

Dilemmas of an Aging Society: Family and State Responsibilities for Intergenerational Care in Taiwan

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Abstract

In an aging society with a declining birthrate, there are more and more elderly to care for and fewer adult children to provide them care; these adult children, and the state, are forced to weigh the costs of eldercare against the cost of child care. In Taiwan, these dilemmas may be particularly acute, given the persistence of Confucian norms of filial piety and the extended family structures. In this study, we examine the attitudes of Taiwanese people toward the relative responsibilities of both adult children and the welfare state for eldercare and child care. Data were taken from the Taiwan Social Change Survey in 2011. Using latent class analysis to develop a typology of attitudes toward intergenerational care responsibilities, we found four types: (a) Family cares for elders and children, (b) family cares mainly for children, (c) cooperation between family and government, (d) government cares for the elderly. Findings show that an individual's attitudes toward welfare state policies are significantly related to both self-interest and sociocultural norms as well as intergenerational family interactions. In Taiwan, filial norms and the quality of family interaction significantly influence attitudes toward the division of intergenerational care responsibilities.

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Keywords

intergenerational care responsibility, intergenerational relations, family care, filial piety

A declining birthrate coupled with increased longevity has transformed Taiwan into an aging society, one with an increasing number of elderly people who need care and a decreasing number of adult children to provide them with that care. In November 2011, concerned about elder abandonment in society, Taiwan's Legislative Yuan passed an initial draft of an act aimed at compelling adult children to provide support for their aging parents. Modeled after Singapore's *Maintenance of Parents Act*, the Taiwanese draft act proposed that, if adult children refuse to take care of their parents, the court would enforce a "maintenance order," which would garnish their salaries to cover the cost of providing their aging parents with support. People varied in their opinions about the act, and in the end, it was rejected. Nevertheless, the debate over the act raised an important question: As Taiwanese society ages, will the demands for eldercare overwhelm the capacity of adult children to provide it?

One issue in an aging society is providing care for the increasing number of elderly; but another issue is maintaining the population by encouraging families to have children. While the debate on the *Maintenance of Parents Act* went on, the Taiwanese government implemented a series of child-rearing welfare policies. For example, in 2011, the Taipei City Government launched a project titled, *Have a Carefree Pregnancy*, which provided parents NT \$20,000 for each pregnancy, along with subsidies to alleviate the expenses of caring for and educating a developing child. Through such child care welfare policies, the government hoped to encourage people to have children, so as to increase the country's comparatively low birthrate. Following Taipei City's initiative, county and city governments throughout Taiwan began to offer such child care welfare programs.

Studies of East Asian families have found that, compared with their counterparts in Japan, South Korea, and mainland China, adult children in Taiwan adhere more to traditional filial norms (Lin & Yi, 2013). Consequently, in Taiwan, the ratio of intergenerational coresidence of adult children and their parents is the highest among the four East Asian societies (Yasuda, Iwai, Yi, & Xie, 2011). Nevertheless, as baby boomers age and the birthrates continue to fall, Taiwan is actively planning welfare policies for long-term care of the elderly. In this sociocultural context, it is worth examining whether changes in filial normative beliefs and intergenerational interactions have started to

affect attitudes about the balance of the burden of intergenerational care that should be shouldered by the family and the state.

Traditionally, in Taiwan, adult children were expected to take care of their aging parents as part of their sense of filial responsibility. Because their parents gave birth to and raised them, they were expected to feel indebted to them. As the old Chinese saying goes, "Store crops for famine times, and rear children for old age." However, with the declining birthrate and increasing longevity, many parents are reorienting their priorities. They delay childbirth to pursue their own education and economic stability; and although they have fewer children, they invest more in them, both emotionally and economically. As a result, families are becoming more nuclear in orientation. As scholars have noted in studies of other contemporary East Asian families, parents seem to prioritize the young over the old. Therefore, in the near future, the younger generation will feel even less obligated toward their elders (Liu, 2005).

This "aging society" discussion raises the question of whether demographic changes lead to changes in attitudes toward family obligations and social policies relevant to eldercare and child care. Will families be expected to do less for the elderly, and will the state be expected to do more? Will the welfare state provide programs of support for parenthood and children as well as for the aged? Public opinion will play an important part in shaping answers to these questions. It is important to know whether traditional attitudes will endure such that families will be expected to provide both child care and eldercare; or whether there will be a shift in attitudes, such that the state will be expected to assume more responsibility for these traditionally familial obligations. In this study, we examine the character and strength of attitudes people have concerning the division of responsibilities between the family and the state in meeting the needs of the elderly on one hand, and the young on the other.

