

Intergenerational relations and life satisfaction among older women in Taiwan

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This study examined the relationship between intergenerational relations and life satisfaction among older women (aged 55 years and older) in Taiwan. According to intergenerational solidarity theory, intergenerational relations are dictated by various components: living arrangements, intergenerational support exchange, intergenerational affection, and intergenerational norms. Data were obtained from the 2006 Taiwan Social Change Survey ($N = 281$). The main results show that intergenerational relations have a significant effect on the life satisfaction of older women. Western studies have found that playing the giver's role increases the life satisfaction of older people. However, the present study found that being mainly a recipient of support from adult children is related to a higher level of life satisfaction among older Taiwanese women. This study also underscores the importance of the emotional component in intergenerational relations to the well-being of older people. In Taiwan, stronger emotional bonds with adult children increases older women's life satisfaction.

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Introduction

Although there is abundant research on life satisfaction among older people, analysis of how social contexts, economic structures, and social policies affect the level of such satisfaction is insufficient despite the importance of these factors (George, 2006). In addition to economic and health factors, relevant family variations have also been found

to be of key importance for older people's well-being (Mancini & Blieszner, 1989). The parent-child tie is a particularly strong source of social involvement and solidarity. Therefore, it seems reasonable to expect that intergenerational relations affect the well-being of elderly parents.

Taiwan is experiencing a rapid aging process. Traditional filial norms are often confronted with the impact of modernization,

resulting in structural changes in the family and in intergenerational interactions. Research focusing on intergenerational relations is just emerging. The issue examined in the present study is how intergenerational relations with adult children influence life satisfaction for older Taiwanese women today. In particular, because intergenerational relations in actuality involve various aspects, this study explored intergenerational relations by incorporating the essential dimensions proposed by the solidarity model (Bengtson & Schrader, 1982; Roberts, Richards, & Bengtson, 1991). By doing so, a more comprehensive picture of intergenerational relations in the Chinese society in Taiwan may be captured. It is expected that this study will extend knowledge in the area of intergenerational relations and give us insight into the overall effects of intergenerational relations on life satisfaction of older people in a society undergoing rapid social change.

Background

In recent decades, Taiwan has experienced steadily declining fertility and increased longevity. As a result of the changing population structure, the dependency ratio of older people is expected to increase from 13.8 percent in 2006 to 30.3 percent in 2026 and to 67 percent in 2051. With a cultural heritage of strong filial piety, family is one of the major social pillars in Taiwan and remains a crucial source of support during old age (Lin, *in press*; Lin et al., 2003). The traditional Chinese family regards a three-generational household, or the co-residence of adult children with elderly parents, as the ideal realization of filial piety. Unlike in Western countries, most older people in Taiwan live with their adult children, although their percentage as part of the overall population has decreased in recent years (Tseng, Chang, & Chen, 2006). However, previous studies have also documented that children are less willing to co-reside with parents and would

rather provide financial support for parents' living expenses while having their own nuclear family (Chang, 1994; Sun, 1991). The interplay of the dominant filial norms with the emerging nuclearization of both young and old generations is expected to produce complicated intergenerational relations. This study thus examined intergenerational relations and explored their influence on the life satisfaction of older women.

Most previous studies that have examined how intergenerational relations with adult children influence life satisfaction for older people have focused mainly on one aspect – intergenerational support exchange with adult children. But the findings on the impact that receiving support has on the well-being of older people are mixed. Some have shown that the well-being of older people was improved (e.g. Antonucci & Jackson, 1990; Silverstein & Bengtson, 1994). Other studies found no effects of support on well-being (e.g., Umberson, 1992), and several studies found that support instead increased distress among older people (e.g., Lee, Netzer, & Coward, 1995). More recently, however, the study of elders as providers of support has attracted more attention, and a considerable body of research has examined the reciprocity in intergenerational support between older people and their adult children (Lowenstein, Katz, & Gur-Yaish, 2007). Hence, considering the dual role of elderly parents, that is, both as receivers and providers of support, it seems imperative to conceptualize the types of intergenerational support in order to capture the diversity of such support. By doing so, we can clarify the relationship between the patterns of support exchange across generations and the well-being of older people.

