

國立臺灣師範大學國際與社會科學學院東亞學系

碩士論文

Department of East Asian Studies

College of International Studies and Social Sciences

National Taiwan Normal University

Master's Thesis

性別視角與平等研究—當代台灣外籍女性的社會經驗

A Study of Gender Perspective and Equality- Societal
Experiences of Foreign Women in Contemporary Taiwan

米雅 Mizrak, Yaren

指導教授：黃約伯 副研究員，張崑將 教授

Advisors; Associate Research Fellow Huang, Yueh-Po,

Professor Chang, Kun-Chiang

中華民國 114 年 6 月

June 2025

摘要

本論文旨在從外國女性的視角來探討台灣社會中的性別平等議題。自進入新世紀以來，台灣政府在許多非政府女權組織和學者的協助下，積極推動性別平等政策，致力於打造性別友善的社會環境、台灣在性別平等表現方面已成為亞洲之首。台灣政府把《消除對婦女一切形式歧視公約》CEDAW 和性別主流化等跨國策略納入了國內政策，亦將打造性別平等的社會定為主要目標之一。此外，台灣政府亦推動多項措施吸引更多外國人士及外國學生，促進多元化和國際化的社會環境。隨著在台的外國女性日益漸增，他們日常生活的經驗所反應出性別平等的狀況也愈發重要。因此，外國女性在日常生活中體驗到的性別平等成為一個重要的議題。

本研究藉由訪談的方式對 15 名在台灣居住超過六個月的外國女性進行調查。透過分析他們日常的性別經驗，歸納出三個主題分別是：性別安全感、社會性別角色和政府參與。數據分析顯示，外國女性認為台灣的生活環境給予他們更多的安全感，這不但增強外國女性的自信和自我探索能力，更進一步增強她們的賦權。但數據也顯示，台灣社會中的傳統性別觀念與規範，對外國女性性別認同造成負面的影響，或將阻礙性別平等的進步。最後，數據也揭露外國女性缺乏對於性別平等衡量指標及維權方面的相關知識，反映出台灣政府缺乏對於這方面的推動。而本研究中提出一系列性別主流化工具以解決台灣社會正面臨的困境。

現代台灣社會與政治研究中有許多關於性別平等及婦女權利的議題，其中雖然也包含了在台灣當照顧者的外籍女性，但從未提及他們的社會性別經驗與角色。為了提升性別議題在台灣的多元與包容，本研究及當中的數據皆可為此提供一個嶄新的研究方向。

關鍵字：性別平等、婦女權益、外籍女性、社會性別視角、性別政策、台灣

Abstract

This thesis is aimed to discuss Taiwanese societal gender equality through the perspectives of foreign women. Since the beginning of the new millennium, Taiwanese government has been developing a gender-friendly environment through gender equality policies with the assistance of several feminist NGOs and scholars; as a result of such great efforts, Taiwan became the 1st in Asia on gender equality. By integrating transnational policies such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and gender mainstreaming into their policymaking, Taiwanese government is emphasizing a gender-equal society as one of their key goals. Moreover, the Taiwanese government is cultivating a more diverse and international setting by welcoming expats and foreign students through several initiatives. Therefore, the gender equality foreign women experience in their daily lives becomes an important topic.

To gather data, fifteen foreign women living in Taiwan for more than six months were contacted. Conducting an analysis of their daily gender experiences, several themes foreign women were affected in various ways merged; gender safety, societal gender roles, and gaps in promoting gender equality measures. The data analysis indicated foreign women feel safer in Taiwan; this aspect contributed to foreign women's feelings of self-assurance and exploration of self, playing a direct role in empowering them. However data also suggested, traditional ideas and norms performed by Taiwanese society influenced foreign women's idea of gender identity, therefore potentially resulting in regression in the societal gender equality state. Lastly, data also revealed that foreign women are not aware of gender equality measurements and means of protecting their rights, this result indicates the Taiwanese government's insufficient promotion of gender equality measurements. It was proposed implementation of a range of gender mainstreaming tools would provide a solution.

Gender equality and issues concerning women's rights have been discussed by numerous experts; foreign women caretakers in Taiwan were the focus of some studies as well. However, the societal gender experiences of foreign women were never discussed before. This study and data it provides offer an alternative method to explore gender issues in Taiwan.

Keywords; gender equality, women's rights, foreign women, societal gender perspectives, gender policies, Taiwan



Table of Contents

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	9
2.1 Global Gender Equality	9
2.2 Gender Equality in Taiwan and Existing Problems.....	12
2.3 Traditional Gender Roles in Taiwanese Culture.....	18
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY.....	24
3.1 Research Procedure.....	24
3.2 Research Participants.....	25
3.3 Interview	28
3.4 Data Analysis.....	29
3.5 Research Ethics and Limitations.....	29
CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION.....	32
4.1 Gender Safety and Freedom of Expression	32
4.2 Societal Gender Roles.....	39
4.2a Marriage, Romantic Relationships, and Family Roles.....	39
4.2b Femininity, Health and Beauty Standards.....	44
4.3 Gaps in Promoting Gender Equality Measures.....	49
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION	59
APPENDIX	62
REFERENCES.....	64

List of Figures

Figure 1: <i>SIGI Rankings of Taiwan and its Neighboring Countries</i>	1
Figure 2: <i>Profile of the Interviewees</i>	28
Figure 3: <i>Codes of Participants</i>	30



CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

According to an annual study conducted by the Gender Equality Committee of the Executive Yuan, Taiwan ranked 6th globally and 1st in Asia (See Figure 1) in the Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) rankings published by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 2023 with the total score of 9 (Gender in A Glance in R.O.C (Taiwan) 2024, 1).

