Changing Attitudes toward Elderly Parental Support in Taiwan: Effects of Individual Resources and Cultural Norms

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Abstract

With urgent demand of elderly care in Taiwan, family as major care provider has confronted with various challenges in the process of social changes. This study intends to explore attitudes toward elderly parental support by focusing on the relative influence of individual resources, cultural norms and family care demand. Drawing from the Taiwan Social Change Survey, parental support is indicated by ‘living arrangement’ and ‘financial support’ which is further delineated by ‘from parent’s perspective’ versus ‘from children’s perspective.’ We first present the trend of changing attitudes on parental support from 1991 to 2016. A consistent picture shows that parental autonomy in living arrangement and in living expenses has been a preferred type from the parent’s perspective, while dependence on children, especially on sons, is considered a better choice from the children’s viewpoints. The impact of filial norm is suspected to affect children’s stand and thus produces the opposing patterns. Multivariate analyses point out cultural norms having the most salient effects, followed by individual resources and much less by care demand at home. Filial piety contributes to the expected attitudes on co-residence between generations and financial provision to parents from both perspectives. Future studies need to examine the emerging change on gender norms in elderly parental support.

Key words: parental support, cultural norms, individual resources

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I. Introduction

In the last few decades, the drastic decline of marriage and fertility as well as the continuously rising aging trend have become the common population structure in East Asia. Taiwan is of no exception. Among various social problems emerged, support of elderly parents is certainly the most serious challenge faced by most Taiwanese families. Governed by the traditional patriarchal culture, sons have assumed the major responsibility of parental support. Since filial piety is shared by both parents and adult children, similar support expectation and behaviors between generations in accordance with social norms have been documented (Hsu 1948; Yi and Chang 2008). Nevertheless, this traditional support pattern encounters several realistic constraints that require family to compromise in the process of adjustment and functioning. To be specific, low birth rate has resulted in less number of children, especially sons, who are available to perform filial duties (Chen and Chen 2012). Coupled by the impact of modern family values, it is noticed that while sons continue to assume major responsibility for parental care, married daughters with greater resources also actively...
participate in providing support for parental needs (Yi 2014). In other words, the traditional pattern of reliance on sons only has gradually been replaced by a shared pattern between sons and daughters in parental support.

The emerging shift of intergenerational support patterns signifies a necessary corresponding measure of family system in response to rapid social changes. Since early 1960s, the massive rural–urban migration has resulted in a substantial proportion of urban working adults with elderly parents staying at rural homes (Chen and Lin 2015; Yang and Chen 2002; Yi and Chen 1998). According to a rural survey in 1980, nearly 90% of rural youth engaged in off-farm business which fundamentally changed the family functioning (Liao 1986). The tradition of three-generational co-residence was no longer feasible, but remittance or living expenses sent home continued to be common filial practice (Chuang 1972; Lin 2014; Lu and Cheng 2012; Tseng et al. 2006). The specific support of elderly parents in Taiwan can thus be distinguished into intergenerational co-residence and financial provision for elderly parents (Yi 1993). In recent decades, with family structure being more diversified, economic employment more geographically concentrated and traditional norms impacted by modern family values, both expectation and behavior of elderly support in the domestic sphere have confronted unprecedented challenge. Previous studies confirm the significant linkage between individual’s actual family experiences (e.g., family structure and financial support patterns) and his/her future support attitudes (Yi and Chen 1998). Hence, it is important to examine how salient social mechanisms operate in accounting for changing attitudes toward parental support in Taiwan.

In order to delineate the social process in shaping people’s attitudes toward parental support, a special focus on the importance of cultural norms in relation to effects of individual resources will be delineated. In addition, since the care demand of elderly parents forms a realistic constraint or facilitator for adult children’s supportive behavior, specific parental care needs will be incorporated in the analysis. Therefore, this paper will investigate the relative effect of individual resources, cultural norms and parental needs in explaining changing attitude toward elderly parental support in Taiwan.

In the following, we will first discuss theoretical frameworks with a particular focus on the importance of normative mechanism on intergenerational support. Demand of parental care as well as the interplay of resources and norms will also be briefly introduced. Next, we will present a profile on elderly parental support in Taiwan by selecting most relevant studies to show the historical development of researches. The analysis will start with a description of changing parental support attitudes by using TSCS datasets since 1991. The second part will use the multivariate analysis to examine factors explaining attitudes toward parental support. Lastly, the implication of findings will be discussed.

II. Theoretical Background

1. Family Intergenerational Solidarity: The Normative Solidarity

Over the last three decades, the family intergenerational solidarity model proposed by Bengtson and his colleagues has been the most used research framework in the study of intergenerational transmission and multigenerational relationship. As a multidimensional model with its theoretical bases on family sociology and social psychology, the intergenerational solidarity paradigm expounds the cohesion and integration between aging parents and adult children from the life course perspective (Bengtson 2001; Bengtson and Schrader 1982). Six dimensions of family solidarity are first proposed which an aim to capture multiple types of solidarity among family members: Associational solidarity, Affectual solidarity, Consensual solidarity, Functional solidarity, Normative solidarity and Structural solidarity (Bengtson and Roberts 1991). It is evident that behavior, emotions and cognitive aspects as well as the availability for interactions are incorporated in the model. But each solidarity dimension represents different family resource and is not an additive property, thus does not form a unitary construct (Roberts and Bengtson 1990).

Due to the advantage of reliable assessment of family integration, specific empirical indicators and concrete measurability, intergenerational solidarity model provides a feasible research framework for investigating intergenerational relationship (Mangen et al. 1988). Nevertheless, subsequent studies try to refine the original six dimensions into less number of domains. A classic attempt is illustrated by Silverstein and Bengtson (1997). They use five of the original dimensions to first cluster into three underlying dimensions: Affinity (emotional closeness and consensus), Opportunity structure (geographical proximity and contact frequency) and Functional exchange (providing and re-
ceiving assistance). After a more parsimonious structure of intergenerational solidarity is achieved, they use latent class analysis to derive five types of intergenerational relations and suggest that despite the diversified family structure in America, family maintains its potential to serve members’ needs (Silverstein and Bengtson, 1997).

It should be noted that not all solidarity constructs receive equal attention. Functional exchanges between aging parents and adult children, often divided into financial help, physical provision and emotional support, are perhaps the most examined solidarity construct (Chen 2006; Hogan et al. 1993; Silverstein and Bengtson 1997; Yeh 1997). Concrete indicators, such as degree of contacts between generations, emotional closeness reported, and specific opportunity structure available, have also been explicated as factors resulting in various patterns of resources exchanges (Eggebeen 1992; Lin and Yi 2007; Tsai and Yang 2017). On the contrary, normative solidarity, defined as the strength of commitment to family roles and filial obligations (Bengtson and Roberts 1991), is relatively less investigated. An exception can be found by Silverstein and his colleagues who use filial norm as the core solidarity construct to predict the actual supportive behavior from adult children (2006). In other words, intergenerational solidarity model has the advantage of being inclusive and flexible so that either a single dimension or partial constructs may be utilized in exploring attitudes or behaviors in the intergenerational support.

