

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF A **CONFUCIAN** WELFARE REGIME

UPON **LONE MOTHERS**

IN **TAIWAN?**

Volume I

by

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MA in Social Policy

Thesis submitted to the University of Nottingham

for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

September 2001

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Acknowledgments

Many people have offered generous support and help to me in different ways during the period of studying MA and PhD in social policy and becoming a “temporary” lone mother and a full-time overseas student with my son, Yuan-Han Chen (陳元瀚), in England. Many thanks, first of all, go to Mr. Richard (Bill) Silburn, as my MA course director, and his wife Mrs. Pat Silburn for their warm friendship, hospitality, recognition of my motherhood, and particularly gracious offer of secure and free housing when my mother-only family suffered a housing crisis as a result of endless harassment and serious vandalism on the basis of racism and sexism. In response to my countless complaints against this racism and sexism, special thanks go to Ms Wong, Ching-Chu (翁金珠), an MP from the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), Professor Tien, Hung-Mao (田弘茂), the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Taiwan, and Dr. Chin-Sheng Chang (張欽盛), the Director of Cultural Division of Taiwan Representative Office based in London, for their sincere concern about my strong request for secure and safe accommodation to complete my PhD thesis.

I am indebted to Dr. Robert Page. He supervised my study in its early stages, for his inspiring and insightful suggestions, which helped to build a solid foundation for my thesis. Further thanks go to my second former supervisor, Professor Jane Lewis, for her strong criticism and comments, particularly over my poor English and Taiwanese thoughts in the middle stage of my study. I am most grateful to *Dr. Gillian Pascall*, who has worked with me continuously not only for my MA dissertation, but also for my PhD thesis from the beginning to the end. Her considerate patience for a mother daily experiencing the dilemmas of a full-time student and a sole parent abroad, great

tolerance for my Taiwanese English and my way of thinking, compassionate friendship for a foreigner, sincere feminist guidance for a younger woman, critical academic insights for a research student, and emotional encouragement to a Taiwanese feminist are much appreciated and remembered deeply in my heart. The warm hospitality from her whole family and her husband, Professor Robert Pascall, has to be mentioned and is greatly appreciated as well.

I am greatly indebted to all the 40 lone parents interviewed in my fieldwork for making time and place, saving energy, sometimes spending money, and sharing their confidential stories and their sincere friendship with me. Without their willing participation, this thesis would have remained an impossible dream. In the meantime, I would like to mention several NGOs, such as WLAW in Kaohsiung, WLAW in Taichung, OLAWF in Taipei, TLCF, MSLPAT and the Catholic Lucy Service Centre in Tainan, for their kind help in introducing potential participants during my fieldwork. My deepest thanks are also due to all my friends who helped in arranging interviews during my fieldwork in Taiwan, and sharing academic ideas, sincere companionship, and emotional support in England with me, particularly Dr. Thapin Phatcharanuruk from Thailand and Miss. Sirin Sung from South Korea. The great support of Mrs. Alison Haigh, the school postgraduate secretary, must be recorded here as well. And I also feel blessed with the Christian fellowship of the United Reformed Church (URC), Boundary Rd., Beeston. Further thanks go to Mrs. Jean Smith, Mrs. Jo Hillen and her whole family for their invaluable friendship and occasional childcare.

My personal experiences within marriage and the Confucian family were realised to my disadvantages-- my rights of independent finance, freedom of speech and moving,

marital property, marital residence, and my parental right, unprotected by Family Law. In contrast I experienced increasing housework, and unpaid care duties as a daughter-in-law/eldest sister-in-law/wife which resulted from my choice in marrying a eldest and only son. He was educated, socialised, and expected in his lifetime to continue his patrilineage via my son, as the eldest grandson, and to take responsibilities for all his family members, particularly his parents, in the Confucian patriarchal family. A motivation to “rebel” against these traditional duties of a daughter-in-law/eldest sister-in-law/ wife gradually developed in me and encouraged me my decision to pursue higher education overseas, even risking of the breakdown of my own marriage. In this case, I am particularly grateful to my husband, Mr. Kuei-Ke Chen (陳貴德), as a lawyer, for his generous financial support, legal concern and action against the above-mentioned racism and sexism, sincere help for some of my participants in needs of legal consultation, helpful search and supply of official data regarding lone parents with a great assistance from a number of his colleagues, and his unexpected tolerance for a “rebellious” wife who has always had to go her own way and to develop her own career.

Following this, I am extremely grateful to my maternal family, including my elder sister, Lee, Ming-Chu (李明珠), my youngest sister, Lee, Ming-Huie (李明慧) and my elder brother, Lee, Ming-Si (李明識) and my own parents for their continuing sincere concern and persistent support in many ways with childcare, childrearing, housing loan and so on. Particularly, my mother has been extremely patient with my strong independent will and very tolerant to my disobedient character since my childhood. And after marrying “me” out of my natal family, she still provided 24-hour childcare for my son for 3 years after his birth and encouraged me to pursue my PhD course without hesitation. My personal thanks also go to my two sisters for their

financial contribution from their paid work at an early age into the family pool to make my BA possible. In addition, another special memory of my eldest brother, Lee, Ming-Gieng (李明俊), passed away in 1985, has to be mentioned for his devoted commitment and sacrifice of his own well-being, due to his status of the eldest son and brother in the poor family living in the countryside.

As a feminist Christian, I also feel thankful to my God/Goddess, whom I believe to stand always with the powerless and against any forms of oppression resulting from class, race, sex and culture segregation.

My sweetest appreciations go to my son, Mr. Yuan-Han Chen (陳元瀚), for his inevitable companionship, pretty happiness, adventurous experiences, and his vivid point of views of the world with me alone in Europe. Finally, I would like to identify myself in my mother tongue as "*Li, Bêng-Giók*", which was given to me by my Hoh-Lo speaking parents since birth. It was rejected by the Chinese-Nationalist-Party-led Ministry of Foreign Affairs and instead my current Chinese name of "Lee, Ming-Yu" was imposed upon my official identity and documents when I applied for my passport for the first time in 1988. In this thesis I would like to be known as my Hoh-Lo identity of "*Li, Bêng-Giók*" as well as my Chinese name of "Lee, Ming-Yu"(李明玉).

Abstract

This study explores the impact of a Confucian Welfare Regime upon lone mothers in Taiwan, where the family is promoted as the major welfare provider for individuals. Since the 1980s, politicians and welfare scholars --whether New Right or Third-Way-- in the West, particularly in the UK, have been very keen to draw lessons from the Confucian Welfare Model in East Asia. The characteristics of this welfare regime are categorised as “*conservative corporatism without Western-style worker participation, solidarity without equality, laissez-faire without libertarianism, far too much social control but too little citizenship, far too little state intervention in welfare provision but too much familial welfare responsibilities*”(e.g., Jones 1993). The Confucian Welfare State is in fact much deeply familialised, and the family is “*the super-major welfare provider*” compared to Western welfare states. This thesis will examine the Confucian Welfare Regime from the point of views of gender, and will argue that its distinctive fractures cannot be understood within existing Western comparative typologies and have not been adequately analysed in East Asian studies.

How do lone mothers meet their needs within this deeply familialised welfare regime in comparison with lone fathers? In search of an answer, a qualitative approach, a feminist perspective and an East Asian standpoint were employed to conduct this study in the form of semi-structured interviews in the Taiwanese Confucian social context. The participants included 30 lone mothers and 10 lone fathers with unmarried dependent children undertaking full-time education.

The situation of lone parents in combining unpaid care work and paid work makes them a strong case for understanding the gendering of welfare regimes in the West

and in East Asia. Thus the Mother-Worker-Family-Outsider Welfare Regime is created on the basis of women's status as lifetime family outsiders in the Taiwanese social context. An understanding of this specific Confucian cultural arena is essential if we are to appreciate the situation of lone mothers—and its difference from that of lone fathers—in Taiwan.

The main findings of this study confirm that the deeply familialised welfare provision affects women and men differently under the Generation-Age-Gender hierarchy of the Confucian family. The family, as the main welfare provider, is more likely to be effective for lone fathers, who are provided with more accessible childcare, childrearing, housework services, housing, financial investment and resources. They also benefit more from this familial provision to support their continuous employment experience, better career prospects and better entitlement to employment protection. But, in contrast, for the lone mothers in this study, the Confucian family is more likely to be the centre of care responsibilities for young and old, the heart of endless unpaid housework, the battlefield of domestic confrontations and sexual harassment, and the altar of sacrifice of individual well-being. The failure of the family in welfare provision also worsens the situation of lone mothers in the labour market in terms of interrupted career, low wages, lower position in occupational hierarchy, more dead-end jobs, and more part-time work, and no or less employment protection. As a consequence of these inequalities the solutions for lone mothers are very different from those for lone fathers in this study. Thus, lone fathers see the reconstitution of the family via remarriage as their best solution. The retreat from marriage and the family is preferred by most lone mothers, who maintain their current status permanently. And the strategies of improving their human capital via more advanced education, establishing self-employed small business and undertaking extra part-time

jobs with full-time work are adopted in order to combine mothering and rice-winning. These disadvantages experienced by lone mothers, seldom by lone fathers, have to be taken seriously into account in response to lone mothers' hopes of being equal and permanent lone parents, fully protected workers and full individual citizens. Therefore, the Mother-Worker-Family-Outsider Welfare Model needs to be transformed into the Parent-Worker-Full-Individual-Citizen Welfare Model based on the notion of "full individual citizens as parents and workers" instead of "family outsiders as selectively protected workers and non-recognised parents", by shifting welfare responsibilities from the family and the market onto the State.

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Glossary of Abbreviated Terms or Organizations

BCA: The Construction and Planning Administration of the Ministry of Interior

CLSC: Catholic Lucy Service Centre in Tainan, Taiwan

DPP: Democratic Progressive Party

DSA: The Department of Social Affairs of the Ministry of Interior

KMT: Koumintang, the Chinese Nationalist Party

MOE: The Ministry of Education

MOI: The Ministry of Interior

MSLPAT: Mutually-Support Lone Parent Association in Taipei, Taiwan

OLOAWF: One-Leaf Orchid Association for Widowed Family (in Taipei)

PCT: Presbyterian Church in Taiwan

ROC: The Republic of China on Taiwan

SPEF: The Single-Parent Educational Foundation

TLCF: Taipei Li-Hsin Charity Foundation

TWDC: Taipei Women's Development Centre

WLAW in Taipei: The Warm Life Association for Women in Taipei

WLAW in Taichung: The Warm Life Association for Women in Taichung

WLAW in Kaohsiung: The Warm Life Association for Women in Kaohsiung

The Terminology in the Present Study

Rice-winner instead of breadwinner, when referring only to Taiwan context;

Bread/rice-winner instead of breadwinner or rice-winner, when referring to Taiwan and Western countries both together

Houseless¹ instead of homeless

Natal family or Maternal family (Niang-Chia 娘家) only referring to the family/home of a married-out daughter

Mother-in-law's home/family (Po-Chia 婆家) only referring to the family/home of a married-in- daughter-in-law's husband

¹ The houseless in Taiwan does not mean the homeless living on the street in Britain. The reasons for not adopting the Western term of "homeless" are expressed in the following aspects: (1) the houseless movement for the decent housing price and rent. In 1980s, the houseless movement, namely "shellless snail movement" in Taiwan, has emerged along with other social movements, calling for a reasonable and decent housing price to rent or to buy. All these people have a proper "home", but more likely cannot afford to rent or buy a house or apartment in Taiwan. For details about social movements in 1980s, see Ngo, Tak-wing (1993), 'Civil Society and Political Liberalization in Taiwan', *Bulletin of Concern Asian Scholars*, vol.25, No.1, pp.3-15; (2) The sense of how people in Taiwan conceive a "Home" is different from that of those in Western countries. After marriage, a home consisting of a nuclear family is the couple's own home, but at the same time, the family of origin is continuously identified as their own "home", too. As a married woman, I not only identify the family consisting of my husband, my son and myself as "my home", but also the family of my origin as "my home" as well.

Introduction

The key concern of this study is “*what is the impact of a Confucian Welfare Regime upon lone mothers in Taiwan?*” Social Policy in Taiwan has been dominated for 55 years by the Kuomintang (hereafter KMT)¹. The KMT has emphasised--explicitly and implicitly--the role of the Confucian family as the primary provider of welfare, with the state and voluntary agencies taking much smaller roles. But how do lone mothers experience state social provision? Can they really depend on the family as the main welfare provider, as the KMT state has always presumed? How are lone mothers affected by the Confucian character of both state and family in Taiwan? The conflicts and constraints in the daily lives of lone mothers, in terms of unpaid care work for children and elderly, their access to income through paid work, and access to housing will be explored--in contrast with the experience of lone fathers--to understand the experience of lone motherhood in a Confucian welfare regime, and how different from experiences described in western studies. The research will also ask about lone mothers own solutions to their dilemmas and difficulties. Do they want to return to

¹ Koumintang is also named the Chinese Nationalist Party. Following defeat of its party and army in the Chinese civil war in 1949, the KMT regime fled to Taiwan, where it had monopolised high political posts, and dominated the mighty military machine, excluding “local” Taiwanese from leadership posts. Since then, Taiwan had been ruled under the martial law until it was lifted on 15th July 1987, and had been ruled by KMT party until Chen, Shui-bian, a Taiwanese from the Democratic Progressive Party (hereafter DPP), was elected as a president in March 2000 to end its 55-years-long rule.

the family via remarriage? Or do they have other solutions to their dilemmas?

As many scholars have pointed out, social policies in Newly Industrialised Countries (NICs), including Taiwan, have mainly been seen as a welfare system of family obligation along with minimum state intervention in welfare provision (Chow 1985/86; Midgley 1986; Jones 1990, 1993; MacPherson 1993; Goodman and Peng 1996; Goodman et al. 1997; Ku 1997; Kwon 1998). As Ku (1995a & b, 1997) argues, neither citizenship nor welfare needs are the concern of Taiwanese social policies. On the contrary, individual duty and family obligation have been constantly emphasized in Confucian welfare states (Wah 1991). Within such a Confucian context, it is assumed by the KMT welfare state that lone parents should have their needs met within their family, which has always been "*the fundamental provider of economic and social security for the individual*" (Gallin 1990:183-84).

However, some Western feminists argue that the family is identified as a key site of male power over women on the basis of the conjugal relationship between a wage-earning husband and a wholly dependent wife (Safilios-Rothschild 1969, 1970; Gillespie 1971; Walby 1990; Pascall 1997). The result of such uneven power has been unequal access to family resources between husband and wife in a Western social

context (Edwards 1981; Brannen and Wilson 1987; Davis and Joshi 1994). In Taiwan, this inequality can exist, not only between man and woman, but also between son and daughter and can vary according to age and generation. This is because family power in a Confucian society is constructed on the basis of not only sex but also age and generation (Baker 1979; Lee 1988; Hu 1995). The Western feminist view of gendered power between a male breadwinner and a dependent wife is too simplified to apply to a Confucian family, where all three determinants-sex, age and generation-are intertwined together in affecting the extent of Confucian familial welfare accessible by lone parents within the Taiwanese context. Four areas need to be closely looked at below so as to understand how lone mothers may be affected within a Confucian Welfare Regime differently from lone fathers in the same context and their counterparts in the Western context.

1. Lone Parents in the Confucian State on Taiwan

In Taiwan, lone parents have not reached the top of the political agenda, in contrast to their counterparts in Western countries, whose situation is well documented in an enormous Western literature (e.g., the Labour Party Manifesto 1997; Lewis 1997a; Strell and Duncan 2001; Knijn and Van Wel 2001). The explanations for the

marginalized status of lone parents on the political agenda are the KMT state's neglect of citizenship, particularly social rights of lone parents in Taiwan. This neglect has to be understood in the wider social context of Taiwan in the following ways:

(1) The Powerless Among the Powerless

The long-term political neglect of lone parents' well-being is closely related to their "frozen" citizenship and particularly their social rights, although these appear to have been guaranteed by Articles 155, 156 and 157 of the KMT's Constitution since 1947 (Lin 1995; Ku 1995a & b, 1997; Goodman and Peng 1996; Lin et al. 1998).

Particularly, social rights for women and children are declared in Article 156: "*The State, in order to consolidate the foundation of national existence and development, shall protect motherhood and carry out the policy of promoting the welfare of women and children*" (Lin et al. 1998). Unfortunately, such rights were "frozen" under Temporary Provisions² since 1949, until the lifting of martial law³ 1987. As Giddens' critiques of Marshall's theory of citizenship, Marshall failed to "*emphasize*

² During the days of the civil war with the Chinese Communist, the KMT government amended the constitution in order to give President Chiang Kai-shek the power of proclaiming martial law. The amendment came to be known as the Temporary Provisions.

³ On May 19, 1949, the KMT government led by Chiang Kai-shek imposed martial law over Taiwan. This "State of Emergency" had remained in effect on Taiwan until July 15, 1987 (Cohen 1988:14).

that citizen rights have been achieved in substantial degree only through struggle”

(Giddens 1982: 171). These struggles for citizen rights and better well-being in Taiwan have been demonstrated clearly in numerous works (e.g., Cohen 1988; Hsu and Song 1990; Hsiao 1992a & b; Ku 1995b, 1997; Shambaugh 1998; Tsang and Tien 1999; Aspalter 2001). Involved in such democratic struggles, the feminist movement, initially led by Annette Lu⁴, emerged in the 1970s calling for legal reforms, including Family Law Reform, citizen rights and better welfare policies for women (Ku 1989).

Under martial law, neither political parties nor non-government organizations of any sort, for example women's groups⁵, were allowed by the 1943 Civic Bodies

⁴ Lu, Hsiun-lien (Annette Lu 呂秀蓮), born in 1944, studied law at the National Taiwan University from 1964 to 1969. In 1971 she received her Master's degree on comparative law from the University of Illinois and returned to Taiwan to see her widowed mother before pursuing her Ph.D. However, at her mother's insistence, she stayed in Taiwan and worked as a section chief in the Commission of Laws on Regulations of the Executive Yuan. In 1971-1972, two incidents occurred regarding women: (1) the protection of men against competition from women in the joint university-entrance examination; (2) the overwhelming sympathy shown to a man who murdered his wife under the suspicion that she was unfaithful to him. Lu defended fair competition in the examination between the sexes and demanded an unbiased trial for the murderer; this generated much debate and discussion about inequality between the sexes and evoked the feminist movement in Taiwan. Unfortunately, Taiwan had been dominated by a martial law suppressing freedom of speech and the right to organize until 1987 when the 38-year-old Emergency Decree was lifted. Thus Lu was under the constant surveillance by the secret police of the Chinese Nationalist state. In 1978, after receiving another master's degree in law, she returned to Taiwan, took part in the National Assembly election, joined the political opposition and became one of its leaders. In December 1979, she also participated in the Kaohsiung Incident, also called the Formosa Incident, which was a demonstration for human rights by opponents of the KMT. Eight of the leaders, including Lu, received sentences of twelve years to life for sedition. Her participation in political opposition and subsequent imprisonment had a strong negative impact upon the feminist movement; women became reluctant passive to get involved in political issues for decades. In 1985, Lu was released; in 1987 she stood in the Parliamentary elections again (the Legislative Yuan). She was elected as a two-term Member of Parliament. In March 1997, she was elected Magistrate of Taoyuan County. In November of the same year, she was re-elected and served as Magistrate of Taoyuan County until May 2000, after which she was elected as Vice President of Taiwan. For further details, see *Free China Journal*, 21st March, 1997 and 28th November, 1997; Lu (1997).

⁵ Lu and her supporters were turned down by the KMT-controlled Taipei Metropolitan City Government citing the act, (the 1943 Civic Bodies Organization Law), in their applications to establish a Contemporary Women's Association in 1972. At that time, the first unspecified reason for banning the registration of new women's groups might have been to prevent them from forming a collective

Organization Law⁶, except for KMT affiliated women's groups⁷. These political and social controls by the KMT Party State encountered serious challenges from democratic and social movements, which rapidly emerged in the early 1980s, and were launched by farmers, workers, aborigines, environmentalists, students and feminists for their citizenship and better welfare policies. Results of these democratic struggles included the passage and/or revision of several welfare acts respectively, for example: The Welfare Act for the Aged and The Welfare Act for *the Disabled*⁸ in 1980, the *Labour Standard Law*⁹ in 1984, *the Youth Welfare Act*¹⁰ in

pressure group and running for the seats reserved for women's groups in the National Assembly. Since 1949, all such seats had been occupied by members of the Taiwan Provincial Women's Association. At the end of 1991, the long-serving members of the National Assembly, elected in China, retired under the Law on the Voluntary Retirement of Senior Parliamentarians passed in 1989. The second reason for banning any establishment of women's groups might have been related to the KMT government's retreat to Taiwan. In the 1920, its rule in China was radically challenged from Anti-Confucianism, communism, and feminism, which had crystallized in the May Fourth Movement. Thus, during its rule in Taiwan, it continued its coherent policies promoting Confucianism, Anti-Communism and Anti-feminism in order to maintain its power in Taiwan forever. For further details, see Diamond (1975) and Cohen (1988).

⁶The Wartime Civic Bodies Organizations Law, promulgated during the Second World War (1943), permitted only one organization of one type in one jurisdictional area, until 1989 when the Legislative Yuan passed the Law on Civic Organizations, effectively opening the door to the formation of private, non-governmental organizations of all sorts.

⁷ The Kuomintang women's groups are mainly: (1) The Chinese Women's anti-Aggression League, founded by Madame Chiang Soong Mei-lin in 1950, is providing training courses in homemaking, child-care and technical skills and some social relief to the poor, the needy and the military personnel; (2) Taiwan Provincial Women's Association founded in 1946 provided educational courses to women, particularly in rural areas in order to train them in domestic skills and also offered employment and family counselling services; (3) the KMT Women's Department, for its female party members and thus an elite group, held as its goal the safeguarding of women's rights and interest and helping women to become good housewives and citizens; It encouraged women to engage in social and wartime services on a voluntary basis. All these three groups were critically challenged by the newly rising of feminist and democratic movements in 1980s and no longer could monopolise all the national resources for women. Particularly, in response to the challenges from Women's Development Department of DPP, promoting women's rights, feminist and female political participation, the KMT Women's Department become more active than before in promoting women's right. In the past, all these three groups only promoted Confucian value for women to be submissive housewives, good mothers and obedient citizens in order to keep its party in the power forever. For further details, see Shreir (eds.) (1988), Diamond (1975), and Cohen (1988)

⁸ In 1980, these two Welfare Acts, the Social Assistance Law and Insurance for Teaching and

1989, the *Children's Welfare Law Revision*¹¹ in 1993, and the *National Health Insurance Law* in 1994. Currently, the *Unemployment Act* and the *National Pension Act* have been proposed, and remain the top debates on the political and social agenda.

Unfortunately as Crompton (1998) in respect of the UK argues, "*The rights of social citizenship, in particular, were modelled on patriarchal family structures... therefore, there have also been struggles on behalf of excluded groups such as women*" (p.200).

For example, the revised Children's Welfare Law prohibits parents from leaving children under the age of six unattended. The ideology of such an act is still grounded

Administrative staff in Private Schools were passed together in response to the political crisis caused by the Kaohsiung Incident in 1979. Furthermore, the Welfare Act for the Handicapped was once revised in 1990. Kaohsiung Incident is also called "Formosa Event", occurring in Kaohsiung, the second biggest city located in the South of Taiwan. After US terminated diplomatic tie with the KMT Government led by Chiang, Ching-kuo, at the end of 1978. On Human Rights Day (December 1979), the Taiwanese political leaders of the opposition group against the Chinese-mainlanders KMT's rule demonstrated for the basic human rights, such as the right to assemble, to speak etc. Actually, this political protest "violated" the martial law, under which Taiwan was ruled by the minority Chinese-mainlander over 40 years until the martial law lifted up in 1987 and Chen, Shui-bian, a DDP candidate, won the presidential election in March, 2000. All the eight political leaders, including Lu, Hsiun-lien, Shih, Ming-te and so on, were arrested and sentenced from twelve years to life imprisonment for sedition. Therefore, the Formosa incident and the 2-28 incident has been marked as "the two landmark events" in the history of Taiwan's democratisation, rapidly emerging in the late of 1980s. For further details, see *Free China Review*, Vol.47, No.7 July 1997, pp.13-16, & 21-22; Lu (1997).

The 2-28 incident was a clash between local Taiwanese and the newly arrived the Chinese-mainlander KMT government on 28th February, 1947 that eventually left thousands of local Taiwanese dead or wounded.

⁹ The response from the KMT government to the labour movement in 1984 was the passage of the Labour Standard Law in 1984. The act was revised once in 1990 to extend its coverage.

¹⁰ The passage of the Juvenile Welfare Act was a response to the feminist movement calling for the protection of female teenage prostitutes in 1987 and 1989. Meanwhile, it was the first time for the diverse NGOs from women's groups, church and human rights groups to form a coalition and demonstrate over women's issues. Five years later, it was revised in 1993. See Ku(1989), 'The Feminist Movement in Taiwan, 1972-1987', *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, Vol.21, No.1, pp.12-22., and Yu(1994), 'Women Activities and Legal Status of Women of the 1980s and 1990s in Taiwan: A Historical Retrospect', paper presented at the *East Asian Women's Forum*, 20-30 October, 1994, Enoshima Island, Japan.

¹¹ The Children's Welfare Law was promulgated in 1973.

on Confucian patriarchal family structure, traditionally consisting of two parents with children and often with patrilineal grandparents, whereby mothers are considered the primary child- and elderly-carers. Further burdens have been placed on lone mothers as workers and child-carers through an addition to this Act, which states that those parents in violation of the Act must attend a minimum of four hours at a parental responsibility course; the parents will be charged fines of between US\$ 44 and US\$ 222 in the case of their refusal to attend the classes. The special needs of lone mothers have yet to be recognised. Furthermore, the *Equal Employment Act*¹² has waited a decade and has still not been ratified in the Legislative Yuan¹³. Currently, *Family Law* (see Appendix 0.1) has been reformed in a piecemeal fashion, one act at a time. However, the aforementioned Acts are vital for women in terms of childcare, matrimonial residence, income, employment and marriage when they become lone mothers. Empowerment of lone mothers who are struggling for their citizenship is critically decided by the formation of their collective power and pressure by themselves and for themselves. The long-term neglect of social policies for lone parents in Taiwan is in fact very closely linked to their citizenship, which had been

¹² The drafted Equal Employment Act was proposed firstly by an "Equal employment Act Drafting Committee" established by the Awakening Foundation. In April 1990, a draft was handed into the Legislative Yuan for formal discussion and its passage. For further details, see Yu (1994), 'Women Activities and Legal Status of Women of the 1980s and the 1990s in Taiwan: A Historical Retrospect', paper presented at the East Asian Women's Forum October 20-30, 1994, Enoshima Island, Japan

¹³ Legislative Yuan means Parliament in the West.

“invalid” under martial law over four decades.

(2) Low Social Expenditure for Lone Parent Families

“Frozen” citizenship and particularly “invalid” social rights of lone parents by the authoritarian KMT state have been realised in practice in extremely low social expenditure for this group. Taiwanese scholars indicate that for five consecutive decades, approximately, 0.5 per cent of the whole population has received social assistance, namely Low-Income Family Allowance (Chan 1983; Chang and Lin 1984; Hsu et al. 1989; Lin and Ku 1991; Ku 1995a & b, 1997, 1998). Meanwhile, for example, the cost of social expenditure for the poor represented only 0.8 per cent of the 1999 whole national budget¹⁴, whereas, Ku (1995a: 355-357) strongly argues, the poor and the rest of the disadvantaged, such as women, disabled and others, cost about 3 per cent of welfare expenditure in total. The exact amount of welfare expenditure on lone parents is unknown in the Confucian Welfare State of Taiwan. But it seems likely that low-income lone parents will receive even less than this.

¹⁴ In the fiscal year 1999, the Taiwan Central government spent 12.4 percent of its total expenditures on what is broadly defined as “social welfare”, a budget heading that includes social insurance expenses (6.2 percent), social relief expenses (0.8 percent), welfare services (4.9 percent), national employment expenses (0.1 percent) and medical care expenses (0.4 percent). See <http://www.gio.gov.tw/info/books2000/ch19-1.htm>.

Another study echoes the above radical inequality, showing that an even smaller amount (0.1%) of the budget is spent on women, whereas each female in the Taiwanese Confucian Welfare State enjoyed only NT\$19¹⁵ in the fiscal year 1996 (Liberty Post 1995; Fu 1995a; <http://Taiwan.yam.org/womenweb/st/98e/e-welfare.htm>). This implies clearly that the cost of welfare expenditure for lone parent families would be much less than that, even though it remains unknown. Therefore it is hardly possible for lone parents in Taiwan, unlike their counterparts in the Mother-Carer-Citizen Welfare model, to have a welfare right to “choose” state dependency in lieu of a paid job in order to care for their children at home, Nor, unlike their counterparts in the Parent-Worker-Citizen Welfare regime can they be provided with high quality childcare in combination with paid work and unpaid care work along with universal State benefits, such as child benefits and parental leave benefits for child-rearing and care of sick children (Strell and Duncan 2001). In fact, they do not have the alternative of depending on social assistance, which is too little to support them and too restricted in coverage, but need to rely on the family, market or voluntary agencies because of the lack of a comprehensive or universal system of social support for lone parents on the basis of “citizenship” in Taiwan. Furthermore, this extremely low cost exactly reflects the fact that the well-being of lone parent

¹⁵ NT\$ means New Taiwan Dollars, a currency used in Taiwan after the KMT government retreated from China and has issued this currency there since 1949.

families has been long neglected by the KMT government. From 1949 until it lost power in May 2000 this government always prioritised economic growth over welfare development and located basic social support within the family, but not as public obligation. Meanwhile, the unknown amount of welfare expenditure on this specific group mirrors a social phenomenon that the voices of this group have never been heard or taken seriously. However, earlier in 1989 Ramsay Leung-hay Shu, made strong attempts to convince the KMT government “*to rectify for past neglect, it is fair to divert portions of government monies from, say, national defence to the cause of single parent families.*” (Shu 1989:141). Still nothing has been done to improve the welfare of lone parents in Taiwan.

(3) The Lack of National Social Policies for Lone Mothers

The extremely low cost of welfare expenditure not only mirrors exactly the powerlessness of lone parents but also reflects the lack of national social policies for this specific group in the KMT state. However, following the end of martial law, there was a rapid growth of NGOs, including women's groups, likened to “that of bamboo shoots after spring showers”, which demanded a variety of welfare provisions from the State (Copper 1991; Ngo 1993). In the middle of the 1990s, several NGOs for

lone parent families were established one by one (see Appendix 0.2). Because no national coalition of pressure groups has been formed to struggle for lone parents' welfare, the response from the state is therefore localized, and depends on whether or not local women's groups have ever taken any action for their welfare. Under pressure from women's groups based in Taipei, the first official response to the needs of the lone parent family was from Taipei Metropolitan City Government led by Chen, Shui-bian¹⁶, the DPP candidate, who won a major victory for pro-welfare issues in Taipei City in 1994. The government commissioned the Warm Life Association for Women (WLAW) in Taipei¹⁷ to establish the *Lone Parent Family Centre* (LPFC) for lone parents in March 1996. Under competition from DPP-led Taipei City government and pressure from local women's groups such as WLAW in Kaohsiung¹⁸ demanding better welfare provisions for lone parents, the passage of the "*Measure to Support Lone Parent Families*" in Kaohsiung Metropolitan City was made possible (Lee 1997a & b; Tsau 1997; Wang 1997; Wang 1997)

¹⁶ Mr.Chen, Shui-bian, was a defence legislator for years. During his election campaign for Tainan County Magistrate, his wife, Ms. Wu, Shu-jen was run over by a truck in a politically inspired attack in the 1980s and since then has been confined to a wheel chair. From December 1994 to December 1998, he was the first one from the DPP defeating KMT candidate to serve as Major of Taipei Metropolitan City. Currently, he has been elected as Taiwan President, whose victory had ended over 50 years of the rule of KMT since 1945.

¹⁷ The Warm Life Association for Women(WLAW) was set up in 1988 and registered at the Bureau of social Affair of Taipei Metropolitan city Government. In reality, this voluntary agency is mainly concerned about the well-being of divorced women themselves and also has taken part in feminist campaign for Family Law Reform.

¹⁸ WLAW in Kaohsiung was set up in August 1991.

As a result of the 1980 *Social Assistance Law*, which designates local authorities as major providers of social assistance for low-income people, there is great inequality of welfare provision for lone parents, varying among localities, based on various administrative levels of local authorities. In the two richest cities cited above, a better structured welfare network offers better support measures for lone parents than the others. But it is very clear that the lack of national social policies for lone parents has remained the same as before.

Eventually, the lack of national social policies parallels the extremely low cost of welfare expenditure for lone parents, and also the Confucian government's neglect of the well-being of lone parent families who have just begun to learn how to implement their citizenship since the beginning of the 1990s. All these circumstances have inspired me to look at the situation of lone parents, the impact of these policies on them, and the way they coped within the Confucian Welfare Regime in Taiwan.

Chapter One describes the general picture of lone parent families in the Taiwan Confucian context in terms of their composition, trends and invisibility in political agenda. Following this, Chapter One continues to illustrate the ideology and reality of

the KMT's social policies until March 2000 and explain the great impact of extremely low social expenditure upon lone parent families in the Taiwanese context due to the assumption of the family as the centre of its social welfare provision.

2. Lone Mothers in the Confucian Family

Secondly, we should examine the Confucian family carefully. The Confucian family has been assumed by the KMT state to be the main welfare provider, because the state has recognised each individual only as “a family member” instead of “an individual citizen”. Lone parents are presumed to have equal access to decision-making power, economic investment, financial resources and properties within the family and also to benefit equally from it. As a result, “Confucian values”, such as “filial piety and fraternal love”, via the education system have been used as a tool to emphasise constantly the individual family member's duty and family obligation of care and support for the young, the old, one-parent families, and other disadvantaged groups in order to guarantee individuals that their welfare needs will be met within the family. This recognition of “family members” is more likely to be a myth for lone mothers in the Confucian family because of the KMT's blindness to the Generation-Age-Gender hierarchy within the Confucian family. There has been a consequent blindness, which

results from their lifetime exclusion from “permanent family membership”, and the different impacts of the Confucian families upon lone mothers and lone fathers. Chapter Two is an attempt to critically analyse the assumption of the family as the primary provider of welfare.

Lone mothers are presumed by the KMT State to be full members of their family, like lone fathers, but their situation is in sharp contrast to their counterparts, viewed as “parent-worker-citizens” in the Parent-Worker-Citizen Welfare model or as “mother-carer-citizens” in the Mother-Carer-Citizen Welfare model in European countries. The Confucian family is critically analysed in terms of the family dynamic based on father-son kinship, of the family power structure under the Generation-Age-Gender dimensions, and of the family investigation and distribution of resources. As a result, it is argued: first, lone mothers as daughters are viewed as “temporary family members within their maternal families” and second, lone mothers as wives/daughters-in-law, are regarded as “strangers within their mother-in-law’s families”. Lone mothers as women do not belong anywhere within the Confucian family, but are seen rather as “permanent family outsiders”. Thus a new welfare typology, namely the Mother-Worker-Family-Outsider Welfare Model, is built upon their status of being family outsiders in order to contextualise lone mothers into the

Taiwanese Welfare State, where the Confucian family is assumed to meet their needs.

But can lone mothers in their daily lives meet their needs within the Confucian family as the KMT State has always presumed? In order to search for an answer, a qualitative approach from a feminist perspective and a Confucian standpoint is adopted to conduct the present study in the form of semi-structured interviews.

A number of studies have focused on lone parent households in Taiwan and adopted either a quantitative approach or a gender-blind approach or culture-neutral perspective. Few studies have been conducted combining qualitative and feminist methods from an East-Asian perspective. None of them has explored the impact of the Confucian welfare system upon lone parents or lone mothers in Taiwan. Gender-neutrality and Confucian-specific-culture-blindness remain among Taiwanese mainstream social policy studies. As Western literature points out, women primarily head lone parent families in Western nations. This situation has emerged in Taiwan also. Particularly after Article 1051, which automatically gave the father custody in the case of divorce, was struck from the Civil Code very late in September 1996, it seems likely that the number of lone mothers will be increasing more rapidly than before. Until then married women were not granted equal rights to obtain children's

custody in case of divorce. Lone fathers are more likely to end their lone parenthood via remarriage than lone mothers: in a Confucian social context men are encouraged to remarry more than women because of double-standard values of chastity and loyalty imposed upon women, but not upon men. Although this contradictory social phenomenon requires further study, it also seems likely that the duration of lone motherhood will be longer than that of lone fatherhood. In other words, the number of mother-only families is more likely to increase rapidly in contrast to the declining tendency of lone fathers in Taiwan. A feminist approach is adopted in this study due to the majority of lone parent families being headed by women and to create an equal relationship between the interviewer and interviewees based on reciprocal trust (Punch 1998:178-182). Furthermore, a Confucian perspective is also employed here because the study is contextualised in Taiwanese Confucianism. Here, lone mothers might encounter different constraints and adopt different coping strategies and their everyday lives might be completely different from those of lone fathers in the same social context and those of lone mothers in Western societies. The reasons and the ways in employing these three approaches together are carefully explained in Chapter Three. Following this, the findings from face-to-face interviewing lone parents in Taiwan are broken down, analysed and interpreted in subsequent Chapters.

Care responsibilities are a key issue for lone mothers in Taiwan as well as in the West (e.g., Daly and Lewis 2000; Williams 2001). The KMT State's reluctant attitude in developing comprehensive social welfare is examined through its minimum state-sponsored childcare services for children of lone parents. Thus lone parents are forced to access childcare from the family. The experiences of lone parents in accessing childcare services from the family confirm that the KMT's assumption is more workable for lone fathers. In contrast, lone mothers hardly benefit from childcare from the family, but rather encounter more domestic conflicts involving children and inheritance properties, experience sexual harassment within the family, and carry out more caring work for their elderly parents or in-laws. These are examined in Chapter Four.

Housing issues are a second key issue for lone mothers in Taiwan. The KMT's public housing policies nearly exclude all lone mothers, particularly never-married single mothers, and force them to access housing support from the family. But the Confucian family under the Generation-Age-Gender hierarchy grants lone fathers as sons/husbands more privileges in accessing secure and stable housing. They are more often able to access home-ownership without mortgage payments than lone mothers. But this power hierarchy gives lone mothers more risks of unstable and insecure

housing in terms of houselessness, insufficient space and unaffordable mortgages. According to the KMT's assumption of the familial welfare, it may be true that lone fathers can meet their housing needs within the family. But this can hardly be true for lone mothers, who as daughters are expected to sign away their equal inheritance rights, particularly upon their fathers' death, as wives to give first priority of home-ownership to their husbands, and as widows to give up their inheritance rights to their deceased husbands' estate. These issues are analysed in Chapter Five.

3. Lone Mothers in the Labour Market

As mentioned above, the 1980 *Social Assistance Law* regulates the role of state intervention in welfare provision. Not only is this located at local authority level but also provides an extremely minimal welfare through very restricted criteria for sickness/disability means-tested cash benefits oriented towards work obligations. All "able-bodied" lone mothers are required to participate in paid work. By this law, there is no possibility for lone mothers in Taiwan to depend on state benefits without participation in the labour market, unlike their counterparts in the UK. The Confucian family is more unlikely to be the fundamental provider of economic and social security for lone mothers in contrast to lone fathers. Then employment becomes much

more critical for lone mothers to support their families than their counterparts in the West. Thus, Chapter Six criticises the failure of the KMT social assistance system in supporting lone parents but rather regulating and forcing them into the labour market. There is no doubt that employment provides the main income for lone parents in Taiwan with the lack of any universal state benefits. Furthermore, gender segregation in the workplace reflects the sexual division of domestic labour and disadvantages lone mothers more than lone fathers in terms of interrupted working career, lower wage, lower position in occupational hierarchy, more dead-end jobs, more part-time jobs, and less or no employment protection. The lack of national unemployment insurance can lead to lone mothers facing disasters with no income support from the State, the labour market or the family or absent fathers. Meanwhile, the lack of national pension insurance can also trap lone mothers into a great risk of poverty in their old age.

4. Lone Mothers in a Confucian welfare regime

While studying in England, I have been personally stimulated by Western welfare policies, where in most nations state benefits constitute a significant source of lone mothers' income, particularly in the Mother-Carer-Citizen Welfare Regime, such as in

the Netherlands and the UK. In Scandinavian states both earnings and state benefits comprise the basis of lone mothers' well-being (Sainsbury 1996; Kiernan et al.1998). "There is no such thing"-the state as the major welfare provider- in a Confucian Welfare State. Meanwhile, my personal experiences of balancing mothering and doing research, together with the accounts of some distressed lone mothers from the Taipei Women's Development Centre (TWDC)¹⁹ (see Appendix 0.2), have deepened my interest in inquiring about the experiences of lone mothers in the Confucian State, the Confucian family and the labour market. It seems that the family is more likely to fail as a primary provider of welfare for lone mothers. But it is more workable for lone fathers. Do lone mothers still want to re-enter the family via the marriage institution as their solution to escape from lone motherhood? Or what are their solutions to cope with their dilemmas in contrast to lone fathers'? Chapter Seven discusses their solutions in coping with lone parenthood. Lone fathers prefer to reconstitute the family via remarriage to end their lone parenthood. In contrast, lone mothers express much less support for reconstituting the family via re/marriage. Permanent lone motherhood is preferred, while adopting strategies to improve their human capital and increase their earnings through employment, despite lower earnings and less

¹⁹ Before studying abroad, I was working as the director of Taipei Women's Development Centre, established by Christian women from Presbyterian Church in Taiwan in 1983 for those women who are distressed divorcees, widows. Or who have suffered domestic violence, or whose husbands are held in prison particular for political reasons.

employment protection.

The family has been persistently presumed, strengthened, and implemented by the KMT State for the last half a century as the most important welfare provider in Taiwan. In fact, the family usually fails to support lone mothers in terms of childcare, childrearing, elderly care, housing and income, but unfortunately creates more domestic confrontations involving children, properties and physical security in turn. The KMT State's extreme reluctance to intervene in welfare provision coincides with the suppression of the individual to its political legitimacy, the subordination of women to the patriarchal authority of the Confucian family, and the repression of the worker in the interests of the corporation, well-guarded by the KMT authoritarian, capitalist, and patriarchal State. Again, this piecemeal state intervention in welfare provision gives lone parents too little choice but to participate in the labour market. The incompatible combination of paid work with unpaid work, and of solo rice-winners with sole carers for the young and the old catches lone mothers in a more disadvantaged and unprotected situation of employment, compared with lone fathers in Taiwan and their counterparts in the West. The implications of these are discussed in the conclusion, which also examines the findings for future social policies. Recommendations for future study are made at the end of this final Chapter.

Hopefully, the welfare of lone mother families will be improved in the near future as democratic change, social reform and economic growth have emerged in Taiwan.

Chapter 1 The Position of Lone Mothers in the Taiwan Welfare Regime

As shown in the Introduction, lone parents have never ever reached the top of the political agenda in Taiwan, in contrast to their counterparts in Western welfare states. The invisibility of this group is closely linked to the controversial conceptualisation of “lone parents” as a group. The estimated number of and rate of lone parents varies from one definition to another. It is a social phenomenon in Taiwan that unmarried adult children living with a lone parent are still common because of the Confucian belief of filial piety¹, which over half of Marsh’s respondents in 1991 still see as a binding obligation toward their parents (Marsh 1996:95). This has led not only to the different conceptualisation of “a traditional family” but also of “a lone parent family” in the Confucian and Western social contexts respectively. Thereupon, some studies in Taiwan focused on lone parents living with unmarried independent adult children in general, who have never been regarded as “lone parents” in the West, while others focused on lone parents living with unmarried dependent children under 20, 18 or 12, resulting in a variety of rates of lone parenthood. In addition, these different groups must surely have different experiences, indicating that most current

¹ Filial piety refers to the notion that people, as children, should/must respect, help, obey and give economic aid to their parents

studies are hardly comparable. This complexity will be discussed later in this chapter in addition to the definition of lone parents I will employ in the present research.

Following the problematic conceptualisation of lone parents, this chapter will include the trends of, the composition of, and the visibility of lone parents in Taiwan and the social services provided to lone parents, and finally, the impact of these social services.

1.1 The Demography of Lone Mothers

Lone Parent Families: A Problematic Issue of Definition

As several researchers have argued in the past, the conceptualisation of a lone parent family has remained vague and problematic (Crow and Hardey 1992; Rowlingson and Mackay 1998; Leung 1998). One problem is the variable criteria used for children's "age" in setting the limits for the definition of a lone parent family. As Rowlingson and Mackay (1998) ask: "*at what age do children stop being dependent?*" (p.25). As Ermich (1990, 1991) points out, due to tremendous variations in the setting of

children's age, definitions of a lone parent family do vary from country to country. For instance, a lone parent family consists of a parent with her/ his dependent children under the age of 18 in the USA and Germany, or one aged under 20 in Japan, and one aged under 15 in Ireland (Ermich 1991:24-25). Variation in definitions is common in comparative country studies, but they are usually consistent within a country. In Britain, according to the Finer Committee Report on One-Parent Families (Cmnd.5629 1974), a lone parent family is usually defined as a father or a mother who lives alone with their never-married dependent children under 16, or aged 16-18 and in full-time education (Millar 1989; Ermich 1990, 1991; OPCS 1996; Kiernan at al. 1998). But in Taiwan, the definitions of a lone parent family do vary from one instance to another in the same country. In brief, there is no consensus on the definition of children in Taiwan. Inconsistent definitions may be attributed to the variation in legal definitions in three laws: *the Children Welfare Law, the Juvenile Welfare Act and the Civil Code*. The Children's Welfare Law defines "a child" as one under the age of 12, the Juvenile Welfare Act as one aged from 13 to 18 and by Book I of the Civil Code² as one aged under 20. In addition to the different criteria used for children's age, children's marital status becomes a key issue in defining a lone parent

² Article 12 of Book I of the Civil Code defines an adult as one over the age of 20; Furthermore, Article 13 declares that "dependent but married children" should be treated as adults, responsible for their own behaviour. The custody of a child in Taiwan would be held until the child reaches the age of 20 but remains never-married. Thus, if children aged 16 to 18 get married for whatever reasons, they will be treated as a mature adult legally and socially in Taiwan.

family in Taiwan, unlike the situation found elsewhere, in particular Western societies.

Such variation in the criteria on children's age and marital status has been reflected and become a problematic issue in Taiwanese literature regarding lone parent families.

At least five definitions of lone parent families exist in Taiwanese literature, more than in comparisons across countries:

Definition 1. Using children's marital status as a measure, a lone parent family consists of a parent and her/his *unmarried* children. This definition was used in the first study of lone parents in 1984 (Shu and Lin 1984a & b). It showed that 8.09 per cent of all households could be identified as lone parent families, including a parent and her/his *unmarried adult* children. Not surprisingly, one of the main findings indicated that the overall socio-economic status of lone parents in Taiwan is higher than that of other types of families in Taiwan and also of their counterparts in the USA due to the financial contributions of their *adult children* into their family pool on the basis of filial piety.

Definition 2. Hsieh (1998:9) adopts the definition of a lone parent family from

Book I of the Civil Code as one living with her/his unmarried dependent children under age 20. Based on this definition, the estimated rate of lone parent families is 7.43 per cent of all households in Taiwan according to the 1990 population survey data (Hsieh 1998).

Definition 3. Another definition of a lone parent family, adopted by Wang (1991) comprises a father or a mother living with his/her dependent children under the age of 12, in accordance with children defined by the Children's Welfare Law. By this definition, no reliable estimate of the extent of lone parent families can be found, because at the age of 12 children in Taiwan just finish the primary schooling and will continue their dependency on their family until they complete their full-time education sometimes at the age of 18 or 22 or over 22. Extremely few studies, whether governmental or non-governmental, applied such a definition to lone parent families.

