THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
CHRISTIAN DAUGHTERS-IN-LAW AND
THEIR NON-CHRISTIAN MOTHERS-IN-LAW IN TAIWAN:
A THEOLOGICAL AND PASTORAL CHALLENGE

BY

YUNG-JU HUNG

SUBMIT IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

THEOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES
SCHOOL OF CRITICAL STUDIES
COLLEGE OF ARTS
UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

SEPTEMBER

2016

Abstract

What are the relational dynamics between Taiwanese Christian daughters-in-law (D-Ls) and their non-Christian mothers-in-law (M-Ls)? How does Christian faith influence their intergenerational relations? How best can a caregiver offer appropriate pastoral support and assist Christian women in dealing with their non-Christian M-Ls? These issues and problems have been largely ignored in the relative literature and have arisen from of my pastoral work and personal experience. As a female pastor and D-L, set out this study seeking to integrate professional and academic knowledge in order to answer these questions.

This study focuses on women's experiences, attempting to reveal those relationship issues, and determine any problems underscoring the daily interactions of D-L—M-L in Taiwanese society. In order to meet these aims, the thesis engages with feminist pastoral theology, social science methodology, psychological analysis, and cultural studies.

The first part of this study explores literature relevant to the topic, and the living context of Taiwanese D-Ls, as well as feminist pastoral theology. It is concerned with how traditional Chinese and Western cultures define roles and construct intergenerational relationships. Social transition, tension between tradition and modernity, and the struggles and challenges in relation to these intergenerational relationships are examined. The traditional male-centred theological paradigms, in which gender is interpreted and which must be reinterpreted and reconstructed for developing feminist theology, is also discussed.

The second part of this study describes its feminist research methodology. It sets out a framework for collecting data to aid in developing an understanding of Taiwanese Christian women's experience. Focus group discussions were used to explore the collective voice of the D-Ls. The last part of this study involves the presentation of research findings, discussions, and suggestions for further thought and action. It illustrates key findings from analysis of the focus group discussions, and describes the daily interaction and cultural ideology they present, along with the roles husbands, fathers-in-law (F-L), children, and other family members play in the web of relationships. The findings reveal that D-Ls face the challenges of an androcentric and hierarchical family culture, a close-knit family web, and unequal power relations. Different religious practices impact upon the D-L－M-L

relationship and this can be a source of tension or conflict. Christian teachings also convey potentially androcentric messages for women that can affect their self-image and cause other harmful consequences. However, many participating women indicated that Christian beliefs provide them with a spiritual strength which has transformed their lives, and led to relational restoration. The Bible, teachings and church groups provide religious resources that support them in the face of relational challenges.

I end with self-reflection, noting the need for further theological construction, and propose an alternative model of Triune love, based upon feminist interpretation, as a foundation for family renewal and women's emancipation. This theological model has implications for new forms of pastoral care which can promote gender equality and non-hierarchical, intergenerational relationships.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

Deep gratitude goes to several institutions and people for their contributions in different ways to making this study a reality.

First of all, I would like to thank Prof. Heather Walton, my supervisor, for her guidance, encouragement, patience and friendship. I have been extremely lucky to have a supervisor who not only inspired me to develop this study, but also cared about my learning journey. I want to express my thanks to Prof. Stephen Pattison and Dr. Alison Jasper, whose suggestions made this work clearer. My particular thanks to Taiwan Baptist Christian Seminary and those friends who generously provided the financial support, prayer, and love over the course of this study. This research would not have been completed without their support.

I am grateful for those who participated and assisted in conducting the focus groups. Without their generous assistance the women's voices would not have been heard and this research could not have been completed. A special thank goes to May Hsu who led the focus group discussions and spent much time with me travelling around Taiwan.

During the journey of the study my husband Sheng Yu and son Chih Shuan have never wavered in their support and encouragement of my academic pursuits and my daring to dream. My sincere thanks to my dear friend Joyce Ren who has also offered much assistance and love, I owe her a deep debt of gratitude.

Finally, I dedicate the work to the Lord for His unimaginable plans and wonderful deeds. I would not have managed to go through the study without His loving care and continuing providence.

Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that the thesis has not been submitted for the award of a higher degree elsewhere. I also declare that this work is my original contribution.

Introduction

Marriage not only establishes a family by uniting two individuals, it also creates family bonds through marital links. Every married woman potentially becomes a daughter-in-law (D-L) as well as a mother-in-law (M-L), when her adult child marries. These non-kin relationships often play a significant role in family life as they weave reciprocal relationships to provide broader networks of support, resources, guidance and emotional engagement to enrich family well-being (E. Lee, Spitze, and Logan 2003, 396; Morr Serewicz 2006, 102–3). Consequently, in-law relationships have been described as a type of triadic relationship involuntarily formed by a marital tie and is comprised of a husband, wife, and his/her parent-in-law (Morr Serewicz 2006, 102–3; Serewicz 2008, 265). This triadic relationship may be difficult and complex as each extended member of a couple is made part of their partner's newly formed family unit. Discrepancies of values and behaviour between the family of origin and that of their spouse may challenge the newlyweds' loyalty and create 'triangular tensions' in performing as a good wife/husband, daughter/son, and child-in-law. Furthermore, the D-L and M-L relationship is perceived as 'the most difficult of in-law relationships' (Morr Serewicz 2006, 101; Jang 2014, 741), because of their roles as kin-keepers and their frequent interaction with each other. This difficulty seems to be endemic across cultures (Linn and Breslerman 1996, 292; Kung 1999, 58; Morr Serewicz 2006, 102–3). In Chinese society, the D-L－M-L relationship is also regarded as one of the most difficult marrital relaitonships (Au 2009, 263).

My interest in the D-L and M-L relationship began in 1982, after my partner proposed to me. Growing up in a traditional farm family with four generations living together, I saw how my great grandmother, grandmother, mother, and uncle's wife knit together a special network of D-L－M-L. In such an environment, I was taught to be obedient, silent, and adept while performing the household chores which are regarded in Chinese culture as women's virtues and responsibility.

Although such experiences helped me learn how to be a wife and D-L, I doubted whether I was competent to play those roles in my new close-knit in-law family. My mother was also anxious that I would face complex in-law interactions because I would have aged parents-in-law and seven older sisters-in-law. Later, I did become a Hakka D-L and struggled with

my M-L.[1] The first challenge I faced was a language barrier within the family unit. I am a Holo and cannot speak the Hakka language. Therefore, I had to keep asking my husband to interpret for me in order to understand what they were saying. Moreover, our frequent interactions accentuated how different we were in values, lifestyles, educational background and religious practice as well as our methods of childcare.[2] Our differences became a source of tension and we collided with each other at times.

Furthermore, I often struggled with the alternate tensions of being a faithful minister to God's call or a filial D-L serving the in-law family. I was a full-time minister before becoming a D-L. Ministering in a Christian organisation, working fourteen hours a day and six days a week, I was required to prioritise the ministry over all other matters. Although there was no articulated acknowledgement of gender difference in the office, the work-oriented theology shaped rigid work schedules with high level ministry stress, which often caused conflicts between personal and job requirements. Moreover, my husband and I were the only married couple amongst twenty single colleagues, who were uncomprehending of our situation as well as my conflicting roles as a wife and D-L. As a faithful minister committed to the mission, I found the more I spent time on my ministering work the less energy I gave to my parents-in-law. Matters were complicated. I felt distressed and guilty about my unfilial behaviour and being unable to meet my M-L's expectations. She could not understand how much pressure was on me as a professional, and expected me to prioritise family matters and bear more children. The fact that I couldn't manage the heavy workload and be a good D-L within the close-knit in-law family was highly challenging. I burned out following the birth of my child.

Later on, my husband and I both resigned from our jobs to receive theological education. This allowed us to reflect and examine ourselves in order to create a balanced life. Although most Taiwanese Christians recognise the importance of keeping a balance between serving God and family, many ministers are expected to live by prioritising the ministry. They consider 'put God first' above the needs of their families or themselves. From my observations, this is particularly the case amongst Christians in Taiwan. There is no doubt that we should love the Lord with all of our hearts, souls, minds, and strength

---

[1]   Every ethnic group has their own dialects, family culture, and rituals. The section of *3.2.1*.briefly introduces the main ethnic groups, including Holo people, Hakka people, and mainlander in Taiwan.
[2]   My D-L represents a typical model of traditional Hakka woman, whose is hard working, self-sacrificial, a good housewife and a diligent farm worker (Sung 2012, 1–4).

(Luke 10:27). However, when this command becomes a 'theology of overwork' this dishonours the Lord, who cares for us and requires us to love ourselves as well as our families. Since becoming involved in active ministry, I have discovered that many other Christian women also struggle with their M-Ls, and come to their pastors seeking support. The origins of this thesis thus lie in the intersection between my personal, professional lives and the deep pastoral concern I now feel to support other women who are suffering with overwhelming and conflicting demands.

I have attempted to deepen my understanding of intergenerational relationships; however, current practical theology provides little guidance on these issues. Few materials can be found within Christian literature, and theological research on the in-law relationship can hardly be found in the Taiwanese context. Although the issues of D-L－M-L relationships are fundamental within family life, they have not been researched in significant depth. Both in Taiwan and the West (Au 2009, 262), relatively few academic contributions to the respective literatures focus upon this aspect of family research. For me, a course on Feminist Theology that I undertook at the University of Glasgow challenged my theological thinking and inspired me to consciously embed the androcentric bias of the family culture and practical theology in my own context. Although Taiwan is a developed country and women's right, status, and wellbeing have gradually improved in recently decades, the society has been conceptualised a 'modified patriarchal society' (Xu and Lai 2002b, 218–19), which promotes the androcentric family system and fails to reference gender equality.[3] Moreover, the existing traditional philosophy and culture, such as Confucianism, Taoism and folk religions, reinforce this inequality and continue to influence moral norms and family values.

Those observations, experiences, and the pastoral encounters I have experienced have motivated me to further explore women's relationships as well as the hidden stories of the Christian D-Ls. As I browsed library catalogues in various libraries and seminaries for feminist/women's theology in relation to the Taiwanese context, only a few search results were achieved, indicating that Taiwanese women's theology has received little attention (C. S. Farris, Lee, and Rubinstein 2004, 5). Because feminist perspectives on pastoral

---

[3]   Sexual inequality still appears in the work place, including job promotions and earnings (W.-C. Yu and Manrique 2009, 54–55). Many Taiwanese women continue to receive a heavy load of domestic responsibility and are likely to have low esteem within the family (C. Y. C. Chu and Yu 2010, 132–33; C. Lin 2007, 2; H.-Y. Hsu 2013, 37).

issues are lacking I came to see it as necessary to embark on this research journey in order to begin to offer women friendly pastoral care to assist Taiwanese D-Ls.

This thesis concerns the relational dynamics between Christian D-Ls and their non-Christian M-Ls. It focuses on women's experiences, attempting to reveal their relationship issues, and to discover what problems underscore their daily interactions in Taiwanese society. In order to meet these aims I engage with feminist pastoral theology, social science methodology, psychological analysis, and cultural studies.

The research has three parts and is divided into six chapters. The first part of this study explores the literature relevant to the topic, and the living context of Taiwanese D-Ls as well as feminist pastoral theology. Chapter 1 is concerned with how traditional Chinese culture and Western culture define the roles in regard to the D-L－M-L relationship. The relevant Western and Taiwanese literature sheds light on the ambivalent, difficult in-law relationships, and on the cultural differences between individualism (the West) and familism (Taiwan). It has attempted to explicate how the two core traditional cultural traits － xiao (孝, filial piety) and respecting aged people construct this intergenerational relationship.[4] The social transition, tension between tradition and modernity (H.-Y. Hsu 2013, 35), and the struggles and challenges in relation to the intergenerational relationships are examined here.

Chapter 2 examines the traditional male-centred theological paradigms in which gender is interpreted and which must be reinterpreted and reconstructed for developing feminist theology. It is important to recognise particularity of context and understand the distinct experiences of women because these are important resources for constructing a feminist theology for Taiwanese women living in Southeast Asia. I explain how globalisation shifts socio-economic conditions, culture and religious contexts in the age of postcolonialism. Such cultural phenomenon and social changes shape women's lives, self-identity, and spirituality, since women deeply interconnect to their relational networks in the web of human living. Women's faith, identity and embodiment, in relation to my concerns for Taiwanese D-Ls, are discussed.

---

[4] The term of *xiao* or *hsiao* is commonly translated as 'filial piety'. I adopt the Confucian term of *xiao* to refer Chinese familial virtue in this paper in order to specify the unique trait of the ethical concept and cultural practice.

The second part of this study describes my feminist research methodology. Chapter 3 sets out a framework for collecting valuable information to aid in developing an understanding of Taiwanese Christian women's experience. I used five different focus group discussions to collect the stories of 41 Taiwanese D-Ls. My research design and the methods and techniques used in the research process are explicated.

The last part of this study is the presentation of my research findings, discussions, and suggestions. Chapters 4 and 5 set out the key findings from my analysis of the discussions in the focus groups. Chapter 4 is organised around three dimensions to manifest a variety of D-L－M-L interactions. I describe the daily interaction and the cultural ideology they present, along with the roles husbands, F-Ls, children, and other family members play in the web of relationships. Chapter 5 is categorised into three dimensions to look at religious interactions and how D-Ls receive the challenge of religious differences. Firstly, I explore how different beliefs can become a source of tensions or conflicts. Secondly, the positive dimension of the religious strength, such as life transformation and relational restoration, is addressed. Thirdly, I explore what religious resources Christian D-Ls have received. These resources include the Bible, teachings, courses, and church groups. The negative aspects of Christian beliefs raised by women participants are also analysed.

Chapter 6, the concluding chapter, summarises the significant themes and issues of my findings concerning D-L and M-L relationships. Christian D-Ls face the challenges of an androcentric and hierarchical family culture, a close-knit living family web, and unequal power relations. I discuss how the different religious practices impact upon relationships, and how Christian beliefs can become the spiritual strength to support D-Ls in the face of these challenges. I end by noting the need for further theological reflection and proposing an alternative model of Triune love based upon feminist interpretation, as a basis for family renewal and women's emancipation. This theological model has implications for new forms of pastoral care which can promote gender equality and non-hierarchical, intergenerational relationships.

Chapter One: The Living Context of Taiwanese Daughters-in-law

This chapter sets out to provide a foundational understanding of the relationship between D-Ls and M-Ls in Taiwan. Literature relevant to the topic and the Chinese cultural traditions that greatly influence intergenerational relationships is examined. The latter involves a close examination of the Chinese concept of *xiao* and veneration of the aged. The last section details and analyses the struggles and challenges of the intergenerational relationships in contemporary Taiwan.

1.1   The Relationship between D-Ls and M-Ls

The focus of this chapter will be upon the Taiwanese context. However, because some basic relational roles within the family have cross cultural similarities, I will begin by assessing how relevant Western literature can further our understanding of Taiwanese D-L and M-L relationships, I then move towards a discussion of different family cultures in the West and Chinese society.

1.1.1 Ambivalent intergenerational relationships and developmental theory

The relationships between married couples and their parents-in-law are ambivalent and complicated, involving both feelings of affection and resentment in the relevant parties (Willson, Shuey, and Elder 2003; C. Rittenour and Soliz 2009, 69). For example, childrearing practices may become a source of tension or an opportunity for cooperation between the D-Ls and their M-Ls. The two parties may have increased conflicts when the D-L give birth to her first child, and their child-rearing practices collide with each other (Fischer 1983, 188). However, such an event, whether involving conflict or not, may enrich reciprocal relationships and provide intergenerational helping opportunities of benefit of the whole family (Bryant, Conger, and Meehan 2001, 625).

Some scholars indicate that the unclear family boundaries set between the married children and their families of origin effect family function and often become a source of relational conflicts with in-laws in western nuclear families (Silverstein 1990; Cotterill 1994, 72–73; Linn and Breslerman 1996, 294). Linn and Breslerman report that most conflicts that arise involve M-Ls who anticipate a loose boundary between themselves and their married child

and the spouse of that married child. The D-Ls, on the contrary, want to set clear boundaries. For example, a M-L wants to maintain tight-bond with her married son, while the D-L prefers to keep a safe distance from her M-L. It is also the cases that people who maintain stronger loyalties to their own parents are to be more often involved in relational conflicts with their parents-in-law (Linn and Breslerman 1996, 294).

As to the issue of intergenerational connections and boundaries, some scholars employ the framework of individual developmental theory to explore such relations (Jean Turner, Young, and Black 2006; Merrill 2007). According to this theory, the foremost developmental task of newlyweds is to create a new family, distinct from their original family. As such, the relationship of newlywed couples with their original families is characterised by separation and increasing autonomy. Alongside this, newlyweds maintain their kinship connections and seek to develop in-law family relationships. The developmental task of parents, Deborah Merrill suggests, is to set proper intergenerational boundaries, allow their adult child to leave home, and accept their in-law children as kinsfolk (Merrill 2007, 131). If the parents successfully go through this stage, they will develop good intergenerational relationships. If not, they will experience the difficulties and conflicts that constitute triadic family relations and be stagnant in their development at this stage (Merrill 2007, 4). Women's identity is shaped by their relational network, such phases of stagnant development will create 'role strain'[1] between the D-Ls and the M-Ls (Jean Turner, Young, and Black 2006, 589).

However, the failure of the adult children to separate from their parents will also result in a struggle to establish a healthy relationship between the involved parties, and may generate negative feelings in the adult child with regard to their spouse and/or the in-laws. It should further be noted that young couples have gained greater autonomy and this assists them to build better family relationships with both their in-laws and their own family. Because the growing sense of autonomy potentially generates greater life satisfaction, which develops more satisfying intergenerational relationships (Linn and Breslerman 1996, 294–95). A lack of autonomy will reduce the satisfaction and increase tensions between the D-Ls and the M-Ls. The next section will discuss the D-L－M-L difficulties in relational tensions.

---

[1] 'Role strain' is intended to convey that an individual feels it difficult to fulfil the obligations of the different roles that individual plays (Leichter et al. 1967, 163).

1.1.2 Difficult D-L − M-L relationships

In-law problems are often placed in the category of 'marriage problems' (Linn and Breslerman 1996, 291), on the assumption that married couples and their parents-in-law are interdependent on many levels (Bryant, Conger, and Meehan 2001, 614; Morr Serewicz 2006, 109). As Bryant et al. note, parental interactions considerably influence the perceptions of marital stability, commitment, and satisfaction, which are used to evaluate the quality of marital relationships or marital success. Their work reveals how in-law parents influence judgements upon the quality of marital relationships among husbands and wives in long-term marriages.[2] Some Western researchers have turned their attention to the potentially painful aspect of in-law difficulties in family life.[3]

Gender plays a key role and has a major influence upon in-law relationship. Women as kin-keepers seek to sustain kinship ties (Cotterill 1994, 62–76; Leach and Braithwaite 1996).[4] Greater levels of involvement with caring work and family chores unsurprisingly lead mothers to participate more in their children's lives than fathers do. Thus mothers may find it more difficult to let their children go, or lay aside their usual protective practices when their sons get married. A further difficulty for a mother is that while she should accept a D-L as a new family member she may appear to compete for the love of her adult son. On the other hand, wives/husbands may sometimes become jealous and compete with their parents-in-law for the affection and devotion of their spouses. The competitive behaviour for the affection of the son, husband, or parents-in-law creates tensions (Silverstein 1990). In addition, married couples tend to have more conflicts with their

---

[2]   The relationships between husbands and parents-in-law particularly impacts upon husbands' perception of marital success. Relatedly, marital success impacts the feelings of husbands' social efficacy, which in turn increase or decrease their power to deal with their in-law relationships. Gender differences lead husbands and wives to offer differing perceptions of what constitutes marital success and lead wives to minimise the parents-in-law relationships, according to Bryant's investigation. Parents may judge negatively their daughter's marital success and if they're aware that their loved daughter is unsatisfied, for whatever reason, with her husband. This, in turn, often generates discord with the son-in-law (Bryant, Conger, and Meehan 2001, 614–16, 624).

[3]   Pamela Cotterill notes, anthropological studies often focus on the kinship relationships of Asian women. Feminists usually stress the relationships between mothers and daughters, and mothers and sons (Fischer 1983, 187; Silverstein 1990, 398; Cotterill 1994, 1). D-Ls and M-Ls relationships have been ignored. She seeks to disclose the role of M-Ls in order to answer why culture often portrays them with negative stereotypes.

[4]   Kin-keepers are those who keeps family members connected and provide networks of support in order to maintain family relationships (Leach and Braithwaite 1996, 201–2). Margaret Leach and Dawn Braithwaite suggest that most kin-keepers are females, largely the middle-aged women, whose children are more independent and their lives are more stable.

same-sex parent-in-law rather than their differently gendered in-law parent (Silverstein 1990, 408–9).

A deep attachment, or an inappropriate connection, to her son may make the mother appears as a source of interference or threat for a newlywed couple attempting to develop their own family. As to the connection between the two generations, when the in-law parents pay less attention and give less approval to their child's partner than their own child in-law tensions can increase. Such triangular tensions and conflicts can create a sense of exclusion if the spouse is particularly intimate with, or loyal to, her/his own parents rather than their partner (Silverstein 1990, 399–400). Emotional distance and negative relationships are often the result of these complicated triadic interactions (Meyerstein 1996, 469; C. Rittenour and Soliz 2009, 68).

Such investigations on in-law relationships were conducted by Western scholars that have shed light on Chinese family relations. In the light of globalisation, Chinese societies have been greatly impacted upon by Western culture and it has had a great effect upon people's lives (Yeh, Chang, and Tsao 2012). The relationships between Chinese D-Ls and their M-Ls are increasingly recognised as requiring investigation due to westernisation. Although this intergenerational relationship appears to have many shared characteristic features (Yeh and Bedford 2003, 225), observations from scholars immersed only in Western culture may not be most helpful in analysing interactional relations within non-Western societies. Differing loyalty structures and unique cultural traits from diverse cultural traditions create significant differences in interpersonal relationships (Silverstein 1990, 399–400), and the issue of the cultural context will be discussed in the next section.

1.1.3 Cultural contexts and D-L−M-L relationship

Understanding specific sociocultural contexts is indispensable in interpreting women's daily lives. Differing emphases upon individualism or collectivism lead to different cultural value within societies and these in turn impact upon family relationships. Western parents encourage their children to be independent – reflecting the individualism that permeates Western culture. Adult children assume significant autonomy and are expected to leave home to establish their own families. Thus, married couples, Morr Serewicz explains, enjoy a relatively high level of choice concerning the roles they play in in-law

relationships; often their actual daily interaction with their in-laws and their attitudes towards them will influence and shape their in-law relations (Morr Serewicz 2006, 111). Therefore, Western D-Ls have looser bonds and more ambiguous roles in relation to parents-in-law (Morr Serewicz 2006, 110; Merrill 2007, 6). Perhaps this suggests why their relationships with M-Ls have received less attention in Western research; compared with the attention that the relationship societies in which D-Ls have more defined roles has received (e.g. India, Taiwan, China, Korea, and Japan). These cultures are characterised by a high level of family focus and practise a hierarchical and patrilineal model of kinship (Meyerstein 1996, 470; Morr Serewicz 2006, 102; Y.-C. Li 2011, 1; Tang 2009, 3).[5]

In Taiwan, some scholars are acutely aware of interactional problems and have sought to explore D-L－M-L relational issues from different angles in recent decades (Che 1997; Kung 1999; Hsu S.-C. and Huang 2006; Yi and Chang 2012). From the analysis of marital and family change between 1985 and 2005 in contemporary society, Yi Chin-Chun and Chang Ying-Hwa conclude that Taiwanese women retain deep bonds to traditional roles and androcentric expectations. Their work indicates that Taiwanese culture, including Taiwanese traditions, continues to influence women's lives.[6] An understanding of Taiwanese culture is thus essential for grasping the particular context in which women's relational behaviours have been shaped. I now turn to explore how the cultural traditions continue to impact upon the women's lives.

1.2   Traditional Chinese Cultural Mores and Social Change

Taiwanese culture has developed from traditional Chinese social-culture, thus traditional Chinese mores must be given consideration when addressing family relations in Taiwan. Chinese society is associated with the patrilineal ethical system and characterised by a hierarchical social structure that Confucianism is deeply rooted within. Confucianism not only permeates conceptions of moral virtue and family values but also penetrates into

---

[5]   Indian, Taiwanese, Chinese, Korean, and Japanese societies are traditionally characterised by collectivistic and patrilineal cultures (T.-F. Wu et al. 2010, 498). Traditional Chinese family-style collectivism emphasizes family wellbeing rather than personal needs. And, the core features of a Chinese self is being connected in their relationships and the performance of roles, such as father-son, husband-wife, etc. (L. Lu and Yang 2006, 167).

[6]   The levels of education received by D-Ls will influence D-Ls and M-Ls relationships. The higher education the D-Ls received the better relational equality they achieve (Chin-Chun and Ying-Hwa 2012, xv).

every aspect of society (Bell 2008, x–xi; Xiao Q. 2001, 142–44).[7] Many scholars indicate the authoritarian hierarchical family structure, which is deeply embedded in Chinese society, mainly originated from performing two cultural practices, one which involves the practice *xiao,* and the other is the custom of respecting aged people (Gallin 1994, 3–4; Kung 1999, 58; Hsu S.-C. and Huang 2006, 36). This in turn promotes the authority of the elderly and their control over the younger generations, including D-Ls who traditionally have a low status within the family (Gallin 1986, 32–33; Kung 1999, 60). I will focus on the traditional Chinese culture and duties of Taiwanese D-Ls to explore how *xiao* and veneration of the aged manifest themselves in the D-L and M-L relationship as well as the influence of culture change in Taiwanese society.

1.2.1 Traditional Chinese culture of xiao

Families are regarded as the fundamental building blocks of sociality that provide the vital relational network for individuals. Chinese society has been described by scholars as a 'familistic society' owing to the emphasis on family relationships within the Confucian ethical tradition . A male head authorises the household emphases upon family cohesion and requires every member to be of one mind in order to build a prosperous family. This ethical system lays out the duties of various roles and sets clear boundaries in interactional behaviour: father-son, husband-wife, and older/younger brother, which is distinct to the looser relational boundaries in Western culture, with the aim of promoting social harmony (Wang Y.-R. 2010, 50).[8] Under such established patterns, the pursuit of harmonious familial relationship has been largely regarded in the private and public domains as a guiding ideal which individuals should strive to promote (R.-L. Chu, Chiu, and Chang 2012, vi).

Xiao is a basic requirement, a leading ethical concept, and a highly praised virtue serving to maintain family harmony and political order within the structured Chinese social system,

---

[7] Confucianism is as a value system that originated from rich Chinese traditions, which began to be creatively interpreted by Confucius (551-479 B. C.) and has experienced many changes throughout its long history.

[8] The three types of Confucian basic relationships are family relations, coming from three of the 'five relationships' of Confucianism. The other two are subjects/rulers and friends/friends. They provide basic social relationships necessary to rule and sustain social and political order (J. Chan 2008, 64).

according to Confucian principles.[9] It has been practiced as the core value of society for almost two thousand years (Xiao Q. 2001, 142–44; Ng 2007, 129). Individuals are frequently judged good or bad depending on how they practise *xiao*. *Xiao* basically incorporates the devotion of children who practise duties to parents as well as the wider duty of respecting elders and ancestors (Yeh 1997, 178; C. Y. C. Chu, Xie, and Yu 2011, 133).[10] More specifically, this lifelong obligation of children involves submission to their parents, entails serving them kindly and pleasantly, and demands respect for the elders' authority in the extended family (Hamilton 1990, 95). This ethical tradition, collectivist-orientation and organised familial system is incorporated into parent-child morals and civic duties deeply rooted in socio-political domains. In fact the tradition has become a central facet of cultural identity among Chinese people and every D-L is expected to conform to its demands (Tu 1985, 119; Ng 2007, 129; Schwartz et al. 2010, 557).

Historically, due to the influence of Confucianism, there were high expectations of D-Ls and their roles were quite clear and tightly bound to the extended family (Yeh and Yang 2009). A woman who marries should be subordinate to her husband, take on his duties and fulfill the responsibility of serving his extended family, including parents-in-law and siblings-in-law. The patrilineal familism and collective values carry heavy duties and a transmit a lower role status for D-Ls (Wun 1985, 16–17; Tang 2009, 3; Y.-C. Li 2011, 1). Adherence to their duties requires a D-L to shift her responsibility of care from her own parents to her in-laws once she is married. It is compulsory for her to prioritise giving her parents-in-law support as she is subsumed within her husband's responsibilities to care of his parents and she is required to serve her husband. Serving parents is fostered in the 'inner nature' of children who spontaneously respond to the loving care received from their parents (Rainey 2010, 25). Adult children repaying love and support to their infirm parents fits into a general pattern of family reciprocity (Chappell and Kusch 2006, 30). However, it increasingly seems unnatural and unjustified that a D-L, who was nurtured by her own parents, should be unable to serve them once she is married. Or that she must prioritise the

---

[9]　　Some scholars claim that *xiao* as a key concept to understand Chinese society, in terms of that plays as the foundation of all virtues in Chinese morality (Bell 2008, x, xi; Hershock and Ames 2006, xii; Taylor 2009, 46). Taiwanese children learn from textbooks about the notions of xiao and understand that the abandonment of one's parents is the greatest shame of one's life (Y.-J. Lee, Parish, and Willis 1994, 1015–16).

[10]　　Lo Ping-Cheung's work provides five types of *xiao* behaviour to express the duties of children to parents: 1. offer support and care; 2. submission and respecting; 3. continuing the family line; 4. honour your parents; 5. Mourning their the death and ancestors worship (Lo P.-C. 2004, 234).

parents of her husband simply because she is married to him. Or, similarly, that, she should submit herself to the leadership of her M-L in the light of the veneration of the aged.

1.2.2 D-Ls and the cultural more of veneration of the aged

The veneration of the aged is part of Chinese traditional culture and exploring the mores related to aspect of Chinese traditional culture can help us better understand *xiao.* As part of the veneration of the elderly the younger generations should subordinate themselves and respect the knowledge and the skills of the elderly, because the aged are regarded as a valuable resource of the family in agricultural Chinese societies (Gallin 1994, 3). In this way of thinking, the elderly are recognised as having gained abundant and valuable experience that can be of help to the family. This cultural custom functions as a guiding principle operated by younger family members who seek advice in decision making from the aged about such matters as work, marriage, and other important issues. The elderly enjoy thus enjoy considerable power in the family. Although women are subjugated to men, an aged mother or M-L is the leading woman in the family. She regulates the household and its labours, expecting obedience and the actions of *xiao* towards her from D-Ls (H.-Y. Chen 2005, 26; Win 2007, 36–37; Y.-C. Li 2011, 7). This hierarchal and unequal family structure inevitably generate D-L－M-L relational problems (Tang 2009, 23–26). The practice of such cultural mores not only leads to the oppression of women by men, but also leads to D-Ls having less power and a lower status than that of their M-Ls (Gallin 1986, 32–33; Xiao Q. 2001, 142–44; C. Rittenour and Soliz 2009, 68).

Thus Chinese D-Ls have not only suffered from a male-centred social structure and gendered domestic injustice, but also from the elder-centred inter-relational customs. Such system forces the women to sacrifice themselves to fulfil cultural ideology in order to sustain matrimonial relations, and many Taiwanese women come under both physical and psychological pressure to be virtuous wives, good D-Ls (P.-J. Tsai 2001, 10–11; Nyitray 2008, 67). In fact, we can diagnose their situation as one characterised by an androcentric social structure with domestic 'kyriarchy'－ multiple oppressions, to borrow Elisabeth

Schüssler Fiorenza's term.[11] It is questionable whether family harmony can really be promoted on the basis of this kyriarchy which undermines women in the name of familism. I consider that family prosperity and reciprocity has often been accumulated from the sacrifice of women, especially the D-Ls who are obligated to serve the family as a whole.

However, the commencement of the New Culture Movement (新文化運動) in the early twenty-first century began to challenge the traditional notion of *xiao*. Hu Shih (胡適), a Chinese liberal and language reformer, argued that the attitude of 'raising sons for help in old age; and storing up grains against famine' by parents is similar to the practice of usury and inappropriate. He believed that child-rearing is the obligation of parents, because children were born involuntarily and parents must not require them to provide service or support in return. Some parents fail to care for or abuse their children, causing lifelong damage. Moreover, how can you require those wounded children to serve the bad parents in return (Lo P.-C. 2004, 240–41)? Hu indicated that exercising *xiao* should be on a voluntary basis, where the adult child takes the initiative to practise for his/her parents. Not surprisingly, many scholars oppose Hu's argument and criticise his work as going against the culture of *xiao* (Lo P.-C. 2004, 238).

Today, traditional Chinese culture has remained influential but globalisation has significantly impacted intergenerational relations (Thornton, Lin, and Lin 1994, 409–10). Under the trends of globalisation, Taiwanese culture is in transition and, the norm of *xiao* has been hybridised with modern notions into a new form. I will discuss the modern notion of *xiao* that has emerged within Taiwanese society in what follows.

1.2.3 Taiwanese culture at the crossroads

Globalisation is often bundled up with modernity as an overarching process of Westernisation and hybridisation.[12] Since Western living standards became the desired model for modern life after World War II, other societies have sought to increase affluence

---

[11]　'Kyriarchy' is a term that Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza extracts the idea from 'patriarchy' and encompasses other oppressions, such as sexism, racism and economic injustice, and other dominating multiplicative forms of inter-relational oppressions to describe a broader oppressive phenomenon (Schüssler Fiorenza 2004, 13–14).

[12]　Jan Pieterse observed that modernity and globalisation are often tied together, because they began from the Western world and resonate strongly with the conception of Eurocentrism (Pieterse 1994, 163).

and imitate Western cultural values (Kwok 2002, 33–34). A rise in per capita gross national product has served to improve living standards.[13] Rapid socio-economic change has led to cultural reconstruction in Taiwan, which has shifted the traditional agricultural society to an industrial society (Kwok 2002, 33–34; Gallin 1986, 32–33).[14] Although this global trend seems to push towards a 'Western standardised life' Jan N. Pieterse argues that globalisation is inadequately described as processes of Westernisation or homogenisation (Pieterse 1995, 63). He explains that the transcultural convergence of globalisation entails multi-processes of hybridity that have changed cultural forms and in which ethnic groups reconstruct their identities with multiplicities from 'mimicry' to 'counter-hegemony', acting locally but thinking globally (Pieterse 1995, 63–64).

The recent wave of globalisation and the emergence of multiculturalism particularly, combine the process of hybridisation of traditional Chinese culture and Western modernity in the Taiwanese context. Chinese collectivist culture has been abruptly impacted upon by Western individualism. Some basic Western values were incompatible with the embedded social system and inevitably caused sociocultural adjustment in the process of cross-cultural transition (L. Lu and Yang 2006). The sociocultural transition synthesises the surviving Chinese cultural essence with Western egalitarian concerns and individualistic culture into a dynamic bicultural form. To be more specific, Western culture is characterised by an individual orientation with personal rights, autonomy, equality, privacy, independence and distinction from others. This is in sharp contrast with Chinese social-oriented collectivism, connectedness and relational interdependence (L. Lu and Yang 2006, 167–68).

Taiwanese people seek to retain Chinese cultural loyalties but imitate western lifestyles and share world values, striving to balance these in their own circumstances. Thus, a multi-oriented model of personal tendencies has gradually become manifest in the society (Xu and Lai 2002a, 218; L. Lu 2009, 149) . I will discuss the socioeconomic change in what follows.

---

[13]   The ratio of the Gross National Product (GNP) per capita is an important measure of total economic output and is used to label countries as developed, underdeveloped, and developing.

[14]   Taiwan has been labelled a developed and industrialised country. The younger generations attempt to imitate Western ways of life (Y.-J. Lee, Parish, and Willis 1994, 145; Thornton and Lin 1994, 87).

1.2.4 D-Ls and M-Ls in the socioeconomic change

A number of researchers are now exploring how the socioeconomic change have influenced the D-L and M-L relationship in Taiwan (Che 1997; P.-J. Tsai 2001; Xu and Lai 2002a; Zhu 2001; C. Lin 2005; Hsu S.-C. and Huang 2006). Rita S. Gallin's work explores the social change from agriculture to industrialization in the village and reveals that resources, such as assets, materials and finance, served as a form of domestic control to influence intergenerational power division (Gallin 1984; Gallin 1986; Gallin 1994). Poorer older women are likely to suffer from both gender inequality and economic disadvantages; for example, some M-Ls depend on their adult children, attain little domestic authority and have a lower status than their D-Ls. The younger generations employed outside the home contribute to the family income and thus enjoy a source of power that D-Ls may control. M-Ls who have better economic resources continue to take domestic control. If their D-Ls have little resources, they tend to follow the traditional practice of *xiao* and obey the M-Ls. Gallin concludes, the socioeconomic situation has influenced the domestic power balance and raised new form of generational inequality in the family. However, the traditional models of subordinate D-Ls continue in many rural areas (Gallin 1994, 12).

In contrast to Gillin's observations of generational inequality, Chio Wen-Ben's work suggests that most D-Ls enjoy equal status with their M-Ls.[15] The analysis allocates research participants into three groups of intergenerational power modes. The largest group is characterised by autonomy and equalitarian intergenerational relations that shows a greater family harmony. The second largest group is one in which the M-Ls enjoy the advantages and the control. In the last group small numbers of D-Ls play the leading role in family relations and present less relational harmony with their M-Ls (Chio 1994). In addition, this research demonstrates an individual's education plays an important role affecting the generational relationships. The D-Ls with higher education will gain power and to achieve equal relationships with their M-Ls (Chio 1994).

The fact that D-Ls have increased the involvement in the labour market has also challenged their physical and emotional capacity and in some ways increased their emotional burdens

---

[15]   Chio Wen-Ben analysed 743 questionnaires which were collected from D-Ls, who co-resided with M-Ls and had a child in primary school.

resulting in less time and energy for caregiving. Hao-Yi Hsu's work discloses that Taiwanese D-Ls still have a sense of guilt when they attempt to accomplish the ambitions of pursuing a personal career or seek to establish a nuclear family deviating from the extended family. M-Ls, on the one hand, expect to receive support and care offered by the D-Ls for life. On the other hand, they are afraid to interfere in the independence and wellbeing of their married children if they rely on the economic support of younger married couples (H.-Y. Hsu 2013, 35). This research suggests that D-Ls and M-Ls are struggling to play their roles in the family during the socioeconomic transition (Che 1997; T.-S. Li 1999).

Xiao continues to be regarded as the core value of the modern Taiwanese society (R.-L. Chu, Chiu, and Chang 2012, vii–ix; Yeh, Chang, and Tsao 2012, 55–57). However, today, modern concepts of *xiao* have gradually replaced the traditional Chinese *xiao*. Some elements from traditional *xiao* have been slowly removed and the practice of *xiao* has progressively become more egalitarian. Some researchers report that traditional notions of *xiao* are now less practised by young people in Taiwan, China and Hong Kong (Yeh and Bedford 2003, 225; H.-H. Tsai, Chen, and Tsai 2008). For example, unconditional obedience to parents, the most difficult traditional element in the practice of *xiao*, is less exercised by young Taiwanese today (Rainey 2010, 25–26). Besides, children are allowed to speak and the parents are more willing to listen to them.[16] Compared with previous generations modern D-Ls have greater rights, including the possibility of receiving higher education and gaining economic independence (Gallin 1986, 32–33). Many scholars indicate that the attainment of higher education and the rise of better working opportunities have led young women to gain more autonomy and power within the family (L.-L. Huang and Hsu 2006; H.-Y. Chen 2005, 10; Tang 2009).

New challenges in intergenerational relationships, however, have arisen from the process of cultural transition. In fact Taiwanese D-Ls and M-Ls are now facing new challenges to their roles which can be attributed to tension between modernity and tradition (H.-Y. Hsu

---

[16]   Caring for parents, respecting elders and worshipping ancestors are duties of Taiwanese children exercising modern *xiao*, although the modern *xiao* is infused with egalitarianism and has become more favoured than that of the traditional practice of *xiao*. Younger generations of parents tend to be open-minded and their children seem exhibit affection-centrism－ acting from affection rather than a sense of obligation (Yeh and Bedford 2003, 217).

2013, 35). In the next section I will explore the main issues related to the relationship between D-Ls and M-Ls, as these have been discussed by Taiwanese researchers.

1.3 D-Ls and M-Ls: Struggles and Challenges

Social transition has significantly influenced the Taiwanese family. The major changes are the shift of family cohabitation from stem family to nuclear family and that family pattern bonds have moved from father-son tie to husband-wife tie.[17] These social shifts have changed the practice of traditional Chinese *xiao* and weakened the veneration of the aged. Although the core values of family continuously emphasise *xiao* and harmony, modern Taiwanese *xiao* has gradually replaced the traditional one and, the concept of *xiao* as well as the practice is dissimilar from the traditional one (Hsu S.-C. and Huang 2006; J.-P. Lin 2012; Yeh, Chang, and Tsao 2012). And so, D-Ls and M-Ls both encounter new challenges in this period of transition. This section will discuss the shift of intergenerational exchange, support, and care from socioeconomic, sociocultural and psychological perspectives.

1.3.1 Socioeconomic shift and the intergenerational exchange and support

It is important to explore whether traditional Taiwanese family values have been as quickly dis-established by industrialisation and rapid socioeconomic and cultural change as some suggest. Lee et al. raise this question and argue that the traditional notion of *xiao* remains strong and the support given by adult children originates from the financial planning of their parents. Since parents have invested much capital upon them, adult children are reciprocally obligated to offer economic support for their parents as a return for the prosperity gained through education and other forms of family support (Y.-J. Lee, Parish, and Willis 1994, 1036–37). Lee et al. discovered that the majority of Taiwanese sons and daughters unconditionally offer financial support to their parents.[18] Some other researchers also report a growth of married children's involvement in financial support and physical care for parents (Y.-J. Lee, Parish, and Willis 1994; Xu and Lai 2002a). To be more specific, married couples provide resources to both their own parents and in-law parents;

---

[17]   The husband-wife tie correlates with the growth of gender equality in contrast with the patrilineal father-son tie (Y.-J. Lee, Parish, and Willis 1994, 1016).
[18]   Lee et al. write, '79% of sons and 70% of daughters gave gifts during the previous year, while only 14% of sons and 21% of daughters received gifts from their parents' (Y.-J. Lee, Parish, and Willis 1994, 1023). Data was collected from the 1989 Taiwan Family and Women Survey and widely gathered from 2231 husbands and 2662 wives.

this transferring behaviour is portrayed as an 'altruism/corporate model' of intergenerational exchange (Y.-J. Lee, Parish, and Willis 1994).[19]

Socioeconomic changes also influence the domestic life cycle of a daughter/D-Ls (Olsen 1974). The tradition that daughters' responsibility to their own parents will end at marriage, has undergone a fundamental change. Those daughters who receive higher education, or enjoy more personal income, tend to 'repay' their own parents, especially those parents who own no property. The rapid drop of birth rates accompanied with the transformation of traditional practice of *xiao* may be two of the causes that change the duty of daughters. Although a daughter's support is similar to the filial duties of her male siblings, in many cases the offering remains supplementary (Y.-J. Lee, Parish, and Willis 1994). The support given by sons is commonly the main aid of parents. Social convention expects that sons retain the role of main financial provider for parents; daughters are now also expected to give care and resources to repay parents. This is confirmed in an important analytical study of the *Persistence and Transition of Family Structure in Contemporary Taiwan, 1984-2005* (Yi and Chang 2012, ix–x).[20]

The practice of intergenerational exchange between daughters and mothers or D-Ls and M-Ls is most obvious in Taiwanese villages. The exchange of the former group frequently provides affections and emotional support, reflecting close affectionate bonds. The latter, offers mainly labour service or domestic assistances and the D-L－M-L relationship may be characterised by obligation and alienation (Gao 1999, 7). Hao-Yi Hsu further explains the exchange of caring work. She indicates that resource exchange and authoritarian traditions cannot sustain D-Ls' caring duties to care for parents-in-law in the context of sociocultural change. On the contrary, emotional connectedness and affection become an alternative source of motivation (Hsu S.-C. and Huang 2006; H.-Y. Hsu 2013). Although the affectionate, reciprocal concepts of *xiao* are gradually replacing the traditional authoritarian practice of *xiao,* some M-Ls still seem more likely to follow the traditional cultural norms and feel less satisfied with the support by their D-Ls (H.-Y. Hsu 2013, 37). Hsu further suggests that those involved should develop their relationships from the initial obligated bond towards affectionate and emotional connectedness (S.-C. Hsu 2003). Good

---

[19]   The aim of the intergenerational support is to 'maximize the welfare of the extended family' and, the parents will take the decisions. The other two hypothesises of the theorised models are 'power and bargaining model' and 'altruism/corporate model'.

[20]   The parents and sons/daughters all believe adult children should repay resources to parents.

interpersonal communication and treating each other with respect builds trust and can improve healthy D-L and M-L relationships (Y.-J. Chen 2007).

Socioeconomic changes influence the patterns of intergenerational exchange and support. 'Filial daughters' tend to strengthen the close bond with their parents and the providing of emotional and material support by daughters has evolved into a new, accepted, modern form of *xiao*. Thus, Taiwanese daughters may feel less guilty when they are able to repay their own parents (P.-J. Tsai 2001, 17–18). In addition, parent-daughter bonds are often stronger than parent-son bonds – perhaps due to the affection and connectedness of daughters (J.-P. Lin 2012, 113). In my opinion the socio-economic theories cannot fully explain the intergenerational supportive behaviour among the parents and adult children. The sociocultural shift described above has been accompanied by a change of psychology within the Taiwanese population. I will discuss this change in the next section.

1.3.2 Dynamic cultural phenomenon and bicultural self

Although socioeconomic and sociocultural analyses provide rich sources for understanding the complexity of transitional relationships, Yeh et al. argue that discussions which focus on how an old model of *xiao* was replaced by a modern one can only express the changes on the timeline – they are unable to capture dynamic cultural phenomenon. They suggest psychological analysis can aid in the production of fruitful insights on this issue. Yeh et al. thus suggest two basic patterns of family functioning－ 'mutual intimacy/support' and 'ethical/moral norms'. These highlight psychological mechanisms more adequately than the simple division of 'tradition' and 'modern'. They suggest that the focus for comparing cultural dissimilarities should examine both the psychological functioning of individuals and the sociocultural circumstances in the past/now (Yeh, Chang, and Tsao 2012, 42).

In relation to this psychological perspectives, Luo Lu and Kuo-Shu Yang also explored the sociocultural change in processes of transition. They propose a model of 'traditional-modern bicultural' self-identity to represent Taiwanese people, who adopt co-existence of traditional social-oriented self and modern individual-oriented self in this transition period (L. Lu and Yang 2006). They argue the 'Chinese self is an active agency and has a synthetic tendency towards coherent elaboration' (L. Lu and Yang 2006, 169). The synthetic feature of the Chinese self naturally combines traditional cultural values with

modern Western notions to solve conflicts until meaningful selfhood and coherence is achieved (L. Lu and Yang 2006, 170). [21] However, this integration may entail a long process of self-development.

The concepts of the bicultural self derived from the study of Lu and Yang's, is similar to the approach of Kuan-Hui Yeh et al. who propose a dual model of *xiao*. Yeh et al. focused on the notion of cultural '*xiao*' to explore the development of family values in sociocultural transition. They observed that the practice of *xiao* has been shifted from traditional authoritarianism and child obligations to the reciprocity of mutual aid, which is motivated by the affection of children (Yeh, Chang, and Tsao 2012, 66–67) . These two research projects provide helpful tools to understand this transitional period for Taiwanese people who are seeking to adjust and construct various orientations towards their own circumstances in relation to both their culture and the self.

However, in response to different social expectations and situational demands, the likelihood of moving forward, staying back or stagnating development may happen before the bicultural multiple-self becomes well integrated. And, a variety of intergenerational interactions will be manifest in the relationships between D-Ls and M-Ls. Hsiao-Ying Chen's work reveals that a D-L gains higher social status when she has a son and the more cultural expectations they meet the more relational harmony ensues (H.-Y. Chen 2005). Other findings reveal that a group of D-Ls may enjoy an increased amount of domestic power in the modern family, while, some of them are still required to conceal some personal interests to avoid conflicts with their M-Ls in the process of forming harmonious relationships (Che 1997). Besides, some M-Ls said that they had suffered from being a

---

[21]   Lu and Yang explain that a variety of defence and/or constructive mechanisms will be used to help individuals making adaptations and achieving personal wellbeing. For example, a Taiwanese person may present the modern self in working place, but behave according to the traditional self at home. In this way they exhibit compartmentalization－a psychological defence mechanism whereby individuals unconsciously separate two different domains of life with different behaviours. They may adopt a dynamic construction to adapt effectively so as to satisfy the requirements of interpersonal relationships and harmony within larger society (L. Lu and Yang 2006, 170).

filial D-L but did not impose such pain and hurt on their D-Ls (Hsu S.-C. and Huang 2006).[22]

These dynamic culture phenomenon affect women and produce a variety of intergenerational interactions between the D-Ls and the M-Ls. Some D-Ls remain silenced and have a lower status with regard to their M-Ls, especially younger D-Ls or those with less resources (Che 1997; Kung 1999), while some may take control of the domestic power. Others may gain autonomy and have equal relationships with their M-Ls. The next section will further explore the types of integrational interactions between them.

1.3.3 Types of the intergenerational relationships

Many D-Ls experience the tension of being both an insider and outsider of the in-law family and the tension of divided loyalties between the family of origin and the in-law family. They have a sense of exclusion and alienation, in particular in virtue of the solidity of the in-law family and when the senior members have united and gained control and greater power (Hsu S.-C. and Huang 2006, 40). Particularly, a young D-L may feel it difficult to enter an authoritarian, tight-knit in-law family and, establish appropriate relationships and negotiate her position within this context. Moreover, many D-Ls and M-Ls expect their relationship to be equivalent to the mother-daughter relationship. This can seem very unnatural and often becomes a stress factor for both parties. Wu-Guan Wu argues this ideology should be rejected. She suggests that daughters and their M-Ls do not have to be as 'daughter-mother' to each other, being 'D-Ls' and 'M-Ls' is sufficient (Wu W.-G. 2011).

In a similar shift of perspective with Wu, Shih-Chi Hsu and Li-li Huang present four basic types of intergenerational relationships: mother-daughter, sisters, leader-follower, and co-workers. Mother-daughter relationships are characterised by a deep affectionate and emotional bond. The relationship between sisters is characterised by equality. Leader and follower relations emphasise obligated roles and ordered relationships. Co-workers have

---

[22]   It is evident that D-Ls are likely continued to have lower status due the influence of the traditional notions of *xiao* and veneration of the elders. Although women have more opportunity to receive higher education and better employment, they have been in bondage to the traditional family structure and androcentric cultural ideologies. Their psychological health is still influenced by these sociocultural factors (Yi and Chang 2012, xv).

relationships founded on flexible complementary and efficient cooperation (Hsu S.-C. and Huang 2006). These four types of intergenerational relationships provide a rich variety of models to help the two parties construct their relationships. I believe that the plurality of such models may help us to examine a variety of co-existing relations between D-Ls and their M-Ls. The different models will appear at different life stages or seasons when lives change; the different models may even appear at the same stage in different circumstances.

Understanding that there is plurality in the proper functioning of relationships may help the two parties avoid falling into the trap of stereotyped relations. This may prevent the two parties from struggling to be 'insider or outsider' in the in-law family and curb inappropriate expectations as well as promoting family harmony in the meantime. I will further discuss the issue of family harmony and the living models in relation to the intergenerational interactions in the next section.

1.3.4 Family harmony and living models

Given that family harmony is regarded as the core value of both family and society it is a subject that has attracted much attention (Che 1997; Kung 1999; S.-C. Hsu 2003; Hsu S.-C. and Huang 2006; Y.-J. Chen 2007; Y.-C. Li 2011). A number of scholars are now exploring intergenerational co-residence in relation to family harmony (Chio 1994; Hu 1995; C. Y. C. Chu, Xie, and Yu 2011; C.-D. 王啟東 Wang 2012; H.-C. Lu and Cheng 2012). Chu et al. found that the Taiwanese family was still more likely to adhere to the traditional ideology of cohabitation and the patrilocal co-residence pattern than those in China.[23] The patrilineal/patrilocal co-residence with multiple generations was traditionally seen as an ideal living model and also a distinct characteristic of Taiwanese society. [24] This model provides support and mutual aid to the members of the family network, especially caring for the aged and children (C.-L. Yang 2010, 33; H.-C. Lu and Cheng 2012, 113–

---

[23] Chu et al. conclude in their study that traditional co-resident pattern may not be affected by the high level of economic growth. Personal economic resources as a key enable individuals to choose the living pattern (C. Y. C. Chu, Xie, and Yu 2011, 133).
[24] Offering care for infirm parents is the duty of adult children and still prevails in Taiwanese society. In 2008, 56.96% of the aged population lived with their children according to the statistics provided by Taiwan government. While, 80% the elderly long-term care was provided by the family members

14),[25] however, there are some negative aspects. In such extended families, D-Ls and M-Ls may compete with each other, bargain for position, power or affections in terms of their frequent interactions (T.-F. Wu et al. 2010, 498). The most issues arising in intergenerational conflicts were in relation to value differences and child care (Y.-C. Li 2011, 6). Other important factors that cause relational difficulties are personality conflicts, interference, prejudice, defence, and the different expectations towards to each other (J.-C. Wang 2014).

However, the practice of caring for the aged from young people predictably will be different from the older generations. Tsai and her colleagues found that higher educated young adults are likely seeking alternative living solutions rather than cohabiting with aged parents in order to achieve intergenerational welfare (H.-H. Tsai, Chen, and Tsai 2008).[26] Although Taiwanese university students reflected a fairly positive attitude towards to *xiao*, they seemed prepared to adopt multiple strategies to serve their infirm parents in the future. This new tendency is contrary to the traditional cultural expectations which emphases co-residence of households and the service offered by family members. In the new situation married couples may provide resources but D-Ls will not be the primary caregivers. An alternative service, such as the service of care home or employing a full-time caregiver, may be provided to care parents-in-law. Nevertheless, parents-in-law who are influenced by traditional Chinese culture may still expect D-Ls to act in accordance with tradition.