Using 363 pairs of aging parents and their middle-aged children find that normative and emotional factors have significant association with actual generational interaction (Bengtson and Roberts 1991). To be specific, consensus on the norm of family priority for both generations contributes to the emotional closeness between parents and children, which in turn, enhances the interaction and contacts between generations (Bengtson and Roberts 1991). Higher filial responsibility shared by both parents and children is also confirmed by other studies on their significant linkage to the instrumental support parents received (Klein Ikink et al. 1999). But other report indicates the indirect influence of filial obligation in that it is mediated by adult children’s feeling of attachment which leads to the final helping behavior to elderly parents (Cicirelli 1983). It appears that filial norm, especially when coupled with the reciprocity between aging parents and adult children, is critical in mobilizing the actual support provided.

1) Relevant Taiwan Studies

There have been numerous studies focusing on intergenerational relations and exchanges between aging parents and their adult children in Taiwan. Primarily based on the intergenerational solidarity thesis, five intergenerational relational types, similar as the pattern found in the West, are derived—sociable, tight-knit, normative, intimate but distant and detached (Yi and Lin 2009). But the difference lies in the majority (49.2%) falling into the normative category which is significantly endorsed by married sons (Yi and Lin 2009). Since clear gender differentials demonstrate that daughters tend to offer emotional support and sons provide financial and physical help to parents (Lin et al. 2003), it is contended that the intergenerational support pattern in Taiwan can be regarded as an outcome of the interplay between individual resources and patriarchal norms (Lin and Yi 2007; Yi and Lin 2009).

With regard to functional exchanges between generations, the most salient pattern in Chinese and in East Asian families is the upward support pattern from adult children to aging parents (Lin and Huang 2017; Yi and Chang in press). In contrast with their western counterparts, the strong normative expectation from filial piety often propels adult children to provide financial, physical and emotional support to parents (Yeh et al. 2013). Studies on Taiwanese farm families concur that higher normative solidarity tends to produce more exchanges between generations (Lin 1998, 2000; Lin et al. 1999). But parents holding stronger filial norms are more likely to actively engage in both receiving support from and giving support to children; while adult children (especially sons) who receive physical help from parents are likely to act out the financial return (Lin and Yi 2007). Further comparative analyses among four East Asian societies (China, Korea, Japan and Taiwan) document the omnipresent influence of patriarchal culture in intergenerational support pattern (Lin and Yi 2013). In accordance with patriarchal culture, sons generally perform more filial duties than daughters. But with daughters enjoying increasing resources, shared responsibility of parental support has gradually become prevalent and has received social acceptance (Lin and Yi 2013; Yi 2014). But the specific effect of filial norms on attitudes toward co-residence and provision of living expenses are not yet clear. It will thus be interesting to delineate the pronounced impact of cultural norms in various family
processes pertaining to the elderly parental support.

2. Parental Needs and Filial Behaviors

Previous studies have pointed out the important influence of familial norms on family functioning. One of the pronounced effects is the latent consequence of actual behaviors triggered by the normative expectation. Litwak (1960) introduced the modified extended family, Riley (1983) further advanced the concept to latent kin matrix which defines extended family structures as a latent web of shifting linkages that provide a potential for activating and intensifying close family relationships in times of need. The proposal of family members being potential support providers as well as being actual providers of support when demand emerges has been applied to intergenerational relationships. The basic research concern is to delineate specific family conditions when supportive behaviors are likely to be mobilized.

In order to illustrate how normative commitments of filial obligation motivate actual supportive behaviors, parental needs as an important condition are investigated. Silverstein and his colleagues attempt to determine whether the emergence of parental need will be mobilized or developed into support behaviors with children holding filial responsibility to parents. They select 488 adult children with at least one parent or grandparent alive and analyze if changes in the parent’s situation over a three year’s period result in support provision. The findings show that filial norms predispose children to provide support when parents experience declining health or when mothers change marital status into unmarried or widowed (Silverstein et al. 2006). In other words, their research confirms that filial responsibility will be converted into support provision when parents experience increased need.

1) Selected Taiwan Studies

Patterns of intergenerational support in Taiwan have generally conformed to the patriarchal norm (Yi and Chang 2008). Filial piety as the dominant family value maintains its strong influence in almost all aspects of family functioning (Yeh 2009; Yeh et al. 2013). In addition to the close linkage between filial norm and support behavior as discussed in the previous section, parent’s conditions are also considered in the support behavior to aging parents in Taiwan. Most studies focus on the declining health of parents and point out as parents become old and frail, children will provide support and care to parents in need (Chien and Wu 1999; Hsieh 2000). While sons assume major caring responsibilities, daughters also fulfill the support role as parents suffering from more health problems (Lin et al. 2003; Lu 1999).

Gender differential in the support provision to aging parents is undoubtedly a unique aspect of intergenerational support among Taiwanese families. Filial norm as the principal Chinese family value also prescribes clear gender distinction in elderly parental support (Hsu 1948). Different from the western family, Taiwanese daughters tend to provide emotional support and will share financial or physical support with their male siblings only if situations arise. These situations include being the only available child (Hsieh 2000), parents having functional impairment (Lin et al. 2003), one parent becoming widowed (Yi and Lin 2009), experience of receiving parents’ instrumental help (Chien and Wu 1999). In other words, similar as the literature in the West, when parental need increases, filial norm prescribes children to perform various support behaviors, but Taiwanese sons are expected to take the major care role.

It should be noted that not all changes of parental need produce positive outcome in the intergenerational support. When Taiwanese parents change their marital status into widowhood, their relationship with children is likely to become either distant (i.e., high in fact contact only) or normative (i.e., high in fact contact, in filial norm, in provision to parents; but low in receiving help from parents, in emotional closeness) (Yi and Lin 2009). Although parental need does not enhance the attachment between generations, filial obligation still operates in that children are unlikely to ignore parents in need. Another study on elderly parental support in urban areas point out that stronger filial norms of children are likely to result in more willingness to support parents who require instrumental care (Chien and Wu 1999). Again, filial norm predisposes children to act out actual support behaviors when parental need becomes an issue. It is therefore worth exploring the potential influence of parents’ care demand and filial norms on attitudes toward elderly parental support.

3. Individual Resources and Cultural Norms

The emphasis of filial and cultural norms on intergenerational support between aging parents and adult children is intended to add a vital dimension to the dominant resources explanation in family studies. Pre-
Various studies of Chinese families show that despite the fact that greater personal resources facilitate the non-conventional practice, cultural expectations maintain their strong impact on family’s daily practice (Chien and Yi 2014). Take marital power structure for example. The increase in wife’s resources tend to enhance her domestic status in Taiwan, China (Tianjin) and Hong Kong (Chien and Yi 2014; Hu and Chou 1996; Yi and Chien 2002). Married females with higher education and gainful employment are likely to enjoy greater decision making power at home (Chien and Yi 2014; Chen et al. 2000; Chen and Yi 2006; Yi and Tsai 1989). But study also pointed out that wife with higher income, a deviation from the normative prescription, tends to report negative marital quality (Zhang et al. 2012). Since normative factors such as filial belief and co-residence with paternal parents are shown to produce negative effects on egalitarian marital relations (Chien and Yi 2014), it is contended that traditional norm based on patriarchal culture maintains its salient influence on conjugal interactions in Chinese families. It is thus essential to consider both individual resources and cultural norms in explaining family dynamics in the Chinese family system.