Definition 4. Like the definition employed by Ermich (1990, 1991), Kau (1991), Tong (1992) and Chang (1994), a lone parent family is defined as a parent with her/his dependent children. By this definition, it was estimated that 6.5% of all households in 1984 could be identified as a lone parent family, excluding unmarried

adult children (Shu and Lin 1989)

Definition 5. More recently, a fifth definition has been adopted by many researchers, identifying a lone parent family as “a father or a mother living with her/his dependent never-married children under the age of 18 due to divorce, separation, death or out-of-wedlock childbirth”(Cheng 1988; Wang, Lin and Sheh 1994; Chang et al. 1995; Hsieh 1997; Lee, Wen-wen 1997; Social Affairs Bureau of Taiwan Prince Government 1996).

The criteria for recruiting lone parents in the current study was a family consisting of a mother or a father without a spouse or a partner with her/his unmarried dependent children undertaking full-time education. This is because “dependent children” regardless of age, undertaking full-time education, completely rely on their parents regarding expenditure for material costs, such as food, shelter, clothing, transportation, education etc and other costs of care and associated work around the raising of a child until the age of self-sufficiency. Whereas in Taiwan the cost of procuring the next generation of citizens is still recognised as “the exclusive responsibility of the family”, this contrasts with the West where it is increasingly seen as a matter of public concern (Montanari 2000:308). A further explanation is described in Chapter 3, too.

As already said above, as Kammerman and Kahn (1989) point out, the estimated number of lone parent families can vary depending on various definitions. The question becomes: how many lone parent households are there exactly in Taiwan? This question remains controversial due to the lack of a common definition. Thus caution should be exercised in studying the incidence of lone parenthood and its rate of increase in Taiwan.

The Estimated Numbers and Rates of Lone Parent Families in Taiwan

Among the five various definitions, presented above, only two **Definition 1** and **5** are often employed to measure the quantity of lone parent families in Taiwan.

First, according to **Definition 1**, the most recently recorded rate of lone parent families as a per cent of all families was 10.85 % in 1992. This means that one in ten families can be identified as a lone parent household, showing an increase of 3 per cent in less than a decade (Table 1.1). Female-headed families represent a majority of lone parent households at over 60 per cent, and in 1995, 10 per cent of all families with unmarried children (DGBAS 1996: Table 3). While the rate of male-headed

households decreases by almost 3 per cent, mother-only families increase over four times as rapidly as the declining rate of lone father families. By this definition, lone mothers may not be the solo rice-winner due to the presence of their unmarried adult children who contribute financially to the family pool on the basis of filial piety (Shu and Chang 1987a & b, 1989). Accordingly, the economic circumstance of this group is not relatively worse than other family types in Taiwan, and indeed is better than their counterparts in the USA. This unique phenomenon regarding lone parents might only exist in a Confucian family and society due to the presence of unmarried adult children making a financial contribution motivated by filial piety.

Table 1.1 The rate of lone parent household consisting of a parent with unmarried children

Research year	Percentage of all the households	Lone mothers as a % of all lone parent families	Lone fathers as a % of all lone parent families	Research unit or researcher
1983	8.09%	61.1%	38.9%	The 1983 Labour Force Survey of Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics under Executive Yuan(DGBAS)
1992	10.85%	74%	36%	Population Survey Unit of Executive Yuan(1992)(Sheh 1992)

This parameter of measurement of the numbers of lone parents and their circumstances cannot accurately demonstrate the nature and problem of lone parents living with their unmarried dependent children, who in general are relatively

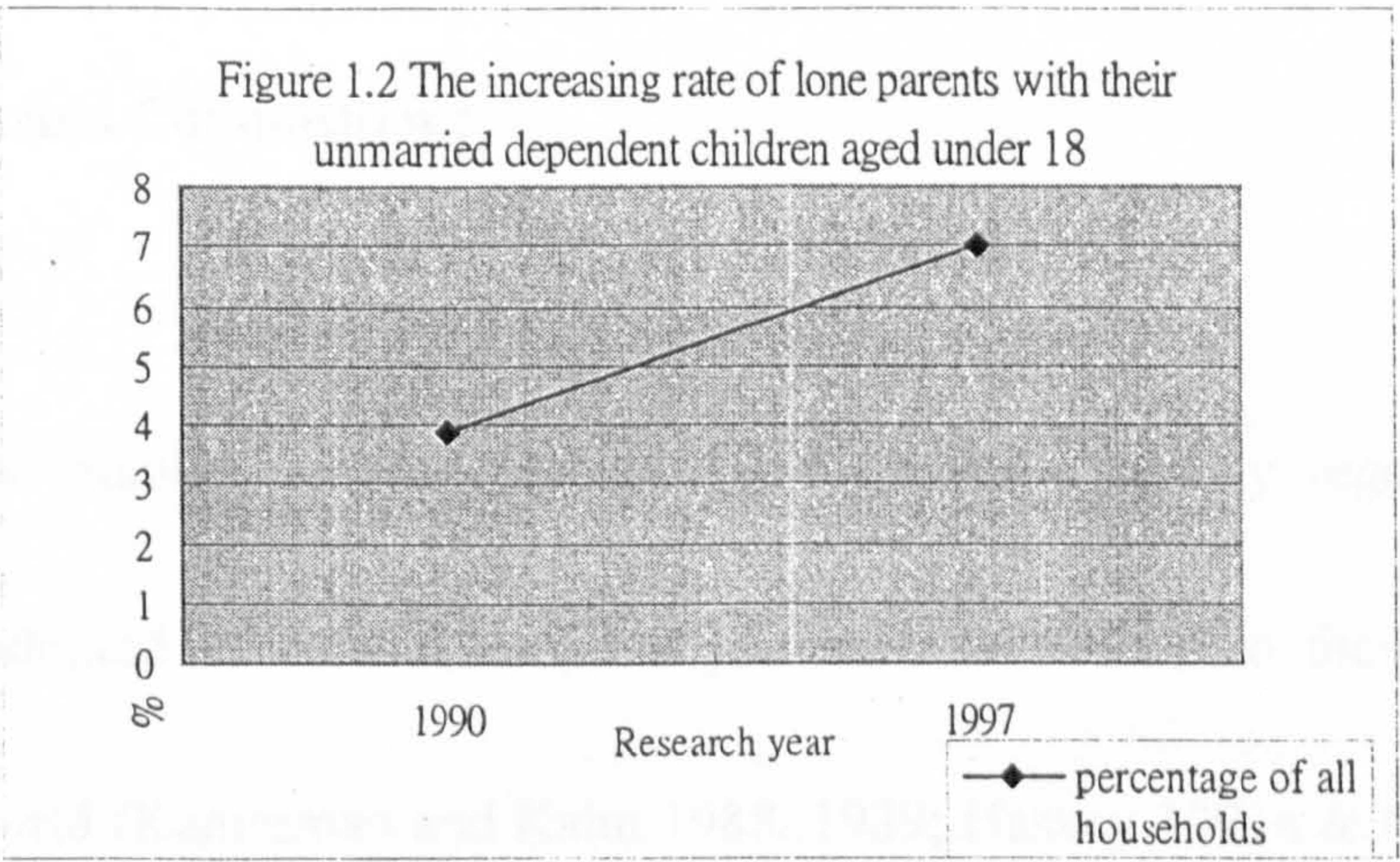
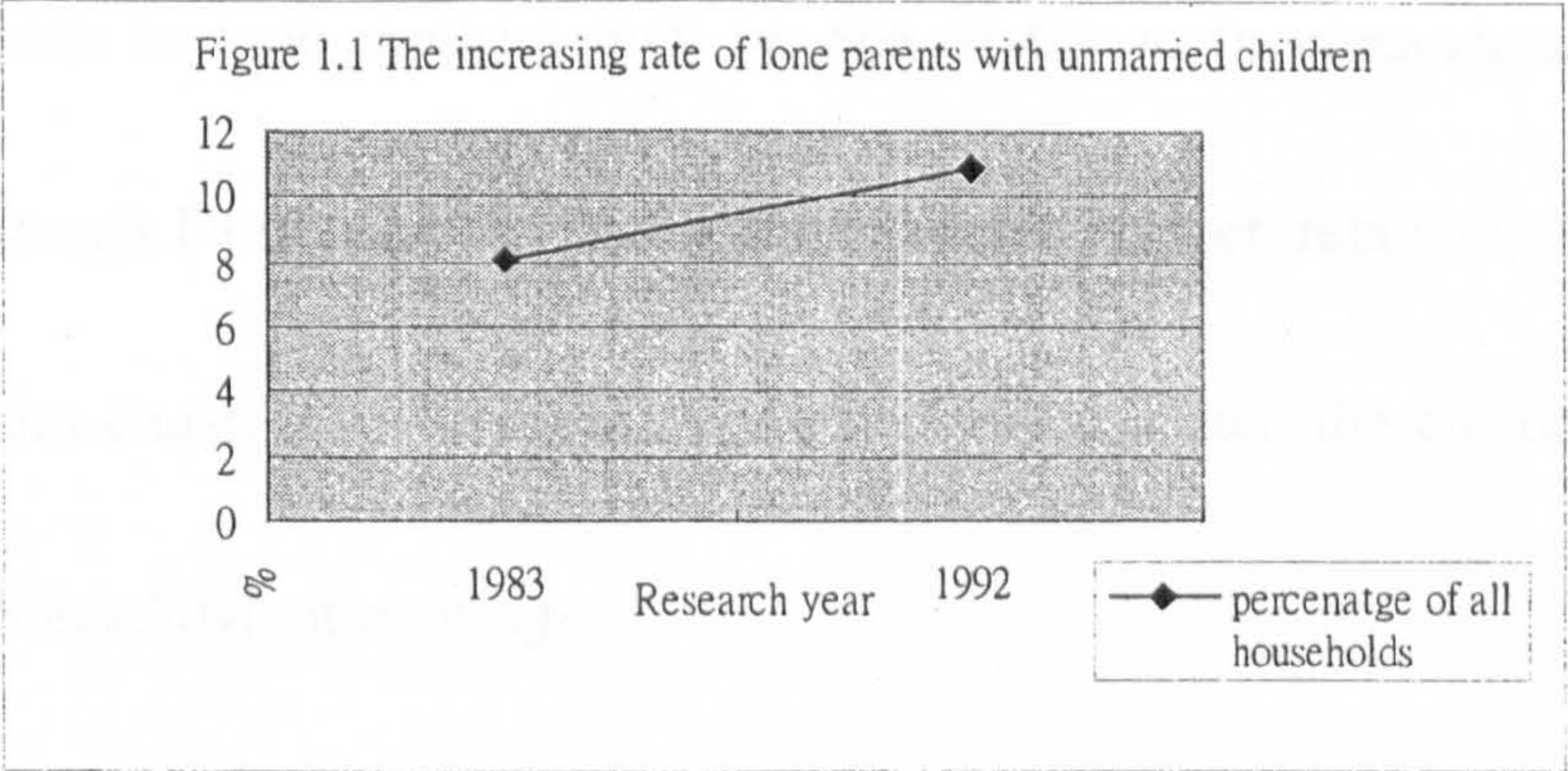
disadvantaged compared to two-parent families and are more likely to be trapped in long-term poverty (Garfinkel and MaLanahan 1986; Millar 1989, 1997; Bradshaw and Millar 1991; Payne 1991; Department of Social Security 1993; Dowd 1997; Pascall 1997). Nevertheless, **Definition 5** has gradually become the most popular one adopted in recent literature in Taiwan. By its relatively restricted definition, the estimated rate of lone parent families decreases to 3.9% among all estimated rates. However, the rate has increased rapidly to 7 per cent within 7 years (Table 1.2).

Table 1.2 The rate of lone parent household consisting of a parent with their unmarried dependent children under the age of 18

Research year	Percentage of all households	Lone mothers as a % of all lone parent families	Lone fathers as a % of all lone aren't families	Research unit or researcher
1990	3.9%	60%	40%	Wang, Li-rong, Lin, Hsieh-chung and Sheh, Tsen-tai(1994), Wang(1995) and Sheh(1996)
1997	7.0%	70%	30%	National Statistics of DGBAS (Hsieh and Lee 1999)

Although precise estimates of the number of or rate of lone parent families varies due to the lack of a common definition, a commonality between these two definitions is hard to deny:

1. There has been a dramatic increase in the incidence of lone parent families, with the rate growing as rapidly as 3 % on average within a decade from Figure 1.1 and 1.2 respectively. The number of lone parent families has grown dramatically from 192,000 in 1990 to 235,000 in 1997 using the relatively restricted definition.



2. Lone mothers always represent the majority of lone parent households in Taiwan, from 60% to 74%, similar to their counterparts in Western societies (Bradshaw and Millar 1991). The increasing number of lone mothers may be critically linked to the

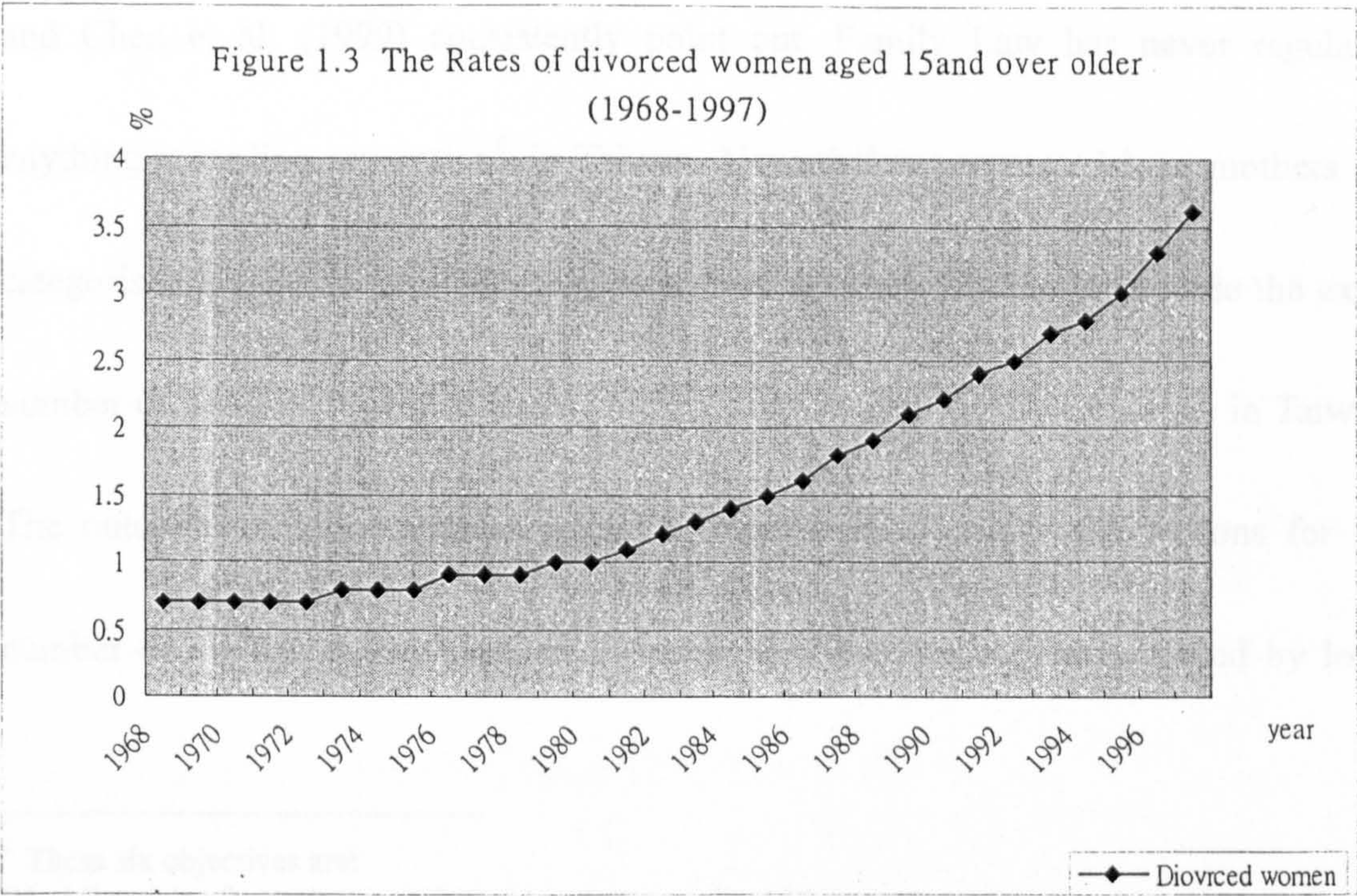
impact of the feminist movement, which emerged in 1972, advocating equal citizenship for women and calling for legislative reforms, such as Family Law.

3. While the rate of lone fathers is decreasing, the number of female-headed families is increasing at least three times as rapidly as the declining rate of lone fathers. This rapid growth in lone mothers may be one of the main consequences of partial reform through Family Law, which grants married women relatively more rights to escape from situations of domestic violence and to obtain the custody of children after the breakdown of marriage.

Trends and Compositions

Certainly, the number of lone parents has been rising rapidly regardless of the definitions adopted in Taiwan, a social phenomenon similar to their counterparts across the world (Kamerman and Kahn 1988, 1989; Haskey 1991a & b; Duncan and Edwards 1996; Chant 1997; Leung 1998). Specifically, the number of lone mothers has been increasing three times as much as the decline of the number of lone fathers. Such a rapidly increasing proportion of lone mothers may be attributed to the rapid rise in the divorce rate. The rate of divorce has increased from 0.7 per cent in 1968 to

3.6 per cent in 1997, a fivefold increase over 3 decades (Figure 1.3). Of divorced women, 70 per cent are between the ages of 30 to 49 (Table 1.3). These women are more likely to become lone mothers with dependent children after marriage dissolution.



by the researcher

Source: Table 12. Population of females age 15 years and older by sex and marital status, the 1998 Statistic Yearbook of the ROC

Table 1.3 The 1996 Rate of divorced women aged over 15 + older in Taiwan by age

Age	15-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	Total	Total Number
Women	0.21	11.24	38.18	33.48	9.77	7.12	100.00	268,146
Total Population	0.13	8.75	34.82	34.19	11.47	10.63	100.00	530,359

Source: Table 11. Population by sex and age., the 1997 Statistic Yearbook of ROC

As one of six objectives³ of the feminist campaign for the reform of Family Law, “the Separation system should be amended in order to strengthen the positive result of divorce” (Yang 1995:11; Yang 1998a:13; Lin, Shiek-yio 1995; Liu, Fong-ching 1995; see <http://taiwan.yam.org.tw/womenweb/curnet.htm>). Furthermore, as Huang et al. (1987) and Chen et al. (1999) consistently point out, Family Law has never regulated anything regarding separation⁴ in Taiwan. Nevertheless, separated lone mothers are categorised legally as married ones, thus, there is a lack of data to provide the exact number or trend of separated lone mothers, despite their historic presence in Taiwan. The outcome of divorce cases issued by courts may provide the reasons for the number of separated lone mothers. Over half of the divorce cases issued by local

³ These six objectives are:

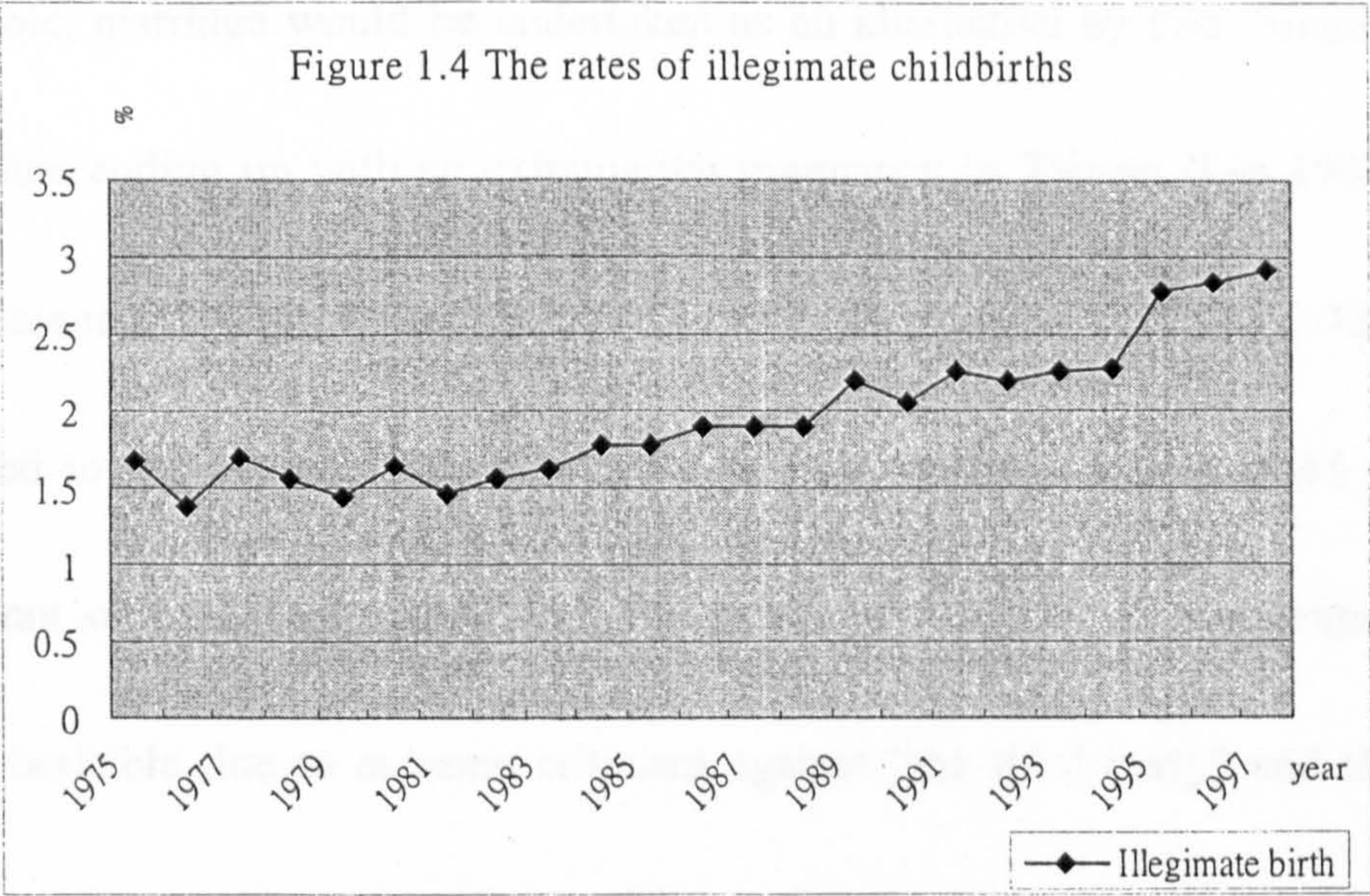
- (1). All articles favouring men/fathers' supremacy should be struck completely. As such Article 1000 regulating that wives should carry on the family of their husband on the top of their own family name; Article 1002 ruling the residence of the husband as his wife's legal domicile; Article 1051 and 1055 declaring fathers given the first priority of having the custody of the children in case of divorce; Article 1089 favouring fathers' final say in disputes about children's disciplines, and Article 1018 favouring men's supremacy in management of all the marital property.
- (2). All articles strengthening chastity, promoted in Confucianism, should be deleted. As such Article 987 and 994 regulating how long divorced women should not remarry after divorce; Article 1068 ruling that mothers committing “adultery” or “not observing conventional rule of behaviour” are denied to adopt their illegitimate children;
- (3). The equality between the sexes should be guaranteed. All the agreements/arrangements made by the couple together should replace all these articles favouring men/father's supremacy;
- (4) State intervention should be activated in family affairs in order to guarantee the best interests of children;
- (5). Wife's property within marriage should be guaranteed. To achieve this, the union property should be replaced by equally distributed income system, implemented in Switzerland. It should be regulated clearly that each of the couple has/her/his own right in managing or owning or selling the property respectively. And housework should not be regarded as obligation only for women, rather than should be evaluated by promoting the equal co-operation and participation of the couple;
- (6) Separation system should be amended in order to strengthen the positive result of divorce.

⁴ Currently until the time of writing (September 2000), The amendment of over-5-years separation between husband and wife has been taken account by the Ministry of Justice as one reason for divorce (Wang 1999)

courts were attributed to abandonment by spouses over a decade (Appendix 1)(Chen 1998). This strongly implies that the high percentage of separation that has emerged in Taiwan has existed for a long time but has not been seriously recognised. In addition, if the divorce rate at over 10% caused by domestic violence is taken into account, then the “invisible” separation rate could actually be much higher than 60 per cent over a decade (Appendix 1). This may indicate that separation ultimately becomes one of the main routes to lone parenthood in Taiwan. Furthermore, separation caused by abandonment would usually end up in divorce. Not surprisingly, divorce caused by voluntary and involuntary motivation has become the most important pathway to lone parenthood in Taiwan, on average 60 % higher than widowhood (Chang et al.1995; Hsieh 1998; Lee 1998).

Historically, as Page (1984) argues, never-married single mothers have experienced considerable degrees of stigmatisation, regarded as a social problem due to out-of-wedlock childbirth. Therefore, Kiernan et al.(1998:24) argues, it is impossible to provide precise time series data indicating the extent of this group of women. Likewise, only changes in the numbers of births outside marriage make it possible to provide a picture of the extent of out-of-wedlock mothers in Taiwan. Figure 1.4 shows the rapidly increasing trend that the tendency of never-married single mothers

is likely to rise, from 1.69 per cent in 1975 to 2.92 per cent in 1997 in the proportion of births outside marriage of mothers aged over 15, paralleling the growth of their counterparts in Western societies (Burghes with Brown 1995; Kiernan et al. 1998).



Source: Table 17. Live births by age of mother and number of births,
the 1998 Statistical yearbook of ROC

Despite this growth, premarital pregnancy, particularly teenage pregnancy, is more likely to end up in marriage, abortion or adoption (Lin 1986). Adoption services, such as two Catholic refuges⁵, have been offered to unmarried pregnant teenagers by several NGOs. Furthermore, the *Eugenic Protection Law*⁶ has legalized abortion as

⁵ These two Catholic refuges for unmarried pregnant teenage are Taipei Catholic Charita Refugee for Never-Married Single Mothers and Tainan Lucy Home for Never-Married Single Mothers.

⁶ Before Eugenic Protection Law, promulgated in 9th July 1984, any forms of abortion were deemed a violation of the Criminal Code. By the law, six conditions are regulated for pregnant women to have the right to ask a licensed obstetrician to undertake an abortion for them. And they are as follows:

a solution for unwanted pregnancy in the case of rape, seduction and sexual intercourse with anyone barred by law from marriage with the woman involved. A survey, conducted by the Family Planning Institute of Taiwan Province showed that nearly 40 per cent of all brides are pregnant before the wedding (Lai 1997). Normally, if possible, marriage would be undertaken as an alternative by two "single" parties rather than ending up with an extramarital pregnancy in Taiwan (Lin 1998). In the case where marriage is impossible, never-married single mothers are more likely to be suspected to get involved in an extramarital relationship with a married man who would not or could not marry with the group of women. Those women would remain invisible due to extreme criticism against "the third party" and the stigma upon never-married single mothers. Childrearing outside marriage is very rare and highly unacceptable in a Confucian family and society, with the exception of famous and economically well-off TV/movie actresses and entrepreneurs in Taiwan (Lu 1995;

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- (1) The pregnant women or her spouse has contracted hereditary, contagious or mental disease;
 - (2) Any of the pregnant women or her spouse's fourth degree (generation) relative by blood has hereditary disease;
 - (3) The pregnancy or the labour may endanger the life or health of the pregnant women;
 - (4) There is a sufficient medial evidence to assume that the foetus is mentally retarded;
 - (5) Where a girl gets pregnant after being raped, seduced and raped by anyone barred by law from getting married with the girl;
 - (6) The pregnancy may damage the pregnant women's mental health or family life.

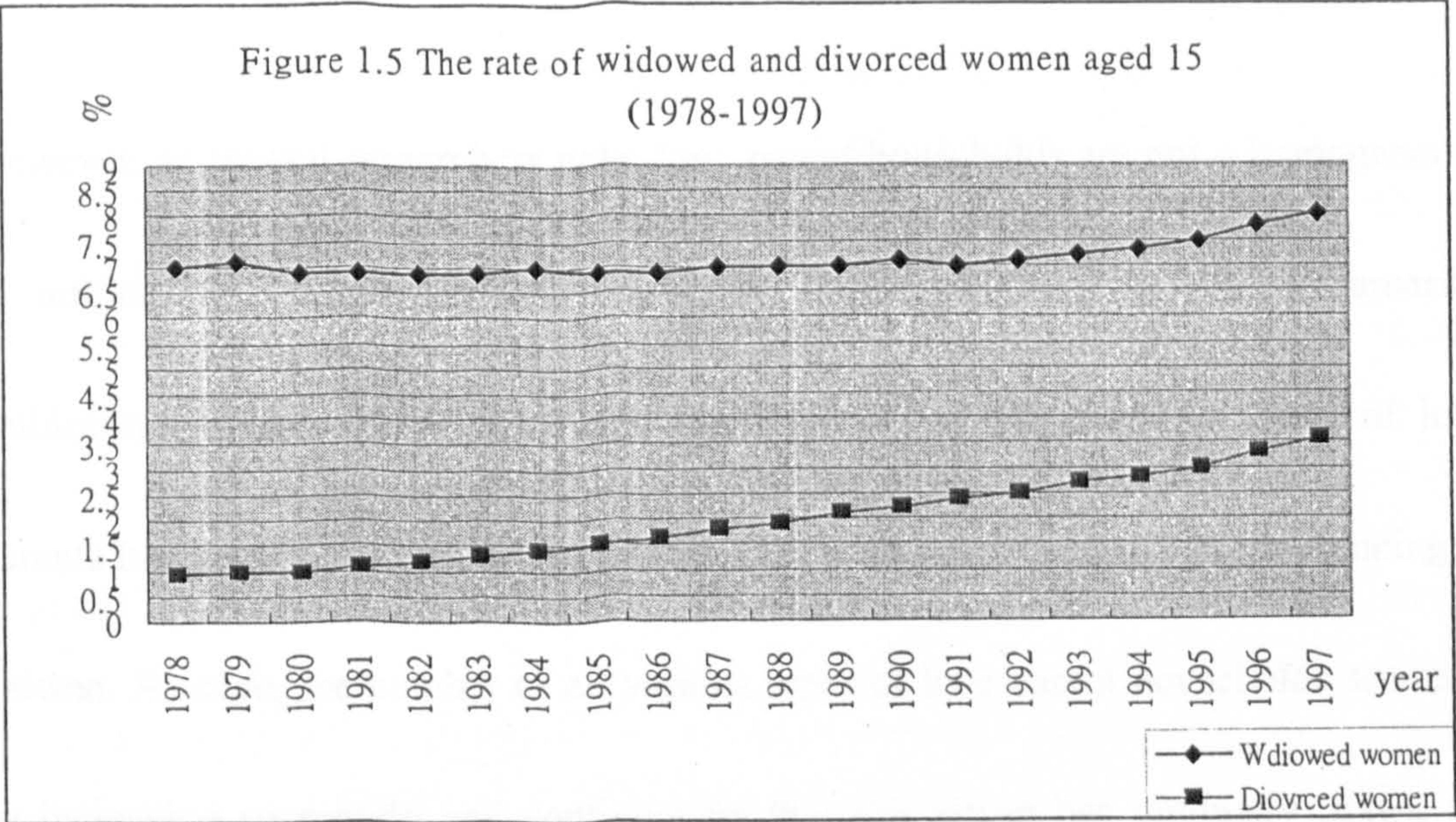
By 6th condition, married women are required to have the written consent of their husband if encountering unwanted pregnancy and requesting abortion. Furthermore, the same situation also often happens to unmarried women, in particular teenaged girls. Many hospitals and clinics insist that they will not perform abortion for a woman or a girl unless she can show a written consent of her husband or her guardian, such as parents, regardless of the cause for which the pregnant is requesting abortion. For teenaged or single women aged under 20, it is very difficult to obtain the written consent of their legal guardians. And Requiring them to submit a written consent of their legal guardians would be just like forcing them to seek abortion from quacks, thereby denying them the benefits of the Eugenic Protection Law

Hur 1998a,b,and c; Huang 1998; Yang 1998). A census survey, conducted by the China Times, showed that over half of the 735 respondents (50.2%) do not agree with or accept out-of-wedlock childbirth (China Time 19th April, 1990). Despite the rapid rise in extramarital childbirth and an increasing openness of sexual behaviour, the strong stigma upon never-married single motherhood has remained deeply rooted in Confucian family and society in Taiwan. According to a 1995 survey conducted by Health Bureau of Taichung City Government, 81.6 per cent of 152 single men under 30 prefer to have premarital sex, although nearly half of them (42.8%) would like to marry virgin brides (Lai 1995). The extreme stigma on unmarried lone mothers has not only made these women invisible but also caused problems in accessing the group. I was denied two interviews with never-married single mothers at their homes due to the societal stigmas conceptualised by their family members. This stigma makes research focussing upon them almost impossible in Taiwan. Only one study focusing on teenage pregnancy was evident in the literature review for my research (Lin 1986). This may explain why never-married single mothers always presented the lowest percentage of lone parent families (on average, less than 6%)(Chang et al.1995: 84; Sheh 1996; Hsieh 1998: 19; Lee 1998:9). Consequently, it is extremely difficult to argue that never-married single motherhood is one of the main categories of lone parenthood in Taiwan; no reliable estimate of the extent of never-married single

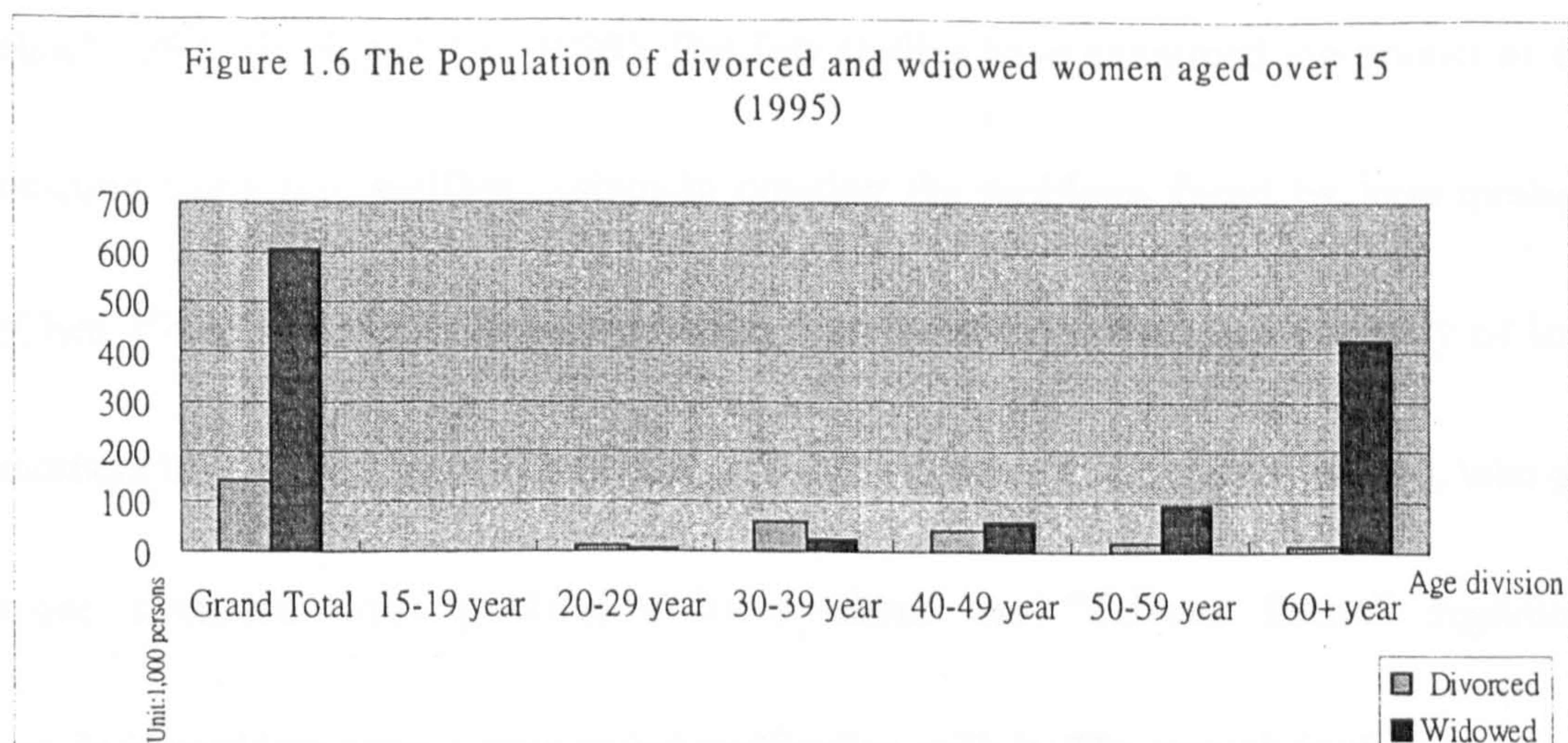
mothers can be found. The social phenomenon of never-married single motherhood is completely opposite to the composition of lone parenthood in western societies. There a large percentage of lone parenthood is comprised of never-married single mothers due to the prevalence, visibility and acceptance of cohabitation in Western societies (Leete 1978; Garfinkel and Maclanahan 1986; Page 1994; Lewis 1997; Rowlingson and Mackay 1998; MacDermott et al. 1998).

There is a decline of widowed lone mothers in Western countries. However, by contrast, this trend in Taiwan, remains unknown due to unreliable data. In 1984, it was estimated that the number of widowed lone parents was four times as many as divorced ones (Shu and Lin 1984). But recent studies repeatedly confirm that widowed lone mothers make up the second largest proportion of mother-only families, indeed fewer than divorced lone mothers (Chang et al. 1995; Social Affairs Bureau of Taiwan Province Government 1996; Hsieh 1998). This trend may be explained by a more rapid growth in the incidence of divorce of young women than widowhood. Although the rate of widowhood over age 15 is slightly rising, it is not climbing as rapidly as that of the divorce rate (Figure 1.5). Furthermore, although Figure 1.5 shows widows as a larger group than divorced women, in fact they become lone mothers often in their old age, normally aged over 60 years with independent adult

children (Figure 1.6). In contrast to their situation, the highest rate of divorce occurs for women aged 30 to 49 years. This group is more likely to become lone mothers with dependent children (Figure 1.6). Thus these two data illustrate that the highest proportion of lone mothers is made up of divorced women, the second highest proportion of lone mothers is comprised of widows, and finally, the smallest group is made up of never married single mothers.



Source: Table 12, Population of age 15 years and over by sex and marital status, the 1998 Statistical Yearbook of ROC



Source: Table 11 Martial Status of Population aged 15 years and over by 5-year age division in Taiwan, Report on the 1995 Population and Housing Survey Taiwan-Fukien Area, ROC

However, as several researchers note, lone parent households are not a homogeneous or unified group made up by divorce, separation, widowhood, and extramarital childbirth (Rimmer 1983; Crow and Hardey 1992). The common trend of lone parents has been unrecognised for a long time, particularly within official thinking in Taiwan. As such, the number of all various types of lone parent households seems to be increasing so rapidly and continuously that this group has gradually drawn the attention of the public, and particularly academics. Since the 1980s, academics have begun to explore the problems that lone mothers encounter everyday and what social policies should be made available to them (Shu and Lin 1984 a & b, 1989; Liu 1984; Lin 1986; Hong 1987; Shu and Chang 1987, 1989; Cheng 1988; Chen 1989; Hsieh and Ma 1989; Chuang 1991; Wang 1991; Tong 1992; Lin and Chin 1992; Hong 1993; Huang 1993; Chang 1994; Chang et al. 1995; Chang 1996; Huang 1996; Lee 1997;

Hsieh 1997; Hsieh and Lee 1999). But few studies have examined the impact of the existing Confucian welfare system in creating the problems faced by lone mothers (Chen 1992; Wu 1993). Not surprisingly, the increasing trend and visibility of lone mothers has not become a significant political debate among political parties, who are more occupied with political debates about the "Taiwan future" regarding pro-independence from China or pro-unification with it. The growth in the number of lone mothers certainly does not mean an increase in social expenditure for them. As in Western countries, whose governments seek to reduce welfare benefits to lone mothers, passing more responsibilities to the market, family and voluntary sector, the Taiwanese government has not increased social spending for lone mothers despite rapidly increasing numbers. Indeed the public provision of social benefits for lone mothers has remained at a minimum. The Taiwan state has taken a secondary role to the family, which is assumed to be the main welfare provision for lone mothers. Because the cost of welfare for lone mothers remains low the Confucian state in Taiwan had never been deeply pressured to direct concern for lone mother families into the political agenda until the rise of organisations concerning lone parent families has rapidly emerged in the 1990s. Therefore, the problems encountered and the strategies employed by lone mothers in Taiwan will undoubtedly be very different from those of their counterparts in Western welfare states.

1.2 Lone Mothers and Taiwan Welfare Regime

When studying the Taiwanese welfare regime, it is necessary to identify and to understand the problems of lone mothers in Confucian family and society. It becomes necessary to focus on the Koumintang welfare regime, due to its long presence in power since 1945. The following section first analyses the rhetoric of the KMT Welfare policies, and secondly examines the extent of social welfare provision for lone mothers in the Taiwanese Confucian State and the barriers lone mothers face in accessing aid from the State.

KMT Welfare Rhetoric

After World War II, Japanese colonisers remanded Taiwan to the Chinese Nationalist-party government led by Chiang, Kai-shek, who was expelled by Chinese Communists out of China. Its ideology regarding social policy is built upon Dr. Sun Yat-sen'⁷s political ideology, coined the "*Three Principles of the People*" (三民主義

⁷ Dr. Sun Yat-sen is the founder of the KMT party and the Republic of China (R.O.C), who was strongly influenced by Bismarckian social insurance system when he was in Europe in his youth. Later on, his political ideology formed the political platform of the KMT, and had been a compulsory ideological course and one of the examination items for all students receiving senior high schooling, college and university for 5 decades until it was lifted up in 1999.

Sam Min Chu I), including the *Principle of Nationalism* (民族主義 *Min-Tsu Chu I*), the *Principle of Democracy* (民權主義 *Min-Chuan Chu I*) and the *Principle of People's Livelihood* (民生主義 *Min-Shen Chu I*). Dr. Sun Yat-sen claimed that the *Principle of the People's Livelihood* is a type of socialism, which has assimilated Chinese traditional philosophy from the *Great Commonwealth* and the experiences of Western social policies. What is the Confucian Great Commonwealth? Confucius himself described the ideal world, society and family in the following manners:

*"When the Great Word is realized in the world, the world is for all. The worthy and capable are elected for public posts; then the people cement harmonious relations by upholding good faith. Thus people will not love their own parents alone, nor will parents care only for their own children. The aged all have a place to spend their declining years. The young are all provided with a chance to become fully developed. The widower, the widow, the orphan, the childless, the disabled, and the invalid- all these people will have a means of livelihood. All men are properly employed and all women properly married. Wealth and material resources are fully utilized, but not only for private purpose. All labour and energy are fully used, but not only for personal advantage. Therefore, no one seeks personal interests or work as a bandit or a thief. Thus it is the Great Commonwealth of the World."*⁸ (Chao 1988; Chang 1988).

⁸ See the Chapter of the Great Commonwealth of the Book of Rites(Li-Chi 禮記)

Based on this Confucianism, Dr. Sun Yat-sen further stated, *“We want a plan which will anticipate dangers and forearm us against emergencies, which will check the growth of large private capital and prevent the social disease of extreme inequality between the rich and the poor...in the solution of social problems, we have the same object in view as that in foreign countries: to make everybody contented and happy, free from the suffering caused by the unequal distribution of wealth and property”* (Sun 1981:123; Chiu 1986:19). As Lin (1990,1994) noted, *the Principle of the People’s Livelihood*, is very similar in ideology to the collectivism advocated by Fabian Socialists, who believe that the introduction of universal services is a necessary development in order to promote social integration and to provide equal opportunity of access welfare provision to all (George and Wilding 1985:69-94). Based on this ideology, the Articles 155 and 157 of the “Chapter on Fundamental Policy” in the Constitution⁹ of ROC has outlined clearly: *“The government should take up its responsibility to provide assistance and services for the people for their*

⁹ Due to the defeat in the Chinese civil war and the retreat into Taiwan, the Nationalist party imposed martial law on Taiwan to “stabilize” it, thereby granting a wide range of emergency powers for the president and greatly expanding the scope of power of the Taiwan Garrison Command and suspending the protection of individual rights guaranteed in the 1946 Constitution. Therefore Taiwan had been ruled by martial law until it was lifted on 15th July 1987 (Gold 1986). Actually, there are six articles of the ROC Constitution relevant to social security: to provide employment opportunities for people who are able to work (Article 152); to institute social policies to protect labourers and farmers (Article 153); to harmonise industrial relations (Article 154); to establish a social insurance system for the people and to provide social assistance for the aged, the disable, and the victims of disasters (Article 155); to carry out a welfare policy for women and children (Article 156); and to promote health care services and a national medical system (Article 157). These points are almost the same as the ideals of Western Welfare States (Lin 1990:133-134).

needs for food, clothing, housing, transportation, education and the pursuit of happiness.”(Lin et al.1998). Particularly, the Article 156 declares clearly that *the State should carry out a welfare policy for women and children*. Consequently, there is no question that the Taiwanese State is ideologically obligated to provide social welfare for lone parent families in terms of income support, childcare, housing etc. so that their families are able to make ends meet. All these ideological statements preferring state invention in welfare provision have only remained political rhetoric and social control of the KMT State in contrast to its real welfare policies in Taiwan. Instead, the family is assumed to be the basic social support for each individual in Taiwan by emphasising Confucianism based on the father-son kinship.

KMT Welfare Policies in Reality

Clearly, the *Principle of People's Livelihood* strongly advocates a system of social provision by the government in which all people receive assistance for survival, where the young are properly raised and educated; the able and the strong are fully employed and the old are adequately taken care of. Every individual in the nation, regardless of sex, age, race and class should enjoy a life of peace and happiness (Chiang 1953). Unfortunately, most of these ideals have remained mere rhetoric rather

than reality in Taiwan. Many social welfare scholars contend that social policies advocated in the *Principle of People's Livelihood* have never ever been implemented by the Chinese Nationalist Party in Taiwan. For example, the social security net is incomplete and underdeveloped, and there is a radical imbalance in welfare allocation among various groups, favouring military personnel, government employees and public school teachers who were used to be deemed important to the stability and legitimacy of the KMT government until the period of rapid growth in social movements in the late 1980s and the growth of democracy in the late 1990s (Lin 1990,1991,1992,1993, 1994 &1995; Ku 1995a & b, 1997, 2001; Fu 1990 & 1995). In the following section, I will look at the impact of the incomplete social security system upon lone mothers and examine the effect of radical inequality of welfare allocation upon this group.

(1) The Impact of the Taiwanese Social Security System upon Lone Mothers

As numerous scholars have criticised, social welfare policies proposed by the Chinese Nationalist government have always been residual, supplementary and selective, regarded primarily as social relief with a strong emphasis on the welfare role of “non-state agencies”—voluntary agencies, firms and in particular “the family” (Lin

1994:32). The State in Taiwan, as Goodman et al. (1998) strongly argue, acts only as a regulator and not a provider, enforcing welfare programmes without provision of direct finance and services, to a significantly greater degree than their counterparts in Western countries (also see Kwon 1995,1999a, 2001; White et al.1998). Not surprisingly, the KMT State is extremely reluctant to develop any universal social insurance schemes based on the notion of citizenship, but rather favours a “pay-as-you-go” scheme, through, not only, contributions but also employment-oriented. In this sense, as many scholars argue, state-sponsored welfare programmes in Taiwan are similar to the “conservative corporatist welfare” developed by Esping-Anderson (1990) in his book *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalist* (e.g., Chan 1984, 1985; Jones 1993; Fu 1994, 1995). In this regime, welfare provisions develop as a fragmented array of schemes for particular social groups according to their occupations. In Taiwan this has meant that military personnel, government employees¹⁰ and public school teachers¹¹ have benefited more than others such as

¹⁰ After the defeat of Civil War in 1949, roughly 1.5 million Chinese Mainlanders from all over China were forced to immigrate into Taiwan with Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist government's retreat. And most of them were military servicemen, government employees and public school teachers. This group has at least “an iron rice bowl” so that they have no need to worry about layoffs and firing. Therefore, they had been regarded as “iron votes” for the KMT government until the beginning of 1990 (Wong 1981:178; Lin 1990:146, 1991:35; Thornton and Lin 1994:23).