Husbands influence family harmony, but the roles of husband/son have been ignored in the discussions of D-Ls and M-Ls relationships (Chio 1994; Kung 1999; Che 1997; S.-C. Hsu 2003; Y.-C. Li 2011). Some scholars claim that to only focus on the relationships between 'D-L－M-L' cannot provide a full picture; the role of the husband/son should be taken into

---

[25]   Eldercare is becoming an important issue in both the public and private sphere in Taiwan (C.-L. Yang 2010; H.-Y. Hsu 2013, 34). The rapid growth of the proportion of elderly people will move Taiwan from being an aging society to an aged society by 2018, according to the official statistics (Taipei Times 20131023). Many Taiwanese families remain three-generation households, although there has been a decrease in extended/joint households in recent decades. In 2005, 38% of the aged population (over 65-year old) cohabitated with their adult children. They live in three generations households and rely on the financial support by the adult children (Yang 2010, pp.32–3).

[26]   The traditional practice of elderly care was to cohabit with the adult children, but young adults participant in the study, which involved students from two urban universities, would consider nursing homes or other alternative ways to practising *xiao* (H.-H. Tsai, Chen, and Tsai 2008).

consideration. [27] The husbands of D-Ls play crucial roles to balance the equilibrium of the relationships between the two parties. Moreover, their attitude and behaviour towards his wife/mother is the key to trigger of the intergenerational relationships that may evoke interactional conflicts or the building of harmonious relationships (Y.-J. Chen 2007). Another researcher, Pei-Jie Tsai, investigated a small group of young, middle-class Taiwanese D-Ls in order to understand what developmental tasks are required when a daughter shifts to becoming a wife/D-L (P.-J. Tsai 2001). [28] She found that the interviewed D-Ls often struggle to fulfil the requirements of their new roles - such as exercising *xiao* for her husband, continuing the family line, and submitting to her M-L. Those women who received encouragement from their husbands and parents strove to adapt to the in-law family culture and they have more harmonious intergenerational relationships.

Conclusion

The task of this chapter has been to explore the D-L－M-L relationships in the Taiwanese context from cultural, socioeconomic and psychological perspectives. I reviewed the Western literature to gain a wider perspective upon the ambivalent relationships between married children and parents-in-law and borrowed from developmental theory to examine the transitional life stage of daughters/D-Ls and mothers/M-Ls. I compared the similarities and the dissimilarities between the Western culture and Chinese culture and found that the in-law difficulty is a cross-cultural phenomenon. Taiwanese culture is deeply rooted in Chinese cultural traditions. In terms of the living context and defining the roles, and interactions of D-Ls and M-Ls, I focused on two cultural traits－traditional Chinese *xiao* and the veneration of the aged to explore how traditional notions impacted upon this intergenerational relationship.

Taiwanese society has been significantly impacted by globalisation, Western modernity, and the shift from a traditional agricultural society to a modern industrialized society. Because of this Chinese culture is at a crossroads. Socioeconomic shifts and cultural changes have impacted upon the daily lives of D-Ls and their M-Ls. They all live in the

---

[27] Wu et al. conducted research amongst Taiwanese couples and found that the wife remained encouraged and satisfied when her husband stood by her side and offered her support. In such cases other conflicts mat not influence satisfaction in the marriage. Their work shows that marital satisfaction might not be affected by the conflict of M-Ls- and D-Ls. Strong conflicts may have little impact on high levels of marital satisfaction, if the wife receives support from her husband (T.-F. Wu et al. 2010, 501).

[28] Pei-Jie Tsai interviewed five D-Ls who, at the time of the interviews, were married for between one and three years.

modern world but struggle to maintain cultural ideology and family mores. I have examined some important issues, including the bicultural self, the types of the relations, intergenerational support, intergenerational co-residence, and family harmony from the perspectives of social science in order to gain a deeper understanding of the dynamic intergenerational relationships. In the next chapter I will take my explorations further by investigating pastoral theology from feminist perspectives in order to understand the religious lives of Christian D-Ls.

Chapter Two: Feminist Perspectives on Pastoral Theology

Most societies, both in the East and in the West, have historically denigrated women's nature and potential role in society. Women have had a lower status than men and often have played inferior and subservient roles. Undertaking this study investigating female-female relations is an important step in adopting a female inclusive paradigm which will enable us to generate appropriate new forms of pastoral theology. Such theology would better equip pastors to provide pastoral care to the female members of their congregation. In this chapter, I begin by outlining androcentric traditions and introduce feminist theology, which seeks to root out sexism and androcentrism within the Christian tradition and the Church. Then, I examine the multiple contexts, in which Asian feminist theology operates. This is important as this research focuses upon Taiwanese Christian D-Ls it is constructed from an Asian women's theological perspective. Finally, I describe how women's lives and spirituality interconnect with their self-identity, their bodies and the relational networks within the web of human living. I claim that understanding women's experience is crucial if we wish to develop a feminist pastoral practice for the Taiwanese context.

2.1   The Need for Female Perspectives on Theology

Feminist theologians have sought to resist male-centred theological paradigms, the sort of paradigms common throughout history and embedded in the Christian tradition. My aim is to engage with the insights of the feminist theological movement to gain a perspective from which to explore the daily lives of Taiwanese D-Ls (Kwok 2000, 25–26). My task will then be to generate data that will be useful when developing a theology that has a central place for the perspectives of women. In order to develop my hermeneutical perspective I begin by confronting the androcentric nature of theological traditions. I shall then introduce the work of three pioneering feminist thinkers, Mary Daly, Rosemary Radford Ruether and Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza. All of these women have significantly influenced feminist theology.

2.1.1 Patriarchy and androcentric Christian traditions

Most women across the centuries have been excluded from or have had unequal restrictions on their involvement in political decision-making processes (Hampson 1990, 97; Schüssler Fiorenza 1995, 344).[1] This discrimination against women not only had the effect of either silencing women in or removing them from the public domain, but it also reinforced beliefs about the proper place of women in society (Ruether 2012, 2–4). In contrast, men historically have been massively more likely than women to hold positions of authority; they have dominated political, economic and religious domains and have enjoyed the power and control.[2] 'Men as norm', a phrase borrowed from Lisa Isherwood and Dorothea McEwan, conveys the idea that men developed male-centred beliefs and practices to construct a hierarchical patriarchal system in accordance with their interests (Isherwood and McEwan 2001, 26). Androcentric culture constructs men as both superior and masterful. Such cultures frequently allot women to the role of carers and treat them as inferior to men.

Historically, the institutions of Christian denominations have also been dominated by men. Christian traditions and the interpretation of the Bible have been conducted by men and their androcentric focus has been handed down to us. These long-established male perspectives excluded women's understandings from discussions of doctrine and theology. These male perspectives also seem to justify the silencing of women.[3] For example, women were commonly thought to be less spiritual than men, and blamed for the sin of Adam and the fall of the human race.[4]

In late 1960s, the feminist movement stirred theologians' consciousness and spurred debates in response to androcentric doctrine and the male-centred history of Christianity in

---

[1] A number of matriarchal societies appear to be the exception to this historical pattern, including Amis in Taiwan (Executive Yuan 2013, 30), Mosuo in China, Minangkabau in Indonesia, Akan in Ghana, Bribri in Costa Rica, Garo in India, and Nagovisi in New Guinea (Garrison 2015). However, historical research in this area is often contested.

[2] Of course, historically many people have been excluded from the exercise of political power, but women have often suffered the double exclusion of not being from the political class and not being male.

[3] Christian men often used 1Timothy 2:10-15 to instruct women to 'learn in silence with full submission'. 1Timothy 2:11-12, 'Let a woman learn in silence with full submission. I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she is to keep silent' (Schüssler Fiorenza 1995, 289). For Adam, was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet she will be saved through childbearing, provided they continue in faith and love and holiness, with modesty' (NRSV 1989).

[4] The binary and hierarchical gender division conceives men as good, strong and spiritually inclined. Women and the feminine are seen as more sinful, weak, physical and emotional (Hampson 1990, 96–97).

in the West (Ruether 2012, 176). An important milestone in feminist theology was Valerie Saiving's article '*The Human Situation*' ([1960] 1995). In this article Saiving criticises Reinhold Niebuhr's arguments concerning 'sin as pride', which seem not to take account of sin as it experienced by women (Saiving 1995). Pride is very unlikely to provide a good diagnosis of sin in women as women tend to be self-sacrificing and self-denying in fulfilling their feminine roles (Saiving 1995, 8–9).[5] Saiving's article exposed a gender bias which had become embedded in male-centred doctrine and she spoke of women's experiences as an alternative theological resource. Her work provoked numerous influential discussions on the androcentric categories of systematic theology, such as sin, Church, leadership and the male persons of God and Christ. In the 1960s, many women were inspired to begin to write and speak about their experience. Feminist theology, a new theological movement, was born in these discussions. From this early phase, feminist theologians criticised the improper exclusion of women throughout the history of theology and called for the wholesale re-imagination and restructuration of theology (Hoggard-Creegan 2001, 446).

Daly, Ruether and Schüssler Fiorenza are three prominent feminist religious thinkers who were leading figures in this theological movement; they all sought to root out sexism and androcentrism within the Church, interpretations of the Bible, and the Christian tradition. They continued to develop their scholarly thoughts from the 20th century into the 21st century and their pioneering work is regarded as a point of reference for those who currently engage in developing feminist theology of various forms. It is therefore appropriate to briefly outline the ideas and theories of these three women. What follows cannot claim to be comprehensive given the vast literature on these thinkers. My main concern is to develop a hermeneutical perspective that will assist me in exploring the relationship between Christian Taiwanese D-Ls and their non-Christian Taiwanese M-Ls.

2.1.2 The reconstruction of the gender paradigm in theology

Mary Daly was a pioneering Catholic feminist working in philosophical theology who offered a substantial critique of the male-centred Church and patriarchal Christian

---

[5]   Valerie Saiving argues that women's orientation commits them to nurture children and this motivates them to cultivate selfless love and to sacrifice. Men are biologically and psychologically less orientated in this direction, their socialisation causes them to develop a tendency of self-orientation for pursuing their own goals.

traditions.[6] In her first book, *The Church and the Second Sex*,[7] she demonstrates how the sexism inherent in Christianity and society caused women to become the second sex and play subordinate roles. This in turn caused the degradation of women's minds, bodies and spiritual lives (Daly 1968). Daly sought to transcend this gender inequality within the Catholic Church, and in order to do so she deconstructed the androcentric structure and called for a radical transformation of accepted hierarchies. Daly also refused to accept phallocentric language and images in the Bible. In the book *Beyond God the Father* (1973), she points out that the image of the God-Man duo is a fundamental theological problem which authorises male privilege and sustains androcentric Christian traditions.[8] For example, Daly believes that the notions of a 'Father God' and a Christology that images Christ as a male-divine are problematic. She advocates that God is also female-divine with female characteristics. Languages, symbols, and images of God with stereotypical maleness and hierarchy should be challenged by female-centred ones (Daly 1973).

Daly and some post-Christian feminists, such as Daphne Hampson, make the criticism that the Church and Christian doctrine is irreparably patriarchal and incompatible with feminism.[9] They tie patriarchy and Christianity together and regarded them as oppressors of women in which sexism cannot be eradicated. Therefore, Daly encourages women to take radical action, to break away from the intrinsically patriarchal institution of the Church and develop their spiritual lives outside Christianity (Daly 1979, 27–42, 376).[10] Her rejection of men's participation in women's emancipatory projects and the Church leads her to an anti-Christian standpoint which is both provocative and controversial and is countered by others who have a more reforming perspective (Ruether 2012, 184–85). I believe that those of us who take this more reformist path have to keep in mind the challenge and anger expressed by Daly about women's exclusion and the dangers of religion for women.

---

[6] Mary Daly is a radical feminist, a post-Christian, and a well-known feminist separatist working on philosophical theology.

[7] Daly is influenced by Simon de Beauvoir, a French feminist and existentialist. Daly's book builds on de Beauvoir's study, *The Second Sex* (1949).

[8] Daly wrote, 'If God is male, then the male is God' (Daly 1973, 19). This is the source of the criticism that the Father figure of God has been used to develop a system of symbols and language, which have subjugated women and shaped patriarchal Christian traditions (McGrowin 2008, 244).

[9] Post-Christian feminists believe that theology should be grounded in women's religious experiences; a post-Christian feminist, for example Daphne Hampson, dismisses Christianity as based on myth and makes an ethical critique of Christianity (Daly 1973; Hampson 1997, 170–71; Kamitsuka 2007, 97).

[10] Daly's moving away from Christianity was signalled in her book *Beyond God the Father* (Daly 1973).

2.1.3 Reconstruction and reinterpretation of the prophetic liberating tradition

Rosemary R. Ruether values Daly's analysis of gender inequality embedded in the Church and the doctrines,[11] but she criticises Daly's female-centred religious revolution which is trapped in the danger of separatism (Ruether 1983, 185). Daly ignores the fact that many women have a positive life with men as well as rich lives as Christians. She stresses the negative aspects of the traditions, and identifies a small group of women as more progressive than other women and men (Ruether 1983, 186–87). Unlike Daly's radical rejection of Christianity, Ruether adopts an eclectic theological approach which keeps her within the Church and reconstructs theology through gender egalitarianism. This approach, however, moves her beyond the traditional male-portrayal of God and allows her to reform the male-structured system from within. She develops a systematic theology that emphasises female subjectivity and focuses on church history to criticise existing traditions in order to promote the 'full humanity of women' and the equal participation of women and men (Ruether 1983, 18–19).[12]

Ruether rediscovers the 'prophetic liberating tradition' and reinterprets the Bible with the purpose of shifting the androcentric paradigms to a new liberation paradigm (Ruether 1983, 12–46). The prophetic liberating tradition refers to the saving work of God for the oppressed. Ruether writes, 'By including women in the prophetic norm, feminism sees what male prophetic thought generally had not seen: that once the prophetic norm is asserted to be central to Biblical faith, then patriarchy can no longer be maintained as authoritative' (Ruether 1983, 24). On the one hand, she believes that the central theme of the Bible is the message of ultimate freedom, which is a source of liberation for those who are oppressed and marginalised.[13] On the other hand, the Gospel evidently has a core that provides moral and spiritual resources to rectify social injustices – including social injustices which victimise women. Therefore, Ruether reconstructs God-language as well as Christology in her book *Sexism and God Talk*.

---

[11]   Rosemary R. Ruether is a Catholic feminist theologian whose approach is very different from Daly's 'abstract scholastic theology'. Ruether adopts 'historical-critical sociology' as her methodology for developing systematic theology (Ruether 2012, 186).

[12]   Ruether identifies the problem of the exclusively male image of God. She suggests that God-language should be changed from signifying a male monopoly to a language that leaves open the maleness or femaleness of God.

[13]   The biblical tradition is the history of God's salvation that links Exodus to Jesus and supports a rich theology of liberation.

Ruether seeks to move away from the masculine image of the divine and the male figure of the servant of God to the modes of gender egalitarianism between men and women (Ruether 1983). Jesus Christ not only suffers with women, but he also helps to release the hurt and pain of those women who surround Him.[14] He was sent to redeem humanity and liberate the weak. His message can transform oppressive relational structures, including sexism and classism, to a proper social order (Ruether 1983, 29–30). Jesus is a liberator and the representative for all of humanity who's saving work is to end oppressive exploitation and social injustice. His gender is irrelevant to these ends. He is as an exemplar of 'a new humanity' for each person to imitate. This new image of humanity generates right relations with no oppression between men and women. Women and other oppressed peoples can reconceptualise their full humanity through Jesus in light of this new historical interpretation from a feminist theological perspective (Ruether 1983, 116–38).

2.1.4 The use of women's experience in feminist theology

Schüssler Fiorenza's analytical work is similar in approach to Ruether's; as she engages in reinterpreting Christian traditions from within through using feminist methods. Schüssler Fiorenza engages in biblical study and claims that Christian history and the theoretical models, which shape religious and cultural identity, have been authorised and articulated by men. These male-dominated interpretations and knowledge have produced present inaccurate images of women and secure their marginalization (Schüssler Fiorenza 1999, 2–3). In the book *In Memory of Her* (London 1983), Schüssler Fiorenza seeks to dispute this religious 'kyriarchy' to discover women's discipleship and the apostolic leadership from biblical heritage in early Christianity.[15] She advocates women read the Bible with a hermeneutics of suspicion. She also uses a new language, which is based on women's perspectives, to analysis the 'kyriocentric language systems'.[16] Her purpose in doing so is

---

[14]   Rosemary R. Ruether criticises the female-tortured images in male-dominated Christian history and asks, 'Can a male saviour save women?' (Ruether 1983, 116). She reinterprets Christology and emphasises Jesus' praxis – He breaks the bondage of sin to redeem those women who surround Him.

[15]   Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza indicates that the interests of those women who are marginalised at the bottom of societies and suffering from unjust control or multiform oppressed should be included in theological discussions and biblical interpretations (Schüssler Fiorenza 2004, 13–14).

[16]   'Kyriocentric language systems' refer to the construction of androcentric or kyriarchal Western male-centred linguistic systems (Schüssler Fiorenza 1998, 92–93).

to reinterpret the meaning of the biblical text and Christian praxis. Such a reinterpretation can ultimately eradicate androcentric interpretations and sexism within the Church.[17]

Schüssler Fiorenza further identifies a fundamental problem－the absence of women's resources and studies in our historical imagination. She encourages women to break silence and articulate their experience and also their perspectives. Women's voices and experiences can be used to examine the patriarchal power structure and reconstruct women's roles.[18] This significant approach of feminist theology provides an important analytical tool that offers necessary resources for theological critique and biblical interpretation. The articulation of women's perspectives can also enable women to participate equally in religious institutions and society; it shifts women from invisibility to the public realm and allows the silenced women to speak (who in Woodward & Pattison 2000, p.234).

In summary, Daly, Ruether and Schüssler Fiorenza in the early days of the feminist theology movement, recognised the patriarchy manifested in Church tradition, language, institutions, and cultural practices. They use different approaches to explore biblical interpretation and critique gender relations for the sake of women's liberation. Ruether writes, 'The uniqueness of feminist theology lies not in its use of the criterion of experience but rather in its use of *women's* experience, which has been almost entirely shut out of theological reflection in the past' (Ruether 1983, 13). The use of women's experiences offers integrity to theology, in that men and women are both included within Christianity and the Church should be informed by the experiences of both. This encourages women to publically claim their own interpretations of lives and knowledge.

However, women in different contexts and cultures will experience and encounter different challenges. My thesis explores the relationships between Christian D-Ls and their non-Christian M-Ls in Taiwan. It is important, therefore, to gain insights from an Asian women's theological perspective. It is essential to investigate the cultural context of these women's lives in order to examine their religious lives.

---

[17]   Schüssler Fiorenza's work stresses the analysis and translation of historical and socio-political contexts in biblical texts so as to reconstruct women's roles and self-identity in order to provide a proper translation of Scripture (Schüssler Fiorenza 1995, 343–45).

[18]   Women's experience becomes a key source for constructing theology, which develops gender equality to balance male-centred theologies (Jones 2012, 26).

2.2   Asian Women's Theology in the Postcolonial Age

Sheila Briggs writes, 'We are embodied not only in our individual biological bodies but also in the broader materiality of our world, and that materiality is one in which nature is not divided from culture' (Briggs 2012, 82). Taiwanese women located in East Asia have been involved in developing Asian women's theology.[19] In order to understand Asian women's lives, we should first understand certain significant features of the Asian context from which that theological approach has arisen. In what follows I discuss these features and provide a brief overview of Asian women's theology.

2.2.1 Different feminist theological discourses raised in contexts

First generation feminist theologians sought to deconstruct and reconstruct the embedded patriarchy in the Church and biblical texts. These Euro-American women focussed on the subordinate status of women, patriarchal epistemology and embedded structural androcentricism. Their work tended to prioritise gender oppression rather than other types of oppression in the Church and biblical texts (Isherwood and McEwan 2001, 28). Some feminist theologians regard this as a neglect arising from the bias of Eurocentrism and Western cultural hegemony. Such theologians shift their attention away from first generation feminist theological concerns to examine other and particular contexts (eg. Sheia G. Davaney, Letty Russell, Rosmary R. Ruether).[20] This is because particular sociocultural contexts, with their distinctive living circumstances, greatly impact upon and shape women's lives. This should be taken into account when doing feminist theology.

With regard to different cultural contexts, Robert J. Schreiter recognises the danger of Western bias in theology and proposes a theological shift from the concentration on

---

[19]   The term 'feminism' is itself controversial and regarded as Euro-American centric in some parts of Asia; the concept feminism has been interpreted in different ways, often negatively. One of the central ideas adopted by postcolonial feminism is to use the term 'woman' as a universal group; such a group is defined only by gender, and not by social class and ethnic identity. Despite this, Asian women regard 'feminist theology' as being a significant historical precursor to their own approach, one with successes and failings. Accordingly, they have adopted 'Asian women's theology' to describe a pro-women approach in theology that seeks to learn from feminist theology and consider the place of women in a way that is sensitive to the specific contexts in which women are located (Kwok 2000, 12, 23). I will adopt this terms instead of 'Asian feminist theology' to indicate how Asian women theologians themselves regard their approach.

[20]   Sheia Greeve Davaney warms against the normative prioritising of women's experience made by Western middle-class white women (Davaney 1997, 200). She makes the criticism that those feminist theologians make general claims based on their own experience. They fail to account for the racial and class privileges that they enjoy, and so their theological reflections ignore those who are working class and racially marginalised.

Western traditions to the dialogical approach of contextual theology to engage with different cultural circumstances (Schreiter 1985). Stephen B. Bevans is also aware of the importance of encountering theology and culture in an appropriate way. Missionaries used to directly import existing Christian theology into mission fields in the past without considering its acceptability to local people (Bevans 2002, 3–6). In order to bridge the gap between the Gospel and local culture Bevans and Schreiter both develop remarkable contextualisation models for doing local theology. Within contextual theology there remains 'creative tension' between Gospel and cultural context. This allows for open dialogue, which in turn involves both sides in a shared process (Bosch 2011, 543). As Sigurd Bergmann's claims, 'Theology today ought to be contextual theology' (Bergmann 2003, 1). Feminist theologians have begun to emphasise local contexts as well as avoid making universalising claims about women's experience. They do so out of recognition of the differences between the cultural contexts that women find themselves within.

Different cultural cohorts encounter different challenges and theological discourses will not necessarily have the same relevance for each cohort, even if these cohorts are living in the same geographical area. For example, African-American women were marginalized twice-over, by their gender and race, observed by Letty Russell and Ruether (Ruether 2012, 177–80, 86–87).[21] Delores Williams argues that survival and freedom, rather than liberation, are the most critical concerns for black women. She distinguishes theological issues for African-American women from theological issues for white feminists in order to describe the social injustice that black women face; social injustice that arises from the oppressions of sexism, racism and classism in the United Sates.[22] Ada María Isasi-Díaz develops *mujerista* theology, and seeks to speak for poor and oppressed Hispanic women, who have struggled to secure the needs for everyday life in North America.[23]

Just as African-American and Hispanic women face a number of oppressions arising from their contexts, so to do Asian women. Women residing within the Asia-Pacific region

---

[21] Letty Russell, a feminist Reformed theologian and activist, reflects on her understanding of feminist theology in relation to praxis with the intention of transforming societies for the sake of justice and women's liberation.

[22] Delores Williams, an African-American woman, uses Hagar's story, the slave-woman of the Hebrew woman Sarah, rather than the Exodus paradigm, God's rescue of the Hebrew slaves, to develop her womanist theology. The story of Hagar in the wilderness can be used as a metaphor for the experience of African-American women (Williams 1993, 2).

[23] Ada María Isasi-Díaz is a Hispanic feminist liberation theologian who adopts ethnography as her methodology for field research and highlights the issues of ethics, ritual, language in her theological project (Russell et al. 1988; Isasi-Díaz 1993).

encounter multiple challenges. Asia comprises 4.3 billion (60%) of the world population according to the report of the United Nations in 2013 (United Nations 2012, 1). This most populous continent contains a strong/prevalent religio-cultural patriarchy and is the birthplace of some of the major religions and philosophies in the world, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, etc., each of which has its own philosophical tradition. In spite of the numerous Christian missions undertaken in Asian countries, most Asian people have retained traditional belief systems, and treasure and respect their own cultural traditions. Christianity is only a minority religion in this region though in countries such as the Philippines and South Korea large portions of the population are Christian (Kang 2011, 117).[24] Asian Christians are more or less marginalised in Asian societies and this should be taken into considerations when we explore Asian women's theology. The dialogues undertaken in Asian women's theology commonly reference particular cultures, religions and the Bible (Ruether 2012, 220–21). That said, Asian women's theology shouldn't simply be reduced to a particular theological approach that falls within a Western theological framework.

2.2.2   The complexity of Asia women's theological discourses

Asian women's theologies are various and multitudinous, as is to be expected given the variety of socio-political environments, cultural traditions, and religious practices in Asian countries (Kwok 2000, 10). For example, although Filipino women suffered from Spanish hegemony and American colonialism, they attempted to retain their own cultures and indigenous languages. Besides, contextual theological discussion in the Philippines should also include the experience of economic oppression and dictatorship (Ruether 2002, 17). Many Indian women have been oppressed by the caste system and purity taboos. Some also have faced religious violence which has threatened their survival. Korean women and Taiwanese women have encountered the particular challenges posed by Confucianism (Ruether 2012, 223). They both suffered under the harsh and oppressive colonial rule of Japan. Some Asian women survived being forced to serve as 'comfort women' for soldiers during World War II,[25] particularly women from South Korea and China (Kwok 2000, 20;

---

[24]   The majority of Filipinos are Christians. In fact, of all the countries in Asia, the Philippines are the country with highest proportion of Christians in terms of overall population. South Korea has the second highest proportion of Christians, according to a religious report in 2012 (USA 2012, Volume 1:94). The Christian community, including Roman Catholic, was the largest religious group in South Korea, consisting in 21 % of the population. This was slightly higher than the percentage of Buddhist believers.

[25]   'Comfort women' represented a painful historical experience for Korean women. Chung Hyun Kyung constructs a creative analysis of Korean feminist theology on this issue (Kyung 2004).

Kwok 2005, 35). As such, Asian women have encountered various socio-political and religious-cultural challenges in different contexts. Many have experienced the oppression of colonialism or imperialism (Wong 1999, 103–15).

Western hegemony can be traced to colonial expansion that occurred when many Western counties began to increase their territorial and ideological influence in Asia in the 15th century. This European colonial history ended in the mid-twentieth century (Kyung 1990, 11) .[26] Over the course of several centuries, the majority of Asian countries suffered from Western imperialism and were greatly impacted by the process of colonialisation. National independence from the colonisers was the response that came to be regarded as imperative. Feminist movements could contribute to the building of an independent nation and, as a result, were sometimes encouraged and welcomed by male elites (Wong 2008, vi–vii; Y.-C. Chen 2011, 32–33). Unlike the middle-class white women, who fought against men and a patriarchal system to attain liberation, Asian women were in alliance with men endeavouring to fight against Western control and/or political corruption at the early stage of the feminist movement. The view that prevailed amongst such feminists was that they should first fight for independence from colonial power and be released from that oppression and repression (Wong 2008, xi). For example, Chinese feminists collaborated with male reformers to combat western hegemonies and the corruption of imperial China in order to transform China into a modern nation.

The radical dissimilarity between Western feminist theology and Asian women's theology is that Asian women commenced collaborating with men in order to break the hegemonic power of Western empires and win national freedom. Taiwan was colonised by the Dutch Empire, the Spanish and was under Japanese control (Xi 1992, 225; Executive Yuan 2010, 48). Following the end of the Japanese Empire, Taiwanese people were threatened by the power of People's Republic of China (Lu 2004, pp.76–78; Yu & Manrique 2009, p.55). Social movements in Taiwan sought to decolonise and fight for the political and economic autonomy of the region (H. Lu 2004, 80–83; Kuo 2008, 37–38). Action on the part of the feminist movement was coordinated with the liberation movement, the aim of which was the development of both the nation and women for the sake of building a modern Taiwan (Yang C. 1993, 154; M.-C. M. Lo and Fan 2010, 177–78). These historical, political and

---

[26]   Macau was the last European colony in Asia. It was colonised by Portugal in the mid-sixteenth century and transferred back to the People's Republic of China in 1999 (International Business Publications 2013, 1:12).

social elements, as well as patriarchal cultural matters, play crucial roles in the Taiwanese context.

2.2.3 Postcolonialism and Asian women's theology

Western political and military control in Asia mostly ended in the last century. Asian countries were gradually liberated from colonizers and won their political independence. However, Asian women theologians realised that the end of political colonial history was not equal to the end of the control of the colonisers' influence and structured patriarchy.[27] Furthermore, these theologians knew that the end of the struggle against the colonisers was not the end of the struggle for social justice for women. This became apparent as many Asian countries went from the oppression of imperialism to the oppression of local dictatorships or other forms of oppressive governance (Kyung 1990, 35).

Colonialism, however, has not disappeared but been superseded by neo-colonialism as a new form of control, which sweeps across the global economy and popular culture, blurring national boundaries with political influence across the global village in recent decades (Kwok 2005, 2, 162; Ruether 2012, xiv). Neo-colonialism means 'new colonialism' and refers to the way in which superpowers, such as the United States who, through multinational corporations, directly or indirectly control foreign culture and economies (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 2007, 146). Ashcroft et al. explain that the term of neo-colonialism has 'been widely used to refer to any and all forms of control of the ex-colonies after political independence' (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 2007, 146). This new form of control has deeply influenced Asian peoples' lives.

The long-term impact of Western colonialism and imperialism, as well as neo-colonialism, has changed Asian cultures and the native peoples' values such that multiple cultural identities have become manifest in postcolonial contexts.[28] Local cultures have been

---

[27]   See, e.g., Chung Hyun Kyung, *Struggle to be the Sun Again: Introducing Asian Women's Theology* (Kyung 1990); Pui-lan Kwok, Introducing Asian Feminist Theology (Kwok 2000); *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology* (Kwok 2005).

[28]   The term 'postcolonial' signifies the critique of and a shift away from colonised epistemological frameworks and the stereotyping of cultures from the colonial era (Kwok 2005, 2) . It is widely used to describe the various effects and experiences of political, economic, cultural and linguistic interactions from Western imperialism in the sixteen century up until present neo-colonialism (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 2007, 168–69).

hybridised with colonisers' cultures.[29] Scholars attempt to explain this cultural phenomenon, but failed to provide solutions from social theory (Kwok 2000, 18–19; Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 2007, vii). However, theorists such as Edward W. Said, Homi K. Bhabha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivfak have developed postcolonial theory and used this theory to reconcile and explain cultural phenomena of the colonised and cultural phenomena of the colonisers.[30] As part of their post-colonial studies, they analyse various colonial experiences, such as race, slavery, migration, and gender oppression, as well as the topics of difference in relation to hegemonic control (Kwok 2005, 126). For example, Bhabha uses post-structuralist theory applied to the colonial discourse. He argues that the cultural identity of the colonised always emerges in an ambivalent and contradictory space. The colonised seek to retain their unique cultural and racial identity, but the coloniser/neo-colonial power attempt to eradicate the local culture. The fluidity of cultural identity is in the lasting tension between the colonised culture and colonial culture (Bhabha 2004, 54–56). In this respect, Bhabha develops the terms of hybridity to describe the interdependence, ambivalence, and mimicry of colonial relationships. It is new transcultural forms shaped by the negotiation of the cross-cultural exchange. The colonised, minorities or marginalised people attempt to resist the power of the coloniser and reconcile cultural differences to reach shared post-colonial condition (Bhabha 2004).

I found that the concept of cultural hybridity can be used to explain how the new form of '*modern xiao*' has been moulded. Through the process of hybridisation, the traditional notion of *xiao* is reconciled with Western individualism and a new notion with multicultural influences is formed. The issues of cultural hybridisation and multiple identity are particularly difficult issues of the postcolonial age (Acheraïou 2011, 6, 140). I will further explore Christian women's identity in a later section.

Postcolonial feminists criticise Euro-centrism, in particular Western liberal feminism and radical feminism for paying insufficient attention to non-white or non-Western women

---

[29]   Ashcroft et al. explain that the term 'hybridity' 'commonly refers to the creation of new transcultural forms within the contact zone produced by colonization' and, it is 'the most widely employed and most disputed term' in postcolonial studies (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 2007, 108). It involves a process of negotiation of the contradictory, the interaction of two or more cultural identities that do not seek assimilation but hybridization into a new one for the construction of subjectivities (Bhabha 2004, 37; Baker 2007, 26).

[30]   Postcolonial theory, following after postmodernism and post-structuralism, is a set of ideas and beliefs in response to the historical and political issues of colonial hegemony (Kwok 2005, 42–43; Pears 2009, 135–37).

(Kyung 1990, 24; Kwok 2000, 32–37; McEwan 2001, 102). [31] In this regard, postcolonial feminist theologians adopt the decolonising approach to develop a theological paradigm in response to their own field (Kwok and Schüssler Fiorenza 1998, 47–48). For example, R. S. Sugirtharajah, Pui-lan Kwok and Musa Dube utilise postcolonial theory as an analytical tool applied to biblical, historical and/or theological disciplines for theological investigation. Kwok, based on her postcolonial understanding from the burgeoning field of postcolonial studies, develops a theological anthropology to offer a postcolonial perspective for feminist theology. [32] She suggests that all the multidimensional, interrelated and entangled factors of age, gender, sexuality, race, religion, as well as colonial contexts, should be carefully examined. These factors may become sources of oppression of Asian women (Kwok 2005, 72–73, 217–3). [33]

Although the majority of the colonizers are male, women can become colonizers directly or indirectly through the system of global capitalism. For example, some women who live in rich countries, such as Singapore, Hong Kong, South Korea, and Taiwan, may use racial, class and/or economic privileges and exploit labour from working-class women (Kwok 2005, 42). Many Asian women are at the bottom of the economic pyramid and struggling to provide sustenance for their family as vulnerable workers on low wages. They have continued to suffer from different forms of socio-political and cultural-religious oppressions, including unequal employment, distorted gender stereotypes, and domestic violence (Kyung 1990, 26–27). Such unjust repressive power and socio-cultural arrangements should be taken into consideration when we seek to understand women's experience according to Asian women's theology.

---

[31]   Postcolonial feminism has been described as a group of feminist theories correlated with non-white, non-Western women, which respond to colonial and imperial effects within the postcolonial world. Postcolonial feminists often criticise mainstream Western feminism, which overlooked the differences of cultural contexts or too easily universalise women's experience (McEwan 2001, 100; Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 2007, 94).

[32]   Kwok Pui-lan, a Chinese feminist theologian, has been influenced by Edward W. Said, who was a founding figure in postcolonial criticism of colonialism and imperialism. In her book *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology*, she explains that her methodology is based on postcolonial theology in her exploration of several specific topics, including Christology, pluralism, and creation (Kwok 2005).

[33]   In order to uncover colonial epistemology and cultural representations, Kwok employs 'postcolonial imagination: historical, dialogical and diasporic' to indicate sexual discourses by moving beyond a 'liberal humanist position and a poststructuralist emphasis on differences to a transnational approach that foregrounds relation of female subjects in globalisation' (Kwok 2005, 22–24) .

2.2.4 Interconnectivity of local and global context

'Asia is a continent so diverse, so complex, so exhilarating, that it is possible to only make broad generalizations about its socio-political, religio-cultural, economic contexts' (Kwok 2000, 12). Kwok quotes Aruna Gnanadason's words to describe the multiplicity of Asian contexts, but she warns against generalising Asian women's experiences given the diversity and complexity of Asian societies (Kwok 2000, 13). Besides, Wong Wai-Ching, a Hong Kong based feminist theologian, also emphasises the importance of contexts and claims that differences between contexts means that research findings from one context, may not be relevant in another context (Wong 2008, vi–vii). Namsoon Kang observers this strong trend towards the approaches of compartmentalisation,[34] according to which feminist theologians emphasise differences and a specific context to avoid the mistake of generalisation. She argues that 'there is no such thing as a "purely particular/local", especially when the "particular/local" is inextricably interlinked to the "universal/global" dimension' (Kang 2012, 123). Regarding local and global interconnectivity, Kang suggests that non-Western feminist theologians should be more aware of interconnected and interdependent cultural phenomena and their transethnic consequences (Kang 2012, 124).

Kang proposes 'transethnic feminist theology' that is an inclusive and dialectic approach according to which ethnicity is one's starting point to engage with feminist theological issues. Although ethnicity is the starting point, as 'trans-' suggests, the ultimate purpose of such an approach is to cross the boundaries of ethnicity, as well as class, sexuality, cultures, and nations (Kang 2012, 124). This approach emphasises human interconnectivity. In this view, communities are controlled by local authority; meanwhile, the local authority is influenced by the global hegemonic power, which in turn will respond to the local and vice versa. In this regard, local circumstances and global settings are both taken into consideration, in order to tackle power hierarchy, social exclusion, and marginalisation (Kang 2012).

The impact of local and global interconnectivity is that Asian women's identity becomes multi-national, multicultural and ambivalent or problematic. In this regard, Asian Christian women have incorporated a strong sense of multiple-identities involving ethnicity, sexuality, and religion in the era of capitalist-controlled globalisation (Kwok 2000, 18–19;

---

[34]   Poststructuralist feminists reject Eurocentric assumptions and emphasise difference in response to structuralism (Fernandes 2010, 110).

Kang 2012, 118–19). These multiple dimensions of personal identities and social identities, which conceptualise one's self-identity accumulate multiple roles and influence women's lives (Abes, Jones, and McEwen 2007, 2–3). In next section I will explore the related theological discourses that bear on the exploration of pastoral theology from a feminist perspective.

2.3   Feminist Pastoral Theology in Context

Serene Jones writes, 'Our background, language, history, geography, education, personal experiences, and even our unconscious but powerfully present assumptions about the world form the lens through which we engage it' (Jones 2012, p.27). It shows that our selves have been moulded by, and deeply connect to, the context in which we live. It is appropriate to begin an exploration of pastoral theology from a feminist perspective, with discussions of the theology in family ministry, the related relational networks, and other associated issues of women's identity, religious agency, spirituality, and embodiment. This will necessary in order to construct an appropriate feminist pastoral theology for Taiwanese women.

2.3.1 Practical theology and pastoral theology

Practical theology, an empirical and diverse discipline, has various concerns and methods that reflect on the life of believers and the Church's ministry (Cahalan and Mikoski 2014, 1–2). This orientation towards praxis, which emphasises the interaction between the complexity of theory and practice, assimilates the insights from secular disciplines, such as psychologies, philosophy, anthropology, and cultural and social theory, for theological reflection and action.[35] James Woodward and Stephen Pattison provide a phenomenological definition for pastoral/practical theology－'a place where religious belief, tradition and practice meets contemporary experiences, questions and actions and conducts a dialogue that is mutually enriching, intellectually critical, and practically transforming' (Woodward and Pattison 2000, 7).[36] This definition emphasises the complexity of the interaction between the theological discourses and human lives. To

---

[35]   Such social sciences, as an analytical tool, are employed by practical theologians, who seek to explore theological praxis with multi-layered analysis (Miller-McLemore 1996, 24; Lartey 2011, 372; Graham 2011, 401–2).

[36]   James Woodward and Stephen Pattison state that the definitions of practical theology and pastoral theology are various, but that there is no comprehensive definition which can cover over these diffusing and changing fields (Woodward and Pattison 2000, 4–7).

understand that interaction, Don Browning provides a triangular model illustrating the relationship between theory and practice that seeks to integrate that relationship in the ongoing process of theological reflection and action. It begins with Christian practice, moves forward to theoretical reflection and returns to practice (Cahalan and Mikoski 2014, 3). Richard R. Osmer portrays this ongoing process as spiral, which is instituted by four core tasks — 'the descriptive-empirical, the interpretive, the normative, and the pragmatic' (Osmer 2008, 10–11). These tasks basically construct the interpretation of theology and practice, emphasising the nature of practical theology as based in human experience. How to carry out the descriptive-empirical task? What theories and theologies can be used to undertake the interpretive and normative tasks? What actions can be determined in response to the reflective conversation? Pastors and ministers have to ask these questions and construct these practices in their own ministry.

Pastoral theology, a theology of pastoral care, overlaps with practical theology (Heitink 1999, 310; Graham 2011, 401). Pastoral theology and practical theology are both characterised by the orientation towards praxis and are concerned with social contexts and human experiences, involving critical studies and pastoral practice. The two disciplines apply theological principles to religious activities in response to humans' situations (Woodward and Pattison 2000, 2). Pastoral theology focuses on the practice of human care and counselling in order to find adequate ways of effective care activities for the care of souls.[37] It 'refers to a critical reflection on the nature and caring activity of God and of human persons before God, within the personal, social, communal and cultural contexts of the world' (Lartey 2011, 371). Therefore, the lived experience and the context of the care-receivers become the main source of pastoral care and theological praxis.

Given that D-L and M-L relationships are placed in the category of the family ministry within the field of practical theology, I will draw on the theological discourse regarding family relationships in relation to church and pastoral concerns in the next section.

---

[37]   Howard Clinebell explains that pastoral counselling is '[t]he utilization by clergy of counselling and psychotherapeutic methods to enable individuals, couples and families to handle their personal crises and problems in living constructively' (Clinebell 1987, 198). Pastoral theology is characterised, with its interdisciplinary, as a 'religion-and-science discussion' (Lartey 2011, 372).

2.3.2 A theology of family Ministry

Family constructs our legal biological relationships, and plays a major role in our lives. It is an important and special place where individuals are shaped and bonded (Sell 1995, 13). Psychologists have used kin altruism and inclusive fitness to explain the loving interactions between kin family members. They claimed that natural familial affections sprung from the altruistic behaviours of parents who had a strong tendency to sacrifice themselves in order to raise their children. Besides, other related extended family members seem to serve the needs of their kin family rather than non-kin. Such altruistic behaviours appeared to be the tendency of kin preference from the genetic parents, as well as the kin that strived them to survive and flourish, their close family members (Browning 2006, 130–31). The concepts of kin altruism and inclusive fitness is also embedded in the notion of Christian love, since Tomas Aquinas, who recognised the phenomenon of kin preference and contributed his insights to the theory of Christian love (Browning 2006, 113–15). According to Aquinas, the natural familial affections are an asset for Christian love, which not only included the practice of kin altruism, but also required Christians to love God and their neighbours.[38] Stephen Pope, using the Aquinas' model, argued that parental love was the core of all love. Familial affection could help individuals to understand what love was and increase their capacity for love as it applied to wider non-kin circles (Pope 1991, 264–65).

Christian love has been interpreted in different models and among theological debates throughout Christian history. For instance, the theological interpretation by Anders Nygren centred on agape which referred to self-giving and self-sacrifice; while, feminist theologians critiqued the negative impact of self-sacrifice and self-denial upon women. The medieval view of Christian love not only emphasised agape, but also incorporated human desires for the goods of life. Although this model comprised an agapic view with the higher aspirations of self-giving extending to serve others, Nygren criticised that this type of Christian love was built on *eros* which is the natural desire of humans, including the motivations of health, wealth, pleasure and affiliation. For Nygren, in other words, this Christian love was not completely by the grace of God, but incorporated the *eros* of human (Browning 2010, 40–41). Given that women usually played the roles of caregivers who took a risk of greater sacrifice or unfairness to practice altruism, feminist theologians

---

[38] Don Browning observed that the new perspectives of Christian love which is characterised with mutuality and equal regard fights against traditional models of gender roles and extreme sacrificial love in theological ethics. This shift has been affected by psychotherapeutic concepts of kin altruism, feminist theology, and other resources (Browning 2006, 112–13).

sought to end such oppressive exploitation and social injustice, as I have discussed in Section 2.2. Therefore, feminist theologians have advocated for women's autonomy and equal-regard for mutual love that has impacted the contemporary model of Christian love.

In order to balance the excesses between extreme agapism and the contemporary feminist theological perspective on Christian love, Don Browning used evolutionary-psychological theory to develop a theology that integrated the mutual benefits of love for both self and other. From the perspective of evolutionary-psychology Browning recognised that parental love partially associated with self-love, was included in the love of agape. Self-love appropriately came through self-transcendence and did not require personal gain without any harm in damaging the goods of others.[39] He further stated, such kin-altruism served as 'mediators between self-love and love for distant neighbours, strangers, and perhaps, even enemies' (Browning 2006, 127). In this view, self-sacrifice was derived from equal-regard that endured suffering, which was not the goal of Christian neighbour love, but served as a 'transitional ethic' that aimed to transform others to achieve equal-regard and reciprocal altruism (Browning 2006, 136–37).

I find that Browning's theological development on kin-altruism, reciprocal altruism, and equal-regard is a resource for exploring family relations which might contributes to Christian women struggling in the face of Taiwanese familial culture. However, it would imply that Christian D-Ls may have to endure their sufferings in behaving with loving actions to their M-Ls, which serves as a transitional ethic bringing out relational transformation in this intergenerational relationship. I believe that the ultimate goal of sacrificial love is not for the sake of sacrifice itself, but aims to pursue the equal-regard, mutual love, and reciprocal altruism of Christian love.

Christian love not only manifests within biological families, but also extends to broader relational networks. The church, and the faith community, consists of families as the body of Christ encompassing a large web of relationships. A Christian theology of family should be rooted in the Bible, and interpreted with respect to Christian history (Lawler and Risch

---

[39]   Browning used the view of Timothy Jackson's argument on agapic love and self-love to fight against the extreme agapic point of view (Browning 2006, 117). He also adopted Louis Janssens' concepts on altruism and self-sacrifice in proposing a model of equal-regard as more balanced Christian love (Browning 2006, 143–45).

1999, 18).[40] The Scriptures often use the Father-child-family relationship to describe the loving relationships between God and His people. The Old Testament discloses that God created the human family, and through His creations He reveals His redemption and loving plans. Unlike the modern individualistic concept of family, the range of family relations presents a much larger perception in the Old Testament. It includes the nearest immediate family relationships of 'Father's house', connects to the closer relatives of the 'clan', and extends to the most distant relative of 'tribe' (Lawson 2011, 67–71).

In the New Testament, Christians receive the promised Abrahamic blessing by our faith in Christ. Therefore, we become brothers and sisters in the kingdom of God (Galatians 3:29).[41] The notion of a Christian family is a faith community which influences the theology of some churches, in order to employ an approach of 'church as a family' for emphasising the close-knit nature of a congregation. Church becomes a family for all people, and the relationships between its members are family-like, as a loving network for growing Christian faith not only for individuals, but also for the wellbeing of families (Renfro, Shields, and Strother 2009, 38–39). The Christian concept of love is not only a general feeling, but one which also involves actively seeking the good of neighbours based on the love of God,[42] prioritising self-giving love for the sake of forgiveness and reconciliation (Lawler and Risch 1999, 13). Church and families not only receive such love, but also actively practice and reflect the true love of God that is characterise by mutual love, support, devotion, forgiveness, and a freely accepted sacrifice in the web of relationships.

Family lives can develop and strengthen Christian faith. In contrast, difficult relationships accumulate negative experiences through close interactions with other family members, and can become a risk and shake Christians' faith (Garland 2012, pp. 80-102). For example, Christian belief may lead a Christian D-L to raise family disputes, splits, or strains in a non-Christian family. As Jesus said in Matthew10:34-35: 'Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn "a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, **a daughter-in-law against**

---

[40]   Different theologies are applied to different approaches of family ministry in Christian history. For example, Protestants are unlike Catholic and Anglican who generally take submissive role of women in relationships. They respect women and provide with more equal status, such as co-workers and companions of men that this notion was originated from Peter Lombard in the Middle Ages (Garland 2012, 80).

[41]   'If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise', Galatians 3:29 (NIV).

[42]   The second greatest commandment is, 'Love your neighbour as yourself' (Matthew 22:39).

her mother-in-law"'. Jesus did not advocate violence or militancy; rather, He knew the response of those who opposed Him stood against Christianity. The sword symbolises family division and conflict (France 1985, 188). The purpose of Jesus is to bring about peace on earth, restoring the relationship between humans and God. Paradoxically, faithful Christians seem inevitably to confront such religious challenges in a malicious society. Church ministers cannot ignore the fact that Christians continue to face a variety of challenges within changing societies, who depend on the church as well as family ministries to obtain help.

Diana Garland defined family ministry as "any activity that directly or indirectly (1) forms families in the congregational community; (2) increases the Christlikeness of the family relationship of Christians; or (3) equips and supports families for the work to which they are called together" (Garland 2012, 120). Her definition emphasises the actions of a church whose work is to cultivate families such that members can live and grow stronger, assisting them to build healthy family relationships and live their life for God. According to this definition, church communities should indispensably provide resources and programmes to support families, in order to strengthen relationships between family members for the benefit of families (Garland 2012, 182–83). In order to be an effective family ministry, therapeutic components should be incorporated into church programmes and pastoral work for serving individuals' needs, or supporting them to solve their problems (Sell 1995, 140–42; Renfro, Shields, and Strother 2009, 38; Garland 2012, 117–20). This approach emphasises the use of professional and non-professional counselling for families or individuals, operating personal counselling, support groups, and therapeutic or educational programmes for sustaining or improving Christian lives.

Taiwanese Christian D-Ls should receive support from their church families, as they may be isolated within their non-Christian family. However, women have a sense of connectedness with others in the web of living. I will discuss the interconnectivity between caregivers and the care-receivers in the next section.

2.3.3 Interconnected relationships and the living human web

Theologians and pastors have struggled to integrate theological analysis and congregational practice. More specifically, they've struggled to apply theories or theoretical knowledge to action. In the past, there was a lack of integration between

theological method and clinical pastoral practice (Miller-McLemore 1996, 24; Macallan 2014, 59). Pastoral theologians needed to secure their academic positions, while ministers were interested in using psychological and social approaches for pastor counselling.[43] The rise of pastoral theology has changed matters somewhat. This rise has caused them to reconsider the foundations of theology and theological education and the relationships between theological method and clinical pastoral practice (Miller-McLemore 1996, 24). Pastoral theologians often found theological meanings through lived experience in times of pain or joy, rather than from Scripture or doctrine. Considering this, Charles Gerkin suggests that human experience is the 'living human document' of pastoral theology, which locates the interdisciplinary nature of pastoral theology and prioritises lived experience as its primary text to bridge the gap between theology, social sciences and practice.[44]

Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore expands Gerkin's work and adds Catherine Keller's concept of the 'web', using 'living human web' to illustrate the interconnected and interdependent relationships between individuals, groups and wider context. The concept is based on Catherine Keller's work, *From a Broken Web: Separatism, Sexism, and Self* (1986); the metaphor of 'web' describes the interconnection of self and other in the world. Miller-McLemore relocates pastoral care away from 'one-to-one counselling', an individual focused approach, to the context of the recipients—a communities-based subject (Miller-McLemore 2012, 33). This shift extends pastoral theology and care to communities, and cultural, political and religious contexts. Members of communities can acquire sustenance not merely from a pastor, but also from the congregation and other sources. The image of living web portrays the interdependence of women; however, reading a living 'web' is much more difficult than reading a 'document', in that the web is constituted not only a person, but also a context and a relational network.

A living human web constitutes various biological, economic and cultural groupings, such as gender, class, and race. Pastoral theologians have paid little consideration to these issues in the past and these elements related to social marginalisation require 'close-life' study in order to respond the rise questions of context and power. Pastoral theology, which was

---

[43]   Clergy seek to offer efficient methods of pastoral care and tend to draw on psychological and social theories for their practical theology (Miller-McLemore 1996, 10–13).
[44]   Charles Gerkin regards pastoral counselling 'as a process of interpretation and reinterpretation of human experience' (Gerkin 1984, 20).

historically a paradigm of an approach that excluded women, has recently engaged with feminist theology. However, the model of the shepherd-sheep relationship has been rejected by some women, who criticise the inequality of power implied by this traditional leading imagine of pastoral theology. Feminist theologians, such as Zoe Bennett Moore and Riet Bons-Storm, identify paternalistic and dependent relationships embed in the model and advocate more equal models of relationships (Bons-Storm 1996; Bennett Moore 2002). Bons-Storm argues that the shepherd does not pay attention to the sheep's own problem and need, but treats the herd as a unit and ignores the individuality.[45] She notes this ignorance of marginalised groupings and a patriarchal bias, which can be applied to the situation of women, who have been silenced in pastoral counselling and personally desire to be cared for and heard. She attempts to end the silence of women and listening to their voice. Bennett Moore further suggests renewing the traditional paradigms or promoting new paradigms for doing pastoral theology from a feminist's perspective. Her model of pastoral relationships emphasises women's subjectivity and agency and considers both the individual and community.

Miller-McLemore calls upon those who engage in pastoral care to recognise the realities of injustice and violence toward women and minorities. Otherwise, inappropriate care-giving might reinforce oppression against those already (Miller-McLemore 2012, 41). In this respect, pastoral theology from a feminist perspective will provide an approach actively inclusive of women. This feminist approach, Miller-McLemore writes, 'requires prophetic, transformative challenge to systems of stratification and domination within the academy and to systems of power and authority within society and religious life, particularly those that rank men and male activities over women and female activities' (Miller-McLemore 1999, 79–80).[46] Therefore, a feminist perspective adapted to criticise the dominant

---

[45]   The sheep symbolises the despised one, who is marginalised by the majority until go astray (Bons-Storm 1996, 27–31). Bennett Moore rejects the traditional image of shepherd-sheep relationships, which fosters hierarchical mode of pastoral theology and is outmoded and irrelevant to women's life today. Men traditionally play the role of the shepherd, who normally controls the power and exacerbate women's problems. While, women are often stereotyped to the weaker sex, but they want to have a shared power and to be both pastoral agency and recipients (Bennett Moore 2002, 8–9, 15–16).

[46]   Caregivers must gain better understanding of counselling skills, theological discourses, socio-political and religious context in order to give care appropriately (Miller-McLemore 1996, 13–17).

authority, can be theorised to change society and the church for 'transforming practice' so as to promote freedom and love (Bennett Moore 2002, 3–4).[47]

Through my research based upon appropriate analytical tools I hope to provide resources and data for understanding women's experience in relation to pastoral issues within the living web. I also borrow the metaphor of 'web' to describe women, who are interconnected and mutually influencing in their own contexts. In this regard I believe that interaction between pastors and care-receivers can be female-friendly and based on their interconnectivity.[48] It is a dynamic and multi-facetted relationship in which wisdom is shared and the two parties mutually influence through interactions (Cooper-White 2004). The caregivers and the receivers are both 'in the dance' and need each other in the ongoing process of pastoral care. The experience of the pastor is as a resource. The care-receiver receives support from the pastor and gives feedback in return. As part of this process the pastor will gain new experience which may inform future pastoral support. The process and the interaction lead the two parties to sharing wisdom (Cooper-White 2004, 59–60).

