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Issues in Father-Daughter Incest Intervention in Taiwan

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by

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Abstract

This thesis centres on the perceptions of social work professionals involved in incest intervention in Taiwan. It is based on 39 in-depth, semi-structured interviews with respondents from three categories: social workers, social work supervisors and counsellors/therapists, from different regions of Taiwan, working in Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Centres. The gender distribution of the interviewees, 35 women and 4 men, reflects the numerical dominance of women in social work.

This study shows that the majority of the respondents were assigned child protection work without consultation, reflecting the hierarchical decision-making process in Taiwanese social work, overriding staff autonomy, personal preferences and training background. Child protection work creates high pressure and necessitates joint decision making involving all related disciplines. Almost every worker interviewed felt a high level of stress and a need for support in dealing with incest/child sexual cases, perhaps due to insufficient knowledge and inadequate training. The shorter the time frame they face, the more mistakes they may make. I utilized two theoretical viewpoints, including family systems theory associated with pathological behaviours and feminist theory, to elucidate how interactions between gender and power contribute to gender inequality in intervention outcomes.

My findings suggest that the current child protection procedure in Taiwan raises significant concerns. These include time-constraints in intervention and psychotherapy, the sequencing of the procedure, and lack of gender-awareness. It seems the hierarchical organisational structure directly and indirectly encourages social workers to be overreliant on their supervisors in decision-making. The relationship between the supervisor and supervisee is often inadequate, leading to many supervisees feeling undermined and discouraged from growing personally in confidence. My study found that no one particular intervention fits all cases and the therapeutic approach chosen will depend on the circumstances of the case, based on the therapist's training background, individual personality variations and experience. However, practitioners identified 'sensitivity', 'accompaniment' and 'empowerment' as effective and important. Radical changes in attitude, an incorporation of a feminist approach, a gender understanding work culture and a clear resolve to make positive changes in the fields of education, practice and reforms in legal and hierarchical structures may resolve some of the difficulties the present system of social work practice in incest faces.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Scope and purposes of the study

This thesis centres on the subjective experience of child protection professionals working on father-daughter incest intervention in Taiwan. The main aim of the thesis is to explore on the basis of empirical qualitative data, how such child protection professionals view incest intervention and what the issues and limitations of their professional experience are. Based on their professional experiences and practice, the second aim is to offer, as part of conclusion to this thesis, recommendations for changes to the training and professional practice of child protection workers in Taiwan in order to improve that practice.

In focussing on these aims, I shall in this introduction provide an outline of the concept of incest and explore briefly gender attitudes in Taiwan and how these attitudes affect the practice of incest intervention. I shall provide a literature review on the definitions of child sexual abuse and incest, indicate some of the debates about the concept of father-daughter incest and then I shall discuss the professional relationship and theoretical approaches of intervention workers towards incest.

Western researchers suggest that child sexual abuse is almost synonymous with incest (Greenland, 1958 cited in Corby, 1998). Child sexual abuse as the umbrella term under which incest fits, might also include paedophilia, exhibitionism, molestation, rape, child prostitution, and child pornography (Kempe and Kempe, 1984). Compared to other forms of child sexual abuse, incest involves sexual activity between close family members. The *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) defines incest as 'the crime of sexual intercourse or

cohabitation between persons related within the degrees within which marriage is prohibited; sexual commerce of near kindred'. The meaning of the word incest varies widely because different cultures have differing notions of 'sexual relations' and 'close family member'. Some cultures consider only those related by birth as capable of incest with each other, while others include those related by adoption or marriage, e.g. the adopted-father and step-father. Yet others may include those with whom one cohabits in a family-like setting. That means incest occurs in all types of families. I shall discuss the concept of 'father-daughter incest' further in the literature review below. For now, based on my own professional background as a social worker in Taiwan, I suggest that power plays a role in incest as well as child sexual abuse (Herman and Hirschman, 1977; MacLeod and Saraga, 1987), and this has led me to define 'incest as a criminal offence of a sexual nature and a form of physical violence to children below the legal age of consent by individuals connected to the family in a position of power misusing their responsible roles; this includes adoptive relatives or those who live together with whom there may be no biological kinship'. In this sense, I suggest that incest is a form of sexualized power relationship between adult and child, and the abuse/misuse of power by the perpetrator is one of the most conspicuous features of incest/child sexual abuse cases (O'Hagan, 1989).

In this thesis, 'children' are defined as those under the age of 18 who are involved in illegal sexual activities, where the children cannot fully understand or give their consent to such activities. Very young children, for example, may be incapable of verbally communicating the harm inflicted on them. An examination of cases of incest and sexual abuse shows that the behaviour of those involved does not differ substantially between them. Most incest cases involve sexual assaults over a period of time, sometimes throughout childhood and unto adulthood. An example from my interview data is the case dealt with by a social worker, who described the powerlessness of a continuing incest victim, abused since childhood by her father and into her thirties. Thus whilst on the whole my participants

discussed incest intervention in terms of children under the age of 18, they also reported cases of incest beyond that age. The opportunity to commit incest with people beyond the age of 18 is partly a function of the gender attitudes prevalent in a given society – in this case Taiwan – where women are considered inferior to men. It is to these attitudes that I now turn.

Gender Attitudes in Taiwan

Taiwanese society has quite different gender expectations from boys and girls, even before a child is born. Chinese society in general places greater value on a boy because he continues the family name (Chan, 1998). This view still influences family expectations regarding the gender of the coming baby. A son is preferred to a daughter, although not as strongly as before the late 20 century (Lee, 2000). Children are socialized to follow the gender stereotyped attitudes of their society. In Taiwan in particular this includes obedience to adults. Male children tend to be socialized to assume power and responsibility, whilst female children in particular are subordinated to males (Chan, 1998). Traditionally, the role of husbands in Taiwan is more instrumental, taking responsibility for decision-making and income provision, while the wives' role is to care for other family members both physically and emotionally. Chinese traditional values claiming that men are superior to women are still deeply rooted in their lives. In effect, these values are influenced by Confucian ideology, even though many middle-class Chinese women consider Confucianism as out of date (Oiwa, 1999). Women are expected to build a close relationship among family members in terms of caring. Women are also expected to make extra efforts to inculcate officially sanctioned values in their children in order to prevent them from drifting towards individualistic, indulgent and materialistic attitudes. Although the division of labour among couples has gradually changed in contemporary commercial society, many working mothers are still expected to be responsible for the household and

child care (Lu, 2002). Overall, there still exists an unequal division of household labour in Taiwan. Lee's study on family gender issues found that men are likely to be viewed as 'the head of the house and wives should submit to their authority' (Lee, 1992). This attitude of submission is also expected from children, and in particular from female children.

Although the Taiwanese government has made efforts to treat all citizens equally, the empowerment of women is far from reality, despite the growing number of women in parliament, assemblies, the judiciary and local bodies. These institutions and systems are structured in accordance with male staff needs rather than female ones. At a very basic level, looking at the establishments of the police, the department of justice and even the head office of the child protection services, male staff dominate over female staff. The occupational and professional cultures in Taiwan provide men with more power and opportunities to influence policies, and therefore 'women face substantial prejudices' (Smith, 1983: 163). There is a general neglect of gender issues in institutions in Taiwan. Organizations are a crucial site for the ordering of gender and the distribution of power. The hierarchical and very masculine culture of the police system for example is still prevalent; indeed, organizational cultures seem to be routinely very much men's cultures (Hearn, 1993). There are some members of the department of justice and the police in Taiwan who still view incest and domestic violence as family matters. Therefore in 1997 when domestic violence work was first started in the Taipei City government of Taiwan, they advertised with the slogan 'violence is not a family matter, it is a crime' (Dobash and Dobash, 1980 cited in Dominelli 1991). This was necessary because of police reluctance to intrude in 'family disputes', indicating the priority the police accord a man's right to privacy over a woman's right to protection. This stereo-type applies to dealing with sexual abuse of children too. Children are also considered to be part of the private domain of the family.

In a way, the police and legal context have played up the gender stereotyping of masculinity and femininity, by playing on derogatory images of females. For example, a girl's virginity is viewed as important and some males do not consider that their sexual activities matter, provided the girl remains a virgin. In terms of the preservation or violation of the 'hymen', sexual intercourse is supposed to be more serious than indecent assault for example. Such views constitute some of the reasons behind the bad practices that occur when treating incest clients. In the process of professionals' own socialization in the social context of Chinese culture, workers are affected by the same values as the society in which they live. Gender specialists in Taiwan claim that the era of gender equality is still far from our reach. Even though the government has adopted more equitable laws and conventions, the real problems of unequal gender relations remain, (Lee, 2003). Culture refers to a society's common fund of beliefs and behaviours, and its concepts of how people should conduct themselves from generation to generation (WHO, 2003). Social workers are of course socialized in the same context as the perpetrators and victims of incest. Cartens (2001) notes that social workers' professional definitions of sexual abuse are influenced by their underlying values and beliefs. Hence, it is vital to bear in mind the socialization processes and cultural values that inform a given society and its members, including social workers.

Reasons for interest in the study

My interest in incest arose while I was working in Hsin Chu City Government (HCCG[1]) in the area of child protection in 1995. At that time, a colleague of mine spoke about her responsibility in child protection but admitted that she had previously never done any casework. I did not have any experience with incest cases either. As my professional training and work over the previous five years had been related to mental health, I had

[1] Hsin Chu City Government (HCCG) is one of the 25 local governments of Taiwan located in the north of Taiwan. See chapter 3 of this thesis, as HCCG was one of the government organizations where this research took place.

very little idea of the Child Welfare Law and the procedures of the child protection practice of Taiwan when I first became involved in the Social Welfare Department, HCCG. This raises the question, if knowledge of child protection is lacking among the staff responsible for it, how can the best interests of children be served? As Jones et al. (1987) argue, the response of each professional will depend on her/his ability to recognize the significance of what she/he sees and this ability, in turn, depends on one's professional training and practical experience. This concern, as well as my own previous work experience with battered women, stimulated me towards research on incest intervention and related gender and power issues.

Between the years 1995 to 1997, I witnessed the introduction in Taiwan of three new Acts /Laws[2] on social work and children. 24-hour sexual assault and child protection hot-line centres were also established. I still remember that we initiated a night duty[3] (under the Child and Youth Sexual Transaction Prevention Act, Article 10) in addition to the normal office work after I had worked at Hsin Chu City Government for three months. However, there was panic among my social work colleagues towards this new statutory duty. The authorities considered the problem as one of the social workers' lack of commitment to child protection. The change in the social workers' role and duties after the 1995 Child and Youth Sexual Transaction Prevention Act was similar in effect to the Cleveland Crisis in Britain, which brought about a significant change in social work practice through the introduction of the Memorandum of Good Practice (Corby, 1998). In Taiwan, too, concern about these changes was followed by new Regulations and Acts related to child protection professionals, particularly social workers and the way in which they should carry out their work.

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[2] Child and Youth Sexual Transaction Prevention Act enacted on August 11, 1995; Sexual Assault Prevention Act promulgated on Jan 22, 1997; the License for Social Workers Act promulgated on April 2, 1997.

[3] The first night duty mission came from the Child and Youth Transactional Prevention Act on August 11, 1995. According to article 10, when a person under 18 is investigated, the police authority shall inform their location's social welfare department who appoint a social worker to accompany the under-aged client, no matter what time of day or night. The social worker should be arriving at the police station within 90 minutes.

The purpose of this research then is to examine what factors, according to social work professionals, impact on professionals' interventions in dealing with incest. Specifically, I focus on the following questions:

1. What are social work professionals' experiences in dealing with incest in Taiwan?
2. What are the reasons that promote and encourage respondents to choose to work in the area of incest?
3. How do the respondents view the social work education and in-service training they have received?
4. How do social work practitioners view the supervisory support they receive?
5. What are social work practitioners' views of the intervention procedures they carry out?
6. How do the professionals select strategies for interventions and how far do different theoretical bases influence their practices or approaches when dealing with incest?

In asking these questions I hypothesise that how a social work practitioner comes to work in a particular area influences that work, that the training which social work practitioners receive is important in professionalizing their practice, as is the supervision they receive and the clarity of the procedures they have to follow.

My research analysis draws in the main on three sets of data: first of all the interview material I collected and which is described in greater detail in the methodology chapter; secondly, on social work texts that deal with issues of social work education training and practice, with reference to child protection in particular; thirdly, on government and policy papers that set out the legal and professional frameworks for social workers working in

incest intervention. I also draw on my personal professional background and the practice I observed of others.

I approach my material from a feminist perspective which suggests that gendered inequalities and power structures are key to an understanding of how incest operates (Herman, 1981; Sgroi, 1982; Russell, 1986; O' Hagan, 1989; Waldby et al., 1989; Glaser and Frosh, 1993; Courtois, 1996). Kate Millet was one of the first second-wave radical feminists to insist that the roots of women's oppression are buried in a patriarchal sex/gender paradigm (Tong, 1997: 95). Power/powerlessness is one difference which is socially and culturally rooted. Radical feminists see this issue in dyadic relations of dominance/subordination. In this context, gender difference is a function of domination, and the implication is that men are powerful and women are powerless. Of course, all females are not automatically less powerful than all males – a middle-class woman, for example, may have more power than a working-class man. However, in many situations female are less powerful than males. You can argue that the perpetrator of incest has more power than his victim as he is able, either by coercion or by seduction, to force himself on his victim. Tong (1997) argues that male dominance and female submission as the norm of relations between the sexes extends into other contexts as well, for example bureaucratic organizations.

Feminists disclosure of men's domestic violence against women, of their sexual coercion and abuse of children in the home in the early 1970s (Segal, 1995), put gender on the social work map by drawing upon and validating women's experience and highlighting the gendered nature of social relations in all spheres of public and private life (Dominelli, 2002: 19). Sexual violence in the form of child sexual abuse has been one main foci among feminists (Kelly, 1996; Kelly and Radford, 1998). In the social services, the majority of service users and service providers around incest are females, and I am therefore looking

at a woman-centred practice. Although some of my interviewees, as I shall indicate, had some understanding of the gendered nature of inequality, this was very limited, and few had considered questions of power and gender in relation to incest.

Most practitioners in Taiwan adopt 'family system theory' as one of the prominent theoretical frameworks in dealing with incestuous families. Partly because practitioners do not engage much with feminist approaches or feminist thinking, they tend not to be very critical of this theoretical model. Systems theory involves the basic idea that objects in the world are interrelated to one another (Whitchurch and Constantine, 1993). Viewing the family as a system, explains how family systems theory links with individual pathological behaviour, assuming intricately inter-connected relations to other members and forces within the family. Family systems theorists also often consider the psycho-sexual distortions in the fathers' behaviours as the result of a failure in the mother's parenting. The family systems approach has been subject to critique from feminists who argue that more emphasis needs to be placed on the external social context where women's experience is formed. Family theorists are apt to see 'family' as an organic whole (Burck and Daniel, 1990), so when they address issues of power, they focus on generational differences rather than gender roles. However, feminists such as Elizabeth Ward (1984), Diana Scully (1986), Emily Driver (1989) and Dominelli Lena (1989) argue that violence or abuse towards women and female children is the result of unequal relations between men and women, men's issues with masculinity and how to enact it, and men's tendency to use violence to assert power. Feminists therefore criticise family systems theory as being too unitary, as they argue that internal family structures and functions need to be viewed in relation to their wider economic, political and ideological significance (Segal, 1995: 252). Family system theory then has been critiqued by feminists because a) it ignores the wider social context and the systematic ways in which inequality is ingrained in society; b) it therefore reduces incest to a family matter and potentially just the private domain; c) it

displaces the issue onto the family rather than focussing on the perpetrator. Since the respondents in my study used concepts such as family systems theory to identify the problem of father-daughter incest, I suggest that knowing about gender issues might help those workers and therapists to become more critical of using family systems theory, and might also help them to consider different approaches. I shall now turn to the literature on father-daughter incest and professional intervention.

Literature review

This literature review is structured as follows: in part one I deal with the prevalence of child sexual abuse; part two centres on different perspectives in conceptualizing father-daughter incest; and part three will cover the literature concerning professional relationships and theoretical approaches to incest intervention. Researchers argue that issues relating to sexuality including father-daughter incest are still considered taboo in Taiwan (Liu, 1994; Huang X., 2001). Thus it is difficult to research into the incidence and causes of the sexual abuse of children and incest in Taiwan. However, since official data show that more survivors now report their victimization to the authorities in Taiwan and are willing to prosecute the perpetrators (www.moi.gov.tw/moi/english/e-forword.asp), incidence figures resulting from child sexual abuse, particularly incest, have gradually been identified (Liu, 1994; Chiang, 1998; Lan, 1999). There has been enough research to show that sexual abuse of children in general is neither a negligible issue nor a question of public hysteria. La Fontaine (1990) argues that incest is a serious social problem and even the lowest estimate of its prevalence indicates that a large number of children are involved. For child sexual abuse researchers it is important to establish the prevalence of child sexual abuse. However, regarding prevalence, as Staley and Lapius (1997) have reported, there are inconsistent prevalence findings of child sexual abuse. This also applies to the situation in Taiwan.

➢ The prevalence of child sexual abuse

In the UK, the estimated rate of sexual abuse cases in general including incest per thousand under the age of 17 years was 0.08 in 1983, rising to 0.65 by 1987 (Creighton and Noyes, 1989), and ascending to 2.7 in 2002 (Department of Health, 2002). Russell (1984) estimated that only 2% of incest cases are reported. Children who remain silent and never speak out might be one reason for this lack of reporting. Abused children may not want to voice their views because abuse rarely results in successful prosecution as the evidence does not stand up to court processes (Wyatt and Powell, 1988). In Taiwan, the problem of sexual offences has been brought into the public arena as an underlying threat to society (Chou et al., 2000). Looking at the incidence rate of sexual assault cases, Wang (2003) indicates that there were 776 in 1987, but that figure had increased to 2,161 in 2002, three times the victim population of 1987. In fact, the official data have underestimated the cases (Wang, 2003), due to the statistics presenting only the tip of the iceberg as the official data of sexual offences have a 'dark figure' (F. Huang, 1999; Xiu, 2004). The Ministry of Interior (MOI) of Taiwan as representative of the public sector reported that there were around 3,000 cases of sexual assault in the years 2001 to 2003. Out of 3,000 cases, 70% involved children under the age of 18 (Xiu, 2004). The 'dark figure' is estimated at about 7 to 10 times that of the substantiated cases (Wang, 2001). This implies that the actual total number of cases of child sexual abuse in Taiwan may be around 21,000 to 30,000 between 2001 and 2003. However, there remains a discrepancy in the above two statistical sources, and figures are not easily reconcilable.

Studies have shown that the majority of victims of incest are female (Stanko, 1985, Alter-Reid et al., 1986; Russell, 1986; Courtois, 1996; Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Committee, 2005). Ho and Mak (1992) in their study found that over 95% of the sexual abuse victims including victims of incest were female children and women. According to Russell (1986) and Finkelhor (1984), 95% of the perpetrators of

abuse of girls are men and 80% of the perpetrators against boys are men. Presser (2005) adopted evidence from the U.S. Department of Justice from 1999 on those who perpetrate interpersonal violence, such as sexual assault and murder, and determined that these individuals are predominantly men. The Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Committee in Taiwan, as a leading agency in the management of child abuse at the prevention and detection level, found that the majority of perpetrators of child sexual abuse are not strangers but male relatives within the family, especially fathers (The Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Committee MOI, 2004). Xiu (2004) reported that over 60% of child sexual abuse cases occurred at home. Wang (2004) found that 50% of the perpetrators were fathers and step-fathers. One of the issues which emerges from this literature and which cannot be stressed highly enough, is that often no clear distinctions are made between child sexual abuse and incest and, in particular, the figures are frequently not disaggregated to indicate different types of abuse. I therefore have to refer to 'child sexual abuse' where this is the term used by the authors and will refer to 'incest' when the authors clearly discuss incest as a separate phenomenon.

Incest between fathers/step-fathers and daughters accounts for approximately three-quarters of reported incest cases (Berliner, 1977; Kempe and Kempe, 1984; Dominelli, 1991) and further, the female children who have been exposed to incest by a biological father, a step-father, a boyfriend of the mother during preadolescence or very early adolescence, tend to be the eldest daughters living at home (Kempe and Kempe, 1984). This is similar to the data of my study which demonstrates that father-daughter is the most common form of incest. For example, three of the social workers I interviewed from different centres discussed the same experience as described in the literature.

> The majority of incest relationships are father-daughter relationships. In seven of my twelve incest cases it was father-daughter. (No. 7: 4)

Fathers are mainly the perpetrators or the mother's partner...the oldest daughter in the family is at much higher risk. (No. 28: 8)

Q: Who is mainly the victim of incest in your cases?
A: Always the daughter.
Q: Who is the main perpetrator of incest in your cases?
A: Fathers are mainly the perpetrators, and only in one case in my experience it was the grandfather.
Q: What's the exact meaning of 'father'?
A: The biological father. (No. 19: 8)

There are some empirical studies which indicate that father-daughter incest is the most common form of incest (Kempe and Kempe, 1978; Ward, 1984; Blume, 1990; Courtois, 1996) and very damaging to the victim (Giarretto, 1982; Vander Mey and Neff, 1982; Ward, 1984; Eisenberg, Owens and Dewey, 1987; Russell, 1986; Courtois, 1996; Courtois, 2001) due to the betrayal of trust (Russell, 1986; Smith, 1986; Courtois, 1996; Colton and Vanstone, 1996). Incest means that the perpetrator misuses the parental role to gain access to his daughter. Although boys are sexually abused as well as girls, the research done to date is mostly based on girls, and suggests that the figures for incest committed against girls are much higher. This phenomenon, as well as my training as a social work practitioner and my personal experience as a woman, provided the motivation to do research on incest and on the issues of gender and power in a patriarchal society, specifically in relation to father-daughter incest.

➢ Conceptualizing father-daughter incest

As indicated earlier, the term incest is considerably narrower than the term sexual abuse. In fact, not much has been researched about incest in Taiwan[4]. Most of the literature on the subject is from the western world but where literature concerning Taiwan is available I have used it in my work. In discussing child sexual abuse practice, Jackson and Sandberg

[4] For a list of the articles and dissertations in relation to incest, see Appendix 1.

(1985: 40) illustrate the lack of a specific definition of incest which contributes to data interpretation difficulties. Western researchers have shown that earlier incest studies (Weinberg, 1955; De Francis, 1969; Meiselman, 1978; Wyatt, 1985) used inconsistent definitions of this type of child sexual abuse. For example, whatever physical form incest takes, it is generally seen as a kind of sexual abuse (Kempe and Kempe 1984). In Taiwan, technically the child protection authorities categorise incest as a type of child abuse in the practice of child protection rather than as a type of sexual abuse. In general, the official data in Taiwan do not have a separate item to identify incest as a form of sexual abuse; instead, it is either grouped under child sexual abuse (MIO, 2003) or included in child protection (Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Committee, 2005). From March 2004, the relation between parties in cases of incest was declared as part of the legal process; therefore, at least the relationship between the perpetrator and the client was articulated.

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is recognized as a crime committed against a child (Glaser and Frosh, 1993). It can be divided into intra-familial and extra-familial sexual abuse. The former is abuse which normally occurs within the family, like incest; the latter is sexual abuse of a child by a molester who is not related to the victim (Chan, 1998). However, Driver (1989: 18) has noted that many feminists reject the theoretical distinction between familial and stranger assault, and they also suggested that incest is simply another name for CSA. There are of course similarities between the two. But there are also differences between intra-familial abuse and extra-familial abuse. Both two types of abuse involve predominantly men in sexual contact with children. In this sense, both are primarily connected with the objects of sexual encounters, for adults have power over children and can define and manipulate their desires as they wish. But the major difference is the context in which the abuse occurs – incest is committed within the domain of the family and the familial household, a space that is meant to be safe for a child.

In academic works on incest, confusion has been caused by the tendency of some writers and researchers to use the terms 'incest' and 'child sexual abuse' interchangeably (Renvoize, 1982). As mentioned earlier, the Taiwanese government views incest as a sub-category of child sexual abuse, and child sexual abuse is a sub-category of child abuse. However, there is a controversy in the literature over the definition of 'incest'. Researchers such as Brownmiller (1975) and Ward (1984), for example, want to advocate the term 'rape' instead of 'incest'. Ward suggested that the term 'father-daughter rape' should be used, as the use of 'child sexual abuse' and 'incest' dilutes and blurs the reality of the behaviour (Courtois, 1996). The term 'father-daughter incest' focuses more on who is involved, rather than upon what is happening (Ward, 1984). Ward argues that to talk of father-daughter incest diminishes the gravity of the sexual violation and concludes that the term 'father-daughter rape' should be used as a generic term for all forms of sexual victimization of female children at the hands of adult men including fathers and father figures (Courtois, 1996: 15). In her contribution concerning child sexual abuse Courtois acknowledges that father-daughter incest is not the only type of incest reported but wants to use the phrase to represent a paradigm of female sexual victimization. Often feminists emphasize two broader perspectives: the age perspective and the gender perspective (Driver, 1989). The age perspective is associated with the discrepancy in age between perpetrator and victim and the notion that the latter has less power due to being younger. It reflects the imbalance of power between adult and child based on an age gap. This is important as children are structurally dependent on adults. Their dependence is one of the factors that defines 'them' as children. It is for this reason that incest is seen as connected to power and gender (Kelly and Radford, 1998), since children on the whole are less powerful than adults, and female children are less powerful than adult males. Adults hold power over children, young girls in particular, and children, especially in cultures such as Taiwan, where female children are still viewed as the possessions of adults. This is also seen in many socio-cultural contexts (Reason, 1998). In the case of incest this notion of

adults' 'ownership' of children goes together with the abuse of females by males. This is the gender perspective in incest which recognises the way in which certain men feel free to abuse females (Robinson, 1993). Vikki Bell (1993) provides a feminist account of incest which exposes the occurrence of incest as a form of sexual abuse of power perpetrated by men, implying that incest is a phenomenon of gender inequality, shaped by its social context. Bell's (1993) argument is close to that of Courtois (1996) in that she sees boys as sexually abused within the family much less often than girls, but like girls they are more likely to have been abused by the father when a parent is the perpetrator. The gender dynamic in which feminists contextualise child sexual abuse is that of male violence against females (Dominelli, 1991).

I want to comment briefly on one of the most common definitions of incest which has been quoted in the literature. This embraces both child sexual abuse and incest. The most commonly used and cited international definition of sexual abuse of children is of 'the involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent, or that violate the social taboos of family roles' (Schechter and Roberge, 1976 cited in Kempe and Kempe, 1978: 60; Johnson, 1990). Based on this kind of definition which largely ignores blood relations as a basis for definition, a more recent study also found that much child sexual abuse is equal to incest (Dominelli, 1991). Despite scholars' caution that the taboo of incest is often based on ties of blood (Bagley, 1990), Kempe and Kempe (1984) emphasize that a blood relationship is not necessary for the condition of incest. Kempe and Kempe suggest that the term 'family' can be used to describe the actual living arrangement of the involved persons, for example, the step-father, adopted father, the mother's partner are included. Some researchers have therefore viewed incest as the imposition of sexually inappropriate acts, or acts with sexual overtones by, or any use of a minor child to meet the sexual or sexual/emotional needs of, one or more persons who

derive authority through ongoing emotional bonding with that child (Blume, 1990). This statement expands the traditional definition of incest to include sexual abuse by anyone who has authority or power over the child. In this thesis, father-daughter incest not only implies the biological father but also other males such as the mother's boyfriend who are members of the household and in a position of trust in relation to a child which they abuse.

Bell (1993) identifies three ways in which incest is written about: in arguments that equate incest with child sexual abuse; in arguments that stress the psychological effects of incest; and in feminist arguments that stress the gender differential in incest. 'Gender' is one of the most persistent and taken-for-granted features of our lives (Hearn 1999), and incestuous relations between males and females are expressive of this. The concept of gender has empowered researchers to think of masculinity and femininity as historically and culturally variable rather than as constant by nature (Jackson and Scott, 2002: 9). Here men's violence towards women and female children is seen as embedded in a broader discourse of power (Presser, 2005). According to Jackson and Scott (2002: 8-9), the rise of 'second wave' feminism in the late 1960s and early 1970s inspired many young sociologists to look for more critical approaches to the study of men's and women's social lives. More emphasis was placed on the inequalities between women and men, and the language of 'sex roles' began to be replaced by new concepts, in particular 'gender' and 'patriarchy', and the origins and maintenance of women's subordination.That subordination, not only of women, but also of children is the norm in Taiwanese culture. Here, a female/male child is considered the possession of her/his parents. Therefore, child protection practitioners need to battle against the dominance not only of men over women but also of adults over children. This also means that 'researchers need to develop an understanding about the effects of power imbalances and relations at a structural or macro level since these affect interpersonal or micro level interactions between people' (Gibbs,

2001: 700). Such power imbalances extend beyond the relations between adult men and adult women to include relations between adults and children.

Hanmer and Maynard (1987) concluded that feminist research reflects the existence of a complex social structure where power is unequal. Incest, as both sexual abuse and abuse of power, is a form of gendered violence. In discussions of father-daughter incest, two factors intersect that both involve issues of power: that of the relation between a male and a female, and that of the relation between a parent and a child. The latter relationship is gendered in the context of father-daughter incest, which as previously indicated, constitutes the majority of incest cases. This means that the majority of incest cases presents a particular gender configuration in which the culturally constructed 'inferiority' and lesser power of the victim is compounded through its combination of involving a female who is also a child. Feminist theorists on gender relations have argued that sexual violence is employed by men to oppress women (Ward, 1984; Scully, 1990; Corby, 1998 and 2000; Deacon et al., 1999). They indicate that the gendered imbalance of power allows men to ignore women's world. Courtois (1996) highlights the greater power ascribed to males in most societies and the lesser power to females, and the sexualization of these power differentials. Different factors have interacted together to enable the framework of the patriarchal society in which the social construction of men who rape is formed. Several researchers who assert that violence is gendered, specifically men's violence to women and female children, emphasize that without an insight into male dominance, it is hard to explain the reasons why the vast majority of incest perpetrators are male, and the reasons why the majority of victims are female (Herman and Hirschman, 1981; Russell, 1986; Scully, 1990; Deacon et al., 1999; Corby, 2000). There is evidence to suggest that, as part of growing up in a male-dominated society, women learn to occupy a particular value position in their society (Stanko, 1985). Feminist analyses of gender oppression (Dominelli, 2002) counteract theories which are gender-blind. For example,

Corby (2000) argues that psychopathology or the disease model which is gender blind is too limited an explanation for incest because it ignores the gender dimension of incest.

I would like to add a comment on how I understand 'power' in this context. Feminists from diverse backgrounds such as Black feminists, feminists from working-class backgrounds, and lesbian feminists have argued that power in not monolithic but differentially distributed in different groups and across different contexts (hooks, 1989). A similar point has been made by Michel Foucault who argues for the circulation of power among social groups, subject to particular contexts (Foucault, 1980; 1991). Whilst it is therefore possible to suggest that power is neither fixed nor 'owned' by particular groups, it is also the case that in specific contexts it takes particular forms or expression. In the case of father-daughter incest, for instance, the confluence of a certain kind of femininity and of infantility or a child state mean that the female victim is less powerful than the male perpetrator to determine how her body is (ab)used in the incest situation. Her powerless state in that context is confirmed by the violation.

Father-daughter incest is a complex issue involving power, dominance, gender inequality, and many other cultural and social factors. Given that this is the case, an increased understanding of attitudes toward incest and child sexual abuse and those cultural beliefs which impact on one's attitude towards these, contributes to the analysis of professional relationships and theoretical approaches towards incest. By linking this understanding of incest with the nature of the family and male-dominated relationships in patriarchal society, it provides a conceptual framework which serves as a basis for not only casework, but also for socio-political change and prevention, too.

An issue to be addressed below will be that of professionals and victims being socialized in the same culture and professionals being unprepared to handle incest cases. In other

words, understanding the cultural context of these experiences is vital. In the following part therefore, I shall give particular attention to literature dealing with how the values and beliefs of professionals influence their relation with their clients.

- **Professional relationships and theoretical approaches towards incest**

This section deals briefly with the literature on the working experience of social workers with female incest victims, including an examination of their clinical experience, their understanding of the father-daughter issue, their perspectives, their working models, approaches to intervention and the professional relationship with clients.

The literature on treatment approaches to incest in Taiwan does not make for encouraging reading or help practice. Western feminism and the western women's movement influenced social work professionals in Taiwan during the 1980s to engage with gender equality and non-sexist treatment approaches (Liu, 2003). Wang (2003) commented that most studies in Taiwan focus on the effectiveness of treatment approaches. However, there is inadequate focus on the treatment strategies of service provision and professional intervention on incest in Taiwan (Teng, 2000) which need to be addressed. Dane (2000) emphasized the importance of helping social workers to cope with the stress and secondary trauma that occurs when they observe and hear affect-laden experiences. The fact is that little attention has been given to the evaluation of personal and professional perceptions of incest (Wang, 2003).

Incest involves a number of complex issues at a wider societal level. It has been pointed out that child sexual abuse has mainly been discovered in the social work practice of 'child protection' (Kempe and Kempe, 1978; Corby, 1998). Child sexual abuse is viewed as a social phenomenon, linked to general attitudes and practices towards female children and

to the ways gender relations are organized and regulated in our society, in this instance Taiwan. This, as I shall indicate, is under-developed in Taiwan.

The protection of incest children is negotiated by a multitude of individuals with varied beliefs and technical skills, located in a wide range of agencies with very diverse functions and priorities. Personal values impinge on professional decisions. Equally important is the recognition that factors such as organizational and interpersonal dynamics, professional acculturation and roles, personal and organizational power, status, and gender are all relevant to this contentious issue (Hallett and Birchall, 1992). Trotter argues that frequent, open and honest discussions about the purpose of the intervention are required together with an understanding of the dual role of the worker as an investigator and as a helper; the client's expectations of the worker; the nature of the worker's authority and how it can be used; what is negotiable and what is not; and the limits of confidentiality (Trotter, 2002: 39). Some writers suggest that the social worker's intervention has positive but also negative dimensions for children, even if it is for a longer-term benefit; however, it is difficult for workers to recognize that they can also hurt children (Jones et al., 1987). Workers may need to be careful, especially in removing a child from home, because while changing the physical environment is comparatively easy, the child's feelings about what has happened and what is to follow are easily ignored by the front-line workers. Corby's (1998) study reminded social workers about the need to listen to children and to take what they have to say seriously and sensitively. Gender-sensitivity is one of the factors that may enhance a person's capacity to work well with incest cases. It involves the inculcation of an understanding of the different situations and needs of females and males, and questioning pre-existing norms of gender roles. Being sensitive to gender entails searching for, considering and accommodating all aspects of social relations between the two sexes in their social and cultural context. This is important when planning, assessing and working

with incest cases and with child sexual abuse because such abuse occurs in a specific context.

Yu's research focused on child protection workers in the local governments of Taiwan and in Taiwan Fund for Children and Families (CCF[5]). 69.5% of the respondents in her study felt that they lacked practical experience and knowledge of intervention and treatment in dealing with child protection work (Yu, 1995), although child sexual abuse or incest was clearly seen by all professionals in this study as an important child protection issue. Moreover, Chiang (1997) found that social workers in general had no sense of the theoretical basis of their work. Similarly, in England Corby (2000) pointed out that the main weaknesses of professional intervention are the lack of specialist knowledge and expertise. Although the prevention of sexual offences and their professional treatment in Taiwan began over ten years ago (Wang, 2003), three areas of problems have been identified that need to be addressed. These are victim services, rapist treatment and preventive education in the Taiwan government's programmes of sexual assault treatment and prevention.

Some writers draw attention to the potential transference and counter-transference in social worker-client relations (Geldard and Geldard, 1997; Chan, 1998). Therefore, it is expected that prevention, the protection of the child affected by incest, and treatment require an inter-agency team with sufficient professionals, skills and knowledge of working

[5] CCF: In 1938, the China's Children Fund (CCF) was established in Richmond, Virginia, USA by American Christians. The name was later changed to Taiwan Fund for Children and Families (CCF/Taiwan). The county/city governments entrusted CCF/Taiwan with the provision of foster care services from 1981. In the early years, most fostered children came from broken families. However, since CCF set up the "Child Protection Hot Line" and cooperated with governments to advocate child protection, cases have been referred by every regional government. They organize workshops covering different topics on parenting in the community to improve parenting skills and benefit children. CCF in Taiwan has also worked on child prostitution-related issues since the Ministry of Interior announced its "Prevention Act for Sexual Transaction of Children and Youth" on August 11, 1995. Five Branches, entrusted by their local governments, set up emergency short-term shelters for abused or sexually exploited teenage girls starting from July 1996. These shelters were named "Chia-Fu Yuan". In addition, Nantou Branch was entrusted by Nantou District Court to provide a placement and counselling service for juvenile delinquents from February 1998. The placement centre is also called "Chia-Fu Yuan".

together (Wang, 2003). However, this is often not the case in Taiwan. Holt's research in Ireland (2003) is critical of an absence of a team policy in dealing with child protection social work and men's abuse of females. There are no such policies in Taiwan. Overall, there is still very little literature in Taiwan on social work professionals and their experiences of intervention practices and procedures.

There are a number of barriers that block the CPWs in Taiwan from executing good practice which are also identified in different literatures. Some of these blocks relate to

I. The professional's value system: the response of a social worker is determined in part by the worker's own value system, reflected in a deeply held set of beliefs (Holland and Scourfield, 2000).
II. The quality and quantity of training and education.
III. Gender-sensitivity: research has highlighted that as social workers focus on women and children, they effectively minimize men's role and their behaviour. Therefore, men become invisible in the child protection system (Corby, 2000).
IV. A critical and valid procedure: a lack of a clear mandate in the form of policy and practice guidelines may result in workers not knowing how to respond or having other priorities (Holt, 2003).
V. Professionals' personal issues: some writers draw attention to the potential transference and counter-transference in social worker-client relations (Geldard and Geldard, 1997; Chan, 1998).
VI. Lack of a future intervention plan: Too often professionals pull in different directions with a great deal of energy spent on trying to decide if abuse has taken place, with little or no future plans for treatment and rehabilitation programmes (O'Brian and Lau, 1994).

Waldby et al. (1989) suggest that the therapeutic literature regarding incest can be divided into three major categories, focussing on psychiatry, family therapy and psychology, respectively. Although there are different and diversified interventions and treatment approaches[6], in my study the professionals talked of only a very limited number of these. I shall discuss those later.

Significance of the study

Father-daughter incest has been 'unspeakable' in Taiwanese society. This makes disclosure difficult. Lin (1998) has shown that there are many reasons why children fail to disclose abuse including a failure to recognise an activity as abnormal or abusive, fear, shame, embarrassment, anger, guilt, grief and scandal; or a lack of skills to communicate the abuse. In addition, offenders often employ a range of strategies to prevent the child from disclosing. Helping professionals, therefore, play a significant role in supporting survivors and their training and support are of paramount importance. Moreover, at a very basic level, there is a need in Taiwanese society to raise gender awareness to increase an understanding of how gender operates in relations of inequality. Such awareness would help to break down the taboos regarding supposedly familial matters such as incest. The point is that raising gender awareness at a basic and general level offers a way of creating public awareness in relation to gender issues, and thereby to issues related to gender such as sexualized violence and incest.

Being gender-sensitive and alert to their own psychological states and coping pattern helps social workers to manage their work better. Therefore, as well as empowering clients, empowering social workers in their gender sensitivity is important for dealing with the issue of incest. Armstrong (1996) points out that incest is a form of politically and culturally

[6] Deacon et al (1999) employed multi-aspects theories to describe the phenomenon of child sexual abuse. These are: family dysfunction theory, behavioural theories, feminist theory, psychological and socio-cultural theories.

sanctioned violence which feeds into women's socialization as subordinates in gender relations. The National Institute for Social Workers in the USA (1982: 146) imposed on social workers a requirement that they should be aware of their own personalities, prejudices and attitudes and the ways which they will impact on their practice. Something similar might be useful in Taiwan.

In Taiwan, Liu (2002) has discussed the effects of female social workers' gender consciousness on their social work practice. Liu (2002) found that female social workers from diverse backgrounds regarding age, marital status, gender awareness and the expectation of women's role had a significant impact on their attitudes towards battered women. This also had a significant impact on their attitudes towards the perception of family violence. It affected their professional interactions resulting in positive and negative emotions (i.e. anger, distrust, rejection) towards their clients. In my study, the social workers also expressed differing emotional reactions to incest/child sexual abuse due to their differing perceptions of incest/ child sexual abuse (see chapter five). The significance of my study then rests on the fact I am dealing with a topic, incest intervention professionals' view of their professional training and practice, on which little has been done to date.

Structure of the thesis

This thesis is divided into seven chapters. This current chapter provides an introduction to the aims and scopes of my study, the reasons for my interest in the topic, a brief review of relevant literature, the principal research questions, and an explanation of the organization of this thesis. The second chapter maps the setting of the study, providing readers with a general picture of the geography, population, language, culture, education, economic development, political changes and females' experience in the socio-cultural context of

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Taiwan. Within this, an overview of the development of social welfare and the background of the Taiwanese child protection system is provided. The chapter also looks at existing services for child abuse which include the services for CSA in Taiwan.

In chapter three, the methodology of the study is considered. The chapter will focus on the process of the fieldwork, the rationale for the research design, the reason for taking a feminist research approach and the rationale for in-depth interviews. The research process, the roles of researcher and researched, and ethical considerations will be highlighted. The demographic characteristics of the respondents will also be described.

A thematic approach is used in the presentation and analysis of the data, which are examined in chapters four to six. In chapter four, I shall discuss in detail the curriculum of social work education, training in institutions and the current civil servant recruitment system in Taiwan, i.e. job-assignment. In chapter five, I shall cover two themes. These are: the time framework for intervention within the contemporary child protection procedure; and the follow-up treatment and services in the social services systems. I shall also discuss my interviewees' viewpoints regarding the drawbacks of the intervention procedure; the respondents' subjective experiences of being supervised and the roles and functions of social work supervisors in relation to the challenges of child protection domain. Chapter six centres on the professionals' perspectives on incest, both theoretical and empirical. Here I will look at four different aspects: the dysfunctional family and individual pathology; the tendency to blame the mother; the unequal relationship between an adult and a female child; and the future relationship between perpetrator and victim. I then examine the influence of the practitioners' own values on social work practice.

In the final chapter I shall offer a summary of the findings. I shall attempt to draw out key themes from the preceding chapters and discuss their implications for father-daughter

incest intervention. I shall also discuss the limitations of this study. I shall then focus on my second aim, the recommendations for changing professional training and intervention in order to improve the practice of social workers working with incest victims. The practice and research implications of the study for child protection and social work practice in Taiwan will be provided.

This chapter has provided an introductory summary of this study and the framework of the thesis. In the next chapter, I will turn to look at the setting of this study. I shall discuss the cultural context of females in Taiwan and how the context influences their experience including education and social status. The background of the child protection system in Taiwan will also be discussed.

Chapter Two

The Setting of the Study

I undertook my fieldwork in Taiwan (The Republic of China, R.O.C.) between 2002 and 2003. Although I had previously studied and worked there, I was not born in Taiwan. I lived there for more than 15 years, between 1984 and 2002. I went to Taiwan in the summer of 1984 to further my undergraduate study. After I got my BA degree in Social Work, I continued to study for another two years, for a Masters degree in Social Work. I then worked there as a social worker for about nine years. Of these nine years, I spent four as a clinical social worker both at a mental health clinic and in the community. Then I started to work in a different area, moving from mental health to a social welfare local authority, in which I had the opportunity to deal with cases of child abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault and young prostitution.

In the following section I shall give brief details about Taiwan and the current status of females in Taiwanese society, to help readers gain an idea of the context of my study. I shall consider gender socialisation in the Taiwanese cultural context, looking at government social policies, particularly those concerning females. Secondly, since the results of this study pertain to education and training in Taiwan, I shall give a brief overview of the relevant education system in Taiwan. The final section will survey the changes that have happened in the child protection system in Taiwan during the last two decades. In particular I shall focus on the changing pattern of the role of the child protection service and its provision for child protection intervention in Taiwan.

Taiwan

The Republic of China, Taiwan[1] is an island located off the southern coast of China, separated from the Chinese mainland by the Taiwan Strait (see Map 2-1).

Map 2-1 Geographical Location of Taiwan in Asia

Source: http://www.gio.gov.tw/taiwan-website/2-visitor/map/

[1] Taiwan is a part of the Republic of China (ROC). Established in 1912, the ROC is Asia's first constitutional republic. The ROC government, led by the Kuomintang (KMT), relocated to Taiwan in 1949 when the Chinese Communist Party established the People's Republic of China (PRC) on the mainland. Since then, the Taiwan area and the mainland area have been two separate political entities. The Republic of China has since exercised jurisdiction over Taiwan, Penghu (the Pescadores), Kinmen (Quemoy, Matsu) and numerous other islets. The Kinmen Islands are located at the mouth of the Chiulung River in Fukien Province, and have a total area of 176 square kilometres. The Matsu Islands are located at the mouth of the Minchiang River in Fukien Province, and have a total area of 29 square kilo metres. Taiwan, one of the islands of this chain, is the largest body of land between Japan and the Philippines. With a total area of nearly 36,000 sq. km, Taiwan is separated from China by the Taiwan Strait.The island is almost equidistant from Shanghai and Hong Kong (Taiwan Yearbook 2005, www.gio.gov.tw/taiwan-website /5-gp/yearbook/p015.html#1).

The history of Taiwan after 1949 is one of rapid and sweeping change over a short period. The population is a mixture of ethnic Chinese and Taiwanese people. Taiwan's total population[2] is nearly 22.5 million (Department of Statistic, MOI 2005). The ancestors of the indigenous people of Taiwan came mostly from the south-eastern coastal provinces of the Chinese mainland, particularly Fukien and Kwangtung. Although the main language is Chinese, the Taiwanese language and customs still exist, especially in the south of Taiwan. By 1949, after the Kuo Min Tang (KMT) government set up its capital in Taiwan, Mandarin became the common language for communication and was promoted through the educational system. A movement was initiated to teach students their mother tongue[3] and to preserve the languages and dialects of smaller ethnic groups. This ongoing movement is expected to have an extensive influence on the languages[4] spoken in Taiwan (Taiwan Yearbook 2005, www.gio.gov.tw/taiwan-website/5-pg/yearbook/p238.htm#3). Culturally, Taiwan has attempted to preserve its historical and cultural tradition. This has been profoundly influenced by Confucianism[5]. This tradition includes a strong focus on education. Confucian thought is deeply embedded in the ideology of Taiwanese society.

Taiwan was mostly an agricultural society under the political rule of China and nearly fifty years of Japanese colonization (Taiwan Yearbook 2005, www. gio.gov.tw/Taiwan-website/

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[2] The population density on Taiwan is approximately 616 per persons per sq km, making it the second highest in the world (Ministry of Foreign Affairs ROC, 2004).

[3] The languages and dialects spoken in Taiwan have their origins in the Austronesian and Han lingual systems. The Austronesian languages are spoken by the indigenous peoples, but are slowly disappearing with cultural assimilation among the inhabitants of Taiwan. Common Han dialects include Taiwanese and Hakka, spoken mainly by those whose ancestors immigrated from China's Fujian and Guangdong Provinces four centuries ago. However, following the lifting of the martial law in 1987, social pluralization has been accompanied by a growing emphasis on native languages.

[4] In 2006, the Ministry of Education (MOE) is drafting a language equality law aimed at preserving the 14 major languages and dialects spoken in Taiwan: Mandarin, Taiwanese, Hakka, and 11 indigenous languages. The draft law encourages both the government and private sectors to provide multilingual services, while calling for language research and development as well as the establishment of related databases.

[5] Confucianism is a philosophy with a religious function. It is named after Confucius and his discourses on ethical behaviour. It embraces some elements of traditional religion, such as a reverence toward heaven and the worship of ancestors, but is primarily concerned with the moral cultivation of the individual in order to establish harmonious relationships with others and society. It does not assert or deny the existence of a deity (Taiwan Yearbook, 2003).

5-pg/yearbook/p042.htm#3). After World War II, Taiwan became a refuge for Chinese Nationalists who fled the Communist takeover in China. Its agricultural society was slowly transformed into an industrial society, and in the 1960s, Taiwan's cities grew larger and more modern. Since 1949, its rapid industrialization, urbanization, modernization and democratization have dramatically transformed the lives of the people of the island. Despite this modernization, Taiwan's rural society and its values continue to exist in many areas.

The economy of Taiwan is growing. However, in 2003 Taiwan's economy was affected in the second half of the year by the outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and the US-Iraq war in the first half of the year (Taiwan Yearbook 2005, www.gio.gov.tw /taiwan-website/5-pg/yearbook/p138.htm#3). The rate of unemployment is apparently higher than before the SARS epidemic. Taiwan ranks first worldwide in the production of laptop computers, handheld scanners, motherboards, keyboards, and modems and so forth. Overall, Taiwan's information technology industry has played a crucial role in the worldwide IT market. Taiwan has become an important manufacturer of hardware products for personal computers, and the world's fourth largest supplier of semiconductor components for the IT industry over the last 20 years.

The cultural context

The word culture[6] refers to the way of life of its members develop in a particular society: the collection of ideas and habits which people learn, share and transmit from generation to generation (Linton, 1945). In order for a society to operate effectively, there are cultural

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[6] Culture is a fuzzy concept. Hofstede (1998) points out two different dimensions to interpret the term culture. One is culture in the narrow sense of 'civilization' and its products. The other meaning is a pattern of thinking, feeling, and acting, which includes much more than 'civilization' alone, which comes from an anthropological position.

rules, including sets of words, ideas, values, customs, norms and beliefs that govern that society (Holmes, 1991; Hofstede, 1998). Without a shared culture, people in society would be unable to communicate and cooperate. Haralambos, Holborn and Heald (2000: 3) identified culture as having two essential qualities: first, it is learned, second, it is shared. The process of learning the culture of one's society is known as socialization. One of the expectations in Taiwanese culture is that children learn and are taught to obey and respect their elders, from an early age. This principle is based on Confucian ideology which demands obedience to the authority invested in elders, especially parents. In cases of incest, this social norm often stops children from protesting against the sexual abuse inflicted by their parents.

Culture also refers to the nature of social change, which takes place as societies gradually evolve. Talcott Parsons' (1951) theory of culture is that order, stability and cooperation in society are based on value consensus; however, there may be change in the values underlying the social system. He argued that culture is linked with both the physical environment and individual personality elements of a social system. Culture is passed on to children through socialization, particularly through primary socialization[7] in the family (Parsons and Bales, 1955). There are two basic processes involved in primary socialization. One is the internalization of society's culture and the other is the structuring of the personality (Haralambos, Holborn and Heald, 2000). To understand the effect of culture is important here, since I shall be reporting on interviews with the subjects of my study, whose personality is moulded in terms of the central values of Taiwanese culture.

[7] Primary socialization refers to socialization during the early years of childhood which takes place mainly within the family (Haralambos, Holborn and Heald, 2000: 509).

Morrison (1994) makes little explicit use of the concept of the relationship between culture and socialization, but argues that culture can empower practitioners to take proper account of the wide-ranging set of influences which bear upon their personal ability to be effective, including societal attitudes, legislation and organizational factors. Scott and Henley (1996) caution practitioners that the effects of culture on professionals cannot be overestimated. It is to be expected that in patriarchal societies, the values associated with the pattern of patriarchy become dominant. People are likely to conform to the culture into which they are socialized. However, contemporary societies also face the influence of the development of cultural diversity, causing people to raise questions about the rightness or wrongness of the shared values. As a result, every society has its unique way of dealing with common problems: for example the problem of incest. All civilizations have been characterized by some forms of taboo on sexual relations with near kin and particularly primary relatives. The existence of prohibitions against incest has been observed to be one of the few instances of universality in human behaviour, transcending time and culture (Maisch, 1973; Colton and Vanstone, 1996). Sociologists (Haralambos, Holborn and Heald, 2000) believe that the solutions to this issue are culturally determined, which means they vary from society to society. However, such solutions all rest on the assumption that incestuous behaviour is not acceptable.