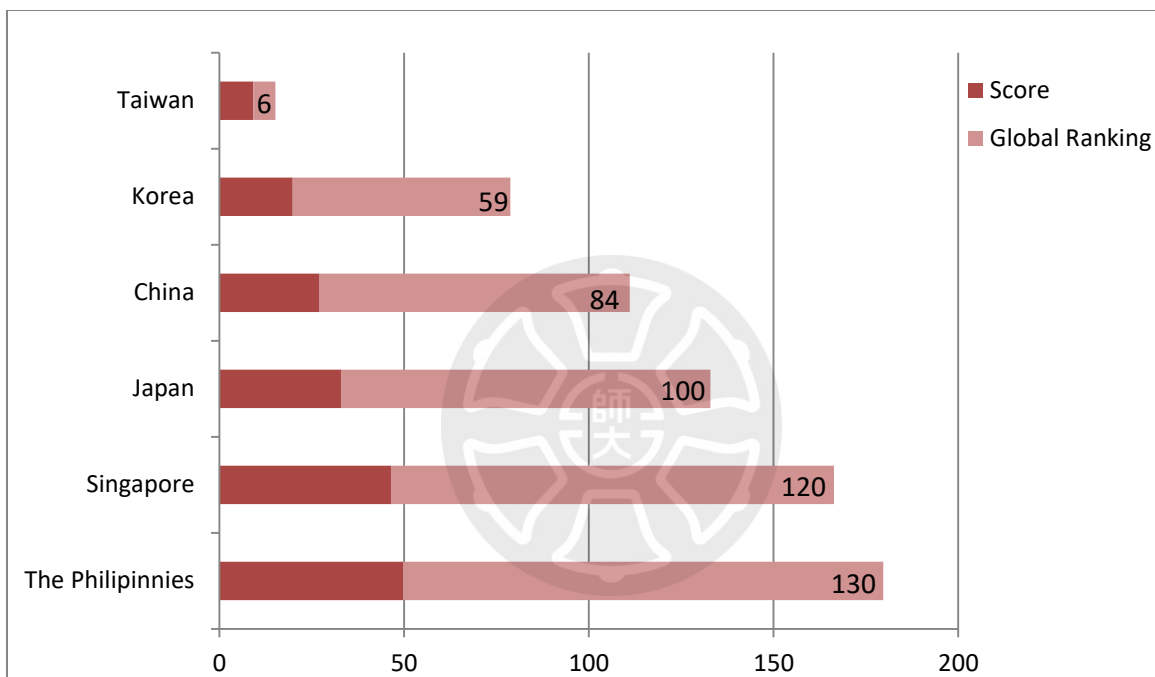


Figure 1. *SIGI Rankings of Taiwan and its Neighboring Countries.* Adapted from Gender Equality Committee of the Executive Yuan, Gender in A Glance in R.O.C 2024, 1

The four main indications for this ranking were discrimination in the family, restricted physical integrity, restricted access to productive and financial resources, and restricted civil liberties (Social Institutions & Gender Index Dashboard). Apart from this, the annual report presents data on improved social equality. The report indicates, the power and influence gap between women and men in national affairs narrowed down, and the number of female cabinet members percentage has risen from 0% to 16.7% in 10 years (Gender in A Glance in R.O.C (Taiwan) 2024, 11); apart from the 15-19 age group, the female labor force

participation has risen for all groups of age (Gender in A Glance in R.O.C (Taiwan) 2024, 19); and compared with the 2015 results, the proportion of female graduates all increased at all education levels (Gender in A Glance in R.O.C (Taiwan) 2024, 26).

This result is not surprising when we take a look at the policies made by the government regarding gender equality in these past 22 years. First in 2002, the Gender Equality in Employment Act, secondly in 2004, the Gender Equity Education Act and in 2005, the Sexual Harassment Prevention Act was announced¹. Each of these policies addresses various aspects of sexual harassment or gender inequality in educational institutions, the workplace, and daily life. Female participation in political national affairs has been ensured with electoral gender quotas and reserved seats (Huang 2016). Additionally, initiatives such as flyers in public places like schools, public transportation, and public bathrooms, designated spots for families and pregnant women, and safe waiting zones in MRTs, show the Taiwanese government's commitment to promoting gender equality and women's safety, working towards a more gender equal society.

Taiwan being the first in Asia on gender equality and entering the list alongside the Western countries in the top 10 is quite surprising. When people think about Asia, most of the time gender equality is not the first thing that comes to mind. On the contrary, patriarchal norms in East Asian societies are quite common and an ongoing debate between scholars. In these societies, the influence of Confucianism is particularly strong (Kaplan 2015), and in Confucianism, there are certain expectations and virtues from women in the family, which indicate women, are perceived as lesser figures (Chao 2005, 30). The most prominent example of these expectations from women would be the Three Obediences and Four Virtues “三從四德” (Gao 2003, 116).

¹ All of these policies have been updated by the government recently in 2023 (Laws & Regulations Database of The Republic of China (Taiwan))

‘The Three Obediences require women to obey the father before marriage, obey the husband after marriage, and obey the first son after the death of the husband. The Four Virtues are (sexual) morality, proper speech, modest manner, and diligent work.’ (Gao 2003, 116)

Three Obediences see women as deeply dependent on the male authority figures in their lives, this limits women’s autonomy and restricts them as the caretaker of the family. Four Virtues describe how a woman should be, which proper servants of the family. If women fail to serve the family, this would determine their worth as women. Regardless of social change and modernization, these beliefs still are the underlying elements of the gender perspectives and the power dynamics in society, and make the idea of gender equality harder to adapt.

Coming from a culture that is very strict about women’s place and worth, Taiwan's development of gender equality has been astonishing and the change was not quite easy. Therefore, it’s worth looking into Taiwan’s history regarding feminism and gender equality developments. According to Chao (2005, 34-35), a significant catalyst for these social changes would be the completion of seven essays published by Annette Lu on the problems of traditional gender norms that Taiwanese society faced in 1971, which raised public awareness about gender equality. During this period, the political climate in Taiwan was heavy, the political movements and incidents were happening, political environment was quite strict. The Martial Law prevented people from forming nongovernmental organizations; any kind of protests or marches were prohibited (Ku 1989, 12). Stating one’s ideas on traditional norms, was something revolutionary, Annette Lu was later imprisoned because of her speech in Human Rights Alley, which is known as the Formosa Incident (Lu 2019).