¹¹ Military Servicemen's Insurance Law and the Government Employees' Insurance Law passed and activated in 1953 and 1958 respectively, much earlier than other social insurance acts for other groups, such as the passage of the Labour Standard Law for most labourers in 1984 and the passage of the Farmer's Health Insurance Law in 1989. Furthermore, the Insurance for Retired Government Employees and the Law of Health Insurance for Government Employees' Dependents also came into force much earlier than other schemes for other groups.

labourers, farmers and fishermen in terms of pensions, health care, housing, parental leave, taxation and the like (Lin 1992; Son 2001). The welfare inequality caused by this fragmented and incomplete social security system has resulted in unequal entitlements according to occupational groups. More precisely speaking, as Son (2001) points out, *"This uneven development in terms of legal entitlement gave rise to the phenomenon of categorical inequality, in the sense that KMT Party-affiliated groups came to enjoy better access to health insurance"*(p.52). Furthermore, women are disadvantaged because only some of them derive welfare rights through their employed or deceased husband. Widows of the above advantaged groups are far better off due to their high level entitlements from the Government Employee Insurance Schemes in terms of health care, taxation, pension, housing and the like. Widows of labourers¹² are only entitled to a lump-sum death payment, which is insufficient for survival (Chan 1983:116). The most disadvantaged group are widows of fishermen or farmers¹³, who are unlikely to receive entitlement at all, and may well be the poorest

¹² The Labour Insurance is the main social insurance scheme for non-military personnel/government employee/public teachers. Actually, this scheme covers several risks:(1) invalidity,(2)disability, (3) maternity,(4) occupational injury,(5) retirement and (6) death(plus funeral costs). But these payments are very insufficient to live on. The Insurance scheme was created in 1950 by so-called "Taiwan Provincial Government" to safeguard those employed in industrial firms and mines with 20 employees and over. In 1958, The KMT Central Government took a further initiative by enacting the Labour Insurance Act, which gave itself a direct involvement in the administration of labour insurance. Thus it was transformed from a provincial-level programme to a national one. The coverage of the labour insurance scheme was extended in 1965 to those who were employed in the government sector but were unqualified for government employee insurance, such as technicians. In 1979, its coverage was further extended to all workers in private firms with more than five employees before the passage of the 1984 Labour Standards Law (Chan 1985).

¹³ The old age allowance for aged farmers was not implemented at all until 1995, facing the political pressure from the DPP and the urgent demand from farmers.

group among lone mothers especially if their participation is in low-skill paid work. Consequently, it is extremely difficult to argue that widows in Taiwan are socio-economically better off than other groups of lone mothers, due to the lack of universal national insurance schemes for all employed men and extremely selective insurance schemes favouring military personnel, government employees and public school teachers. This social phenomenon, for Taiwanese widows, is completely different in Western countries, where widows are entitled to their deceased husbands' national insurance contribution, and therefore usually more well-off than others groups of lone mothers (Orloff 1991; Millar 1996; Kiernan et al. 1998; Land and Lewis 1998a; Van Drenth et al. 1999).

Until May 1995, when the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHI) was implemented, there existed no "universal and compulsory" insurance schemes in Taiwan. However, this first universal and compulsory scheme is still, according to Ku (1998) and Hwang (1995), based on a contribution model¹⁴, whereby employers and employees share welfare costs rather than a taxation model, as is proclaimed in the Constitution. Not surprisingly, the Taiwanese welfare system has never

¹⁴ The ratio of National Health Insurance premium is 30:60:10 for employees, employers and government respectively (Hwang 1995: 240-244).

implemented a citizenship-based on non-contributory and universal social security systems with benefits, such as family allowance or child benefits. Like Esping-Andersen's "Bismarkian" welfare model (1990), "*Benefits have depended almost entirely on contribution, and thus on work and employment*"(p.22). Such a model is still based on a universal, compulsory and national social security net in terms of national pension insurance and unemployment insurance for the employed, which is still being developed in Taiwan¹⁵. In effect, before 1998 the KMT government had no plan to implement any unemployment insurance scheme (Chan 1984:419; Lin 1990:143; Ku 1995a: 357). Under strong pressure from growing social movements and critical competition from the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) since the 1980s, finally in 1997 and in 1998, Premier Siew, Wan-chang (Vincent) announced separately that a national pension system would finalise its planning and

¹⁵ Since its foundation in 1986, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) had become the major opposition party against the KMT. In 1993, pro-welfare DPP published a white paper on social welfare, proposing:

- (1) Establishing a universal social insurance system covering benefits for pensions, health, work injury and unemployment;
- (2) Family allowances for children and young people;
- (3) Increasing social assistance cash benefits;
- (4) Expanding welfare services to disadvantaged groups;
- (5) A comprehensive medical care system and network;
- (6) A housing policy for everyone;
- (7) Collective bargaining about working conditions
- (8) Establishing a ministry particularly responsible for social welfare in the central government;
- (9) Including social welfare in national development plans;
- (10) Proceeding with resource redistribution across the nation (DPP 1993; Ku 1998b:36).

Facing persistent critical competition from the DPP, the former Premier Hsiao, Wan-chang from KMT was forced to announce a commitment in November 1997 to a national pension system, which should finalise its planning and be realized by 2000. But unfortunately, after the defeat in the presidential election in March, 2000, the pro-welfare DPP came into power in May, 2000 for the first time. The planned National Pension Scheme is still a long way from being implemented.

be realized by 2000. Simultaneously, a national unemployment insurance¹⁶ would be implemented in the latter half of 1998 (China Times 5 November 1997; Shen 1998; Ku 1998; Ku and Chen 2001). Unfortunately, these insurance schemes have still remained the rhetoric of the KMT government's social policy until it lost the presidential campaign to pro-independence and welfare DPP candidate Chen Shui-bian on 18th March 2000.

Even as dependents of working men, lone mothers and their children in Taiwan can hardly have benefited from the contribution of their working men/husbands due to selective, incomplete and residual social security net, unless they themselves participate in the labour market to contribute for themselves, by themselves and of themselves. Thereupon, lone mothers eventually are assumed in the KMT Welfare Regime to be workers without any state support for their mothering. In reality, some empirical researches upon lone parents constantly confirmed that earnings from employment are the main income for lone parent families in Taiwan (Chang 1987; Chang, Sheh and Chow 1995). Like their counterparts in Sweden, lone mothers are

¹⁶ The National Unemployment Insurance was drafted by Council of Labour Affairs (CLA), and submitted to Executive Yuan for approval in April 1998. According to the draft, the system will exclude labourers who do not have regular employers, numbering more than 2 million islands wide in 1998. Labourers with regular employers who become jobless can apply for unemployment benefits equivalent to between three and six months of their previous monthly salary. But those who lose their jobs because of labour regulation violations, as well as those who refuse to accept new jobs or to receive vocational training, will be ineligible for the unemployment benefits. Under such conditions, lone mothers, working as piece rate workers or casual / temporary labourers without regular employers, certainly cannot be covered by such a scheme. Further details, see Sheen (1998)

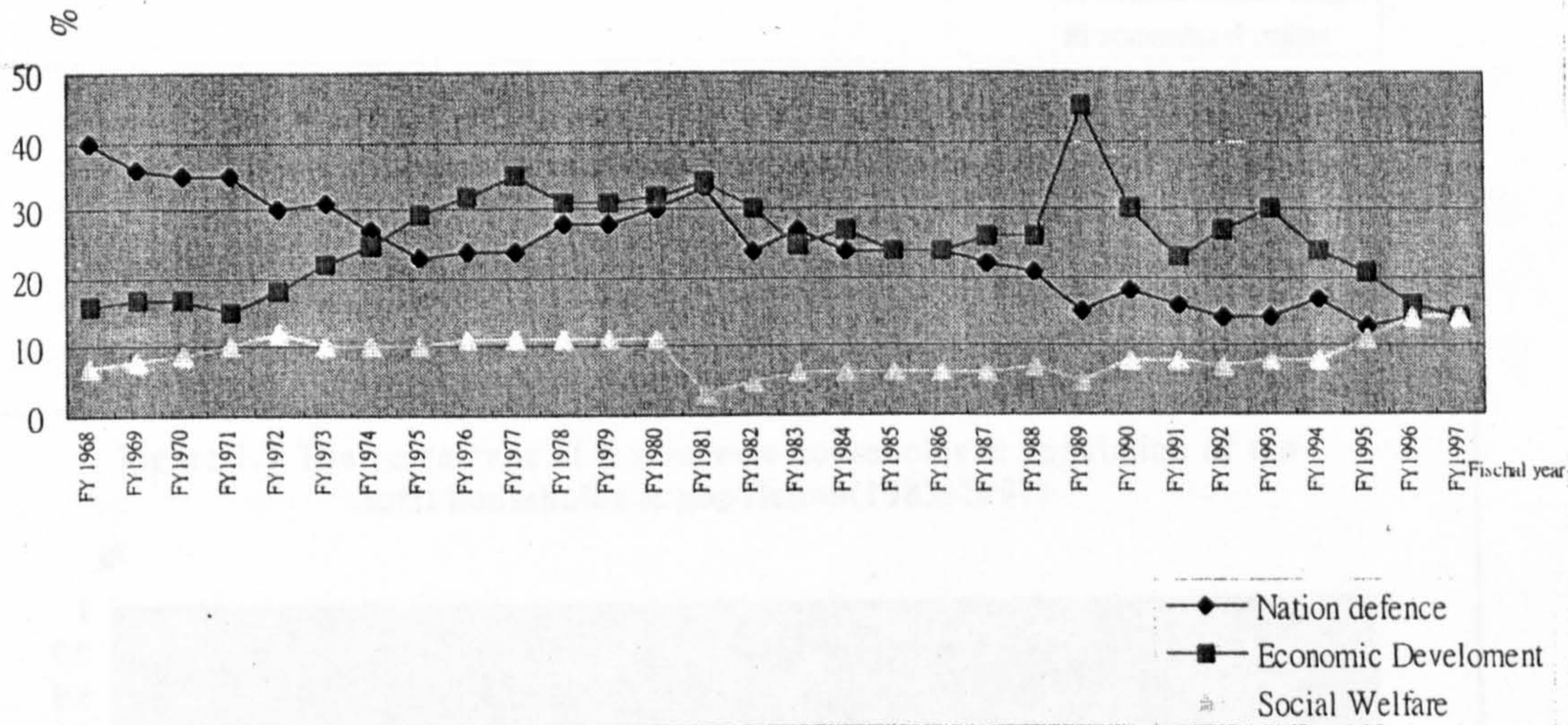
viewed as workers, but unfortunately, unlike their counterparts in Sweden, they are not protected in case of unemployment, because the Unemployment Insurance Law has not been passed and realized in the Taiwanese context. Instead, as Ku (2001) points out, "*The Labour Council declared this (1998) 'the Year of Employment Security', in order to establish a more consistent employment security system.*" until the KMT lost power in May 2000 (p.30)

(2) The Effects of Extremely Limited Welfare Allocation upon Lone Mothers

As indicated above, in Taiwan, there has existed a large gap between the constitutional statement concerning the State's obligations to provide social welfare and the reality of the existing social welfare system. For five decades, economic development and national defence have been given the highest policy priority by the KMT government resulting in a much higher expenditure towards these programmes than that of social welfare until 1997. Historically, national defence expenditure has represented at least 25.2 per cent of general government expenditure (Figure 1.7) In the 1950s defence expenditure reached an exorbitant 85% to 90% of general governmental spending (Wang 1989:71-116). In contrast, social welfare expenditure has normally represented less than 10% (Figure 1.7). Of the low welfare expenditure,

over 60 per cent of it is spent on the advantaged groups, described above (Lin 1993; Fu 1995). Lone parents among these advantaged groups would certainly enjoy more social protection from their occupation than non-military personnel, government employees and public school teachers, but in terms of meeting needs of lone parents among disadvantaged groups this should be the other way around.

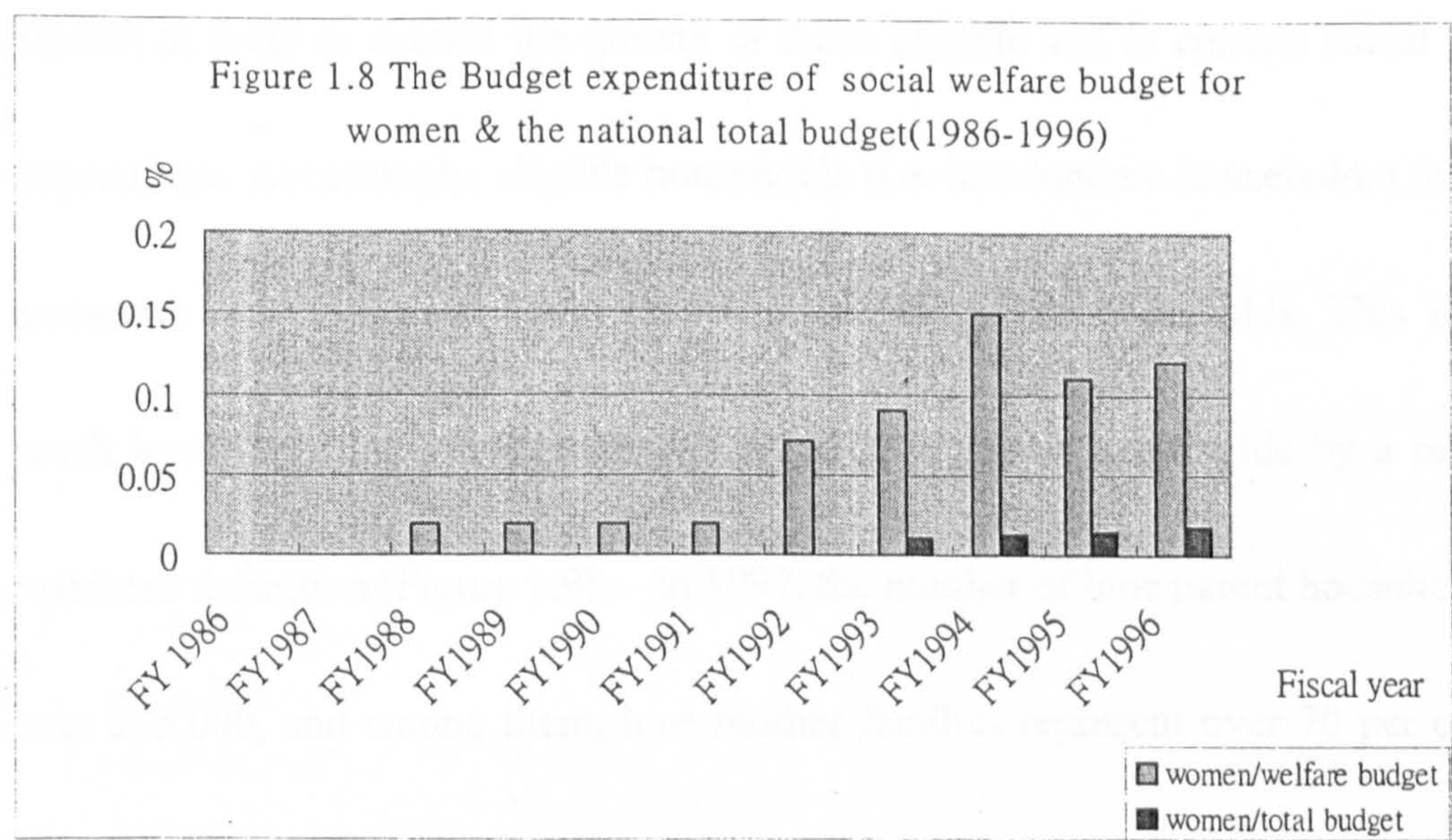
Figure 1.7 The Expenditure rate of Nation Defence, Economic Development & Social Welfare in National Total Expenditre of Taiwan(1968-1997)



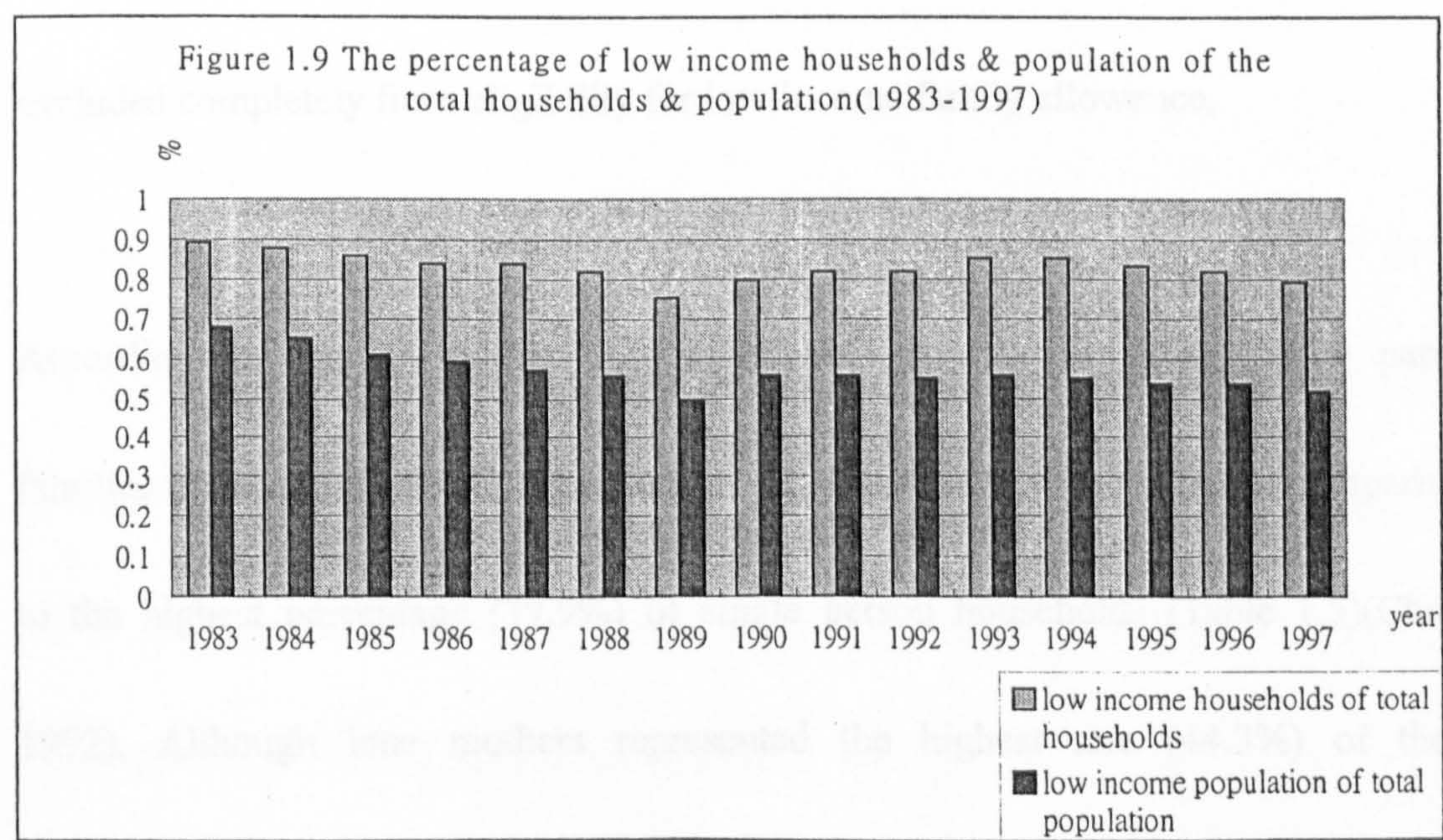
Source: Table137. Net revenues and expenditure of general government, Statistical Yearbook of the ROC 1998

Among the disadvantaged groups, women would be entitled to very low welfare benefit expenditure, less than 0.15 per cent (Figure 1.8). In other words, lone mothers can hardly depend on the Taiwan welfare state, which has a very limited social welfare budget for women. It is no wonder that scholars consistently argue that social welfare in Taiwan can only be regarded as social assistance without any

comprehensive family allowance or child benefits (Jacobs 1998).



Source: the Statistic Yearbook of ROC 1997



Source: Table 89.Low income households and population,
the Statistical Yearbook of the ROC 1998

Can lone mothers depend on social assistance like their counterparts in Britain? For

five decades, an extremely restricted eligibility scheme has been implemented in Taiwan in order to control the growth of those eligible and to contain social welfare expenditure. Accordingly, eligible households (i.e. low-income households) for social assistance have remained fewer than 0.9 per cent of all households. This figure is much lower than the lowest rate (3.9 %) of lone parent households by a relatively restricted definition (Figure 1.9). In 1997, the number of lone parent households was over 235,000, and among them, lone mother families represent over 70 per cent—at 165,000 households (Hsieh and Lee 1999). In the same year, the number of lone mother families surpassed the number of low-income households (49,207), which represents 17 per cent of lone mother families. Clearly, most lone mothers have been excluded completely from eligibility for low-income family allowance.

According to Chang's research on low-income families in Taiwan, lone parent families represented only 23.5 per cent of all low-income households, in comparison to the highest percentage (39.9%) of single person households (Table 1.5)(Chang 1992). Although lone mothers represented the highest rate (44.3%) of those women-headed low-income households, how can they be possibly eligible for such a low rate of the low-income households and benefit from such very low social expenditure? In summary, lone mother families in Taiwan are extremely

disadvantaged due to underdeveloped means-tested social assistance in stark contrast to their counterparts in Britain.

Table 1.5 Family types of low-income households in Taiwan Province in 1990
by household's gender

Unit: % & Household			
Family Structure	Sum%	Household's gender	
		Male	Female
Single person household	39.9%	42.6%	36.3%
Lone parent household	23.5%	8.1%	44.3%
Two-parent household	16.1%	25.7%	3.0%
Three generation household	8.1%	8.9%	7.1%
Husband-wife household without children	5.6%	8.4%	1.9%
Grandparent-grandchildren household	2.4%	1.9%	3.0%
Other	4.4%	4.5%	4.3%
Total (total number of all households)	100.0%(5,500)	100.0%(1,434)	100.0%(4,066)

Source: Chang (1992), pp.41-58

Dependence on the KMT State, which is characterised by an incomplete social security system, limited social welfare expenditure and very underdeveloped social assistance, is hardly possible for lone mothers in Taiwan. This “impossible mission” has been recognised by some academic researchers, but unfortunately unrecognised by the KMT government. As Shu and Chang (1989:17) said:

Since single parent families in Taiwan could not count on the government for support, by necessity they would have to solve their problems through their own initiatives and resources.

What are their initiatives and resources to support their family on their own? How do they cope with lone motherhood without dependency on men or the State in Taiwan?

This next section provides a discussion of these issues.

1.3 The Family—the Centre of A Confucian Welfare System

By decree of the Confucian Great Commonwealth, lone parents (previously only widowers and widows) should “have a means of livelihood”. Similarly, in the *Principle of People’s Livelihood*, the State is assumed by Dr. Sun Yat-sen to work as a welfare provider to “make everyone contented and happy, free from the suffering caused by the unequal distribution of wealth and property”. Furthermore, the universal welfare provision of the State is clearly guaranteed in the Constitution of ROC: “ *The government should take up its responsibility to provide assistance and services for people for their needs for food, clothing, housing, transportation, education and the pursuit of happiness*”. Unfortunately, the State’s responsibility for universal welfare provision has always been ignored and deliberately covered up by the KMT government. Instead, the family, as the centre of welfare provision, has

persistently been emphasized, promoted and implemented on the basis of Confucianism¹⁷ which has been to this day the basic ideology of the ruling classes since the Han-dynasty (Tsang 1999), and further completely contradictory to Dr. Sun's welfare ideology in "the Principle of People's Livelihood" (Lin 1990).

As Chang (1988:116) pointed out, the family, traditionally based on the patrilineal three generations, is "*the supporting pillar*" of a Confucian state's social security system. However, the Confucian extended family is no longer the main type of family in Taiwan. The rapid rise of industrialisation, urbanization and modernization from the 1970s has changed that. The nuclear family is something else, different from the traditional extended households (Wong 1981; Thornton and Lin 1994). The new types of lone parent families formed by divorce, separation and extramarital childbirth are increasing rapidly as is the rise of nuclear families. But the traditional welfare role of the family is not declining as rapidly as the extended family is dividing into nuclear families and lone parent families. First, individuals in the newly formed families generally do not share the same residence but maintain close social contacts. Furthermore, they do not share common property but maintain a high degree of

¹⁷ According to Confucius, the ideal whole world is nothing more than a family with the emperor at the top as son of Heaven (Tien-tsi 天子) and at the same time father of all citizens, who were Tsi-min (Children-citizens) (子民) to their emperor (father-monarch) (Fu-wang 父王). Such a relationship between father and sons was the same relationship between the ruler and the ruled. Likewise, the measures of state security were regarded as forms of family security, as the prime essential feature of the social security system in the Confucian ideal state (Xing 1982:29; Chang 1988:112)

economic cooperation, because they do still consider themselves as part of a divided extended family¹⁸ (Wang 1977:4, 1981: 32). The Confucian family value of solidarity among parent-child and siblings on the basis of filial piety and fraternal love¹⁹, effectively maintains the family as the main source of social security for each individual from cradle to grave (Chang 1988; Gallin 1986,1990; Thornton and Lin 1994:48; Jacobs 2000:11).

Second, this type of family welfare tradition and value have systematically been strengthened, promoted and emphasised by KMT government through education²⁰, the civil code²¹ and propaganda (Chan 1984,1987; Lin 1990,1995). In the 1980s, the

¹⁸ As Wang (1977, 1981) argued, such a newly nuclear family is a product of modernisation. And the capital flow among siblings and parents and their adult off-spring remains at a high percentage, on average 45% and 67% respectively.

¹⁹ Filial piety and fraternal love are the corner stone of the well-governed family, quoted from Chapter 1st, 2nd, 4th and 12th of the Confucian Analects, Lun-Yün (論語). Actually, Filial piety (孝 Hsiao) is the attitudes and duties of children towards parents; fraternal love (悌 Ti) characterises the relationship between siblings. Filial piety is practised by supporting one's parents materially and economically when they are alive and looking after their funeral arrangement upon their death., which are the duties of sons. In response to filial piety, parents should show their benevolent affections (慈 Tzu) to their children as its correlate. Ti prescribes that elder siblings are to care for their younger siblings in a benevolent way (友 YO) and that the latter should in turn show honest veneration. Although such a family relationship is by nature unequal according to sex, age and generation, this is a Confucian ideal family. Further details, see Chang (1988:112-113)

²⁰ Confucianism occupies the top 7th of the textbooks of the courses for pupils. It stresses not only the importance of social order but also family order. Everyone needs to fit into a particular position in the social and family structure and to play her/his role in society and family. Since the Han dynasty (202bc-AD 8), Confucianism had dominated the basis of the ruling ideology. Therefore, not surprisingly, the KMT government still insists upon Confucianism as the best traditional culture of China and puts it at the heart of education in Taiwan, by stressing obedience, loyalty, harmony, order etc on the belief of filial piety, fraternal love in family and patriotism, nationalism in society respectively. (Chang 1988:109-124; Meyer 1988:21-23; Chang 1990:147-156; Ku 1997:179-181)

²¹ For example, the Article 1084 of Book IV of the Civil Code states clearly: "As children, people should implement their duty of filial piety to their parents", See Lin et al.(1998)

KMT social policies have still continued to stress the welfare function of the family.

As the chief director of the Council for Labour Affairs, Chao, Shou-po said:

“a sound social welfare system must be one through which the family can share with the society and the government the duties of taking care of individuals, and not one through which the society and the government will take the place of the family in providing those necessary care and services which it is able to provide...To protect the family and strengthen its role and functions is of great importance for the well-being of the society.. the more services the family can share and provide, the less the society and the government should spend in this regard. Thus, measures must be taken in our social welfare to enable the family to play a greater role in meeting the welfare needs of individuals.” (Chao 1988:68-69)

Afterwards, the former Premier of the Executive Yuan²², Hau, Pei-tsun in 1992 announced clearly: *“The development of our social welfare system must be built on citizens’ diligence and familial filial piety so as to avoid Western social welfare which will destroy the traditional good virtues—hard work and filial piety”* (Lin 1995:31).

While facing the rising demand for old-age pension schemes, he instead launched a

²² The Executive Yuan is one of the five- function central government of the Republic of China in Taiwan. It is the Cabinet with a range of ministries and commissions, which are appointed by the president and whose chief leader is the premier. The five-function central government are: (1) the Executive Yuan,(2) the Legislative Yuan, responsible for legislation, approving the national budget and interpellating the central government officials,(3) the Judicial Yuan,(4) the Examination Yuan for examinations for the civil service and professional license,(5) the Control Yuan, the chief watchdog.

programme of “Three generations living in the same household”, intending to roll the nuclear family, which is rapidly growing in industrial society, into the traditional three-generations family grounded in agriculture, by saying: “*Not only can this scheme save the public budget, but also can fulfil the traditional virtue—filial piety, for the aged parents are presumed to be delighted to live with their son and daughter-in-law and to look after their grandchildren. Absolutely, all three generations will/can benefit from such a welfare scheme. Why don’t we implement it?*”(Lin 1995:106). In 1994, facing more radical competition from the pro-welfare DPP, the *Guiding Principles of Social Welfare Policies* was subsequently published by the KMT government. One of its nine principles²³ for Taiwanese welfare development clearly continues to strengthen and promote “*the family as the centre of social welfare policy*” (Ku 1997:248, 1998b: 37). More recently, the former Premier of Executive Yuan, Hsiao, Wan-chang (Vincent) declared and emphasised again in the 1998 National Social Welfare Conference in Taipei: “*The family as the centre of social welfare policy should and will be continuously developed*” (Lo 1998). Based on these remarks, it is clearly assumed by the KMT government that lone parents will

²³ The nine principles of the Guiding Principles of Social Welfare Policy are listed as follows:

- (1) Emphasis on the balance between economic and social development;
- (2) Establishing a proper social administration system;
- (3) Team work among varied governmental departments and stress on the importance of professional social workers;
- (4) Harmony and co-operation between employers and employees;
- (5) A financially independent social insurance system;
- (6) Needs satisfaction and the mixed economy of welfare;
- (7) Public housing for the lower income families;
- (8) Equal opportunity for access to medical care.

meet their needs within their families in terms of childcare, housing, income support and so on.

Furthermore, as Kwon (1999,2001) argued, the family is still the main economic support for the elderly in Taiwan and Korea, where half of the elderly still live together with their grown-up children. Their main income source is from their children on the basis of the Confucian notion of filial piety. This is more likely to be the case of lone parents in Taiwan in the sense of “the family” (家 CHIA), solidified by Confucian notions of namely filial piety (孝 Hsiao) and fraternal love (悌 Ti). Some empirical studies have found that at a variety of levels, lone parents have received emotional care, childcare, housing, income and the like from their families, and in particular from their family of origin (Liu 1984; Chang 1987; Hong 1987; Cheng 1988; Lin and Chin 1992; Wang 1991; Wu 1993; Huang 1993; Chang 1994; Chang et al.1995; Lee Wen-wen 1997). The family still plays a critical role of welfare provider for lone parents. Furthermore, Taiwan has deliberately prevented lone parents from becoming dependent on the state, but rather locates them within the family. Traditionally the family, in agriculture, was a cooperative enterprise and the fundamental provider of economic and social security for the individual (Chang 1988; Gallin 1990). For lone parents, the family has remained remarkably intact in

providing social security and services. The crux of the Taiwanese Confucian Welfare state has not changed very much (Chang 1988; Jones 1990,1993; Kwon 1999, 2001).

1.4 Summary

Despite the variation in definitions of a lone parent family, a commonality throughout illustrates that the estimated number and rate of lone parents has been increasing as rapidly as those of nuclear families have been growing, due to industrialization, urbanization, modernization and westernisation in Taiwan since the 1970s. The composition of lone parents has changed with the largest group reversed from widowhood to divorce, following a rapid rise in the younger age of divorce. Currently, feminist reformers have been lobbying to amend the legislation of a separation system to the existing Family Law. If successful, it can be predicted that the rate and the visibility of separation will sharply increase. Likewise, the Confucian stigma upon never-married single motherhood has been challenged by the rapidly increasing rate of extramarital childbirth and more openness in sexual activity among teenagers, particularly by more well-off female entrepreneurs who prefer to have a baby without marriage. It is certain that the rate of never-married single mothers will not roll back, but conversely will increase despite researchers having no reliable estimate of data for

that group of women.

Interestingly, the rate of lone fathers has declined nearly 10% within a decade, whatever definitions are adopted. The priority of giving fathers custody of children has been challenged. Now people and the courts tend to consider the best interests of children in the case of divorce, which has been enforced by the revised Children's Welfare Act in 1993 and solidified further by the revised article of the partially reformed Family Law in 1996 regarding the custody of children. Currently, mother-only families represent between 60% and 74% of all lone parents, much lower than 90% of their female counterparts in Western societies. It is expected that the number of lone mothers in Taiwan will catch up with western rates of their counterparts in the West due to the reforms of legislation in Taiwan.

Unfortunately, notwithstanding the rise in number of and the change in composition of lone parents, the welfare system in Taiwan has not been changed to reflect the Confucian Great Commonwealth which recognises ideologically the special needs of lone parents and provides no special schemes for them as it should be ideally done within the Confucian Great Commonwealth, with the Principle of People's Livelihood and under the Constitution of ROC.

Essentially, the state-sponsored social security system in Taiwan is very employment-oriented; in this sense it is very similar to Germany, which Esping-Andersen (1990) categorised Germany as a type case of the conservative corporatist Welfare State which links workers' contributions with their entitlement to benefits. Even lone mothers who are unpaid carers and domestic workers and who in theory are not supposed to receive support from the state, are still supported by the State in Germany due to the recognition of dependants of male breadwinners (Wilson 1993; Hobson 1994; Lewis and Ostner 1994, 1995; Klett-Davies 1997). In this sense, the welfare system in Taiwan is more paid-work-oriented than that in the Bismarkian Welfare regime. Lone mothers in Taiwan, working as unpaid carers and homemakers, are not able to receive support from the state in practice by non-recognising social rights of dependants of male breadwinners, unless they take up a paid job. When the Bismarkian Welfare state develops toward a "modernised" model as Klett-Davies (1996,1997) argues, lone mothers in Germany will in practice be entitled to non-contributory benefits for unpaid caring work. In contrast, lone mothers in Taiwan are entitled to nothing more than social assistance along with their casual, temporary and part-time paid work. Furthermore, the inequality of the employment-oriented social security net between military personnel/government employees/public school

teachers and non-military personnel/government employees/public school teachers has segregated widowed lone mothers into two groups. On the one hand, widows of workers insured by the Labour Standard Law are only entitled to a lump-sum death payment, accrued by their deceased husband's contribution, which is insufficient and inadequate to support a family long term (Chow 1985-86; Chang 1988). On the other hand, widows of military personnel/government employees/public school teachers are entitled to a life-long monthly death payment, which is sufficient and adequate to support their family, like their counterparts in Germany, where they are entitled to their husband's contributory benefits regardless of their occupation. In addition, the welfare system in Taiwan is still lacking the Unemployment Insurance and the National Pension Insurance, as mentioned earlier. Therefore, for most lone mothers in Taiwan the insufficient death payment for widows and the employment-oriented social security system without unemployment benefits and comprehensive pension make unpaid mothering at home impossible without participation in the labour market. The "welfare to work" programme, launched by New Labour in Britain since 1997, is intended to reduce lone mothers' dependency on the state benefits and increase their participation in the labour market (Brindle 1997; Smith 1997; Wick 1997). Unfortunately there is no such thing in Taiwan, because lone mothers are presumed to, and indeed, must work despite mothering alone.

The Taiwanese welfare state is characterised by an extremely low social welfare expenditure (Figure 1.7), the very low percentage of “the poor” population (about 0.5 %; Figure 1.9), controlled by the extremely restricted eligibility, and the incredibly low social expenditure for women (Figure 1.8). The low-income families have always presented, on average, only 0.5 per cent of all the whole population in Taiwan over the last five decades, and among them, lone parents represent only 23.5 %. How could lone mothers benefit from such an extreme quota for social assistance? In other words, most lone mothers are excluded from eligibility and cannot “depend on” the State benefits. For lone mothers, “dependency on the State” does not exist in Taiwan. “By necessity they would have to solve their problems through their own initiatives and resources” as Shu and Chang (1989) pointed out earlier. What are their own initiatives and resources to support their unique situation of being a working mother alone? Under such a circumstance, the family becomes critically significant for them on the Confucian bound solidarity between parents and children and among siblings. The family welfare, persistently launched by KMT government for 55 years, seems the only initiatives and resources available to solve their problems. Therefore, in the next chapter we are going to examine carefully the welfare function of “the family” for lone mothers. Can they still benefit from it as the KMT government has always

presumed? If so, to what extent can they access resources from it? And what kind of resources can they obtain? Is the family still effective in providing social security in their daily lives?

Chapter 2 Lone Mothers and the Family

As the KMT government has persistently stressed, the family should be the centre of welfare provision in Taiwan. Is it still the main welfare provider despite the rise of nuclear families along with the increase in lone parent households in the Newly Industrialized Taiwan? In other words, can lone mothers really meet their needs in terms of childcare, childrearing, housing, and income within the family based on a patrilineage, patriarchy, and patrilocality? Firstly, a question should be asked: what kind of policy logics underlies such an assumption? Secondly, if the family is still the main welfare provider for lone mothers, then what kind of family do they have and what are the determinants of the extent of welfare provision they can access from it? This chapter attempts to examine the social policy logics regarding lone mothers and what familial structure will affect the extent of the familial welfare provisions for lone mothers. At the end of this chapter, a new welfare typology is established to contextualise them into a Confucian social context.

2.1 Lone Mothers, Presumed as a Full Member of the Family

Which Models for Lone Mothers in Taiwan?

From countless critiques of Western feminists, the welfare regime typology employed either by Richard Titmuss (1963) or Gøstav Esping-Andersen (1990) has ignored gender as a vital variable in the analysis of social policies (Wilson 1977; Hobson 1990,

1997; O' Conner 1993; Orloff 1993; Sainsbury 1994, 1996 and 1999; Lewis and Ostner 1995; Lewis 1997; Lister 1997; Watson and Doyal 1999). Instead, these feminists have emphasised and recognised the family as the significant provider of welfare and care, where unpaid work done by women has virtually been ignored by male mainstream theorists (e.g., Marshall 1950; Titmuss 1963; Wilensky and Labeaus 1965; Mishra 1990; Esping-Andersen 1990). Furthermore, in order to gender welfare state regimes, they have proposed a different set of gender criteria for constructing social policy regimes based upon variations in attachment to the male breadwinner ideology. Yet, more recently, the work of Jane Lewis and Ilona Ostner (1991, 1995) has proposed a gender policy regime based on the strength or weakness of the male breadwinner outlook, directly challenging to the premisses of Gøstav Esping-Anderson's policy regime typology. These regime types are broken down into three categories (Lewis 1992, 1997):

- (1) Strong breadwinner outlook, such as Germany, Britain and the Netherlands;
- (2) Moderate breadwinner outlook, like France;
- (3) Weak breadwinner outlook: Sweden is the paradigmatic case.

Despite such a male-breadwinner typology in the ways which gender cuts across mainstream regime typologies, some Western feminists still point out, this welfare regime still remains problematical (e.g., Hobson 1994; Sainsbury 1999; Strell and Duncan 2001). As such Sainsbury (1999) clearly demonstrates that "*In this regime, unmarried mothers and divorced women are anomalous, and they fall outside regular policies*" (p.78). Moreover, as Hobson (1994:175) further pointed out, it still remains problematical in the crucial respect of lone mothers, who are the only breadwinner in their families. Instead, she posed two models to locate the case of solo mothers in

analysing the welfare regimes: (1) **Parent-Worker-Citizen** model for solo mothers in Sweden; (2) **Mother-Carer-Citizen** model for lone mothers in the Netherlands and Britain (Hobson 1994, 1997). According to Strell and Duncan's argument (2001), either Lewis and Ostner's model or Hobson's criteria has certain shortcomings in the analysis of lone mothers in Austria. Meanwhile, they proposed a "*Caregiver/Breadwinner Social Wage*" welfare model in Austria instead of Lewis-Hobson welfare typology, i.e. the Parent-Worker Welfare regime and the Caregiver Social Wage Welfare Regime (p.162). By contrast, neither Lewis and Ostner's, nor Hobson's, nor Strell and Duncan's welfare model can explain the case of lone mothers in the Taiwanese context. Firstly, the male breadwinner model is grounded on the assumption of the nuclear family whose key dynamic shaft is built on the equally horizontal position between husband/man and wife/woman despite enormous feminist critiques of the inequality between the sexes within marriage (e.g., Pahl 1980, 1983, 1989; Thorne and Yalom 1982; Wilson 1987a & b; Pascall 1997). Due to women's dependency on a male breadwinner, they may make claims to derive benefits as wives and widows, and as workers or as mothers in the absence of a male breadwinner in Western welfare states. Such a model probably can only apply to those women whose bread/rice-winners, favoured by the KMT government, are classified into military personnel/government employee/public educators in Taiwan. But it is hard to explain the circumstance of the other women, mostly working as a secondary wage earner or an unpaid housewife, who can hardly benefit from their bread/rice-winners' contribution due to extremely insufficient lump-sum benefits from the National Labour Insurance and the lack of universal non-contribution benefits from the KMT State (Chow 1985/86; Dixon and Chow 1992; Aspalter 2001), even in the case of widows. The incomplete social security system and the inequality within it, indicated in Chapter One, hardly make the male bread/rice-winner model possible in the Taiwan

context, because of the KMT welfare logic of the family as the centre of its welfare provision.

Furthermore, as numerous scholars point out, a Confucian family (家 Chia) is not built on the equal, horizontal relationship between husband/man and wife/woman, like the Western family, but rather on the unequal vertical kinship between father and son as its most central relationship within the family (Freedman 1966; Thompson 1969; Hsu 1949, 1971; Wong 1978; Stacey 1983; Baker 1979; Hu 1995). The blood tie of father-son, as the main dynamic shaft of the family, automatically means the downgrading of women's status and the withholding of their educational and economic opportunities. And it also simultaneously reinforces their dependence on the family so well described by the traditional code of feminine ethics, the Three Obediences¹. Bearing such Three Obediences in mind, lone mothers are presumed to be dependent on their family. That is, never-married single mothers are supposed to be dependent upon their father before marriage, divorced/separated lone mothers on their husband after marriage and widows on their sons after the death of their husband. It is no wonder why the KMT government has persistently stressed the vital significance of the family as the centre of its welfare provision. Regarding lone mothers, it is very difficult to apply the male breadwinner model based on the horizontal relationship of husband-wife in Western societies in analysing the Taiwanese Confucian State and understanding the positions of lone mothers.

¹ Three Obediences prescribes that a woman is to obey her father at home before marriage, her husband after marriage, and her eldest son after the death of her husband. Further details, see Tu, Wei-ming (1998), 'Probing the "Three Bonds" and "Five Relationships" in Confucian Humanism', *Confucian and the Family*, ed., Walter H. Slote and George A. DeVos, New York: State University of New York Press

Lone Mothers as Carer-Worker

Secondly, we are going to examine the inappropriateness of Hobson's two models, very similar to Fraser's two equity models: the Universal Care-giving Parity model and the Universal Breadwinner Employment Model (Fraser 1994a and b), in analysing lone mothers in Taiwan context. The parent-worker model, of which Sweden represents the paradigm case, assumes all mothers, as another breadwinner equal to the male breadwinner, will be active labour force participants. Care services provided are then very available and affordable for two working breadwinner-parents. In the meantime, it also provides recognition of care in the form of parental leave benefits and benefits to care for sick children. Therefore lone mothers are included in the labour market and a social wage paid for unpaid care for their children to make their high rate of the labour participation possible. But the Taiwanese Confucian welfare regime assumes all women will participate in the labour market, but ultimately as a secondary wage earner, and not bread/rice-winner (Gallin 1984:392; Greenhalgh 1985:272). As Hakim (1996:66) argues, even secondary earners, mostly married women, taking full-time jobs are still relatively low-paid, normally having intermittent work histories, but provided with some compensating advantages, such as convenient hours, in order to cope with their primary duty of care at home. Not surprisingly, they are further classified almost as a "reserve army of labour" (Barron and Norris 1976, 1991; Armstrong and Armstrong 1978, 1984; Bruegel 1979; Joshi 1981). Despite the important contribution from their earning to the family budget, they are mainly financially dependent on their bread/rice-winners, but not state income support, for the basic necessities of life such as housing, food and the like. In the absence of a male rice-winner, lone mothers in Taiwan are compulsorily shifted from a secondary earner to a primary sole earner in their family. But such a shift does

not change the disadvantages of being a secondary earner in the workplace. Thereupon, the compulsory combination of a solo primary earner and carer has forced lone mothers to cope with extreme circumstances. The worse thing is that, simultaneously, the Taiwan state does not recognise their unique circumstance of being “a solo primary earner and mother” in the forms of providing universal family or child benefits, parental leave benefits or benefits for care for sick children or prevalent affordable childcare and so on. Despite the high rate (87.6%) of full-time participation in the labour market of lone mothers in Taiwan, like that of their counterparts in Sweden, it is extremely difficult to allocate them into the Parent-Worker-Citizen Welfare Model, because they are not treated as bread/rice-winners as equally as men in terms of employment payment nor, as their counterparts in Sweden, as breadwinners. At the same time, it is also impossible to employ the Mother-Carer-Citizen Welfare Model in analysing Taiwanese lone mothers, because their unpaid care not only has been taken for granted by their patrilineal family members but also their patriarchal Confucian state, unlike their counterparts, entitled to state income support in the Netherlands and Britain. In brief, neither these two models can be realised without the common basis of “citizenship”, which by Marshall’s category, is civil, political and social rights (Marshall 1950; Marshall and Bottomore 1992). While Taiwan has been democratised since the lifting of martial law in 1987, social rights are particularly lacking and need to be developed urgently.

Lone Mothers as Citizens?