Speaking in a global sense, society encourages females to be victims in everyday life; passivity seems to be rewarded as a feminine trait. At the extreme end, if a woman is beaten, she is said to have incited it. If she is raped, she is said to have invited it. A woman may lose her job due to reproduction. In some societies a woman may lose custody of her child if she is divorced. These attitudes are still very deep in the culture of various oriental countries, of which Taiwan is one. Hence, it is vital to bear in mind that culture is a framework that impacts on those operating within it (Scott and Henley, 1996). Returning to

my research I am concerned with the impact of culture on child protection workers, since the framework of policy and practice in the management of incest in Taiwan appears unclear, and practitioners bring their own values and experiences to their work. An assessment of a case of child abuse, for example, can never be value-free, so social workers need to be sensitive to the cultural issues in every assessment they undertake, beginning with the planning of the assessment and who should be involved (Home Office, 1988). Cultural values are acquired during childhood when we absorb the basic values and norms by which our family, our society and community live. And as individuals we differ from one society to another. In addition, organizations too have their own micro-cultures which people adapt to, often consciously, when they join (Scott and Henley, 1996). Therefore, practitioners automatically see clients and their behaviour within the shared cultural as well as their organizational context and make assessments and interventions accordingly. In turn, both people's views and their previous experience of the child protection systems will influence the way they relate to social professionals and what they expect of them. According to Wyatt and Powell (1988) historical attitudes and values result in primarily men as offenders going under-punished and women as victims going under-noted, and this can also be applied to the situation in Taiwan (see Wang, 2003). According to one research finding in Taiwan, 85% of the 599 women who had been sexually abused reported to the police but only about 70% of them instructed the police to sue the perpetrator (Hse, 1999).

Governmental social policies on women

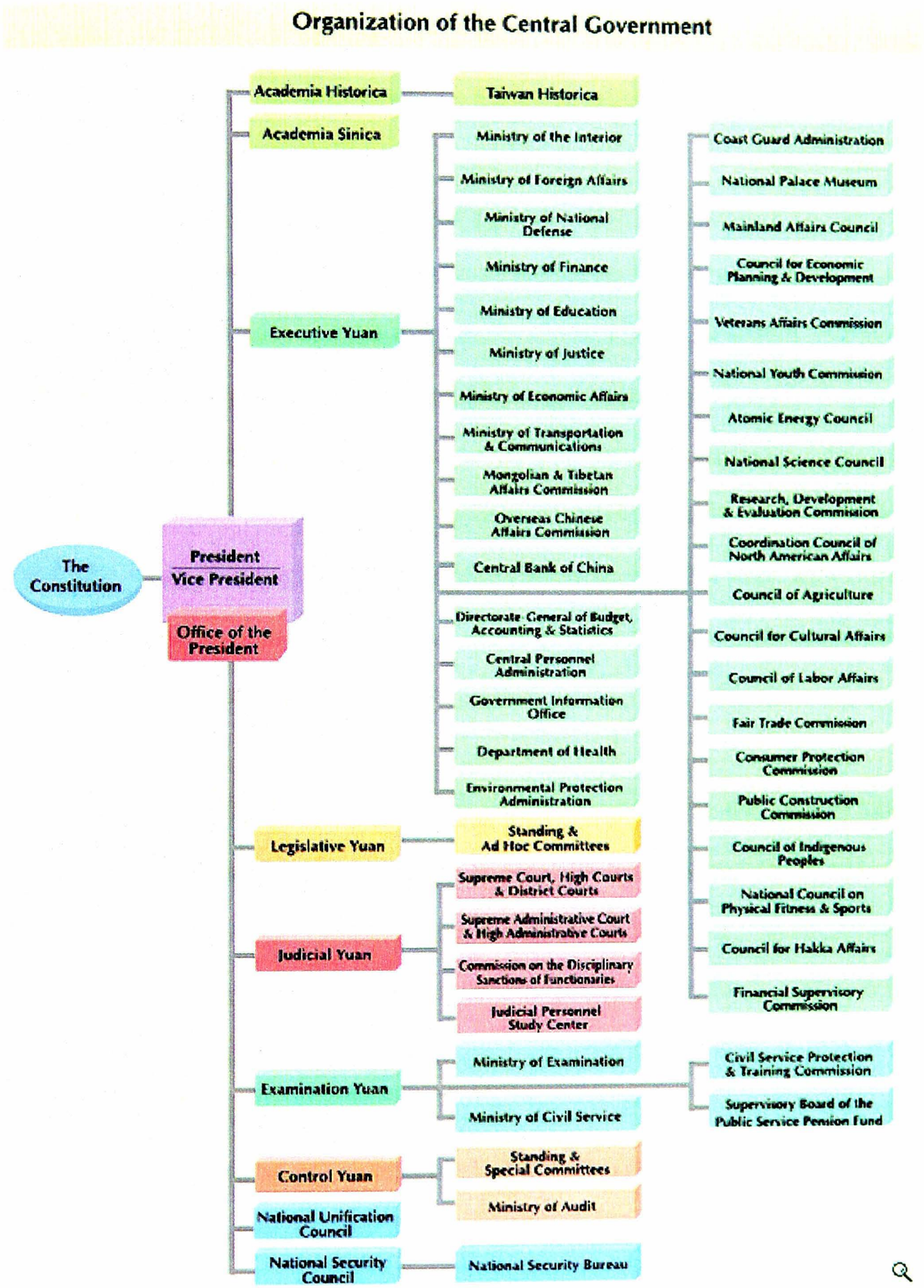
The ROC government is divided into central, provincial/municipal, and county/city levels, each of which has specifically defined powers[8]. The central government consists of the

[8] Regarding the power of each level of government, refer to Taiwan Yearbook, 2005 (http://www.gio.gov.tw/taiwan-website/5-gp/yearbook/p054.html#2).

Office of the President, the National Assembly, and five branches (called 'Yuan'), namely the Executive Yuan, the Legislative Yuan, the Judicial Yuan, the Examination Yuan, and the Control Yuan.

The Taiwan Provincial Government exercises full jurisdiction over Taiwan's 16 counties and all the cities except for Taipei (TPE) and Kaohsiung (KS), which are special municipalities directly under the jurisdiction of the central government. Figure 2-1 shows the organization of the central government of the ROC:

Figure 2-1 Organization of the Central Government



Source: http://www.gio.gov.tw/taiwan-website/5-pg/yearbook/p054.htm#3

In Taiwan there is a particular policy on women which is a national policy for women's rights. Apart from the Committee for the Promotion of Women's Rights, the Executive Yuan was established in 1997. Several regulations related to women's rights were promulgated at that time. The Executive passed a number of bills providing for the personal safety of women, such as the Sexual Assault Prevention Law, the Family Violence Law and so forth. It also successfully fostered the amendment of the family laws of the Civil Code, and women-related NGOs[9] were established to provide various services for women of different backgrounds. The intention of the government to continue a programme which highlighted women's rights gave birth to the concept of this policy on women. According to information from one of the NGOs, the Foundation of Women's Rights Promotion and Development[10], the Cross-century Blueprint for Women's Policies stemmed from the 1995 UN 4th World Women's Convention focused on human rights. This Foundation is concerned with problems in relation to the human rights of women.

The safeguarding of women's rights has long been provided for in the Chinese Taipei Constitution. Section 7 of the Constitution provides for the legal equality of men and women: 'All Chinese Taipei nationals, regardless of sex, religion, race, social status or political affiliation, are equal in law'. Since mothers are thought to be the foundation of the nation's survival and development, Section 156 of the Constitution states: 'In view of the state's respect for the foundation of the survival and development of our people, laws should protect mothers, as well as implement policies safeguarding the welfare of women and children' (Taiwan Women Web, 2001). Hence, in the realization of the constitutional

[9] Numerous women's organizations have been established over the past two decades to assist women to confront issues of concern, such as the Women's Relief Foundation of Taiwan, the Foundation of Women's Rights Promotion and Developments, the Women's Society of Taiwan and the National Association of Taiwan's Women Groups to uphold women's rights and promote equality and mutual respect between the sexes.

[10] The Foundation of Women's Rights Promotion and Development is a women-related NGO founded in 1998 by the Home Office with a subsidy of 3 hundred millions NT as its project fund. The objectives of this NGO are centred on women's safeguards, women's right to freedom, right to independence, right to education, right to participation and work (http://www.wrp.org.tw/Entrust/index2B.htm).

spirit of equality of the sexes, the protection of the mother, the implementation of welfare policies for women, government policies, laws and measures should ensure the equality of both sexes. On the one hand, the government should proactively assist women to achieve equal opportunities in their individual pursuits in the home, school, employment field, and society, as well as equal social status. On the other hand, it is supposed to eradicate the irrationally subservient, second-class-citizen, subordinate and restricted status and plight of women, thereby enhancing conditions for the independence, quality, autonomy and development of women. Although The Republic of China's President Chen Shui-bian, as a representative of the Democratic Progressive Party, in his second term of office (2004 - 2008) has shown his concern about constitutional reform regarding women's rights. There is a blueprint for establishing a 21st century society of gender equality (The Report on Women's Status in Taiwan, 1998) but the culture that restricts women's opportunities due to gender inequality is still in existence.

There is therefore a discrepancy between the ideology of the constitution and the reality facing women. Despite the policies focusing on the plight of women and aiming to upgrade women's status in recent years, gender relations within society reflect that discrepancy, which is underpinned by socio-cultural norms and traditions which generally regard women as inferior to men.

Women's experience in the socio-cultural context of Taiwan

In Taiwan's social system, it seems that women play an important role as providers for their household, but they are the most neglected group. Although there is evidence that there has been some improvement in women's status following the Constitution for women, 'every citizen, man and woman, will be treated equally under the law', in the setting of

government policies or in research on social welfare measures, women's views and participation have always been limited. A person's ethnicity or gender in theory does not influence her/his right to live, to work, to own property, to participate in politics, and to protect her/his own freedom; theoretically all citizens are equal. The Constitution, however, only provides the most general principles. What are the implications of this? In light of the Taiwanese government policies for women, the position of women is considered to have improved during the last few decades. However, have the conditions under which women live really improved in contemporary Taiwanese society? This is the focus of the following section. In defining the social relations between men and women, some sociologists (Abercrombie et al, 2000) have adopted 'patriarchy' as the concept to analyse gender relations. This captures the interconnectedness of the different aspects of gender inequality. Debates on the analysis of changing gender relations can be divided into two major themes: marriage and social structure.

- **Marriage: patriarchy still rules**

In Taiwan, the Family Law in operation in 2005 which regulates relationships in marriage and in the family, was first passed in 1930. Even in 2005, patriarchal ideology continues to influence the family. There are four phenomena showing the strength of patriarchy; firstly, the wife has to live where her husband lives; secondly, the children shall inherit their father's family name; thirdly, when parents disagree with each other on disciplining their children, the father has the final decision; and fourthly, the husband has the right to manage all the property in the marriage, and can override any of his wife's decisions (Taiwan Women Web, taiwan.yam.org.tw/womenweb/st/98e/e_law.htm). The traditional rural society of Taiwan is mainly focused on a culture of men. The family's line of descent is based on the patrilineal principle. In any generation, only males transmit their

membership in the group to their offspring. In addition, the men are the ones who have the right to take over the family's name and title.

There is a procedure called 'judicial separation', which mirrors the divorce petition up to decree nisi, but there is no termination of marriage. Instead of a decree nisi, a decree of judicial separation is made which terminates the obligation to live together. The procedure is favoured by those who have moral objections to divorce, or who do not want to let their spouse 'off the hook', although after three years of living apart the respondent spouse has grounds for divorce[11]. In divorce cases, husbands often manipulate the so-called 'living obligation' by accusing their wives of having committed 'adultery', 'maliciously abandoned' them or 'neglected obligations to the marriage', to escape their responsibility to pay alimony. According to the statistics provided by the Judicial Yuan, among the divorce cases in the family court, as shown in Table 2-1, cases of 'desertion' (the English term; the original Chinese language version uses the words 'malicious abandon') amounted to 73% of all divorce cases in 1987 and remained the biggest category between 1990 and 1996. Likewise, 'adultery' was a ground for judicial divorce. However, in the new English version

[11] The ground for divorce is that the marriage has broken down irretrievably. Such breakdown can be shown only by evidence of one (or more) of the 10 grounds which are set out in the Civil Code IV Family (2002), article 1052. Where either the husband or the wife is found in one of the following conditions, the other party may apply to the court for a [juridical decree of] divorce:
(1) Where he or she has committed bigamy;
(2) Where he or she has sexual intercourse with another person;
(3) Where he or she has been such abused by the other party as to render it intolerable to live together;
(4) Where his or her elder lineal relative has been such abused by the other party, or he or she has been so abused by the elder lineal relative of the other party as to render it intolerable to maintain the common living;
(5) Where the other party has deserted him or her in bad faith and such desertion still continues;
(6) Where he or she is intent on murdering the other party;
(7) Where he or she has a loathsome disease which is incurable;
(8) Where he or she has a serious mental disease which is incurable;
(9) Where it has been uncertain for over three years whether he or she is alive or dead;
(10) Where he or she has been sentenced to not less than three years' imprisonment or has been sentenced to imprisonment for a disreputable crime.
Either the husband or the wife may apply for a [juridical decree of] divorce upon the occurrence of any gross event other than that set forth in the preceding paragraph that renders it hard to maintain the marriage, but if one of the husband and the wife shall be responsible for the event, only the other party may apply for the divorce (http://law.moj.gov.tw/eng).

in 2002, the authority changed the terminology to 'intercourse' instead. Interestingly, it seems that husbands use the above reasons frequently. Sixty percent of the accusers are male; only 40% of accusers are female (The Report on Women's Status in Taiwan, 1998). According to an anonymous source (www.docras.org.tw/finaldown/download/200208210 454censure.htm) records from the public hearing after the Congress Legislative Yuan amended Article 1052 of the Civil Code, indicate that the ground of adultery is used mostly against women. There are women who are abused by their spouses for many years and some may choose to run away. They may have lived apart from their husbands for many years, yet if they have a new relationship outside their marriage, such women may face accusations of adultery and desertion. Table 2-1 shows that the number of cases of adultery and desertion has reduced gradually. Conversely, the incidence of abuse by the partner and of partners in prison has gone up. Although the data in Table 2-1 are not gender disaggregated, my own experience suggests that in the categories 'abused by the partner' and 'partner in prison', the majority of accusers are female.

Table 2-1 The Reasons for Divorce Cases in Local Courts Unit: % (Person)

Reasons	Adultery	Abused by the Partner	Desertion	Partner in prison	Others	Total (Person)
1981	9.9	15.3	63.2	8.6	3.0	100.0 (711)
1986	6.4	11.7	69.1	10.7	2.1	100.0 (1363)
1987	5.3	9.7	73.3	9.6	2.1	100.0 (1349)
1988	5.6	12.4	69.7	8.9	3.5	100.0 (1449)
1989	5.3	12.0	65.4	14.5	2.8	100.0 (1569)
1990	5.1	12.1	64.5	15.5	2.7	100.0 (1935)
1991	5.3	11.1	64.2	16.5	2.8	100.0 (1983)
1992	4.9	12.9	59.2	21.1	1.8	100.0 (2265)
1993	3.7	11.7	54.1	28.9	1.4	100.0 (2467)
1994	4.0	10.5	49.9	33.5*	2.1	100.0 (2694)
1995	4.4	11.8	51.9	28.9*	3.1	100.0 (2726)
1996	3.4*	16.2*	51.7*	25.3	3.5	100.0 (2485)

Source: http://taiwan.yam.org.tw/womenweb/st/98e/e_table3.htm

The Family Law of the Civil Code has been amended three times (1985, 1996 and 2002). The new version results in three different positive outcomes. They are:

- the expansion of the definition of 'acceptable reasons for judicial divorce', making it easier to get a divorce;
- allowing a wife to keep her own property registered in her name before 1985, without having to prove that she previously owned it; and
- asking the judge to consider the best interests of children when evaluating the custody of children in a divorce case, which is an important achievement culturally because traditionally children are automatically awarded to men, not their mothers.

Obviously, some of the new articles in the Civil Code have helped to protect women's rights, but how they are executed will determine their effectiveness. For example, although the new articles outline the rules, the decision is still subject to personal judgment. Therefore, professionals making these decisions (e.g. social workers and judges) should receive training on gender inequality. Although gender issues seem to have such an enduring impact on our social and cultural lives, gender consciousness exists less in the domestic sphere and in community norms than in national policies. There are many invisible social expectations that still exist in Taiwanese society. For example, for an old retired military solider or officer to have a very much younger woman partner is acceptable but a woman significantly older than her husband is unusual; women are expected to take care of the household and men to make money; females are seen as gentle and males are wild, and so forth. Another significant example is that if a woman contributes substantially less financial resources than her partner, it is likely that her employment will continue to be seen as

subsidiary to his, and she will have less influence over decision- making within the family. The typical pattern of a couple's relationship is of a tyrannical, authoritarian father who dominates his family, while the wife is usually passive and acquiescent, with strong emotional and financial dependence on her husband (Courtois, 2001). Those discrepancies are a reflection of the ingrained patriarchy which still influence female under patriarchy system in Taiwan (Shih, 2005).

- **Social structure: men's patriarchy and women's subordination**

Although traditional Chinese society is not the only male-dominated country in the world, it has one of the longest histories of oppression in terms of women's history (Taiwan Headlines, www.taiwanheadlines.gov.tw). We might not be able to understand men and masculinity sufficiently without understanding the power of men in the first place. Chinese culture in Taiwan is dominated by Confucianism. The master (Confucius) said to his disciple that, 'of all people, girls and servants are the most difficult to behave to. If you are familiar with them, you lose your humility. If you maintain a reserve towards them, you are discontented' (The Sayings of Confucius, www.cnovel.com/cnovel.html). Actually, the word 'servant' does not fit the Chinese version. The Chinese wording does not use 'servant' (in the old sense of a serf) but 'villain'. Whether the expression is servant or villain, it is quite obvious that females are viewed as subordinate to men and also that females occupy a lowly position. The status of females in society is placed on the same level as that of a servant or villain. Far back in history, servanthood was a status which was held for life, like that of slaves in western countries. Servants were viewed as the property of the master. The master had power over everything to do with their servants, even their marriages. As for a female, especially a pretty servant, the master might send her as a gift to a friend as a 'minor wife' (McNicoll, 2002: 1). Such phenomena were not unusual even 50 years ago. Under Confucian culture, a female was told that she should always obey a man: her father

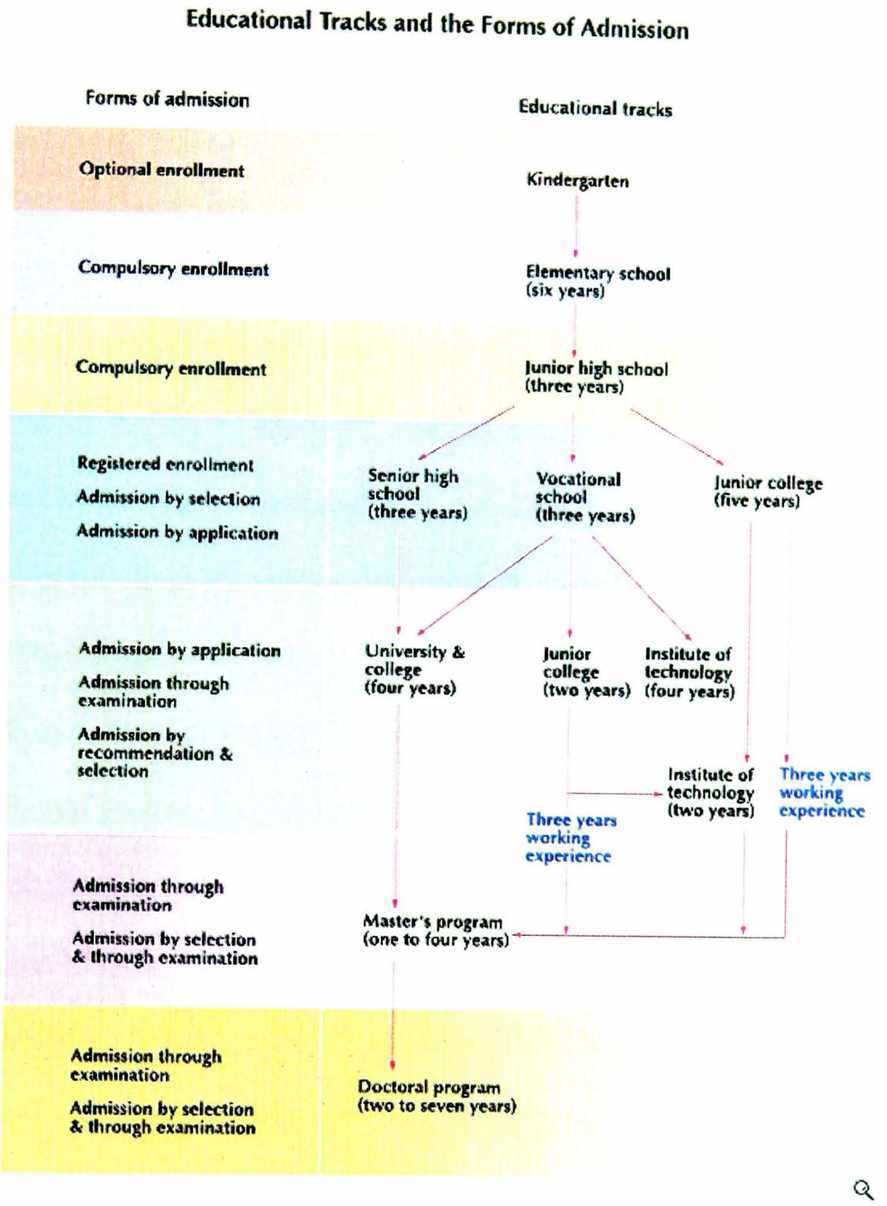
when she is young; her husband when she is married; and her son when she is old (The Sayings of Confucius, www.cnovel.com/cnovel. html). Therefore, females are pressured to conform to socially expected roles which dictate conformity and obedience; on the other hand, men are constructed to occupy the instrumental roles of rationality and power (Jefferson, 1997). In my study, I also found that some of the mothers, whom I heard of in my interviews, were extremely dependent upon and subservient to their husbands. Descriptions of the mother in the incestuous family by feminist researchers suggest that, 'even by patriarchal standards, the mother in the incestuous family is unusually oppressed' (Herman, 1981: 49).

Despite its transformation and modernization, there are still some traditional ideas about the role of women in Taiwanese society. Men still carry the ancestral line, and women still marry into the husband's family. Men in various ways still have the leading role. For example, only few women are assigned to the post of a senior officer in the structure of government or become the Mayor/the head of a county. Even though, as I mentioned earlier, the rhetoric of the Constitution in Taiwan claims that men and women are equal in law, what really rules are the practical laws, regulations and the executives of each department. These important issues will be examined further by focusing on the evolution of professional attitudes and understandings of incest in later chapters, where it will be highlighted that male dominance affecting the social circumstances in which practitioners' attitude development takes place, may itself be influenced by gender relations.

Overview of education and training in Taiwan

In Taiwan's education system, various different categories of education have developed, in order to produce expert personnel in different fields (see Figure 2-2).

Figure 2-2 The Education System in Taiwan



Source: http://www.gio.gov.tw/taiwan-website/5-pg/yearbook/p276.htm#3

Nine years of education have been compulsory since 1968. Children normally commence school at the age of six and continue for six years of primary school education and three years of junior high school (in Britain, Years 7 to 9). After graduating from junior school, students can choose either a senior school (in Britain, Years 10 to 12) or a vocational school for three years. One of the paths, called five-year junior colleges, begins beyond the senior school level. The requirement for admission is that candidates should have graduated from junior school. Basically, junior colleges in Taiwan mainly provide programmes of applied

science and technology. Higher education consists of two-year junior colleges, technical colleges, liberal arts colleges, comprehensive universities[12] and graduate schools[13], altogether five different types of institution.

In Taiwan, most universities' undergraduate programmes take four years. Only technical colleges and comprehensive universities have undergraduate social work training programmes so far. In recent years, supplementary education has become an option, offering many alternatives ways for people to achieve different education levels, so that people can obtain their Bachelor qualification through different paths, including distance learning. The education system, in general, however has been criticized for its inflexibility and failure to address the needs of Taiwan's rapidly changing society (Taiwan Yearbook 2005, www.gio.gov.tw /taiwan-website/5-pg/yearbook/p276.htm#3) because students cannot transfer between different types of institutions and they need to re-take examinations to move on in their studies. In the last few years, undergraduate students have been able to choose to enter a higher-level programme or research programme either through schemes of application, recommendation, or through entrance exams.

Changes in Women's education

Over the last decade, women's roles have been redefined as more Taiwanese women have received higher education, joined the work force, begun to compete with men, and become financially independent. In June 2005, there were 11.1 million women in the Taiwan area, compared to a male population of 11.5 million (Taiwan Yearbook 2005,

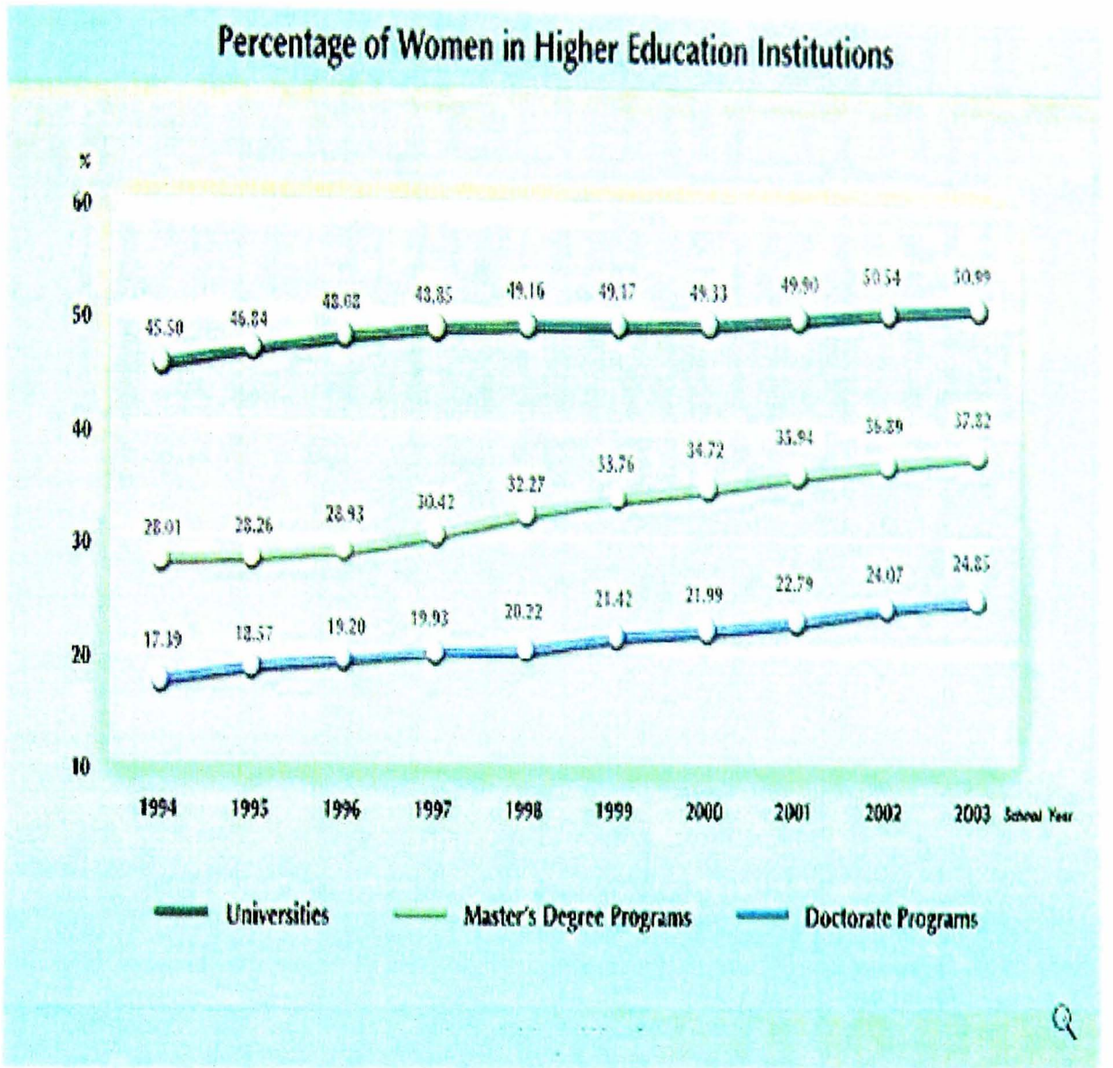
[12] Most comprehensive universities' undergraduate programmes require four years of study. Some specialized programmes, such as medicine require seven years to complete and dentistry takes six years.
[13] Graduate school offers a wide variety of postgraduate programmes and doctoral research programmes. Full-time master programmes require two to four years to complete, and doctoral degrees require two to seven years for completion.

www.gio.gov.tw/taiwan-website/5-pg/yearbook/p238.htm#3). Almost half of Taiwan's women are regular wage earners and help support their families.

The educational system in Taiwan has grown rapidly since the 1950, and opened the school-gates for women. In 1995, the percentage of female students at all educational levels was close to half of all students. In other words, the student sex ratio is almost 1:1. At the end of 2001, 53.71 percent of junior college students and 47.78 percent of university and college students were women (Ministry of Education, 2004). Two decades earlier, the figures were 37.27 and 36.45%, respectively. Women now have better educational opportunities, with female graduates from university, college and graduate school having increased by 50% in 20 years.

However, this enrolment ratio does not extend to the advanced educational levels. There is a disparity. The figures show that female enrolment rates decrease at higher levels. For example, in 2003 only 37.82% of students in master's degree programmes were women and only 24.85% of students in doctoral degree programmes were women (Figure 2-3).

Figure 2-3 The Percentage of Female Students of Each Educational Level （%）



Source: http://www.gio.gov.tw/taiwan-website/5-pg/yearbook/p238.htm#3

An indication, regarding educational opportunities for females and males can be gained from the following data on student enrolment (see Table 2-2).

Table 2-2 Number of Students at Each Education Level (SY[14] 2004 -2005) Unit: Person

		Total	Public			Private
			National	Municipal	County & City	
Total	Female	1,010,450	281,976	51,314	19,528	640,123
	Male	1,035,174	339,165	55,327	17,249	616,411
Senior. High Sch.	T.	409,067	155,159	74,177	34,507	145,224
	F.	**205,364**	**77,148**	**37,710**	**18,002**	**72,504**
	M.	203,703	78,011	36,467	16,505	72,720
Sr. Vocational Sch.	T.	326,159	102,023	26,534	2,270	195,332
	F.	**146,923**	**43,592**	**9,940**	**1,526**	**91,865**
	M.	179,236*	58,431	16,594	744	103,467
Jr. Colleges	T.	36,714	3,091	-	-	33,623
	F.	**28,190***	**2,996**	**-**	**-**	**25,194**
	M.	8,524	95	-	-	8,429
Uni. & Colleges	T.	1,249,153	360,868	5,930	-	882,355
	F.	**612,464**	**158,240**	**3,664**	**-**	**450,560**
	M.	636,689	202,628	2,266	-	431,795
Open Universities	T.	24,531	-	-	-	-
	F.	**17,509***	-	-	-	-
	M.	7,022	-	-	-	-

Source: http://www.edu.tw/EDU_WEB/Web/E0001/index.htm, 2006

As Table 2-2 shows, in 2004-5 according to the number of students at each level in Taiwan listed, the ratio between females and males was almost equal. Since nine years of education are compulsory in Taiwan, I have omitted data for elementary and junior school. As shown in this Table, more male students choose to go to senior vocational school than female students. However, for the junior college option, the case is the opposite; enrolment of female students is much higher. On the basis of the data, it is quite possible to deduce that

[14] A school year (SY) refers to a one-year period from August 1 of the current year to July 31 of the next year. A school year is divided into two semesters. The first semester covers the period from August 1 of the current year to January 31 of the next year, and the second semester, from February 1 to July 31 of the next year (Ministry of Education, Taiwan).

men are expected to do something more practical, as men will be responsible for their families in the future. The data also show something else which is important here, namely that more women studied at the Open University than men. The Open University is not part of the formal education system but it leads to the same qualification as a normal university. It can be assumed that more women tend to improve their educational level through a second chance. The database reflects broadly the distribution of the sexes within each level and helps to understand what happens to women within the education system.

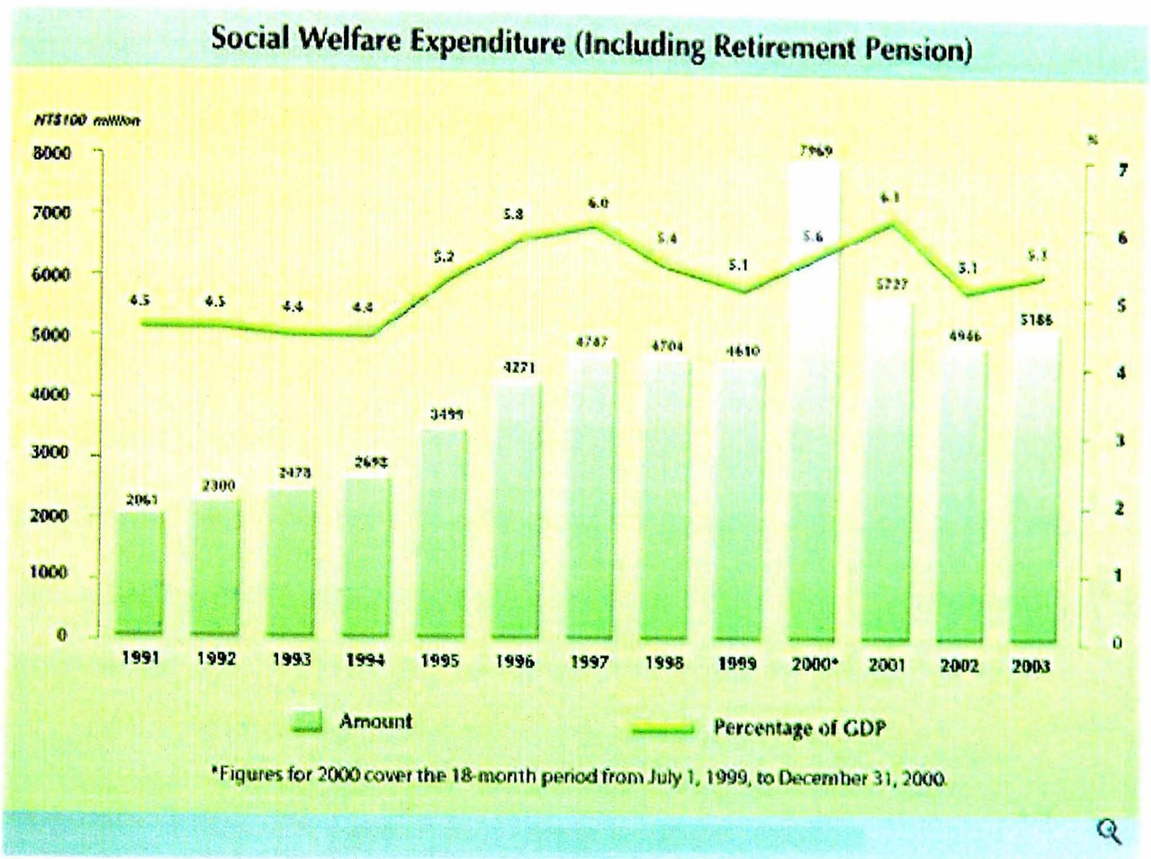
The development of social welfare

> The principle underlying children and youth protection is to take into account the best interest and advantage of children and youth as priorities. The protection, aid and assistance to children and youth shall be the first priority.
>
> (Article 5 of the Children and Youth Welfare Law, ROC 2003)

Throughout the last five decades, Taiwan has been undergoing unprecedented social, political, and economic changes. Democracy was restored and export-driven economics managed to secure participation in the global economy. This has resulted in economic growth, a strong high-technology market and a strengthening of democratic institutions. Due to economic growth, the majority of people in the Taiwan area are able to have a better life than ever before. Equal access to education, jobs, housing, medical care, travel, and the political system are the result of profound social and political changes accompanying the economic success of recent years. However, this restructuring of society has also generated new social ills.

Statistically, in the fiscal year 2003, the ROC central government allocated only GBP 5186 million (Figure 2-4), or 5.3 percent of its total expenditure to social welfare (Taiwan yearbook 2005, www.gio.gov.tw/taiwan-website/5-pg/yearbook/p238.htm#3).

Figure 2-4 Social Welfare Expenditure in Taiwan (1991-2003)



Source: http://www.gio.gov.tw/taiwan-website/5-pg/yearbook/p238.htm#3

Communication between various government agencies, academic institutions, private charities, and care recipients is of crucial importance. In a typical scenario, the Department of Social Affairs (DSA) under the Ministry of the Interior (MOI) formulates welfare policies and drafts related legislation. The DSA then briefs local welfare offices on the latest policies. These offices commission universities or individual scholars to survey the actual demand for specific services in the local community. Once community demand has been assessed, local welfare officials invite representatives from private charities active in the area to attend

seminars in which the new government guidelines are explained, community needs discussed, and responsibilities and priorities set.

The extended family was once the fundamental source of welfare services in Taiwanese society. Currently, 50 percent of the population of Taiwan lives in the cities of Taipei, Taichung, Tainan, and Kaohsiung. It is now common for both parents to work full-time outside the home, and children are often cared for by the school system. In Taiwan, the term 'children' refers to those under the age of 12 and teens are the age group between 12 and 18. Child sexual abuse is a phrase used for all up to the age of 18, although those under and those over the age of 12 are regulated by a separate law. The definition corresponds to the groups protected by the UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) and rules and regulations of child rights in other countries. In 2001, about 16.51 percent of the population of Taiwan were children under 12 years of age, as defined in the Child Welfare Law.

The Child Welfare Law[15] was first promulgated in 1973, and revised in 1993 and 2002 respectively, Government policy has emphasised of the importance of partnership with parents and favours family support services. Under the law, a pregnant woman may not smoke, drink, take drugs, chew betel nuts, or engage in any other activity that might endanger her unborn child. The law also mandates subsidies for the medical care of premature babies and seriously ill children. Social workers, health care professionals, day-care workers, teachers, and the police are required to report cases of child abuse. The revised Children's Welfare Law also prohibits parents from leaving children who are under

[15] The 'Children and Youth Welfare Law' as a merger of the 'Child Welfare Law' and 'Youth Welfare Law' was ratified on 2nd May 2003 at the 10th Session of 3rd Assembly of 5th Congress, Legislative Yuan (Children Bureau, Ministry of the Interior ROC, 2004).

the age of six or who require special attention unattended. Parents violating this regulation must attend a minimum of four hours of parental responsibility training. Fines[16] of NT 1,500 to NT 6,000 (almost £25 to £100) are charged for each refusal to attend the classes. Under the revision, courts are able to assign a child to another guardian if both parents are deemed incompetent. As an added measure, the revised Children's Welfare Law empowers authorities to make public the name of anyone who violates the provisions of the law and to fine them up to NT 12,000 (almost £200).

The background of the child protection system

> Declaration of the Rights of the Child: 'The child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth' (Children's Bureau, Ministry of the Interior R.O.C).

According to the Department of Social Affairs, reported cases of child abuse have increased steadily from 1,235 in 1993 to over 8,000 children in 2003 (see Table 2-3).

Table 2-3 Child and Juvenile Protection Cases - No. of Abused Unit: Person

Year	Total	Children (Persons)	Juvenile (Persons)
2000	6,059	4,093	1,966
2001	6,927	4,466	2,461
2002	6,902	4,278	2,624
2003	8,013	5,349	2,664
2004	7,837	5,796	2,041

Source: Table derived from the Children's Bureau, Ministry of the Interior R.O.C.

[16] According to the Children and Youth Welfare Law, the minimum fine is NT 1,500 and the maximum is NT 12,000. The local minimum wage is NT 15,800 (approx. £220) (http://ttf.textiles.org.tw/news/900214001.htm) per month..

This can be attributed to 'the implementation scheme of reporting and preventing home violence and sex abuse to protect children and youths' (Wu, 2005). Many high-risk families are reported by their neighbours within the same community or same location. A large number of cases are referred by responsible informants due to the local authority's effort in increasing social awareness. Interestingly, in 2001, among the 4,466 children below the age of 12 protected by the local governments, physical abuse was the most common complaint (29.8 percent), followed by neglect (22.5 percent), and abandonment (6.5 percent) (Taiwan Yearbook 2004, english.gov.tw/yearbook/index.jsp). No figures for sexual abuse are given on this web page. However, a report of the Department of Statistics, Ministry of the Interior ROC in 2003, on the prevalence of child abuse, categorizes abuse into six types and states that apart from sexual abuse, in each type of child abuse the number of boys' cases is slightly higher than that of girls. Sexual abuse is a notable exception. The ratio of boys to girls is 1: 8.6 (see Table 2-4).

Table 2-4 Sex Ratio of Each Type of Abuse Unit: Person (n=5,465)

Types / Sex	Physical	Mental	Sexual	Neglect	Other	Abandonment
Boy	1,035	268	23	876	380	258
Girl	903	237	197	744	337	212

Source: Statistical yearbook of Interior ROC, 2003.

It should be borne in mind that these data refer only to cases of child abuse which are registered as 'at risk', and not to detected cases.

Article 34 of the 'Children's and Youth Welfare Law[17]' requires that child abuse cases must be reported within 24 hours of discovery (Children Bureau, Ministry of the Interior ROC, 2003). According to the Children's and Youth Welfare Law, all reports of child abuse must be investigated and the authorities must proceed with the cases within 24 hours (Article 34). A social worker is dispatched to the site, sometimes accompanied by the police. When an alleged child abuse case is confirmed, and if the parents are unable to guarantee the safety of the child, the child is then removed and placed in a safe environment. According to the Children's Welfare Law, protective custody may not exceed 72 hours without a direct court order (Article 37). About 65.3 percent of the 4,466 children dealt with by social workers in 2001 received family counselling, of whom 24.4 percent were placed with relatives, temporary foster homes, or children's homes, and 4.1 percent in permanent foster care (Taiwan Yearbook 2004, english.gov.tw/yearbook/index.jsp).

To further expedite the handling of child abuse cases, the Children's Bureau of the Ministry of the Interior R.O.C (CBI) was established on International Children's Rights Day, 20th November 1999 (Under Article 6 of the Child Welfare Law). Both a women-children protection hotline and a website (www.cbi.gov.tw) were set up in 2001. In addition to accepting reports on child abuse cases and providing counselling on child protection, the hotline and website also offer information on foster homes (www.cbi.gov.tw), child adoption, parent-child relationships, missing children, and husband-wife relationships. On the other hand, the grassroots movement and the women's movement have been working for a long time to increase abused women's protection under the law. However, resistance resulting from patriarchal views, and different opinions inside the legal profession, hindered

[17] The 'Children and Youth Welfare Law' as a merger of the 'Child Welfare Law' and 'Youth Welfare Law' was ratified on 2nd May 2003 at the 10th Session of 3rd Assembly of 5th Congress, Legislative Yuan (Children Bureau, Ministry of the Interior ROC, 2004).

the process. The basic disagreement is whether a special law is necessary to protect abused women. Legal experts still insist that modifying the original laws is enough, while others insist a new law is needed immediately (Yu, 2003). This shows that the concept of 'reform' is very undesirable. People prefer to change old-fashioned ways bit by bit, rather than in a radical way.

Generally, under the provisions of the Sexual Assault Prevention Law of January 1997, the Sexual Violation Prevention Committee of the Ministry of the Interior has been working with hospitals, law firms, police stations, and private social welfare organizations to set up an integrated protection network for the victims of sexual assault. The services offered by the network include legal assistance, counselling, and emergency shelters. In June 1998, the ROC government promulgated the Family Violence Prevention Law. To encourage domestic violence victims to seek professional assistance, the government enacted the civil protection order in June 1999. A Domestic Violence Prevention Committee, established in April 1999, assists county and city governments to set up domestic violence prevention centers around the island. To better protect minors from domestic violence, special visitation centres have been set up in 25 county and city governments in order to supervise and arrange visits by family members to young victims. Resources, such as judicial, police, medical, educational, and volunteer service organizations, are integrated into the prevention system (Ministry of Interior 2004, www.moi.gov.tw/moi/english/e-forward.asp).

The role of the Child Protection Service

In Taiwan, child protection services have been implemented for more than ten years. The Child Protection Service provides child-centred, family-focused services to protect children

and young people from significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect within the family unit and to ensure that children and young people receive services to deal with the impact of abuse and neglect on their well being and development. The Child Protection Service is based on the principle that the best protection for children is normally parents but broadens the scope to society if necessary. According to the annual statistical report of the Domestic Violence and Sexual Prevention Committee, 2002, there were 36,590 abuse cases in that year in Taiwan. Of these, 4,590 (13%) cases were child protection cases. The sex distribution of the children (under the age of 12) was 2,487 (54%) girls to 2,103 (46%) boys (Sexual Assault Prevention Committee, MOI of ROC, March 2004). Unfortunately, there are no separate data about incest, only a global total for child sexual abuse. The data show that 1665 children were removed from home and placed in emergency care due to high risk. The annual statistics for 2003 show more categories and variables. However, the categories are still rather vague; for example, the authority (Sexual Assault Prevention Committee, March 2004) uses two dimensions to classify the data. One consists of the variables associated with the types of abuse by different age group, education, the time of occurrence and location, and the profile of perpetrators but without the sex of perpetrator. The data therefore only shows that 142 males and 4,761 females were raped in the year of 2003. However, there are no further data about how many girls and boys of a certain age group were victims. The types of abuse are classified into three: intercourse, assault and others. Perpetrators are classified into 20 categories; however, no data show how many perpetrators are fathers or step-fathers, and the father's partner and also there are no separate data in terms of sex for each separate variable (see Tables 2-5, 2-6, 2-7 and 2-8). In contrast, most statistical evidence of child sexual abuse in Britain makes gender details explicit. For example a study published by the HMSO classified the relationship of the child to the abuser (Table 2-9) into seven types, such as natural mother, natural father, stepfather and so on.

Table 2-5 Sex of Victims of Child Sexual Abuse (n=4,478)

Sex	No	%
Female	4,130	92.22
Male	135	3.31
Unknown	213	4.75

Source: Adapted from the Sexual Assault Prevention Committee ROC, 2005.

As shown in Tables 2.6 and 2.7, the majority of victims of child sexual abuse are females. The high risk population is the group of age 12 to 18.

Table 2-6 Age of Abused Children (n=4,903)

Age	No	%
0-5	157	3.2
6-11	391	7.97
12-under 18	2,482	50.6
other age groups	1,873	38.23

Source: Adapted from the Sexual Assault Prevention Committee ROC, 2005.

Table 2-7 Types of Abuse (n=5,292[18])

Types of abuse	No	%
Intercourse	3,680	69.54
Assault	1,002	18.93
others	610	11.53

Source: Adapted from the Sexual Assault Prevention Committee ROC, 2003.

The abuse is divided into only three types, intercourse, assault and others. In the literature, the range is from exhibitionism to intercourse, often progressing through the paths of nudity, disrobing, genital exposure, observation of the child, kissing, fondling, masturbation,

[18] The total was more than the number of victims. This is because some of them were abused in more than one way. For example, intercourse with physical harm may occur.

finger penetration of the vagina, penile penetration of vagina and dry intercourse etc (Courtois, 1996: 13). In Taiwan, interestingly, practitioners' concern is whether the child was raped or not (Table 2-8).This is because the criteria of the judicial proceedings condition the way practitioners think. I was told that some respondents experienced a dilemma if the case was one of assault but not intercourse. Some respondents wondered if this type of abuse should be sent to court or not, as the forensic evidence is always invisible and ambiguous. For the next year 2004, I could not find data with similar categories concerning types of abuse. However, after 2003, the categorization of the types of sexual abuses on the official web site has changed.

Table 2-8 Abuser's Relationship to the Child in Taiwan (n=5,059)

Perpetrator	No	%
Immediate relatives	191	3.78
Distant relatives	98	1.94
Other family relatives	77	1.52

Source: Adapted from the Sexual Assault Prevention Committee ROC, 2003.

In Table 2-8, the data show that the relationship between abuser and victim is divided into three different categories, immediate relatives (full blood), distant relatives (half blood) and other family relatives. The immediate relatives could be father/mother, grandfather/mother, mother's father/mother, step-father/mother, son/daughter and grandson/daughter; the distant relatives cover a wide range of the horizontal relatives such as sibling, uncle, aunt, nephew/niece. However, the definition of other family relatives is not clear. In 2005, the category of abuser's relationship was changed from 'other family relatives' to 'other family acquaintances'. The reason why this category was changed was perhaps due to a lack of clarity about who constitutes the category 'other family relatives'. This change might help differentiate clearly between intra-familial and extra-familial abuse. The classifications used

in Table 2-8 are also similar to the classifications of the Criminal Law in Taiwan. For example, article 230 of Chapter 16 in the Criminal Law, ROC is the only article in which incest and related offences are mentioned, 'any male/female person who has sexual intercourse with a person related to him in a degree specified in immediate, three grades distant relatives, shall be guilty of incest.' The problem with this definition is of course its focus on relatives, that is blood relations, rather than those living intimately together in households which might include stepfather, for example. These are recognized in the British representation of child sexual abuse, as indicated in Table 2-9.

Table 2-9 Abuser's Relationship to the Child (in Britain)

Perpetrator	No	(%)
Natural mother	6	(5)
Natural father	44	(36)
Stepfather	19	(16)
Other 'fathers'	8	(7)
Brothers	18	(15)
Other relatives	19	(16)
Other household members	7	(6)
Total	121	(100)

Source: HMSO: Child Sexual Abuse: A Descriptive and Treatment Study (1996: 32).

It can be seen that there is a significant difference between Table 2-8 and Table 2-9. The abuser's relationship to the victim is ambiguous in the Taiwanese data. Looking at the recent Criminal Law about incest both in Taiwan and in the UK, the way the Criminal Law has categorized the perpetrator's relationship to the victim is similar to the categories used in Table 2-8 and Table 2-9 respectively. In other words, the researchers tried to categorize the items by following the Law. However, according to my study, the experience in Taiwan

is similar to Britain, in that the largest category of perpetrators are the biological fathers and step-fathers of the victims.

The original Child Welfare Law in Taiwan was established in 1973. From 1993, a change began to have an influence on child protection provision, manifested in a new legal framework for social workers and other practitioners when dealing with the child victims of incest and their families. The government revised the Child Welfare Law which made the framework of child protection clearer in terms of legal proceedings and the statutory roles and duties of the social services system. For example, both social workers and policemen are able to apply for an emergency protection order from the court. The Law also promotes 'partnership' between parents and local authorities. Parents should be worked with for the good of the child. This has broken the concept of the privacy of the original family in Taiwanese society.

Having a brief look at the history of child protection in Taiwan gives us a sense of certain changes. In contrast to the close relation between the women's movement and child protection in Anglo-American countries, there was no such relation in Taiwan and much still needs to be done as we are still far from 'gender equality' in Taiwan (Huang, 1999). In my experience, in 1988, the idea of child protection was advocated by non-governmental organizations. Regional governments then gradually responded to this issue. In 1993, for the first time, a major review of the Child Welfare Law was undertaken and it was revised by the central government twenty years after the law first came into force. This had a big influence on child protection and welfare practice. The Government took over from the Children's Protection Society the responsibility for providing nation-wide welfare based on child protection services under determination of the amended Child Welfare Law.

In the context of Taiwan, a wide range of welfare services for victims of child abuse, including incest, spouse battering and sexual violence are now provided by the Social Affairs Bureau located in each local government, and by subsidized and non-subsidized non-governmental organizations, such as the CCF. The Family Prevention and Child Protective Services aim at protecting children and families from domestic violence, including child abuse, helping them and their families to overcome the trauma and to prevent recurrence of similar incidents. The Service includes statutory protection, counselling, group work services and referrals to other services, such as the psychological service, legal aid, financial support, residential care and so forth. The objectives of the family and child protective services are to protect children who are suffering or who are at high risk of suffering or have suffered from physical or psychological abuse, neglect or sexual exploitation.