Recent studies of intergenerational relations reveal similar findings in that the interplay of individual resources and cultural norms are shown to affect specific support patterns from adult children to aging parents (Lin and Yi 2013; Yeh et al. 2013). From the perspective of resources and demands, change of parent’s marital status tend to increase children’s support behavior, but if children are older and have less financial resources, they are likely to develop detached relationship with aging parents (Yi and Lin 2009). In other words, individual resources are found to interact with parental demands, which in turn produce significant consequences on intergenerational relationship (Yi and Lin 2009). Another notable aspect is how gender differentials produce significant influence when taken into account their interplay with patriarchal filial norms. Analyses of Taiwan data indicate that sons who endorse patriarchal filial norms are most likely to provide actual support to aging parents (Liu and Huang 2009; Yi 2014). In contrast, daughters who agree with patriarchal norm in that sons are expected to assume major care responsibility turn out to be less likely to provide filial support to parents (Yi 2014). Filial norm appears to produce opposite effects depending on the gender of children. But in fact, the message derived coincides with patriarchal culture because daughters who share same filial piety belief with their male siblings also act in accordance with the normative expectation. Hence, higher normative concept is associated with sons providing more financial, physical and emotional support to parents, while daughters engage in emotional support with parents.

Over all, compared with individual resources or specific parents’ care demands, ideological changes and normative effects remain to be inadequately investigated (Chien and Yi 2012; Yi 2011). Since both patriarchal norm and individual resources interact in the family functioning, this paper will incorporate individual resources, parental need as well as cultural norms in their potential influence on attitudes toward parental support in Taiwan.

III. Elderly Parental Support: Selected Studies in Taiwan

Taiwan became an aging society (population aged 65 exceed 7%) in 1993 and steadily moves into an aged society (14%) in 2018. It is estimated that Taiwan will be a super-aged society (20%) along with Japan, Korea and Singapore by 2025 and will reach the highest aging population in Asia by 2060 (CEPD, Population Projections for Taiwan Areas: 2012–2060). The noticeable aging trend has serious impact on various social institutions. In the family domain, due to the omnipresent influence of patriarchal culture and filial obligation, care of aging parents and elderly family members has undoubtedly the highest core concern (Yeh et al. 2013).

In fact, issues regarding the elderly parental support have aroused much attention in Taiwan since the early 1980s. In 1981, Government conducted a survey on "Family Life and Social Environment Image Survey in Taiwan Area" with a sample of 4% households (N = 15,287) (Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics, Executive Yuan). Two questions concerning attitudes toward intergenerational co-residence were included. One is the general attitude of preferred living arrangement, “What is your opinion on separate living arrangement between married children and their parents?”; the other is the personal attitude of preferred living arrangement under a specified situation, “If you have children, what is your most wanted living arrangement after retirement?” The profile revealed a clear distinction in that nuclear family preference (41%) received the most endorsement in general attitude while co-residence with sons (56.6%) became
the most chosen personal preference after retirement (Yi 1985). It is also shown that education or the resources one have produce the most pronounced influence on both general and personal attitudes concerning preferred living arrangement (Yi 1985).

From 1991, Taiwan Social Change Survey (TSCS hereafter) constructed two operational indicators for parental support in Taiwan, namely, living arrangement and economic support. The advantage of using these two indicators not only captures the core essence of the concept, it also allows for specific and repeated measurement which is essential for future analyses on the linkage between attitudes and behaviors of parental support. Inspired by the previous official survey, the research team introduced a new questionnaire design in that perspective from children versus perspective from parents was distinguished. In other words, when studying intergenerational relations, specifically attitudes toward parental support, one can compare two corresponding perspectives from parents in contrast with that from children. Possible differences pertaining to living arrangement and financial provision can also be compared and delineated. In addition, judging from the historical development, it will allow researchers to capture the long term changing trend of parental support which in turn, will enable the examination between family values and family behaviors. Therefore, the construction of living arrangement and financial provision as empirical indicators for parental support may be considered a significant contribution to East Asian family studies (Yi and Chang 2008).

Using 1991 TSCS data, the parental support pattern in Taiwan was first explored from the parents’ versus from the children’s perspective. Findings indicate opposing attitudinal preference for parental support when different perspectives are taken into account. For same respondents, traditional or conservative support patterns are expressed from the children’s perspective while more autonomous preferences are endorsed from the parents’ perspective (Chang 1994). To be specific, up to 63% agreed that children should co-reside with parents and 90% agreed that children should provide parents’ living expenses (i.e., from children’s perspective). On the contrary, 37% favored separate residence with children (the highest category from parents’ perspective) and 35.7% preferred not to rely on children for living expenses. Clearly, filial value maintained its influence in that when taking the role of children, filial obligation was expressed, but autonomy or not to rely on children became parent’s preferred support pattern which may be realized if personal resources allowed (Chang 1994). Furthermore, between co-residence and financial provision, the latter reached a consensus from both children’s and parents’ perspectives with sons only receiving the most endorsement and shared responsibility among all children closely followed. The findings imply that Taiwanese family operation adjusts to changing social environment in that attitudes toward non-traditional parental support patterns emerge, but normative influence remains especially for adult children (Yi 1999).

A subsequent survey in 1995 using island-wise random samples found similar patterns (Yi and Chen 1998). Specifically, paternal intergenerational co-residence was favored in general attitudes while separate residences between generations became preferred personal choice. Likewise, financial provision from adult children not only was the common practice (60.5%), it was also considered the preferred support pattern (Yi and Chen 1998). It should be noted that in that study, general attitudes was distinguished into from the perspective of children versus from parents as in TSCS; and personal attitudes refer to when the respondent gets old. The revised three category comparison revealed consistent findings in that the traditional support pattern appears to be favored from children’s perspective (i.e., 48% co-residence between parents and married sons, 81% living expenses provided by children), but the non-traditional pattern was more likely to be endorsed from parent’s perspective (i.e., 44% separate residence and 30% economic autonomy). In addition, a clearer self-reliance preference was expressed when referring to personal situation—57.7% favor not co-residing with children and 59% prefer not to receive financial support from children. The analyses focusing on personal resources such as education, urbanization and current family practice produced the above patterns. Hence, it was suggested that support of elderly parents requires a compromise between filial norm and actual resources (Yi 2014).

If changing attitudes toward parental support imply future changes of family values and behaviors, then delineating social mechanisms accounting for parental support attitudes provides significant empirical reference for future research. In recent years, persistent efforts have laid on the development of theoretical framework in studying family relations and family functioning in Taiwan and in East Asia. Since the re-
source model has been dominant in the west, it is intended to show that unlike their western counterparts, traditional norms remain to be salient in this region. Specifically, the principal contention is to present the significant effects of individual resources and cultural norms in the study of changing family systems in transitional societies (Chang and Yi 2006; Chien and Yi 2012; Yi 2001, 2014). It also argues that both modernization and the constraints of traditional norms impact on the family functioning (Yi et al. in press). Based on the above frameworks, this paper will illustrate the potential effects of individual resources and cultural norms on attitudes toward parental support in Taiwan.

IV. Methods

1. Data and Sample

Data are taken from the “Taiwan Social Change Survey 2016—Family module.” Taiwan Social Change Survey (TSCS) is an island-wide multi-wave cross-sectional research project which collects survey data on different subjects such as family, social stratification, culture and religion, nation and state, gender, health, work, social network, etc. In order to monitor trends of social changes in Taiwan, the project rotates each module every five years so that the time-series of social change can be captured. Family module was included since 1985 and has collected seven waves as of 2016.