Thirdly, we are going to look at why lone mothers are in practice working as a

primary earner and unpaid carer, but unfortunately, are treated as a secondary earner in the workplace and unrecognised mother at home without any state support on the basis of “citizenship”. Notwithstanding social rights, guaranteed by the ROC Constitution and social welfare rhetoric, advocated by *The Principle of the People’s Livelihood* (see Chapter 1), as many scholars point out, the characteristics of the Confucian Welfare State are not to stress the notion of “rights”, instead of “duty/obligation/responsibility”, but the norm of “family before individuals” (Jones 1990, 1993; Wah 1991; Saunders 1996; Goodman and Peng 1996; White and Goodman 1998; Tsang 1999). Ku (1998:180-181) further criticises, Confucianism has deliberately been used as an ideological tool via the education system and mass media to legitimatise the minority rule (15%) of the Chinese-Mainlander Nationalist Party’s over the majority of Taiwanese (85%) due to its stress upon social order between the ruler and the ruled, solidarity within the patriarchal family, the family before individuals, harmony between the sexes, dutifulness instead of rights/citizenship and the like. Whatever social welfare has been provided by the KMT state has been propagandised as either the good will of the rulers, such as Chiang Kei-shek or as kind deserts for the Taiwanese people, which was nothing related to “citizenship”, until the upsurge in democratic movements² in the late 1980s (Lin 1990, 1995). As a result, the four major hurdles to Taiwan’s democratisation were removed, namely

² A whole series of social and political movements involving workers, feminists, students, human rights activists, aborigines, environmentalists and others emerged in the early 1980s. According to statistical information, there were more than 1,500 incidents of social movements between 1983 and 1987. The movement reached a new peak in 1987 just around the time martial law was lifted. In 1986 police statistics revealed that there had been 1,200 incidents of street rallies and demonstrations, in which over 96,000 people had been mobilised. In 1987 the number of social movements and protests increased to over 1,800 (Wu 1989; Hsiao 1992; Hsu and Song 1990; Tang and Tang 1997). By 1987, almost 11,300 registered civic associations, with over 1.3 millions members and a vast number of newly formed groups which did not register, came together to protest for their demands, interests, and ideals but also against the KMT ruling regime. In Taiwan, the people’s right of association was finally recognised in the enactment of the Civil Organization Law in 1989 (Ngo 1993).

martial law³ in 1987, the ban on new newspapers and the extreme control on the mass media in 1988, the ban on establishing political parties or any NGOs in 1989, and the termination of the “thousand-year” parliamentarian members of the National Assembly, Control Yuan and Legislative Yuan⁴ who had been frozen in office until the end of 1991 (Free China Review July 1997). As a result, it is certain in the Taiwanese context that people’s civil and political rights of *“liberty of the person, freedom of speech, thought and faith, the right to property...the right to justice.. the right to participate in the exercise of political power as a member of a body invested with political authority or as an elector of the members of such a body”* were finally recognised and gained at the beginning of 1990s (Marshall and Bottomore 1992:8). In a notable critique from Anthony Giddens, Marshall’s rights divisions failed to *“emphasise that citizen rights have been achieved in substantial degree only through struggle... each of the three sets of citizenship rights... had to be fought for, over a long span of historical time”* (Giddens 1982:171). Such long-running social, democratic and political movements have gradually granted people in Taiwan some level of social protection from the top down, as Lin (1990) and Ku (1995 a & b, 1997) had pointed out respectively. Hitherto, the incomplete social security system can demonstrate that citizenship has not been fully achieved, particularly while the National Pension Insurance for the elderly was supposed to be implemented in 2000 until the KMT lost power in the 2000 presidential election. Instead, President Chen

³ In 1987, martial law was lifted up through the termination of the 38-year-old Emergency Decree and further in 1991, the termination of the Period of National Mobilization for Suppression of the Communist Rebellion, by abolishing the Temporary Provisions and promulgating the Additional Article of the Constitution, enacted in May 1991.

⁴ According to Dr. Sun Yat-Sen’s legacy, the central government consists of the Office of the President, the National Assembly, and five governing branches (called “Yuan”), namely the Executive Yuan, the Legislative Yuan, Judicial Yuan, the Examination Yuan and, the Control Yuan. In Taiwan, the role of the “parliament” of Western countries was jointly filled with the National Assembly and the Legislative Yuan, directly elected by the people. But the direct election of the president and vice president by the people in Taiwan since March 1996, who had replaced the National Assembly and was further frozen by the DPP central government after Chen Shui-Bian’s presidential victory in March, 2000.

Shui-bian from DPP introduced an old age allowance system for the elderly of NT\$ 3000 (approximately US\$ 90 per month), which will be implemented in January 2002, following the 2000 presidential election promises.

Despite women's involvement in all these social movements, indicated above, it does not mean that their citizenship has been granted as much as men's. Evidence shows that women's status has neither increased as rapidly as the rise of their participation in the labour force nor has been improved as much as men's (Diamond 1975; Arrigo 1980; Greenhalgh 1985; Gallin 1990; Kung 1983,1994; Hsiung 1996). Conversely, Kung (1994) pointed out: "*While women are becoming wage-earners, their place in the family and the definition of their familial responsibilities have not been substantially altered*" (p.196). More precisely, married women need to combine their paid work with their child-rearing responsibilities (Hsiung 1996:99). And their earnings are often assumed as supplementary to those of those household members (Kung 1994:195). It is no wonder that lone mothers are treated the same as married women, as a secondary wage earner combining with child-rearing alone, despite their earnings constituting the main income of their families without male bread/rice-winners. In fact, lone mothers' unpaid child-rearing responsibilities have never been recognised and subsidised in the form of a social wage on the notion of "rights/citizenship". Furthermore, it has been taken for granted and valued by the KMT state as "Model Mothers", whose children have achieved success because of their maternal care and self-sacrifice, and who would normally be glorified in public on each Mother's Day (Diamond 1975a:15; Farris 1986: 3; Ku 1989:13; Kung 1994:194).

The non-recognition of "citizenship" has trapped lone mothers in Taiwan into an

extreme dilemma to cope with while they are working as sole primary rice-winners but treated as a supplementary earner without any paid parental leave or available and affordable childcare, and simultaneously as unpaid mothers without any comprehensive state income support. In fact, lone mothers in Taiwan are not treated as citizens based on the notion of “social rights” nor further entitled to a social wage for their unpaid care for their children, but entitled to the glory of being “*better housewives, better mothers, better citizens*”, who have to sacrifice their own individual social rights (Diamond 1975a:37). Without male rice-winners, there is still a widespread assumption that, as secondary earners, they should rely on other family members of their agnatic or affinal family while in need. Taking the “citizenship” approach, it is hard to employ Hobson’s two models in analysing the circumstances of lone mothers in Confucian Welfare states. They might better be categorised into the model of “Mother-Worker-but-not-Citizen” on the assumption that they are full family members and should meet their needs within their natal family or mothers-in-law’s family in the absence of male rice-winners.

2. Lone Mothers and The Confucian Family

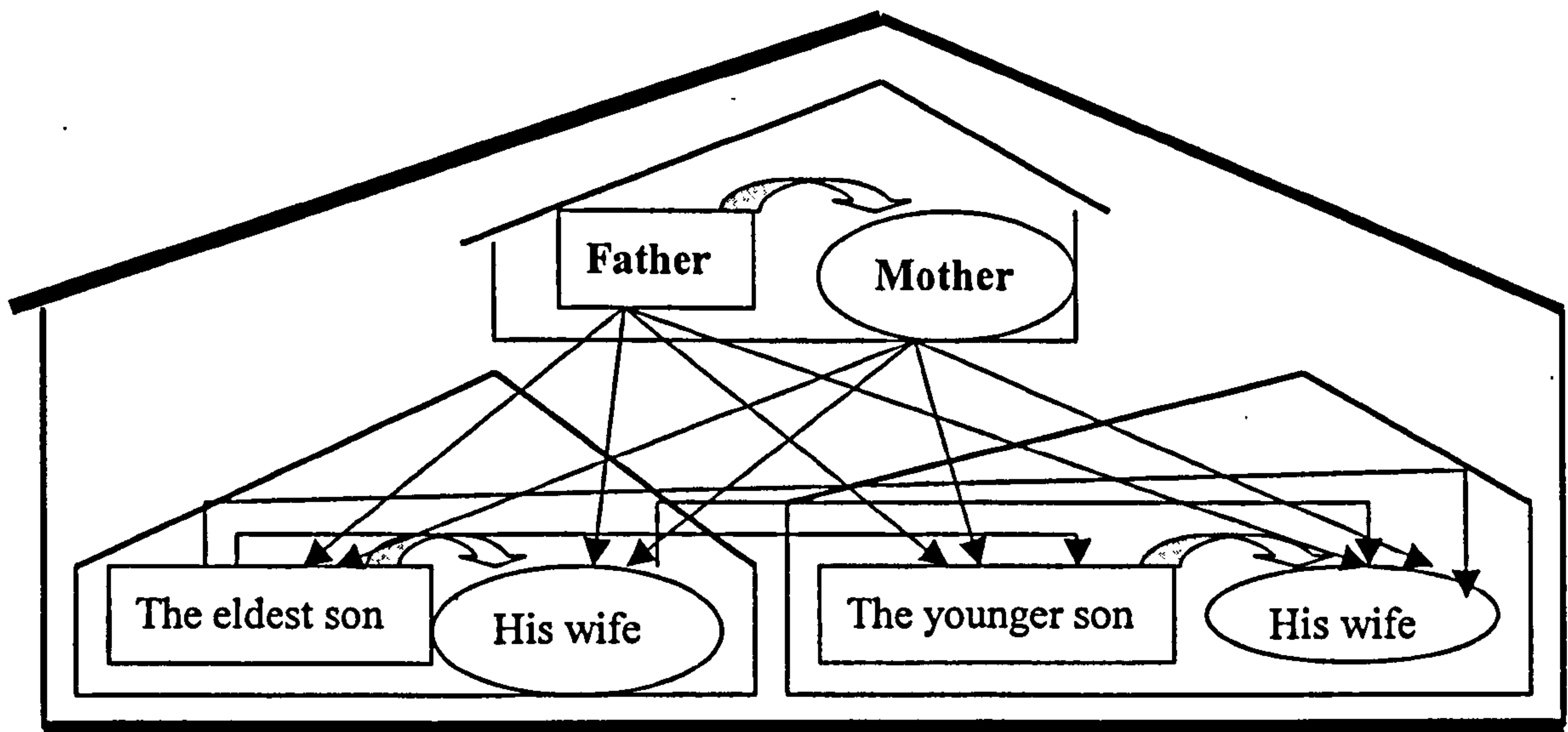
Eventually, the familial welfare policy logics of the KMT government are based on assumptions about lone mothers as members of the agnatic family, neither as individual citizens nor only a dependent wife of a male bread/rice-winner. As an individual citizen, lone mothers in Scandinavian countries are treated as parent-workers, supported by universalist benefits from their employment and social assistance. As a wife, they are entitled to the contribution of the insured working

men and social assistance in the absence of their male breadwinner in Britain, Germany, USA and the like. In Taiwan, they are working as secondary earners in combination with their unpaid care responsibilities, and are assumed to rely on their family while in need. If so, are lone mothers really treated as a member of the Confucian family? In other words, can they really benefit from the family? Or can the welfare role of the family still meet the needs of lone mothers? In search of such an answer, we are going to look at the Confucian family structure and function, which is supposed to be the centre of the KMT Confucian welfare state and meet lone mothers' needs as well.

The Status, Power and Right of Lone Mothers in the Family

As a number of scholars jointly note, the family has always been a cooperative enterprise and the fundamental provider of economic and social security for the individual in Taiwan (Gates 1979, 1987; Chang 1988; Gallin 1984,1990; Jones 1993; Lee, Parish and Willis 1994; Goodman, White and Kwon 1997). If compared with meagre state welfare provision, it might be true for the individual, but considering gender as a dimension, it might not be true for women due to the Confucian family centrality built on father-son kinship, which is critically connected with the power structure within it. The power to be exercised from the top down is based on three dimensions in the family: *Generation, Age and Gender* (see Diagram 2.1).

Diagram 2.1. The Power Structure in the Confucian Family



The first priority: Generation (that is *Senior/older* generation comes first)

The second priority: Age (that is *Senior/elder* brother comes first)

The third priority: Gender (that is *Male* comes first)

The priority of its pecking order in the family is “*generation prior to age, then age prior to gender*” (Hsu 1949, 1971; Dawson 1978; Baker 1979; Stacey 1983; Gallin 1986,1990; Lee 1988; Hu 1995). The generational hierarchy between father and son is motivated as the most central relationship within the Confucian family by the virtue of “filial piety” (孝 Hsiao)⁵ which is practised by supporting one’s parents emotionally, materially and economically in their old age. The age hierarchy (seniority) is consolidated by another virtue of “fraternal love” (悌 Ti)⁶, whereas the younger siblings should show their honest veneration to their elder brothers,

⁵ One of Confucius’ teachings on “filial piety” in Lun-Yün (論語 the Confucian Analects) is: “that parents, when alive, should be served according to propriety; that, when dead, they should be buried according to propriety; and that they should be sacrificed to according to propriety.” For further details, see Chao (1983, p. 71-100)

⁶ Actually one of the Confucian teachings illustrates the significance of these two virtues of how to well-govern the family by saying: “Filial piety and fraternal love are the cornerstone of the well-governed family”, see Chapters 1st, 2nd, 4th, 12th of the Confucian Analects (論語 Lun-Yün).

particularly their eldest brother, who is supposed to support their parents prior to themselves⁷. And the gender hierarchy results in the extremely subordinate, powerless and rightless status of daughter/wife/mother in the Confucian family, who has no entitlement for any “rights”, except “unpaid housework and care duties⁸” (Diamond 1975b; Cohen 1976; Dawson 1978; Wong 1978; Baker 1979; Kung 1983, 1994). The three structural inequalities caused by generation, age and gender have allocated lone mothers of Taiwan into a more complicated environment than that caused by the model of male-breadwinner-dependent-wife in the Western family (Pahl 1980, 1983, 1989). Certainly, the Generation-Age-Gender power hierarchy “from the above to below” has marginalised lone mothers into four disadvantaged positions where they can hardly claim equal familial welfare provision and protection as much as lone fathers.

Their “Unrecognised Full Family Membership” in the Confucian Family

Lone Mothers as a “Temporary” Member within their Natal Family

⁷ The Confucian ideal of the harmonious world is built on five cardinal human relationships:

- (1) Rule/the ruled
- (2) Father/son
- (3) Elder brother/ younger brother
- (4) Husband/wife
- (5) Friend/friend

These so-called Five Human Relationships (五倫 Wu-lun) are arranged in order of priority, and with the exception of the last one (between friends) are all superior/inferior relationships too. Properly observed there could be no conflict or friction within the Confucian society or within Confucian family, for every member of the family and of society is held tightly in check by the duty and obedience which he/she owes to another (Baker 1979:11). Within the family, the father-son relationship is the most important one, second to it is the kinship between male siblings, and the last one is the relationship between husband and wife. Furthermore, the theme of the father-son identification is fully explored in Hsu, Francis L.K. (1949), *Under the Ancestors' Shadow*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. Also see Tu, Wei-ming (1998), ‘Probing the “Three Bonds” and “five Relationships” in Confucian Humanism’, *Confucianism and the Family*, New York: State University of New York Press

⁸ The Chinese character for “woman” (婦 Fu) is originally composed of two elements illustrating a female (女 Nü) and a broom (帚 Chao), symbolising her domestic role and duty.

Lone mothers, as women, are born into Confucian patrilineal families built on a father-son kinship that do not recognise them as permanent members but rather as “*belonging to other people*” (Ahern 1973:127; Diamond 1973:214; Shiga 1978; Chao 1983:57; Sheridan and Salaff 1983; Greenhalgh 1985; Judd 1989; Tu 1998). Rather, they, as unmarried daughters, are treated as only “temporary family members” who are expected to marry out and never return, like “water spilled out on the ground”. If, unfortunately, they die while unmarried, such as being spinsters. Their tablets⁹ are still not allowed to be installed in the altar of their natal family so that either a non-domestic shrine, i.e. “old maid houses” (Gu-Niang-Temple 姑娘廟)¹⁰, must be found to accommodate their tablets (Freedman 1966:56,60,1979:275-276; Ahern 1973:127-128), or their tablets must marry out with a living man in the form of “Ghost marriage”¹¹ (Jordan 1972:140-155; Lee 1988:118). Obviously, daughters are

⁹ Tablets mean the tablets of the agnatic dead, particularly ancestral tablets. Normally the deceased ancestors have been represented on individual wooden plaques, ranging in height from about fifteen to thirty centimetres, or even taller, and a few centimetres wide. Some bears the name of the deceased carved on the face of the tablet, whereas others have the name written with a brush on a small indentation in the front of the tablet, and fitted with a sliding panel that conceals the indentation from sight. The common ancestral tablets are usually kept in one central room of the family and are passed down by a principle of primogeniture. The worship of ancestral tablets is vitally associated with ancestor worship and is also the dynamic cult of the continuity of the patriarchy, patrilineage and patrilocality of Confucian family. For further detail see Jordan (1972:94,96-99) and Gallin (1966:239).

¹⁰ Old Maid Houses”(Gu-Niang-Temple 姑娘廟) actually is a temple which is set up to accommodate the wooden tablets of those unmarried women, dying before marriage or of those separated wives and abandoned widows who were alienated from their husbands’ families, in order to prevent their spirits from becoming homeless wandering ghosts. On the anniversaries of their death, sacrifices would be made to their wooden tablets.

¹¹ “Ghost marriage” or “Spirit marriage” is the most commonly used to designate the bride of “female spirit”. Ghost marriage only occurs when a girl who has died in childhood before marriage appears to her natal family in a dream some year later, and asks to be married out. A groom is found by her natal family by laying “bait” in the middle of a road. This usually takes the form of a red envelope (used in Taiwan for gifts of money). As soon as a passer-by picks up the envelop, the family of the female spirit bride come immediately out of hiding beside the road and announce to the young man that he is the chose bridegroom. The female ghost is married to him in a rite designed to resemble an ordinary wedding as closely as possible, although the bride is represented only by an ancestral tablet. The groom and his family have to accommodate the ancestral tablet of the bride on their family altar and to provide it with sacrifices as though the spirit bride had married in life. For further details, see Jordan (1972:140-155) and Wolf (1974:131-182)

not recognised as a permanent member of their natal family from birth to death. Their “temporary” status within the natal family results in much less and more short-term “familial welfare provision and protection” based on the short-term period for themselves than for their brothers. Regarding such “temporary family support”, as Chao (1983) points out, *“The strength of the father-daughter relationship is cemented by complete obedience to the father and his obligations to provide for his daughter’s support until her marriage”* (p.53). Much literature focusing on working unmarried daughters in the 1970s found that although daughters have become wage earners and contributed their earnings to their natal family, their inferior status within it and their dutiful, domestic responsibilities are not substantially changed (Kung 1983,1994; Arrigo 1984). After becoming lone mothers, daughters are likely to be granted by their natal family a “temporary shelter” or “irregular cash or in kind” consonant with their “temporary” family membership, in particular unmarried single mothers. But not all lone mothers are so lucky as to be granted such “temporary” familial welfare, especially if involved in any stigma of lone motherhood, such as stigma upon divorce or extramarital childbirth. Particularly the stigma upon divorce makes it more difficult for divorced lone mothers to access the familial welfare, due to their status of “properly marrying out and belonging to other people”.

Lone Mothers as “Outsiders within their Mother-in-Law’s Family”

After a complicated wedding procedure¹², can women really “belong to other people”

¹² This procedure is called “Six Rites” of marriage of the canonical Li-Chi (禮記), the Record of rite. The sequent of wedding still lies at the base of Taiwan modern wedding sequences, but is slightly modified and embellished in the Taiwanese context. Actually, these “Six Rites” are: (1) Inquiries about a girl are made by a go-between, sent by a family seeking a bride; (2) genealogical and horoscopic data of bride and bridegroom are sought by the go-between; (3) the girl’s horoscope is matched with the boy’s; (4) the betrothal is clinched by the transfer of gifts; (5) the date of the wedding (i.e., the transfer of the bride) is fixed; (6) the bride is moved and married out of her natal family into her mother-in-law’

and be treated as “full family members” within their mother-in-law’s family? Unfortunately, the answer is “NO”. Married women in their mother-in-laws’ households are an “outsider/stranger within” (Wolf 1972:131; Wolf and Huang 1980:77; Diamond 1975b:376; Kung 1983:8; 1994:8; Chao 1983:60,63; Gallin 1986:33; Hu 1995). Like daughters in their natal family, married women also lack equal welfare rights in their mother-in-law’s family unless they produce sons to continue their husbands’ patrilineal line, for their social security, including their old age pension, and their entitlement to economic support from the mother-in-law’s family rests upon their ability to produce sons. On behalf of their young sons, widowed lone mothers certainly can make claims to property rights involving housing and residence, and economic support (Kung 1983, 1994). In reality, making such a claim often involves serious family confrontations against them, in particular from their mother-in-law. Despite the custody of their children and the inheritance rights of their deceased husbands’ estate, guaranteed by the Civil Code since 1931, such rights are still not recognised due to their status of being “outsiders/strangers within the mother-in-law’s family”. They are only presumed, as Diamond (1975b) argued, *“temporary control over household-owned land. They (widows) held it in trust for their minor sons, and as sometimes happened, the land reverted in use and ownership to the deceased husband’s brothers or lineage cousins”* (p.376). In accordance with their “outsider” status, in case of remarriage, they would have to leave their children with the mother-in-law’s family due to the patrilineal family continuity (Wolf 1972:16; Cohen 1976:186; Wong 1981:66-67; Sheridan and Salfaff 1984:6), and *“to return this portion of property to her deceased husband’s lineage”* (Chen 1970:77). By customary law, the mother-in-law, granted by the Generation-Age power hierarchy,

family (Freedman 1979:290-293).

always has authority¹³ over her sons' wives and socialises them into an inferior status (Yang 1945:38; Lang 1946:47-48; Levy 1949:109-110; Wolf 1972:36; Wong 1978:253; Barker 1979:43-44; Stacey 1983:40; Gallin 1986:31-49; Chen 1994; Hu 1995:76-80). Sometimes, harsh treatment to a daughter-in-law by the family-in-law, particularly her mother-in-law, could cause her death by suicide because of her powerlessness, inferiority and rightlessness as reported in several studies (Wolf 1975; Stacey 1983; Chao 1983). Widows may compromise themselves to adjust their outsider status by sacrificing the custody of their children or the inheritance right of their deceased husbands' estate. Or they may insist on their rights granted by the Civil Code to encounter confrontation involving their children and inheritance rights against their family-in-law, particularly their mother-in-law.

This inferior status of being an outsider within the mother-in-law's family was embedded into Family Law (Book VI of the Civil Code), buttressed by the gender hierarchy: the husband comes first, then the wife. For example, over the last five decades, by Article 1051 and 1055 of the Civil Code, the custody of children automatically rested with the father, unless the divorced parties had agreed otherwise. Furthermore, Article 1018 still stipulates that the right of management, use and collection of fruits form the union property within the marriage rests with the husband.

¹³ The mother-in-law's authority could enjoin the son to repudiate his wife in spite of his love for her. A very famous ballad (see Appendix 1) expressed the couple's death as being the result of such an authority. A man, namely Chiao, Chung-ch'ing, had a wife, who was obsequious to her mother-in-law and repudiated at the latter's instigation. In the hope that she would be reunited with her husband, she took an oath not to remarry. Unfortunately, after returning to her natal family, her brother compelled her to remarry in order to shift his responsibility of supporting her. To keep her word not to remarry, she drowned herself. When her husband heard that his wife whom he loved so much had died with hatred, he plunged into grief and hanged himself from a tree in the courtyard. In pity for the sad fate of the couple, the people from time to time told this story in the form of ballad (see Appendix 1).

The Confucian family built on the father-son bond and operated by the Generation-Age-Gender power hierarchy makes lone fathers' circumstances completely opposite to those of lone mothers. Lone fathers who, as Stacey (1983:38) pointed out, as the dominate father/husband/son conjure up an unbroken patrilineage with power, property, and esteem passing in orderly and gradual fashion from generation to generation. During their lifetime, lone fathers are recognised as "full members" of their patrilineal family, entitled to the full family welfare provision and protection, which grants them a very secure and permanent position in their family. On the contrary, lone mothers, as a daughter/wife/mother, live with at least two distinct, unrelated families--in their natal and agnatic families, divided by the father-son kinship. As Stacey (1983) argues, "*The woman was not fully a member of any family at any time during her lifetime.*" (p.38)

Although unequal access to the family provision favouring lone fathers has briefly been mentioned once in Wang's research (Wang 1991:87), such inequality caused by sex segregation within the Confucian patriarchal family has never been highlighted. Female "unrecognised full family membership" in the Confucian family certainly has no entitlement for "full familial welfare provision and protection". In this sense, can lone mothers make ends meet with the Confucian family, as the KMT assumed the family as the centre of welfare. Or is this assumption is more workable for lone fathers, but probably not for lone mothers? The blindness of the KMT state to the inequality within the Confucian family may affect women and men differently, particularly under the Generation-Age-Gender hierarchy. This power structure within the Confucian family may distinguish the circumstances of lone mothers in Taiwan from those of their counterparts in the West.

The Inequality of Family Investment (Employment)

As has been shown before, the lack of comprehensive state support and the non-recognition as “full family members” have driven lone mothers to be inevitably and compulsorily dependent upon employment, whereas their counterparts in Scandinavian countries rely on paid work and social wage, and those in the Netherlands, Britain and Germany on state benefits to stay at home (Mcfate, Smeeding and Rainwater 1995; Lewis 1997). Not surprisingly, a number of empirical studies found that earning is the main income for lone parents in Taiwan, although employment as the necessary survival method has been taken for granted for all lone mothers without analysing KMT welfare policies or criticising the Confucian patriarchal family in many studies (Hsieh and Ma 1989:39; Chang 1994:32; Tong 1992:42; Chang et al.1995; Chang 1996:90). Few studies have shown that the poverty among lone mother families is mainly caused by their participation in low-pay, low-skilled and dead-end jobs (Liu 1984; Tong 1992). In the meantime only one study briefly mentioned the linkage of their low-pay jobs with their lower human capital in coincidence with their low-level education caused by the Confucian Gender-hierarchy favouring sons over daughters (Chang 1996).

In the Taiwanese Confucian state, the level of human capital certainly can determine a lone mother’s potential income through employment. In contrast to Britain, it may not be a key determinant to get lone mothers out of poverty or dependency on the state, while numerous critiques are rising against New Labour’s “Welfare to Work” to get lone mothers into employment, by providing training and education and increasing their employability and human capital (Lister 1998a & b, 1999,2001; Duncan and Edwards 1999; Land 1999; Powell 2000). It is because lone mothers in Taiwan are

treated as secondary workers, but not as “male-rice-winners”. For lone mothers, the higher level of human capital certainly means higher incomes through employment. But the reason why they invest less in their “human capital” is not because of their priority for domesticity. Unlike human capital theorists who argue that the sexual division of labour in the home—particularly women’s role in childbearing and rearing—leads them to specialise in domestic work and economise in the effort they put into their paid employment; therefore they are satisfied with their employment because it allows them to fulfil their domestic priorities (Becker 1985). Their less and more vulnerable human capital is more likely to be a result of the inequality of family investment consolidated by sexual stratification within the Confucian family, whereas, from birth to death, women are not recognised as a permanent member of any family with the notion that a daughter will eventually and inevitably “belong to other people”. Thus, for parents, money invested in a daughter’s education is “lost” to her husband’s household, whereas a girl/daughter is by custom named as “the commodity on which the money has wasted and lost in the natal family”(Smith 1970:250; Kung 1976:37). Such unequal family investment upon daughters’ education is further maintained by the popular saying: “Lack of learning is a woman’s virtue” (Wong 1978:253). Furthermore, as Greenhalgh (1985) argued, *“sons were long-term members of the family whose contracts were, from the parents’ perspective at least, for life. Daughters were temporary members whose contracts lasted only until their marriage, usually 15-20 years. Different lifetimes of the two contracts provided the economic basis for favouring sons over daughters in levels of investment and terms of repayment. Because parents’ long term well-being depended crucially on their sons, parents invested as much as they could in their son’s upbringing, providing schooling, apprentice training, and the like”* (p.270). This unequal family investment, preferring sons over daughters, also reflects in educational inequality

favouring boys. Shaw (1983) much earlier argued, "*The (gender) differences are often expressed in terms of examinations entered and passed, entrance into higher and further education, and destination in the labour market.*" (p.89). In the 1970s, these unequal educational opportunities guaranteed that more boys were transferred into the national education policy of the KMT State through the National Joint University-Entrance Examination¹⁴ (Ku 1989). Through this unequal entrance examination into higher education, the KMT government intended to "protect men from equal competition from women". Then and there the Taiwanese feminist movement emerged against such unequal educational inequality violating girls' unequal rights to higher education.

Furthermore, the Generation power hierarchy, based on notions of "filial piety and fraternal love", always grants parents control over the income of their working filial daughters (Wu 1976; Arrigo 1980; Kung 1976,1983,1994; Salaff 1981; Greenhalgh 1985). Thus, substantial researches upon working unmarried women in the 1970s suggested, among parents with limited resources, a major strategy for raising the educational level of their sons is to educate their daughters a little, send them out to work at a very early age, and then use their income to pay for higher education for their sons. In particular the oldest daughters are often expected to "sacrifice" their human capital in terms of educational opportunities and training for skilful occupations (e.g., Diamond 1979; Gallin 1966; Wolf 1972; Robins and Cheng 1977;

¹⁴ The National Joint University Entrance Examination is administered annually by all universities in Taiwan and is open to all senior high school graduates. Admission is based on the score one receives and the order of preference one specifies on the application form. As the test record showed, girls' scores were improving each year. The KMT government feared that they would eventually outnumber men in universities. Some governmental officials even further suggested that a certain quota should be set for male students to enter universities. Such educational inequality between sexes in the 1970s was one of the two main elements to make the feminist movement possible in the Taiwanese Confucian Society.

Kung 1983, 1994; Hu 1984; Gallin 1984; Greenhalgh 1985; Arrigo 1980, 1984). Along with remitting their wage to their parents on the notion of “filial piety”, those working filial daughters, who were allowed to keep a minimal portion of their earnings, usually would invest their own funds to pay for their own higher education or training in specialised skills (Arrigo 1980; Kung 1976, 1983, 1994).

In short, the inequality of family investment resulted from the Generation-Age-Gender stratification within the Confucian family might have caused the further vulnerability of the lone mother’s human capital and more possibilities of poverty brought about by low-pay, low status and low-skill occupations. Thus, it is hardly necessary to argue lone mothers’ unwillingness to invest their human capital and increase their earnings instead of a preference for their primary duty of childrearing without taking up paid work.

The Imbalance of Family Economic Resource Distribution

As has been noted earlier, the Confucian state, society and family have been characterised by the stress upon the notion of “duty/obligation/ responsibility” instead of “rights”. It is more true for women who lack property rights, but are entitled to “care obligations” because of their un-recognised family membership of the Confucian family. Despite the equal right to share her parents’ holdings as her brothers’ shares, guaranteed by Taiwan Patrimonial Law¹⁵ since 1931, she either might not have such a legal knowledge (Chen 1970:77; Wolf 1972:204; David 1975:243) or sign away all such equal inheritance rights when she marries or upon her

¹⁵ Taiwan Patrimonial Law is included in Book V of the Civil Code of the Complete Volume of Six Laws. For further details, see Lin et al. (1998) and *Min-Shen Post*, 10th August 1997

father's death¹⁶ (Gallin 1966; Wolf and Witke 1975; Cohen 1976:83; Byxbaum 1978; Baker 1979; Chao 1983:57; Kung 1983:9; 1994:9; Arrigo 1984:145; Sheridan and Salaff 1984:7; Shreir 1988; Hu 1995; Min-Shen Post 10th August 1997). By custom, a daughter's inheritance rights are still not often recognised as equally as a son's, even now (Yian 2000). On the contrary, she might be entitled to a small-scale movable dowry (嫁粧 ke-cng)¹⁷ at her parents' discretion (Freedman 1970; Ahern 1973; Baker 1979:23; Kung 1983:118, 1994:118; Arrigo 1984:145). But such a dowry brought a daughter another complaint by saying: "Raising a daughter is like raising a thief" who gets into the house to take the agnatic property away in the form of a dowry (Wolf and Huang 1980:75). By contrast, if there is no son, a daughter may be expected to substitute for a son, and she is supposed to take uxorial marriage¹⁸ in order to transmit her father's lineage on the belief of "filial piety", then she has an inheritance right and her son will inherit the family property (Chen 1970:77; Wolf and Huang 1980:94-107, 216-229). This is only one exceptional case, which could happen in a Confucian patrilineal family.

Moreover, parents' future, to be precise old-age pension, relies on the personal prosperity of their sons, which is perceived as the most certain route to their own

¹⁶ Upon the death of my father-in-law at the beginning of December 1997, my husband is the only son and the eldest brother who inherited all his father's estate, including farm land and houses, with the support of his mother. In spite of the equal inheritance right guaranteed by Taiwan Patrimonial Law, his three younger sisters automatically signed away such a right and did not claim anything from their father's holdings. When my husband, as a lawyer, was challenged by me to "take away" the three portions of the family property from his three younger sisters, he said that he is the person who should inherit such a property from his father. It is obvious that daughters seldom would claim their equal inheritance right as their brothers, even though they have been guaranteed such an equal right.

¹⁷ In Wolf and Huang's anthropological study (1980), the dowry normally consists of gold jewellery, furniture, clothing, and in the case of an exceptionally wealthy family, land (p.75).

¹⁸ Uxorial marriage can be arranged only under such a situation: a man grows old and has a daughter only but no son. He may call in a young man to marry his daughter and carry on his patrilineal family line. For further details, see Wolf and Huang 1980:94-107, 216-229.

economic security (Wolf 1972:33-34; Gallin and Gallin 1982). As a result, sons are granted a large-scale immovable property, like land or housing, and are encouraged to purchase property with a financial contribution from the parents (Greenhalgh 1985:298). This differentiation of family economic resource distribution, grounded on the Gender-hierarchy, absolutely secures the economic circumstance of lone fathers, as sons, more than lone mothers as daughters in terms of housing or economic stability. Furthermore, among sons, the eldest son traditionally receives a special portion of their parents' estate on the family partition or upon their father's death because of the emphasis upon the right of primogeniture, buttressed by the Age-power hierarchy. By this seniority, the eldest son of the eldest brother is the chief mourner¹⁹ who carries on the family line and is granted that special portion of property which is called tua-sum-gia (大孫額), literally "the portion of the eldest grandson" (Chen 1970:76-77; Freedman 1970:195-196). Conversely, the older the sibling's order of daughters is, the more family obligations they are expected to take, particularly, those from poor families with limited resources, involving leaving school early, working at low-status, poorly paying jobs, and sending large remittances to their parents, who use them to secure their own future by investing in the future of their sons, especially their eldest son. If lone mothers' siblings are older, they are likely to sacrifice more of their own education opportunities at a young age and to participate in low-pay jobs in their latter life, particularly after becoming a sole working mother.

¹⁹ At the beginning of December, 1997, my father-in-law passed away due to lung cancer. My son, Yuan-Han Chen is the only grandson of my husband's patrilineal family, excluding five children of my sisters-in-law, and the eldest grandson, who is the chief mourner and is supposed to carry on my husband's family line. Without his participation and presence, the funeral for his grandfather could not move on. AS Freedman described (1970), "the senior grandson goes to the grave dressed as a son because he inherits like a son.... The senior grandson has a right to a share of the property inherited from his grandfather" (p.196). It is because the eldest grandson is regarded as the smallest son of his agnatic grandfather. Therefore, a special mourning black dress, the same as his father, is required to be put on by my son. Of course, by customary law, he has the right to inherit all the property, including land and houses from my husband's patrilineal family. Thus his return from England back to Taiwan was strongly required and expected to participate in the funeral for his grandfather as the chief mourner who should carry on his grandfather's patrilineage and inherit the patrilineal family estate.

The imbalance of family economic resource distribution also often happens between husband and wife. As Stacey (1983) criticised, “*The law served to codify and reinforce the basic authority principles of Confucian patriarchy. Patriarchal authority was officially, strengthened, and occasionally implemented by the dynastic legal codes. a husband’s power over his wife was scarcely less extreme.*” (p.37). Family Law (Book IV of the Civil Code), promulgated since 1931, also reflects such a Confucian order in terms of marital property, whereas a husband always comes first before a wife, backed by the “Three Obediencies”. Married women could seldom have first priority in access to marital property before their husbands. Moreover, as an “outsider within”, they did not have the rights to claim any property from marriage prior to the 1985 revision of Family Law²⁰, despite all of these properties legally registered in their name. The recognition of a married wife’s marital property right was only extended to those who married or registered their property in their own name after the 1985 revised Family Law was activated. In practice, such a revision failed to grant property rights to those who married or registered their marital property prior to it, and was strongly criticised by feminist groups, particularly the *Awakening Foundation*²¹ and *Warm Life Association for Women in Taipei* (hereafter WLAW).

²⁰ Prior to 1985, married women who kept their own property registered in their name, including their dowry would be recognised before 1985 unless they could prove that they previously had owned it before their marriage. By such a revised Family Law in 1985, married women’s status and rights were not improved much and they continued to be subordinated to the patriarchal lines in terms of marital property management, choice of residence, child custody, etc., despite the constitutional guarantees of legal equality of the sexes (Ku 1989; Liu 1995).

²¹ Awakening was founded by Li, Yuan-chen and a small group of professional women in Taipei, some of whom had worked with Lu, Hsiu-lien. Under the Wartime Civic Bodies Organization Law, they could not set up their group. Instead, they published their discussion as a monthly magazine called “Fu nu hsin chih (婦女新知 Awakening Magazine). In March 1988, its executive committee successfully raised NT\$ 1 million (£19,230) to meet the KMT-led Taipei City Government’s requirement to register itself as the Awakening Foundation, which is one of the Taiwanese feminist groups to promote legal and social reforms for women in Taiwan, including the reform of Family Law. Its main objectives are: to raise female consciousness, to encourage self-development and voice feminist opinions.

Under pressure from women's groups, the Family Law was revised again and amended, namely the newly revised Article 1017, to extend the marital property right retroactively to all married women, regardless of their date of marriage or registering their marital property (Independent Morning Post, 23rd November, 1997). A husband was prioritised to own the marital property by Family Law integrating Confucian gender hierarchy until 6th September, 1996. This "privilege" secured a higher rate of housing ownership for lone fathers than that for lone mothers after becoming lone parents.

Another determinant causing lone mothers more instable housing is the husband's power over the wife, which has long been criticised by Western feminists by

In order to achieve the Family Law Reform, they invited feminist lawyers and law experts, and organized themselves as the "*Non Government Committee for revising Book IV of the Civil Code*" (hereafter NGCRBCC) (Liu 1995). They have been lobbying law-makers to change Book IV of the Civil Code for nearly a decade. Their campaign is mainly calling for six objectives as follows:

- (1) All articles favouring men/fathers' preferment should be struck completely, such as Article 1000 regulating that wives should carry on the family name of their husband rather than their own family name; Article 1002 ruling that the residence of the husband is his wife's legal domicile; Articles 1051 and 1055 declaring that fathers be given the first priority in having custody of the children in the case of divorce; Article 1089 favouring fathers' final say in disputes over the disciplining of children; and Article 1018 favouring men's preferment in the management of all property within marriage.
- (2) All articles encouraging chastity, promoted in Confucianism, should be deleted, such as Articles 987 and 994 regulating how long divorced women should not re-marry after divorce; Article 1068 ruling that mothers committing "adultery" or "not observing the conventional rules of behaviour" are denied the right to adopt their illegitimate children.
- (3) The equality between the sexes should be guaranteed. All the agreements/ arrangements made by the couple together should replace all the articles favouring men/fathers' preferment.
- (4) State intervention should be activated in family affairs in order to guarantee the best interests of children.
- (5) A wife's property upon marriage should be guaranteed. To achieve this, property of the union should be replaced by an equally distributed income system, such as that implemented in Switzerland. It should be legislated clearly that each of the couple has his/her own rights in managing, owning or selling the property. Also, housework should not be regarded as an obligation (for the woman alone?). Instead, it should be promoted as the equal responsibility of both husband and wife.
- (6) A separation system should be added in order to strengthen the positive results of divorce (Yang 1995:11, 1998a:13; Lin 1995; Liu 1995; See <http://taiwan.yam.org.tw/womenweb/curnet.htm>).

With the support of female lawmakers, regardless of their various parties, particularly Yeh Chu-lan (葉菊蘭) the family laws of the Civil Code, have been either partially struck from Book IV, or revised or amended to stipulate.

reinforcing the unpaid care in accordance with the weaker wife (Haavind 1984; Land and Rose 1985). Unfortunately, such an uneven power hierarchy has been embedded again into Family Law. Firstly, Article 1002 gave husbands the final say in designing a family place of marital residence in coincidence with patrilocality on the belief of *“Follow the man you marry, be he a goof or a crook”* (Liang 1980:218). If married women did not follow such a patrilocal residence, their husbands could accuse them by quoting such a article that they have maliciously abandoned and neglected obligations to the marriage in order to get divorced successfully without paying any alimony (the 1997 Judicial Statistic Yearbook, 1997). Until April, 1998, the Article 1002 was declared by the Council of Grand Justice²² unconstitutional (Free China Journal 24th April, 1998; Lin et al. 1998; Lin 1998; Yang 1998b). Secondly, the 1996 newly revised Family Law (Article 1017) guarantees married women’s full property ownership registered in their own name without proving that they previously owned it before 1985. But a husband’s supremacy in managing all the marital property (Article 1018) has not been modified yet. Thus this partial reform of Family Law continues to be strongly criticised by feminists as not guaranteeing completely married women’s equal rights to marital property (Wang 1997:5; Chen 1998:21). A husband’s power over a wife, reinforced by Family Law, can still trap women into more risks of poverty and unstable housing if a marriage breaks down.

Widows can hardly be exempt from these practices of excluding women’s property rights. As has been shown earlier, widows are only recognised as trustees who

²² The main duty of the Council of Grand Justice is to interpret the Constitution and unify the interpretation of laws and ordinances. An interpretation of the Constitution requires a three-fourths vote of the members present with a quorum of thee-fourths of members; other decisions can be made by a simple majority. Both government agencies and individuals can call for an interpretation of the Constitution. Agencies of the government must be involved in performing their duties; be in dispute over their authority; or perceive that laws, regulations, or decree contravene the Constitution. Citizen must demonstrate that their constitutional rights have been infringed to institute legal action.

temporarily manage and hold their deceased husbands' estate on behalf of their children, particularly sons, who are the real persons to carry on the patrilineal family line and "deserve" the inheritance rights. When domestic confrontation rises against their claim for inheritance rights, it often involves in child custody as well and can cause more complicated and worse circumstances to widows than other types of lone mothers.

In fact, the imbalance of family economic resource distribution buttressed on the Generation-Age-Gender family structure and the partially reformed Family Law may bring variety of disadvantages to lone mothers, such as more instable housing and more risks of poverty, and less welfare provision from the family in cash or in kind, and will drive them to rely heavily on employment, whereas there is always full of sex segregation in the workplace again.

In summary, as Buxbaum (1978), who studied the dynamics of Family Law and customary law in Chinese societies, noted, "*Legal change, however, does not mean automatically bringing about social change... The customary law persists, in part, because the governments have not made strenuous efforts to change it and, in part, because under present circumstances such new practices probably are neither economically rational nor social desirable*" (p.218-219). Although the partial reform of Family Law has been enacted under pressure from women's groups, such a partial reform guaranteeing more legal rights for women does not mean bringing about the certain decline of Confucianism and the rise of women's status, power and rights. Lone mothers under the Generation-Age-Gender hierarchy of the Confucian family are allocated a more vulnerable and contingent position than lone fathers. Can lone mothers really rely on the family as they are presumed by the KMT state to do so?

And to what extent of the familial welfare can be provided for lone mothers in comparison to lone fathers? If they cannot make ends meet within the family, why cannot they? What problems prevent them from the access to welfare provision from the family? What strategies have they adopted to cope with the failure of the family in welfare provision?

2.3 The Mother-Worker-Family-Outsider Welfare Model

Despite the efforts made to emulate the Confucian Welfare Model in Western States, Jones (1993) still had to admit that *“None of the tigers (i.e., Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore and Hong Kong) would qualify by Richard Titmus’ standard, for instance, since manifestly none of them are committed to his ‘institutional-redistributive’ model of social policy as the ultimate objective...there is far too much social direction and too little sense of individual rights (including minimal social rights)”* (p.214). The stress upon “family obligations” instead of “individual rights/citizenship” coincides closely with the lack of a comprehensive social security system, such as the National Pension Insurance and National Unemployment Insurance, and the low cost of social welfare in Taiwan (Chow 1985/86; Ku 1995a & b, 1997, 1998; Tyabji 1993; Jacobs 1998; Doling 1999). However, some scholars argue that in ways similar to what Esping-Andersen calls “Bismarckian” welfare systems, state-sponsored welfare programmes in Taiwan have tended to develop as selective, residual and fragmented arrays of particular schemes for particular social groups based on their various occupations (Fu 1994,1995; White and Goodman 1998). But lone mothers in the

“Bismarckian welfare system” are still recognised as wives dependent on their working male breadwinners, either entitled to their deceased husbands’ national contribution or to the state benefits in case of the absence of a male breadwinner. Because the German benefit system is based on contributions it supports workers or workers’ wives rather than citizens (Wilson 1993; Klett-Davies 1996, 1997). Lone mothers in Taiwan can hardly be supported as “workers’ wives” unless they participate directly in the labour market or they are wives of military personnel/governmental employees/public school teachers. They are not entitled to anything as “workers’ dependent wives” because the Taiwanese welfare systems “*do not accommodate the interests of the working class*” (Doling 1999:237). Consequently, if the welfare regime of a male-breadwinner model, proposed by Jane Lewis and Ilona Ostner (1991, 1995; also see Lewis 1992, 1997), is adopted in analysing the Taiwanese welfare system, in effect it absolutely remains vitally problematical for lone mothers in such a particular social context as noted earlier.

In addition, despite substantial literature arguing Taiwan as a Liberal Welfare Regime, based on preferring the free market and minimalist social expenses, more welfare scholars argue that it does not conform with Esping-Andersen’s liberal regimes having too much social direction and too little sense of individual rights, including minimal social rights (Jones 1993; Doling 1999). Taiwan is certainly not a liberal regime nor is it a social democratic regime. As many welfare theorists argue Taiwan, with the other three Asian NICs, represents *another regime type*, sometimes called as “Confucian Welfare State” promoted by Jones (1993) or the “East Asian Welfare Model” by Goodman and Peng (1996), Goodman, White and Kwon (1997, 1998) and Kwon (1997) or the “Social Welfare Model in East Asia” by Ku (1995) and Jacobs (1998). In the West, many feminists criticise male mainstream welfare regime

typologies, such as those constructed by T. H. Marshall (1950) and Gøtave Esping-Andersen (1990), in the ignorance of women's unemployment resulting in their unpaid care work at home. As Pateman (1988a) criticised, "*Paid employment has become the key to citizenship, and the recognition of an individual as a citizen of equal worth to other citizens is lacking when a worker is unemployed*" (p.237; also see Sainsbury 1999). Feminists in the West argue that Western welfare regimes affect men and women differently because of family care provision dominated by female unpaid workers at home. Unsurprisingly, Leira (1998a: 362-378) strongly argues that caring is conceived as equal and social rights for mothers and fathers, but not exclusively as only mothers' responsibilities in Nordic Welfare states. Consequently, Western feminists have strongly stressed gender as a variable dimension as well as class (race too) in the analysis of social welfare regimes by re-constructing social policy regimes (e.g., Lewis 1992, 1997). Likewise, nearly all the Eastern Asia Welfare regime literature is "gender-blind" in failing to highlight "family obligation" always dominated by women as daughters, wives, mothers, daughters-in-law as "unpaid carers" as Western feminists criticise male mainstream Welfare theorists (e.g., Ku 1995, 1997; Goodman and Peng 1996; Goodman, White and Kwon 1998; Kwon 1999, 2001). However, some of them indeed highlight that "Welfare Orientalism", as cultural explanation, does influence the evolution of the Eastern Asian Welfare model, which heavily relies on the welfare role of the family (e.g., Jones 1993; Goodman, White and Kwon 1998). But none of these discusses the "Confucian family structure and its impact upon women who are historically conceptualised as the main care-givers and family outsiders, but denied obtaining any rights in their whole lives. But this "welfare Orientalism" is unknown to most Western feminists and is sometimes recklessly ignored by Asian feminists whilst analysing the Eastern Asian Welfare model. Even researchers, such as Peng (1995, 1997), explored lone mothers

in Japan by adopting the male-breadwinner approach based on the “traditional two-parent family” exactly the same as the presumption of the male-breadwinner-model in the West. This approach in analysing lone mothers in Taiwan is highly inappropriate in the current study, because unmarried women are assumed to rely on their family of origin, and after marriage, they are not only presumed to be dependent on their husband but also on their mother-in-law’s family in the Taiwanese context in case of the loss of their male rice-winners. Not surprisingly, the family welfare function has to be consistently emphasised by the KMT State to stress the Confucian family obligations by which women are more likely to be assigned to care for the young, the elderly and participate in paid work, particularly lone mothers.