Provision in Taiwan

Both domestic violence and sexual assault are crimes. Everyone has the right to say no to violence and crimes (Sexual Assault Prevention Committee ROC, 2004). The role of child welfare in Taiwan is to offer a comprehensive network of services for children and young people who are abused, neglected, or abandoned, as well as those who have behavioural problems. As mentioned earlier, each local domestic violence and sexual assault prevention centre provides a range of services including a hot-line service for suspected child sexual abuse and relating to domestic violence, joint investigation and video-recorded interviews with the police on cases involving vulnerable witnesses, in particular, victims of child abuse. In some cases, they may provide placements for individuals if necessary, and counselling for both individuals and the family. They also offer

- A free 24-hour service hotline "113"
- Emergency rescue and protection
- Help with the petition for a protection order
- Delivery to medical examination and collecting evidence
- Legal aid
- Psychological counselling, employment advisory services and home-visiting consultancy
- Batterers' and rapists' community treatment programmes

The child protection network in Taiwan has developed gradually over the past two decades. It has provided increasing clarity towards three different levels (i.e. primary, secondary and tertiary) of care and preventive work (S. Wu, 2005). The recent work pattern of child protection services tends to focus on the concept of prevention rather than termination. In Taiwan, the Ministry of the Interior has divided professional interventions into three types: primary, secondary and tertiary prevention (Feng, 1994) that lead to specific changes in the family. Each type of intervention deals differently with questions of responsibility, activity, guilt, and blame and is distinguished by separate aims towards different family members.

Primary Prevention

Primary preventative care aims at improving public education about sexual behaviour, as education is a basis to stop child abuse events from happening regularly. It includes strategies to spread awareness of child protection, especially among high-risk families[19] (S. Wu, 2005). The goal of primary prevention is to provide support and education for children

[19] Munro (2002) states that risk is assessed along three dimensions: the child's developmental needs, parental capability, and family and environmental factors.

and families before problems arise. The situation in Taiwanese society is just as indicated in Gibbons et al's research (cited in Corby, 1998), namely, large numbers of families are filtered out of the system without ever receiving any service. Community attitudes towards violence, children's rights and physical punishment are associated with child abuse. Community education and awareness programmes focus on addressing these issues by educating the public about alternatives to abuse, changing social attitudes away from tolerance away from violence and encouraging community debate about issues such as censorship, family violence, gender equality, sexual offence and so on.

Secondary Prevention

Secondary prevention is more focused on existing child abuse cases. Its strategies are partly to begin 'the implementation scheme of reporting and preventing domestic violence and sexual abuse to protect children and youths'. This includes the free 24-hour women and children hotline (S. Wu, 2005). The system of responsible informants strengthens the recognition and attention on sifting out high-risk families in which violent and abusive incidents have already occurred. Secondary prevention offers programmes such as public education that identify and reduce the personal and social stresses on parents which can lead to family breakdown and/or child abuse. There are many community-based agencies and organisations such CCF, the Garden of Foundation[20] which support families and help them overcome significant problems. Services include in-home family support, counselling, respite care and various parenting and self-help groups.

[20] The Garden of Foundation is an NGO in Taiwan. They are engaged in helping young prostitutes in the first place, and then continually developing multiple services related to the needs of women and children.

Tertiary Prevention

Tertiary prevention is for individuals who have been more seriously affected by child abuse and aims to ensure that the problems do not continue. Its purpose is to help children who are currently mistreated by their parents or other caregivers from abusive circumstances. Through professional intensive intervention, it aims at rectifying the situation of the children and youths who are being abused and exploited, mainly through intervention treatment, family therapy/counselling, or ensuring parental education, regular follow-up intervention and in some cases forced removal of the child from the family (S. Wu, 2005). On the whole, its aim is to heal the children's trauma, eliminate the possibility of the other siblings being abused within the family, to rebuild their family and to restore its functions (Feng, 2003). Tertiary protection includes the statutory Child Protection Service which responds to child protection notifications, placement services for children who are unable to live at home, and treatment services such as domestic violence and sexual assault prevention centres.

Conclusion

Taiwanese women who were born forty years ago did not have the same quality of life and rights as in the democratic society of today. They did not have equal opportunities of education, for example. Gender discrimination continues to exist in Taiwanese society, although women theoretically have more room for social, political, and economic power in and out of the family. Men have nonetheless retained an excess of power and a supreme position. This paradox reflects a deeply-rooted Chinese ideology which maintains an image of women as subservient, completely dependent on men and trapped in a life of passive servitude. As I mentioned earlier, the most visible changes are seen in the equal opportunities in education for both sexes.

The changes in women's role, however, are a long upward struggle, with little acknowledgement of the deeper issues that have perpetuated male dominance in Taiwanese society. Long-term attention and continuous support of resources is needed to tackle the issues of gender inequality in particular. If Taiwanese society expects more rapid changes in domestic and public milieux, societal structures, even values and cultural traditions, it might have to deliberately consider the influence of the issues raised above.

Policy is one means to protect women's rights. Although gender issues have gradually been brought into the public sphere and in particular have affected policy-making at a national level, the goal of full recognition of the rights of women is currently more of a fiction than fact. The Taiwanese Constitution promises that every citizen, man and woman, will be treated equally under the law. A person's ethnicity or gender will not influence his or her right to live, to work, to property, to participate in politics, and to protect his or her own freedom. Theoretically all citizens are equal. The Constitution, however, only provides the most general principles. What really rules are the practical laws and regulations? Based on my personal perspective as a woman and on the data that I collected, I would argue that there still exists a wide gap between the ideology of the Constitution and the socio-cultural context. However, making these connections is critically important in the way forward for the future.

Regarding the child protection work in Taiwan, I found there are two issues which affect incest intervention in Taiwan. One is that the present classifications of incest/child sexual abuse are changing, for example, changing definitions of abusers' relationship to child which has a considerable impact on official statistical data which may confuse the follow-up of the data. The second issue, I think, is that early intervention seems important to prevent a sexual abuse case from happening. This is the original aim of primary prevention.

However, the present structure of the social services in Taiwan seems poorly equipped in terms of available staff to focus upon community education and abuse prevention work. In chapters four, five and six, I shall discuss my findings further. Before that I shall elaborate on the methodology used in this study in the following chapter.

Chapter Three

Methodology

Introduction

In this chapter I shall discuss the methodology adopted for my research. The chapter demonstrates the rationale for using qualitative data collection in the form of in-depth interviews (Legard, Keegan and Ward, 2003). I also explain the reasons for taking a feminist research approach to the analysis of my interview data, and the process of the field work and reflections on it. The chapter further discusses the notion of the 'defended subject' (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000) and how I apply this to my position as researcher and those researched here. Specifically, this deals with the process of the study in terms of self-reflexivity, where reflexivity can be understood as a turning-back of one's experience upon oneself (Mead, 1962: 134). The final section of the chapter addresses some ethical issues related to the methodology of this study.

My research aimed to understand the subjective experiences of professionals dealing with father-daughter incest cases. This included their views of incest perpetrators and victims, as well as of the process of intervention. My purpose was to learn more about practitioners who have been involved in incest intervention or treatment and to help professionals in the field to understand more clearly their intervention practices and strategies. I intended to explore, describe and discuss what can be done to improve intervention in the field of child protection. I chose to carry out face-to-face, semi-structured interviews to collect data from social workers, social work supervisors and therapists. The research questions I sought to address were:

1. What are the professionals' experiences - including therapists, social workers and their supervisors - in dealing with incest?
2. How does women's place and status in Taiwanese culture influence professionals' experience of incest?
3. What are the socio-cultural values that influence practitioners?
4. How do professionals profile perpetrators and victims in cases of incest?
5. How do professionals select strategies or interventions when dealing with incest?
6. What is their core thinking on incest and what has shaped this?
7. How do different theoretical bases influence their practice approaches?

Qualitative research design

Qualitative research as a mode of inquiry transcends disciplines and subject matters. It has a multi-method focus and involves interpretive, naturalistic, and descriptive approaches to research (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998; Rafuls, 2002). Interviewing is the most widely used qualitative method of research (Fielding, 1993: 135). An in-depth interview can build the kind of intimacy that is common in self-disclosure which can provide a 'deeper' understanding of social phenomena than might be obtained from purely quantitative data (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Interviewing is a key method for attitude research (Fielding, 1993), because interviewing offers researchers access to people's ideas, thoughts, and memories in their own words (Reinharz, 1992).

According to Everitt et al. (1992), without qualitative studies, we would be hard pressed to understand the social worlds of those with whom we work, and without this understanding, we could not begin to conceptualize interventions which will be acceptable, let alone effective. Gordon (1999) describes how qualitative methodology focuses on people's subjective feeling and experience. This is particularly useful when

researchers use western methodology applied in their own, non-western setting and the research object comes from a different cultural context, something which may be hard to investigate using quantitative methods. One problem lies in the fact that scientific research methods are instruments for structuring reality and as such shape what one 'sees'. However, the inability of empiricism and naturalistic inquiry alone to deal with the complexity of the incest problem has been recognised (Lu, Lin and Chang, 2003). Therefore, the interview is the 'favoured digging tool' of this thesis (Benney and Hughes, 1984).

There were four concerns which led me to choose a qualitative research design: firstly, qualitative research is best suited to research intended to explore substantive areas about which little is known or about which too much is known to adopt fresh and creative thinking (Glaser and Strauss, [1967], 1968). This is the case with incest intervention in Taiwan, about which little is known at present. Secondly, research on incest deals with a topic of sensitivity and emotional issues subject to private and personal taboos. Qualitative research is appropriate to explore such issues, experiences, and feelings of people because interviews can allow such issues and feelings to come to the fore (Padgett, 1998; Marshall and Rossman, 1999; Lan, 1999). Thirdly, establishing rapport is necessary when trying to understand deeply subjective experiences (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992). Qualitative research emphasises the interaction and relationship between researcher and researched (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998; Bryman, 2001) which quantitative research may not achieve. The final consideration was the lack of adequate research in relation to incest in Taiwan and a view that qualitative research would be an appropriate method to begin to address this lack.

Study setting and qualitative sampling

The field work for my study was conducted in Taiwan. To begin field work, a research site needs to be selected. It is important to think about and spell out why one location is chosen rather than another. I used three centres where incest intervention takes place, and for the following reasons. The subjects of the thirty-nine case studies were chosen from three of the twenty-five Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Centres[1] located in the north, mid-north and south of Taiwan, established by the Ministry of the Interior, Republic of China in 1997. They were Taipei County (TPCG) (interviewee numbers: n=24) in the north, Hsin Chu City (HCCG) (n=6) in the middle north and Kaohisung County (KSCG) (n=9) in the south of Taiwan. This assured a good geographic spread of locations. To facilitate accessibility of interviewees, at the initial stage of planning this research, I approached my former agency TPCG, the first established regional governmental organization to deal with child protection and domestic violence cases, because TPCG and KSCG are the biggest counties of Taiwan. Secondly, TPCG is also the centre with the highest number of cases of both child protection and domestic violence. This centre was the first one to be set up in Taiwan; it became an independent unit from the social welfare department of Taipei County Government but is still subordinate to the sub-unit of the Bureau of Social Service. Lastly, I wanted to include centres with both an urban and a rural profile. KSCG is situated in the southern part of Taiwan in the countryside. The majority at KSCG speak the Taiwanese dialect. The regions have different cultures and customs. Here the political and socio-cultural contexts are more traditional, with pronounced male dominance. The number of professionals in KSCG is not as high as in TPCG. I therefore looked for another centre in a rural area, and chose Hsin Chu. Hsin Chu City is quite a small town by Taiwanese standards with a population of 350 thousand (Ministry of Interior Annual Report 2001). Hsin Chu was the first of the 23 centres within provincial areas in 2002 (excluding Taipei and Kaohisung City).

[1] See the map in Chapter Two (p. 29).

There were two criteria when selecting interview cases. One was respondents' work experience in the (social work) practice of incest. The other criterion was that they should be willing to join this study.

I actually collected 39 respondents including 1 pilot study interview. Most interviewees were female, 35 in total, and 4 respondents were male. 22 respondents were single, and 1 person was separated. The rest of the 16 respondents were married. However, only 13 respondents had 1 or 2 children. 26 respondents had worked in their position for about 2 or 3 years; 4 people for less than one year and 4 respondents more than 4 but less than 10 years. In terms of professional experience, 8 people had 10 or over 10 years' experience in their profession, and 11 people had over 5 but less than 10 years' professional experience. The last 4 people had almost a year working experience. It is important to mention that TPCG is a relatively new centre and only became an independent unit in 2001.

Among the 39 respondents, there were 10 people with a Masters degree in social work, 1 person gained a doctoral qualification in psychology, 2 respondents were still doing postgraduate courses in social work and the remaining 26 respondents had Bachelor qualifications in social work. Interestingly, there was only one person who had never dealt with incest but who had experience of supervising staff who dealt with incest. Apart from a supervisor and a therapist for whom I do not know the exact number of incest cases they had dealt with, most respondents had worked on approximately 10 cases of incest each. Only one therapist had treated 100 incest cases. This included group work practice. A few interviewees had dealt with between 20 and 50 incest cases. The profiles of the interviewees are shown in Table 3-1.

Table 3-1 Profiles of Interviewees

CODE	Age	Marital status	No. of children	Qualification	Professional Experience	No. of Incest Cases	Position*	Time in the position
01	35	M	0	BA	8y	20	Former S	7y
02	27	S	0	BA	3y 3m	3	SW	2y 3m
04	27	S	0	BA	3y	6	SW	2y 9m
05	31	S	0	BA	4y 5m	5	SW	3y
06	31	M	1	Master	3y	2	T	2y
07	36	M	2	BA	10y	15	SW	2y
08	39	M	2	BA	11y	0	S	3y 5m
09	29	M	0	BA	2y 8m	2	SW	11m
10	28	S	0	BA	4y 5m	4	SW	2y 3m
11	26	S	0	BA (MSW)	1y 11m	6	SW	1y 11m
12	38	Divorced	1	MSW	14y	10-15	S	2y 8m
13	38	S	0	BA	5y 5m	Over 5	T	3y
14	26	S	0	BA	2y 5m	12	SW	1y 2m
15	28	S	0	BA	3y 7m	4	SW	2y 1m
16	38	M	2	BA	7y	11	SW	2y 2m
17	27	S	0	BA	3y	10-15	SW	2y
18	33	M	2	Master	4y 5m	30-40	T	2y
19	24	S	0	BA	1y 3m	7	SW	1y 3m
20	47	M	0	MSW	20y	9	T	3y
21	31	M	1	Master	2y 5m	3	T	2y 5m
22	26	S	0	Master	1y 1m	2	SW	1y 1m
23	27	S	0	BA	3y	6	SW	2y 9m
24	34	S	0	Master	7y	30-50	T	3y
25	33	M	1	BA	9y	5	SW	3y 5m
26**	31	S	0	BA	2y	4	SW	2y
27	30	S	0	MSW	3y 5m	5	T	5m
28	45	M	2	BA	18y	10-20	S	4y
29	31	M	2	BA	8y	3	SW	7m
30	31	M	1	BA	8y	1	SW	6m
31	33	S	0	BA	6y 5m	5-6	SW	1y
32	36	S	0	MSW	8y	Not clear	S	2y 5m
33	29	S	0	BA	4y	1	SW	11m
34	42	S	0	MA	5y	Not clear	T	1y 5m

36	24	S	0	BA	1y 3m	5	SW	1y 3m
37**	26	M	2	BA	10y	20-50	S	10y
38**	39	M	1	BA	13y 5m	4	SW	4y 5m
39	32	S	0	BA	6y 3m	10-20	SW	6y
40**	33	M	2	BA(Master)	5y 9m	7	SW	3y
41	38	M	0	PhD	10y	100	T	2y

Note. *Position: 'SW' = social worker; 'S' = supervisor; 'T' = Therapist. 'Se' = secretary.
** Refers to male interviewees. Time in the position: 'y' = year; 'm' = month
Source: Interview data, doctoral research on professionals' intervention and treatment approaches in the cases of father-daughter incest in Taiwan, 2002.

Recruiting and retaining respondents

In the recruitment process for my interviews, I encountered quite a few problems and barriers, especially in dealing with the supervisors of domestic violence and sexual assault prevention centres. It was not that these organizations did not have experienced child protection social workers, social work supervisors and therapists to deal with incest cases. However, there were various problems such as: a) personnel issues, as the director of TPCG had changed. Basically, the new director was quite helpful but the relevant application procedures in order to conduct the study were complicated. b) Some organizations had reorganized, and the staff were transferred within the same setting but to a different unit. The social workers and even the supervisors were new and inexperienced in the area of incest. Two of the centres in a central part of Taiwan I initially approached refused to allow their staff to be interviewed. This contributed to my approaching the two other centres, HCCG and KSCG; they agreed to participate in the study.

Many arrangements had to be made before the interviews could commence. Two centres (TPCG and KSCG) asked me to send them my research proposal in a set format which they specified and also some papers to prove my current status. Each agency also had a set procedure for agreeing to my request. KSCG put my application into their monthly

chief staff meeting for example. The head of this centre reported on my application and introduced my proposal to all members in the meeting. Participation in the study was decided on by a vote. At TPCG, the situation was slightly different. The director of the centre approved my application for interviewing their social workers, supervisors and therapists; however, she also put this matter up for discussion at a regular staff meeting. Their meeting then decided that they should set up an ethics committee to discuss how to cope with applications asking for research cooperation. The role of the ethics committee is to prevent any unexpected treatment of their staff arising in the course of interviews. After the second round of discussion, they officially replied to my research request. I was required to respond to a few questions about the process of getting the data and their analysis, ethical considerations and also methodological issues. This procedure made me feel less positive about conducting the research because of the way in which I felt questioned by the social workers' supervisors at that time.

In each centre they had one person whom I had to liaise with. I had to explain my research purpose in order to access the respondents via this coordinator. I communicated with the key person(s) by email or by telephone. TPCG seemed to me to be very reluctant to participate in the study and the ethics committee also claimed that they agreed to open the information to the public but not necessarily to join the study. However, I finally received confirmation of the interviewees, and the number turned out to be more than I had initially been told. The coordinator was very crucial here. She not only posted my proposal on a notice-board but also took my invitation letter to every potential respondent and invited them to participate. Powney and Watts (1987: 182) emphasize that 'interviewing has always to be accompanied by assurances about anonymity and practical confidentiality'. A formal letter introducing the rationale, purpose, eligibility criteria of respondents and confidentiality was therefore given to every potential interviewee (see Appendix 2).

As a feminist researcher I am sensitive to issues of power and control. There was a power imbalance between me and the researched organizations, especially at TPCG, at the earlier stage of this research. I needed their support to conduct the research and therefore had to go through the procedures they required. Initially I struggled with the application procedures, but later I respected what the ethics committee had asked me to complete. In these instances, it is wise to practise bracketing (Ely et al., 1991). According to Ely et al. (1991), 'bracketing' refers to a conscious effort to suspend one's assumptions, beliefs, and feelings in order to better understand the experience of others, including the organizations' hierarchies, the respondents and so on. In qualitative research, the notion is not to seek to eliminate or repress one's beliefs and feelings, but to identify them so that they do not interfere with the study. In line with this, I tried to bracket off my somewhat negative feelings towards the organization to focus on the task at hand.

Table 3-2 shows the number of professionals each organization/unit had in relation to the number of professionals that actually participated in the study. The last row of this table shows totals of interviewees following my explanation of my research. At TPCG, for example they initially had 18 people who had agreed to be interviewed, with 7 people thinking about it. Amazingly, I got 6 respondents out of those 7 people. Eventually, I obtained 24 respondents in TPCG.

Table 3-2 Numbers of Interviewees Per Organization

Professional role / **Location**	**No. of social workers in organization (no. of social workers interviewed)**		**No. of supervisors in organization (no. of supervisors interviewed)**	**No. of therapists in organization (no. of therapists interviewed)**		**Final number of particip and further comments**
K.S. County	4(3)	KSCCF 4(3)	2(2)	0	KSCCF 1	**9 interviewees** [No contract therapists. Public sector social worker mainly responsible for chil from age 12 to 18. NGO is delegated to be responsible children under the age of 1 who are reported as abused
Hsin Chu City	3 (3)		1(1)	2(2)		**6 interviewees**
Taipei County	29 (11)		3(2)	?(5)		**18 interviewees** [11 people refused] [6 people under considerati [1 person undecided]
Sub-Total (by 1/10/02)	20		5	7		**33 interviewees**
Finally (after the initial meeting)	**+4=24**		**+0=5**	**+2=9**		**+6 (including 1 pilot) =39 interviewees** 4 social workers and 2 therapists of TPCG accepte be interviewed after further explanations. 1 person from HCCG accep to sit for the pilot study interview.

Table 3-3 gives further details of the 39 respondents and the interviews. The interviewees were mostly women (91%) and only 9% men. 38 recordings could ultimately be used out of 41 interviews; one interview (No. 3) was cancelled because the respondent was not ready to be interviewed. She agreed to participate again after some discussion. No. 3 and No. 23 are therefore the same person (This refers to Table 3-3). Additionally, the recording of interviewee 35 was faulty. Hence, I gathered 38 interviews. Table 3-3 also shows the interview timetable and the locations where each interview took place.

Table 3-3 Interview Timetable

Interview no.	Date	Interview site	Professional Position	Remarks
01 (Pilot)	31/10/02	Centre Counselling room	Former social work supervisor	Recording accidentally deleted
02	8/11/02	Centre Discussion room	Social worker	
03	9/11/02	Centre mini conference room	Social worker	Cancelled (incomplete)
04	11/11/02	Centre Discussion room	Social worker	
05	11/11/02	Centre Discussion room	Social worker	
06	13/11/02	Centre Counselling room	Therapist	Pregnant 6m
07	13/11/02	Centre Counselling room	Social worker	
08	20/11/02	Centre Group therapy room	Social work supervisor	
09	21/11/02	Labour department Discussion room	Social worker	She quit her job in November 2002
10	25/11/02	Centre Discussion room	Social worker	
11	25/11/02	Centre Discussion room	Social worker	
12	27/11/02	Centre Respondent's office	Current Secretary/former director and temp supervisor	
13	27/11/02	Centre Control room	Therapist	
14	2/12/02	Centre Discussion room	Social worker	
15	2/12/02	Centre Discussion room	Social worker	
16	4/12/02	Centre Discussion room	Social worker	
17	4/12/02	Centre Discussion room	Social worker	
18	9/12/02	Centre Discussion room	Therapist	
19	10/12/02	Centre Discussion room	Social worker	
20	11/12/02	NGO Therapy room	Therapist	
21	12/12/02	Respondent's home Living room	Therapist	Pregnant 9 months
22	16/12/02	Centre Discussion room	Social worker	
23	16/12/02	Centre Discussion room	Social worker	
24	17/12/02	Centre Control room	Therapist	
25	19/12/02	Centre Counselling room	Social worker	
26	21/12/02	Centre Discussion room	Social worker	
27	21/12/02	Centre Discussion room	Therapists	
28	27/12/02	Hospital Group therapy room	Social worker supervisor	

29	27/12/02	Hospital Group therapy room	Social worker	
30	30/12/02	Hospital Group therapy room	Social worker	
31	30/12/02	Hospital Group therapy room	Social worker	
32	5/1/03	Centre Discussion room	Social worker supervisor	
33	6/1/03	Centre Discussion room	Social worker	
34	10/1/03	Centre Discussion room	Therapist	
35	13/1/03	Centre Discussion room	Social worker	Disk damaged
36	13/1/03	Centre Discussion room	Social worker	
37	17/1/03	Centre Counselling room	Social worker supervisor	
38	17/1/03	Centre Counselling room	Social worker	Former Child Protection Worker
39	24/1/03	Centre Counselling room	Social worker	
40	24/1/03	Centre Counselling room	Social worker	
41	7/2/03	NGO Group therapy room	Therapist	

Using semi-structured interviews

In this study, I undertook semi-structured interviews. Qualitative researchers typically rely on four methods for gathering information: participation in the setting, direct observation, in-depth interviewing, and analysing documents and material culture (Marshall and Rossman, 1999). The main types of data generated in qualitative research are in-depth interviews and group discussions (Lewis, 2003). Fielding (1993) emphasizes that two principles inform research interviews: the questioning should be open-ended; and, in order to gain spontaneous information about the respondents' attitudes and actions, the questioning techniques should encourage interviewees to talk about their underlying attitudes, beliefs and values. According to Fielding, the manner of the interviewer is crucial; a relaxed and un-selfconscious interviewer puts respondents at ease. I found that these two principles applied in my interviews. In the first two interviews with each professional group I was nervous about interviewing the

respondents. I did not quite know the best way to ask my questions and how to clarify points when the interviewees responded that they did not understand a certain question. I seemed to put too much focus on my own tension. Therefore I was not able to flexibly use those techniques that I was supposed to be familiar with. I found that the more nervous I was, the more reluctant the interviewee became. Viewing the situation from the respondents' side, I felt that a few respondents looked a bit worried about their performance in answering the interview questions when they walked into the interviewing room. Some respondents gave technical answers rather than their personal perspectives, which may have been due to their anxieties about the interview or what it might mean. Overall, the interviews were not always easy, but as the interviews progressed, this issue receded.

The interviews lasted between 110 and 140 minutes each. Apart from the conversations with the interviewees, I also observed non-verbal cues, listening to their needs and probing in more detail about their personal and professional experiences. Interviews with three types of respondents, social workers, social work supervisors and therapists, were conducted in three Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Centres in Taiwan. The interviews took place between November 2002 and February 2003. Altogether 25 social workers (including 1 pilot interview), 5 social work supervisors and 9 therapists in three regional government centres were interviewed. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed. Altogether 41 interviews (including two damaged) were conducted. Permission for using a mini-disk recorder was sought in advance of the interviews. I spent four months interviewing and another nine months making the transcriptions and translations of the interview data into English. Translation from Chinese to English has its own complexity and became quite difficult and time-consuming. The explanations and expressions of feelings by respondents had to be translated into English which, due to different linguistics and tense of verbs between the two languages, made the process

quite a long and strenuous job. This was compounded by the fact English is not my first language.

The interviews were semi-structured with five sections of questions (see Appendices 3-5). This method allowed me to cover the ground I wished to focus on in the interviews and also allowed the respondents to tell their stories (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000), enabling comparability of response. The methodology of the study was framed within a version of grounded theory, the notion of building theory from data rather than imposing theory on data (Glaser and Strauss [1967], 1968). Grounded theory is a flexible and heuristic strategy, providing researchers with relevant predictions, explanations, interpretation and applications (Glaser and Strauss [1967], 1968). The power of grounded theory lies in its tools for understanding reality rather than just putting a series of concepts together based on one's imagination (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Charmaz, 2003). McIntyre (1999) asserts that the use of grounded theory and a feminist methodology are complementary. One central agenda of both is to highlight the importance of experience, ideas and feelings to create theories grounded in qualitative data. In this sense, grounded theory suggested a bottom-up approach to understanding the experiences of the professional working with incest cases, and feminist thinking (Dominelli, 2002b, Harding, 1982, 2004) provided the gendered frame for this.

Grounded theory requires that researchers take control of their data collection and make comparisons at each level of analysis (Charmaz, 2002). Some information, such as personal data and respondents' concerns about the issues of incest and their beliefs about practice, were collected from questionnaires which the subjects filled in before the interview. Answering the questionnaire (see Appendix 6) in advance helped respondents to recall their memories. Often in practice, data from this type of source are ignored (Dey, 1993). However, I used that data to inform my questions, for instance regarding the

amount of work on incest cases they had done. Some of this data appears in tabular form (shown in Table 3-1).

Feminist approaches to interviewing

In conducting the interviews, I incorporated feminist approaches into the overall process. Feminist approaches to research can be identified largely by their focus on gender and power. They provide insights into gendered social existences. They are also distinguished by conceptualizing taken-for-granted male power in the family as a critical issue in making sense of experiences of abuse (Ramazanoglu and Holland, 2002: 147). Herman and Hirschman (1981) pointed out that without the grounded understanding of male supremacy and female oppression, it is impossible to explain why the vast majority of incest perpetrators are male. At the same time, the majority of victims are female. On the question of gender difference, Rhode (1989: 313) has argued that 'the critical issue should not be difference, but the difference difference makes'. Hammersley (1995) synopsized four features of feminist methodology:

- **the ubiquitous social significance of gender**

  Feminist methodology is a set of approaches to the problem of producing justifiable knowledge of gender relations (Rammzanoglu and Holland, 2002: 10). In my study, I argue that the phenomenon of incest is heavily structured by differences in the social position of women and men, and by differences in power. Gender is therefore a central issue for professionals who deal with incest cases, which should be taken into account in any analysis. Indeed, there is a growing awareness that gender is an essential tool to understand the phenomenon of incest and related issues. I was curious to know if this variable had been given attention by the interviewees when dealing with incest.

- **the validity of experience as against method**

A main task of a feminist approach, from this point of view, is to explore the experience of women. Knowledge of social life is shaped by theory, culture and ideas, and is connected to experience and its meaning (Ramazanoglu and Holland, 2002: 14). In my study, the majority of the respondents were female, as were the majority of the respondents' clients who had suffered incest. Harding declares that in feminist research women's personal experience is a significant indicator of the reality against which hypotheses are tested (Harding, 1987: 8). I focused particularly on the professionals' own experience.

- **the rejection of hierarchy in the research relationship**

Traditional qualitative research methods emphasize objectivity, separateness and distance (Reinharz, 1992), and asymmetrical power (Briggs, 2002: 911) because traditional relationships involve treating people as mere objects - 'there for the researcher to do research on' (Gelsthorpe, 1992: 217). However, feminist approaches emphasize that the relationship between researcher and researched should be reciprocal; the data derived from hierarchical relationships are shaped by that structure (Hammersley, 1992). In some ways the relationship between the respondents and me as researcher was non-hierarchical, although not entirely. Hierarchical relationships probably cannot be completely eliminated from the research process under present conditions of social life research. In my study, I attempted to treat the interviewees as people, to respond to them as individuals, and to be sensitive to their needs. For example, some potential participants were worried before the interviews began about how I would view and deal with the research data. I then explained more about the research background and my motivation for this study to the people I wanted to interview. I explained how I would interpret the data, that I would not judge their performance. Recognising the

interviewees as the experts and authorities on their own experiences was taken as the starting point for my research.

- **the adoption of the emancipation of women as the goal of research and the criterion of validity**

  Research for the sake of research is insufficient. As Maria Mies states, 'the change of the status quo becomes the starting point for a scientific quest' (Mies, 1983: 35). Many feminists define as a central goal of their research the emancipation of women, rather than the production of knowledge as such (Hammersley, 1992: 190; Thompson, 1992). Fundamental to feminism is a commitment to social change and gender consciousness-raising, arising from the actions of women to refuse the patriarchal social structure as it stands, in favour of a more egalitarian society. In this study, a feminist approach was important for me to empower women as professionals and to promote the value of women in our society.

The dynamics between interviewee and interviewer

The roles that a researcher may play are varied. Ultimately, the roles determine the type of power relationships that exist between the researcher and the participants (Everitt et al., 1992). For example, in cases where researchers interview less powerful groups, they may find themselves in a position of power, whereas in an elite interview the situation may be reversed. Qualitative research speaks to the relationship between researchers and the researched. Ideas about relationships in this context come mainly from the literature on ethics in research (Brickhouse, 1992). This literature addresses the dynamics between the two, some guiding principles on how to treat participants, and it provides some examples of relationships that cross the boundary from what is helpful to what can harm individuals. Padgett (1998) points out that qualitative researcher should

be able to maintain a critical distance. I as practitioner-researcher went back to one of my former workplaces to do part of my research. Interestingly, I thought some of my colleagues might wonder how to address me and even how to treat me, because of my previous position as a social work supervisor in TPCG; and that some might behave in a very familiar manner. Actually I found that the administration staff's interaction with me was quite straight forward, addressing me by my previous job title as supervisor. Most social work respondents treated me as a colleague. After we had an informal chat before the interview, they looked more relaxed and began to address me by my name. I noticed a difference between interviewee respondents and non-interviewee respondents in their behaviour towards me. Non-interviewees became more informal with me after observing the communication between interviewees and me.

I myself was nervous of conducting the interviews, especially during the first three or four interviews. I was not familiar with the questions and I had three different interview schedules for three different groups of people. I had to prepare and try to pretend to be relaxed. Initially, when I thought or observed that respondents had not understood a question, I felt frustrated because I was supposed to be good at explaining each of the questions. In fact, I could not do it that well. If the interviewees resisted answering a certain question or a person tried not to open themselves because they did not want to, feeling perhaps that to speak of some particular subject would be impolitic or problematic (Adler and Alder, 2002: 515), or even challenging the question as too abstract, I tried to repeat the question in a different style. Sometimes, it worked out but not all the time. For instance, I found that one of the senior social workers took a very relaxed attitude to the interview. During the interview, she ate her crisps as if we were having a chat. However, I also had a feeling that she was possibly nervous and worried about the interview, based on the way in which she mentioned several times that the interview questions were unclear or abstract. In Chinese culture, 'eating' can have two meanings, of which one is that it is a sign of relaxation; another one is that it is a

behaviour to reduce one's anxiety. Students, for example, often eat non-stop in order to eliminate their fears when examinations take place. When I did the transcribing later, I found that I had asked some questions repeatedly but the interviewee did not respond to them. She also used humour to criticize my interview questions as being too subtle or unrealistic. From there, she drew a line and commented that my study looked a bit like an academic piece of work and so on. Sometimes, she seemed quite comfortable to talk about work issues, but sometimes she did not. For example in the first 30 minutes of the interview, she commented on my interview questions a few times, in phrases such as:

> ...Your question sounds very high up. (6)
> ...What do you want to know? (The respondent is laughing while eating crisps, and seems to be anxious about the performance.) It is an abstract question. (7)
> Referring to the interview questions, what do you exactly want to ask me about? Um, what are the points? Can you be more precise in what you are asking? (Laughing) (10) (No. 12)

A certain power struggle in my interviews was also unavoidable. Even if I took it for granted from the beginning that I was an insider (as a former colleague), when interviewing my peers from social science disciplines, as researcher and interviewer I was 'in a relatively powerless position' (La Rossa, Bennett and Gelles, 1981: 306; Hockey, 1993: 218). In the case cited above the interviewee did answer my questions but she challenged me. This made me aware of the difference in our positions. In a sense I needed her answers more than she needed my questions. I suddenly realised that the relations between this interviewee and myself within the interview were hardly equal (Reed, 2000; Tang, 2002).

While interviewing, I also bore in mind Hollway and Jefferson's (2000) notion of 'the defended subject'. The notion of the defended subject explains a defensive function

which comes into play during interviews and serves to mitigate one's anxieties. I shall discuss the issue of identity investment in one's positioning below. For example, interviewee 37 had neither experienced nor participated in incest practice; however, he was aware that 'our society pays much more attention to females for being sexually abused and ignores the male kid for being sexually abused'. This was an issue for him, as his account here illustrates:

> Q: Why do you think mainly girls are victims of incest?
> A: In fact, the research papers show that there are quite a few male victims of incest even though the majority of my clients are female.
> Q: Do you believe the female is more commonly the victim than the male?
> A: Actually, I don't believe this. I think the ratio of male kids and female kids is almost the same. I have asked students whether they have experienced sexual abuse or not when I educate students about self-protection. Sometimes, a few male kids would raise up their hand. However, it is quite shameful to have this kind of experience so they may describe it lightly later. (No. 37: 8)

This is quite a surprising exchange, given the known data on gender ratios in incest cases, and one needs to ask oneself what this respondent's investment was in suggesting that equal numbers of female and male children are victims of incest. In my view respondent No. 37 tried to differentiate himself from stereotypes of hegemonic masculinity, patriarchy, incest perpetrators, by suggesting that males as well as females are victims of incest. To accept that females tend to be the victims of incest and men the perpetrators would have meant for him, as a male, to accept that he belongs to the category of 'perpetrator', at least potentially. This creates an uncomfortable position. By suggesting instead that as many males as females are victims of incest, he opened up the category 'victim' as pertaining potentially to men and to himself as well, thus reducing the difficulty of coping with the fact that he belongs to the category – male – who in the literature emerges as the perpetrator.

However, after the interviewing, I also found that some of the TPCG respondents felt good about their interviews and felt that it helped in their practical experiences. Some respondents told me that they felt able to share their experiences and feelings, because they realised that they were not going to be evaluated, as I had explained in the initial meeting. Half of the therapists said they really appreciated the process of the interview because they had an opportunity to articulate and systematize their experiences of dealing with incest.

The researcher's role as instrument

The success of a qualitative study will depend on the researcher's personal qualities as well as their intellectual capacity. Padgett (1998) holds that the success of qualitative research depends on the ability of the researcher to become immersed in the world of the respondent and to be engaged in the field for a relatively long period of time. This means that the researcher might engage in rewarding relationships, but can become over-involved and emotionally exhausted. This section addresses the implications of the idea that if researchers are to take reflexivity seriously, these issues must be addressed.
My position as a practitioner-researcher is not a 'neutral spectator' (Denzin, 1997: 35), abstracted and distanced from the research. Rather, like my respondents, I am also a defended subject. Hollway and Jefferson argue that anxiety precipitates defences against threats to the self. Defences operate at a largely unconscious level and significantly influence people's behaviours, lives and relations (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000: 19). The idea of a defended subject is to show how the subject, my interviewees and I, invest in discourses when these offer positions which give protection against one's anxieties.

Psychoanalytic perspectives such as Hollway's and Jefferson's alert research-minded practitioners to factors in the interviewees'/interviewers' own childhoods and past, and possibly forgotten experiences which may influence their understanding of the world

(Evritt et al., 1992). This is one of the crucial theoretical assumptions about this research topic. For example, if a young woman's story of childhood sexual abuse stirs painful memories of the researcher's own childhood trauma or if a practitioner treats a battered woman and thinks of her own mother's couple relationship and even her own. Each researcher carries with her emotional baggage or 'the knapsack on their backs' (Carter, 1995) which is an accumulation of her social and cultural inheritance that influences what questions she asks and to some extent the replies she receives (Carter and Delamont, 1996). I certainly think that the 'helping profession' is a very personal activity in which the personality, autobiography and professional training background of the social workers, supervisors as well as therapists have an important influence on professional relationships and consequently on intervention/treatment outcomes. Dubois (1983) states that we see and think in terms of our culture; we have been trained in these terms and shaped by them. This forces me to be alert to the meanings and relevance of my own and of respondents' growing up within a distinctive cultural background.

Brannen (1988) asserts that researchers' success in getting interview data, especially about sensitive topics, is influenced by the relationship between researchers and respondents. She argues that respondents will have less fear if they cast the interviews within a 'one-off' relationship. This idea contradicts the orthodoxy of other researchers, who believe that trust is best forged between a researcher and a respondent when a more personal relationship is established (Adler and Alder, 2002). I found that having previous knowledge of the interviewees was not necessarily helpful in understanding their responses and in some cases it might have been easier if I had conducted a 'one-off' interview with relative strangers. However, familiarity with the setting presents a challenge to the researcher who is seeking an open questioning perspective (McCracken, 1988). My respondents may have seen me as a researcher and also as belonging to a particular supervisors' group for example, within the organization, creating worries. The position of practitioner research is both privileged and problematic during the research

process. This was weighted in the power balance I had when some remained passive in answering questions (Tang, 2002).

The interviewer's identity, her ethnicity, social class, and gender, has an impact on the interviewee and on the dynamic between interviewer and interviewee (Phoenix, 1994: 56). Feminist methodology aims to highlight and examine the role of the researcher, locating the researcher on the same critical plane as the researched (Reinharz, 1984; Stanley, 1990; Roseneil, 1993). Recognising researchers' self-reflexivity is an essential tool to interpret the defended subjects' discourses and their positioning since we tell our stories through others (Steier, 1991). In this account, researchers' defences against anxiety also affect the results through their perceptions of the interviewing processes and their interpretations (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000). As I mentioned above, I, as researcher, was unavoidably present in the research process, and my work was shaped by my social location and personal experience. From this point of view, feminist research is necessarily a process of self-reflexivity for researchers. Stanley and Wise argue that fieldwork changes the researcher and also that researchers use their own biography in fieldwork (Stanley and Wise, 1993; Carter and Delamont, 1996). This raises some questions. For example, what is the impact of individual differences in interview? I focus especially on how I have used my own experience and how being an 'insider' impacted on the research process.

I call myself an 'insider'. This is because I used to work in TPCG as a social work supervisor. I took advantage of my past experience and acquaintance when I went and collected my data from there. Although I did not work in HCCG and KSCG, my role as a child protection practitioner helped me to understand more easily their ecology and the nature of the job. As a woman working in a female-dominated work culture, I could use my gendered view to try to understand the differences between female and male practitioners from a researcher's point of view. These multiple roles benefited me in

doing my fieldwork. In my observation, as a practitioner researcher, I was able to gain in-depth information quicker and participants might have been more willing to be frank with a colleague rather than with an outside 'expert' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). As I was a kind of empirical qualitative researcher, already familiar with the phenomenon and setting of my study, this had the merit of a certain level of in-built, face-level trust between myself as researcher and those researched (Riemer, 1977: 474). During the field work, we had a common language and similar experiences. I was able to take advantage of my role as an insider, in a manner noted by Roseneil (1993: 189) who argues that 'the researcher is more able to discount misinformation, whether deliberate or not, and can evaluate respondents' accounts in relation to her own experience'. I think I changed my view a bit after finishing some of the interviews. I realised that I would have to concentrate more on my understanding of the social setting than on trying to find out 'the truth'. Kuhn (1962) suggests that there are no facts which are paradigm-free. One of the most striking things that emerged from reflexivity for me was that I needed to be clear about my roles, that is of social workers and social worker supervisor in the past and researchers in the present, and to have a clear idea about my own core issues such as insecurity about my research role, specific views about professional behaviour and so forth.

Interviewing

I structured my interviews according to an interview guide, in which I outlined the themes to be covered during the interviews (Padgett, 1998). My interview guide had a number of questions designed to encourage the respondents to give elaborated answers that covered several dimensions including:

- The background of the interviewees
- Their profile of incest intervention experience

- Their own experience and perceptions of father-daughter incest
- Options for intervention
- Ethical conflicts
- Advice from the respondents

To ensure the integrity of the interviews, I tried to conduct them in a quiet and separate space. Adler and Alder (2002) found that the location of the interview is a crucial factor in assuring that reluctant respondents will feel comfortable. For most of my interviews I used either a counselling room, or a discussion room, or a group therapy room. The rooms I used were ones which the interviewees were familiar with in their professional context.

In analysing the interviews, I gave each respondent an identifying classification in the form of an interview serial number (see Table 3-1). All names in the transcriptions, and information pointing directly to an individual were anonymized. However, I still wondered about the items 'professional experience' and 'time in position', as I thought it possible that certain readers could figure out who the interviewees were. The nature of qualitative research makes guaranteeing confidentiality harder than it seems. The dilemma arises when a researcher's efforts to disguise the respondents' identities are not effective enough (Padgett, 1998: 39). Padgett suggests that researchers can use pseudonyms and may change inconsequential facts in the vignettes to prevent the reader from discerning who is referred to. As confidentiality is especially important in the interviewing of high-profile subjects, it is important that researchers do not disclose personal traits or organizational affiliations through which respondents could be easily identified (Odendahl and Shaw, 2002); I therefore decided to omit the item of respondents' organization, shown in Table 3-1.

For ethical reasons, all the interviewees were asked to give consent to being audio-taped. Before interviewing, I asked them to try the microphone to find the most comfortable way to talk. Most interviews took approximately 130 minutes. However, there was one relatively short interview of around 90 minutes with a therapist, who had been put on the list of participants when I received it from one of the coordinators. When I tried to get in contact with her and arrange the time to interview, she seemed a bit unwilling to join the study, although she never withdrew her offer of help verbally. I found it quite difficult to fix a time for her to be interviewed. Eventually we agreed a time between two of her therapy sessions. I was a bit concerned about the time constraint. When I invited her to introduce her qualifications and professional background, she put the question back and asked about my research intention, saying that otherwise she had nothing to say in reply to the questions. When I asked her about her own special experiences and views of incest, she replied that she had quite a few, but for confidentiality reasons, she refused to talk. I said: 'It is okay if you do not want to talk, you make your own choice'. I could tell she was unwilling to talk because of her verbal responses to my first few questions. I tried not to be manipulated by my feelings but felt that she might be testing me in the interview process. I kept interviewing her until the end. I was asked to suspend the interview once in the middle because she had to go out and deal with her subsequent therapy session. I eventually spent 89 minutes on this interview. When I later transcribed her tape, I listened to my voice and found that I was very calm but I know I was struggling. The reluctance of a respondent in social scientific interviewing has been noted by Adler and Alder (2002: 515). They stress that researchers generally face two types of reluctance, involving issues of access and resistance. Some people agree to be interviewed, but then resist opening up or discussing certain kinds of topics or may not be forthcoming during part of interview. This was my experience with one or two participants.

I learnt through this interview about the difficulties and power dynamics in the interviewing process. I realised that I needed to be clear about the boundary between me as researcher and each of the interviewees. I, as a practitioner, had in the past been employed by one of the three centres. That experience might influence my current position as researcher. However, I think it also brought me the advantage of using my past relationships to work with those respondents.

Techniques of Data Collection

Each of the interviews was digitally recorded. Each digital disk-recorded interview was transcribed verbatim. The transcription of ten minutes of recording took about one to one and a half hours. The original transcription was in Chinese; it was then translated by the researcher into English. The sentence construction was based on natural pauses in the dialogue and punctuation is in accordance with standard written punctuation[2].

Qualitative 'raw' data come in various forms but most commonly comprise verbatim transcripts of interviews (Ritchie, Spencer and O'Connor, 2003: 220). The verbatim transcribing of interviews was very daunting because each of the tapes took about two or three days, sometimes longer. The process was an unforgettable experience as I could listen to the tape bit by bit, typing bit by bit. Despite my emphasis on the accuracy of the transcriptions, they can never be complete because of a possible discrepancy between the written record and the recorded material. Additionally many aspects of nonverbal interaction are not recorded. Therefore, the process of interpretation begins at this

[2] The following symbols were used when quoting from the transcriptions:

... Unfinished sentences

[ ] Researcher's explanatory note inserted.

( ) Researcher's observation

..... Indicates a pause of longer than 3 seconds

Chinese C. Chinese idiom translation

transcription stage. Transcribing discourse, like photographing reality, is an interpretive practice. Decisions about how to transcribe, like decisions about telling and listening, are theory driven and rhetorical. Different transcription conventions lead to and support different interpretations and ideological positions, and they ultimately create different worlds. Ritchie, Spencer and O'Connor (2003) argue that the core issue is what kind of text I as a researcher anticipated a transcript to be. In this case, I wanted it to be a record of what was said, intelligible within written conventions. By the time the translation work was completed, I had nearly 100,000 words. This experience was one of the important processes in my doctoral training as I had embarked on qualitative research for the first time.

Ethical considerations

Epistemologically, when considering the varieties of fieldwork, each with differing relations between researchers and researched, researchers perhaps see that different possibilities of harm and benefit are associated with each (Cassell, 1982: 17). Feminists have criticised traditional scientific research methods for treating the researched in oppressive ways: they may be manipulated, exploited, scrutinized and constructed as inferior (Mies, 1983; Harding, 1986; Thompson, 1992). However, on the other hand, Laine (2000) emphasizes that ethical problems and dilemmas are a necessary part of field work, an unavoidable consequence. Kvale (1996) describes an interview inquiry as a 'moral enterprise'. Yet this raises a question. For example, does my research setting construct a 'non-hierarchical' relationship (Oakley, 1981) between interviewer and interviewees? Stacey (1988) states that the relationship between researcher and researched is inherently unequal, and that the researcher should be alert to this dilemma. This section focuses on three such issues: power in interviews; dual relationships; and dealing with the negative feelings arising from my research.

In the past few decades, some qualitative researchers have espoused post-modern arguments that critique traditional social science (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Marshall and Rossman, 1999). These researchers challenge historic assumptions of neutrality in inquiry. Debates over research ethics have been especially lively among qualitative researchers who decry the objectification of human 'subjects' in conventional scientific research. Duncombe and Marsden (1996) argue that the more effective the interview in persuading respondents to disclose their private experiences, the greater the ethical problems posed for the interviewer. As rapport is established, the interviewee might divulge information that makes the researcher face a dilemma of ethical judgment. Say for example, the information I gather might include respondents' personal feelings and reflections as well as their perceptions of other participating colleagues. One of my interviewees talked to me about her feelings about a recent well-known case of incest in her office. Her view of what happened differed significantly from that of others. I, a researcher, had worked as a social work supervisor and I found my role change problematic in the conversations with this respondent (No. 33). I had to reconcile insider and outsider roles, being a researcher raised in the local setting but returning to study the setting as an outsider (Jarvie, 1969), as in the following situation:

Q: Since you have been here for a year, do you have any ideas about the standpoint and expectations of your organization when dealing with incest?

A: Most of the time (with a sardonic tone) it might be considered as firm to maintain the children's right, but conceded occasionally.

Q: What do you mean by 'conceded'? Can you say more?

A: I think what I wanna talk about is the current big case.

Q: You mean the allegation five-year-old case of sexual abuse[3]?

[3] The case of a five-year-old girl in TPCG was a turning point that affected professional relationships among social workers, clients and their family. This case headed the list of the ten most notorious national social welfare scandals in 2002. The case was reported by the girl's teacher, after the girl told her that her father touched her vagina. The girl was quickly removed into foster care under the Children Welfare Law. Then, the client's father, who had political influence, used his influence to claim that the professionals were inaccurate when they concluded without enough evidence that the young girl was victimized by her dad. He held a media conference accusing TPCG of removing his daughter without good reason. Finally, the girl returned home after six months and three days, as the court rejected TPCG's application for an emergency protection order. See the interview data of No. 28; No. 5; No. 19; No. 11; No. 32; No. 41; No. 22; No. 33 and No. 16.

A: Yes. I think with hindsight it was obviously a concessionary. Moreover, I think our social work profession seems very silent in that situation...I think we should have evaluated that this child was unsuitable for returning home at the moment. However, the kid has gone home due to political involvement. (No. 33: 6)

Hill, Glaser and Harden (1995) emphasize that an ethical dilemma occurs when the researcher experiences conflict, especially conflict that cannot clearly be guided by one's own moral principles. What happened to me was that I thought fieldwork became particularly problematic when my role crossed boundaries of conventional and sensitive topics, public and private space, overt and covert methods, and the overlap between roles and relationships (Laine, 2000). I discovered that my biases or past experience impacted on the research process, because my personal views made me positively predisposed to some responses from interviewees. I had to balance my reactions to events with my findings and with the perspectives of my research participants. As a researcher, I had to negotiate my insider and outsider roles. It was necessary to differentiate between one's research and interpretations as private, and the study conclusions that are to be made public. I learned lessons about the niceties of boundary spanning and reciprocity.

- Power in interviews

The recognition of the complexities of power relations opens up new possibilities for feminist analyses. Some feminists point out that despite women's shared understandings of gender subordination, other social attributes also contribute to different power relationships in women interviewing women (Riessman, 1987; Ramazanoglu, 1989; Ribbens, 1989; Tang, 2002). Wise (1987) argues that the goal of equal interaction in interviews is illusory as ultimately the researcher retains the power to walk away with information. As she points out, the research relationship is fundamentally a relationship of unequal power between the researcher and the researched (Wise, 1987; Roseneil,

1993). On the other hand, some researchers have argued that interviewees both recognize and delightfully exploit the power inequalities in the interview process (Fine et al., 2000). Clearly, the researcher as an interviewer cannot always be the one who takes control. I thought a non-hierarchical relationship between interviewer and interviewees did not entirely exist in my interviewing of professionals. In pursing the goal of examining experiences and feelings through the research process, I found that I as a researcher and a doctoral student had less power of control than my respondents. For example:

> Q: Please could you introduce your professional background and work experience?
> A: Huh, what do you mean by 'professional background' and 'work experience'?
> A: Since you have asked? I don't know what are the exact details that you want to obtain?
> Q: You may like to introduce something about your training or relate this to your present experience of therapy; it definitely depends on how much you would like to talk?
> A: Not that it matters, but it depends on what you want to get from me. Because I don't know what you want to ask and what you want to get. I may need to know what you expect to know, and then my answer could probably meet your question. (No. 34: 1)

This circular conversation made it difficult for me to do the interview. Apparently, my interviewee had more weight in the power relationship (Tang, 2002: 711). However, the literature on interviewing does not address these issues, instead usually maintaining that there is a 'relative powerlessness of the subject vis-à-vis the researcher' (La Rossa, Bennett, and Gelles, 1981: 306). It is the case that I am in a position to interpret the data I gathered from the interviews and thus have power over the information put into the public domain. But that does not feel like comprehensive power to me. Rather, it puts me under an obligation to work in a manner that does not harm the respondents and beyond that, one that is useful in some way to those I researched. However, researchers have also recognized that power dynamics in the interviews are not static (Tang, 2002), nor are they the same at every stage of the research process.

