

A New Poverty? Poor Old Single Women Living in Yangon, Myanmar

Khin Cho WIN

CONTENTS

- I. Introduction
- II. Background
- III. Is it A New Poverty? “The Appearance of Poor Single Old Women”
- IV. Single Poor Elderly Women in Yangon City (Urban Area)
 - 4.1 Research Rationale
 - 4.2 Research Objective, Research Questions and Hypothesis
 - 4.3 Research Methodology
- V. Empirical Evidence of Single Poor Elderly Women at Twilight Villas (NPO)
 - 5.1 Field Survey
 - 5.2 Analysis and Discussion
 - 5.2.1 Examples of life history interviews and analysis
 - 5.2.2 How family and community functions change in society
 - 5.2.3 Common factors for poverty reasons
- VI. Conclusions
 - 6.1 Summary of findings
 - 6.2 Conclusions

Key words: Feminization of poverty, poor single elderly women, new poverty, multiple poverty factors, inter-relation among poverty factors, urban areas, Myanmar, life history approach

I . Introduction

The term “Feminization of Poverty” was coined in 1978 by Diana Pearce. By using this term, Pearce meant that women were representing an increasingly large proportion of the economically disadvantaged (Pearce, 1978). Many academics from sociology defined the feminization of poverty in different ways after its original usage by Pearce. According to Chant (2010), the feminization of poverty is defined as: (a) an increase in the difference in the level of poverty among women and among men, and (b) an increase in the difference in the levels of poverty among female-headed households and among male- and couple-headed households (p.99). The female-headed households such as single mother families¹⁾, unmarried women, widows, divorcees and elderly women were identified as poor women in the developed countries (Goldberg and Kremen, 1990; Gelpi, et al, 1986; Northrop, 1994; Thomas, 1994). The female-headed households are usually overrepresented among the impoverished women. Moghadam (2005) also described that female-headed households consist of elderly women (widowed or divorced) with no dependants, or younger women (divorced or never married) with dependent children. It is common for all kinds of single women to be poor but, among them, elderly women aged 65 and over were disproportionately represented among the women in

poverty (Thomas, 1994). Although little attention has been paid to this segment of the poor population, the proportion of women aged 65 and over are more easily vulnerable than those in any other age group above 24 (*Ibid*). Thus, it could be argued that single women will tend to be poor when they become old.

Like developed countries, developing ones are also encountering the feminization of poverty. However, research about the feminization of poverty in developing countries has not identified conceptual issues so far²⁾. They have not recognized the common characteristics of the context in developing nations yet. Thus, this study will try to understand and evaluate how women are in poverty in Myanmar, one developing country with an attention on poor single old women. Feminization of poverty has occurred in Myanmar and the “worse-off women” of Myanmar were characterized by lack of income and assets, old age, sickness, heavy work burden, insufficient food, poor clothing, and low quality housing (Kyaw and Routray, 2006). Poverty for elderly women is especially **visible** recently even though this situation might have been unnoticeable in the past. Traditionally, elderly people in Myanmar were taken care of by families, relatives, neighbours and people in the community in both rural and urban areas of Myanmar society.³⁾ This practice is still preserved especially in rural areas even now (Myanmar Country Report, 2007). However, it is gradually being eroded in urban areas (Han, 2012). Traditional function for elderly care generally declines in Myanmar. One consequence of this situation is that the single elderly women appear as poor ones in **urban areas**. Thus this study will try to understand the complicated factors which cause the feminization of poverty in Myanmar with a focus on single elderly women in urban areas, Yangon, the former capital. As the previous studies focused on the feminization of poverty from economic, welfare and demographic aspects separately; and didn't emphasize inter-linked and inter-related family, community, economic and social factors which make women impoverished⁴⁾ (e.g Goldberg and Kremen, 1990; Thomas, 1994 and Harreller, 1996), this paper tries to find out the inter-related multiple factors which come together to contribute to poverty of single elderly women from a social perspective.

And this paper also applies Barnes' (2005) framework of social exclusion.⁵⁾ Figure 1.1 describes the conceptual properties of social exclusion and how these differ from those of poverty. Social exclusion focuses on multidimensional aspects of poverty factors such as physical needs, material needs and social participation. It is caused by dynamic factors. It concentrates on individuals, households or local neighborhood (Barnes, 2005, pp.13-16).

Figure 1.1 Main properties of the conceptualization of poverty and social exclusion

Poverty	Social exclusion
One dimensional	Multi-dimensional
Physical needs	Physical needs, Material needs, Social participation
Static	Dynamic
Individuals, Household	Individuals, Household, Community

Source: Barnes (2005: 16)

This study uses the poverty concept discussed by Paul Spicker (1999):

Poverty is not a single, easily identifiable condition, but a fluctuating set of circumstances. Poverty is treated as a multidimensional issue. The researchers focus on ten interlocking dimensions of poverty: precarious livelihoods, excluded locations, physical problems, gender relations, problems in social relationships, lack of security, abuse by those in power, disempowering institutions, weak community organizations and limitations on the capabilities of the

poor (p.241).

This paper doesn't use the entire concept of poverty above, but is limited to in dimension of problems in social relationships and weak community organizations and focuses more on social perspective rather than economic perspective. Poverty also has far-reaching consequences and it leads to financial and social exclusion⁶. Socially excluded people suffer multidimensional disadvantages because of the irrevocable decline of social networks due to material and cultural degradation of their neighbourhoods (Mathieson et. al., 2008).

This study uses the concept of poverty in term of not one dimension (financial exclusion) but multi-dimensions. Poverty by Barnes⁷ is not same like the one in this study. My usage for poverty in this study is more related to physical problems and lack of social support due to the problems in social relationships and weak community organizations which lead to social exclusion by Barnes. Social exclusion by Barnes refers to the multi-dimensional and dynamic process of being excluded, fully or partially, from the economic, social and cultural system which decide the social integration of an individual in a society (p.15). This study applies the poverty concept from Barnes' idea of social exclusion view point and applies Barnes' idea of social exclusion to explain the poverty.

This study applies the concept of poverty as a multidimensional social phenomenon⁸ as poor people in previous eras of traditional Myanmar society⁹ might be able to subsist with use of social resources such as family members, relatives, neighbors, and community support based on traditional norms. To sum up, this study focuses on multidimensional aspects of poverty factors including human networks¹⁰ of family and community, rather than single dimensional aspect of poverty factor like economy with an aim to uncover some complicated poverty factors and poverty processes of single elderly women.

II. Background

In aging, industrializing and globalizing Myanmar society, poor single old women living in urban areas are noticeably visible now and they seem to appear as a form of "new poverty¹¹". Such a recent appearance of impoverished single old females has never seen in Myanmar society before in outside world and this poverty can be surmised as a new type of poverty. In Yangon, the NPO called "Twilight Villas" takes care of poor single elderly women. A number of single elderly women who need social support are increasing, and which means such kind of poverty becomes visible now (Appendix 1).

The present feminization of ageing in Myanmar might stem from by the changes of demographic factors such as life expectancy, fertility rate and ageing population. These demographic changes have been suggested as factors that contribute to women's poverty in their old age. The increase of life expectancy of women and the decline of fertility rate might be related to the reason why the women suffer poverty in their old age. According to Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs of United Nations (2011), the life expectancy of women in Myanmar is increasing from 77.3 years in 2000-2005 to 88.4 years in 2045-2050 (Appendix 2). Therefore, the increase in life expectancy of women might pose serious challenges for the single older women who have no children to rely on. According to Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs of United Nations (2011), the fertility rate of per women in 1950-1955 is 6.0 and it decreases to 2.1 in 2025-2030 in Myanmar (Appendix 3). Decreasing fertility might be also one of the factors contributing to both feminization of ageing and feminization of poverty. If the fertility rate continues its rate of decline, the younger generations' capacity to take responsibility for the care of elderly in the society will be overwhelmed.