Samples include adults aged 18 years or older who have official registration and reside in Taiwan. Stratified multi-stage probability proportional to size sampling (PPS) is used to select respondents (Appendix 1). The current study is based on the 2016 TSCS samples. A close examination showed various item-nonresponse rate (i.e., missing data) ranging from .1 to 3.1%. Given the low non-response rate, we delete subjects with nonresponses and the final sample number was 1,887 from the original 2,024 (mean age = 45.7; 50% male).

2. Variables

1) Dependent variable: Preference of Parental Support

Elderly parental support is distinguished into “living arrangement” and “financial support” (or support of parents’ living expenses). For each of these two aspects of support, perspectives from parents versus perspective from children are asked with same responses. Specifically, opinions toward better living arrangement between parents and married children include seven categories: living with married children in rotation, living with one married child all the time, living with one married son all the time, not necessary to live with any children, depends on children’s opinions, and others. Similar response categories were raised for who should pay for parents’ living expenses: shared by sons and daughters, shared by sons only, from one particular son or daughter, from one particular son only, not necessary to depend on sons or daughters, depends on children’s opinions or economic situations, and others. For each support type, respondents answer the question from the perspective of being parents first, then from the perspective of being a child.

As one will notice, only married children are listed as possible choices for living arrangement; while children, married or not, are considered for living expenses for parents. This is owing to the patrilineal practice in Taiwan where married sons are expected by cultural norms to co-reside with parents. In the subsequent analyses, we grouped all responses into three main categories (plus “others”) for both living arrangement and living expenses: all children (live with married children, shared by children), sons only (live with married sons, pay by sons), parents self (parents do not live with children, parents pay their own living expenses). This is because the distinction between parental autonomy and dependence on children signifies the modern versus traditional preference. The further distinction between depending on sons versus on children (i.e., daughters as well) implies a possible loosening of patriarchal culture. Since our study is particularly concerned with the impact of cultural norm and individual resources, the above categories will allow us to delineate the impact of changing attitudes toward parental support.

2) Independent Variables

As discussed above, this study attempts to address attitudes toward elderly parental support by examining three main mechanisms: cultural norms, individual resources, and parental needs. Cultural norm is indicated by dual filial piety (Yeh 2009), traditional family attitudes and egalitarian gender role. For individual resources, in addition to several demographic variables (e.g., gender and marital status), subjective income is also included. As to parental need, we consider both the availability of parents and the actual demand of care.

a) Cultural Norm

Filial piety as the core cultural norm in Chinese societies has been proposed to be a concept of dual di-
Authoritarian filial piety denotes obedience to parents (normative authority) and fulfills the need for collective identification; while Reciprocal filial piety refers to spontaneous affection from long-term close interactions which fulfill the psychological need for mutual relatedness (Yeh et al. 2013). In this study, four items indicate authoritarian filial piety: “One should give up personal interests to fulfill parental expectations,” “Live with parents/in-laws after marriage,” “To continue the family line, one must have at least a son” and “Do something to honor your family.” Another three items were used to indicate reciprocal filial piety: “Be grateful to parents for raising me,” “Be nice and kind to your parents regardless how they have treated you,” and “Support your parents to make their lives more comfortable.” The response categories for each item ranged from 0 (“it is not important”) to 4 (“it is very important”). Summation of these four items created the particular variable with higher scores indicating higher level of filial piety ($\alpha = .68$ for authoritarian filial piety and $\alpha = .58$ for reciprocal filial piety).

Traditional family attitude is another important indicator to capture cultural norm in Taiwan. Four items referring to one’s attitudes toward traditional family definition are included: “It is all right for a couple to live together without intention to get married,” “It is not necessary to have children in marriage,” “It is better to have a bad marriage than no marriage at all” and “It is better to have a bad marriage than divorce.” For each item, the response categories are on a 7-point scale with higher score indicating stronger favor of the statement. The first two items were reversed coded. Summation of these four items is used with the higher score indicating a higher level of traditional family attitude ($\alpha = .60$).

Egalitarian gender role attitude is measured by four items: “A husband’s job is to earn money; a wife’s job is to look after the home and family,” “It’s not good for a pre-school child if the mother is working,” “The best advantage of getting married is to have financial security” and “Family life will always be affected if the wife has a full-time job.” Each item has five response categories which range from agree (1) to disagree (5). Summation of these four items is used with higher score indicating more egalitarian gender role attitudes ($\alpha = .49$).

3) Individual Resources
Individual resources include gender, educational level, marital status, age, and subjective income. For gender, male is coded as 1. Educational level is distinguished into six categories: elementary or lower (0) to graduate school or higher (5). Marital status has three categories: married, single, and other marital status which includes both widow and divorced. Two dummy variables are created for this variable with other marital status as the reference group. For age, participants’ self-report age in years is used. Finally, relative income was derived from a subjective report on “In comparison to other families, would you say your family income is higher or lower than most other families, or about the average?” The response categories range from very much higher than most families (1) to much very lower than most families (5). There are two reasons for using the subjective income. First, research has shown that subjective income tends to affect individual’s well-being (Oshio et al. 2011). Second, a higher percentage of missing values is often observed with objective income. For 2016 TSCS, there is about 25% missing for objective income in contrast with only 1% of missing for subjective income.

4) Family Care Demand
We use three indicators to capture the various aspects of family care demand. Care demand at home refers to family members above the age of 65 who require help from others in their daily activities (e.g., eating, daily hygiene, house chores). Yes is coded (1). Home care preference is derived from a question about preferred arrangement if there is an elderly at home who needs to be taken care of. Response categories include higher foreign caregiver, send to nursing homes for 24-hour care, ask neighbors or friends to help care, etc. We choose the strongest home care preference as the main focus—someone in the family quits his/her job or quits school to take care of the elderly at home—to compare with other arrangements. In addition to the actual demand of elderly care and the preferred home care arrangement, parental condition is also considered. The availability of parents is separated into four categories: only father alive, only mother alive, both parents alive and neither parent alive. It is expected that using the above various indicators will provide a more comprehensive profile of family care demand.

3. Analytic Strategies
The analyses proceed in three steps. First, we present the descriptive statistics and binary analyses (e.g., ANOVA) to show the overall distribution as well as the
relationships among the variables. Second, we compare the trend development of Taiwanese attitudes toward two dimensions of parental supports, namely, the “living arrangement” and “living expense” across two decades (from 1991 to 2011). Finally, we use the latest 2016 survey data to perform the multivariate logistic regression to ascertain how each predictor, after controlling for other factors, is related to parental supports from both parents’ and children’s perspective. In order to be consistent, each dimension is distinguished into similar three categories: parental autonomy (separate residence, self-support), support by sons (co-residence with sons, financial provision by sons), support by all children (co-residence with children, financial provision by children).