In fact, the Taiwanese Confucian Welfare state is a regime type, one characterised by conservative corporatism without worker participation. Thus even for working men, paid employment is not the key to full social welfare protection on the notion of citizenship in Taiwan due to the lack of a complete social security system and its inequity favouring those military personnel/government employee/public educators. As a result, for lone mothers, it is highly impossible to be a dependent housewife who can only rely on the insufficient lump-sum death compensation from the National Labour Insurance or claim social assistance, except participating in the labour force, unlike their counterparts in Germany. In the meantime, the Taiwanese Welfare State is a regime type, one characterised by “laissez-faire” but is not liberal. Accordingly, lone mothers are not recognised as social groups in priority needs in the absence of their rice-winner, because the 1980 Social Assistance Law regulates them to participate in paid work while they are eligible for social assistance benefits, unlike their counterparts in Britain relying on state support in terms of income and housing;

the Taiwanese Welfare State is also a regime type, having solidarity without equality, whereas lone mothers are presumed by the KMT Confucian government to rely on the family on the notion of a “family member”, unlike their counterparts in Scandinavian countries, supported by the states in forms of the prevalence of affordable childcare, paid parental leave and universal child/family benefits and the like. In effect, it is because the Confucian family is the vital basis of the KMT social policies where lone mothers are **Mother-Worker-Family-Outsiders**, hardly benefiting from the State and family, except for self-reliance and independence.

However, a burgeoning interest in the developmental dynamics of East Asian economic success with low government welfare spending through heavy reliance on the family, the firm and large voluntary sector underpinned by Confucianism, particularly in the “Newly Industrialised Countries (NICs) of Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore and Hong Kong”, has recently emerged and the lessons which might be learned from this have been taken seriously by Western politicians and scholars (Midgley 1985; Blair 1995; Hutton 1995; MacShane 1995; MacWhiter 1995; Jones 1990, 1993; Finer 2001). Certainly the researches on Confucian Welfare States brought about by such a rising interest have played a very positive role in discussions or the evaluation of the East Asian Welfare model. In fact, such a rising interest in social welfare for women, particularly for lone mothers, in these Confucian states, can hardly be found (Peng 1995, 1997; Chan 1997; Lai 1998). In fact, women’s inferiority, powerlessness, rightlessness under the Generation-Age-Gender hierarchy within the Confucian family have completely been ignored not only by policy-makers but also by East-Asian mainstream theorists. None of the previous literature has highlighted the impacts of the inequality brought about by Generation-Age-Gender hierarchy within the Confucian family upon women, particularly on lone mothers in Taiwan due

to a culture-and gender blindness. Despite substantial critiques against the KMT familism welfare, its incomplete social security net and its reluctance to become a welfare state along the lines of those Western States, none of them has made any efforts to break down the inequality of the familial welfare provision and protection on the assumption of “a family member” (Chan 1985; Ku 1995a & b, 1997; Lin 1990, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995; Lin et al. 1995). Furthermore, as Western feminists criticise mainstream welfare theorists about their gender-neutral approach, gender as a vital approach in the analysis of the Confucian welfare model has completely been ignored in Asian mainstream theorists, too (e.g., Chow 1985/86; Ku 1995a & b, 1997, 1998; Goodman, White and Kwon 1997; Kwon 1999, 2001). Despite the gradual increases of feminist critiques against the KMT patriarchal state and familism, few have spotted the inequity brought about by the traditional three dimension power structure due to their ignorance of Confucianism, and none of them has made any efforts in the analysis of the KMT social policies for lone mothers or the impact of the inequality within the family upon lone mothers (e.g., Liu 1995, 1997a & b). Thus the present study is the first attempt at an analysis of KMT social policies related to lone mothers using East-Asian feminist approach and of the inequity within the Confucian family upon lone mothers’ well-being, which is its main concern.

Obviously, during their lifetime, women have never been recognised as full members of any family, rather as temporary daughters in the natal family or as outsider within their mother-in-law’s family. In this sense, lone mothers are not supposed to be entitled to full familial welfare protection and provision in terms of housing, childcare and income, as equally as lone fathers. What extent of familial welfare can lone mothers really access in comparison with lone fathers? Can they really make their ends meet within the family as much as lone fathers? If not, why not? What

difficulties have they encountered while making claims? A further question should be asked if the family fails its welfare function, what strategies have they adopted to cope with this? The search for these answers is the main aim of this present study.

Chapter 3 The Methodology and Methods of the Research

The rationale of the deployment of qualitative methods and the East-Asian feminist standpoint, for the current study of lone mothers in the Taiwan Confucian context will be discussed in the present chapter in terms of the reasons, the ways, and strengths and weaknesses associated with these approaches. The qualitative research interview from an East-Asian feminist standpoint in the form of semi-structured interviews, deployed in the field of lone motherhood in the Confucian Welfare State, will be carefully evaluated. Essentially, this raises a number of fundamental issues confronting the research, involving the study design, problems in doing fieldwork and recruiting the participants, the interview process, data analysis, and the research ethics, centring on the triangle relationship between the research, the family and Taiwanese welfare policies.

3.1 Qualitative Approach

The debates about quantitative and qualitative methods have been going on in Western academia since the 1960s. On the one hand, some social scientists regard two

research approaches as a continuum, not as opposites or mutually exclusive models of analysis (e.g., Jayaratne 1993, Alasuutari 1995); on the other hand, others completely oppose quantitative methods by favouring a qualitative approach (e.g., Blumer 1956; Yllö and Bograd 1990; Stanley 1990; Stanley and Wise 1993). Such debates have not yet emerged clearly in Taiwan social science studies. The reasons for adopting a qualitative approach within the present study depend on the following critiques of previous quantitative studies concerning lone parents and some considerations.

Quantifying Lone Mothers

In comparison with an abundance and a variety of research concerning lone parents in Western countries, seemingly literature focusing on lone parents in the East-Asian Confucian Welfare states can hardly be found, as noted in Chapter Two (Chan 1997; Lai 1998; Peng 1995, 1997). Likewise, seemingly the literature focusing on lone parents appears much less and inadequate in reflecting their marginalised and neglected position in the Taiwan political agenda (Appendix 3.1; See Chapter 1). A quantitative approach in the form of survey or well-structured questionnaires was mainly used in these studies regarding lone parents in these particular areas. As Oakley (1999) criticised Western positivist social researches, “‘*quantitative*’ methods

were accepted as the dominant paradigm by social scientists until 1960s” (p.159).

From the 1960s onwards, it is no wonder in the West that an enormous criticism challenging “quantitative methods” has rapidly emerged from modern social scientists and feminist scholars (Bell and Newby 1977; Bryman 1988; Hammersley 1989,1995; Maynard 1990; Philips 1992; Ramazanoglu 1992; Reinharz 1992; Marsh 1999; Oakley 1993, 1998, 1999; Yllö and Bograd 1990). Until the time of writing (September, 2001), quantitative methods have still been accepted as the dominant paradigm in social studies in the Taiwanese context. Not surprisingly, the great majority (84%) of these previous studies concerning lone parents adopted a quantitative approach on a large-scale (Lu 1979; Shu and Lin 1984; Lin 1984a & b; Hong 1987; Cheng 1988; Hsieh and Ma 1989; Chen 1989; Wang 1991; Tong 1992; Lin and Chin 1992; Wu 1993; Chang 1994; Chang, Sheh and Chow 1995; Social Affairs Bureau of Taiwan Province Government 1996; Lee, Wen-wen 1997), and only two of them adopted qualitative interviewing as a supplementary method (Wang 1991; Chang, Sheh and Chow 1995). By contrast, there are few qualitative studies using their approach as the main research strategy on a small-scale (Shu and Chang 1987a & b, 1989; Hong 1993; Chang 1996; Huang 1996). Obviously, the lack of such studies has currently motivated my research interest in qualitative methods. Only two Taiwanese references regarding qualitative methods were found in Taiwan (Hu 1996;

Hsu 1997¹). Due to the lack of the critiques on quantitative methods and studies, qualitative studies have remained not only far fewer than “mainstream quantitative researches”, but also “fragmented, uncritical and uncontextualised” in the Taiwanese social context. Only 40 “small, non-random” respondents regardless of “representativeness” have participated in the present study via qualitative interviewing (Bryman 1988:104).

Oversimplifying Lone Mothers’ Daily Lives

Quantitative studies with precisely structured methods, such as well-structured survey or pre-established questionnaires having a limited set of response categories, in order to measure lone mothers’ daily lives, can produce “hard, rigorous, and reliable” data, exhibiting considerable precision, collected by systematic procedures (Bryman 1988:103). But, as Jayaratne (1993) criticises, “*No matter how thorough the questions in quantitative research, quantitative data will yield findings which are superficial in nature, compared to most qualitative data*” (p.117). In contrast, the data emanating from qualitative studies are often depicted as “rich and deep” (Bryman 1988:103).

¹ Basics of Qualitative research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques by Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin (1990) is completely translated by Hsu, Chung-gwo (1997) into a Chinese version and published by Chu-Liu Book Company in Taiwan. From my own opinion, qualitative researchers are still struggling to integrate qualitative methodology and method into the Taiwanese context now.

Most previous quantitative studies focussing on lone parents in Taiwan failed in revealing “*how to constitute the textuality of social phenomena (financial insecurity)*” of lone mothers (quoted in Smith 1988:106; also see Smith 1990, 1993,1999), despite “the fact/the truth” of financial insecurity among lone mothers being found (Liu 1984; Hong 1987; Tong 1992; Hong 1993; Wu 1993; Chang 1994; Wang 1995; Chang et al.1995; Chang 1996). They seldom have the commitment to investigate further and explain more deeply “*the social relations individuals bring into being in and through their actual practices*” (quoted in Smith 1988: 160; also Smith 1990, 1993, 1999). It is because they have often taken the everyday lifeworld for granted and seldom problematised it as a source for creating sociological theory from the standpoint of the subject being investigated, unlike qualitative and feminist researchers (Smith 1988, 1990, 1993, 1999; Simonen 1991; Hartsock 1998; Harding 1999). Consequently, they could seldom give explanations for “the fact/truth” which they had found from their quantitative data. Although a few of them attempted this, their explanations were very simple, “because of the lack of male bread/rice-winners and the sexual segregation in the workplace” (Tong 1992; Chang 1994; Chang 1996). Such a simplistic and superficial view of the reality of the way in which lone mothers live has long assumed that “*household income and other material resources were shared equally by all its members*” (Oakley 1993:217). In fact, all these quantitative

researches have recklessly ignored the domestic inequality, resulting from generation/age/gender differentials in a Confucian family, and failed in the radical critiques of sexual segregation in the labour market backed up by the KMT residual and selective welfare policies. Rather they have divorced the knowledge of the particular research context *“from the context of their construction and thus lose the meaning they had for the people involved; moreover, readers bring to them their own ‘reading context’”* (Farren 1990:101; also see Lury 1982). In contrast, the use of qualitative methods reveals in more detail and more deeply the problematic of lone mothers’ personal everyday experiences, “like rambling”, which are *“worthy of examination because of their capacity to help us to understand what is going on in a particular context and to provide clues and pointers to other layers of reality”* (Bryman 1988:63). And it is with which the present study is mainly concerned.

Numbering Lone Mothers as “Object”

A number of modern sociologists criticise the claim of quantitative researchers to be “value-free” in their work, underpinned by positivism with its emphasis on the notions of *“objectivity, value-neutrality, predictability with its stress on measurement”* (Bell and Newby 1977:21; Bryman 1988; Denzin and Lincoln 1994, 1998 a, b & c).

Thus, as Denzin and Lincoln (1994, 1998 a, b & c) point out, “*quantitative researchers abstract from this world and seldom study it directly. They seek a nomothetic or etic science based on probabilities derived from the study of large numbers of randomly selected cases*” (p5, 10). Quantitative researchers normally keep distant from the subjects being investigated as an “outsider” who should be involved as little as possible in the social world, where the researched live. Instead, such a stance in relation to the researched, more precisely counting them as “impersonal objects or numbers”, has been challenged strongly by modern social scientists and feminists (Bowles and Klein 1983; Graham 1983a; Billson 1991; Yllö and Bograd 1990; Ollenburger and Moore 1992; Kvale 1996). As such, Yllö (1990) in her research on battered wives radically criticised that “*The lives of the abused women were numerically coded and it was easy for me to think of wife battering as a score on ‘XC12Ws’, the index measuring severe violence against wives*” (p.34). In contrast to objectivity, a number of modern social scientists advocate “intersubjectivity” by doing qualitative research or feminist studies “with the subject being investigated” rather “on the object” by taking a more personal stance (Westkott 1979:425; Klein 1983; Mies 1983:122; Graham 1983a: 136; Yllö and Bograd 1990; Acker, Barry and Esseveld 1991; Longino 1993). In order to achieve doing research with the subject instead of being coded as a “number”, lone parents participating in my research were

asked to choose what they wanted to be named by themselves and for themselves (see Appendix 3.2). It is because, as Bryman clearly points out, *“The most fundamental characteristic of qualitative research is its express commitment to viewing events, action, norms, values, etc. from the perspective of the people who are being studied... The strategy of taking the subject’s perspective is often expressed in terms of seeing through the eyes of the people you are studying”* (p.61; also see Kvale 1996:1; Seale 1999:70-71). As a result, qualitative researchers are strongly encouraged to “get close” to the participants as an “insider” (Bryman 1988:96). Being aware of some limitations of taking an insider position, which were identified in Ribbens’ study about the feminist study of childrearing (1994:34-37), I, as a Taiwanese growing up in a Hoh-Lo-speaking family² and being taught in the Chinese-Mandarin educational

² HohLo language, which originated in Fukien Province of China, is the daily spoken common language of my two parents who cannot speak Chinese-Mandarin at all. Due to sexism within a Confucian family, my mother, a biological daughter of a Hakka family, “was given away” from her birth by her natural patriarchal father to a HohLo speaking family. Whatever HohLo or Hakka, both of them started to migrate to Taiwan between the 14th and 17th centuries and present the major (85%) of Taiwan’s population. For details on Taiwanese’s ethnic groups and the settlement of Taiwan, see Ronald, G. Knapp (eds.) (1980), *China’s island Frontier: Studies in the Historical Geography of Taiwan*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press. Besides, there are at least 10 different aboriginal tribes (3%) in Taiwan, such as Ami, Tayal, Punlun, and Paiwan etc. generally considered to be of Malayan or Indonesian origin, whose languages, culture, family structure and society differ completely from those of HohLo and Hakka people. Actually, my father’s lineage originates in the Pin-Pu tribe, which was completely assimilated into the HohLo culture, language, familial and societal structure for centuries. Therefore during my childhood, I grew up in a Confucian patrilocal extended family, constituted of five sons’ households, including my father of the third sibling, and at least 18 cousins surrounding me. Considering the ethnic, cultural, linguistic, familial and societal differentials, the present study

system³, being a parent of 5-year-old son (at the time of interviewing) and of a similar age to my interviewees (ages ranging from 26 to 49), have benefited from such a position in gaining consent and trust from them, to get close to them and have a purposeful conversation with each of them personally and individually. Such a conversation is intertwined with tears, laughter, sadness and joy, and very reciprocal and enjoyable to both the researcher and the researched together.

Strengths and Limitations of Qualitative Researches

Despite a growth in sceptical ideas about methodological arguments used to support qualitative researches (e.g., Hammersley 1989, 1992b; Carey 1989), it still cannot be

deliberately does not recruit any lone parents from Taiwanese aborigines despite my long-term friendship with them brought out by my previous jobs and Christian liberation faith.

Another ethnic group is that of approximately 1.5 millions of Chinese-Mainlanders who migrated into Taiwan following the defeat of Chiang, Kai-shek led KMT in the Chinese Civil War the end of the 1949. Afterwards, Chinese-Mandarin was opposed as the National language via the education system, emphasising again upon Confucianism. Nevertheless, it became one of my daily spoken languages. Taking a similar culture background rooted in Confucianism, all of the informants participating in my studies are of either Hohlo, Hakka, or Chinese Mainlander origins.

³ The Chinese-Mandarin education system, which all the participants and I have been through knowingly or unknowingly, was criticised as being tools to socialise pupils, regardless of their ethnicity and origin, to legitimatise the minority rule of the Chinese Nationalist Government in Taiwan. For details on how Taiwanese's children were socialised to be Chinese and have loyalty to the KMT government, by stressing Confucianism via the education system, see Richard W. Wilson (1970), *Learning to Be Chinese: The Political Socialization of Children in Taiwan*, London: The M.I.T. Press

denied: *“Qualitative researchers stress the social constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry. Such researchers emphasize the value-laden nature of inquiry. They seek answers to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning”* (Denzin and Lincoln 1994:4, 1998 a, b, & c: 8; also see Blumer 1956:688; Frarran 1990; Patton 1990). As such, Hammersley (1992b) had to admit: *“While I regard many of the arguments of these critics as mistaken, I think that they (ethnographers) point to important and neglected methodological questions”*(p.3)

Moreover, qualitative interviewing employed in the present study had actually provided an opportunity to be sensitive to lone parents' everyday worlds in the Taiwan context and allow them to speak for themselves by quoting their own interpretations of their daily lives and crystallizing some aspects of the discourse in question. Altogether 40 lone parents interviews are not analysed in the search for empirical evidence or to verify hypothesis or my own theoretical assumptions. In contrast, analysing qualitative texts has always been based on informal conversational discussions between them and me (Seale 1999:70). Meanwhile, such discussions relate more to their everyday experiences, but from there, the theoretical structuring of themes has emerged and unexpected topics arising from topics introduced by interviewees are also taken seriously into account. The qualitative approach is to give

space for interviewees' own voices, which are incorporated in the validation of the present study in techniques of "member validation" (Seale 1999:61-71). Therefore, the present qualitative research concerning lone mothers cannot be "repeated" in the sense of demanding objective measures and techniques like the previous quantitative studies about lone parents, but rather to explore their own perspectives via in-depth interview in response to advocacy of the supposed interests of this particular group in Taiwan (Denzin and Lincoln 1994).

While recognising the strengths qualitative interviewing provides to "hear the voices of the silent", nevertheless, as Alldred (1998) notes, "*we may simultaneously reinforce their construction as Other, and concurrently our own perspective or the dominant cultural perspective as central, prevents us from naively assuming that our work is bound to be liberatory*" (p.154). For example, "the voices" of lone parents are inscribed within this study and explained by the researcher in the language (English), which is not "their own" daily actual words, but rather "Other's". While criticising this male-stream and mainstream culture, Spender (1998) argues that language is reflective and productive of man-dominated power, status, and authority. Likewise, what lone parents in Taiwan in this study have said is explained by the power of qualitative researchers' familiar language--English, which often has no accurate terms,

such as “T’o-You-Ping” (拖油瓶)⁴, to express literarily lone mothers’ actual words. Bearing these limitations resulting from cultural, language, or gender differentials, this study is an attempt to contextualise the voices of lone parents into “a specific cultural context”—a Confucian welfare state which is as well “sexually specific”.

3.2 The Feminist Standpoint

In addition to the use of a qualitative approach, the feminist position taken within the present study depends upon the following arguments:

For Women, Not Only About Women

As shown in Chapter One, lone mothers in Taiwan can hardly benefit from the extremely low welfare expenditure of the Taiwanese Confucian State. Previous studies have never ever criticised radically the selectiveness and residualism of the KMT social policies from the standpoint of lone mothers. As Simonen (1991) states, *“Theorising sociology from the perspective of men (of the ruling class) has been a false line of thinking: women have been silenced or objected in the theoretical*

⁴ See Footnote 7 of Chapter 7

discourse. Men's standpoint has been represented as universal. The theory of the everyday world as problematic highlights the importance of understanding the complex nature of making the invisible visible and silenced voices heard... Social policy and the welfare state need rethinking from the standpoint of women" (p.30).

Furthermore, as Oakley (1998) argues, *"Moreover, this science came wrapped in the trappings of logical positivism and with a stress on 'quantification', 'objectivity' and 'control' that seems at odds with the political values of feminism, and particularly with the formation of a feminist 'social' science that tried to be for women rather than about them."* (p.133). Previous studies regarding lone parents in Taiwan were almost conducted "about women" by the researchers, most of whom are women too. It does not mean that all these studies are "for women". A few of them employed qualitative interviewing, but still gender has not been taken seriously in accessing the knowledge of the lone parents' world in Taiwan. As such, even though Shu (1989) noticed Confucian sexist society as the cause of remarriage inequality between lone fathers and lone mothers, he still insisted that *"gender bias is insignificant in this model"* while discussing their economic conditions (Shu 1989:119). Furthermore, recognising the declining welfare function of the patriarchal family as a result of industrialization, Chang (1987) strongly advocated that *"it is compulsory and necessary to promote familial welfare due to the incomplete social security net in Taiwan"* (p.237), taking

exactly the same stance as the KMT government, preferring the family as the centre of welfare provision, as noted in Chapter One. In contrast to such a male and ruler's stance, the main purpose of my research is to listen to the unheard voices and uncover the invisible experiences of lone mothers living in the Taiwan Confucian social context by taking a feminist standpoint "about women, with women and for women", namely from the standpoint of lone mothers.

Hearing the Silent

As shown in the **Introduction**, the voices from lone parents have never been heard on the Taiwan political agenda. In order to reveal faithfully the "silent" voices of lone parents, as many feminists argue, a qualitative method with in-depth face-to-face interview is adopted as best suited to obtaining the best accounts of women's experiences in the Taiwanese social context (Roberts 1981; Bowles and Klein 1983; Stanley and Wise 1983, 1991; Graham 1983a; Oakley 1981, 1998a; Yllö and Bograd 1990). On the one hand, some feminist sociologists have confirmed that same gender identification is a central feature of a fruitful interview based on a more non-hierarchical relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee (Oakley 1981; Finch 1984a; Padfield and Procter 1996). On the other hand, other feminists

have problematised this shared gender approach, by noting the lack of shared cultural and ethnic norms, which could create barriers to understanding women's daily experiences (Riessman 1987:217; Ollenburger and Moore 1992:59-61). Bearing such debates in mind, thirty purposely selected women either from HohLo, Hakka or Chinese Mainlander living daily in the Confucian family and society, have been recruited to participate in my research due to the main focus of my study being only upon Confucian familial and societal culture. Nevertheless, another qualitative study is strongly recommended by the researcher to focus on Taiwanese aboriginal lone mothers whose language, identity, culture, familial and societal structures completely differ from Confucian lone mothers. As a woman, a daughter, a wife, a mother with a child, a sister and a daughter-in-law living daily in a Confucian family, I, the researcher, have been much privileged to listen to and to understand more deeply these voices from their own perspective and attempt to reveal them more faithfully, which has not been uncovered via qualitative interviewing from the lone mothers' perspective.

Among 40 research participants, 10 lone fathers from the same Confucian background were recruited for the following reasons:

- (1) Only two of all the previous studies discerned the differentials between the sexes with quantitative methods, whereas for lone mothers, the most problematic concern is financial insecurity, but for lone fathers, rather childcare and children's schooling (Wang 1991; Wu 1993).
- (2) Ten interviews are conducted with lone fathers in order to uncover the inequality within the Confucian family and to uncover the greater disadvantages of lone mothers in comparison with males in the Taiwanese Confucian welfare state. The issues of cross-gender interviews have been debated in terms of the unequal relationship between a female interviewer and a male interviewee (McKee and O'Brien 1983; Smart 1984; Lee, Wen-wen 1997). As such, a female interviewer's vulnerability or a male interviewee's control of the interview situation hardly occurred in my fieldwork conducted from April to October 1998, due to gender differential between the researcher and the researched. The explanations to that may be closely related to (1) my position of being a married woman with a husband and a son, not of being a "unmarried single young woman", and (2) the route of access to those 10 fathers, introduced to me either by NGOs⁵, with whom

⁵ That is, particularly OLOAWF and WLAW in Taichung. In summer 1998, I designed three free-charge-projects, two of them for OLOAWF in Taipei, lasting more than five months and fully sponsored by Chen, Shui-bian led Taipei City Government, and one for WLAW in Taichung, partially sponsored by the DPP led Taichung City government. Particularly, one of these two projects for OLOAWF included childcare for those lone mothers taking part in the project. All these projects not

I had much contact during the fieldwork, or by my good friends. Like clergy wives interviewed by Finch (1984a), seemingly it is great to have someone for those 10 male interviewees to talk to and to share, particularly, the difficulty of being a carer for their children and the eager wish for remarriage;(3) Non-home interviewing settings were more likely preferred by those male participants (7) with one interview at Dust' home while his girl-friend was present there, because of my gender, opposite to them, despite no objections against the interviews from their own family, unlike those faced by some of female interviewees.

In short, in an interview conversation in the form of a semi-structured guideline (see Appendix 3.3), *"the researcher listens to what people themselves tell about their lived world, hears them express their views and opinions in their own words, learns about their views on their work situation and family life, their dreams and hopes"* (Kvale 1996:1).

only benefited lone parents but also these two groups financially. This is what I could contribute to these two groups and those lone parents joining the projects run by the researcher. At the end, two of these women's groups did appreciate what I had done for them, also wishing me to finish my course as soon as possible to return to Taiwan and do something for lone parent families. Meanwhile, my research also benefited from these three projects in accessing the interviewees. In fact, all of us, the women's groups, the lone parents, and myself the researcher have equally benefited and are enjoying our good relationship and co-operation, too.

3.3 East-Asian Perspective

Contextualising Lone Mothers in Taiwan

One exceptional quantitative study briefly mentioned that the poverty of lone mothers was more likely resulting from Chinese traditional sexual divisions but without any further and deeper development and explanation (Chang 1996). As has been shown above, hitherto lone mothers in Taiwan have been quantified in mainstream/malestream social science as anonymous objects and impersonal numbers, buttressed by positivist ideas of “objectivity, value-neutral, non-interference, generalisations, etc”, which make lone mothers in Taiwan “float in a vacuum space”, tethered neither to time nor to place, and renders the knowledge about lone mothers culturally abstract and unrealistically ahistorical (Smith 1974). As Billson (1991) strongly argues, “*Failure to study women in our cultural contexts, embedded in our socio-historical circumstances, is to strip us of our identities as human beings. Not only does this approach deny our humanity, it also renders our research findings suspect.*” (p.203). Echoing such a point of view, qualitative and feminist researchers are more likely to emphasise that knowledge has been socially constructed at a particular time, in a particular place and for particular people (Bryman 1988; Smith

1974, 1988, 1990, 1993, 1999; Ollenburger and Moore 1992). Du Bois (1983) has described this as “*seeing things in context*.”(p.111). In the meantime, Ollenburger and Moore (1992) also promote the same research criteria by emphasising: “*context or situational factors are vital to understanding human behavior*” (p.59). In response to “seeing things in context”, the criteria for recruiting participants in my study was slightly changed during doing the fieldwork from **Definition 5** of lone parents to **Definition 4** (see Chapter 1), which means *a family consisting of a mother or a father without a spouse or a partner with her/his unmarried dependent children undertaking full-time education*. As mentioned in Chapter One, the explanation for such a shift is because “children” regardless of age, undertaking full-time education, are completely dependent on their parents, in particular economically in terms of tuition fees, living costs and so on. Thus the qualitative knowledge of my study is only conducted for the particular groups, indicated above, living in Confucian-culture-specific Taiwan at a particular time (from April to October 1998).

Towards a Confucian Feminist Methodology

In the late 1980s and the 1990s, critiques of Euro-American-centric masculinist and feminist epistemology have emerged from Third world scholarship, particularly from

women of colour, or working-class women or Asian feminists or women from the Third world (e.g., Collins 1990,1991; Murray and Hong 1989, 1994; Teng 1996). While challenging the quantitative monoliths grounded in positivist logics, as Cannon et al. (1988) argue, qualitative research is biased insofar as it ignores women of colour and working-class women. The social contexts within which different kinds of the researched subjects live, work, struggle and make sense of their lives differ widely across the world and between different groups of the researched subjects. For example, the questions to interview lone mothers "why don't they go to work?" only make sense in Western welfare states, for the specific group in such particular social contexts at a certain period has "choices" of whether to participate in the labour market or not, due to their entitlement for state benefits (e.g., Brown 1989). Unfortunately, the same enquiry can hardly make sense to researchers or to lone parents in the Taiwan Confucian welfare context, because lone parents can hardly depend on Taiwan Confucian state. Similarly, as Stanley and Wise (1990) criticise, the taken-for-granted assumptions of universal patriarchy, male control of the family daily life, women's experiences only "*actually reflected the experiences and analysis of White, middle-class, heterosexual, First World women only, yet treated these as universals.*" (quoted from Stanley and Wise 1990:20; also see Tong 1989; Graham 1991).

While the burgeoning interests in qualitative and feminist research in the Taiwan academy has recently emerged, I, as the researcher living daily in the Taiwan Confucian context, chose the core themes which were important for the women participating in my study and for me, too. I not only explored the experiences of those participants with whom I had a good conversation, but also my own experiences of being a daughter, wife, mother, daughter-in-law and the like. While asking my participants about the ownership of their present housing, I suddenly realised that as a daughter, I am also one of them, being treated as an outsider from my natal family as well. The house I have long identified as my maternal home has legally been owned by my elder brother from the initial time when my parents bought it on the basis of father-son inheritance system. In order to reflect faithfully the Confucian everyday world, the language I use deliberately differs sometimes from the Euro-American-centric terminology, which prevails often in Western social science literature and Western contexts. For example, the term of “rice-winner”⁶ will

⁶ Rice-winner means “male-breadwinner” in Western countries. In Taiwan, the conceptualisation of gender differences are derived from the compositions of these two words: Man/men(男Nan) and woman/women(女Nyu). These two words, like the rest of Chinese nouns, have no differentials between plural and singular forms. Actually, the Chinese character of “man/men”(男Nan) consists of two terms: “rice field”(田T’ien) and “power/strength”(力Lih). On the contrary, the Chinese Character of “woman/women”(女Nyu) developed from the figure of a female sexy body. Man/men is/are man/men who should work hard in rice fields as the “rice-winner” (breadwinner in Western terms).

replace “Western breadwinner” when referring only to the Taiwan context, because rice is not only equivalent to our daily main meal but also related to the conceptualisation of sexual division within Confucian social contexts, which might also be applicable for other Confucian countries, such as Korea, China, Singapore and Japan. The deliberate choice of the terms⁷ I use in the present research would help to embed me in the East-Asian social context where I come from and in the group I am studying instead of distancing me from “my people in my homeland”.

3.4 Rationale for the Study

The Study

The way of conceptualising man/men and woman/women has resulted in the sexual division of labour and the separation of the private and the public by stressing “Man/men work/s outside; woman/women work/s inside”(男主外;女主內, Nan too wai; Nyu too nei). This means that man/men should work outside as breadwinners and woman/women should do housework and care for all the family members, particularly young children and the elderly, as housekeeper/s and housewife/wives. For details about Confucian sexual division of labour and separation between the private and the public, see Hu, Yow-huey (1996), ‘All men work outside; all women work inside—Women and Employment’, *The Collection of Essays of Review and Prospect on Women's Rights—Women's Studies in the Decade*, ed. Chang Gyue, Taipei: Women Research Programme of Population Studies in National Taiwan University

⁷ See The Terminology in the Study, p.xviii

Initially, the present study attempts not to inquire about the personal perceptions of Confucian philosophy from the lone parents' view, such as filial piety, but rather to *"understand the everyday life from their own perspective, to unfold the meaning of their experiences, to uncover their lived world"* (Kvale 1996:1). In the Taiwan Confucian Welfare context, "the family" is always presumed to be the centre of welfare provision and also a *"Haven in a Heartless World"* (Lasch 1977), where the decision-making power, household income, property, and other material resources were shared equally by all its members (Oakley 1993:217). As an enormous Western feminist literature highlights, "the family is a problem"(Oakley 1997:36), and also is a core site of women's oppression by unequal power, income distribution and sexual division of labour *between the sexes* (e.g., Dobash and Dobash 1979; Barrett and McIntosh 1982; Pahl 1984; Pascall 1997; Singh 1997). Such a problematic of the family in the West is mainly caused by gender inequality, but in the Confucian social context can be brought out not only by gender difference, but also by seniority (age) and generation inequities. As Snow (1967) criticises the harmonious Confucian family and society, built on the three bonds that subordinate minister to ruler, son to father, and wife to husband, *"In the Chinese family system, there is superficial quiet and calmness and quarrelling is frowned upon, but in reality all is conflict."* (p.196; also see Stacey 1983:72; Ku 1989:14). Can generation/age/gender really make a

difference in the access to the Confucian Welfare model primarily built on familial provision? The family is always implicitly and explicitly presumed by the KMT Confucian State as a main source of support in forms of childcare, income, housing, employment, marriage and so forth. What does this assumption really mean for lone mothers? or for lone fathers? Or as Snow (1967) argues, does the family mean confrontation instead of a source of support? Based on harmonious Confucian familial and social order, buttressed by generation/age/gender and favouring son/husband/father, can lone mothers as daughters/wives/mothers really benefit from such familial welfare? If they can, to what extent can they access equally in comparison with lone fathers as sons/husbands/fathers? Or in their everyday life, are they more likely to encounter conflicts from the family (-in-law)? Does the Confucian Welfare model built on “the family” really work properly for lone mothers in Taiwan? In the search for an answer to the above questions, the current research intends to explore lone mothers’ daily experiences situated in the Taiwan Confucian Welfare State from their own perspective, highlighted by comparison with lone fathers’. In the light of this, the research aim of this study mainly attempts *to explore the impact of a Confucian Welfare Regime upon lone mothers in the Taiwanese social context*. Thus the following sub-objectives will be carefully inquired, examined and analysed in order to overarch the main goal of this study.

- (1) to examine the extent and the constraints of access to state welfare provision in terms of childcare, housing, income and employment while the Confucian family is presumed by the KMT state as the main welfare provider to meet lone parents' needs.
- (2) to explore the extent of familial welfare lone mothers could access in terms of childcare, housing and income in comparison with lone fathers within their family from their perspective.
- (3) to highlight what problems/conflicts are faced by lone mothers in contrast to lone fathers, if the Confucian family fails in its welfare provision, and then to interpret the reasons involved in such problems, which lead to the failure of the KMT State's assumption of familial welfare.
- (4) Following this, to explore what solutions they prefer to cope with their lone parenthood in forms of re/marriage and employment.
- (5) to identify concrete implications for contemporary social policies and to make recommendations for future researches in Taiwan.
- (6) to understand the nature of a Confucian welfare regime from the point of view of gender.

Methods

In order to listen to and understand faithfully the voices of all the participants, qualitative and feminist research from a Confucian perspective was used with semi-structured interviews. The interview questions grounded in qualitative, feminist and culture research methodologies, remained open-ended, and reflexive and allowed lone parents to talk freely and influence the interview schedule planned, resulting in a more faithful understanding of their perception of their everyday lives.

Pilot interviews of 10 lone mothers were carried out in December 1996 for the purpose of developing and testing the interview guide. As shown before, the bulk of the interviews were done from April to October 1998. The 40 tape-recorded interviews all began by asking each participant to tell me about her/his background, and from there, I raised the relevant questions from the interview guide, which I had almost memorised. But, before the interview conversation came to an end, I double-checked whether the conversation had covered all the themes (see Appendix 3.5), needed in my study.

In theory and practice, the time of interviewing was arranged based on each participant's convenience and agreement. In the field, interviewing sessions approximately ranged from one and a half hours to two hours with one exceptional case⁸. Most of the interviews were conducted in the evening after work during the week (12) or during the daytime at the weekend (15), except for six conducted during working hours, including two self-employed bosses and four employees with flexible working hours. All the interviews were tape-recorded, supplemented by intensive field-note-taking and simultaneously all the tapes were transcribed by the researcher-myself (15 transcripts⁹) and a group of college students (25 transcripts). Only spoken sentences were transcribed, no silence or changes of voice were included in the transcription (except in cases where we were laughing or crying). To check the reliability of the data, I at least triple-checked recordings and equivalent transcriptions

⁸ Interviewing Karen, introduced by one of my close friends, took the longest time. The interview was supposed to start at 12:00pm, but both of us could not do it until her two-year-old daughter fell asleep roughly at 23:00pm. During the waiting time, I accompanied them to a local park in order to let her daughter play around and have a good time there. The interview was conducted at the weekend so that it did not affect their routine daily life in the week.

⁹ As many researchers clearly pointed out, transcription is not only a time-consuming job but also an energy-consuming "headache" work (Simonen 1991). The first 15 interviews were transcribed by myself from spoken Hoh-Lo or Chinese into English, and the rest of them were transcribed by a group of college students, who were paid by my husband in order to help me solve this problem out. Then I triple-checked their Chinese transcriptions until all these transcriptions expressed faithfully what the interviewees meant.

to make sure that there were no technical irrelevances or unreliabilities involved. The quality of the transcriptions turned out to be very good and faithful to what each interviewee said. All the interviews were conducted in either Mandarin Chinese, Hoh-Lo or a mixture of both, our most common spoken languages in Taiwan. All the participants joining in the study gave their oral consent, by telephone or face-to-face, even though none of them gave me a formal “written” consent form. Again, before each interview, the Chinese written informed consent¹⁰ (see Appendix 3.5) was given to each participant individually. Meanwhile, 21 of them were drawn from my personal network¹¹; the other 19 participants were accessed from five voluntary groups¹². Since

¹⁰ The Written informed consent clearly describes the purposes of the research, provides my personal background relating to my current status, a mother, a wife, and full-time research student, and my own family, promises the degree of confidentiality of the findings, and strongly emphasises that their participation is fully voluntary, as some sociologists recommended (Burgess 1984; Fontan and Frey 1994; Rubin and Rubin 1995).

¹¹ Those from my personal network included three from Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT) and five members of WLAW in Taipei. Actually I am a female minister of PCT and was the former director of Taipei Women’s Development Centre, which is one of the women’s groups in Taiwan. Of such a background of myself, it was easier for me to access participants to take part in my research. In the field, one of the lone mothers was accessed most dramatically in the way she introduced herself to me without anyone as mediator between us. Somehow she was given the Chinese informed consent after the pilot research. One day she rang me suddenly to enquire about my study on the phone. At first, she would not tell who she was and how she had all the information about my research. After at least four hours chatting with me about how she got divorced and how hard she had to strive for maintaining the custody of her son on the phone, she still kept herself anonymous until the second time she rang me again. Recognising her current situation of striving for her son’s custody in the court, I offered her a free charge legal consultation with the help of my husband, who has been a lawyer for years. At the

receiving their name, telephone number, and sometimes their correspondence address and their oral permission, I routinely confirmed a convenient timing and place with them for participating in the research. Meanwhile, it was strongly emphasised that if something happened urgently, both the interview time and place could be changed. In the field, two interviews were postponed due to an accidentally broken arm of a lone mother's son and an emergent operation of a lone father¹³. And after receiving

end, she felt quite happy to participate in my interviewing research. The interview was conducted finally at her home.

¹² These five NGOs are indicated as follows: 10 participants from One-Leaf Orchid Association for Widowed Family (OLOAWF); 4 interviewees from Taipei Li-Hsin Charity Foundation (TLCF); 2 participants from Warm Life Association for Women (WLAW) in Kaohsiung; one lone mother from WLAW in Taichung; one lone father from Mutually-Support Lone Parent Association in Taipei (MSLPAT); one never-married single mother from the Lucy Service Centre in Tainan, sponsored by the Catholic Church in Taiwan.

TLCF has been commissioned by Taipei Metropolitan City government as the Children Welfare Centre in Won-Hwuan district, Taipei City. Its director is Ms. Hsu, Shuei-fong(許秀鳳). After a good conversation with her one afternoon, she promised to search for lone mothers to participate in my study. Thus I am indebted to her for introducing 4 lone mothers to participate in the present study.

Lucy Service Centre is located in Tainan city, in the southern part of Taiwan. It is one of shelters, supported by the Catholic Church in Taiwan, for never-married single mothers who are going to deliver children, but normally are encouraged not to raise up their children on their own. Generally, most of them receiving its service are teenaged single mothers.

¹³ The interview with Peak was supposed to be conducted at 10:00 am, on 7th August 1998. When I arrived at his electronic store, the door was tightly closed and I was sceptical about making a mistake and remembering the wrong time, date and place. Checking carefully my own diary to make sure of the date and place again, I had certainly got the right time, date and place, and so was confused about where was the interviewee. Finally I found out that he was in a public hospital due to an urgent operation. Instead of the interview, I went to the hospital to visit him there with his two boys and his

the oral permission, three interviews with lone mothers were withdrawn as a result of opposition from the potential interviewees' own mothers, if living together with their family. This rejection is more likely to be closely linked with the stigma upon lone mothers. The potential participants may well have been forbidden to participate in any interviews with any outsider to their family.

Interview Settings

Each interview setting was chosen by each participant for considering her/his different situations and individual convenience. Only 23 interviews took place at the participants' home. Generally, the interview setting at home provides a more secure, comfortable and confidential environment for interviewees. But simultaneously, it is also very much easier to be disturbed or interrupted by telephones, young children, other family members, sometimes visitors, and other unexpected factors. The waiting time for interviewing was much longer than the time conducting the interview, due to their specific situation of being a lone parent alone. One interview with Karen, a never-married single mother, took me from lunchtime to the next morning. I needed to wait for her to settle down her two-year-old daughter first. After completing the

family-in-law and expressed my concern about his health. Then he was also very kind and arranged another time and date for me to interview him.

interview, it was after midnight and, unexpectedly, I had to stay at her home overnight until the next morning. One interview with Huei-lin was conducted in the quiet and private seminar room provided by OLOAWF, for the interviewee was one of participants who joined in one of the projects led by me for OLOAWF.

In contrast to the home setting, 16 interviews had to be conducted in various settings: Seven in participants' own office or shop, six in restaurants/cafés, two in a room offered by his/her friend and one in a room provided by a local church where a couple of my friends have worked as Christian ministers. Certain considerations for such non-home settings are described as follows: (1) Due to the objections to interviews from lone mothers' family members, normally their own mothers, three interviews, one for a divorced woman and two never-married single mothers, had to be done in restaurants/cafés; (2) More conveniently, and with better security and confidentiality, seven interviews were completed in interviewees' own offices/shops, three in restaurants, two in a room offered by his/her friend and one in a room provided by a local church. Generally, several participants' offices/shops also provided a quite peaceful, comfortable, secure and private space for interviewing, sometimes much better than home, at least without any disturbance from family members. A room provided by participants' friends was nearly the same setting as the interviewees' own

offices/shops. The restaurants, where six interviews were conducted, depended on their type. Three offered a private space, comfortable sofa, good meals and refreshments and quiet atmosphere, even though they cost¹⁴ more. In comparison with these three restaurants above, the other three¹⁵ were less quiet, secure and more disturbing. However, all these interviews in non-home settings were conducted with the interviewees' full agreements based on their choice and convenience.

Ethical Considerations

Although I did my research on an ethnic/cultural/national group to whom I am completely connected through my own personal background, in fact, class or gender or educational differences still exist between the researcher and the researched. In relation to differences, DeVault still warns that feminist and qualitative researchers

¹⁴ The cost of conducting interviews at restaurants was always paid by me except for one interview with one widowed lone mother, who paid the cost for me because she had joined one of projects led by me for OLOAWF, and showed her respect to a teacher, like me, on the basis of Confucianism and friendship between us and considered my unwaged studentship.

¹⁵ One interview was in an instant-food restaurant, preferred by a lone father. It is because the location of that restaurant is quite nearby his home and he visited it quiet often and felt very secure, familiar and comfortable. Considering the objection from her own mother and more traffic convenience for her to pick up her son from school, Tulip, a never-married single mother, preferred a restaurant located in Taipei Railway Station. The third one was done in a café located in Lu-Chu Township, Toayuan county. Before the participant arrived at the meeting point, I tried hard to look for a good place for interviewing, by walking around the whole downtown. Unfortunately, she also could not recommend her favourite ones. As a result, with her full-permission, the interview was completed there.

need to be sensitive to such differences (DeVault 1990,1994; also see Riessman 1987; Edwards and Ribbens 1995,1998). However, feminist and qualitative epistemologies and methods seemed to provide me with some insights and support in dealing with differences. But in the field, some dilemmas involving my role of being the researcher should be illuminated here.

(1) Confidentiality or Children's Welfare?

As shown earlier, the confidentiality of all the participants' personal details has been achieved with pseudonyms freely chosen by all the interviewees in order to protect her/his privacy (see Appendix 3.2). The first moral dilemma I confronted during my fieldwork was whether I should keep confidentiality to a male participant, as promised in my informal consent, or do something for the well-being of his two children, urged by my "commonsense" of being a parent. During the interview, I was informed how urgently and eagerly he wanted to "remarry" a "beautiful wife" in China in order to find a "good mother" for his children so that he left his children (aged 13 and 10 respectively) alone at home for more than 10 days in Taiwan, with only a fridge fully filled with frozen water dumplings and some pocket money, but without any adult's supervision and care. Reporting his case as violating the

Children's Welfare Act by neglecting his two children to the local Bureau of Social Affairs would absolutely violate the confidentiality, strongly guaranteed by me, the researcher. Seriously considering the welfare of these two children and driven by my commonsense of being a parent and having a responsibility as a qualitative and feminist researcher, instead I asked for help from social workers of the voluntary group which encouraged him to participate in my research in order to monitor him for the sake of his children's well-being. From this dilemma, I have learned to add a clear statement in the informed consent in the future acknowledging that the confidentiality will be violated under certain critical circumstances such as involving those neglecting children's welfare.

(2) Publicising or Labelling Lone Mothers Again

Essentially, the main concern of the study is to listen to the silent voices and publicise the invisible lives of lone parents from women's perspectives in a specific Confucian context. As Edwards and Ribben (1995) clearly point out, "*in moving toward 'publicising' women's 'invisible' lives and understandings, there may be a danger of making women more vulnerable*" (p.255). Such a danger, for example, involving "re-stigmatising" lone parents as delinquents' households, publicised by the mass

media in Taiwan society, has raised critical debates to resist such re-oppression of lone mothers and their children (Huang 1997; Wang Pai-chih 1997; Wang, Chau-yeh 1997; Lu 1997). Being aware of such a danger in my mind, on the one hand, the interview enquiry focused on the difficulties in access to childcare or involving children's schooling. On the other hand, I am very keen and sensitive to gender, class and educational differences among us as a number of feminist researchers warn, indicated above. Although being a "temporary" lone mother with a young son in England, studying alone without my husband's presence, somehow such a unique experience did deepen my understanding of the daily lives of lone parent families, theoretically and practically. Essentially, I have never ever become a "permanent" lone mother, having much higher education and middle class background without any financial anxiety, completely unlike some female interviewees participating in my research. Nevertheless, I became more cautious in listening to and reporting the muted voices in order to avoid stereotyping lone mothers again in the present study.

(3). Powerful vs. Powerless

The equal power relationship between the researcher and the researched has been a key theme for qualitative and feminist methodologies (e.g., Denzin and Lincoln

1994,1998 a, b & c; Mies 1983, 1991; Finch 1991; Blaikie 1993). Throughout my fieldwork, I strove to observe this principle, but still felt very sorry at refusing “two women”, who identified themselves as “lone mothers” and were willing to take part in my study, but could not adhere to my sample criteria, indicated above. I did my best to explain, while not denying their own identity of being lone mothers, that my study only focused on lone parents with children undertaking full-time education. But such a challenge from these women raised some issues about who has the power to define those who are the researched. Can the researched have equal power to the researcher? In the present study, obviously, I, the researcher, was the person who held the power of defining who are the researched.

On the one hand, I had experienced a powerful position of being the researcher throughout my fieldwork; on the other hand, I had also experienced powerlessness, like some of lone parents participating in my study. During the fieldwork, I contributed as much as I could, not only to NGOs concerning lone parents but also lone parents themselves, such as free legal advice with help from my lawyer husband, while some were in need of such services as, for example, involving the custody of children or divorce. Throughout my fieldwork, I felt just as powerless as those participants who are invisible with silent voices. A criminal who murdered Peak's

wife and caused his lone parenthood with two young boys has not been brought to justice; Joy, a divorced lone mother who has cancer, was unemployed at home during the time when I interviewed her, mixing with her tears, laughter, sadness and joy. Although her case probably could pass the extremely restricted eligibility for claiming Low-Income Family Allowance, the subsidies (roughly only NT\$ 2400[£44] for two children per month) from a local County government, like Taipei County Government, was absolutely too little to support her family with her two young daughters. As a researcher, what can I contribute back to them on the basis of reciprocity and equality after they contributed their everyday experiences to me? The answer is very apparent: there was nothing much that I could do to improve social policies in that short time when they were in need. It is hoped that the present study will “make” their invisible experiences “visible” and their “silent” voice be heard so that better social welfare policies will be made about them, with them and for them.