After the lifting of the Martial Law in 1987, numerous women's nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) were established (Chang 2018a, 90). The feminist movements led by these NGOs applied pressure on the government to change, and many members of these feminist NGOs also participated in lawmaking, some members of these NGOs even became very influential public figures; Annette Lu became the Vice President of Taiwan (Chang 2018a, 90; Chao 2005, 34-35). Since then, various laws have been enacted to protect women's rights and promote gender equality. With these laws, the government focused on educating legal professionals, law enforcement officials, teachers, medical personnel, and such (Chao 2005, 42-43). These steps the government took positioned Taiwan as the leader in gender equality in Asia.

Improvements in Taiwan are reflected in the annual research published by the Gender Equality Committee of the Executive Yuan, as previously mentioned. According to this research, Taiwan ranks first in Asia in women's taking seats in the parliament with a percentage exceeding 40%. Women in policymaking are also voicing their thoughts on gender equality in the Taiwanese parliament, Vice President Bi-khim Hsiao aims to reach 50% for the next election (Focus Taiwan 2024). That being the case, the roles of women in economic participation and decision-making levels are expanding. The Taiwanese government states, female labor rate has been growing throughout the years and the proportion of female students graduating with advanced degrees in Taiwan is increasing (Gender in A Glance in R.O.C (Taiwan) 2024). These government initiatives build a gender-equal society in Taiwan.

On the other hand, growing up in Turkiye, my experiences were quite different. As a matter of fact, it is hard to talk about gender equality and its measurements, when women's safety is still an issue. In Turkiye, there are several laws protect women from violence and all

forms of discrimination, however, the implementation of such laws in practical spheres, in most cases, require support from NGOs, private lawyers and the people.

Violence against women is a significant problem, compounded by pervasive gender inequality in society, with minimal protection from the government (Mor Cati Women's Shelter Foundation 2024). In 2021, Türkiye withdrew from The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (known as the Istanbul Convention). Türkiye was the first country that sign this convention and participate in policymaking as well. According to several scholars, by withdrawing from the convention, the Turkish Government made a symbolic gesture to signal its stance on women's rights and violence prevention (Taştan et al. 2022, 5-6). The withdrawal was heavily criticized; however, the government did not reverse their decision.

In 2024 alone, 287 women lost their lives to gender violence², and unfortunately, this is most likely an underreported number. The men who committed these crimes do face sentences but these sentences are often extremely lenient and criminals leave the court almost feeling “happy” (Sayın 2020), the withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention did not enhance the situation. Public voices are against it and protests are held in many parts of the country, but unlike Taiwan, it does not have much impact on the state. Protests are neutralized by the police within a few minutes and the activists are often arrested (Hacaloğlu 2021). As a result, more people are afraid to speak up and women's safety and gender inequality remain unsolved problems for Türkiye. However, the young generation is quite eager to change the current situation and have more voice in the government each day.

From a very young age, girls in Türkiye are thought to always be aware of their surroundings, return home early, dress modestly, and carry self-defense items like pepper

² Until October 4th. <https://anitsayac.com/?year=2024> (last access: 2024/10/4)

spray or sharp objects while walking home at night. Growing up with these habits and then moving to Taiwan, and experiencing a gender-equal society were a revolution. I no longer had to second-guess whether my outfit was too revealing, could walk through all the alleys at night without considering what time it is, could stand in the crowded MRT without worrying about getting harassed. I finally felt free.

Furthermore, reading the news and seeing the Taiwanese government's efforts to improve the situation regarding gender equality made me feel valued and safe. As a woman who lived both in Turkiye and Taiwan, I have experienced the contrast in how gender equality is perceived and implemented. On the other hand, I became curious about the real-life gender equality experiences in Taiwanese society; since I experienced firsthand that government policies and real-life lived encounters can be quite different. This curiosity eventually led to this research on lived gender equality experiences in Taiwan.

Over the course of two years living in Taiwan, I had the chance to observe lived gender experiences. One thing that came to my attention was, how differently foreign women from various countries perceive the changes and developments on Taiwan's women's rights and gender equality. For some, Taiwan was an ideal place to live and had no issues regarding gender equality and gender roles. On the other hand, for some women, Taiwan still had some problems that needed to be solved that some women didn't notice. In several cases, a number of foreign women I talked to viewed certain gender equality developments as problems. These differing experiences of how foreign women perceive gender equality in Taiwan became a key factor for this research. This research is aimed to explore lived gender experiences from the standpoint of foreign women.

There are two reasons why foreign women have been chosen as the focus of research about Taiwan's gender equality. First, foreign women come from countries that have different

ideas on gender and developments in gender equality. This gives foreign women the opportunity to compare gender equality in Taiwan with their countries. Whether or not they are students or employees in Taiwan, foreign women also become a part of this society afterward, unlike the people who are born into the society and grow up with the traditional norms. I believe this gives foreign women the chance to see certain gender ideas and perspectives more clearly since these ideas and norms are not parts of their culture and everyday lives before. This approach gives us a fresh set of eyes to explore Taiwan's gender equality and women's rights, and the societal relationships influenced by it.

Secondly, the Taiwanese government has been working actively to make Taiwan a more international and global country. They are offering several scholarships to international students to learn Chinese and pursue degrees, and research funds to scholars to do research in Taiwan (Study in Taiwan 2024). Companies and organizations also open up internship and job opportunities for foreigners. The Taiwanese government has been using its budget to promote Taiwan internationally, welcoming foreigners in Taiwan. With these opportunities, Taiwan becomes the home for a lot of foreigners; when the Foreign Residents statistics from September 2023 and September 2024 were compared, it can be seen that the number of foreign residents living in Taiwan has been increasing gradually³. Therefore the gender equality foreign women experience becomes a topic that needs to be discussed.