It should be noted that because of too many empty cells of the depending variable, elderly parental support, which result in unstable model, the logistic regression is used. The analyses are processed with a focus on three support categories, namely, dependence on children, dependence on sons and parental autonomy. In other words, there are three dependent variables for each support category—preferred living arrangement and living expenses for parents, and each support category will be examined by two different perspectives (i.e., from parent’s and from children’s). Furthermore, in order to evaluate our model fit, HL-test (Hosmer & Lemeshow test) with non-significant results Table 1. Descriptive statistics

| Variables                        | % (n)    | Variables                        | % (n)    |
|----------------------------------|---------|----------------------------------|---------|
| Gender                           |         | Availability of parents          |         |
| Male                             | 49.9 (941) | Father only                      | 5.2 (99) |
| Female                           | 50.1 (946) | Mother only                      | 19.4 (367) |
| Marital status                   |         | Both parents                     | 47.1 (888) |
| Married                          | 56.4 (1,063) | None                            | 28.2 (533) |
| Single                           | 30.6 (578) | Home care preference             |         |
| Other status                     | 13.0 (246) | Someone care at home             | 17.5 (331) |
| Care demand at home              |         | Other choice                     | 82.5 (1,556) |
| Yes                              | 8.1 (152) |                                 |         |
| No                               | 91.9 (1,735) |                                 |         |
| Parent’s perspective             |         | Children’s perspective           |         |
| Living arrangement               |         |                                 |         |
| Parents co-reside with married   | 21.7 (410) |                                 |         |
| sons                             |         | 32.4 (612)                       |         |
| Parents co-reside with married   | 17.0 (321) |                                 |         |
| children                         |         | 24.1 (455)                       |         |
| Separate residence               | 52.6 (992) |                                 |         |
| Other arrangement                | 8.7 (164) | 29.1 (550)                       |         |
| Financial support                |         | 14.4 (270)                       |         |
| Only sons provide                | 16.6 (314) |                                 |         |
| All children provide             | 41.6 (785) | 25.1 (474)                       |         |
| Self-support                     | 36.8 (694) | 57.3 (1,082)                     |         |
| Other arrangement                | 5.0 (94)  | 10.1 (190)                       |         |
| Variables                        | Minimum | Maximum | Mean (SD)                        |
| Age                              | 19       | 92      | 45.7 (17.02)                     |
| Education                        | 0        | 5       | 2.54 (1.57)                      |
| Relative income                  | 1        | 5       | 3.16 (0.70)                      |
| Authoritarian filial piety       | 0        | 16      | 9.09 (3.79)                      |
| Reciprocal filial piety          | 0        | 12      | 10.92 (1.53)                     |
| Traditional family attitudes     | 1        | 28      | 13.94 (4.71)                     |
| Egalitarian gender role          | 4        | 20      | 12.08 (3.09)                     |

n = 1,887
indicates an acceptable fit.

V. Results

1. Descriptive and Bivariate Analyses

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics for all variables included in the analysis. Let us first look at the dependent variable. With regard to living arrangement, more than half (52.6%) choose separate residence between parents and children as the preferred type when answering from the parent’s perspective. In contrast, when taking the children’s stand, relatively more equal distribution is attained in that separate residence falls below 30%, while co-residence with married sons (32.4%), along with co-residence with married children (24.1%) assume the majority. Clearly, different living arrangement attitudes are found with separate residence from parent’s perspective and co-residence between generations from children’s stand being the favored arrangement. It appears filial expectations remain to be strong so that when expressed as a child, one abide by the norm and indicates co-residing with elderly parents a better arrangement. But the norm does not apply to parents who prefer separate living arrangement from children, much more so than co-residence with children.

As to financial support, a different pattern is observed. From parent’s or children’s perspective, all children share parent’s living expenses is the most favored support type (41.6% and 57.3%). Parental autonomy, indicated by self-support, again, receives stronger support from parent’s view (36.8%), but is the least preferred support type from children’s stand (10.1%). This implies that while not to depend on children may be parent’s attitudes, but in terms of financial support, the preference for children to assume the filial responsibility becomes a shared expectation between generations. In addition, to pay for parents living expenses receives more endorsement from children’s than from parent’s perspectives as expected (82.4% vs. 58.2%). Most notably, financial support by sons only has changed to support by all children from either perspective meaning patriarchal norms may be loosening in that parent’s living expenses are expected to be shared by children, but normative influence maintains to be salient in preferred attitudes toward co-residence with sons.

Table 1 also lists variables of family care demand. Among all respondents, 47.1% has both parents alive, followed by neither parent alive (28.2%) and only one parent alive (father 5.2%; mother 19.4%). For specific care demand at home with reference to family members aged 65 and above, 8.1% indicates so. But 17.5% expressed strong home care preference that someone ought to quite work or school to stay home as a carer for elderly family member.

Tables 2 and 3 show the trend in recent two decades

| Table 2. Attitudes of preferred living arrangement across years |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Parent’s perspective¹ |
|                  | 2016 | 2011 | 1996 | 1991 |
|                  | %    | %    | %    | %    |
|                  | (n)  | (n)  | (n)  | (n)  |
| Parents co-reside with married children | 17.0 (321) | 16.4 (350) | 12.6 (242) | 13.9 (348) |
| Parents co-resident with married sons | 21.7 (410) | 31.2 (667) | 33.1 (637) | 31.3 (779) |
| Separate residence | 52.6 (992) | 41.5 (887) | 34.5 (663) | 37.1 (924) |
| Others | 8.7 (164) | 7.9 (169) | 19.8 (281) | 17.5 (436) |
| Children’s perspective¹ |
|                  | 2016 | 2011 | 1996 | 1991 |
|                  | %    | %    | %    | %    |
|                  | (n)  | (n)  | (n)  | (n)  |
| Parents co-reside with married children | 24.1 (455) | 22.0 (470) | 18.1 (349) | 20.2 (501) |
| Parents co-reside with married sons | 32.4 (612) | 39.0 (831) | 43.6 (839) | 40.8 (1,013) |
| Separate residence | 29.1 (550) | 20.2 (431) | 14.0 (270) | 15.6 (389) |
| Others | 14.3 (270) | 18.1 (387) | 24.2 (466) | 23.4 (582) |
| n = 1,887 | n = 2,135 | n = 1,924 | n = 2,488 |

¹ Unknown and skip are deleted.
on two parental support categories in Taiwan. For living arrangement between 1991 and 2016, separate residence between parents and children has the most noticeable increase to 52.6% in 2016 from parent’s perspective (Table 2). The same perspective also finds co-residence with married children remains to be lower than with sons only, with the latter experiences a substantial drop in 2016 (from 31.2% in 2011 to 21.7%). Altogether, parents still prefer to have separate residence, but co-residence with children also occupy substantial proportion. Regarding the children’s perspective, the trend indicates an evident increase of separate residence preference from 15.6% in 1991 to 29.1% in 2016. However, co-residence with sons consistently receives the most endorsement (high as 43.6% in 1996 to 32.4% in 2016). Added by preference of living with children, co-residence between generations has exceeded separate residence as the preferred living arrangement from children’s perspective.

With regard to financial support, the most obvious trend is the change from sons as sole providers to children sharing the support responsibility, from both parent’s and children’s perspective. As can be seen from Table 3, the change from “sons provide only” is superseded by “all children provide” between 1991 and 2016 (parent’s stand: 38% in 1991 to 41.6% in 2016; children’s: 53.5% to 57.3%). On the contrary, for parents to self-support living expenses exhibits relatively stable endorsement, but with opposing views, in that parents would prefer to enjoy autonomy (>1/3) while only a minority of children would favor this support type (≤ than 1/10).

Since co-residence between generations requires greater physical, financial, emotional resources and is thus much more complicated than financial support to parents, the preference of support patterns revealed reflects an outcome from filial norms, changing ideologies as well as realistic constraints. Overall, the traditional patriarchal norm (i.e., sons to provide support) is loosening, and is replaced by filial support to be shared by all children. Parental autonomy, as opposed to cultural norms, remains to be an attitude expressed from parent’s perspective only. It should be noted that filial norm seems to have stronger impact on attitudes toward co-residence than financial support.