In addition to the aforementioned concerns pertaining to support exchanges between generations, intergenerational relations in actuality involve a number of aspects. To understand the complexity of intergenerational family relations in later life, Bengtson and Schrader (1982) proposed a model of

intergenerational family solidarity that focuses on family cohesion as an important component of family relations, particularly for successful adjustment to old age (Silverstein & Bengtson, 1994). This model emphasizes family solidarity as a multidimensional construct with six elements of solidarity: structural, associational, affectual, consensual, functional, and normative (Bengtson & Schrader, 1982; Roberts et al., 1991). Researchers have, in the past few decades, used this paradigm widely to study relations between parents and their adult children (e.g. Bengtson & Roberts, 1991; Even-Zohar & Sharlin, 2009; Schwarz et al., 2005; Silverstein, Gans, & Yang, 2006; Voorpostel & Blieszner, 2008; Waites, 2009; Yi & Lin, 2009). Adopting the framework suggested by the solidarity model, when studying the relationship between intergenerational relations of elderly parents and adult children and parents' life satisfaction, researchers should take various aspects of intergenerational relations into account.

Intergenerational relations and older people's life satisfaction

Since the 1940s, social gerontologists have conducted research into the relationship between frequency of intergenerational support and an older people's life satisfaction, happiness, morale, and psychological well-being (Mancini & Blieszner, 1989). Many studies reported that frequency of contact between senior parents and their adult children had little impact on the parents' psychological well-being (e.g., Brubaker, 1990; Lee & Ishii-Kuntz, 1987; Lowenstein et al., 2007; Suito & Pillemer, 1987). Intergenerational relations are much more complicated than simply two generations keeping in touch with one another.

Antonucci and Jackson (1990) found that elderly parents enjoyed greater life satisfaction when they received more support from their children. Other studies have not supported this finding, however. Several studies

(e.g. Lowenstein, 2007; Lowenstein et al., 2007) found that elderly parents who received assistance from their adult children were less satisfied with life. When elderly parents played the role of "giver," their level of life satisfaction increased. From a social exchange viewpoint, Dowd (1975) commented that older people feel detached from society when they have fewer resources and fail to establish a reciprocal, balanced exchange relation. Lee (1985) expounded on this perspective, noting that an imbalanced exchange relation, which makes the older person feel dependent, has a negative effect on his or her psychological wellbeing. Researchers also found that compared with the need to be supported, the inability to establish a reciprocal relationship could more seriously devastate the older person's morale (Liang, Krause, & Bennett, 2001; Stoller, 1985).

However, numerous reports have pointed out that patterns of intergenerational support are different between the West and the East. While adult children are likely to receive support from parents in the West (Lowenstein & Daatland, 2006), intergenerational exchange within Chinese families is usually in the opposite direction (Lin & Yi, 2010). In Taiwan, adult children were found to give more money and assistance to elderly parents than they received from their parents (Chen, 2006; Lin, in press). In addition, gender can influence the provision of such support. Married sons generally provide more assistance to their parents than unmarried sons, and unmarried daughters assist their parents more than do married daughters (Lin et al., 2003). Chou (1996) found that the impact of receiving support on older Taiwanese women's well-being differed depending on the source of the support. The more support (the sum of different types of support) their sons provided, the better psychological health the elderly parents enjoyed. On the other hand, studies in China concur that the positive effects that providing functional support has on well-being are magnified among

parents who adhere to the more traditional norms regarding family support (Chen & Silverstein, 2000). Filial norms are of particular importance in the East Asian region because of their historical and cultural heritage. Thus, intergenerational norms, which are influenced by society and culture, warrant further study. In Western society, older people value their independence highly. Even when they need assistance, if they think themselves to be unable to give something in return, they are hesitant to accept their children's help. Thus, an imbalanced support exchange, in this context, has a negative effect on the older person's psychological well-being. However, in Taiwan, under the influence of a culture of Confucian filial piety, supporting elderly parents is considered a necessity to show reverence, and the family is the major source of financial stability for the older members.

In addition to the aforementioned concerns of support exchanges between generations and the effects of filial norms, most of the research has failed to analyze the effects of affectual aspects on the older person's life satisfaction. Mancini (1989) regarded the feeling of emotional intimacy between elderly parents and adult children to be an index to "intergenerational relation quality" because it was thought to help develop stronger ties among family members. In one study of farmer parents in Taiwan, Lin (2000) used qualitative data to analyze the affection that older persons have for their adult children. The affection of adult children, the consideration they show to their parents in daily life, and parents' expectations of care are all essential elements in intergenerational affection. Affection stems from attachment, caretaking, and expectations. In contrast to Western cultures, in patriarchal Asian societies, roles and their fulfillment are more important than emotions and their effects for the formation of the intergenerational affection. The impact of intergenerational affection on the psychological well-being of older people in Chinese

society is still unknown because less research has been carried out. Hence, this study analyzed the potential influence of intergenerational affection ties with children on older persons' life satisfaction.