Several researches have been conducted with relevance to gender equality and women's rights by Taiwanese and foreign scholars both in English and Chinese. These studies indicate several inconsistencies between the laws and their practical influence on women's lives. Scholars discussed gender equality and the discrimination women face in almost every aspect of life such as employment (Chin 2018), family relations (Lin et al. 2003), education

³ Please see the Foreign Residents by Nationality statistics from the Ministry of Interior, National Immigration Agency website here; <https://www.immigration.gov.tw/5475/5478/141478/141380/> (last access; 2025/04/19)

and childrearing (Hu and Yeung 2019), policies (Chang, 2017; Chang, 2018b; Huang, 2024), and traditional gender roles (Chang, 2017; Iida, 2023). These previous works and more useful literature provide a foundation for this study and are going to be discussed in this paper as well.

This research aims to provide a different approach to Taiwan's current state regarding women's rights and gender equality through foreign women's perspective, using this approach day to day social gender equality will be discussed further. Consequently, this research will also address further improvements in Taiwan and what other countries can learn from Taiwan.

The general orientation of this research proposal is as follows. The paper first examines various researches on international gender equality strategies and their implementations, then goes on to explore women's rights and gender equality in Taiwan and its discussions, then moves on to outline the methods that have been employed in this research. This paper will elaborate on the findings and explore sociocultural elements influencing Taiwan's development of gender equality. Lastly, this research will discuss potential improvements and further research concerning Taiwan's gender equality and women's rights.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

For the literature review part of this research, I will analyze gender equality strategies and arguments that have been made about gender equality in Taiwanese society to have a better understanding of the topic. In this part, I will discuss the development and the existing issues around gender dynamics in Taiwan that have been pointed out by other scholars and then analyze two main policies Gender Equality in Employment Act and Gender Equity Education Act, and their success in maintaining gender equality. Before doing so, to provide some background to these policies and steps, the global scene on gender equality will be discussed first, since there is a trend of these kinds of humanitarian policies transferring from Western countries to other parts of the world (Walby 2005, 457), especially when some countries do not have efficient funds and manpower, they tend to learn other countries steps. In this part, gender mainstreaming, one of the strategies to maintain gender equality will be discussed thoroughly.

2.1 Global Gender Equality

Humanitarian rights and gender equality have been on the United Nation's agenda for a long time since its establishment in 1945. According to Zwingel (2020, 44), in the early years of the UN, gender equality wasn't a substantial part of its bureaucratic formation but still had a commission (Commission on the Status of Women) working on gender equality problems, however, their impact was limited. Gender issues and discrimination were discussed in the UN through the years in different conferences, first in Mexico in 1975⁴.

Yet it was when the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was adopted in the UN General Assembly in 1979 (The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

⁴ See Zwingel (2020) for the historical evolution of gender norms in the UN.

1979), UN took the biggest step in women's rights and gender equality. This convention provides a multidimensional approach to discrimination against women, which includes discrimination in political and public life, representation, nationality, education, employment, health, economic and social benefits, marriage and family life, and equality before the law⁵. With 189 member states signing the treaty⁶, this convention became the international bill for women's rights for the past 45 years.

Even though Taiwan is not a member of the UN, this country took it upon itself and decided to sign CEDAW after the enactment of the CEDAW Implementation Act (CEDAWIA) effective in 2012 (Kuan 2021, 31). While CEDAW made a considerable amount of impact with the member states and non-member countries and included equality in women's "private lives" such as family matters, unlike the human rights laws at that time (Charlesworth 2013, 38), it also has been critiqued for its poor enforcement and no effect on women's economical rights (Englehart and Miller 2014, 23).

States that sign this convention are required to do self-monitoring and submit reports every four years (Liebowitz and Zwingel 2014, 379). However, most of the states dropped behind with these reports. It has been discussed by Englehart and Miller (2014, 31) that, CEDAW is most impactful where it's not needed and less impactful where it's most needed; most successful countries already have strong policies regarding women's rights, more or less the same as the most human rights treaties. Because of these arguments and critiques, gender mainstreaming became the focus of global gender equality policies in 1995. As stated in Gender Mainstreaming Strategies in International Governance,

⁵ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

⁶ United Nations Treaty Collection, United Nations.
https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=IV-8&chapter=4&clang=en (last access: 20/10/2024)

‘...gender mainstreaming is the idea that women and men, due to socially-constructed gender differences and ideologies, do not experience political, economic, social, and cultural life in the same ways.’ (True and Parisi 2013, 59)

Gender mainstreaming compares discrimination and (in)equality in not-so-obvious aspects of social life; it is a way to promote gender equality (Walby 2005, 462). It has been heavily adopted within many different internal policies and it has triggered organizational and procedural changes within state bureaucracies, non-governmental organizations, and international organizations (Caglar 2013, 336). With the implementation of gender mainstreaming, substantive equality became the key concept and a standard for gender equality policies. For many internal governments, adopting gender mainstreaming was modernizations of public policies (Daly 2005, 440), and it may have been an influencing element behind the swift adoption of gender mainstreaming by many governments. Policies and steps that empower women but also benefit men have been made globally with a gender mainstreaming approach in these private spheres, especially in employment and economic rights (Walby 2005, 456). Gender mainstreaming is implemented through a total of fifteen tools; gender analysis, gender equality action plans, gender audit, gender awareness-raising, gender budgeting, gender equality training, gender-responsive evaluation, gender impact assessment, gender statistics and indicators, gender monitoring, gender planning, gender-responsive public procurement, gender stakeholder consultation, and institutional transformation⁷. These tools serve as a guide for internal governments when implementing gender-friendlier and gender-centered policies.