➢ Dual relationships

One of the considerations a researcher faces in engaging with former colleagues for the purpose of research as I did is that of 'dual relationships' (Brickhouse, 1992). In order to be effective, the researcher as a former staff member should according to Elliott 'dismantle the value structure of privacy, territory and hierarchy, and substitute the values of openness, shared critical responsibility and rational autonomy' (Elliott, 1991: 67). At the outset of the study, I assumed that it would be relatively easy to keep the research separate from my former role related to the organization. Naturally, it is quite possible for the researcher to inadvertently fall into playing the role of 'insider'. Defining one's own position within the bounds of professional practice therefore seems essential. I tried to take account of the effects of my previous relationship with some of the interviewees on the research process. Not surprisingly, I thought that when a respondent was my ex-supervisee, I might face dilemmas. Such relationships become especially problematic when we seek to study our work subordinates because interrupting a professional relationship with one's former work subordinate to ask for consent might appear coercive even when handled sensitively (Padgett, 1998). Padgett (1998: 37) argues that 'it can be hard on the prospective respondents who do not want to displease us and it can be hard on us, trying to shift between research and work roles'.

Within this relationships structure, although I tried to avoid the influence of my own experience, some projection of past experience and my judgement on the ex-supervisee respondents was probably unavoidable. On several occasions, I was conscious of my previous superior status in relation to my interviewees who were my former colleagues, especially my former work subordinates. I took it for granted that I was an insider, 'one of them' in the field of child protection. Where both interviewer and interviewee share membership of the same category of group, the basis for equality may impress itself on the interviewer's consciousness (Oakley, 1981: 55). In one interview, when I asked the

interviewee about the standpoint and expectations of her organization when dealing with incest cases, the interviewee avoided my question and shifted to another issue that she wanted to talk about, even though it was related to my question. When I was perceived as at a higher level, in some instances I felt that the informants saw the interview as a sort of evaluation. Somehow I sensed the interview might turn out to be what they thought I wanted to hear. Stacey (1988) emphasizes that the greater the intimacy, the greater the danger of the boundary between research and researched being transgressed. In this account, it was problematic when I used my familiarity with my past work experience during the research process. It also caused me to have same bias in judging the specific interviewee's conversation. One might argue that to some extent, I lost my 'objective' attitude due to that intimacy. My interviews not only highlight the extent to which different roles throw up different ethical issues, but also illustrate how the role-relationship between the researcher and the respondents is complicated, and has to be managed.

- Dealing with negative feelings

As a feminist researcher, it is essential to be alert to the fact that any study might victimize respondents, especially when recalling traumatic experiences in dealing with incest cases. There are also emotional and other risks for the researcher that need to be mentioned. As Padgett (1998) asserts, it is impossible to avoid emotional ups and downs during interviewing. I experienced this several times during the field work with different respondents. Some respondents might tell me about the tense relationships between them and their supervisor or among colleagues. Some might ask me what the correct answer to an interview question might be or ask me indirectly to comment upon their performance during the interview. Two or three interviewees cried while they were talking about their experiences in dealing with incest. I tried to bear in mind Legard, Keegan and Ward's (2003) argument that the researcher's role should not be confused

with that of adviser or counsellor, so it is not appropriate to give advice, nor comment favourably or unfavourably on decisions or circumstances, beyond an expression of empathy.

The paramount concern in all research lies with protecting the respondents from harm (Etherington, 1996; Padgett, 1998). Anticipating and dealing with emotional risks means that as researchers we are in a better position to protect our respondents as well as ourselves. This includes self-reflection when a respondent's answers hit home or touch upon personal issues for the research as well as the participant. Sometimes, this happened in my field work. Taylor (1987) suggests that initial impulses to dive in and do something should be weighed against all foreseeable consequences. This I attempted to do. As Patton (1990: 11) states: 'generating useful and credible qualitative findings through observation, interviewing, and content analysis requires discipline, knowledge, training, practice, creativity, and hard work'. That was certainly the experience I gained in this research. The following chapter will concentrate upon my interview data regarding the social work education system. This chapter will also discuss various issues in relation to the social work education system in Taiwan that affect child protection social workers.

Chapter Four

Reflections on the Social Work Education System and Training in Taiwan

Introduction

Beginning with this chapter and in the next two chapters I shall analyse the interview data using thematic analysis. First, I shall examine the reasons for the interviewees choosing to become social workers, drawing on the qualitative aspects of the study to provide a picture of what motivated the professionals I interviewed to become child protection workers. In the next section, I shall review the course structure of social work education and training in institutions both in Taiwan and in the UK. Here the aim is to review the design of the curriculum, in order to understand how well prepared social workers are through their training to undertake child protection work. Also considered are the possible repercussions of the motives of social workers for their learning and application of professional knowledge, values and skills, as professional identity has a profound impact on professionals' responses in dealing with incest. In the last section, I start by looking at the crucial, and related, issues of what constitutes practitioners' competence in child protection and sources of stress in dealing with incest.

Becoming a child protection worker

The social worker's decision to apply to a Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Centre and becoming socialized into the profession of child protection, is in most cases a highly complex and various, yet little understood, process. Lishman (2002) highlights that motivations for social work, just like social work itself, are varied. In any social work area, throughout Taiwan, professionals rarely have the opportunity to be asked and to explore

the factors affecting their choices to become social workers at any point during their training and practice. Some have clear motives, and well-rehearsed positions, while others have no concrete motives and beliefs. In Taiwan, I found no study that sheds light on the motivations of social workers to serve as incest or child protection workers. Researchers have pointed out that some professionals[1] do social work training because of their personal experiences (Cree, 1996). Here, there is an assumption that the motivation for one's job is the practitioner's personal experience as a survivor of incest/sexual abuse (Glasgow, 1987). For example, one of my interviewees (No. 34) was extremely reluctant to share her feelings. It appeared that there was a personal connection with the topic of incest. Regarding this scenario, I could draw no firm conclusion, but it is obvious that incest is difficult to speak of: 'Yes, there was something that really impressed me; however, I am not going to say anything because it was quite private'. (No. 34: 1)

The literature shows that some social workers are able to support the child more effectively because of their own experiences (Peace and McMaster, 1993). Some retrospective studies have found that prior experience of harassment was related to less target blame by female practitioners (for example, Jensen and Gutek, 1982); Glasgow (1987) has argued that personal experience in childhood abuse can both facilitate and distort work in some situations. It is important to note, however, that prior experience also includes practitioners' sex attitudes, gender, and gender role, apart from any direct experience of abuse. It was beyond the scope of this study to explore interviewees' personal experiences of incest/child sexual abuse. None of my interviewees, however, indicated that their reason for entering social work arose from their personal experience, as a child or as an adult. Instead, one social worker, for example, said:

[1] 'Professionals' in this study means a group of people specifically educated and trained to carry out a particular job of work which, without such education and training, they would not be competent to undertake (Stone, 1990: 61).

> I always tell myself, probably I am the only person who has the statutory authority to give the victim resources so as to deal with her difficult time; otherwise, they are very helpless and hopeless. Therefore, I always tell myself, it is my 'job duty'. (No. 7: 3)

Glasgow (1987: 13) was of the opinion that if someone is working principally with children who have been sexually abused, the distress and difficulty of this job must be outweighed by some personal motivation which is unlikely to involve just the need for a job, altruism or job satisfaction. However, Glasgow's view was still not entirely borne out by my study's findings. Although my interviewees had similar feelings to those Glasgow reported, the original motives of my respondents were very different. It is, of course, however possible that motivation changes over time, and that respondents have multiple reasons for what they do, not all of which they articulate.

An understanding of the reasons why social work students choose to become child protection workers is critical for those concerned with the employment of social workers. Holme and Maizels (1978) in their empirical research in the UK asked 1,423 social workers who were employed by local authority social service departments and the probation service in England about their motivation. Their finding was that social workers sought self-realization through their work and rejected certain aspects of social work practice, those seen as boring and routine. Another study, in the 1980s, found that both social service and probation groups were motivated by wanting to help others; social work students were more interested in social change and social action (O'Connor et al, 1984).

In my study, I had no intention to focus on the reason why respondents undertook social work, but I initially asked them such a question because I was interested to know how many of them were concerned with the issue of gender. This is of interest because the

literature describes rape and sexual violence as reflections of women's subordination. In feminist discourse, 'gender relations are power relations' (Featherstone, 2002: 114). Featherstone (2002) argues that how gender relations operate and are changing can help facilitate the welfare of children in a broad sense. Therefore, it seemed fitting to begin by reflecting on this question. I found that the majority of interviewees were motivated to work in the area of incest by job opportunities, job assignment and by interest in gender issues, with job opportunity being the most frequently cited reason. As Table 4-1 shows, of those interviewees who spoke about their reasons for working in incest intervention, the vast majority responded to a job vacancy.

Table 4-1 Interviewees' Reasons for Working in the Area of Incest

Reasons to work in the area of incest	**Respondent No.** *underline: These interviewees chose more than one of the items.	**N**
Job vacancy	2, 4, 6, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 24, 26, 27, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 40, 41	25
Interested in gender issue	20, 29, 41	3
On the advice of teachers	21	1
Other reasons: 1. Job assignment 2. Interested in child protection	 5, 7, 9, 8, 10, 23, 25, 28, 29, 30, 31 39	12

Source: Table derived from the interview questionnaire on 'the practices and interventions of professionals working with incest victims' in Taiwan in the years 2002 and 2003.

Job opportunity was by far the most common reason for interviewees to enter the area of incest. It was mentioned in 25 cases (approximately 62.5% of interviewees). However, a notable finding emerging from the research was the number of interviewees who were in their current position mainly due to job assignment, not job opportunity.

The routes by which interviewees had arrived in their current positions are illustrated by the following comments:

> For almost half of my work experience in this centre, I had an administrative position. In other words, my experience in casework is intermittent. In January of 2001, I was transferred to deal with casework again but I can't remember the exact date when I started. (No. 5: 1)

> I graduated from the department of Sociology and majored in social work, at the National Taiwan University in 1999. After graduation, I worked in a centre for the physically and mentally disabled belonging to the social welfare department in TPCG for three or four months, and then I was internally transferred to their domestic violence and sexual assault prevention centre. (No. 23: 1)

> I graduated from the department of medical sociology of KS Medical School. I worked at World Vision Children's and Adolescents' Care Centres in Taiwan after graduation. I quit after six months. I then entered KSCG and dealt with the programme for women and children. Two or three years later, I was transferred to a shelter where I took care of a group of abused women. Last November, I was shifted again in my job from a shelter to a sexual assault prevention centre. We have a job-assignment every two or three years. (No. 31: 1)

> I graduated from the social work faculty of Tunghai University, Taiwan in 1994. I worked at TCPG after graduation. At the beginning, I was responsible for the physically and mentally disabled for over two years. After that, I shifted to do direct service in a local social welfare centre. The first two years, I dealt with the service for low-income population; I then commenced dealing with domestic violence cases for over four years. Later on, I was transferred to the social work sector to deal with sexual assault administration for a year. This May I was moved in my job again from the last job to the Sexual Assault Prevention Centre to undertake casework. (No. 30: 1)

The above respondents were in the same position in having come into their current position through job assignment. It seems that they had no specific training or work experience in the field of child protection. Besides, they did not seem to have actively

chosen to work in their current position. However, the following respondent was different from them, as she chose this job herself. As she said:

> Before, I worked at the Animal Protection Association of Taiwan for half a year. Then I worked at The Pearl S. Buck Foundation of Taipei in Taiwan for six months. During the last six months, I have dealt with casework on the issue of foreign brides and programme design as well. I didn't think I would become a social worker, as I was quite interested in animal protection. Probably it was just a hobby. When the interest in pets was over, I naturally decided to come back to social work and to choose to apply for this job. (No. 17: 1)

This respondent seemed to be an enthusiastic pet lover but I did not feel that she had a particular passion for child sexual abuse. Another informant's situation was also different, as she was selected and assigned by the Examination Yuan of Taiwan:

> After that, I passed the higher civil servant examination, so I was sent to be here. (No. 33: 1)

It is worth noting that many of the interviewees commented on being sent to a new job as if they had no agency. They seemed to be moved without themselves choosing to go to a different job. Their responses suggest that they were used to viewing themselves in a passive position; they did not see themselves as exercising control in their choice of work. A male social worker reported his ambitions prior to entering the organization as a child protection worker (CPW):

> Technically, my thought was very simple. I was hoping that I would do my best to help people in need. Honestly, I was changed gradually. I was hoping that I would be able to uphold righteousness, prior to entering this position, but not any more. Now, I just do what I can. (No. 38: 18)

I did not collect further data about the government and its practice of job assignment. To a certain extent, the public sector in Taiwan treats professionals as if they were administrative workers rather than experts. They are recruited to be social workers by passing the civil examination. At this point, they do not even know what position they will be placed in once they have the civil servant qualification. Alternatively, they might be employed on a temporary basis. Furthermore, no matter what official channels the staff have gone through, it is quite possible to be rotated or shifted. However, researchers have argued that social workers are a professional group (Liberman, 1979; Martin, 1989). In attempting to make sense of the policy of job assignment, it is necessary to be aware of the socio-cultural context of the respondents. Job assignment or job rotation is outwardly one of many bureaucratic policies, but it also reflects the perceptions of the hierarchy of Taiwanese authorities regarding staff's autonomy, rights, personal interests and training backgrounds. There may be considerable differences from one society to another in this. Some evidence from my former work experience in social work in two different local authorities in Taiwan suggests that the policy of job assignment might be particularly characteristic of Taiwanese society.

Interest in gender issues

Apart from the reasons of job opportunity and job assignment as a matter of policy, 10% of the interviewees indicated that they chose to work in the area of sexual assault because they were interested in the issue of gender. As is pointed out by Lishman (2002: 97) social workers' dilemmas and actions reflect and symbolize wider preoccupations with insecurity, safety, marginalization, risk and control. Cree (1996) emphasizes that gender difference is one of the factors in the motivation to undertake social work. This was illustrated by interviewee No. 8, who talked about her family when I asked her about her idea of the

unequal relationships between genders. She described her family's dynamic: 'I observed that my father was very overbearing and my mom was a traditional woman, grinning and bearing the unhappiness and insults'. (No. 8: 5)

Obviously, the experience which professionals have in their own childhoods, their interaction with their parents or seniors, influences the way in which they view gender relations. On the other hand, professional training is an additional key factor because such training has a significant influence on relations with clients. Nonetheless, one of my interviewees was not interested in the issue of gender due to her therapeutic training approach. Her experience challenged Cree's view. She said:

> Comparatively, I only focus on [the victim's] personality and ego-strength rather than the other issues such as gender issues... I have mentioned, in our theory, we view a person as an individual. (No. 34: 5-8)

This respondent was strongly interested in the Freudian school. Freud's theory suggests that responsibility for incest is on the victim, who was regarded as fantasizing about having a sexual relationship with the paternal figure in question, although his theory was roundly rejected as preposterous by his colleagues. However, the implication is that the sexual relationship is desired by the child. The consequence of this view is that some professionals were previously very comfortable with the belief that sexual abuse, particularly incest, was quite rare, and when it did occur, it quite likely was the result of the child's seductive behaviour (Faller, 1993). Although my respondent here first said that she was not concerned with the physical difference between men and women, her later words indicated a contradiction, as she assumed that women are much weaker than men in physical terms. Some of the interviewees were interested in other aspects concerning gender, as the following quotes illustrate:

> The majority of victims were female, and why do men treat women in a violent way? If looking at the frequency of different crimes, we would find out only sexual crime has mostly females as potential victims, it shows that men have obtained more power to suppress women in the society in which we live. Definitely, it is a gender issue behind this phenomenon. (No.18: 3)

> The fact is that gender inequality exists in our society. It causes victims to have to take the punishment indirectly. That's very unfair. I think I'm very gender conscious... I think women should have more assistance and support to help them in a way. (No. 29: 1)

Two of the respondents were concerned that the vast majority of victims of incest are female. They viewed abuse as due to a power imbalance (Blume, 1990) which exists between men and women. What can be done if their families are as dominated by the men as female clients are? Respondent 41 told me that the reason that brought her to be a therapist was her strong interest in working with sexual abuse cases.

> Of course, the more important reason is that I have a passion for victims of sexual abuse... it is very important to arouse the client's self-awareness of gender difference and the power structure... (No. 41: 7)

These respondents were female. Moreover, the three informants had a common ground in their answers, in which sexual violence or sexual crime was identified with gender inequality. Men, including male social workers, might be reluctant to talk about gender relations, particularly with respect to their own potential to perpetrate or be identified with sexual abuse (Glasgow, 1987). Interestingly, many respondents clearly believed that large numbers of females are victimized by men, but not many of them said that the gender issue was an important motivation for their work.

Overall I found that gender did not appear to be a significant factor influencing

professionals' concerns in Taiwan. A difficulty arose here, because there were only four male respondents in my study, and three of them were employed by the same organization (CCF in KSCG). It is thus hard to piece together a picture about the difference in view between female and male workers. Christie and Kruk (1998) argue that men tended to hide personal issues or work with clients as areas of concern, identifying more strongly organizational or professional concerns. It did seem that the interviewees' way of thinking was to be concerned about their ability to satisfy the local authority's work criteria.

Being a social worker involves entering into the lives of people who are in distress, conflict or trouble. Dealing with this requires not only technical competence but also qualities of integrity, genuineness and self-awareness (Siporin, 1975; Lishman, 1994). Self-awareness is necessary for practitioners to recognize their impact on others during an intervention (Lishman, 2002), particularly within counselling activity. It helps to examine personal issues which can potentiate inappropriate and damaging responses (Glasgow, 1987: 11). A further consideration in looking at the importance of self-awareness is that child sexual abuse, especially incest, provokes strong emotions, which in turn impact on professionals' responses (Martin, 1989). Respondent No. 21, for example, pointed out the importance of sensitivity:

> I think one should be more sensitive to the relevant issues surrounding power and control. I believe that professionals with different backgrounds bring different perspectives to the work of counselling children and to analysis as well. (No. 21: 10)

Another therapist also extended this equal relationship issue from the private life to the therapeutic relationship. She suggested:

> I think that the key point is rather that a therapist/counsellor should be more sensitive to the issue of power in the professional relationship between the workers and the clients than decide to choose which approach. (No. 41: 15)

Society remains 'deeply inflected with gender traditionalism' (Halford and Leonard, 2001). Hence it is not surprising but people acquire certain behaviours or ways of thinking from the process of socialization.

I therefore argue that all of these issues of personal attitudes and feelings are likely to have profound effects on the responses individuals make to victims and the personally significant elements of their situations. According to Liao's study in Taiwan, most CPWs have complex emotions when a case is referred to them, and their negative feelings might influence their judgement while they are making intervention decisions (Liao, 1997). Liao stated that bad luck, fear, annoyance, worry, anger and accommodation are among the possible negative emotions. In his study, Corby discovered that, 'greater understanding of issues of sex and sexuality might enable professionals in this field to develop a more detached awareness of their roles and functions' (Corby, 1998: 23). The question of incest may be approached from a variety of angles. In my study which focuses on professionals' subjective experience of incest intervention I have decided to centre my discussions on issues of gender and power, partly because incest is a gendered phenomenon (i.e. predominately females are assaulted by males), partly because that genderedness is - as my data demonstrate – insufficient taken into account in Taiwanese incest intervention, and partly because the issue of power plays a key role both in terms of perpetrators having power over victims to abuse then on the other hand, and social work professionals experiencing the power of institutions to circumscribe their interventions. This also means that I do not engage extensively with questions of sexuality and sexual behaviour which, of course, forms another important aspect of the intervention.

'...we didn't know how to help these children who were being abused'

Many professionals I interviewed said that there were no experts in the field of child sexual abuse. Researchers Peace and McMaster (1989: 17) found that practitioners were all learning and trying to discover the best ways of working. The social work profession is still defined as 'a social institutional method of helping people to prevent and resolve their individual problems, to restore and enhance their social functioning' (Siporin, 1975: 1). Social work has fifty years' history as a helping service profession in Taiwan. During this time, more than twenty faculties of social work and relevant subjects have been established, and postgraduate programmes and doctoral research studies have gradually been set up (Liao, 1986; Lin, 1994; Chou, 2002). The quantity of training programmes for social work students has been increased and the public has gradually recognized social work as a profession. Chou (2002) however, argues that the development of the social work profession and the awarding of a professional licence in Taiwan cannot guarantee the quality of their services.

- **Social work training in Taiwan**

The purpose of social work education is to enable students to integrate the knowledge, values, and skills of the social work profession into competent practice. This profession includes an approved training programme, a professional organization, related organizations and activities (Skidmore, Thackeray and Farley, 1991). This raises the issue of the framework of social work education and the syllabus social work students follow to become competent novice practitioners. When social workers are highly stressed, poorly trained and unskillfully managed, the service they provide will be less than good (Stone, 1990). However, skills and knowledge might help the professionals to be more confident in offering effective intervention. Two therapists said:

> As a matter of fact, no matter what the cases, I think we need to have the basic skills of counselling and a basic attitude towards human beings. Nevertheless, the more workers there are, the better, and then we would be able to specialize in certain issues. (No. 21: 14)

> I think that it is necessary to have enough knowledge of incest, as well as the knowledge and skills of therapy for sexual assaults. (No. 20: 19)

In light of what the respondents presented in this study, one cannot fail to ask whether the professionals' education and training framework is an appropriate system for responding to child sexual abuse or not. I shall argue below that the traditional syllabus for a social worker practitioner, which has been based on the premise that the central purpose of that education is to produce knowledgeable persons to function well, is insufficient to meet both the market demand and individuals' personal career needs. I suggest that more interaction and integration between the academic setting and practice is needed in order to produce better quality social work practitioners.

In 2005, 22 universities in Taiwan offered bachelor programmes in social work and social welfare in Taiwan. There are 15 universities that provide masters programmes and three doctoral programmes for social work (Lin, 1994; Chou, 2002; Lin, 2003; Department of higher education, 2005). In addition, there are also two universities with four-year honours degree programmes in youth and children welfare, and one university with a two-year graduate programme in family studies and child development (see Table 4-2).

Table 4-2 List of Full-Time Social Work Programmes in Taiwan, 2004

No.	Institution	Undergraduate (Social work and related subjects)	Masters programme in Social work	Doctoral Programme
01	National Taiwan University	V	V	
02	National Cheng Chi University	V		
03	National Taipei University	V	V	
04	National Chi Nan University	Department of social policy and social work	V	V
05	National Chuns Chens University	Department of social welfare		V
06	National Yang Ming University	Department of social medicine		
07	National Pingtung University of Science and Technology	V	V	
08	Tunghai University	V	V	V
09	Fu Jen Catholic University	V	V	
10	Tzu Chi University	V	V	
11	Soochow University	V	V	
12	Chinese Culture University	Department of social welfare		
13	Shih Chien University	V	Department of family studies and child development	
14	Providence University	Department of youth and children welfare	V	
15	Chaoyang University of Technology	V	V	
16	Kaohsiung Medical University	Department of medical sociology and social work	V	
17	Chung Shan Medical University	Department of medical sociology and social work		
18	Chia Nan University of Pharmacy and Science	V		
19	Chang Jung Christian University	V	V	
20	Hsuan Chuang University	Department of social welfare		
21	Taichung Healthcare and Management University	V	V	
22	Fu Hsing Kang College	V	V	

Source: www.high.edu.tw.02/02.htm

The standard undergraduate social work programme is a four-year honours degree programme leading to the professional qualification of social worker. At my former university, Tunghai University, students have to complete at least 132 credits from courses offered by the Department of Social Work, including 75 compulsory credits and 57 elective credits. The core components of the curriculum are foundation training, social work theory and practice, social policy and social welfare, human development, social research, and field practice (as shown in Table 4-3). Students are equipped with the values, knowledge and skills of the profession, while they are free to choose a number of electives related to their interests. B.S.W. graduates will have a basic 200 hours of field work, and two semesters of tutorials to practise exercises.

Table 4-3 An Example of the Social Work Course Structure in Taiwan

Year One (credit)	**Year Two**	**Year Three**	**Year Four**
Chinese	Social psychology	Constitutional law	Social welfare programme planning
English	*Philosophy of Christianity	*Life philosophy	*Enlightenment of life in Buddhist philosophy
Thought of Dr. Sun	Human behaviour and social environment	Community organization and development	Management of government documents
General Chinese history	Social case work	Personal management	
Survey of social work	Social statistics	Social work research work	
Sociology	*Small group theory	Social policy and administration	
Social problems	Humanities	Fine art appreciation	*Communication theory
General psychology	Social group work	*Training group	*Social welfare planning
Military training	Nursing Care	-	-
Physical education	Physical education	Physical education	Physical education
	Contemporary	*Economics	*Introduction to

	Chinese history		Psychiatry
	Field work I	Field work II	Field work III
	*English oral	*Voluntary service	*Advanced case work
		*Practice of community development	*Medical social work
		*Counselling theory for practice	*Marital and family therapy

Core modules; * Electives.

Source: Adapted from the Tunghai University curriculum (Taiwan), 2005.

Between one and two thousand undergraduates, and approximately two hundred postgraduates in social work graduate from the various universities in Taiwan every year (Lin, 2003). Most graduate student social workers are employed in NGOs and public sectors, and so operate within the framework and policies of agencies. This gives them structural backing and support that strengthens their services in many ways. In 1997, social work was recognized as a licensed profession in Taiwan. However, Chou questioned the utility of certifying the quality of the social work profession. According to Chou's (2002: 91) analysis, the obstacles to social work development in Taiwan include:

- Teaching – lack of a local and practical curriculum and lack of self-reflection among the educators.
- Practice – practitioners have no commitment to serve the clients and the professional role has not been identified.
- Integration – failure to explore in the inter-connected settings of education, practice and research, the inextricable and essential partnerships between the academy and practice.
- External environment – public bureaucracy, unstable non-governmental agencies with limited budgets, and lack of political and economic concern about the

profession, all discourage the development of social work.

- Local experience – lack of identification of the local experience base of social work practice, as well as international connection.

Since social work intervenes in the lives of people, social work education should place greater focus on social work values and ethics in the curriculum as the core module, encouraging in social work students a clear mindset to reflect on a problem, which can be an indispensable guide to develop their competence in making decisions (Tzeng and Hu, 2002). I argue that understanding values and ethics is indispensable in social work as a helping profession. In particular, the new values are concerned with challenging oppression as distinct from the 'traditional values' (Shardlow, 2002: 30). In the following, I shall briefly comment on the UK system of social work education and its differences from the Taiwanese one.

- **Social work training in England**

In the UK, two levels of the social work curriculum are accredited by the General Social Care Council: the Bachelor and the Masters. The bachelor level prepares students for generalist social work practice, and the Master's level prepares students for advanced social work practice in a specialist area. These levels of education differ from each other in the depth, breadth, and specificity of knowledge and skill that students are expected to synthesize and apply in practice. Both levels of social work education must provide the professional foundation curriculum that contains the common body of knowledge, values, and skills of the profession. At Hull University, simultaneous with the decision of the university to modularize its undergraduate teaching into eight units a year, a two-year MA/DipSW course was introduced in 1992 (Burke and Bradley, 1993), including 16 units in total. The innovative three-year BA programme is accredited by the General Social Care

Council and constitutes the professional qualification for social work. The programme is run by the University in partnership with the Social Services departments in Hull, East Yorkshire, North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire as well as local users and carers and a number of other partners from the voluntary and independent sectors (social work at the University of Hull, slb-fhsc.hull.ac.uk/swba.htm). It is based on a series of four-week intensive teaching modules including a week for completing an essay. Work placements are subsumed into the system: the first one is a double module of eight weeks' duration and the second one a quadruple module lasting sixteen weeks (Burke and Bradley, 1993: 77). Students accumulate 360 credits to gain the qualification. There are five categories of modules: foundation, practice, specialist, optional modules and dissertation modules (normally only for the MA course), as shown in Table 4-4 and Table 4-5. Burke and Bradley (1993) emphasize that the strength of this modular structure is that students choose their own pathway in light of their motivation to learn. The dissertation and work placement modules are very flexible core modules.

Table 4-4 University of Hull Year One – Course Structure of the Undergraduate Degree in Social Work, 2006

Semester 1	**Core module** • Introduction to social work, social policy and the law • Human growth and development • Social work process and practice: planning, intervention and review	This is a programme comprising 20-credit modules over three levels with 120 credits at each level.
Semester 2	• Working with children and families: policy, law and practice • The research-minded practitioner • Enhancing communication: interprofessional learning Concepts and issues in social work	

Source: FHSC, slb-fhsc.hull.ac.uk/swba.htm, 2006

In the years 2 and 3 of the full-time programme, there are two routes through the programme, A and B (as shown as Table 4-5). These routes are determined by students'

module choices and the availability of practice learning opportunities. In the first semester of Year 2, Student A may take three 20-credit modules concurrently. Student B would take his/her first practice-learning opportunity (placement) in the first semester. This placement will last six months, at least 100 days of which must be spent in practice learning.

Table 4-5 University of Hull Year Two and Three – Course Structure of the Undergraduate Degree in Social Work

Year Two – Three (120 credits per year)
Year Two **Student A** Semester 1 *Core* • Mental Health social work: knowledge, law and practice *Options (students choose two of the following)* • Loss, bereavement and palliative care • Safeguarding vulnerable adults • Working with looked-after children • Challenging behaviour Semesters 2 & 3 • Practice learning 1 – Parts 1,2,3 ***OR*** **Student B** Semesters 1 & 2 • Practice learning 1 – Parts 1,2,3 Semesters 2 & 3 • Understanding drug and alcohol problems • Safeguarding children and young people • Community care, care management and social work • Challenging behaviour

Year Three

Student A

Semesters 1 & 2

- Practice learning 2 – Parts 1,2,3

Semesters 2 & 3

- Community care, care management and social work
- Understanding drug and alcohol problems
- Safeguarding children and young people

Student B

Semester 1

Core

- Mental health social work: knowledge, law and practice

Options (students choose two of the following)

- Protecting vulnerable adults
- Substance use: social work practice and the law
- Loss, bereavement and palliative care
- Working with looked-after children

Semesters 2 & 3

- Practice learning 2 – Parts 1,2,3

Source: FHSC, slb-fhsc.hull.ac.uk/swba.htm, 2006

In the UK, social work has an educational programme involving coursework and placement experience, which go hand in hand. The course structure involves a progression from the general to the specific. Compared to Taiwan, the strength of the social work modular structure is that students can follow their own pathways, subject to their having an acceptable set of proposals for the specialist modules, and the modules are more practical. The free elective modules tend to be practical and diverse. In Taiwan, however, the course design is more general but not specialized. In my view, the social work education training in Taiwan and the practical environment do not match sufficiently. In my study, many respondents mentioned the importance of professional training, although not many people

discussed the insufficiency of their academic training. One of them addressed the situation to some extent:

> It just reminds me that I didn't receive specific training in child protection when I was at university. What I learnt is how to act out my role as social worker properly, as well as something of the professional ethics and values. That's it. In contrast, I seem to lack some specific modules. I have started learning to be a CPW since I have been involved in this centre. I'm learning by doing. I doubt whether this uncertain process strengthens my confidence as CPW. (No. 10: 14)

Although the incest taboo is universal in human culture, it is still necessary to put this issue into the academy as one issue to explore in relation to effective intervention in practice. However, very little of this seems to be acquired through the training at college. As respondent No. 10 said, her knowledge on the topic came mainly from work experience. Therefore, in order to avoid beginners feeling stress or frustration in case handling, relevant academic training seems important and both education policy and social service organizations might need to develop a more varied picture. In addition to this, it may be appropriate to have special training and special preparation programmes for those working with incest victims. The issue of competence in doing a professional job well is another, related, matter (Dominelli, 2002), which I will consider next.

Current thinking - Competence in social work

The majority of the respondents in this study were relatively inexperienced in handling incest cases; only six had handled about 20 or more cases (see Table 3-1, last chapter). However, child protection professionals are required to be at work during emergencies (Shamai, 2003). Social workers are expected to be ready to intervene immediately in case of a child being raped by an adult they trust. In fact, many respondents in this study, when

thinking about their work in the child sexual abuse field, seemed very vague in viewing the problem of incest and explaining the complexity of the related issues.

Popple (1991) further suggested that social work educators should recognize the importance of social work students' value development. However, values are diverse and teaching on this matter is very variable. Haynes (1999) borrowed Pumphrey's (1959) perspective on this matter, arguing that social work students should be taught how to use personal values positively and consciously, and that values and ethics learned in the acculturation process transform the student from a trainee to a professional. Haynes proposed that social workers should understand professional values within their social context. In this sense, if practitioners deliberately insert the self into a practical scenario, this will begin to clarify their own values and subjective viewpoints towards incest. In my findings, a most important point is that there is no requirement that trains and encourages therapists/social workers to examine their own assumptions and feelings about incest. Talking of this work, some social workers stressed:

> This is tough work and high pressure... Again, it is tough work, so each of us should take care of ourselves. (No. 5: 16)
>
> Regarding a suggestion to front line workers... this is a tough job. (No. 23: 15)
>
> I feel that there are many difficulties in dealing with incest cases, right. I query why only social workers concern themselves with the future plan as if we are the gate-keepers. We have to keep checking and making decisions alone... I don't know how to collect the evidence, but I know I am expected to have this competence to find the truth out, as well as be a valid witness. It scares me. Dealing with the case of the five-year-old girl was probably a severely traumatic experience for me. (No. 11: 2)

Three of the respondents commented that incest cases were so tough they could not deal

with them and they had experienced great pressure. Respondent No.11 raised the issue that social workers are expected to figure out whether an allegation is true or false. But the pressure on social workers seems particularly strong when they have to make a decision whether they should remove the child to foster care or not or to return the child.

Deacon et al. (1999) suggest that it is important to increase confidence in social workers' ability to manage and work with child sexual abusers. They argue that little attention has been given to the work undertaken in society by individual social workers. This appears to be an issue in Taiwan, too. For example, when I asked respondent No. 15, who used to be a clinical social worker before entering TPCG, what she wanted to offer to a new social worker regarding social work practice related to incest, she said:

> When I look back at the cases I have dealt with, I just felt so bad (she laughs while talking). To be more precise, I missed something. I wish there had been a senior who could lead me and I'd follow, so that I wouldn't be learning by doing and I would have saved much time avoiding trial and error. Also, I feel ashamed at making terrible assessments. (No. 15: 15)

Interestingly, few interviewees commented on the fact that professionals as practitioners should look after themselves as well. Probably one of the reasons that caused practitioners to experience feelings of shock and helplessness when encountering incest cases was their lack of particular and sufficient knowledge and expertise in dealing with incest. These situations seem to occur in both the UK and Taiwan (Chiang, 1997, Corby, 1998; Teng, 2000;). I was told by one senior social worker, 'It is terribly heavy work'. She looked very tense even though she was laughing. Sadly, she went on to say, 'An incest case is almost equal to three other types of cases (choked)' (No. 5: 2). By this she meant that incest cases are significantly more difficult to deal with than other kinds of cases. She did not specify

what these other kinds of cases might be but her sentiments were not specific to her alone. As some of responses above also indicate, social workers dealing with incest cases generally tended to find dealing with those cases tough, and repeatedly attributed this to lack of training.

Problems of practice may be reflective of factors other than the competence of practitioners (Stone, 1990: 62). This may have to do with training styles. Learning by doing is one factor which has been heavily relied upon by social work organizations in Taiwan so far. Most new practitioners learn on the job, with some preparation beforehand and discussion afterwards with the supervisor, and some respondents might have the experience of learning the skills to work with incest through the processes of dealing with incest and even child abuse, similar to respondent No. 15. One of the social work supervisors stressed that:

> Believe it or not, we insist that the inexperienced front-line worker shouldn't deal with cases of child abuse... In reality, it takes time to learn and gain experience. That's the reason that we don't let the freshman undertake this heavy duty in the first few years. (No. 37: 3)

The comment suggests that senior practitioners classify different types of abuse in terms of the degree of difficulty posed in the statutory casework. Even if one does not begin by dealing with child abuse on entering the job, when such cases first occur, even quite experienced social workers are always novices. All jobs have their own difficulties, challenges and meanings, but social work is undoubtedly highly stressful (Stone, 1990). On the one hand, social workers have no experience of certain issues. On the other hand, their professional skills and knowledge are often insufficient for them to intervene, assess and support an incest family effectively. The majority of social workers in my study were

experienced in dealing with incest at the time of interviews, but often had feelings of upset, frustration and dilemma as a result of their working experience in relation to incest/child sexual abuse.

Professional differences

Some of the respondents (No. 36, 31, 17, 20, 25, 26, 14, 16) impressed me by their client-centred approach when they talked about what they did with a case of incest when it was referred to them. They were not inactive, viewing the procedures just as procedures, but they were more concerned to identify and assess the client's situation and needs before the procedures began. Here I extract from my interview data some different descriptions of what they thought about the child protection procedures. From the content, I found that the principles and procedures adopted by different social workers were generally similar, but a slight difference was that some social workers were more able to focus on the real scenario rather than just talking about the procedure itself during the interview. For example:

> I would make an effort to reach the kid and it is important to build up trust and a relationship with the client in the rapport stage in order to move on to what might be difficult information to talk about. Before going, I would absolutely try to collect more information about the client from the informant or schoolteacher. In particular, seeing the client herself is still a priority task and interviewing the abused children...and then I would tell the client that I would place her into an emergency foster care if it's incest... (No. 17: 3)

> For incest cases, we would get there and investigate, speak to the client in order to find out if she is obviously in immediate danger. Then, we would call the local police, take the statement and arrange a medical examination after the kid has settled down. After that, we would interview the perpetrator. (No. 36: 7)

> The standard child protection procedure is to confirm the information on the referral sheet before seeing the child in order to get an idea about the situation of this matter, tracing the time elapsed, the client's feeling and perception of being abused and the degree of her significant harm. But I think this is a bit by bit process. What's more important is to speak to the client so that the interview might help us to find out the strength and weakness of that case. (No. 31: 4)

Three respondents reviewed the investigation procedures in the light of their different experiences. Firstly, practitioners mentioned that meeting and approaching the client was important. Secondly, there is an agreed-upon principle that it is vital to tell clients about the interview procedures, so that they can prepare themselves to discuss their experience in detail. One supervisor recounted her experiences in dealing with some of the workers whose assessments she did not agree with. She described that,

> She [social worker] told me she saw one or two of the three children and didn't see the most important one. This kind of situation cannot persuade me and then the worker has to go again. Some are like: they went again and still could not see the child, could not talk to her alone. The mistake they often make is that they give me the secondary information, which I cannot accept. After this, the worker will change their mind and attitude a little bit, and then they will bring the information about the child back next time. (No. 12: 12)

How social workers deal with cases is clearly partly related to the direction they get from their supervisors or their organizations. Wattam (1989: 27) argues that if the investigation of child sexual abuse is observed as a social process rather than as a procedural matter, many features become visible which shape the way in which social workers work together with children. As one interviewee said:

> The critical point is the child's state, whether she feels comfortable or not. (No. 5: 5-6)

Research shows that interviews with the children are a principal component of social workers' initial investigations (Hallett, 1995). The front-line practitioners must be familiar enough with the procedures related to the victim to undertake each single step involved in the process of the investigation of an allegation of child sexual abuse (Courtois, 1996). Some of the professionals in my sample were reluctant to undertake the statutory duty to get involved for fear of making a mistake in their assessment. Some social workers use secondary data from informants or neighbours instead, especially as Chinese society is suspicious of outside intervention in family affairs (Chan, 1998).

When the issue was raised of the capability of planning an interview for information gathering and assessment, the major concern was said to be the pressure of insufficient appropriately trained and experienced staff to cope with this difficult task especially in handling an interview with a victim. The aim of the interview is to find out in detail what has happened (Wattam, 1992). However, one supervisor expressed her concerns about the social workers' inadequate investigation. The reason, she thought, might be lack of skill in interviewing children, so that they fail to make an adequate assessment. She said:

> How to interview a child? I felt there is no strength even though I took this to heart (Chinese c.) when I was a substitute supervisor for four months...The centre has scheduled some training sessions for this recently. But I think um, we need to be highly concerned about how to investigate and interview the victim. (No. 12: 8)

Child sexual abuse workers require high quality supervision. Supervisors should have a duty to ensure that their practice adheres to social work's value base and should be in a position to help practitioners reflect critically on their practice. Wattam (1992) points out that the major problem which faces professionals is that they must get children to talk

about their experience evidentially. However, this is often impossible. Wattam argues that the reason why social workers so often fail is because of the issue of evidence. There is a problem that in the process of investigation, practitioners are bound by evidential constraints, what can or cannot count as evidence.

Stress in dealing with incest

Public concern about child sexual abuse places pressure on the Taiwanese government to be seen to be taking the issue seriously. Researchers argue that the way professionals view problems and their capacity to cope with stress, reflects the nature of their experience of distress (H. Bell, 2003: 517). Thus, personal factors are essential in underpinning the professional self, as one's own self is part of the service as a tool. For example, I asked respondent No. 28 how she felt when she began dealing with incest cases and their families. She replied:

> The strongest impression is from one case where the defendant alleged perpetrator sought somebody who is a councillor [sic] to intercede on his behalf. The coincidence was that there was the assembly meeting at that period, and we had plenty of pressures as a government sector from the councillor for quite a while. (No. 28: 1)

Here a defendant effectively got a politician to intercede on his behalf. This case headed the list of the ten most notorious national social welfare scandals in 2002. The case was reported by the girl's teacher, after the girl told her that her father touched her vagina. The girl was quickly removed into foster care under the Children Welfare Law. Then, the client's father got politicians involved in this case. He claimed the professionals were exaggerating when they insisted that the young girl was victimized by her father. He held a

media conference accusing TPCG of removing his daughter without good reason. Finally, the girl returned home after six months and three days, as the court rejected TPCG's application for an emergency protection order. The social workers had been confident before the court case, but the outcome gave rise to very negative emotions and doubt in the TPCG's CPW team, which had an effect on their statutory responses when dealing with incest cases. They might, for instance, have felt less confident in making judgments. Some respondents had feelings of fear or worry when working with an incest family, no matter whether or not they had successfully removed the child into foster care by using an emergency protection order which is activated when a child is in immediate danger and may have to be taken away from home quickly or kept in a safe place. The conflict of interest among the political structures, the legal system, the social welfare bureaucratic system and the client's family is apparent. One concern of my study was to shed light on how the ecological system of the patriarchal society might influence child protection professionals' attitude (social workers' in particular) and the way they decide to carry out their work. The case mentioned above indicated how certain patriarchal structures such as the legal system and the political system, both dominated by men, that challenge men's ability to dominate their families reinforce each other, making interventions difficult.

It is vital for social workers to be realistic about what they, as professionals, can achieve, given the organizational and other constraints they encounter. Stress impairs professionals' ability; as helpers, they can become burnt out (Glasgow, 1987). In particular, there is pressure on social workers to make incest intervention a priority when a case is referred. If the organizational environment is very ambiguous, the social worker will find it difficult to focus on ways of handling the cases, just like respondent No. 36, who said:

> To be honest, I think compared to physical child abuse case, in a sexual abuse

> case it is harder to build up the professional relationship between social workers and children. The reason might be that both the worker's feelings and the feelings of the kid seem very complex. Thus, I think a worker might have a feeling of distress when she doesn't know how to handle a case of sexual abuse well. (No. 36: 18)

Stereotypical assumptions play a role in this, as interviewee No. 32 pointed out. She said that society is full of myths, and by society, she meant everyone, professionals included. She said:

> They, of course including me, professionals, need to confront their stand and role continuously, examining if we inherited expectations about women from the patriarchal society. Yeah, sometimes we do. (No. 32: 7)

Professionals need to examine their self-awareness and capacity for critical reflection in order to ensure that their perceptions, conceptions and experiences are used to enhance their practice (Lishman, 1994: 99). Therefore, continuing professional/self development is necessary in social work practice. Only when the practitioner can minimize the influence of her particular experience, will the connection with the client's experience be as effective as possible. One of the social workers said:

> ...maybe we were merely educated how to be a good social worker and some basic values and ethics... our viewpoint is based upon the degree of acceptance associated with our socio-cultural context and the attitudes towards incest as each of us has got a different value system and varied beliefs in viewing the same theme. (No.10: 14)

Our individual personality as part of our competence will influence what we bring to the professional/therapeutic relationship and a practitioner can use her own strengths and personal attributes to enhance her work, just as one of the respondent's supervisees, for example, did. She said:

> I felt that one of my supervisees had a good insight into her inner emotions and personal issues as well. It's quite obvious that this ability would enable her to recognize her inner self faster compared to the other social workers. However, this might relate to her personality as well, she probably has great bravery and desire to connect with her inner self, and thus it helped her to recognize the influence of her own issues on her helping profession more easily. (No. 32: 14)

Conclusion

My research makes a contribution to what is an ongoing debate around whether the social work curricula in Taiwan meet certain substantive requirements. This is an important debate which has huge implications for respondents, their supervisors and the organisations in which they work. The purpose of social work education is to enable students to integrate the knowledge, values, and skills of the social work profession into competent practice. The achievement of this purpose requires clarity about learning objectives and expected outcomes, flexibility in programming and teaching to accommodate a diverse student population, and commitment of sufficient time and resources to the educational process. One social worker respondent, who commented on the profile of social work education in Taiwan, said:

> Technically, I think CPW must need some special training, such as gender education and family dynamic. These are very fundamental courses for counsellors when dealing with incest. It is equally important for social workers as well. Maybe social workers do not need to be very learned in those theories, however, it is a very necessary training for child practitioners. And I don't think it should be undertaken by an organization itself but it should be admitted that the curricula of social work education needs many large changes. As a matter of fact, I didn't receive any training in relation to the knowledge of family dynamic or gender issues. (No. 10: 14)

Another counsellor also identified the importance of the training to the whole of child protection. She said:

> I think the professional training of the counsellor and the formulation of value systems have a significant influence on the counselling or therapy relationship and consequently on counselling outcomes. (No. 21: 13-14)

In the light of this, the need for continuing updating and renewal of knowledge and skills – for continuing professional development – looks unavoidable. In the next chapter I shall develop my analysis of crisis work within the statutory framework, concentrating on the procedural constraints for front-line social workers, the hierarchical relationship between supervisor and supervisee, and in particular to look further at the issue of the constraints of their training associated with their practice.

Chapter Five

Professional Practice in Incest Intervention

This chapter addresses the following three major issues: firstly, I will look at the general structure of intervention in child protection practice in Taiwan, assessing the child protection procedures associated with the issue of time scales, the relationships between supervisors and social workers, and the concerns by the respondents regarding the procedure. Secondly, I will consider the therapists' issues in therapeutic intervention on incest: their approaches to therapy, the length of therapy, and the therapists' experience of transference/counter-transference. Finally, I will move to a different context of social work practice on incest, focusing on an essential aspect of intervention in intra-familial abuse: the professionals' gender and gender sensitivity, and explore what is involved in good practice regarding incest intervention for practitioners.

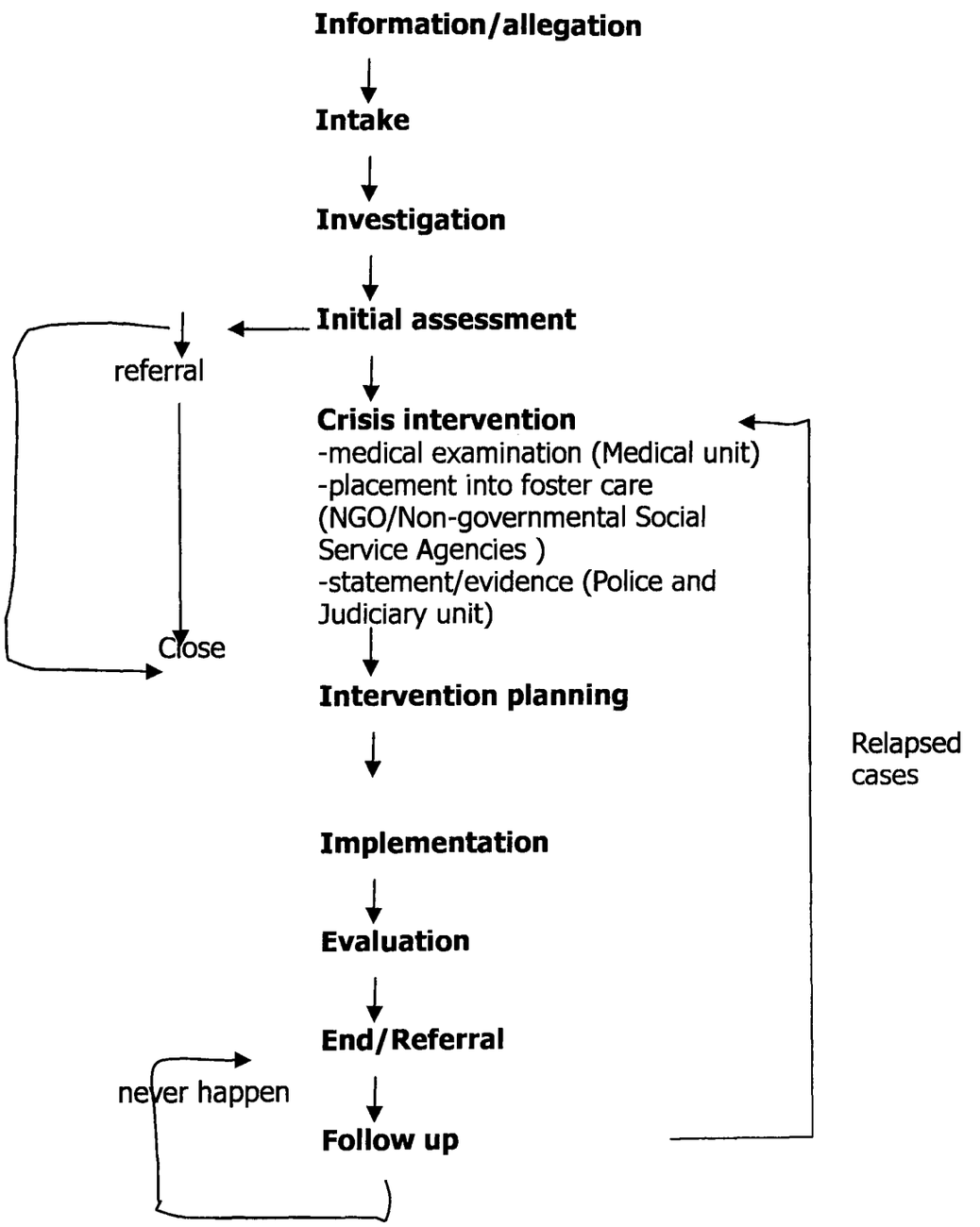
Overview of the crisis statutory framework for child sexual abuse investigation in Taiwan

Despite many undoubted improvements in the child protection system over the past forty or fifty years in western developed countries, such countries also remain in some ignorance and uncertainty about aspects of child sexual abuse (Farmer and Owen, 1995: 18). In Taiwan, CCF (refer to chapter one) has been a pioneer in the area of child protection since 1988 (Hsu, 2002) when the different branches of CCF started to assist the local government to implement the practice of child protection work. During the development of child protection practice, CCF adopted new methods based on knowledge and experience gained from the US concerning child protection, establishing a framework

for child protection. The central government policy on child protection practice was developed and enhanced afterwards. Its framework involved a holistic, multi-agency approach towards the assessment of children in need.

Between the mid-1970s and the 1990s, the issue of child abuse became a major preoccupation of societies throughout the western hemisphere and there was a gradual shift towards a more systematic and proceduralized approach to state involvement in the protection of children (Parton, 1991; Corby, 1993). Generally, social work intervention takes place within an organizational context, and so social workers have to understand the underlying principles and functions of their organizations (Lawrence, 2004). Incest is an urgent case regarding child abuse and characteristically faces social workers with a crisis in terms of needs for intervention (Glaser and Frosh, 1993). In the event of a referral to social work services, concerns that a child may be suffering or at risk of suffering sexual abuse should result in the following action (refer to Figure 5-1) by the social worker. Once an investigation in Taiwan has been undertaken there is a child protection committee case conference to consider the findings of the investigation if necessary, the evaluation of the abuse and come to a shared decision about what should happen and how to construct the safety and entire protection plan for the child (and maybe others in the family). Checking back with social work supervisors about progress and what should happen should take place on a regular basis in the meantime. The social services department also needs to report on the whole event to the nominated court and apply for the permission to use the protection order in writing.