In Myanmar, as the ageing population increases, the proportion of the elderly female population also increases. The predominance of females has become more marked with increasing age (UNICEF, Myanmar, 2005). And, according to

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2011), the elderly female population of aged 60 and above also increases from 6.0 % in 1950 to 23.3% in 2050, that of aged 65 and above increases 3.6 % in 1950 to 17.4% in 2050, and that of aged 80 and above increases 0.3% in 1950 to 4.0% in 2050 (Appendix 4). Among the elderly, the fact that women outnumber men, sometimes referred to as “feminization of ageing”, underscores the need to pay attention to those issues that relate to older women (UNFPA, 2012). There is a need to ensure that elderly women receive adequate support to ensure their well-being in old age. As a subset of this group that is of special and growing concern are the elderly women aged 75 and over-the oldest age group (UNICEF, Myanmar, 2005). This makes the poverty of single elderly women (age 75 and above) in Myanmar (urban area) as an essential area of concern in the present study.

In developed countries, the nature of feminization of poverty may by external experiences, seem to be universally consistent in its defining features, but is, in fact, different based on economic, social, cultural, historical and demographic backgrounds. The nature of feminization of poverty in developing countries is quite different from that of developed ones. The reasons for feminization of poverty in industrialized countries are systematic where as those in developing ones are more cultural rather than structural. The developed countries have theoretical concepts for the context while there are no many theoretical studies for developing ones. In Myanmar, a developing country, the feminization of poverty¹²⁾ is also starting to emerge and especially within the single elderly women’s poverty group. It is clearly visible recently even though this situation might have existed in the past. In spite of widespread poverty in Myanmar, the comprehensive study for preparing a strategy to reduce poverty including gender equality in Myanmar is still lacking (Kyaw and Routray, 2006). So, this study will identify the complicated factors which cause the feminization of poverty in Myanmar, especially with regard to single elderly women’s (age 75 and above) poverty.

III. Is it A New Poverty? “The Appearance of Poor Single Old Women”.

Impoverished elderly women are prominently found in Myanmar recently, especially in Yangon (urban area)¹³⁾ and they are clearly noticeable now even though they might have been before. This is an emerging issue for women’s poverty recently and should be addressed by poverty alleviation policies specifically aimed at women. It is necessary to consider whether this situation is a new type of poverty which could have dramatic consequences in both social and economic changes with Myanmar society.

According to Han (2012), the care for the elderly, for both genders has traditionally been considered as a noble practice because of religion and culture in Myanmar. The extended family pattern has been practiced and the elderly receive social support from younger family members in a respectful manner (Han, 2012). Due to these ideals rooted in traditional elderly care within the families, relatives, neighbours and community, socially and economically poor single old women might have been unnoticed before even if the vulnerability of such women might have existed in society.

The non-profit organization (NPO) namely Twilight Villas¹⁴⁾ was founded to provide social care to the vulnerable elderly people in April 5, 2010 (Source: Official website of “Twilight Villas” and interview with the responsible person of NPO). Actually the poor single elderly women outnumbered their counterparts. This NPO appeared very much recently and it can be considered whether the poverty of single elderly women is “new poverty”.

Is it a new poverty? “the appearance of poor single old women”. This question comes to be under consideration concerning the emerging issue of poor single old women in urban area of Yangon now. Such poverty of those women may be due to the consequences of the transformation of social and economic situations in Myanmar now. In term of transformation of social patterns such as rate of increase in low instances of childbirth, migration of younger people, engagement of more family members in jobs and rapid urbanization, the traditional family care practice is fading bit

by bit these days (Han, 2012). Even though Myanmar society generally values and treats older people in a respectful manner, this noble practice has somewhat reduced in some rural and urban areas due to the raising trend of smaller families getting separated from elderly relatives through rapid urbanization (Han, 2012). This practice gradually erodes into urban areas especially in Yangon, the former capital and the most industrialized city with the transformation of socio-economic situations in Myanmar. It becomes an interesting point to consider whether the rise of the poor elderly single women in Yangon (urban) is “new poverty”.

In this regards, it is necessary to consider why such a kind of poor old single women appear in the form of new poverty. Actually, poverty is not a single issue. Poverty is caused by both economic and social circumstances. Employment, from an economic point of view, is not the main issue for these generations in Myanmar and many other factors come together for the occurrence of poverty. Thus, this study only focuses on poor elderly women in urban area of Yangon because of the rise of in numbers¹⁵. Such women have become transparent recently because Myanmar society shifts from the previous tradition to the new form with dramatic changes in social and economic conditions. The family patterns change and the nature of society also changes. The practice of a wider kin network of support within society is eroding gradually. To understand such kinds of complicated factors which contribute to the poverty of single old women deeply and comprehensively, this paper focuses on the issue of such women in Yangon (urban). This case is a good example of family and community transformation rather than income. The appearance of the single older women’s poverty is more related to human, community and family relations than economic factors which are poverty reasons basically.

IV. Single Poor Elderly Women in Yangon City (Urban Area)

4.1 Research Rationale

To uncover some complicated poverty factors and poverty processes of single elderly women, this study focuses on multidimensional aspects of poverty factors including human networks of family and community, rather than single dimensional aspect of poverty factor like economy. Yangon was chosen as a case study because it is the former capital and the population density is the highest among all other cities. According to Department of Population (2009), the population of female elderly aged 60 and above are larger than that of male counterparts and above. Table 4.1 below reveals the marital status distribution of household population by age, sex and residence in Yangon and it is found that the single and widowed women are more than their counterparts.

Table 4.1 Marital Status Distribution of Household Population by Age, Sex and Residence in Yangon (Urban) (2007)

	Age	Total	Single	Married	Widowed	Divorced/Separated
	Total	18,064	9,528	7,380	945	211
Total	60+	1,701	109	1,015	558	19
Male	60+	742	28	569	135	10
Female	60+	959	81	446	423	9

Source: Department of Population, (2009)

4.2 Research Objective, Research Questions and Hypothesis

With the intention to explore the complicated socio-economic situations which contribute the poverty of single elderly women, this study has main objective “to examine rooted multidimensional causes of the emergence of poor single elderly women in Myanmar which is undergoing dramatic changes in economic and social structure, with using a life history approach”. According to the above mentioned rationale of the study and the research objective, there are two research questions necessary to be answered for this study and they are: (1) in which multidimensional process are elderly women living alone shown up as poor in Yangon? and (2) how multiple poverty factors are related each other? The hypothesis for this study is “multiple poverty factors such as economic, family, community and social factors are coming one by one or together and inter-related each other to contribute to the poverty of single elderly women in Yangon (urban area).”

4.3 Research Methodology

This study applied the life history approach to understand the poverty process of poor single elderly women throughout their lives. Life history approach focuses on the significance of presenting the individual's subjective evaluation of his experiences and giving information about his social experiences (Bakar and Abdullah, 2008). According to Ojermark (2007), life histories are very useful for understanding chronic poverty and identifying the key poverty drivers. Life histories are relational and have the potential to link macro and micro processes. Life history interviews allow individuals to discuss not only themselves, and their lives, but also the social, economic, and political spaces which individuals inhabit. Life histories capture processes of change (Ojermark, 2007). Feminization of poverty in Myanmar cannot be known in details due to the lack of both research on social economic situations of women and the data on the poverty rate of females in Myanmar. So life history approach is the best methodology for this study which focuses from individuals to wider social framework. So this paper uses the life history approach as a tool of analysis and explains the socio-economic situations of poor single elderly women by making in-depth interviews about life histories.