3.5 Summary

In conclusion quantitative research, associated with a range of data collection methods, particularly favouring the social survey, has still been employed as the dominant

research paradigm concerning lone parents in the Taiwanese social context. Despite its positive role in illuminating the welfare needs of lone mothers by “numbers”, these studies still failed to contextualise lone mothers in Taiwan in a specific Confucian context by distancing the researcher from the researched. In contrast, the present study employing qualitative, feminist and Confucian-culture-specific methodologies conversely has tried to embed lone mothers back into their own social context where the researcher and the researched have shared the same ethnic/cultural/national background, and mostly also shared the same gender, too. As a result, the study is the nature of subjectivity, yielding rich, vivid and deep data on lone parents’ experiences and views of how to cope with their everyday lone parenting/mothering.

Subsequent chapters in this thesis will draw on qualitative research data from in-depth interviews with 40 lone parents, 30 mothers and 10 fathers. The issues explored in the following chapters will faithfully and directly reflect the concerns voiced by the participants, mainly from the lone mothers’ viewpoint, during the course of the interviews.

Chapter 4 Care Responsibilities and Lone Mothers

Much earlier, Land (1978) criticised the British State's assumption "*that families no longer care for their kin as much as they used to do*" (p.269). In contrast to this assumption, the KMT State presumed that families were still able to care for their kin as much as they used to do. Accordingly, as shown in the Introduction, the State role of the KMT-led regime can only be categorised as a "regulator" rather than a "provider". Furthermore, this role of being only a "facilitator and co-ordinator" of welfare activities in local communities is clearly demonstrated in its own official document (The ROC Yearbook 1997), by persistently stressing the welfare function of "the family". Particularly, the family consisting of "Three generations living in the same household", in which it is presumed that the aged grandparents can/will provide childcare to their grandchildren, is more valued and preferred by the KMT government than the nuclear family. This assumption will be carefully examined in the current chapter as the base of analysing care experiences of lone mothers for children and elderly. In everyday reality, can lone mothers receive childcare from their "family", which regards them from birth to death as "lifetime family outsiders", unlike their opposite-gender counterparts who are regarded as "permanent and full family members"? Can never-married single mothers benefit from childcare provided

by their natal family, as “temporary family members”, who are expected to marry out and never return, like “water spilled on the ground”? Can divorced or separated lone mothers return to their maternal families and access to childcare from them while “married out” daughters are viewed to “belong to other people” and are supposed to do so? Are widowed lone mothers easier to be provided childcare by their mothers-in-law’s families since becoming “married-in” daughters-in-law? Or do they, in contrast, encounter other problems, or carry on other duties instead of childcare, which sons/husbands/fathers have never had in their whole life? Can lone mothers really benefit from childcare provided by Confucian families, as the KMT welfare regime always presumes?

First, the present chapter will examine the minimum childcare provision of the KMT welfare regimes regarding lone parents, secondly the extent of familial childcare provision for this group, and thirdly another care work for elderly parents and in-law experienced only by lone mothers.

4.1 Critique of Childcare Policies of the KMT Welfare Regime

Access to Childcare: Residual State Services

As many Western feminists clearly point out, state-sponsored childcare provision and parental leave policies are considered cornerstones in facilitating the combination of job and childcare (Hernes 1987; Leira 1998a). Furthermore, in some Western countries, lack of childcare provision has regularly been quoted by lone mothers as the main barrier to their participation in the workplace and dependence on the State (Martin and Roberts 1984; Bradshaw et al.1996). Rhetorically, according to the *Principle of the People's Livelihood*, ideologically grounded on the *Great Commonwealth*, partially assimilating Fabian Socialism (see Chapter 1), social policies ideally should ensure that the young are properly raised and educated, the able and the strong are fully employed and the old are adequately taken care of; every individual in the nation, regardless of her/his sex, religion, age and race, should enjoy a life of peace and happiness (Chiang 1953). Thus Ku (1997) strongly argues that “*Whether the Principle of the People's Livelihood is like socialism or social democracy, the state's responsibility for establishing a comprehensive welfare systems remains*” (p.184; also see Wang 1983:210; Lin 1995:18). Echoing his view, the state-sponsored services for children ideally should be implemented and provided on

the basis on “citizenship”, guaranteed by the Constitution, similar to the services in the Scandinavian welfare states (Leira 1998a & b). In reality, in the KMT welfare regime, public childcare services are made available usually as a last resort, where families are required to prove a form of “family failure/dysfunction/bankruptcy”. It is because the KMT welfare state never recognises lone parents’ “individual citizenship”, rather seeing them as “members of a Confucian family”. Not surprisingly, only four widowed lone mothers in the present study were offered public kindergartens for their pre-school children aged 4 to 6 because of the welfare dysfunction of their “mother-in-law’s family” (Po-Chia 婆家)¹. This “failure” granted them the entitlement

¹ For a married woman in Confucian context, a home/family is referred to in terms of her relation to the woman with whom she has the most significant tie, who is usually also the senior woman in that family. Thus, from a married woman’s standpoint, “home/ family” is divided into natal home/family, i.e. mother’s home/family (Niang-Chia 娘家) and mother-in-law’s home/family (Po-Chia 婆家). In contrast, these terms have no symmetrical male equivalent for married men. The term, Niang-Chia, is properly used to indicate a closeness between a mother and a married daughter, which is valued and common although not universal, and grants a married-out daughter a variety of supports from her natal family via her mother. The ties with natal family will not vanish even after the death of a married woman’s mother, and her natal home/family also will not be referred to as her father’s home/family. For detail, see Ellen R. Judd (1989), ‘Niangjia: Chinese Women and Their Natal Families’, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol.48, No.3, pp.525-544

In contrast to the closeness between mother and daughter, confrontations between a mother-in-law and a daughter-in-law have consistently noted as the result of generation-age-gender hierarchy within Confucian families (e.g., Yang 1945:38; Lang 1946:47-48; Levy 1949:109-110; Wolf 1972:36; Baker 1979:43-44; Gallin 1986:31-49). Mother-in-law is the person who should socialize and integrate her daughter-in-law, as a stranger, into patrilineal family of her own “mother-in-law”. In the past, daughters-in-law were often subjugated stringently and harshly by mothers-in-law, whose authority is buttressed on the basis of filial piety and veneration of age and generation, to ensure the stability of the Confucian family and social security in old age for mothers-in-law. Certainly, such stability and

to social assistance, i.e. "low-income families scheme", including free public kindergarten, by the Social Assistance Law². According to the same registered permanent residence as her father-in-law's, the KMT State recognizes Thekla, a widow, as a member of her mother-in-law's family, where her living father-in-law and all the siblings-in-law have legal and moral family obligations for her two young daughters and herself. Particularly, her father-in-law legally owns a small property; this means that her mother-in-law's family is not a proletarian one, which has not

security was achieved at the price of the immeasurable repression of daughters-in-law, who seldom would benefit from any supports of their mothers-in-law's families.

² The Social Assistance Law, promulgated in 1980, defines local authorities as major welfare provider for people in need and adopts the concept of "family income" as the key criterion to define those who are in need (Ku 1995:349). In other words, eligibility is determined by each fiscal year a figure for monthly minimum expenses based on consumer price index and variations in regional income distribution, which is assigned by the Taiwan Central government. This figure differs from locality to locality. For instance, in the fiscal year 1999, the monthly minimum is set at £198 in Taipei Metropolitan City, £157 in Kaohsiung Metropolitan City, and £126 in Taipei county within Taiwan Province. "Families" whose average monthly income does not reach this amount of money will be classified as low-income families and eligible for low-income family allowance (the Republic of China Yearbook 1997). The problem here is how to define a "family". The official definition of a family depends on the population registration document. It happens quite often that a married son lives in reality with his wife and his dependent children alone separately from his parents, but still keeps his nuclear family's registered residence in his parents' place due to Confucian patrilineage and patrilocality. After becoming lone mothers, widows hardly can be eligible for social assistance because they are regarded as the family of their deceased husband's family due to the same registered residence as their family-in-law. Thus although their family income is more likely to come from their earning, according to official document, "family income", including from all their family-in-law members' earnings, certainly will surpass the officially defined "poverty line". Unless they remove their registered residence out of their family-in-law's and also prove the proletarian status of their family-in-law, lone mothers hardly can be eligible for social assistance.

reached the official definition of “family bankruptcy/failure”, and is presumed to be able to support her family. Thus she is denied entitlement to full social assistance, although her nuclear family has long lived separately from her mother-in-law’s family. In order to prove the welfare dysfunction of her mother-in-law’s family, she has to “disqualify” legally the membership of her mother-in-law’s family by moving her registered permanent residence out of patrilocality.

In the beginning, I couldn’t qualify as a low-income family, because my father-in-law has owned a 12-ping-sized³ single storey house nearby here. Due to this property owned by my father-in-law, I was not eligible as a low-income family in need of a full allowance At that time, I had the same registered permanent residence as my family-in-law. Due to the same registered permanent residence, I was told that my brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, and my father-in-law have obligations to bring up and support my daughters and myself. In order to claim a low-income family allowance, the chief of the basic unit of Taipei City administration required me to move my registered permanent residence out of my mother-in-law’s home. Then I would qualify as a low-income family in need of a full allowance. Once I was refused by the Bureau of Social affairs (BOSA) to claim as a low-income family in need of the full allowance, due to being in the same registered permanent residence as my mother-in-law’s family (Thekla).

If the family-centred care for children is presumed to come before state-sponsored childcare, there is no wonder that the KMT childcare policies are characterised by minimal national standard childcare provision and its fragmented services.

³The size of 12-pings is equivalent to 39.67 square meters or 432 square feet. Actually, 1 ping is equal to 3.30582 sq. meters or 36 sq. feet.

Table 4.1 reflects such a minimum state-sponsored childcare provision by indicating that the public sector only presented 30.5 per cent of all childcare provision in 1997. Among them, community nurseries were reduced rapidly from 1931 in 1995 down to 257 in 1997 (Statistical Yearbook 1998 of the Republic of China, Table 91). However, the total number of pre-school children aged 0 to 6 (the statutory school age in Taiwan) is estimated at 19,440,000 (Wang et al.1994; Wang 1995; Wang and Lai 1997; Fu 1995). In other words, Table 4.1 also implies clearly that 70 per cent of pre-school children are cared for in the private sector, i.e. "family" and "market" (private kindergartens), including 5 per cent of pre-school children cared for by baby-sitters (Ibid.) Not surprisingly, the remaining lone parents in the present study accessed childcare either from private kindergartens, family or baby sitters except for these four cases of low-income lone mothers, while they had pre-school children.

Table 4.1 The Situation of Childcare Provision in Taiwan in 1997

Types of childcare provision	Number of childcare institutions	Number of children	Percentage of pre-children cared for in institutions
Kindergarten	2,777	230,700	
Public Kindergarten	1,009		
Private Kindergarten	1,768		
Nursery	2,304	246,418	
Public Nursery	284		
Community Nursery ⁴	257		
Private Nursery	1763		
Total	5,081	477,118	Roughly 25%

(Table 4.1 modified by the researcher;

Source: The Republic of China Year Book 1997, chap.17 and chap.19)

The Neglect of Childcare for Children aged 0 to 4

Although the kindergarten is not a part of compulsory education, it is in fact conceptualised as a part of inevitable education in the Taiwanese Confucian context, where the significance of education is strongly emphasised. This conceptualisation is developed as a division between “care” and “ education” caused by an incoherent

⁴ Previously, the predecessor of community nurseries were set up to attempt to meet the temporary childcare needs for farmer’s families during harvest. In 1979, all of them formally were named as “Community nurseries”. In 1991, there were 2,550 community nurseries across Taiwan. The subsidies from the KMT government to them are very few, and the tuition fee they charge for childcare also very cheap. But most of them lack qualified childcare. So the quality they offered could compare with that of public nurseries. Further details, see Wang and Lai (1997), ‘Dilemma between Childcare and State in Taiwan’, *Women, State and Care*, ed., Liu, Yu-show, Taipei: Fembooks (in Chinese)

legislation and administration regarding childcare provision in Taiwan, slightly similar to the same division occurring in British childcare provision (Land and Lewis 1998a) First, the **Pre-School Education Law**, promulgated in 1981, empowers the Ministry of Education (MOE) as its authorised regulator/supervisor of all kindergartens, and defines itself clearly only for pre-school children aged 4 to 6 (or 7) before the compulsorily primary education starts. By this law, childcare in kindergartens is conceptualised as “pre-school education”. Accordingly, it can be understood why all the 40 participants in the present study have/had to access kindergartens for their children while having children aged 4 to 6. By contrast, it is obvious that the KMT childcare policies have seriously neglected childcare needs for pre-school children under the age of 4. Not surprisingly, baby-sitters and family, particularly the family of origin, are the main childcare providers for lone parents for their children under the age of 4.

Secondly, as was shown in Chapter One, the **Children’s Welfare Law**⁵ defines children as aged 0 to 12, but its main aim targets only children “in need” whose family completely dysfunctions, such as orphans, the abused, and the like, rather than attempting to offer universal childcare for all pre-school children. Although it is the

⁵ The Children’s Welfare Law was promulgated in 1973, and revised once in 1993.

highest legislation for the KMT welfare regime to implement its childcare policies, however it actually does not have much to do with childcare provision. Rather it only regulates all-level local governments to offer such a provision or to subsidise the private sector for childcare provision only (Wang and Lai 1997). By this act, the **Department of Social Affairs** under the Ministry of Interior⁶ (MOI) is the highest authorised unit in charge of all childcare affairs, but given its lower rank status with a relatively limited personnel and budget can act only as a regulator/supervisor of all nurseries for children aged 0 to 6 in Taiwan in comparison with MOE (Ku 1995a:347). Thus there is a popular belief that children cared for in nurseries are not “educated properly”, rather being “cared for only”. This division between “care” and “education” reinforces lone parents’ reluctant use of nurseries for children under the age of 4 due to their perception of nurseries being only for “care”, excluding “pre-school education”, even when affordable nurseries are available.

Lee: Who is looking after her now (Annie’s daughter aged two- and –a-half)?

Annie: My own parents because my parents-in-law have passed away. During the daytime they are taking care of my daughter.

Lee: Why doesn’t your youngest one (aged two-and-a half) attend any nursery?

Annie: It is because she is too small and my mother is reluctant to let her join a nursery at her young age.

⁶ The Ministry of Interior is equivalent to Home Office in the UK.

The third incoherent gap between legislation and administration is exactly mirrored in the failure in establishing a “Bureau of Children’s Welfare⁷” under MOI. By Article 6 of the 1993 revised Children’s Welfare Law, the KMT government should set up this special unit within its central administration structure “within two years after regulations become effective” (Chang 1999), but in fact it ignored this legal requirement until on 20th November 1999 the Children’s Bureau was established in response to 135 children whose families were victims of the 921 Earthquake⁸ and become orphans (Central News 6th October 1999; Chang 1999).

In summary, as many British scholars criticise, “*in the UK child care has, until very recently, rarely appeared on the government’s agenda...is sparse, inconsistent and patchy*” (Kember 1997:111; also see Phillips and Moss 1989; Cohen and Fraser 1991; Lovenduski and Randall 1993; Land and Lewis 1998a). Likewise, the KMT State has no national childcare policy, rather a patchy childcare provision for “children in need” whose families are presumed to be too “dysfunctioned” to afford any childcare and

⁷ The Bureau of Children Welfare is located in the central Taiwan City Taichung, which is closed to the epicentre of 921 Earthquake, in order to take care of the 135 earthquake orphans.

⁸ 921 Earthquake was struck in the early morning of 21st September 1999 and registered 7.6 on the Richter scale. Over 2,000 are dead and 8,000 injured and an estimated 100,000 were made “houseless” by the quake. At least 135 children became orphaned. For further details, see Gittings and Woollacott (1999) and Woollacott (1999a, b, c, &d)

child support. The assumption held by the KMT State is that Confucian families are still able and willing to take responsibility for their family members in terms of childcare provision, despite a rapid decline of extended families and a fast increase of nuclear families and lone parent families along with rapid modernisation and industrialisation in Taiwan. Unlike men, women in Confucian families cannot be recognised as “full family members” for their whole life. Can they really benefit from such a Confucian belief in this special social context while the State is still reluctant to develop universal childcare policies on the basis of “social rights and social justice”?

4.2 Confucian Family-Centred Care for Children

Differentiated Entitlement to Family-centred Childcare

In the UK, an enormous literature in childcare has clearly demonstrated that among full-time employed women with young children, the most common childcare arrangement continues to be care by relatives (e.g., Daniel 1980; Land 1981; Martin and Roberts 1984; Branner and Moss 1991). Furthermore, many Western scholars

have precisely pointed out *“Relatives, and especially grandmothers, are particularly important for the children of working lone mothers and mothers working full-time”* (quoted in Moss 1976:35,1982:128-129; also see Land 1981:21; Hofferth and Phillips 1987:561-565; Presser 1989:581-591). One survey on changes of family structure in Communist urban China clearly confirmed that *“She (mother-in-law) is still respected because of tradition, and her contributions to child care and household chores are considered indispensable.”* (Tsui 1989:744-745). Unequal division of family relationships between maternal and paternal kinships in the West has not been a major issue because of the horizontal dynamic between the sexes in nuclear families. Unlike the equal closeness to a mother’s maternal family and a father’s paternal family, there is an unequal differentiation between these two families in Confucian families and society (see Appendix 4.1). It may be true in the West that “grandmothers” are a readily available pool of carers for young children for employed lone mothers. Likewise in Taiwan, it may be also true that grandmothers of a mother’s maternal family play a particularly important role in childcare for working lone mothers, but “grandmothers” from a father’s patrilineal family may be more like a “control” or sometimes a “catastrophe” instead of childcare particularly for widowed lone mothers in Confucian families, particularly full of a long-standing history of conflicts between

the daughter-in-law and the mother-in-law (Yang 1959:107; Leslie 1973:104; Lee 1995).

As mentioned in Chapter Two, women are differentiated from the Confucian family centrality built on father-son kinship and only recognised as “outsiders” of any family at any time during their lifetime (Stacey 1984:38). This differentiation also extends to not only their own children but also their natal family and kinship. Their children are separated from Confucian patrilineal families on the basis of father-son kinship by “granting” them the title of “children of outsiders”, who are referred to either as “grandchildren of outsiders” (Wai-sun 外孫) or “cousins of outsiders” in the term of “Piao”(表)(Piao Hsiung-ti [表兄弟] or Piao Tzu-mei [表姊妹])⁹. Furthermore, their maternal families are alienated as “the family of outsiders”, including naming their own parents as “parents of outsiders” or “grandparents of outsiders” (see Appendix 4.1). In contrast to this more distanced relationship of women’s maternal families,

⁹ “Piao”(表) means “outside” or “external”; the father’s sister’s, mother’s sister’s, and mother’s brother’s descendants are all addressed with the same term “Piao” (表). Furthermore, the children of father’s sister are called as “Ku-piao”(姑表), of mother’s sister, as “Yi-piao” (姨表), and of mother’s brother as “Chiu-piao”(舅表), are all non-patrilineal-clan relatives and all the three first-degree “Piao” relationships of the Confucian kinship system, although they are consanguineal relatives of distinct affiliation. Further details, see Feng, Han-Yi(1948), *The Chinese Kinship System*, Cambridge, Mass.: Yale University Press, and Chao, Paul(1983), *Chinese Kinship*, London: Kegan Paul International.

children of men are integrated as “children of insiders¹⁰”, who are referred to either “grandchildren of insiders” (Nei-sun 內孫) or “cousins of insiders” in the term of “T’ang”(堂) (T’ang Hsiung-ti [堂兄弟] or T’ang Tzu-mei [堂姊妹]) (see Appendix 4.1). The gendered differentiation is a decisive variable in the accessibility and the various extent of family-centred childcare and child support. With this differentiation, we may ask whether lone mothers have less accessibility of childcare either from their maternal family or from their mother-in-law’s family than lone fathers. In other words, are children of outsiders less likely to be cared for or to be supported within the family in comparison with children of insiders? Subsequently, the following sections attempt to analyse the accessibility and the extent of childcare provision within the family based on their differential situations within the Confucian family.

Comprehensive Childcare for Children of Insiders within the Patrilineal Family

As mentioned in Chapter One, KMT social welfare policies have always developed on the assumption of the family as the centre of welfare provision. As Leira

¹⁰ For example, my son is a “grandson of outsider” to my maternal family and parents, but is a “grandson of insider” to my mother-in-law’ family because of his status of being a son of “a man”, i.e. my husband. In the past all children are legally and customarily regarded as children of fathers by taking the surname of their fathers. This patrilineal belief about children was embedded in the Family Law, granting father’s first priority of the custody of children in the case of divorce and is challenged by partial reform of the Family Law by considering the best interests of children in dealing with the disputed custody of children.

(1990:134) argues, the “family” policies affect women and men differently. Particularly, the traditional three-generational family is most preferred by the KMT welfare regimes by granting it the first priority of access to public housing, discussed later in Chapter Five. This assumption completely ignores that the family is in fact built on the patrilineality, patriarchy and patrilocality and maintained by the Generation-Age-Sex power hierarchy and its impact results in inequality in familial welfare accessibility and familial resource redistribution among generations, ages and genders. According to this, the familial welfare function may work properly and perfectly for those older and more senior men, but may not work for those younger and less senior women, while married women are normally classified into a junior generation, the same one as their children in the Confucian family (Freedman 1979:245).

As Chao (1983) clearly demonstrates, “*Men through their life and women until their marriage belong to their fathers’ clan.*” (p.25). On the centrality of father-son kinship sons’ sons are recognised by custom as “children of insiders” (Nei-sun 內孫) in contrast to daughters’ sons as “children of outsiders” (Wai-sun 外孫). In the traditional three-generation family, it was conceptualised in the past that childcare for sons’ children is the responsibility of grandparents, particularly grandmothers, who

are too old to work, and whilst the mothers are working (Yang 1959:150). Despite the rise of nuclear families and neolocality, childcare for children of insiders from grandparents remains strong as the KMT welfare regime has persistently preferred it. This conceptualisation is still confirmed in the present study. Four of the ten lone fathers are still offered comprehensive childcare by their living parents; the remaining six had their parents passed away (5) or seriously ill (1). Among four, two are the eldest sons in their patrilineal families. And their eldest sons are the eldest grandson of the eldest insider, buttressed by primogeniture, and are granted fully comprehensive childcare and child support from their patrilineal family, like Dust's only and eldest son.

To be honest, at that time, I had an idea of escaping from my family responsibility. Then I thought that if my parents and my second elder sister could take good care of my son, why shouldn't I pass down such a burden to them and let them carry it for me? That is what was going on... My son is the only grandson they have. Particularly, my mother would like to keep him with her.... I had never paid anything for my son, including his tuition fees even though he began to study in a university. My mother and my second elder sister always pay everything for him, including living expenses. Currently both of them still keep paying everything for him completely.... Even now, all I have to do for my son is to contribute to cover his National Health Insurance premium (Dust).

Furthermore, among these six lone fathers whose parents were not available to provide childcare for their children, two were provided by their elder siblings with

after-school childcare or holiday childcare on the basis of “fraternal love” when they were in need. Meanwhile, another two are offered childcare by their family-in-law, particularly the mothers of their deceased wives. The higher accessibility of childcare from their family-in-law without confrontation involving in preferential children’s custody and property has to be explained in terms of the differentiated primary responsibilities between the sexes. Child-caring and child rearing are conceptualised as married women’s primary duties in Taiwan and in the West, closely linked with the ideology of motherhood (Chodorow and Contratto 1982; Leira 1987; Dalley 1988; Baines et al.1991; Jensen 1989; Drew 1998). But caring by fathers for young children may be seen as exceptional, as supplementing the caring of mothers (Oakley 1974:155; Leira 1987:177; Thompson and Walker 1989:856; Baines et al.1991:22-23). This gendered expectation of caring makes lone fathers as rice-winners more likely to receive more care services from their family-in-law when they lose the care of mothers for young children. From this gendered expectation of caring, Peak as a rice-winner is provided with all the caring services, including childcare, by his family-in-law, in particular his mother-in-law without any confrontations or compromises involving children in custody or property.

My mother-in-law takes care of my two children (aged 14 and 12) for me. So I have to pay her for that.....It is because my mother-in-law prepares three

meals for my children everyday and also does all the housework for me, such as doing all the laundry. That is why I pay her to cover these costs..... Actually, I feel very grateful for all the support offered by my family-in-law, so that there is no need for me to worry about all the housework and childcare at home etc. For example, they are taking good care of my sons, particularly my mother-in-law. So I do feel very thankful for all the help from them (Peak).

Janet Finch, in her penetrating analysis of the concept of “family responsibility” as applied to people who are either older or disabled, describes the commitment to supporting the family as “*a curious mixture of the benign and the sinister*” (Finch 1989:115). If this concept is applied to lone fathers in the Confucian family, there is no doubt that the family is eventually benign in term of childcare provision, child support and caring work. It is because the status of family insider grants lone fathers more accessibility to childcare and child support from their living parents or their siblings. Even when their patrilineal family is not available any longer, they are more likely to receive caring substitutes from their family-in-law, particularly their mother-in-law because of the engendered care responsibilities between the sexes.

Voluntary Childcare for Children of Outsiders from the Natal Family

As shown above, women until marriage belong to their father’s patrilineal families, who never consider them as permanent family members based on the assumption that

ideally daughters will sooner or later inevitably leave their maternal households to marry and bear children for another patrilineal family. Along with the rise of out-of-wedlock childbirth, unmarried motherhood eventually reverses this ideal order of daughters by bearing children before marriage. The person who bears the responsibility for adult daughters' "misbehaviour" is the mother, who is more intimate with her daughters than the father (Chao 1983:53). This maternal responsibility could explain not only the reason why three mothers banned their daughters from participating in the current research, mentioned once in Chapter Three, but also the outraged reaction of Karen's mother against her never-married single pregnancy.

How about the reaction of my mother to my unmarried pregnancy? During the first half period of my pregnancy, she was so angry with me that she didn't want to contact me any more (Tears in her eyes). Throughout the whole period of my pregnancy, she did not contact me any more. Even worse is no more phone calls from my Mum (Karen).

But the intimate relationship between mothers and daughters may grant daughters a variety of supports from their family of origin via their mothers. One of these supports is childcare provision. Eleven out of thirty lone mothers have received or currently receive childcare from their natal families. Meanwhile, nine of them are provided with childcare by their own mothers and only two exceptional cases received care either

from their co-living elder sister or their father living nearby while their mothers are not available, for example, because of death.

But this care provision from maternal mothers cannot be guaranteed despite the willingness and availability of maternal grandmothers. Maternal fathers may exercise their power over mothers to stop them making such an offer. The power inequality between fathers and mothers is consolidated by gendered power within marriage, which has carefully been examined in an enormous Western literature (e.g., Gillespie 1971; Safilios Rothschild 1976; Kompter 1989; Meyer 1991; O'Conner 1991; Vogler 1998; Arber 1999). And this power is also buttressed by the generation-age hierarchy of the Confucian family. This made childcare by maternal grandmothers impossible for two female participants in the current study. Regina's patriarchal father completely forbade, not only her mother to contact her, but also did not allow her to return to her maternal family to receive any form of support because of being a married-out family member who should not return to her natal family, like "water spilled on the ground", particularly after she got divorced and became a lone mother.

If he (the father) knew my divorce, then I wouldn't be allowed to go back to my natal family any more.....He would be afraid that I would depend on my natal family forever. Or he would be worried that I probably would move back and live with him in my natal family forever. For the sake of my father, I seldom go

back and visit my natal family..... Anyway, he is extremely intolerant to me. Therefore, it becomes very difficult for me to go back to my natal family.I feel my mother has always tried hard to avoid confrontations against my father (while Regina's mother was contacting her as much as possible).. For example, if my mother would like to ring us (children), she has to do it secretly whilst my father is not at home... In order to avoid any conflicts between my mother and my father, we dare not ring her often. Meanwhile, my mother also makes all the effort she can to avoid contacting us.... He is such a dominant person.. he always likes to give orders (Regina)

Furthermore, childcare by the natal grandmother becomes very fragile without the guarantee of father-son kinship. This fragility is reflected in Margaret's experience of childcare from her natal parents, while a conflict against the interest of an outsider's child led to her moving out:

Yes, they did (take care of her son while Margaret lived with her own parents). But in fact, my son went to kindergarten everyday. Then in the evening, I looked after him by myself.....Furthermore, my father was over 60 years old, and preferred to live in a quiet domestic environment. So he always made certain demands of my son, and often required him to be silent and quiet, and not to move here and there. Under such conditions, if we would like to get along with each other, then either my son or my father had to suppress himself respectively. So it is better for me to move out.... So I decided to move out (of her natal family)(Margaret)

Childcare for children of outsiders is more likely to rely on the "voluntary goodwill" of the natal family, particularly the maternal father, like Purple-clouds' father living nearby, offering everyday after-school childcare for children of outsiders. Thus the

nature of childcare provided by natal families is in fact very unreliable and fragile unlike the compulsory and comprehensive nature of childcare and child support for children of insiders, regarded as indispensable family obligation backed up by father-son kinship, especially benefiting lone fathers as the eldest son in their patrilineal families.

Among lone mothers, only widows have children of insiders. An interesting but contradictory thing is that unfortunately, they are treated as a “stranger within” completely in contrast to their children as “insiders within the Confucian family”. Will they benefit from better childcare from their mother-in-law’s families, particularly mothers-in-law? The following section attempts to answer this question.

Conditional Childcare Provision by Mother-in-Law’s Families

Despite the significance of childcare by mothers-in-law, however, among 12 widowed lone mothers participating in the present study, only three widowed lone mothers were provided with childcare by their mother-in-law’s families. In the context of lack of parental leave for sick children and the family obligation for children of insiders, one of them was offered childcare from her father-in-law in case one of her children

was hospitalised. Another was Thekla who was offered after-school childcare and housing support by her three younger siblings-in-law, living with her family in the same flat. The explanation for these offers is their worries about difficulties in bringing up and taking care of the children of insiders (their eldest brother).

Yes, they do help me a lot, in particular in childcare. Compared with other lone mothers, I feel luckier. After my husband passed away, my sister-in-law was afraid that I would remarry soon and leave two children to my mother-in-law's family. You know, my mother-in-law died 5 years earlier than my husband. And my father-in-law died also in the following year after my husband's death. Then my younger sister-in-law got anxious about my remarriage. If I decided to marry again and leave two children to them, what could they do about it?
(Thekla)

In the case of remarriage, it is assumed that widows have to leave their children to their mothers-in-law's families, because the children they gave birth to are not viewed as "their children", but children of their deceased husband and permanent members of their mothers-in-law's families, unlike themselves as "outsiders/strangers within" only (Wolf 1972:16; Cohen 1976:186; Wong 1981:66-67; Sheridan and Salaff 1984:6). By custom, certainly widows should "leave children of insiders" to their mothers-in-law's families and disclaim their inheritance right to their "mother-in-law's family properties", which are normally denied to married women. Accordingly, widowhood is the first vital variable in the accessibility of childcare or other supports from mother-in-law's families. Not surprisingly, after the funerals of

the deceased husbands, another two of 12 widows interviewed were asked by their senior family members-in-law the common question: “What are you planning to do next?” in order to ascertain whether or not and how much the mothers-in-law’s families could be involved in childcare provision or child support.

Unsurprisingly, all his family members, including his eldest sister and brothers, asked me the same question: “What am I going to do from now on?” I replied them: “I don’t have any idea about my future, but I prefer to stay in Taipei.”..... Simultaneously, they all implied to me clearly together that if I chose to return to my natal family to do other plans, such as re-marrying, then they could bring up and look after my child in the USA (Lousia).

One day I went to my mother-in-law’s home and my eldest sister-in-law was seemingly requested by my father-in-law to ask me: “From now on, do I have any plans to do next?”.... I replied: “I do not have any plans at all.” Then she continuously carried on saying: “Her father said: ‘If you (I) do not intend to remarry, he (her father-in-law) will arrange something for you.’” She implied clearly that if I intended to remarry, it would not bother them at all. Then I could just leave their family to remarry (without my children). They could take care of my children. But if I did not intend to remarry, their father and their family members would make some arrangements for my children and myself. Do you understand what she meant? (Purple-clouds)

First, for widowed lone mothers, “giving up” rights of remarriage and of custody of their children is vital in their entitlement to childcare and any familial support from their mother-in-law’s families, despite all the rights, guaranteed by the Civil Code since 1931. Secondly, their individual inheritance rights to the property of their deceased husband, guaranteed by Book V of the Civil Code since 1931 (Lin et al.

1998), are likely to be compromised in some way. Otherwise, it is hard to access a comprehensive childcare for their children without any compromises or conditions. Only one of 12 widowed lone mothers is provided with comprehensive childcare due to having a son as the eldest grandson of an insider, who is supposed to transmit the patrilineal line, inherit the father's estate and deserve the care of grandparents (Freedman 1970; Wolf 1972; Baker 1979:23; Cohen 1976:213-214; Marsh 1996:122). Historically, widows may return to their natal family and look for remarriage and lose property rights as "strangers/outside within". Particularly childless widows do not have any children of insiders on whose behalf to claim any familial support or property rights from their mother-in-laws' families (Barclay 1954; Wolf 1972:35; Rosaldo and Lamphere 1974; Wolf and Wite 1975; Kung 1983:8; Gallin 1986:33). Show-mei is lucky to have a pre-school son as the eldest grandson of an insider, but still has had to compromise some of her rights, granted by law¹¹: first, to carefully maintain her widowhood; secondly not intending to "occupy" all the properties; thirdly, instead registering the properties into the joint ownership of herself and her son; and fourthly "leaving" the ownership certificate with her mother-in-law in order to avoid any serious conflicts with her mother-in-law who has offered comprehensive childcare to her son since she became a lone mother.

¹¹ This is Article 1138 of the Civil Code

Sometimes, when I was chatting with my widow friends, I really felt that I am quite lucky to have nice and friendly parents-in-law. For example, after my husband passed away, his flat successfully passed down to register the joint ownership of my son and myself without any confrontations with my parents-in-law. A lot of my widowed friends have experienced awful confrontations with their parents-in-law when they claimed to inherit their deceased husbands' housing. Once my mother-in-law said to me: "Take it (the ownership certificate) and register it in your name!" You know, as a human being, we are always like that. When someone trusts you, you will pay the same trust back to her as well. Based on reciprocal trust, I replied to her: "Well, how about it? Rather I would like to register it in the joint ownership of my son and myself." This joint ownership certainly would make her feel completely secure without any anxiety at all. I do not want my mother-in-law to regard me as an overbearing and high-handed daughter-in-law, like a "dictator" occupying all the inheritance of my deceased husband. So I even left the ownership certificate (of the flat) with my mother-in-law. From my point of view, it is much better to make her, an elderly lady, secure and safe (Show-mei).

For widowed lone mothers, all childcare provision and support is offered with certain conditions, which encourage married women to maintain widowhood by "controlling" their rights of remarriage and of the custody of their children and by "limiting" their inheritance rights, all guaranteed by the 1931 Civil Code. The gap between customary law and modern law regarding remarriage, children's custody and inheritance properties only occurs to lone mothers, never to lone fathers, and certainly affects women and men differently. Childcare for children of insiders is offered to lone fathers without compromising their custody, property and remarriage rights. Sometimes, this provision is not only unconditional but also with further support,

such as child support from the patrilineal family, and further services, such as housekeeping from the mother-in-law. In the case of lone fathers, customary law and the Civil Code not only coincide perfectly with each other but also doubly consolidate their full custody, property and remarriage rights. In comparison with these childcare, child support, and housework services for lone fathers, childcare for outsiders vitally depends on the goodwill of the natal family but is only offered with certain conditions by limiting widows' custody rights of their children, and their inheritance and remarriage rights. As Show-mei points out, she is in fact a "lucky" one among widows, being provided childcare by her mother-in-law without confrontations involved in children's custody and inherited properties with her mother-in-law's family. Two widowed lone mothers in my fieldwork had experienced serious and explicit confrontations involving their children and their inheritance and entitlement rights. Following such conflicts, they had to change their residence, even housing in order to avoid these unbearable disturbances from their mother-in-laws' families, particularly mothers-in-law.

Thus the following section is going to explore those lone mothers experiencing conflicts involving children and inheritance against themselves because they insisted on their rights guaranteed by law.

No More Childcare, but Confrontations with Mothers-in-Law's Families

Married women are viewed as outsiders within mother-in-law's families, even after becoming lone mothers. Viona describes the way her mother-in-law alienates her from her mother-in-law's family and only recognizes her daughter as a child of an insider.

To be honest, my mother-in-law would pay for milk, and nappies for my daughter, because she regards my daughter as her granddaughter. If I catch a cold or there is something I need, she wouldn't pay the medicine cost or other expenses for me¹².....The way they treat me makes me feel that only my daughter is viewed as a member of the Yang family but not me. They do not regard me as a member of their family at all (Viona).

This customary alienation between outsiders and the child of insiders had brought two widowed participants further catastrophes after becoming lone mothers. Neither Huei-lin's custody of her children nor her inheritance rights are recognised by her mother-in-law in accordance with her status as an outsider. Despite a widow's inheritance rights being guaranteed by the 1931 Civil Code, the first confrontation

¹² During the time when her husband died, Viona was a housewife and did not have any earning income to support her own family. After the funeral, she was requested to move back and to live with her parents-in-law. The housing she used to live with her husband belonged to her mother-in-law. So she did as her mother-in-law's family asked.

faced by Huei-lin was that her mother-in-law completely denied her inheritance rights and fought against her.

Later on, my parents-in-law were fighting against me over inheriting the property of my deceased husband. .. She (her mother-in-law) thought that I was so young that I would remarry in the future (Huei-lin).

In order to avoid such violent conflicts, she completely gave up her rights by transferring all her deceased husband's properties into the joint ownership of her two young children. Following this, the second quarrel against her was over the custody of her children. Apparently, all these confrontations, denying the mother's rights to children and her property rights are reinforced by the traditional mother-in-law's authority over her daughter-in-law, buttressed by Generation-Age-Gender power hierarchy in the Confucian family on the basis of "filial piety and veneration of age" (Wolf 1972; Cohen 1976; Gallin 1966; Gallin1986; Chen 1994; Hu 1995). As Gallin (1986) argue, *"In 1979, the balance of power between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law had shifted.....daughters-in-law had achieved a new bargaining position with which to resist the traditional authority of their mothers-in-law"* by participating in the labour market and earning their own living (p.43). For lone mothers, has this imbalance of power really shifted? Huei-lin almost got slapped by

her mother-in-law in her baby-sitter's home by resisting giving up the custody of her children.

So I gave up the inheritance rights and transferred my husbands' two flats into the names of my two young children. Afterwards they should feel more secure, right?... I did go to a local court to sign away my inheritance rights and transferred my husband's properties into my two children's names..... But they still wouldn't stop quarrelling with me.. She shouted at me: whatsoever, I should give it up (the custody of her children)...because if I abandon the custody of my children, it would be given to them. Then they could obtain the right to sell my husband's flats. The purpose of this confrontation was an attempt to occupy my husband's property. She thought the property my deceased husband had owned truly belongs to them, absolutely not to me. She wouldn't give them to me...They have regarded me as an outsider....One day she went to my baby-sitter's home to quarrel with me about the custody of the children.....(Raising up her hand above my forehead), she almost intended to give me a slap on my face, but people surrounding us could see what she was doing to me (Huei-lin).

A rich Western literature consistently confirms that widows among lone mothers are better off, entitled to "widow's benefits" due to being "housewives of male-breadwinners" (e.g., Land and Ward 1986). It is probably true in Western societies mainly consisting of a nuclear family on the basis of a horizontal dynamic between the sexes. Thus Western feminists only criticise the power inequalities between sexes within nuclear families, by ignoring this power imbalance between two generations and various ages (Stacy and Price 1980, 1981). As demonstrated in Chapter Two, widows of government employees are certainly entitled to a better lump

sum “widow’s benefits” compared with widows of working men, like Viona. Unfortunately, her entitlement to the compensation of the loss of her husband is denied completely by her mother-in-law. Worse is that “coercion” is used to subjugate her to “return widow’s benefits” and further “a stigma as a jinx” is labelled by blaming her for bringing an evil fate to “kill her husband somehow”.

My mother-in-law refused to do it¹³, and argued that I should return half of it to them. One day a quarrel happened. My sister-in-law scolded me: “I am such a shameless person, because I took their money away from my parents-in-law...Even though my eldest sister-in-law and my mother-in-law stayed in, I didn’t feel secure to leave my daughter with them at home alone. On the contrary, I asked my colleague to pick up my daughter from my in-law’s home to her church. Then my mother-in-law got angry at what I had arranged for my daughter, by enquiring: “Why shall I take my daughter away as well when I need to go to hospital?” Then the conflict between us emerged right away... On the way out I met my eldest sister-in-law and we had another serious quarrel there. Then she took my daughter away from me by force, saying: “This is the child of the Yang family, not yours.”....My mother-in-law went to them (Viona’s friends) to complain how bad, awful and undutiful I was to her....Of course, hearing what I said to her, she became more fierce with me. Then she raised up her tone and enquired of me: “My son is dead; how can you return him back to me? Can you?” Straightaway, I also answered her back: “I didn’t kill your son.” Unexpectedly, she slapped me on my face twice (Viona).

In addition to these serious and explicit confrontations, another two lone mothers experienced potential and implicit tensions involving the same issues. Even though these invisible and implicit tensions have not yet been exposed, they have really

¹³ This is the money as the compensation for the loss of her husband from the Governmental Employee Insurance Scheme, because her deceased husband was working in a public bank.

affected childcare arrangements for Deborah and Purple-Clouds. Not surprisingly, in order to avoid conflicts with mothers-in-law's families, childcare from maternal families is usually preferred by lone mothers, if it is possible even on the basis of the "voluntary goodwill" of their natal families. Thus it seems very reasonable that a higher proportion of lone mothers preferred childcare from the maternal family rather than from the mother-in-law's family.

Mothers-in-law's authority over daughters-in-law denying custody of children and marital properties to married women not only occurs to widows but can also be one of the main causes of divorce. Furthermore, for some lone mothers, these confrontations quite often do end when marriage ends in divorce. She-fong is an example, suffering "a typical domestic violence against daughter-in-law" caused by her mother-in-law during marriage. Since becoming a divorced mother, the same confrontations are still part of her everyday life despite her 15 year-old son's own will and decision in moving out of her ex-mother-in-law's family and living with her in a rented flat.

Another big problem is about my son. Since my son decided to move out and to live with me, all the family and relatives of my ex-husband became extremely intolerant about the decision my son made. Once my ex-mother-in-law went to his school, visited him there and tried to convince him, by crying loudly: "You

are the eldest grandson of the Chuang family. You should not move out and live with your mother, rather you should move back and live with your father there.”
(She-fong)

No More Childcare, but only Sexual Harassment from Mothers-in-law's Families

In addition to these violent confrontations, lone mothers are also more vulnerable to become objects of sexual harassments from their mother-in-law's families, especially after becoming lone parents. Two female participants in my fieldwork¹⁴ had such unpleasant experiences from their mother-in-law's families. Pin-cyang's mother-in-law was firstly unwilling to offer childcare for her children. Secondly, she implemented her authority over a daughter-in-law to “sacrifice” Pin-cyang's family welfare in order to “offer” a place for an uncle of Pin-cyang's husband to stay overnight. This arrangement trapped Pin-cyang into a risk of being sexually harassed at her home.

A Taiwanese folk festival was going on. Thus my mother-in-law prepared a banquet for her relatives. After eating and drinking, one of my husband's uncles came to my flat and rang my door-bell. I thought he is one of my husband's uncles. So I let him in... Furthermore, he began to lean against me and cling to me so closely with his body. Meantime, he gave NT\$1,000 to my eldest daughter and asked her: “Hwei-lin, take the money, bring your younger sister and brother

¹⁴ One of the female interviewees participating in the pilot fieldwork at the end of 1996 also expressed the same vulnerability to sexual harassment from her father-in-law after becoming a lone mother.

out and buy some sweets for them.” Immediately, I forbid my daughter: “Don’t take any money. Do not go out!” While I was approaching the telephone to ring my mother-in-law, he was leaning his whole body more closely to me. I said to him: “Don’t come close to me!”.. From then on, every time when that uncle came to ring my door, I asked all my children never to open door to him. Every time when I saw him somewhere, I wouldn’t greet him at all. Or when he rang me, I wouldn’t talk to him, either. More ironically, my mother-in-law said: “Eventually, he didn’t do anything against you. He just would like to take a rest in your room only.” Then I replied to her: “Who can guarantee that he wouldn’t do anything bad against me during the night. When I tried to ring you, his body was completely leaning against me already. If he raped me or sexually harassed me, what could I do about it?” (Pin-cyang)

This experience of sexual harassment from a mother-in-law’s family can hardly be found in Western feminist literature, which only concerns domestic violence against women from their intimate partners (Dobash and Dobash 1979; Binney 1981; Pahl 1985; Stanko 1985; Smith 1989; Hague and Malos 1993; Hague et al.1995; Kirkwood 1993; Grace 1995; Buzawa and Buzawa 1996) or sexual harassment at the workplace (MacKinnon 1982, 1987; Leeds 1983; Stanko 1988; Walby 1990; Stockdale 1996). In acquaintance rape, Warshaw (1994) points out, “*the rapist and victim may know each other casually... or they have a closer relationship.*” (p.12). Similar to this, lone mothers and their harassers are relatives based on their mother-in-law’s families. In the meantime, this sexual harassment often takes place “behind closed doors”; like domestic violence, the extent of it is also unknown to anyone outside the family (Dobash and Dobash 1979; Hanmer and Stanko 1985; Worrall and Peach 1986; Smith

1989; Morely and Mullender 1994). Furthermore, as Dobash and Dobash (1979) argue, *“Patriarchal domination through force is still supported by a moral order which reinforces the marital hierarchy and makes it very difficult for a woman to struggle against this, and other forms of domination and control, because her struggle is construed as wrong, immoral, and a violation of the respect and loyalty a wife is supposed to give to her husband”* (p.ix). Patriarchal domination, criticised and examined by Western feminists, only focuses on the imbalance of power between husbands/men and wives/women within the nuclear family in the West. But rather similar to this, the sexual harassment from relatives-in-law is supported by Confucian patriarchy backed up by Generation-Age-Gender hierarchy and reinforced by its traditional moral orders, such as filial piety, fraternal love, loyalty to mothers-in-law’s families and veneration of age and generation, which make it extremely difficult for lone mothers to report it to anyone outside their families. Instead they are easily labelled as “bad women”. The way Huei-lin described the sexual harassment from her husband’s brother sounds more cautious, more careful and very confidential indeed:

I am not certain whether I should tell you or not?... OK. I tell you what happened to me...because I have kept this secret in my mind for a long time. At 3:00 am mid-night of one day, he (the brother of her deceased husband) came to my home saying that he would show his respect and burn some incense to his

deceased brother in front of my husband's tablet¹⁵ in the living room of my flat. Of course, I opened the door and let him in as I used to do. This is taken for granted for me naturally. After he entered, he told me that he intended to do that kind of thing¹⁶....I did not expect that after the death of my husband he wanted to marry me. Often at mid-night... he rang me to harass me quite often.... Because a lot of lone mothers have experienced sexual harassment from their relatives-in-law (Huei-lin)

Within a social context, can lone mothers really benefit from childcare provision by "the family"? This question remains strongly doubtful. In order to avoid such unending sexual harassment and confrontations with her mother-in-law, she, as a "victim of domestic conflicts and sexual harassment in the home", changed her residence to another new place, completely unknown to her family-in-law.