Figure 5-1 The Child Protection Practice Guidelines for Child Protection Workers in Taiwan (Taken from CCF, 1999).



To achieve this prompt response, child protection workers in Taiwan have certain duties to perform:

- receive notifications from multiple sources (schoolteachers, police, medical staff and so forth) who believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection because of abuse or neglect;
- provide a national-wide hot line called '113' and provide advice where an informant reports such concerns;
- investigate matters where it is believed that a child is at risk of significant harm;
- refer children and families to services (i.e. medical examination, counselling, transferring to another school and financial support) that assist in providing the ongoing safety and well being of the children;
- take matters before the Court if the child's safety cannot be assured within the family;
- foster and supervise children on legal orders granted by the Court (TCPG, www.sw.tpc.gov.tw/113850/about/about.html).

Within this study, respondents were asked to describe what they do with a case of incest when it is referred to them. More than half of respondents said that they were required to see and interview the child within a specified time limit (i.e. within 24 hours), in particular to remove the child from danger and place her/him in a safe context. Two respondents said that they needed to take emergency action to deal with incest cases, so they were supposed to put this as their top priority compared to other types of abuse in which emergency action is not required. The limited time frame was an issue in dealing with incest, as the nature and necessity of such cases can differ from other types of abuse. Several respondents pointed out that to provide an emergency placement was a very

important but challenging task to achieve in intrafamilial abuse cases, as practitioners need to investigate and make a prompt and accurate judgement. As for the limited time, it is possible that the quicker the response social workers are asked to make, the less time they have to prepare; therefore, the easier it is to make a mistake due to insufficient evidence.

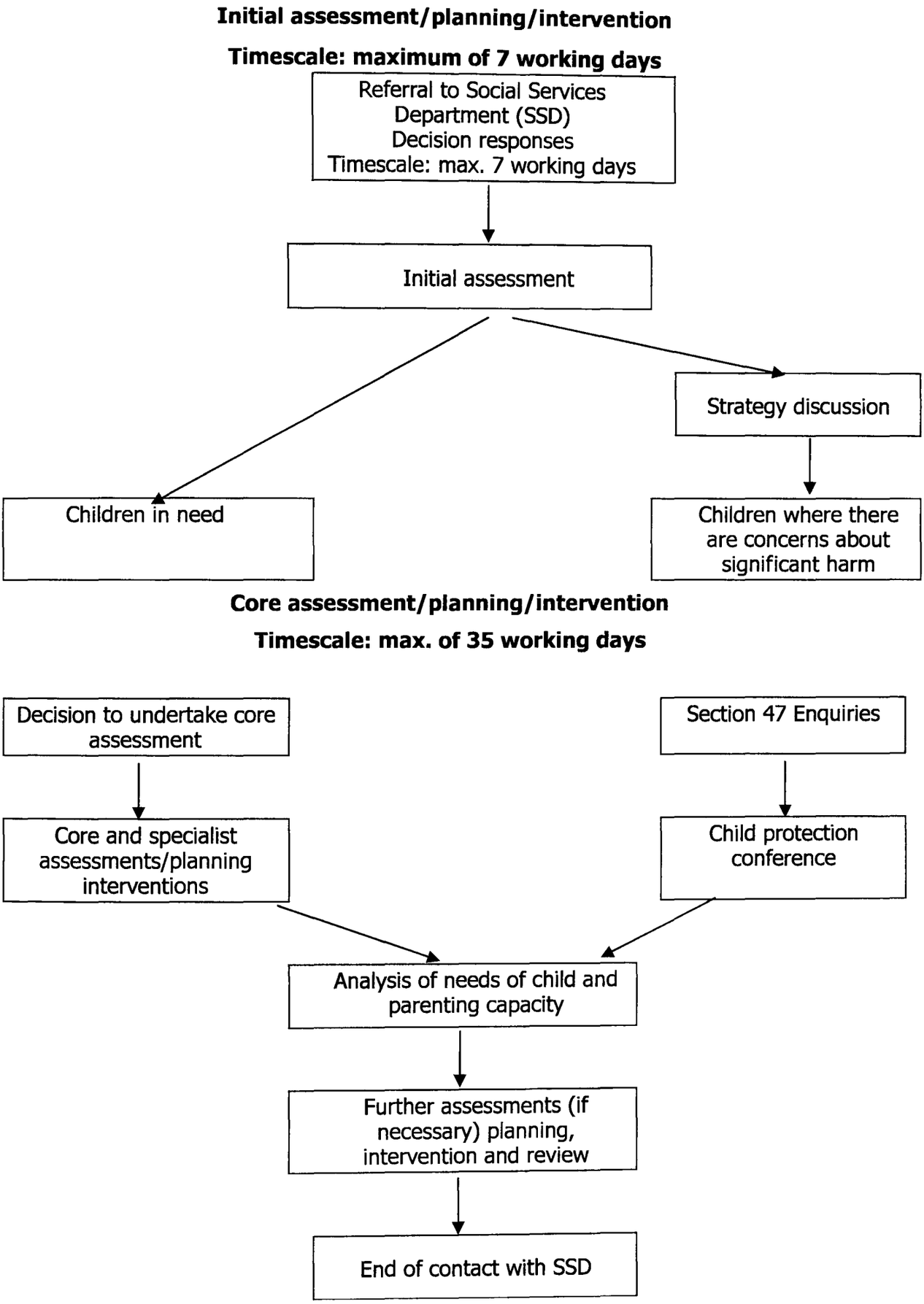
Most respondents of HCCG and KSCG were quite confident of implementing the statutory procedures, 'the protocol of the sexual assault procedure', and said that this does not differentiate between a sexual abuse case and an incest case. They go through the same procedure with a medical examination, search for evidence and taking the statement. The only difference is that they need to assess the safety of incest victims if the latter want to go home. In this case practitioners can make an urgent placement or apply for an urgent care order from the court to suspend the perpetrator's presence. They also accompany the client within the judicial process with a policewoman. In this study, every respondent clearly understood how to operate the proposed instructions manual as child protection investigators.

The investigation of allegations or suspicions of child abuse has been accompanied by the development of a significant degree of interagency collaboration in Taiwan in the last decade. Every step in the procedure has been drawn up based upon the underlying Child Protection Law. It should allow uniformity in implementation of the law. It is a step-by-step procedure, and adherence to associated regulations by the front-line practitioners is monitored by the law. Although the underlying principles are the same the practical procedures or guidelines vary from place to place, based on the statutory roles and duties of TPCG, HCCG, and KSCG respectively, practitioners still need to follow the above instructions when dealing with child sexual abuse/incest, especially in handling crisis intervention. Compared to other kinds of abuse, however, most respondents felt more

challenges and difficulties in mapping out an intervention plan for incest cases. This can be inferred from the fact that some respondents highlighted the need for professionals to receive adequate education and training in order to help them to handle incest well.

As mentioned earlier, by law a child protection worker ought to implement an investigation of an allegation within 24 hours. At each step of the above Figure (5-1) a risk assessment needs to be made (Wald and Woolverton, 1990). One major problem is that there is little literature detailing good practice in decision-making and proper assessment in Taiwan (Hsu, 2002). This, in turn, makes front-line workers hesitant about risk assessment and this might influence their confidence in making an intervention. In Britain, an 'Assessment Framework' has been developed to provide a systematic way (as shown as Figure 5-2 below) of analysing, understanding and recording what is happening to children and young people within their families and community where they live.

Figure 5-2 Referral Assessment Framework



Taken from: Framework for the assessment of children in need and their families, DOH, 2000

The primary purpose of the assessment framework is to improve the outcome for children in need. It is designed to help local health authorities to ensure that referral and assessment processes discriminate effectively between different types and levels of need as well as to produce a timely response. The decision-making process is based on the views of all the agencies represented at the conference. Importantly, the approach to assessment emphasised is to encourage empiricism even when precise measurement is not available or possible (Jones, 2001).

From the interview data, it also seems that most of the social work supervisors expected their supervisees to follow the official procedures in handling incest cases. For example, one supervisor said:

> Normally, we just follow the protocol of KSCG when a new case is referred. We go through a medical examination first, search for evidence and take the statement. We interview the child in order to gain some basic details. (No. 37: 3)

Another supervisor commented:

> ...we will follow the protocol of the sexual assault procedure. (No. 28: 4)

A social worker made the same point:

> I think in our organization, we have a set of routine procedures in black and white to deal with sexual assault cases. (No. 10: 2)

In terms of practice, it seems that there is a common ground based on procedures, tasks and priorities at each of the stages. The UK and Taiwan have some essential stages such as the referral process, social work investigation, medical examinations and police

investigation, criminal investigation/prosecution and psychotherapy/counselling. The primary duty for social workers is to act to protect children. Some interviewees in my study emphasized this:

> The safety principle for the social workers is paramount when we deal with incest. (No. 5: 2)
>
> The paramount principle is to prevent the victim from being hurt again. (No. 28: 4)
>
> Other agencies and the relevant units may be asked to give help with the child and family because we have a common ground to protect the victim from harm as a paramount principle. (No. 5: 5)

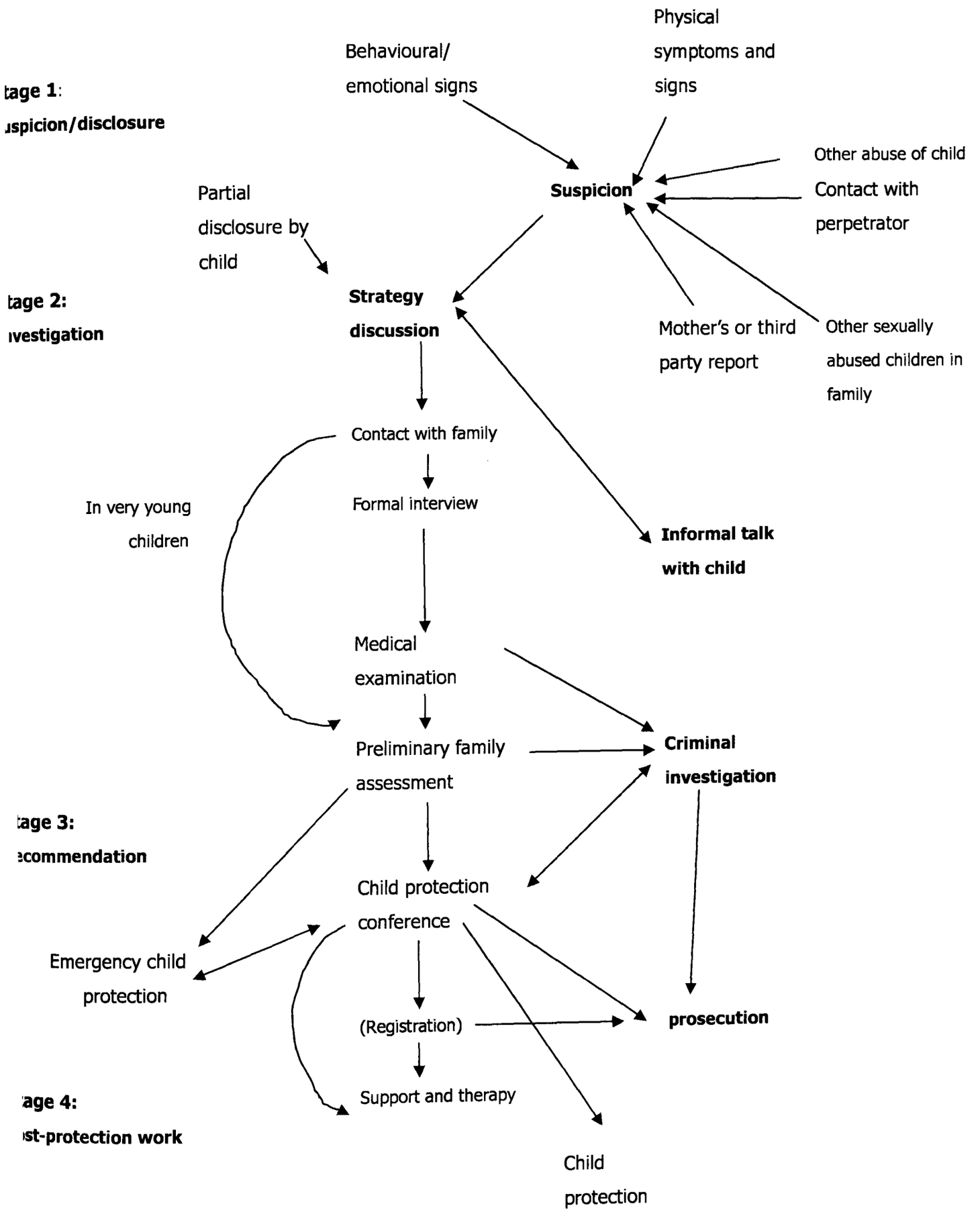
The data in this study suggest that this principle is extremely clear and significant for child protection social workers, except in cases where the evidence is unclear and there is no evidence of significant harm or injury. The immediate threat to a child's life is a compelling reason for action, in incest cases especially. In Taiwan, this particular sort of training is not ordinarily covered in the curricula of schools of social work as mentioned in chapter four. Professionals and policy makers need to be very precise about definitions, criteria for identification, and acceptable methods of investigation, assessment and monitoring (Gough and Lynch, 2000), as failure in such precision can leave children unprotected. As a consequence, the role, priorities and focus of intervention and practice should be highlighted during the relevant training.

In England, this has been incorporated into 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and 'Every Child Matters' so where there are concerns that a child may be or is suffering significant harm, professionals will follow the guidelines provided. There is an 'Assessment Framework' which is represented in the form of a triangle with the child's welfare at the

centre (DOH, 2000). There are three inter-related domains: the child's development needs, the parenting capacity, and family and environmental factors. Each has a number of critical measurements. For example the parenting capacity involves basic care, ensuring safety, emotional warmth, stimulation, stability, guidance and boundaries. The influence or interaction of the dimensions requires careful exploration during the assessment.

I shall now go on to discuss the overall procedural characteristics followed in the framework of child protection work in the UK, to compare them with the same procedures in Taiwan. I would like to draw attention to a figure by Glaser and Frosh (Figure 5-3) to contrast the nature and the extent of sexual assault procedures in the UK and in Taiwan.

gure 5-3 Schematic View of the Context of Child Sexual Abuse and Its Professional Management in the UK (quoted from Glaser and Frosh, 1993).



This figure itself is similar to the local procedures of the child protection work in Taiwan, where I collected my data, requiring the front-line practitioners to undertake at least four main parts of an initial investigation following a referral: a social work investigation, a medical examination, a police investigation, and then the decision whether or not to prosecute. The procedures for child protection practitioners in the UK are very detailed. However, in reality, each of the team of professionals gets only a very limited time to deal with incest cases. It is therefore at this point that pressure is felt most intensely (Jones et al, 2001). In Taiwan, similarly, the position is made very difficult by the timescales imposed. As one interviewee said:

> The procedure looks pressured to complete things in a limited time; otherwise we might not finish doing something. Sometimes, I doubted whether the clients have come across to talk about the matter. However, the path of our procedure seems too rushed. Worrying about if they were prepared to go through the process of investigations yet. (No. 10: 4)

The immediate period after referral can be a difficult time for all concerned. It seems from the responses in the interviews that initially investigations were treated seriously and urgently and other work was reorganized as necessary to accommodate them within the requisite timescales. However, some of those interviewees mentioned anxieties about the timescale issue. Obviously, the beginning of the referral process is a complicated way of looking at what most social workers consider to be their high priority in routine work, such as picking up the phone in the hot-line duty room, conversing with a respondent, and putting relevant information on a referral form; the work of taking a referral (Wattam, 1992). Child sexual abuse in particular makes the collection of clear evidence a difficult and sensitive process. In my sample, most social workers were able to understand and follow the same kind of official procedures as their supervisors, to perform their statutory roles

and duties, but they were also concerned about different aspects of these procedures from different angles. It seems that a discussion with their supervisor was necessary once the referral sheet was at hand (supervision will be discussed in a later section).

For incest or sexual abuse cases, forensic evidence is really important in relation to the criminal proceedings and a medical examination is needed to provide corroborative evidence. As a social worker said:

> Our interventions are simple and there are not many choices. One is isolation for safety, which the worker has to ensure. Then the process of the legal system, we need to collect and preserve the forensic evidence ... (No.12: 8)

This respondent emphasised that in the incident of child sexual abuse, the interview with the child typically is the most valuable component of the medical evaluation. At this point, the examination is mainly for the forensic evidence collection (Giardino, 2006). My respondents also summarised that the focus of concern at the investigation stage is to establish as clearly as possible the status of the case. The time scale is a very crucial factor, since forensic evidence is easily lost. That is the main reason why it is necessary for the practitioners to treat such evidence as the first priority and to facilitate collection of this as soon as possible after the event. Conroy, Fielding and Tunstil (1990) address the factors which appear to affect the amount of time spent on an investigation. These include the type of referral, the number of children involved, the degree of harm to the victims and the attitudes of the clients' families, the collection of evidence and whether or not a prosecution ensues. There must be a speedy response to any incest/child sexual abuse case referral but professional judgements may be based on incomplete information. This cannot be avoided, due to the need to act without delay. As has been noted, the manner and speed of this action really depends upon the severity and nature of the allegation and

the time, place and person to whom the allegation was made (Lawrence, 2004). In practice, the most challenging issue for front-line practitioners is how to achieve a good balance between the relative risks and merits of immediate protection of that child.

In broad terms, the first task of child protection work, then, is to make an initial assessment in terms of the client's resources, which may include the family support system, the attitude of the non-abuser parent, the client's feelings. Herman (1981: 145) quotes the director of the Child Abuse Treatment Programme in San Jose, California, Henry Giarretto, as saying, 'we feel the essential nucleus is the mother and daughter'. His aim is to get the mother to communicate with the daughter as soon as possible to reassure the daughter that she is not to blame; the reparation process, therefore, has begun. After statutory powers have intervened in an incestuous family, the daughter is given the kind of protection and support that she [the daughter] was unable to gain in the past; on the other hand, the mother also needs support to express her own feelings and to think things through again. Jones et al. (1987) emphasize that it is crucial to convince parents to accept that something has taken place and that they have a problem with their child which they have to be prepared to work at unravelling. A social worker explained in relation to one particular case:

> (Sigh), I would suggest thinking about the timing to call the police for making an investigation. I just wondered if I hadn't informed the kid's mom first, what would have happened...I think I would be still struggling whether I should call the police first or not. I think I am more concerned that for the kid's sake, I should have built up a positive relationship with my client's parent. I think an open and honest approach with parents is essential. (No. 36: 8)

Protection work and then therapy are equally important (Furniss, 1991). The second part of the procedure for child protection work is the follow-up treatment procedure which

comes from combined work by the professionals from the areas of clinical social work, psychotherapy and child psychiatry. The experience of incest is often a significant trauma that continues to have an impact on clients throughout their life span. Therefore, appropriate treatment or involvement in therapy in the helping process may be essential. This was recognized by the respondents:

> It will be necessary for the child to undergo treatment afterwards. The mother will be forced to undertake parental education. (No. 12: 8)

Basically, there are at least two parts to the child protection procedure after referral: investigation and their treatment of trauma. It seems that most professionals recognise the procedures of child protection practice. However, Lawrence (2004) questioned front-line practitioners' use of some mandated interventions: medical examination, police investigation, and legal investigation, involving a positivist framework, which has been reported to cause additional distress – or secondary victimization of the clients. Some social workers discussed police attitudes toward child sexual abuse cases and this is discussed further in the section on the issues in the child protection procedure.

Major concerns by the professionals in relation to child protection procedures

In this section, I shall raise two issues which the social workers identified as major concerns during the interviews. One is the limited time frame and the other is the role of supervisors and the hierarchical dynamic relationship between them and social workers. A recent report by the NSPCC (2003) in the UK, which suggests 20 recommendations to improve the current child protection system, claims that the key factors of inefficiency are practitioner shortages and limited resources. According to the Child Welfare Law in Taiwan,

an emergency case should be brought to court within 72 hours, including a completed investigation report and an initial assessment by the social worker to state the rationale for an emergency placement. Then the local authority can place the child for three months, after which they can apply once for another three months' extension with full evidence in writing if it is considered to be in the child's best interests. That is the reason why some practitioners highlighted the time constraint. One of the social workers said: 'I am not sure but I always think that the emergency placement is seemingly too rushed a decision for their parents' (No. 23: 3).

What often happens in practice is that social workers are expected to go and investigate the alleged case quickly. Next, they are requested to make a quick and appropriate decision by which the child can be protected. Children are often removed from danger into foster care after investigation. Practitioners spend much of their time investigating and evaluating the risk to children within a very limited time. They are not available to focus on work to support the non-abusive parent or deal with the parent as a perpetrator. The time limit for carrying out the initial investigation was seen as particularly worrying since the responsibility for taking emergency protective action rested with local authorities, as the following quotation indicates:

> In terms of the legal system, we need to follow a very short time frame to finish the procedure... According to the legal system, we have only six months for a placement. During this period, you have to manage to get the witness for the wardship. Consequently, time always makes things difficult. The child is not old enough to talk though. (No. 19: 11-12)

'Six months and three days' is a very famous phrase in child protection practice in Taiwan (No. 14; No. 37). This time frame is based on the laws. Front-line practitioners feel very

stressed when working within it. Some of the respondents did not mention the six months and 72 hours time limit but they still placed emphasis on the time frame. For example:

> Although it seems that there is no regulation in black and white to require us to investigate immediately, urm...incest is a matter of urgency, and therefore we will reach the case straight away, either the same day we set off when the case is referred or no later than the next day. (No. 2: 13)

Research suggests that a tension exists throughout the child protection process for families and practitioners alike (Lawrence, 2004). The stress sometimes is cumulative and so will increase with time, but it is very important to allocate adequate time for the evaluation (Faller, 1988). When the pressure is too high and the time is too limited, people might develop mechanisms to reduce their inner anxieties and conflicts. In practice, some social workers explicitly deny or ignore official responses to a manifest problem due to their heavy caseloads. Many allegations of incest or child sexual abuse therefore may be automatically excluded from the protective system, onerous caseloads in particular. In addition, decisions in social service organizations are not made in isolation - a network of influence affects all important decisions. This network includes many of the multi-disciplinary professionals, legislative body, politicians, and the bureaucracy of the organization itself, the police, the law, and the medical team and so on. Researchers have raised the criticism that bureaucracy and hierarchies always become a barrier or disadvantage in the child professional network (Furniss, 1991; Howe, 1992).

My interviews were also concerned with what social workers do when faced with an issue concerning the child protection procedure. There are pitfalls in the collection and analysis of forensic evidence concerning child sexual abuse, as the origins of sexual abuse are very complex. It will depend on the maturity of the practitioner's personality, relevant

experience in dealing with similar cases, and acquisition of knowledge in relation to child sexual abuse.

As mentioned earlier, legal investigations and prosecution are important processes as incest/child sexual abuse is a crime. Such cases are dealt with by public prosecution in Taiwan. However, the legal process is quite uncertain. The prosecution of a case of incest usually takes from four months to over a year (Herman, 1981) and in Taiwan it might take longer than two or three years, depending on the nature of the evidence. One social worker explained about one case:

> I think the court proceedings took too long. And when the policewomen were conducting the investigation, their languages and the way they asked questions was in a tone of doubt. It also included the prosecutor's investigation, treating the client as a liar. I really felt very bad about the legal system. Sometimes, the case would be kept waiting a long time for the first hearing, leaving several months or more to complete. (No. 15: 5)

Another social worker said:

> As regards the legal aspect, the duration of the court proceedings seemed to be very long-winded, it made them [client] fear for their life. Like this case, although it happened in June of this year, it hasn't been prosecuted yet [November]. The client is still unstable because the case is making slow progress even though we have referred her to see a counsellor. I wish the legal process could be faster. (No. 7: 3)

Herman (1981) argues that such delay is very hard for young victims who often do not have the emotional strength to endure the ordeal of a criminal investigation and trial. As one of the senior social workers emphasized: 'I've realised that clients suffer a lot because the legal procedure takes too long' (No. 28: 3).

Victims and their families are likely to be more frustrated and angry if the response to a report is ineffective or even more harmful. That is to say, the judicial system and the court proceedings can cause more stress to victims of incest. In relation to prolonged legal proceedings, many factors might influence the progress and the result is problematic for young victims when the final verdict is '*Not guilty*'.

There has been considerable debate about child witnesses, video technology, and the laws of evidence in the last two or three years which have attempted to reduce duplicated police investigation as well as court proceedings in Taiwan (see p. 141, comment made by No. 37 and No. 28). This is because the process might cause the victims a second injury when they give evidence and are cross-examined in open court in the presence of their abuser. Under present law in Taiwan, children under 16 years of age are able to give evidence and answer questions from a room separate from the courtroom if necessary. The legal system has also tried to use video technology to reduce the trauma of sexual assault victims appearing in court. Provision for the use of live video-links was made in the Operational Fundamentals for Relieving the Victims of Sexual Assault Cases in 2002 (2nd amendment, Taiwan Taipei District Prosecutor Public Office, 2005). An interviewee of KSCG remarked on this new policy:

> KSCG is the first government sector with a pilot scheme of 'Diminishing the Operation of the Court Proceedings'. In cases involving a person who is younger than 16 years, we must send them to court without fail. The protocol prescribes that the social workers should report to the prosecutors immediately when we receive the referral of incest from any source. Then we interview the client and take a statement from her and transmit all the papers to the court after finishing the recording. Especially if we assess initially that the victim has sound judgment and that the kid's statement is credible, we will proceed to action in the light of the statutory sexual abuse victim's procedure. (No. 28: 9)

Social workers are aware that the process might be difficult and stressful. My interviewees did not mention what improvement in the interview process has been made in the light of this scheme, although there is a reduction in the number of times victims are interviewed. One social worker commented:

> ...even if we make use of this system – 'Diminishing the Operation of Court Proceedings', I think there are weaknesses as well. Once the case is referred, the system requires us to accomplish the whole procedure within 24 hours. Because of public prosecution, we have no choice. Therefore, in that case, we have to transfer it to court after finishing the statement. Nevertheless, I think it is a bit of a rush to get the things done within the limited time frame and this could cause the family a lot of trouble. (No. 39: 5)

From this comment, it cannot be shown that the reduction of the court proceedings results in better intervention, and better outcomes for children and their families. There are important issues to be considered about the dilemma for practitioners obtaining valid evidence. One social worker highlighted:

> Once an incest case is referred to us, we have to run the procedures – 'Diminishing the Operation of Court Proceedings'. In that situation, social workers should cope with the pressure of the proceedings. I think the most difficult part is to be faced with insufficient evidence or where the evidence is very vague. Social workers might face a real dilemma in making the decision whether we should notify the prosecutor or not. (No. 40: 3)

Potential advantages were recognized, such as a reduction of stress for the child, and a reduction in time. However, three of my interviewees felt that this new legislation was problematic because social workers have to make the primary decision. The social workers are also given full responsibility for this under this procedure.

The official requirement for corroborated evidence in the case of incest or child sexual abuse or sexual assault is problematic. This requirement, which I might argue reflects an exaggerated male defence ideology over the accused, at the same time puts a difficult burden of proof upon the girl victim and makes the laws ineffective, since many incest and sexual abuse cases 'drop out' of the system (Giller et al., 1992). The validation of an allegation relies on medical and forensic evidence (Wattam, 1992). The pressure to obtain that kind of evidence in order to make a case is strong and visible in public. For example, a social worker supervisor emphasized that:

> Another problem is worry about the testimony being twisted... To the best of my knowledge, we make many efforts to preserve the child's evidence for this kind of case. (No. 12: 8)

Although the legal process is necessary, young female victims may experience feelings of secondary victimization. The problem remains that practitioners are bound by evidential constraints. The strength of a case rests on its evidence. According to my work experience, absent or insufficient forensic evidence in cases of child sexual assault is not unusual, and this affects the result of any alleged case. In other words, the clients' suffering from the legal process could finally be in vain.

The focus on the pursuit of medical and forensic evidence also causes a vicious cycle. Social workers might accidentally act as 'a filter' to the decision to prosecute (or not) incest cases where the medical evidence needed for the legal procedure is missing or weak. The workers I interviewed felt that the legal system remains an inherently difficult one for dealing with cases of offences against children. The point made by No. 7 (see p. 151) illustrates how child sexual abuse cases are treated by the legal process and what the outcomes of those cases can be in relation to the types of evidence involved in these cases.

Social workers may relinquish the duty to prosecute abuses due to insufficient evidence or the low rate of success.

The other principal component of social workers' initial investigations of incest is an interview with the children concerned. This aspect was mentioned by some of my interviewees, but as an additional point. Their focus was more on the crucial position of the clients' mothers in incest cases. Hallett (1995) argues for the importance of a partnership with the non-abuser parent whenever possible. Some of the practitioners commented that the mother's role is very crucial during the intervention process. They explained their experiences in considering the mother's position:

> I am in doubt whether I should stabilize the child or whether I should be concerned about the need of the mother simultaneously. I don't know if I have to work with both of them or if there is a possibility of having another worker involved in working with them. This was a dilemma as I dealt with the child as well as the mother. (No. 23: 4)

> I thought I would like to speak to her mom and see how this mom talked about this matter and if she had any insight on it. (No. 14: 2)

> I am not quite sure what procedure to follow, because it depends on the interview and attitudes of the non-abusing parent... This will determine whether to place the child in care or not and whether the child should be treated with psychotherapy... (No. 19: 3-4)

Three social workers (No. 23, 14, 19) mentioned that when they begin investigating an incest family, the mother must be taken into consideration when making an intervention plan. There are different theories regarding the role of the non-abusing mother in the incestuous family: the mother as a colluder; the mother as the helpless and powerless dependent; and the mother as a victim (Frame, 1995). My work, however, did not focus on

this specific issue. I therefore did not trace the reason why some practitioners placed so much weight on the role of the mother. It is perhaps not surprising that the role of mothers in father-daughter incest has been the subject of some discussions (Hooper, 1987). For example, many daughters believe that their mothers knew, or should have known, about the incest occurring. Some daughters can also become drawn into a competitive relationship with their mothers which centres on an alliance with the abusive father (Herman, 1981). Mothers have been interpreted as contributing to, or perhaps causing, the abuse, as they either occasion the abuse by ignoring their husband or maintain it by failing to protect the child (Ward, 1984). The mother's level of awareness of the existence of the abuse has a great impact on this matter. She is a key figure in understanding incest, and her role and functioning has considerable influence on the way a case is handled (Faller, 1988). Having become aware of such abuse, her position is particularly difficult. As the child's caregiver, she is often forced into making a choice between her relationship with the abuser [her husband] and the child (Glaser and Frosh, 1993). One of the social work supervisors commented on the fast and complex procedure associated with the issue of the reaction of the non-abusive parent in one particular case. She said:

> Basically, we have a clear policy to notify the police when a case is referred to us... However, I just knew what would happen if we decided to report to the police. The incestuous family has to encounter a lot of bother following the disclosure as well as the secondary injury coming from the legal procedure. Um, I was really struggling at that time as I could see how much the mother was suffering. However, I still gave the order that the social worker had to send the kid to the hospital and in the meantime notified the police. Unsurprisingly, the next day the mother was very down and suffering greatly as the policeman also investigated the perpetrator and completed the interrogation the same day. She rang me ... and I think the most difficult decision was whether to call the police that day or hold on for a little while; that situation has always challenged me. (No. 32: 1-2)

Understanding the mother's support system is an important area of assessment. This may help the front-line worker/investigator to assess the dynamics of the child sexual abuse matter and plan intervention.

The assumption made in this study is that the mother is the non-abusive parent although, of course, that is not always so. Additionally, it also appears that the mother in the incestuous family is often unusually oppressed. Herman (1981) concluded that more than the average wife and mother, she is often extremely dependent upon and subservient to her husband. Some mothers might also suffer from physical and emotional abuse by their partners/spouses (Walker, 1984; Courtois, 1996). One of the respondents had that experience. She commented:

> I believe that the mother suffers very much in that situation. It is completely different from other kinds of child abuse. (No. 41: 3)

This respondent said incest is very different from other forms of abuse because it also involves intimacy. That might be the reason why almost every mother feels very sore and ambivalent. It is partly for this reason that Courtois (1996) argues that the majority of mothers do not actually collude in incest.

Ward (1984: 164) states that the mothers have many reasons for not being able to 'see' and 'hear', because to a certain extent, the mother is being raped, too. It is quite possible that many professionals believe that the mother is to blame, as if the mother must know, at least in some respects, what is happening and therefore fails to protect the daughter (Finkelhor, 1989). However, mothers may not even know about the abuse as their daughters may go to great lengths to keep them from knowing (Russell, 1986). As mentioned earlier, the majority of mothers do not collude in incest, nor are they offenders

or even participants in its occurrence. Feminists blame the myths about women within society for interpreting the mother as contributing to, or perhaps causing, incest (McIntosh, 1988; Glaser and Frosh, 1993). The question is that should practitioners view incest cases at the individual level or view the family as a whole as the unit of investigation. A key process here is to get the mother to accept her daughter's actual situation, needs and feelings, as well as to be able to speak about her own anger, fear and guilt as a basis for work, although some parents find this impossible. Very often social workers in the above situations become stuck at this level, feeling unable to act or to work with the mother. This may influence the child's prognosis (Faller, 1988). However, some practitioners view the mothers in incest cases as a different issue. One of the therapists criticized this approach:

> Until now, the approach we have been used to in Taiwan is still to view the client as a unit rather than viewing the family as a unit in dealing with the case of incest. (No. 41: 8)

One study of incest families (Gordon, 1989) placed particular emphasis on the involvement of the mother. From the feminist viewpoint, the mothers also need a lot of care, and the development of the mother-daughter relationship in particular is a major issue when the worker intervenes in the family. In the incest family, the mother-daughter relationship is often strained following the sexual relationship between father and daughter. This affects the family as a whole. The worker has to concentrate not just on the client but also develop a dynamic understanding of the intra-familial relationship among family members in order to help the client effectively. The workers who intervene in the family may require a high level of support and resources. Loughlin (1992) also suggests support through supervision is vital for everyone working in this context. The supervision should include transference issues, and emotional support and care. I will therefore now turn to look at supervision as a major issue in social work practice.

Professionals' views of supervision

I define 'supervision' as a form of ongoing training through the process of regular, structural and interactive contact between supervisor and supervisee. Its purpose is to support, educate, monitor and protect the client and practitioner by ensuring the maintenance and development of professional behaviour. Senior professionals teach, assist and monitor their supervisees through individual tutorials, group discussions or case conferences, aiming to enhance the supervisees' professional skills, knowledge and core values and capacity in their position, so as to provide a good quality of service. The local authorities of KSCG, TPCG and HCCG mainly deal with domestic violence and sexual assault cases. Incest is not their specialism and the number of these incidents dealt with at the centres overall is relatively small. Child sexual abuse or incest is not something that social workers can work with on their own; they need colleagues to co-work with, supervision to retain objectivity and peers to share their feelings almost simultaneously (Kenward, 1987). Corby (1998) argues that social work supervisors learn on the job, and that peer support might meet this need. In my study, social work supervisors emerged as the principal characters in the organizational bureaucracy. One social worker spoke about how important it was for her to have a discussion with her supervisor before beginning an investigation:

> First, I yell for a moment and then get more information on the case. I'll discuss it with my supervisor before doing anything, in general. (No. 19: 3)

Regular supervision or a meeting (strategy discussion) to plan the assessment and investigation of the situation is helpful and necessary for front-line social workers in the area of abuse and protection. In particular, professional discussions among their group or other disciplines help the social workers to maintain an appropriate focus and prioritize the tasks in intervention. However, it is almost impossible to map a plan of supervision as well

as reactive assistance at times of crisis. For example, one of the interviewees compared her four different supervisors:

> Before if we received an incest case, my ex-supervisor viewed this as a serious issue, so that I would be obligated to remove the child from home...Since March 2002, yeap, I talked to my supervisor when one of my kids suddenly left foster care. I got feedback from my current supervisor regarding teenage clients, especially those who do not want to be placed, we still have sort of flexibility in this respect...at least I need to be sure if my new supervisor agreed with my intervention. (No. 15: 2)

The current supervisor of respondent No. 15 was only a temporary supervisor and acted as an assistant director in their agency. This social worker found that different people had different styles of supervision. As Brown and Bourne (1996) said, every supervisor will be a blend of much that has gone before in their personal and professional lives. Likewise, it seems to me that practice in Taiwan depends to a large extent on the supervisor's approaches. In other words, the supervisor plays a key role in determining events and the child's welfare.

The following are examples of the anticipated procedures identified from two social work supervisors when each was asked about the procedure when an incest case was referred to her group. The two social work supervisors in two different local authorities talked about a similar protocol for their social workers, concerning child protection procedures.

> I thought, my colleagues should have completed several things: firstly, escort the client to be taken for the statement and the medical examination. Then they are supposed to hold an interview meeting with the client in order to get the client's trust. The later part of the procedures is that social workers have to escort the client to the court for the hearing. If there is still any other issue or problem raised as a consequence of incest, I would expect them to refer the

> client to see a psychotherapist if it is appropriate but this should wait until the client's situation is more stable. (No. 8: 6)

> There's no obvious difference between a sexual abuse case and an incest case. They go through the same procedure with a medical examination, search for evidence and taking the statement. The only difference is that we need to assess the safety of incest victims if they want to go home. We'll make an urgent placement or apply for an urgent care order from court ... It depends on the case's resources. If the education unit refers it to us, we'll immediately visit the school and interview the client and teacher. We'll accompany the client into the judicial process with a policewoman, if it is suspicious. Then we will follow the protocol of the sexual assault procedure. The social worker in charge will offer counselling sessions to the victim. Yes. I'm not saying this case can then be filed, because we still escort the client to court. (No. 28: 4-5)

From these two long quotations, it can be seen that these two social work supervisors focused on three things: emergency placement, medical examination and taking a statement. On the whole, interviewees had the same feeling, as respondent No. 40 indicated, concerning the major role that they play in dealing with incest cases. He commented that:

> I view it as having an accompanying role and giving further help to them. I know it is very difficult to achieve (Laughs). (No. 40: 9)

Then, the second part is to refer the child to see a counsellor/therapist and to follow up the legal proceedings i.e. escort her to the court hearing. There is an issue here. If we go back to p. 131 and look at the flow chart (Figure 5-1), front-line practitioners in Taiwan view those few procedures as a type of crisis intervention for sexual assault cases, as they have a limited time frame in the light of the Laws. During the interviews, I had the feeling that many interviewees acted just like these two supervisors [No. 8 and 28] mentioned. They made efforts to tell me about the official protocol of the general sexual assault procedure.

However, respondent No. 12 who acted as a deputy supervisor in one of the centres, answered differently. She revealed the social workers' struggles with the priority steps which they should take in this time-constrained process:

> Oh, it's painful. Uh-huh! They will be asked to see the children as soon as they can. More than just solve the obvious problem that has been disclosed, at the same time, they have to consider how to deal with follow-up questions so they will make double checks. In a dilemma, they will be required to check the background information they have before taking action, and then make a decision what to do first, where to make a report... For example, some information may be vague... I'll have to pick my moment before deciding whether we should make more effort to approach the informant or not... After the decision, it is possible to remove the client from home immediately, since if everything goes well, the situation is obvious and then the alleged client will be taken away instantly. Okay, we have to decide whether to make a statement first or make it after sending the child to foster care... you still have to consider the outcome. (Laugh wryly) Therefore, the centre has scheduled some training sessions for this recently. But I think um, we need to be highly concerned about how to investigate and interview the victim. (No. 12: 7-8)

From what the respondent tried to highlight, it can be seen that her experience was quite practical. As she pointed out, the social worker might be reluctant to interview the child who has been abused which is in line with Cooper and Ball's (1987) comment that child abuse work is something that social workers would prefer not to do. Some practitioners may choose not to meet the child and to gain the data from a secondary source, e.g. a neighbour, teachers or even the initial informant, because some practitioners might find it very difficult to go to investigate if the perpetrator is at home. Some social workers in Taiwan felt uncomfortable to interfere in the internal affairs of the family, as they felt that it is a unit whose boundary should not be crossed. When that is the case, such social workers may have conflicts between their statutory role and their personal values. As highlighted by Mullender (1997), lack of a clear mandate in the form of policy and practice guidelines may

result in workers not knowing how to respond. However, if the protocols are too strict, the workers may also feel uncomfortable in their application.

Social workers always have to deal with the hierarchies of all agencies involved, especially in the government sector. Jones et al. demonstrate the importance of regular supervision for front-line social workers, because the task of dealing with incest/child sexual abuse is so complicated and varied (Jones et al., 1987). In practice, some respondents still felt that they did not get enough assistance or support:

> I hoped I would have a wonderful supervisor to support me as I am very new, just graduated from university and this is my first job. Unfortunately, I don't feel I have met a 'good supervisor' anyway, and when there are a lot of difficulties that have to be overcome, I usually want to seek for help and hope there's somebody who I can turn to, therefore I was thinking of reading my senior colleagues' case records... (No. 9: 8)

> It is not a lot, apart from their [supervisors'] experience... (No.40: 13)

The social work supervisor in Taiwan is considered the master of social workers or the closest resource for the front-line practitioners. Such a person might provide different kinds of support and modelling. One social worker repeatedly mentioned that she would seek out and ask her supervisor if she had any difficulty in making an assessment. She said:

> My supervisor would tell me sometimes, we don't have many alternatives in that case. But she can convince me of her judgment, as long as there is somebody who has helped me to make the decision as well as share the responsibility for the consequence. (No. 16: 8)

This respondent seemed to have given up the right of looking at more different options in

managing decision-making. Usually, she spoke to her supervisor about her assessment. She then followed her supervisor's judgement. Making an immediate decision is very tough and complicated in cases involving child protection/sexual abuse/incest. However, this respondent's attitude seems slightly different. My sense was that she was not very concerned about either the accuracy of the judgement on a case or the reason resulting in a different conclusion between her and her supervisor. She seemed focused on the idea that her supervisor's power to make the final decision would relieve her of the burden of enforcing her statutory role and duty. This may be unlike the situation in England where decisions are not made by the social worker alone. It seems that respondent No. 16 worried about making a wrong decision. Therefore she preferred to wait for an order from her supervisor rather than to take responsibility for making an uncertain assessment. However, this worker did not raise the issue of the importance of a shared decision for front-line social workers. One thing I did not clarify on that issue during the interview was whether she avoided making mistakes or taking responsibility. The example below is typical of a social worker reducing anxiety by getting some support while talking with her supervisor.

> I need to talk to my supervisor sorting things out or to keep working with the family in order to understand how they think and feel about this incest or the possible intervention or approach. It is necessary to have a brainstorming process, talk and go over it with the supervisor. (No. 19: 21)

This comment ends on a key message to underline the importance of the role of supervisors and their support. It also emphasizes that, if professionals attempt to work in this field without a structure and a system of support they might quickly become overwhelmed and cease to function effectively.

Among my interviewees, respondents from different centres had different experiences regarding supervision. Many respondents in TPCG thought that their supervisors had provided a range of forms of knowledge, experience and emotional support, for example:

> When I deal with incest cases, my supervisor often provides me with a dynamic view to look at the family's problem and the relationships within. This perspective helps me to clear my mind and stand firm. It's quite important to me. Of course, the support also includes assisting or, instead of me, interviewing the perpetrator or the non-abuse parent. In some circumstances, my supervisor would assess it is better to employ a lawyer instead of a social worker, she might address our request to the organization hierarchy. Therefore, I won't be alone and work individually. Anyway, her ideas and opinions in relation to casework are very helpful really. (No. 10: 13-14)

> Comparatively, my supervisor gave me a lot of advice. There are the considerations of all relevant facts when making an investigation and the effectiveness of prosecution for a client, for example. Emotional support is most important. Yeap, she also reminds me of aspects of the administrative work which can be very confusing and unclear. (No. 33: 13)

> Sometimes, I think maybe even my supervisor doesn't know what will happen in the end. In that situation I feel more worried and uncertain about the intervention plan. However, my supervisor can stabilize my anxiety and also give me strength to face the issues, and a good knowledge base. (No. 36: 17)
> She is supportive and tells me straight what to do, especially if I am not able to make a right decision. I can relax more after supervising. She will lead me to look at the case from a different perspective so as to reduce my worries which is very useful. (No. 23: 13)

Dominelli (2004) revealed that social workers involved in child protection have only one outcome that is acceptable, which is 'to get it right'. Workers are therefore highly stressed; very little of their work is straightforward or pleasant. The 'burn out' rate in people working with child sexual abuse is consequently high (Dale et al., 1986). The same is also the case in Taiwan. It is clear that these respondents needed proper support and constant

supervision and their experiences of having guidance and support were positive. The above data were from the centre at TPCG. Four of the social workers were supervised by two different supervisors in TPCG, but one of the supervisors refused to be interviewed. I cannot say anything with respect to the quality of supervision provided by the different supervisors. However, this brings me to the question of how statutory agencies respond to the expressed need for the provision of support for their workers. One of the social workers in HCCG felt that she had not been offered enough time to take her work up:

> (Smiling bitterly) I have been in this organization for two years now, I feel that there has been no one to support me, I always work individually and fight my own corner really. Even when I have lost my direction there was no one who would come to give assistance or just tell me what I should do. (No. 9: 13)

The way this respondent had dealt with stress was self-help. Many front-line workers in social services agencies also rely on self-help (Peace and McMaster, 1993). The dialogue below is an example to show how the practitioner works alone in the same organization as respondent No. 9.

Q: What kind of assistance can the supervisors offer you when dealing with incest?
A: I think I really need to have a person who can give me strength and support while I am dealing with a case.
Q: Do you think your supervisor could give you this assistance in a way?
A: I think she cannot give me this help so that I feel very hard done by.
Q: Do you have any regular individual supervision, team meeting or group supervision?
A: No, we haven't. As I mentioned above, I always discuss things with my colleagues. The peer group is one of my main supports in this organization.
Q: On what occasion would your supervisor offer you an opportunity to talk?
A: I have been working in this centre for two years, since the centre was set up. Our past supervisor led us for almost four months and never offered a regular

> time to us for discussing the work. And then the next supervisor followed the same style to deal with us. (No. 7: 15)

It is clear that regular and steady guidance is very necessary for this respondent as well as for other CPWs. But the absence of proper supervision seems to suggest a lack of care and support for the front-line workers. In the UK, Cooper and Ball (1987) raised a concern about the best form of staff development. They emphasized that practitioners, particularly when they are new and inexperienced, are less likely to develop if they are exposed too quickly and haphazardly to too much work. Besides, an anonymous social services inspector stressed that it is not only the inexperienced and the young that need support, but it should be available as a right to everyone (Peace and McMaster, 1993). This comment is matched in my data as the respondent above was not new or experienced but at the middle level in terms of her professional experience. Organizations should be aware of this as a major concern.

On the other hand, there are aspects of support that an organization might be able to provide for the practitioners if they have difficulty in employing a supervisor, or even if a supervisor is unlikely to offer 'good supervision', such as a consultant, external supervisor or a form of committee, for example:

> I am looking forward to next year. I was told that we have budgeted to employ a contract supervisor from outside. (No. 9: 10).

> There is a committee to guide our child protection team or the domestic violence prevention committee. In KSCG, the committee members include lawyers, doctors, judges, and president of a civil court and so on, all of them [committee members] are supportive. (No.40: 13)

Respondent No. 40 emphasised the child protection committee as a great resource. The discussion among different disciplines is also helpful to minimise the danger and the risks involved for all concerned and to make a more objective and comprehensive plan for child in need. In fact, supervisors are faced with the threefold responsibility of protecting the welfare of the client, mentoring supervisees in their professional development, and protecting the interests of the profession and the public at large (Todd and Storm, 1997). Good supervision may relieve the high anxiety levels that working with the victims and perpetrators generates, enable social workers to deal properly with the legal procedure, get things in proportion and create a more helpful approach in relation to the intervention plan. It may also clarify or challenge practitioners' own beliefs and values concerning the matter of incest. Whilst good supervision is thus an important aspect of social workers' ability to function effectively in their professional role, it is also important that this supervision enables them to feel confident in their judgements and to achieve a degree of professional independence.

The interviewees in my study raised some of the difficulties that occurred in the supervision relationship. During the interviews, I was aware of structural inequalities in the relationship between social workers and their supervisors due to the power differentials inherent in the supervisory relationship. An associated issue relates to the hierarchy of the organization but social workers may have little opportunity for tackling issues concerning the unequal position in the workplace. Some of the respondents talked about their feelings about their supervisor linked to this issue. They commented:

> I usually go and investigate the concern and then I draw a conclusion. I will report to my supervisor about my assessment. However, we have to see what my supervisor's determination is at last. They [the hierarchy] have a huge impact. (No. 33: 5)

> From my experience of dealing with incest cases, I figure the principle is to follow the supervisor's instruction as she is a crucial person who can make the final decision. I wondered what the criteria are. After a while, I still had no idea about the standard and also how to keep the balance. (No. 23: 9)

> Based upon my major concern, if I can deal with the situation, I will work individually. However, if it is involved with my organization hierarchy, I will follow my supervisor's instruction. Is that very weird? Am I? (No. 29: 9)

These respondents [No. 33, No. 23 and No. 29] tended to conform to authority or maybe they were just resigned to the idea of hierarchy. The data showed that most social workers in TPCG had to or tended to enquire of their supervisors about steps and even decision-making before and after investigations. Cranny-Francis et al. (2003: 49) quoted Foucault who argues that 'the individual is an effect of power, and at the same time, or precisely to the extent to which it is effect, it is the element of its articulation'. Applying this to my interview data provides an insight into the nature of the power relationship that exists and must be challenged in order to work towards social and personal change within the bureaucratic organization. This needs to be given and understood from within the Taiwanese cultural context where the notion of accepting the authority of one's supervisors and a general sense of the importance of social hierarchy means that individuals tend not to operate as equals and peers but as members of hierarchies. This, in turn, means that they do not necessarily assume responsibility for their sphere of work, and often do not feel empowered or able to take such responsibility. As highlighted by Gallop (1999), supervisors have greater power than those supervised. Supervisors' authority is derived from their positions in agencies. Impersonal bureaucratic rules evolve because they alleviate the tensions created by subordination and control (Gouldner, 1954). For example, when I asked interviewee No. 16 whether she would like to have more autonomy from her supervisor, so that she could respond quickly to the evaluation of the

needs of clients, she answered that what she wanted to have was a power to make a decision. In the meantime she did not want to have full responsibility (No.16: 9). This is obviously a contradictory position. Technically, social workers are told that they should share concerns with their supervisors, organization director or even experienced colleagues. However, my findings showed that the social workers were just following what the supervisor recommended, or expected their supervisor to arrive at a conclusion after making the assessment. Hence, dealing with the issues of autonomy and assertiveness in incest intervention are essential in this context. This is because these issues are not only a professional, but also importantly a cultural matter.