V. Empirical Evidence of Single Poor Elderly Women at Twilight Villas (NPO)

This study chose Twilight Villas (NPO) as a case study because it is the only one NPO for vulnerable single female elderly and it is located in only Yangon city (urban area). With an aim to provide social care to poor elderly people, this NPO was founded in 2010. Even though the NPO cares for the both genders, the impoverished single women outnumber the poor men (Source: Interview with the responsible person of the NPO). The very much recent appearance of this NPO means that the very much recent necessity of social help started. And also the appearance of this NPO shows the increasing number of single poor women who need more social help and this kind of poverty is visible recently.

5.1 Field Survey

The field research was made at Twilight Villas (NPO) during October 15, 2013 and Nov 20, 2013. The interviews were made to responsible staff for collecting information about current situations of poor single elderly women (age 75 and above). The life history interviews were made to the targeted women about their social, economic and family

situations throughout their lives. The interviews were made for gathering information about age, marital status, family, native, education, employment, children, social and economic situation throughout the life cycle (young, middle, old age), community and social welfare support.¹⁶⁾ For examples, the questions relating their education, economic, employment, family and community were asked to know their social economic situations which make them impoverished. And also the questions such as “could you tell me about your socio-economic situations throughout your whole life, including your family members, please?” and “could you tell me the process in which you became poor step by step, please?”, “are there social relations between community members and you?”, “did you receive any community help?”, “how did you come to this NPO?” and etc. were asked to know the interrelationship among the multiple poverty factors. Most questions were open ended ones. Analysis was made for poverty factors such as education, economy, employment, family and community factors based on the information by life history interviews¹⁷⁾.

The NPO (Twilight Villas) took care of 60 poor elderly for both genders. Out of 60, the number of poor female elderly was 40 and so the elderly women suffer poverty more than elderly men in urban area of Yangon, Myanmar. The targeted people for my field survey were the poor single elderly women at the age of 75 and above. As the sample size, 30 poor elderly single women, out of 40, were interviewed and so represents 75% of population. 11 widows, 10 singles and 9 divorcees are identified according to their marital status. Among all elderly women, widows are 36.7%, singles are 33.3% and divorcees are 30% of all sample population. According to the field observation, it is found out that the rates of never married single women and divorced women are higher than those in the national data¹⁸⁾ by Department of Population (2009).

The life expectancies of poor single old women are 75-96 years and above. The details of life expectancies can be seen in table 5.1.1. So the life expectancies of poor single elderly women are higher than their life expectancies (58.8 years) by United Nations (Appendix 5). And the education levels of those women are basically low. The summary for education level can also be seen in table 5.1.1.

Table 5.1.1 Age Categories (years) and Summary of education of poor single elderly women at NPO

Age Categories (years)		Summary of education	
Age	Number	Education level	Number
75-85	11	No education	8
86-95	17	Primary education	19
96 and above	2	Secondary education	3

Source: Field survey from October 15 to Nov 2013

5.2 Analysis and Discussion

According to the interview to the responsible staff at NPO, the general situations of poor single old women can be summarized as follows. The situations of poor single elderly women in Yangon are very devastated and they need the very basic needs—food, shelter and care services. They need both financial and social support. The poor elderly single women are from the poor families and communities. Family functions and community involvement are weak in caring the vulnerable single elderly women in Yangon (urban). The poor single old females are socially excluded due to cultural degradation within Myanmar society (Source: Interview with the responsible staff at NPO).

This study explores the reasons for feminization of poverty in Myanmar by using life history approach which relies

on the ways in which elderly women are able to reconstruct their past through the narration of their life history. Table 5.2.1 shows the overviews of the life histories of poor old single women.

Table 5.2.1 Overviews of the life histories of poor single old women

		Age-10-30	Age-40-50	Age-60-above	Turning point
Woman 1 (81 years, single)	Education	Secondary			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Good		Not good	
	Employment	No paid job	Informal job	No paid job	
	Family	7 siblings	Care of parents	Lived with nephew and his family and niece.	
	Community	Urban (Same community)			
Woman 2 (95 years, widow)	Education	Primary			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Not good	Good	Not good	
	Employment	No paid job			
	Family	No siblings	Married. Had 3 children. Husband was merchant. Spouse died.	Lived alone. Not receive support from children.	
	Community	Rural	Moved to urban (new community).		
Woman 3 (83 years, widow)	Education	Primary			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Good	Good	Not good	
	Employment	No paid jobs			
	Family	5 siblings	Husband's economy was ok. No children.	Husband died. Lived alone.	
	Community	Rural	Moved to urban (new community).		
Woman 4 (82 years, widow)	Education	Primary			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Good	Not good	Not good	
	Employment	No paid job			
	Family	6 siblings	Married. Husband died after 1 year of marriage. No children Lived with one sister.	Sister died. Lived alone.	
	Community	Rural	Moved to urban (new community).		
Woman 5 (76 years, divorcee)	Education	Primary			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Good	Good	Not good	
	Employment	No paid job			
	Family	4 siblings	Married. Husband's economy was ok. Have no children.	Divorced with spouse. Lived alone.	
	Community	Rural	Moved to urban (new community).		

A New Poverty? Poor Old Single Women Living in Yangon, Myanmar (WIN)

Woman 6 (83 years, widow)	Education	No education			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Enough for survival.	Enough for survival	Not good	
	Employment	No paid job		Sold groceries	
	Family	One brother	Married. No children. Husband died.	Lived with her mother. Mother also died. Lived alone.	
	Community	Moved to urban (new community).			
Woman 7 (80 years, single)	Education	No education			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Good	Good	Not good	
	Employment	No paid job	Informal job	No paid job	
	Family	2 siblings	Lived with her mother. Supported and cared her mother.	Mother died. Lived alone.	
	Community	Urban (Same community)			
Woman 8 (78 years, widow)	Education	Primary			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Good	Enough for survival.	Not good	
	Employment	No paid job			
	Family	One sibling	Married. Husband was a football player. Has one son. Son was suffering mental illness.	Husband died. Lived with her son. Son was suffering mental illness.	
	Community	Same community			
Woman 9 (88 years, widow)	Education	No education			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Good	Good	Not good	
	Employment	No paid job			
	Family	9 siblings	Married. Husband's economy was ok. No children.	Husband died. Lived alone.	
	Community	Rural	Moved to urban (new community).		
Woman 10 (83 years, single)	Education	Primary			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Good	Not good	Not good	
	Employment	No paid job	Informal job	No paid job	
	Family	One sibling. Parents died. Lived with aunties.	Moved to Yangon and lived with friends	Lived alone.	
	Community	Rural	Moved to urban (new community).		
Woman 11 (74 years, single)	Education	Primary			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Good	Not good	Not good	
	Employment	Informal job			
	Family	5 siblings	Lived with parents, supported parents.	Parents died. Lived alone	

	Community	Urban (same community)			
Woman 12 (80 years, divorcee)	Education	No education			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Good	Enough for survival.	Not good	
	Employment	No paid job	Informal job	No paid job	
	Family	No siblings	Married. Husband is government staff. Have no children. Divorced with spouse after 7 years of married life. Lived with relatives after divorce.	Lived with relatives.	
	Community	Rural	Moved to urban (new community).		
Woman 13 (76 years, widow)	Education	Primary			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Good	Good	Not good	
	Employment	No paid job	Informal job	No paid job	
	Family	4 siblings	Married. Husband's job was informal. Had no children. Husband died.	Lived with the female friend.	
	Community	Urban (same community)			
Woman 14 (94 years, divorcee)	Education	Primary			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Good	Not good	Not good	
	Employment	No paid job	Informal job	Unpaid work	
	Family	No sibling	Married. Husband was government staff. Had one daughter. Divorced with spouse after 5 years of married life. Lived with daughter and took care of daughter.	Lived with daughter. Daughter was poor.	
	Community	Rural	Moved to urban (new community).		
Woman 15 (75 years, divorcee)	Education	Secondary			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Good	Good	Not good	
	Employment	No paid job	Informal job	No paid job.	
	Family	One brother	Married. Husband was government staff. Had two daughters. Divorced with spouse after 15 years of married life. Lived with one daughter. Another daughter lived with her ex-husband.	One daughter who lived with her married and migrated to another country with her husband. Her daughter gave financial support to her. She lived with sister-in-law.	
	Community	Urban (same community)			
Woman 16 (83 years, single)	Education	Primary			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Not good	Not good	Not good	
	Employment	No paid job	Informal job	No paid job	