However, the adaptation of gender mainstreaming strategies in internal policies faced several complications, despite the fact that it is an international policy by nature (True and

⁷ See European Institute for Gender Equality website for more information on gender mainstreaming tools and methods <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/tools-methods> (last access; 4/13/2025)

Parisi 2013; Walby 2005). As Walby argues (2005, 454), the gender mainstreaming strategy has been transnational from the start. Still, since existing gender dynamics in different countries influence the implementation of this approach, it has not been equally developed globally, even in member countries within the EU. True and Parisi (2013, 53) also argue, many countries implement gender mainstreaming strategies without knowledge and misunderstand what “gender” is. Therefore causing inconsistencies between the aim of gender mainstreaming and the gender mainstreaming these countries claim to implement. Thus, it is important to take a look into how gender mainstreaming is applied and expanded in Taiwan and its influence on internal policies. By doing so, influence of such transnational policies can be explored.

2.2 Gender Equality in Taiwan and Existing Problems

Taiwan had its laws on discrimination in employment, education, sexual harassment, and domestic violence years before CEDAW took effect in 2012. With the establishment of the Commission for the Promotion of Women’s Rights in 1997, activists and lawyers from feminist NGOs had the opportunity to join the policy-making process for more gender-friendly social policies (Chang 2018b, 344). Thanks to feminist women’s movements in 1998, the Domestic Violence Prevention Act passed the parliament. However, it is important to point out that the making of the Domestic Violence Prevention Act or the establishment of the Commission for the Promotion of Women’s Rights did not occur suddenly, the Taiwanese government was forced to promote a violence prevention law as a result of the several cases of gender-based violence in Taiwan happening one after the other, right after the lifting of Martial Law in 1987. In her study of the domestic violence prevention movement in Taiwan, Chao (2005) addresses the lives that were lost to gender-based violence.

First in 1993, Deng Ruweng, a woman stabbing her husband to death made the headlines. As the media began to investigate her case more thoroughly, information on

domestic violence came to light. She was raped, and then forced to marry her rapist. In the course of her marriage, she and her children were beaten severely, her family members were threatened and her sister was also sexually assaulted by her husband. She then decided to kill her husband, because there was no way out (Chao 2005, 29-30). Three years later after this incident, the director of the Department of Women's Development for the Democratic Progressive Party, a feminist, Peng Wanru was murdered. She was a firm advocate of women's rights and the domestic violence prevention act. Peng Wanru was raped and stabbed many times, to this day the murderers responsible for her death haven't been arrested and the reason behind her murder was never covered. Right after the murder of Peng Wanru, Bai Xiaoyan, the daughter of a Taiwanese celebrity, was raped and tortured. She was 17 years old at the time (Chao 2005, 39).

Incidents of brutally murdered women happening consecutively made a significant backlash in Taiwanese society; the government was forced by the people to take action. As a result, many government officials, judges, teachers, medical personnel, and legal professionals received education on domestic violence with the implementation of the Domestic Violence Prevention Act (Chao 2005, 43). Even though this was an act about domestic violence, it also raised public awareness about gender equality and women's rights in the highly patriarchal Taiwanese society at that time.

Feminist advocates from different women's rights NGOs who later joined the government integrated gender mainstreaming perspectives into gender equality policies (Chao 2005, 34-35; Chang 2018b, 90). There was an active effort in every ministry and department of the government to formulate gender-specific goals. Those ministries and departments used gender mainstreaming tools such as creating gender equality task forces, gender awareness-raising, gender statistics, gender impact assessments, and gender budgeting in policy-making

and conducted an annual internal evaluation of the effectiveness of such tools (Chang 2018b, 347; Hwang 2008, 9).

Now in 2024, Taiwan has detailed gender equality policies such as the Gender Equality in Employment Act and the Gender Equity Education Act; these policies ensure the use of gender mainstreaming tools and help Taiwan to become the most gender-equal country in Asia. On that account, analyzing the content of these policies would help to understand the measures that need to be taken while aiming for a gender-equal society.

With the implementation of the Gender Equality in Employment Act, the government prepares budgets to provide training for employees, and child and elder care facilities if needed for promoting gender equality in employment, and discrimination because of gender or sexual orientation is permitted. The employee can request one day of menstrual leave each month, eight weeks of paid maternity leave (two years unpaid), and parental leave⁸. The act provides employees with gender-friendly policies such as additional breastfeeding break time and reduced working hours to create a friendlier environment for working mothers. This act also ensures that companies with more than 100 employees shall have breastfeeding (breast milk collection) rooms and childcare facilities or suitable childcare measures (Gender Equality in Employment Act 2023). Taiwanese government also has provided resources to assist socioeconomically disadvantaged mothers and children in certain urban neighborhoods, community-based vocational training for unemployed women, free job trainings, and job referral services (Chang 2018b, 352).

Regulations regarding discrimination and inequality in education also received attention. Since education is the core of a gender-equal society, textbooks were updated to promote gender equality ideas, gender equity curriculum were made mandatory from

⁸ See Gender Equality in Employment Act for more details.
<https://law.moj.gov.tw/ENG/LawClass/LawAll.aspx?pcode=N0030014> (last access: 27/10/2024)

kindergarten to high school, and universities started opening gender study courses (Chang 2018b, 349-350). It is stated in the Gender Equity Education Act that, a central competent authority has to establish a gender equity education committee with at least half of the members being women, two-thirds of the members being experts, scholars, members of NGOs/NPOs, student representatives, and practitioners with gender equity backgrounds⁹. With this act, schools providing a gender-friendly learning environment, staff members taking gender equity training made mandatory, and any discrimination and inequality because of gender were permitted (Gender Equity Education Act 2023). Attendance and graduation policies are also made flexible in public schools for single mothers (Chang 2018b, 351).