Authority structures need to be clear, especially regarding who can decide the policies, the primary task of each different professional team, and the core belief system of the organization. Subordinates within bureaucratic work organizations in Taiwan, for example, learn to 'please the other', to internalize their superiors' perspectives and anticipate demands. Many social services organizations are structured hierarchically, at least officially, and superiors, called 'bosses', or 'supervisors', have more power than their subordinates. Weber (2004, cited in Allinson, 1984: 14) defined the term 'power' to refer to the ability to persuade people to accept orders; 'legitimation' to refer to the acceptance of the exercise of power because it is consistent with values held by those people; and 'authority' to refer to the combination of the two, for example power is viewed as legitimate. To understand the effects of the hierarchical dynamics between supervisor and supervisee, both need to be self-reflexive about their own position within that structure and socially constructed power hierarchies of domination (Webber, 2004). This is very obviously the case in Taiwan. When I asked interviewees, 'Who can decide what kind of strategy/intervention plan should be implemented in your agency?', some respondents (for example, No. 4, 5, 16, 23, 26, 33, 14, 15, 17, 10, 11, 19, 36, 22) answered that the supervisor is the key person who

often makes the ultimate decision. At the same time they also mentioned that they found their supervisors to be experienced in this field, supportive and helpful. For example, one of the social workers said:

> The discussion between me and my supervisor is quite useful, as we are able to examine the client's family together. Through this kind of discussion, I found it was really helpful and I think that's quite important for me. Perhaps my supervisor is a very experienced practitioner. She therefore enabled me to look through the issues on this family. (No. 4: 15)

There was a therapist in TPCG who also expressed her observations on the same matter. She said:

> Um...social workers very much rely on their supervisor in TPCG. They often go and ask their supervisors' opinion while we are discussing something regarding the case's matter. In the meantime, they hardly have their own direction in general. (No. 24: 4)

However, respondents (No. 29, 7, 9, 40) from HCCG or KSCG commented that they found their supervisors were unhelpful. These respondents emphasized that colleagues were more important. Some respondents also mentioned other resources, for example, this respondent commented that:

> The specialized committee for child protection support is more useful than those supervisors, especially providing the social resources. (No. 40: 13)

Sometimes, the focus of hierarchical tensions does not seem to be the face-to-face relationship with the immediate supervisors. It might happen, rather, to be the more remote, indirect relationship between social workers and the hierarchy (Crozier, 1964). Furniss (1991) raises the criticism that bureaucracy and hierarchies always become a

barrier in the professional network. For example, when I asked interviewee No. 33 how she viewed the alleged child sexual abuse of a five-year-old girl, which was at that time widely discussed in the news media, the social worker who was based at TPCG, told me:

> I felt my office was forced to make a compromise due to the politician involved, and that my head-office had compromised earlier...I was thinking of how to cope, under the influence of our head-quarters, bureau of social service or other hierarchies like politicians. Honestly, the influence on the intervention of case work is quite obvious. (No. 33: 4-5)

Power is therefore an important dimension and in a number of ways, both within and outside of the organization. It should not be ignored in practice, as a similar dynamic in the practitioner – child relationship is quite possible and may imitate the same pattern as the supervisor-supervised relationship. Hall and Lloyd (2002) emphasize that supervisees could be influenced by their supervisors. This situation was evident in some of the interviewees' experiences. The social workers believed that the supervision space created during training - though not always available later - helped them to identify what they were feeling while dealing with the powerful emotions arising from their clients' experiences. For the social worker, it is reassuring not to feel left alone to cope with the burden of emotional experience which invariably leads to periods of disequilibrium. Supervision, then, is a key element in social workers' professional practice but it was differentially available and/or effective in the cases of my interviewees.

Dominant issues in therapeutic intervention

In the development of counselling and therapeutic roles, there are a number of issues about how these roles are to be performed. This presents challenges to the counsellor or therapist. I will therefore examine therapist respondents' views with respect to what

therapy approach they prefer to use and what approach is considered the best for clients.

Therapy for sexually abused children and their family is very important. The majority of the respondents wanted to focus on the family which includes victims, siblings, the non-abusing parent and the perpetrator. In the following section, I shall suggest that therapists can usefully employ feminist analyses as a complementary framework to guide their thinking and practice and provide an overview of the treatment issues. Here I consider therapy to be a context in which people not only come for help with a specific problem, but also seek validation as people. Technically, counsellors and psychotherapists acquire an extensive theoretical and practical knowledge as a basis for their practice, but they also bring their own human qualities and their life experiences to their practice (Corey, Corey and Callanan, 1993). Since my respondents are all gendered persons, their clients' and their own gendered experiences, beliefs, and identities will either be validated or challenged in the process (Burck and Daniel, 1995), and therefore what feminist therapy has brought to feminist thinking is an interactive understanding, especially sensitivity to dilemmas of change for women and men in society. This section examines respondents' views on how approaches to therapy, time factors, their personalities and knowledge can affect responses in practice. Three aspects were raised by the respondents, which are all linked. They were: the approach to therapy, the length of the therapy, and the issue of transference and counter-transference. I shall discuss each of these in turn.

- ***Approach to therapy***

The most vehement arguments concerning the approach to therapy expressed by the respondents focused on two aspects: the use of play therapy[1] and sand therapy[2] but they

[1] According to one play therapist's definition, play therapy is a psychotherapeutic method, based on psychodynamic and developmental principles, intended to help relieve the emotional distress of young children through a variety of imaginative and expressive play material (Webb, 1991: 27). Play is the central theme for a

also applied some other approaches or therapeutic interventions. For example:

> I have used cognitive skills as part of the treatment at certain stages. Moreover, I would use four other therapeutic tools like psychodrama therapy, drama therapy, play therapy and sand therapy. The beliefs behind whatever the approaches may be, I think, are the same, to bring out the client's inner power. (No. 41: 15)

> ...in Hsin Chu County Centre the majority of the cases are teenagers or adult survivors. Considering the verbal ability of the client, I usually prefer to use either conversation or art therapy as an interview tool rather than play therapy. However, I evaluate each case separately and choose the most appropriate media or approach for each of them. (No. 21: 7)

> Considering my five cases are children and also one mother, it is quite possible to use play therapy, and the puppets and soft toys are involved. Apart from play therapy, I also like to use the concepts of narrative therapy, so that the victims are given opportunities to act what they want spontaneously. Some others are centred on the conception of client-orientation in terms of company, support and object-relations. (No. 27: 4)

In general respondents agreed that it was not a question of which was best – a cognitive approach, a feminist approach, play therapy and sand therapy, an object-relations approach, gestalt therapy or the psychoanalytic school - but that all are appropriate to different stages and for certain clients. Several stressed that it was important to use all these forms in a way that was complementary to working with the incestuous family as the unit of care. For example, when questioned what kinds of treatments the respondents were aware of, that were available to incest victims, the respondents replied:

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child in helping her make sense of the world around her and her place in reality.

[2] Also called sand tray work, which provides the child with an opportunity to use symbols, figurines and miniature animals within a defined space, to tell her story (Geldard and Geldard, 1997). It is a type of play-therapy.

> No one treatment is particularly effective. I think every approach has its good points and limitations. Simply, I think that each approach is the best itself. (No. 41: 15)

> I believe that there is not any school or approach with an absolutely perfect approach, but we just choose the most appropriate and ensure the quality of our work and address the needs of the specific client. (No. 21: 13)

If that is the case, effective practice can be indicated as grounded in a good-quality relationship, not associated with any particular style of counselling or therapy. Two respondents had similar ideas that different schools of therapy could provide a vehicle and framework for carrying out the helping relationship. Ellis (1999) has shown that a particular therapy is indeed a vehicle for enabling clients to talk, explore, reflect, interpret and make sense. One of the feminist therapists suggested a feminist treatment approach and also mentioned that her approach was eclectic:

> A feminist treatment approach does not have a specific treatment approach. It depends on the background of professional training, at the same time, the application to the counselling work and the integration of the ideas into the therapist's perspective. An important characteristic is that, take for example, it is a non-medical model, which emphasizes survival and converts the symptoms into a survival strategy, at the same time, to indicate and recognize the traumas in order to cure the hurt. (No. 20: 16)

It seems that feminist counselling is not just a technique or style. It is about attitudes and even beliefs to each other and different values and ways of thinking. Chaplin (1988: 16) found that the majority of counsellors support the notion that stereotyped gender expectations and women's second-class status affect both women's psychology and that of men. However, one of the respondents did not identify with the ideas of feminism. She stressed:

> I do not have an ideology of feminism or masculinity. (No. 34: 5)

But another therapist commented:

> I realise that it [incest] is related to the power structure between two genders. With regard to children, basically no matter who is female or male, both are much weaker than an adult in terms of their shape or power. (No. 21: 8)

Most therapists repeatedly emphasized that their training background was important for them in deciding what approach they preferred. The above respondent's training background put the gender/power issues behind her therapy. However, another therapist had a different idea of gender/power issues. She answered the question about counselling as follows:

> It can be divided into two parts. One is related to my training background, I'm not familiar with psychodynamic theory and psychoanalytic theory, so I absolutely do not use them. The other part is, these issues about gender and power were included in my professional training. Power is a big issue, in fact, so I am quite sensitive to 'gender' and 'power' both. The first paramount principle in my training background is to emphasize that the relationship between the client and me should be equal; otherwise the effect will be invalid. (No. 41: 15-16)

In sum, if therapists/counsellors are unfamiliar with feminist ideas and the need for gender sensitivity they will not utilize them (Schneider, 1990). This, of course, also holds for other approaches.

I now move to describe ways of assisting families with their problems and which the therapists stated can result in progress. For example:

> ... if a counsellor looks at a survivor with a traumatized treatment perspective, I prefer to link it up with her past traumatic experience, so that all of the outcomes actually are a pattern to cope with one's trauma during the aftermath in order to survive. I believe that it will be more useful and powerful for clients and it can be decontamination. In other words, the behaviour of clients is not morbid; it is developed by the client in that difficult situation so as to survive. I think this is a very different perspective, moving from a position of less autonomy to a position with more autonomy, to help her to look at herself. Therefore, if the client can understand this, it means that she will select a different way to interpret herself ... she may find that she is the person who can control her own life in choosing this or selecting for the other... If the client can be met at this stage, it will help her to construct or shape her self-identification to make some change possible. (No. 20: 17)

This respondent identified how much she opposed the medical approach towards PTSD and that she preferred to use the empowerment treatment approach instead. She thought that selecting a medical perspective to look at the clients most of the time might just find that the victims have lots of frustrations and difficulties in the aftermath of incest and that such frustrations and difficulties influence the client's self-esteem. In contrast, this therapist advocated the use of gender-aware therapy (Good, Gilbert and Scher, 1990), which is aimed at helping female clients understand how societal conceptions of gender often limit their thinking, feeling and behaviour.

Obviously, the approach adopted will depend on the professional's training background and the basic views of different schools, approaches or beliefs. Another therapist had a different perspective on her treatment. She said:

> I think the character influences what approach I prefer when counselling. I think rapport is vital to the relation therapy. I have seen that before when I used play therapy as an interview tool in a primary school. I realized that the

> non-directive approach of play therapy made me powerful. I could see the child made a spontaneous change. It was so brilliant and cheerful. (No. 21: 3)

Here, this respondent attempted to highlight the difference between the directive and non-directive approach in which she could see the child change slowly. She thought that her choice was an effect of her own character and also her training background which led her to decide not to use one predominant approach of therapy. But I think, a more important issue for her was that as a therapist/counsellor, one of the roles is to try to empower the clients. As one therapist stated:

> I won't work with the whole family in an incest case at first. I think perhaps I won't use traditional approaches of family therapy, either Minuchin's structural family therapy or Satir's systematic model. One of the reasons is both of them haven't had to cope with the issue of gender in their approaches. Even though they have dealt with the power issue when talking about boundaries. But I'm afraid it would be totally different between home and the therapy room, if I commenced family therapy when the case is referred to me. (No.41: 16)

This respondent indicated the critical role of her training background. All approaches in relation to treatment have different contributions. However, each approach involves different considerations and assessments of the therapeutic processes. As mentioned earlier, most abused targets are young children. Whilst talking is a proper activity for adults, I found in my own fieldwork, art and play therapy were frequently advocated for children by my respondents.

Cattanach (1992) suggests that play therapy is central to the attempt to heal the hurt child and is not just a stimulation to help the child to talk for example. Cattanach, as a play therapist, draws on a gendered intervention to criticize some therapists who might think that play is something women do with young children. In fact, the value of play is as a kind

of social interaction and as part of the whole intellectual development of the child. A therapist may read the child's unconscious state through the picture of play. In a way, in this play world, children can be empowered to abreact their feelings.

- ***The length of therapy***

The majority of the public sector organizations in Taiwan have a policy of limiting the number of therapy sessions that a child can have, no matter what form of abuse they have experienced, though some organizations' criteria are broader. The focus of the therapy is mainly the recollection, exploration and abreacting of the traumatic material through the therapeutic context. The treatment goal is to alleviate the effects of incest. My findings showed that the length of time for individual counselling for incest victims is often inadequate. This can also impact on the counselling outcomes. In Taiwan, the anonymous document of the central authority, the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Committee, as a leading agency in the management of child abuse at the level of prevention and detection, indicates that the victims of child sexual abuse can officially be provided with up to 12 sessions of treatment. Four therapists (No. 41, 27, 21, 13) respectively commented on this:

> I think the limit of 12 sessions of counselling is a very big problem for me as a counsellor even though I know it not only happens in TPCG but also widely in other regional governments. (No. 41: 5)

> Personally, I prefer not to push my client towards the treatment goal, however I have to accept the dilemma in actuality. Based on my training background I can accept that the treatment process may be terribly long, but unfortunately I am restricted to 12 fixed sessions. (No. 27: 5)

Two other therapists struggled with this time-constraint. Some respondents described that

different authorities have different policies to cope with the upper limit of treatment sessions. For example,

> I think that HCCG centre is quite a flexible and human organization because the number of counselling sessions can be extended to up to 30. (No. 21: 3)

> 12 sessions is the situation in general. It can be increased, but I have no idea about the upper limit. I just started to work here, so I am not sure how many sessions can be possible... I also thought that it would be based on the client's attitude and wishes. However, I would say, basically teenage clients might need more time to build up the professional relationship. (No. 27: 2)

> Frankly, I don't feel comfortable if I am not able to discover the truth soon. Sometimes I have been forced to finish this assessment of the traumatic reaction in only one or two sessions. I don't feel that I am doing my own work, but if they can let me have at least 12 sessions to review and assess, I guess I may be able to accomplish this duty. (No. 13: 6)

The above three respondents talked about how much discretion they were given by their organizations. It seems HCCG is more flexible about the maximum time-limit. One of the therapists in HCCG mentioned that she was told that she could have up to 30 sessions for her clients if necessary. And I also discovered that some of them like No. 27, although she knew that 12 was the standard treatment plan, did not worry too much about it. However, No. 13 and 27 similarly summarised that the therapeutic relationship is not a short-term matter and therefore in 12 sessions they could usually only complete the assessment. From the findings, treatment/therapy is recognised as a lengthy process (Murgatroyd, 1980). Social service sectors are aware that the treatment is a long-term process. Sometimes it takes one or two years. The basic allocation of 12 sessions is therefore inadequate. As one interviewee said:

> It's quite difficult to predict the exact length of the treatment, unless I can precisely discover how deep the child's harm is. Sometimes the surface is not the same as her inside and that is always a major thing. More than that, the whole picture cannot be seen, it takes time... (No. 13: 2)

The pressure of time put therapist No. 34 in a dilemma. She chose to end the therapy based on the black and white principle, even though she was clear that the family was not ready for the child to go home but maybe only the initial tasks of referral had been achieved.

As mentioned earlier, a major issue for therapists treating sexually abused children is that on average every single client can in total have only up to 12 sessions of treatment unless the key social worker either looks for social resources or fights for prolonged treatment each single time. This therefore causes social workers much extra paper work and pressure to appeal to the court or the financial head office for approving to extend the treatment plan. Faller (1993) emphasizes that orchestration of treatment in the child's best interest is a genuine challenge. In my study, most respondents working in the sexual abuse field recognized the limitations of a perspective that focuses purely on time-constraints. However, there is no denying that work in the field of sexual abuse is extremely stressful and it may take a long time to heal the client's trauma. Ideally, individual, dyadic, family, and group treatment modalities should be available, especially if reintegration of the offender and/or the victim into the family is planned. Therapists and treatment plans without a full spectrum of services and plentiful time cannot be fully successful in psychotherapy.

- ***Dealing with transference/counter-transference***

The therapist-client relationship is a crucial component of all therapy, and its importance is

highlighted in incest therapy (Courtois, 1996). In psychotherapy, there is a different form of social interaction within the therapist-client relationship, in which emotional reactions to other people may reflect 'transference' of emotional reactions to the therapist from people who were significant in childhood (Legg, 1998: 42). For example, transference occurs when the child behaves toward the counsellor as though the counsellor were her mother, her father, or another significant other in her life. Geldard and Geldard (1997) describe that transference can result in the child perceiving the counsellor either positively or negatively. Both client and therapist can have emotional reactions to each other, at the same time. I include a discussion of transference and counter-transference (Corey, Corey and Callanan, 1993) here because of my argument that if these factors are ignored, the child's treatment progress might be impeded. One therapist had a similar comment linked with this point:

> According to my professional training background, those therapeutic processes obviously affect the personal life of the clinician. In other words, it is counter-transference with the clients, I realize that it will induce this. I think that transference and counter-transference are now commonly considered to encompass all the therapeutic relationships... (No. 34: 1)

Therapists use transference because it provides evidence of feelings from the past, although this transference often comes to be recognized through what is known as 'counter-transference', that is the feelings the therapist experiences (Woodward, 2000: 346), because the relationship I can be instrumental in providing the survivor with the necessary support and work through the traumatized experience while modelling a healthy, non-exploitative relationship (Courtois, 1996). Corey, Corey and Callanan (1993) point out the importance of therapists dealing properly with counter-transference reactions, with resources such as supervision or consultation, in order to prevent their problem becoming their client's problem (Cattanach, 1992). One of the therapists mentioned her counter-transference experience in dealing with a case. She described how she dealt with

her counter-transference: 'After I started to work in Taiwan, I discovered that counter-transference really happened in me. I then began to step back and study it intensively' (No. 34: 7).

This therapist [No. 34] was alert to her emotional reactions to her clients. She sought a supervisor as her way of sorting out her feelings and dilemmas. Another therapist also mentioned the importance of having a good supervisor-supervisee relationship. She said:

> I think the professional training of counsellors and the formulation of their value system have a significant influence on the counselling or therapy relationship and consequently on counselling outcomes. It is important for us to have a supervisor-supervisee relationship. I think that anyone who counsels clients, especially children, needs to have a sound theoretical knowledge base, together with appropriate training and on-going professional supervision. (No. 21: 13-14)

According to respondents No. 34 and No. 21, it seems that the first step to take before starting a therapeutic relationship with an abused child is to find a supervisor to monitor one's work. Thus, ethical practice demands that therapists are aware of their emotional reactions to their clients or any other associated family members. For example, therapists No. 24 and No. 6 commented that the mother is a problem to be solved in working with an incest family. Although they did not explain in detail the reason why they had this idea, two of the therapists mentioned that mothers were very unhelpful in the treatment process and somehow needed to look after their own emotions (No. 6: 3 and No. 24: 6). It is easy to see negative self-perceptions projected onto others (Courtois, 1996). On the other hand, one therapist had a totally different viewpoint when discussing the mother's role. She said:

> I always think that incest is quite a big crisis in her life and her family too. She has to encounter the fact that she has lost her husband and her whole family.

> On the other hand, she has to face the anger from her inner self, from her daughter and also the feeling of distrust and ambivalence in her surroundings. (No.20: 6)

This therapist clearly empathized with the mother in this case, suggesting that she too was a victim of sorts. The role of mothers as non-offending parents will be further discussed in the next chapter.

Numerous intrapsychic and interpersonal effects of incest are manifest in the therapy process and relationship (Courtois, 1996). For example, there were two other therapists who recalled something related to their personal issues during the interviewing process. They said:

> I must recognize that I have my weaknesses. In other words, I also need to be reminded by social workers in certain circumstances, because I have a certain bias. So do you [researcher] remember the case on which we worked together? I've learnt a lot from it, I can tell I was over-involved that time, I really needed some warning... Even though I 'm a kind of serious person as a counsellor, I still get into trouble sometimes. (No. 41: 18)

> My life experience is..., my dad is a dominant person compared to my mom. We usually obey his words. If I tried to challenge him, it would trouble my mom...but I suddenly felt quite interested to use 'challenge' as my word. (No. 27: 6)

These reactions indicate how personal histories and views become part of the clinical process. Professionals' emotional reactions to child sexual abuse are to be expected and are normal. However, it is important to recognize them and to prevent them from impairing our professional judgment or interfering with our role performance. As the data show, each therapist brings into the therapeutic relationship her own personality and history.

Only a few of the therapists I interviewed talked about the issues of transference and counter-transference in their therapeutic relationship. When therapists answered those interview questions, I also found that they did not necessarily have a dynamic perspective when talking about their therapist-client relationship. I thought, perhaps I had not expressed myself clearly or perhaps my respondents are not familiar with academic questions. If not recognized, the professionals' responses might create problems for the therapist herself and impact on the therapeutic process, as by keeping our own reactions and feelings, denial, and identification with the victim, out of awareness, the treatment or intervention may be impaired (Mitchell and Melikian, 1995). With this in mind, I shall now turn to look at gender and gender sensitivity as part of a good intervention practice.

Essential considerations of intervention in intra-familial abuse

In this section, I argue that professionals' gender and gender sensitivity is an important aspect of the intervention process. In a society dominated by masculine values and opinions, ideas and standards, women are often asked to evaluate themselves by measures and concepts that are foreign to their way of being. Collins (1986: 215) emphasizes: 'The feminist analysis for this "sexual politic" enables one to not only understand individual and collective female oppression but also what is seen as our cultural "consciousness of estrangement"'.

Feminist family therapy has been described as the application of feminist theory and values to family therapy (Goodrich et al., 1988). Goodrich et al. assume that gender roles and socialization affect each individual in the family system as well as interpersonal relationships in the system. Gender roles also affect relationships between the family and society as well as the client and therapist exchange. In the questionnaire, three of the

respondents [No. 20, 41 and 29] chose the answer 'concerned with the issue of gender' as a reason for working on incest. They mentioned that they had been influenced by a feminist therapeutic perspective when dealing with incest cases. Therapist respondent No. 20 recognized that the issue of incest is related to the ideology of feminism, as it involves the topic of differences between the two genders and power relations in their social cultural context.

Given those differences, and the pronounced patriarchal culture of Taiwan, dealing with male child sexual abusers is particularly challenging for female social workers, and for male workers dealing with female victims is also very problematic. It challenges practitioners to question their own understandings of gender and to address the complex ways in which gender and identification are played out in the territory of trust and equal relationships and equally within intervention. One therapist commented on the importance of gender sensitivity regarding incest:

> To a certain extent, the counsellor must be sensitive to the issue of gender, or challenge the topic of gender on this matter, otherwise you cannot endow the victim with power to readjust the right and interest as a woman. I think the issue of gender impacts on dealing with the victim. At the same time, it cannot cure her of the trauma. (No. 20: 20)

This therapist emphasized that the impact of a professional's gender awareness is connected to her attitudes, approaches and also the effectiveness of the therapeutic relationship. The roles for which women in many cultures are destined are by and large silent ones: motherhood and homemaking, tasks relegated to the obscurity of a domesticity that does not count and was not considered worth recounting (Duby and Perrot, 1992: ix). In Taiwan such inequalities arise from the fact that Taiwanese society still endows men with power and expects women to take continuing responsible for

child-rearing, to be subordinate to their husbands and responsible for satisfying their husband's sexual desire.

Hallett and Birchall (1992) report research findings that reveal significant gender differences in professional judgment. Snyder and Newberger's study (1986) showed that doctors, the majority of whom were male, were less sensitive to the severity of child abuse than nurses and social workers, who were mostly women. Whether or not social workers are sex-biased in their judgement of clients, an important aspect is that most of the social workers in my study were women, and I think it is therefore important to consider how female professionals engage in discourses of power from their own gendered position. As I mentioned earlier, the majority of the victims are female and the majority of perpetrators are men. It is worth exploring how female practitioners respond to this phenomenon. For example, one social worker respondent shared her viewpoint:

Q: From your viewpoint, what do you think about that phenomenon as a female social worker?

A: This is a very interesting question. I think the majority of perpetrators are men. Basically, a male adult will look for a young girl in a way.

Q: What do you think about this phenomenon?

A: I think the female is the weakest and most powerless. As to me, incest does not strike me that much. Conversely, when I look upon the fact that the majority of rape victims are female, it often scares me a lot. I remember the case of a woman who was raped by a stranger when she went out to buy her supper. I was shocked by this case as a female social worker. I began to be concerned about my personal security especially if I was on duty at night. In terms of incest, even if it is sexual abuse, it often occurs within the family. Also, I am an adult, I think I am mature enough to cope with it and I never think this will happen to me. Surely, it means something quite different to me. But I have become a bit suspicious after I have dealt with the rape cases.

Q: What influences you most to be like that?

A: Before I entered this centre, I thought that everyone should have the right

over their own bodies. After that, I have observed something very weird, for example, when we have a family gathering, I noticed that some adults used to touch the nice-looking kids in public. Indeed, it is against the children's own rights and interests. People as adults should respect children; they always have the right to refuse even though they are very young. I do not appreciate that kind of parents' behaviour.

Q: It sounds like you are concerned about the sense of autonomy over our own bodies, but I am quite interested in what issue concerns you the most?

A: I think we should learn how to respect one another, regarding men to women as well as adults to children. And education on boundaries should be a continuing process within the family. (No. 5: 3)

The experience of respondent No. 5 cited above can be split into two dimensions. The first is her subjective feelings about incest, which is about its limited relevance to her personal life. She viewed herself as an adult who had outgrown the stage where she was likely to be a victim of incest. As she said, 'I am an adult, I am mature enough to cope with it and I never think this will happen to me'. That may be the reason why she felt 'incest does not strike [her] that much'. However, she used her young woman's 'identity' to project herself as 'a powerless victim'. This can be seen as a kind of counter-transference (see the earlier section). She said, 'I began to be concerned about my personal security, in particular if I was on duty at night'. Her reaction in terms of the possibility of being raped is a legitimate terror given that. She thought, 'I think, the female is the weakest and most powerless'. She had internalized the notion of woman as weak. Secondly, she also noticed that some adults touch nice-looking children in public. She then noted the power inequalities between adult and child, and women and men. This respondent's views may in part be derived from her socialization or cultural background. She may think that historically men are aggressive and women are fragile and that patriarchy continues to maintain women in a disempowered position. Although this social worker seemed to have some insight into the problem of children's own rights and the concept of bodily autonomy, her understanding of gender

issues and gender sensitivity was still very limited. According to Riley (1991), the abuse victim is often not aware that she has rights over her own body. How many professionals in Taiwan agree consciously that they have rights over their own bodies?

There is also the issue of whether or not male therapists should treat female incest victims. Courtois (1996) maintains that the major question is, can male therapists overcome their socialization to disengage from a position of power over females and to adequately identify and empathize with the incest victim and her experience? There have been claims that sexually abused children must only be seen by female therapists and social workers. I am not convinced of this, unless a female client has negative feelings about talking to a male worker. Male workers can empathise because the human being has a conscious and unconscious state and this does connect to one's capability and ego-function. From a professional perspective, the gender of the professional is however likely to influence reactions to cases of child sexual abuse. Faller (1993) stresses that the major issue will be gender identification. At a specific level, it causes the professional to see a person of the same sex, whether offender, victim, or mother of victim, as 'like me'. On the other hand, Faller also suggests that gender identification can result in either greater empathy or greater rejection of the person of the same sex. The implications of such an intervention may be quite disturbing for both therapist and client if they do not face the issue which exists. As Furniss (1991) found there is no contradiction in a sexually abused girl being seen by a male professional and for a boy to be seen by a female professional, as long as female and male workers are aware of the fact that their respective gender has certain specific impacts. It seems that the key issue is how to avoid the disadvantages occurring and to trigger the advantages, rather than insist on the gender difference, unless practitioners really suppose that male colleagues are unable to think for themselves and come up with gender-sensitive positions, just as women colleagues learn to do (Harding,

2004). This is what one of the four male interviewees said regarding his views in relation to working with female clients:

> Q: From your viewpoint as a male social worker dealing with a female victim, what do you feel about that?
> A: ...umm...I was angry, maybe.
> Q: Did you feel embarrassed when you dealt with incest cases?
> A: Yes, I did, especially when I first worked with them. I was very worried that my gender might influence the client's feeling, and even that she might feel annoyed to talk to me about this. Because of my gender as a male, I was not going to ask the client about the timing of the incident that happened or I even didn't pay that much attention in relation to the detail of the incident. I didn't push if the client did not want to talk. If I couldn't get the information from her, I would try to use some other evidence to prove this case. However, the court always doubted the truth. Now the feeling of embarrassment has gone, I feel the relationship between me and my female clients is getting better. Because, it is a good model for her to experience a different experience with a male figure, maybe it helps with her recovery from her traumatic experience.
> Q: Before that you mentioned about your anger? What do you mean?
> A: My anger is...as a man, how come the perpetrator who brings disgrace on us as men in our man group [Chinese C.]? (No. 26: 9)

In this study, I had 4 male respondents from two of three centres. The interviewee quoted above was a male social worker who worked in TPCG. The other three male respondents worked in KSCG - CCF. Male social workers are relatively rare in Taiwan. As a result of involvement in incest cases, this male respondent (No. 26) experienced feelings of marginalization, fear, anger, embarrassment and sensitivity that derived from having a different gender from that of his clients. Within worker-client relationships, in particular male workers to female victims, female victims may project thoughts of the 'abuser' role onto male worker, he [No. 26] thought. Yet, Stroller and Britton (1998) also show that male social workers may subvert traditionally defined and socially normed male roles.

When a man chooses to enter a female-dominated profession, he may still incur stigmas that differentiate him from other males. Arendell (1997) observed that male research participants seemed to use the female interviewer's gender to make particular claims about themselves. Some male workers, for example No. 26 cited above, may also feel projective identifications with the sexual offender. They may have negative feelings towards their gender as men are cast as the culprits, the abusers, those who abandon their families (Brooks, 1998; Krill, 1992). In fact, in some ways masculinity itself appears antithetical to that which social work and counselling avows (Brooks, 1998; Christie, 1998).

Not surprisingly, male social workers such as No. 26 may begin to question their legitimacy in a field that tells them that they often lack the empathy and nurturance to perform some of their roles. They may emphasize the masculine aspects of their jobs to 'reduce the dissonance between their professional and gender identities' (Christie and Kruk, 1998: 506). No. 26 noted his gender as an innate quest for power and dominance. This caused him to be reluctant to act in his professional role and duty. He found it difficult to talk to a female client about her experience of being raped by her father/stranger. Such negative feelings can interfere with one's professional stance. A professional might assume sexually abused children will initially be very frightened of a male worker, but the findings of Furniss's research (1991) showed that some children who had been sexually abused by a father nevertheless wanted to be seen by a male professional.

Is there fragmentary understanding about incest intervention?

In this section, I shall look at how to apply gender-sensitive perspectives to treatment issues, particular to women. Professionals may have a blinkered focus on child sexual

abuse/incest because of this limited knowledge. This section now moves on to examine respondents' views on what kinds of intervention the social workers are aware of that are beneficial for victims of incest.

Social workers make risk assessment decisions within a normative framework. This normative framework includes the practitioner's overall knowledge with an assumed objectivity which is based on knowledge about father-daughter incest, social work practice skills, and ideas about current cultural gender consciousness (Lawrence, 2004). In my sample, comprehensive assessment and planning was not a consistent feature of every single case, although a clear need for it was seen. However, only one interviewee of KSCG-CCF mentioned tools for case assessment. The social work supervisor of KSCCF said:

> We have a series of assessment tools... I think this scale is quite useful and helpful as a reference. We have edited it many times since 1991. The new version is quite good. I know one of the problems is that the explanation of the tool is too abstract for practitioners. Sometimes, the scale shows the victim is at high risk but the investigator might not completely agree with the outcome of the scale. The answer to some questions on that scale might not fit the reality or be too vague, so that it is easy to be polarized. However, it is quite useful for the new staff to use as a reference. So that they have a framework to interview the parents, victim and the relevant resource and collect the concrete data according to the questions on the scale. In other words, they are able to obtain the indicators to assess what they have seen. (No. 37: 6)

KSCG was in a different situation from the other two authorities, TPCG and HCCG. KSCG also purchase social work resources from KSCCF. In other words, CCF deals with child sexual abuse cases on behalf of KSCG involving children aged 12 or younger. However, KSCG itself did not have an official protocol of assessment tools or concrete guideline procedures when dealing with such cases. The supervisor of KSCG (respondent No. 28) thought it would be useful to have such guidance:

> I think it will help us to provide more applicable services, constructive and effective, particularly the protocol for a family reconstruction intervention, and good practice procedures and guidelines for the investigation and interviewing process in the future. (No. 28: 16)

Although clinical experience has shown that children who make allegations of sexual abuse in the family usually do not lie but speak the truth (Furniss, 1999), an appropriate assessment is still essential to make a successful diagnosis, and may be useful to guide the practitioner. In general, the practitioner needs to decide on the basic structure of the intervention and on the necessary steps involved. In the UK, O'Hagan (1989) concluded that there are five types of intervention for social workers in incest cases:

1. Arranging a medical and transporting child and mother to hospital
2. Informing the police.
3. Removal of the child through a place-of-safety order and placement in a foster care.
4. Removal of the child through a request from the mother for voluntary care or advising/recommending this course of action to the mother.
5. Counselling of the mother and the perpetrator.

Looking back at Taiwan, there are some major forms of intervention which are similar to O'Hagan's list, such as removal from home, medical examination, police investigation, education, financial aid and legal assistance including a protection order, prosecution and treatment therapy. Most of the interviewees had experienced psychotherapy as one of the potentially strongest ways of helping incest cases and their families. Some of the comments with regard to counselling were as follows:

> Urm, I was offering this child to see a counsellor. I also believe in the counselling service for victims who have been raped...To a certain extent, I was uncertain of the harm to the child, even if some children looked all right. Regarding my experience, I didn't know what they needed initially. I have seen a case's mother who didn't believe her daughter until the child had met the counsellor. We found that the child stayed to talk about her mother's negative attitude. In the meantime, we gave her an opportunity to defend herself regarding the incest matter. I realized the unexpected outcomes after that. (No. 23: 6-7)

> I think that counselling is quite useful, particularly in child sexual abuse/incest, because I can see their [the client's] changes obviously. She [client] might have believed when her father said that it was all her fault. She might be distressed and think it is her fault. Later, she can trust her counsellor and change from the initial view to another one of believing that what her father asked was very disgusting. Meanwhile, the emotions of the child seem more stable. Therefore she is more empowered to think of herself as a good person, a useful person, confident and stop hating herself. Especially for the long-term case, it's very hard for them to speak out. Once she disclosed the event, the whole family blamed her; she therefore had to be removed from home. Therefore, counselling is helpful to empower her ego-strength. (No. 19: 14)

> I realised counselling and therapy is very important. So I might provide the client with individual therapy initially and then parent-children group therapy. (No. 22: 10)

One of the experienced social work supervisors expressed similar thinking. She argued that:

> (Sigh!) Theoretically, all of the incest victims need to be removed from their homes, apart from those juveniles who are reluctant to be placed. As for counselling, it is an essential healing for the victim. I think all of these are must-do. (No. 12: 21-22)

The main point is that professionals need to identify, categorize and prioritize responses in their work (O'Hagan, 1989: 110). A very experienced researcher of child sexual abuse,

Corby (1998), suggests that the main considerations for the evaluation and implemented planning of incest cases are:

1. Did the work with incestuous families seem to be carried out sensitively and openly?
2. Were incest cases adequately protected?
3. Was sufficient attention paid to the general needs of families?
4. Were incest cases and non-abuser parent helped with their problems in the process of intervention?

Corby's thinking might give the practitioners of incest intervention some further ideas in working with cases of father-daughter incest. In practice in Taiwan, one social work supervisor stressed her micro perspective on intervention. She said:

> The three useful interventions are: accompanying the clients to the medical examination, taking the statement and appearance in court. I try to analyse the reasons for that. I think the common thread is the feeling of companionship, especially if the situation is uncertain, insecure or helpless and dispirited. Apart from these, the voluntary lawyer is also very helpful as a companion. (No. 28: 11)

In this study, some of the respondents [No. 20, 40, 27, 21, 18] emphasized the importance of their role as company. Actually, the forms of intervention are still similar, but the key factor is that they emphasized the importance and the meaning of companionship. Here, the social work intervention stresses the rapport relationship between the professional and the service user. This idea is congruent with the standpoint of feminist research. I argue that the incorporation of a feminist perspective would help to reframe the problem of incest/child sexual abuse in ways that widen the frame of the private domain confined to the perpetrator and victim and the family to the wider public and structural arena. This will

be further discussed in chapter six. The major issue remains that although incest victims are now beginning to be traced more readily, the means of dealing with and helping such individuals are still inadequate. The resources for providing therapy for sexually abused children, their families and offenders, are very scarce in Taiwan.

Conclusion

The procedures for sexual assault in Taiwan have been developed and revised from time to time since 1993 and from being a relatively minor offshoot of general child protection work of social services departments they have become a major aspect of specific units such as HCCG, TPCG and KSCG (see chapter three). The findings suggest that there are a number of barriers to effective child protection practice such as timescales, the front-line professionals' capabilities and abilities, the power relationship between supervisor and supervisee, and the legal proceedings. Among those issues, I identified that practitioners frequently had no concrete guidelines but only general procedures. This is a main barrier in the practice of CSA and may as well as affect practice in incest in Taiwan. At the same time, the follow-up treatment and services for abused children in the social protection system are limited. This still presents challenges for social work practice (Chiang, 1997). This may be the reason why many professionals seem reluctant to pursue their concern and activate the investigatory procedures. In addition, there is still suspicion about the social workers' interference in family affairs in Taiwan. Throughout the investigation of allegations or suspicions of child abuse, the interviewing of children for evidential purposes is a complex, specialised and demanding area of work requiring the highest standards of professional practice by social workers. Most of the interviewees indicated that an essential reaction for front-line practitioners is to have a prompt response to any child abuse referral. The short

timescale allowed for the process was a common complaint for many professionals in child protection work. Meanwhile, there are particular issues arising from the hierarchical position of supervisors in this study. This hierarchy referral to is not just organizational but also cultural. It leads to over-dependence on the supervisor in decision-making in a context where team decisions and case conferences are in any event not yet the norm. Secondly, in some centres social workers felt under-supported by their supervisors. Thirdly, there is the issue of quality control when supervisors are not able to offer adequate support.

It can be observed that the social services department is concerned with systems of managing incest and inter-agency procedures. However in this study, I did not look at the inter-agency issue regarding child protection in Taiwan. In my findings, I inferred some weaknesses in dealing with both incest and child sexual abuse. What I try to emphasize here is that the strength of a case rests on its forensic evidence. That makes it difficult for social workers in practice. As long as the justice system, as well as the social organizational hierarchy, remains a male preserve, it may still be hard to expect reform in favour of the rights of female victims.

In sum, the procedures clearly need to be reviewed to be more closely related to the concerns of practice. It seems that there is no specific treatment/intervention approach that was identified as most effective, but 'accompaniment' and 'empowerment' were highlighted as effective and important. It is quite clear that the majority of the respondents needed to be strengthened in many realms of professional practice, regarding knowledge of child sexual abuse work and knowledge of gender sensitivity in an incest or child sexual abuse case. Another finding was that only when practitioners are courageous enough to engage in an open dialogue about gender issues and female/male interrelational dynamics

within their own positions, are practitioners, (like No. 26) able to work through their own gender issues and gain insight into the implicit and explicit gender constraints that professionals and clients encounter.

In the next chapter, I shall turn to a discussion about professional perspectives on incest. Child protection investigations can place a great deal of stress on families, in particular the mothers. How to minimize the impact of this stress will be further discussed in the following chapter in terms of professional perceptions about this aspect.

Chapter Six

Professionals' Perspectives on Incest

This chapter examines the empirical findings on perspectives of the interviewees who work in child protection organisations specialising in incest issues in Taiwan. Earlier researchers (Butler, 1978; Justice and Justice, 1979; Herman, 1981; Renvoize, 1982; Giaretto, 1982; Rush, 1984; Ward, 1984) stressed that father-daughter incest has been the main subject for investigations of incest. Indeed, Ward (1984) argued for describing father-daughter incest as rape. However, in my view, the difference between rape and incest is that while rape may be individual and even isolated from any other social context, incest is an event in the family unit involving perpetrators, victims and other family members in diverse ways. This means that the family unit is implicated in any interventions the professionals provide, whereas if incest is viewed as rape, the family unit as a whole may not be implicated in the same way. The word 'implicated' is used here not to mean 'blame' but to indicate that family members are affected by incest and interventions which result from incest coming to light. By exploring feminist literatures of gender inequalities, there are mainly four aspects which are noticeable in dealing with incest cases. They include the notion of the dysfunctional family (individual pathology), the power imbalance between adult men and young girls, issues related to blaming the mothers, and the future relationship between the perpetrator and the victim. After discussing these aspects, I shall comment on the influence of values, knowledge and approaches related to incest intervention.

Perspectives on incest: from theoretical to empirical

In this section, the first part of the analysis includes several dimensions regarding the issues of incest. Respondents were asked about how their experience and perceptions of incest in terms of incest intervention/treatment including views about causation. This social worker attempted to raise an issue concerning the importance of everyone understanding and recognising that children are individuals and not belongings, not there to fulfil adults' needs (see Table 6-1).

Table 6-1 The Respondents' Perceptions of the Causes of Incest

Categories	No. of Respondents
1. To satisfy his own sexual desire/sexual temptation	7, 23, 21, 28, 37, 41, 12, 34, 20, 24, 27, 29, 32
2. Women are treated as men's property	17, 26, 27, 32, 38, 14, 32
3. Revenge on his spouse/woman by raping his daughter due to marital problems or an unsatisfactory sexual relationship between the couple	7, 21, 40, 8, 11, 30, 9
4. A way of control over the powerless person	6, 20, 11, 24, 25, 33
5. Perpetrator's unfinished business from childhood	41, 34, 6, 8, 26, 9
6. It's kind of paedophilia, sick and abnormal	5, 19, 12, 15
7. The feeling of control due to bad sexual life or relationship between the couple	23, 34, 36, 38
8. To satisfy men to forget his incapability, powerlessness in their gender relations	21, 23, 36, 38
9. Lack of the concept of boundary in the family	4, 10, 29, 33
10. Very insufficient knowledge to comment	27, 28, 6, 13
11. A problem with perpetrator's personality	41, 8, 27
12. Mother's absence	41, 34, 29
13. Men in society view women as an object/tool	21, 16
14. To devalue women's value and their right to body autonomy	13, 17
15. Children are essentially a captive population	21
16. The feeling of refreshment, hurricane and rejuvenation	28
17. Victims are weak	10
18. Perpetrator's responsibility	34
19. Lack of self-control	18

In Table 6-1, evidence showed that social workers have emotional reactions to child sexual abuse. They are often reminded by clients of their own vulnerabilities as women, as well as having their own fears (i.e. the fear of being raped). In light of this, social workers have to believe in the potential of their clients and their abilities to find a way out. This allows them to stand back from their own emotions, while nonetheless remaining supportive. One of the concerns is the largest number of respondents believed that most perpetrators had sexual desire or temptation as one of the major reasons for committing to incest. Some might feel that perpetrators deliberately take revenge on their wives due to relationship problems or disappointing sexual life. Some mentioned that incest is a way the perpetrator uses his power over the powerless person. And some practitioners also believed that the reason why men might feel anger towards their wives or partners was due to women being treated as men's property in most societies and, of course, in Taiwan. These four main concerns of the causes of incest are interrelated (these points will be elaborated in the later sections). Faller (1988) describes the causes of sexual abuse as multiple and complex. As with most forms of deviant behaviour, there are various explanations as to the aetiology and maintenance of sexual offending. Within the specialist literature, ideological, psychological and sociological theories have been designed to explain the onset of deviant sexual fantasies and behaviour. However, owing to the heterogeneity of the perpetrators of such abuse and the complex nature of this behaviour, no one theory is sufficient (Bickley and Beech, 2001). Nonetheless, understanding the causes of incest is important in order to implement policies that can be matched to the needs of all types of incest cases.

The dysfunctional family, individual pathology

Several studies have shown that family dysfunction is more serious in connection with intra-familial than extra-familial abuse (Courtois, 1988; Meiselman, 1990; Briere and Elliot, 1993). Briere and Elliot (1993) maintain that the dysfunctional patterns seen in

families where incest has occurred can be viewed as a result of the abuse no less than as a cause of it. In my findings, some respondents made similar links:

> In my experience, the mother is dysfunctional in the family, so that the father wants to find somebody who can substitute for his wife's role and function. (No. 37: 7)

> I think most of the parents in the incestuous family are disharmonious in their relationship (Sigh!) (No. 7: 5)

These respondents commented that such families are either dysfunctional or disharmonious. In reviewing the literature, family dysfunction theory has become one of the most widely held explanations for the manifestation of incest and, together with its associated treatment methods, has been adopted by many government and statutory authorities in Australia, the U.S and the UK (SECASA, 2003). The reason that the dysfunctional family system is a dominant orthodoxy amongst many professionals is because abuse is described as involving the breakdown of certain normal family boundaries, hierarchies and relationships (Deacon et al., 1999: 5). From the family systems perspective the typical incest family has been found to have rigid boundaries, therefore it is socially, physically and psychologically isolated (Courtois, 1996). Underpinning this approach is a system of family norms, which are used as a yardstick for measuring differing degrees of family pathology. In a dysfunctional family, incest may be utilised to reduce tension and maintain equilibrium within the family, while ensuring that the family's pathology is kept a secret.

Perhaps the most frequent explanation for incest found in the psychiatric literature asserts that the male perpetrator is sick. According to Freund (1967a, 1967b and 1972) cited in Finkelhor (1986), many sexual offenders have clearly documented deviant patterns of sexual arousal and fantasy. In my study, a number of practitioners, for

example No. 12, No. 19 and No. 7, also interpreted the event of incest in terms of perpetrator pathology:

> The perpetrator is really pathological. The spouse is in a disadvantaged position, which the perpetrator violates. What's worse, he violates children. (No. 12: 14)

> Frankly speaking, I am not that clear on this part. However, I feel that they got mad. Yes. I feel they are unusual. Just like this family, I have talked with the mother several times and she told me about the perpetrator's situation at home. She felt that the perpetrator must have some abnormal psychological behaviour problem. Such as he told his wife that, he imagines his genital organ as a 'nipple' to stuff his daughter's vagina. (No. 19: 8)

> To synthesise those cases I have dealt with, they look like the perpetrator wants to control the whole family in a sense. Everyone within the family must be threatened by his power. He wants to be the most dominant person in the family. (No. 7: 8)

These respondents perceived incest as a perpetrator's abnormal behaviour and a manifestation of power dominance, though only a few held this perspective. Clearly, respondent No. 19 thought the perpetrator was mad rather than bad. However, Langan and Day (1992) argue that this view of sex perpetrators as 'mad rather than bad' is a way of absolving individuals and society from the responsibility for child sexual abuse.

It has also been suggested that perpetrators were victims of sexual abuse as children (Finkelhor, 1986), and that perpetrators who grow up in female-headed or female-dominant households become 'hypermasculine', so their behaviours just demonstrate the need 'to maintain the image of a 'real man' (Scully, 1991: 66). All of this points to the importance of understanding the socialization of perpetrators as members of society. Some front-line social workers therefore thought that it might be useful to have some

information in relation to the perpetrator's personal history. This was how some social workers responded:

> I think it is quite useful to understand the incest perpetrator and his personal history; what makes him commit incest. If he has a problem with his personality or psychological factors, I think it could give us some direction for the future plan. However, we haven't touched this part in a way. (No. 7: 12)

> Perhaps it could help, I am not sure. Suppose he [the perpetrator] was a victim or child witness when he was young. I may give him a different treatment. As to this part, the influence of my decision on intervention may be just giving him a chance to undergo a psychological assessment... As I have said, I wish I could help him so as to stop him hurting children again but it is absolutely not to give him an excuse to hurt others as he has been hurt. (No. 5: 15)

Two respondents recognised that the perpetrator's personal history might be important in gaining more useful information to help the family or to make an accurate assessment for the client's treatment. This reflected that incest is still viewed as the abuser's pathological problem rather than a gender phenomenon. Some respondents might also shift their focus from victim to perpetrator. For example, this therapist said:

> I do not have the experience of working with the perpetrator. I still remember that I was told this by my tutor in the training programme. The perpetrator is actually another victim within a family. He probably has got pressure that caused him to do this. With my best knowledge of my training, I have a fundamental notion which is that we should also treat the perpetrator as a victim. (No. 6: 8)

This interviewee had never worked with a perpetrator, but was interested to discuss further how the idea of the perpetrator as a victim could affect the direction of therapy, especially if the same therapist deals with both perpetrator and victim, two antagonistic

parties, simultaneously. Berkowitz's study (1995) explored an area of 'role confusion' that exists not only for therapists; the role confusion may be even greater if the therapist has to interact with both victim and perpetrator, in a therapeutic setting for example.

Not all social workers can work effectively with perpetrators, although as Martin (1989) has argued, many social workers do not see the child as the primary client if they also deal with the incestuous family. In addition, Deacon et al. (1999) highlight the difficulty for professionals to draw a clear boundary between 'therapeutic input' and 'assessment'. A careful balance needs to be maintained, as some direct challenge will occur if the psychotherapist confuses his/her role with that of the victim's psychotherapist, for example. Some practitioners feel confused if they have to deal with the client and the perpetrator, especially if the practitioner views the perpetrator as another client-to-be, so that he/she should offer them a particular treatment. Therapists might encounter individuals on both sides, but it is a controversial issue whether it is appropriate for a therapist to handle perpetrators and victims from the same incest case. One of the therapists, in reply to my question whether there was any difference in her role as an individual therapist and a dual therapist, answered very positively, 'No, they won't transfer both the victim and the perpetrator to me' (No. 41: 10). She did not comment much about this, but she said, 'I think I should step back from making value judgements, because this is not my focus. In addition, I have to forget to seek out the truth about those sexual stories' (No. 41: 10). But a conflict of interest may arise when therapists work with several members of an incest family. If that is the case, how can the therapists maintain a professional boundary as therapists? For example, when asked 'Do you mind if both the non-abusing parent and the kid are referred to you simultaneously?', one senior therapist said:

A: ...the most important premise is whether I can differentiate the boundary. However, I still believe that it is more difficult to deal with the mother and victim at the same time.

Q: How do you describe the boundary?

A: Because I have dealt with the two of them from different positions; otherwise, I can't work with them at the same time. Sometimes, there are some value conflicts between these two parties. (No. 20: 10)

This interviewee talked about two difficulties: boundaries and value judgments, if dealing with two clients at the same time, the mother as a non-abusing parent and the daughter as a victim for example, or the father [perpetrator] and the daughter [victim]. In my view, without effective supervision and consultation, these thoughts and feelings may interfere with one's effective execution of one's duties (Fargason, 1995).

In this case, respondent No. 5 felt able to manage their role as child protection worker. One centre's [HCGC] social workers do not need to deal with perpetrators officially. Two respondents agreed that gaining an understanding of the history of the alleged perpetrators is an important guide to leading them in developing the best strategy for the child. Both said that appropriate treatment is vital and helpful for the perpetrators.

Research evidence shows that not every abused child becomes a perpetrator and that not all perpetrators have themselves suffered sexual abuse when they were young (Deacon et al., 1999). Although the abuser may have been a victim in his childhood, the practitioner who undertakes an investigating/assessment meeting has to be very clear about his/her role within the process and the need to maintain this over time. Every practitioner is likely to be working with perpetrators because of the limited number of therapists in social services. The following comments illustrate those experiences:

I am interested in his developmental background. But I think I should not deal with the perpetrator in a way. I think it is a bit difficult to be done if I am

> working on behalf of the child. As the father's social worker, I shouldn't tell him he was wrong, otherwise we cannot build up a trust relationship. I am supposed to be his worker and support him. However, I can't accomplish this successfully as a child protection worker. Right, it is a conflict to deal with them at the same time. (No. 23: 12)
>
> I have thought about that but I haven't got enough strength to deal with them. Moreover, I could not cover the perpetrator simultaneously due to my role as a child protection worker. (No. 40: 7)

The dilemma of handling this kind of relationship was complicated and impossible according to respondent No. 23, and No. 40 was reluctant to deal with this dyadic relationship as he felt that it would be a difficult challenge for him. Some writers focus on the problem inherent in dual relationships. Such relationships tend to impair the professional's judgment, as having a potential for conflicts of interest (Corey, Corey and Callanan, 1993). Basically, professionals who engage in more than one role within an incestuous family, especially fathers and daughters, need to be concerned over their dual roles.