Background

Challenges in Balancing the Responsibilities of the Family and the State

Traditionally, economists have assumed that welfare support provided by the state serves as a substitute for the intergenerational support provided by families (e.g., Cox & Jakubson, 1995). That is, for example, they assume that as the welfare state takes up the role of the family in providing eldercare, it replaces the support contributed by the family (e.g., Juarez, 2009). In recent years, however, sociologists studying the family have proposed a different

perspective. They have raised questions about whether social welfare programs replace the family as providers of eldercare, or whether they lead to shared responsibility by the family and the state for intergenerational care (e.g., Motel-Klingebiel, Tesch-Roemer, & Von Kondratowitz, 2005). If family and state share responsibility, rather than one replacing the other, will they augment one another, such that intergenerational family support will be strengthened and welfare programs will be more effective (e.g., Brandt, Haberkern, & Szydlik, 2009)? To answer this question, it is important to take into account whether the norms around intergenerational care are changing. Social and cultural norms are critical factors that affect the balance of burden-sharing and the effectiveness of welfare policies (Izuhara, 2010).

Limitations of Research on Shared Responsibility for Intergenerational Care

Research on this topic so far has several limitations. One is that most research has focused on European societies, raising questions about whether the findings generalize to Asian cultures. Another limitation is that the research has been guided by classical economic theory, which assumes that people's attitudes are shaped by individual positions and economic needs—that is, by “self-interest.” These researchers assume that individuals are self-interested utility maximizers, and that the material self-interest of each age group determines their attitudes toward any welfare program that redistributes resources across generations (Goerres & Tepe, 2010). But such a perspective excludes sociocultural factors that are particularly pertinent to Taiwan; namely, the degree to which attitudes toward welfare programs are shaped by the Confucian norms of intergenerational solidarity characteristic of Asian families, as well as by each individual's social contexts, in particular, the frequency of his or her extended family, intergeneration interactions. Only recently have studies begun to shed light on the effects of these factors (e.g., Blome, Keck, & Alber, 2009; Daatland & Herlofson, 2003; Daatland, Slagsvold, & Lima, 2009; Motel-Klingebiel et al., 2005). A final limitation of previous research is that it focuses on welfare programs either for the elderly or for the young, treating these attitudes and preferences separately. But, judging from intergenerational family relationships, an individual may hold multiple generational positions and roles at the same time. For instance, adult “children” can also be the “parents” of their own children. Hence, people's attitudes toward welfare with regard to care for the elderly and care for children may be interrelated. We believe that a fruitful way to study attitudes toward intergenerational care responsibilities would be to include

attitudes toward both care for the elderly and care for children, as dependent variables in the same study, then examine the effects on these attitudes of respondents socioeconomic status, their normative beliefs, and intergenerational interactions within their families.

East Asian societies still lack empirical studies of the links between intergenerational family relationships and welfare policies. Influenced by Confucianism, the family in East Asian societies is a critical institution. As a result of economic growth and other factors, which have brought changes to family life (such as delay in marriage, a rising divorce rate, fewer births, and a decline in multigenerational households), the family unit has become more complicated and diverse in Taiwan, and intergenerational family relationships have become a major research focus in family studies (Yi & Chang, 2008). Influenced by society and culture, the family “generational contract” is based on intergenerational norm of family reciprocity. Hence, the discourse on an individual’s right to receive and his or her obligation to provide support should also be based on these norms (Izuhara, 2010). This study analyzes respondents’ attitudes toward the balance of state versus family responsibility for eldercare and child care (i.e., social welfare policies). In all, this study examines two research questions: As the population structure changes, what are people’s attitudes toward intergenerational care responsibility—care for the elderly and children, and the relative responsibility of family and the state for meeting these responsibilities? The second question is, does a person’s position in society and the family, as well as their adherence to Confucian norms, and intergenerational interaction affect their attitudes toward intergenerational care responsibility?

Intergenerational Care Responsibility: The Roles of Family and the State

Studies on intergenerational relationships mainly take two perspectives. One is a micro perspective, which defines a “generation” as the descendants of a consanguineal family, and bases discussion on the relationship between elderly parents and adult children or grandchildren in a family on “solidarity,” emphasizing issues related to connection and cohesiveness among family members (e.g., Atkinson, Kivett, & Campbell, 1986; Roberts & Bengtson, 1990; Silverstein & Bengtson, 1997). The other is a macro perspective, defining “generation” based on age and cohort. The macro perspective sheds light on social and political issues according to “age stratification” and cares about “generational equity,” such as how welfare is distributed to each generation in society (e.g., Lynch, 2006; Phillipson, 2005). Defining “generation” differently results in two research perspectives, micro and macro, and

the relationship between these two perspectives, in turn, shapes the intergenerational relations in our society (Pillemer & Suito, 1992).

In a social development context that includes the aging of the population and debate over social welfare policies, in recent years, sociologists of the family, sociologists of aging, and welfare scholars have all started to pay attention to the mutual influence between the social welfare system and the intergenerational relationship between adult children and their parents (e.g., Bengtson & Putney, 2006; Daatland et al., 2009; Daatland & Herlofson, 2003; Daatland & Lowenstein, 2005; Kohli, 2005; Motel-Klingebiel et al., 2005). Motel-Klingebiel et al. (2005) pointed out in their analyses that traditionally it is widely believed that the formal welfare-state support and the intergenerational support provided by family can replace one another. In other words, the development of a welfare state will lead to the state taking up the role of family, resulting in the reduction of influence of family help and a decline in intergenerational solidarity. This “crowding out” thesis has widespread support among economists but has recently been challenged by family sociologists, who have pointed to the complex and even mutually reinforcing relationship between family eldercare and welfare-state care services (e.g., Daatland & Lowenstein, 2005; Motel-Klingebiel et al., 2005).