A New Poverty? Poor Old Single Women Living in Yangon, Myanmar (WIN)

	Family	No sibling. Mother died when she was 7.	Migrated to Yangon. Her father died when she was 36. She lived with her aunt. Her aunty died.	She lived with her cousin sister.	
	Community	Rural	Moved to urban (new community).		
Woman 17 (78 years, single)	Education	No education			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Enough for survival.	Enough for survival.	Not good	
	Employment	No paid job			
	Family	No sibling. Parents died when she was 7. Adopted by adopted parents.	Lived with adopted parents. She cared them. Adopted parents died. She lived with a female friend.	She lived with a female friend.	
	Community	Rural	Moved to urban (new community).		
Woman 18 (72 years, widow)	Education	Primary			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Good	Good	Not good.	
	Employment	No paid job			
	Family	3 siblings	Married. Husband was a merchant. She depended on spouse. Had 3 sons. One son is a monk. One son is a soldier. One son is a merchant. Husband died. No children lived with her.	She lived alone.	
	Community	Urban (same community)			
Woman 19 (77 years, divorcee)	Education	Primary			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Just enough for survival.	Just enough for survival	Not good.	
	Employment	Unpaid job.	Informal job	No paid job	
	Family	No sibling. Parents divorced since her childhood. Lived with mother.	Married. Had two daughters. Husband worked at factory. Divorced with spouse. Lived with two daughters and took care of them.	Two daughters migrated to another country when she was 70. Daughter gave financial support. She lived with cousin sister.	
	Community	Rural	Moved to urban (new community).		
Woman 20 (83 years, single)	Education	Primary			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Good.	Good	Not good.	
	Employment	No paid job.			
	Family	No sibling. Lived with parents.	Lived with parents and took care of them.	Parents died. Lived alone.	
	Community	Urban (same community)			

Woman 21 (76 years, single)	Education	No education			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Good.	Not good	Not good	
	Employment	No paid job	Informal job	No paid job	
	Family	3 siblings	Lived with parents and took care of them.	Parents died. Lived alone.	
	Community	Urban (same community)			
Woman 22 (82 years, divorcee)	Education	Primary			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Good.	Just enough for survival.	Not good	
	Employment	No paid job	Unpaid job + informal job	Unpaid job	
	Family	2 siblings	Married. Husband was informal worker. Had no children. Divorced with spouse after 4 years of married life. Lived alone. Earned by selling groceries.	Lived alone.	
	Community	Rural	Moved to urban (new community).		
Woman 23 (81 years, widow)	Education	No education			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Not good	Just enough for survival.	Not good	
	Employment	No paid job			
	Family	No sibling. She was an orphan. Looked after by the neighbors.	Married. Husband's job was informal. Depended on husband. Had no children.	Husband died when she was 61. Lived alone.	
	Community	Rural	Moved to urban (new community).		
Woman 24 (86 years, single)	Education	Primary			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Good	Good	Not good	
	Employment	No paid job			
	Family	6 siblings	Lived with parents and took care of them.	Parents died. Lived alone. Lived at a meditation center.	
	Community	Rural		Urban area	
Woman 25 (89 years, widow)	Education	Primary			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Good	Good	Not good	
	Employment	Unpaid job	Informal job	No paid job	
	Family	One brother	Married. Husband was informal worker. Had no children. Spouse died after 3 years of married life. Lived with parents-in-law.	Parents-in-law died. Lived alone.	
	Community	Rural	Moved to urban (new community).		

A New Poverty? Poor Old Single Women Living in Yangon, Myanmar (WIN)

Woman 26 (84 years, divorcee)	Education	Primary			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Good	Good	Not good	
	Employment	Unpaid job			
	Family	4 siblings	Married. Husband was informal worker. Had one son. Depended on spouse. Son got married and lived with parents-in-law.	Husband died. Lived alone.	
	Community	Rural	Moved to urban (new community).		
Woman 27 (88 years, single)	Education	Primary			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Not good	Not good	Not good	
	Employment	No paid job	Informal job	No paid job	
	Family	7 siblings	Lived with parents and cared of them.	Parents died. Lived alone.	
	Community	Urban (same community)			
Woman 28 (87 years, divorcee)	Education	No education			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Not good	Just enough for survival.	Not good	
	Employment	No paid job	Informal job	No paid job	
	Family	4 siblings	Married. Husband was informal worker. Had no children.	Husband died. Lived alone	
	Community	Rural	Moved to urban (new community).		
Woman 29 (75 years, divorcee)	Education	Secondary			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Good	Good	Not good	
	Employment	No paid job	Informal job	No paid job	
	Family	7 siblings	Married. Husband was government staff. Had no children.	Divorced with husband. Lived relatives.	
	Community	Rural	Moved to urban (new community).		
Woman 30 (84 years, widow)	Education	Primary			Become disability. And need social help and feel social exclusion. Arrived NPO.
	Household income	Good	Good	Not good	
	Employment	Unpaid job			
	Family	No sibling	Married. Husband was a government staff. Had no children. Depended on husband.	Husband died. Lived alone.	
	Community	Rural	Moved to urban (new community).		

Source: Source: Field survey from October 15 to Nov 2013

5.2.1 Examples of life history interviews and analysis

The following are chosen as some examples of life history approach of this study.

Life history of Woman A

Age	-83							
Marital status	-widow							
Native	- rural area							
Family	-one brother							
	Age-10	Age-20	Age-30	Age-40	Age-50	Age-60	Age-70	Age-80
Education	No education							
Household income	Household income of parents was just enough for survival, parents were farmers		Household income was just enough for survival.			Employment income was not enough.		Became physical disability at 80. Need social and financial support. Feel social exclusion and isolation.
Employment	No-paid job		Informal factory worker Husband worked as informal factory worker		Earned as a grocery seller		No paid job	
Family	Lived with parents.		Got married. Migrated to Yangon. Had no children.		Husband died when she was 42. Lived with mother and supported mother.	Mother died when she was 62. She lived alone.		
Community	Rural		Urban (new/ different community)					Neighbour informed NPO. Arrived NPO.

Life history of Woman B

Age	-78							
Marital status	-never married single							
Native	-rural area							
Family	- no sibling							
	Age-10	Age-20	Age-30	Age-40	Age-50	Age-60	Age-70	Age-80
Education	Primary level							
Household income	Household income was just enough for survival.					No employment income		She became physical disability at 77. Need social and financial support. Feel social exclusion and isolation.
Employment	No paid job							
Family	Parents died when she was 7. She was adopted and Taken to Yangon (urban) by adopted parents.		Lived with adopted parents.			Adopted parents died when she was 60.		
Community	Rural		Urban (new/ different community)			She lived with a female friend after the death of her adopted parents.		Her female friend informed NPO. Arrived NPO.