The power imbalance between adult men and young girls

One of the important characteristics of father-daughter incest is that it reflects the power relationship that exists between men and women, and more specifically between adult and child at societal level. Feminist approaches explain sexual crime in term of power and gender relationships in society (Colton and Vanstone, 1996). Many researchers view incest as a gendered phenomenon (Russell, 1986; O'Hagan, 1989; Glaser and Frosh, 1993; Armstrong, 2000), because most crimes of sexual abuse are committed by men. In this section, I explore how father-daughter incest has been explained and located within the domain of feminist perspectives, paying particular attention to the core proposition that male sexual violence has a critical role in maintaining women's

oppression (Kelly, 1988). The concept of patriarchy indicates a social system in which structural differences in privilege, power and authority are invested in masculinity and the cultural, economic and/or social positions of men (Cranny-Francis et al, 2003: 15). Already in 1975 Brownmiller pointed out that 'the intrafamilial sexual abuse of children prevents a realistic appraisal of its true incidence and meaning that is rooted in the same patriarchal philosophy of sexual private property that shaped and determined historic male attitudes towards rape, it means that woman was man's original corporal property, children were, and are, a wholly owned subsidiary' (p.281). Women's oppression is here seen to originate with patriarchal power on the one hand and class domination on the other. Feminists also recognised incest as child sexual abuse, which not only reflects the inferior position of women and girls but also reflects the power and predatory attitudes of men (Parton, 1990). Itzin (2000) claims that it is predominantly men who are the perpetrators of domestic violence and sexual violence; simultaneously it is largely males who are child sexual abusers.

Although women as well as men have power over children as a consequence of being adults, the case of women sexually abusing children appears to be relatively rare (Finkelhor and Russell, 1986; Glaser and Frosh, 1993 and Courtois, 1996). However, many women and children occupy an unequal position in a male-dominant society. The relationship between an adult male and a female child is one of the most unequal relationships. This inequality was highlighted by some of the interviewees:

> It's just patriarchy. The woman is seen as the man's property. The man feels that he has to be satisfied, and the man has never known how to respect others. (No. 12: 15)

> ... Children are essentially a captive population, totally dependent upon their parents for their basic needs. This is important for the perpetrator... In

> patriarchal societies I find the child's interest is always being sacrificed and also the mother is powerless. (No. 21: 8)

> My idea in relation to the thought of the feminist perspective is also relevant to my current job. The women's power in the private sphere of motherhood and women's identity at home are ignored in our society. Thus, women's right is exploited by the men and the other family members. The husband can require his wife to satisfy what he wants. Compared to male experience, nobody would be concerned about women's feelings and individualisation. They are often taking more responsibility at home. Therefore, I never ever thought whether the man as father/husband has a pathological problem, I think probably in the society we live in there remains the issue of gender inequality between men and women. (No. 29: 2)

According to the evidence, feminist practitioners in a patriarchal system see child sexual abuse/incest predominantly in terms of the concept of power (Herman and Hirschman, 1977; MacLeod and Saraga, 1987; O'Hagan, 1989; Glaser and Frosh, 1993). An experienced social worker emphasized:

> (Laughs wryly) It is not a brand-new thing for me anymore. They [mothers] are the disadvantaged minority in a family... From several incest cases, the father and mother are not equal in a family. The fathers are sick, but I cannot understand them [perpetrators] since what I know is limited. (No. 12: 14)

Another therapist's experience was:

> I have noticed that with the majority of the incest families, there are big problems with domestic violence issues simultaneously. Domestic violence usually happens in the patriarchal family where the father beats the mother while the children witness the process. Some of the perpetrators would hurt the mother and rape the daughter simultaneously, such as in an incestuous family. (No. 21: 8-9)

From this quotation, it is clear that the interviewee was aware of gender inequality which places females in a position of subordination, making incest particularly likely to happen to female children. However, there was rarely any discussion of sexual assault issues as gender-specific in Taiwan until the late 2000s. For example, interviewee No. 34 talked about her personal opinion towards incest:

> Q: Are they mainly female victims of incest?
> A: Yes, I have never dealt with a male victim.
> A: ... Because in my training background, no matter if there are young girls or boys, they have hidden the consciousness of sexual fantasy.
> Q: What do you mean?
> A: It means that the kid has a desire to be raped by her/his father. On the basis of my theory, the difference between sexual abuse and family violence is that sexual abuse happened. Therefore, the boundary between fantasy and reality is in a state of chaos, the emotions are complex as well. Indeed, she wants to be treated like that.
> Q: From your viewpoint, what do you think about incest? How do you feel about the victims as themselves?
> A: That's no concern of mine. Definitely, this will relate to the drawbacks of the perpetrator's personality. And I am concerned about the dynamics of the incest...
> Q: You mean you do not care about the gender difference?
> A: Yes, I sense that I do not view women as a weaker person. I won't consider their physical strength even though the woman is much weaker than the man is... (No. 34: 5)

This response raises a question of how the interviewee viewed herself, a woman, as an object. Towards the end she first mentioned that she did not view woman as a weaker person, but then she pointed out that a woman is much weaker than a man is. It can be argued that the latter point came from her subconscious, it could stem from professional training and the process of socialisation, which might have influenced her role as a woman and a therapist. Another contradiction is that she would not treat a woman as a

powerless person but she has a bias against women, claiming that they are likely to have dependent personalities. Assuming 'a desire to be raped' or 'a dependent personality person' is a way of labelling. This is one of the most powerful accusations which can be hurled at a woman/female child (Stanko, 1985). It seems to imply that she [the victim] is likely to have caused the abuse herself. Although this therapist had a basic knowledge of incest, it was unclear what her level of self-awareness was. However, professionals' self-awareness is an important factor which can affect the quality of the intervention. The literature highlights that a high level of self-awareness is necessary; otherwise, counsellors may obstruct the progress of their clients (Corey, Corey and Callanan, 1993).

The gender dimension of sexual violence/child sexual abuse against females, especially female children, was largely ignored by my study's respondents. Part of the process of interviewing practitioners was therefore a form of consciousness-raising, getting practitioners to consider the issues of gender in relation to incest. Importantly, despite the perpetrators of sexual violence being mostly male, in our society women frequently still continue to be perceived as responsible, either by causing rape or by failing to stop it happening. The police might take pity on offenders as they might think, 'if a woman did not want to give, a man could not take it', for example. Such responses create problems for the professionals and might influence the intervention process. The concern is that male therapists, for example, may inadvertently revictimise incest victims due to their own male enculturation (Cole, 1985). However, in my study, when asked about what they viewed as the major cause of incest, the two male respondents did not respond differently from the female interviewees. Both No. 40 and No. 37 articulated family dysfunction and disharmony in sexual life and the breakdown of the spousal relationship as causes, as the following exchange shows:

Q: What do you see as the major cause of incest in general?

A: I think the reasons are as follows: firstly, the parents in the incestuous family possibly had problems in their sexual life. Secondly, in the history of the perpetrator there may be some obstacles to his personality or experience growing up. The next reason is the economic recession which may bring him into unemployment and depression somehow. It may also induce him to have a thought like that.

Q: According to your work experience, do they match your practical experience?

A: Yes, some matched what I have experienced.

Q: Apart from the reasons you mentioned, have you concluded some other reasons which you realized may cause incest to occur?

A: There is a case still waiting for the legal process but I realized that her father had raped her. I thought this must relate to his marriage.

Q: What exactly do you mean?

A: I learnt the parents were divorced and the father was responsible for looking after the child for a while and then incest happened. (No. 40: 6)

Another male respondent said:

> I think there are probably some other things apart from sex, like revenge on his wife because of disharmony... He just accomplishes the purpose desired. (No. 37: 10)

This male professional [No. 40] surmised that the parents' problematic sexual life or marital relationship was the possible reason for incest, although he also mentioned some other reasons, such as personality and social factors. When I discussed the concept of the defended subject in chapter three, I mentioned that one of my interviewees who had little experience of incest intervention, expressed the view that 'our society pays much more attention to females for being sexually abused, and ignores the male kid for being sexually abused'. He said that he thought the evidence that 'mainly girls are victims of incest' is not true. This suggests that the gender sensitivity of the practitioners is one significant factor in understanding incest. Simultaneously, it is necessary to dispel the

many myths besieging contemporary thought and professional practice, such as the seductive child and the collusive mother.

The question of blaming

The disclosure of incestuous abuse of a child constitutes such a departure from normative expectations of mothering that it necessitates a reappraisal and reconstruction of the mother's identity. Based on women having had greater involvement with their children, mothers are seen as being more responsible for protecting their children than fathers. Mothers are therefore easily accused of collusion in cases of child sexual abuse committed by the father (Justice and Justice, 1979; Herman and Hirschman, 1981; Renvoize, 1982; Ward, 1984). A similar situation exists in the field of child protection practice in Taiwan. As one experienced counsellor said: 'Basically, we are likely to blame the mother, it's a tendency' (No. 41: 9). Another respondent who was a social worker also revealed that: 'I blame the mother unconsciously, sometimes... I think a mother should protect her child. In this case [incest], the mother obviously could not protect her daughter and was herself a battered woman' (No. 19: 2). This interviewee believed that mothers could be culpable. I was struck by how much a mother's failure to recognise the incestuous abuse of her child bothered some practitioners. In my experience, because of domestic violence, in some cases the mother may have knowledge of the abuse but be fearful of reporting it. In others, she may have incomplete knowledge of the abuse or misinterpret the signs of the abuse. Nelson (1987) suggested that father-daughter incest is more prevalent in families where traditional roles and gender expectations are taken to the extreme and roles are distorted. For example, one of the male practitioners raised these issues in relation to gender expectations:

> In fact, man is an impulsive person in sex. Simply, when he has a sexual desire, his wife cannot satisfy him, he may seek somebody to replace his wife. The daughter is often hurt in this situation. (No. 37: 9)

This male social worker did not explicitly blame the mother. However, he implicitly blamed the mother for neglecting her duty or performing her own role inappropriately. Such a view can be problematic because it may lead to inappropriate discussion of the direction of an intervention plan. Implicitly, this interviewee used the notion of 'male nature' to explain abusive behaviour by men, effectively suggesting that they cannot help themselves. Male sexuality is inappropriately associated with nature sexual urges which partly justifies their role as a perpetrator, however natural urges does not absolve responsibility or rationalize male sexual behaviour in incest cases.

Knowing the role of the mothers is essential in dealing with an incestuous family, as one of my respondents highlighted that:

> Regarding the mothers, if the mother trusts her daughter, the follow-up intervention is easier... I only expect that the mother does not blame her daughter and that's good enough according to my basic requirement. (No. 41: 8)

Herman and Hirschman (1981: 49) argue that the lack of a strong, competent, and protective mother does seem to render girls more vulnerable to sexual abuse. Technically, the prognosis of a victim's recovery is subject to the attitude of the mother. Some daughters have lots of negative emotions directly against the mother and ask why she allowed the abuse event to happen (Ward, 1984), for example. One therapist said:

> I think it is not only the father but also the mother. In addition, the girls who have many complex emotions about their father such as anger, shame and

despair; on the other hand, they usually have distinct anger towards their mum. (No. 20: 8)

Many of the negative feelings that the daughters feel towards the mothers might come from the disappointment of their desperate need for a woman in their lives who is supposed to be stronger. However, the mother is always given the role of scapegoat. In a way, the social construction of motherhood imposes on women unrealistic standards of ideal motherhood. These standards have to be striven for and seen to be maintained in order for women to retain their moral authority as mothers (P. Bell, 2003: 135). The mother's response to the disclosure of sexual abuse and the mother's relationship with the victimized child is very complex. Being a mother does not challenge traditional female roles, it also does not challenge women's oppression in the family. From a dynamic perspective, it might be very challenging but necessary for practitioners to articulate why the mothers have many reasons for not being able to see or hear when their daughter are raped, rather than just blaming the mother, which is not a valid response or explanation for incest. But equally, a consideration of the power of the mothers is very important in any discussion about incest.

The future relationship between perpetrator and victim

The father-child relationship in incest cases is diverse. The relevant literature depicts a wide variety in quality of relationships. For instance, some abused children appear to be very fond of their fathers. The literature concerned with the future, that is the post-intervention relationship between perpetrator and victim seems very sparse. There is a real question as to what the blueprint for the perpetrator-victim's future relationship as well as the plan for family reconstitution should be. This section draws on a number of interviewees' beliefs and practices relating to the map of the future father-daughter relationship. Courtois (1996) emphasizes that the goal of incest therapy is not to

reconstitute the family. In talking about the professional perception of the father-daughter relationship after knowing about incestuous abuse, most interviewees did not pay much attention to attempting to improve that relationship in the future because they realized:

> I think it's difficult for both father and daughter to maintain their relationship. Basically, I believe that clients don't want to see their fathers anymore. (No. 30: 9)

> It has never been a success in my experience. (No. 41: 11)

One therapist and one social worker had a similar feeling regarding the difficulty of healing the relationship between perpetrator and victim. Another therapist also commented on the possibility of the father-daughter relationship. She said: 'I don't think the relationship between father-daughters can be continued or revamped in future' (No. 20: 8).

The same therapist repeatedly talked about apology as a key factor and insisted:

> I think the father must recognise what he did and that it is his fault. In addition, he can take responsibility so that he can make an apology for what he did to his daughter; otherwise... (No. 20: 8)

Another interviewee, a social worker, raised the same issue as a key factor in recovery. She commented:

> In my view, basically, the father should admit his fault and apologise to his child. When I review the literature, I have found that the perpetrator tries to make out that he did nothing wrong. I've also found that the kid was desperately hoping to identify with her father. To a certain extent, an apology

> means justice. So the perpetrator is sent to prison, that is important, but an apology is even more important as a ritual. (No. 29: 8)

From here, it is quite clear that an apology is an important issue to deal with during the treatment intervention. The abuser must take full responsibility for his abusive behaviour and apologize to the victim. Such an apology can enable the client to feel some relief. This means helping the abusers come to awareness about their responsibility for the abuse. As Glaser and Frosh (1993) emphasize, only when this is achieved can they truly apologise to the child. However, one of the therapists had a different impression of the real situation of the apology. She said:

> They [father-daughter] never do it face-to-face. I am sorry to say that it has never succeeded in my experience. Perhaps I haven't had much experience in dealing with perpetrators. (No. 41: 11)

This respondent was a very experienced therapist and she had seen many different situations of child sexual abuse cases, and dealt with around 100 cases in total. However, she realized that it is difficult.

When talking about apology, another important issue that must be raised is that of forgiveness. Courtois (1996: 348) talks of forgiveness as 'a process of ceasing to feel resentment against someone or to pardon someone.' This issue was raised in another example when a social work supervisor said:

> Basically, I think that the therapist must deal with the issue of forgiving. That is to say that the father should be honest and ask his child to forgive him if sexual abuse occurred. He really needs to apologise to his child and take responsibility for the incest event. In that way, they may possibly be able to carry on the relationship between them. However, if the father were a tough nut, it cannot be solved. Even though the child might return home, it doesn't

> mean that the relationship between the father and the daughter has recovered. (No. 28: 15)

Another social worker also explored issues related to apology and remorse. She said:

> Concerning the father-daughter relationship, I think the father must admit he was wrong. If he doesn't want to recognise it, I think they might not able to amend their relationship and there is no way to meet again. I think it is impossible for them to meet comfortably. Perhaps there is a slim chance to continue if a father makes a full apology to his daughter. (No. 23: 9)

Another interviewee made a similar point. When I asked why she felt that in rape cases it would be more difficult to deal with future relations between the perpetrator and victim, this respondent commented:

> Um...I will see how the client reacts concerning the relation with her father in the future. Let me think, even though I am inexperienced in the topic of forgiveness, I still found how scared my client was when her body boundary was destroyed by the perpetrator and the loss of power over her body and autonomy in her very early stage. If she has got the experience both of rape and violence, the image of the father is probably extremely negative for her. Like my case, her father hurt her again after she was removed from home. Her father forcibly took her home from her own place and then raped her again. That was an extremely awful experience for her, so how could she forgive him for what he had done? In brief, some cases are not able to forget and forgive what the father has done. I can see that there are still lots of emotions, maybe some anger or something like that, but it is vast. (No. 21: 12)

In fact, there were different viewpoints about apologies. One social worker raised the questions of quality and reliability when asked what she thought about the value of an apology. She said:

> I do not trust that it is at all possible that the harm won't happen again after the father apologises. As I have emphasized, the perpetrators are supposed to be dealt with first, and the follow-up service must not move on until the situation is under control. (No. 5: 10)

Incest sacrifices trust (Blume, 1990). It is difficult for a victim to regain trust when she knows someone she is dependent on has raped her and knows this could occur again.

When I asked male workers about the same issue of the future relations between the perpetrator and victim, the difference of gender in the workers made no significant difference to their view of the issue of forgiveness. For example, one male respondent said:

> A: Speaking of which, forgiveness is her [client's] choice and is not something that every client will decide to do. I should respect her perception.
> Q: How do you think about this issue?
> A: I am a human being, I hope that the perpetrator can be subject to criminal proceedings and sentenced with a severe punishment.
> Q: Personally, do you think their relationship can be amended?
> A: I think there is little possibility of amending their relationship.
> Q: What makes you think that the father-daughter relationship is impossible to reconcile?
> A: The majority of clients cannot forgive their father, and furthermore they still ask the reason why their fathers have done this to them. Some of them do not even want to meet up with their fathers again... they cannot forgive, as they have been hurt so deeply. (No. 40: 10)

From this data, it is clear that the male practitioner did not project his own gender identification as a man and rush to a conclusion on that basis. On the contrary, this male practitioner made a similar comment as respondent No. 30. The reason why the majority of daughters cannot forgive their fathers easily, as Ward (1984) indicated, having reviewed the literature on fathers, is that many fathers continue to deny their actions for

as long as possible. When they finally admit what they have done, they also often shifts the blame to the mother or to others at the same time. In practice, it is not unusual for fathers to accuse the victim of being provocative and seductive. Ward also pointed out that perpetrators generally do not spontaneously confess, or seek intervention. The professionals, based on their experience, show the future relationship between father perpetrator and daughter victim as hopeless. Three respondents in different positions as social worker, social work supervisor and therapist respectively, but with similar clinical experience, based on their incest intervention, made the following comments:

> I think it is a problematic issue when talking about incest. In my experience, the majority of cases are separated eventually. Even in some of the cases that were not prosecuted by the court, the parents ended their marriage and lived separately. (No. 7: 11)

> I take a cynical view. I don't think she can continue staying with her family like before. And I don't know what degree of the relationship should be mended is enough. I realize that there are still lots of complicated issues between perpetrator and victim, in particular, father and daughter. (No. 8: 10)

> Um, I think it will depend on the degree of trauma...Personally, I imagine it is hopeless to mend the relationship since then, especially if the extent of sexual abuse has been rape. If it was a sexual assault, and there was no violence in it ... um, I still feel that it's quite hard to mend. (No. 21: 11)

These professionals from HCCG had similar views based on their child protection practice when dealing with father-daughter incest, in particular, on the issue of their future relationship. Indeed, this was also the case at TPCG and KSCG. 'The relationship between father and daughter is hard to amend.' This is frequently heard in the interviewing process, because even the hope to forget is very challenging (Canter, 1995). However, apart from those who saw mending the relationship between father-daughter

as hopeless, a number of respondents had no concrete idea about this issue when dealing with incest cases. For example:

> I try not to think about this. Quite far, really far away. (No. 19: 19)

> A: I think it is too far away. Moreover, we don't have enough counselling sessions to deal with the relationship between the client and her father due to a lack of budget.
> Q: Can you overrun the limit of sessions if it is essential?
> A: I have exceeded the limit once when I've dealt with physical abuse. (No. 34: 9)

> A: No, I have no answer to this question.
> Q: Personally, what do you think about the future relationship between your client and the father-perpetrator?
> A: I don't know. I have no comment even though I kept thinking. I am not sure, but I will ask myself what it means to the child and the influence as well. (No. 23: 9)

The future relationship between father and daughter might be an important focus regarding incest intervention. However, practitioners seem still in the process of learning how to successfully treat intra-familial sexual abuse, and in particular, they struggle with the restructuring of the father-daughter relationship. In my view, there are very problematic issues when talking about whether the client should forgive her father or whether the practitioners need to engage in helping the father-daughter's future relationship. Some practitioners might decide to forgo working on this issue because of the difficulties, like No. 19 and No. 34 who saw it as too far away or just like respondent No. 23, who did not have a blueprint about the future plan. Although these three had a common practice, they did not seem to have enough knowledge and experience in dealing with the latter part of incest intervention. One of the respondents, an assistant

director, when I asked her about the future of the relationship between father and daughter, commented:

> A: I have to admit, we cannot reach there at present.
> Q: What's your blueprint? How do you consider this relationship?
> A: When I was a director in a centre, I knew that the father-perpetrator admitted his fault in some cases; then the victim and the perpetrator will apologise...Um, (pausing and pondering) but it's not so easy in my belief and philosophy. (No. 12: 9-10)

Apart from what this respondent described, a few practitioners also indicated that they had never thought about the topic of a plan for the future father-daughter relationship, and its relevance to the child protection profession. The social workers obviously had few expectations concerning their role and their perceptions of their intervention, with both the perpetrator and victim. This could be a weakness of child protection workers in Taiwan.

Father-daughter incest intervention linked to feminist perspectives

This section focuses on how important it is to adopt feminist perspectives for the respondents' understandings of and reaction to incest issues. Feminist researchers propose that child sexual abuse including incest is related to a set of issues which are inseparable from questions of gender, and so are themselves gendered (Hearn, 1988; Kelly, 1988). Indeed, the gender imbalance of power in favour of men allows men to ignore women's world. On the other hand, the subordinate status of women also induces researchers to pay attention to the male world. Sometimes incest victims might want to tell an adult about being raped, and might expect somebody to listen to their pain. One of the important concerns in the feminist approach also emphasizes that 'to let women give their voice, to analyse the situation women face - the idea was not to change

women, it is male supremacy - feminists want to change (Kitzinger and Perkins, 1993 cited in Armstrong, 2000).

Respondent No. 20 is an experienced psychotherapist who recommended a feminist approach in treatment because feminist perspectives and family systems theory influenced her very much:

> I think it is an issue of patriarchy. It's very hard to talk about this topic without lumping together relevant issues. Yes. I think in the structure of patriarchy, the relation of male supremacy and female oppression is quite clear and the respect for seniority as well. Actually, the controlling of different orders is one of the characteristics of patriarchy. (No. 20: 4-5)

This respondent thought that a feminist approach provides a unique viewpoint, which is useful in its application to counselling work. An important characteristic is that, for instance, it is a non-medical model, which emphasizes survival and converts the symptoms into a survival strategy. This therapist said:

> To a certain extent, the counsellor/therapist must be sensitive to the issue of gender, or challenge the topic of gender on this matter, otherwise you cannot endow the victim with power. (No. 20: 19)

Although not every respondent addressed feminist ideas when looking at incest, some respondents reflected on their viewpoints which associated power dominance and gender inequality regarding incest. For example, four of the respondents (two therapists and two social workers) commented:

> Sex is a form of control. Having sex with you means you are possessed by me. (No. 24: 12)

> Probably from his growing experience, he didn't acquire the knowledge of respect for women and even needs to appreciate the partner's own right. Maybe that's the reason why he doesn't feel it's that bad and serious, compared to killing people or setting places on fire, even if he has trampled on her body. (No. 13: 5)

> I perceive that the traditional values of my society have generally seen women as lower and unvalued; the man sees his spouse or girl as a property and so he can get what he wants. (No. 17: 7)

> It's still a male-dominated society, men do seem to view women as 'a tool' for sex. (No. 16: 16)

As revealed in the data, some interviewees showed gender sensitivity in response to the notion of male domination. For these respondents, incest included a sexual component and an element of power, exploitation. They understood the inequality between men and women, especially in sexual relationships. Respondent No. 32 thought that women were treated as property which places females in a subordinate and submissive position. And respondent No. 10 thought that women are seen as a minority group in Taiwanese society. Another respondent presented her enculturation in a different way. She told me:

> I had some personal experience in relation to gender and power. I was taught that I should not apply violence to deal with my life, and also I should fear violence. In other words, I should be scared of men who use force to get something they want. I think, on the contrary, woman are blamed, disgraced and jeered at. In a situation where a woman uses violence, she is condemned as 'a whore'. But I think people in this society have to be taught this idea repeatedly. (No. 27: 6)

The argument is not that all men believe this or act in this way, but that such ideas are prevalent in the culture, transmitted from adult men to boys through direct instruction

and modelling, by peer pressure among boys, and the mass media. For example, one supervisor shared her personal experience and recalled that:

> In the social tradition, maybe not really because of tradition but it seems that men are endowed with authority throughout society. He uses this to control, to gain what he wants from his child. I think my family is the same as a normal family in a patriarchal society. I see my father as very authoritarian; mother is a very traditional woman, submitting meekly to insults from my dad (Chinese C.). Although I could not accept it in a way, my father was such a powerful person and my mom was the very opposite of my dad. (No. 8: 5)

Apparently, this respondent accepted the idea of men as superior as a result of the cultural background that constituted her social life. Her views reflected that she found the cultural and societal reaction fundamental to the problem of incest. This dependence is one of the factors that make girls victims. Meiselman (1978) commented that the authoritarian father-passive daughter combination is the most common incest initiation pattern when the daughter is very young.

Feminist therapeutic interventions are excluded from the social work curriculum in academic education in Taiwan and not even included in most of the in-service training programmes. This means that gender sensitivity is not dealt with but left as a matter of personal preference for the child protection workers. I suggest that there is a need to look more clearly at gender issues in the context of incest intervention training.

The influence of values, knowledge and approaches

In this section, I shall consider the significance of values as a central feature of social work theory and practice. Dominelli (2004: 63) asserts that 'values are the principles that have been elaborated to guide professional behaviour, its aim at creating a

professional culture that improves practice through their practice'. To begin with, value judgements are an almost unreflective process; many of our judgements of value are vague and inexplicit, which means our values are always linked directly to our actions and attitudes, a framework for making sense of practice (Legg, 1998, Thompson, 2005). Child protection practice is a good example of work in which values play a major part. Case outcomes are affected by the interplay between practitioners' knowledge of incest and their assumptions as a basis for a decision. Therefore, the social worker's uses of their approaches to intervention are intertwined with these two considerations, value and knowledge. It is difficult to disentangle them. Thompson (2005) stresses the importance of not overlooking the significance of values in social work. This is because, even if we are not aware of them, values will influence our lives, our professional role and the agenda within the role. An example is provided by informant No. 21:

> However, I think those judges, doctors and the other team members should eliminate the consciousness of hierarchy and keep a check on the influence of one's personal value and belief... Some of the victims have been caused secondary harm during the processes of medical examination and court procedures because of their excessive egoism. (No. 21: 19)

Another social worker pointed out that she as a person is key in deciding what approach is to be used:

> In this situation, I believe that it must be totally different when different persons deal with same case. It completely depends on the particular social worker, when she wants to open and close the case in hand. In addition, each social worker has his or her own style and approach in dealing with incest, so that the quality is different to a certain extent. (No. 7: 4)

Researchers have found that the practitioners' professional expectations reflect their role socialisation and training (Deblinger et al, 1994: 679). Social work intervention is

nonetheless also a very personal activity in which the personality, personal qualities and values of the practitioner have a significant influence on the professional relationship and consequently on the outcome intervention. Knowledge and attitudes towards incest, and beliefs in thinking about child sexual abuse/incest influence professionals in their efforts to prevent child sexual abuse and incest specifically.

It could be argued that the more conscious the child protection professionals are of their own values, the better they can monitor that their interventions and treatment approaches are consistent with their professional framework. Values find expression in this study as indicated in the answers regarding the major cause of incest, illustrated in Table 6-1.

Timms (1983) suggests that self-awareness of one's own values is increasingly urged for intervention planners and policy decision-makers, as this may help them guard against injecting their own choices in the helping process. Table 6-1 shows that not every interviewee had the same idea concerning the causes of incest. Therefore practitioners might have quite different approaches and treatments. They all indicated the dominance of men, their strong sexual desires, and the desire to take revenge by raping the daughter. The majority of the respondents focused the cause of the incest as sexual desire and power control, for example:

> Ah, I have never thought about that but I guess desire for sex. (No. 37: 10)

> I think it is power, or the desire to control. Certainly, it's still about having a physiological need. I think men in society view women as an object at most. (No. 28: 16)

Respondent No. 41 in fact held a different view as to what perpetrators can obtain from incest. This respondent was an experienced therapist. She expressed her thoughts on the perpetrator as follows:

> Apart from the sexual sentiment, I think the perpetrator can get the feeling of refreshment, hurricane and rejuvenation. This renewal process may bring him into a different life stage and life experience. (No. 41: 8)

No. 41 perceived that sexual satisfaction is what prompts the perpetrator to violate his own daughter but she also looked at the perpetrator as an individual and considered his inner motivation. Another experienced social work supervisor demonstrated that she had no sense of the motivation behind incest perpetrators. She commented:

> With regard to the motivations behind the incest perpetrator, I actually have very limited knowledge due to limited experience. (No. 32: 8)

A social worker who was this respondent's supervisee also argued that:

> So far, I am still not sure how perpetrators feel and think about why this [incest] happened. (No. 14: 5)

One of the interesting findings of the study was that these interviewees, No. 32 and No. 14, were unable to provide an account of why the abuse happens. Their account of what actually happened was pieced together from limited work experience. I think what they meant is that they wanted to indicate that they did not focus on the study of men. It is also interesting that, when I conducted the interviews, there were quite a few informants who actually asked me the same question, 'In your experience, what is the main motivation behind the incest perpetrator?' Some of the respondents honestly told me that they were so busy they did not have time to relax, pause and think about what was the cause of incest. Some respondents expected that after finishing the interview they

could find out the answer or I might accurately tell them, based on the literature or research findings, what motivates perpetrators. However, that of course was not my intention or purpose.

Professional reactions to sexual abuse may differ by gender as men and women experience living in society differently. Although men may not condone their position, they are generally dominant (Faller, 1993). I compared the respondents in order to examine the factors associated with the professionals' gender role, but found that gender did not make an obvious difference when both No. 21 and No. 40 talked about sexual desire as the factor motivating perpetrators. The literature suggested that there is another dimension to this question which is the perpetrators' desire for revenge on their wives' daughters due to a bad marital/sexual relationship. Both genders shared a similar assumption that incest is an act of revenge when a man fails to have successful relations with his wife. One female respondent said:

> Sometimes it might occur to take revenge on the child's mother by raping her daughter. (No. 21: 8-9)

Another male respondent said:

> I think the father wants revenge on his wife. He wants to hurt the daughter instead of the wife but there is no evidence to support my idea. (No. 40: 6)

Both No. 21 and No. 40 observed that there is a power struggle between the child's parents, because the incestuous father assumes his wife should provide him with sexual satisfaction (Herman and Hirschman, 1981). The daughter is used as a substitute when the wife fails to do so. De Judicibus and McCabe's (2001) study indicated that gender-typing resulted in increasing the blame of the target by male professionals but not by female professionals. However, Faller (1993) proposed that a female professional may

have more empathy for the mother of a victim having to choose between her child and her husband, because she is or has been in a comparably dependent position with a man. Alternatively, she may perceive the woman who sides with her husband as a 'traitor to her sex.' In sum, it is not impossible that gender identification causes each to be more sensitive when the victim is of his/her gender.

For those who viewed gender inequality and unequal power relationships as characteristic of incest between men and women or the abuser and abused, their ideas on incest or the relationship between men and women were aligned with the feminist approach. However, when asked which intervention approach they chose and used, they actually seemed very limited in their ability to explain precisely the appropriate intervention approach for incest in relation to feminist ideology.

A characteristic of feminist intervention models is that they acknowledge women's emotional experience and their voice. Maynard (1994) describes feminism as a theoretical framework concerned with gender divisions, women's oppression or patriarchal control, which is how my interviewees understood their social world. For example, respondent No. 23 highlighted a need for her to 'give voice' on behalf of the young victims of incest. And informant No. 19 perceived society as full of myths and traditional values when talking about family affairs, domestic matters and taboos.

In some situations, they might need to confront their clients in a way. For example, a therapist mentioned her experience. She said:

> Besides that, I have confronted her for not escaping from the difficulties because she might feel sick of encountering the situation of incest. (No. 20: 6)

As a therapist, this interviewee supported but also confronted her client when she found that her client had barriers impeding her progress. Griseri (1998) asserts that values are a combination of cognitive and emotional factors. Practitioners are always criticised because they are ordinary human beings; personal training and childhood socialization still shape their lives and characters very much. Training, education and social policy are also not value free, but rather reflect a particular set of values. Despite education and training, which specifies how to perform our professional roles, each of us has personal reactions to our work. Child sexual abuse probably arouses more personal reactions than many of the problems we encounter. For example, one of the male respondents expressed some of his negative ideas when asked what kinds of interventions of incest he was aware of that are available for victims:

> Subjectively, I will say, I have done nothing that can be viewed as a useful intervention in particular. Only psychotherapy/counselling is seen as a helpful strategy. I want to put more effort into it but time is insufficient. (No. 40: 9)

This quotation shows that this respondent experienced a feeling of helplessness as he perceived intervention in incest cases as weak. He also seemed to be under time pressure. Obviously his position did not really help him to solve the dilemma of his statutory role and duty, so that he felt somewhat relieved after his agency was assigned to focus on the second part of the procedural framework. Besides, this respondent recognised that child protection practice is tough work. However, he did not talk much about how to cope with it in relation to his knowledge, but he just showed his awareness of certain problems. For example, he said time is usually seen as a remedy for traumatic memory. Hence, having knowledge is one thing, but being able to use it in actual practice is a different story. In order to use knowledge well practitioners need to be able to have three skills: select, integrate and reflect in relation to reflective practice (Thompson, 2005). According to Thompson, 'reflective practice' involves going beyond

the idea of 'fitting the square peg of theory into round hole of practice'. It is necessary to build up an interactive process through which concepts and frameworks are 'made to measure' by the skilful work of the reflective practitioner (Thompson, 2005: 73). For example, there is no so-called 'the right answer' as if there is no only one possible solution to each problem in every single case situation. Therefore, practitioners should learn how to respond to and adjust the changing circumstance in hand. Some social work researchers encourage practitioners to engage in 'reflexive practice' in social work that places greater emphasis on practitioners' reflection on their everyday experiences (Dominelli, 2002a, 2002b; Payne, 2002; Dominelli, 2004; Thompson, 2005).

In discussing effective practice in incest intervention, Cooper (1997) has pointed out that a belief in the knowledge of which interventions are most efficacious for handling problems is central to evidence-based practice. She suggests that different methods tend to have similar results. Most of my respondents had been working in the field for some years, but they were still concerned about their enhancement of their professional knowledge, and receiving training in child protection. In this study, when speaking of protocols for intervention, many practitioners seemed to imagine that there is some ideal practice behind these interventions which the practitioners would find most appropriate and sensible. However, this is a process of thinking and doing. Child protection practitioners have to constantly reflect upon what they do.

Dominelli (2004) emphasizes that if a social worker cannot engage with clients' everyday experiences, they will make the clients feel disempowered. This is slightly in line with respondent No. 40's comment that 'the presence of intervention of incest for victims is viewed as their predicament' (No. 40: 9). Lishman (2002) argues that the focus is on how to manage change. Support and guidance are two important things to enable professionals to be stronger. One respondent (No. 41) clearly highlighted that a

professional's self-care is an important issue in the field of child protection. She commented:

> Considering they work in a high-pressure atmosphere, it's good to set up a rotational system for the social workers. Apart from the system, the practitioners as tool in the helping process seem to be a very much vital factor that must be taken into account if we want to achieve good practice. (No. 41: 14)

As she said, social workers themselves are considered as one of the main variables for providing a good quality of service. They need to be developed in their self-awareness and capacity for critical reflection in order to ensure that their motivation and past experience are used to enhance their practice.

Practitioners sometimes distrust or doubt that behaviour such as incest is widespread and ignore possible evidence, perhaps because of the difficulty of facing such a painful issue. However, from the client's side, disclosure of sexual abuse is a significant step in the victim's experience (Chan, 1998) and must be recognized as such. Thus when a child discloses sexual abuse or when a worker begins to suspect an alleged incest case, it is important not to back off and continue to explore the suspicion (Furniss, 1991).

Based on the above discussions and quotations, it is quite clear that the majority of respondents need more support and information in many spheres, in particular their professional knowledge of child sexual abuse work and knowledge about the gender issues of incest/child sexual abuse. In fact, one of the unexpected outcomes of this study was that some of them personally felt helped and empowered through participation in the research interviews.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I discussed four aspects concerning professionals' perspectives of the causes and the consequences of father-daughter incest, based on the interview data. I found two major theoretical influences in current child protection practice: the family systems model and feminist theory. I also addressed some issues in the professionals' perspectives linking to aspects of blaming, and the future father-daughter relationship as well as the dynamics of the influence of values, knowledge and approaches of professionals. The experiences and the shape of practitioners' education and training led them to take different stances in this study.

Jones et al. (1987) argue that there is no single form of intervention for this form of child abuse but working with an incestuous family potentially embraces any or all forms of treatment practised by many different professionals. In this study, most of the interviewees realized that they did not have a particular approach and that how they would respond depended upon the unique circumstances of the family and the available skill and resources of the practitioners, which is similar to previous research evidence in Taiwan (as indicated in chapter one).

Part of the problem, as shown by the respondents, is that the awareness of incest is a complex phenomenon and many be dealt with through different theoretical interpretations; therefore, practitioners may have quite different responses. It can be seen from the last part of this chapter that values are one of those things that we continue need to wrestle with for as long as we practise as professionals.

In the following final chapter, I will present a summary of the findings and discussions on a few key issues, and say something about the limitations of this study. I shall conclude with some recommendations for future social work practice in incest and the suggestions for future research will be also discussed in the last chapter.

Chapter Seven

Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

This thesis aimed to provide an insight into the issues related to the existing procedures and guidelines of child protection work in incest in Taiwan. My thesis covers several issues within the area of incest intervention in Taiwan: the factors which bought respondents into child protection work, the design of the social work education training curriculum in Taiwan, and the current statutory framework of incest intervention. The professional practice in incest intervention raises three major issues: first, is the professional competence; second, personal accounts of involvement with sexual abuse or incest cases and third, the stress in dealing with cases of incest. Other important concerns are the supervision system in child protection practice, the dominant issues in therapeutic intervention, the perceptions of Taiwanese professionals in incest practice and incest intervention as a gendered practice. The findings of this study make a contribution to child protection practice by revealing certain inadequacies and insufficiencies in the present social work education system and training in Taiwan. The thesis draws on a range of theoretical frameworks – family systems theory, feminist theory, pathological behaviour,

Discussion

The thesis was structured into seven chapters including this concluding chapter. In chapter one, I introduced the study as a whole and briefly reviewed the literature on conceptualizing father-daughter incest, issues in professional relationships, and the theoretical approaches towards incest. Following this chapter, I developed a deeper

understanding of the background of Taiwan, particularly in its socio-cultural context. Chapter three considered methodological aspects of the study and argued for a feminist approach to the analysis of my interview process. I discussed the power relationships between the researcher and the participants as well as issues of empowerment for the participants in the light of feminist research goals. The purpose of chapter four was to examine social work training in Taiwan and its educational context. In chapter five I focused on professional practice in incest intervention. The last chapter of findings examined professionals' perspectives on incest, from theoretical to empirical. These issues emerged from the key concerns raises in my study:

1. Becoming a CPW: the issue of job assignment in the public sector.
2. Issues of social work education training.
3. Stress in dealing with incest.
4. Major concerns regarding the child protection procedure.
5. The role of the supervisor associated with practice development.
6. The hierarchical relationship between supervisors and supervisees.
7. The issue of gender awareness and its effects.
8. The impact of gender roles and sexist attitudes.

These findings are elaborated upon and discussed below. They represent the conclusions drawn from the work detailed in the preceding chapters.

Becoming a CPW: the issue of job assignment in the public sector

My study explored how and why particular individuals come to work as CPWs. I was interested in the process by which one takes on the role of a child protection practitioner

with a focus on incest. Firstly, the interviewees felt ambiguous about wanting to work in child protection and many respondents believed that due consideration was not given to their personal preference *not* to work in child protection. The second factor my research indicated was that the social work environment in Taiwan is very different from that in the UK. The child protection social worker in Taiwan is still viewed as a general administrative civil servant rather than a specialist in child protection. My findings revealed that the system of the civil servants' recruitment in Taiwan is problematic because of the process of job rotation and job assignment.

In the public sector, each local authority can allocate their human resources. For example, the head of the Social Welfare Bureau might or might not hold a qualification in Social Work or have any relevant qualification. Due to the fact that the Taiwanese government does not view child protection social workers as specialists, there is a lack of specialization in that field. However, practitioners, to a certain extent, need to make an immediately assessment after finishing investigations. The supervisor acts as an important figure in a social worker's support network. Given the general culture of submitting to authority in Taiwan, interviewees depend on their supervisor far too much. My findings suggest that social work in Taiwan needs to become more vocational rather than be considered a bureaucratic task, driven by procedure. The place and identity of the child protection social workers should be reconsidered and re-valued in light of this research.

The issues of social work training in Taiwan

Social workers as described were assigned the position of child protection worker in incest rather than having chosen it themselves. In that circumstance, some respondents seemed to hand over the right of making decisions to their supervisors. 'Hand over' means that

they deliberately or unintentionally avoided reaching their own conclusions from the facts even though they were the only investigator to handle a case of incest/child sexual abuse. Some respondents seemed to think that if they did not arrive at a conclusion after their initial assessment, they might be absolved from taking full responsibility for making a decision. This is connected to the finding that the professionals' education, its context and the curriculum of social work in Taiwan do not meet the demand to respond to child sexual abuse or even more generic child protection. As mentioned earlier, a number of interviewees entered the field of incest without any child protection social work experience or education, so training is of paramount importance. It was possibly partly in consequence the case that workers relied very much on supervisors in their decision-making rather than feeling confident in their own decisions.

As indicated in chapter four, child protection practitioners in incest have little specific knowledge and clinical experience to handle assessments of incest and other sexual abuse cases. This was repeatedly highlighted by the interviewees, pointing to issues in the design of the social Work training curriculum and the job assignment system in the Taiwanese civil service. Developing good social work practice and service delivery requires a review of the existing formal qualifying training curriculum, to include child protection training and exposure to child protection procedures in social work training. The curriculum should allow students to develop a sound grounding in social work skills, knowledge and values, such as law for social workers, interpersonal and communication skills; inter-agency practice and partnership; ethical practice; an insight into human growth and development, and the need to understand the role of gender, culture and sexual orientation in all phases of the social work process. Practitioners need a broad-based education that enables work with systems of all sizes (individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations). It is worth reconsidering CPW as a specialist rather than a generalist practice. Therefore,

there should be specialized education and training for child protection workers as Corby (1998) found that the main weakness of professional intervention were the lack of specialist knowledge and expertise, and paradoxically in some cases, a blinkered focus on child sexual abuse to the exclusion of all other issues. Adequate knowledge and skills can help professionals become more confident in offering an appropriate intervention. Lack of skills and knowledge can cause violation of the safety principle, placing a child at risk.

There was little uniformity in the social workers' method of choosing a preferred approach. However, the approach to intervention often depends on the skill and experience of the social worker, which may further be influenced by his/her personality and attitudes. There is a need for training and self-development to raise the quality of the skills the social workers have to help them incorporate a feminist approach and gender sensitivity into their own work. This can result in a deeper understanding and better outcomes in intervention. Social and cultural factors also have a great impact on front-line practice in response to child abuse and incest referrals. Respondents cannot entirely avoid assuming shared values, concerns and interests with and between parents; in particular they also need to be attuned to the possibility of male violence towards their partners when dealing with incest. Many Taiwanese social workers do not recognise the notion of femininity and masculinity as influencing factors in the incestuous family. Unfamiliarity with these concepts leads to a lack of understanding of feminist ideas and results in, for example, the condemnation of the mother. My study showed that respondents had very limited awareness of feminist approaches. They possessed vague ideas about the issues of power and gender and the role of the dominance of men in societal value systems. The participants' views about the causes of abuse appear from this study largely as a collection of negative opinions about the perpetrator. The findings also indicated that emotional reactions towards incest exist, and that there is limited knowledge and a lack of awareness

of the influence of the personal values of the practitioners on the process of intervention in child sexual abuse. Therefore, better knowledge and training are needed in child protection organizations, so that better help can be given to children in vulnerable environments and in this way the risk of incest averted or its effects alleviated by appropriate intervention.

Apart from social work education and on-the-job training, which specifies how to perform their professional roles, social workers also have personal reactions to their work. In particular, incest and child sexual abuse may arouse more personal reactions than many of the other problems practitioners encounter. Anxiety on the part of professionals (often based on inadequate skills) can sabotage the investigation process. Therefore, practitioners need appropriate modules or workshops to help them recognize their personalities, personal experience, values and attitudes in order to prevent them from impairing their professional judgment or interfering with intervention/treatment. The Taiwanese government should think about how to modify the training for new professionals so that they are better equipped to deal with the complexities of their work. The pressures of investigations relating to incest are in line with the respondents' reluctance to take full responsibility found in this study.

Stress in dealing with incest

This study indicated that the professionals' competence is probably below the standard required, and that this leads to high stress pressure and more challenges for child protection workers in incest. As mentioned earlier, the majority of the respondents in this study reflected that they lacked specialist knowledge about incest itself and specific interventions, and lacked knowledge and an understanding of issues in relation to gender

and power. My findings showed that child protection workers were under stress for several reasons.

- Firstly, incest is still viewed as a taboo. Thus when the front-line workers have to get involved with the family to carry out an investigation or intervention, they have the statutory responsibility for confronting the alleged perpetrator regarding the abuse allegation and this might involve future legal implications in case they make a wrong judgement or a false allegation.
- Secondly, child protection workers in incest operate on a 'limited time frame' and 'the duration of therapy' to fight for the child's right and her best interest.
- Thirdly, the public perceive workers as powerful, as they can remove children from parents, whereas workers perceive themselves as powerless, their hands tied by the statutory responsibility of their own bureaucracies such as their unit heads, the police and the court.
- Fourthly, there is a lack of resources to offer adequate treatment, such as placement, counselling services and future plans, to incest victims.
- In incest intervention it is still not easy to obtain the forensic evidence due to some forms of abuse being invisible compared to physical abuse. However, respondents felt that they were expected to find out the truth if social workers wanted to use their statutory right to place the victim into foster care.
- Also at issue here is that incest or child sexual abuse work needs a multi-disciplinary approach. However, my observation is that work in the social welfare service in Taiwan to a large extent demands that the social worker manages everything, including knowledge of the legal system, relevant ordinance and regulations, medicine, social resources and education systems and so on and so forth. Intervention however becomes more difficult than in some other social work areas

because the client's and the incestuous family's problems are often intertwined and multi-faceted.

- Concerning the work orientation of my interviewees in working with incest cases, this was very draining for practitioners due to the complicated dynamics in the incest family and the broad social and socio-cultural context.
- There are no concrete plans in place for practitioners to deal with the future relationship between victim and perpetrator, and the victim and her other family members.
- In addition, the legal system involves a lengthy process for the child, causing potential secondary victimization and frustration in the incestuous family. Despite attenuation in the process of the court proceedings, the pressure is on the social workers to make a defensible case within a limited time period, which often increases the dilemma and indecision in their minds.

Major concerns regarding the child protection procedure

In evaluating existing child protection procedures, despite contradictory findings, there was common ground in the data on several points although the procedures vary from place to place. Basically, social work is a helping profession. It is difficult for a front-line social worker to accept to be called 'a destroyer' or 'nitpicking', when social workers have to remove the child from home to foster care. However, this is the common situation which social workers have to tackle in Taiwan. In order to work through this complexity, there needs to be some shift in attitudes at the broader societal level in the first place.

Another concern is associated with multidisciplinary collaboration. The prime duty of social workers is to protect children's safety (Children Welfare Law, 2002). To end abuse, they

need to access a number of legal options if a child is at risk, including having the child medically examined, as well as the ultimate possibility of recommending the removal of a child from her home or an application for a protection order from the court (Domestic Violence Prevention Act, 1998). Obviously, the child protection services system emphasizes the importance of multidisciplinary collaboration. The Child Welfare Law (Amendment) and the Children and Youth Welfare Law (2003) in Taiwan therefore proclaim that: 'In case medical staff, social workers, educationalists, babysitters, police, judiciary personnel, and any other parties implementing children and youth welfare learn that a child or youth is in the situation which may harm his/her physical or mental health, the child shall be taken to be in need. Professionals should immediately refer to local authority both verbally and in writing within twenty-four hours' (Article 34, Children and Youth Welfare Law). The timing of the referral is essential. The referral may lead to no further action, directly to provision of services or other help, including involving some other agencies or further initial assessment of the needs of the child. Given its complexity and emergency, it may be better to divide the work into a front-line service which includes working with other disciplines, i.e. police, medical staff, school teacher so on and so forth, and a follow-up service which is mainly long-term therapy treatment. So far, only in KCCG (as an experimental stage) are statements taken jointly by a woman police officer and social worker. Video recordings of the interview are promoted and used in court proceedings (The Sexual Assault Prevention Committee of ROC, 2004). As addressed in chapter six, many practitioners had no concrete guidelines, but they had official procedures for running all the general aspects of incest or child sexual abuse. This needs to be changed, to provide CPW with a full knowledge to enable them to contribute to and take the necessary actions to safeguard children, understand and appreciate their statutory roles and duties and that of other professionals and agencies.

Comparing the Taiwanese child protection process with that in the UK, lack of time was found to be a great source of pressure as was the immature structure for joint decision-making so that individual social workers are not wholly responsible for the plan and for what happens. Child sexual abuse needs urgent action as acknowledged by front-line child protection workers. However, the time constraints make it difficult to implement the statutory procedures as CPWs carry the full burden of assessing whether abuse has occurred. Bagley (1999) comments that social workers may cope with their pressures by ignoring many referrals, only accepting those which fit professional perceptions of what is an important or deserving case. The six months and three days time-constraint principle puts practitioners under considerable stress, leading to unhelpful coping mechanisms like denial of official bureaucracy and to selective ignoring of minor allegations of sexual abuse.

The role of the supervisor associated with professional development

Although the important relationship between effective supervision and effective social work practice was recognised by the interviewees in this study, the same interviewees also pointed out that the support of their supervisors was sometimes inadequate and unsatisfactory. A few respondents, including social workers and therapists, did not receive adequate supervision due to their supervisors' lack of experience and relevant knowledge. Participants also raised the issue that the quality of their supervision was highly variable. This caused problems, especially if they had changed supervisors at a particular time. One respondent mentioned that 'different supervisors had different styles of supervision'. I would like to stress the fact that minimizing the differences among supervisors is important. There is further the question of who monitors the quality of the supervision the practitioners receive. Especially in organizations where scarce resources dictated policy,

front-line social workers were struggling to survive without supervisors. Some interviewees therefore chose to receive supervision on a routine basis from their peers or senior colleagues. The practitioners appreciated the support from their peer group and from external contract supervisors and the specialist child protection committee, but more support from regular supervisors was clearly needed.

Respondents indicated that one of the key roles for a supervisor was to help social workers prioritize and focus on interventional tasks, such as, when to act, who to involve at which stage, and the time taken in the process of investigation (Peace and McMaster, 1989: 31). Secondly, over half of the interviewees talked positively of the managerial aspects of supervision. In particular, interviewees felt that practitioners need to have adequate emotional support to help them with job-related anxiety and stress. Thirdly, a few respondents found it helpful to be well supported and to be allowed an opportunity to express their perceptions and feelings of existing supervision arrangements, which included facing anxiety, dilemmas and stress. In this study, the respondents of TPCG mentioned that their social work supervisors were able to provide 'support' and 'instruction' whereas in the other two centres (HCCG and KSCG) the social workers mainly identified the 'administrative' support of their supervisors. Participants also identified that supervisors had the task of ensuring that their practice adhered to child protection and social work's value base and that supervisors should be in a position to help practitioners reflect critically on their practice.

In general, there appeared to be a consensus that supervision was primarily about accountability and quality assurance rather than professional issues. However, there was very shaky evidence of consistency among supervisors, whose judgements on a case might be influenced by their varying personalities, attitudes or experience. There is

evidence in the UK to suggest that in some rare cases, inadequate supervision has resulted in serious consequences for vulnerable children (Turner, 2000). By taking part in formally assessed continuing professional development and regular supervision, every child practitioner should have the opportunity to consolidate and build on their initial training. This should be available to all practitioners.