Regarding recent research trends, a series of European-based studies focuses on the mutual influence mechanism between social welfare and intergenerational family relations. The studies look into people’s views on family responsibility for intergenerational care and support behaviors in states with different social welfare conditions (e.g., Albertini, Kohli, & Vogel, 2007; Daatland & Herlofson, 2003; Daatland & Lowenstein, 2005; Haberkern & Szydlik, 2010; Johansson, Sundström, & Hassing, 2003; Motel-Klingebiel et al., 2005; Saraceno & Keck, 2008). There are two practical research perspectives to take. One is to focus on services, and examine the relationship between formal support by welfare states and informal support by families across nations. The other is to focus on attitudes, and examine the factors that influence respondents attitudes toward the roles taken by the state and the family in providing intergenerational care.

Provision of Care by the State and the Family

Has formal support in welfare states really replaced the intergenerational informal support provided by family? At this moment, researchers’ opinions vary. But they are inclined to support the hypothesis of shared responsibility, meaning that formal welfare-state support has not yet replaced intergenerational family support (e.g., Johansson et al., 2003; Motel-Klingebiel et al., 2005). Take for example, the study conducted by Motel-Klingebiel et al.

(2005) using data collected for their research project titled, "Old Age and Autonomy: the Role of Service Systems and Inter-generational Family Solidarity" (OASIS). Motel-Klingebiel et al. (2005) found that family help is significantly higher in countries with poorly developed welfare service. However, when they take into account the characteristics of older people, including their partnership status, health status, the number of children they have, and their normative beliefs, intergenerational help is mostly the same across countries. Consistent with these findings, Norway is a social-democratic welfare state with guaranteed universal benefits and services at high levels. However, Norway shows levels of family help and support similar to or even higher than societies with a strong family orientation. Therefore, family help is not crowded out by the extensive provision of formal services. Moreover, in societies with well-developed service infrastructures, help from families and welfare state services act cumulatively. In light of this, research findings on the relations between formal support provided by welfare state programs and the informal support provided by families supports that hypothesis of mixed responsibility. Furthermore, related studies point out that even when formal welfare provided by the state and informal support provided by family are inversely correlated, this relationship approaches zero when you control for micro-level factors, such as the number of adult children the elders have, the intergenerational living arrangements, and the family members' expectations about family's responsibility for intergenerational care (e.g., Cooney & Dykstra, 2011; Motel-Klingebiel et al., 2005; Schenk, Dykstra, & Maas, 2010).

Attitudes Toward Formal and Informal Family Intergenerational Care

The aforementioned studies focus more on the actual *provision* of elderly care. There is another focus to take: respondents' *attitudes* toward the responsibility of the state and family for intergenerational care; and their *attitudes* toward the relative balance of state and family responsibility for care provision. Research results show that in France, Germany, and Norway, people tend to see child care as the family's responsibility, and elderly care as the state's responsibility (Daatland et al., 2009). In other words, in Europe, when it comes to responsibilities within families for intergenerational care, there is a downward slope that leans toward the child care and away from eldercare.

As to an individual's attitudes toward the welfare states, recent research has raised questions about whether the validity of age-based "self-interest" perspective for explaining attitudes toward intergenerational care (e.g., Busemeyer, Goerres, & Weschle, 2009; Street & Cossman, 2006; Tepe &

Vanhuysse, 2009). For example, based on a study on 12 OECD countries, Goerres and Tepe (2010) pointed out that the experience of intergenerational solidarity within the family has an impact on older people's attitudes toward public child care. The more intergenerational interaction the elderly have with their adult children, the more likely they are to support public child care. In light of this, policy preferences are context-dependent, and research on welfare preferences should take into account not only age-based self-interest but also the sociocultural contexts and the degree of intergenerational solidarity (Street & Cossman, 2006).

Overall, the interdependence of social welfare provision and intergenerational family support remain an important topic of research. To understand the family/state division of responsibility for the old and the young, family obligations are of interest because they are predictive of intergenerational support behavior: they predispose people to behave in a certain way toward their family members (Dykstra, 2011). These family obligations vary by culture. Furthermore, definitions of "welfare state" vary by culture, and differences exist in each country's social and family cultures. Finally, attitudes toward the state's provision for eldercare and child care vary, depending on the demographic structure and economic development of a country.