Life history of Woman C

Age	-81								
Marital status	-never married								
Native	single								
Family	-Yangon -8 siblings								
	Age-10	Age-20	Age-30	Age-40	Age-50	Age-60	Age-70	Age-80	Age-90
Education	Secondary level								She became physical disability at 81 and needed social and financial support. Feel social exclusion and isolation.
Household income	Household income of parents was enough.			Employment income was enough.			No employment income		
Employment	No paid job		She worked informal job since 24.		No paid job				
Family	Lived with parents, brothers and sisters.		Lived with parents. Supported parents.		Her parents died when she was 57. Lived with nephew and his family and niece.				
Community	Urban (same community)								
									Arrived NPO.

Woman A was chosen as one example of life-history interviews.

Woman A

Woman A is a widow at the age of 83. She was born in Phaunggyi (rural area). In her young age, she lived with her parents who were farmers. Their household income was just enough for survival. She had one brother. She had no education. She did unpaid household works. She got married at the age of 29 and went to Yangon with her husband. Her husband worked as a factory worker. She also worked as a factory worker. They had no children. The household income was just enough for survival. Her husband died when she was 42. So she lived with her mother after her husband's death. She changed the work and earned her living as grocery seller. Her sibling already died at that time. She also took care of her mother. At her age of 65, her mother died. So she lived alone after her mother's death. She has no relatives in Yangon. She could not work anymore when she was 73. She lived on her few savings during her middle age. She became physical disability. But she had no body to take care of her. She was socially excluded and felt isolation. Finally she arrived NPO when she was 80. She feels satisfaction at NPO.

Life history analysis of woman A's life story: Woman A was a rural dweller until she was 29. Less family members made less chance to make strong human relationships among family members. The fact that she had only one sibling is family factor which makes her poor since childhood. And she had no education and this social factor became the long lasting social factor which influences her whole life and makes her poor throughout her life. Thus, these family and social factor were interrelated each other since her childhood.

Her life transition took place when she got married at her age 29. She migrated to urban area of Yangon with her husband. She moved to new community. There were weak human networks among community. She did the informal work after marriage. Her husband's work was also informal. Their household income was just enough for survival. These economic factors were contributing her poverty when her life time was middle age. Moreover, she had no children. So, this family factor was one of the crucial reasons for her poverty. Thus, economic and family factors were inter-linked and made her poor at her middle age.

Her life changed again when her spouse died at her age 42. Family factor of her husband's death interlinked the other family factor like the situation that she lived with her mother and took care of her mother after the death of her spouse. Her job changed when her husband died and lived with her mother and she earned her livings by selling groceries. These economic and family factors of double role for care work and income for living were coming

together and inter-related at that time and made her impoverished in the middle of her life.

At her age of 65, her life transition happened again when her mother died. Then, she lived alone. She felt lonely and isolation. And also she could not work anymore. Thus, family factors of living alone, no relatives and community factors of weak human relations and no mutual help within her community were coming together and interlinked and supporting the situations which made her old age poverty. In addition, she became physical disability. The community factor of weak human relationships which made the social isolation is very crucial for her poverty. Thus, family, social, community and economic factors were interlinked and contributing to poverty in her later life.

Woman B was chosen as another example of life-history interviews.

Woman B

Woman B is 78 years old of never-married single woman. Her native is Oathpho (rural area). When she was young, she lived with her parents in Oathpho. Her parents were farmers. She has no sibling. She can just read and write. Her parents died when she was 7. She had no relatives. Her adopted parents adopted her and took her to Yangon when her parents died. So she lived with her adopted parents. She did unpaid household works. She didn't get married and remained single and lived with her adopted parents in her middle age. She did household works and provided care services to her adopted parents throughout her life. Her adopted parents died when she was 60. After her adopted parents' death, she lived with a female friend. She became physical disability at the age of 77. Her friend and community could not give her social help. She was socially excluded and felt isolation. Finally she arrived NPO. She feels satisfaction at NPO.

Life history analysis of woman B's life story: Woman B was a rural dweller until she was 7. Her parents were farmers and died early when she was 7. She had no siblings and no relatives as well. The lack of family members and relatives made no chance to make human relationships among family members and relatives since her childhood.

She was adopted at her age of 7 after her parents' death. She migrated to urban area of Yangon with her adopted parents. She moved to new community. Economy factor of no paid job and family factor of no sibling made her poor. She didn't get married and remained single and lived with her adopted parents in her middle age. Thus, economic, family and social factors were inter-linked and made her poor.

Her life changed again when her adopted parents died when she was 60. She lived with a female friend. Social relations and mutual help in community were weak. The family factor of no sibling and community factors of weak social relationships in community were contributing to her poverty in her old age. And also she could not work anymore. In addition, she became physical disability when she was 77. Her friend could not provide her social care and she didn't receive any community help as well. She felt isolation and socially excluded and arrived NPO. Thus, family, social, community and economic factors were coming together and interlinked and pushing her into poverty.

Woman C was also chosen as additional example of life-history interview.

Woman C

Woman C is 81 years old. She is a never-married single woman. Her native is Yangon. Her father was a teacher and her mother was a house wife. The household income of her parents was enough for their livings. She completed secondary education. She had 8 siblings. She had no paid job until age 24 and depended on parents. She worked as informal worker at 24 and supported family. She worked and supported parents until her age was 59. She had no paid job since age 60. Her parents died when she was 61. She lived with her nephew and his family and her niece after the death of her parents until 80. She became physical disability at age 81. Her niece, nephew and his family could not take care of her. She didn't receive social help from community as well. She was socially excluded and felt isolation. Finally she arrived NPO. She feels satisfaction at NPO.

Life history analysis of woman C's life story: Woman C is an urban dweller since birth. She lived in the same community throughout her life. She has many siblings. The household income of their parents was enough for their livings. Economic, social and family factors were strong until her middle age.

She remained single and worked as informal worker at 24. She supported her parents. She worked, lived with her parents until 50. According to her life history, family and economic factors were still strong and didn't make her poor until 59. But there were weak human relations among the community though she lived in the same community.

Her life changed at 59, her parents died and she had no paid job also. After her parents' death, she lived with her niece and nephew and his family. The household income was enough until 70 due to her savings and it was not good when she was 71. Economic factor made her poor at that time. And she became physical disability and needed social and financial support at 81. Her niece and nephew's family could not give her social help because they were busy with their works. Although she had many siblings, she didn't receive social support from them because of weak human networks among them. And also the community didn't support any help. She felt isolation and socially excluded. Finally she arrived NPO. Economic factor of no paid job, social factor like higher life expectancy, family factors like no family support and no help from relatives, community factors such as weak social human relations within her community were coming together and interrelated each other and made her impoverished.

5.2.2 How family and community functions change in society

Woman D was chosen as a typical example.

Age	-76		Marital status		- divorcee			
Native	- rural area		Family		-one brother			
	Age-10	Age-20	Age-30	Age-40	Age-50	Age-60	Age-70	Age-80
Education	Primary level							
Household income	Household income of her parents was just enough for survival. Parents were farmers.		Employment income was just enough for survival.			No employment income		She became physical disability at 75. She needed social support. Feel social exclusion and isolation.
Employment	No paid job		Informal factory worker. Husband worked at factory			No-paid job		
Family	Lived with parents.		She got married at 23. Went to Yangon (urban). Had two daughters.		Divorced with husband at 41. Lived with two daughters.		Two daughters migrated to another country in search of wage labour when she was 70. She received financial support from daughters. She lived with her cousin sister.	
Community	Rural		Urban (new/ different community)					Arrived NPO.

Woman D

Woman D is 76 years old. She is a divorcee. Her native is Bokalay (rural area). Her parents were farmers. She has one brother. She completed primary education. She married when she was 23. She went to Yangon after marriage. Her husband worked in a factory as manual worker. She also worked in a factory as an informal worker. She has two daughters. The economy was enough for their livings. She divorced with her husband when she was 41. She lived with her two daughters after divorce. The household income was not enough. When she was 70, her two daughters migrated to foreign country and were working in another country. They gave financial support to her. She lived with her cousin sister. She became physical disability at the age of 75. But her cousin could not give her need social support and community also could not. She was socially excluded and felt isolation. Finally she arrived the NPO when she was 76. She feels satisfaction at NPO.

