潮現象。另外，高達九成認為其通靈能力

主要來自先天啟發或與先天有關，只有十五位認為其能力完全來自後天自修，這兩種類型各自隱含「上古巫的傳統」與「漢文化的修煉傳統」。

本文是關於靈乩研究的第一次實證考察，參與人數多達兩百位。本文統計結果與往昔文獻質性研究有相同也有不同。本文希冀經由嚴謹的數據支持，能釐清當代台灣靈乩界的基本特徵（例如先天神能），並闡明因這些特徵所帶來的風潮與現象。

關鍵詞：靈乩、通靈、民間信仰、先天神能