Social Change and Intergenerational Relationships in Taiwan

Because Taiwan is still influenced by Confucian culture, filial piety is a core family value. As a way to fulfill filial piety obligations, many adult children choose to live with their aging parents; others choose to support their aging parents financially (Lin & Yi, 2013). Nevertheless, the percentage of three-generation households has been on the decline in recent years (Tseng, Chang, & Chen, 2006). Presently, most Taiwan's elderly still receive some financial support and care from their adult children. Within a patriarchal structure, gender-based division of intergenerational support still exists when it comes to sons and daughters looking after parents (Lin, 2012; Lin & Yi, 2011). Sons are the main providers of financial and physical assistance, while daughters mostly offer emotional support to parents. Lin (2012) constructed a typology of intergenerational interaction, based on the amount of intergenerational contact and exchange of support: (a) Tight-knit: frequent contact, frequent reciprocal exchanges of support; (b) Regurgitation-feeding: frequent contact, frequent support from adult children to parents; (c) Dependent: frequent contact, financial transfers from parents to adult children; (d) Obligatory: little contact, financial transfers from adult children to parents; (e) Detached: little contact, and few exchanges of support. In Taiwan, the "tight-knit"

intergenerational interaction type still characterizes the highest percentage of Taiwan's families. Overall, adult children and their parents still interact quite closely. However, it is worth noting that the interactions between young adult children with few siblings and resources and their parents are more likely to be "dependent," as the adult children mainly receive financial assistance from parents. During the past decade, the percentage of "dependent" intergenerational interactions has been on the rise.

Furthermore, as the average life expectancy gets longer, more people live in households of three generations or more. Studies of Taiwan's three-generation family relationships show that various types of exchange of intergenerational support exist among middle-aged couples, their elderly parents, and their adult children. Thirty percentage of the middle-aged parents belong to the "support upward and downward" category, supporting both their elderly parents and their adult children. Nearly, 40% of the middle-aged parents receive monetary and physical assistance from their adult children (Lin & Huang, 2017). Overall, in the East Asian society of Taiwan, intergenerational support still goes "upward" from adult children to elder parents. However, as society evolves, intergenerational support in families has started to take different forms. In Taiwan's families, when it comes to intergenerational support, other than types such as "give back upward" and "receive care from downward," there is also the "support upward and downward," meaning the generation in the middle supports both their aged parents and their adult children (Lin, 2012; Lin, Chang, & Huang, 2011; Yi & Lin, 2009). In a changing sociocultural and economic context, intergenerational relationships in families become highly adaptable to these changes.

This study combines the aforementioned ideas. Taking into account the norms of filial piety, the "needs," "resources," and social interaction between aging parents and their adult children, the goals of this study are as follows: (a) to examine the attitudes toward the family/state division of responsibility for the care of children and the elderly in Taiwan and (b) to examine the impact of needs, resources, filial piety, and intergenerational interaction on these attitudes.

Method

Data and Sample

The data used were from the 2011 Taiwan Social Change Survey, Phase 6, Wave 2 (Chang, 2013). The Family Module consisted of an island-wide sample of 2,135 adults aged 18 years and older who were randomly chosen using a multistage stratified sampling method and interviews. Due to missing

values for some of the independent variables in the model, the final sample size we use for the multivariate analyses is 2,110 individuals (male = 1,100, female = 1,010).

Measurements

Individual Characteristics. To assess individual needs and resources, the following individual characteristics were considered: gender (0 = female, 1 = male), age in years, marital status (0 = unmarried, 1 = married), and total years of schooling.

Family Context. Family resources and needs included the following variables: (a) Employment status: “dual-income” and “nondual income” families. (b) Parents (and in-laws) care demand: This is measured by the respondents’ parents’ health status. Regarding parent’s health status, respondents were asked to answer whether their parents and their spouses’ parents “have an unsatisfactory health status” on a scale from 0 to 4, with higher numbers indicating greater need to look after the parents. (c) Child care demand: This is measured by whether the respondents have to “raise children who are 12 years of age or younger.” (0 = no children; 1 = with children)

Filial Norms. To measure filial norms, this study used a filial piety scale derived from the reciprocal filial piety concept in the dual filial piety model proposed by Yeh and Bedford (2003). Respondents indicated how important each statement was to them. The scale includes four items: (a) be grateful to your parents for raising you, (b) be nice and kind to your parents regardless of how they have treated you, (c) support your parents financially to make their lives more comfortable, and (d) attend a parent’s funeral no matter how far away you live. Respondents rated each item on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5), so that high scores represented strong normative perceptions. The value of Cronbach’s alpha is .672.

Intergenerational Interaction. Based on the intergenerational solidarity model (Bengtson & Schrader, 1982), this study takes into account factors such as intergenerational living arrangements, intergenerational support, and intergenerational relationship quality, to measure intergenerational interaction behaviors and experiences in families. (a) Intergenerational living arrangements. Living arrangement types were divided into two categories: coresidence, or not coresidence with their parent(s). (b) Intergenerational support: This was measured by the financial support which the

respondent (and his or her spouse) receive from parents (and in-law). The questions are as follows: "Have you or your spouse received any financial assistance from your parent(s) or in-law for things such as a house purchase, renting a house, business expenses, or other material support since marriage?" (0 = No, 1 = Yes). (c) Intergenerational relationship quality: Intergenerational relationship quality is defined by how satisfied the respondent is with family life. Family life satisfaction was measured by the question: "Generally speaking, are you satisfied with your family life?" The answers to this question were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 5, in which a higher score indicates higher family life satisfaction. While using a single item to measure intergenerational relationship quality has its limitation in subsequent interpretations of findings, this global indicator adds an important dimension to the construction of intergenerational interaction in our analyses.