In Taiwan, 77 percent of older women were found to rely financially on their adult children (Wang, 1997). Compared with men, who tend to play the more distant, authoritative role of traditional Chinese fathers, aging women have been shown to have a closer relationship with their adult children than aging men have (Baker, 1979; Cohen, 1976; Lin, 2000). Considering the special social and cultural situation of the older woman in Asian society in general, the focus of the present study was on older women in Taiwan. In brief, the study examined how intergenerational relations with adult children influenced life satisfaction for older Taiwanese women today. In particular, the study focused on four subdimensions of intergenerational relations: living arrangements, intergenerational support type, intergenerational affection, and intergenerational norms. Based on the aforementioned literature review, we proposed that co-residence, receiving support, and strong emotional ties between older women and their adult children would increase older women's life satisfaction. In addition, older women's filial responsibility expectations toward adult children would be negatively associated with well-being because of conflicts and disappointments that may occur if older parents' expectations are not met.

Method

Sample

Data were taken from the 2006 Taiwan Social Change Survey, phase five, wave two (Institute of Sociology, Academia Sinica, Taiwan, 2006). The Family Module consists of an island-wide sample of 2,102 adults aged 20 years old and above who were randomly chosen using a multistage stratified sampling method and were interviewed.

Since the subject of this study was relations between elderly women and their adult children, only subjects aged 55 and above with at least one adult child (aged 19 and above) were included. After deleting subjects with no adult children, the final sample included 281 older female respondents. The average age of the older women in the sample was 66.52 years. The Taiwan Social Change Survey adopted the “focal child” strategy for measuring intergenerational relations between elderly women and their adult children, asking elderly women to choose the child she saw most frequently. Our selection strategy ensured that the focal child was the one with whom the parent had the maximum opportunity for interaction; thus, we have not underestimated the parent’s involvement with the children, because we did not randomly select against this child.

Measurements

Dependent variable. The life satisfaction of the older women in this study was measured by the question: “All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days?” The answers to this question were rated on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 5, in which a higher score indicates higher life satisfaction. The life satisfaction score for this sample averaged 3.75 out of a possible five points.

Independent variables. The first independent variable was socio-demographic characteristics. Two dummy variables were used for marital status: married and unmarried. A total of 60.1 percent of the sample was married. Regarding family income, the respondents were asked, “How does your family income compare with that of average households in our society?” The five response choices were: *far below average*, *below average*, *average*, *above average*, and *far above average*. Self-reported health was also measured on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from *very bad* (1) to *very good*

(5). The average score for self-reported health was 3.24 out of a possible 5 points. The number of children reported was the total number of living children. The older women in this study had an average of 3.84 surviving children.

The second independent variable was intergenerational living arrangements. Living arrangement types were divided into two categories: co-residing or not co-residing with the focal child.

The third independent variable was intergenerational affection. Intergenerational affection is the feeling of emotional intimacy between older women and their adult children. The respondents were asked to judge whether “you and your focal child are getting along at the moment.” The scores ranged from *poor* (1) to *excellent* (5).

The fourth independent variable was intergenerational norms. Based on the intergenerational solidarity model, intergenerational norms were defined as the extent to which young and middle-aged family members are expected to assist their aging parents (Lee, Netzer, & Coward, 1994). In traditional Confucian culture, for adult children to provide financial support to their elderly parents is regarded as an act of filial piety. The present study defined intergenerational norms as the parent’s expectation for financial support from their adult children. The norm was measured by a three-item scale a) that an unmarried adult man ought to provide financial support to his parents, b) that an unmarried adult woman ought to provide financial support to her parents, and c) that a married adult man ought to provide financial support to his parents. The items were administered in a Likert-type scale with seven options ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7) so that high scores represent high expectations pertaining to filial support.