In summary, in Western societies, "the family" is still strongly conceptualised as a "Haven in a heartless world", which should be a place of peace, security and harmony, and a source of support (Lasch 1977; Bhavnani and Coulson 1986). *"The family, in other words, is not seen as a group of individuals possibly in conflict but as some sort of natural and indivisible unity"* (Wilson 1982:47). In this sense, it is certainly true for lone fathers in Taiwan, benefiting from childcare, child support, child rearing and housework without confrontations, but it is not true for lone mothers.

¹⁵ Tablet, see Footnote 9 of Chapter Two.

¹⁶ It implies clearly to have a sexual relationship. But the brother of her deceased husband is a married man having a wife already.

Furthermore, if the concept used in Janet Finch's "family responsibility" is applied again to lone mothers, the family is not always a "benign", but is sometimes "sinister" for certain lone mothers in Taiwan. In the meantime, Western white feminists argue that the family can be viewed as a core site of women's oppression (Barret and McIntosh 1982). It is also true for certain lone mothers in Taiwan, who have experienced confrontations and sexual harassments from mothers-in-law's families instead of childcare and familial support.

4.3 Another Care Responsibility

In addition to childcare responsibility, lone mothers in Taiwan have faced another duty, i.e. care for their parents or parents-in-law. A significant amount of Western feminist criticism concerning care has strongly argued that community care in effect means family care, which in turn means care by female family members as unpaid carers (Finch and Groves 1980; Groves and Finch 1983; Finch 1984b, 1990; Hooyman 1990). Those carers of the elderly particularly are more often daughters rather than sons due to the gendered conceptualisation of care (Lewis and Meredith 1988; Spitze and Logan 1990). But Western feminists hardly uncover family care

for the elderly carried by lone mothers who are daughters or daughters-in-law. In the meantime, an enormous Western literature regarding lone parents concerns the childcare responsibility of lone mothers, but hardly mentions the double care responsibilities for young children and the elderly relatives carried by lone mothers in Taiwan.

As shown in Chapter Two, lone mothers in Taiwan are not recognised as dependants of rice-winners, unlike their counterparts as housewives of breadwinners in the Mother-Carer-Citizen Welfare Model in Holland and Britain, entitled to the state income support, nor as equal parents and bread/rice-winners as solo mothers in the Parent-Worker-Citizen Welfare model in Scandinavian countries, supported by their relatively equal earnings and state benefits on the basis of “citizenship”. Rather they are recognised by the KMT state as “family members” who should be supported by their families. Unfortunately “their families” seldom view them from birth to death as “permanent and full family members”. Accordingly, paid work is inevitably the main income for lone mothers in Taiwan. Armstrong and Armstrong (1984) argue that the combination of paid work and unpaid childcare has trapped working mothers into “the double ghetto”. Hitherto, the “unresolved dilemmas” between paid work and unpaid childcare remain unsolvable in the Mother-Carer-Citizen Welfare model (Kauppinen

and Gordon 1997). The same problem is also faced by lone mothers in Taiwan with more hardships and difficulties not experienced by other women in Taiwan or by other lone mothers in the West. In addition to these unresolved dilemmas, another care responsibility has fallen upon two lone mothers in my fieldwork.

It seems that all the “rights” in the Confucian patriarchal family are always denied to women in contrast to all the “duties/responsibilities” granted to them in turn. A daughter’s filial piety of care for her maternal parents is not severed as she is married out as “water spilled on the ground”. However, since becoming a lone mother, Pin-cyang is drawn out by the intimate relationship between mother and daughter, mentioned above, and motivated by her identifying with being a “filial and dutiful daughter”. As several Western feminists demonstrate clearly, women’s willingness to care is a decision to opt for a labour of love rather than money (Gilligan 1982; Graham 1983b; Lewis and Meredith 1988). For filial daughters, their willingness to care for their maternal parents is “a labour of love” supported by their sense of “filial piety”.

Taking care of my children is too much for me already. Furthermore, I have to go back to my natal family and take care of my own mother... Once my mother had a traffic accident so that she could not move her lower body at all. Twice or three times in a week, I have to bath her and change her clothes. It just takes a couple

of hours a day. I can't stay there all day long, because I have to return for my work (Pin-cyang).

But for daughters-in-law, their care for their parents-in-law is different from daughters' care for their own parents, but rather is "a labour of 'obligation'", even sometimes against their willingness. Failure to care for parents-in-law also commonly induces guilt for "compulsory altruism for some"; it was whom a filial daughter-in-law should care for in order to implement filial piety of sons on behalf of her deceased husband (Land and Rose 1985). Care for parents-in-law becomes the biggest difficulty faced by Ne-Ing, a lone mother and a daughter-in-law, if she becomes the only carer for her elderly parents-in-law. Thus she strongly objects that care responsibility of her parents-in-law is not equally shared between her younger brothers-in-law and herself.

Now they (her parents-in-law) return to live with me. I do think they should take a rotation¹⁷ to live in each place for a while. I do not object to this idea (that they

¹⁷ This rotation is called "Ch'ih-huo-tou" (eating allowance 吃伙頭) in Taiwan. And actually it is a custom for sons equally to care and support their aged parents. Ne-Ing's husband is the eldest son in her mother-in-law's family and has another two young married brothers. Not surprisingly, her parents-in-law always lived with them until her husband passed away, as normal cases whereas the aged parents usually stay with their eldest son, because of primogeniture. Following his death, Ne-Ing could not afford to care and support her parents-in-law alone. Thus she insisted on "Ch'ih-huo-tou" (eating allowance 吃伙頭) to be implemented among her two younger brothers-in-law's families and herself. From her opinion, her parents-in-law should take a rotation to stay with each family of their three sons' families for a certain time. For details of the custom of "Ch'ih-huo-tou" (eating

co-reside with me forever). But if they live with me forever, I do not think this is a good idea. They (her two younger brothers-in-law) should not take for granted that I should take care of their parents forever. I disagree that all the care responsibility for my parents-in-law only falls upon myself alone. Every one should share of this care obligation... They are both over 70-years-old. ..If something happens to them, such as illness, whom can I ask for help?.. Financially, I am certainly willing to support them (Ne-Ing).

As Confucius emphasised once clearly, “*There are three major offenses against filial piety; firstly, do not support parents when they are alive, secondly do not give them a decent burial upon their death, and do not produce an heir, the last of which is the gravest offense.*”¹⁸ Rhetorically and traditionally, care and support for elderly parents are viewed as sons’ filial duties. Not surprisingly, as Ku (1998) persistently criticises, the KMT State was reluctant to develop a national pension insurance scheme. Under pressure from DPP and NGOs for the elderly, it did announce the commitment to implement the National Pension Insurance by 2000. (China Times, 5 November 1997). This pension scheme was never realised until the KMT state lost power in March, 2000 and became “the opposition party” which in turn commits itself to the implementation of this scheme in 2001 (Central News 6th October, 1999 & 29th June, 2000; Lin 2000). Over five decades, it always presumed that care for the elderly is a “family responsibility”, which means care for the elderly is viewed as each son’s

allowance 吃伙頭), see Chen, Chi-lu (1970), ‘The Taiwanese Family’, *The Journal of The China Society*, Vol.7, pp.64-79

¹⁸ See the 1st and 2nd Chapter of the Confucian Analects, the Lun-Yü,(論語).

filial duty and equal responsibility. In effect, care for ill maternal or paternal parents falls mainly upon either daughters-in-law or daughters, seldom men. Especially care for parents-in-law is regarded as an obligation for daughters-in-law, whether she likes or dislikes it. This responsibility not only forced Regina to withdraw herself reluctantly from the labour market but sped up her divorce proceedings. Meanwhile, this unbearable care responsibility for parents-in-law is a vital variable in lone mothers' preference for a "permanent" lone parenthood, which will be discussed in Chapter Seven.

Precisely speaking, I resigned my post before my baby was born, because the father of my ex-husband had a stroke suddenly...Yes, actually (she quitted her job to take care of her ex-father-in-law in order to implement the duty of a filial daughter-in-law), but I did not want to be a filial daughter-in-law, but the atmosphere of his family forced me to do it. As soon as I heard his father had a stroke, my first reaction was to ask him (her ex-husband) to go to hospital first. Then I stayed at home to cry out sadly for I knew that I would have to compromise and sacrifice myself in the future to care for the father of my husband.... I did realize what pressure I would have to face. So that was why I cried sadly in advance in order to get me ready to face all pressures from his family. Could I cry in front of everyone? ...He wouldn't do any caring work. Instead, he passed down all his duties (of being a filial son) to me (Regina).

Thus there is no wonder that none of the lone fathers in my fieldwork was doing care work for their parents, exempted by the Confucian gendered division of care work.

Double care responsibilities for the young and the elderly can be part of lone mothers' everyday lives in the Confucian social context. The concept of "double ghetto" is used by Armstrong and Armstrong (1984) in analysing Canadian women's experiences, segregated between childcare at home and employment at the workplace. In addition to this "double ghetto", lone mothers in Taiwan sometimes have to bear another care duty for the elderly, which can hardly be found in Western women's segregated work experiences or Western literature concerning lone parents. Thus, if this concept applied to lone mothers in Taiwan, the "double ghetto" may not be "faithful enough" to reflect the real circumstances faced by lone mothers in Taiwan. It is because the "patriarchy", which women in the West have experienced, is not exactly the same one, as women have been struggling against in the Confucian social context. Eventually Western feminists successfully discuss the power imbalance between the sexes in private, such as at home, and its impact upon men and women differently in public, such as in the workplace (e.g., Walby 1990; Gardiner 1997). But they are culture-blind to another form of "patriarchy", which is reinforced not only by gender hierarchy, but also by age and generation power hierarchy in the Confucian social context, the last of which is the most decisive variable in power structure in the Confucian patriarchal, patrilineal, patrilocal and primogenitary family. While all these three powers are intertwined together, absolutely the impact of these affects women

and men not only differently in Taiwan but also the way of these differs completely from the way of gender hierarchy in the West. Lone parents, particularly lone mothers, in such a social context have experiences different from their counterparts in the West. Lone mothers with children are more likely to be located in “a junior generation” at the “younger age” and a “disadvantaged gender”. All these three powers have trapped them in the most vulnerable positions to encounter violent confrontations from their mothers-in-law, sexual harassments from their mothers-in-law’s families, and double care responsibilities along with their paid work outside, which lone fathers in Taiwan and lone mothers in the West have never experienced.

4.4 Summary

British politicians are keen to draw lessons from the “East Asian welfare model” because this provides them with a handy tool to examine the failings of the British welfare model (Blair 1995; Hutton 1995; Macshane 1995; MacWhirter 1995; Timminis 1995; Patten 1997). Furthermore, some British welfare scholars have described a bit of the “Confucian Welfare Model” (e.g., Jones 1993). If they look at this East Asian Welfare model more closely and examine its impact upon lone

mothers more carefully, is this welfare model still worthy to emulate in the West? In order to capture how social policies shape the economic and social lives of women in different welfare states, Hobson (1994) states: *"I consider the situation of solo mothers as reflective of a family blueprint in divergent policy regimes. I have selected solo mothers for this analysis because they allow for a discussion of different dimensions in welfare states: claim structure; the organization of care; and more generally the unstated assumptions about dependency and independency in welfare states"* (p.176; also Hobson 1997; Hobson and Takahashi 1997). Echoing her views, lone mothers in Taiwan are a strong case "reflecting of a family blueprint" in analysing the Confucian Welfare model.

While the family as a major welfare provider is attractive to British politicians and some welfare scholars, "this family" has never included lone mothers (or women) from birth to death as "permanent and full family members". While "dependency on the state" is extremely regulated, strongly discouraged and severely stigmatised by promoting traditional virtue of "diligence and self-help", lone mothers have "no choice" except participating in the labour market. Where mutual support within the family is presumed and advocated by the KMT state, there lone mothers cannot be entitled to full and equal familial supports in term of childcare, rather they encounter

domestic conflicts or sexual harassments from their mother-in-law's. Where the state-sponsored childcare remains at a extremely minimal level, there lone mothers have to combine childcare with their paid work. Where there is a lack of the national pension insurance, there lone mothers have to take care of the elderly as well as the young. While the minimum social expenditure of East Asian Welfare States is a "good lesson" to learn from it in the West, lone mothers there carry on triple-responsibilities of being secondary rice-winners, solo mothers and carers for the elderly, which does not "cost much" to the Confucian State in Taiwan. The following chapter is going to examine the extent of housing support for lone parents and the way they cope with it since becoming lone parents.

Chapter 5 Housing and Lone Mothers

Access to housing and decent quality of that accommodation are basic needs for all, irrespective of age, sex, race, disability, class, nationality and income groups. In this sense, lone parents have no exceptional case across countries. In Taiwan, public housing provides only 5% of all housing provision, whereas the private market housing occupies 95% (Chen 1995:73-138). Some housing scholars argue that there is no “housing policy” in Taiwan but rather only “public housing policy”. Furthermore, public housing building is aimed not only at selling but also at better-off families, particularly for military personnel/government employees/public school teachers. It is hardly conceptualised as part of “social policy”. Too little Taiwanese literature focuses on housing and lone mothers, except for Chen’s study concentrating on low-income lone mothers rehoused in “Public Free Flats” in Taipei Metropolitan City (Chen 1992), and the latest one only briefly mentions the housing needs of single-parents (Weng 2001). As Balchin (1995) points out, “*Housing policies in Britain have always been based around the family*” (p.240). Likewise, the Taiwanese housing policy is not an exceptional case, not only targeting the “family” but also meeting housing needs within “the family”, whereas the KMT welfare regime has always mirrored the family-centred welfare policies in Taiwan, even emphasised by

some Taiwanese scholars (e.g., Weng 2001). Furthermore, Pascall (1997) more precisely highlights that if “*housing policy gives preference to ‘traditional’ families, then ‘one-parent families’ may well expect to be disadvantaged*” (p.145). On the one hand, the term “traditional families” has different meanings in the West and in the Confucian social context. “Traditional families” in the West are viewed as nuclear families consisting of two parents with dependant children (see Edwards and Duncan 1997), but in Taiwan as “patrilineal three-generations households”, which are prioritised as the first group to access public housing more than other disadvantaged groups (Hung 2000a). On the other hand, echoing Pascall’s views, clearly lone parents have more difficulty accessing “a decent home” due to being a solo bread/rice-winner in their families. In a Confucian Welfare state stressing the family welfare function, can lone mothers really be rehoused within their families, particularly after marriage breakdown? And to what extent can they benefit from the family in terms of housing provision? First, the current chapter is going to examine to what extent lone parents in Taiwan can access housing from the public sector prior to the analysis of housing provision from the family and the private market.

5.1 Who Can Benefit From Public Housing?

Lone Mothers?

Public Housing for Lower Income Families?

The housing policy of the KMT state still reflects the inequality of its underdeveloped and fragmented social security system, favouring military personnel/government employees/public school teachers (Wade 1990:60). The KMT state had never intervened in any housing provision before 1975. Unsurprisingly, as Chen (1995) argues, the KMT government took a somewhat laissez-faire policy stand towards housing for the majority of indigenous Taiwanese people after it was forced to cross the Taiwan straits in 1949. Before 1975, houses/flats built by the KMT state were in fairly limited numbers in order to rehouse the Chinese refugees, who had left Mainland China with the KMT party, and most of whom worked as military personnel/government employees/public school teachers (Chen 1994; Doling 1999). State intervention in housing provision for those above-mentioned groups¹, including veterans and members of parliaments², must be understood as an attempt to

¹ After the Chinese Communist takeover in 1949, there was an influx of Chinese fleeing from mainland China to Taiwan, who to a large extent were military personnel/government employees/public school teachers and became city dwellers (Copper 1996). This influx accelerated the serious shortage of housing in cities in Taiwan.

² By the 1946 Constitution of the Republic of China (ROC), the role of "parliament" is jointly filled with by the National Assembly and the Legislative Yuan. In Januray,1989, under political pressure the Legislative Yuan passed the Law on the Voluntary Retirement of Senior Parliamentarians. All the long-serving members of the National Assembly and the Legislative Yuan(and the Control Yuan) had been in office since 1947 and had to retire from office in December, 1991 by this law. As Tien and Cheng (1999) point out that all the senior delegates of the First National Assembly, Legislative Yuan and Control Yuan "*were given very handsome pensions*"(p.27). Thus Ku (1995) further criticises that

consolidate the KMT's political power over Taiwan, because the above groups had been viewed as most closely related to the political legitimacy and stability of the KMT state in Taiwan until the rapid rise of democratic and social movements in the 1990s (Chan 1984, 1985; Hsiao 1989, 1991, 1992; Ku 1995a & b, 1997, 1998, 2001; White, Goodman and Kwon 1998). The small amount of public housing for "these certain groups" was built in order to stabilise its legitimacy in Taiwan in contrast to the mass council housing built in the 1950s and 1960s for working class families in Britain (Roberts 1995:25-27; Kleinman 1996:18).

The KMT state had never "acknowledged" the housing needs of non-military personnel/government employees/public school teachers, most of whom were local Taiwanese and labourers, farmers, fishermen, miners and the like, until *The Regulation of Public Housing* was promulgated in 1975 (Chen 1988:83; 1995:74). Since the passing of the 1975 Public Housing Regulation, "*Home-to-the Residents*" has become the official rhetoric of KMT housing policies. It may sound as if

"those groups who are seen as most closely related to the stability of the Taiwanese state received 74.9% of the welfare expenditure of the central government in 1991; whereas the disadvantaged such as the poor, the handicapped, the young, the aged and the female, only got 3.9%"(p.357). Thus the legitimacy of the minority rule of the Chinese KMT government could remain well supported by dominating these two parliaments until the first popular presidential election on 23rd March 1996 marked democratic change in Taiwan. Four years later 18th March 2000, the KMT lost its presidential election to DDP candidate Chen Shui-bian and ended its 55 years rule over Taiwan. Further details see Feldman, Harvey J.(eds.)(1991), *Taiwan in the Modern World: Constitutional Reform and the Future of the Republic of China*, London: M.E.Sharpe, Inc; Tsang, Steve and Tien, Hung-mao(eds.)(1999), *Democratization in Taiwan-Implications for China*, London: MacMillan; *Free China Review*, 'A Decade of Political Change', Vol.47, No.7, July 1997

universalism was integrated into KMT public housing provision for all its citizens. But in fact, KMT public housing policy has constantly been designed only “for lower income families”, exactly as the main goal in Article 2 of the *Public Housing Regulation* clearly states (Chen 1988:93, 1995:101; Ku 1997:248; Lin et al.1998). By the Regulation, a consecutive ten-year public housing development plan from 1975 to 1985, was divided into two stages: a six-year year followed by a four-year plan, and launched and implemented for “lower income families” (Chen 1988, 1995; Lin 1995). But can lower income families really benefit from such public housing schemes?

Apparently, as Article 2 of the *Public Housing Regulation* states, KMT state intervention in housing provision is only for “lower income families”. This exactly coincides with the residual, selective and fragmented nature of the KMT welfare policies, shown in Chapter One. In order to achieve public housing for lower income families a restrictive eligibility system of access to public housing ownership is established and described as follows:

- (1) anyone aged 25 or over, having a local residential connection of at least more than half a year, but more than three years in Taipei Metropolitan City;
- (2) anyone living with his/her patrilineal relatives or with his/her spouse in the same

household;

(3) none of his/her family members owning any houses or flats;

(4) none of his/her family members being entitled to housing subsidy from the State;

(5) anyone having a total year income of his/her families less than NT\$ 940,000

(£18,076)³ in Taiwan Province, NT\$1,400,000 (£26,923) in Taipei Metropolitan

City and NT\$1,090,000 (£20,961) in Kaohsiung Metropolitan City (Chen 1988,

1995; Tsue- Ma-Ma 21st August 1999; Liberty Times 21st, 27th January 2000)

In fact, the *Regulation of Public Housing* does not offer any better public housing loans or lower mortgage interest rates to lower-income families compared with the private housing loans and mortgage interest rates, discussed in the later section.

Meanwhile, relatively high first downpayments have to be paid within a short period of time and create a big burden for real low-income families. As Clapham et al. (1990) clearly point out, "*Whether housing is being purchased on a mortgage or rented, housing cost still tends to be the largest single item in the budget of most households.*"

(p.86). As Dowd (1997) further highlights, "*Housing is the single largest expense for single parents*" (p.137; also see Peng 1996:139). Many Western studies have

consistently confirmed that the economic circumstances of lone mothers are more

³ The criteria amount of the whole family income is decided to vary from year to year and from locality to locality. These certain amounts of the family income were the criteria in the year of 2000, see *Liberty Times* 21st and 27th January 2000.

disadvantaged than those of two-parents (Millar 1989; Hauser and Fischer 1990; Ermisch 1991; Gustafsson 1995). A result of this more disadvantaged economic ability is a lower rate of home-ownership of lone mothers than for two-parent families (Lefaucheur 1995). A higher rate of homelessness among lone mothers has also consistently been found in Western housing literature (Brion and Tinker 1980; Austerberry and Watson 1983; Watson with Austerberry 1986; Sexty 1990; Muir and Ross 1993; Gilroy and Woods 1994; Chat 1996; Kinernan et al. 1998; Ford and Millar 1998; Hutson and Clapham 1999; Ginsbury 1999). Likewise, the economic ability of lone mothers as solo rice-winners in Taiwan is more likely to be inferior to that of two-parent or three-generation families. Furthermore, a survey confirmed this relative disadvantage by showing that in 1994 the proportion of mother-only families among the poor was 5.36% higher than male-headed two parent families (Journal of Community Development 1996). This financial fragility in access to home-ownership is confirmed by Thekla, a low-income widowed lone mother with two dependent daughters, when asked about the possibility of her purchasing a flat, whereas she now lives near a public housing area and the oldest district-Won-Hwa (萬華)-of Taipei City. Her immediate reaction without any hesitation is "impossible", because of her inability to save the first downpayment and pay a monthly housing mortgage which would consume nearly all her income so that her family cannot

survive at all.

Oh! Dear! It costs a lot of money. How can it be possible! A flat is extremely expensive. It is impossible. If I haven't saved at least NT\$ two million (about £36,363) or three million (about £54,545) basically, it is impossible for me to buy a flat. Of course, everyone would like to have her/his own house/flat. So would I. But in fact, it is really impossible for me to purchase a flat for my own family. I do my best to save such an amount of money as the first payment, I would have then to think about whether I could afford to pay the mortgage or not. After I paid the mortgage, I would not have any money for my living expenses at all (Thekla)

As Power (1993) points out, even in the USA, where the concept of the free market dominates, housing is considered a consumer good, not a social right and its public housing efforts are still made to aim at housing one-parent families, while the state provides only a minute proportion of "social housing" (p.2; also see Ball et al. 1988:62; Kamerman 1995:242). Furthermore, in the UK, British legislation on homelessness gives local authorities statutory duties to rehouse those unintentionally homeless lone mothers in priority need. Consequently, an enormous British housing literature has persistently confirmed that a higher proportion of lone mothers rely heavily on council housing (Watson with Austerberry 1986; Bradshaw and Millar 1991; Muir and Ross 1993; Woods 1996; Pascall 1997; Graham 1997; Smith 1999). Similar to the statutory duties of rehousing homeless lone mothers, other states in Western Europe, such as France, Germany, and Denmark, use systems of nomination to

social housing companies to ensure public housing access for priority cases, including lone mothers (Power 1993). In contrast to these statutory duties for housing homeless lone mothers in these Western countries, first the KMT public housing policy has prioritised the housing needs of “three-generation families” and “nuclear two-parent families” prior to those of lone parent families by Section 2 of the above-mentioned eligibility. Secondly, in order to solve the problem of “idle houses”, which were directly constructed by the KMT state within the Ten Years Public Housing Development Plan, but cost beyond what lower-income families could afford, the above-mentioned eligibility of applicants for public housing ownership was loosened to allow higher-income families to make use of and make profit from them, especially after the size⁴ and location of public housing were improved after 1984. Instead, lower income families, as the original designated groups for public housing, can hardly benefit from such public housing schemes. Unsurprisingly, the public housing schemes have been criticised for benefiting those who are better off and able to afford the first downpayment and monthly mortgage, but not those in need, like low-income lone mothers (Mi 1988; Chen 1992; Chen 1995). The ability to pay for housing exactly reflects the aims of the KMT public housing policy, which are to produce

⁴ Before 1984, the first designed size of public housing ownership was only “12 pings” (39.67 m² or 432 sq. ft.) for a whole family regardless of the variety of family members. Since 1984, this narrow space has been improved up to the sized of 28 pings (92.56 m²), 24 pings (79.33 m²), 20 pings (66.12 m²), 16(52.89 m²) and 34(112.39 m²) respectively in order to avoid the problem of “idle houses”(Mi 1988; Chen 1995).

homes for purchase with its supplementary role of social rented housing, despite the revision of the Regulation of Public Housing in 1982 (Chen 1995). Obviously, the public housing schemes of the KMT state based on “the ability to pay” are completely in contrast to those of the Western Welfare States, even the USA, which are based on the housing needs of disadvantaged groups.

Public Housing as Social Exclusion of Never-Married Single Mothers

As Pascall (1997) argues, the ideal of the priority for “traditional families” of two-parents has been integrated into British housing policies in the 1990s (p.134; also see Ermisch 1991:20). Dowd (1997) further criticises the veneration of the nuclear, marital, patriarchal, traditional two-parent family by stigmatising single mothers as the “underclass, broken and deviant” family (pp.3-15). Although the term “traditional family” does have a different meaning in the West and in Taiwan, echoing this value of favouring the “traditional family”, the KMT housing policy also gives preference to “traditional families”, which are patrilineal three-generation households as the first priority of applicants for owner-occupier or tenants of public housing by the second section of the above-mentioned eligibility, which declares obviously “*anyone living with his/her patrilineal relatives or with his/her spouse in the same household*”. By

this section, all the public housing schemes have excluded all unmarried “single” persons. This priority of public housing for “traditional families” has been strongly criticized within the “Roofless Snail Movement⁵” as violating social equality and justice for all the citizens in Taiwan (Tsueh-Ma-Ma 1999). In the meantime, this eligibility has excluded all never-married single mothers from any public housing because of their “never-married single status” with their “matrilineal” children without any “marital spouse”. Their family, consisting of never-married single mothers with “matrilineal children”, is not recognised as “a family” in the values of “Confucian marital family based on father-son kinship”. In the 1990s, teenage girls were accused by the Conservative Government in Britain of deliberately getting pregnant to gain public housing priority by the Housing Act (Guardian 9th November, 1993; Sexty 1990:36). As many British scholars criticise, the Conservative government’s emphasis on teenage pregnancy was misguided (Sexty 1990; Gilroy and Woods 1994; Bachim 1995; Pascall 1997; Kemp 1999). But none of them can deny that by the Housing Act⁶, lone parent families, including teenage mothers, are granted

⁵ In February, 1987 the rapidly rising cost of land was caused by National Estate Bureau to sell a piece of land near by China Airline located Nanking South Road, Taipei city, at the price of NT\$ 900,000 (£18,000) per pings (3.30582 m²; 36 sq. ft.) to Gwo-Tai Insurance Ltd. Thus Roofless Snail Movement emerged immediately, calling for affordability of housing costs for purchasing and renting as well.

⁶ The Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977 was integrated into Part III of the 1985 Housing Act and revised twice again in 1988 and 1996 respectively. By this act, local authorities are obligated to rehouse households who are unintentionally homeless and priority need of accommodation, namely families with children, pregnant women, or anyone deemed vulnerable as a result of old age, mental or physical disability or other special reasons. For an account of debates surrounding the Housing Act see Raynsford (1986); Cloke et al.(2000).

priority access to public housing in the Mother-Carer-Citizen Welfare Model (Brion and Davies 1984; Kamerman 1995). Especially, “unwed mothers” as the dominant group in the Parent-Worker-Citizen Welfare model are entitled to social protection as equally as married women based on their citizenship (Kamerman 1995). Gustafsson (1995) further points out, “*Single mothers receive preferential treatment in the allocation of limited childcare, and their children are also charged a lower fee than children of nuclear families in most communities*” (p.310). Not surprisingly, Kamerman and Kahn (1989) clearly demonstrate that in Sweden “*lone parents usually also receive housing allowances. These are income tested (not means-asset-tested) cash benefits that offset some of the costs of housing, whether rented or owner-occupied. About 70 per cent of single mothers with one or two children received housing allowances....; and 90 per cent of lone mothers with three children received them*”(p.29). In contrast to the recognition of priority housing needs of “unwed mothers” in the West, it seems that “there is no such thing” (ironically in Margaret Thatcher’s term) in the Taiwanese Confucian Welfare State to rehouse those never-married single mothers in public housing. This social exclusion from public housing fell upon Chung-huei, aged 34 with a dependent daughter, who attempted to purchase a public flat for her own “family”.

Do you know? My status (of being a never-married single mother) could not fit the eligibility of public housing ownership.... because I have not yet married. They (the Department of Social Affairs in Kaohsiung City) still refused my application (for public housing ownership). Even though I was ready to purchase a public flat, having enough for the first downpayment, being able to pay the monthly mortgage, and preferring only a flat with two bedrooms, I was still banned from such a scheme (the Public Housing Scheme) (Chung-huei)

Furthermore, until the 2000 presidential election, under political competition from the DPP and pressure demanding housing equality from the Roofless Snail Movement, the Construction and Planning Administration (CPA)⁷ of MOI announced in January 2000 that it would loosen the “eligibility” by slightly lowering the eligible age from 25 to 20 of anyone having a local link, and adding anyone unmarried aged 40 and over without a spouse, eligible for public housing (Hung 2000 a & b). Can never-married single mothers with their “matrilineal” children benefit from such a “tiny” public housing reform? Without lower mortgage interest rates, a lower first downpayment, housing subsidies, housing benefits, and tax deductible mortgage repayments and so on, this question remains strongly doubtful as most of this eligibility remains unchanged.

Public Rented Housing for Low-Income Families?

⁷ The Construction and Planning Administration (CPA)⁷ of Ministry of Interior is the central unit of the Central Government in charge of public housing schemes for sale to lower-income families.

While analysing the high rate of household saving in Taiwan, Wade (1990) states directly that “*For house purchase a large downpayment is required (50 percent or more [of household income]). Little public housing is available*” (p.62). This is because public housing only plays a supplementary role in housing provision (only 5%), whereas the private market housing is the main housing provider (95%) in the Taiwanese context (Chen 1995:93). Since 1975, the main purpose of the KMT public housing policy with a limited amount of houses/flats is to produce homes for sale to “lower-income families”. As noted above, this public housing policy remains rhetoric. Moreover, social rented housing, i.e. “*Public Free Flat for Families and One-Bedroom for Single Persons*”, is limited to a very minor role in housing low-income families, who cannot purchase public housing nor can afford private market housing, often with poor-quality amenities and a very limited amount. This “very minor role” can be demonstrated by the fact that social rented housing hardly exists in any local government area, except for Taipei Metropolitan City in Taiwan (Chen 1992; Chen 1995). Access to social rented housing is far more restricted than the above criteria of access to public housing ownership. How impossible it is to access social rented housing for lone parents will be analysed in terms of their experiences of extreme difficulty in qualifying as low-income families by the official conceptualisation of the “poverty line” which is intertwined in the 1980 Social

Assistance Law (Lin et al.1998).

By this Law, the poverty line is determined each fiscal year issuing a figure⁸ for monthly minimum expenses based on the consumer price index and variation in regional income distribution assigned by each local government. Normally, the highest poverty line is always located in Taipei Metropolitan City, where NT\$10,304 (£193.20) was determined as the eligibility level of low-income families in the fiscal year 1998. But in the same fiscal year, the Council of Labour Affairs⁹ (CLA) declared NT\$15,840 (£298.80) as the contemporary minimum wage, which was much more than the highest poverty line in Taipei City (Liberty Times 29th August, 1998; Free China Journal 1st January, 1999). Obviously, as long as one family member of any type of family takes up a full-time job, her/his family monthly income will absolutely surpass the highest poverty line across Taiwan. By such a restricted poverty line, the population of low-income families has been controlled and at roughly 0.5 per cent of all the population of Taiwan for decades (see Chapter 1; ROC

⁸ This figure is determined as the poverty line and differs from area to area: For example, for the fiscal year 1999, the monthly minimum expense is set at US\$322 (for fiscal year 1999, in Taipei City the monthly minimum expenses is set at US\$322 (£193.20) Taipei City, US\$256 (£153.60) in Kaohsiung City, US\$ 206 (£123.60) in Taiwan Province, and US\$168 (£100.80) in Kinmen County. Any family, whose averaged monthly income does not reach this amount, is officially classified as a low-income family. For further details, see *ROC Yearbook 1999*, Ch.19

⁹ The Council of Labour Affairs was established in 1988 in response to the loss of the labour representative in the parliament from the KMT party. And its function involves most of the businesses related to labourers, such as industrial relations and conflicts, vocational training, labour employment services, wage policy and labour insurance etc. For further details see Ku (1997)

Yearbook 1999 and 2000).

As demonstrated in Chapter Two, lone mothers in Taiwan are treated as mothers whose unpaid care work is taken for granted without any entitlement to state income support, unlike their counterparts in the Mother-Carer-Citizen Welfare model, and as workers whose paid job is never supported by any paid parental leave, publicly subsidised childcare, sufficient pension, and equal payment, unlike their counterparts in the Parent-Worker-Citizen Welfare model. Their citizenship has never properly been recognised, except for the recognition of “family members”. Like their counterparts in Sweden, earning from paid work is always the major component of the lone parents’ income package in Taiwan (Chang et al.1995; Gustafsson 1995). Thus, irrespective of their occupation, lone parents’ earnings are absolutely higher than the guaranteed minimum wage. Consequently they can hardly be eligible for social assistance services for low-income families, including access to public rented housing. By this extremely restricted poverty line, Joy with two school-aged daughters, was repeatedly refused by her local government due to her full-time earnings.

They (the Bureau of Social Affairs of Taipei County Government) wouldn’t like to help me. I really did not know how to fit their eligibility. Each time when I went there to try to claim any support from the state, he (the social worker

working for the Government) always said: “ You are too rich! There is no way I can help for you!”.... “Your wage already is over the defined poverty line.”(Joy)

Unlike their counterparts in Sweden, neither their economic hardship nor their difficulty in combining paid work and unpaid care can be recognized. Further, their housing needs also can hardly be seen, for the KMT welfare state comes as close to “minimum public responsibility” as it can, but as close as it can to “maximum family responsibility” for lone mothers.

Essentially, this extremely restrictive poverty line has “successfully” prevented lone parents, irrespective of their marital status and gender, from accessing social rented housing. In my fieldwork, only a widowed mother, namely Lucy, with three school-aged children fits such a restrictive poverty line and is rehoused in social rented housing, because she is a casual worker whose earnings do not exceed the highest poverty line in Taipei City. Only one previous empirical study found that an extremely low percentage (0.2%) of lone parents were rehoused in social rented housing (Chang et al. 1995:Table 7.3), compared with 57% of lone parents rehoused in council housing in Britain (OPCS 1995:Table2.26; Pascall 1997:141; a similar rate also see Logan 1987:50; Graham 1997:196). But unfortunately, it either failed in highlighting the barriers to access to social rented housing or ignored the vital

difficulty in accessing social rented housing faced by lone parents in Taiwan. Earnings from full-time employment seem to be the key “barrier” for lone mothers to access social rented housing. In other words, full-time employment sounds like a form of “punishment” upon lone mothers in preventing them from accessing social rented housing. Thus the rest of all the participants (38) in my fieldwork have been “excluded” not only from public housing ownership but also from social rented housing, including another three low-income lone mothers. As shown above, housing costs always represent the largest expense for all families, particularly for lone mother families (Clapham et al.1990; Wade 1990; Dowd 1997; Peng 1997). Furthermore, considering women’s inferior economic position, unsurprisingly lone mothers heavily rely on social rented housing in terms of housing needs in the West. And this dependence on public rented housing, for example in Britain, has been extensively documented (Morris 1988; Sexty 1990; Bradshaw and Millar 1991; Baker 1992; Ginsburg and Watson 1992; Goodlad 1993; Heenan and Gray 1997). Unlike their counterparts in Britain, this is not the case for lone mothers in Taiwan, who can hardly access public housing for purchasing or renting. On the contrary, they are more likely to be excluded from public housing. This exclusion certainly will increase their dependence on “the private housing sector”. And their relatively fragile economic circumstances will give them little choice but to access housing support from their

family. Can lone mothers access housing support from their family of origin as assumed by the KMT government regulations to meet their housing needs within their family being eschewed by such restrictive eligibility for public housing ownership and social rented housing?

The Critiques over the Quality of Public Housing

Although four low-income female-headed families participated in the present study, only Lucy, shown above, is rehoused in social rented housing and another one purchased a public flat before the loss of her husband by Section 2 of the eligibility, favouring “traditional Confucian families”. As argued at the beginning of the current chapter, decent quality of housing is one of basic needs for every family. This section is an attempt to examine the adequacy of public housing only in terms of its space and location, where those two lone mothers live in public housing after 38 lone mothers were “legally” excluded from public housing.

Living in a Decent Home or Overcrowded Space?

As Chen (1988) clearly points out, “*the standardized design (of 12 pings for each*

family) makes the layout of most public housing estates less attractive, thus hard to compete with the private sector” (p.92). Since 1984, in order to avoid “idle houses”, the standardised space of the public housing for sale has been improved to a better size, such as 34 pings (112.39m² or 1,224sq.ft.) or 28 pings (92.56 m² or 1,008sq.ft.), but unfortunately, the group benefiting from it has shifted from lower-income families to higher-income families. Lone mother families are more likely to suffer from poor living conditions along with other disadvantaged groups. As Brion and Tinker (1980) point out for the UK, “*Standards of room occupancy, household amenities and rooms and beds shared were found to be worse for lone parent families than for two parent ones.*” (p.25; also see Crow and Hardey 1991). Yi-tsi is the only participant with her three school-aged children in my study, owning a publicly built flat with its standardised design of 12 pings (39.67m² or 432sq.ft.). Even with her kitchen extended on space originally designed as a balcony, her public flat is still only 13.4 pings (40.97m² or 482.4sq.ft.). What she felt about the living conditions of her flat, constructed within the *Ten-Year Public Housing Development Plan*, is described as follows:

My flat is too small for all my family (four persons). But I don't have the ability to change it until all my children grow up and become independent. Otherwise, currently I am not able to change it (Yi-tsi).

For Yi-tsi, her earning capacity of being a solo mother is too fragile to improve her overcrowded home. In 1997, the officially investigated average dwelling space per household would be 39 pings (119.23m² or 1,404sq.ft.), of which each family member at least should enjoy 10.2pings (31.19m² or 367.7sq.ft.) (Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics, 1997:13-16). Meanwhile, according to the same official data mentioned above, it illustrates again that those lower-income families even live on average in the housing size of 30 pings (99.17m² or 1,080sq.ft.), enjoying 77.3 % of housing ownership (Ibid.). Compared with this official data of “a decent home”, Yi-tsi’s flat is far more overcrowded and is inadequate for her whole family of four persons. Inadequate room occupancy and housing facilities would be characteristic of those lone mothers rehoused in the old public housing.

Living in an Adequate Community or a Slum?

Brion and Davies (1984) argue, *“If the woman is considered to have a priority, she may be offered permanent accommodation but not necessarily in the area of her choice, and most authorities allow only one offer. Places in unpopular estates are invariably offered”* (p.175) The social rented housing, where Lucy’s family has been rehoused by Taipei City Government, in one of five stigmatised “Public Free

Flats”(see Appendix 5.1), is not permanent accommodation due to a lack of any “Houseless Persons Act”, but congregates her family in very poor-standard of housing amenities and space (only 8 pings¹⁰), with an insecure, unattractive, dirty environment affected by crime and vandalism along with other disadvantaged families, like most of social housing in the UK and USA (Bratt 1986; Harloe1988; Crow and Hardey 1991; Chen 1992; Balchin 1995; Chen 1995; Koebel 1997; Conway 2000). Similar to social housing in the USA, all these social rented flats, built before 1984, have been labelled as a “Concrete Building Slum” which, as Chen (1995) argues, is waiting for slum clearance.

No, here is too noisy. At midnight, I quite often can hear people fighting and quarrelling outside of my flat. I get used to it, but not my daughter. She is terrified of it, in particular, of drunken people. People fight each other here very frequently, because people living here are quite complicated (Lucy)

Summary

In Taiwan, no coherent and united administration of the Central Government is responsible for the housing policy as a whole, unlike Department of the Environment (now DETR) in the UK (see Appendix 5.2). Different administrative units are

¹⁰ 1 ping=3.30582 square meters or 36 square feet. 8 pings=26.44 m²=288 sq.ft.

responsible for various social groups in accordance with the fragmented welfare policies of the KMT government. By such very fragmented, selective, residual and complicated “housing policies”, lone parents found it extremely hard to access the public housing sector favouring the “Confucian traditional family”, especially by excluding all never-married single mothers and preferring higher-income families since 1984. By the 1980 Social Assistance Law, low-income lone mothers working as “casual labourers” may be rehoused in social rented housing, but in the meantime, they lose entitlement to purchase housing for the labour because they are not full-time workers/labourers. Before 1985, whilst labourers, farmers, fishermen, miners and other rural residents could hardly benefit from the Ten-Year Public Housing Development Plan, because of only being entitled to a “loan for self-constructed houses”, military personnel benefited most from the above-mentioned public housing because of public housing schemes subsidised directly by the KMT government for remodification of military dormitories and military dependents’ housing (Chen 1995: Table 5). Before it lost power in May 2000, those military personnel/government employees/public school teachers or their dependents have benefited most from the lowest mortgage interest rate of 3.5% while other social groups are granted only 9-10.5%, as discussed in the last section of the present chapter. This inequality of mortgage interest rates favouring those advantaged groups has been critically

challenged by the DPP candidate, Chen, Shuie-bian by proposing 3% for all first-time home buyers. Among disadvantaged groups, lone mothers found it hard to be “rehoused and protected” within such unequal housing policies in Taiwan. Furthermore, following successful access to public housing, the living conditions and environment they live in are very poor-standard, overcrowded spaces and a stigmatised community, victimised by vandalism and crime. By the very restricted criteria of access to public housing, lone parents have no choice except to fulfil their housing needs in either the private market sector or through their family.

5.2 Engendering Access to Housing from the Family

As noted above, the proportion of public housing built for sale or for rent remains fairly small. As a result, lone parents have little choice but to depend on housing support from their family if possible or they have to rely on their ability to pay for housing. As indicated above, only two of all the participants in my study are rehoused in the public sector. The rest of them access housing either from the family sector (14) or from the private housing market sector (24) at the time of interviewing. The present

section is an attempt to examine the extent of family housing support to lone parents.

A Permanent Home for Lone Fathers

Home owner-occupation has been promoted and favoured by the KMT government as the main goal of its housing policy since its “commitment” to the “Home-to-the-Residents” housing programme mainly constructed by the private market sector with a supplementary role for the public sector. Not surprisingly, the rate of housing ownership in Taiwan has represented over 80% since the 1990s, higher than that ranging from 60% to 70% in Britain, USA and Japan (Directorate General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics 1996; Ungerson and Kember 1997; Kemp 1999). Before looking at the significance of different housing experiences between male-and female-headed families, the fact needs to be addressed that over 90% of the population in Taiwan live in households headed by nuclear two-parent families or patrilineal three-generation households except for lone mother families who are fewer than 10% of all households (see Chapter 1). Subsequently, most women live in households where a man is present (usually husband or father) and which, by official statistical convention, are described as “male-headed households” based on father-son kinship. Furthermore, Morris and Winn (1990) strongly claim for

the UK: “ *it is the lack of a male wage-earner which puts home-ownership out of reach of many households headed by a woman rather than the lack of a second wage-earner*” (p.121; also Gilroy 1994:48). Likewise, Chang et al. (1995:117-118) also confirmed that home ownership of lone fathers is higher than that of lone mothers in Taiwan, despite no interpretation of this housing inequality. However, Saunders (1989, 1990) in the “English culture” claims that gender is irrelevant to meanings of home and home ownership since women and men express similar feeling about home. Whilst disputing Saunders’ claims, a number of Western feminists strongly argue that women experience not only home but also the housing system differently from men (Madigan, Munro and Smith 1990; Morris and Winn 1990; Darke 1994; Dowling 1998). Echoing their views, one variable in “Confucian culture”, which makes this home-ownership differentiation between lone mothers and lone fathers, is closely related to an inheritance system on the basis of father-son kinship “at home”.

Unequal Inheritance Distribution Favouring Sons

British housing literature has drawn attention to the significance of home ownership via housing inheritance, which is the inter-generational transfer of wealth via the bequeathing of property in the form of housing (Munro 1988; Forrest et al. 1990;

Saunders 1990; Hamnett 1991; Hamnett et al. 1991; Watt 1993; Forrest and Murie 1995). Furthermore, as Mullins (2000) criticizes, too little housing research has been undertaken on the line of descent between the sexes in the intergenerational transmission of housing. Whilst disputing Delphy and Leonard's (1986, 1992) claim that domestic property goes disproportionately to the men of the next generations because of the power of patriarchy, he further opposes that "*Patriarchy, it can be contended, plays no direct role in the intergenerational transmission of Western domestic property*" (Mullins 2000:695).

In Taiwan, domestic property, including housing, actually only goes to "the men of the next generations", as sons who are treated as permanent family insiders and equally share their fathers' estates. Thus, lone fathers, as permanent family members, are recognised by customary law through the Confucian cornerstone of father-son kinship, which is motivated by the Generation-Gender hierarchy, to have an equal share of their parents' holdings, especially upon their fathers' death (Yang 1965:140; Freedman 1966:149-150; Leslie 1973:87). This "equal" inheritance distribution, favouring sons granted one lone father, namely Turtledove in my fieldwork, ownership of a permanent and decent home without a housing mortgage.

Previously, that house (where he lives now) belonged to my father, but now it is owned by myself. Initially, my father had owned two houses: one passed down to my eldest brother, another to me. None of my sisters shared any properties of my father at all (Turtledove)

In addition to an “equal share” of the father’s holdings among sons, the primogeniture buttressed by the Age hierarchy granted another lone father as the only and eldest son access to permanent home ownership from his agnatic family without any payment, such as a housing mortgage or the first downpayment.

Thereupon, the flat, where I live now, is provided by my parents. The flat belongs to me, but I didn’t spend any pennies to buy it at all; rather, my parents bought it for me. I feel very thankful for having it, because I didn’t spend any pennies, but I have owned it completely. How could I complain about it? (Dust)

“Permanent” home ownership without any cost accurately reflects the “permanent family membership” of lone fathers consolidated by the Generation-Age-Gender Hierarchy within the Confucian patrilineal “home”. “Equal” share of the patrilineal estates among sons, excluding *daughters*, absolutely stabilises lone fathers’ housing and better-off economic position, whilst, as Wade (1990) points out, for housing purchase a large downpayment is required of 50% or more of the whole family income pool and, as Dowd (1997) notes, the housing cost is the largest expense for lone parents. Home ownership *freely* offered by the patriarchal family certainly not

only strengthens housing stability but also guarantees economic security for these two lone fathers. Nevertheless, none of them have ever experienced the risk of “houselessness and the frequency of moving in and out”, faced by lone mothers across countries.