Characteristics of the respondents are presented in Table 1. The average age of the sample was 48.61 years. The mean education was 11.29 years, ranging from 0 to 18 years. About 60% of the sample was married. The proportion of dual-income families was 21.7%. However, 17% of the sample had school-age children. Furthermore, the sample reported high filial norms. The filial norms score for this sample averaged 4.76 out of a possible 5 points. Regarding intergenerational interaction, 38.2% sample coresided with their parent(s). Indeed, 40% of the sample received assistance from their parent(s). In addition, our data demonstrate that the quality of the intergenerational relationship between the sample and their parent(s) was high (mean = 4.00 on a 5-point scale).

Intergenerational Care Responsibility. To assess attitudes toward intergenerational care responsibilities, this study focuses on attitudes concerning responsibility for underage children and responsibility for the frail elderly. This focus is similar to that of the MULTILINKS research program (Saraceno & Keck, 2008), which examine family policies in EU countries. However, the main goal of the MULTILINKS research program is to compare welfare programs carried out by the EU states, so as to analyze family policy perspectives in each country. The present study focuses specifically on attitudes toward "care for children" and "care for the elderly," and constructs indicators about attitudes toward the balance of state versus family responsibility for intergenerational care. Attitudes toward intergenerational care responsibility was measured with the following question: Generally speaking, would you consider the following matters to be the responsibility of the government, or the responsibility of families? (a) To provide care of the elderly, (b) To provide a decent standard of living for the old, (c) To raise children, (d) To

Table 1. Description of Analytic Variables (N = 2,110).

Variables	Range	M (SD)	n (%)
Individual characteristics			
Age	20-97	48.61 (17.88)	
Years of schooling	0-18	11.29 (4.77)	
Male			1,100 (52.1)
Female			1,010 (47.9)
Marital status			
Unmarried			852 (40.4)
Married			1,258 (59.6)
Family context-related variables			
Employment status			
Nondual income			1,653 (78.3)
Dual income			457 (21.7)
Parents (and in-law) (G1) care demand	0-4	0.63 (0.81)	
Child (G3) care demand			
Have school-age children			360 (17.1)
Nonschool-age children			1,750 (82.9)
Filial norms	1-5	4.76 (0.39)	
Intergenerational interaction			
Intergenerational living arrangement			
Not coresidence			1,303 (61.8)
Coresidence			807 (38.2)
Intergenerational support			
Did not receive support from G1			1,750 (60.3)
Received support from G1			360 (39.7)
Intergenerational relationship quality	1-5	4.00 (0.79)	

pay for children’s educational expenses. Possible answers were government, half-and-half, or families. Respondents rated each item on a 5-point scale corresponding to the following categories: *all the responsibility of the government*, *mostly the responsibility of the government*, *half-and-half*, *mostly the responsibility of individuals/families*, and *all the responsibility of the individuals/families*. People who answered *all the responsibility of the government* or *mostly the responsibility of the government* were put in the “Government” category; the “Half-and-half” group was composed of those who answered *half-and-half*; and the “Families” group was composed of those who answered *mostly the responsibility of individuals/families* or *all the responsibility of the individuals/families*.

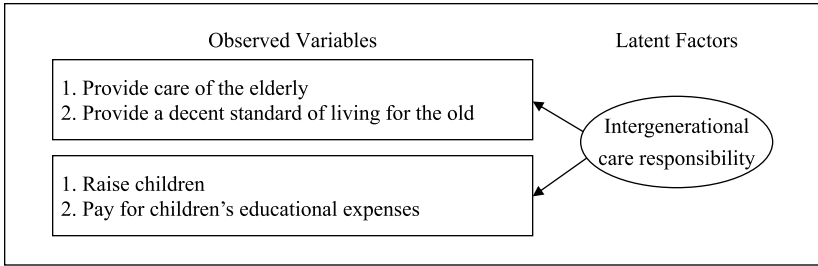


Figure 1. Observed variables and latent factor of intergenerational care responsibility.

Finally, latent class analysis (LCA) was used to examine the underlying patterns of people's attitudes toward intergenerational family responsibility. As stated above, four indicators of intergenerational care responsibility were dichotomized to explore the latent structural pattern in intergenerational care responsibility (Figure 1). This study used the program *Mplus* version 6.0 to conduct the analysis.

Results

Descriptive Analyses

How do the people of Taiwan think that responsibility for child and elderly care should be divided between the family and state? Looking at Table 2, no matter whether it is providing care for the elderly or providing a decent standard of living for the old, a majority of the respondents (61% and 53.9%, respectively) are inclined to agree that elderly care should be carried out by both family and the state. On the other hand, as to child care, especially child raising, nearly 60% of the people agree that this is mainly the family's responsibility. In other words, the majority of the sample (59.6%) are inclined to agree that child care is the family's responsibility.