The fifth independent variable was intergenerational support. Three dimensions of support were distinguished: financial, emotional, and help with household chores. For each of these dimensions, support giving and

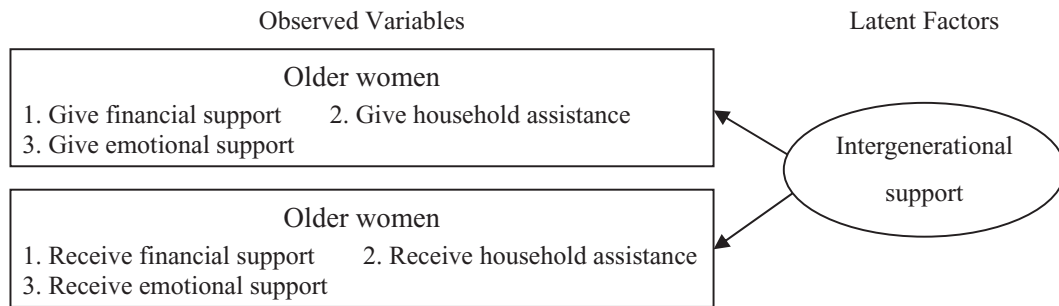


Figure 1. Observed variables and latent factors of intergenerational support.

support receiving were measured separately. A six-item scale asked “How frequently did you do each of the following things for your focal child during the past 12 months?: (a) provided financial support, (b) took care of household chores, and (c) listened to the child’s ideas and shared your feelings.” The converse was: “How frequently did your (focal) child do each of the following things for you during the past 12 months?: (a) provided financial support, (b) took care of household chores, and (c) listened to your ideas and shared your feelings.” The respondents rated each item on a five-point Likert-type scale corresponding to the following categories: *not at all*, *seldom*, *sometimes*, *often*, and *very frequently*. The older women who answered *not at all* or *seldom* were put in the “Give Less” category; the “Give More” group was composed of those who answered *sometimes*, *often*, or *very frequently*. Regarding receiving support from children, the same logic applied to this variable and resulted in the “Receive Less” and “Receive More” categories. Latent class analysis (LCA) was used to examine the underlying patterns of intergenerational support. As stated earlier, six indicators of intergenerational support were dichotomized to explore the latent structural pattern in intergenerational support (Figure 1). This study used the program Latent GOLD 3.0 (Statistical Innovations Inc, Belmont, MA) developed by Vermunt and Magidson (2003) to conduct the analysis.

Data analytic sequence

To examine how intergenerational relations influenced elderly women’s life satisfaction, we used the ordinary least squares regression analysis with life satisfaction as a dependent variable. In model 1, the socio-demographic variables of the elderly women were taken into account; in model 2, intergenerational relations variables were further added, such as intergenerational living arrangement, types of support, degree of intergenerational affection, and intergenerational norms.

Results: intergenerational relations between the elderly women and their adult children

Living arrangement, intergenerational affection, and norms

Table 1 shows that at the time of the study, over 58 percent of the older women were living with adult children. Regarding the intergenerational affection, our data demonstrate that there is a high degree of emotional ties between the older women and their children (mean = 3.87). On the other hand, in this study, intergenerational norms were defined as the parent’s expectation for financial support from adult children. The mean of the intergenerational norms scale exceeded 5 on a seven-point scale (mean = 5.45). This shows that there was a high expectation for

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Table 1. Description of analytic variables ($N = 281$).

Variables	Range	Mean (standard deviation)	n (%)
Sociodemographic characteristics			
Age	55–91	66.52 (8.84)	
Marital status			
Married			169 (60.1)
Unmarried			112 (39.9)
Health status	1–5	3.24 (1.19)	
Family income	1–5	2.50 (0.73)	
Number of children	1–12	3.84 (1.63)	
Gender of focal child			
Male (son)			167 (59.4)
Female (daughter)			114 (40.6)
Life satisfaction	1–5	3.75 (0.94)	
Intergenerational relations			
Intergenerational living arrangement			
Co-residence			163 (58.0)
Not co-residing			118 (42.0)
Intergenerational affection	1–5	3.87 (0.89)	
Intergenerational norms	1–7	5.45 (1.10)	

Table 2. Model fit for the optimal number of classes in the latent class analysis.

Number of types	1	2	3	4
L^2 (likelihood ratio statistic)	279.713	99.921	73.113	53.062
df	57	50	43	36
p value	0.0000	0.0000	0.0028	0.0332
Bayesian Information Criterion	2215.046	2080.133	2134.240	2153.879
Entropy	–	0.909	0.744	0.822

financial support from adult children among the older women.

Intergenerational support types

We used the LCA to investigate the types of intergenerational support. The first step in this analysis is to determine the number of latent classes needed to characterize the data. As indicated in Table 2, the model differentiated the number of latent patterns as one, two, three, and four patterns. Conditional dependence diagnostics show that the assumption of local dependence holds for a four-type solution ($L^2 = 53.062$, $df = 36$, $p = 0.0332$). The model that assumes four latent patterns represents the best fit for the

observed joint distribution among the six indicators of intergenerational support.