In order to pursuit the pastoral knowledge and practice for the spiritual care of women, it is necessary to reflect further on the specific dimensions of women's faith experience.

2.3.4 Women's Faith

Elaine Showalter in her essay, *Feminist Criticism in the Wilderness*, indicates that most social theories have been developed by men within a phallocentric paradigm, which means that women have been excluded from the critical practice of theory construction. Therefore, she proposes a women-centred feminist criticism that provides an alternative framework to reinterpret and redefine the discursive and androcentric social and historical contexts from women's perspectives (Showalter 1981). Showalter uses a term 'gynocritics' to indicate the need for women's culture, in which women's bodies and images can be authentically portrayed and women's experiences can be properly analysed (Showalter 1981, 185).

---

[47]   Good practice provides human freedom, hope and love. Elaine Graham develops 'transforming practice' approach in order to challenge the dominated oppressive structure and values in postmodern context. Her analytical work focuses on women and emphases the critical study of value, attempting to reconstruct the values in the age of uncertainty for the coherent theological reflection and faithful action (Graham 2002).

[48]   Female-friendly pastoral care is a pastoral caring approach, which highlights gender equality, compassion and non-oppression aiming for promoting peace and justice, proposed by Carolyn Stahl Bohler (Bohler 1996). Bohler argues that counselling of women in family therapy has largely ignored gender bias. She offers twelve principles of pastoral counselling that support caregivers in consciously providing appropriate care.

Many psychological and social theories, as well as being constructed by men, are only based on males' experiences and ignore gender difference. The same is also true of developmental theories, which reflect male interests and involve hierarchical stratification. However, as with Showalter's notion of a shifting theoretical framework, I begin with a gynocentric approach to re-examine and explore women's faith development in order to understand Taiwanese women's spirituality.

As to the field of spirituality, James W. Fowler is a pioneer of the systematic study of faith.[49] His definition of faith is as a religious and a life-meaning making process for sustaining our being. He writes, faith 'shapes the way we invest our deepest loves and our most costly loyalties' that faith is activity of trusting relate to the world (Fowler 1981, 5). Fowler's book *Stages of Faith* based on traditional developmental theories developed from Jean Piaget, Lawrence Kohlberg, and Erik Erikson, identifies different stages across the typical human lifespan from infancy to adulthood in order to understand individuals' faith journeys.[50] His empirical research provides a useful paradigm and a starting point for exploring human faith. However, Fowler's approach is criticised by feminist theologians, such as Nicola Slee and Anne Phillips, for only providing linear models and not giving adequate consideration to sexual and contextual differences (Slee 2004, 31–32; Phillips 2011, 35). Fowler's study is deeply rooted in a male-centred psychological paradigm that cannot fully represent women's experience. He adopts a traditional framework of male-psychological theories which should be re-examined and re-interpreted. Besides, the ethnographic research upon which his 'stages of faith' were constructed Eurocentric North America data. Such a model plausibly doesn't fully represent human experience (Norquist 2008, 5).

Slee and Phillips, in response to Fowler's androcentric methods, adopt feminist perspectives to explore women/girls' faith development in the European context. Their feminist theological methodology is grounded in the experience of subjects and

---

[49]   James W. Fowler's work is associated with the work of Jean's stages of cognitive development, Erik Erikson's life-stage of psychosocial development, and Lawrence Kohlberg's stages of moral development in psychology. His conception of faith has been influenced by H. Richard Niebuhr, whose perception of faith is dynamic as a 'universal feature of human beings', and that of the psychosocial notion of self based on the theory of ego developed by Erikson (Fowler 2001, 159–60).

[50]   Fowler's empirical work was conducted with 359 interviewees from various age groups. His staged model across a life-span, includes stage 0 (0-2 years), 'primal or Undifferentiated' faith; Stage 1 (3-6 years), 'Intuitive-Projective' faith; Stage 2 (7-12 years), 'Mythic-Literal' faith; Stage 3 (13-20 years), 'Synthetic-Conventional' faith; Stage 4 (21-30 years), 'Individuative-Reflective' faith; Stage 5 (31-40 years), 'Conjunctive' faith and Stage 6 (40 years and above), 'Universalizing' faith (Fowler 1981).

characterised by reflexivity and non-oppression (Slee 2004, 44–51; Phillips 2011, 7–8). Slee's analytical work is conducted on the basis of findings from thirty female interviewees. The stages of faith development that she identifies are as follows: firstly, there 'is a dominance of concrete visual, narrative and embodied forms of thinking over propositional, abstract or analytical thought' (Slee 2004, 79); secondly, there is preference of faith expressions with conceptual thought and the use of 'metaphor, story or exemplar' (Slee 2004, 79); thirdly, the faithing strategies are dynamic and interactive, in which the interviewer and the interviewees both are making meanings.[51] 'Alienation', 'awakenings' and 'relationality' are the main patterns of women's faith development (Slee 2004, 14).

Slee's work confirms that some of women's faith development can be closely related to Fowler's faith stages, but the model is more complex than the male-centred model (Slee 2004, 159). Women's spirituality is characterised by interconnectedness to others and, women's identities, in turn, have been shaped by religious and cultural ideology in the living web. Such factors should be carefully taken into account when we study Christian D-Ls who deeply connect to the network of family, and this greatly influences women's self-identity. I will briefly discuss how Christian women's religious identity has been shaped, and their religious agency in the next section.

2.3.5 The identity of Taiwanese Christian D-L and women's religious agency

Scholars show that one's identities have been constructed and developed within a living context (Cooey 1994; Brown 2007, 95; Xie 2007, 19–20).[52] Erik Erikson's pioneering work on psychosocial analysis develops the concept of 'ego identity'－the ego quality of one's existence. He explains that '[e]go identity, then, in its subjective aspect, is the awareness of the fact that there is a self-sameness and continuity to the ego's synthesizing methods, the *style of one's individuality*, and that this style coincides with the sameness and continuity of one's *meaning for significant others* in the immediate community' (Erikson 1968, 50). The growth and development of individuals, personal consciousness and the perspectives of other people shape one's identity, which changes in different

---

[51]   Nicola Slee prefers to use the term of 'faithing' to emphasise that the meaning-making process of faith development is dynamic and active (Slee 2004, 61–62, 80). Her work on women's faithing echoes the findings of Miller-McLemore on the 'living web' and that of White-Cooper's 'shared wisdom' in a dialectical process.
[52]   Gail Ching-Liang Low identifies 'the recent theorisation of identity as textual, hybrid, performative, strategic and positional' (Low 2005, 159).

phases of life. The inner sense of self is multiple and fluid and needs to be adjusted when external roles change. A sense of wholeness will emerge, if identity is well integrated under the right circumstances, and the true self will potentially grow. While, when one hides or suppresses her/his true thoughts, feelings, and beliefs, the one will erect a false self with low self-esteem or be silence. The behaviour of false identity manifests itself in interpersonal relationships through internalising relationships with others in the social context for the security of selfhood. Besides, when one is forced to accept a negative image by superiors or dominant groups and simultaneously accepts it, a negative identity occurs. Other factors that significantly influence the construction of one's psychosocial identity include culture, community, interactions, and role expectations (Jacobs 1987, 125–26; Frosh 2010, 31). Paula M. Cooey states that the 'sexual itself, is cultural'; 'women's identity is the product of a social relation, reflecting male economic need and political power' (Cooey 1994, 26). This assumption reminds us that patriarchal politico-economic arrangements may be embedded in a culture that objectifies women and reinforces their second-class citizenship. Careful examination of the power structure in the cultural context can assist us to better understand the production of women's identity.

A Christians' religious identity often encourages them to make a division of the world between the divine and the created one, the sacred and secular, the living and the dead, and both private and public (Werbner 2010, 233). Women mostly develop their religious identities within a religious community and are formed by the places they practice Christian faith. Their identities enact multiple conceptions of psychosocial identifications, including sexual, ethnic, religious, social class in their own contexts that assist them to make meaning of the ego (Leming 2007, 73).[53] The image of a Taiwanese D-L based on the description of Catherine S. P. Farris and Sor-hoon Tan is of a person who patiently cares for her parents in-law and her husband's siblings, who is faithful to her husband, who is a loving mother, but who receives less back than she gives (C. S. P. Farris 2004, 359; Tan 2004, 226). This description reproduces the most prevalent ideology of a D-L and this gender ideology and familial cultural norms plausibly go hand-in-hand for a long history in Taiwanese society (Xie 2007, p.20). In other words, D-Ls play the role of care-giver and are expected to be self-sacrificing or selfless. However, the Christian faith not only

---

[53]   Laura M. Leming writes that '[t]he term "religious agency", which has been used sparingly in theological and spiritual writing…, has not been clearly defined. Nor has it been systematically examined in a sociological context' (Leming 2007, 73). Therefore, Leming seeks to move the notion of religious agency to social loci.

emancipates women, who have suffered from oppressive regimes, but also builds their self-esteem and provides hope and love. Furthermore, 'the arrival of Christianity in Asia has challenged the control of family and gender-role structures, setting some women free to soar' (Brock 1987, 104).

Although Christianity may be interpreted as having a liberalising influence I have discussed the fact that women have been victimised by androcentric systems and marginalised by male-dominated theological thinking that has distorted women's images. Women have been recognised by their religious agency, which has been repressed in the past, but recently has been given considerable attention (McPhillips 1999, 297–98; J. Kilby and Lury 2000, 257). Religious agency means that individual play the role of a religious agent, who claims and enacts a meaningful religious engagement for the religious freedom. My interpretation of a Christian female religious agent is a person who combines her own identities with a theological focus from the root of the faith that motivates her to raise crucial concerns and engage in actions for promoting social change (Leming 2007, 73–74; Michie 1990, 200). For example, Shaminder Takhar's work discloses the political agency of South Asian women, who have successfully combatted oppressive regimes and changed social policy (Takhar 2013, 63–67). Mary E. Hunt shows religious feminism in the work of building a women's church, without sexual oppression and that is female-friendly (Hunt 2009). Laura M. Leming and Ellen Skerrett both propose a sociological concept of women's religious agency in which a dynamic spiritual identity not only motivate women to act within their own context, but also to foster memory to generate better futures (Leming 2007; Skerrett 2010). Leming explains that 'religious agency provides a means of examining the processes of structuration as it is occurring in religious institutions', in order to empower action for transformation (Leming 2007, 74, 76). Skerrett's work examines four groups of women's work in four American cities and shows that the women in these groups contribute to social improvement as religious agents (Skerrett 2010, 561). These investigations of women's religious agency help our understanding of women's choices, actions and the relationship between women and the structure of the Church. They show the strategies which enable women to identify and negotiate their woman-consciousness and religious identities in order to gain voice and move toward to social transformation (McPhillips 1999, 297–98; Leming 2007, 75). This

refreshed identify of women's religious agency places greater stress on women's subjectivity than older models of agency.[54]

The multiple identities of Taiwanese D-Ls include those of being a Taiwanese woman and a Christian who is also negotiating the roles of a wife, a daughter, a D-L and/or a mother. In the on-going process of meaning-making and reconciling ego identity, they act as religious agents and attempt to transform traditional patriarchal Confucian values and bring change in their own families. Their identity and agency are also crucially tied to their embodied experience (Stevenson-Moessner 2000b, 17; Miller-McLemore 2013, 747).[55] A woman's body is also intricately tied to self-identity, self-image, and emotions. However, body, mind, and soul as a whole comprise a person and this fact needs to be addressed when we explore the daily lives of women. I will discuss the issues of women's embodiment in the next section.

2.3.6 Women's bodies

Tracing Christian history, the Greco-Rome cultural notion of soul-body or spirit-body dualism has been persistently embedded in Christianity, which honours soul or spirit and devalues body and so reinforces the mind-body split (Stevenson-Moessner 2000a, 12–13; Ashcroft 2014, 14–15). This notion influences Christian theology to harbour a concept of dualism and approves of privileging mind over body and spirit over body (Miller-McLemore 2013, 747–48). Men and women are dichotomised through the polarised images of spirit and body. Women are equated with flesh and regarded as inferior to men. They are assigned the roles of caregivers and housekeepers in charge of heavy housework loads. The biological rhythms of women include monthly periods, childbearing, menopause, etc., and these are feared and ritualised in many cultures. For example, some women have suffered from barrenness or failed to give-birth to a male heir and so provide succession in the lineage. Such succession is of huge significance within family-based cultures and has been considered traditionally important in Chinese society.

---

[54]   As to women's religious agency, other examples, Ruether broke away from androcentric church to establish a women's church. Schüssler Fiorenza stands in a different political location and advocates prophetic action to out of Egypt, where they were oppressed, for constituting women's religious and sexual subjectivity (McPhillips 1999, 297–98).

[55]   Erik Erikson's developmental theories of maturation provide structured stages of life to explain the life cycle. The occurrence of developmental crises is often age-related and due to the challenge of biological change (Elizabeth Liebert 2000, 20–22).

While the female body is a resource which provides specific insights for women;[56] it can also be the first place of discrimination (Isherwood and McEwan 2001, 142, 149). Elaine Graham claims the majority of women in the world suffer from violence, oppression and injustice.[57] Kwok draws attention to the poor and writes of the, 'East Asian economic wonder, which is based on the exploitation of women' (Kwok 2000, 18). Many Asian women are exploited by offering cheap labour.[58] Such labour consumes their strength and time but they only receive low pay in return. Feminist theologians attempt to challenge this distorted spirit-body dualism. Jeanne Stevenson-Moessner argues against the devaluation of flesh and advocates re-evaluating the importance of body (Stevenson-Moessner 2000a, 13). She takes the example of Jesus' passion drama, which exemplifies the paradox of the human body in so far as it is a source of shame and glory, suffering and healing, and brokenness and completion. This paradoxical aspect of the human body serves to underline the significance of the body (Stevenson-Moessner 2000a, 13). Jesus sacrificed his body and so heals the bodies of men and women. Those who have broken bodies or souls can, through Jesus' body, find a new perspective and acquire healing and hope.[59] The broken body of Christ makes us whole and our bodies, psyches and spirits are deeply interconnected.

The bodies of Taiwanese D-Ls are distorted and devalued. Their domestic life is filled with household chores, childbearing, and caregiving for the well-being of family members (Stevenson-Moessner 2000b, 15). Moreover, they have been silenced as we have discussed in the first chapter. They have often suppressed their own desires and sacrificed themselves to offer care or fulfil the needs of family members (McPhillips 1999, 297). In recognition of this I invited Taiwanese Christian D-Ls to speak about their lived experience in focus

---

[56] Ecofeminists argue that the universe symbolises the body of God and human beings are 'embodied personal agents' (McFague 2011, 117). This model is different from the traditional approach that God is only spirit. Sallie McFague presents us with 'God metaphorically as the spirit'; the universe created by God, which can be seen as the body of God and we are contained in Her womb (McFague 2011, 118). Ecofeminist theology emphasises women inclusive languages and metaphor, using female images of the Creator to highlight the value of women's bodies.

[57] In order to develop a theory of the body, Graham examines the work of Arthur Frank and uses his model of 'ethics of embodiment' as a basis to explore suffering bodies (Graham 2009, 115–17).

[58] Kwok argues that the highly developed sex industry drives many Asian women to sell their bodies for increased income (Kwok 2000, 20–21). She develops Rita Nakashima Brock and Susan Brooks' analysis and attributes the selling of their bodies to 'economic exploitation, the social structure of male dominance, the legal protection of patrimony, the cultivation of hyper masculine cultures, and androcentric religious teachings' (Kwok 2000, 21).

[59] Sharing the 'body' is one of the most significant Christian traditional practices passed down to us; the congregation through the Eucharist receiving His body builds a direct relationship with Christ (Ashcroft 2014, 14–15).

groups and encouraged them through doing so to move from the private sphere to the public. Through this process I hope their hidden stories will become visible, and we can understand their intergenerational interactions and spiritual life.

Conclusion

The task of this chapter has been to introduce feminist perspectives on pastoral theology. In this respect, I began by tracing patriarchal history and androcentric Christian traditions to explain that there is a need to reconstruct the gender paradigm in theology. Feminist theologians have sought to reconstruct and reinterpret the prophetic liberating tradition for women's emancipation. Women's experience became a basic and important resource to reject the traditional androcentric paradigm within feminist theology. As Asia is the geographic location of Taiwanese D-Ls, I introduced Asian women's theology to locate its unique socio-political and cultural context in the postcolonial era. In response to the bias of Eurocentrism in feminist theology, I highlighted the importance of recognising cultural differences. The colonial and patriarchal history impacted upon Asian women's theological discourses and neo-colonialism has shaped a new form of hegemonic control through the system of global market.

I have also explored pastoral theology from a feminist perspective and the related topic of family ministry within the field of practical theology. In the era of globalisation, local and global contexts have deeply interconnected. I adopted the image of 'human living web' from Miller-McLemore's work to describe the interconnectivity of human relationships. Finally, I turned to explore women's faith, identity, religious agency, and body, as they are particular relevant to my concerns for the everyday lives of Taiwanese D-Ls. In the next chapter, I will explain how the feminist methodology I have begun to set out in this chapter has influenced the research strategies I adopted in this study for the collection of the women's lived experiences. My intention in my research is to allow Taiwanese women to speak out in order that their experiences may form the base for renewed theological and pastoral practice.

Chapter Three: Methodology and Research Strategies

This chapter will set out and discuss methodologies and research strategies for exploring the questions with which this thesis is concerned. What are the everyday experiences of Christian D-Ls in their relationships with their non-Christian M-Ls in Taiwan? How do power and ideology operate across social systems and churches so as to influence or shape this relationship? How do the relationships impact upon other family members? What church teachings do the D-Ls receive on relationship issues that arise from their relationships with their M-Ls? How does biblical understanding and Christian belief affect the interaction between Christian D-Ls and their non-Christian M-Ls? Answers to these questions can help us to understand important aspects of the life experiences of this cohort of women.

3.1 Research Methodology

This research is focussed upon the life contexts of Taiwanese Christian D-Ls. This is a group that has been historically silenced and whose experiences are not well known, and yet who have their own particular pastoral needs. In order to uncover their issues and help us to hear their stories, I employ feminist ethnography – a qualitative research method – encompassing a variety of interpretive frameworks. My aim is to provide research that can help raise the consciousness of ministers in Taiwan to issues facing a particular number of their flock and to develop a theological basis that can guide ministers in the provision of pastoral care to this cohort.

3.1.1 *Qualitative research methodology and practical theology*

Qualitative and quantitative research methods are the two basic types of paradigms in social science and practical theology (Scharen and Vigen 2011, 4).[1] 'Quantitative researchers use mathematical models, statistical tables, and graphs and usually write in an impersonal, third-person prose' (Denzin and Lincoln 2011, 10). Quantitative research methods often adopt questionnaire as survey instruments, which although sometimes helpful, can also generate predetermined response to explain the predicted events, human attitudes and behaviour (Swinton and Mowat 2006, 44–46). Qualitative research differs

---

[1] The meaning of methods refers to a specific series of techniques, which are designed by researchers to collect and analyse the data for accomplishment of a required task (Swinton and Mowat 2006, 74).

from quantitative research in that it requires its own particular set of interpretive activities or involves a complex process of conversation.[2] Qualitative research is thought of as 'participatory', 'ethnographic', and 'naturalistic'. It is thus a methodology that enables investigators to develop an understanding of specific aspects of human lives, perspectives, and belief systems. As Norman K. Denzin and Yvonne S. Lincoln indicate, human experience is the starting point of qualitative research (Denzin and Lincoln 2011, 3–4). Researchers use qualitative research methods in order to record particular individuals' life experiences and inquire into the meaning-making process.

Although social scientific study has been associated with secular concerns, and has sometimes been seen as inapplicable to religious subject matter regarding the sacred (Hammond 1985, 1; Munthali 2014, 23), social scientific methods have also been employed for the purpose of undertaking theological investigations. John Swinton and Harriet Mowat directly attempt to connect the two disciplines in dialogue (Swinton and Mowat 2006). In *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*, they claim that qualitative research is particularly relevant to practical theology for the exploration of emerging new questions or challenges in the process of theological reflection. Practical theologians develop and utilise a scientific research paradigm, which shapes their research and allows for efficient data collection and analysis (Swinton and Mowat 2006, vi). The task of practical theology is hermeneutical or interpretive. It is a discipline that makes use of various research tools and encourages the development of further methods to interpret the human situation,[3] Christian tradition, and theological investigation.

The open-ended nature of qualitative inquiry provides effective tools for practical theologians for theological reflection. According to the work of Swinton and Mowat, 'description', 'interpretation' and 'understanding' are the three core tasks of qualitative research. These tasks help researchers to model and analyse real scenarios that involve human psychology, behaviour and political and cultural contexts, as well as evaluation and reflect on the praxis of theological discourses. In this regard, qualitative research promotes

---

[2]   According to the explanation of Joey Sprague, 'Qualitative methods are a diverse lot, including in-depth interviewing, field observation, the analysis of historical documents, and the analysis of visual and verbal discourses' (Sprague 2005, 119).

[3]   The term 'methodology' implies a series of procedures and rules, which use various scientific methods and comprise philosophical perspectives and epistemological assumptions to construct a research project (Miller and Brewer 2003, 192).

rich descriptions and abundant interpretations for the employment of practical theology (Swinton and Mowat 2006, 46).

It is on the basis of the advantages noted above that I employ qualitative methods in my own research. Ethnography is a form of qualitative methodology that particularly well adapted to explorations of cultural phenomena in the day-to-day life of a particular community (Stacey 1988, 22). Its disciplined attention to what is going on can reveal issues that participants are not consciously aware of and which can then be reflected back to them. More specifically, I use ethnographic methodology to listen to and interact with my female participants and to develop an understanding of their situation.

3.1.2 Ethnographic methods

Ethnography is a hermeneutics-orientated approach to research that has been developed from anthropology and sociology. The term 'ethnography' comprises both *ethno* (race, culture) and *graphy* (writing, study), which refers to written culture and approaches to the stories, rituals, moral responsibility, symbols and folk narratives within particular locations (Scharen and Vigen 2011, 16–17; Harper 2015). Ethnographers utilize a range of methods; particularly central are techniques of participant observation which entail the examination of relevant cultural, moral, and religious dimensions. They closely participate and interact with a group of people and, through observation, record and conceptualise the individuals' behaviour and actions, which may previously have gone unconceptualised. In employing this research methodology, the researchers actively play roles as both insider and outsider in order to gain understanding of the values, beliefs, ideology, and social locations of those they study (Scharen and Vigen 2011, 16; Denzin and Lincoln 2003, 55–56).

In recent years, many practical theologians have employed ethnographic research methods for the purpose of theological investigation. They have done so in order to gain knowledge and insight of certain groups (Swinton and Mowat 2006; Scharen and Vigen 2011; Moschella 2011; Ward 2012).[4] They suggest that doing practical theology should place cultural context at the centre stage and, simultaneously be theological, cultural, and social.

---

[4]   Robert J. Schreiter, Don Browning and Elaine Graham are practical theologians who employed ethnographic methodology to develop practical theology (Moschella 2011, 225).

[5] Ethnography has helped theologians to respond to social change and its manifestation in cultural phenomenon. Pete Ward emphasises the dialectical approach of ethnography, which is 'a way of seeing or a way of approaching social research' (Ward 2012, 6). Swinton and Mowat point out that the aim of ethnography 'is to challenge and complexity situations and accepted views of the nature of truth and reality and, in so doing, to render the familiar strange' (Swinton and Mowat 2006, 167). More specifically, ethnography has helped identify the 'strange in the familiar' with the result that accepted values and cultural behaviour, which are usually taken for granted as normal, are challenged (Swinton and Mowat 2006, 167). This facilitates researchers getting a closer look and nuanced information. By using ethnographic research methods, they can collect reliable data and make interpretations regarding the daily lives of a group of people (Swinton and Mowat 2006, 167; Ward 2012, 77). Such theological and dialectical engagement invites conversation between the studied people and the theologians. The latter are influenced by the subjects with regard to their theology and reflections on the church.

Postmodernist scholars dispute our capability to know other groups of people through scientific research (Best and Kellner 1997, 226). They claim that knowledge is created by scholars, whose background, perspective, and power inevitably play a role in the construction of knowledge (Tierney 2001, 359–60).[6] However, Denzin and Lincoln observe that ethnography has become 'one of the major discourses of the neomodern world' (Denzin and Lincoln 2011, xiii), but its foci has been shifted from the objective process to the subjectivity of researchers.[7] New approaches, in feminist and postcolonial projects are concerned with the social and political dimensions of observation. These new paradigms emphasise listening to the voice of marginalised groups for the purposes of liberating actions, justice, or social transformation (Denzin and Lincoln 2011, xiii, 12; Lincoln, Lynham, and Guba 2011, 117). Moreover, an ethnographer's work is understood as being more than recording the life experience of the informants, the researchers' stories

---

[5]   Julie Scott Jones and Sal Watts's work mentions seven-key values of ethnography which are 'participation', 'immersion', 'reflection, reflexivity, and representation', 'thick description', 'an active participative ethics', 'empowerment', and 'understanding' (Scott-Jones and Watt 2010, 7–10). Pete Ward suggests that such values can contribute to theological projects in an ecclesial context (Ward 2012, 6–7).

[6]   The participants will be affected by the prior interests, values, perspectives, and the personal background of the observer. Gender, social class, language and race, can all have an effect with the result that the collection of the information and the interpretation of the data in research process is often not neutral (Ward 2012, 76).

[7]   The term of subjectivity refers to people's personhood, consciousness, agency, reality, and truth. It broadly indicates at 'lived experience' within a physical, political, and historical context (Schwandt 2014).

are also written into the ethnographic text and, those who have been studied may challenge what has been written by the ethnographers.

Mary C. Moschella observes that the work of pastoral counselling has similarly moved from being individual centred toward being community or local faith group centred. Ministers or religious leaders are now more concerned with the wider social context than previously. This contrasts with a past emphasis on caring for individuals abstracted from their life settings. The new contextual pastoral methods now used seek to foster trust, growth, and the empowerment of the faith community. Moschella suggests that ethnographic methods can be used to invite theological conversation and reflection and develop 'pastoral ethnography' as 'the intentional use of ethnography as a pastoral theological practice' (Moschella 2011, 229). This ethnographic pastoral practice not only reads the stories and listens to the voices of the local congregation, but also take actions so as to transform the lived faith practices. At heart it is a theological work that combines reflection and practice in a pastoral cycle and seeks dialogue between with the theories, studies and tradition of researchers and the local people, attempting to bring about the transformation of the society (Moschella 2008, 25–43; Moschella 2011, 229).

It is clear that pastoral ethnography can assist both my gathering of reliable information and my explanations of the practice of faith and the social phenomenon I investigate. As the subjects of this study are all women, gender is a focus for this analytic project. It is vital that pastoral ethnography should incorporate feminist perspectives to avoid the gender bias of traditional, androcentric knowledge. Therefore, I apply theoretical concepts from a feminist standpoint, in order to collect and construct data for research which is ultimately concerned with women's well-being.

3.1.3 The application of feminist ethnographic methodology

According to the recent *Religious Diversity Index*, Taiwan has the second highest score for religious diversity in the world (Pew Research Center 2014). The majority of Taiwanese are Taoists and Buddhists, while Christians only account for 6.95% of the total population

and as such they are a minority group within Taiwanese society.[8] The religious lives of Christians are tightly knit with their churches. To much of the majority population, they appear unusual and exotic. For example, Christians refuse to follow certain folk customs such as ancestor worship, which distinguishes their religious activities from most Taiwanese people.[9] More specifically, Christians have their own symbols, values, terminology and forms of worship which has set them apart from the majority population and influenced their marginalisation from non-Christians. Taiwanese Christian women often are forced to maintain a difficult balancing act. They often struggle to both fit in with mainstream cultural life, the way of life that is dominant sometimes even within their own families, and live the life of a Christian and church member.

As I have shown Taiwanese D-Ls play subordinate roles in family and are disregarded within the androcentric cultural structure.[10] Moreover, Taiwanese Christian D-Ls who have been marginalised often struggle to talk about their life experiences in public. Marjorie L. Devault argues that the silence of women often means that 'parts of their lives "disappear"' (DeVault 1999, 66). Listening to the voices of silenced Taiwanese Christian D-Ls can be seen as a response to the appeal of Riet Bons-Storm that we 'listen to women's silences in pastoral care and counseling' (Bons-Storm 1996). I also adopt Diane Bell's approach of women talking to women in acknowledgement that women's use of language differs from men and that by having women talk to other women more might be learnt (Graham 1995, 59). By speaking and listening, participating women not only have the opportunity to break the silence and to tell their stories, but they are also encouraged to use their own language and terms when sharing their personal experience with other women.[11] This feminist ethnographic method attempts to view the phenomena that are our concern through the eyes of the women that are central to it. I follow this feminist approach in order to move beyond the masculine focus of traditional ethnographic texts, which have been criticised for the imposition of its inappropriate male-centred logic upon female experience (Miller-McLemore 2000, 234–35; Wickramasinghe 2009). This methodology is non-oppressive

---

[8]   In 2013, Christianity in Taiwan included 4872 churches (J. S. T. Chu 2014, 1–2, 5). The number of churches is more than the official statistic of 3323 offered by the government of that year. I suggest that John S. T. Chu's work better manifests the figures of Christianity in Taiwan, due to its valid and efficient annual investigation in recent years. However, there were 12106 Taoist and Buddhist temples at the end of 2014 (Department of Statistics 2015). Taoists and Buddhists comprise around 70 % of the religious population. In addition, Roman Catholics only make up 1.09 % of the total population.

[9]   Chinese cultural heritage is deeply rooted in Taiwanese society (Bell 2008, 114).

[10]   See chapter one that provides more explanations about Chinese culture and women's roles.

[11]   Elaine Graham advocates the importance of listening to women, which can contribute to the emancipation of women (Graham 1999, 113).

and women friendly and allows me to collect information regarding women's sorrows, hopes and joys.

Although my basic stance is as a feminist ethnographer I shall employ a range of selected methods in my research. This is a requirement because of the complexity of human behaviours and spiritual lives (Denzin and Lincoln 2011, 11–12).

3.1.4 The method of focus groups

I use the framework of qualitative research, a feminist dialectical approach, and the methodological tools of ethnography within the field of pastoral theology to conduct this project. According to Hesse-Biber's a feminist dialectical approach holds 'out promise for enabling feminists to test out their theories and generalize their findings through integrating and contextualizing women's daily living experiences at the macro level (placing them into a larger socio-historical context)' (Hesse-Biber 2010, 186). I believe that this female-friendly research design can offer suitable analysis and effectively reflect factors particular to the relevant cultural context of the theological investigation (Swinton and Mowat 2006, 50).

Focus groups are the chief research method for this study and they enable me to collect data for analysing the experiences of participating D-Ls. I chose to run focus groups rather than using interviews or simply accepting returned questionnaires due to a focus group's interactive, dialectical, and open-ended features. Individual interviews can curtail the open-ended exploration of ideas and make for a less interactive and dialogically rich means of generating data. George Kamberelis and Greg Dimitriadis quote Madriz's words to explain that focus groups can be used 'to unveil specific and little-researched aspects of women's daily existences, their feelings attitudes, hopes, and dreams' (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis 2011, 552). It is also of benefit that the operation of focus groups is less expensive and more time efficient than many other forms of research! Individual interviews demand a longer time to collect first-hand resources. Focus groups in contrast allow for the quicker acquisition of results giving that information is gathered from the interactions of several participants at once (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis 2011, 557–7). The careful design and open-ended nature of group discussion operates to generate a diversity of perspectives and reflections that enable researchers to obtain a wealth of detailed information and gain new insights or unique perspectives throughout the process. Finally the use of focus groups

offer me opportunities to explore very controversial topics and open up some inspiring discussion and reflection amongst women (Litosseliti 2003, 1–3).

Compared to other methods, focus groups offer a non-threatening, more natural, comfortable, and enjoyable environment for the women to share their own experiences. Participants are encouraged to freely speak of their own stories, ideas, and perspectives and, at the same time, they may become inspired by the stories shared by other women. They are also allowed to interpret social phenomenon and, this enables women to find voice in the small group. The discussions are led by a set of semi-structured questions and guided by a sophisticated moderator. The result is that participants can flexibly follow up interesting responses with further questions and thus enable a dialectical process. I chose focus groups as the data collection method because of all these strengths. The efficiency of the data collection methodology in collecting the women's stories is particularly important given that very little study has been carried out on the experiences of this cohort of women. The use of focus groups will therefore enable diverse and rich information to be collected on this group quickly which should prove a value resource for future research on the same themes. The information gathered is also of a sort that can provide evidence to challenge conventional thoughts that might otherwise guide pastoral praxis (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis 2011, 547–50).

Although focus groups are appropriate for this study, some weaknesses should not be ignored. For example, one of their disadvantages is that the groups' opinions and individuals' opinions may not easily to be distinguished. The wide-range of the responses are very difficult to interpret and analyse and this factor may influence the outcome of the research (Litosseliti 2003, 21). I tried to minimise the effect of these methodological disadvantages as much as possible when I came to collect the research data. Therefore, I addressed some main weaknesses of this method in relation to the process of the data collection. I was aware that it was easy to lose control of the research process, given the open-ended nature of group discussions (Litosseliti 2003, 9), the complexity of interactions, the constraints of time, and the looseness of dialogue – all of which can influence the production of data (Litosseliti 2003, 9). For example, the participants tend to talk about what they are interested in and what is shared easily slips away from the concern of the research questions. However, some of these weaknesses can be minimised through

sophisticated moderation.[12] I chose to work in partnership with a moderator in order to free myself to make more detailed observation of the processes at work within the group conversations

Together with my colleague May, who I recruited as moderator, I brainstormed and deliberately planned every detail of the sharing days (in which the focus groups took place) in an attempt to eliminate as many of the weaknesses as possible. We met twice before the operation of the first focus group, which allowed her to thoroughly understand the whole project and allowed me to receive some useful suggestions of the focus group discussions from her. After every successive focus group we met for an exchange of thoughts, conducted a review, and adjustment the processes in the light of our reflections. We also did a rehearsal for the next time as well. We sought to perfect the operation of the research collection process so as to acquire the most effective information.

We were concerned that the prejudices of the moderator/researcher or a dominant voice amongst the participants might bias or overly influence the conversations. We also worried that participants might have certain assumptions or expectations as to what would be acceptable to say and then they might tailor what they contributed according to those assumptions or expectations. If that were to happen, then of course we might not receive the frank perspectives, with regard to experiences and opinions, of the participants. In order to avoid these flaws, May and I sought to stay neutral and to avoid presenting our personal opinions. We created a caring, secure, and open-minded environment that encouraged the participants to talk and honestly share their perspectives. We both encouraged everyone to express their opinions authentically and to listen to different voices throughout the discussions. May skilfully drew everyone into the conversations, especially the quiet women in the group. These actions not only stimulated the discussions, but also facilitated the collection of greater and more comprehensive information.

I recognised that restrictions on group size and time could result in the information collected, the basic raw material of my research, being unrepresentative of the experience of whole Taiwanese Christian D-Ls (Litosseliti 2003, 21). In order to minimise such a

---

[12]   I invited a Christian woman, May, to play the role of moderator. May is a lay leader and has been engaging in woman and family ministry over fifteen years. She is also a D-L with a non-Christian M-L. I invited May to moderate the group discussions not only rely on her moderating experience, but also her charisma that she has a sense of humour and is able to create an enjoyable environment for a dialogue.

problem, I carefully recruited participants who would make for a diverse sample.[13] In the next section, I will describe the operation of the sharing day events and the methods I used on those days.

3.2 Sharing Day Events

I arranged five 'sharing-day' events for running five focus groups in order to collect information on the everyday lived experience of Taiwanese Christian D-Ls. The five focus groups met between October and November 2014. Forty-one Taiwanese D-Ls attended the focus groups.[14] These participants were Christian women from different protestant denominations in Taiwan.[15] I will now explain how I recruited women to attend the sharing day events, the questions I asked in the focus group discussions, and how I used the methods of participant observation.

3.2.1 Recruiting Taiwanese Christian daughters-in-law

Participants play the most important role in the focus groups, because their contributions directly affect the quality of the information available for collection. The backgrounds of the participants greatly influence the group discussions and impact the quality of the data. Although I faced the previously discussed limitations, I deliberately recruited participants from diverse backgrounds, and attempted to gain insight and illustrative information from them. I began by inviting some friends, who met the requirements, to attend the focus groups. Other friends assisted me to advertise this volunteer opportunity through their circles of friends. I also posted a volunteer opportunity on my Facebook page and this post

---

[13]   I am not collecting quantitative statistical materials. I seek to look for a sample group that would have a range of experiences rather than represent the population group as a whole.

[14]   I tried to achieve representativeness in these areas. I understood that it could only have a small number so genuine representative and was always going to be difficult, perhaps impossible, to achieve. Unfortunately I only had limited resources available, and needed to prioritise given the limitations of my time and financial resources. It made sense for me to recruit participants from within my Christian circle rather than Catholics or non-mainstream Protestants. Besides, my concern is the relationship between the two groups and the role that Christian theology and pastoral care plays and should play in that relationship. Finding out the perspectives of Christian D-Ls is important in that it can tell us something about the relationship between the two groups. It is also important in that we can learn something about the role that their faith and church plays in that relationship.

[15]   I assume that there is not much variation in the reception to various denominations of Christians by non-Christians in Taiwanese society, and that therefore I believe that my findings remain generalisable to the population of Christian Taiwanese D-Ls as a whole. It is likely that my findings more accurately reflect the experiences of Christian Taiwanese D-Ls from the denominations that are well represented in this study.

was shared by many who read it. In what follows, I provide clear data that shows that my sample does seek to be broadly representative of this female group (see Appendix 1 and 2).

A. Ethnicity, custom and language. According to government figures, Taiwan's population is composed of approximately 95% of Han Chinese and 5% indigenous Austronesian and recent immigrants from various areas (M. Lu, Taylor, and Silver 2014, 9–10). The Holo people or Hokkien and the Hakka of Han Chinese comprise the two main ethnic groups approximately 70% and 19% of the total population, respectively (S. Yu and Lin 2014, 48) .[16] In 1949 after the Chinese Civil War, the government of the Republic of China (ROC) relocated to Taiwan along with 1.2 million other people from mainland China (S. Yu and Lin 2014, 48).[17] This event led to the further diversification of culture and ethnic make-up in Taiwan. For example, the customs of the new immigrants differ from the customs of the Holo and the Hakka. Although the official language is Mandarin, every ethnic group has its distinct language, which is used to speak to family and within their communities. People may find difficult to communicate with other ethnic groups, if they only speak their own Sinitic language, especially for the older generations (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2014).

Increased intermarriage in recent years has blurred the distinction between different ethnic groups. Differences of custom and language may still, however, raise relationship issues, including barriers between D-Ls and M-Ls. With this consideration in mind, I took factors of ethnic groups and age groups into consideration and conducted the focus groups. The participants included Holo, Hakka, Chinese mainlanders, and aborigines.[18]

B. Geography. In order to aid the recruitment of a representative group of Taiwanese Christian D-Ls from a variety of ethnic groups, social backgrounds, and age groups protestant denominations, the meetings of the five different focus groups were

---

[16]   Southern Han Chinese includes Holo/Hokkien, Hakka, and Cantonese. Many Han Chinese have indigenous ancestry on the basis that a large number of Holo male immigrants married indigenous Austronesians between 1644 and 1912 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2014).
[17]   As a subethnicity, mainlanders made up less than 14 % of the population at that time; however, Holo, mainlander, and Hakka people are identified as Hans (White 2009, 65–66).
[18]   The breakdown of the participants' ethnicity is as follows: Holo (25), mainlanders (8), Hakka (4), aborigine (1), mainlander/Hakka mixed (1), and Holo/aborigine mixed. One participant chose not to state her ethnicity.

disbursed across five different locations in Taiwan. Four focus groups met in western Taiwan. Two of the four met in the city centres of metropolitan areas. One was in Taipei City－the capital city and the most densely populated, while the other met in Taichung City－located in mid-western Taiwan. The other two took place in rural districts. One met in Longtan District in the north-west, while the other met in Rende District, which is located in the south. Only one focus group met in the east. This group met in Hualien City. The disparity of the number of groups meeting in the east in comparison to the number of groups meeting in the west is accounted for by the fact that only 3% of the total population inhabits the eastern parts of the island (H.-H. Huang and Li 2012, 122).

C. Age groups. The participants were between the ages of 20 and 65, had a variety of educational backgrounds, and came from a variety of social classes and family structures.

D. Denominations. The participants came from twenty churches with various Christian denominations, including 11 Presbyterians, 10 Baptists, 6 Bread of Life Church, 5 Pentecost, 3 Methodists, and other 6 Churches.[19] The participants chose one of the venues to attend for the planned sharing day. Each group consisted of five to twelve women from various ethnic groups.

In the next section, I will describe how I schedule the sharing day to collect the cultural behaviour of the participating women.

3.2.2 The schedule of a sharing day

In each sharing day I sought to create a space which allowed silenced women to freely speak of their joys, burdens and pain. The one-day sharing events created an opportunity for the participating women to think of themselves and their family relationships, and promoted awareness of the needs and problems of Christian Taiwanese D-Ls. I attempted to eliminate potential negative environmental factors. To do so, I used quiet, comfortable, secured and easily accessible venues to host the sharing day events; one class room in a seminary and four meeting rooms in churches provided with child care or other related

---

[19]   The six churches include Quaker, Zion, Christian Reformed Church, Evangelise China Fellowship, Christian and Missionary Alliance and China Peniel Missionary Society.

facilities. I employed my friends to assist with child care work, in order to support some younger mothers, who could then concentrate on the group discussions without worrying about their children. This was one of the reasons that I selected churches as venues for hosting focus groups, both for women and their accompanied children. Other potential locations would have been relatively more expensive and offer less space and resources.

To a Western observer it might be thought that a religious location could be restraining to the participation of women involved in the study. However, it is important to be aware of cultural differences in this instance. I am aware that some Taiwanese women have had negative experiences in church and this may have caused them not to wish to take part in my research. It is also the case that some participants might have felt reluctant or anxious about bringing their weaknesses to light within such a sacred place. However, as previously mentioned, within the traditional cultural context of Taiwan many women experience Christian churches as less patriarchal and restrictive than the wider society, particularly the familial location. They consider the church a natural place in which to find support and a place for honest sharing. For many of the women, as my focus groups revealed, the church functions as a spiritual home or shelter, in which they felt relaxed and could find hope and peace.

The sharing days, which usually occurred on Saturdays, were generally divided into four main sections, including introduction, two sections of group discussions, and lunch break, with every meeting lasting between 3.5 hours to 5 hours.[20] The purpose of the first section was to create a non-threatening, friendly, open, and communicative environment. The meeting began with a warm welcome with short self-introductions and an overview of the research project. The purpose of the sharing day, the rules of the group discussion, and the agreements of confidentiality were all discussed (details see the section of *3.3.1*).

After attendees signed the form consenting to their participation in the focus group being recorded and being discussed in my thesis that ensured confidentiality, the process moved to the next stage of the programme－performing an improvised play. Each attendee was assigned to one of two groups for the purposes of preparing and performing in a short

---

[20]   I assumed that Christian D-Ls were more available to attend a sharing day on Saturdays. In addition, only Longtan ran focus group on Monday, the participants and the moderator having chosen a particular Monday as the ideal date.

play.[21] One play was on the topic 'being D-Ls', while the other was on the topic 'being M-Ls'. I encouraged the participants to use that experience or learning in order to improvise a simple plot or scenario together I their groups. After fifteen minutes, the two groups took turns to perform their improvised play. The purpose of this improvised performance was to provoke consideration and awareness of being a D-L or mother-in-law, which benefited subsequent discussions (Norris 2000, 44). This co-operation entailed by performing a drama with other attendees constituted 'more than merely describing and representing lived experience' (Mitchell et al. 2011, 381). Rather, the task of improvising a play with only a short preparation time helped the attendees to build relationships with one another and become more open. By doing so, the attendees were readied to participate in later conversations.

The inclusion of the described drama performances in the sessions brings the narrative of real life stories into play. However, time constraints meant that participating women were unable to fully develop their plays. Only the focus groups in Taipei and Taichung performed the short dramas. The late arrival of women participating in the focus groups at the other three venues led me to decide to cancel the play in order to avoid losing time in the group discussions. Instead, I circulated a piece of short stories from life (see Appendix 3). This writing presented some issues regarding the relationships between D-Ls and M-Ls. Comparing the two different preparations, I observed that these two focus groups of women likely employed more dramatically elements, such as body language, sound, or symbols for self-disclosure (Hamera 2011, 325). The participants from those two groups seemed bolder in expressing themselves. However, this difference might be attributed to the personality of the two groups of women; many of them were more open to others and appeared less shy. Perhaps it had something to do with the fact that these women were living in an urban rather than a rural area.

In the second and the fourth sections of the day group discussions were held. A break time placed in between the two sections for lunch. Light meals were provided so that the attendees could not only stay in the room to save time and energy, but so that they had an opportunity to chat with the other women. However, there was a danger that the attendees might not fully express themselves in focus group discussions due to constraints of time or

---

[21]   Having worked in a Christian drama troupe for almost ten years, I have a sophisticated understanding of stage play performance. I have retained this interest since leaving the troupe and often use drama as a tool in church ministries.

method. In addition, the group discussion might have caused some to reframe their views by shifting their perspectives or inspiring new insights. While they have a voice, some might have wanted to speak in public. In order to reduce the impact of such factors, I designed a '*Personal Participant Information and Feedback Survey*' to collect feedbacks and census type data (see appendix 4). This survey was completed by the participants and included at the end of the focus group discussions.

The first half of the survey collected the personal information of a participant and her mother-in-law, including age and ethnic groups, educational and occupational backgrounds, and the religious background of the families, etc. Information on the frequency of the contact between M-L and D-L was also collected. The second half of the feedback survey investigated the levels of impact of certain factors on their relationships with their M-Ls and their relationships with their in-laws in general. Inquiry was also made as to whether participants had had new insights or altered views. Finally, comments and the sharing of thoughts generated during focus group were also welcomed. This open-ended aspect of the feedback survey offered an opportunity for the attendees to write about and reflect on what they had learnt. Now I turn to the techniques or research methods, which were used in the group-discussion sections.

3.2.3 Focus groups discussions

A semi-structured questionnaire was used to guide the focus group discussions. Questions were formulated that fell into one of three different topic categories. This questionnaire was used during both the pre-lunch discussion and the discussion that took place after lunch. I listed nine questions on a page, which fell into three different categories, and distributed the questions to every participant for the group discussion. Participants were welcomed to preview and take notes during the discussions. The first topic regarded the daily life of the participating women, the relationships and the interactions between D-Ls and their M-Ls were. The questions in the first section were (Hung 2014b, 1):

1. What are the everyday interactions with your M-Ls?
2. Please adopt an image or a phrase to describe your relationships with your mother-in-law.
3. What do you think is expected of a woman in order for her to be considered a 'good D-L'?

I sought to discover how their faith and the teachings received from their religious communities influenced their lives. The second part of the questions were designed to explore relevant religious perspectives of the Christian women (Hung 2014b, 1):

1. What teachings on family relations have you received from your church?
2. What role does biblical teaching and Christian belief play in your interaction with your mother-in-law?
3. How does faith influence your family relations?

The final topic focused on some difficult issues. Women's perceptions of power relations within the family were explored. I attempted to raise their consciousness and awaken their self-awareness regarding such power relations within the family. The following three questions were formulated (Hung 2014b, 1):

1. What do you perceive 'power' to be in family relationships?
2. Do you experience any conflicts between you and your mother-in-law, or does this relationship cause conflicts in your family? If so, please describe.
3. How does this relationship influence your other family relationships, including those with your husband, children and/or other family members?

The focus group discussions created an opportunity for the participating Christian women to share their own stories and make themselves visible; at the same time, they provided rich data and new evidence about the relationships between them and their M-Ls. This method not only involves the colleting of data from what participants say, but also involves the practice of participant observation which allowed me as a participant to and chart emotions and behaviour (Denzin and Lincoln 2011, 17). In the following section I will explain the use of participant observation and the roles I played during the focus group discussions.

3.2.4 Participant observation method

Observation is the most used method and a data collection technique for studying human behaviour. Michael Angrosino and Judith Rosenberg write, 'Observation has been characterized as "the fundamental base of all research methods" in the social and behavioural sciences (Adler & Adler, 1994, p. 389) and as "the mainstay of the ethnographic enterprise" (Werner & Schoepfle,1987, p. 257)' (Angrosino and Rosenberg 2011, 467). In other words, the observational method is of vital importance. Qualitative

researchers should become observers who go to a particular setting and engage their observation of people's life patterns, social activities, rituals, symbol, and languages, in order to facilitate understanding a culture and complex human behaviour in ethnographic fieldwork (Swinton and Mowat 2006, 241; Moschella 2011, 225; Angrosino and Rosenberg 2011, 476).

There have been developments in the methodology of observation over time. A new form of observation has developed out of the pure observation approach. This new approach to data collection emphasises interaction and collaboration.[22] The approach recognises researchers are not merely 'observers'; they interact and collaborate with participants in a research project and seek to bring about transformation. In contemporary postmodern hybrid societies, spaces are interconnected and behaviour presents diversity. The burgeoning of virtual spaces has shifted our definitions of 'space' and 'community, from 'real', bonded to the geographical locations to 'virtual' (Angrosino and Rosenberg 2011, 467–69). Researchers who use the observation method within a postmodern hybrid culture should be aware of these social changes and carefully considerate their practices of observation and participation.

Participant observation inevitably has some weaknesses. The main weakness of this method is that data is only generated from the one-sided perceptions of the observer. Besides, some researchers may doubt their observational ability to produce accurate information. Unforeseen factors may interfere with the judgement of the observers in their collection of valid information or, become an obstacle to reduce the accuracy of the data interpretation (Kothari 2004, 96–97). The actions of participant observers may be felt as unpleasant or intrusive by the people observed, they may feel that their privacy is not being respected (Angrosino and Rosenberg 2011, 470–71).

The researcher and the recruited participants have different backgrounds; this will affect the discussion and the data collections within about the focus groups. It is suggested, every research method is with its own limitations. In order to present a clearer picture of this study, I will discuss the ethical issues and provide details of the roles of the researcher and

---

[22]   The classic approach assumes that ethnographers are elites, and are where power resides. Their participation and interaction with the people they studied will influence the social behaviour of those people. In order to avoid this flaw and ensure the objectivity of the researcher, participation is limited (Angrosino and Rosenberg 2011, 468–89). The new approach is just like an aspect of the ethnographic approach discussed earlier.

the participants as well as the identified limitations of the sampling method in the next section.

3.3 Ethical Issues and the Limitations of the Sampling Method

In this section I will explain the ethical issues and the potential risks of harm to the participants, and what roles of the researcher play in this research. The limitations of the research design and the sampling method will also be presented at the end.

3.3.1 Ethical issues

In order to carry out good work that benefits the researchers, the participants, and the readers researchers are required to conduct their research within the bounds of ethical practice in the whole process (O'Reilly 2009, 61; Wiles 2013, 18).[23] They should carefully consider a variety of ethical issues and are obligated to take ethical principles and moral matters into consideration (Hammersley and Traianou 2012, 16–17).[24] I followed the guidance and conducted this research programme entirely in accordance with the laws in Taiwan and the regulations of the University of Glasgow (see Appendix 5). In such ethical research practice, confidentiality and anonymity are key considerations that relate to the privacy and respect for the participants (Wiles 2013, 41–42). I recognised these guiding criteria and understood that it was my responsibility to protect the well-being of every woman who participated and to respect their rights, dignity, diversity and privacy. Although this is more difficult to assure given a group based approach, I made my best effort to ensure confidentiality for every participant and guarded against every predictably harmful effect that might otherwise impact them (O'Reilly 2009, 61; Wiles 2013, 18; Hammersley and Traianou 2012, 16–17).

Clear research information, assurances of confidentiality and anonymity are outlined in the *Participation Information Letter*, for which ethical approval had been acquired. These letters were distributed in advance before the one-day sharing event (see Appendix 6). Every participant was informed about the purpose and processes of the focus group and

---

[23]   Clifford G. Christians's work lists several guidelines of the ethical code that provides moral principles for professional and academic associations. He emphasises use of informed consent, opposition to deception, security of privacy and confidentiality, accuracy of data relating to participants, actions of beneficence, and the need for justice (Christians 2011, 65–66).

[24]   Rose Wiles writes, 'Research ethics are concerned with moral behaviour in research contexts' for ensuring safety and well-being of research participants (Wiles 2013, 4, 55).

their rights, responsibilities and potential risks. This allowed them to consider in deciding whether to attend.[25] I recognised that discussion of a sensitive topic in a focus group had the potential to cause psychological distress to the participant through fear of lack of confidentiality. Therefore, I explained the ethical basis of the research and the norms governing the group process and insisted that every participant respected other participants' confidentiality before the focus group discussions.

An ethical consent form was circulated to the participating women at the beginning of the sharing days. This ensured that every attendee was aware of and consented to the confidentiality agreements and had granted permission for me to observe and take sound and video recordings throughout the discussions (Wiles 2013, 34–35).[26] Furthermore, I used pseudonyms to anonymise the participants thus protecting them from identification, but I do recognise this safeguard may cause a 'loss of ownership' of the data produced (Wiles 2013, 50–52).

The participating women were encouraged to speak in their own voice without being judged to create a deep conversation and allowed for rich and deep insights to be gained (Litosseliti 2003, p. 51–53). They were also informed they were entitled to freely make decision how much information they wanted to disclose and reminded throughout that they could refuse to answer the questions or withdraw their participation at any time.[27] Such reminders were made to safeguard the participants from the risks of distress when discussed a sensitive topic or revisited unresolved issues in a group. In addition, the rooms where we held discussions were provided with light refreshments, which were always available for participants. Group discussions were not intended to be exhausting! May and I often reminded participants that they could freely walk to the table, and keep a short distance from the group for a break whenever they wished. Despite these safeguards, participating women were inevitably emotional, and I must acknowledge the possibility of harmful effects when they shared painful experiences. May and I both recognised this potential risk, and endeavoured to guard against such effects through sensitive group facilitation. We were ready to offer support immediately and provide appropriate support

---

[25]   The focus group discussions took place in a secure environment and operated according to an agreed code of confidentiality.