Latent Class Analysis

Taking a further step, we used LCA to create a typology of underlying attitudes toward intergenerational care responsibility. The first step in this analysis is to determine the number of latent classes needed to characterize the data. We compared models with different numbers of latent classes to select a model with the optimal balance of fit (Lin & Dayton, 1997). Table 3 presented the fit indices and inferential test statistics for one-, two-,

Table 2. Attitudes Toward Intergenerational Care Responsibility ($N = 2,110$).

Value items	Government		Half-and-half		Families	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Provide care of the elderly	362	17.2	1,288	61.0	460	21.8
Provide a decent standard of living for the old	527	25.0	1,137	53.9	446	21.1
Raise children	99	4.7	753	35.7	1,258	59.6
Pay for children’s educational expenses	210	10.0	962	45.6	938	44.5

Table 3. Model Fit for the Optimal Number of Classes in the Latent Class Analysis ($N = 2,110$).

Number of types	1	2	3	4
AIC	15679.356	14552.422	14055.490	13802.131
BIC	15724.591	14648.548	14202.506	14000.036
Adjusted BIC	15699.175	14594.537	14119.901	13888.837
Entropy	—	0.659	0.701	0.776
L^2	2219.660	1074.726	559.794	288.435
<i>df</i>	72	63	54	45
<i>p</i>	.0000	.0000	.0000	.0268

Note. AIC = Akaike information criterion; BIC = Bayesian information criterion; *df* = degrees of freedom.

three-, and four-class solutions. In all models, the L^2 statistic was statistically significant for the two-class and three-class models but significance declined for the four-class model, which signified that four latent classes provided a good fit to the data of each sample. Entropy was highest for four-class model. Furthermore, AIC, BIC, and adjusted BIC decreased for every solution over one-class, suggesting a four-class solution to be the best fit for the data.

Table 4 displays the maximum likelihood estimates of the latent class proportions for the four-type model, and the conditional probabilities of item responses for each latent class for each of the four indicators of people’s attitudes toward intergenerational care responsibility (probabilities greater than .6 are indicated with an asterisk). The task of labeling the latent classes requires inspection of the conditional probabilities associated with the manifest indicators within each class. Using the pattern of these probabilities, we assigned the labels to describe the latent classes.

Table 4. Conditional Probabilities of Item Responses for Each Latent Class for Indicator of Intergenerational Care Responsibility ($N = 2,110$).

Items	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
	Family cares for elders and children	Family cares mainly for children	Cooperation between family and government	Government cares for the elderly
<i>n</i>	329	931	547	303
%	15.59	44.12	25.92	14.37
Provide care of the elderly				
Government	0.020	0.076	0.065	0.779*
Half-and-half	0.077	0.803*	0.896*	0.179
Families	0.903*	0.122	0.039	0.042
Provide a decent standard of living for the old				
Government	0.068	0.123	0.155	0.963*
Half-and-half	0.051	0.748*	0.822*	0.011
Families	0.881*	0.129	0.024	0.026
Raise children				
Government	0.013	0.000	0.062	0.201
Half-and-half	0.052	0.173	0.925*	0.383
Families	0.935*	0.827*	0.013	0.416
Pay for children's educational expenses				
Government	0.045	0.023	0.156	0.301
Half-and-half	0.132	0.391	0.844*	0.417
Families	0.823*	0.586	0.000	0.282

Note. Latent class probabilities greater than 0.6 are considered relatively high and are indicated with an asterisk.

Four types were found for people's attitudes toward intergenerational care responsibility. The first class had high probabilities on both child care and elderly care are "family's responsibility" items, thus, these respondents (15.59%) are labeled "family cares for elders and children." The second class had high probabilities on elderly care are "half-and-half" items and high probabilities on child care are "family's responsibility" items, a type we referred to as "family cares mainly for children." The Type 2 attitude toward intergenerational care responsibility is that government and family should cooperate to take care of the elderly, and child care should be the family's responsibility. The number of people expressing the attitude of "family cares mainly for children" was the highest (44.12%). The Type 3 attitude is that family and government should contribute "half and half" for child and elderly care. These (25.92%) are labeled "cooperation between family and government." The

Type 4 attitude toward intergenerational care responsibility is that elderly care is the government's responsibility. These (14.37%) are labeled "government cares for the elderly." In summary, different types of attitudes toward intergenerational care responsibility were found in Taiwan. The most common type was "family mainly cares for children." The next most common type was "cooperation between family and government," followed by "family cares elders and children" and "government cares for the elderly."

Multinomial Logistic Regression

A two-level multinomial logistic regression analysis was undertaken to test the associations between intergenerational care responsibility type and personal characteristics, family context, filial norms, and intergenerational interactions. The dependent variable in the model represents the four latent patterns describing public opinion about how responsibility for care for the elderly and children should be divided between the family and state. The reference type for the dependent variable was "family cares for elders and children" type. Estimated logit coefficients were transformed into odds ratios (*ORs*) for ease of interpretation. We also show tests of statistical significance (Table 5).