Another big step Taiwan took was the establishment of the Department of Gender Equality in 2012 (Chang 2017, 2). This department was the first authoritative unit devoted to gender equality, and since its establishment, it has been working on the implementation of CEDAW, enactment of gender equality policy guidelines, gender mainstreaming in central and local governments, global participation, and gender equality training nation-wise (Gender in A Glance in R.O.C (Taiwan) 2024)¹⁰.

From these steps and serious measurements in gender equality, one may think that the Taiwanese government has adopted gender mainstreaming tools and successfully aimed for a substantive gender-equal society. However, the implementation and the scope of these policies and steps received much criticism from scholars.

Comments on the government's attitude towards gender mainstreaming and the gender equality policies mostly fall under two topics. Departments, ministries, and even parliament see these gender mainstreaming tools as the “end game” in gender equality, substantive

⁹ It is also mandatory for municipal government county or city level, and every school to establish a gender equity education committee but the requirements differ. See the Gender Equity Education Act for more details. <https://law.moj.gov.tw/ENG/LawClass/LawAll.aspx?pcode=H0080067> (last access: 28/10/2024)

¹⁰ Gender Equality Committee of the Executive Yuan Website <https://gec.ey.gov.tw/en/8FB10983A3908085> (last access: 28/10/2024)

equality is not the aim (Chang 2018b; Huang 2024; Hwang 2008), and the enforcement of the policies in the private sphere is very inefficient, most women are not aware of such policies or do not believe the policies would make any difference (Chang 2017; Chang 2018b; Chin 2018; Huang 2024; Iida 2022).

Regarding the gender mainstreaming tools seen as the “end game”, Chang (2018b) states in her research that every department receives feedback about their annual assessments on gender equality, but most of them do not make any changes, and existing gender sensitivity training only mandatory for civil servants who are not directly in the policymaking process. Even if it was mandatory for all, the training is too short to teach any valuable and useful information. Huang (2024, 2) also argues that even though Taiwanese government’s dedication to gender equality, a gender-sensitive process has not been achieved in the legislative. MP’s act on certain responsibilities on gender mainstreaming or gender equality measures, only because they have to.

According to Hwang (2008, 8-9), the biggest problem with the implementation of gender mainstreaming measures and the absence of substantive equality is the lack of knowledge about gender mainstreaming. She explains, with the rapid development of gender mainstreaming, most of the bureaucrats responsible for policymaking didn’t know how to put gender mainstreaming into the practice and implemented it while still learning about it. They didn’t fully comprehend the purpose and goal of gender mainstreaming (Chang 2018b; Hwang 2008). Therefore, the division of these tools was very complicated and unclear, which made implementation and adaptation very difficult (Hwang 2008, 8-9). In other words, they implemented gender streaming tools only because they needed to be implemented. This might be the reason why gender equality policies are limited.

However, it is important to point out the nature of implementation of such laws, laws carried out right after horrific incidents happening to women and children since it could be the underlying factor of limited implementation of gender equality policies. They are by nature, to protect, not to ensure gender equality. When gender equality laws have the rationale to protect the weak (woman and children in this context), they tend to fail ensuring gender equality on the societal spheres in a greater context and incidents of social inequality persist.

These limitations can be seen in the regulations regarding employment, education, and sexual harassment policies. First of all, the job training provided for unskilled or unemployed women only offers courses on skills for low-paid jobs that are already women-dominated such as the service industry (Chang 2017, 23; Chang 2018b, 352). Despite the gender-friendly employment policy, the working environment is very unfriendly for women; most of them don't take the two years of unpaid maternity leave because they think they wouldn't have a job to return to. Vocalization of gender equality policies is deficient, most women are not aware of such policies (Chang 2018b, 353; Iida 2022, 91). There is a lack of affordable childcare and eldercare facilities which prevent women from joining the workforce (Chang 2018b, 353), since childcare and eldercare are seen as women's responsibilities (Chang 2017, 13; Iida 2022, 83). Huang (2024, 8) also talks about the limitations of the sexual harassment act in the parliament. She says that MPs and their staff cannot file a complaint because the act requires the victim to file a complaint in the city or county government where the sexual harassment took place, but since the parliament is not their employer, they can't file a complaint.

Apart from the legal and legislative process limitations, internalized traditional patriarchal norms in Taiwanese society also prevent the adaptation and implementation of gender equality policies, and affect the choices of women living in Taiwan. Iida (2022, 82), states in her research that despite being the most gender-equal country in Asia, Taiwan has

low fertility rates, which is unusual because normally gender-equal laws make childrearing easier for women. Therefore, she argues that low fertility rates in Taiwan show there is a gap between public laws and private lives. Chang (2017, 12), also claims that Taiwan's aging population problem can be solved if gender mainstreaming policies are applied fully. The focal point of these scholars is the discrimination women face in day-to-day life is the reason they decide not to get married and give birth. They both argue patriarchal norms still affect gender roles in Taiwan and it is the reason why the implementation of these laws has a hard time in Taiwanese society.

The social inequality continues to effect women's private lives, despite the gender equality laws. These inconsistencies reveal that gender equality laws do fail to transition from institutional frameworks into social practice. To gain better understanding of the reason behind this and the 'protect the weak' rationale mentioned above, it's crucial to discuss traditional gender roles in the Taiwanese society.

2.3 Traditional Gender Roles in Taiwanese Culture

The traditional gender roles in Taiwanese society tend to be quite patriarchal. Patriarchal norms here indicate the Confucian traditional norms that expect women to stay in the house preferably give birth to several sons and look after their home and the family (Gao 2003, 118). These patriarchal norms are discussed in almost every research in Taiwanese gender studies since it is one of the elements that influence Taiwanese society's idea of gender (Chang 2017; Chao 2005; Lin et al. 2003; Iida 2022; Yi and Chang 2020).

With modernization and social change, expectations towards the female gender do change, but this doesn't mean that women redeem themselves from traditional gender roles. A survey from 2017 shows that wives do 70% percent of the household chores which was the same percentage as in 2006; the results were almost the same with the dual-income

households (Iida 2022, 84). Hu and Yeung (2019, 38) state in their research, that disciplining the children is seen as the mother's work in Taiwan, while in Japan it is the father's responsibility and in China, both father and mother take equal participation.