[26]   In order to identify every participating woman and write correct transcripts after the sharing day, I used a video-recorder and a MP4 recorder to record the entire discussions of the focus groups.

[27]   The researcher and the mediator trained with listening skills, interview techniques, and nonviolent communication techniques.

services to those who were in need, following the discussion. In undertaking this research my supervisor and the ethical approval committee of Glasgow University supported my conviction that although there were some risks associated with sharing painful experiences there were also many potential benefits both to the participants themselves and through the gathering of data upon a significant cultural issue. This data will be made available not only to academic readers but to the participating women themselves. Each woman will receive a brief summary report when the research project is completed. This will give them further opportunities to reflect upon relational issues raised and perhaps to share their new awareness with others.

A researcher should have a high degree of self-awareness to ensure that their interpretation of people is proper and the research process is valid and appropriate. Moreover, the interactions in the group discussions were dynamic and everyone in the group was empowered to develop the co-narration and the meaning defining process which should not be colonised by any person (Swinton and Mowat 2006, 62–63). I was aware such factors could inadvertently lead to biases, therefore, I emphasised 'relational ethics' — a respectful attitude and an understanding of mutual reflection among the group interactions (Denzin and Lincoln 2011, 136). In order to ensure that I communicated my aims accurately to the women open-mindedness, regular reflection and professional supervisions also assisted me to minimise such a danger.[28] I will explain my roles played in this project in the next section.

3.3.2 The roles of the researcher

I, the researcher, both an insider and outsider, played the role of an observer within the research setting. My role is also as an ethnographer, a visual author, and collaborator with those Christian women, invisible authors, in the fieldwork. I am a female pastor and was asked to assist some Christian D-Ls to deal with problems in relation in their relationships with their M-Ls. I felt I was called to get actual voices of women with regard to this issue and make their voices public. This has motivated me to undertake this investigation.

---

[28] Collected data was securely stored and deleted when this project will have finished.

As I previously mentioned in the *Introduction*, I am Taiwanese, Holo is my mother language, but I am married to a Hakka and had non-Christian in-laws.[29] At the beginning of my marriage I felt a language barrier acutely. Given my own personal experience I can understand the situation of many of the participants. However, I am aware that my personal background and position may lead to certain research biases, with the result that selection and judgment of the research data in this study is affected. Although I attempted to diminish threats to validity, some validity issues have been identified and are discussed in the next section.

3.3.3 The process of data analysis

The analysis and the findings of this study are mainly based on the video recordings of approximately 13 hours and 35 minutes in total. The recordings are from five focus groups. The languages of the discussions in this project were mainly Mandarin, the official language of Taiwan; a great many Holo dialects, and a few Hakka dialects were also used by the participants. I translated all the focus group discussions (with more than 145,000 Chinese characters) and transcribed into six transcripts in Chinese characters. There were two distinct generations of participants operating in the focus groups discussions in Tainan.[30] Therefore, I use two different transcripts to present the stories of the two groups of women.

The participating women not only shared their life experience, but also spoke of the experiences of other D-Ls. This information has been incorporated into the analysis in the next two chapters. In order to make maintain anonymity, the names of the participants and any direct or indirect identifiers have been changed or removed.

In the data analysis stage, I repeatedly played the video recordings whilst reviewing printed transcripts, and took notes to keep track of the findings. I also sought to capture the nuances of body language, facial expression, and other nonverbal information. These revised transcripts, and the feedback sheets, were organised into a document in which the

---

[29]   I have been married over twenty-one years and my parents-in-law eventually became Christians in recent years.

[30]   The members of the morning group included 4 younger D-Ls and 7 elder D-Ls. The latter were over 55 years old and both D-Ls and M-Ls. The former were between the ages of 23 and 47. The two discussions brought out generational differences.

responses of participants were allocated, in order to answer different questions for the analysis of the group discussions. Different coloured pens were used to highlight key words on printed transcripts, in order to code emerging themes and categorise the data. Then, I posted all colour-coded transcripts with notes on walls in a private room, in which only I could go. This assisted me in organising the findings.

The major research outcomes, such as most frequent comments, most widely held perceptions, and most commonly raised themes as well as interesting associated stories were carefully interpreted and translated from Chinese into English. This translation was at times problematic, due to cultural and verbal communication differences. To this end, I requested the assistance of native English speaker friends.

3.3.4 The limitations of the sampling method

The timescale and resources of the research project restricted my ability to work with a larger number of subjects. At a practical level, the process of operating, transcribing, and analysing focus group discussions consumed time far more time than I had anticipated. The methodology of focus groups could provide a rich amount of information, but the analysis had to be limited. Sadly this means that some significant features of the D-L–M-L relationships have been superficially treated or neglected in this study.

The 41 participating women were not a genuinely representative sample of Taiwanese Christian D-Ls as a group. The denominations were limited to Protestant churches. The group of Christian women did not include those who had currently stopped going to church. These volunteers might be mainly extroverts who wanted to discuss those relational issues and were able to speak both personally and collectively within the groups. Moreover, those Christian D-Ls who were introverted and have been silenced, and did not attend the focus group, might have different opinions. In my sampling group, many D-Ls suffered from various levels of oppression and have been seeking pastoral support. A high proportion of the participating D-Ls are the first generation of Christians. For this reason, these women were likely to be the victims in familial disputes. Church provided shelter and pastoral care for these D-Ls when faced with life challenges.

Besides these issues some women might be anxious that they could be seen as a bad D-L and not want to talk about this subject in detail. Each focus group had one young mother

together with her infant/toddler attending the discussions, except the one in Taipei. This was somewhat of an interference, which affected these mothers in having less opportunity to speak and possibly influenced some participants who could not completely focus on the discussions.[31] However, such incidents reflected women's situations as the main carers who usually take on the duty of childcare, although they attended these activities at the weekend.

Conclusion

This chapter has described my research design. The first section introduced the research methodology employed in this study. I demonstrated that the open-ended nature of qualitative research provides the most appropriate methods for this human experience-based inquiry. The hermeneutical oriented framework of ethnography assisted me to uncover the relationships between Taiwanese Christian daughters and their non-Christian M-Ls. As a gender-based investigation, I used a feminist ethnographic approach which was developed from my work in chapter two on feminist hermeneutics and theology and my work in this chapter on feminist research approaches which eschew a male-centred paradigm. Focus groups were the chief method for collecting effective data because their interactive, dialectical and open-ended features allowed me to obtain abundant and detailed information.

The second section of the paper described the sharing day events. Multiple methods were adopted to gather the raw data in the sharing days. I explained how I designed and recruited an appropriate sample of Taiwanese Christian D-Ls to attend the focus groups. I detailed the schedule of the sharing days, which broken down as follows: (a) instruction, (b) group discussion one, (c) lunch time, and (d) group discussion two. I discussed how ethical practice guided the whole process and, I used the life stories as a stimulation to open a dialogue. I designed a semi-structured and open-ended questionnaire to guide the group discussions in order to generate rich information. I employed participant observation in the sharing days to observe and study the behaviour of the participating women.

In the last section, I explained that all aspects of the research project were conducted in conformity with standard ethical guidelines. I am both an insider and outsider with

---

[31]   Many women had children of a young age, who played outside of the room when we conducted the discussions.

multiple roles in this research. Finally, the constraints of the sampling method were discussed. In the next Chapter, I begin my analysis of the focus group discussions to present key aspects of the everyday experience of the participating D-Ls is.

Chapter Four: The Analysis of Five Focus Group Discussions

This chapter will begin to report my findings from the analysis of the data produced by the focus groups.

I will firstly present the relationships between the participating D-Ls and M-Ls through the images and symbols they adopted. The stages of their relationships, their interactions, the values and perceptions of the two generations will be examined. Secondly, I will analyse the ideology, the roles, the expectations as well as the personality factors, which influence such relationships, and the power dynamics that operate within family. Finally, the roles of husband and F-L and the issues of child-rearing and infertility will be discussed.

4.1   Daily life of the Daughters-in-law and their Mothers-in-law

This section discusses the nature of the relationships between D-Ls and M-Ls in their everyday lives. The crucial issues involved here include patrilocal co-residence, close interactions, and different values and perceptions between the older and younger generations. Although I had raised specific questions for focus group discussions, I tried to carry out a thematic analysis for understanding emerging relational issues arising in the moderated discussions, rather than merely looking for the answers. I found participants usually use their own voice and personal stories to speak of the relationships with their M-Ls, or the issues they were interested in. During discussions, it was often very difficult to focus participants on answering the planned questions. Therefore, I decided to use a thematic analysis to explain the results. In this way, the outcome of the analysis could appropriately reflect D-Ls' concerns and their daily lives.

In many areas of this study, I used anonymised names and gave the numbers of those participating women who held particular beliefs, in order to present individual experiences. Group-generated themes are normally provided as a result of focus group methods, and such numbers may seem unnecessarily irrelevant in such interpretative qualitative research. This individualisation and quantification, however, can be seen as an interpretation of a feminist method which helps to recognise differences amongst women (Olesen 2003, 130). It also allows participants' voices, previously silenced or at least never heard in public, to be recognised and identified. I sought to faithfully present the importance of the issues

raised, and tried to use numbers and pseudonyms as evidence for presenting individuals'
stories in this practice-based research.

4.1.1   The images and symbols of D-Ls and M-Ls relationships

The participating D-Ls use a great variety of rich images and symbols to describe their
relationships with their M-Ls. They also told stories of other D-Ls. In this subsection, I
shall examine and analyse the collected data and classify their expressions of images and
symbols into eight categories. The purpose is to help us identifying reoccurring patterns in
their relationships.[1] In what follows, I shall report findings on eight types of relationships.

1. **Mother-daughter relationships**. Seven women used an image of 'mother-
    daughter' to describe their relationship with their M-Ls, who treat them like their
    own daughters or who they love like their own mothers.[2] For example, Sue
    appreciated the love and support given by her M-L who once kindly gave Sue two
    months long postpartum care after the unexpected delivery of her premature baby.[3]
    The premature childbirth caused Sue to stay with her parents-in-law while she
    commuted between home and the hospital caring for the infant baby (Hung 2014a,
    7–8). Sue felt that she was treated like a daughter and received much love from her
    M-L. Fen, another woman, perceived that a closer relationship had developed
    before her marriage at a time when she had to spend one month in a ward caring for
    her fiancé's mother after she had surgery. Further, Chen said, 'We were like mother
    and daughter…, I even treated my parents-in-law better than my own parents'
    (Hung 2014e, 3). Ting also said, 'I have received much love and support from my

---

[1]   I am wary about using descriptions of 'tight-knit' relationships to categorise those who have very
good and close knitted in-law relationships in the ways these are often used by the Western scholars (Merrill
2007; Cotterill 1994). I consider it is inappropriately to illustrate the in-law relationships in Taiwanese
society due to the different family structures. The collectivistic society of Taiwan values family cohesion, co-
operation, and conformity that family and the extended family members are often 'tight-knit'; despite the fact
their relationships are not good.

[2]   Fang, Sue, Fen, Ting, Spring, Chen, and Joy all adopted the image of 'mother-daughter' to describe
their relationships. In addition, Fang's M-L had a mental disorder and liked to speak to Fang rather than other
siblings-in-law, because Fang was always patient and compassionate to her (Hung 2014f, 6).

[3]   Postpartum care is a crucial birth-related ritual still widely practiced among the Chinese societies.
Postpartum women must follow restrictions and the customs, which are usually transmitted from their M-Ls
or mothers. Their mothers and in-laws provide special foods and offer assistance and help maintain their
health as recover from the delivery (Wan 2009, 74–75). This one-month practice is beneficial to the women
and helps prevent some ailments in old age. For more details about this custom, see *Exploring Chinese
Women's Cultural Beliefs and Behaviours Regarding the Practice of "Doing the Month"* (Holroyd, Twinn,
and Wan-Yim 2005).

M-L…moreover, she is more patient with me than with her own adult children'
(Hung 2014g, 4).

Joy observed that her M-L wanted a daughter, because she had given birth to five
sons. Therefore, Joy intentionally behaved like her daughter. Although their
relationship was very similar to a mother-daughter relationship, Joy realised that
she could never have quite the same status as a biological daughter. She felt
excluded at times, such as when her in-law family discussed issues relating to their
properties and liquid assets (Hung 2014c, 3–4).

2. **Hand-in-hand harmonic relationships**. Fon's M-L loved her as her own daughter.
   Fon used the hand-in-hand image to portray their relationship. The M-L was happy
   with her company and the whole family enjoyed harmony with one another (Hung
   2014g, 11–12). Another women, Jade, also used 'harmony' to describe her
   relationship with her M-L. Jade related how she had made efforts to achieve it
   during more than 26 years of her marriage. She said, 'our relationship, with its ups
   and downs, experienced several stages. We eventually managed to get used to each
   other. She concluded, 'now, we can understand each other better and have achieved
   harmony at last' (Hung 2014c, 9).

3. **Respecting others**. Xin used 'respect' to express their interactions and relationship.
   Xin was respected and comfortably lived with her M-L, who carefully built proper
   boundaries so as not to interfere with the lives of her adult children and their
   spouses. Although this family was made up of 7 members with parents-in-law,
   brothers-in-law and a sister-in-law, they all could afford to have spaces and had
   maintained their privacy, which contributed to family harmony. Xin exhibited a
   great deal of love and affection for the elderly members of her family in-law (Hung
   2014f, 2–3).

4. **Cha-cha dancers**. A dancer takes a step forward and the partner takes a step
   backward in a dancing movement. This image described the interaction between
   Lien and her M-L. The two dancers often made mistakes and stepped on one
   another's toes in the initial stages of their relationship. However, they gradually
   achieved tacit understanding and caught the rhythm of the dance so rarely tread on
   each other's toes (Hung 2014d, 2). In addition, Lien explained why it was
   impossible to achieve a 'mother-daughter' relationship. On the one hand, she

realised that the two parties did not have a deeply bonded blood relation as mother and daughter. They also lacked the experience of growing up together and went through the various stages of development. The irreplaceable life experiences of such growing up together typically engender a very special bond between a mother and her daughter. One the other hand, 'friendships' were probably more suited to develop between M-L and D-L. Therefore, Lien chose to use 'being friends' to define the relationship with her M-L (Hung 2014d, 5).

Purdie had a similar opinion. She emphasised why her relationship with her M-L could be characterised as a friendship. She spoke what was in her mind, saying that 'you might argue or have conflict with your good friend, but you were not willing to cut off the friendship with them' (Hung 2014f, 9–10). Purdie observed that a good friendship is characterised by equality and mutual respect. This also characterised her relationship with her M-L and helped her to feel relaxed in her dealings with her M-L.

5. **D-L－M-L relationships**. Three women claimed that their relationships were pure 'D-L-M-L' relationships. This image explained that their relationships were built on marriage and were accompanied by related values and duties. Lin plays the roles of both D-L and M-L. She adjusted herself away from the expectation of being 'as a daughter' to being a D-L, because the two roles were different in her own experience (Hung 2014g, 20). Besides, Vivian also experienced the differences of being a daughter and D-L in her 9 years marriage. She explained that she has adjusted her behaviour and now keeps a distance from her M-L. Earlier in their relationship Vivian tried to have a more intimate relationship. 'I play the roles, do my duties with no expectations of her', Vivian said (Hung 2014c, 5–6). Another women Gale had a similar perspective of in-law relationships and emphasised her own responsibilities as a D-L (Hung 2014a, 14).

6. **Guest-host relationships**. 'I am like a guest with appropriate boundaries', Rose explained (Hung 2014g, 1–2). She adopts a Chinese idiom '相敬如賓' (xiāng jìng rú bīn) to describe their interactions－as a 'guest' with a proper etiquette in the in-law's family. Besides, June said, 'our lifestyle is so different… I feel like a "foreigner" in my in-law family, while I stayed with them….' (Hung 2014d, 3).

This type of D-L－M-L relationship is characterised with distance, good manners and ultimately with the feeling of being an outsider from the view of the D-Ls.

7. **The symbol of ice**. 'The relationship between me and my M-L can be described as 相敬如'冰' (bīng)' [4]－deep freeze of ice. Pei said, 'My M-L said to me, 'I don't like you' (Hung 2014g, 6). Pei has avoided contacting or interacting with her M-L. Other wives of her brothers-in-law are also reluctant to see her. In addition, another participant, Yen, has also experienced a similarly cold relationship with her M-L. They tried not to get in touch with each other, except when necessary to prevent conflicts and tensions (Hung 2014c, 7).

8. **Fire-and-ice relationships**. Lena explained that she had very painful experience of co-residence with her M-L, which has characterised by 'fire and ice'. She was unable to conform to her M-L's project of moulding Lena to fit her own wishes. After some time, Lena could no longer bear to stay under the same roof; she left with her child in her arms and took a few belongings, escaping from that home.[5] Jade told a similar story about her husband's sister-in-law. 'She has a strong personality and could not accept the conduct of my M-L, which often caused head-on confrontations' (Hung 2014c, 10).[6] The two women often had quarrels and conflicts over trifling matters－like fire and ice they were irreconcilable.

The above eight categories show the different D-L－M-L relationships with various levels ranging from intimacy to alienation. The first two, 'mother-daughter' and 'hand-in-hand' relationships are described as being cordial, intimate and affectionate. 'Respecting others' and 'cha-cha dancers' represented that the generational relationships have developed harmonious and supportive interactions on the basis of equality and mutual understanding. The moderate categories of 'D-L-M-L' and 'Guest-host' relationships described

---

[4]　　Bei adopted the idiom, which Rose used to play paronomasia. She changed one of the Chinese characters of 相敬如'賓' (bīng) into 相敬如'冰' (bīn)', which the two characters are pronounced very similar, but the meanings are very different. The meaning of 賓 here is 'guest' and 冰 is 'ice'.

[5]　　However, Lena and her M-L's relationships have greatly improved since Lena became a Christian (Hung 2014g, 2–3, 10). I will discuss this in the next chapter.

[6]　　Jade indicates that the sister-in-law came back from the US and lived with the M-L. She observed that her sister-in-law deeply influenced by American culture, which is characterised by independence and autonomy and this affected her interactions with her M-L. The different values and lifestyle often led them to have quarrels and conflicts. Once during an argument the M-L told the sister-in-law with rage that she wanted to find her son a new wife. This incident really hurt the sister-in-law and worsened their relationships. 'If I were her, I would keep silent when my M-L scolds me, because the best way to keep family harmony is to endure it to the end', said Jade.

relationships of obligation, in which a D-L was like an outsider and maintained good manners to fulfil her duties. The last two, symbolised by 'ice' and 'fire-and-ice' represented relationships from cold to hostile, characterised by alienation and conflict.

The testimony of the participants indicates that their relationships with their M-Ls have undergone various stages of development. The length of the relationships and frequency of being together became crucial factors that influenced their relationships. Such interactions connected to other family members to weave a relational web. In the next section, I will analyse their interactions to present the stages of their relationships.

4.1.2   The stages of being together

The D-L－M-L intergenerational relationship is connected to the processes of married life. The relationship between a D-L and M-L tends not to be static, but rather develops as each of the parties goes through different life phases. So as to develop positive in-law relationships, some D-Ls said that focussed efforts commenced at the premarital stage. Fen and June both confessed that they tried to be nice to their future M-Ls in order to make a good impression before their marriages. Fen looked after her fiancé's mother in a ward for one month. This laid a strong foundation for their relationships before the wedding. At the early stage of their marriage, both Gale and Xin did not know how to interact with their parents-in-law (Hung 2014f, 2; Hung 2014a, 8).[7] As Gale said, 'I didn't know how to get along with my M-L when I first got married. I was used to living alone and being myself… and really struggled with such interactions' (Hung 2014a, 8). June, a newlywed, stated that she was like an 'alien' in her in-law family, in that the two parties both had their own lifestyles and particular ways of doing things (Hung 2014d, 3). June and her M-L respected each other, and so were able to accept their differences and built positive relationships. The experience of these five women reveal the challenges and reality of the D-Ls at the early stage of marriage when as outsiders or strangers they seek to become an insider within in-law family. Although these D-Ls have encountered some challenges, mutual respect and acceptance enables them to overcome such challenges and to develop good intergenerational relationships.

---

[7]   Xin mentioned that she tried to discover common interests with her M-L to create opportunities to improve their relationship.

However, having a good start does not mean that all will be well in the future. Vivian and Jade had a good start with their M-Ls in the early stage of their marriages, but encountered huge challenges when they tried to play the role of a D-L in later stages of their family lives. Although Vivian had developed a very intimate relationship with her M-L, even closer than with her own mother, everything changed since she gave birth to a child (Hung 2014c, 5).[8] Jade found that her M-L was not as good as she had thought before. Her M-L did not pay her respect when she was married into the in-law family. She was always nagging and talking loudly. Moreover, her speech was like yelling or fighting. 'I am uncomfortable and pained by such ways of interacting', Jade said (Hung 2014c, 9). Different lifestyles, expectations and levels of educations created huge relational barriers between Jade and her M-L. To keep silent and be patient became the way that Jade interacted with her M-L. However, the conflicts largely decreased when Jade moved out far away from the house of the parents-in-law (Hung 2014c, 1). In the span of 27 years of in-law relationship, Jade passed some difficult life stages and has now achieved a harmonious relationship with her M-L.

Ten participating women mentioned that they have sought to develop good intergenerational relationships in their lives.[9] They all reported that they had good M-L's and really enjoyed spending time together. For example, Sue experienced deep love and care from her M-L during the period of postpartum and, this enhanced their relationships. Afterwards, Sue regularly carried her baby to visit and stay with her M-L. Her purpose was to please her in-law and improve their intergenerational relationships. In addition, Sue's M-L had experienced mistreatment by her M-L and suffered in her role as a D-L. So that she was determined that it would never happen again. Therefore, she tried to be a good M-L and treated Sue as her own daughter (Hung 2014a, 7–8).

Participants with long-term marriages tended to describe relationships with their M-Ls as having different stages. For example, Gao listed three stages, high friction, mutual understanding, and relationship maturity to describe the different stages of relation with her M-L. Gao was deeply distressed in playing her role as a D-L for a long time. She had to face the challenges of language barriers, different values and lifestyles in the early stage.

---

[8]   Childcare is regarded as one of the most difficult issues that can easily cause tensions or conflicts between D-Ls and M-Ls among the participants. I will provide with details about this issue in section *4.3.2*.
[9]   Sue, Joy, Lee, Apple, Xin, Spring, Jinn, Chen, Fon and Fen expresses that they received much love from their M-Ls and had good intergenerational relationships.

She strived to earn the acceptance of her M-L. Gao stated that her M-L was a 'difficult person' and disagreed with almost everything Gao did. She often disapproved and complained about Gao's conduct and deeds to Gao's F-L. This caused Gao great anxiety and she felt her life was fraught with hurt and pain. Her caring efforts were not recognised, even when her fourth child was born (Hung 2014c, 2–3).[10] Gao gradually understood what her M-L wanted and tried to be submissive so gradually was accepted by her M-L. In the stage of relational maturity, Gao began to enjoy this better relationship since she became a Christian three years ago and after 26 years of marriage the relationship has now reached mutual understanding.

According to the participants, many women are likely to have undergone different stages of D-L－M-L relationships. Frequently they seemed to actively adapt themselves to their M-Ls until reaching mutual understanding and harmony in their life journeys.[11] The length of time together creates space which assisted them in developing relationships. However, living together, family backgrounds, child care, lifestyles and expectations can be complicated factors and cause tensions even conflicts between D-L and M-L. In the next section, I will focus on the problems of patrilocal co-residence and the influence of close interactions in analysing related issues in depth.

4.1.3 Patrilocal co-residence and close interactions

Traditionally, parents living with the adult son were regarded as the ideal family form in Chinese societies. Many participants had the experience of intergenerational co-residence, ranging from regular stays to joint households lasting several years, or until their M-Ls passed away. There are 34.15% participants over 50 years old (see Appendix 1). This older age group had been more likely to follow the traditional culture of patrilocal residence with their parents-in-law, including Fei, Ying, Wen, Spring, Lily, Jinn, Jia and Chen. Caring for infirm parents/parents-in-law was one of the chief factors that motivated couples to choose joint households. Five participants stated that they lived with their infirm parents-in-law in order to provide better care of them.[12] Purdie had lived her with parents-in-law for the first

---

[10]   Gao's parents are mainlanders and Gao's M-L is a Holo. Gao was unable to speak Holo to her in-law parents who live in an outlying island archipelago located in the Taiwan Straits. In addition, the marriage of Gao's husband's brother ended in divorced due to the problem of co-residence. The wife was unable to co-reside with her M-L and this was one of the reasons that led the couple to divorce (Hung 2014c, 10–11).
[11]   Jade, Gao, Ying, Kuo, Lien, Zeng, Hong, Lena and Lin all spoke of different intergenerational relationships in life stages.
[12]   The five women are Ying, Jade, Jinn, Purdie and Chen. In addition, Chen and Ying provided 24-hour home care for their ill M-Ls until they passed away.

5 years of her married life;[13] she then later had to co-reside with them as increasing level of care was required by her aging in-laws. I will discuss the issue of the elderly care in the later section (see *4.2.2*).

Some of the newlyweds chose to have generational co-residence.[14] Gao, one of them, said that she was very 'nervous' and had felt insecure in the process for gaining the acceptance of her M-L, especially in the first year of marriage. Moreover, she could not sleep well, because her in-laws woke up at 4:00 to light incense to the gods and ancestors (Hung 2014c, 2). Jade also faced the challenges of different living patterns with her M-L. She usually came home late and went to bed late due to her job requirement. Her M-L, who was an early bird, could not accept her work patterns and often made complains about it (Hung 2014c, 9–10). Matters became worse after Jade's child was born. Another women Lily also talked about her experience of co-residing with her in-laws for the first 5 years of marriage. She was pressured by her nagging M-L. She felt hopeless and thought of divorce as an escape. However, because of her husband's new job Lily moved away, with their three children, from her in-law family in the countryside to the city.[15]

The attribution of economic resources may be another reason why young couples choose co-residence. For example, Xin chose to have a joint family in the first 3-year of marriage to save the money to buy a new house. There were seven family members in co-residence including Xin and her husband, parents-in-law, the couple of the sister-in-law and the brother-in-law (Hung 2014f, 2, 7).

Although Apple was comfortable living with her M-L, co-residence became stressful because her husband had a bad attitude toward his mother. He argued with Apple when she showed compassion or stood up for her M-L. Staying with her mother was a way of living in a shelter and helped her avoid such conflicts with her husband. Apple and her infant child just went back and lived with her in-laws last week. Apple cried, 'It is painful and I have deep struggles….' (Hung 2014f, 12). She knows her M-L loves her son, but she does not understand why her husband cannot forgive and mitigate his hatred of his mother. The

---

[13]   Purdie was a house wife, who not only had to nurture of her little girl and take over all housework, but also had to spend 1-2 hours along with her M-L when she was off work, in terms of her M-L needing much attention paid to her. The serious male preference of the M-L fostered the rage of Purdie's husband and became the main reason that they decided to move out after 5 years of co-residence (Hung 2014f, 8–9).

[14]   Xin, Jade, Gao, Purdie, Wen, Lily, Lena, Hong and Lin co-resided with their M-Ls when they were newlyweds.

[15]   Wen only lived with her parents-in-law for half a year (Hung 2014e, 8–9).

mother-son conflict placed huge pressure upon Apple, especially when they co-resided together.

Some D-Ls avoid living with their in-law parents. Joy insisted on the rejection of her M-L's offer of co-residence with her in her house. Instead she bought a house in a specific location －not too far and not too close to her parents and parents-in-law and thus avoided their interference and having to frequently visit them. Fen's M-L and Fang's F-L insisted on not residing with their married children to avoid conflicts.[16] Fang and Lee both attributed long distances as the key in avoiding too much encounters so reduced tensions and conflicts with their M-Ls. Gao and Wen no longer co-resided with their M-Ls. They both found that geographical distance enabled them to have fewer interactions than before. This reduced tensions (Hung 2014c, 1; Hung 2014f, 5).

It is evident that patrilocal co-residence caused many problems. It became one of the most difficult issues for the D-Ls (C. Y. C. Chu, Xie, and Yu 2011, 120). Adjusting to married life and learning how to be a good D-L at the same time can be a great challenge for a newly wedded woman. Different life patterns and lack of boundaries led co-residing D-Ls to face more challenges than those who lived apart. Besides, although half of the participants stated that they had lived with their M-Ls only 10% of the women are still living with their M-Ls according to the feedback survey as Table 4.1 shows.[17] 61% of participants visit or have contact with their M-Ls on a daily or weekly basis. 20% meet monthly or twice a month. Such figures show their maintenance of close interactions. Although, less and less D-Ls co-reside with their M-Ls, they appeared to sustain close contact with their M-Ls.[18] Close interactions increase the exposure to their differences in personal values and perceptions, which may cause positive interactions or negative afflictions. I will discuss the related issues in the next section.

TABLE 4.1 THE FREQUENCY OF CONTACT WITH MOTHER-IN-LAW (N=41)

---

[16]   Fen encouraged her M-L to live with her because she lived alone and was getting older and weaker. However, she refused.

[17]   20% of participants have co-resided with their M-Ls on the basis of the collected *Survey and Feedback Form*, 10% of the M-Ls have since passed away.

[18]   According to the feedback survey, 26% participants meet or contact with their M-Ls every day or once two days. 34% of the women keep in contact weekly. Lin keeps in contact with her M-L, although she got divorced. Amy's M-L was in a persistent vegetative state and her husband's elder sister had assumed the role of the M-L.

	Co-residence	Daily or once two days	Weekly	2-3 Weeks	Monthly	2-3 Months	non-record
% of D-Ls	20*	26	34	5	15	12	7
*10% M-Ls passed away							

4.1.4 The different values and perceptions between elder and young generations

None of the participants claimed to be a good D-L and some criticised themselves for poor performance in the role. For example, Pei felt inadequate to meet the expectations of her M-L during her 10-year marriage. The ideal D-L for her M-L was submissive and met all duties and needs (Hung 2014g, 7). Fei is in her '50s and has been co-residing with her M-L for nearly 20 years. She has a poor self-image as a D-L because she is not obedient to her M-L and persists in her own ways of living. A critical inner voice often accused her saying, 'A good D-L isn't like this, you should say something sweet….to become more submissive….' (Hung 2014a, 13).[19]

Another four women thought they were not good D-Ls, because they were not able to meet some requirements. For example, Yen showed anger on her face when her M-L was nagging. Wen felt she was not so good to her parents-in-law because she did not live with them and could not speak words to please them. Gale felt that she had not done enough for her M-L. She only managed to spend a few hours with her M-L every week.[20] Juan was embarrassed if she did not help with the housework (Hung 2014a, 14). These women seemed to possess traditional images of an ideal D-L based on submission, pleasing behaviour and good conduct towards the M-L.

Some elder women talked about their life experiences, including how they survived control by their M-Ls, experienced negative relationships or developed positive interactions. Jinn concluded, 'a young D-L does not have to insist on her own opinions, just obey ' (Hung

---

[19] Fei received higher education but her M-L is illiterate. She followed her husband to the US and bore three children. Afterwards, she lived with her parents-in-law when her husband had received his doctorate degree and came back to Taiwan. Fei struggled to be an obedient D-L, because she seeks to do what is right. But she knows that she is not a submissive D-L; and cannot always say something sweet. She regards her grandmother as a role model for D-L and M-L relationship in that she never had her own voice. Fei criticised her mother who was not quite as good a D-L.

[20] Gale is in her 30s and spends 2-3 hours visiting her M-L every week. She thinks that the time spent on her parents-in-law is not enough to meet the requirement of being a good D-L (Hung 2014a, 15).

2014e, 2, 8).[21] Obedience is called *xiao* in Chinese and it is widely considered a vital requirement and essential virtue for a good D-L. Not surprisingly, most women stated that being submissive is as crucial as being good. This indicates that the traditional ideology remained influential, especially for older women. They believed that a good D-L should follow what the M-L dictates — unless it was actually illegal!

The younger generations do not ascribe to notions of complete obedience and insisted that doing what is right is more important. Purdie's expressions represent the opinion of her younger generations, 'I respect my M-L, but I am not completely submissive'. She further said, 'one of our new duties is to provide accurate guidance to help parents-in-law to make decisions appropriately since we have up-to-date knowledge' (Hung 2014e, 10). She described how she helped her ill parents-in-law to seek crucial medical advice although they had been reluctant to do so. Purdie said, 'older people do not have all the knowledge… my M-L has gradually realised that I have a lot of new knowledge, although I am quite young' (Hung 2014f, 10–11).[22] Fang pointed out that the key difference between the two generations is their education levels, which has shaped their understanding, values, habits and beliefs. According to the feedback survey, 78% of the M-Ls are illiterate or only received primary educations whilst 59% of D-L's have undergraduate or higher degrees and 27% of D-L graduated from high schools (see table 4.2). Undoubtedly levels of educations created a big generation gap and affecting their relationships.

TABLE 4.2 THE LEVELS OF RECEIVED EDUCATIONS (N=41)

	None	Primary School	Secondary School	High School	Associate's or college degree	Master's degree	non-record
% of D-Ls		7	7	27	49	10	
% of M-Ls	34	44	5	12	2		2

---

[21] The elder women like Jinn, Lily, Jia and Jun all emphasised the conduct of obedience, as well as a younger D-L, Apple. Apple's M-L is open-hearted and encourages her to be autonomous, although they live together. Apple said that she is lucky to have such a good M-L and is glad to obey and please her (Hung 2014e, 11). Her pain is caused by the fighting between her husband and M-L that I have previously mentioned.

[22] Purdie's in-law family is very traditional that they always prioritise their parents in everything. She thinks that this family culture is good, but that false values and inappropriate conduct should be corrected (Hung 2014e, 10–11).

Heidi and Lien both tried to be submissive and meet the expectations of their M-Ls in the first few years of their marriage. However, they both found it hugely stressful and concluded that they would never achieve their goals (Hung 2014d, 6). Reflecting on the relationships with her M-L renewed Heidi's effort to be a good D-L. She realised that she had to obtain autonomy and have an equal relationship. Therefore, she redefined their relationship as 'friends' (Hung 2014d, 5). Likewise, Heidi found that she should be wise in dealing with her M-L rather than merely subservient (Hung 2014d, 6).

As we have discussed previously, complete obedience is no longer approved by younger women. They use a humble attitude in place of complete submission. At the same time submissive ideals continue to influence their perceptions of being a good D-L and put a burden on their lives. As the younger D-Ls received higher education, their values and outlook are quite different from the older generations'. This has broadened the generational gap. Therefore, young D-L's adopt a more equal attitude in dealing with their M-Ls. They may insist on their rights, although their M-Ls may have different views. Understanding the complex interaction of roles, expectations and how power works within the relational web will help us to draw a clearer life picture of D-Ls. I will address such issues in the following section.

4.2   The Ideology of a Good Daughter-in-law

Traditionally women are carers, involved in domestic work, caring for infirm parents-in-law and children. In order to understand the behaviour, interactions and the power operation between D-Ls and M-Ls, we should examine the ideology, the expectations and other related issues. The personality profiles of M-Ls and the structure of power in the family are also crucial elements affecting D-Ls' daily life.

4.2.1 To be a good daughter-in-law

Lu, Gao, Joy and Ting all sought to be good D-Ls. They made efforts to integrate themselves into their in-law family after marriage. As Gao said, 'I do not interfere with my in-law's family affairs, but attempt to adjust myself to them' (Hung 2014c, 2). Other women like Melody, Gale and Gao all expressed how challenging it was early in their married life in adapting to the in-law family. They were under great pressures by being a 'little fearful silenced D-L' (Hung 2014a, 5, 10; Hung 2014c, 10). Besides, Purdie felt hurt

because her in-law family devalued the role of D-Ls. The prevalent view among this family is, 'there is only one mum and the son can re-marry a new wife' (Hung 2014e, 10–11). It means that a D-L can be replaced by other women but the M-L is irreplaceable. This concept indicates that the longstanding culture of *xiao* and veneration for the elders continues to permeate some families. Moreover, Purdie and Pei took charge of all the housework and their M-Ls took their role for granted. Purdie said, 'my M-L only crosses her legs sitting beside on a chair, while I was busy doing the cleaning' (Hung 2014f, 10).

Gao, Vivian and Jade both claimed that they substituted for their husbands by practicing *xiao* to their parents-in-law (Hung 2014c, 8–9, 14). They cared about their physical and/or psychological needs, tried to serve them, and kept in contact with them.[23] Jade said, 'I am more proactive in taking care of my M-L than my husband, even to the point that my husband and my M-L praised my filial behaviour. I am glad that I am able to do this for his parents' (Hung 2014c, 9). In the case of Jade, practicing *xiao* and being a filial D-L not only helped her to build good relationships, but also earned love and respect from her spouse and other family members.

Some women said that their husbands were filial sons. These included Yen, Vivian, Gao, Fei, Lu, Melody and Fen. Their husbands respected their parents and kept close interaction with them. Lu said that she learnt to submit herself to her husband so she practised *xiao* to her parents-in-law (Hung 2014a, 3). A filial son tends to require his wife to meet the needs of his parents. Hsu's husband could not accept her feelings of being an outsider in the family. He reproached Hsu and said, 'My mother treats you as her own daughter, why do you always have to feel like an outsider' (Hung 2014d, 12). Hsu explained that in-law relationship was very different from that of mother-daughter relationship. She spoke of her experience with her M-L, 'I will be prudent and cannot relax….I just cannot' (Hung 2014d, 12). Another D-L, Zeng, had a similar experience her husband demanded, 'you should treat her like your mum'. She told him, 'I cannot directly point out her mistakes as I do with my mum simply because she is not the mother of my blood-bonded' (Hung 2014d, 13). Zeng observed that her M-L had some inappropriate conduct and problems which should be challenged. She sometimes quarrelled with her husband about such incidents. Zeng told to her husband, 'I will be honest to my mum and let her know what is bad for her and

---

[23]   Gao has a sense of guilty that she was unable to serve her parents-in-law at all times in terms of the long geographical distance (Hung 2014c, 2).

encourage her to give up bad habits, because I love her'.[24] Other women like Fang, Gale, and Lu noticed that there is a great difference between M-Ls and their own mothers. As Fang said, 'It is easier to communicate with my own mother than with my M-L' (Hung 2014f, 6).

It was also the case that a filial son could oppress his wife and force her to lose autonomy and self-esteem in the in-law's family. Gao and her husband had a wonderful marriage. Nevertheless, her husband asked her to be a submissive wife prioritising his needs when they went back to the in-law family (Hung 2014c, 2). Fen was respected by her husband at home, but he asked her to play a drama in which Fen should obey him in front of her M-L (Hung 2014g, 26). Such stories about women show that intergenerational interactions can stereotype the submissive role of D-L reinforce hierarchal family structure and patriarchal gender roles.

Yen did not like visiting her in-law family because her husband often quarrelled with her. He grumbled, 'you do not integrate into my family and do not accept my mum' (Hung 2014c, 7). 'I will feel better if my husband understand me', Yen said (Hung 2014c, 7–8). She felt wounded,[25] because he always stood up for his mother and never said a word to defend her when her M-L nagged. Therefore, she tended to keep a safe distance from her M-L, which again generates another vicious cycle. Melody's husband was a workaholic who came home very late and then always spent much time with his parents in the living room. Melody remembers, as a young full-time mother in her early marriage, how she nursed her young children and was kept waiting for her husband. She felt hopeless when her husband was available to her only after 23:00 and his routine began in early morning (Hung 2014a, 16–17). The filial behaviours of both Yen's and Melody's husbands become a barrier in their marriage and they felt under an oppressive power.

However, practicing *xiao* is still seen as a requirement for a good D-L. It has been emphasised by many participants, including Jade, Amy, Ting, Hong, Fen, Fon, and Lena. Fon concisely defined what a good D-L is. Her definition is to practice *xiao* so as to build

---

[24] Zeng believed that the 'filial attitude' of her husband towards to his mother is inappropriate. 'It's not true love, you assist to damage her', she told her husband (Hung 2014d, 13).

[25] Yen always takes the job of caring for her three children when they stay with in-law family. Yen said, 'I don't know who his WIFE in the world is' (Hung 2014c, 7). Because her M-L usually goes with Yen's husband to visit his friends or catches up in the living room. The close bond and interactions between her husband and M-L have caused some problems in her 19 years of marriage.

up a harmonious family. In so doing, her M-L was happy to see her son, who was filled with joy and energy (Hung 2014g, 12). Besides, Lu pointed out that the main duties of a good D-L was to manage your own family well and care for her own children and husband (Hung 2014a, 14). These duties were basic expectations of a M-L as defined by cultural ideology. Most D-Ls perceived and accepted these conventions.

Some D-Ls were taught by their mothers. Spring, Apple, Xin, Fon and Joys' mothers taught them how to take charge of the housework, although their M-L always did all the work and did not ask them to do so (Hung 2014e, 11). Some women, such as Gao, Purdie and Spring, attempted to imitate their mothers who complied with the cultural ideology of an obedient D-L to serve their M-Ls. Whereas, Gao confessed that she was not so submissive as her mother (Hung 2014d, 7). Spring tried to copy her mother as a model but failed. She remembers that she was initially unaccustomed to living with her parents-in-law and that their values and living patterns were distinct from her own. Her grandmother was authoritative, while her M-L was more liberal with her and encouraged Spring to be herself and become independent (Hung 2014e, 5–6).[26]

The image of a good D-L put forward by the participants tended to reflect a traditional ideal role that is to offer care. In next section, I will provide some details on the issue of caring for the elderly.

4.2.2 Daughters-in-law as caregivers

Elderly care was raised by the participants as a significant issue in their lives as a D-L often plays a carer's role on behalf of her husband towards his parents. In a previous section, we explained partially that to provide care to infirm parents-in-law is one of the reasons for co-residence. According to the feedback survey of the participants, over 68% of women consider that the 'health' of M-L is of vital importance to them, around 24% regarded it as important; less than 8% saw it as not important. These figures show that the health conditions of their M-L is strongly connected to the well-being of the D-L, since D-L is often regarded as the main carer in the in-law family. For example, Ying gave up her job to serve her M-L for 7 long years. Lily and Chen also spent many years looking after

---

[26]   Spring is in close to 60 years old. She comes from a farming background; the family members dare not eat meals if the grandmother did not start eating. While, Spring's parents-in-law were businesspersons with irregular living patterns. Her M-L told her that she could be free at home, but she was used to keeping old patterns of life and playing a subordinate role and found it difficult to take it easy.

their M-Ls, who both suffered from dementia. 'I played my part in serving my M-L…. my church accredited me the best D-L in my church', reported Chen (Hung 2014e, 2–3). Furthermore, these women reported that they do not merely serve their infirm M-L's, but also themselves served as a model for their children in this act. Other women, such as Lin, Hong, and Melody likewise mentioned the importance of being a model for their children so as to provide a good, formative example. Lily spoke on behalf of these women, 'I am contented that my children witnessed how I served their grandmother; and, they will follow my steps later on' (Hung 2014e, 9–10).

To be a caregiver is likely to involve self-sacrifice. For example, Jade meets with her M-L once a month since they live really far apart. Her M-L sometimes comes and stays with her for an extended period of time. Recently she came for a medical check-up and stayed for three weeks. 'I had to put her schedule on my top priority like driving her around and such…' said Jade. Another woman, Pei, began to worry about an operation on her M-L because she might have to ask for leave or resign from her job in order to look after her in the ward. Pei said, 'my M-L demanded me to care for her if she had the operation' (Hung 2014g, 6). 'I have a sense of fear and am stressed to be with her, but it is the duty as a D-L' (Hung 2014g, 6).[27] Pei decided to fulfil her role as a carer, despite the fact she may be under huge pressure from her M-L. However, she acknowledges that she cannot afford to work for 24 hours a day and she will employ a helper and share the load.

It is worth mentioning that some D-L's like Pei and Melody are able to receive support to reduce the burdens of care work. Melody's parents-in-law both have dementia and live with her brother-in-law. They employ two carers to give 24-hour assistance.[28] Some D-L's with fewer resources have to face greater challenges and difficulties. The continuing acceptance of the role of a caregiver for infirm parents-in-law reveals the continuation of a strong ideology and cultural expectations for a D-L. However, serving an infirm M-L is a continuous challenge for many D-Ls. Pei, Fei, Gale, Lee and Purdie do hope that it won't be so difficult, if their M-Ls are ill. They will be expected to be the main caregiver for their M-Ls in the future. They hope they can survive under such circumstances. In the following section, I will discuss the issues of expectations.

---

[27]   Although Bei's husband had refused that request by his mother, Bei thought she should play her role well and fulfil the duties of giving care.

[28]   Melody had spent much time attentively serving her parents-in-law. They still know her, but cannot recognise their son. Melody is encouraged by this recognition, which shows they remember what she had done on them (Hung 2014a, 5–6).

4.2.3 Expectations and some associated issues

Before marriage, many women dreamed about their role as a D-L and about their M-L. Most D-Ls expected to become an insider from being an outsider and sought to develop their in-law relationships through close interactions. Besides, the good 'mother-daughter' relationship can be described as an ideal model which is accepted by many women who desire to have it. However, these expectations do not match reality. Many D-Ls gradually realised that the blood-bond daughter-mother relationship was unlikely to be replicated in their new family setting. Lin urged other D-Ls to give up this unrealistic expectation. She sighed and said with earnest, 'don't expect to be equal to her daughter in the eyes of your M-L, who can always be tolerant with her own daughter, whereas you would not receive the same treatment' (Hung 2014g, 20).

Hong, Rose, and Lena mentioned that they longed for an intimate relationship with their M-Ls, characterised by mutual acceptance, trust and love (Hung 2014g, 13–14). However, their dreams were shattered. Hong was unhappy that her M-L only managed to maintain harmony on the surface, but showed a lot of favouritism towards the sister-in-law. Rose apologised to her M-L for her passive character. 'It is my problem. Although I have such expectations, I rarely take actions to build relationship with my M-L', Rose sobbed when she said this (Hung 2014g, 1).[29] Language was an obstacle, as she was not able to freely express herself to her M-L, but her M-L often used her limited Mandarin to pay attention to her. Lena was confident about being a good D-L and expected to have good relationships with her M-L because of her personality and her personal background — she is a Hakka and married to a Hakka. However, although they both speak Hakka different accents caused misunderstanding and different lifestyles caused stress. She had painful experiences in co-residing with her M-L and felt herself an outsider in her in-law family. She drew a clear boundary from her M-L (Hung 2014g, 2–3).

Although the ideal mother-daughter relationship may be unrealistic for both parties, acceptance and affirmation toward to each other can generate positive self-images and help establish relationships. One day, Lin unexpectedly heard a conversation between Her M-L

---

[29]   Rose said that she has a good M-L. Although her Holo M-L can only speak a little Mandarin, she makes an effort to do so and shows her love to Rose. Rose's Holo language is not so fluent, other adults and children are free to talk, whereas Rose cannot understand what they say. This causes her to have the feeling of an outsider when she visits in-law family. Avoiding contact with her M-L is the way she deals with the language barrier.

and a neighbour from outdoors in which her M-L gave positive appraisal of Lin. Lin was greatly encouraged and it increased her confidence; this motivated her to learn from her M-L and speak positive words to her (Hung 2014g, 25). Fei had a similar experience. She felt that she was a bad D-L; however, she was told by other people that her M-L praised her as doing well. This really comforted her heart (Hung 2014a, 22). Some M-Ls were good to their D-Ls and her family beyond expectations. For example, Lee and Juan appreciated that their M-Ls have helped to care for their mothers in the ward. These actions improved their relationships.

D-Ls may attempt to meet the needs and expectations of their M-Ls, engaging in what the M-Ls like them to do or want them to do. For example, Sue, Vivian, and Hsu regularly set aside time and space for grandma-grandkids 'intimate' gatherings and reunions. I will discuss the issues of childcare in the section of *4.3.2*. Fen uses massage to release the pain of her M-L. She also answered her M-L's requests and phoned her on Saturdays, when her M-L has the largest number of customers in her shop. Therefore, she can show off to many of her customers how filial her D-L is and how intimate their relationships has become (Hung 2014g, 27). Not only Fen's M-L likes to show off their relationship but many of the M-Ls have similar preferences. They may place special requests on a D-L's manner and etiquette when they are together. The D-Ls are required to attend special occasions and they may be required to dress up and looked good in front of others. Gao and her husband as well as Kuok the couple responded to such requests by their M-Ls. They studiously arranged visits or activities with their M-Ls and satisfied her expectations (Hung 2014c, 11–12; Hung 2014d, 5–6). Joy and Yen buy gifts for the relatives and neighbours near the house of their M-L in order to gain the pride and honour of their M-L when they pay a visit (Hung 2014c, 4, 15).

Ting's in-law family were from an elite class and teachers. Her parents-in-law received Japanese higher educations; to obtain a master's degree was a requirement for their children. They set particular rules for the children who had to behave in a proper manner in daily life. Ting said, 'my M-L treats me better than her own children; she is more patient and tolerant, without setting the same high demands as apply to my husband and his siblings' (Hung 2014g, 4). Although Ting's M-L was kind and very supportive, she was nervous when she stayed with her. For example, they spoke three languages; Japanese, Holo or English at home. Yet, Ting was not able to speak either Japanese or English

fluently and she was encouraged to speak Holo and use Mandarin less. However, she began to be aware of the requirement to dress up properly, pay attention to the languages spoken, and follow family rules. Ting and her husband both resigned from their positions to pursue theological education in recent years. Nonetheless, Ting had an ambivalent attitude towards her M-L. She could not provide financial resources to them because their income was largely reduced; while, she received their financial support for her study.[30]

However, providing support for the M-L can be difficult for those who are constrained financially. For example, Lena always bought very high quality fruits as gift to please her M-L, who has a taste for good things, although she had a tight budget (Hung 2014g, 8).[31] Financial support via giving 'red envelops' with cash in is as a popular way of practicing *xiao* among Taiwanese families.[32] Pei's M-L was unsatisfied with the amount of money provided by Pei and her husband (Hung 2014g, 5–7). Lu, another woman, has a very tight budget and felt stressed by the monthly allowance given to her M-L. Moreover, her husband insisted on giving her fixed amounts. This caused problems in balancing their family expenses (Hung 2014a, 3). In such cases, the expectations of M-Ls or husbands can make economic difficulties worse or be economically exploitative of D-Ls in practice.

In sum, unrealistic expectations can create huge pressure and burdens on D-Ls and affect the D-L－M-L relationship. However, every woman has her own personal characteristics and behaviour patterns which affect interpersonal interactions. The personality of D-Ls and M-Ls will be addressed in the next section.

4.2.4 Personality and the operation of power

According to the *Feedback Survey,* 58% participants consider that the personality of the M-L as vitally important in relationships; 34% regarded it as important. Only 8% of women think it is not important. Mario Mikulincer and Phillip R. Shaver argue that personality 'is embedded in social relationships and cultural systems and is influenced by

---

[30]   Ting has been married for ten years. Her family background is very different from her husband and her parents do not set many rules and restrictions.

[31]   Lena has used the financial gifts from her own mother, who knew Lena's awkward finial situation and provided for their daily needs for a period of time, to buy gifts for her M-L in order to avoid unpleasant generational interactions.

[32]   Giving red envelope here is a cultural practice of giving money as well as an action of *xiao* from adult children to their parents-in-law/parents. It symbolises good luck and support. Lena, Lu, Lee, Lin, Gao, Ting and Jade all spoke of their experience of giving red envelope/money.

changes in experiences over time. Its construction takes years, and it has effects on many aspects of a person's experiences, close relationships, and identification with particular groups' (Mikulincer and Shaver 2015, 1:xxx). It is clear that personality influences D-L and M-L relationships.

Many women mentioned that they have deep struggles with the personality of their M-Ls. Some M-Ls are chronic complainers, nagging, critical women or self-absorbed people. Most D-Ls keep silence in response to such M-Ls. Purdie, Liying, Fang, Lily, Jade, Heidi, Amy, Gao, Wen and Yen have nagging M-Ls. How do D-Ls deal with a nagging M-L? Liying said, 'even my husband cannot endure his mum…as to me… I didn't fight back and against my heart…' (Hung 2014e, 14–15). Purdie often let the words 'go in one ear and out in the other' in her response (Hung 2014g, 11). Fang described her sisters-in-law's confession 'none of her D-Ls can bear this for a long time' (Hung 2014f, 6). Although Lily's heart was filled with pain in that she had long suffered the nagging behaviour of her M-L. For instance, her M-L once said, 'I will die, if I do not nag'. She endured and never spoke back, 'because I am a Christian and, God can help me overcome …' (Hung 2014g, 8–9).[33]

Some D-Ls noticed that their M-Ls were not only complainers, but also gossipers (Wen, Gale, Pei, and Lena). For example, Gale's M-L always gossiped with her neighbour. Moreover, some M-Ls manipulated their relational web and tried to control their D-Ls by this means. Pei's M-L complained about Pei to relatives and neighbours, who told Pei's husband in order to distress Pei (Hung 2014g, 9–10). Lena said, 'my M-L brought pressure through relatives and neighbours upon me. They came to 'teach' me how to play the role of a D-L' (Hung 2014g, 10).

There were some narcissistic M-Ls who wanted to be spoiled and indulged. Neither Purdie's husband nor his siblings could endure their mother's personality. Purdie would spend much time squatting or kneeling beside her M-L saying sweet or comforting words until she was pleased and her good mood returned whenever there was a mother-son conflict (Hung 2014f, 9). Wens' M-L expected her to satisfy her needs but Wen had to guess what she wanted. She was angry and kept silent, if Wen did not respond correctly or made a wrong guess. Saying sweet words and showing much affection is what the M-L

---

[33]   Lily realised that her M-L cannot change her nagging behaviour. However, her M-L made apologises to Lily after many years and said, 'I am fortunate, it is you' (Hung 2014g, 8–9).

wanted Wen to do. 'I feel painful' (Hung 2014f, 5), Wen said. Wen's personality is honest and direct and she finds it impossible to meet such expectations. Jade, Lena and Gale also encountered such challenges and found it difficult to speak 'sweet' words and instead, they took actions to serve their M-Ls.