In Model 1, personal characteristics and family context variables were taken into account. The results show that people who are older are more likely to be the "government cares for the elderly" type rather than the "family cares for elders and children" type ($OR = 1.013, p < .10$). Women are more likely to lean toward the "cooperation between family and government" and "family cares mainly for children" types ($OR = 0.664, p < .01$; $OR = 0.733, p < .05$). In other words, men are more likely to be the "family cares for elders and children" type rather than the "cooperation between family and government" type or "family cares mainly for children" type. People who are more highly educated are more likely to be the "family mainly cares for children" type rather than the "family cares for elders and children" type ($OR = 1.040, p < .05$). Analyses of family context variables reveal that dual-income families are more likely to be "cooperation between family and government" ($OR = 1.661, p < .05$) and "government cares for the elderly" types ($OR = 1.625, p < .05$), rather than the "family cares for elders and children" type. People who need to provide care for the elderly parents have a higher probability of falling into the "cooperation between family and government" type ($OR = 1.207, p < .10$). Those who need to care for children are more likely to be in the "family cares for elders and children" type rather than the "family mainly cares for children" type ($OR = 0.637, p < .05$).

Table 5. Multinomial Logistic Regression Analysis of People's Attitudes Toward Intergenerational Care Responsibility (N = 2,110).

Latent class predictors	Odds ratios of latent class membership versus "family cares for elders and children" class			
	Model 1		Model 2	
	Family cares mainly for children	Cooperation between family and government	Government cares for the elderly	Government cares for the elderly
Age	0.994	0.994	1.013*	1.013*
Gender (0 = female; 1 = male)	0.733**	0.664***	1.077	1.065
Marital status (0 = unmarried; 1 = married)	1.002	1.208	1.179	1.331
Years of schooling	1.040**	1.022	1.017	1.029
Employment (0 = nondual; 1 = dual)	1.327	1.661***	1.625**	1.648**
Parent(s) care demand (parents' health status)	1.006	1.207*	0.890	0.836
Children care demand (0 = no school-age children, 1 = have school-age children)	0.637**	1.013	1.033	0.998
Filial norms				
Living arrangement (coresidence with parent(s); 0 = noncoresidence, 1 = coresidence)				
Receive parent(s) support (0 = no, 1 = yes)				
Intergenerational relationship quality				
χ^2/df		116.526***/21		150.031***/33
Cox and Snell		.054		.069
Nagelkerke		.058		.075
McFadden		.022		.028

Note. *df* = degrees of freedom.

p* < .10. *p* < .05. ****p* < .01. *****p* < .001.

In Model 2, filial norms and intergenerational interactions also turn out to be significant predictors of intergenerational care responsibility type, and largely along the lines we had expected. People who have a stronger sense of filial norms have a higher probability of falling into the “family cares for elders and children” type rather than the “government cares for the elderly” type ($OR = 0.700, p < .10$). When people have higher intergenerational relationship quality, it decreases the likelihood of being in the “government cares for the elderly” type and “cooperation between family and government” type ($OR = 0.651, p < .001$; $OR = .816, p < .05$). Furthermore, this study found no significant effect of “coresidence with parents” and “receives parents’ support” on people’s attitude toward intergenerational care responsibility.

Conclusion and Discussion

In recent decades, Taiwan has experienced steadily declining fertility and increased life expectancy. The growing proportion of elderly puts the state under increasing financial pressure. Families with fewer children are faced with greater responsibilities for providing support to aging parents and grandparents. People face dilemmas of how to cope with the increasing challenges of caring both for their elderly parents and for their children. The development of social welfare policies with regard to both children and the old has caught the attention of the Taiwanese public recently. This study discussed research on public opinion about how responsibility for care for the elderly and children should be divided between the family and state, and analyzed the links between individual characteristics, family context, filial norms, and intergenerational interactions in Taiwan on people’s attitudes toward intergenerational care responsibility. In general, our research results show that, on “care for the elderly,” people in Taiwan tend to agree that family and the state should share the responsibility with families, while “care for children,” is seen as the family’s responsibility.

Furthermore, using LCA, the researchers examined the latent patterns of attitudes toward intergenerational care responsibility. The results show that there are indeed different types of attitudes toward intergenerational care responsibility. Placing “family” (the responsibility should be taken by the family) and “state” (the responsibility should be taken by the state) at two ends of a continuous spectrum, the four types of attitudes held by people toward intergenerational care responsibility can be defined as follows, “family cares for elders and children,” “family mainly cares for children,” “cooperation between family and government,” and “government

cares for the elderly.” When looking into the ratio held by each type and its meaning, it becomes possible to learn Taiwanese people’s views on the care carried out by families and their attitudes toward the state welfare schemes in depth. First of all, people in the “family cares for elders and children” type think that both child and elderly care are the family’s responsibility. The family has traditionally been the basic unit of Chinese society. In present-day Taiwan, more than 15% of the people still think that family should bear the major responsibility for taking care of both children and the elderly. Moreover, “family mainly cares for children” has the highest percentage of adherents (44%). Nearly, 26% of the people believe that government and family should cooperate to take care of the both the elderly and children. Finally, 14% believe that the government should take care of the elderly. Judging from these findings, the majority of the people (15% plus 44%) do tend to think that family should provide care for children, a sign of an “intergenerational downward slope.” From a Chinese sociocultural viewpoint, filial norms in a traditional family are all about “giving back”: the parental generation raises the filial generation till it reaches adulthood; then, the filial generation looks after the aged parental generation. The two-way “raising” and “giving back” is not just about reciprocity. There are cultural ethics which cannot be ignored. Family continuity is important in Chinese society. The cultural norms reminds parents that they are responsible for their offspring; and adult children that they are responsible for their parents. However, when a family has limited resources, it is possible for the members to value children more than the elderly, resulting in an “intergenerational downward slope.”