Patriarchal filial norms are also quite important in Taiwanese society and sending parents to live in a nursing home is seen as disrespectful, this leads to the way to most of the parents living with their married sons (Lin et al. 2003, 184). Yi and Chang (2020, 221) state, Taiwan has the highest percentage of parents living with their son in East Asia.

According to Confucian belief, after marriage, the woman leaves her maternal family and becomes a part of their husband's family (Gao 2003, 116), therefore women undertake the responsibility of parent-in-law's care after marriage (Lin et al. 2003). All these responsibilities make certain holidays and family gatherings feel like a burden for women (Iida 2022, 90), because for them it's labor in disguise of a celebration. Iida (2022, 90) adds, to avoid the judgment of society, women choose to obey these traditions but these kinds of traditional expectations influence Taiwanese women's decisions to create families.

Taiwanese women face discrimination because of their gender and marital status in places of employment as well. Gender-specific labor can be seen both in women-dominated and male-dominated fields. Women, who work in male-dominated fields, mostly get assigned easier tasks than their male colleagues, and this makes women work more to prove they deserve their jobs. Even in women-dominated jobs, men get assigned more complicated tasks, because it is believed women are not suitable for it.

The gender pay gap still is an issue; men get paid more because they of course have a family to feed, whereas women get fed by their husbands. Men also get discriminated against if they work in "womanly" jobs, they get stereotyped as "not enough" men who cannot provide for their families (Chin 2018, 92).

Chin (2018, 83) argues in her book that, management practices at work are *gendered and heteronormative*. Women get asked if they are planning to get married or have children (Iida 2022), whether or not they will follow their boyfriends/husbands if their job sends them to another city, or even if their husband/boyfriend would be okay with them going away for work (Chin 2018), despite it being illegal since this all counts as discrimination of gender and marital status.

As a consequence of this, women decide to do certain jobs because it's more “suitable” for women which are mostly in small and medium-scale companies. The problem with small and medium-scale companies is, they see women marrying and having children as a potential personnel cost to the company (Chin 2018, 99). They don't provide a gender-friendly workplace and women don't take leaves that gender equality policies provide for them, and most of them aren't aware that these policies exist because no one takes them (Iida 2022, 91).

On the other hand, if a woman is a certain age and not married, they often get labeled as not “normal” by the employers (Chin 2018, 102). It seems that whatever the circumstances are women get discriminated in the workplace. It is important to note that this is not the case for all workplaces and families but this situation also shows us that Taiwan still has a long way to go to ensure the gender-equal society and application of gender mainstreaming approaches.

Traditional gender roles construct women as individuals who need to be protected, taken care of, and caretakers of the weaker (seniors and children). So when the gender equality laws are implemented to “protect women” it only feeds into this traditional norms and therefore lead to limitations.

The effects of the limitations of gender equality laws and the traditional ideas and practices within Taiwanese society are quite observable in the annual report of the Gender

Equality Committee mentioned previously. It was mentioned in the previous chapter that the power and influence gap between women and men in national affairs narrowed down, however, if the statistics are analyzed thoroughly, it can be observed that the higher the level of the position, the lower the females participation is (Gender in A Glance in R.O.C (Taiwan) 2024, 11-12). The female labor force participation indeed has risen for all groups of age, but most of the female are clustered in low-paid fields such as; pre-school teachers. The proportion of female graduates increased at all education levels, yet most of the females are graduates of education and humanities, while men dominate the science and engineering fields (Gender in A Glance in R.O.C (Taiwan) 2024, 27-28). These results and the detailed discussions from the scholars indicate despite the great efforts on gender-equal policymaking, there are great obstacles to overcome both in the government organizations and the society.

The UN took various steps for more gender-equal societies like establishing gender equality commissions and implementing CEDAW (Zwingel 2020) which was adopted by many countries but gender mainstreaming became an important strategy in recent years. Gender mainstreaming is an important tool to improve gender equality globally; it aims to minimize inequality in public and private spheres. Its main goal is to integrate a gender perspective into decision-making and provide more substantive equality rather than only before-law equality for all genders (Council of Europe ¹¹). However, this approach encountered a few problems when adapting to a new country despite being a transnational strategy (True and Parisi 2013; Walby 2005). This strategy mostly got misunderstood, not understood enough (True and Parisi 2013), or didn't fit the gender ideas and roles a country already has (Walby 2005), which made implementing gender mainstreaming quite hard.

¹¹ See the Council of Europe website for detailed information; <https://www.coe.int/en/web/genderequality/what-is-gender-mainstreaming#:~:text=Gender%20mainstreaming%20means%20integrating%20a,of%20policies%2C%20programmes%20and%20projects>. (last access: 4/11/2024)

Even though it's the most gender-equal country in Asia, this is the situation in Taiwan as well. Taiwan has two gender equality laws that prevent inequality and any kind of discrimination in employment and education, and a sexual harassment prevention act that ensures women's safety. Taiwanese government also makes great efforts to implement gender mainstreaming strategies into decision-making and private lives with the Gender Equality Committee of the Executive Yuan.

Nevertheless, these policies are not executed well (Chang 2018b; Huang 2024; Hwang 2008), and internalized patriarchal norms still influence the Taiwanese society's idea of gender and policy making (Chang 2017; Chao 2005; Iida 2022; Lin et al. 2003; Yi and Chang 2020). These two factors put a thick and tall wall in the way of gender equality efforts. With modernization, this wall cracks more and more each day and women access more equality in their workplace and family relationships. Taiwanese government also takes steps to improve gender inequality and discrimination (The Garden of Hope Foundation 2024) but needless to say, most Taiwanese women still face inequality in their everyday lives.