Life history analysis of woman D's life story: Woman D was a rural dweller until she was 23. She has one sibling. Less family members made less chance to make strong human relationships among family members. Her education was primary level and she did household works. Thus, these family, social and economic factors were interrelated each other since her childhood.

Her life changed when she married at her age of 23 and went to Yangon. She did informal work after marriage. Her husband's work was also informal. Their economy was just enough for their livings. She had two daughters.

Her life transition took place when she divorced with her husband at her age of 41. She lived with two daughters. She struggled her divorced life with her two daughters. But the economy was not good and so her two daughters migrated to another country in search of wage labour when she was 70. So the migration is a very crucial factor which causes the family transformation. Her daughters provide her just financial support, but no social support. She lived with her cousin sister. Migration of children is an important criterion for losing social support and close social relations within the family and community as well. The change of family patterns makes her poor. She migrated to a new community after marriage. As the community was economically weak and so poor, the residents in the community were very busy for their earnings and survival. They could not communicate each other because of working for money which is vital for their livings. As a negative consequence of weak relations within community, the human networks among community become weak. And the human relations and mutual help in the community were weak. So the community factor such as erosion of neighbors' help within community makes the single elderly women poor for social needs.

She became physical disability when she was 75. She needed social support but her cousin sister and the neighbor could not give social help to her. And also her daughters could not come back to her to provide social support. This shows clearly the migration of children can cause the single elderly feel isolation and lack of social needs. Thus, family, social, community and economic factors were interlinked and contributing to poverty. Thus she arrived the NPO when she was 76 years old. She feels better and satisfaction and feels no more isolation. So, it can be assessed that interlinked and inter-related economic, social, family and community factors make her impoverished. However, family factor such as lack of children's capacity to take responsibility due to migration which made family patterns change and the community factor such as erosion of neighbors' help within the community are playing a more crucial role in poverty of single elderly women even though economic factors are the basic poverty reasons. Family and community functions change within the society in which cultural traditions and customs favorable to old age were valued and prioritized previously.

5.2.3 Common factors for poverty reasons

Firstly, community seems not to take a function for caring old women living alone, and that seems to have taken a

function before. 19 out of 30 women moved to new community in urban area after marriage, but they seem not to make close relationship with the community people.

Secondly, family function also seems not to work well for safety net of single poor women and the traditional extended family type seems starting to erode. 18 out of 30 women have siblings and most of them have many siblings, but social relations among themselves are weak and social help from siblings cannot be expected for old single females. The capability of relatives to take care of old women living alone seems to weak due to their more engagement into work as a consequence of industrialization.

Thirdly, children cannot be expected to be as safety net for old women. As we have seen Woman D's case, old women cannot depend on their children when the children get jobs abroad. In other words, the globalization gives a negative effect on the structure of traditional family care. Moreover, higher life expectancy, low education and exclusion of labour market can be challenges for poor single old females. These situations can be seen in all women cases. Finally, the physical disability is the turning point for old women to need social help. Elderly women have no choice and they are taken to NPO.

Most of the women have low education, and even they do not have experience to be employed, as far as they are married, their economic condition is not so bad. But once husband die, their economic situation gets worse. However, as far as they can work or they live with family, they can survive although they have to take care of old parents. But when they get old and no possibility of working, or if children work abroad, their condition gets serious. Finally, when they cannot take care of themselves with disability, community and relatives are not always capable to take care of another female-headed household. Economic and education are not always the main factors for the poverty of single old women living alone. Rather, family and community networks are necessary for their survival, especially they become at the age 60 and over.

VI. Conclusions

6.1 Summary of findings

The nature and characteristics of the feminization of poverty were clarified in previous studies but those in developed countries are not same as those in developing ones. The reasons for feminization of poverty in industrialized countries are systematic where as those in developing ones are more cultural rather than structural. This paper clarifies the feminization of poverty in Myanmar with a special attention on the single elderly females in urban areas and presents the case study that is a good example of the context which shows the traditional family and community functions do not work for the safety of poor old women living alone. Myanmar is experiencing the recent appearance of single old women's poverty in urban areas, and this situation is clearly noticeable now and but it cannot be said firmly that it is "new poverty" because of the lack of the academic research on traditional poverty to be compared with. Inter-related multiple poverty factors contribute to the single elderly women's poverty throughout their whole lives gradually. The final challenge for old women to be social excluded is the physical disability and they have no choice except NPO.

Through the life history approach, it is found out that single elderly women became poor because of multiple poverty factors. Generally, their education levels are very low. Basically, they had no experience for paid job. They migrated from old community to new community in their middle ages in search of wage labour. Their spouses died early and they divorced with their spouses in early marriage life. Family patterns change and joint family system is broken up. The birth rate was decline. Their children migrated to other countries in search of wage labour and could

not provide social support and responsibility to them. Human relations and mutual dependence among family members, relatives, neighbors and community members are very weak. So they are excluded from family and community help when becoming older and disable. The disability is the turning point to need social help. Poor single elderly women have no choice and their poverty become visible.

This study cannot generalize the overall situation of poor single elderly women in Myanmar because some other situations may be invisible. The findings based on the empirical research at only one NPO can be summarized as follows. Multiple poverty factors such as economic, family, community and social factors contribute to the poverty of single old females. The economic factors such as the low or no household income and employment income of the single elderly women are part of reasons for their poverty. The family factors such as the incapability of family members to take care due to change of family patterns, broken joint family system, and the migration of children to other countries in search of wage labour are playing the important roles in making the single elderly women vulnerable. Community factors such as the incapability of community members for mutual help and support due to the weak social relations among themselves are also the important factors which cause the poverty of single elderly females. Social factors such as the low or no education, the decline of birth rate and the higher life expectancy are taken into account as the poverty factors for single old women.

6.2 Conclusions

Behind the development of globalization and industrialization, Myanmar is also influenced by urbanization and aging. The appearance of the poverty of old women living alone shows us a gray zone before introducing social security system as social safety net. As the negative consequences of urbanization, family and community functions as safety net for such women are starting to erode in urban areas though these functions worked in Myanmar traditional society before. Through life history approach, this paper identifies that multiple poverty factors such economic, family, community and social factors are coming one by one or together and inter-related each other to contribute to the paucity of single elderly women in urban area. Family and community functions don't work well for social safety net of old women living alone. Social factor of low education is normally important for their poverty. Economic factor of being out of labour market and having no experienced for formal employment is also normally important for their generation. Family factors like breaking up of joint family system, early death of husband, the decline of birth rate, lack of younger generations' capacity to take responsibility due to migration, weak social relations among family members, no support of family members are playing an important role for their poverty. Community factors like moving to new community, poor community, weak social network and weak social relations are very crucial poverty factors for appearance of impoverished single women in their old ages.

To sum up, family and community factors are very important poverty factors for single elderly women's poverty even though economic and social ones are basic poverty factors generally. The weakness or absence of family and community support mainly contributes to the poverty of single women when they become old even though the poor access to employment, low education and higher life expectancy are basic reasons for their poverty. These inter-related multiple poverty factors are the root causes which make the poverty of single old women visible in urban areas of Yangon, Myanmar. The poor single elderly females have no choice. However, it cannot be answered the question "is it a new poverty? "the appearance of poor single old women" clearly because of the lack of traditional poverty data of females to be compared even though it seems different from old poverty in society.