This free and permanent home ownership is rarely provided to daughters in my fieldwork with one exception, Karen, a never-married single mother. Home ownership exceptionally provided to a daughter must be understood in the particular social context in Taiwan, in terms of how people in a Confucian society conceptualise the problem of infertility and how they find solutions to deal with it. As noted in Chapter Four, “*the gravest one of three major offenses against filial piety is not to produce a male heir*” (Lun-Yǔn 論語). This belief of valuing sons more than daughters reflects in the average ratio of the newborn babies between the sexes in modern Taiwanese society. During the three years from 1990 to 1992, the ratio of the newborn babies between boys and girls reached 110.22:100, much above the world average ratio of 105:100, because, as many Taiwanese feminists argue, new abortion technology has been employed in medical care deliberately to abort the female fetus (e.g., Liu 1997:18). Again, this preference for sons is confirmed in Chu’s study of reproductive health beliefs and practices of women in Taiwan, by highlighting that

"Those who have given birth to a son feel especially proud and relieved that they have fulfilled their duty, 'giving' their husbands' families someone to continue the *hsian-huo* (incense burning 香火), which means there is a descendant to continue to provide for the deceased in the family" (Chu 1993:39; also see Coombs and Sun 1981). *Not to produce a son* is conceptualised as the worst one of these three major offenses against filial piety. Likewise, "infertility" is certainly viewed as a worse offense than "not to produce a son" and is easily stigmatised as "barrenness". This was the situation faced by Karen's parents, particularly her mother. By custom, adopting a daughter is one of a variety of ways to overcome barrenness and bring a hope of producing a son (Chen 1970). As a result, prior to Karen's birth, her parents had already adopted a daughter in the hope of eliminating the stigma of barrenness upon them. In the meantime, an uxoriocal marriage¹¹ could make the patriarchal family line carry on without interruption, by treating a daughter as a *substitute* for a son (Gallin 1966; Wolf 1972; Wolf and Huang 1980; Hu 1984). After suffering barrenness for six years within marriage and having no hope of having a child even

¹¹ Uxorical marriage is the term used by Margery Wolf and her husband Arthur P. Wolf to describe the following phenomenon in Taiwan: A man grows old and has a daughter(or adopted daughter) but no son. He may call in a young man to marry his (adopted) daughter and carry on his family line. But the form is less desirable for a young man. In 1984, Hu, Tai-li conducted her data collection and could not find its existence in her mother-in-law village due to increasing wealth among men caused by industrialisation in 1980s. Further details, see Wolf, Margery (1972), *Women and the Family in Rural Taiwan*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, pp.191-204; Wolf, Arthur P. and Huang, Chieh-shan (1980), *Marriage and Adoption in China, 1845-1945*, Stanford, CA.: Stanford University Press), pp.94-107, 216-229; Hu, Tai-li (1984), *My Mother-in-law's Village: Rural Industrialisation and Change in Taiwan*, Taipei: The Institute of Ethnology, Academia Sinica (1984), pp.152-60.

after adopting a daughter, Karen's parents suddenly gave birth to her. As Wolf (1972) notes, daughters, like Karen, are born under such a social context and are always treated as "their parents' darling and accustomed to the best" (p.192).

As everyone knows, he (her father) really loves me very much due to my mother's infertility. I was born after they had been married for 6 years, and felt hopelessly desperate to bear any child. Therefore, they already adopted my eldest sister¹². As a result, my birth was eventually a great surprise and happiness to my parents. In particular, in the days of my parents, infertility was a kind of big shame and they would often be mocked. So you might understand how happy they were to have me (Karen)

Not surprisingly, Karen has always been "accustomed" by her parents to the best from childhood to adulthood, including purchasing a flat for her in Taipei Metropolitan City whilst studying at a university before becoming a single mother. Albeit having an out-of-wedlock baby, she was offered enough money by her parents to pay off her mortgage. Eventually, she is the only woman in my fieldwork, completely offered permanent home ownership by her natal family, unlike other lone mothers.

Unequal Distribution of Marital Property Favouring Husbands

¹² In Taiwan, there was a popular belief that an adopted daughter may bring to the family a younger brother (son), by normally naming them as "Chio-ti" (招弟) "to bring a younger brother", or "Yo-ti" (腰弟) "to raise a younger brother" etc. Further details, see Chen (1970), "The Taiwanese Family", *Journal of the Chinese Society*, Vol.7, pp.64-79

In Taiwan, another cause resulting in more male owner-occupiers than female ones is significantly affected by the Confucian belief of the gender hierarchy within marriage, held by people in Taiwan and underpinned by Family Law, which has guaranteed husbands' supremacy in owning and managing all marital estates by customary and modern laws, as outlined in Chapter Two (Legge 1880:107; Stacey 1983:37; Sheridan and Salaff 1984:7-8). Husbands' ownership of all the marital properties was doubly solidified and prioritised by custom and law until the newly passed Article 1017 of Book IV of the Civil Code (Family Law) on 6th September 1996, expanding the marital property rights to all married women. This doubly consolidated "privilege" has granted home ownership to five male interviewees participating in the present study before becoming lone parents. Furthermore, husbands' supremacy in managing, using and collecting all the fruit of the joint conjugal properties, guaranteed by Article 1018, has remained unchanged as before. By this "privilege", husbands can still benefit from "legally" transferring the registration of any housing owned "legally" by their wives into their own ownership. In fact, one of the four divorced lone fathers has benefited from this article, owning his present residence whilst in marriage crisis, even though he got divorced at the beginning of 1998, since the partial reform of Family Law regarding marital properties has been twice revised in 1996 and 1998 respectively and continuing until now.

Originally, before marriage I had bought a flat under my name.....(Afterwards, it was sold out).. one year later after marriage, the second flat was purchased in 1984 in her name (his ex-wife). She insisted on getting divorced, but I did not want to... So I transferred her flat into my name (ownership) secretly... During her stay in hospital, I had got her inpatient certificate, and then applied for her new ID card and her authorised seal.. ... Afterwards, I successfully transferred the registration of her flat into my name (David)

In the West, an increased awareness of the economic importance of unpaid household work, and of women's work in general has expanded feminist research to "count" the economic value of household work which married women have contributed to within marriage (e.g., Waring 1989; Ironmonger 1989, 1996; Aslaken and Koren 1996; Aslaksen, Fagerli and Gravningsmyhr 1996). As a result, Aslaken and Koren (1996) clearly demonstrate that *"Despite their larger contribution to total economic production, women have less access to money, measured as their own income and assets, less wealth and less control over the economic processes they have contributed to."* (p.66). Echoing their views, women's earning and unpaid household work contributing to their patrilineal nuclear family and accumulating their family's assets, including housing, have hardly been noted and valued, but rather viewed as their husbands' assets and money, doubly underpinned by the customary law and Family Law in Taiwan. Unsurprisingly, Article 1018 is strongly criticised by Taiwanese feminist groups for guaranteeing husbands' supremacy in managing all the marital

properties. In other words, lone fathers certainly benefit from such a “gross household product” contributed by their wives (Inronmonger 1996). Undoubtedly, it can be argued that lone fathers have more access to home-ownership than lone mothers and this higher access will certainly benefit lone fathers with more stable housing circumstances and with less chance of moving in and out, unlike lone mothers in Taiwan. Accordingly, like many Western feminists, Morris and Winn (1990) strongly argue, “*women experience the housing system differently from men*” (p.117; also see Watson 1988). In response to these feminists’ views, actually, gender division is a vital dimension in analysing housing policy for lone parents in Taiwan as well. The following section is going to explore the way lone mothers access housing and the extent of housing support from their “families”.

Temporary Home from the Maternal Family for Lone Mothers

Some Western literature has briefly mentioned that a very few “single caring daughters” access home ownership through housing inheritance from their frail aged parents whom they care for (Gilroy 1994:43). This can hardly be the case for “filial and caring daughters” in Taiwan who care for their frail parents but are still usually denied housing inheritance rights by their maternal family, due to their temporary

family membership. For lone mothers, access to housing from their natal family exactly mirrors their status of being “temporary family members” within the Confucian patrilineal family in contrast to lone fathers. As noted in Chapter Two, as daughters, women have hardly been regarded as “permanent member of their natal family”, who are normally expected to “*marry out*”, like “*water spilled on the ground*” and sign away their inheritance rights (Buxbaum 1978; Diamond 1979; Kung 1983, 1994; Judd 1989; Gallin 1990; Lee 1995). It is because, ideally by custom, their permanent home is located in their husbands’ home in the custom of ancestor worship, where their tablets are installed in the altar of their husbands’ ancestors¹³ (Freedman 1970; Young 1973; Hu 1984). Unsurprisingly, none of the female participants (30) in my study has ever “inherited” any housing from their maternal family, except one, Karen, who was provided a home by her natal family through purchase. And only 13 of them have been rehoused by their natal family. Furthermore, after suddenly becoming lone parents, three of these 13 female interviewees did move back to their maternal home to meet their emergency housing need, But after a very short time, ranging from one month to three months, they moved out again. Family conflict was

¹³ This is the way of identifying a married woman permanently belonging to her husband’s family by installing her tablet into the altar with her husband’s ancestors together. An unmarried woman still can not be treated as a permanent member of her natal family, because she is expected to marry out. If she is to stay unmarried in her natal family ever after death, then a nondomestic shrine must be found to accommodate her tablet. Or by the ceremony of “ghost marriage”, she should be married out by installing her tablet into the ancestor altar of her living husband. For further details about “Ghost marriage”, see Footnote 11 of Chapter 2.

one reason for Margaret who felt she had no choice but to move out of her natal family home in order to solve the conflicts against her son from her father, noted in Chapter Four. Another circumstance in giving lone mothers little chance to access long-term housing from their natal family is gossip about women experiencing marriage breakdown. Such gossip not only embarrassed Shi-Shi's own parents very much but also forced her to move out of her maternal home in the countryside.

I did move back to my natal family and live with my own parents for a short time. You know my parents are villagers living in the countryside. Divorce is a taboo among villagers. Unfortunately, their daughter (me) got divorced. They become very afraid and worried in case someone learnt of my divorce.... A lot of gossip about my divorce emerged. So I have been thinking of these. Then it was better for me not to live in the countryside with my parents... My parents have never dared to mention to anyone about my divorce. But villagers there are still very curious by consistently asking my parents: "What's wrong with your daughter? She even brings all her children back to live here. Why?" After for a short while (roughly only three months), I decided to move back to Taipei City again (Shi-Shi)

Such gossip¹⁴ is essentially based on the Confucian assumption that once daughters were married out properly, like "water spilled on the ground", they were not supposed to return to live with their maternal families again, particularly for a long-term period,

¹⁴ From Wolf's view of point, gossips are Taiwanese women's collective power and technique to "lose someone's face" in order to influence decisions that are ostensibly not theirs to make (Wolf 1968, 1972). The fear of "losing face" makes gossips very powerful, particularly in villages. One Taiwanese man was asked by Wolf (1972) about what "having face" amounted to. And "He replied, '*When no one is talking about a family, you can say it has face*'" (p.40). Meanwhile, Huang (1988) also confirmed the significance of "having or losing face" closely relating to the indignity of Chinese and their human relationship.

because of their “temporary family membership in the natal family” in contrast to permanent family membership of sons. Violating this given “assumption”, they are often questioned by neighbours about “What’s wrong with them?” in the form of gossip about their divorce and return to the maternal family “secretly” without their presence. The fear of gossips certainly increases lone mothers’ reluctance to return and live with their natal families after marriage breakdown.

Furthermore, among 13 lone mothers rehoused by their natal families, two have confirmed that the housing where they live with their children has been passed down from their father to their brothers, regardless of their age and marital status, although one of them has not yet married out and lived with her natal family as a never-married single mother.

Since separation, I have lived with my natal family... The natal family my son and I have lived with are my first youngest brother and my youngest sister... My first youngest brother has owned the flat (where her son and she lived.)
(Mary)

As noted in Chapter Two, despite the equal share of their fathers’ holdings with their brothers, guaranteed by Taiwan Patrimony Law since 1931, particularly upon their fathers’ death, daughters, whether married out or not, have seldom claimed their equal

inheritance rights. Yi-yi, aged 25, is a never-married single mother and replied straightforwardly without hesitation, while being interviewed about the ownership of the housing where she and her two young daughters live:

The house is supposed to belong to my eldest brother, impossibly to my mother... Upon my father's death, if the house was not inherited directly by my eldest brother, rather by my mother, it still would cause more troubles in getting through the same inheritance procedure in the future. If my mother dies, the house still has to be passed down to him anyway. It is because he is the eldest and only son in my family. All the properties we have had should be passed down to my eldest brother and inherited by him as well. ...(About the inheritance upon her father's death), I am not the person who should deal with it (Yi-yi)

Even for those 10 lone mothers, rehoused by their natal family for a long-term, the housing provided by the natal family on the basis of "goodwill" is their "temporary shelter" not their "permanent home". This temporariness of the housing is verified particularly by those female participants living with their natal family during the time of interviewing.

I lived with my elder brother's family. Eventually, to stay there could meet only my temporary need for a short time. For a long time, it is not a good idea to stay there, if quarrels emerged between them and me. To be honest, after all, his home is not my permanent home (Viona)

Now I do temporarily live here (her parents flat in Yungho, Taipei county). Thus my Mum told me when she runs out of my Dad's pension she will have to

sell this flat (where her daughters and she live now). Consequently, I do not have a sense of security at all. Furthermore, my Mum said the maximum period she could hang on would be three years. I have been thinking of how to make good money for my Mum, otherwise I will have housing problems afterwards (Joy)

Gossip about married-out daughters who return for housing support from their natal family and unequal inheritance distribution excluding daughters have undoubtedly increased the housing instability of lone mothers. Again, housing provision from the natal family to lone mothers coincides with their "temporary status" within it. Furthermore, unequal inheritance distribution favouring sons has deprived lone mothers' of an equal chance to access the home-ownership as lone fathers in Taiwan. And this provision is also based on "the goodwill" of their natal family, like childcare provided by the maternal family. Accordingly, it can be argued that lone mothers have more risk of being the "houseless" and be rehoused in the private market sector.

However, even some Western feminists imply implicitly a popular belief that housing wealth is generally shared equally among beneficiary children (e.g., Finch and Hayes 1994; Finch et al.1996). But Delphy and Leonard (1986, 1992) still claim that domestic property is passed unequally to beneficiary children between the sexes. Echoing their views, Confucian patriarchy, buttressed on the Generation-Age-Gender hierarchy certainly plays a direct and significant role in the intergenerational

transmission of Taiwanese domestic property, which is completely in contrast to Mullins' claim based on Western Australian experiences by occupation, irrelevant to gender.

Conditional Home from Mother-in-Law's Family

As many Western feminists note, home ownership is available to women largely through men whose income and employment women generally have to rely on to become home owners (Morris and Winn 1990; Sexty 1990; Pascall 1997). Among these female homeowners, widows have a comparatively higher proportion of home ownership than others, but many of these widows are older than pension age and have inherited marital properties from their deceased husbands (Morris and Winn 1990; Sexty 1990; Pascall 1997). As Pascall (1997) points out, "*for many women, widowhood will bring the first prospect of independent owner-occupation in homes acquired through marriage.*" (p.136). It may be true for widowed lone mothers in the West, but can hardly be realistic for their counterparts in the Taiwanese social context. First, Western mainstream housing literature always presumes that a class differentiation is the key dynamic resulting in housing inequality, by ignoring gender differentiation (e.g., Saunders 1990; Burbidge 2000; Van Kempen et al. 2000). By

contrast, Western feminists highlight that housing inequality can be between husbands/men and wives/women (e.g., Smith 1990). But Western housing literature often presumes that widows can inherit marital properties, including home ownership from their deceased husbands without any difficulties or compromises. But can this presumption about widows' inheritance be true in Taiwan? Can widowed lone mothers in a Confucian family really inherit home ownership from their deceased husbands without any problem, like their counterparts in the West?

As shown in Chapter Two and above, ideally, the "permanent home" of all married women is located in their mothers-in-laws' home in the way of installing their tablets in the altar of their husbands' patrilineal ancestors, but not in the way of access to their mothers-in-law's estate, including their deceased husband's property (Freedman 1970; Young 1973; Hu 1984). An enormous Taiwanese literature persistently confirms that by custom, all married-in daughters-in-law are viewed as "outsiders/strangers" within their mothers-in-law's families and are denied claim to any properties from it, despite their inheritance rights guaranteed by Article 1138 of the Civil Code since 1931, noted in Chapter Four. The gap between customary and modern law related to widows' inheritance issues certainly results in another housing problem faced by widowed lone mothers but seldom by widowers in Taiwan or

widows in the West.

Another Form of Social Control over Lone Mothers?

Needless to say, lone mothers can hardly ever gain access to the housing from their mothers-in-law's family after the breakdown of a relationship, including separation. Among 12 widows in the present study, only two were provided with housing by their mothers-in-laws' families at the time of interviewing; in the meanwhile, only three had been rehoused once by their mothers-in-laws' families previously. None of these five widows have ever gained ownership of the place where they used to live or currently live, rather it belongs to one of their mothers-in-laws' families. Like childcare from the mother-in-law's family, housing provision is always offered conditionally. Widowhood is the decisive variable in access to housing provision from mother-in-law's families, but does not guarantee home-ownership for lone mothers, as family outsiders. Without home-ownership, they can hardly have independent power over, or in control of, their housing provided by their mother-in-law's family. This powerlessness in control of housing is described by Lousia's experience of her previous residence provided by her mother-in-law's family.

I shouldn't live there in my whole life; after all, the flat didn't belong to me at all. I still didn't have a sense of belonging, because the flat was not mine. For example, if something was broken down in my flat and needed to be replaced by another new one, or if I needed to nail down something on its wall, I had to write a letter to my sister-in-law in USA and to ask her whether or not I was allowed to do so (Lousia)

Lacking a sense of a "permanent home" without home-ownership, housing offered by the mother-in-law's family can only be seen as "temporary shelter" for lone mothers. But a requirement of widowhood is the key dynamic to access this "temporary shelter" by disclaiming the rights of remarriage. In some way, it is more likely that this housing provision can be interpreted as an implicit form of "social control" over lone mothers to lessen their autonomy and independent power in terms of remarriage and to strengthen explicitly the traditional honoured "virtuous widowhood" in newly industrialised Taiwanese society. Unsurprisingly, Lousia made all her efforts to purchase her own home.

Furthermore, this "temporary shelter" is also very fragile while conflicts emerge against widowed lone mothers from the mother-in-law's family, like Viona.

In my mind, I was thinking: "OK! You (her mother-in-law) slap me. Then you have to pay a price for that." While crying sadly, I went to a public telephone booth to ring my elder brother and to ask him to come over to deal with it for me..... After they arrived at my mother-in-law's home, they hadn't sat down properly. Then my elder sister-in-law couldn't stop blaming and

complaining of "my bad behaviour". Then my elder brother replied that there was not much they could talk about, and asked me to pack important things and to go home (her maternal home) with them immediately. Afterwards, I went back there several times to pick up and move out my belongings (Viona)

When confrontations or "familial control" through housing provision from the mother-in-law's family reached beyond what widowed lone mothers could bear any more, moving out is a necessary and inevitable strategy for them to adopt immediately.

Difficult to "implement" Home Ownership

Widows in Taiwan have been granted the first priority in inheriting their deceased husband's holdings by Act 1138 of the Civil Code since 1931, in comparison with their children as the second priority, and their parents-in-law as the third priority respectively (Lin et. al. 1998). In theory, the Act is supposed to prevent widows from being deprived of their deceased husband's estate and ensure their economic and housing stability. But, in reality, it is very doubtful to what extent a widowed lone mother could be protected under the Act in terms of her home ownership and stable housing

As mentioned above, married-in daughters-in-law, as “outsiders within”, are presumed not to “take away” any estate from their mother-in-law’s family, including their deceased husband’s housing. Potential tensions or explicit conflicts involving the widow’s inheritance issue, closely linked to their housing residence and ownership, usually emerge from the controversial split between custom and law. Only four widows in my study have obtained their home through inheritance from their deceased husband’s holding at the time of interviewing. Annie is the luckiest one, inheriting her deceased husband’s properties without any conflict, due to having no parents-in-law alive. Furthermore, as an outsider, she has been “isolated” by her younger brothers-in-law’s families far away. Unlike her, Huei-lin not only encountered conflicts involving inheritance and children’s custody, but also sexual harassments from her brother-in-law. Furthermore, she had no choice but to move out of her patrilocal residence so as to avoid endless conflicts and unpleasant harassment from her mother-in-law’s family, noted in Chapter Four. Along with Huei-lin, Ne-Ing also transferred all her deceased husband’s properties into the joint ownership of her two sons. Show-mei, as shown in Chapter Four, took a “middle way” of inheriting her deceased husband’s housing with her son together to achieve harmony with her parents-in-law and to maintain childcare provision from them. In the meantime, Pin-cyang’s inheritance right to “implement” home ownership was postponed until

her mother-in-law and her eldest brother-in-law's family purchased a larger flat, because both of them occupied the flat legally owned by her husband. This delay is closely "justified" by the Generation-Age-Gender hierarchy within the Confucian family, but "sacrifices" widowed lone mothers' housing welfare. By contrast, these complicated housing transactions involving rejecting inheritance rights and children's custody, and delaying access to the inherited properties has never befallen any of the widowed lone fathers (6) in the current study. First, husbands are generally prioritised by Gender Hierarchy and further solidified by Family Law favouring husbands to own the marital properties rather than their wives. Thus inheritance seldom can be an issue for lone fathers at all. Secondly, children are viewed as their children on the basis of father-son kinship. Thirdly, their residence is more stabilised by patrilocality. Consequently they are less likely to experience a high frequency of moving in and out, unlike lone mothers, while dealing with conflicts involved in children's custody and housing inheritance.

Fragile Home on Marriage Break-Up

A number of Western feminists have explored the higher homelessness among women on relationship breakdown (e.g., Leever and Thynne 1979; Logan 1987; Pascall

1997). However, as Logan (1987) criticises, in Britain both the matrimonial legislation and the homeless legislation prioritise women's access to the home by recognising them as carers of children rather than women's rights to the home per se. In other words, the first concern of both acts has been aimed at how to preserve a stable home for any dependent children. By contrast, hitherto no legislation in Taiwan recognises women as carers of children and prioritises them in access to the matrimonial home or social rented housing. Even the 1993 revised *Children Welfare Law* has not yet been concerned with how to preserve a "home" for any children under the age of 12 on marriage breakdown of their parents. Until the *Domestic Violence Prevention Law*¹⁵, promulgated on 24th June 1999 onwards, wives experiencing domestic violence are protected by this law to continuously stay in their matrimonial home only by restraining orders against their abusive husbands (Tzon 1999). Besides, if the marriage breaks down, married women are almost forced to leave their matrimonial home.

For married women, the difficulties in retaining the owner-occupied home on marriage breakdown are closely linked to the 1931 Family Law embedding gender

¹⁵ Domestic Violence Prevention Law was passed by the Legislature in May 1998. Before its passage, there was no framework through which abused wives could seek protection from their abusive husbands. The newly enforced law stipulates that police officers, prosecutors and social workers as well as the victims themselves can apply to restrain the abusers. Judges also can issue the orders to prevent future contact and thereby avoid further abuse. For further details, see Tzou, Juliet (1999), 'Law on Domestic Violence in Force', *Free China Journal*, 2nd July 1999

hierarchy. Prior to 1985, women were almost completely denied marital properties by Family Law. This law was revised once in 1984, partially permitting wives to gain marital property, which they acquired on their own, either before or during the marriage (Lin 1996; Huang 1998). But a retroactive provision was not included until Article 1017 was revised, amended, and passed on 6th September 1996 to extend the marital property rights retroactively to all married women (Independent Morning Post, 23rd November 1997; Haung 1998; Kuo 1998; Chang 1999). In fact, the 1985 revision failed to protect the property rights of women married prior to 1985. Thus only one, Holi, of 12 divorced and 2 separated female participants could retain her ownership-occupied home because of her ex-husband's reckless unawareness of the 1985 revision.

Later on, when we wanted to buy another new flat at the second time, we decided to buy it in my name. In that year of divorce, he did not realise that Family Law relating to marital property has been slightly changed in 1985.... Fortunately, he didn't notice this change of Family Law. Thus, he thought, it was quite OK for him to state clearly in our divorce agreement that the ownership of the flat belongs to me (Holi)

Without her husband's unawareness of the 1985 revision, it would not have been possible for Holi to retain ownership of her home. Despite matrimonial property rights guaranteed by the 1985 revision, Holi's home ownership was not granted

without any conditions. Like widows, “remarriage” is banned and “*divorced singlehood*” is a necessary requirement for her to retain her home ownership.

But these duties he (her ex-husband) has to implement come with some conditions. If nothing changes with me, I can keep the flat forever. But if something changes with me, such as remarriage, I have to sell the flat and give him half the amount of money of selling the flat (Holi)

Although the partial reform of Family Law has been proceeding, the husbands’ supremacy in owning and managing all the marital estate remains both by customary and modern laws. Particularly, Article 1018 still stipulates that the right to manage, use and collect fruits from the co-owned marital properties rests with husbands and still reflects traditional husbands’ preferment in managing rights of matrimonial property. By this Article, one of my divorced female participants not only lost her flat, given by her natal parents as a dowry, but also lost her jointly owned flat.

After my operation, my flat was sold out by my husband and my father-in-law secretly together. Originally, that flat was registered under my name, but, as a result, it was sold out by the way of cheating me. Later on, another newly-bought flat was owned jointly by me and my ex-husband.....Later on, he went to an illegal bank to borrow as much as he could against the jointly owned flat. All the money from selling the flat was going to pay off his debt (Joy)

Unlike their counterparts in Britain, lacking the legislation to preserve a “home” for

carers with dependent children, lone mothers in Taiwan are in general forced to leave their matrimonial home with “empty hands”, as Regina describes her powerlessness and rightlessness on marriage breakdown.

The time when I got divorced... there was not much I could strive for... Because of voluntary divorce, there was nothing worth talking about. Thus my divorce agreement was written in a very simple way. Later on my friends always made jokes about my divorce certificate. They said: “Your divorce certificate can be summarised exactly in four words (Chinese words), i.e. “*Sweep you out of his home by broom*”(掃地出門). Furthermore, many of my friends continued to make fun of me: “Your study major was in law. As an expert, how could you make your divorce conditions so bad? You really ‘wasted’ your talents in law.”...As I have studied and known laws pretty well, in fact, the law (Family Law) could not empower me to have any rights.. Without any requirement, I just wanted to have my divorce done. So I left there (her matrimonial home) with “empty hands” (nothing). Nor I did ask to share half of “his properties”. No conditions and requirements at all (Regina).

The proceeding reform of Family Law can still hardly guarantee married women’s rights of conjugal property due to its “partially selective but not comprehensive changes”. This impact upon married women certainly brings about more risk of unstable housing on marriage breakdown and a much lower rate of home ownership in comparison with lone fathers, mentioned above.

No Matrimonial Home but Bankruptcy and Debts on Relationship Breakdown

In Taiwan, on relationship breakdown, if lone mothers can leave their marital home without encountering any further troubles, it may be still regarded as “relatively” lucky, like Regina, who at least left her matrimonial home with “empty hands”, nothing, but no bankruptcy in comparison with Travelling. As noted in Chapter One, separation has never yet been recognised by Family Law as “relationship breakdown” in the Taiwanese social context. Nevertheless, separated women are still held by law and custom as “married women”, ignoring the break-up of their relationship and their historic presence. Even the official statistics have never classified separated women into different individual categories so it is hard to provide an estimated number of separated lone mothers in Taiwan, as shown in Chapter One. Unsurprisingly, Taiwanese feminists and some legal scholars urgently propose and advocate an amendment of the separation system into law while evaluating on-going reform of Family Law in the recognition of “separation” (Huang et al.1987; Chen 1998; Zeng 1998; Gih 1998; Chen et al.1999). No recognition of separation has trapped Travelling into a more disadvantaged circumstance. First, she, as a “married wife” was forced to sell her matrimonial home following her “separated” husband’s bankruptcy.

It is because as his (legal) wife I have been completely implicated by his bankruptcy as well. So his bankruptcy has also made me bankrupt. Do you understand? I am not allowed by law to own any properties in my own name at all (Travelling).

Her individual rights to own properties can only be recognised effectively when she gets divorced legally and successfully. Meanwhile, another unbelievable problem faced by Travelling is the traces and harassments from her separated husband's debtors.

In fact, it did happen to my son. Some of his father's debtors came to his school to look for him. The teachers of his school are very co-operative with me and really do help me a lot. They not only blocked these debtors out of school but also made excuses to prevent them from finding out where we lived... So I do appreciate very much what his teachers did for us (Travelling)

In order to prevent her mother-only family from such harassments she has no choice but relatively often changes her residence and lives in a more cautious way than other lone mothers. The lack of separation legislation has affected separated women negatively in retaining their matrimonial home. Their "owner-occupied home" is still at great risk of being viewed as a compensation to pay off the debts of their separated husbands while in bankruptcy, exactly as described in Sexty's terms of "*women losing out*" (Sexty 1990).

As Logan (1987) point out clearly, *"It is difficult for women to enter the owner-occupied sector, and it is often equally difficult for them to retain the owner-occupied home on the breakdown of the relationship"* (p.49). It is because paying off the housing mortgage can be another big problem for women with inferior economic ability, particularly on marriage breakdown or death of their husbands. This difficulty has been well documented in Western feminist housing literature (Brion and Tinker 1980; Logan 1987; Sexty 1990; Morris and Winn 1990; Madigan et al. 1990; Pascall 1997). But the Western literature regarding either housing or lone parents has not yet explored a case like She-fong. In her whole marital life, she persistently encountered endless confrontations from her mother-in-law, including disputes against her owner-occupied home being in her name within marriage. After the break-up of her marriage, she left her owner-occupied flat and has lived in a rented flat with her son. In effect, she not only has to pay the housing rent for her mother-only family but also has to continue to pay the housing mortgage of her owned home where her ex-husband and her daughter live, and which she cannot use. Triple housing burdens of housing rents, housing mortgage and housing debts have trapped her into a great economic crisis.

Meanwhile, the flat rent costs me NT\$8,500 per month. In addition, I still have to pay the mortgage for my owned flat, which costs me NT\$ 23,000 per month.

Eventually, I cannot afford to pay such a housing mortgage. Thus I did not continue to pay the housing mortgage from December 1997 onwards. Another factor has to be taken into account seriously; i.e. my daughter still lived there while she was only a primary school pupil. Thus I was not supposed to sell it immediately because of considering a stable housing environment for my daughter. But I still cannot pay it anymore. At the end, the local court sent me a judicial notice, warning they would sell it by auction. That is one of the problems I have to solve now.... Eventually, I feel reluctant to see my own flat being sold by the court by auction. As a result, I went to the Formosa Bank to borrow at least NT\$100,000 to sort this problem out. So, now, I have debts of NT\$ 160,000 (She-fong)

For lone mothers, it is very difficult to retain a home in the private rented sector and to rear children alone at the same time without housing benefits, child benefits and family allowance from the state. Hitherto in Taiwan there is a lack of any Matrimonial Housing Act or mortgage legislation to preserve a home for lone mothers with dependent children. It is because the Taiwanese State is still blind to the housing needs of dependent children and women on relationship breakdown. Thus, for lone mothers in Taiwan, owning housing does not ensure a secure and stable home without protection of mortgage and matrimonial legislation from the State. By contrast, “legally” owning a home with a mortgage can be a disaster when married women still have little choice but to leave their patrilocal owner-occupied home on marriage breakdown. In contrast to the KMT state and her ex-husband, She-fong has no choice but to continuously pay the housing mortgage in order to secure a “stable home” for her young daughter in recognition of her daughter’s housing needs. For She-fong,

albeit owning a home superficially and legally, there is “no matrimonial home” in her real daily life, but rather “housing rents, housing mortgages and housing debts”, which she cannot afford at all on marriage breakdown.

5.3 Commercialising Access to Housing from the Private Sector

Lone parents in Taiwan can hardly be social rented housing tenants or public housing owners because of public housing legislation favouring “traditional Confucian family” but excluding all never-married single mothers, as shown earlier. The housing provision from the family also reflects Confucian father-son kinship via intergeneration inheritance and husband’s priority and supremacy over marital properties. Thus lone mothers have little option but to rely heavily on the private housing market.

Whilst distinguishing housing policy in Taiwan along with another three new industrialised countries (NICs) from that of old industrialised countries (OICs), Doling (1999) further argues that “*In this regime type, consumption is not governed by*

considerations of de-commodification, equality or fairness, but rather reflects the ability of individual households to pay for the housing they consume” (p.238).

Echoing his views, even this ability to pay for housing has been integrated into the public housing for sale in the KMT state, whereas particularly, housing provision relies heavily on the private market housing, occupying over 95%, in comparison with 5% of the public housing, noted earlier in the Chapter. Again, as Doling (1997, 1999) further argues, housing consumption exactly reflects the market power of individual households, if housing is conceptualised as a commodity, not a social right. In this sense, as many Western scholars point out, if housing is a commodity, then it is a necessary element in the reproduction of labour due to the vital interrelationships between housing and labour markets (Smoth 1990; Forrest and Murie 1991; Marchuse 1991; Randolph 1991; Watson 1991; Badcock 1994). Moreover, Forrest et al. (1990:119-124) clearly state that gender differences within all labour market ingredients in the workplace and occupational status certainly affect the economic power of working households, and thus their consumption of housing. Following their views, Watson (1991) critically argues that women’s position in the labour market does account for their marginalised status in the housing market because of sex segregation at the workplace (see also Watson with Austerberry 1986:129-148). She further concludes that *“female single parents in Australia are considerably more likely*

to be public (25%) and private (40%) tenants rather than owners/purchasers (27%) while male single parents or male heads of nuclear families in the same age group are far more likely to home owners or purchasers--40% and 55% respectively" (ibid: 150; see also Watson 1986:6). It is broadly true that, as Smith (1990) argues, "*Significant differences in men's and women's mean annual earned incomes persist, irrespective of the age... when labour force status, occupational characteristics and sector of employment are considered*" (p.71). The present section is going to look at the extent of the private housing market lone parents can access based on their solo ability of individual households to pay for their housing.

High Potential Home-Ownership for Lone Fathers

At the time of interviewing, only three lone fathers lived in private rented housing. One of these three participants has owned his home, prioritised by Confucian Gender hierarchy to obtain home ownership, before the loss of his wife. First the breakdown relationship may be the key factor for divorced and separated lone mothers to move out of their matrimonial home due to the lack of the protection legislation, unlike their counterparts in Britain (Brion and Tinker 1980). Secondly, confrontations with their mothers-in-law's family may also be another vital dynamic for widows to change their

residences despite owning a home through inheritance. Neither of these issues can be reasons for lone fathers to change their residence since becoming lone parents, rather something else. As such, for Ming-chung, a lone father, who moved out of his self-owned matrimonial home, it is because of his belief in “bad Hong-Shui”(風水)¹⁶

(When asked about the ownership of the place he lives currently, the experiences of moving in and out and the reasons of moving) Yes, I did move home once...Originally I lived upstairs. That flat, located upstairs, belongs to me and it was my home there.... I had already moved out of there. Now I am intending to sell it. I would like to sell the old home and then buy another new home...It is because of “bad Hong-Shui(風水). I had already paid a geomancer to check whether my old home is still located in good Hong-Shui (風水)or not. The bad Hong-Shui(風水) has affected sincerely all aspects in my life, even including my family life and my business(Ming-chung).

Furthermore, it was found that lone fathers are more likely to become homeowners than lone mothers (60.9% to 50.4%) (Chang et al.1995: Table 7.4). Conversely, lone mothers are more likely to be private rented tenants than lone fathers (27.9% to 23.4%) (Ibid.). Unfortunately no explanation could be found to interpret the higher ratio of home ownership of lone fathers to lone mothers in Taiwanese literature, unlike

¹⁶ The term *Hong-shui* (風水 in Taiwanese or *Feng-Shui* in Chinese Mandarin) can be literally translated as “winds and waters”. This is a kind of Taiwanese folk belief. It is believed that illness; financial trouble, family misfortune etc. are commonly attributed to trouble with their ancestors' grave. Ming-Chung complained that since the highest building was built in front of Taipei Railroad Station, it destroyed the good Hong-Shui,(風水)of his old home and his office. As a result, his wife passed away and his business trade was not going as prosperously as before. He believed that the good Hong-Shui,(風水)of his flat was destroyed so that he intends to sell his old home and buy another new one. During the time of waiting to sell his flat, he is renting a flat with three bedrooms and making every effort to sell his old home. For further details about Hong-Shui,(風水) see Freedman (1966:119-142,1970:164-179);Thompson (1969:21-22); Ahern (1973:175-190).

Western feminist literature mentioned above. In response to Watson's views (1986, 1988, 1991), sex segregation in the workplace does account for men and women's different status in the housing market (also see Smith 1990). None of the 10 lone fathers in the study have had broken work experiences, or ever taken part-time or temporary jobs resulting from their domestic care for their family dependents, particularly children. Meanwhile, they all concentrate on "men's jobs" in the higher ranks of the occupational hierarchy with more prospects and promotions. Among these three lone fathers living in private rented housing, two are self-employed bosses running their own businesses. And the last, Feng-yang (Flying-About), was a branch manager of a life insurance company at the time of interviewing. Due to the higher rank and better-off income of his occupation there is no problem for Feng-yang to buy a home within a short time.

(While being asked about the probability of purchasing a home) Certainly within two years!... Nowadays, anyone who intends to buy a home only needs to prepare the first downpayment and at least save NT\$30,000 to NT\$ 50,000 per month. Then to own a home can be made possible.... In fact, I do receive a bonus monthly. Except for my monthly salary, I am still granted to have commission payments from my own job... At least, I can save NT\$30,000 to NT\$ 50,000 per month...Yes, certainly(it is highly possible to buy a home) (Feng-yang).

As a great number of Western literature demonstrates, the disparity between male and female wages is the vital dynamic for lone parents to support their families on their

own earnings (e.g., Chiplin and Sloane 1976; Gustafsson 1990). Likewise, in Taiwan, female wages have always presented, on average, 66 percent of male ones (Chang et al.1995; Wang 1995; Hu 1996; similar ratio also see Gannicott 1986). Certainly gender wage inequality affects access to home ownership from the private housing market differently among lone parents. For lone fathers, the potentiality of owning a home via purchase is more secure in their participation in the labour market due to the uninterrupted full-time work experiences with more education, higher earnings and more prospects in “men’s jobs” (Gannicott 1986; Acevedo 1990; Cockburn 1985; Berik 2000).

Highly Potential Home-Owners for Military Personnel, Government

Employees and Public School Teachers

As Western housing theorists illustrate, the mortgage interest rate is one of determinant variables in housing affordability despite the lack of agreed definition of it (Smith 1990; Malpass and Murie 1994; Balchin 1995). As Balchin (1995:220) further points out, when mortgage interest rates are high, there is a relatively low level of affordability, but when mortgage interest rates are low, affordability is relatively high. Home ownership without “lower” mortgage interest rates can be another

housing trauma for lone mothers. For She-Fong, mentioned earlier, home ownership typically results in the financial “entrapment” of home owner-occupiers (Edel et al. 1984; Badcock 1994). As a first-time home-buyer, she is only granted 9 to 10.5% of mortgage interest rate in comparison with 3.5% granted to military personnel/government employees/public school teachers ¹⁷ (Chen 1995:90). Furthermore, apart from low-income family allowance, no housing benefits can be claimed by her to cover her housing mortgage in contrast to Income Support covering housing mortgage interest for lone mothers in the UK (Brion and Tinker 1980). Among lone mothers, those covered by the Government Employee Insurance are more likely to become home owners due to their entitlement to the lowest mortgage interest rate in Taiwan. In my fieldwork, two lone mothers working in a public junior high school did confirm that this mortgage interest rate makes housing affordability possible for them due to their occupation as government employees.

I think I will have chance to be granted the housing scheme of mortgage interest rate and loan only for government employees.... After divorce, I had already applied to such a housing

¹⁷ Except for the lowest housing mortgage, military personnel have long received special health care in military and veteran hospitals. Moreover, their families have paid lower rates for electric power and education and have received monthly rice and oil stipends. In the meantime, veterans have received either a lump sum old aged payment or monthly pension, medical care, new career training and transfer etc. Government employee and public educators have received social security provision almost as the same level as the military. For example, government employees also have received some additional welfare benefits, such as monthly stipends of rice and oil, housing rental assistance, and much cheaper “welfare groceries”. It is no wonder that government employees in the past were labelled as the persons with “an iron rice bowl”, who have no need to worry about layoffs and firing and have benefited from better social security, until the rising democratic and social movement in the early 1990s (Lin 1990, 1995)

scheme for government employees. Thus, this year (1998) I can afford to pay for a home for my own family.. The housing mortgage interest rate is only 3.5% (I-chueng).

Just recently I have finished applying for the housing loan and mortgage interest rate for government employees. I will be granted the housing loan of NT\$1,800,000 and the mortgage interest rate of 3.5%. So I did go to apply for that already... After successfully being granted such an amount of money and mortgage interest rate, I am allowed to buy a home within the following two years. So I still have got two years to think and look for where I should buy my own home (Purple-clouds)

Essentially, this inequality in housing loan and mortgage interest rates exactly reflects selectiveness, residualism and fragmentation of the KMT government's social policies favouring military personnel/government employees/public school teachers (Chan 1984; Ku 1995 a & b, 1997). Further this housing inequality created deliberately by the KMT state has trapped those lone mothers who are not sort of the above privileged groups into a more vulnerable housing status in the housing market without any housing benefits or subsidies from the state.

High Frequency of Moving and Insufficient Space

Furthermore, for those mothers working in the private sector, it is hardly possible to own a home without access to a housing loan from their natal family based on their "good will". However, lone mothers as daughters are refused an equal share of their father's estate nor can be often provided with free home ownership from their natal

family, unlike lone fathers. But sometimes, access to a housing loan from their natal family is the critical factor in obtaining home ownership for those not eligible for the lowest-interest mortgage loan and attached to a lower-wage. A housing loan from her natal sibling made home-ownership possible for Chung-huei on the basis of the “good will” of her elder sister.

I was given the first downpayment to purchase a flat... Then I borrowed NT\$200,000 (£4,000) from my elder sister... Because my elder sister realises that I do not have enough money.. and I can not pay such money back to her soon (Chung-huei)

Sex segregation of the labour market and the low wages attached to female-dominated occupations have constantly been problematised in Western liberal and feminist studies since the 1970s (Oaxaca 1973; Malkiel and Malkiel 1973; Cockburn 1985; Ollenburger and Moore 1992; Lovendusik and Randal 1993; Bacci 1999). Likewise, as has been shown above, gender wage inequality against women is a strong feature of the labour market in Taiwan (Gannicott 1986; Berik 2000). Consequently, women’s inferior wages have always decreased access to home ownership in the private housing market in contrast to lone fathers (Chan 1995; Wang 1995; Hu 1996). Such wage differentials are likely to decrease the rate of home ownership but increase the possibilities of shared private rented housing among lone mothers compared to lone

fathers. None of the lone fathers in my fieldwork share their housing with non-family members. Even the three lone fathers living in the private rented housing have never shared their flats with non-patrilineal family members. By contrast, one of three female participants living in private rented housing cannot afford to live alone without sharing her rented flat with non-family members, although her “ideal home” is to live alone with her son. Shared private rented housing with non-family members or renting a single bedroom is her strategy to cope with her inferior position in the labour market of being a working solo mother without any income support from her ex-husband, her “natal family and her “state”.

I would like to live alone with my son only... Under such a realistic situation and considerations (financial pressure), I did not have another choice....When I recall the past, I stayed with my parents for one and a half years, then in an ensuite with a toilet and bath, finally here in the rented flat for two years.. We (she and her female colleague) share the flat together (Margaret)

For these lone mothers, access to an “ideal home of living alone without shared private rented housing” can only be possible if private rented housing is available from their relatives or friends. Without such housing support, frequent moving in and out is another characteristic of housing in the private rented sector, because of the lack of home ownership, independent and sufficient space and affordable housing costs. As shown earlier, housing costs, particularly private rented housing, always exceed

more than half of their family income. All the lone mothers rehoused in the private rented housing market have experienced moving in and out at least three times. Housing instability is certainly one of their housing characteristics, decisively affected by their disadvantages in the labour market. Renting a flat and living alone with her son is only possible for Regina with certain housing support from her social network

One of my friends had a friend, who had a flat to let out, and she introduced me to her friend and asked her friend to let her flat to me. After understanding what happened to me (getting divorced), she said to me: "OK, you can move in and live there at first". After I had lived there for two months, I started to pay rent to her. If she let her flat to another tenant, she would receive NT\$10,000 (in 1987) (£200), but I was only able to pay her NT\$5,000 (£100)..... Due to my good social relationship... about my housing, I always could get a nice and large flat to live, but pay less...The present flat I live in belongs to my aunt, my father's sister. I am quite lucky to have another nice flat (with its size of 20 pings) (66.12m² or 728 sq.ft.)(Regina)

Otherwise, for lone mothers, renting a home without housing support from kinship or friends, inadequate homes, lack of privacy and enough space would be their housing constraints in the private rented housing market. This indecent home with one single bedroom actually upset Margaret very much.

After my son went to bed to sleep, I needed to stay in the bathroom and to continue my work lest I disturb my son, because of my rented en suite. Sometimes, while I was under work pressure or other emotional pressure, I

always went to the bathroom to avoid crying in front of my son. For me, there is no space... Having no space upset me very much (Margaret)

Again, the inadequate home, lack of independence and enough space and privacy, which lone mothers can access in the private rented sector, exactly reflects their sex segregation in the labour market and their inferior positions as solo working mother-only households. It is obviously true that sex segregation of the labour market continues to be an important determinant of gender related earnings differences, which are closely linked to the housing inequality between the sexes (Smith 1990).

5.4 Summary

In the Parent-Worker-Citizen Welfare model, Sweden is also a good example of a country where a “socialist housing market” has developed (Headey 1978:66). However, Lundqvist et al. (1990) were sceptical of Headey’s views of “a success story” of the housing policy in Sweden, but they still could not deny that *“households with the highest disposable incomes are concentrated in that tenure which provides the best prospects for a favourable economic outcome of housing, i.e. home ownership. At the same time, the lower-income households are concentrated in the least*

favourable housing sector in this respect, i.e. rental housing” (p.453). Still unmarried lone mothers among lower income groups or groups with special needs are recognized as “citizens” and are well catered for in social housing, which could be equated with public housing, not selective in favour of any one tenure of group (Lundqvist et al. 1990). In contrast, particularly unmarried single mothers are excluded by the KMT public housing, whereas its housing policy is extremely selective in favour of certain groups, of certain occupations and “traditional families”

In the Mother-Carer-Citizen Welfare model, lone mothers are recognised as carers of dependent children and are prioritised for social housing by their special needs. In Britain, under homelessness legislation, lone mothers receive the first priority to be rehoused in council housing. Furthermore, even in the USA, social housing exists to house lone mothers in priority need, whereas in Taiwan the free market dominates housing policy and housing is regarded as consumer goods, not a social right at all (Ball et al. 1988; Power 1993; Kamerman 1995). In the recognition of their care for children, lone mothers are prioritised a stable home in public housing by the British state. By contrast, lone mothers in Taiwan have never been recognised as carers of children and prioritised as groups with special needs to preserve a stable home in social rented housing or matrimonial housing properties, whereas lone mothers might

carry triple housing burdens--housing rent, housing mortgage and housing debts-- in order to preserve a stable home for their children.

In the Mother-Worker-Family-Outsider Welfare model, lone mothers are recognised as “family members”, whereas the family has never viewed them as “permanent family insiders” in contrast to lone fathers. As daughters, lone mothers seldom claim their equal inheritance rights as much as their brothers. As wives, their matrimonial home is often at risk of their husbands’ supremacy in the use, management and collecting of their marital properties by custom and law. As daughters-in-law, they could hardly keep their marital home without confrontation involving their inheritance rights and their custody of children. In fact, on relationship breakdown, women have little choice in staying in their matrimonial home without conditions of “separated and divorced singlehood”. Again, “there is no such thing” in the Taiwanese Mother-Worker-Family-Outsider model for lone mothers to “turn to the local authority for housing” or “to stay in the matrimonial home” in recognition of being “carers of children”, unlike their counterparts in Britain, or to be guaranteed a stable home of public housing in the recognition of “citizens”, unlike their counterparts in Sweden. Actually, lone fathers are recognised as “permanent family insiders” and are more secure in housing via intergeneration inheritance and husbands’ supremacy over

wives. In contrast, the status of family outsider has trapped lone mothers into a great risk of houselessness, housing instability and poorer housing quality in comparison with lone fathers in Taiwan and lone mothers in the West.