Some M-Ls with dominant personalities were authoritative and difficult to deal with. Hong, Lena's, Melody's, Pei's, and Purdie's M-Ls required their D-Ls to obey them in every way. Hong's M-L took control at home which made Hong feeling uncomfortable because her M-L attempted to repress her and often assigned her tasks (Hung 2014g, 28). Lena had a fear of authority figures; she kept silence when her M-L exercised authority over her (Hung 2014g, 2). Melody described how she responded to authority when it was exercised by her M-L, 'I can only cry…' (Hung 2014a, 16–17). She endured the pressure with silence and tears for years. Moreover, Wen's M-L often loaded her burdens and emotions onto her (Hung 2014f, 5). Pei talked about some unpleasant experiences with her M-L and these experiences often caused her to think of a divorce in the early stage of marriage (Hung 2014g, 5).

Some families maintained the patrilineal tradition of fathers having the authority to make decisions. Whilst, some participants noticed that their M-L took domestic controls in the families. One participant, Lin married into an aboriginal family, the Amis tribe. This tribe was traditionally matrilineal and followed the uxorilocal marriage system.[34] Lin said, 'I really felt the authority of my M-L in the family, when I was with them…. However, my M-L is unlikely to be willing to pass down the family authority to me, but I was not begging for it either' (Hung 2014g, 26). Lin believed that keeping a harmonious family is important. That is why she often remained silent in the decision making process in the family unless her parents-in-law asked for her opinions.[35]

The nature of in-law relationship and the closely bonded hierarchical family structure challenge the interactions between D-Ls and M-Ls. Most participating women shared unpleasant experiences of the relationships in the discussions. Given such stories from the participating D-Ls, we have learned how these women conformed to their M-L in playing their roles. Many M-Ls behaved in an oppressive way and placed unrealistic expectations

---

[34]   Lin's F-L followed the ritual of uxorilocal marriage.

[35]   Lin preferred her M-L to take the control within the in-law family. She was happy that she authority at home in terms of that she already took the control on her working place (Hung 2014g, 25–26).

upon their D-Ls which required their D-Ls to make unreasonable concessions. However, such intergenerational relationships were interactive and connected to other family members. I turn to analyse those associated issues in the next section.

4.3   The Web of Relationships

The interactions between D-Ls and M-Ls are connected to other family members and constitute a web of relationships. Husbands, F-L, and children all play important roles in intergenerational interactions. This section will analyse the roles of husband and F-L, and the issue of child-rearing.

4.3.1 The roles of husband and father-in-law

As Hsu indicated, the quality of the relationships with her M-L influenced the relationships with her husband (Hung 2014d, 5). Furthermore, a husband can impact upon the relationship of his wife and mother. Moreover, he can deepen misunderstandings between the two parties. For example, Ying could not find help from her husband in solving the conflicts with her M-L. A serious son-mother quarrel worsened the relationship between Ying and her M-L when her husband stepped in. Ying thus gave up asking her husband for help in solving problems (Hung 2014a, 21). Early on Wen's husband attempted to push her into accommodating the needs of his mother. He believed it would be easier for a young person to adjust compared to an older one whose living patterns were already formed. Therefore, the changes should be made from the side of his wife.[36]

Some participating women gave credit to their husbands who had managed to bridge the gaps between the two women he loved. Purdie's husband played such a positive role (Hung 2014e, 16). Xin's husband sought to improve the relationship between his wife and mother. He often used love language to mould positive images for each party that valued their roles and what they did for each other (Hung 2014f, 8). These actions have helped to establish good images for both two parties. Although Fei's husband could not solve some of the relational problems between Fei and his mother, he privately comforted each party and undertook the housework, which the two parties did not want to do! His efforts always touched Fei's heart; therefore, she was willing to follow her husband's steps. Thus tension

---

[36]   However, his perceptions have been changed latter on. He realised that his mother also has to adjust herself to respect and accommodate their life patterns (Hung 2014f, 5).

or conflict might be relieved by the actions of the husband (Hung 2014a, 10). Lena's husband always stood by her side and supported her Christian beliefs when his mother raised religious issues. However, the husband may also suffer from the conflicts or tensions between his wife and his mother. For example, Ting sometimes blamed her husband when she made mistakes in her in-law's house. She was angry with her husband because he did not inform her in advance of the situation that led her to make such mistakes (Hung 2014g, 22). Wen's husband got hurt by his mother, who said, 'you have married a good husband rather than a good son'. The mother could not accept that her son stood for his wife and did not listen to her (Hung 2014f, 5).

Husband, wife, and mother are weaving complex triangular relationships. For example, the extramarital relations of Jade's husband promoted the collaboration of Jade and her M-L when Jade suffered from her husband's betrayal. The M-L stood by her side to condemn her son and provided emotional support in order to sustain Jade through the storms of marriage. The intervention of her M-L improved their relationship and the solidarity of the two women helped to overcome the family crisis (Hung 2014c, 10). As to the extra marital affair of Kuok's husband's, his mother had observed unusual behaviour of her son and made Kuok aware of this. However, Kuok was blamed by her M-L for ignoring her advice. Moreover, the M-L believed that Kuok spent too much time on work and outside activities which caused her son to have extramarital relations. Such accusation and rejection issued from the M-L sharpened the pain and reinforced the pressure on Kuok. Although Kuok forgave her husband and her husband finally came back to her the M-L remained angry for some time (Hung 2014d, 12).

F-Ls also play crucial roles in the intergenerational relational web. Many F-Ls were supportive and bridged the gaps between his wife and the D-Ls. For example, Ting's F-L used to explain his wife's conduct which helped deepen mutual understanding and avoided tensions (Hung 2014g, 13). Wen sensed that the present relationship with her M-L was not as good as when her F-L was alive. At that time he could wisely deal with his wife and kept the two parties in harmony (Hung 2014f, 3–4). Pei's F-L always secretly helped with cooking in the kitchen as she was not so familiar with these things. In addition, he could not bear the stress from his authoritarian wife and chose to end his life at the end (Hung 2014g, 5–6). In contrast, sometimes a F-L stands by the side of his wife when she

argues with her D-L. For example, Purdie's F-L put the blame upon her for making his wife unhappy (Hung 2014e, 2).

The interactions of two generations complicate relationships due to their closely knitted nature. The interventions of husbands or F-Ls may bridge the gap between their wives and mothers or their wives and D-Ls and strengthen their intergenerational relationships. The interventions of the two generations, on the contrary, can be oppressive and result in distress and pain for both all involved. Moreover, relational tasks create larger challenges in relation to the issues of child-raising, especially when women take up the role of carers. I will analyse such issues raised by the participants in what follows.

4.3.2 The issues of raising child rearing and infertility

Many participants noted that child rearing can be a source of conflicts with their M-Ls. 43% and 41% of the participants reported that the issue of childcare is either 'very important' or 'important' in D-L－M-L relationship. Vivian spoke of her experiences, 'our relationship was closer than that between me and my mum….I loved my M-L and told her almost everything…however, everything changed since my first child was born' (Hung 2014c, 2). Vivian's M-L was not satisfied with her childcare and always judged her work. 'My poor grandbaby is so weak and tiny…' (Hung 2014c, 2). The M-L criticised and blamed her for inappropriate child care. 'As a new mother, I have tried my best to be a good mother and wife. It's very sharp and really hurt…', Vivian sobbed (Hung 2014c, 2). The relationship broke down as the result of such negative interactions.

Lien, Gale, and Yen said that their M-Ls were intrusive and lacked boundaries. They felt un-respected as their M-Ls sometimes suddenly appeared and rang the bells without informing them beforehand when they wanted to see their grandchildren. Hsu's parents-in-law usually visited and stayed with them every weekend. Although they were warm and kind, Hsu felt interfered with by them and unhappy because she had little time available with her husband and children after childbirth. Hong experienced manipulation in raising her child by her M-L. Hong said, 'I cannot accept that fact that there is someone else there supervising and teaching me how to raise my own children' (Hung 2014g, 28).

106

Some M-Ls have maintained a preference for male offspring. As to the issue of child rearing, Yen, Amy, Purdie, and Lena mentioned their distress on not giving birth to a son. Yen's mother could not accept the fact that she had given birth to a girl, 'it was a mistake. The baby you brought back from hospital should not be a girl', said the M-L repeatedly for over half a year. Yen could only embrace the baby and melt into tears at that time (Hung 2014c, 6). Amy's M-L has been in a vegetative state and her husband's elder sister took her place playing the role of her M-L. Amy had severe pregnancy sickness with three months of vomiting and she fainted in the office several times. After the birth of her three daughters she decided to have tubal ligation. While, her sister-in-law insisted that her bother should have a son to bear his name, and threatened Amy, saying 'I am going to remarry my brother a wife….' (Hung 2014d, 1). Amy was hopeless and went to church to seek help. I will discuss religious issues in the next chapter.

Purdie and her husband were sad and upset by the strong male-preference of her M-L. Her daughter was not recognised and largely ignored by her M-L. For example, the grandma only bought a gift for her grandson and gave the girl got nothing when she had a visit (Hung 2014e, 9). Purdie thought that such inappropriate notions and conduct should be changed. She attempts to transform the favouritism of her M-L through her son. Purdie teaches her son about love and equality. Her son was taught to ask his grandma about bringing a gift for his sister when he received one and by this way to guide the M-L. Afterwards, Purdie's M-L began to take her granddaughter into considerations when she did something for the grandson. 'My son is the bridge in the intergenerational relationships' said Purdie (Hung 2014e, 12).

Three women noticed the acute distress caused by infertility. Lu choked with sobs sharing experience of her 7-year barrenness. Although her M-L tried very hard not to touch upon this sensitive issue, she was still under great pressure. For example, she began to get sick when her husband wanted to pay a visit to his parents. Finally, she gave birth to three children, but now she encounters another problem. Her M-L favours her second son who bears the most resemblance to his father and is her M-L's dearest son (Hung 2014a, 4). Another older participant, Jia, shared a sad story about her M-L who was a concubine and oppressed by her husband's first wife in her own patriarchal family. Jia had two M-Ls. The first one was barren; therefore she took a concubine for her husband in order to produce an

offspring. The concubine gave birth to eight children, but she was oppressed by the first wife and her husband.[37]

Those stories manifest a huge generation gap on the issue of raising children in some families. Some M-Ls have strong sense of their possession of grandchildren and sons, loving and caring for them, which becomes an intrusion and interference with the new family. A lack of boundaries becomes a problem in such intergenerational interactions. And the problems of bareness and male-preference reflect the androcentric culture embedded among some elder generations.

Conclusion

The task of this chapter has been to analyse the information collected from the women who participated in the five focus groups. I explored the images used by the D-Ls to describe the relationships with their M-Ls. I examined the inter-generational interactions to provide a sketch of D-Ls' daily life that presented various stages through which they interacted with their M-Ls. The data revealed that most participants kept in close contact with their M-Ls. Moreover, many had the experience of co-residence, which complicated their interactions. Different lifestyles, values, and understandings became crucial factors that affected the D-L−M-L relationships.

I further analysed how the ideology of a good D-L shaped roles, duties and expectations. M-Ls or in-law families had particular rules and requirements that they expected D-Ls to fulfil. In the meantime, D-Ls also had their own expectations on their M-Ls and of themselves. Tensions or conflicts were generated when the two parties could not accept each other or fulfil their expectations. Husbands, F-Ls and children played their roles in increasing or decreasing the quality of the relationships. In my exploration of these interactions I hope to have shed light upon the life experience and the inter-generational relationships between D-Ls and their M-Ls in Taiwan. The next chapter presents an analysis of the impact of religious differences upon participating women and discusses

---

[37]   Although the concubine bore eight children, she had to work outside with her husband. The children were cared for by the first wife (Hung 2014e, 1). Polygamy is illegal in contemporary Taiwan and a man is not allowed more than one wife. However, infertility continues to be a problem that distresses many women who are expected to have a child.

how the Christian women's spiritual life becomes an important factor in interactions with their non-Christian M-Ls.

Chapter Five: Religious Influences upon D-L and M-L relationships

Religion and child rearing are the two main issues that influence the quality of the relationships of D-Ls with their M-Ls.[1] This claim is based on an examination of participant discussions. This chapter will analyse how Christianity influences the relationships between Christian D-Ls and non-Christian M-Ls. Such an analysis 'requires the detailed accessing of the participant's world' (Opie 1992, 57). With this in mind, I shall focus on the religious-based issues and attempt to identify the key themes to capture the intergenerational tensions in women's lives.

I first discuss how the religious beliefs of the Christian D-Ls differ from those of their M-Ls, and the range of responses to those differences. Second, I address how Christian beliefs transform the intergenerational relationships and how their faith supports women in overcoming life-challenges. The third section will disclose what Christian teachings are received by the participants in relation to the D-L－M-L relationship and the feedback and perspectives of the Christian D-Ls.

5.1 The Interactions of different beliefs

There are significant religious differences between Christian D-Ls and their non-Christian M-Ls. Inevitably, this difference impacts upon their interactions and relationships. Borrowing Lena's words, 'tensions or conflicts are inevitably raised when Christians are confronted with the issues of worshiping gods and ancestors at home' (Hung 2014g, 18). Her statement shows the negative effects of different beliefs. According to the participating women, ancestor worship and the practice of folk religions can be identified as the two most challenging issues in relation to religious differences. 81% participating women perceived that religions as a vitally important factor (47%) or important factor (34%) influencing their relationships. These figures were collected and analysed from the *Feedback Survey* form.[2] In this section, I will analyse the attitudes of the M-Ls. These attitudes range from respect to manipulation of their D-Ls' beliefs. Religious-based tension,

---

[1] Kuok and Purdie both stated that the most different perspectives upon life between generations were related to childcare and religion (Hung 2014f, 7)

[2] 38 valid samples were collected for this question.

related to ancestor worship, folk religion and eating food offered for sacrifice are also discussed.

5.1.1 Respect for Christian faith

Some Christian D-Ls, Apple, Spring, Xin, Wen, Sue, Lee, and Gale, reported that their religious life is fully respected and accepted by their non-Christian M-Ls, who are tolerant or have an unprejudiced attitude toward their religious beliefs. In some cases basic Christian beliefs were communicated to parents-in-law prior to the weddings when the parents of the D-Ls explained the sacred wedding rituals of Christianity to the future in-laws. These parents-in-law respected Christian beliefs and the related ceremonies which the D-Ls insisted upon. The D-Ls were not required to comply with folk rituals or practice ancestor worship. Furthermore, the parents-in-law encouraged the new family members to pursue their own faith. Such respect and acceptance engendered the affection of D-Ls toward their M-Ls. For example, Wen's parents-in-law showed their respect and admiration for her vocation to the ministry before her wedding. She was receiving theological education prior to ordination at that time (Hung 2014f, 3). Fen's M-L showed her acceptance and the understanding to Fen in such a way that touched Fen's heart and earned her appreciation (Hung 2014g, 19). Apple also had a similar experience before her wedding. Her future M-L had considerately collected information regarding nearby churches. Spring's M-L supported her pursuit of the Christian religion. Moreover, she took over the duties of housework for Spring and urged her to go out early to attend the Sunday service (Hung 2014e, 7). These loving actions improved the quality of relationships.

According to the focus groups, husbands play a crucial role in reducing the tensions or problems of religious differences between their Christian wives and non-Christian mothers. For example, Sue's husband already passed through a period of religious conflict with his parents when he converted to Christianity before their marriage. Therefore, Sue's beliefs were accepted without much difficulty by her M-L (Hung 2014a, 7). Hsu's husband, like Sue's husband, converted to Christianity when he was single. He defended his faith and regularly brought the children to Sunday services. Therefore, Hsu's parents-in-law gradually accepted their religious lives and became accustomed to their religious routine (Hung 2014d, 11). Although Lien's husband was not a Christian, he supported her religious life. He, himself performed all the Chinese wedding rituals, which included some religious practices. Hence, Lien wasn't required to do anything against her Christian beliefs.

When some relatives criticised Lien's absence from family religious activities, her husband would defend her. Lien's M-L eventually respected her beliefs and stopped asking her to engage in ancestor worship (Hung 2014d, 10). Ting's parents-in-law had witnessed the transformation of their son's life. They assented to his choice to become a Christian and Ting's choice to do likewise (Hung 2014g, 19). These M-Ls all showed their respect and understanding to their D-Ls. Furthermore, the parents-in-law became their defenders against the criticisms of other relatives (Hung 2014g, 20; Hung 2014f, 3–4). In addition, Fon's M-L converted to Christianity due to the conversion of her loving son (Hung 2014g, 12).

Some M-Ls encouraged their Christian D-Ls to take their children to church. For example, Purdie's M-L could not offer care to the grandchildren on Sundays therefore she asked Purdie to take the children with her (Hung 2014f, 1).[3] Although Ying was baptised at an early age, she did not go to church. However, Ying sent her two children to Sunday school in order for them to receive Christian teachings as she disapproved of her M-L's ways of educating her children. As Ying had to work, her M-L assisted her in raising Ying's children for 12 years (Hung 2014a, 18). In addition, Ying went back to church and began to seek spiritual guidance when she encountered the challenges and the pressures of elderly care.

Those M-Ls/parents-in-law manifested their support and respect regardless of religious differences. Some M-Ls, however, were discontent with the religious lives of their Christian D-Ls. Such relationships were characterised by tension and difficulty when religious behaviour or practices collided. I will address the issues raised by the participants in the next section.

5.1.2 Relational tensions/conflicts and the religious differences

The incompatibility of Christian beliefs and Taiwanese folk religions can raise relational tension or conflicts between Christian D-Ls and their non-Christian M-Ls. Many M-Ls had strong opinions on the behaviour of their Christian D-Ls who could not, owing to their own religious beliefs, follow the cult of ancestor worship. These opinions impacted their relationships and caused various levels of tension or conflict. For example, Melody's and

---

[3] Except Purdie's M-L, other family members, such as Purdie's husband and father-in-law are Christians.

Ying's M-Ls offered the same negative assessment: 'my D-L would be perfect, if she were not a Christian' (Hung 2014a, 21–22, 25).[4] These M-Ls felt unsatisfied with their D-Ls' loyalty to Christian beliefs. As Heidi commented, 'my M-L was very angry at me, but I did not care and refused to do anything against my Christian faith' (Hung 2014d, 9). Religious loyalty can become a source of tension that raises relational difficulties between D-Ls and M-Ls.

Some D-Ls report that they encounter greater difficulties from their M-Ls related to religion at the beginning of marital life or soon after conversion to Christianity. Although Hong's and Zeng's M-Ls had known that they were Christians, they forced them to burn incense in the temple or required them to attend family religious activities as usual.[5] Zeng's and Lien's M-Ls did not accept their Christianity. Zeng mentioned that her M-L asked Zeng's husband to take her to offer sacrifices to the ancestors after the wedding day. For the sake of being a filial, submissive D-L, Zeng went together with her husband, but did not burn incense. Later on, she was criticised when she was absent from religious practices at family gatherings. However, Zeng's M-L finally accepted her Christian beliefs, as well as her alternative way of remembering ancestors; following a religious dialogue, Zeng began to offer flowers instead of burning incense in the temple (Hung 2014d, 8).

Some M-Ls care about their D-Ls being Christian, while some M-Ls seem not to mind what religion their D-Ls are. One of the reasons is that the M-Ls may not value or have a negative relationship with their D-Ls. Pei talked about her experience, 'one day my M-L asked me whether I would burn incense. I boldly rejected her, because I already converted to Christianity. I felt both sad and relieved…' (Hung 2014g, 6). Pei's M-L maintained an apathetic and sometimes cold attitude towards their relationship which began from the time when they first met each other. She came not to care about Pei's religious beliefs; she only required Pei's husband to ancestor worship.

Some non-Christian M-Ls tend to manipulate the religious activities of their sons and/or grandchildren. For example, Heidi's M-L tried to stop her bringing her children to church,

---

[4] A Christian is not able to exercise ancestor worship and participate in the rituals of folk religion. Such none participation is generally regarded as unfilial behaviour in Taiwanese society. Some M-Ls expressed their worries that they would not receive offerings and supports when they descend into the netherworld.

[5] Hong feared to tell her M-L of her conversion of Christianity at the early stage. Her M-L was very unhappy, when she discovered Hong had already accepted Christian beliefs. She could not change Hong's faith but put much pressure on her son/Hong's husband (Hung 2014g, 17–18).

'you can go, but not my grandchildren…' (Hung 2014d, 9). Lena's and Hong's M-Ls also forbade their sons and grandsons from becoming Christian. Lena's M-L said: 'My son and my grandson cannot go to church, but it's no problem if you and my granddaughter go' (Hung 2014g, 17–18).[6] Some M-Ls insisted on their religion and worried that the family shrine and the rituals of offering sacrifices to ancestors would not be passed down to the next generation. These women too probably worried that they would not receive offerings by their successors in the future.[7] From the M-Ls point of view, these were their family successors who should continue the family shrine and offer sacrifices to the ancestors. Given their beliefs, it must be quite scary and sad to think that generations of religious remembrance of family members would come to an end and that their traditional beliefs and practises could be lost. They would feel a duty to all family members before them not to allow this to happen.[8]

A few Christian D-Ls either had their religious activities restricted by their in-law family or encountered serious conflicts, such as Amy and Lin. Amy was criticised and forbidden to attend Sunday services for a period of time by her husband and his elder sister who substituted the role of M-L (Hung 2014d, 9).[9] Amy made an effort to be what she thought of as a better D-L that is one who nurtured children, served her husband, and treated her in-law family with love and kindness. Their relationship has become better in recent years. Another woman, Lin, encountered problems with her M-L who is a devout Jehovah's Witness and tried many times to convert her. Lin had not felt any religious oppression, but experienced religious tensions since she became a Christian. Her M-L was angry that Lin's conversion had influenced her only son to also convert. However, Lin and her husband kept pursuing their Christian faith. Although Lin's husband bore the major religious oppression from his mother, there was always tension relating to this issue between Lin

---

[6] Lena's M-L showed her favouritism for the grandson/Lena's son. She had no way of facing the rejection from her loving grandson who refused to take part in worshiping idols and ancestors. She could only gradually accept the grandson's and Lena's Christian beliefs (Hung 2014g, 9).

[7] Apple's M-L also raised this issue. She was worried that no one would offer sacrifices to her when she died.

[8] There are also issues of family decision making that deserve attention. Surely it's not the Christian D-L that is entitled to decide everything. In some views of family authority the adults (husband and wife) together should be able to decide matters for themselves and for their children. In East Asian culture, and particularly within families that are much more interdependent on different generations, it is natural to think that the broader family should have a certain degree of say too.

[9] Amy used many excuses to acquire her husband's permissions to attend church activities when she moved out from the co-residence with the in-law family and lived nearby a church.

and her M-L.[10] Lin's M-L refused visits from Lin and her husband though her grandchildren were accepted. She claimed that they no longer had a relationship with her just because of religion. Moreover, the M-L threatened that she would not leave any family assets to her son and his family if they did not return to the Jehovah's Witnesses. However, Lin still tried to be good to her in-law family. She attempted to avoid verbal attacks and give no excuse for her M-L to criticise her husband. 'We continued to visit her, even more frequently than before. I cooked and served them as usual. My F-L offered his appreciation for what I did, but my M-L rejected my efforts. However, I didn't want to directly go against her', Lin explained (Hung 2014g, 20–21).

As to such religious issues Lien, Hsu, Amy and Zeng all realised the need for clear expectations to be established between Christian D-Ls and non-Christian M-Ls. Therefore, Lien suggested Christian D-Ls should not only hold firmly on their beliefs but also be compassionate toward their M-Ls. In her view, although the M-Ls have a negative attitude to the religious behaviour of their D-Ls at the early stage, they will gradually accept and respect the Christian religion of their D-Ls' (Hung 2014d, 10). Love and loving actions have the power can transform intergenerational relationships. The next sections will analyse what the main issues of religious differences are that affect the tensions or conflicts between Christian D-Ls and their non-Christian M-Ls.

5.1.3 The dilemmas of religious differences

As previously explained different religious practices impact upon intergenerational relationships, Kuok's M-L is close to and listens to her elder D-L who is skilled at exercising folk religious practices for good luck and blessings. She believes her D-L can use these skills to bring good fortune to her family. In fact, Kuok's sister-in-law often exercises some religious practice in the name of *xiao* for her M-L. Kuok, as a Christian, is unable to show her affection in the same way. Therefore, the M-L felt less satisfied with Kuok's filial actions in comparison to that of her elder D-L (Hung 2014d, 10). The elder D-L employed religious practices to show her superiority over Kuok. Such religious differences influenced the quality of the relationship between Kuok and her M-L, meaning Kuok perceived herself as an outsider in the in-law family.

---

[10]   Lin's M-L tried to use the family assets and the mother-son relationship to prevent Lin's husband going to a Christian church.

Although Christian D-Ls cannot worship ancestors or show their filial actions through participating in folk religion, some participants assist their M-Ls to prepare materials and offerings. This action and involvement is seen to be part of the role of a D-L and does not run contrary to Christian beliefs. In such cases M-Ls have a sense of respect and acceptance from their D-Ls (Hung 2014e, 13; Hung 2014f, 3). In so doing, Amy, Xin, and Apple behaved in approved ways and maintained connectedness with their M-Ls (Hung 2014d, 1; Hung 2014e, 3, 11).

Kuok's and Melody's M-Ls were accustomed to adopting traditional folk therapy to comfort Melody's children (Hung 2014d, 10; Hung 2014a, 25–26). This traditional Taiwanese therapy combines the practice of worshipping idols with folk healings in order to comfort children with blessings or help them sleep well. This practice leads Christian D-Ls to a dilemma; they appreciate the good intention of their M-Ls, but refuse the practice, which is contrary to Christian faith.[11] Such practices became a source of pressure and some Christian D-Ls become stressed by the behaviour of their M-Ls. For example, Apple could not refuse her M-L exercising such practices for her child. 'I feared rebelling against my M-L, but I did resist her actions in my thought', Apple said with difficulty (Hung 2014e, 13).

The eating of sacrificed food is another source of tension between Christian D-Ls and their non-Christian M-Ls (Hung 2014g, 18–19). Non-Christians perceive the ritual of eating sacrificed food as a means of receiving blessings, acquiring good health and luck from gods/ancestors. A M-L through the action of distributing the food gives every family member a portion to manifest her love and good wishes. However, a Christian D-L may feel uncomfortable about accepting this food due to religious reasons.[12] Melody and Xin, on the contrary, did not refrain from eating such food. They believe that Christians are free to eat anything because 'I am convinced, being fully persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean in itself...' (Romans 14:14a). They acknowledged God's ownership and believed that everything is purified by the blood of Jesus. However, Melody changed her practice and began to not accept sacrificed food due to the teachings emphasised by her

---

[11]   Kuok, Melody, and Apple all encountered those religious challenges.

[12]   It is forbidden by God, to be seen participating in 'pagan feasts' (Acts 15); many Christians were taught that they should refuse to eat such food in order to maintain a pure testimony and prevent a weaker brother in Christ from sinning (1Corinthians 8:4-13).

church. She felt awkward about this change and felt that it was difficult to interact with her M-L on this matter.

The Christian lifestyle and its weekly routine may negatively influence the building up of the in-law relationship. Lee, addressing her religious life, reported that she and her husband spent much time on church activities at weekends. She felt sorry for her M-L that she was not able to spend time with her doing outdoor activities (Hung 2014c, p.23). Besides, some parents-in-law were reluctant to accept the vocational dedication made by their children/D-Ls. Although Ting's parents-in-law had accepted her Christian beliefs, they resisted the intention of Ting and her husband to respond to the calling of ordained ministry in church. The most serious conflict that Ting encountered with her M-L originated from this decision. Although this couple faced strong opposition, they persisted in their faith and choices. The two parents finally came around and supported financially their decision to receive theological education (Hung 2014g, 20).

These Christian women exhibited a high degree of loyalty to their faith, regardless of the attitudes of their M-Ls and how their M-Ls treated them. In the next section, I will turn to focus on the religious lives of the participating women in order to understand how Christian beliefs influence the relationships between believers and their unbelieving M-Ls.

5.2   Life Transformation and Christian Living

This section analyses the religious lives of the Christian D-Ls as well as how their Christian faith has transformed their lives. Firstly, I address how life transformation alters the vision, the mind, and the behaviour of the women. They grow in faith and their relationships are renewed. Secondly, I analyse what religious characteristics support the women in facing the challenges of D-L–M-L relationships. The practice of self-reflection and prayer significantly assists those women in overcoming difficult challenges. Thirdly, I shall address how the in-law family or the family members experience the family transformation. Such change is driven by the Christian women who renew their lives and grow in faith.

5.2.1 Life transformation and relationship restoration

Some participants felt under great pressure in playing the role of D-L. They sought help from the church before they became Christians.[13] Many of them experienced healing, in which their soul was restored and psychological stress was released. Lena experienced healing in her marriage and the transformation of the relationship with her M-L after she converted to Christianity (Hung 2014g, 18). In telling her life story, she said, 'I had an encounter with God that changed my life and renewed my family relationships' (Hung 2014g, 3). This life transformation not only changed her from a troublemaker into a peacemaker but also released the tensions with her M-L and led to a harmonious relationship.

Given that in-law difficulties can become a marital problem, as addressed in the previous chapter, some women were considering the idea of divorce (e.g., Yen, Fei, Lily, Lena, and Pei). These women experienced that their Christian faith not only sustained them in overcoming the threat of divorce but also improved their family relationships. Fei said, 'I would have applied for a divorce if I were not a Christian, and I, my husband, and my M-L would not go as far' (Hung 2014a, 2). She also experienced life transformation: 'I had hated myself (…); however, God renewed and changed me' (Hung 2014a, 27–28). Another woman, Lu, said, 'There were tons of hardships and bitterness… I could not lift up my head within my in-law family, if I were not relying on God (Hung 2014a, 33). Spring said, 'God gave me wisdom and courage to accompany and assist my M-L passing through the life storm of death when my F-L passed away' (Hung 2014e, 18).

Many participants claimed that Christian beliefs improved the relationships with their M-Ls (Hung 2014g, 21; Hung 2014c, 17). For example, Yen experienced life transformation that helped her build a closer relationship with her M-L (Hung 2014c, 17). Fei experienced life restoration and said, 'Christian faith has helped me to look at the relationship with my M-L from a new perspective that has enlarged my capacity to accept our differences' (Hung 2014a, 36). Another woman, Hong, shared how she followed the Scriptures to love her M-L and how this loving action renewed the relationship with her in-law. As a result of this change, Hong was considered worthy of being in the process of decision making in the in-law family. 'I just realised that I was valued by my M-L; she gradually passed her authority onto me' (Hung 2014g, 28). Receiving such power to exercise in the family, she

---

13   Yen, Gao, Ying, Jade, Amy, Lin, Pei, Lena, and Hong all expressed that they had such experiences.

became more humble and careful in using this authority. It is evident, based on the experiences of these women, that Christian beliefs have helped them to renew their thoughts and adjusted their attitude toward their M-Ls.

Those participating women all had the experience of life transformation, and this transformation motivated them to generate a strong sense of calling to enact religious agency. Many women attempted to evangelise their family members. Lin's, Fon's, and Lena's husbands all converted to Christianity through the influence of their Christian wives (Hung 2014g, 18). As Fen said, 'I love my M-L so much and hope she can be baptised to join the family of God' (Hung 2014a, p.19). Jade's M-L was influenced by her; she took the initiative in abandoning the folk religion and became a Christian last year (Hung 2014c, 11). Fei's parents-in-law both converted to Christianity (Hung 2014a, 28). Other M-Ls, including Ying's, Fei's, and Fon's, were baptised as a result of the influence of their D-Ls. Life transformation changed these D-Ls as well as their family members. In the next section I will focus on the women's religious practices to analyse how Christian faith grows women's spiritual lives as well as supporting them to encounter life challenges.

5.2.2 The support of Christian faith

Many Christian D-Ls find support and strength from their faith and strive for better lives and relationships. Some D-Ls, through self-reflection, grow in self-awareness and can see how to reduce relational tensions. Gale, a young D-L, shared how she encountered a potential threat to her relationship with her M-L. One day she was off work, she heard a complaint, when her M-L phoned her sister-in-law and grumbled about problems with Gale, such as 'princess' tendencies, being indulgent, etc. Although Gale was angry when she incidentally heard the grumbling, she kept silent to reflect on what mistakes she had made with her M-L. She sought to tackle her own problems (Hung 2014a, 8). Gale said, 'I have learnt how to grow in faith as well as reflect on how I can improve the relationship. My M-L will understand and see my good deeds with her own eyes' (Hung 2014a, 28–29).

Prayer is one means of supporting a D-L in overcoming the conflicts with her M-L. Hong provided much care for her parents-in-law compared with the little help given by other siblings by marriage. She sometimes felt that the situation was unfair or unacceptable. Prayer effectively assisted her in using positive thinking instead of negative thoughts to overcome such challenges. Once, Hong argued with her husband's brother, and that caused

tensions between Hong and her M-L. She was reminded in prayer and self-reflection that she had to take action to solve this problem. She made an effort to communicate with that brother-in-law and her M-L, and that not only helped her to solve the problem but also assisted the three parties in gaining mutual understanding and learning to respect each other (Hung 2014g, 24). It could be seen that self-reflection and prayer helped the two D-Ls to have better self-control and adopt positive attitudes to overcome potential relational threats.

Lives can be out of control and full of intractable difficulties, and Christian faith provides strength to assist D-Ls in overcoming such challenges. Juan's M-L had a mental disorder with extreme characteristics, and she sometimes said to Juan, 'I am going to die'. Juan was often stressed by her M-L's illness and also suffered from her unreasonable accusations. With a sense of helplessness, Juan prayed when she felt trapped. Prayer provided hope and sustained Juan in courageous attempts to find solutions in the face of tough challenges. Juan has a heart of compassion and empathy. On the one hand, through prayer she recognised her M-L's weakness and insecurity and tried to care for her needs. On the other hand, she learnt to break the silence and speak of her feelings and thoughts to release her burdens (Hung 2014a, 29–30).

Another woman, Ying, also had to deal with the illness of her M-L who was paralysed during the last three years of life. Ying spoke of how Christian beliefs supported her in getting through the challenges. As a main caregiver, Ying not only provided 24 hours of care for her M-L but also took on the duties of childcare and household chores. Ying was burnt out but still had to bear these heavy burdens. 'That period of time was suffering and bitterness… I was distressed by her unreasonable requests…we tortured each other' (Hung 2014a, 19–20). Ying was exhausted and only could get strength via prayer and worshipping God. She always sang to the Lord, 'give me oil in my lamp, keep me burning….' in asking for God's help. It seems that, in her life, a cycle was repeating in which she went from fighting to sleeplessness, then kneeling in prayer, finally ending with reconciliation. Ying changed her daily routine and added more religious activities with her M-L. She spent longer reading the Bible and singing hymns to her M-L. This small change made a big difference, in that their tensions and conflicts were significantly reduced (Hung 2014a, 21). She recalled such memories and concluded, 'Christian faith was the most

important spiritual support sustaining me in facing the adversity. The Lord provided me with strength to walk through the valleys of my life' (Hung 2014a, 19–20).

Christian faith can also contribute to developing emotional intelligence as well as helping to sustain D-Ls in overcoming difficulties. Purdie's M-L once made a false accusation about her. Her F-L only listened to the M-L's side and stood up for his wife, blaming Purdie. The misunderstanding was solved in the end, but this incident made an impression on Purdie. Through it, she realised how God assisted her in keeping calm and carrying on. 'I was not angry, because God is in me' Purdie said (Hung 2014e, 16). As to her M-L, Purdie used a Taiwanese saying '老人囝仔' to describe the elderly people who tend to be childlike, with the need for much attention.[14] This explained why some old people tend to receive more care and are inclined to be indulged. Purdie bore this very patiently in serving her M-L, although she sometimes had feelings of helplessness. Christian faith provided her with hope and strength in the face of serving her M-L. Purdie wrote on the feedback survey, '….the Lord will make the best arrangement and a better future…He is my best friend and my saviour, who completely understands all my sadness and helplessness that no one knows….' (P. Xiao 2014, 2).

Such self-reflections, prayers, and spiritual pursuits assisted Christian women to renew their life and move toward overcoming relational challenges or improving their D-L–M-L relationships. However, this life transformation not only happened to them, but it also transformed other family members. How Christian beliefs transformed in-law families as well as husbands will be discussed in the next section.

5.2.3 Family transformation

Christian beliefs can bring the notion of gender equality into focus within families. Fang's husband is a Christian and taught by the church to share the housework at home. He does the dishes and helps to cook, which means that he is not conforming to the Holo culture in which men keep away from kitchen chores. Fang said that 'my husband helps my M-L and me out with cooking and cleaning in the kitchen, which is good because it brings a new cooperation into the in-law family' (Hung 2014f, 7).

---

[14]   The saying '老人囝仔' originates from a Holo folk saying. Purdie sometime felt distressed about her M-L, who needed to be paid much attention. This affected Purdie as she could not spend time in caring for her toddlers.

There was a different atmosphere when all the members of Lena's in-law family gathered to celebrate Chinese New Year. The New Year celebration within the in-law family was always filled with wine and gambling, *mah-jong* – even the children played it on their own. Lena's M-L also loved to play *mah-jong* and wanted Lena's husband to have fun without any restrictions. However, Lena hated her husband spending a lot of time on it and did not want her children to learn such bad habits. Therefore, it was painful to stay with the in-law family during this time. However, she tried to turn their attention to other activities. As a group leader of her church, she learnt how to encourage the members to speak to each other. Therefore, Lena deliberately made tea to reduce the consumption of alcohol. She told jokes and thought of some interesting topics to promote an atmosphere of communication (Hung 2014g, 8–9) .[15] She attempted to create a warm and communicative atmosphere in the family gathering.

Furthermore, the development of a good D-L–M-L relationship influenced Hong's husband to develop a better relationship with his parents. Moreover, Hong used such opportunities to teach her children how to please parents at the same time. In this atmosphere, their children fostered the notion of *xiao* and also learnt how to behave properly (Hung 2014g, 24). These Christian D-Ls had received Christian teachings or training, which motivated them to bring family problems to light in order to improve family well-being. God's Word provides powerful resources to Christians for living. I will analyse what the biblical principles and the teachings that the participants have received from religious communities in relation to D-L–M-L relationships are in the next section.

5.3   Christian Teachings in Relation to D-L–M-L Relationships

In the light of the Word, participating in church communities, and from the teachings from clergy, some Christian women have learnt how to deal with intergenerational relationships. In order to understand what teaching they have received, this chapter will discuss how the stories of Ruth and Naomi, and the teachings regarding filial duties, influence the attitudes of the D-Ls. As these teachings are regarded as the main source of help relating to such intergenerational relationships, the chapter will examine how the marriage courses and

---

[15]   In addition, Lena's faith has influenced her husband. Their marriage had been at risk and her husband gained confidence to take the initiative in finding help from Lena's pastor. 'It was just impossible for my husband, who stepped out to seek help' said Lena (Hung 2014g, 3).

church groups support the women in facing these relational challenges. The negative aspects of Christian beliefs that are destructive to women's lives will also be addressed.

5.3.1 Ruth, Naomi and the teachings regarding filial child

Many participants indicated that the relationship between Ruth and Naomi is the ideal model of D-L–M-L relationship in the Bible. In *The Book of Ruth*, a Moabitess, Ruth, married into a Hebrew family and became Naomi's D-L. Her loving-kindness, loyalty and obedience promote Naomi's well-being and become a best exemplar of Christian D-L (Ruth 1:16-17; 4:15). Hong stated that *The Book of Ruth* is the book in the Bible that has had the most influential on her, and it has significantly affected the relationship with her M-L as well as impacted her life. 'The sincere love with all her heart to her M-L that Ruth demonstrates is what I pray for myself and seek to imitate. It is also what I expect to accomplish' (Hung 2014g, 14).

Jinn and Kuok both emphasised the obedience of Ruth to Naomi, which demonstrated a prominent characteristic of a good D-L, and they can learn from her (Hung 2014e, 11). Furthermore, Ruth sacrificed herself to love Naomi, which made a deep impression on Kuok with regard to the D-L and M-L relationship. In the light of the Ruth-Naomi story, Kuok identified Ruth with her mother who, just like Ruth, was completely submissive to Kuok's grandmother. This obedient attitude and filial service were like the magnet that attracted Kuok to pursue such virtues (Hung 2014d, 8). However, some women argued that there was reciprocal love between Ruth and Naomi. Heidi and others indicated that Naomi was a loving M-L, who had Ruth's best interests at heart; therefore, Ruth could submit to her without being oppressed. The most significant characteristic of the two women is that they showed mutual respect and support (Hung 2014d, 8). Nevertheless, Ruth and Naomi's story represents a loving D-L–M-L relationship, loving each other even though they came from different social and religious backgrounds.

As to the biblical teachings in relation to the D-L and M-L relationship, some women highlighted Exodus 20:12 and Ephesians 6:1-3, which instructs readers to 'honour your

father and your mother'.[16] However, the keynotes of these verses refer to the notion of *xiao* in Chinese versions of the Bible, which could be used in the relationships between D-Ls and parents-in-law. In Taiwanese culture, D-Ls should treat their parents-in-law as their own parents. Therefore, the interpretation of the biblical teachings by the D-Ls could be translated as 'practising *xiao* on your parents-in-law' and being filial D-Ls. As to being a filial D-L, Ying and Gao both emphasised the importance of submission that has been generated from their own experiences since they converted to Christianity. However, this submission referred to submitting yourself to God. Therefore, you knew how to be a filial D-L under His guidance (Hung 2014a, 22) .

Love is essential for D-Ls to get along with their M-Ls. Fang, Purdie, and Xin all addressed the element of love, which includes respect and proper treatment. Fang's understanding of love is based on the notion that 'God is love' and the second greatest commandment, 'Love your neighbour as yourself' (Matthew 22:39). God requires us to love each other (Hung 2014f, 10–11). 'Not only your M-L is the object who you should love, but she is your husband's mother, your family, who is closer to you than other people, thus, you should love her more deeply', Fang explained (Hung 2014f, 11). Besides, Wen and Spring emphasised the importance of 'speaking the truth in love' (Ephesians 4:15).[17] They said this referred to a Christian D-L who should express or speak truth to her non-Christian M-L when M-L made mistakes or lied the truth (Hung 2014f, 11). As well as the element of love, Joy addressed another key component, forgiveness, which she was taught by her church could improve the D-L–M-L relationship. In the case of Pei, who was distressed by her aggressive M-L, she suggested that only forgiveness from God could bring healing and love for those wounded (Hung 2014g, 12).

It was not only such biblical teaching that influenced those women's relational interaction; marriage courses and church groups also played important roles in their religious lives. The latter will be analysed in the next section.

---

[16]   Exodus 20:12 'Honour your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you'. Ephesians 6:1-3 'Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honour your father and mother" – which is the first commandment with a promise – "so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."' Jinn, Fen, and Lu highlighted these teachings, which they received from the Bible (Hung 2014a, 3; Hung 2014e, 11; Hung 2014g, 12).

[17]   Spring wrote on the form of the *Feedback Survey*, 'Do not remain silent and conceal the problems; it is important to have the courage to express yourself'.

5.3.2 Marriage courses and church groups

When asked what teachings she had received from church for being a D-L, Fang replied that she had been taught very little in relation to the role from her church. More often, she had learnt about being a D-L through observations or via the shared life stories from church groups (Hung 2014e, 11–12). Many other participants recommended the meetings of couple fellowships. The group activities had greatly helped them to develop intergenerational relationships, and the fellowships provide support to sustain each other (Hung 2014e, 12; Hung 2014a, 27). Moreover, Hong, who was baptised recent years, said that the preaching and the teachings received from her pastors contributed to building a good relationship with her M-L (Hung 2014g, 13).

Some women, such as Ting and Vivian, attended a series of courses offered by their churches for building a healthy marriage. The courses included marriage preparation and instruction on building a harmonious family which greatly benefited the two women in nurturing their own families and understanding how to interact with their parents-in-law/parents (Hung 2014g, 13; Hung 2014c, 13). Christian life and growing within a faith community changed Lena's values, attitudes, and the patterns of life. This motivated her to restore and rebuild the relationship with her M-L. The first breakthrough she made with her M-L was to use physical touch to express her love. Lena learnt body language from her church; she said, 'we hug each other in every Sunday service and in cell groups. The action of hugs powerfully shortens the distance between two people and also changed my expressions of affection. This helps me to use more physical touch with my family' (Hung 2014g, 13). Chinese people usually find it difficult to say 'I love you' or 'sorry' in their everyday lives; therefore, Lena made the second breakthrough− speaking love languages. She also taught her children to hug their grandmother and say 'I love you' (Hung 2014g, 12–13).

It is evident that the cultural notion of *xiao* was emphasised by the church and well integrated into Christian teachings. Besides, some churches helped the D-Ls to interact with their M-Ls by holding particular courses relating to marriage, which seemed to emphasise its practical aspects. In addition, the teachings of different denominations on D-L–M-L relationships could not be clearly identified; they did not show differences in our sampling group. Christian faith promoted well-being to the women while it potentially also

placed women under a certain amount of stress. The negative aspects of religious influence will be addressed in the next section.

5.3.3 Negative experiences in the Christian life

Most participants reported that Christian religion contributed to coping with difficult situations and promoted family harmony. The positive aspects of the beliefs are that it brings hope and support to women's emancipation, which promotes their autonomy to pursue their spiritual life. However, religious differences create tensions or conflicts, which contribute to the generational gap between Christian D-Ls and non-Christian M-Ls. Besides, the negative aspects of Christian faith are that the virtues of self-denial and self-sacrifice have been much emphasised. This emphasis gives rise to strong pressure upon Christian women who feel that they should conform to the high standards of dominant stereotypes related to both religious life and the cultural norm of femininity.

Melody conceived that a godly woman should surrender to God's will and sacrifice herself in taking up her own crosses to follow Jesus Christ; however, this stereotype distressed her. Being a lifelong Christian, with 20 years of being a Christian D-L, she often struggles with the feeling of condemnation and accusation concerning her failure to be a good D-L. As the only Christian within the in-law family, Melody has made an effort to be an example and that has driven her in the direction of cultivating self-sacrifice and selflessness in caring for the families. She assumed that one of her crosses/duties in religious life was to persuade her M-L to be baptised, and she felt very worried about what others thought about her. However, her M-L remained an unbeliever and Melody blamed the unfulfilled mission on the failure of her own performance (Hung 2014a, 16–17). 'I attempt to be good and hope that my loving behaviour can touch her heart in order to evangelise her; however, I should be more submissive, talk less and do more…in my role of D-L, I am still unqualified ' (Hung 2014a, 5), Melody sobbed and self-criticised.

Feeling unable to achieve the standard of a good Christian D-L can be destructive and paralyse women like Melody who are overwhelmed by shame and guilt. Other women, like Pei, Juan, and Fei, expressed a sense of helplessness and felt deserted because of the burdens and stresses of religious life (Hung 2014a, 16–17). Pei said that Christian faith caused her to find it impossible to refuse the unreasonable requests from her M-L, although she would like to say 'no' (Hung 2014g, 6). Juan was also unable to present her

unwillingness and different values in the face of her M-L. 'I am used to swallowing my anger and repressing my emotions…however, I know my heart is furious…'(Hung 2014a, 30), Juan said bitterly.

Lu, a minister and a wife of a pastor, explained that her roles required higher emotional intelligence to manifest positive emotions in being a godly D-L/woman. 'I have to repress my negative emotions; otherwise, people criticise me, saying "you are a minister/pastor's wife"' (Hung 2014a, 33). As to repressing negative emotions, Fei suggested that a Christian D-L herself ought not to be enduring bad treatment and aggrieved all the time for the sake of being godly or perfect, especially because of the influential models of clergy/clergy wife. We should reject the false image of 'godly/perfect D-L' and release our negative emotions to accept the real self. In this regard, Fei and some women perceived that the stereotypes and the virtues of religious femininity, such as submission, self-denial, and self-sacrifice, became a source of pressure, which was distressing and distorted the self-image of women (Hung 2014a, 33).

However, we should not ignore the religious pressure and the bias of the teachings as we give pastoral care or teachings. The next section will reveal what opinions and feedback were made or written by the participants at the end of the focus groups. The main themes of the feedback and the issues raised by the participants will be analysed in order to offer a full picture of the relationships between Taiwanese Christian D-Ls and their non-Christian M-Ls.

5.3.4 The feedback and opinions of the participants

Most participants wrote down their opinions or feedback on the form of the *feedback survey*. This data manifested those opinions, which possibly they had not expressed in group discussion or related to something they wanted to particularly emphasise. Moreover, these women might have changed their thoughts after the discussions and the new notions these elicited could be written on the feedback form.

Some women, such as Sue and Melody, mentioned that they had only very little or no such opportunity to talk about the relationships with their M-Ls. Lena and Lee wrote, 'this sharing event offered an opportunity to speak of my own experience and listen to others, which provided avenues for exploration and reflections'. Many women were encouraged

and inspired by the openness and sincerity shared with other participants. Moreover, listening to the stories of the participants led Apple to reflect on her own situation and reduced the sense of self-pity. She recognised that her situation was not the worst compared to other women's challenges. Ting, Melody, Fen, June, and Lena found hope and gained deeper understanding of these intergenerational relationships. This helped them to grow in confidence and strength in interacting with their M-Ls. Ting wrote, 'the focus group discussions benefited me in the work of pastoral ministry, in which I gained more knowledge on D-L–M-L relationships'. In addition, Melody, Lee, and Purdie mentioned that they had grown in confidence to evangelise their parents-in-law from what other women had shared.

As to building a good D-L–M-L relationship, Lu, Yen, Juan, Purdie, Fang, and Kuok all emphasised sincere mutual love. Both parties should take responsibility for developing and maintaining positive relationships. Celebrating differences and acceptance were ways of mutual love that could bridge the gap between the two parties (said by Jinn and Fon). Besides, M-Ls should be cared for; a D-L had to listen to her M-L with a humble attitude, so that the D-L could understand her M-L's needs in order to give her appropriate care (Jia, Hui, and Chen suggested). In addition, Heidi, Amy, Ting, and Rose mentioned the importance of taking the initiative to improve the D-L–M-L relationship. They believed the change started from the D-L, and the D-L should be the first and more proactive in loving her M-L. However, 'we are imperfect people and should continuously follow Jesus Christ to renew ourselves for the better', Lu concluded.

Many women, such as Jade, Lu, Gao, and Fei, began to consider what the qualities of their future D-Ls are. Lin learnt from her parents-in-law, who paid her many compliments and treated her with honour. 'I will provide my D-L with positive feedback if she does something good for me' (Hung 2014g, 25). Jade was looking forward to her D-L's respect and company. She hoped that her future D-L would speak positively to her. Spring and Sue's M-Ls had been oppressed by their M-Ls, and such experiences determined them to be good to their D-Ls. Gao wrote that she did not want to live with her D-Ls. These D-Ls generated insights from their own experience and gave their perspectives on their future intergenerational relationships.

Some women mentioned that they were already M-Ls and were aware of the ways in which to treat their D-Ls. Chen treated her D-L with empathy. Although Liying's D-L was very quiet and used silence in response to the questions Liying asked, she still loved and respected her (Hung 2014e, 15). Lily treated her D-Ls as her own daughters and kept openness in her communication with them (Hung 2014e, 9). In addition, there were a few suggestions made by the participants in relation to future research on D-L and M-L relationships. Fei gained rich rewards through the group discussions and suggested to me that M-Ls' group discussions should be held, in which M-Ls are allowed to tell their stories.[18] Another woman, Spring, mentioned her needs: 'there must be a handbook providing solutions in the guidance of D-L–M-L problems'. Such opinions indicated the potential needs for pastoral care and the complexity of intergenerational relationships. Understanding the significance of those issues written down or mentioned by the participants as revisions of their opinions or feedback is beneficial in understanding their urgent needs after the focus group discussions. Thus, their hidden voices can be heard.

Conclusion

The intent of this chapter has been to explore the religious-based aspects of the relationships between Christian D-Ls and non-Christian M-Ls. At the beginning, I analysed the religious interactions between the D-Ls and the M-Ls, who presented a variety of attitudes toward their D-Ls, which varied from respect, tolerance to conflict. As to the religious interactions, ancestor worship, folk religion, and related issues were the main causes of tensions or conflicts. Then I turned to address women's spiritual lives. These Christian women all experienced life transformation as well as change in their family relationships. Christian faith laid a strong foundation to assist the women when they encountered difficult challenges. The story of Ruth and Naomi and teachings relating to filial duties were the prominent biblical teachings which guided these women in dealing with in-law relationships. Religious communities, such as church groups and marriage courses offered by pastors, were providing both knowledge and support that helped them to develop or maintain their D-L–M-L relationships. Also, I addressed the negative aspects of Christian beliefs, which could become destructive and add to the stress in women's lives. In the final section I presented some additional information collected from the participants' written feedback following the five focus groups.

---

[18]   Fei said to me in the public discussion, 'you should run focus groups for M-Ls. They need an opportunity to speak out'.

Chapter Six: Conclusion and Triune Love and Feminist Pastoral Theology

The main task of this study has been to shed light upon the nature of relationships between Christian D-Ls and their non-Christian M-Ls – an under researched area that has major impact upon the lives of many Taiwanese women. In this closing chapter I will reflect upon the most significant themes that emerged from my research findings. These reveal the daily challenges within the lives of the women and the power differentials embedded within family relationships. I shall then go on to indicate what theological and pastoral resources we might draw upon when engaging with the problems the women in my study face. In particular, I will indicate that a feminist Trinitarian theology might become one possible model for the intergenerational pastoring of Taiwanese Christian women.

To begin I summarize the challenges posed by the androcentric Taiwanese cultural and hierarchical family structure, close-knit family networks, and the power issues which greatly influence the relationship between D-Ls and M-Ls. I will then address the tensions raised by differing religious practices as well as the spiritual strength that can be provided by a Christian faith. Through evaluating these issues, I hope to demonstrate the importance of equal, reciprocal family relationships. In the light of these reflections, I will finally suggest that a feminist pastoral theology of Triune love may enable pastors, caregivers, and D-Ls to renew their thinking and practice in relation to the challenges of the intergenerational relationships.