The feminization of poverty in Myanmar cannot be clearly clarified due to the data scarcity of not only social and economic situations and poverty rates of females based on age classification. So this study focused on individuals

through life history approach and led to the wider social framework. Like others, this paper has some limitations. This study basically focused on the empirical field observations because of the data scarcity about this context. The deeper observation in this context on a wider scale is worth pursuing in details in the next step as the further study of this research.

Notes

- 1) Single-mother families are defined as families headed by a female with no spouse present—living with one or more own, never-married children under age 18.
- 2) A lot of research about feminization of poverty in developing countries has done but no conceptual issues have been identified. For example, Makka (2004) discussed the feminization of poverty in developing countries and claimed it is a misconception that women are excluded from the economy and suffer discrimination in access to education and health. Diana Pearce (2011) stated that the feminization of poverty in developing countries didn't have same characteristics as those in developed ones.
- 3) The traditional elderly care was very common in Myanmar society and but there are not many studies in this context especially academic context. A rare study "Health care of the elderly in Myanmar" was made by (Han, 2012) and the situations of traditional elderly care can be seen in the later part of this paper.
- 4) For instance, Goldberg and Kremen (1990) studied and analyzed the feminization of poverty from economic, welfare and demographic points of views. Thomas (1994) and Harreller (1996) focused on the issue from economic perspective.
- 5) Please see Barnes (2005) for more information.
- 6) Social exclusion is "a shorthand for what can happen when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health and family breakdown" (England's Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) 1997). Social exclusion involves the rupture of relationships between people and the society in which they live (Mathieson, J. et al, 2008).
- 7) Barnes (2005) defined "poverty" in his work as "poverty is a lack of financial resources (primary income) necessary to achieve a minimum standard of physical subsistence in society, measured at a point in time (p.15).
- 8) Please see Spicker, P, (1999) for more information.
- 9) Traditional Myanmar society is made up of extended families and every elderly person naturally receives care from their children, grandchildren and relatives. High regard of the Myanmar traditional society for older people, extended family type based on mutual dependence and cultural traditions and customs favorable to old age are important contributing factors in this regard (Myanmar Country Report, 2007). Traditional Myanmar society generally values and treats elderly people in a respectful manner (Han, 2012).
- 10) Human networks mean social relations or social relationships among the family members and community members. For example, if an individual has a communication with the family members and the others in his/her community, he/she can build up social relations with them. Such kinds of relationship among the family and community can be a help for each other in need.
- 11) The meaning of "new poverty" may differ because many researchers (for example, Harrington (1984); Room (1990) and Cheal (1996) defined "new poverty" in their studies in according with the different contexts. "New poverty" in this study may have different meaning from these previous ones.
- 12) Feminization of poverty in Myanmar can't be known unfortunately in details due to the lack of both research on social economic situations of women and the data on the poverty rate of females in Myanmar based on age classification.
- 13) Despite no particular research about poor old women in Yangon (urban area), the appearance of poor old women can be seen recently in almost every part of Yangon outside practically. It can be seen in Appendix (1).
- 14) The NPO namely Twilight Villas was chosen as the case study and can be seen in later parts.
- 15) To be honest, there is no data for poor elderly women in Myanmar for the evidences of "the rise of in number". Unfortunately, there is still lack of national data for poor elderly women in Myanmar. And also there is still lack of academic research about this issue in Myanmar. So it is difficult to show the data. This research is based on the empirical evidence because in reality, the numbers of single elderly women who need social support are increasing in the NPO (Twilight Villa). These situations are already shown in Appendix 1. Please see the Appendix (1).
- 16) Individual interviews were made for about 30 minutes and 45 minutes depending on their individual response about their life

histories.

- 17) The examples of detailed analysis for poverty factors such as education, economy, employment, family and community factors can be seen in later part.
- 18) The national data refers back to table 4.1

References

- Anyanwu, J.C. (2010). *Poverty in Nigeria: A Gendered Analysis*, The African Statistical Journal, Vol (11), November 2010
- Bakar, N.R.H.A and Abdullah, M.Y.H. (2008). *The Life History Approach: Fieldwork Experience*, Journal e-Bangi, Vol (3), No (1), 09, 2008. ISSN: 1823-884x
- Barnes, M. (2005). *Social Exclusion in Great Britain, An Empirical Investigation and Comparison with the EU*, Studies in cash and care. Ashgate Publishing Limited, Gower House, Croft Road, Aldershot, Hampshire GU11 3HR, England, Ashgate Publishing Company, Suite 420, 101 Cherry Street, Burlington, VT 05401-4405, USA.
- Chant, S. (2010). "*The International Handbook of Gender and Poverty, Concepts, Research, Policy*", Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, The Lypiatts, 15 Lansdown Road, Cheltenham, Glos GL50JA, UK, Edward Elgar Publishing, Inc. William Pratt House, 9 Dewey Court, Northampton, Massachusetts 01060, USA.
- Cheal, D. (1996). *New Poverty, Families in Postmodern Society*, Greenwood press, 88 Post Road West, Westport, CT 06881, An imprint of Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc.
- Kyaw, D and Routray, J. K. (2006), *Gender and Rural Poverty in Myanmar: A Micro Level Study in the Dry Zone*, Journal of Agriculture and Rural Development in the Tropics and Subtropics, Vol (107), No (2), 2006, pages 103–114
- Department of Population. (2009). *Country Report on 2007 Fertility and Reproductive Health Survey*, Ministry of Immigration and Population, Union of Myanmar, Nay Pyi Taw, Appendix D-8
- Field survey at *NPO (Twilight Villas) in Myanmar* on 15.10.2013-20.11.2013 by the author
- Gelpi, B.C et al. (1986). *Women and Poverty*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London
- Goldberg, G.S. (2010). *Poor Women in Rich Countries, The Feminization of Poverty over the Life Course*, Oxford University Press, Inc, 198 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10016, www.oup.com
- Goldberg, G.S and Kremen, E. (1990). *The Feminization of Poverty only in America?*, edited by Gertrude Schaffner Goldberg and Eleanor Kremen, Praeger Publishers, One Madison Avenue, New York, United State of America
- Han, M. (2012). *Health care of the elderly in Myanmar*, Regional Health Forum – Vol (16), No (1)
- Harrington, M. (1984). *The New American Poverty*, Published by Holt, Rinehart and Winson, 383 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10017, Published simultaneously in Canada by Holt, Rinehart and Winson of Canada, Limited.
- Harreller, R. Jr. (1996). *Poor Women, Poor Children, American Poverty in the 1990s*, Copyright ©1996 by M.E Sharpe, Inc., 80 Business Park Drive, Armonk, New York 10504.
- Huddleston, A. (2011). *Women, Sustainability, and Development, Kaleidoscope*: Vol (10), Article 42, Retrieved on 7 March 2013 from <http://uknowledge.uky.edu/kaleidoscope/vol10/iss1/42>
- Kazi, A.B. (2012). *The Advantages of micro-credit lending programs and the human capabilities approach for women's poverty reduction and increased human rights in Bangladesh*, International Journal of Research Studies in Management, 2012, October, Vol(1), No(2), 25-36.
- Mathieson, J. et al. (2008) *Social Exclusion, Meaning, measurement and experience and links to health inequalities, A review of literature*, Commission of Social Determinants of Health, Institute for Health Research, Lancaster University, UK
- Moghadam, V.M. (2005). *The Feminization of Poverty and Women's Human Rights*, SHS Papers in Women's Studies/Gender Research No.2, Social and Human Sciences, Gender Equality and Development Section, Division of Human Rights, Social and Human Sciences Sector, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) 1 rue Miollis, 75732 Paris cedex 15, France, www.unesco.org/shs/gender
- Myanmar Country Report (2007). *Country Report (Myanmar) to The 5th ASEAN & Japan High Level Officials Meeting on Caring Societies: Collaboration of Social Welfare and Health Services and Development of Human Resources and Community, Community Services for the Elderly*, 2007
- Northrop, E. (1994). *The Diminished Anti-poverty Impact of Economic Growth, the Shift to Services, and the Feminization of Poverty*, Garland Publishing, Inc. New York & London

Official website of "Twilight Villas", <https://www.facebook.com/TwilightVillaMyanmar>.