Table 3 displays the maximum likelihood estimates of the latent class proportions for the four-type model, and the conditional probabilities of item responses for each latent class for each of the six indicators of intergenerational support (probabilities greater than 0.6 are shown indicated with an asterisk). The task of labeling the latent classes requires inspection of the conditional probabilities associated with the manifest indicators within each class. Using the pattern of these probabilities, we assigned the labels to describe the latent classes.

In type 1, the older women in the study were highly involved in exchanges with

Table 3. Conditional probabilities of item responses for each latent class for indicator of intergenerational support ($N = 281$).

Type	Dimensions of support						n (%)	Label
	Gives money	Gives household assistance	Gives emotional support	Receives money	Receives household assistance	Receives emotional support		
1	0.239	1.000 ^a	0.884 ^a	0.725 ^a	0.746 ^a	0.956 ^a	106 (37.7)	High exchangers
2	0.031	0.242	0.669 ^a	0.705 ^a	0.659 ^a	1.000 ^a	66 (23.5)	Receiver
3	0.622 ^a	0.692 ^a	1.000 ^a	0.000	0.000	0.449	14 (5.0)	Giver
4	0.039	0.374	0.151	0.529	0.456	0.000	95 (33.8)	Low exchangers

^a > 0.6

their adult children, both giving and receiving support on several dimensions. They were labeled “high exchangers.” The number of “high exchangers” was the highest: 37.7 percent of older women engaged in reciprocal financial, household, and emotional support relations with their adult children. Type 2 was associated with a high likelihood that the older women received support from adult children. These (23.5%) were labeled “receivers.” Type 3 was associated with a high likelihood that the older women give support to adult children but have a low likelihood of receiving support from adult children. These (5.0%) were labeled “givers.” Type 4 was associated with a low probability of giving and receiving on each of the three dimensions of exchange. These (33.8%) were labeled “low exchangers.”

In summary, different types of intergenerational support were found to take place between the older women and their adult children in Taiwan. The most common type was “high exchangers.” The next most common type was “low exchangers,” followed by “receivers.” A large number of studies in Taiwan have documented that aged parents receive instrumental and emotional support from their offspring (e.g. Chou, 1996; Lin et al., 2003). However, it is not true that older persons are primarily recipients of intergenerational exchange. Nearly 5 percent of the older women in the study were “givers.” They

Table 4. Standardized ordinary least squares regression coefficients for the life satisfaction of older women ($N = 218$).

	Model 1	Model 2
Age	0.066	0.073
Marital status ^a	0.036	0.055
Health status	0.262***	0.241***
Family income	0.288***	0.244***
Number of children	-0.016	-0.016
Son ^b	0.000	0.021
Co-residence ^c		0.033
Intergenerational affection		0.188**
Intergenerational norms		0.086
Intergenerational support type ^d		
High exchangers		-0.059
Giver		-0.137*
Low exchangers		-0.083
Total R ²	0.186***	0.248***
R ² change (ΔR^2)		0.062**

^a Unmarried. ^b Daughter. ^c Non-co-residence. ^d Receiver.
* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

provided more financial assistance, help with household chores, and emotional support to their adult children than they received from their children.

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Table 4 presents standardized estimates predicting life satisfaction of the older women. In the first equation, the socio-demographic variables of the women were taken into account (model 1). Model 1 shows that older women who enjoy good health ($\beta = 0.262$,

$p < 0.001$) and higher family incomes ($\beta = 0.288, p < 0.001$) are more satisfied with life. This finding supports relevant findings in the past – for older people, health is the most important factor contributing to a satisfying life, with income coming second (Kirby, Coleman, & Daley, 2004; Pinquart & Sörensen, 2000).

In model 2, we controlled for sociodemographic variables. The model shows that intergenerational relations were significantly associated with the life satisfaction of elderly women ($\Delta R^2 = .062, p < 0.01$). Intergenerational affection significantly predicted life satisfaction ($\beta = 0.188, p < 0.01$), and stronger emotional cohesion with adult children increased older women's life satisfaction. The effect of intergenerational support types, in contrast to the "receivers," is that the life satisfaction of older women was significantly lower ($\beta = -0.137, p < 0.05$) for those who were "givers." In other words, older women who mainly provided support to their children were less satisfied. In addition, although the extended family model is culturally dominant in Taiwan, this study found no effect on life satisfaction stemming from co-residence with children ($\beta = 0.033, ns$ (not significant)). Furthermore, the effect of older women's beliefs about intergenerational norms on their life satisfaction was not significant ($\beta = 0.086, ns$ (not significant)).