Concerning therapists/counsellors, supervision is an issue where workers often have to deal with both victim and abuser. A professional, such as a general practitioner, therapist or social worker, may feel dual and conflicting loyalties to the child and the abuser as both parties have competing interests; the professionals are expected to maintain a clear boundary between these two parties. My findings showed that a therapist's ability to deal with the two parties at the same time is subject to her/his self-reflexivity. The best interests of a child have to be of paramount importance, and it is often helpful to involve another professional colleague with abusers in order to preserve one's therapeutic relationship (Glaser and Frosh, 1993: 67). Although the data showed inconclusive evidence of the conflict of dual relationships of practitioners generally in Taiwan, the supervisory systems appear to be an essential mechanism to monitor both the quality of social workers and therapists, as well as the quality of the services they provide.

At a basic level, it is suggested that consideration be given to how the supervision resource deficit might impact on the nature of the child protection services. I found that some of the supervisors offered support to their supervisees during the investigation mainly on issues pertaining to procedural bureaucracy and formulaic steps in dealing with such cases. This could be in the form of 'neat' packages of instructions (Lishman, 2002) which are often a reflection of the government's official guidelines without individualizing the child protection procedures to a particular case. This results in the social workers feeling less supported

and less confident in operating the child protection procedures according to the needs of practice. In turn, it fosters an atmosphere of inadequate professional learning and development.

The information provided by the practitioners about the limitations in the quality of the supervision in two of the centres (HCCG and KSCG) identified lack of educational and emotional support as a potential source of poor professional development. Yet in other ways, interviewees commented that their attitudes, values and knowledge towards the issues of incest changed significantly to become more objective and professional. The majority of social workers involved in interviewing CSA cases, who had formerly questioned a child's allegation, are now more accepting. For example, the data showed that respondents were inclined to believe that their clients' allegations were usually true, without a thorough routine investigation of the evidence unless they thought there were contradictions in their clients' stories. I was told the reason why they trusted in their clients was, firstly, that they had learnt this in some special training programmes for practitioners dealing with incest. Secondly, they had been exposed to a lot of fresh ideas through reading groups or group supervision and so forth.

Both the social work and therapists' head office should consider providing supervision on a regular and reliable basis. Lishman (2002) suggests that the unavailability of quality supervision will hamper professional development. Therefore, the quality of the professionals' intervention and treatments would be strengthened by effective supervision and qualified education training.

The hierarchical relationship between supervisors and supervisees

Tough child protection work is a highly specific profession which requires competent and confident practice (Richards et al., 1990; Morrison, 1993; Turner, 2000). My interviewees tried to comply with their supervisors mostly in order not to have to face making any wrong decision about children exposed to incest. This reflected partly the unequal relationship that exists between my respondents and their supervisors. In terms of professional self-development this is not an ideal setting because a hierarchical structure makes every social worker highly dependent on their supervisors both directly and indirectly when it comes to making decisions or resolving dilemmas. This organizational culture helps practitioners avoid taking responsibility and independent assessment. This is maintained in a vicious cycle in which increasing dependence leads to increased avoidance with respect to taking responsibility which in turn leads to further dependence. This also explains why many practitioners in my study expressed their acceptance of and comfort with the present hierarchal structure. In my professional experience the hierarchical organization of Taiwan plays a crucial part in encouraging practitioners to depend on supervisory decision-making. I was told that social work supervisors are highly influential when important decisions are made in an organization.

This study found that inequality in power between supervisor and practitioner may cause loss of autonomy leading to a loss of confidence in the social workers in making their own assessment. It is also opposed to the aim of enhancing personal and professional development. This perhaps results in undermining the usefulness of social work supervision and its function through the organizational culture of bureaucratization and also through the lack of human resources in the public sector in Taiwan. The experience of CPW in the UK indicates decisions-making about a case through a team or case conference is preferable to decisions taken independently. As Britain encourages practitioners to make

decisions in a multi-disciplinary setting involving all concerned agencies and individuals, difficult decisions may be easier to take if more than one investigator is involved. In the UK unlike Taiwan strategy meetings and multi-disciplinary case conferences are common practice. The child protection work in Taiwan is still evolving and this presents problems with their child protection framework and the assessment procedure which is partly different from that in the UK. According to my interview data, respondents felt anxious about taking an active and immediate role in the child protection system.

Issues that also need to be focused on include equality among professionals and an awareness of the issues of authority and responsibility which in the present system is assumed to be learnt in practice. On an individual level, an awareness of the practitioners' own strengths and weaknesses needs to be maintained. However, my analysis of incest intervention approaches shows that the concept of reflective practice and the ability to demonstrate how to make an independent assessment whilst taking full responsibility for the intervention process were not present in my interviewees. Ongoing education and training are needed to help their professional development to be improved.

The issue of gender awareness and its effects

Feminist social work has developed since the 1970s in the UK (Featherstone, 2001). In Taiwan, there were very small numbers of masters and doctoral theses that introduced the ideology of feminism and gender relations gradually in the 1990s; domestic violence, in particular, was the most significant area in which a feminist approach was adopted. Some key themes within more general feminist writings about feminist social work and the feminist therapy approach have been developed. This expanding interest in the position of women has influenced the social work profession, but not to the extent one might expect

in a field dominated by women both as professionals and clients. Therefore, the professionals' knowledge of what feminist social workers actually do in practice is still very limited in Taiwan.

Emergent feminists of the late 1960s and early 1970s were inclined to be more reflexive in their extensive analyses of what it means to be a woman. Consciousness-raising was a central process in politicizing the personal: not only was it intended to awaken women to the injustices of their secondary social position, but they were also encouraged to reassess their personal and emotional lives, their relation to their families (Whelehan, 1995). Feminist theories of social work have been criticised in recent years for treating women as a uniform category and displaying insufficient sensitivity to the complex ways in which other social divisions (those of ethnicity, age, disability and so forth) impact on gender relations. As such, these issues are essential concerns for students, educators and practitioners alike in social work.

With regard to understanding issues relating to autonomy over one's own body among front-line workers, there was a poor understanding among my interviewees of the issues of boundary recognition as mentioned earlier. There appear to be issues such as the internalisation of the disempowerment of women's role due to repeated exposures to sexual abuse victims that may via counter-transference trigger personal fears as the majority of social workers are women. These issues alone require awareness-raising and training among workers in Taiwan who are in incest and child sexual abuse protection practice.

In this study, only three or four interviewees out of 39 worked in child protection teams because of an interest in gender issues. However, this does not mean that the rest of the

interviewees did not have gender awareness. They still shared their notions associated with their experience and their learning through socialization. Two main issues were of concern for these respondents: one was the unequal power relationships between men and women and between adults and children, and the other was the abusers' responsibility for creating the circumstances leading to incest. In examining differential power relationships within society, family feminists argue that sexual assault is found in the complex interplay between existing social structures, conventional attitudes and socialization. This refers in particular to the differential gender socialization of males and females in patriarchal society. That is one of the reasons why I decided to focus on the interviewees' motivations for choosing to become a professional in this particular field, as professionals need to be aware of how these issues may influence their work.

My field work illustrated that it was unusual for practitioners to think and be asked about the reasons why they wanted to become social workers or therapists at any point during their practice. My research findings offer some comment on the data, and the reasons why the majority of practitioners were not interested in or ignorant about working on incest/child sexual abuse through the issues of gender and power. It seems that the respondents could understand and accept that there is inequality and imbalance in child protection work with men and women and aim to change that situation, but, at the same time, there was no evidence that they offer a service that is particularly gender sensitive. Few practitioners, in this study, had a clear concept of gender issues in Taiwan, despite the sense that gender awareness is rising there. The lack of insight into understanding issues of father-daughter incest often results in portraying the mother as colluding with the problem or the daughter as a seductress. My research identified the importance of the role of social work education in providing social work students with greatly increased professional and self-development in the area of gendered socialization, particularly in

relation to sexual matters. If practitioners are to understand the issues involved, and therefore respond to them appropriately this is essential. I conclude by arguing that understandings of gender are essential in informing social work theory and practice.

The impact of gender roles and sexist attitudes

Male social workers may register differences in the way they work with men and with women. Recent evidence shows that professional responses vary by gender (Hicks and Tite, 1998). Kendall-Tackett (1991) further found that men were less likely than women to believe children's allegations of abuse. Despite the small number of male respondents, my study showed similar findings. As the majority of the victims were female, some might question a male worker's suitability in becoming a child protection worker. If that is the case, while working with victims, can male practitioners admit that incest is perpetrated by men against women and children and is a function of male power in a patriarchal society? The object here in my study was to examine how male practitioners deal with issues of gender. Given the small number of men in my sample it is not possible for me to generalise my findings. However, on the whole there seemed to be no significant difference between male and female workers' responses. However, one male social worker suggested that equal numbers of boys and girls are abused. This overall result was the same as Deblinger et al.'s (1994: 682) research conclusion, in which they found that male workers were probably more consistent in their professional and personal attitudes toward the dissolution and/or maintenance of the incestuous family because of their greater ability to relate to offenders.

Male practitioners' own projections or worries in working with female clients in particular might hamper their ability to help clients effectively. Because a male social worker

understands that most perpetrators are male, he may under-perform in his role as a social worker. Similarly, a male therapist may also have to struggle with gender issues. The male interviewees in my study felt embarrassed and uncomfortable in trying to gather details of the incident from the victim and at times this could affect the quality of the interview and therapy. This can lead to a lack of confidence and leads them to question the legitimacy of their role. Recognition of the power and dominance invested in the concept of the male role can also create a difficulty for the male therapist, as he might be very sensitive to these issues and over-compensate. In Taiwan helping professionals come from a culture characterized by male dominance, reflecting deeper societal values in relation to gender roles and power issues. The notion of 'value judgements' in relation to child harm and injury, means that professionals use their own values to make judgements about clients and about the whole picture of incest (Higginston, 1990).

A social worker's basic values must relate to individuals (BASW, 1996). Professionalism in social work related to child sexual abuse is endangered by gender issues leading to a potential lack of objectivity. For example de Judicibus and McCabe (2001) found that males blamed the target of sexual harassment more than females did. Qualitatively, the struggle the professional faces when dealing with children is often tempered by a lack of understanding of the deeper issues of a male-dominated psyche. This leads to an internal reluctance to engage in data-gathering in the initial phase of the investigation which can lead to consequent inadequacy in quality in the following phases. This may jeopardise successful prosecution of the perpetrator, leading to injustice for the victims and families, which is also an area of concern. The findings from this study suggest that better training and supervision can influence respondents' attitudes, knowledge and values towards father-daughter incest.

Reflections on the study

In conducting this research I made every effort to work in an open and non-judgemental manner, to make it as easy as possible for interviewees to answer questions. However, since my history as researcher also involved a previous role as a social work supervisor and some of the participants were ex-colleagues, I could feel that some respondents might find the interview stressful, or could become worried about their performance. A few respondents were curious to know if there were model answers. Although a few respondents were somewhat embarrassed or defensive, they nevertheless appreciated the overall purpose and value of the study. As mentioned earlier in chapter three, some said that they found the interview very profitable because it gave them the opportunity to think about their work in a systematic manner.

This study does not give full attention to all issues related to child protection work in Taiwan in relation to incest and gender. I have not, for example, explored the respondents' own perceptions about the deficits they feel exist in child protection training curricula related to gender issues and feminist approaches. I could not expand my questionnaire to include perceptions from supervisors specifically to address this lack of the education component in their supervisees' training programmes. Although I incorporated the respondents' perceptions about their own levels of gender awareness, I did not ask about their own views about the impact of gender roles and sex attitudes. Furthermore, I had a limited number of male respondents to gather views from. The majority of people who agreed to be interviewed were women. Therefore, it is not possible to conclude in general that there is any difference between a male worker's and a female worker's views are associated with cultural influences and reflected in their practice. Due to this I am unable to comment further on differences in view which can be attributed to the gender of the respondents. However, one of the main contributions this thesis makes to existing

knowledge is the identification of the fact that there is an urgent need to try to address the level of awareness of the issues of power and gender amongst practitioners dealing with child incest in Taiwan.

Recommendations for good practice in relation to incest intervention

Based on the issues raised by this study on father-daughter incest or intrafamiliar abuse intervention in Taiwan I would like to make recommendations about the direction in which this type of work might develop in the future. The recommendations are intended to improve child protection incest services in the light of the analysis of the major issues outlined in the previous chapters.

I. Practitioners' understandings of the complex problems of incest have gradually increased elsewhere due to education and research and this is also needed in Taiwan. More training and greater integration of gender issues is still required in order to understand how gender issues impact on incest and related interventions. Keeping gender as a central theme in their work will be particularly useful to practitioners who work with incest and child sexual abuse as it enables the latter to become self-reflexive about aspects of their societal context that shape them and their views of incest. According to my study findings, education and training for child protection social workers is currently inadequate and requires, among other things, incorporation of more topics related to issues of power and gender and how they may affect child sexual abuse work. The issue I have tried to highlight in chapter four is that for inexperienced CPWs dealing with child sexual abuse, greater understanding of gender inequality, of how men view women and female children in Taiwanese society might improve their ability to cope with the subject matter of their

investigation and interventions. Such understanding might be acquired as part their social work training. Current social work education in Taiwan does not help professionals examine gender power dynamics or reflect on the different social and cultural positions of males and females. The issue of finding a way of integrating gendered knowledge and gendered thinking seems to me crucial to tackling the limitations so many practitioners feel in their interventions. Furniss (1991) suggests that practitioners approach the problem of those issues through a senior colleague or supervisor. I would support this view. From my interviewees' experience, the main weakness of professional intervention was a lack of specialist knowledge about incest and gender issues. This deficit is necessary for the Taiwanese Ministry of Education to recognise and correct by its inclusion into the current training curriculum.

II. The ability of professionals to recognise that a child has been abused depends upon two factors: training and experience (Stern, 1987). Thus the social work practitioner's training has to change to meet the needs of child protection practitioners and the training in Taiwan needs to develop a balance between generalist and specialist training. Specialist social work status should be accorded to all practitioners working with sexual abuse cases involving children, based on specialist training. This will lead to more effective work in interventional approaches, and a greater degree of confidence among professionals.

III. In my thesis, I argue that practitioners' interests and concerns influence their attitudes and beliefs, and perhaps especially when they are not aware of this. In the Taiwanese public sector, job assignment or job rotation which takes no account of workers' preferences is outwardly one of many bureaucratic policies, but it also reflects Taiwanese authorities' views regarding staff who are viewed as exchangeable

administrators rather than as specialists in a field. There are considerable differences from one society to another regarding this. My experience in social work practice in two different Taiwanese local authorities showed me that the policy of job assignment is a common characteristic of Taiwanese society. The bureaucratic structure of the social services in Taiwan appears to be indifferent to the specific placement of social workers and often inter-transfers workers between different domains requiring differing expertise within the social service department. This leads to situations in which the social worker finds himself/herself dealing with child sexual abuse, specifically incest, without adequate motivation and/or specialist training. Any specialist training occurs only in an ad hoc, haphazard and unsystematic way. As suggested earlier child sexual abuse/incest should be a specialised subarea within the provision of social work services and this needs to be recognised and addressed by the organisation involved in the placement of workers. As discussed in chapter four, it is very problematic for those practitioners to be placed without appropriate knowledge of incest in this area, because they do not feel confident in their judgments and professional practice. I recommend from my findings that in the selection process of social workers involved in incest, it is vital to provide appropriate training including a broad understanding of gender issues and suitable motivation to work in this area. The screening process should involve gender-sensitive practitioners well experienced in incest work, who can through organised interviews and/or evaluations help select the most suitable practitioners to be placed in the child sexual abuse domain. I further recommend that the practice of job assignment and rotation, reducing social work practitioners to administrators, be discontinued.

IV. Decision-making in relation to incest cases in Taiwan remains a difficult and stressful part of the practitioner's job. In Britain, responsibility for taking decisions is not left to

one person alone but usually involves peer groups and case conferences. This is not quite the same in Taiwan. In Taiwan, according to my findings, practitioners often feel very much on their own when having to make decisions, despite access to supervisory advice and other peers. This results in high stress as perceived by the practitioners as they struggle to arrive at a decision with a degree of confidence and support. There is therefore a need both to re-think how decisions are made, and to help social workers become more effective in their professional practice. I recommend that decision-making should be a shared collective process involving relevant practitioners who may come from social services staff, doctors, police, legal professionals, educational instructors, voluntary organisations, and therapists as necessary to the case. This will enhance the quality and comprehensiveness of the intervention provided.

V. My interview data indicated how Taiwanese professionals felt about the disadvantages of the procedures in the process of the initial investigation. The time limitations for investigating and completing assessments in child protection cases and sequencing of incest intervention procedure were mentioned by many as problematic. As the risks to the child may increase with a longer time period for the process of investigation, avenues might be explored to alleviate the practitioners' perceived pressure and stress levels. In Britain such case work is conducted by a case work team. I recommend that difficult and complicated cases at the least should involve more than one practitioner who can work as a team to promote a more effective and less stressful working environment. Practitioners might be allocated in pairs depending on the case.

VI. In relation to the sequence of the procedures to be followed, the existing rigidity of the sequence makes it cumbersome, stressful and at times inappropriate to have the same sequence in all incest cases. One of the examples in chapter five (see respondent No. 10: 4), a social worker, worried if the child is prepared to go through all the stages in relation to the incest protocol. I recommend allowing for more flexibility in which practitioners can choose to alter some of the sequential steps in the intervention procedure according to the individual case dynamics after discussions with seniors or supervisors. It should be noted here that the matter of sequencing intervention steps is separate from that of the provision of clear, detailed guidelines for intervention which I deal with next.

VII. In my findings, child protection practitioners found the current guidelines for professional practice are still ambiguous. They found them not practically useful and they did not have sufficient knowledge to make every relevant decision. Not all service providers had detailed guidelines. In a way, the child protection system in Taiwanese society is far behind that of western societies in general, and there is not enough or adequate knowledge of intervention and assessment concerning intra-familial incest. I would suggest that a systematic protocol that outlines the steps in the intervention procedures should be developed to allow for less subjective assessment. This may be achieved by a review of the existing protocol, and guidelines which involve practitioners in the protocol drafting. It may not be appropriate to prescribe all the steps in the intervention procedures but all the significant steps should be clearly outlined to maintain consistency in intervention.

VIII. The support given to the social workers on the frontline, mainly from the supervisors, was according to my research of variable quality and amount. The exchange of ideas,

information, experience and advice is vital, and 'good supervision' is of paramount importance but from my findings, this does not occur very often. This affects decision-making in relation to intervention. Two recommendations spring from that. The first is that supervision should be delivered as a regular service to all social work practitioners in all intervention centres rather than this being a matter for individual centres, and being provided in a haphazard manner. Secondly, there is an urgent need to monitor the quality of the supervision offered to the workers, given the disparity in usefulness of the supervision perceived by many of the workers. I suggest that workshops or conferences on how to maintain and deliver good standards of supervision could help address this issue and raise awareness of the difficulties that the practitioners perceive. Likewise, the quality of the therapists involved in intervention also appears to be variable. It is important that practitioners should be aware of their limitations and should be monitored by their supervisors, attend case conferences and have regular and updating evaluations to help them to improve their practice. I recommend that a more robust supervisory system be put in place to monitor the quality of their work.

IX. There needs to be a greater awareness of the influence of personal and societal value systems which may affect judgment and decision-making. Self-reflexivity in professional practice contributes to the development of such awareness and should be fostered as part of the supervision of social work practitioners. It can be also trained through a combination of formal education, high levels of quality supervision, and professional and emotional support in difficult circumstances. According to my findings, therapists in this study realised that they need to acknowledge that their own issues interfere with their therapeutic relationships from time to time. Such issues, including for example understandings of gender roles, might also be explored

through continuing professional development. Such continuing professional education is at present under-developed in Taiwan, and needs to be established and extended.

X. Self-awareness is vital if the professionals are to recognise their impact on others, and vice versa (Furniss, 1991; Lishman, 2002). As mentioned earlier, some respondents had a very limited sense of the unequal power relationships between males and females in the social context of a male-dominated society. Learning more about feminist approaches to incest intervention might help professionals develop a critical perspective of the invention approaches such as family systems theory that they use to understand incest. It might, for example, impact on their view of the role of mothers in families where incest occurs (Parton, 1990). Parton (1990), as a pro-feminist man, points out that child protection practitioners should work towards giving women and female children the power and resources to protect themselves, as the empowering of the mothers is also one of the most important contributions to preventing the sexual exploitation of children. In my findings, respondents identified 'empowerment' as one of the effective and important elements of good practice. It refers to the process of gaining control over one's life and circumstance (Thompson, 2005). Therefore, I highlight empowerment as an important concept that should be added into the professional's knowledge via regular training programmes, not least because it is important for female practitioners to engage with their own position as women.

Final thoughts

Treating child incest victims and helping the family effectively and adequately are not easy tasks. This study indicated that there is no specific treatment or intervention approach that is most effective. The 'companionship' and 'empowerment' associated with the feminist model of intervention were weighed as effective and important by the respondents with respect to child protection practice. The difficulty is that there is no single comprehensive theory of child sexual abuse including incest which will completely cover this complex matter, because interventions need to be tailored to meet individuals. Therefore having a series of standardized steps in intervention may not be flexible enough to suit an individual approach. As previous evidence showed, none of the theories or models advanced for this type of abuse can explain the full range of sexual offences against children (Colton and Vanstone, 1996). From my previous knowledge, I assumed that the time-constraint intervention approach to child sexual abuse or incest would be a major concern. My findings highlighted further that insufficient knowledge about incest intervention plus the high-pressure atmosphere in the workplace are even more critical. The training failed to meet the respondents' needs in practice. Therefore, supervision was perceived as an essential personal development teaching dimension. However, the quality of the supervision was varied. This study provides sufficient qualitative evidence to inform future policy making about this area in Taiwan which in turn can help improve existing standards of understanding and child protection practice, when implemented.

Child protection practice in Taiwan needs more researchers to devote their interests to investigating the guidelines and protocols, and their standardization. Clear measures give the worker a good idea of appropriate practice and a strong sense of direction. I suggest adopting the use of a more reflexive approach to assessments of child sexual abuse and incest allegation. Reflexivity particularly means social workers constantly gain evidence

about how effective their actions are, so that they can change what they are doing according to the evidence of its value (Payne, 2002). If the professional can have the experience of internalising a reflexive practice, I think that this can provide a dynamic perspective which may build up a more flexible base for understanding and action, rather than to just follow official procedures or guideline practice. It is important to provide training opportunities for therapists/counsellors towards specific interests in the area of child protection. Although professional shortcomings relate in part to the fact that professionals' abilities to address sexual abuse are still developing, they are also the result of a lack of adequate resources.

Apart from the issues I raised in the earlier section, there are still a number of very serious challenges to be faced in Taiwan in child sexual abuse work. One important lesson emerges from this study. There is limited attention drawn towards monitoring the future relationship of the victim with the perpetrator and her family members, the mother in particular, through therapeutic interventions or social workers' planning. I also found that due to time pressure, a 'bolt-on' approach is often adopted by practitioners, which is a contributory factor encouraging limited attention to the future relationship of the victim-perpetrator-family and of appropriate monitoring. This is partly due to a lack of resources and manpower in the child protection organization which leads to a pressured work atmosphere and inadequate attention towards long-term relationship monitoring.

There was speculation before the advent of my study about the deficits in the current child protection practice and training in Taiwan which largely ignores the incorporation of feminist issues and gender sensitivity. It is also important to think about what might be specific issues for men as CPWs. It is necessary to create an opportunity for male workers to re-think the effect of not acknowledging women's sense of multiple experiences. I argue

that gender patterns can play a large part in rigidifying such processes, because emotion will affect our attitude and behaviour. Social workers and therapists whether male or female, need to clarify their assumptions about father-daughter incest if they are to provide effective intervention and treatment. Child protection practice in incest is a stimulating and challenging job, but it can also be frustrating and exhausting. Developing adequate knowledge and understanding about incest and professional practice in this area will assist in improving practice and intervention in incest. This thesis has contributed to this by increasing the knowledge base on the issue of incest intervention through its particular focus on the perceptions of professionals. The aim of this study ultimately is to help social workers and therapists to feel more in control of themselves as professionals and to gain a deeper understanding of their job and role in the framework of incest related work in social services in Taiwan.

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Appendix 2 Invitation Letter

Dear Practitioner,

This is an invitation for you to take part in a research project that will explore the challenge of child protection and incest practice.

I am now studying as a Ph.D. student with Professor Gabriele Griffin and Miss Bridget Penhale, at Hull University Gender Studies Department, United Kingdom. This project seeks the views of the practitioners who agree with a feminist perspective and those who do not. This research also intends to understand how these two parties perceive their experience in working with both incest survivors and perpetrators. It also seeks to explore how the experience of different theoretical bases influence their practice and approaches, since this directly influences helping strategies and professional beliefs. This interview is the main part of my Ph.D. programme. The participants are Social Workers, Social Work Supervisors and Therapists in Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Centres in Taiwan.

The schedule of visiting includes two parts. I will first visit your agency and hold a meeting to explain the details of this research. The second part involves conducting an interview with you. This interview concerns your own profession, experiences of incest intervention and the situation of your position. The interview should take 90mins to 2 hours so please arrange your time.

Your help is very important for me to conduct this study and also important for contributing to the studied topic. Please confirm the best time for interview by completing the simple form enclosed; and then return it to me no later than 20th of September. Thank you very much for your participation.

All data collected will be absolutely confidential. The interview is also anonymous. Information identifying you or your agency will not be disclosed under any circumstances.

If you have any comments related to this research or if you would like to share your experience further and personally, please do not hesitate to contact me at 'aliuinhull@hotmail.com'.

Again, thank you very much.

Mei Lin, Liu (9th September, 2002)
University of HULL
Field of Gender Studies and Social Work
(Former Supervisor of Taipei County Government Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Centre)
18, 3F, Lane 271, Sec 1, Pei-Hsin Rd., Hsin-Tien, Taipei County, Taiwan 231.
Tel: +886 2 29127447
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Invitation Letter [Translation]

邀請函

敬愛的實務工作同仁您好：

個人相當榮幸能在此正式邀請到您，在百忙中撥空參與我的研究計劃。我的主題是探討「兒童性虐待中關於父女亂倫議題中的權力、性別與社會文化脈絡」。基於研究倫理，首先各您鄭重聲明，訪談將以匿名方式處理，有關個人資料及訪談內容將完全予以保密。同時，不論在何種情況下，研究者絕不會暴露受訪者身份或公開受訪者機構之有關資料。特別說明的是，爲使訪談工作更順利進行，我將會全程錄音，但我保證所有聲帶僅供本研究之用，絕不他用。

個人是英國赫爾大學兩性研究所博士班研究生，目前受教於在英國對女性主義學術研究中有崇高地位的 G. GRIFFIN 教授，與在社會工作實務領域中專研暴力議題的 B. PEHALE 教授；此研究計劃的進行，係探訪直接接觸亂倫個案的第一線社會工作者及各相關專業人士，想明瞭大家對受害人與加害者的處遇觀點；並探索對比此類事件發生時，較具影響性的論點是哪些；想借助諸位專業人士本身的經驗、感想，處遇模式的應用心得，進一步明瞭社會中的文化價值及性別意識間的交互關聯與運作；本研究祈能邀訪到「家庭暴力暨性侵害防治中心」實際從事亂倫專業背景之社工人員、督導與二線治療師等術業兼備之士，實在滿心感激您接受訪談。

實地訪談工作將分兩部份進行。首先，在訪談開始前，敝人將正式拜訪機構，召開訪談前溝通，以探詢諸位之意見與考量，亦會利用此機會再次向諸位陳說本研究之主題、目的以及對所有受訪者談話內容保護之措施。其次，個別訪談時間將搭配諸位公務煩忙之空檔，訪談工作將集中在十一月份進行，全程約九十分鐘左右，不便之處尙祈海涵。

您的幫忙對學術研究以及實務工作的貢獻異常重要，沒有您的參與，不僅研究將不能施行，面對亂倫事件的痛仍將瀰漫於社會中。誠摯地您的加入，請於九月二十日前填寫回條，告知方便訪談的時間。非常感激您的參與！

若您有任何意見和想法，或想更進一步分享您個人更深層的經驗，歡迎您寫電子郵件到 'aliuinhull@hotmail.com'，由衷感激。

再次謝謝您的鼎力相助！

廖美蓮 敬上(09/09/02)
英國赫爾大學兩性研究所博士班研究生
(前台北縣家庭暴力暨性侵害中心保護扶助組督導)
連絡處：台北縣新店市北新路一段 271 巷 18 號 3F
電話： +886 2 29127447
E-mail：aliuinhull@hotmail.com

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回條：

願意參與此研究，一般較方便受訪的時間爲　　上午/ 下午　(星 期　　)。

署名：　　(E-MAIL：　　)

Appendix 3 Interview Protocol-The Interview with Supervisors

Issues in Father-daughter Incest Intervention in Taiwan

STARTER:

- Explain the purpose of doing this research
- Guarantee anonymity / confidentiality

Section one

A. BACKGROUND

1. What is your professional background and current position?
2. How long have you been working here?
3. How many incest cases have you supervised?
4. How many incest cases have you dealt with beforehand, as a social worker and as a supervisor?
5. How would you describe your belief or philosophy?
6. How would you describe the mission of your organization?
7. What is your own attitude towards this mission?
8. What kind of supervision approach do you use when you deal with incest?
9. What difficulties do you face as a supervisor dealing with incest cases?

Section Two

B. PROFILE of INCEST

10. Who are the main perpetrators and victims of incest in your experience?
11. Why do you think mainly girls are victims of incest?
12. What do you see as the major cause of incest in general?
13. What do you think are the motivations behind it?
14. What role do you think other family members play in the case of incest?

C. EXPERIENCE AND PERCEPTIONS

15. Describe what you do with a case of incest when it is referred to you or your supervisee.
16. What are the criteria by which you judge your supervisee's investigation and assessment report?
17. How do you deal with a situation when you do not fully agree with your supervisee's assessment of an incest case?
18. How often does this occur in your experience?
19. Regarding your past experience, what are the main reasons why you and your supervisee

think differently about a case of incest?

20. In general, what do the perpetrators really want to obtain from incest?
21. When you review the whole picture, do you think incest could be avoided, prevented or suspended earlier, if...? Give the reasons.
22. In your view, what is the social worker's major role in helping incest cases?
23. What is the major role you play in supervising social workers working on incest cases?

D. OPTIONS FOR TREATMENT

24. What kinds of intervention and treatment of incest are you aware of that are available for victims?
25. What intervention(s) do you actually recommend your supervisee to use?
26. What do you think of the intervention and treatment of offenders? (If available.)
27. There are different therapies widely used in the treatment of incest victims.
    In your opinion, which one(s) is the most effective and adequate? Please explain.
28. There are different therapies widely used in the treatment of incest perpetrators.
    In your opinion, which one(s) is the most effective and adequate? Please explain.
29. There are different therapies widely used in the treatment of families with an incest problem.
    In your opinion, which one(s) is the most effective and adequate? Please explain.
30. In general, what do you think the future relationship of your supervisee's client with the father-perpetrator and the client's relationship with other members of her family should be?
31. Are you the main person to decide what kind of intervention and treatment strategy your supervisees employ?
32. Do they usually agree with your decision?
33. Does it match their belief or assessment? Please explain.

E. ETHICAL CONFLICT

34. What role does the perpetrator's personal history play in your decision?
35. What role does the client perspective play in yours?
36. How do the supervisee's responses (reluctant...) influence your decision?
37. Have you had any experience of therapists having different viewpoints about how to deal with the same incest case?
    How have you dealt with such differences?
38. Have you had any experience of colleagues having different viewpoints about how to deal with the same incest case?
    How have you dealt with such differences?
39. Who can give you assistance when you encounter a dilemma during your supervision with your supervisees who are dealing with the incest clients?

F. SUGGESTIONS

40. As far as you are concerned, what measures should be taken to reduce/ eradicate incest?

41. Are there any other suggestions or opinions that you would like to offer regarding social work/supervision practice related to incest?

Interview Protocol-The Interview with Supervisors [Translation]

訪談工具（社工督導的訪談大綱）

探討台灣父女亂倫處遇中的議題

開場序言：

1. 說明本研究之目的
2. 向受訪者保證一切受訪資料將採取匿名與保密之原則

第一部份

A. 背景資料

1. 請問您的專業背景以及目前職務？
2. 您擔任處遇亂倫的工作有多長的時間？
3. 您過去曾經督導過多少亂倫案件？
4. 您過去曾經親自處理過多少亂倫的個案？包括你任職社工員以及你擔任督導後。
5. 您會如何形容您個人的工作信念以及工作哲學？
6. 您會如何來描述機構的宗旨？
7. 您對於機構使命的個人態度爲何？
8. 您個人在督導亂倫個案時所慣用的的督導取向爲何？
9. 在您督導亂倫此類案件時，您碰到那些困境？

第二部份

B. 亂倫的輪廓描繪

1. 在您的工作經驗裡，通常誰是亂倫的主要加害者以及誰是主要的受害人？
2. 對於多數的亂倫受害者爲女孩，您有何看法？
3. 一般而言，您認爲亂倫的主要成因爲何？
4. 您對隱藏在亂倫背後的作案動機有什麼想法？
5. 您認爲其他家人在亂倫事件前後常扮演了什麼樣的角色？

C. 工作經驗及個人認知

1. 請您描述，當一個亂倫個案轉介到您這裡或受督者手上，您們將會如何處遇。
2. 您會用什麼準則來評斷您的受督者之調查工作以及評估報告？
3. 針對亂倫案件，當您不完全同意您受督者的評估時，你會如何來應因這種情況？
4. 上述這種情況的發生頻率？
5. 就您的經驗，造成您和您的受督者看法不同的主要原因爲何？
6. 一般而言，究竟加害人真正想要從中獲得什麼？
7. 當您檢視整個亂倫案的全貌時，可曾覺得這樣的不幸或可更早避免、預防或終止？

請提出您的看法和論點。

8. 依據您的要求，社工員在介入亂倫案件時的主要角色爲何？
9. 您在督導社工員時的主要角色任務爲何？

D. 處遇方式的選擇

1. 那些處遇及治療是您發覺對亂倫受害人最受用的？
2. 那麼，那些處遇是你真正建議您的受督者使用？
3. 您對加害人的處遇有何想法？(如適用)
4. 目前有眾多的治療方式被廣泛使用來幫助受害人。就您個人意見，哪一種是最有效且適用於個案身上。請詳談。
5. 目前有眾多的治療方式被廣泛使用來幫助加害人。就您個人意見，哪一種是最有效且適用於個案身上。請詳談。
6. 目前有眾多的治療方式被廣泛使用來幫助亂倫家庭。就您個人意見，哪一種是最有效且適用。請詳談。
7. 一般而言，您如何期待/處理您的當事人與她的加害人爸爸以及與其他家人的未來關係走向？
8. 您是否爲你受督者在決定該運用何種處遇及治療策略時的主要關鍵人？
9. 您的受督者能不能同意您的決定？
10. 一般而言，這些方式或策略是否吻合工作員本身的信念或評估？請說明。

E. 倫理兩難

1. 亂倫加害人的個人成長背景對您在處遇上的考量有何意義？
2. 您覺得受害人本身的看法及個人意願對您在做任何決定時有何意義？
3. 您的受督者的反應會不會影響您的決定？
4. 您是否有過經驗與您的治療師在處理某一亂倫案時，有相互不同的看法？您是如何處理這些差異？
5. 您是否有過經驗與其他同事在處理某一亂倫案時，有相互不同的看法？您是如何處理這些差異？
6. 當您的當事人向您抱怨關於這個社會服務體系或抱怨她們的社工員時，您會如何因應？
7. 當您在督導過程面臨兩難及衝突時，誰能夠給您協助？

F. 建議

1. 就您所想，您認爲該如何減少 / 杜絕亂倫的發生？
2. 您是否有其他意見或看法，想提供給其他從事實務工作者及其督導？

Appendix 4 Interview Protocol-The Interview with Social Workers

Issues in Father-daughter Incest Intervention in Taiwan

STARTER:

- Explain the purpose of doing this research
- Guarantee anonymity / confidentiality

Section one

A. BACKGROUND

1. What is your professional background and current position?
2. How long have you been working here?
3. How many incest cases have you dealt with?
4. How would you describe your philosophy and belief?
5. How would you describe the mission of your organization?
6. What is your own attitude towards this mission?
7. What kind of intervention does your organization use when dealing with incest?
8. What kind of the professional social work authority do you have in case of incest?
9. What are the strengths and weaknesses of these interventions?

Section Two

B. PROFILE of INCEST

10. Who are the most frequent perpetrators and victims of incest in your experience?
11. Why do you think mainly girls are victims of incest?
12. What do you see as the major cause of incest in general?
13. What do you think are the motivations behind it?
14. What role do you think other family members play in cases of incest?

C. EXPERIENCE AND PERCEPTIONS

15. Describe what you do with a case of incest when it is referred to you.
16. What makes you believe that your client's father (step-father) raped her? Explain the reasons why?
17. Have you ever worked with perpetrators before? In what situation? If not, can you describe the reason(s) why?
18. According to your investigations, what do the perpetrators really want to obtain from incest?
19. What is the major role you play in helping incest cases?

20. When you review the whole picture, do you think incest could be avoided, prevented or suspended earlier, if...? Give the reason.

D. OPTIONS FOR INTERVENTION

21. What kinds of interventions of incest are you aware of that are available for victims?
22. What interventions do you actually use?
23. What do you think of the interventions for a family with an incest problem?
24. What do you think of the intervention for offenders?
25. In choosing a therapist for an incest case what criteria do you use?
26. There are different therapies widely used in the treatment of incest victims.
    In your opinion, which one(s) is the most effective and adequate? Please explain.
27. There are different therapies widely used in the treatment of incest perpetrators.
    In your opinion, which one(s) is the most effective and adequate? Please explain.
28. There are different therapies widely used in the treatment of family with an incest problem.
    In your opinion, which one(s) is the most effective and adequate? Please explain.
29. What do you think the most important goals should be when counselling an incest case?
30. In general, how do you deal with the future relationship your client has with the father-perpetrator and your client's relationship with other members of her family?
31. Who can decide what kind of strategy/ method/approach to use?

E. ETHICAL CONFLICT

32. What role does the perpetrator's personal history play in your decision?
33. What role does the client perspective play in your decision?
34. Have you had any experience of a supervisor having different viewpoints from you about how to deal with the same incest case?
    How have you dealt with such differences?
35. Have you had any experience of therapists having different viewpoints about how to deal with the same incest case?
    How have you dealt with such differences?
36. What kind of assistance can the supervisors offer you?
    Was it helpful?

F. SUGGESTIONS

37. As far as you are concerned, what measures should be taken to reduce/ eradicate incest?
38. Are there any other suggestions or opinions that you would like to offer regarding social work practice related to incest?

Interview Protocol-The Interview with Social Workers [Translation]
訪談工具（社會工作者的訪談大綱）

探討台灣父女亂倫處遇中的議題

開場序言：

1. 說明本研究之目的
2. 向受訪者保證一切受訪資料將採取匿名與保密之原則

第一部份

A. 背景資料

1. 請問您的專業背景以及目前職務？
2. 您擔任處遇亂倫的工作有多長的時間？
3. 您過去曾經處理過多少亂倫的個案？
4. 您會如何形容您個人的工作信念以及工作哲學？
5. 您會如何來描述機構的宗旨？
6. 您對於機構使命的個人態度爲何？
7. 何種處遇方式是貴機構在處理亂倫案時常採用？
8. 在處理亂倫案時，您覺得您擁有何種專業權威？
9. 這些處遇模式之助力與阻力爲何？

第二部份

B. 亂倫的輪廓描繪

1. 在您的工作經驗裡，通常誰是亂倫的主要加害者以及誰是主要的受害人？
2. 對於多數的亂倫受害者爲女孩，您有何看法？
3. 一般而言，您認爲亂倫的主要成因爲何？
4. 您對隱藏在亂倫背後的作案動機有什麼想法？
5. 您認爲其他家人在亂倫事件前後常扮演了怎麼樣的角色？

C. 工作經驗及個人認知

1. 請您描述，當一個亂倫個案轉介到您這裡，您將會如何處遇。
2. 事件透漏的哪些因素會讓您相信您的個案被她的父親/繼父所強暴？請說明之。
3. 您過去曾否與加害人有過工作經驗？當時的情境如何？若否，能否說明一下您沒有工作過的原因是什麼？
4. 依據您的調查發現，究竟加害人真正想要的是什麼？

5. 從事亂倫案件時，您的主要角色定位爲何？
6. 當您檢視整個亂倫案的全貌時，可曾覺得這樣的不幸或可更早避免、預防或終止？請提出您的看法和論點。

D. 處遇方式的選擇

1. 那些處遇是您發覺對亂倫受害人最受用的？
2. 何種處遇是您實際常予以應用的？
3. 您對於要介入解決家庭內所發生的亂倫問題，有何想法？
4. 您對加害人的處遇有何想法？(如適用)
5. 您通常是根據什麼準則來爲您的亂倫當事人（個案）選擇治療師？
6. 目前有眾多的治療方式被廣泛使用來幫助受害人。就您個人意見，哪一種是最有效且適用於個案身上。請詳談。
7. 目前有眾多的治療方式被廣泛使用來幫助加害人。就您個人意見，哪一種是最有效且適用於個案身上。請詳談。
8. 目前有眾多的治療方式被廣泛使用來幫助亂倫家庭。就您個人意見，哪一種是最有效且適用。請詳談。
9. 您認爲亂倫受害人的心理治療工作中最重要的目標應擺在那？
10. 一般而言，您如何期待/處理您的當事人與她的加害人爸爸以及與其他家人的未來關係走向？
11. 機構內，哪些人會影響您對處遇策略/方法/取向的選擇和應用？

E. 倫理兩難

1. 亂倫加害人的個人成長背景對您在處遇上的考量有何意義？
2. 您覺得受害人本身的看法及個人意願對您在做任何決定時有何意義？
3. 您是否有過經驗與您的督導在處理某一亂倫案時，有相互不同的看法？您是如何處理這些差異？
4. 您是否有過經驗與您的治療師在處理某一亂倫案時，有相互不同的看法？您是如何處理這些差異？
5. 您的專業督導可以提供您哪些協助？
6. 這些協助對您是否有實質幫助？

F. 建議

1. 就您所想，您認爲該如何減少/杜絕亂倫的發生？
2. 您是否有其他意見或看法，想提供給其他從事實務工作者及其督導？

Appendix 5 Interview Protocol- The Interview with Therapists

Issues in Father-daughter Incest Intervention in Taiwan

STARTER:

- Explain the purpose of doing this research
- Guarantee anonymity / confidentiality

Section one

A. BACKGROUND

1. What is your professional background and current position?
2. How long you have been working here?
3. How many incest cases have you dealt with?
4. How do cases of incest vary from other abuse case?
5. How would you describe your philosophy?
6. How would you describe the mission of your organization?
7. What's your own attitude towards this mission?
8. What kind of therapeutic strategies does your organization expect you to use when you deal with incest?
9. What are the strengths and the weaknesses of those strategies?

Section Two

B. PROFILE of INCEST

10. Who are the most frequent perpetrator and victim of incest in your experience?
11. Why do you think mainly girls are victims of incest?
12. What do you see as the major cause of incest in general?
13. What do you think are the motivations behind it?
14. What role do you think other family members play in cases of incest?

C. EXPERIENCE AND PERCEPTIONS

15. Describe what you do with a case of incest when it is referred to you.
16. What makes you believe that your client's father (step-father) raped her? Explain the reasons why?
17. Have you ever worked with perpetrators before? In what situation? If not, can you describe the reason(s) why?

18. In general, what do the perpetrators really want to obtain from incest?
19. What is the major role you play in counselling incest cases?
20. What is the major role you play in counselling the father as an incest perpetrator? (If available)
21. When you review the whole-picture, do you think a situation of incest could be avoided, prevented or suspended earlier, if...? Give the reason.

D. OPTIONS FOR TREATMENT

22. What kinds of treatments of incest are you aware of that are available for victims? What treatment approach do you actually use?
23. What do you think of the treatment of offenders? (If available)
24. There are different therapies widely used in the treatment of incest victims. In your opinion, which one(s) is the most effective and adequate? Please explain.
25. There are different therapies widely used in the treatment of incest perpetrators. In your opinion, which one(s) is the most effective and adequate? Please explain.
26. There are different therapies widely used in the treatment of family with an incest problem.
    In your opinion, which one(s) is the most effective and adequate? Please explain.
27. Should the specific goals for an individual session or a series of sessions be set by the counselor or by the client?
    What do you think the most important goals should be?
28. In general, how do you deal with the future relationship your client has with the father-perpetrator and your client's relationship with other members of her family?
29. Who can decide what therapeutic strategy should be employed?
    Does it cohere with your belief or assessment?

E. ETHICAL CONFLICT

30. What role does the perpetrator's personal history play in your treatment decision?
31. Have you had any experience of social workers/social work supervisors having different viewpoints about how to deal with the same incest case? How have you dealt with such differences?
32. Have you had any experience of therapists having different viewpoints about how to deal with the same incest case? How have you dealt with such differences?
33. What do you do when a client complains about the social service system or their social worker?
34. Who can give you assistance when you encounter a dilemma during your counselling with an incest client?

F. SUGGESTIONS

35. As far as you are concerned, what measures should be taken to reduce/ eradicate incest?

36. Are there any other suggestions or opinions that you would like to offer regarding social work/ therapeutic practice related to incest?

Interview Protocol- The Interview with Therapists [Translation]

訪談工具（治療師的訪談大綱）

探討台灣父女亂倫處遇中的議題

開場序言：

1. 說明本研究之目的
2. 向受訪者保證一切受訪資料將採取匿名與保密之原則

第一部份

A. 背景資料

1. 請問您的專業背景以及目前職務？
2. 您擔任處遇亂倫的工作有多長的時間？
3. 您過去曾經處理過多少亂倫的個案？
4. 您認爲亂倫個案與其他虐待類型案件有何差異？
5. 您會如何來描述機構的宗旨？
6. 您對於機構使命的個人態度爲何？
7. 何種處遇方式是貴機構在處理亂倫案時常採用？
8. 在處理亂倫案時，貴機構有沒有期待您覺得您用什麼樣的治療性策略？
9. 這些治療策略之優勢與劣勢爲何？

第二部份

B. 亂倫的輪廓描繪

1. 在您的工作經驗裡，通常誰是亂倫的主要加害者以及誰是主要的受害人？
2. 對於多數的亂倫受害者爲女孩，您有何看法？
3. 一般而言，您認爲亂倫的主要成因爲何？
4. 您對隱藏在亂倫背後的作案動機有什麼想法？
5. 您認爲其他家人在亂倫事件前後常扮演了怎麼樣的角色？

C. 工作經驗及個人認知

1. 請您描述，當一個亂倫個案轉介到您這裡，您將會如何處遇。
2. 事件透漏的哪些因素會讓您相信您的個案被她的父親/繼父所強暴？請說明之。
3. 您過去曾否與加害人有過工作經驗？當時的情境如何？若否，能否說明一下您沒有工作過的原因是什麼？
4. 依據您的調查發現，究竟加害人真正想要的是什麼？

5. 您在亂倫個案的心理治療中的主要角色爲何？
6. 那麼，您在治療亂倫加害人的主要角色爲何？
7. 當您檢視整個亂倫案的全貌時，可曾覺得這樣的不幸或可更早避免、預防或終止？請提出您的看法和論點。

D. 處遇方式的選擇

1. 那些處遇是您發覺對亂倫受害人最受用的？何種處遇是您實際常予以應用的？
2. 您對加害人的處遇有何想法？(如適用)
3. 目前有眾多的治療方式被廣泛使用來幫助受害人。就您個人意見，哪一種是最有效且適用於個案身上。請詳談。
4. 目前有眾多的治療方式被廣泛使用來幫助加害人。就您個人意見，哪一種是最有效且適用於個案身上。請詳談。
5. 目前有眾多的治療方式被廣泛使用來幫助亂倫家庭。就您個人意見，哪一種是最有效且適用。請詳談。
6. 個別心理治療是否應該有特定的目標？又或是這一系列的治療單元目標應由治療師或當事人本身來決定？
7. 一般而言，您如何期待/處理您的當事人與她的加害人爸爸以及與其他家人的未來關係走向？
8. 機構內誰能替你決定你該採用什麼治療策略？那些策略本身與您本來的個人工作信念或評估是否一致？

E. 倫理兩難

1. 亂倫加害人的個人成長背景對您在處遇上的考量有何意義？
2. 您覺得受害人本身的看法及個人意願對您在做任何決定時有何意義？
3. 您是否有過經驗與您的社工員/社工督導在處理某一亂倫案時，有相互不同的看法？您是如何處理這些差異？
4. 您是否有過經驗與其他治療師在處理某一亂倫案時，有相互不同的看法？您是如何處理這些差異？
5. 當您的當事人向您抱怨關於這個社會服務體系或抱怨她們的社工員時，您會如何因應？
6. 當您在治療過程面臨兩難及衝突時，誰能夠給您協助？

F. 建議

1. 就您所想，您認爲該如何減少/杜絕亂倫的發生？
2. 您是否有其他意見或看法，想提供給其他從事實務工作者及其督導？

Appendix 6 Introductory Questionnaire

November, 2002

Dear Respondents,

As part of my preparation for this study, I would like to ask you to fill in the attached questionnaire which is part of the interview for my Ph. D. thesis at University of Hull, U.K. The questions will help me to know your professional background and working experience before I conduct the interviews. As your information for the following interview is very important, please kindly take some time to complete this questionnaire as accurately and precisely as possible. Your response will be treated strictly confidential and anonymous.

I hope that you are able to take part as I am sure that your experience and perspective will extremely valuable for the study as a whole. If you would like further information about this research, you can contact me at 02-29127447.

Mei-lin, Liu

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study. I look forward to seeing you on:

Date:_____

Time:_____

Place:_____

Instruction: Please tick (V) the appropriate box for each question.

1. Name of agency: ( ) Taipei County ( ) HsinChu City ( ) Kaoshiung County
2. Position:
3. Name of respondent:
4. Sex: ( ) Female ( ) Male
5. Age:
6. Relationship status: ( ) Married ( ) Single
7. Children : Number ( ) Ages ( )
8. Age left school :
9. What kind of professional modules you have taken were related to your work?
10. Religion: Do you belong to a particular religion?
11. The reasons you chose to work on the area of incest: (tick one or more)

    ( ) Job vacancy
    ( ) On the advice of friends or teachers
    ( ) Concern with the issue of Gender
    ( ) Other (please be specific)_____

12. How many years working experience as a social worker do you have? Have you worked in what areas?
13. How long have you been working in this agency?
14. How many incest cases have you dealt with?
15. What influences most how you deal with incest cases?
16. What issues are you most concerned about when you deal with incest cases?

Thank you!

Introductory Questionnaire [Translation]
受訪者基本資料調查表

親愛的受訪者：

非常感謝您撥冗參與本研究，為使本研究之訪談能更為順暢與有效率，在此誠摯邀請您完成附頁問卷的填寫。這份問卷將有助於訪談的順利進行，和更有效率的節省您寶貴的時間，因此懇請您儘所能回答各問項，您的個人資料將會予以保密及匿名處理。

您個人的經驗分享與觀點對本研究有極高的價值，衷心感謝您的參與。關於本研究，假如你有進一步的需要，請不吝與我連絡（連絡電話：02-29139781）。

說明：請在適當欄位內打勾 （v）

1. 受訪者姓名：
2. 性別：（ ）女 （ ）男
3. 出生年次：民國
4. 婚姻狀況：（ ）已婚 （ ）未婚 （ ）其它
5. 子女數與年齡：
6. 宗教信仰：
7. 單位名稱：（ ）台北縣家防中心（ ）新竹市家防中心 （ ）高雄縣性侵害防治中心
8. 職稱：
9. 專業背景學歷與畢業年度：
10. 在校曾修習哪些課程與您目前的工作相關：

11. 您選擇從事亂倫實務工作的理由？
（ ）工作機會 （ ） 老師或朋友的意見 （ ）關切兩性議題 （ ）其它說明

12. 您從事社會工作的年資有多長？
曾在哪些實務領域工作過？

13. 您在目前單位服務了多久？

14. 您大致曾處理過多少亂倫案件？

15. 在您遇到亂倫案時，感受最深切的是？

16. 影響您處遇亂倫案最深的是？

17. 哪些事情是您處遇亂倫案時最關切的？

謝謝您！