Ojermark, A. (2007), *Presenting Life Histories: A literature review and annotated bibliography*, CPRC Working Paper 101, Chronic Poverty Research Centre ISBN 978-1- 906433-00-0

Parimala, D. (2008), *Challenges of Poverty Reduction Programmes: A Study on Women and Poverty in Developing Countries*, Bangladesh e-Journal of Sociology, Vol (5), No (2), July 2008

Pearce, D. (1978). *The feminization of poverty :women, work, and welfare. The Urban Social Change Review*, Special Issue on Women and Work, Vol (11), No (1) & (2)

Pearce, D. (2011), *The Challenges of the Feminization of Poverty*, Prepared for the Seminar on the Feminization of Poverty, Valparaiso, Chile, March 7, 2011, Seminario Internacional Feminization, De La Pobreza, Camara De Diputados, Chile

Pressman, S. (2003). *Feminist Explanations for the Feminization of Poverty*, Working Paper No.351, Luxembourg Income Study, Working Paper Series, Department of Economics and Finance Monmouth University, West Long Branch, NJ 07764 (732) 571-3658, pressman@monmouth.edu

Room, G. (1990). *'New Poverty' in the European Community derived from a study prepared with a support of the Commission of the European Communities*, MACMILLAN PRESS LTD, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG 21 2XS and London, Companies and representatives throughout the world

Sen, A. (2000) *Social Exclusion:Concept, Application, and Scrutiny*, Social Development Papers No. 1, Manila (Asian Development Bank).

Spicker, P. (1999) *Definitions of poverty: eleven clusters of meaning*, in Gordon, D, and Spicker, P, eds, *The International Glossary on Poverty*, London: Zed.

Thomas, S.L. (1994). *Gender and Poverty, Children of Poverty, Studies on the effects of Single parenthood, the feminization of poverty, and homelessness*, edited by Stuart Bruchey, University of Maine, Garland Publishing, Inc, New York and London,

UNFPA. (2012), *The Situation of Older Persons in Myanmar*, Results from the 2012 Survey of Older Persons by John Knodel, HelpAge International, Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, International Member of the HelpAge global network

UNICEF Myanmar. (2005). *The Elderly Population in Myanmar: Trends, Living Conditions, Characteristics and Prospects*, Social Policy Planning Monitoring and Evaluation Section 223 Sule Pagoda Road, Yangon , Retrieved on 5 April 2013 from http://www.unicef.org/myanmar/Elderly_Population_in_Myanmar.pdf

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. (2011). *World Population Prospects: The 2010 Revision, Volume I:Comprehensive Tables*. ST/ESA/SER.A/313.

Wnnerholm, C. (2002). *The 'Feminisation of Poverty': The use of a concept*, Swedish International Development , Cooperation Agency , Division for Policy and Socio-Economic Analysis

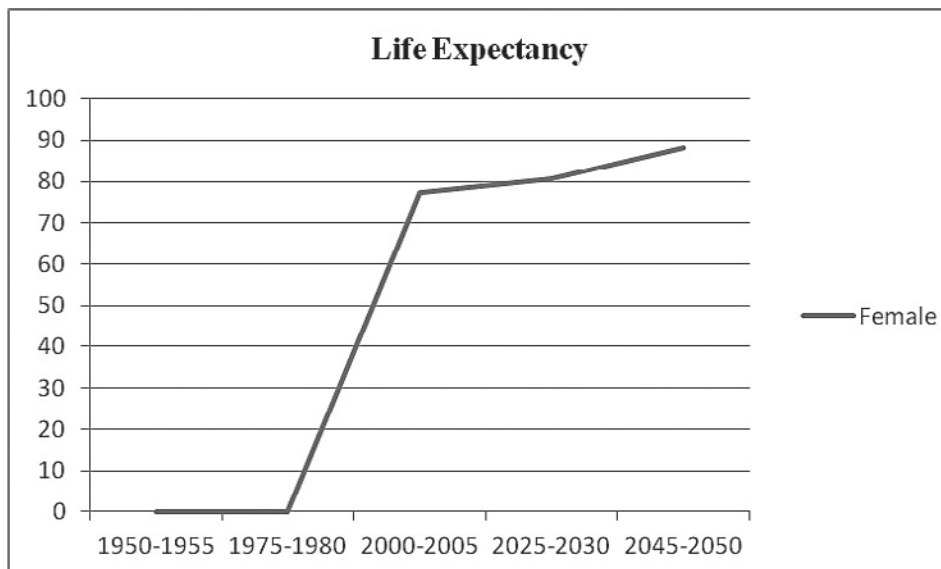
Appendix (1) The current situations of poor old single women in Yangon city (urban)





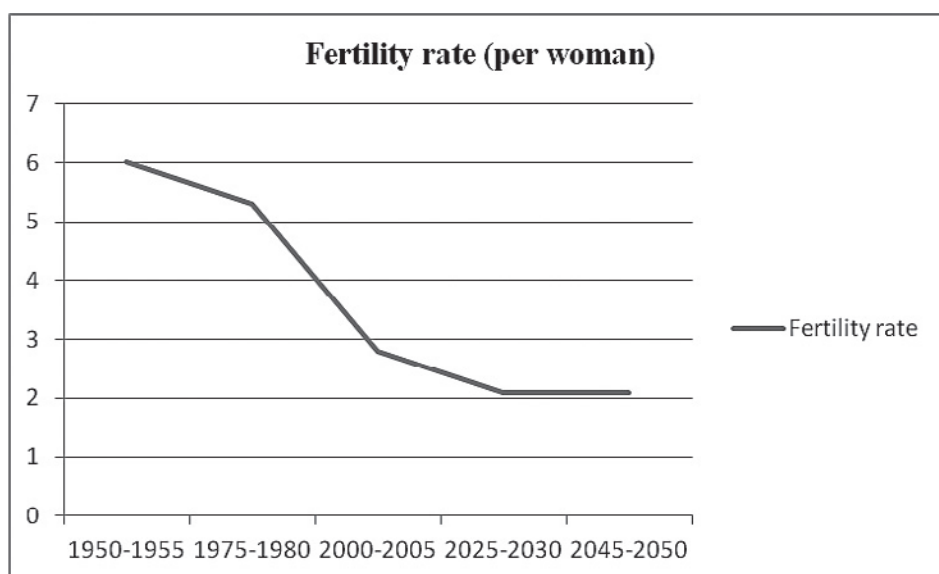
Source: Official website of "Twilight Villas" (2013)

Appendix (2) Life Expectancy (Female)



Source: Population Division, DESA, United Nations (2011)

Appendix (3) Fertility rate (per woman)



Source: Population Division, DESA, United Nations (2011)

Appendix (4) Percentage in older ages

Indicator	Age	1950	1975	2000	2025	2050
Female	60+	6.0	6.8	7.2	13.1	23.3
	65+	3.6	4.4	4.9	8.9	17.4
	80+	0.3	0.5	0.8	1.4	4.0

Source: Population Division, DESA, United Nations (2011)

Appendix (5) Life Expectancy (years)

	Age	1950-1955	1975-1980	2000-2005	2025-2030	2045-2050
Female	Birth	38.2	52.8	58.8	71.1	75.0
	60			17.3	20.7	22.4
	65			14.0	16.9	18.4
	80			6.6	7.9	8.7

Source: Population Division, DESA, United Nations (2011)