Discussion

Based on the intergenerational solidarity model and by analyzing intergenerational living arrangements, mutual support, expectation of filial norms, and intergenerational affection, we have examined how intergenerational relations are related to life satisfaction for older women in Taiwan. This study found that older women do not merely rely on their adult children to provide financial or household chores support. Four types of older women were found in Taiwan: "high exchangers," "receivers," "givers," and "low exchangers." The number of "high

exchangers" was the highest: 37.7 percent of the older women in Taiwan are highly involved in mutual support with their adult children. This is quite different from the research findings of Hogan, Eggebeen, and Clogg (1993) on American families. In that study, only 11 percent of the research subjects frequently exchanged support with their adult children, and nearly half of the American older people were "low exchangers." In Taiwan, an Asian society, a relatively high proportion of older women retain a reciprocal support relationship with their adult children. Notably, 5 percent of the older women gave support to their adult children rather than received assistance. Mainland Chinese and Japanese scholars have discussed in recent years the dependence tendency of the younger generation. They speak of the Not in Employment, Education, or Training group (NEET), meaning young people between 15 and 34 who are not in employment, education, or training, and "parasite singles," referring to adult children who live with their parents after high school graduation and financially rely on them for living expenses (Yamada, 1999). Yieh, Tsai, and Kuo (2004) also found that in Taiwan, adult children who are young, have a low income, and are single are more likely to live with their parents after graduation, relying on their parents to provide financial support. This was found to occur more often with sons than with daughters.

What impact did the intergenerational relations between older women and their adult children in Taiwan have on the older person's psychological well-being? Intergenerational affection significantly predicted life satisfaction, and stronger emotional cohesion with adult children increased older women's life satisfaction. Compared with the older women who mainly received support, those who mainly provided support to their children were less satisfied. By contrast, according to studies from the West, playing the giver's role was found to facilitate life satisfaction, while imbalanced intergenerational support had a negative influence on the older

person's psychological wellbeing when this support was provided mainly by the adult child to the parent (Lowenstein, 2007; Lowenstein et al., 2007; Stoller, 1985). Such differences between the East and the West can be explained from a sociocultural perspective. In American society, older people highly value independence. When they are in imbalanced exchange relations with their children, the inability to reciprocate means that the older person becomes dependent and feels powerless and is thus demoralized (Lee, 1985). In Asian settings, because traditional Chinese values highlight the importance of filial piety and of responsibility of adult children in taking care of parents in old age, most adult children support their older parents. What is more, family interactions in Asia are based on "the rule of demand" rather than "the equity rule" or "the equality rule" (Hwang, 1985, 1988). As the old saying goes, "storing crops for famine time and rearing children for senior days," meaning that just as one stores up grain against lean years, parents bring up children for the purpose of being looked after in old age. The emphasis in Chinese communities on the "invest–return" dimension during a person's lifespan has been shown to differ from the "symmetric reciprocity" rule of the intergenerational support mechanism of the West (Akiyama, Antonucci, & Campbell, 1990). Cultural values reinforce the meaning and expectations of intergenerational support and shape the outcomes. In the present study, the more support older women in Taiwan received from their adult children, the more satisfied they were with life.

Previous researchers have generally assumed that in cultures where intergenerational ties are highly valued, co-residence with children has a positive influence on the psychological well-being of elders. However, this study found no such positive effect of co-residence with children on life satisfaction. Whether this finding reveals a social transition in Taiwan from multigenerational co-residence as a standard living

arrangement to a more Westernized family lifestyle, with heightened values of privacy and independence as well as of individuality, requires further investigation.

The use single-item measure-to-measure life satisfaction and intergenerational affection as variables was a limitation in the present study. The findings and their interpretations should therefore be regarded with some caution. Despite these limitations, the contribution of this study is that it has examined intergenerational relations on older people's life satisfaction in the context of multidimensional intergenerational solidarity (living arrangements and intergenerational support, affection, and norms). Additionally, the study employed LCA to examine the underlying patterns of intergenerational support. The research design of this study should help paint a clearer picture of the intergenerational relations between older people and their adult children. We suggest that future research utilizes the findings of the study as a basis for delving into the minds of adult children, discussing how the relations between the two generations influence adult children's psychological well-being. Furthermore, the finding that the emotional component in intergenerational family relations is a crucial aspect of the subjective well-being of older people in Taiwan suggests that the emotional aspect of intergenerational relations is an important area for policy consideration.

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