

From social exclusion to inclusion: Single-mother families and social policy in Taiwan

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Abstract

Female-headed single parent families are one of the most concerned issues in the contemporary family or women studies. From the perspectives of the Taiwanese culture, married women are like water spilled on the ground and can never be retrieved. Being single mothers, how they interpret their experiences of social inclusion or exclusion? How our service system can rebuild and strengthen single mothers' social inclusion? These concerns are the main topics which this paper wants to explore. Five focus groups are held to collect mothers' subjective interpretations. In-depth interview are also conducted. Results indicated that the informal support systems are limited for single-mother families. Instead, self-help groups and social welfare system are playing the influential roles. Some implications, i.e. the reshape of the value system, the support of self-help groups, the revision of social assistance system and a coordinated social service delivery, are proposed and hope to help those women in need.

Keywords: single-mother families, social exclusion, social policy