6.1   The Emerging Themes of My Findings from the D-L and M-L Relationship

In this thesis I compared D-L－M-L relationships in the West and in Chinese society. Chapter one demonstrated that the discord within in-law relationships is manifested across cultures and takes different forms in different societies. The focus of this study has been on the relationship between Taiwanese Christian D-Ls and their non-Christian M-Ls. My findings show that the D-Ls experienced bicultural self-identities and struggled with powerful cultural ideologies and traditional mores. Although the collectivism of Chinese culture had shaped the familism of Taiwanese culture, Western individualism and modernisation as well as globalisation have significantly impacted upon the daily lives of Taiwanese women. These trends and influences have shifted Taiwanese society away from a traditional agrarian base towards becoming a modern industrialized society. My findings

indicate that cultural transformation has not only impacted upon the intergenerational relationship but also changed roles, patterns of life and interactions between D-Ls and M-Ls. Their relationships manifested diverse and multi-cultural perceptions and interactions ranging from traditional hierarchy to modern notions of equal relationships. The former emphasises the ideology of a submissive D-L and the latter is characterised by autonomy and independence. Different perceptions and practice often open an intergenerational gap between the two parties, and this can lead to tensions or conflicts.

Based on my analysis of the literature and empirical research, I summarised three important themes relating to the most challenging issues in the D-L－M-L relationships. The androcentric and hierarchical family culture, the close-knit living family web, and the issues of unequal power relations. In three sections, I will summarize these significant themes and their implications for the interactions between D-Ls and M-Ls. In a fourth section will examine the issues in relation to the religious differences and spiritual resources.

6.1.1 The challenges of the androcentric and hierarchical family culture

The attitudes manifested by my sampling group showed that an androcentric and hierarchical culture continues to influence Taiwanese families. This cultural matrix is invisibly embedded in the society. Although it is claimed that the practice of *xiao* and the custom of respecting elderly people have helped to achieve or maintain family harmony (see section of *1.2* and Che 1997; Kung 1999; Hsu 2003; Hsu and Huang 2006; Chen 2007; Li 2011) such practices have also promoted the authority of the elderly and their control over younger generations (Gallin 1994, 4; Kung 1999, 58; Hsu S.-C. and Huang 2006, 36). Moreover, the ongoing influence of these cultural traits was a major factor for those D-Ls in my sample group who took subordinate roles and were distressed by their treatment by M-Ls and husbands. A few women also reported that they suffered from infertility and/or were under pressure to give birth to a male heir so as to provide succession in the lineage for the sake of *xiao*. Likewise, a few M-Ls showed a strong preference for grandsons and devalued their granddaughters. This focus upon male succession means that some D-Ls continue to be treated as biological objects and the instrument for procreation. The female bodies of the D-Ls, as well as their girl children, are regarded as secondary or even shameful in the eyes of their M-Ls. This finding echoes my discussion of women's bodies

which are discriminated against and devalued (see section of *2.3.5*). Within this patriarchal system of gender inequality it must be admitted that women are oppressing women. Furthermore, it must be acknowledged that some husbands in this study supported the notion of sexual equality and took action to resist the sexism experienced by their wives.

As to the practice of *xiao*, an adult son is obligated to his own parents. He shows his appreciation and affection, and offers support in gratitude to his parents who have nurtured him since he was young. However, the ethic of *xiao* requires that the participating D-Ls take on the responsibilities owed by their husbands because filial duties are extended to include wives. This ethical norm constructs a gendered practice, which assigns the roles of assistant and caregiver to women in the private domain (Hsu S.-C. and Huang 2006, 36). I argue that unequal power relations are embedded in these customs. In other words, cultural norms sustain male power over women and elders continue to exert their authority upon younger family members. This has created both gender and intergenerational inequality and constrained D-Ls to provide services to their parents-in-law for the sake of their husbands under *xiao*.

As to the practice of *xiao*, many participants stated that they took upon themselves the responsibility for adjusting their lifestyles to adapt to their in-law family. In addition to this voluntary subjection some husband's attitudes became a source of oppression because they disregarded their wives to please their mothers (Au 2009, 266). A few men appeared excessive in requiring their wives to conform to what their mothers wanted even when their habits or usual practices were inappropriate or unhealthy. This made the D-Ls experience painful feelings of confusion. In addition, several women were required by their husbands to publically prioritise their husband's needs when in front of their parents-in-law. Moreover, in some cases, the husbands believed that his wife ought to completely integrate herself into his family of origin. Such husbands took the side of their mothers against their wives insisting that they treat his mother entirely as if she were her own mother. They could not understand or accept that a wife might feel as if she was an outsider in his family of origin.

It is very difficult for a D-L to place the M-L in an equal position to her own mother, because the mother-daughter relationship was generated from long-term, loving interactions. On the other hand, the existing solidarity of the in-law family which she

enters might lead a D-L to feel a sense of exclusion and alienation (Hsu S.-C. and Huang 2006, 40). Newlyweds, in particular, report feelings of being excluded or alien in their husbands' families. In addition, several of the D-Ls felt they were in the uncomfortable space between being insiders and outsiders. They considered it was unreasonable, and represented emotional blackmail, for a husband/M-L to require a wife/D-L to treat the in-law family as the family of origin. More positively, a husband can bridge the relational gap between his wife and mother. Many wives had a positive life with their husbands and these partners offered encouragement, comfort, and support to assist the relationship between their wives and mothers. Such husbands not only reduced the tensions between the two women he loved but also improved the quality of the intergenerational relationships.

Patrilineal family structures and their collective values imposed heavy duties on the D-Ls. They often played the roles of carers to their M-Ls. They were expected to be selfless and self-sacrificing, offering services and financial gifts. Some M-Ls took for granted that they were receiving such support and did not regard the efforts of their D-Ls even when they did most of the housekeeping work. This represents exploitation of a D-Ls' labour or resources in the private domain. Some D-Ls offered such resources because of traditional obligations while others displayed various levels of affection and emotional connectedness.

According to the participating women in my research, an ideal D-L should be submissive and quiet (Chuang 2004, 127). These were the virtues internalised by most of the D-Ls, who were expected to pursue them, but might struggle to behave accordingly. Most participating older D-Ls willingly conformed to these cultural norms, while many young D-Ls struggled with this stereotyped role and treated their M-Ls in different ways. As Jackson and Berg-Cross indicate, submission is seen as the crucial element building a good relationship in a traditional context (Au 2009, 267–70). The submissive attitude of D-Ls, however, can lead to
M-Ls becoming stagnant and self-absorbed and neglecting their own tasks of psychosocial development (see section *1.1.2*).

Some D-Ls who had received higher education did not act with complete obedience and often spoke up for themselves. The interactions between this group of D-Ls and M-Ls display less hierarchical power relations and more attitudes of mutual respect. This finding echoes the results of some other researchers as discussed in the section of *1.3.1*. The

opportunities of education empowered those D-Ls. It also benefited the in-law family and had positive results, spontaneously nurturing mutual care and love between the two parties. On the other hand, my findings show that some educated D-Ls persisted in doing what they thought was correct when this went against the opinions of their M-Ls. Not surprisingly this often led to tension or conflict. These women tended to express their views to their M-Ls and insisted on sticking to their principles. A number of the D-Ls stood somewhere 'in between' accepting modern notions and staying within the tradition. They were in cultural transition and frequently struggled over keeping silent or speaking out their views; between being obedient D-Ls or acting as autonomous women. Such struggles and challenges often affected them emotionally in that they felt disheartened and guilty in the face of their M-Ls even though they sought to play the part of a good D-L, taking up domestic duties and serving their husbands, children, and parents-in-law (see Hsu and Huang 2006, 52–53).

My research has confirmed that intergenerational interactions manifest themselves in various forms of D-L–M-L relationships among Taiwanese families. These range from the dominance-submission model, to the friend model and on to the mother-daughter model. It is evident that the androcentric social characteristics and hierarchical family order continue to be deeply rooted within Taiwanese sociocultural contexts. Such cultural notions and the practices generally remain; promoting inequality and an androcentric bias and reducing women's wellbeing. My results also indicate that the traditional practice of *xiao* has now been joined by the modern concepts of autonomy and equalitarianism. This cultural change can improve or worsen the relationship between D-Ls and M-L. Not only ideas but forms of family life are in transition. In the next section I will offer an analysis of the living family web and its particular challenges in this changing context.

6.1.2 The challenges of the close-knit living family web

Most D-Ls in my research were closely-knit with their in-law families. Moreover, some D-Ls co-resided with their parents-in-law. This patrilocal pattern of living provides support and mutual aid within the family networks (see *1.3.3*), especially in caring for elderly people and children (C.-L. Yang 2010, 33; H.-C. Lu and Cheng 2012, 113–14). Although this way of living brings economic and other benefits, different living habits and lack of boundaries often lead to problematic relationships. Since the household has been regarded as the domain of M-Ls and D-Ls, the two parties are both challenged by their close interactions and the differing views over housekeeping. As to their roles and self-identity

the D-Ls manifested a variety of bicultural selves which combined traditional cultural values with modern Western notions. My findings here echo the work of other scholars and show that the development of Chinese selfhood presents a synthetic tendency, which adjusts and constructs identities in the long integrating process between the cultures and the self (L. Lu and Yang 2006, 169–70; Yeh, Chang, and Tsao 2012, 66–67). Many D-Ls in this context of cultural hybridity were in the period of transition in which they sought to cohere and construct self-identity in order to solve conflicts and satisfy the requirements of being a D-L within their own particular circumstances (see *2.2.3*).

As to their attitudes towards being together, some participants reported that they enjoyed the close interaction with their M-Ls within the tight knit web, and their relationship was like that of a mother and daughter. Other D-Ls were under pressure to attain a mother-daughter relationship they did not desire. Many D-Ls had anticipated having such a relationship with their M-Ls before marriage. They expected to be treated as the M-Ls' own daughters and, vice versa. The romantic stereotype of the relationship reveals the continuation of a strong cultural ideology and cultural expectations regarding D-Ls and M-Ls (Hsu S.-C. and Huang 2006, 35). From the experiences of the participating women, these ideologies and expectations could be oppressive. Many were overwhelmed with serving work, such as caring for infirm M-Ls or providing 24-hour care. A few D-Ls, who lived on a tight budget, were burdened with giving financial resources to their M-Ls. Moreover, some D-Ls stated that they felt vulnerable because of the challenges of D-L–M-L difficulties, and at times, they thought of breaking up with their husbands to get away from this situation (Song and Zhang 2012, 57).

Some D-Ls enjoyed a mother-daughter relationship with their M-Ls, whereas a number of D-Ls gradually realised that this model of relationship was impossible to achieve. Some participants would like to be friends or merely have a well-functioning D-L–M-L relationship. Such different relational models are proposed by Wu (Wu W.-G. 2011), and Hsu and Huang (Hsu S.-C. and Huang 2006), who argue that there are various types of viable D-L–M-L relationships. These suggestions open up possibilities of more dynamic and creative models for both D-Ls and M-Ls, who can have more relational choices and relief from the restrictions of the cultural ideology. Besides, different life stages will develop diverse intergenerational relationships. For example, D-Ls and M-Ls can develop their relationships like sisters, friends, and/or co-workers, etc., and via communication

reduce distress and unrealistic expectations. Moreover, different relational models can simultaneously exist, depending on what the stage of life is. D-Ls and M-Ls can become co-workers to care for children and be sisters in their daily interactions. In so doing, D-Ls and M-Ls may find relief from the pressure to build a mother–daughter relationship and establish more harmonious intergenerational relations.

Close-knit living family networks challenge the relationship between D-Ls and M-Ls. Such intergenerational interactions are inevitably structured by power relations and in the next section I will examine the significant power issues raised by the D-Ls in my research.

6.1.3 The challenges of power issues

D-Ls and M-Ls have both the polarised feelings of being accepted and rejected, and of being connected with and alienated from each other (Che 1997). They consciously or unconsciously bargain for status, power or affection in the family. Childcare is one of the issues most raised in the focus group discussions, through which the D-Ls and M-Ls competed to take the lead in assuming parental roles. This finding supports the results of some other studies which suggest that child-rearing can be a major cause of relational tensions and conflicts (Chuang 2004, 27; Song and Zhang 2012, 58). With a strong intention to uphold the values of family life, the two parties seek to fulfil the traditional expectations of their roles in childcare. Over-involvement or under-involvement in the lives of each party can be a source of frustration or disappointment (C. E. Rittenour and Kellas 2015). Many M-Ls displayed possessive behaviour towards their grandchildren or exercised their authority over the D-Ls. Also, many M-Ls showed great interest in visiting their grandchildren frequently or being involved in the work of childcare. Some of them provided a valuable resource to the young couples who were in need of different types of assistance with child-rearing. Several of the other M-Ls attempted to supervise or guide the work of childcare. They operated their power to authorise or control how the D-Ls parented their grandchildren. They actually interfered with the parenting responsibilities of the D-Ls.

Some D-Ls believed that their M-Ls were obligated to share the work of childcare in light of collectivism. From my sample group it appears that the M-Ls occasionally assisted in this work, a few of them became the main caregivers to their grandchild, while a number of M-Ls refused to engage with this labour at all. D-Ls who received higher education have

not only acquired up-to-date knowledge about such things as health and child development but also have a better opportunity to be employed in the job market than their M-Ls (see section *6.1.1*). Such employment can confer some power to the D-Ls while increasing the family's benefits, including family income.

Several D-Ls complained that they were not able to work outside the home because their M-Ls were reluctant to offer care for their toddlers in the daytime. The reasons that the D-Ls needed their M-Ls to offer childcare are that the D-Ls felt insecure about sending their children to a nursery and/or were unable to afford the fees. As a way of family resource exchange, a few M-Ls receive financial support from their D-Ls/sons when they helped with childcare. Besides, the co-operation of childcare can be a means of embodying reciprocity in that the two generations share the burdens of raising a child and link the family finances. On the other hand, D-Ls can take advantage of M-Ls - especially those who provided childcare free of charge or were self-sacrificing in offering such a service. Those M-Ls who worked as cheap labour and expended a huge amount of energy and time in raising children were themselves exploited within this family system.

The D-Ls who have financial resources, material resources, and higher education/up-to-date knowledge can potentially exercise power over their M-Ls. As these M-Ls had suffered from colonialism, sexism, and being controlled by their own authoritative M-Ls, they had very few resources. They are the most vulnerable generation in this period of cultural change and so they felt threatened by their D-Ls and sought to safeguard their status within the family (see *2.2.3*). It is clear that alternative means should be provided to meet the needs of the D-Ls and elderly people because the issues of childcare and women's employment are not restricted to the private world but also feature in the public domain. Such issues are connected to the expectations regarding women's roles, gender equality in the workplace, and social policies relating to the care of children and elderly people. Disadvantaged elders may offer their labour/childcare service in exchange for the support of their adult child in meeting their daily needs. Therefore, independent organisations and civil society should undertake the responsibility of relieving the levels of such burdens through offering affordable, quality childcare or job opportunities while working for improving the wellbeing of women and children as well as elderly people.

As to the operation of domestic power between D-Ls and M-Ls, the personality of the M-L is a crucial element which often influences their relationship. Some D-Ls reported that they psychologically and/or physically suffered from interaction with their difficult M-Ls who were dominating, nagging, interfering, controlling, or childlike. Those M-Ls acted out destructive behaviours with a negative language pattern, in which they used verbal and nonverbal messages, or physical signs, to gain control over their D-Ls. Many D-Ls were distressed by their abusive M-Ls and became used to experiencing the operation of their M-Ls' authority. Keeping silence often appeared the best way to respond to some M-Ls. However, some D-Ls claimed that dialogue was a solution to reduce relational tensions and conflicts. Those D-Ls who sought to communicate with their M-Ls realised that keeping silence could make things worse when tensions or conflicts arose. Misunderstandings were often rectified through explaining their feelings to their M-Ls and expressing themselves through the way they behaved (Au 2009, p.268).

In other cases, some M-Ls failed to listen to their D-Ls, placed unrealistic expectations upon them, and required them to make unreasonable concessions. A few M-Ls manipulated relational networks through a third party, including other family members, relatives, or neighbours, to 'teach' their D-Ls how to be 'good'. In contrast, a few D-Ls had sought help from a third party, which sometimes deepened the relational gap with their M-Ls, reinforcing their antagonistic relationship. In addition, a small number of M-Ls presented inappropriate behaviour and competed with their D-Ls for the love of their sons. These M-Ls exercised power to cause distress to the D-Ls, who suffered from isolation, hopelessness, or depression. However, some of the participating women enjoyed autonomy and interconnectedness with their M-Ls. The interactions were filled with love, compassion, and reciprocity, and were characterised by mutual respect, affection, and healthy boundaries (Chuang 2004, 127). This relational pattern can be described as 'mutual intimacy/support' as suggested by Yeh et al. (Yeh, Chang, and Tsao 2012, 42). In addition, a few M-Ls stated that they had been wounded by the oppression and manipulation of their own M-Ls. They were determined to stop repeating the abusive relationships of previous generations. Therefore, these M-Ls offered household assistance or childcare on a regular basis and provided their D-Ls with the same benefits a daughter would have.

From my analysis of the information collected from the participating Taiwanese Christian D-Ls, it is apparent that androcentric and hierarchical power relations are continuously

being reinforced in intergenerational relationships. The notions of *xiao*, veneration of elderly people, cultural ideology, unrealistic expectations, and existing differences have impacted the wellbeing of both the D-Ls and the M-Ls. Those women who are under the pressure of such family power relations should be encouraged to confront the injustice. Christian beliefs are effective in providing support to assist the D-Ls in the face of such challenges. However, the existence of different religious traditions may cause tensions or conflicts. Religious interactions and influences will be examined in the next section.

6.1.4 Different religious practices and spiritual strength

The religious interactions between the Christian D-Ls and the non-Christian M-Ls ranged through a variety of attitudes from respect, tolerance to conflict. M-Ls who gained the appreciation of their Christian D-Ls were those who respected and accepted their D-Ls' religious practices. Within my research the participating D-Ls exhibited a high degree of loyalty to their faith regardless of the attitude of their M-Ls towards to their religious life. However, the D-Ls faced a dilemma when their M-Ls adopted pagan practices, albeit with good intentions, to show love to them or towards their children. My findings also indicate that these different religious practices were often a source of conflict. Such conflict was often generated by the practice of ancestor worship, traditional folk therapy, the eating of sacrificed food and when religious practices interfered with daily life routines.

What religion children should practise was one of the core issues that caused the Christian D-Ls and the non-Christian M-Ls to be antagonistic towards one another. The D-Ls tended to provide what they thought was the best religious education and therefore involved their children in church. However, the M-Ls were responsible for passing down the family shrine, tradition and rituals from one generation to the next. In other words, as the female head in the family, M-Ls sought to manage the family affairs in order to create a family bond, and maintain the family ties. They tended to keep a tight hold on the men who they could influence and expected their sons and grandsons to observe family duties in folk religion. Such restrictions also brought tensions and arguments in particular when D-Ls challenged the ancestor worship and the practice of religious rituals (Lo P.-C. 2004, 236).

Although different religious practices might cause relational tensions or conflicts, their Christian faith has helped some D-Ls to relieve their stress and pain and gain emancipation. Some Christian D-Ls sought to reduce relational tensions and conflicts and learned how to

keep the right balance of togetherness and separateness necessary for building good relationships (Au 2009, 265). Christian beliefs often became the most important support in sustaining the women in facing the challenges of D-L–M-L relationships and life difficulties. This spiritual strength not only helped them to gain wisdom and courage to accompany and assist their M-Ls but also provided them with hope and moved them towards life transformation. Some D-Ls found that spiritual strength sustained them in overcoming the threat of divorce, unexpected life storms and the heavy work of caring for their ill M-Ls in the wilderness of life. To be more specific, the D-Ls renewed their thoughts through prayer, worship, and self-reflection, which helped them to grow in emotional intelligence, self-awareness, and self-control and assisted them in adjusting their attitude toward their M-Ls so that they overcame many relational challenges. In addition, the D-Ls were also empowered by Bible reading, teachings, courses, and church groups - which all provided important resources to strengthen their lives.

This spiritual strength not only transformed the life of the D-Ls it also could improve intergenerational relationships. Other family members could also experience transformation in the pattern of family functioning. Christian beliefs empowered many participants to seek intergenerational transformation and move relationships from estrangement towards mutual intimacy/support. Some families embraced the notion of gender equality and learned to create a warm and communicative atmosphere in the gatherings of the in-law family (see *5.2.3*). Given the religious lives of the participating Christian D-Ls, they tended to show a disposition towards evangelism and seemed on a mission to display good conduct and act with love towards their M-Ls. Those women had a strong sense of calling to enact religious agency and attempted to convert their M-Ls as well as other family members (see *2.3.4* and *5.2.1*), in order to promote the transformation of the whole family. They emphasised the practical living out of faith to be a witness to Christ. Therefore, they were used to swallowing their anger and controlling their emotions. However, finding ways to balance selfcare with being a good D-L is an imperative for Christian women. It is important to relieve the negative emotions and accept the real self as well as rejecting the false image of 'godly perfect D-L'.

In sum, the relationship between Taiwanese Christian D-Ls and their non-Christian M-Ls is not simply a female–female relational task; the broader environment, including social structure and cultural aspects, should be taken into consideration. My study shows that the

D-Ls physically and psychologically struggled to live within the androcentric and hierarchical cultural context. Moreover, some of them fought to survive in the face of oppressive interactions with their M-Ls. Christian beliefs, however, effectively provided spiritual strength and empowered women to face such challenges. As to doing pastoral theology for the D-Ls, feminist theology with an egalitarian aim of eradicating unequal power relations and combating androcentrism and oppression provides an inclusive and dialectic approach for hope and emancipation, as I explained in *Chapter Two*.

This thesis has introduced significant issues in relation to the D-L－M-L relationship. I have focused upon outlining how important this relationship is for many women and its fundamental significance in so many aspects of daily life. I have sought to show how Christian women struggle with the demands of their culture and their religious beliefs. Although my concerns have been to understand the practical lived experience I also think that we need to develop more theological resources to think through the issues from the perspective of faith. We also need more practical theological work to develop an appropriate pastoral care for women in the Taiwanese context. This clearly requires more theological thinking and more pastoral thinking than I can possibly attempt here. The limitation of this study is that there is not the space to allow me to develop further analytical work necessary to meet such challenges. However, I can briefly point towards possible options and models that I think might be helpful in future thinking on the issues I have raised.

6.2   Reflections and Recommendations from a Feminist Perspective in Pastoral Care

The purpose of this end section is to present my reflections and the recommendations of the learning journey of the study. Although there are many other theological resources available, I believe that the challenge of Trinitarian love might be particularly useful when applied in praxis for the emancipation of women and the improvement of intergenerational relations.

6.2.1   My reflections on the journey of the research programme

It is worth indicating from the out-set that this research has been one of self-dialogue, self-discovery, and growth. As an obedient D-L born in a traditional Taiwanese family, I was

raised to be quiet and invisible — listening to authorities and elders, as well as upholding both the theological and cultural traditions of the community. This learning process has helped me to better understand what it means to be a D-L, future M-L, and practitioner in Taiwan. Unexpectedly, I found that the more data I examined, the more questions I would like to ask.

For instance, I would like to ask churches whether the traditional ideology of being a good D-L continuously prevails in the church. Generally, most participants have a negative self-image of being a Christian D-L. Many of them observed that there are very few teachings as regards D-L—M-L relationships and churches should give more appropriate teachings and theological principles to assist D-Ls in relating with their non-Christian M-Ls. Other questions to be considered may also include the following: can a balance be struck between religious lives and family lives, particularly for those whose family members are not Christians? Do churches support their female members who feel isolated and are challenged by their non-Christian M-Ls? Some women may be particularly challenged by the work of elderly care. It is worth noting that Taiwan already faces the challenge of rapid population aging. D-Ls are generally regarded as the primary caregivers of elders and children in Taiwanese families. The findings of this study may be beneficial to pastors, Christian families, sociologists, and politicians who are concerned about such intergenerational issues. Taking on the role of a pastor and theological teacher, I also ask myself such questions.

Undertaking the ethics approval process affects the design of this research. Thus, I made considerable and useful background checks before embarking on the focus group discussions. The ethics application process helped avoid potential problems and ensured the efficiency of the research design. As I followed the Glasgow University protocols to conduct this study, I learned how important it is to consider the effects and consequences on the participants involved. I gained deeper understanding of the skills needed to run focus group discussions and how to protect the participating D-Ls, in guarding against predictably harmful effects to the utmost.

In retrospect, there are three aspects of the ethical conduct of the research which I would do differently. Firstly, I would interact more with the participants in the focus group discussions. For instance, some of the women indicated that they wanted to listen to my

story at the end of the day. I would leave some time to share my story and what I have learnt from the research project, especially in relation to certain challenges of the androcentric culture and the distorted D-L's image. Such stories will considerably assist those who are struggling with the traditional ideology and androcentric Christian doctrine. Nonetheless, some of these issues will still be highlighted in the result (of this study) to be sent to the relevant participants. I will also provide some useful resources to help those needing individual support.

Secondly, I would add one more question in the feedback form asking if the participants need independent support or further assistance. Some participants cried as they shared their sadness and pain in the focus group discussions. May and I, as well as other participating women provided immediate comfort, showed empathy, and prayed with them at the end of the discussions. I identified some D-Ls who may need additional support. Therefore, I invited some friends who attended the same focus group meeting to work with these participants. However, some D-Ls did not have a follow-up person nominated and I was uncertain whether such D-Ls already acquired the support of their churches or were aware of their own needs. Looking back I should have given women the opportunity to name their support needs themselves. This would reveal their specific needs and would have enabled me to maintain some contact with those who require support or contact the pastors or other counsellors if required. The wounded D-Ls would benefit from the sustaining process offered by those who closely give pastoral counsel and support.

Thirdly, I may organise a focus group or interview some Christian D-Ls who do not regularly go to church. Although this group of women may be difficult to recruit, their experiences can prove valuable in gaining more understanding about Christian D-Ls unable to attend church services. Their life stories may be different from those of the participating women who are mostly active members of the church or act in some other capacities in church circles.

This research offers a sketch of intergenerational interactions between Christian D-Ls and their non-Christian M-Ls. I employed the focus group method to conduct this research. This way, further studies can build on the relevant findings or may utilise other methods to explore such issues more in detail. It not only opens up a new opportunity from a Christian feminist perspective to look at the intergenerational relationships, but also provides

important evidence related to elderly care. The results provide useful information to improve D-L—M-L relationships as well as family wellbeing. However, the small sample size of the participants prevents me from generalising women's experience. More studies need to be carried out in this area, including quantitative ones. Furthermore, the life stories of Christian/non-Christian M-Ls potentially demonstrate different results of M-L—D-L relationships, which are based on M-Ls' perspectives and their unique experiences. The findings collected from the two opposite parties will provide a fuller picture for understanding the relationships between M-Ls and their Christian D-Ls. Finally, husbands play crucial roles in such relationships. I suggest that research undertaken from the husbands' perspective will be beneficial.

In this work, the androcentric and hierarchical family culture, the practice of *xiao* and veneration of elders, as well as unequal power structures have been identified as potential harmful elements to D-Ls and family relations. As a D-L, I spontaneously accepted the traditional ideology and followed such cultural traditions without asking questions or perceiving the inappropriateness of such practice. Although I initially felt dampened by such oppressive structures and was angry at exercising these cultural practices, I was rather overcome by endurance and more submissiveness. Through this work, I began to reflect on and examine my role as a professional pastor or practical theologian. I have paid more attention to finding my own voice, and kept aware of the power relations between me and my care receivers, in avoidance of reinforcing the oppressive power to those who seek for help. This journey opens up a feminist perspective which observes gender and examines the family structure, as it relates to power. This discovery offers new insights and increases my awareness of power relations. It also motivates me to develop teaching on this topic as I begin my work as a seminary lecturer.

This study was embarked upon not only to answer the relevant research questions, but also to assist ministers facing theological and pastoral challenges. According to the work of Lawler and Risch, 'scholars of marriage and family are concerned about the long-term negative effects of expressive individualism on families and nation' in the US (Lawler and Risch 1999, 11). I do believe that much emphasis on individualism in families and churches potentially manifests as selfish acts which concern one's self benefits, rather than other family members. While practicing *xiao* and respecting elders present loving actions which are very close to the core values of Christianity, how to keep a fine line between

individualism and familism (both respecting individual and loving family members) without bearing the structured stress remains a question.

Through the research process, I find it imperative to provide a theological model which can be used to cope with the androcentric cultural traits and the inadequate hierarchal structure among Taiwanese cultures. In this regard, the doctrine of the Trinity can be a pertinent resource to modify the authoritarian hierarchical family structure, because it presents the dynamic presence of God as love in relationships. In the next section, I will explain how the feminist interpretation provides Triune theology with new models of equal loving human relations which can be applied in the pastoral care of women and specifically within the D-L－M-L relationship. I recognize that this mode of theological thinking is only one of many possible ways of mobilizing theological resources in response to the pastoral concerns raised in this thesis. It is presented here as a case study which illustrates the important relation between pastoral care and renewed theological thinking.

6.2.2 The grounding of practice within the Taiwanese context

One major resource through which Christians reflect upon relationships is through the model of the Trinity which demonstrates the relational nature of God's own self. I propose Trinitarian theology as a helpful model to apply to the concerns of this thesis because it offers an image of equal loving relationship and this can help to challenge the hierarchical family structure which causes so many problems between D-Ls and their M-Ls. In thinking about the Trinity I employ a feminist perspective as a pertinent resource for women and pastors as an appropriate model in dealing with androcentric culture and its power mechanism.

Augustine claims, 'The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God: and yet He is not the Father who is the Son, nor He the Son who is the Father, and the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the Father and the Son, is neither the Father nor the Son; the Trinity is one God'.[1] In Trinitarian love, the difference of the three divine Persons is at the core of their intimate relationships; the Divine is distinct in relationships but united as one God (Rogers 1999, 198). The perichoretic unity of the Triune God is connected in communion, in

---

[1]   'Person' is understood as a complete individual being from the Latin concept. Augustine argued that the three Persons were differentiated by their relations (St. Augustine 2007, 222).

relationships.[2] This emphasis on non-hierarchical inter-relationships has social implications and can offer an alternative model of family relations (Gonzalez 2007, 156). The nature of the family, if modeled on the triune community, would be one of equal persons involved in loving relationships and deeply sharing their lives. The reciprocity of family life calls them to live in harmony and to provide mutual support to one another, although each individual still remains a distinct person.

Although the Trinity embodies reciprocal and equal relations we cannot ignore that traditionaly the doctrine has had an androcentric bias. Therefore, I suggest that we re-interpret the Trinitarian relations through the lens of feminist theology, which can help us avoid such androcentric bias and takes women's experience into consideration enabling us to construct a gender-equal framework. In the next section, I will explain the Trinity from the perspective of feminist interpretation.

6.2.3 Feminist interpretation of the Trinity

The Trinity is a fundamental doctrine of Christian theology.[3] Although not explicitly set out in the Bible the doctrine is a systematisation of content found in the Scripture. The language of the Bible describes God as Father, God as Son, and God as Holy Spirit; language that suggests the Trinitarian nature of God. The unity of God is manifest within the triune community who are all fully God, equal to each other, and yet differently related. In other words, the three Persons as a community are formed of the same essence or substance, but their roles make their relations distinct. The Father is the creator, the Son is the saviour, and the Holy Spirit is the sustainer (Minister 2014, 35–36). These different roles of the Three within the Godhead have been described the 'economic Trinity'.[4] The three Persons relate to each other and also play roles in God's salvation of the world (Sanders 2007, 35–36). God's saving work has manifested the divine love to humans through the actions of the triune God – in creation, in the suffering of the Son and through the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Bishop 2013, 539–40).

---

[2]   Hannah Bacon helpfully adopts Gregory of Nazianzus' Trinitarian thought to reflect upon and express the perichoretic relations of the Divine (Bacon 2009, 64).

[3]   The doctrine of Trinity had been relatively ignored in the nineteenth century. Friedrich Schleiermacher regarded the doctrine as secondary while Karl Barth revived its significance in the first volume of *Church Dogmatics* (1932). For further discussion see Kilby (K. Kilby 2011, 519–20).

[4]   Karl Rahner uses the term 'economic Trinity' to refer to the relationships between the triune God and creation in salvation history (Rahner 1970, 21).

Feminist theologians (e.g., Hannah Bacon, Catherine LaCugna, Kathryn Tanner, Patricia Fox, and Karen Baker-Fletcher) criticise what they see as the hierarchy and androcentrity of the doctrine of the Trinity. They argue that the biblical language of Father-Son and the traditional masculine figure of God have shaped patriarchal notions of Divinity. These androcentric Trinitarian terms of 'Father' and 'Son' reinforce classical gendered images and serve to suggest that only men are created fully in the image of God (LaCugna 1989, 243–44). Besides, misunderstandings of the order of the three Persons and their relations within the Trinity have reinforced hierarchical assumptions that the Son and the Holy Spirit occupy the second and third order of importance, respectively. According to this critique Jesus in this model plays a subordinate role to the Father, and therefore occupies an unequal position in the Godhead (Tanner 2012, 372–73). This apparent ranking in the Divine is problematic in that it can allow a dominant party to cite relations in the Trinity to impose his priority on disadvantaged groups, including women or minority ethnic groups. Such a party can demand that they sacrifice themselves to fit into their problematically identified social roles assumed within some forms of Trinitarian thinking (Tanner 2012, 383). However, in interpretations of the Trinity constituted with equal relations,[5] God is not superior to the Christ or Holy Spirit, because the three Persons, united in one, enjoy a perfectly equal and mutual relationship, eternally co-existing through their perfect communion. Their diverse but equal images challenge phallocentric accounts of hierarchical difference; their mutual sharing through community provides a non-oppressive model of reciprocity; their mutual exchange offers a model that affirms equality between women and men.

Hannah Bacon agrees that the traditional androcentric notion of the triune God is problematic, but claims that we should think right with the Trinity (Bacon 2009, 5–7; Bacon 2012, 443). That is, we should acknowledge God is beyond human grasping and our limited theologies are insufficient to capture the triune God. Bacon's idea is that we have to undertake careful hermeneutical work in order to gain a better understanding of the Trinity for our own contexts. Bacon argues that 'thinking God as Trinity' does not reinforce androcentric values, but rather provides a theological support for women and an opportunity for them to speak about their own experience (Bacon 2009, 53). Women are constructed, and shape their identity, within particular cultural contexts and always in

---

[5]   According to Rahner's proposal of the Trinity, 'the "economic" Trinity is the "immanent" Trinity and the "immanent" Trinity is the "economic" Trinity' (Rahner 1970, 22). The 'immanent Trinity' indicates that God is not only the economic Trinity in relation to us but really is three-in-oneness.

relation to others. They have a much greater awareness of their dependence upon the living web of relationships than men who often appear to be more autonomous. Thus women's experience offers reliable knowledge about the self constituted through relationships. Bacon emphasizes the importance of women's experience and adopts Simone de Beauvoir's thinking to claim that women's bodies, 'the instrument of our grasp upon the world' are an epistemological location (Bacon 2009, 136). She borrows Luce Irigaray's understanding of woman and argues that by understanding the symbolic position women occupy in the social order, and employing this against the grain of culture, women can make conscious decisions to resist phallocentric tendencies.[6] Therefore, women's bodies should be recognised as not only biological bodies, but also as a positioned or located body within language and culture. Seeing the world from a women's deeply relational, embodied perspective offers new and valuable insights.

Bacon adopts women's experience, female body included, as her theological key and seeks a liberating praxis in order to offer the optimal way of understanding relationships within the Triune Divine (Bacon 2013, 322–24). As for women's bodies they may be identified with Christ's body. Jesus Christ occupied restricted flesh, was incarnated in a human body and embodied Himself in the world. He emphasises the importance of body in terms of His incarnation, an incarnation that becomes a particular but representative self-identification of God with humanity. Bacon suggests that although Jesus took a male body, He is beyond sex; all bodies participate in relations with the Triune God. Furthermore, Jesus through His bodily actions and interaction with others, liberates women and marginalised groups and provides an example of how a person should be in the world (Bacon 2009, 186).

Feminist theological interpretation gives rise to reflections on a traditionally androcentric doctrine and revisions the Trinity as a model of gender equality, non-hierarchy, and non-oppression. Such an interpretation of the Trinity manifests an equal and mutual loving

---

[6] Bacon analyses Simone de Beauvoir's work on the notion of women's bodies. The female body should be recognised for its reality and materiality, because these are essential elements of women's situations. Bacon critiques Beauvoir's theoretical apparatus for its omission of the bodily transcendence that is also part of women's situation. Beauvoir's theory, at the same time, also ignores the integrity of female subjectivity and the diverse positions between men and women. Unlike Beauvoir's rejection of women's positions, Luce Irigaray redirects positive otherness by women themselves that deconstructs male-dominated notions of being unto women in relations and its sameness and phallocentric logic, thereby allowing women to look at their selves, including their bodies, to establish their own subjectivity and be different. Irigaray places women's otherness at the heart of their subjectivity. However, Bacon critiques Irigaray's work in that it appears to establish sexual difference as the most fundamental difference. She has minimized the importance of other differences, such as class, race, and sexuality (Bacon 2009, 136–41).

relationship that is 'not restricted to a static model of Threeness but opens out to invite others into communion' (Bacon 2009, 189). However, Taiwanese Christian D-Ls live in a context in which their particular cultural and religious challenges must be taken into consideration when applying the Trinitarian theology into praxis. I will explain how Trinitarian love can be applied to Taiwanese family relations in the next section.

6.2.4 The application of Trinitarian love to the family relationships

According to the misunderstandings of relations within the Triune God that we have discussed in the previous section these may be seen as supporting hierarchy and androcentrism. Therefore, Marianne Katoppo makes the criticism that '[f]orcing people to relate to an all-male Trinity is oppression' and 'ridiculous' in the Asian context' (Fox 2011, 276). [7] Furthermore, Asian feminist theologians have not yet paid much attention to Trinitarian theology and have published little on the subject. Patricia Fox explains that this may be partly due to Asia's rich female divine inclusive languages and cultures. Or, it may be that it already presents practices and myths of Goddesses. Fox further suggests that the communal relationship embodied by the Trinitarian God are congruous with Asian women's cosmic spirituality (Fox 2011, 275–77).

Some Asian feminist theologians like Fox are seeking to re-interpret Trinitarian theology in Asian contexts. Heup Young Kim provides an alternative paradigm from an East Asian perspective and states that the religio-cultural traditions of Confucianism and Taoism are female inclusive. In correlative Chinese cosmology, *yin* and *yang* as the core concepts represent a Confucian ontology of relation, in which the two opposites are in a contrasting relationship but remain interconnected and interdependent. The dualities of *yin* and *yang* include female and male, mother and father, dark and light, earth and sky, moon and sun, etc. The complementary forces of *yin-yang* operate in the world in order to achieve balance and harmony (Ames 2003, 846–47). Kim presents an understanding of the *yin-yang* relationship that connects it to the theology of Trinity and suggests that the inclusion of feminine personhood and women can be empowered by this paradigm for doing feminist

---

[7]   A recent essay reveals gendered preferences in the use of God's images among theological students in the UK. The finding suggests, 'Women appear to prefer androgynous images as well as feminine images, while men prefer masculine images' (Cartledge 2009, 136). This finding also manifests different tendencies of spiritual life between women and men.

theology. [8] Whereas, another scholar Vivian-Lee Nyitray indicates that East Asian Confucian cultures still retain the idea of '*yang* yields to *yin*' – male authority and female obedience. She concludes that, although there is considerable improvement in women's status, 'the future is sure to be determined in large measure by contemporary Confucianism responses to conflicting demands for both the liberation and control of women' (Nyitray 2008, 66–67).

Asian women's theologies tend to emphasise the salvific, personal, and relational dimensions of a culture familiar with female gods that are less exhibited within Western theologies (Fox 2011, 275–76). As Farris indicates that 'the majority of the Chinese female deities were motherly figures, material mercy and protection being their main attraction' (Hsiung 2004, 37). Such feminine characters construct images of female divines, which relate to the needs of Asian women, who require hope, protection, and sustaining.

The Taiwanese context is very similar to that in the majority of Asian countries which possess a rich heritage of representations of women's divinity in religions, cultures and languages. However, this religious background of female goddesses seems unable to challenge unequal gender relations in society. The oppressive power, which my participants experienced, remains firmly based in cultural hierarchy, androcentrism and gendered ideology. Taiwanese people pursue family 'harmony', which is often built on the silencing of women, especially for D-Ls who need to sacrifice themselves and endure the control of domestic power in the in-law family.

Catherine LaCugna proposes a relational and interdependent model of Trinitarian theology, which emphasises 'living God's life with one another' and personhood in relations (LaCugna 1993, 411).[9] Similarly, John Zizioulas states that 'human personhood necessarily finds its fulfilment in relationship with God, and with one another' (Zizioulas and Zizioulas 2004, 58).This model requires an understanding of personhood that portrays human beings as existing in relational networks with both God and other people. It draws on the three Persons of the Triune God, who are different but equally interdependent acting in all God's works. This model can be applied to D-Ls, who need not lose their own selves

---

[8]   Heup Young Kim claims that understanding the relationship between yin and yang is the key to understanding the East Asian model of harmony (Kim 2011, 297).

[9]   Catherine LaCugna, unlike Barth and Rahner, refused to use the term, Persons, in relation to the triune God and re-interprets the Trinity of the Cappadocian Fathers with a model of relations and interdependence.

by entering into relationships, if one accepts the possibility of her being able to follow the Triune model at least to some extent. In living family webs, being-in-itself and being-with-one-another are not actually opposed. This model can assist D-Ls and M-Ls to develop non-oppressive equal relationships and help them to reach the summit of joy that lies in the most intimate love of one family member with another.

Perhaps predictably my sampling group did not give comments on the problems represented by hierarchical doctrines or the androcentric nature of Western theological discourse. However, embedded androcentric cultural notions and practice within the hierarchical family order threatened these women's wellbeing. Therefore, I make the case that employing a model drawn from Trinitarian relationships and love from a feminist perspective can contribute to Taiwanese women overcoming challenges posed by *xiao*, in-law relationships and restricted conceptions of motherhood. In doing so, ways can be found to bridge cultural and theological gaps to find ways to harmonious coexistence. I believe that the framework of Triune relations, in which the Three are distinguished but enjoy equal standing, can be a proper model of family relations for Taiwanese Christian women to imitate. This ideal model functions without kyriarchy and emphasises that the one with more power or talents should serve weaker members. It images reciprocal and loving relationship, not only for D-Ls and M-Ls but also for their husbands and sons.

Although the participating women did not focus upon doctrinal issues they had a deep awareness of God's saving work. They experienced Jesus as their saviour and saw the Church as a warming shelter in which they were empowered to seek emancipation. Those D-Ls relieved their pain and found strength from a Christian faith which transformed their life as well as their family relationships. The bodies of Taiwanese Christian D-Ls can be identified with the suffering of Jesus Christ, who understands their pain, emancipates them from oppressive power relations and provides hope to lead a life of transformation. Therefore, I can confidently claim that theologies which offer empathy, comfort, love, and hope can support vulnerable women in overcoming their difficulties and, moreover, inspire family transformation.

Pastors or caregivers can play a crucial role in such encounters. They may provide guidance and support to help women in the face of life's difficulties, oppressions or

challenges. The next section will provide a few, brief practical suggestions for those working on family relations and seeking to meet pastoral needs.

6.2.5 Feminist pastoral theology in the family relations

I not only propose a loving Triune relationship for family relations, but also suggest caregivers adopt this model to cultivate caring relationships which are female-friendly, dynamic and culturally appropriate. The two parties in a pastoral encounter can also characterise relationships of mutual love and sharing wisdom (Cooper-White 2004, 59–60). Such a non-hierarchical relationship should be sought to avoid unequal power operating as well as assisting those who are vulnerable to obtain support, as I have discussed in the section of *2.3.2*. Pastors should recognise the deep reality of culturally sustained power relations and not provide stereotyped, androcentric teachings to reinforce oppressive power on vulnerable women. In addition, pastors or ministers offering pre-marriage and marital courses or running family groups must provide teachings that can help D-Ls and couples to better their family relations.

When feminist pastoral theology meets Taiwanese culture this will inevitably create tensions between the Gospel and cultural context (see the section of *2.2.1*). As I have shown religious difference often causes some levels of relational strain. We need to encourage a more open dialogue in which both Christian D-Ls and their non-Christian M-Ls join in a shared process. From the findings of my participants, when silence is broken by dialogue there is opportunity for reconciliation. Both D-Ls and M-Ls must speak and listen - not only for clarifying misunderstanding but also for improving mutual understanding. In addition, speaking positively to each other is essential. And husbands and F-Ls can also play significant roles in this dialogue. Pastors can play a significant role in entering into creative dialogue with the women they serve and showing how such dialogue is an important part of Christian love.

My findings reveal that some D-Ls had alienated relationships with their M-Ls and tended to keep a safe distance and only fulfil their obligations. Other D-Ls treated their M-Ls with affection and empathy thus generating mutual love. A number of D-Ls took the initiative to be good to their M-Ls by the love of God no matter what the attitudes of their M-Ls were and such actions often transferred positively to their relationship. This finding indicates

that the capacity of D-Ls to show loving care toward their M-L is correlated with the quality of D-L–M-L relationships and vice versa.

This study examined the lived experience of Christian D-Ls with their non-Christian M-Ls in contemporary Taiwan. It is the first such study of a very neglected but significant field. I hope my investigations will not only disclose the women's hidden relational interactions but also provide a potential base for an emerging feminist pastoral theology. This new Taiwanese feminist pastoral theology will be constructed in the hope of assisting Christian women in their relationships with their M-Ls and provide a useful resource for pastors in giving care. However my work also embodies a deeper longing. I also hope that this thesis can contribute to Asian women's theology and the liberating empowerment of Chinese women in the future.

Appendix

Appendix 1: Description of the Participants

41 participants

Characteristic	Daughter-in-law / N=41	Mother-in-law / N=41
Age		
≤29	2.43%, 1	-
30-34	21.95%, 9	-
35-39	7.32%, 3	-
40-44	21.95, 9	-
45-49	12.2%, 5	-
50-54	7.32%, 3	-
55-59	19.51, 8	12.2%, 5
60-69	4.88%, 2	34.15%, 14
70-79	-	26.83, 11
80+	-	19.51%, 8
Non-recorded	2.43%, 1	7.32%, 3
Ethnics		
Holo	60.98%, 25	
Mainlander	21.95, 9	
Hakka	9.76%, 4	
Mainlander & Hakka Mixed	2.43%, 1	
Indigenous	2.43%, 1	
Indigenous & Holo Mixed	2.43%, 1	
Non-recorded		
Education		
None	-	34.15%, 14
Primary School	7.32%, 3	43.90%, 18
Secondary School	7.32%, 3	4.88%, 2
High School	26.83, 11	12.2%, 5
Associate's or college degree	48.78%, 20	2.43%, 1
Master's degree	9.76%, 4	-
Non-recorded		2.43%, 1
Vocation		
Housewife	39.02%, 16	-
Part-time job working outside	14.63%, 6	-
Full-time job working outside	39.02%, 16	-
Student	2.43%, 1	-
Retire	4.88%, 2	-
Children's age groups		
0 or pregnant	7.32%, 3	-
Toddler	31.71%, 13	-
Primary school	9.76%, 4	-
Secondary	4.88%, 2	-
Secondary to Adult	17.07%, 7	-
Adult	29.27%, 12	-
Husband's Religion		**Religion**
Christian	70.73%, 29	21.95%, 9
Buddhism	4.88%, 2	2.43%, 1
Taoism & Folk religions	7.32%, 3	56.1%, 23
Atheist	12.2%, 5	9.76%, 4
Non-record	4.88%, 2	-

Appendix 2: The Traits and the Abstracts of the Focus Group Discussions

The relevant data were collected from focus group discussions involving Daughters-in-law (D-Ls) who had shared their unique life experiences. The planned questions were discussed and the themes emerged when a woman shared her story. I provide the traits of every focus group and abstracts of conversations from 41 participants in five different venues, including Longtan, Taipei, Taichung, Tainan, and Hualien. I will use a brief narrative to describe the emerged events and the important themes in this section.

Focus Group in Longtan

Most D-Ls in the focus group of Longtan noticed the barriers of distinct lifestyle, values and different languages between Holo people, Hakka people, and the Mainlanders. Different values, languages and behaviours of these ethnic groups affected the interactions and relationships with their M-Ls. To be clearer, different thinking, interests and behavioural orientations created unique and distinct lifestyles between the D-Ls and the Mothers-in-law (M-Ls); such differences have greatly affected their interactions and relationships.

Some D-Ls, early in the marriage, were stressed by being a 'little fearful silenced D-L'. Gao and Yen often felt hurt and isolated from their family in-law. They lost their autonomy and self-esteem at times when they stayed with their M-Ls. Besides, the majority of the D-Ls experienced tension or conflicts, particularly by co-residing or staying with their M-Ls. They had arguments over different lifestyles. For example, Jade's M-L could not understand her late sleeping patterns due to her work, as she was used to going to bed early and waking up very early. However, geographic distance reduced their conflicts, long term interactions helped to improve their mutual understanding and intergenerational relationships. As Jade described, 'since we stopped living together and saw each other more rarely, the arguments have decreased ever since.' Although these D-Ls lived some distance apart from their M-Ls, they took the initiative to keep in frequent contact with them.

The personality of the M-Ls greatly influenced D-L—M-L relationships. Many D-Ls said that their M-Ls were somewhat intrusive and lacked boundaries. Moreover, their M-Ls had

difficulties controlling their emotions which brought great pressure to those around them. Gao, Yen and Jade all expressed that they were uncomfortable with the nagging negative behaviour of their M-Ls. Even though they were opposed to the conduct of their M-Ls, they did not fight back and usually kept silent. Some D-Ls had arguments about how to care for children with their M-Ls. Moreover, some M-Ls had a male preference for children. Yen addressed that she was not only under the stress of having a child after marriage, but also pressured to give birth to a son after the birth of her baby girl. The relationships between Vivian and her M-L were different from other participants. Although she had developed a very intimate relationship with her M-L, even closer than with her own mother, everything changed since having a baby. Vivian's M-L interfered and often judged her childcare methods. As a result, Vivian adjusted her attitude and kept a distance from her M-L. However, she appreciated the childcare collectively provided by her parents-in-law when she was ill, and that kin-altruistic action improved their intergenerational relationships.

Some D-Ls described that they had a 'mother-daughter' relationship with their M-Ls, but not as close as their own mothers. Others manifested a cold relationship or kept a relational distance from their M-Ls. What did these D-Ls think was expected of a woman in order to be considered a 'good D-L'? Many D-Ls explained that to be a good D-L it meant to take good care of their husband and children, and allow them to spend time together with the in-law family. They expressed it was important to obey and honour your M-L, and speak loving language to encourage your M-L. Some D-Ls described that a 'good D-L' should fulfil the requirements of her M-L and be more proactive than her husband was in taking care of her M-L. Moreover, Jade and Gao took over the responsibility of *xiao* on their parents-in-law for the sake of their husbands. The two D-Ls expressed that they were glad to do so, 'My children have watched how I practice *xiao* on my parent-in-law and I can become an example'.

The husbands' filial behaviours constituted a challenge to the marriage; they seemed to destroy the relationships between his wife and mother in this focus group. Some D-Ls reported that she was blamed by her husband for not fully integrating into his family of origin, which he loved very much. Moreover, some husbands required their wife to obey his mother, and performed the 'obedience obligation' towards him in front of his parents. Yen shared about her painful experience that she often was hurt by her husband who

obeyed his mother and never really sided with her whenever disagreements ensued between her and her M-L. 'I feel sad and isolated', said Yen. The behaviour of her husband aggravates the tension between Yen and her M-L. However, ultimately the collaboration between D-L and M-L not only improved their relationship, but also promoted the solidarity between the two women to overcome the family crisis. Jade shared about her special experience, which she had suffered from her husband's betrayal, but her M-L stood by her side to condemn her son. She appreciated her M-L who provided encouragement and emotional support to sustain her through the storms.

The majority of the participants converted to Christianity after many years of marriage. Although different religious views have caused some conflicts and tension that distressed the D-Ls at times, Jesus Christ has changed their lives and attitude towards their families. Many participants claimed that Christian faith informed their attitude to seek peace with their M-L and assisted them to overcome marital risks. 'I would probably be divorced if I was not a Christian. Now, I'm trying to love my M-L', Yen said. Gao began to understand how her parents-in-law express their love, therefore, she began to enjoy a better relationship with her M-L after her conversion to Christianity. Besides, the majority of the D-Ls emphasised the biblical teachings of love and forgiveness which has helped confront the challenges of intergenerational relationships. Some D-Ls said that the best way to take such challenges is to behave according to the Word from Matthew 24:13, 'But the one who endures to the end will be saved'. Such experiences, life transformation, and a strong evangelical intention led the D-Ls to aim for baptising their M-Ls, as well as other family members.

Gao and Jade who had 20-year interactions with their M-Ls divided their intergenerational relationships into three stages: a) the high friction stage; 2) the stage of mutual understanding; and 3) the matured stage. This showed that they gradually developed their understanding towards to a closer relationship. D-Ls and M-Ls experienced that inappropriate expectations between them could have destroyed their relationships, while, loving actions and serving the needs of each other solidified their intergenerational relationships.

One issue that should be noticed and particularly raised in this group is that women took greater power within their nuclear family. Joy, Gao, and Jade possess the control of the

family, but they should follow their M-Ls in the extend family. Moreover, Vivian's mother took control as well, but her power distorted the images of her husband, which provided a negative sample of family relations to Vivian. However, Vivian received the teachings of gender equality when she was converted. She realised the problem of female oppressive power and sought to establish a healthy family with her husband in Christ. In addition, Joy and Gao never required their husbands to go to church with them, and this caused relational tensions between them and their husbands.

Focus Group in Taipei

The focus group discussions that took place in Taipei highlighted the intergenerational issues of distinct lifestyles and values caused by the wide gap in educational backgrounds, caring for an infirm or ill M-L, childcare, and the pressure of the filial D-L ideology. In particular, there were two female pastors who were also married to pastors. This led to discussions from a religious perspective of being an example or model within the in-law family, as well as the stress originating from the Christian faith.

This focus group involved the most highly educated D-L participants. One D-L had graduated from high school, whilst the others had Bachelor's or Master's degrees. On the other hand, 50% of the M-Ls had not received any education, 25% had finished primary school and 25% had completed secondary school. Given that education can shape one's knowledge, values, skills, and habits, the wide educational gaps between the D-Ls and M-Ls caused relational tensions in their interactions. Fei's experience epitomized that of some of the other participants, when she said, 'the biggest difference between my M-L and I is that she is uneducated and I have been awarded a bachelor's degree, although she is only 19 years older than me'. Fei has three children and co-resides with her parents-in-law since her husband received a doctorate from the US and came back to Taiwan. 'We are totally different in personal behaviours and lifestyles, and this easily generates tension in our everyday lives.' Fei was not alone in this struggle; many other participants also faced these challenges.

