ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis owes its existence to the help, support and inspiration of several people. Firstly, I would like to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to Prof. Mine-Ping Sun for her guidance during my research. Her support and inspiring suggestions have been precious for the development of this thesis content.

I am also indebted to Prof. Leonard Chu, who has been a constant source of encouragement and enthusiasm, not only during this thesis project but also during the two years of my Master program. In addition Prof. Leticia Fang and Prof. Shih-Hung Lo deserve special thanks, as my thesis committee members and advisors.

I would also like to thank all the members of CARES who constantly welcome me every time I visited the center. A special thanks goes to all the spouses I met inside and outside the organization. Not only the fourteen participants of this research whose names can not be mentioned for privacy issues, but also all the other Chinese spouses I have been in contact with through CARES. They always welcomed me and encouraged me to take part in their activities and made me feel part of their big family. I will forever remember in my heart the stories and the moments you girls shared with me during these months together!

Particular thanks goes to all the social assistants at CARES. Although they were very busy with their daily tasks, they have always been available to answer my questions
and clear any doubts that I had. In particular, I would like to thank Miss Ding who has given me tremendous help during the completion of my investigation.

My greatest gratitude goes to my friend and roommate Kah who patiently revised and corrected my thesis twice. It is only thanks to her that this thesis acquired an ‘English shape’!!

I would never forget all the chats and beautiful moments I shared with some of my friends and classmates. They were fundamental in supporting me during these stressful and difficult moments. Other close friends I would like to mention here in Taiwan: Alessandro, Ajith, Ania, Ann, Caterina, Claudia, Francesca, Juan, Klara, Paola, Pei, Sarah, and Shell. I would like to thank Yiyi and Danny (good friends of mine) who personally contributed to this thesis, helping me with translations, and transcriptions.

A special thanks goes to Ceci because without her I would have never started this wonderful experience in Taiwan. My little sister, no matter where you are around the world, you are always with me!!

I am very grateful to all the people I have met along the way and have contributed to the development of my research. In particular I would like to show my gratitude to Ms. Jennifer Lin from the Foundation for Women’s Rights Promotion and Development, Prof. Sara L. Friedman from Indiana University, Mr. Pao-Min Chen from the Taipei Veteran General Hospital, and Mr. Esteban Huang from The Pearl San Buck Foundation.
I would like to thank Riccardo for his immeasurable patience during these two years of studies, projects, and telephone chats. Thank you for believing in my project and supporting me, even if this meant staying far away from each other in these two years.

Finally, my deepest gratitude goes to my family for their unflagging love and unconditional support throughout my life and my studies. You made me live the most unique, magic and carefree childhood that has made me who I am now!