Nearly, one in four people are “cooperation between family and government” types, identifying with the idea that both family and government have responsibility for child and elderly care. Also, nearly 15% identify with the “government cares for the elderly” type, meaning they think that elderly care is the government’s responsibility. In comparison, studies carried out in the West suggest that people mostly support a “mixed responsibility” system. Research results show that in welfare states in the West, the government has not formally replaced families; rather, the family share the responsibility by providing informal intergenerational support (e.g., Johansson et al., 2003; Motel-Klingebiel et al., 2005). This study found that people’s views on intergenerational care responsibility in Taiwan have also started to move toward “cooperation between family and government.” In light of this, it may be the government’s mission to carry out state welfare policies which can further respond to society’s development and people’s needs.

What are the factors that affect people's attitudes toward intergenerational care responsibility? This study analyzed factors with regard to individual characteristics, family contexts, filial norms, and intergenerational family interactions. The results show that elderly people are more inclined to endorse "government cares for the elderly," meaning that the state should be responsible for most of the care for the elderly. Furthermore, people who have higher needs for taking care of parents prefer the "cooperation between family and government" model. They believe that the state and family should share the responsibility of caring for the elderly and children. These findings corresponds to standard political economy models which suggest that people's attitudes toward welfare are much about age-based self-interest (e.g., Persson & Tabellini, 2000). On the other hand, women are more likely to lean toward the "cooperation between family and government" and "family cares mainly for children" types. Men support the "family cares for both children and elderly" type, suggesting that men are more likely to lean in a conservative direction. Dual-income families lean more toward "cooperation between family and government" and endorse "government cares for the elderly." Perhaps when both wives and husbands work, the couple is more open to the idea of the government taking responsibility for the elderly, in part or in total. Nowadays, women are still the primary caretaker of the family and household in Taiwan. Our result also implies that the practical need to look after family members can affect attitudes toward intergenerational care responsibility. Overall, for intergenerational care responsibility, the attitudes expressed among Taiwanese samples clearly shows that attitudes toward roles and duties taken by the "state" or attitudes toward "welfare for the elderly" and "welfare for children" conform to the "self-interest" principle. The attitude toward intergenerational care also shows the life cycle effect which takes into account individual and family needs and suggests that each age group can benefit in a way (Blekesaune & Quadagno, 2003; Svallfors, 2008).

Furthermore, when individual characteristics and family context variables are controlled, filial norms and family interaction experiences still significantly influence attitudes toward intergenerational care responsibility. The more a person identifies with filial piety, the more he or she falls into the "family cares for elders and children" type, meaning that both child and elderly care are a family's responsibility. On the other hand, the less satisfied an individual is with family life, the more likely he or she will opt for "government cares for the elderly." However, neither coresidence nor receiving support from parents predict attitudes toward apportioning responsibility. Judging from this, social norms and perceived quality of family life indeed are related to attitudes toward intergenerational care

responsibility, but direct interaction is not related to these attitudes. In sum, our analyses point out that an individual's attitudes toward welfare state policies are significantly related to both self-interest and sociocultural norms as well as the perceived quality of intergenerational family relations. In Taiwan, filial piety and the quality of interaction experiences in families produce important effects on people's attitudes toward welfare for different age groups, such as the elderly and children. Welfare policy preferences are context-dependent and are influenced by norms and motives of intergenerational solidarity. Hence, we argue that interpreting those factors from the perspective of age-based self-interest is inadequate and should also take into account normative factors and interaction outcomes.

Comparative studies on family policies in European countries have shown that it remains difficult to propose one ideal family-policy model for all European welfare states (e.g., Daly & Klammer, 2005; Kremer, 2007; Mischke, 2014). Mischke (2014) analyzed related literature and pointed out that discussing public opinion toward welfare policies is an extremely important research subject. Currently in Taiwan, there has been a great deal of change in the field of child and elderly care policy, and family living arrangements are becoming increasingly heterogeneous. Therefore, it is important to know people's perceptions of ongoing changes as well as their needs and policy preferences. In Taiwan, as well as in other East Asian societies, studies on attitudes toward welfare policies regarding elderly care and child care remain inadequate and are mostly confined to a focus on one or the other, either the elderly or children. This study attempts to integrate attitudes toward care responsibility for both the elderly and children. Results from LCA suggest attitudes toward who should be responsible for child care lean toward the family responsibility while attitudes toward who should be responsible for elderly care lean toward both them being seen as the responsibility of both the family and the state. Different from her Western counterpart, Taiwan, society shows the importance of normative influences, notably filial piety, in shaping attitudes toward intergenerational care responsibilities.

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