Many participants had lived with their M-Ls or parents-in-law, and issues associated with co-residence recurred throughout the discussions. Some of them were under great pressure in living with their M-Ls and found it challenging to adapt to the family-in-law. They described how they were likely to be a 'little, fearful, silent D-L', especially early in the marriage. In Fei's words, 'I had a tensed and conflicting relationship with my M-L during the first 10-years of co-residing with her'. However, some women, such as Melody, Gale, and Juan, moved on to establish their own nuclear families and the geographical distance reduced the tensions and conflicts with their M-Ls. In addition, they still retained close contact with their M-Ls, despite no longer co-habiting with their parents-in-law.

Some participants claimed that their M-Ls were good to them and treated them like their own daughters. These M-Ls unconditionally provided childcare, respected their Christian religion, and joined in house chores. Other D-Ls said, 'my M-L does not set high expectations or requirements for me'. They respected and were open with each other. Some D-Ls used 'caregiver and care-receiver' to describe their roles and interactions, whist others had a sense of isolation, because their parents-in-law spoke a language which they did not speak whenever they did not want them to understand a conversation.

Most D-Ls stated that they were *not* good D-Ls for different reasons. Many participants indicated that 'I cannot completely submit myself to my M-L, because I have my own opinions and perspectives which are often against hers', or 'I have failed to speak "sweet words" to please my M-L; however, I am used to taking actions to show my love to her'. Some M-Ls were very domestic and skilled in cooking and housework, while their co-resided D-Ls were busy at work and had a sense of guilt for not taking on the responsibility of house chores. A few women thought that because they were unable to co-reside with their M-Ls and serve them they were unfilial. In sum, they considered a 'good D-L' should appropriately take care of her husband and children, be submissive in every way, and spend more time with their M-Ls.

Most participants expressed that they were unlikely to follow received teachings relating to the roles of a D-L, but they knew well the story of Ruth and Naomi in the Book of Ruth, which came as the best example of a D-L—M-L relationship. As Melody said, 'my church has never talked about D-L and M-L relationships, but I had known Ruth and received "love each other" as the biblical principle to treat my M-L'. Some D-Ls addressed the issue of *submission*, 'I have received the biblical teachings about wives' submission to their husbands. Therefore, I listen to my husband and serve my M-L'. Submission entails a deep reverence to God; therefore these women can understand how to be a filial D-L under His guidance.

Caring for infirm or ill M-Ls was a significant thread throughout the discussions, in terms of how some D-Ls were struggling in the face of this challenge. Two contributing factors for this theme were the inspiration of Ying's life story and the

awareness of future elderly care. Ying gave up her job to serve her paralysed M-L for seven years. She had to provide 24-hour support to her, while also taking on the duties of childcare and household chores. Moreover, she had to fight with her M-L and was distressed by her unreasonable demands that created such a heavy burden she almost burnt out. 'I often sang 'Give Me Oil in My Lamp', and then I could get strength from God. Christian beliefs and the church members supported me in facing the adversity and the challenges.' The M-L was eventually baptised by Ying. Melody also told a story about caring for an ill parent-in-law who had dementia and had lived with her brother-in-law in recent years. They employed two caregivers to offer 24-hour assistance and Melody was able to have more time for herself. Her story suggested the employment of caregivers as an alternative to reduce the burden of care. These two life stories raised a conversation about care for the elderly, the influence of loving actions, and the value of sacrifice.

Melody spoke further about her own experience. As the only Christian within the in-law's family, Melody decided to be a positive example, and that has driven her in the direction of cultivating self-sacrifice and selflessness in caring for the family. She conceived that a godly woman should surrender to God's will and sacrifice herself, by taking up her cross to follow Jesus Christ; however, this stereotype distressed her. Being a lifelong Christian (and 20 years of being a Christian D-L), she often struggles with feelings of condemnation and accusation concerning her failure to be a good D-L. Moreover, she assumed that one of her crosses or duties in religious life was to persuade her M-L to be baptised. However, her M-L remained an unbeliever and Melody blamed the unfulfilled mission on her own failings.
'I attempt to be good and hope that my loving behaviour can touch her heart in order to evangelise her; however, I should be more submissive, talk less and do more…in my role as a D-L, I am still unqualified', said Melody. Although her parents-in-law are very ill, they remember her acts of kindness. This recognition encourages Melody, who feels worthy for her effort in caring for her parents-in-law. 'I'm happy I can be a good model for my children', she concluded.

One noteworthy theme is that the two female pastors both indicated that they should suppress their desire to play the role of a pastor at any time as well as being an example of a good D-L; however, this really hurt. Their experience, along with

Melody's story, inspired a conversation about the religious burdens of a godly woman or member of the clergy whose position is undermined by family obligations.

Most D-Ls seek to be good examples that can influence their M-Ls to be baptised in terms of the Great Commission, which instructs us to baptise our family. Some M-Ls of the participants have turned to Christ through the influence of their D-Ls. Christian faith became a resource that provides support and strength for the D-Ls in the face of intergenerational relationships and life challenges. Fei and Ying said, 'But for Christ and my Christian faith, I could not remain in this marriage and co-reside with my M-L'. However, religious loyalty became a source of tension which raised relational difficulties between some of the D-Ls and M-Ls. Melody and Ying's M-Ls, who did not convert to Christ, had always told them, 'you would be perfect, if you were not a Christian', deriding their neglect of ancestral worship and practice of folk religion.

Childcare was another important issue highlighted in the conversation, as a challenging task that most highlighted the intergenerational differences in values and actions between the D-Ls and the M-Ls. Those D-Ls who had children usually needed childcare assistance from their M-Ls/parents-in-law/parents in order to strike a work-life balance. Fei stated, 'I could not trust someone from outside to look after my young children, but my M-L refused to take over this caring work. For many years, I had a deep resentment against her for refusing to care for her grandchildren. Although I really wanted to seek employment to improve our bad financial situation, I could only stay at home to be a housewife.' Gale's M-L often told her that she would like to offer childcare for her, until Gale gave birth to her daughter only to find her M-L now withdrew this offer. In addition, Gale felt disrespected when her M-L sometimes arrived at her house without warning when she wanted to see her grandchild. Lu described how her M-L favoured one of her three grandchildren over the others and how this behaviour was hurtful.

Different religious perspectives or activities in caring for children considerably complicated matters and caused conflicts and tension that often distressed the D-Ls. On the religious aspect, the more common incidents relate to the practice of folk religion and eating foods offered for sacrifice, which negates the Christian faith. Most M-Ls were accustomed to adopting traditional folk therapy to comfort children with

blessings or help them to stop crying at midnight. This practice often resulted in dilemmas for the D-Ls. While they appreciated the good intentions of their M-Ls, they rejected the practice, which is contrary to the Christian faith. How to receive their love while carefully rejecting their religious practice became very challenging.

Although the D-Ls in this focus group had received higher levels of education than the previous generation, their family structure tended to be male-centred. Their F-Ls or husbands had the authority to make decisions and husbands also played crucial roles in the relationships between their wives and mothers. For example, Fei's husband often wisely bridged the gap and eased the relational tensions between the two parties. For Ying, Juan and Gale, in contrast to Fei's experience, their husbands sometimes widened the gap in the D-L—M-L relationships. As Juan described, 'I could not find help from my husband in solving the tensions/conflicts with my M-L, because he will quarrel with my M-L'. Lee spoke of her different experience, 'My husband has a bad relationship with my parents-in-law. I became a bridge between them, because they really like me.' A filial son potentially prioritised the needs of his parent over his wife. Lu said, 'my husband is filial. He offers financial gifts to my M-L, although we are a low income family, lacking sufficient funds to maintain a decent standard of living and nurture three kids.' Melody recalled her painful experience early in her marriage and said,

> 'My husband came home very late and always spent much time with his parents to catch up in the living room after work. As a young full-time mother, I felt hopeless that I nursed a baby and had to keep waiting for my husband. He was available to me only after 23:00 and his routine began in early morning.'

Focus Group in Taichung

The discussions which took place in Taichung accommodated a larger number of younger D-Ls, with 50% of the women in their 30s. They represented a typical urban woman; almost all had jobs and were characterised by independence and autonomy. A three-generation group attended this focus group together: a daughter with two toddlers, and her mother, who often provides child care to support her daughter. I could see that the daughter and mother have a very close bond as well as practising reciprocal altruism. One particularly noteworthy point to report, some participants told me that they tried to invite their friends to attend this event, however, they were all busy at church or family activities. Three husbands of the participants came to collect their wives to attend their in-law family gatherings at the end of this sharing event. They all reflected that some Christian women were actively involved in church programmes or family activities at the weekend.

One particular issue raised in this focus group was that two women shared their experiences of life transformation from the traditional submissive D-L to having more equal relationships with their M-Ls. Heidi and Lien both tried to be submissive and meet the expectations of their M-Ls in the first few years of their marriage. However, they found it hugely stressful and realised they would never achieve this goal. Reflecting on the relationship with her M-L renewed Heidi's effort to be a good D-L. Heidi found that she should be wise in dealing with her M-L rather than being subservient. She recognised that she had to obtain autonomy and an equal relationship with her M-L to achieve mutual wellbeing.

Some D-L expressed that they made efforts to be the best possible D-L, that was, one who practicing *xaio*, nurtured children, served her husband, and treated her family-in-law with love and kindness. Honour your D-L is expected by some M-Ls. Kuok and her husband were often asked by her M-L to attend special events that required dressing up and looking good in front of others to honour her. She arranged visits or activities studiously with her M-L in order to satisfy her expectations. Many D-Ls were expected to be obedient to be a good D-L; however, some participants confessed that they were not as submissive as their own mothers. They thought that obedience combined with wisdom — identifying what their M-Ls asked them to do — was more important. The participants emphasised the obedience of Ruth to Naomi, which demonstrated a scriptural pattern of a good D-L they

could learn from. The most significant highlight in their relationship was that they showed mutual respect and support for each other. Many D-Ls pointed out that the element of sincere mutual love, which includes respect and proper treatment, was important in the interactions between D-Ls and M-Ls. God commanded us to love our neighbours or M-L as ourselves; therefore, Christian D-Ls should not only hold firmly to their beliefs but be compassionate to their M-Ls. Although the M-Ls could initially have negative attitudes toward the Christian faith of their D-Ls, with time, they would gradually accept and respect their faith. The change had to begin with the D-L, who should take more proactive steps to love her M-L.

June confessed that she tried to be nice to her future M-L in order to make a good impression. Such loving actions laid a strong foundation for their relationship before the wedding. Although, she had a mother-daughter relationship with her M-L, she felt like a foreigner, particularly in lifestyle, within the in-law family. Some participants also borrowed the image of mother-daughter to describe their relationships; others used friendship or mutual respect to portray their interactions. Lien used the cha-cha dance to describe the interactions with her M-L. They stepped on toes at the beginning of the dance, but gradually understood how to avoid hurting each other and improve their dancing.

Given that some M-Ls did not respect the Christian faith of their D-Ls, religious loyalty became a source of tension that raised relational difficulties. For example, Heidi refused to practice folk religions and her M-L was very angry with her Christian belief. Heidi proclaimed her own faith and said, 'I refused to do anything against my faith and did not care about their reactions'. Zeng mentioned her religious experience when her M-L asked her to join her husband in offering ancestral sacrifices the day after her wedding. For the sake of being a filial, submissive D-L, Zeng went together with her husband, but did not burn incense. Later on, she was criticised for distancing herself from religious practices at family gatherings. However, following a religious dialogue, Zeng's M-L finally accepted her Christian beliefs, as well as an alternative (provided by Zeng) to burning incense in the temple to remember ancestors.

Some husbands supported the religious life of their wives to replace the duties of traditional religions, even though they were not Christian. For example, Lien's husband performed all the Chinese wedding rituals, instead of her, as well as the religious practices.

165

Hence, Lien was not required to do anything against her Christian beliefs. When some relatives criticised Lien's absence from family religious activities, her husband would defend her. Lien's M-L eventually respected her beliefs and stopped asking her to engage in ancestor worship.

Different religious views on childcare obligations considerably complicated matters and caused conflicts and tension that distressed the D-Ls at times. Many M-Ls are accustomed to adopting traditional folk therapy to comfort their grandchildren. They also shared sacrificed food, which symbolises blessing from the gods, as one of their loving actions with their children and grandchildren. Such practices easily create relational tensions given the different religious orientations.

Frequent visits by M-Ls could cause time pressures for the D-Ls. For example, Hsu's parent-in-law regularly visited and stayed with them every weekend. Therefore, Hsu had to plan family activities and set aside time and space for grandma-grandkids 'intimate' gatherings for the reunions. Although they were warm and kind, Hsu felt her parents-in-law interfered with her nuclear family. She was particularly unhappy as she had little time for her husband and children after childbirth. In addition, some D-Ls shared stories about their difficult M-Ls. Heidi and Amy's M-Ls were chronic complainers, nagging, critical women and self-absorbed people. They often kept quiet in reaction to criticisms from their M-Ls.

As the power relations of D-L—M-L, Kuok perceived that her sister-in-law, who often exercised some religious practices in the name of *xiao* for her M-L, practiced power between the three parties. Kuok's M-L was close to and listened to her elder D-L, because she was skilled at exercising folk religious practices, which believed by the M-L and could bring good fortune and blessings to the family. However, Kuok, as a Christian, was unable to show the same form of affection. Therefore, the M-L felt less satisfied with Kuok's filial actions in comparison to her elder D-L. The elder D-L employed religious practices to show her superiority over Kuok. Such religious differences informed the quality of the relations with the M-L. Some D-Ls noticed that they had similar experiences with Kuok, who perceived herself as an outsider to the in-law's family. Another event, the extra marital affair of Kuok's husband, severely impacted the relationships between Kuok and her M-L. Kuok's M-L believed that Kuok spent too much time on work and church

activities which led her son to have extramarital relations. She was angry and blamed Kuok for ignoring her advice beforehand. Such accusation and rejection from the M-L increased the pain and reinforced the pressure on Kuok. Although Kuok forgave her husband and her husband finally came back to her, the M-L remained angry for some time.

Many D-Ls addressed that there was a great difference between her M-L and her own mother. For example, Zeng could not directly point out the mistakes of her M-L, as she could with her own mother. She said to her husband, 'I will be honest with my mother and let her know what is bad for her and encourage her to give up the bad habits, but I cannot do the same to your mother'. However, some husbands demanded their wives to treat their mothers like their own. This has raised tensions and conflicts and has become a barrier between the three parties. Hsu's husband could not accept her feelings of being an outsider in the family. He reproached Hsu and said, 'My mother treats you like her own daughter, why do you always have to feel like an outsider'. Hsu explained that in-law relationship was very different from that of mother-daughter relationships. She spoke of her experience with her M-L, 'I will be prudent and cannot relax….I simply cannot'. Generally, the quality of the intergenerational relationships influenced the relations between the couples.

Focus Group in Tainan

The focus group discussions in Tainan manifested with distinct two groups and two generations. The group of six-sevenths elder women were both the roles of D-Ls and M-Ls and only attended the discussions in the morning. They played a role in religious agency, attending many religious activities actively, and left to receive training in the afternoon. The younger generation of women seemed more shy and quiet in the morning, although the mediator strongly encouraged them to speak. Most stories of the older generation show a more traditional ideology of a D-L, who was submissive and under pressure or long-suffering. A young woman told me that she was astonished to hear such stories from the older generations.

However, I went through the discussions again in the afternoon, after the seven elder women had left and one new participant had arrived. When the younger generation members were asked why they talked less in the morning sessions, only one participant, Fang, said, 'just to leave more opportunity for those elder women to share their stories'. I observed that these elder women were just about the same age of the M-Ls of the younger D-Ls, who might naturally keep silence in front of them or feel a sense of stress, which influenced their unwillingness to speak, especially as they were the minority. These women were all Presbyterians from several churches except one. The feature of this group is that some participants were farm children or married into peasant families. Many women noticed the different lifestyles and customs.

Many D-Ls live with their M-Ls. Caring for infirm parents/parents-in-law is one of the main reasons why couples increasingly prefer joint households. Purdie said that she will come back to co-reside with her parent-in-law and provide them with a better level of care in the near future. Some D-Ls spend many years looking after their aged M-Ls. They not only served their infirm M-L's, but also served as a model for their children. Lily spoke on behalf of these women, 'I am contented that my children witnessed how I served their grandmother; and, they followed my steps later on.'

Some D-Ls had lived with their parents-in-law for a few years and were pressured by their somewhat difficult lifestyles. For example, lily felt hopeless early in her marriage and thought divorce was an escape. However, some of D-Ls moved away from their M-Ls.

Although Xin initially had little knowledge on how to interact with her parents-in-law, the lack of economic resources was the reason she chose to co-reside with them. Her plan was to have a joint family during the first three years of marriage in order to save enough money to buy her own house. In addition, there were seven family members in the co-residence, including Xin and her husband, parents-in-law, the couple of the sister-in-law and the brother-in-law. Xin's M-L carefully built proper boundaries to not interfere with the lives of her adult children and their spouses. Their interactions improved after a period of time and Xin exhibited a great deal of love and affection for her in-law's family.

Although Apple was comfortable living with her M-L, the co-residence became stressful because her husband had a bad attitude toward his mother. He argued with Apple when she showed compassion or stood up for her M-L. Staying with her mother was a way of living in a shelter and helped her avoid such conflicts with her husband. Apple and her infant child just went back from staying with her mother to live with her in-laws last week. Apple cried, 'It is painful and I have deep struggles…' The mother-son conflict placed a large amount of pressure on Apple, especially when they co-resided together.

Most participants claimed that a mother-daughter relationship is the ideal model of D-L—M-L relationships and many of them were glad to have such good relationships. Lily gladly mentioned that she was already a M-L who treated her D-Ls as her own daughters and she was open in her communication with them. Liying also had a D-L; although Liying's D-L was very quiet and used silence in response to the questions Liying asked, she still loved and respected her as her own daughter. However, some younger D-Ls preferred to build friendship with their M-Ls. For example, 'to be friends with the M-L'—this image helped Purdie feel relaxed in her dealings with her M-L.

Some women attempted to imitate their mothers who complied with the cultural ideology of an obedient D-L to serve their M-Ls. Spring as a representative of the older D-Ls tended to copy her mother as a model but failed. She remembered that she was initially unaccustomed to living with her parents-in-law and that their values and living patterns were distinct from her own. Comparing her authoritative grandmother to whom Spring's mother served with her own M-L, the later was more liberal with her and encouraged her to enjoy greater autonomy and be herself. The younger D-Ls gained different perspectives to develop their in-law relationships. 'I respect my M-L, but I am not completely

submissive'. Purdie's expression represents the opinion of the younger generations. She further stated, 'one of our new duties is to provide accurate guidance to help parents-in-law make decisions appropriately since we have up-to-date knowledge'.

Considering how to be a good D-L, many D-Ls replied that a good D-L should do housework and chores diligently, and serve all members attentively. Some D-Ls based their observations to talk about the interaction between M-Ls and D-Ls. They explained that elderly individuals should be cared for and a D-L had to listen to her M-L with a humble attitude. This way, a D-L could better understand her M-L's needs and offer appropriate care. Purdie addressed her unpleasant experience that she had to serve her M-L very patiently and endured the unreasonable requirement by her dependant M-L at times.

What teachings on family relations did the participants receive from their churches? Many D-Ls indicated that the obedience of Ruth to Naomi demonstrated a biblical portrait that a good D-L should emulate. Another two biblical references indicated are from Exodus 20:12 and Ephesians 6:1–3, which instruct D-Ls to 'honour your father and your mother'. Some D-Ls indicated the importance of 'speaking the truth in love'. This refers to a Christian D-L who should express or speak the truth to her non-Christian M-L, especially when the M-L made mistakes or untrue remarks.

Many D-Ls struggled with their difficult M-Ls who were controlling and self-centred. For instance, Wen's M-L often loaded burdens and emotions on her. Purdie's M-L exercised control over her. Neither Purdie's husband nor his siblings could endure their mother's personality. Whenever there was a mother-son conflict, Purdie would spend much time squatting or kneeling besides her M-L saying sweet and comforting words until she was pleased and her good mood returned. Moreover, Purdie's M-L was reluctant to do house chores when they lived together. Purdie described, 'my M-L only crosses her legs sitting on a chair, while I was busy doing the cleaning.' As to her M-L, Purdie used a Taiwanese saying '老人囝仔' to describe the elderly people who tend to be childlike, with the need for much attention. This explained why some old people tend to receive more care and are inclined to be indulged. Purdie bore this very patiently in serving her M-L, although she sometimes had feelings of helplessness. Moreover, Purdie felt hurt because her in-laws devalued the role of D-Ls. The prevalent view among this family was 'there is only one mum and the son can re-marry a new wife.' Another theme that greatly distressed Purdie

was the male preference of her M-L. At the beginning, she was stressed by not giving birth to a son. Her daughter was largely ignored by her M-L and the inappropriate behaviours became worse when Purdie's son was born.

Many D-Ls had nagging M-Ls and they could only keep silent, endure requests and try not to speak back in reaction. 'None of her D-Ls can bear this for a long time', Fang adopted her sisters-in-law's confession to describe the response of other D-Ls toward to her M-L. Purdie said that the words just 'go in one ear and out the other' in her response. Liying's M-L even said, 'I will die if I do not nag'. Liying noted that 'even my husband cannot endure his mum…when my M-L nagged; I did not fight back but kept the hatred in my heart…' However, Christian faith helped the D-Ls to effectively manage challenges and conflicts with their M-Ls. I observed that these participants often thanked God for He provides Words and enough strength to sustain them in the face of the challenges. As Liying said, 'I am a Christian. God can help me to overcome difficulties, but my M-L does not have this faith'. The phrase 'God with us' also helped the D-Ls stay calm and forged ahead.

As to the religious interactions between the Christian D-Ls and their non-Christian M-Ls, some participants reported that their religious life was fully respected and accepted by their M-Ls who accepted or had an unprejudiced attitude toward their Christian beliefs. The D-Ls were not required to comply with folk rituals or practice ancestor worship. Furthermore, the parents-in-law encouraged the new family members to pursue their own faith. Such respect and acceptance engendered the affection of D-Ls toward their M-Ls. The loving actions considerably improved the quality of their relationships. However, different religious perspectives or activities stipulate certain roles for children, including care or comfort that distressed the D-Ls at times. Some M-Ls exercised folk religions on their children. Apple said, 'I feared rebelling against my M-L, but I did resist her actions in my thoughts'.

Husbands and F-Ls could influence D-L—M-L relationships and reduce or reinforce the pressure on D-Ls. Early on, Wen's husband attempted to push her into accommodating the needs of his mother. He believed that it would be easier for a young person to adjust compared to an older one whose living patterns were already formed. Therefore, the changes should be made from the side of his wife. This pressed much stress on Wen.

Besides, Wen sensed that the present relationship with her M-L was not as good as when her F-L was alive. At the time, he wisely dealt with his wife and kept the two parties in harmony. In addition, Wen's M-L could not accept that her son stood for his wife and did not listen to her. She said, 'you have married a good husband rather than a good son.' Wen's husband was hurt by these words. Some F-Ls preferred standing by their wives whenever arguments broke out with their D-Ls. For example, Purdie's F-L put the blame on Purdie for making his wife unhappy.

There were other themes worth mentioning. Some D-Ls spoke of their experience of serving their infirm/ill M-Ls. As D-Ls are generally expected to be the main caregivers to their M-Ls in the future, the younger D-Ls all hope they can survive under such circumstances. Many women expressed that they were encouraged and inspired by the openness and sincerity shared with other D-Ls. Moreover, listening to the real-life stories of the participants led them to reflect on their situations and reduced the sense of self-pity. For instance, Apple recognised that her situation was not the worst, compared to other women's challenges.

In addition, Jia shared an unusual sad story about her dead M-L who was a concubine and oppressed in the family. Jia had two M-Ls. The first one was barren; therefore she took a concubine for her husband in order to produce offspring. The concubine gave birth to eight children, but she was oppressed by the first wife and her husband.

The eight participants in Hualien were the first generation of Christians in their families, and their husbands supported their religious lives positively. All experienced life transformation when they converted to Christianity. Afterwards, they received a series of courses for preparing/building a harmonious family.[1] Life transformation and the training helped them to renew their relationships with family members and motivated them to have strong desires for evangelism. They all emphasised living out faith to be a witness of Christ.

The participants adopted a variety of images or phrases to describe relationships with their M-Ls. Some D-Ls and M-Ls were like 'guest-host', whereby the two parties respected and kept distance from each other. Pei used the symbol of ice to describe their struggle. Lena had experienced fire-and-ice relationships before she converted to Christ. Fon and her M-L had a 'hand-in-hand' harmonious relationship. Other D-Ls used the image of mother-daughter to portray their close relationships. Ting stated, 'I have received much love and support from my M-L…moreover, she is more patient with me than with her own adult children'. In the contrary, Lin urged the D-Ls to give up the unrealistic expectations of mother-daughter relationships. She played the role of both D-L and M-L and said, 'do not expect to be equal to her daughter; she can always be tolerant with her own daughter, whereas you would not receive the same treatment'. Lin adjusted herself away from the expectation of being 'a daughter' to being a D-L, because the two roles were different in her experience.

Many D-Ls believe that practicing *xiao* is a basic requirement of a good D-L. The practice of *xiao* includes caring for family members, serving your parent-in-law, and being pleasing and obedient to your M-L. Fon noted that practicing *xiao* is to care well for her husband and children, and serves to build a cohesive relationship. In so doing, her M-L is happy to see her son, who is filled with joy and energy. Some D-Ls believed that a good example for children is crucial, so as to provide a good, formative model. The development of a good D-L–M-L relationship influenced Hong's husband to develop a better relationship with his parents. Hong used every opportunity to teach her children how to please parents

---

[1] The participants were recruited from a church. Rev. Chang found that Hualien had the highest percentage of divorce rate in Taiwan; therefore, he developed a series of courses for assisting the members to build happy marriages (Chang 2010). The members of the church are required to attend such courses.

at the same time. In this atmosphere, their children fostered the notion of *xiao*, and learnt how to behave properly.

Although providing support for the M-L is an essential aspect of *xiao* practice, this can be difficult for some D-Ls who have a tight budget. Pei's M-L is unsatisfied with the amount of money provided by Pei and her husband. Therefore, Pei avoids contacting or interacting with her M-L, and often keeps distance from her. Although Pei's M-L had said to her 'I don't like you', she demanded Pei to care for her if she has an operation in the near future. Pei said, 'I have a sense of fear and stress to be with her, but it is my duty as a D-L'. Although she understood that caring work will place her under significant pressure, she would take this duty to fulfil her role as an elder D-L. She realises that she cannot afford to work 24 hours a day, therefore she plans to employ a caregiver to share the load.

Some D-Ls noticed that they have difficult M-Ls who were not only complainers, but also gossipers. Some M-Ls manipulated their relational web and tried to control their D-Ls through these means. Pei's M-L complained about Pei to relatives and neighbours, who would come to condemn Pei's inappropriate behaviour, and pressure her through this way. Another D-L, Lena, also had a similar experience. She said, 'my M-L mounted pressure on me through relatives and neighbours. They came to "teach" me how to play the role of a D-L.' In addition, Lena had a fear of authority figures; she was always quiet whenever her M-L exercised authority over her. A few D-Ls mentioned that their M-Ls tried hard to mould them to fit their own wants; however, some of the D-Ls fought against their M-Ls' project. However, in-law difficulties can become a marital problem. A few women considered the idea of divorce in escaping their difficult M-Ls.

Lin married into an aboriginal family which was traditionally matrilineal and followed the uxorilocal marriage system. Lin felt the authority of her M-L in the family deeply. Although she has the right to succession in inheritance, she noted that 'my M-L is unlikely to pass down the family authority to me, but I was not begging for it either'. Lin believed that keeping a harmonious family is important. That is why she often remained silent in the decision making process in the family, unless her parents-in-law asked her opinions.

A few women sought to develop good relationships with her future M-Ls before the marriage. For example, Fen tried to be nice to her fiancé's mother in order to make a good

impression; moreover, she looked after her in a hospital for one month that laid a strong foundation of close relationships before the wedding. Fen's M-L also showed her acceptance and understanding in such a way that touched Fen's heart and earned her appreciation. She now lives alone, and Fen has invited her to move into her house to have better care. She refused, preferring to live independently. Another woman, Lena, told a different story. Although she was confident about being a good D-L and had built a close relationship with her future M-L before marriage, the language, misunderstanding, and different lifestyles caused her struggles with her M-L. Lena had painful experiences in co-residing with her M-L. Language barrier often caused misunderstanding and led to relational tensions whereby she considered herself as an outsider in her family-in-law. She moved out from the co-residence, and drew a clear boundary from her M-L after a serious conflict.

Some D-Ls mentioned that they hoped for an intimate relationship with their M-Ls, characterised by mutual acceptance, trust and love. However, their dreams were shattered. Hong shared her story that she was unhappy with her M-L, who only managed to maintain harmony on the surface, but showed a lot of favouritism towards her other D-Ls. Rose expected to have a mother-daughter relationship with her M-L; however, she apologised to her M-L for her passive character. She said, 'it is my problem. Although I have such expectations, I rarely take actions to build enduring relationships with my M-L'. Some D-Ls addressed that they were anxious when they stay with their M-Ls. Ting's family-in-law belongs to an elite class and the distinct family backgrounds affected her anxiety when she stayed with her M-L, although her M-L was kind and very supportive.

God's Word provides powerful resources for Christians to improve their family well-being. Many D-Ls followed the Scriptures to love their M-Ls. In many ways, this transformed D-L—M-L relationships. Hong followed the Scriptures to love her M-L and behaved in a loving way, which renewed the relationship with her in-law. She stated that *The Book of Ruth* is the book in the Bible that has affected the relationship with her M-L significantly, as well as impacted her life. 'The sincere love that Ruth demonstrated to her M-L is what I pray and seek to imitate. It is also what I expect to accomplish', Hong said. Other women noticed that they sought to honour their M-Ls, in Exodus 20:12 and Ephesians 6:1-3 instructing them to 'honour your father and your mother'. They served their M-Ls as their mothers.

Many women experienced healing in their marriages and transformation in their relationships with their M-Ls, since converting to Christianity. Many D-Ls attended a series of courses offered by their church on building healthy marriages. The courses included marriage preparation and instruction on building harmonious relationships, which benefitted the D-Ls greatly in nurturing their families and understanding how to interact with their parents-in-law/parents. Moreover, some D-Ls addressed, 'the preaching and the teachings received from the Sunday service contributed to building a good relationship with my M-L.' Christian living and growth within a faith community changed the D-Ls' values, attitudes, and patterns of life. Lena noticed that she learns body and love languages through the interaction and teachings in church. Such loving expressions have helped her to express affection in her family, which shortens the distance between her and her M-L. In addition, self-reflection and prayer helped some D-Ls to have better self-control and adopt positive attitudes to overcome potential relational threats.

Such transformation leads the participants to have strong evangelical intentions, and seek to evangelise their family. For example, Fen said, 'I love my M-L so much and hope she can be baptised to join the family of God'. Hong spoke gladly of the transformation of the D-L—M-L relationship. She took decision making roles in her in-laws family after she converted to Christianity and experienced the renewal of life. 'I just realised that I was valued by my M-L; she gradually passed her authority onto me', Hong said. Receiving such power to exercise in the family, she became more humble and careful in using this authority. Although Christian faith has assisted the D-Ls in the face of relational challenges, a few D-Ls had a sense of helplessness and felt deserted because of the burdens and stresses of religious teaching. Pei, who was distressed by her aggressive M-L, suggested that only forgiveness from God could bring healing and love for those wounded. She also indicated that the Christian faith caused her to find it impossible to refuse the unreasonable requests from her M-L, although she would like to say 'no'. Sometimes, this placed her under great pressure.

There are significant religious differences between Christian D-Ls and their non-Christian M-Ls. These differences impact their interactions and relationships. Therefore, 'tensions or conflicts are inevitably raised when Christians are confronted with the issues of worshiping gods and ancestors at home', said Lena. A few M-Ls, aware that their D-Ls had converted

to Christianity, still forced them to burn incense in the temple or required them to attend family religious activities as before. Lena and Hong's M-Ls forbade their sons and grandsons from becoming Christians. Lena's M-L said, 'my son and grandson cannot go to church, but it's no problem if you and my granddaughter go.' These M-Ls probably worried that they would not receive offerings from their male offspring in the future, and that the family shrine and the rituals of offering sacrifices to ancestors would not be passed down to the next generation.

Most participants` husbands kept positive attitudes toward the conversion of their wives. Moreover, some husbands converted to Christianity through the influence of their Christian wives. They often stood by their wives, and supported their Christian views whenever their mothers raised religious issues. Lin's M-L, who is a devout Jehovah's Witness, tried many times to convert her but failed. Lin's conversion to Christianity impacted her relationship with her M-L and husband, who suffered religious oppression from his mother. Furthermore, some husbands suffered from the conflicts or tensions between the wives and the mothers. For example, Ting sometimes blamed her husband when she made mistakes in her parent-in-law's house. She was angry with her husband because he did not inform her in advance of the situation that led to such mistakes.

Some D-Ls suggested that acceptance and affirmation towards each other are the ways of mutual love that can bridge the gap between D-Ls and M-Ls, generate positive self-images, and establish a good relationship. Christian D-Ls should take the initiative to improve the relationships with their M-Ls, and the change should begin with the D-L who must be proactive and loving at the same time. Some D-Ls found that it was rather difficult to speak 'sweet' words to their M-Ls and, instead, tended to use actions to serve them.

Other important issues emerged from the discussions. For example, some D-Ls felt inadequate to meet the expectations of their M-Ls. Lena mentioned her distress on not giving birth to a son. Hong said that she could not accept that her M-L supervises her on how to raise her own children. Some D-Ls suggest that living long distances apart are keys to avoiding too many encounters and a way to reduce tensions and conflicts with their M-Ls. Pei shared her experience with her F-L. He always secretly helped with cooking in the kitchen as she was not so familiar with these things. Sadly, he could not bear the stress from his authoritarian wife and chose to end his life at the end.

Many women said that they were inspired and encouraged by the stories shared from other women and gained deeper understanding on D-L—M-L relationships. The focus group discussions helped them to build more self-confidence in the face of such challenges.

Appendix 3: Stories Drawn from Life

The stories were originally collected from a range of sources, including from personal experience, from care-receivers, as well as from other friends. The two scenarios employed to promote improvised conversations between D-Ls－M-Ls were developed from the stories. Participants were generally assigned into two groups, acting either as M-L or D-L. In the relevant groups, participants read the scenarios, discussed the intergenerational issues, and quickly developed a short play which illustrated their personal experience and lives in 10 minute.

Scenario one: the perspective of M-Ls
A group of women are talking about their D-Ls. Please stand on the side of your M-L and develop your group story which can present the relationships between you and your M-L, including positive and negative interactions.

'My son and I had a very good relationship, but this relationship has gradually faded since his marriage. He and my D-L do not discuss with me when they decide to do things. His room is always locked. That's MY house! I do not understand why I am not allowed to get in….'

'My D-L acts like an outsider to my family. She prioritises the needs of her parents rather than mine and often goes back to find them. This has affected my son in many ways, as he often goes with her but finds no time to visit me! It feels like losing a son, as opposed to gaining a daughter. She should understand that she is already a part of my family.'

'I scrimped and sacrificed to grow and educate my son. Although he is still filial, our relationship has changed since he got married. We are no longer as intimate as before!'

'My D-L is very filial. She treats me like her own mother.'

'I am so happy that my D-L appropriately takes care of my son and grandchildren!'

Scenario two: the perspective of D-Ls

A group of women are talking about their M-Ls. Please develop your group story and present your own experience with your M-L that includes positive and negative interactions.

'I'm so lucky! My M-L treats me like her own daughter.'

'She generally helps look after my children, and then I'm able to work outside.'

'I feel guilty not being able to spend more time with her. I'm always busy at work and look after my family.'

'Although my M-L lives with me, she does not equally share the housework with me. I have to go to work outside in the daytime and at night look after my kids while also attending to a number of house chores. I always feel exhausted at the end of the day!'

'My M-L does not respect me. She often makes decisions without asking me, and just tells me what I have to do.'

'Although I am not quite pleased with how she relates with my husband and children, I can only keep silent.'

'My M-L is good to me. I feel loved and appreciate what she has done for me!'

Appendix 4: Personal Information of Participant and Feedback Survey

個人資料及反饋調查

Your cooperation is very import for this research. Please tick and fill in your information in detail. All answers will only be asked for the analysis of this project. Thank you!
您的協助對於這個研究非常重要，請您詳細填寫或勾選下列問題。所有的資料僅用於這個研究計畫，請您放心回答。謝謝您！

【Personal Information 個人資料】

Denominations 教會宗派：_____

1. Age 年齡：□ 25-29　□30-34　□35-39　□40-44　□45-49　□50-54　□55-60
2. Ethnic groups 族群：□ Hokkien 本省閩南　□Hakka 本省客家　□ mainland Chinese 大陸各省市　□ Original inhabitant 原住民　□ other 其他_____
3. Religion of your husband 配偶的信仰：_____
4. How many children do you have 孩子：□ none 無　□ _____個_____years old 歲
5. Education 您的學歷：□ none 無　□primary school 國小　□secondary school 國中　□high school 高中/職校　□Associate's or college degree 大學/大專　□Master's degree or PhD 研究所
6. Occupation 您目前從事甚麼職業：_____
   □ part-time 兼職　□ full-time 全職　□ none 未就業　□ retired 已退休

【Mother-in-law Information 婆婆的個人資料】

1. Religious belief of mother-in-law 婆婆的宗教信仰：_____
2. Age of mother-in-law 婆婆的年齡：□40-49　□50-59　□60-69　□70-79　□80+
3. Education of mother-in-law 婆婆的學歷：□ none 無　□ primary school 國小　□ secondary school 國中　□ high school 高中/職校　□ Associate's or college degree 大學/大專　□ Master's degree or PhD 研究所
4. Residence of mother-in-law 婆婆的居住狀況：□live alone 獨居　□ parents-in-law live together 公婆兩人一起住 □ live with you 與你同住 □ with her other son 與其他兒子同住 □ with her daughter 與女兒同住　□ care home 安養中心　□ others 其他_____
5. The frequency and times that you make contact with your mother-in-law in person, by phone, letter, or internet 婆媳多久見面或是用電話、信件或網路連絡：
   □ resident with you 同住　□ day 天　□ week 週　□ month 月　□ year 年　_____times 次，每次約_____hours 小時　□others 其他_____

Feedback Survey

1. How important do these factors play in your role as a daughter- and mother-in-law? Please tick the best one that describes your relationship. 您認為下列因素對婆媳關係有多重要？
   a. Family income 家庭收入：☐vital 非常重要 ☐important 重要
      ☐not import 不太重要 ☐not applicable 完全不重要 ☐don't know 不知道
   b. Child care 孩子照養：☐vital 非常重要 ☐important 重要
      ☐not import 不太重要 ☐not applicable 完全不重要 ☐don't know 不知道
   c. Housework 家務分工：☐vital 非常重要 ☐important 重要
      ☐not import 不太重要 ☐not applicable 完全不重要 ☐don't know 不知道
   d. Health 身體健康：☐vital 非常重要 ☐important 重要 ☐not import 不太重要
      ☐not applicable 完全不重要 ☐don't know 不知道
   e. Personality 個性: ☐vital 非常重要 ☐important 重要 ☐not import 不太重要
      ☐not applicable 完全不重要 ☐don't know 不知道
   f. Religion 宗教信仰: ☐vital 非常重要 ☐important 重要 ☐not import 不太重要
      ☐not applicable 完全不重要 ☐don't know 不知道
   g. Others 其他：
      _____

2. Any new insights or re-framed reviews you have gained throughout the focus group? 參加完今天的聚會，你對於婆媳關係有甚麼新的看法或是觀念的改變？
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

3. Any other comments or thoughts? 我有話要說(任何意見或想法):
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

The Written Feedbacks of the Participants

The data was collected and translated from the written feedback forms by the participants.

Focus Group in Longtan

Joy: Love and forgiveness are the keys to transforming human relationships.

Yen: We should learn to have mutual respect for each other.

Focus Group in Taipei

Melody: I have gained more confidence to baptise my parents-in-law in the future. I was particularly encouraged by other women's life stories.

Lee: The relationship between M-Ls and D-Ls can be challenged at any given time; conflicts can be easily raised when they live together. Thanks to the Lord, my husband and I do not live with my parent-in-law and just live close to them. Although my M-L is an unbeliever, she has an open mind and respects my Christian faith. Many thanks to those who honestly shared their relational difficulties and life stories; I am immensely thankful to learn from their experiences, especially in relating with my parents-in-law in years to come. Practising *xiao* on my parents-in-law is the right and responsibility given by God to us. I hope God provides me with strength and resources to support them when they are old or sick, and also help me to convert my parent-in-law, who can be saved by His grace.

Fei: God has a wonderful plan for everyone. You do not want to compromise yourself. You do not have to always grin and bear it; rather, you always need a way out. M-Ls also need to have their focus groups to share their experiences.

Ying: It would be wonderful, if the relationship between M-L and D-L is the same as mother-daughter relationship. Of course, I believe God can do the impossible, such as enabling us to have closer relationships, as opposed to living as strangers.

Gale: I feel I should be more courageous in expressing my own feelings and learning how to communicate, as well as tolerating others.

Sue: Christian faith is a great support and strength to us, especially as we seek to look after our elders in the future. I rarely have opportunities to talk about my M-L. I am indeed very appreciative of her care for me. It always feels like having a second mother.

Lu: Individuals generally have distinctly unique styles and attributes, we all need to respect and support each other. None is perfect, but by continuing and relying on the Lord, 'I press on toward the goal'.

Juan: We should respect one another and care for one another.

Focus Group in Taichung

Amy: Life is for the most part a relationship of 'give and take'. You should not just wait around, looking for people to be good to you. Instead, you should change yourself to be good to others first; things will still work out well.
In addition, my M-L is in a coma, like vegetable. My sister-in-law acts like M-L.

Gui: Although I am already divorced, I still maintain close contact with my M-L, and still have a generally good relationship with her.

Hsu: Having heard about the need for boundaries, I agree that this is very important.

Kuok: Religion plays a very important role in D-L－M-L relationship. I often give my M-L a call, and during the holidays, I often go to her home and spend time with her. Generally, there is a need for sincere love and mutual respect between any D-L and M-L. A good relationship can be established when we give sufficient consideration to others whose backgrounds, educations are different from ours.

Zeng: God can transform human relationships.

June: Praise God for His leading, it gives us hope.
I am very happy to meet all of you and to be here present at this meeting.

Heidi: In my view, great relationships start from oneself.

Focus Group in Tainan

Apple: No matter what family you are in, there are always stories, there are always problems. Even though, we might feel sorry for ourselves, how hard it is, but we need to keep in mind that there is always someone out there whose situation is worse than ours.

Fang: My M-L tries her best to talk to me in Mandarin; nevertheless, I always answer her in Taiwanese. Modern D-L－M-L relationships are very different from those of the past. Nevertheless, what remains constant is the expectation of submission. Usually, parents-in-law are most gratified when you spend quality time with them, and also making efforts to look after them.

Purdie: Before my M-L was married, she was a Daoism.
a. My M-L was very materialistic.
b. She thought the role of a D-L was simply to look after children.
c. She expected D-Ls to be responsible for all house chores.
e. My M-L has absolute freedom to do anything she wants, without any interference from me.
g. She has male preference.
Love helps us to be more tolerant, the grace of God assures us of a better future. I continue to believe that the Lord has the best plans. God is my great support. Through all the ups and downs of marriage, only God Himself really understands me. Only God really knows all of the difficulties and sufferings that are hidden from others. The Lord is my closest companion, even in the face of difficulties; He continually blesses my spirit with joy. He blesses me with a positive and healthy life. I pray that my M-L would be filled with the love of the Lord. I pray that both my M-L and father-in-law (F-L) would soon come to trust in the Lord and worship Him.

Spring: I believe that when you encounter a problem you should show courage and not be afraid to speak up. I hope for a clear solution to the frequent difficulties I have with my M-L and D-L.

Jinn: I believe we should seek to use love to manage and accept differences in cultures and family backgrounds. Use the love of God to love family members.

Jia: We should be quick to listen and seek to be sympathetic, because what our elders mostly need is our care.

Hui: I think it is important to care for one another, listen to each other, and try to understand each other's needs.

Chen: I think the interaction between M-L and D-L should be one of love and submission. After all, the social change affects intergenerational relationships; the relationship between M-L and D-L shifted. In myself became a M-L, I realise that our relationship needs to be based on empathy.

Focus Group in Hualien

Hong: For sure, faith is able to change one's attitude and perspective. Because of our Christian faith we are able to hand everything over to the Lord, so we can place in the Lord's hands our conflict and trust Him to work things out for the better.

Fon: I think we should not have too many expectations. We should not have any preconceived ideas. Along this line, other people's experiences will not necessarily reflect your own experience.

Rose: I think we should seek to establish more positive M-L–D-L relationships, take more initiative to be caring.

Fen: I think we should live out our faith and further develop our testimonies. We should also become more effective and seek to bring our M-Ls to Christ.
Thank you very much for arranging this meeting. We can be encouraged by each other and help each other.

Ting: Good relationship begins with us. We should always take the first initiative.
This focus group discussion is very helpful to my pastoral ministry, especially in understanding the relationship between D-Ls and M-Ls.

Lena: Having listened to the life stories of other D-Ls, I feel like a very lucky woman. I would like to further swallow my pride and empathise with my M-L. Today's conversations have extensively renewed our minds.

Pei: I learn to appreciate what my M-L does. I also have more understanding about the differences in family backgrounds between my M-L and I.

Appendix 5: Ethical Protocols

Consent to the Use of Data

焦點團體討論同意書

University of Glasgow, College of Arts Research Ethics Committee
格拉斯哥大學，文學院倫理委員會

I understand that Yung-Ju Hung is collecting data from a focus group for use in an academic research project at the University of Glasgow.
我了解洪詠茹將於焦點團體進行過程中使用全程錄影及摘要記錄，所有談話和討論的內容僅限於格拉斯哥大學的研究和學術論文之寫作使用。

- This research will explore the relationships between Christian daughters and their non-Christian mothers-in-law in Taiwan.
  此項研究是為了探討基督徒媳婦和非基督徒婆婆之間的關係。
- You will be invited to attend a focus group as part of a one-day sharing event. The day will be at 10:00 – 15:30 on October or December 2014. The focus group will be VIDEO recorded. Participants will be requested to enter into a confidentiality agreement prior to participating in discussions. 您將被邀請加入一個焦點團體分享聚會，時間預訂於十月或十一月某一日的 10:00-15:30。聚會將會全程「**錄影**」，參加者在聚會開始之前需要同意並遵守保密協議。

I give my consent to the use of data for this purpose on the understanding that:
本人同意在下面列舉事項的狀況下讓資料被使用於學術研究：
- All names and other material likely to identify individuals will be anonymised.
  參與者的名字和可能具有辨識性的個人資料將以匿名的方式處理。
- The material will be treated as confidential and kept in secure storage at all times.
  此資料將被視為機密並安全的被保存起來。
- The material will be retained in secure storage for use in future academic research.
  此資料將被安全地存留以供日後的學術研究之使用。
- The material may be used in future publications, both print and online.
  此資料可能會被使用於印刷出版及網上發表。

Signed by the contributor (參加者簽名):_____

Date: _____ (dd/日) _____ (mm/月) __2014__ (yy/年)

Researcher's name and email contact (研究員之姓名及電子信箱):
Hung, Yung-Ju 洪詠茹, email: y.hung.1@research.gla.ac.uk
Supervisor's name and email contact (指導教授之姓名及電子信箱):
Department address (部門地址):
Theology and Religious Studies, 4 The Square, Glasgow, UK G12 8QQ

The Statement of Using Recorders

I will use a MP4 recorder and a video-recorder to capture the entire discussions of the focus groups, in order to easily identify participants and write detailed transcripts. I am aware that I have responsibility for protecting the psychological, physical and social well-being of the participants in my study. I will follow the regulations of the University of Glasgow and the laws in Taiwan to respect the rights, dignity, sensitivities and privacy of every participant in the research programme. The possible consequences of my work will be careful taken into consideration for guarding against predictably harmful effects.

The entire focus group will be captured on videotape by a stationary video-recorder. In order to secure the whole collection of the group discussions or avoid the failure of video record, I will set a MP4 recorder on the table for recording of voice in the meantime. The two types of collected data will be separately archived in a video archive and a sound archive on my own laptop. These records and the videotapes will be carefully stored in a locked location throughout the study and, destroyed when this project is finished.

Research Ethics Risk Assessment and Management

[1] Physical Risks

Identified Risks	Likelihood High/ Medium/ Low	Potential Impact/Outcome Who might be harmed and how	Risk Management	Mitigating Factors
No risks identified				

[2] Psychological Risks

Identified Risks	Likelihood High/ Medium/ Low	Potential Impact/Outcome Who might be harmed and how	Risk Management	Mitigating Factors
The discussion of a sensitive topic in a focus group has the potential to cause distress to the participants by reliving unresolved issues	Medium	Participants – psychological stress	Remind participants can refuse to answer the questions or withdraw from the project Signpost participants to appropriate internal and external support services	Researcher educated as a reflective practitioner in pastoral care Researcher and mediator trained with listening skills, interview techniques, and nonviolent communication techniques
Discussion of a sensitive topic in a focus group has the potential to cause distress to the participant through fear of lack of confidentiality	Medium	Participant – psychological stress	Clear confidentiality and anonymity stated in Participation Information Letter will be distributed in advance before participants sign up. A confidentiality agreement will be outlined and pronounced at the beginning of the focus groups. Remind participants of these before each stage of their participation.	Researcher educated as a reflective practitioner in pastoral care Researcher and mediator trained with listening skills, interview techniques, and nonviolent communication techniques

Identified Risks	Likelihood High/ Medium/ Low	Potential Impact/Outcome Who might be harmed and how	Risk Management	Mitigating Factors
Whistle-blowing – participant might disclose current stress, anxiety, potential harm caused by named individuals or situations	Medium	Participant – emotional and psychological distress	Remind participants of limits to confidentiality in Participation Information Letter Offer to cease the focus group	Researcher trained as a reflective practitioner in pastoral care, listening skills, interview techniques, and nonviolent communication techniques
Disclosure of unmet mental health needs	Low	Participant - psychological distress immediate, prompt or urgent response might be required	Ensure Participation Information Letter indicates possible researcher response to disclosure Offer to cease the focus group Signpost participants to appropriate internal and external support services	Researcher trained as a reflective practitioner in pastoral care, listening skills, interview techniques, and nonviolent communication techniques
Research participant in danger of harm to self or others	Low	Participants - Immediate, prompt or urgent response might be required	Ensure Participation Information Letter indicates possible researcher response to disclosure or fear of harm Offer to cease the focus group Signpost participants to appropriate internal and external support services	Researcher trained as a reflective practitioner in pastoral care, listening skills, interview techniques, and nonviolent communication techniques
Researcher insensitivity	Low	Participants might be suffered from emotional or psychological stress	Pilot the process in advance Have planned a 'sharing day schedule' for the focus groups	Researcher trained as a reflective practitioner in pastoral care, listening skills, interview techniques, and nonviolent communication techniques Researcher has over 10-year experience of women ministry and

Identified Risks	Likelihood High/ Medium/ Low	Potential Impact/Outcome Who might be harmed and how	Risk Management	Mitigating Factors
				has personal experience of struggling with my mother-in-law
Participants may be known to the researcher	Medium	Participants - Psychological stress through fear of identification or breach of confidentiality	Ensure participants are fully informed of the 'what' and 'who' of the research before they sign up. Clear confidentiality agreement and anonymising data stated in Participant Information Letter in advance Remind participants of the confidentiality agreement before each stage of data gathering	Researcher has over 10-year experience of women ministry and the accompanying the needs of confidentiality

[3] Risks due to invasion of Privacy and/or Breach of Confidentiality

Identified Risks	Likelihood High/ Medium/ Low	Potential Impact/Outcome Who might be harmed and how	Risk Management	Mitigating Factors
Respondents might be identified	Medium	Participants - Emotional and psychological stress	All data will be coded ASAP All identifier codes will be destroyed ASAP Standard guidelines for storage of codes and data will be observed at all times	

Identified Risks	Likelihood High/ Medium/ Low	Potential Impact/Outcome Who might be harmed and how	Risk Management	Mitigating Factors
Participants may be known to the researcher	Medium	Participants - Psychological stress through fear of identification or breach of confidentiality	Ensure participants are fully informed of the 'what' and 'who' of the research before they sign up. Clear confidentiality agreement in the participants information letter before their participation Remind participants of the confidentiality agreement at the start of the sharing day programme	Researcher has over 10-year experience of women's ministry and the accompanying the needs of confidentiality

Appendix 6: Information Letter for Participant

Dear _____,

I hope this email finds you well. I'm a PhD student of theology and religious studies at the University of Glasgow. I am working on my thesis, focusing on the relationship between Christian daughters and their non-Christian mothers-in-law in Taiwan. I am inviting you, as a daughter-in-law, to take part in my research. If you do decide you wish to be a participant this will involve attending a one-day 'sharing event' in which 'focus groups' will be formed. The purpose of my research and the way that the 'focus groups' will function within the sharing day will be described below.

Taiwanese society has been influenced by traditional Chinese culture and many people have maintained our cultural practices with pride. While, feminist movements have been championing women's welfare and we have achieved greater gender equality in recent decades. These changes have sometimes leaded to family members of different generations holding different life values – this is particularly challenging in the case of daughters-in-law and mothers-in-law. A married woman must find how to interact with her in-law parents within patrilineal Taiwanese society. This is even more complicated for those who are Christians with non-Christian mothers-in-law. Differences in values may cause the two generations to experience stress or tension, and affect the relationship as they interact.