The profile on the changing trend of attitudes toward parental support in Taiwan is in accordance with our contention that cultural norms, individual resources as well as family care demand are significant mechanisms accounting for attitudes toward parental support. Bivariate analyses are thus conducted in order to ascertain the meaningful association between variables (Table 4). As can be seen, most of variables considered are significantly related to attitudes on two parental support categories, from both parent’s and children’s perspective. Further bivariate analyses are then per-

Table 3. Attitude of financial support for elderly parents across years

| Parent’s perspective¹ | 2016 | 2011 | 1996 | 1991 |
|-----------------------|------|------|------|------|
| All children provide  | 41.6 (785) | 35.4 (761) | 19.7 (379) | 19.5 (485) |
| Sons provide          | 16.6 (314) | 24.3 (335) | 35.8 (688) | 38.0 (945) |
| Self-support          | 36.8 (694) | 31.1 (736) | 35.3 (680) | 35.3 (878) |
| Depend on children    | 5.0 (94) | 7.8 (118) | 9.1 (175) | 7.2 (179) |

| Children’s perspective¹ | 2016 | 2011 | 1996 | 1991 |
|-------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| All children provide    | 57.3 (1,082) | 48.5 (1,034) | 29.9 (575) | 34.8 (865) |
| Sons provide            | 25.2 (474) | 30.2 (645) | 51.7 (994) | 53.5 (1,330) |
| Self-support            | 10.1 (190) | 6.9 (147) | 10.4 (200) | 4.6 (115) |
| Depend on children      | 7.5 (141) | 13.4 (287) | 8.1 (155) | 7.1 (177) |

¹ Unknown and skip are deleted.
formed, and associations basically support our hypotheses (all the results of post hoc analyses are available upon request).

Take living arrangement for example. Taiwanese adults who have higher level of authoritarian filial piety are more likely to endorse traditional view—that is, it will be better for parents to co-reside with married sons. In contrast, those who express higher level of reciprocal filial piety are more open to co-residence with all children as well. Nevertheless, although the dual filial piety may display somewhat different preference regarding parental living arrangement, those with high level of either filial piety are less likely to endorse separate residence. Another consistent result from bivariate analyses is that stronger egalitarian gender role attitudes are likely to result in higher preference for self-support and separate residence respectively for “living arrangement” and “financial support.”

As expected, traditional family attitudes tend to lead Taiwanese adults less likely to choose self-support or separate residence as the preferred parental support types, regardless from which perspective. There is only one exception. With regard to financial support, higher level of traditional family attitude is significantly associated with children’s endorsement of support by sons, but not the other two choices (i.e., all children and self-support).

Among individual resources, almost all variables were significantly related to the outcome variables. For example, males are more traditional in that they are more likely to endorse sons to be responsible for parental support from either perspective (i.e., co-reside with sons, sons provide financial support).

For variables included in the “family care demand,” care demand at home and home care preference each has different significant association with two support categories. But further analyses on differences between four types of support preference for each of support categories show they are not significantly related to outcome variables, or only marginally related. As to the availability of parents, when both parents are deceased (as compared with only one parent is alive), co-residence with sons becomes the most preferred living arrangement for both perspectives. However, with regard to living expenses, although results attain significant levels, but closer scrutiny does not find a clear pattern.

Since variables considered are significantly related to attitudes of parent’s and children’s perceives on both parental support categories, we then use multivariate
logistic regression to simultaneously examine all relevant factors so as to determine their relative importance on attitudes toward parental support.

2. **Logistic regression**

The above analyses provide a preliminary depiction of attitudes toward parental support in Taiwan. We further delineate the relative effects of individual resources, family care demand, and cultural norms on people’s attitudes by using logistic regression. From Table 5, findings on preferred living arrangement for parents which echoes the results from bivariate analysis can be seen. Let us look at findings on cultural norms. From parent’s perspective, Taiwanese adults who endorse authoritarian filial piety and traditional family attitudes are more likely to choose “co-reside with son” as the preferred living arrangement for parents, but less likely to select “separate residence” as expected ($\beta = .09$ and $\beta = -.11$ for authoritarian filial piety; $\beta = .07$ and $\beta = -.07$ for traditional family attitudes). Similar patterns are found from the children’s perspective. For reciprocal filial piety, a more relational focused filial belief, slightly different results are shown. Those who report higher level of reciprocal filial piety are less likely to choose “separate residence” as the living arrangement for parents ($\beta = -.10$ for parents’ perspective; $\beta = -.17$ for children’s perspective). Instead, they tend to favor “co-reside with children” as a better arrangement ($\beta = .14$ for parents’ perspective; $\beta = .13$ for children’s perspective). In other words, cul-

### Table 5. Logistic regression on attitudes toward parents’ living arrangement**

|                  | Parent’s perspective | Children’s perspective |
|------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
|                  | Separate residence   | Co-reside with son    | Co-reside with children |
| Cultural norms   |                      |                       |                        |
| Authoritarian filial piety | $-.11 (.02)^{**}$     | $.09 (.02)^{**}$       | $.09 (.02)^{**}$        |
| Reciprocal filial piety  | $-.10 (.04)^{**}$     | ns                    | $.09 (.02)^{**}$        |
| Traditional family attitudes | $-.07 (.01)^{**}$     | $.14 (.05)^{**}$       | $.05 (.02)^{**}$        |
| Egalitarian gender role   | $.07 (.02)^{**}       | -.08 (.02)^{**}       | ns                      |
| Individual resources |                      |                       |                        |
| Males            | ns                   | $.54 (.13)^{**}        | $-.52 (.13)^{**}$       |
| Education        | $.31 (.05)^{**}       | $.27 (.06)^{**}        | $.27 (.05)^{**}         |
| Age              | ns                   | -.01 (.01)^{†}         | ns                      |
| Marital status³  |                      |                       |                        |
| Married          | $.44 (.17)^{**}       | ns                    | $.36 (.26)^{†}          |
| Single           | $-.38 (.21)^{†}$      | ns                    | $.57 (.26)*             |
| Relative Income  | ns                   | ns                    | $.47 (.22)^*            |
| Family care demand |                      |                       |                        |
| Availability of parents⁵ |                      |                       |                        |
| Father only      | ns                   | ns                    | $.80 (.31)^{**}         |
| Mother only      | ns                   | ns                    | $-.59 (.29)^*$          |
| Both parents     | ns                   | ns                    | $.40 (.20)^*            |
| Care demand at home⁵ |                      |                       |                        |
| Home care preference⁵ | $-.25 (.14)^{†}$     | $.29 (.15)^{†}        | ns                      |

Nagelkerke $R^2$  

|                  | Parent’s perspective | Children’s perspective |
|------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
|                  | .24                  | .20                   | .11                   |

N = 1,887  

¹ p<.1; ² p<.05; ³ p<.01  

¹ All the H-L tests show insigniﬁcant results.  

² Reference: other marital statuses.  

³ Reference: both parents are deceased.  

⁴ Reference: no elderly above 65 years old at home need care.  

⁵ Reference: other care types.
tural norm of filial piety, be it authoritarian or reciprocal, propels adults to favor co-residence between generations as a better living arrangement for elderly parents.

As expected, egalitarian gender role attitude produces significant negative effect on “co-reside with son” as a preferred living arrangement, regardless from which perspective ($\beta = -.07$ for parents’ perspective; $\beta = -.04$ for children’s perspective). Adults with egalitarian gender role attitude are also more likely to choose “separate residence” from parent’s views ($\beta = .07$). Modern ideologies tend to result in higher parental autonomy, especially from the parent’s stand.

Among various indicators of individual resources, gender and education have more noticeable significant effects. Males are much more likely to choose “co-reside with son” ($\beta = .54$ for parents’ perspective; $\beta = .81$ for children’s perspective), but less likely to choose “co-reside with children” ($\beta = -.52$ for parents’ perspective; $\beta = -.75$ for children’s perspective) than females. Despite recent efforts from the government and various civil organizations promoting gender equality, males have revealed consistent and supportive attitudes toward traditional patriarchal expectation. The higher educated, as expected, strongly favor “separate residence” ($\beta = .31$ for parents’ perspective; $\beta = .27$ for children’s perspective), and less likely to consider “co-reside with son” ($\beta = -.27$ for parents’ perspective; $\beta = -.17$ for children’s perspective) as a better arrangement. This result fits well with the contention that

| Table 6. Logistic regression on attitudes toward parents’ financial support* b |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Cultural norms                  | Parent’s perspective | Children’s perspective | Parent’s perspective | Children’s perspective | Parent’s perspective | Children’s perspective |
| Authoritarian filial piety      | $-.06 (.02)^*$    | $.16 (.02)**    | $.03 (.02)**    | ns              | $.04 (.02)      | ns              |
| Reciprocal filial piety        | $-.07 (.04)$      | ns              | ns              | $-.20 (.05)**   | ns              | $.17 (.04)$      |
| Traditional family attitude     | $-.04 (.01)^*$    | $.03 (.02)**    | ns              | ns              | ns              | ns              |
| Egalitarian gender role        | $.06 (.02)**      | $-.08 (.02)**   | ns              | $.06 (.03)**    | $-.04 (.02)^*$  | ns              |
| Individual resources            |                   |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| Males                           | $.27 (.11)**      | $.74 (.14)**    | $-.67 (.10)**   | ns              | $1.36 (.13)**   | $-1.01 (.11)**  |
| Education                       | $.28 (.05)**      | $-.27 (.06)**   | $-.09 (.05)*    | $.19 (.07)**    | $-.25 (.05)**   | $.14 (.05)**    |
| Age                             | $.02 (.01)**      | ns              | $-.02 (.01)**   | $.02 (.01)**    | $.02 (.01)*     | $-.02 (.01)^*   |
| Marital status                  |                   |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| Married                         | ns              | $.44 (.20)*     | $-.37 (.16)*    | ns              | $.34 (.18)      | $-.30 (.16)^*   |
| Single                          | $-.63 (.21)**     | ns              | $.47 (.20)      | ns              | ns              | ns              |
| Relative income                 | $-.27 (.08)**     | ns              | $.17 (.08)*     | ns              | ns              | ns              |
| Family care demand              |                   |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| Availability of parents         |                   |                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| Father only                     | ns              | ns              | $.76 (.30)**    | ns              | ns              | ns              |
| Mother only                     | ns              | ns              | ns              | ns              | ns              | ns              |
| Both parents                    | ns              | ns              | ns              | ns              | ns              | ns              |
| Care demand at home             | ns              | ns              | ns              | ns              | ns              | ns              |
| Home care preference            | ns              | ns              | ns              | ns              | ns              | ns              |
| Nagelkerke R²                   | .15             | .17             | .14             | .06             | .21             | .17             |

N = 1,887
* p < .1; * * p < .05; ** p < .01
a Coefficients use “other” as the reference.
All the H-L tests show insignificant results.
1 Reference: other marital statuses.
2 Reference: both parents are deceased.
3 Reference: no elderly above 65 years old at home need care.
4 Reference: other care types.
higher education tends to result in stronger individualistic orientation (Lu and Yang 2005; Yang 2004).

Another interesting finding is the influence of marital status on parental support attitudes. Taken from parent’s perspective, married are more likely to favor “separate residence” between elderly parents and adult children (β = .44), and are less likely to prefer “co-reside with children” (β = -.36). This pattern is exactly opposite to preference expressed by unmarried singles. As can be seen in Table 5, singles tend to oppose “separate residence” (β = -.38) and prefer “co-reside with children” (β = .57). From children’s perspective, singles also favor not to “co-reside with son” (β = -.47), but choose “co-reside with children” instead (β = .41). It appears the experience of marriage may discourage married adults to prefer separate living arrangement between generations, while singles are more likely to reveal greater conformity to co-residence norm.

With regard to family care demand, the availability of parents produces more realistic effects, especially when judging from children’s perspective. Compared with no parents available, those with only father or only mother alive tend to select “co-reside with children” as a better living arrangement (β = .65 for father only and β = .40 for mother only). They are also less likely to favor “separate residence” between generations (β = -.59 and β = -.35, respectively). Still, even when both parents are alive, children may express “co-reside with children” as a preferred living arrangement (β = .41). Again, when judging from the children’s perspective, greater conformity with familial norm of co-residence between generations is reported. On the other hand, if parent’s view point is taken, home care preference where a family member quits job or school to assume the caring role tends to result in a preference of “co-reside with sons” (β = .29), but not to have separate residence (β = -.25).

Table 6 presents findings on attitudes toward parent’s financial support. Unlike living arrangement, the effect of cultural norms on provision of parent’s living expenses is not as strong nor as consistent. From parents’ perspective, both dimensions of filial piety have negative effects on “self-support” (β = -.06 for authoritarian filial piety; β = -.07 for reciprocal filial piety). Taiwanese adults who endorse filial belief are less likely to let elderly parents pay for their own living expenses. Furthermore, authoritarian filial piety is positively related to “provide by son” (β = .06 from parent’s and β = .04 from children’s perspective) and “provide by children” (β = .03 from parent’s perspective). Reciprocal filial piety also contributes to the preference of “provide by children” from children’s perspective (β = .07). In other words, while dual filial belief results in negative attitudes toward parental autonomy in living expenses, those with higher authoritarian filial piety (more traditional filial belief) is more likely to favor financial provision from children.

Traditional family attitude has the expected significant influence on attitudes toward financial support from parents’ perspective only. In specific, those holding more traditional marriage and family values are less likely to let parents support their own living expenses (β = -.04), but are more likely to choose sons as the provider (β = .03). The effect of egalitarian gender role attitude on financial support to parents is more consistent with findings on living arrangement. Those who hold more egalitarian gender attitude prefer parents to practice “self-support” (β = .06 for parents’ perspective; β = .06 for children’s perspective) rather than “provide by son” (β = -.08 for parents perspective; β = -.04 for children’s perspective) in their financial support. Modern ideology is echoed by the preference of parental autonomy in financing living expenses.