Many Taiwanese scholars have investigated the relationship between daughters-in-law and mothers-in-law in recent decades. Yet, very little discussion embraces inter-faith dimensions. In order to understand the relationships between Christian daughters-in-law and non-Christian mothers-in-law in contemporary Taiwan, I will invite research participants to attend focus groups, through which I will collect life stories in order to present women's experiences. The four focus groups will be separately operated in northern, southern, eastern, and western parts of Taiwan between October and December 2014. The sharing day will be held from 10:00 am to 15:30 pm. Each will involve approximately 8 participants from different ethnicities, educational and social backgrounds, whose ages are between twenty-five and sixty years old. Participants must have more than a two-year interactive experience with their mothers-in-law and their mothers-in-law must still alive. The programme of the sharing day will consist of short plays, life storytelling and discussions focusing on the relationships between Christian daughters and non-Christian mothers-in-law. You will be asked to interact with other participants, not only in the discussion, but also in the interactive short plays. You will be required to abide by a confidentiality agreement and, not to repeat personal stories learnt about others in the focus group without their permission. Every participant will be deeply respected and encouraged to speak freely and offer divergent views in a focused and meaningful manner. You are encouraged to be as truthful as possible and stay for the entire discussion. Taking part in this research project is entirely voluntary; you also have the right to withdraw your

participation at any point without giving a reason. A trained female mediator will lead the discussions. I will take notes, and make audio and video recordings, and observe the actions of the participants throughout the whole meeting.

The collected information is ONLY for this research project. All sharing and discussion will be protected for the purpose of privacy. All the collected data, including the sheets, audio records, video records, and life stories will be carefully stored in a locked location throughout the study. These materials will be deleted or destroyed when this project is finished. My supervisors or the review committee may scrutinise all the materials. Pseudonyms will be used instead of the real names of the participants in my thesis. The research or thesis may be published online, in a journal, or in book form. I will send you a copy of the findings of the research.

The benefits of the participation of the focus group are that you are able to tell your own story, in your own words in a friendly small group. In the meanwhile, you have an opportunity to listen to others and that may help you to gain new insights on this issue. You will represent a group of Christian daughters-in-law and be a voice for them, and contribute your life experience as a source of this research project. The findings of the project, is hoped, will help to meet the pastoral needs for the pastoral care. The potential risk in relation to this participation will be the disclosure of your life experience within a small group. In addition, there will be no any financial aid provided to participants, who should come to the venue by their own means. A free light lunch will be offered at noon on the sharing day.

Please contact me and let me know whether you will take part in a focus group. My email address is y.hung.1@research.gla.ac.uk. You are also free to contact me if you have any questions. Many thanks for your kind assistance.

Best wishes,

Yung-Ju Hung

Bibliography

Abes, Elisa S., Susan R. Jones, and Marylu K. McEwen. 2007. 'Reconceptualizing the Model of Multiple Dimensions of Identity: The Role of Meaning-Making Capacity in the Construction of Multiple Identities'. *Journal of College Student Development* 48 (1): 1–22. doi:10.1353/csd.2007.0000.

Acheraïou, Amar. 2011. *Questioning Hybridity, Postcolonialism and Globalization*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Ames, Roger T. 2003. 'Yin and Yang'. In *Encyclopedia of Chinese Philosophy*, edited by Antonio S. Cua, 846–47. New York: Routledge.

Angrosino, Michael, and Judith Rosenberg. 2011. 'Observations on Observation: Continuities and Challenges'. In *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, edited by Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, 4th ed., 467–78. London: SAGE Publications.

Ashcroft, Bill. 2014. 'Threshold Theology'. In *Colonial Contexts and Postcolonial Theologies: Story Weaving in the Asia-Pacific*, edited by Mark G. Brett and Jione Havea, 3–39. Postcolonialism and Religions. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin. 2007. *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*. 2nd edition. New York: Routledge.

Au, Cheung-Kong 區祥江。《夫婦輔導的理論與實務》（Couple Therapy：Theory and Practice）。香港： 建道神學院。

Bacon, Hannah. 2009. *What's Right With the Trinity?: Conversations in Feminist Theology*. Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.

———. 2012. 'Thinking the Trinity as Resource for Feminist Theology Today?' *Cross Currents*, December, 442–64.

———. 2013. 'Expanding Bodies, Expanding God: Feminist Theology in Search of a "Fatter" Future'. *Feminist Theology* 21 (3): 309–26. doi:10.1177/0966735013484216.

Baker, Christopher Richard. 2007. *The Hybrid Church in the City: Third Space Thinking*. London: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.

Bell, Daniel A., ed. 2008. *Confucian Political Ethics*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Bennett Moore, Zoë. 2002. *Introducing Feminist Perspectives on Pastoral Theology*. Introductions in Feminist Theology. London: Sheffield Academic Press.

Bergmann, Sigurd. 2003. *God in Context: A Survey of Contextual Theology*. England: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.

Best, Steven, and Douglas Kellner. 1997. *The Postmodern Turn*. New York: Guilford Press.

Bevans, Stephen B. 2002. *Models of Contextual Theology*. Revised edition. New York: Orbis Books.

Bhabha, Homi K. 2004. *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge Classics.

Bishop, John. 2013. 'How a Modest Fideism May Constrain Theistic Commitments: Exploring an Alternative to Classical Theism'. In *Models of God and Alternative Ultimate Realities*, edited by Jeanine Diller and Asa Kasher, 525–42. Dordrecht ; New York: Springer.

Bohler, Carolyn Stahl. 1996. 'Female-Friendly Pastoral Care'. In *Through the Eyes of Women: Insights for Pastoral Care*, edited by Jeanne S. Moessner, 27–49. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

Bons-Storm, Riet. 1996. *The Incredible Woman: Listening to Women's Silences in Pastoral Care and Counseling*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.

Bosch, David J. 2011. *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*. 20th Anniversary Edition. American Society of Missiology Series 16. New York: Orbis Books.

Briggs, Sheila. 2012. 'What Is Feminist Theology ?' In *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Theology*, 73–106. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Brock, Rita Nakashima. 1987. 'Special Section: Asian Women Theologians Respond to American Feminism'. *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 3 (2): 103–5.

Brown, Melissa J. 2007. 'Ethnic Identity, Cultural Variation, and Processes of Change: Rethinking the Insights of Standardization and Orthopraxy'. *Modern China* 33 (1): 91–124. doi:10.2307/20062660.

Browning, Don S. 2006. *Christian Ethics and the Moral Psychologies*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing.

———. 2010. *Reviving Christian Humanism: The New Conversation on Spirituality, Theology, and Psychology*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

Bryant, Chalandra M., Rand D. Conger, and Jennifer M. Meehan. 2001. 'The Influence of In-Laws on Change in Marital Success'. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 63 (3): 614–26.

Cahalan, Kathleen A., and Gordon S. Mikoski, eds. 2014. *Opening the Field of Practical Theology: An Introduction*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield.

Cartledge, Mark J. 2009. 'God, Gender and Social Roles: A Study in Relation to Empirical-Theological Models of the Trinity'. *Journal of Empirical Theology* 22 (2): 117–141. doi:10.1163/092229309X12512584571580.

Chan, Joseph. 2008. 'Territorial Boundaries and Confucianism'. In *Confucian Political Ethics*, edited by Daniel A. Bell, 61–84. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Chang, Mu-Quan 張木泉。〈花蓮博愛浸信會歷史傳承〉（*The History of Hualien Boai Baptist Church*）。（網路文章）網址：http://www.boai.org.tw/web/539907/5。

查詢日期：2009/9/9。

Chappell, Neena L., and Karen Kusch. 2006. 'The Gendered Nature of Filial Piety — A Study among Chinese Canadians'. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology* 22 (1): 29–45. doi:10.1007/s10823-006-9011-5.

Che, Hsien-Huei 車先蕙。《內、外之間:婆媳間的關係與權力》（*Between Insider and Outsider: The Relationships and Power of Mothers- and Daughters-in-law*）。台北：輔仁大學碩士論文，1997。

Chen, Hsiao-Ying。《媳婦角色規範、家人支持與婆媳和諧關係之探討 》（*Effects of Norms of Daughter-in-law's Roles, Family Support on Harmonious Relationship between Mother and Daughter-in-law*）。台北： 師範大學碩士論文，2005。

Chen, Ya-Chen. 2011. *The Many Dimensions of Chinese Feminism*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

Chen, Yun-Ju。《女性原生家庭依附性、丈夫支持與婆媳和諧關係 》（*Study of "Support of Husband", "Attachment to Family of Origin" and "Harmonious Relationship with Mother-in-Law"*）。 高雄：師範大學碩士論文，2007。

Chio, Wen-Bin 邱文彬。《三代同住家庭中代間婦女關係之探討 》（*The Discussions of Female Intergenerational Relationships in the Three-Generation Cohabitated Family*）。台北：國立政治大學，1994 。

Christians, Clifford G. 2011. 'Ethics and Politics in Qualitative Research'. In *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, edited by Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, 4th ed., 61–80. London: SAGE Publications.

Chu, C. Y. Cyrus, Yu Xie, and Ruoh Rong Yu. 2011. 'Coresidence With Elderly Parents: A Comparative Study of Southeast China and Taiwan'. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 73 (1): 120–35. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2010.00793.x.

Chu, C. Y. Cyrus, and Ruoh-Rong Yu. 2010. *Understanding Chinese Families: A Comparative Study of Taiwan and Southeast China*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Chu, John S. T., ed. 2014. *Taiwan Church Report 2013*. Taichung: Christian Resource Center.

Chu, Ruey-Ling 朱瑞玲、Hei-Yuan Chiu 瞿海源、Ly-Yun Chang 張苙雲編。《台灣的社會變遷 1985~2005：心理、價值與宗教》 (*Social Change in Taiwan, 1985-2005：Psychology, Value and Religion*)。 台北：中研院社會所， 2012。

Chuang, Hui-Chun 莊慧君。《 婆媳衝突與調適心路歷程之研究》 (*The Study of Mother-in-law and Daughter-in-law : Conflict and Compromise in their Life Experience*)。嘉義：國立嘉義大學碩士論文，2004。

Clinebell, Howard. 1987. 'Pastoral Counselling'. In *A Dictionary of Pastoral Care*, edited by Alastair V. Campbell, New edition edition, 198–99. London: SPCK Publishing.

Cooey, Paula M. 1994. *Religious Imagination and the Body: A Feminist Analysis*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cooper-White, Pamela. 2004. *Shared Wisdom: Use of the Self in Pastoral Care and Counseling*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

Cotterill, Pamela. 1994. *Friendly Relations? Mothers and Their Daughters-in-Law*. London: Taylor & Francis.

Daly, Mary. 1968. *The Church and the Second Sex*. New York: Harper & Row.

———. 1973. *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation*. Boston: Beacon Press.

———. 1979. *Gyn/Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism*. London: The Women's Press.

Davaney, Sheila Greeve. 1997. 'Continuing the Story but Departing the Text — A Historicist Interpretation of Feminist Norms in Theology'. In *Horizons in Feminist Theology: Identity, Tradition, and Norms*, edited by Rebecca S. Chopp and Sheila Greeve Davaney, 198–212. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

Denzin, Norman K., and Yvonna S. Lincoln, eds. 2003. *The Landscape of Qualitative Research: Theories and Issues*. California: SAGE Publications.

———. , eds. 2011. *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*. 4th ed. London: SAGE Publications.

Department of Statistics. 2015. 'General Conditions of Religions'. Statistical Yearbook of Interior. Taiwan: Ministry of the Interior. http://sowf.moi.gov.tw/stat/year/elist.htm.

DeVault, Marjorie L. 1999. *Liberating Method: Feminism and Social Research*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Elizabeth Liebert, S. N. J. M. 2000. 'Seasons and Stages: Models and Metaphors of Human Development'. In *In Her Own Time: Women and Developmental Issues in Pastoral Care*, edited by Jeanne Stevenson-Moessner, 19–44. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

Erikson, Erik H. 1968. *Identity: Youth and Crisis*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co.

Executive Yuan. 2010. 'The History of the Republic of China'. Executive Yuan. http://www.ey.gov.tw/en/upload/webarchive/3862/history.pdf.

———. 2013. 'People and Language'. Ministry of the Interior. http://www.taiwan.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=105396&ctNode=1918&mp=1001.

Farris, Catherine S., Anru Lee, and Murray A. Rubinstein, eds. 2004. *Women in the New Taiwan: Gender Roles and Gender Consciousness in a Changing Society*. New York: M.E. Sharpe.

Farris, Catherine S. P. 2004. 'Women's Liberation Under "East Asian Modernity" in China and Taiwan-Historical, Cultural, and Comparative Perspectives'. In *Women in the New Taiwan: Gender Roles and Gender Consciousness in a Changing Society*, edited by Anru Lee, Murray A. Rubinstein, and Catherine Farris, 325–76. New York: M.E. Sharpe.

Fernandes, Leela. 2010. 'Unsettling "Third Wave Feminism": Feminist Waves, Intersectionality, and Identity Politics in Retrospect'. In *No Permanent Waves: Recasting Histories of U.S. Feminism*, edited by Nancy Hewitt, 98–118. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Fischer, Lucy Rose. 1983. 'Mothers and Mothers-in-Law'. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 45 (1): 187–92. doi:10.2307/351307.

Fowler, James W. 1981. *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*. New York: HarperCollins publisher.

———. 2001. 'Faith Development Theory and the Postmodern Challenges'. *The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion* 11 (3): 159–72. doi:10.1207/S15327582IJPR1103_03.

Fox, Patricia A. 2011. 'Feminist Theologies and the Trinity'. In *The Cambridge Companion to the Trinity*, edited by Peter C. Phan, 274–90. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

France, R. T. 1985. *The Gospel According to Matthew*. Tyndale New Testament Commentaries. Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press.

Frosh, Stephen. 2010. 'Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Identity: From Ego to Ethics'. In *The SAGE Handbook of Identities*, edited by Margaret Wetherell and Chandra T. Mohanty, 29–44. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Gallin, Rita S. 1984. 'Women, Family and the Political Economy of Taiwan'. *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 12 (1): 76–92.

———. 1986. 'Mothers-in-Law and Daughters-in-Law: Intergenerational Relations within the Chinese Family in Taiwan'. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology* 1 (1): 31–49. doi:10.1007/BF00116017.

———. 1994. 'The Intersection of Class and Age: Mother-in-Law/Daughter-in-Law Relations in Rural Taiwan'. In *Women Among Women: Anthropological Perspectives on Female Age Hierarchies*, edited by Jeanette Dickerson-Putman and Judith K. Brown, 1–14. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Gao, Shu-Gue 高淑貴。〈 農村已婚婦女與其女性尊親屬代間關係之研究：婆媳、母女之代間交換分析〉 *(Intergenerational Exchange of Married Women in Taiwanese Farmer's Villages: the Analysis of Daughters and Mothers-in-law, and Mother-Daughter Relationships）*。台北：臺灣大學農業推廣學系暨研究所，1999。（網路文章）網址：https://srda.sinica.edu.tw/search/gensciitem/587。查詢日期：2014/02/21。

Garland, Diana R. 2012. *Family Ministry: A Comprehensive Guide*. 2nd ed. Illinois: InterVarsity Press.

Garrison, Laura Turner. 2015. '6 Modern Societies Where Women Literally Rule'. *Mental Floss UK*. November 25. http://mentalfloss.com/article/31274/6-modern-societies-where-women-literally-rule.

Gerkin, Charles V. 1984. *The Living Human Document: Re-Visioning Pastoral Counseling in a Hermeneutical Mode*. Reprint. Nashville: Abingdon Press.

Gonzalez, Michelle A. 2007. *Created in God's Image: An Introduction to Feminist Theological Anthropology*. New York: Orbis Books.

Graham, Elaine. 1995. *Making the Difference: Gender, Personhood, and Theology*. London: Mowbray.

———. 1999. 'Words Made Flesh: Women, Embodiment and Practical Theology'. *Feminist Theology* 7 (109): 109–21. doi:10.1177/09667350990000210.

———. 2002. *Transforming Practice: Pastoral Theology in an Age of Uncertainty*. Eugene, Ore.: Wipf and Stock.

———. 2009. *Words Made Flesh: Writings in Pastoral and Practical Theology*. London: SCM Press.

———. 2011. 'Practical Theology'. In *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christian Theology*, edited by Ian A. McFarland, David A. S. Fergusson, Karen Kilby, and Iain R. Torrance, 401–3. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hamera, Judith. 2011. 'Performance Ethnography'. In *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, edited by Norman K Denzin and Yvonna S Lincoln, 4th ed., 317–30. London: SAGE Publications.

Hamilton, Gary G. 1990. 'Patriarchy, Patrimonialism, and Filial Piety: A Comparison of China and Western Europe'. *The British Journal of Sociology* 41 (1): 77–104. doi:10.2307/591019.

Hammersley, Martyn, and Anna Traianou. 2012. *Ethics in Qualitative Research: Controversies and Contexts*. London: SAGE Publications.

Hammond, Phillip E., ed. 1985. *The Sacred in a Secular Age: Toward Revision in the Scientific Study of Religion*. California: University of California Press.

Hampson, Daphne. 1990. *Theology and Feminism*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd.

———. 1997. 'An Ethic for the 21st Century'. *Sea of Faith Network*. http://www.sofn.org.uk/conferences/hamps97.html.

Harper, Douglas. 2015. 'Ethnography'. *Online Etymology Dictionary*. http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed_in_frame=0&search=ethnography&search mode=none.

Heitink, Gerben. 1999. *Practical Theology: History, Theory, Action Domains : Manual for Practical Theology*. Translated by Reinder Bruinsma. Michigan, Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

Hershock, Peter D., and Roger T. Ames, eds. 2006. *Confucian Cultures of Authority*. New York: New York University Press.

Hesse-Biber, Sharlene Nagy. 2010. 'Feminist Approaches To Mixed Methods Research: Linking Theory and Praxis'. In *SAGE Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social & Behavioral Research*, edited by Abbas Tashakkori and Charles Teddlie, 2nd ed., 169–92. California: SAGE Publications.

Hoggard-Creegan, N. 2001. 'Feminism, Feminist Theology'. Edited by Walter A. Elwell. *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic.

Holroyd, Eleanor, Sheila Twinn, and Ip Wan-Yim. 2005. 'Exploring Chinese Women's Cultural Beliefs and Behaviours Regarding the Practice of "Doing the Month"'. *Routledge*, Women & Health, 40 (3): 109–23.

Hsiung, Ping-chen. 2004. 'Sons and Mothers: Demographic Realities and the Chinese Culture of Hsiao'. In *Women in the New Taiwan: Gender Roles and Gender Consciousness in a Changing Society*, edited by Catherine Farris, Anru Lee, and Murray Rubinstein, 14–40. New York: M.E. Sharpe.

Hsu, Hao-Yi 許皓宜。〈媳婦角色在家庭照顧中的文化期待〉（The Cultural Expectations on the Role of Daughters-in-Law Play in Family Care）。《家庭教育與諮商學刊》*(Journal of Family Education and Counsel)* 14 （2013）：33–52。

Hsu, Shih-Chi 許詩淇。《婆媳關係之和諧類型與衝突轉化—以本土化動態模式為視角》 *(Types of Harmony on the Mothers-in-law and Daughters-in-law in Taiwan and Dynamic Model of Transformative Solutions to the Causes of Conflicts of Chinese Culture）*。台北市：臺灣師範大學碩士論文，2003。

Hsu Shih-Chi 許詩淇、Huang Li-Li 黃囇莉。〈「情同母女」之外：婆媳關係的多元和諧〉（Beyond Mother-Daughter Affection: Multiple Harmonies for Mothers- and Daughters-in-Law）。《本土心理學研究》26（2006）：35–72。

Hu You-Hui 胡幼慧。《三代同堂: 迷思與陷阱》 *(The Three Generations under One Roof: Myth and Pitfalls）*。台北：巨流圖書公司，1995。

Huang, Han-Hui 黃瀚輝、Chieh-Lu Li 李介祿。〈跨區域比較遊客之價值觀與遊憩行為意向〉（A Cross-regional Comparison of Visitor Values and Recreation Behavior Intentions）《林業研究季刊》34，2（2012)：121–32。

Huang, Li-Li 許詩淇、Huang Li-Li 黃囇莉。〈虛虛實實之間：婆媳關係的和諧化歷程與轉化機制〉（From Superficiality to Genuineness: Harmonization Processes and Transformation Mechanisms between Mothers- and Daughters-in-Law）。《本土心理學研究》25，（2006）：3–45。

Hung, Yung-Ju. 2014a. *Transcripts of Focus Group Discussions - Taipei*. Taiwan Baptist Theological Seminary.

Hunt, Mary E. 2009. 'Women-Church: Feminist Concept, Religious Commitment, Women's Movement'. *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 25 (1): 85–98.

International Business Publications, Ibp, ed. 2013. *Macao: Country Study Guide*. Vol. 1. Strategic Information and Developments. Washington, D.C.: International Business Publications.

Isasi-Díaz, Ada María. 1993. *En La Lucha/In the Struggle: Elaborating a Mujersta Theology*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

Isherwood, Lisa, and Dorothea McEwan. 2001. *Introducing Feminist Theology*. 2nd ed. England: Sheffield Academic Press.

Jacobs, Michael. 1987. 'Identity'. Edited by Alastair V. Campbell. *A Dictionary of Pastoral Care*. London: SPCK Publishing.

Jang, Juyoung. 2014. 'In-Laws'. In *The Social History of the American Family: An Encyclopedia*, edited by Marilyn J. Coleman and Lawrence H. Ganong, 1:741–43. California: SAGE Publications.

Jean Turner, M., Carolyn R. Young, and Kelly I. Black. 2006. 'Daughters-in-Law and Mothers-in-Law Seeking Their Place Within the Family: A Qualitative Study of Differing Viewpoints'. *Family Relations* 55 (5): 588–600. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3729.2006.00428.x.

Jones, Serene. 2012. 'Feminist Theology and the Global Imagination'. In *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Theology*, edited by Mary McClintock Fulkerson and Sheila Briggs, 23–49. New York: Oxford University Press.

Kamberelis, George Kamberelis, and Greg Dimitriadis. 2011. 'Focus Groups: Contingent Articulations of Pedagogy, Politics, and Inquiry'. In *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, edited by Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, 4th ed., 545–61. London: SAGE Publications.

Kamitsuka, Margaret D. 2007. *Feminist Theology and the Challenge of Difference*. Oxford University Press.

Kang, Namsoon. 2011. 'Out of Place: Asian Feminist Theology of Dislocation'. In *Out of Place: Doing Theology on the Crosscultural Brink*, edited by Jione Havea and Clive Pearson, 105–28. Cross Cultural Theologies Series. London: Equinox Publishing.

———. 2012. 'Transethnic Feminist Theology of Asia: Globalization, Identities, and Solidarities'. In *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Theology*, edited by Mary McClintock Fulkerson and Sheila Briggs, 109–30. New York: Oxford University Press.

Kilby, Jane, and Celia Lury. 2000. 'Introduction'. In *Transformations: Thinking Through Feminism*, edited by Sarah Ahmed, Jane Kilby, Celia Lury, Maureen McNeil, Maureen Mcneil, and Beverley Skeggs, 253–58. London and New York: Routledge.

Kilby, Karen. 2011. 'Trinity'. In *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christian Theology*, edited by Ian A. McFarland, David A. S. Fergusson, Karen Kilby, and Iain R. Torrance, 518–20. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kim, Heup Young. 2011. 'The Tao in Confucianism and Taoism: The Trinity in East Asin Perspective'. In *The Cambridge Companion to the Trinity*, edited by Peter C. Phan, 293–308. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kothari, C. R. 2004. *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques*. New Delhi: New Age International Publishers.

Kung, Hsian-Ming 孔祥明。〈婆媳過招爲哪樁？：婆婆、媳婦與兒子（丈夫）三角關係的探討〉（Intergenerational Interaction between Mothers- and Daughters-in-law: A Qualitative Study）。《應用心理研究》4（1999）：57–96。

Kuo, Cheng-Tian. 2008. *Religion and Democracy in Taiwan*. New York: State University of New York Press.

Kwok, Pui-lan. 2000. *Introducing Asian Feminist Theology*. England: Sheffield Academic Press.

———. 2002. 'Feminist Theology as Intercultural Discourse'. In *The Cambridge Companion to Feminist Theology*, edited by Susan Frank Parsons, 23–39. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

———. 2005. *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology*. London: SCM Press.

Kwok, Pui-lan, and Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, eds. 1998. *Women's Sacred Scriptures*. London: SCM Press.

Kyung, Chung Hyun. 1990. *Struggle to Be the Sun Again: Introducing Asian Women's Theology*. New York: Orbis Books.

———. 2004. 'Your Comfort vs. My Death: Korean Comfort Women'. In *Women Resisting Violence: Spirituality for Life*, edited by Mary John Mananzan, Mercy A. Oduyoye, Elsa Tamez, J. Shannon Clarkson, Mary C. Grey, and Letty M. Russell, 129–40. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers.

LaCugna, Catherine Mowry. 1989. 'The Baptismal Formula, Feminist Objections, and Trinitarian Theology'. *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 26 (2): 235.

———. 1993. *God for Us : The Trinity and Christian Life*. San Francisco: Harper Collins.

Lartey, Emmanuel Y. 2011. 'Pastoral Theology'. In *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christian Theology*, edited by Ian A. McFarland, David A. S. Fergusson, Karen Kilby, and Iain R. Torrance, 371–73. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lawler, Michael G, and Gail S Risch. 1999. 'Covenant Generativity: Toward a Theology of Christian Family'. *Horizons* 26 (1): 7–30.

Lawson, Michael S. 2011. 'Old Testament Teachings on the Family'. In *A Theology for Family Ministry*, edited by Michael Anthony and Michelle Anthony, 66–87. Tennessee: B&H Publishing Group.

Leach, Margaret S., and Dawn O. Braithwaite. 1996. 'A Binding Tie: Supportive Communication of Family Kinkeepers'. *Journal of Applied Communication Research* 24 (3): 200–216. doi:10.1080/00909889609365451.

Lee, Eunju, Glenna Spitze, and John R. Logan. 2003. 'Social Support to Parents-in-Law: The Interplay of Gender and Kin Hierarchies'. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 65 (2): 396–403.

Lee, Yean-Ju, William L. Parish, and Robert J. Willis. 1994. 'Sons, Daughters, and Intergenerational Support in Taiwan'. *American Journal of Sociology* 99 (4): 1010–41. doi:10.2307/2781738.

Leichter, Hope Jensen, William E. Mitchell, Candec Rogers, and Judith Lieb. 1967. *Kinship and Casework*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Leming, Laura M. 2007. 'Sociological Explorations: What Is Religious Agency?' *The Sociological Quarterly* 48 (1): 73–92.

Li, Chenyang. 1999. *The Tao Encounters the West: Explorations in Comparative Philosophy*. New York: State University of New York Press.

Li, Tsui-Shan 利翠珊。〈已婚女性家庭系統的交會：親情與角色的兩難〉（Encountering Different Family Systems: An Intergenerational Dilemma in Terms of Role and Affection）。《中華心理衛生學刊》 12，3（1999）：1–26。

Li, Yan-Ching 李彥慶。《丈夫面對婆媳衝突之婆媳權力認知、夫妻親密情感與婆媳衝突因應策略之相關研究》（*Study of Husband's Cognitive of Power among Conflicts in Mother- and Daughter-in-law Relationship, Marital Intimacy and His Coping Strategies with the Conflicts*）。台南：台南大學碩士論文，2011。

Lin, Chin-ju. 2005. '"Modern" Daughters-In-Law in Colonial Taiwanese Families'. *Journal of Family History* 30 (2): 191–209. doi:10.1177/0363199004270786.

———。〈父系家庭與女性差異認同：中產階級職業婦女家務分工經驗的跨世代比較〉（Identity Differences among Women in Patrilineal Families: A Cross-Generational Comparison of the Division of Domestic Labor of Middle-Class Working Women）。《臺灣社會研究季刊》68（2007）：1–75。

Lin, Ju-Ping 林如萍。〈台灣家庭的代間關係與代間互動類型之變遷與趨勢〉（Intergenerational Relations and a Typology of Intergenerational Interaction between Adult Children and Parents: Trends in Taiwanese Family）。《台灣的社會變遷1985~2005：家庭與婚姻》。伊慶春、章英華編。台北：中研院社會所，2012。

Lincoln, Yvonna S., Susan A. Lynham, and Egon G. Guba. 2011. 'Paradigmatic Controversies, Contradictions, and Emerging Confluences, Revisited'. In *The SAGA Handbook of Qualitative Research*, edited by Norman K Denzin and Yvonna S Lincoln, 4th ed., 97–128. London: SAGE Publications.

Linn, R., and S. Breslerman. 1996. 'Women in Conflict: On the Moral Knowledge of Daughters-in-law and Mothers-in-law'. *Journal of Moral Education* 25 (3): 291–307.

Litosseliti, Lia. 2003. *Using Focus Groups in Research*. Continuum Research Methods Series. London: Continuum. http://www.GLA.eblib.com/patron/FullRecord.aspx?p=742924.

Lo, Ming-Cheng M., and Yun Fan. 2010. 'Hybrid Cultural Codes in Nonwestern Civil Society: Images of Women in Taiwan and Hong Kong'. *Sociological Theory* 28 (2): 167–92. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9558.2010.01372.x.

Lo Ping-Cheung 羅秉祥。《公理婆理話倫理》（*Christian Ethics*)。香港：明風出版，2004。

Low, Gail Ching-Liang. 2005. 'Crossing Boundries: Thinking/Teaching Identity'. In *Transformations: Thinking Through Feminism*, edited by Sarah Ahmed, Jane Kilby, Celia Lury, Maureen Mcneil, and Beverley Skeggs, 159–72. London and New York: Routledge.

Lu, Hsin-yi. 2004. 'Imagining "New Women", Imagining Modernity-Gender Rhetoric in Colonial Taiwan'. In *Women in the New Taiwan: Gender Roles and Gender Consciousness in a Changing Society*, edited by Catherine S. Farris, Anru Lee, and Murray A. Rubinstein. New York: M.E. Sharpe.

Lu, Huei-Chung, and Roger P. C. Cheng。〈孝道的認同與實踐－以「成年兒子與父母同住決策」為分析對象〉（Identification and Implementation of Filial Piety－the Coresidence Decision of Adult Son and Elderly Parents）《人口學刊》45（2012）：111–54。

Lu, Luo. 2009. '"I or We": Family Socialization Values in a National Probability Sample in Taiwan'. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology* 12 (2): 145–150. doi:10.1111/j.1467-839X.2009.01276.x.

Lu, Luo, and Kou-Shu Yang. 2006. 'Emergence and Composition of the Traditional-Modern Bicultural Self of People in Contemporary Taiwanese Societies'. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology* 9 (3): 167–75.

Lu, Myra, Robyn Taylor, and Don Silver, eds. 2014. *The Republic of China at a Glance: 2013-2014 Taiwan*. New Taipei City: Ministry of Foreign Affairs. http://www.taiwan.gov.tw/public/Data/562215182771.pdf.

Macallan, Brian C. 2014. *Postfoundationalist Reflections in Practical Theology: A Framework for a Discipline in Flux*. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers.

McEwan, Cheryl. 2001. 'Postcolonialism, Feminism and Development: Intersections and Dilemmas'. *Progress in Development Studies* 1 (2): 93–111. doi:10.1177/146499340100100201.

McFague, Sallie. 2011. 'Ecofeminism and Nature'. In *Creating Women's Theology: A Movement Engaging Process Thought*, edited by Monica A. Coleman, Nancy R. Howell, and Helene Tallon Russell, 113–26. Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers.

McGrowin, Emily. 2008. 'God, Gender Of'. Edited by Ed Hindson and Ergun Caner. *The Popular Encyclopedia of Apologetics: Surveying the Evidence for the Truth of Christianity*. Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers.

McPhillips, Kathleen. 1999. 'Modernity, Rationality and the Problem of Women's Religious Agency'. *Australian Feminist Studies* 14 (30): 293–302. doi:10.1080/08164649993128.

Merrill, Deborah M. 2007. *Mothers-in-Law and Daughters-in-Law: Understanding the Relationship and What Makes Them Friends Or Foe*. London: Praeger publisher.

Meyerstein, Israela. 1996. 'A Systemic Approach to in-Law Dilemmas'. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* 22 (4): 469–480. doi:10.1111/j.1752-0606.1996.tb00221.x.

Michie, Helena. 1990. *The Flesh Made Word: Female Figures and Women's Bodies*. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mikulincer, Mario, and Phillip R. Shaver, eds. 2015. *APA Handbook of Personality and Social Psychology: Attitudes and Social Cognition*. 1st ed. Vol. 1. APA Handbooks in Psychology. Washington, D.C: American Psychological Association.

Miller, Robert Lee, and John D. Brewer, eds. 2003. *The A-Z of Social Research: A Dictionary of Key Social Science Research Concepts*. London: SAGE Publications.

Miller-McLemore, Bonnie J. 1996. 'The Living Human Web: Pastoral Theology at the Turn of the Century'. In *Through the Eyes of Women: Insights for Pastoral Care*, edited by Jeanne S. Moessner, 9–26. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

———. 1999. 'Feminist Theory in Pastoral Theology'. In *Feminist and Womanist Pastoral Theology*, edited by Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore and Brita L. Gill-Austern, 77–94. Nashville: Abingdon Press.

———. 2000. 'How Sexuality and Relationships Have Revolutionized Pastoral Theology'. In *The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology*, edited by James Woodward and Stephen Pattison, 233–47. Wiley.

———. 2012. *Christian Theology in Practice: Discovering a Discipline*. Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing.

———. 2013. 'Embodied Knowing, Embodied Theology: What Happened to the Body?' *Pastoral Psychology* 62 (5): 743–58. doi:10.1007/s11089-013-0510-3.

Minister, Meredith. 2014. *Trinitarian Theology and Power Relations: God Embodied*. New Approaches to Religion and Power. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 2014. 'About Taiwan: Geography & Demographics'. *Info Taiwan*. December 30. http://www.taiwan.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=136103&CtNode=3557&mp=1.

Mitchell, Gail J., Sherry Dupuis, Christine Jonas-Simpson, Colleen Whyte, Jennifer Carson, and Jennifer Gillis. 2011. 'The Experience of Engaging With Research-Based Drama: Evaluation and Explication of Synergy and Transformation'. *Qualitative Inquiry* 17 (4): 379–92. doi:10.1177/1077800411401200.

Morr Serewicz, Mary Claire. 2006. 'The Difficulties of In-Law Relationships'. In *Relating Difficulty: The Processes of Constructing and Managing Difficult Interaction*, edited by Dan Charles Kirkpatrick, Steve Duck, and Megan K. Foley, 101–18. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum associates.

Moschella, Mary Clark. 2008. *Ethnography as a Pastoral Practice: An Introduction*. Cleveland, Ohio: Pilgrim Press.

———. 2011. 'Ethnography'. In *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology*, edited by Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore, 224–33. John Wiley & Sons.

Munthali, Robert. 2014. *Transformation and Development of Human Society: A Homiletical Pastoral Perspective*. Xlibris Corporation.

Ng, Tai P. 2007. *Chinese Culture, Western Culture: Why Must We Learn from Each Other?* iUniverse.

Norquist, Bruce Robert. 2008. *An Exploration of the Relationship Between Student Engagement with 'Otherness' and Faith Development in Evangelical Higher Education*. ProQuest.

Norris, Joe. 2000. 'Drama as Research: Realizing the Potential of Drama in Education as a Research Methodology'. *Youth Theatre Journal* 14 (1): 40–51. doi:10.1080/08929092.2000.10012516.

NRSV. 1989. *New Revised Standard Version Bible*. Hendrickson Publishers.

Nyitray, Vivian-Lee. 2008. 'Fundamentalism and the Position of Women in Confucianism'. In *Fundamentalism and Women in World Religions*, edited by Arvind Sharma and Katherine K. Young, 47–76. NY: T&T Clark International.

Olesen, Virginia L. 2003. 'Feminisms and Qualitative Research at and into the Millennium'. In *The Landscape of Qualitative Research: Theories and Issues*, edited by Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, 332–97. California: SAGE Publications.

Olsen, Nancy J. 1974. 'Family Structure and Socialization Patterns in Taiwan'. *American Journal of Sociology* 79 (6): 1395–1417. doi:10.2307/2777141.

Opie, Anne. 1992. 'Qualitative Research, Appropriation of the "Other" and Empowerment'. *Feminist Review*, no. 40: 52–69. doi:10.2307/1395277.

O'Reilly, Karen. 2009. *Key Concepts in Ethnography*. London: SAGE.

Osmer, Richard Robert. 2008. *Practical Theology: An Introduction*. Grand Rapids, MI / Cambridge, UK: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing.

Pears, Angie. 2009. *Doing Contextual Theology*. 1st ed. New York: Routledge.

Pew Research Center. 2014. 'Global Religious Diversity'. *Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project*. April 4. http://www.pewforum.org/2014/04/04/global-religious-diversity/.

Phillips, Anne. 2011. *The Faith of Girls: Children's Spirituality and Transition to Adulthood*. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Company.

Pieterse, Jan Nederveen. 1994. 'Globalisation as Hybridisation'. *International Sociology* 9 (2): 161–84. doi:10.1177/026858094009002003.

———. 1995. 'Globalizaiton as Hybridizaiton'. In *Global Modernities*, edited by Mike Featherstone, Scott Lash, and Roland Robertson, 45–68. London: SAGE.

Pope, Stephen J. 1991. 'The Order of Love and Recent Catholic Ethics: A Constructive Proposal'. *Theological Studies* 52 (2): 255–288.

Rahner, Karl. 1970. *The Trinity*. Translated by Herder & Herder. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Rainey, Lee Dian. 2010. *Confucius and Confucianism: The Essentials*. UK: Wiley-Blackwell.

Renfro, Paul, Brandon Shields, and Jay Strother. 2009. *Perspectives on Family Ministry: 3 Views*. Edited by Timothy Paul Jones. Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group.

Rittenour, Christine E., and Jody Koenig Kellas. 2015. 'Making Sense of Hurtful Mother-in-Law Messages: Applying Attribution Theory to the In-Law Triad'. *Communication Quarterly* 63 (1): 62–80. doi:10.1080/01463373.2014.965837.

Rittenour, Christine, and Jordan Soliz. 2009. 'Communicative and Relational Dimensions of Shared Family Identity and Relational Intentions in Mother-in-Law/Daughter-in-Law Relationships: Developing a Conceptual Model for Mother-in-Law/Daughter-in-Law Research'. *Western Journal of Communication* 73 (1): 67–90. doi:10.1080/10570310802636334.

Rogers, Eugene F. 1999. *Sexuality and the Christian Body: Their Way into the Triune God*. Challenges in Contemporary Theology. Oxford ; Malden, Mass: Blackwell.

Ruether, Rosemary Radford. 1983. *Sexism and God-Talk: Toward a Feminist Theology*. Boston: Beacon Press.

———. 2002. 'The Emergence of Christian Feminist Theology'. In *The Cambridge Companion to Feminist Theology*, edited by Susan Frank Parsons, 3–22. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

———. 2012. *Women and Redemption: A Theological History*. Second Edition. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

Russell, Letty M., Kwok Pui-Lan, Ada María Isasi-Díaz, and Katie Geneva Cannon, eds. 1988. 'A Hispanic Garden in a Foreign Land'. In *Inheriting Our Mothers' Gardens: Feminist Theology in Third World Perspective*, 91–106. Louisville: Westminster Press.

Saiving, Valerie. 1995. 'The Human Situation: A Feminine View'. In *Readings in Ecology and Feminist Theology*, edited by Mary Heather MacKinnon and Moni McIntyre, 3–18. Kansas City, Mo: Sheed & Ward.

Sanders, Fred. 2007. 'The Trinity'. In *The Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology*, edited by John Webster, Iain Torrance, and Kathryn Tanner, 35–53. NY: Oxford University Press.

Scharen, Christian, and Aana Marie Vigen, eds. 2011. *Ethnography as Christian Theology and Ethics*. New York: Continuum.

Schreiter, Robert J. 1985. *Constructing Local Theologies*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books.

Schüssler Fiorenza, Elisabeth. 1995. *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins*. 2nd ed. London: SCM Press.

———. 1998. *Sharing Her Word: Feminist Biblical Interpretation In Context*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark.

———. 1999. *Rhetoric and Ethic: The Politics of Biblical Studies*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

———. 2004. *Jesus: Miriam's Child, Sophia's Prophet: Critical Issues in Feminist Christology*. New York & London: The Continuum International Publishing Group Ltd.

Schwandt, Thomas A. 2014. 'Subjectivity'. In *The SAGE Dictionary of Qualitative Inquiry*, 4thed. London: SAGE Publications.

Schwartz, Seth J., Robert S. Weisskirch, Eric A. Hurley, Byron L. Zamboanga, Irene J. K. Park, Su Yeong Kim, Adriana Umaña-Taylor, Linda G. Castillo, Elissa Brown, and Anthony D. Greene. 2010. 'Communalism, Familism, and Filial Piety: Are They Birds of a Collectivist Feather'. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology* 16 (4): 548–60. doi:10.1037/a0021370.

Scott-Jones, Julie, and Sal Watt, eds. 2010. *Ethnography in Social Science Practice*. New York: Routledge.

Sell, Charles M. 1995. *Family Ministry*. 2nd ed. Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House.

Serewicz, Mary C. M. 2008. 'Toward a Triangular Theory of the Communication and Relationships of In-Laws: Theoretical Proposal and Social Relations Analysis of Relational Satisfaction and Private Disclosure in In-Law Triads'. *Journal of Family Communication* 8 (4): 264–92. doi:10.1080/15267430802397161.

Showalter, Elaine. 1981. 'Feminist Criticism in the Wilderness'. *Critical Inquiry* 8 (2): 179–205.

Silverstein, Judith L. 1990. 'The Problem with In-Laws'. *Journal of Family Therapy* 14 (4): 399–412. doi:10.1046/j..1992.00469.x.

Skerrett, Ellen. 2010. 'Reclaiming Religious Roots and Women's Agency'. *Journal of Urban History* 36 (4): 561–68. doi:10.1177/0096144210363069.

Slee, Nicola. 2004. *Women's Faith Development: Patterns and Processes*. England: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.

Song, Yi, and Yan Bing Zhang. 2012. 'Husbands' Conflict Styles in Chinese Mother/Daughter-In-Law Conflicts: Daughters-in-Law's Perspectives'. *Journal of Family Communication* 12 (1): 57–74. doi:10.1080/15267431.2011.629968.

Sprague, Joey. 2005. *Feminist Methodologies for Critical Researchers: Bridging Differences*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

St. Augustine. 2007. 'Homilies on The Gospel of John'. In *St. Augustine: Gospel of John, First Epistle of John, Soliliques*, edited by Philip Schaff, translated by John Gibb and James Innes. Vol. VII. Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, First Series. NY: Cosimo, Inc.

Stacey, Judith. 1988. 'Can There Be a Feminist Ethnography?' *Women's Studies International Forum* 11 (1): 21–27. doi:10.1016/0277-5395(88)90004-0.

Stevenson-Moessner, Jeanne, ed. 2000a. *In Her Own Time: Women and Developmental Issues in Pastoral Care*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.

———. 2000b. 'Incarnational Theology: Restructuring Developmental Theory'. In *In Her Own Time: Women and Developmental Issues in Pastoral Care*, edited by Jeanne Stevenson-Moessner, 7–18. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.

Sung, Hua-Min 宋華敏。《苦難、勞動、關係的建構:北台灣客庄婦女的生命敘事分析》（*Suffering, Labor and the Construction of Relationships: An Analysis of Life Narratives of Hakka Women in Northern Taiwan*）。新竹：交通大學碩士論文，2012。

Swinton, John, and Harriet Mowat. 2006. *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*. London: SCM Press.

Taipei Times, Staff writer. 20131023. 'Taiwan's Population Moves from "Aging" to "Aged": Statistics - Taipei Times'. http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2013/10/23/2003575197.

Takhar, Shaminder. 2013. *Gender, Ethnicity and Political Agency: South Asian Women Organizing*. New York: Routledge.

Tan, Sor-hoon. 2004. 'Filial Daughters-in-Law: Questioning Confucian Filiality'. In *Filial Piety in Chinese Thought and History*, edited by Alan K. L. Chan and Sor-Hoon Tan, 226–40. London: Routledge.

Tang, Nai-Hua 唐乃華。《幫手!?綁手 !?已婚女性與母親、婆婆托育協助之代間矛盾》（*Intergenerational Ambivalence in Married Women Nurture with their Mothers and Mother-in-Law*）。台北：臺灣師範大學碩士論文，2009。

Tanner, Kathryn. 2012. 'Social Trinitarianism and Its Critics'. In *Rethinking Trinitarian Theology: Disputed Questions And Contemporary Issues in Trinitarian Theology*, edited by Giulio Maspero and Robert J. Wozniak, 368–86. London and New York: T&T Clark International.

Taylor, Rodney L. 2009. *Confucianism*. 3rded. New York: Infobase Publishing.

Thornton, Arland and Hui-Sheng Lin. 1994. *Social Change and the Family in Taiwan*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.

Tierney, William G. 2001. 'The Autonomy of Knowledge and the Decline of the Subject: Postmodernism and the Reformulation of the University'. *Higher Education* 41 (4): 353–72. doi:10.1023/A:1017588907541.

Tsai, Hsiu-Hsin, Mei-Hui Chen, and Yun-Fang Tsai. 2008. 'Perceptions of Filial Piety among Taiwanese University Students'. *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 63 (3): 284–290. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2648.2008.04711.x.

Tsai, Pei-Jie 蔡沛婕。《初為人媳角色轉換經驗之探討》（*Role Transition: The Lived Experience of Newly Daughter-in-law*）。嘉義：嘉義大學碩士論文，2001。

Tu, Wei-Ming. 1985. *Confucian Thought: Selfhood as Creative Transformation*. SUNY Press.

United Nations. 2012. 'The World at Six Billion'. Accessed February 25. http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/sixbillion/sixbilpart1.pdf.

USA, International Business Publications. 2012. *Korea: South Country Study Guide*. Vol. Volume 1. Strategic Information and Developments. Washington, DC: International Business Publications.

Wan, Yin. 2009. 'Childbirth Among Hong Kong Chinese'. In *Childbirth Across Cultures: Ideas and Practices of Pregnancy, Childbirth and the Postpartum*, edited by Helaine Selin and Pamela Kendall Stone, 5:71–76. Science across Cultures: The History of Non-Western Science, Childbirth Across Cultures. Amherst, Mass: Springer Verlag.

Wang, Chi-Doung 王啟東。〈三代同堂〉（Three-generation Extended Family）。《Encyclopedia of Taiwan》。（網路文章）網址：http://210.69.67.7/web/content?ID=100187。查詢日期：2013/9/6。

Wang, Jung-Chen 王蓉貞。新婆媳「問題」：臺灣在地婆媳與新移民婆媳互動關係之研究。（*New "problem" between Mothers-in-law and Daughters-in-law: Study of Comparison of The Interactions between in-laws from Native and Immigrant Daughters-in-law*）。台北：東吳大學碩士論文，2014。

Wang, Yi-Ren 王以仁。《婚姻與家庭: 配偶及家人的溝通和調適》（*Marriage and Family: the Communications and Adaptions between Couples and Family Members*）。台北：心理出版社股份有限公司，2010。

Ward, Pete, ed. 2012. *Perspectives on Ecclesiology and Ethnography*. Grand Rapids, MI / Cambridge, UK: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing.

Werbner, Pnina. 2010. 'Religous Identities'. In *The SAGE Handbook of Identities*, edited by Margaret Wetherell and Chandra T. Mohanty, 233–58. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

White, Lynn T. 2009. *Political Booms: Local Money and Power in Taiwan, East China, Thailand, and the Philippines*. Singapore: World Scientific.

Wickramasinghe, Maithree. 2009. *Feminist Research Methodology: Making Meanings of Meaning-Making*. New York: Routledge.

Wiles, Rose. 2013. *What Are Qualitative Research Ethics?* London and New York: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Williams, Delores S. 1993. *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist God-Talk*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books.

Willson, Andrea E., Kim M. Shuey, and Glen H. Elder Jr. 2003. 'Ambivalence in the Relationship of Adult Children to Aging Parents and In-Laws'. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 65 (4): 1055–72.

Win, Cha-Chi 溫家青。《婆媳角色期待的差異性研究》（*A Study of Discrepancies of Role Expectations Between Mother-Daughter-in-Law*）。南投：暨南國際大學碩士論文，2007。

Wong Wai Ching 黃慧貞編。《亞洲女性主義神學》（*Asian Feminist Theology*）。香港：基督教文藝出版社，2008。

———。〈從西方「婦女宗教精神」運動到亞洲基督徒婦女神學的反省〉（A Reflection from Western "Women's Religious Spirit" to Asian Christian Women's Theology）。《道風漢語神學學刊》10（1999）：103–15。

Woodward, James, and Stephen Pattison, eds. 2000. *The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Wu, Tsui-Feng, Kuang-Hui Yeh, Susan E. Cross, Lisa M. Larson, Yi-Chao Wang, and Yi-Lin Tsai. 2010. 'Conflict With Mothers-in-Law and Taiwanese Women's Marital Satisfaction: The Moderating Role of Husband Support'. *The Counseling Psychologist* 38 (4): 497–522. doi:10.1177/0011000009353071.

Wu Wu-Guan 吳娟瑜。《不必當母女當好婆媳就好: 婆媳都不說, 但希望對方了解的事！》（*Do Not to Be Mother-Daughter, but to Be Mother-in-law and Daughter-in-law: They Don't Speak, but Want the Other Party to Know*）。台北：三采文化出版事業有限公司，2011。

Wun Hei-xuon 溫惠雄。《教牧看婆媳問題》（*The Discourses Between Daughters and Mothers-in-Law from the Pastoral Perspectives*）。台北：橄欖基金會，1985。

Xi, Xue-Ji 許雪姬。〈台灣女性史〉（The History of Taiwanese Women）《成為時代差使—婦女七十週年慶祝大會，主題信息暨分組研討精華》。莊淑珍編。台北：台灣基長老教會總會婦女事工委員會，1992。

Xiao Qunzhong. 2001. *Xiao Yu Zhongguo Wen Hua (Filial Piety and Chinese Culture)*. Beijing: Renmin Publisher.

Xie, Yu-ling 謝玉玲。《「道德媳婦」的當代生活實踐：女性代間照護處境之經驗研究》(*An Ideology of "Moral Daughters-in-law " in Contemporary Praxis: The Lived Experience of Daughters-in-law in Intergenerational Care Relationships*)。嘉義：中正大學博士論文，2007。

Xu, Xiaohe, and Shu-Chuan Lai. 2002a. 'Resources, Gender Ideologies, and Marital Power: The Case of Taiwan'. *Journal of Family Issues* 23 (2): 209–45. doi:10.1177/0192513X02023002003.

———. 2002b. 'Resources, Gender Ideologies, and Marital Power The Case of Taiwan'. *Journal of Family Issues* 23 (2): 209–45. doi:10.1177/0192513X02023002003.

Yang, Chih-Liang 楊志良。《由活躍老化觀點建構國民健康新願景 》（Constructing a New Goal for Health from the Concept of Active Ageing Population）。《中華民國社區發展研究訓練中心社區發展季刊》。132（2010/12）：26–40。

Yang Cui 楊翠。《日據時期台灣婦女解放運動：以《台灣民報》為分析場域》（*Taiwanese women's Liberation Movement under Japanese Rule*）。台北：時報文化出版企業有限公司，1993。

Yeh Kuang-Hui 葉光輝。〈台灣民眾之孝道觀念的變遷情形 〉（The Change in the Taiwan People's Concept of Filial Piety）。《九○年代的台灣社會：社會變遷基本調查研究系列（二）》。瞿海源、張苙雲編。台北：中央研究院社會學研究所，1997。

Yeh, Kuang-Hui, and Olwen Bedford. 2003. 'A Test of the Dual Filial Piety Model'. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology* 6 (3): 215–228. doi:10.1046/j.1467-839X.2003.00122.x.

Yeh, Kuang-Hui 葉光輝、Ying-Hwa Chang 章英華、Wei-Chun Tsao 曹帷純。〈台灣民眾家庭價值觀之變遷與可能心理機制〉（The Change of Family Values and Its Underlying Psychological Mechanism in Contemporary Taiwan）。《台灣的社會變遷 1985~2005：家庭與婚姻 》。伊慶春、章英華編。台北：中研院社會所，2012。

Yeh, Kuang-Hui 葉光輝、Yang Kou-Shu 楊國樞編。《中國人的孝道：心理學的分析》（*Chinese Filial Piety: Psychological Analysis*）。重慶：重慶大學出版社，2009。

Yi, Chin-Chun 伊慶春, and Chang Ying-Hwa 章英華編。《台灣的社會變遷 1985~2005：家庭與婚姻》（*Social Change in Taiwan, 1985-2005: Family and Marriage*）。台北：中研院社會所，2012。

Yu, Susan, and Fang-yan Lin, eds. 2014. *The Republic of China Yearbook 2014*. Taipei: The Executive Yuan, Republic of China (Taiwan).

Yu, Wei-Choun, and Gabriel Manrique. 2009. 'Changes in the Labor Market of Women in Taiwan from 1978 to 2007'. In *Women in Taiwan: Sociocultural Perspectives*, edited by Ya-chen Chen. Indianapolis, IN: University of Indianapolis Press.

Zhu Ruei-ling 朱瑞玲。《婆媳之間：自己人乎？外人乎？（*The relationship between Daughters and Mothers-in-Law: an Insider? an Outsider?* ）。台北：台灣大學心理學系本土心理學研究室，2001。

Zizioulas, John D., and Jean Zizioulas. 2004. *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church*. London: Darton, Longman & Todd.

Hung, Yung-Ju. 2014a. *Transcripts of Focus Group Discussions - Taichung*. Taichung Baptist Church.

———. 2014b. *Transcripts of Focus Group Discussions - Taipei*. Taiwan Baptist Theological Seminary.

———. 2014c. *Transcripts of Focus Group Discussions - Longtan*. Video Record. Bread of Life Christian Church in Longtan.

———. 2014d. 'Sharing Day Schedule'.

———. 2014e. *Transcripts of Focus Group Discussions - Tainan I*. Chungzhou Presbyterian Church.

———. 2014f. *Transcripts of Focus Group Discussions - Tainan II*. Chungzhou Presbyterian Church.

———. 2014g. *Transcripts of Focus Group Discussions - Hualien*. Hualien Boai Baptist Church.

Xiao, Purdie. 2014. 'Feedback Survey: Purdie'.