With regard to individual resources, comparable patterns are found to that obtained from the living arrangement. Among all variables, gender and education have the most profound influence on one’s attitude toward parents’ financial support, but other variables also produce significant effects. Consistent with preference on parents’ living arrangement, males are more likely to choose sons as the financial provider to their parents (β = .74 for parents’ perspective; β = 1.36 for children’s perspective), but less likely to favor “provided by all children” (β = -.67 for parents’ perspective; β = -.1.01 for children’s perspective). As can be seen, the gender effect is larger when judging from the children’s perspective. As to education, higher educated favors “self-support” of parents on living expenses (β = .28 for parents’ perspective; β = .19 for children’s perspective) and not to be provided by sons (β = -.27 for parents’ perspective; β = -.25 for children’s perspective) from either parent’s or children’s perspective. The educational effect is consistent with the pattern found on living arrangement. With regard to marital status, interesting and different results are shown. Married adults are more likely to let sons provide parents’ financial support (β = .44 for parents’ perspective; β = .34 for children’s perspective), and are less likely to
endorse “provided by all children” ($\beta = -0.37$ for parents’ perspective; $\beta = -0.30$ for children’s perspective). Singles, instead, prefer not to let parents use “self-support” ($\beta = -0.63$), but to be shared by all children ($\beta = .47$) in providing parents’ living expenses.

Age is an important factor for parent’s financial support. Older adults tend to favor parental autonomy ($\beta = .02$ for parents’ perspective; $\beta = .02$ for children’s perspective) but not the shared responsibility among all children ($\beta = -.02$ for parents’ perspective; $\beta = -.02$ for children’s perspective). Relative income as reported by respondent’s subjective evaluation also produces salient effect in that when taken the parent’s perspective, lower income is likely to result in less preference for “self-support ($\beta = -.27$), and stronger favor for “children provide” pattern ($\beta = .17$). In other words, males and married adults appear to be strong supporter of patriarchal norm in that “son provide” is the most favored support pattern for parent’s living expenses. Higher educated, on the contrary, tends to endorse the “self-support” pattern so as to enjoy the parental autonomy.

Family Care Demand does not attain noticeable effects on attitudes toward parent’s financial support. Only one condition in the availability of parents—when father is alive (as compared with both parents deceased) reaches significant likelihood in choosing “children provide” as a preferred financial support pattern to elderly parents ($\beta = .76$). It appears the realistic care demand at home may have more salient influence on attitudes toward parents’ living arrangement, but less effect on parents’ living expenses.

VI. Conclusion

Due to the emerging demand of elderly home care from the accelerating aging process in Taiwan, this study attempts to examine attitudes toward elderly parental support and to delineate the relative importance of factors accounting for the changing attitudes. Using data from 2016 Taiwan Social Change Survey, effects of individual resources and cultural norms along with the demand of parental care are included to ascertain their potential influence on attitudes toward parental support. Since the normative expectation embedded in the patriarchal culture is a unique feature in Taiwan and in East Asia and has been inadequately investigated in the West, normative factors will be emphasized to illustrate how traditional norm continues to shape the contemporary family dynamics.

Attitudes toward parental support are indicated by “living arrangement” and “financial support,” which is further distinguished into two different perspectives: “from parent’s perspective” and “from children’s perspective.” The original intention of the questionnaire design is to explore whether filial norm may reveal stronger influence on the viewpoint of being children. In order to better understand the continuity and change of patrilineal influence in Taiwan, parental autonomy will be compared with dependence on children—especially on sons—to determine the preferred type of parental support.

The analyses start with a brief review of the changing trend in the preference of parental support from 1991 to 2016. With regard to living arrangement, opposing attitudes from parents’ versus children’s are clearly shown in that separate residence between elderly parents and adult children has been the most favored living arrangement from parent’s perspective; while co-residence with sons consistently exceeds separate residence from children’s view. As to financial support, the pattern is more various. Although parental autonomy as indicated by self-support of parents remains to be a favored choice from parent’s stand, the preference for children providing parent’s living expenses consistently surpass other options. The change only occurs from “sons provide” to “all children provide.” Similar change of trend is also noticed from the children’s perspective in that financial support to parents is expected from son’s responsibility to a pattern by all children. The minority who endorse parent’s self-support of living expense implies that filial norm has profound impact so that both parents and children agree that parent’s living expenses should be provided by children. Normative expectation also results in children (especially sons) to favor co-residence with parents while parents express a continuing preference of separate residence.

After meaningful associations between variables are ascertained from the bivariate analyses on 2016 datasets, we use multivariate analyses to examine the relative influence of cultural norms, individual resources and family care demands on two types of parental support. Results point out that either from parent’s or children’s perspectives, individual resources generally attain expected effects in that males tend to strongly endorse the patriarchal support pattern in contrast with higher educated who are more likely to favor parental autonomy. Family care demand turns out to be
relatively less important for attitudes on parent support, except children with only one parent alive are less likely to favor separate residence but co-residence between generations. As expected, cultural norms produce salient effects on attitudes toward parental support. Dual filial piety has clear negative impact on parental autonomy. Compared with reciprocal filial piety, authoritarian filial piety contributes to typical patriarchal support pattern (co-reside with sons and sons provide parent's living expenses). Attitudes in marriage and family as well as gender role attitudes also produce expected outcome in that traditional attitudes support dependence on children and modern attitudes are inclined to support parental autonomy. In other words, individual resources and cultural norms are shown to produce significant effects on attitudes toward parental support in Taiwan. Among them, norm of filial piety has attained expected pronounced influence.

Perhaps the most interesting finding regarding attitudes toward parental support in Taiwan is that taken from the parent’s perspective, autonomy or self-support has been a preferred support pattern in contrast with the normative arrangement endorsed from children’s perspective. It should be noted that sons as main providers for parental support (prescribed in the patriarchal norm) have been gradually changed to all children sharing the support responsibility. This implies that filial norm may continue to impact the future family practice, but individual resources and realistic constraints also result in a loosening of the traditional norm so that flexible compromise on parental support is likely to occur.

Future studies may emphasize on two related subjects. One is to delineate factors accounting for the difference between living arrangement and financial support. There are some differences regarding effects of individual resources and cultural norms, especially the relatively less strong influence of norms on parent’s financial support. It may be due to the continuous increase in the preference of shared support pattern by all children which requires further investigation. The other is to link the supportive attitudes to support behaviors, particularly the distinction between co-residence with sons and co-residence with children. The distinction allows argument on the strength of patriarchal norms, and thus needs to be elaborated on the gender differentials. Females are shown to have negative attitudes toward co-residence with sons and to let sons provide financial support from either perspective. But females are positive about dependence on children (or not to depend on sons only). The subtle cultural influence which may operate in the parental support decisions deserves qualitative studies.

In brief, this study confirms that both individual resources and cultural norms have significant impact on attitudes toward elderly parental support in Taiwan. Since intergenerational obligation in East Asia is still under the omnipresent influence of patrilineal culture, compromised arrangements may become a necessary adjustment to the existing physical constraints and may continue to behave in line with the patrilineal rule. With regard to attitudes toward parental support, the endorsement of various alternatives implies a changing possibility is emerging. Nevertheless, the strong patriarchal norm maintains its strong influence in family functioning which suggests that parental support will most likely act in accordance with the normative expectation.

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Appendix

In 2014, the research team and the "Research Center for Humanities and Social Science, Academia Sinica" developed seven strata that included all 358 administrative districts in Taiwan. After considering geographic location, the final strata became nineteen. These nineteen strata were then used for the PPS. In order to compensate for possible confounding factors (e.g., refuse to participate and non-eligible subjects), the research team also included inflating factor when deciding number of subjects. Each inflating factor was based on the response rate of recent three years’ survey along with strata specific situation. The final inflating factor for current 2016 data ranged from 1.4 to 3. After deleting subjects who were not qualify or refuse to participate, the final usable sample for the 2016 TSCS Family module was 2,024, and was representative of Taiwanese in gender and age.