It's important to analyze these papers since they help to have a better understanding of the general situation on gender equality globally and in Taiwan. However, little to no studies have been done on gender equality in Taiwan from foreign women's perspective apart from the several researches on immigrant women (Cheng 2013; Wu and Wu 2015; Yang et al. 2010). However, these works mostly focus on transnational brides or immigrant workers, the challenges and problems they face while integrating in Taiwanese culture (which include gender roles). Focus groups are mainly Southeast Asian women, and scarcely touch upon the gender equality aspect of Taiwan. Therefore, it is also crucial to talk about the gender equality and gender perspectives foreign women experience in their now, new home since it can help us to assess the gender equality that is lived every day in society.

Foreign women coming from different parts of the world will be interviewed about their gender equality experiences in Taiwan to further understand the equality in the Taiwanese society. In the next part of this paper, I will elaborate more on the methods of this research.



CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Procedure

Foreign women living in Taiwan were interviewed to analyze how Taiwan's gender equality situation and society's gender perspectives affect the day-to-day lives of foreign women in Taiwan for this research. I believe analyzing the daily experiences of foreign women is an indirect way to explore the gender equality and gender roles that have been lived in a society in general. Carrying out qualitative interviews with foreign women living in Taiwan, I will explore several questions that this research focuses such as, how foreign women living in Taiwan perceive gender equality and gender perspectives in Taiwan. How do these experiences compare with their home country? I argue that foreign women's experiences may give us a clearer view of gender equality and point out positive and negative aspects of Taiwanese society since they come from countries that have different ideas on gender and developments in gender equality.

Foreign women who were at least 21 years of age and spent more than 6 months in Taiwan were chosen to conduct the interviews. Since the adult age differs from 18 to 21 globally, it's been decided that the 21 age limit would be more widely applicable.

This research focuses on foreign residents in Taiwan because they may have more experience living in Taiwan than tourists who only visit and, therefore have a higher chance of developing gender perspectives. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, foreigners who stay in Taiwan for less than 180 days are only eligible to apply for a visitor visa (tourist).

Therefore, interviews were conducted with women who spent at least 180 days or more (6 months) in Taiwan¹².

3.2 Research Participants

Interviews were done with a total of 15 foreign women chosen with convenience sampling (See Figure 1). Foreign women acquaintances were contacted about the interview. A call for the interview was also posted on social media; people who replied and wanted to join were contacted. When choosing the participants, the diversity of their nationality was the priority. Foreign women contacted the interviewer were first asked about their nationality to keep the sample as diverse as possible. Only the basic information about the purpose of the interview was given to avoid any influence on the participant sample.

One participant, who is Half-Taiwanese, was included in this research on foreign women since she wasn't born and lived in Taiwan, and only spent short amounts of time in each visit. She also provided several useful insights due to her familiarity with Taiwanese culture and society.

Name	Country	Total Time Spent	Reasons to Move
I1	New Zealand	1 year	The first time to study Chinese (Huayu Scholarship), the second time to work (loved the language, people ,and food)
I2	USA	3 years	To study Chinese (Huayu Scholarship), stayed in Taiwan to pursue a master's degree

¹² This condition wasn't required for one participant, since she is half-Taiwanese and visited Taiwan once every couple of years with her family; she was very familiar with the topic.

			(cost of education, way of living, health insurance), and now looking for a job
I3	USA/Japan	1.5 years	To pursue a master's degree (learn about the culture and practice Chinese)
I4 (online)	Japan	1 year	The first time to study Chinese (Huayu Scholarship), the second time to pursue a master's degree (MOE Scholarship, closer to Japan both geographically and culturally, interest in Taiwanese politics)
I5	USA/ Dominican Republic	3 years	To pursue master's degree (didn't specify why)
I6 (Chinese)	Vietnam	2.5 years	To study Chinese (it was hard to find a job in Vietnam due to Covid, and decided to learn Chinese)
I7	Mexico	-	To pursue PhD (safety reasons for women and overall gender

			equality)
I18	Scotland	2 years	The first time to study Chinese, the second time to work (loved the way of living)
I19	UK/Taiwan	-	To work (weather, nature, convenience of life)
I10	Philippines	1 year	To pursue a master's degree (got scholarship –didn't specify which-, first world country)
I11	UK	3 years	To study Chinese (Huayu Scholarship), and later stayed here to work (loved her time in Taiwan decided to stay for longer)
I12 (Chinese/English)	Malaysia	5 years	To pursue education -didn't specify the education level- (watched Taiwanese television shows, kind people, safe and Chinese speaking country)
I13	India	5 years	To pursue education -didn't specify the education level- (wanted to pursue further

			education in a Chinese-speaking country, knew people who studied in Taiwan), and stayed after graduation for work
I14	Turkiye	1 year	To pursue a master's degree (to do Asian gender studies, Taiwan is the best option)
I15 (online)	China	1 year	Loves Taiwanese culture, moved to Taiwan after marriage to a Taiwanese man

Figure 2. *Profile of the Interviewees*

3.3 Interview

A piece of brief information about the interview's purpose, content, and background of the interviewer was given before the interview. Interviews were conducted in person with the participants who are residents in Taipei, two of the fifteen interviews were made online because one of the participants was a resident in Tainan, and the other was in China visiting family. Interviews contained eight semi-constructed questions, and follow-up questions were asked if needed. The interview contained questions on gender equality issues in education, the workplace, traditional gender roles, family relationships, government participation, and societal gender ideas to understand their familiarity with the topic and social spheres which women mostly encounter gender inequality.

Interviews took 30-60 minutes. 13 of the 15 interviews were conducted in English; two were done in Chinese¹³, upon the request of the participants. All the initial interviews were done in a month from September 25th to October 20th, 2024, in Taipei, Taiwan. After conducting a coding analysis of the interview data, participants were contacted for more information on several themes; the collection of the additional data timeline was from March 13th to April 20th.

3.4 Data Analysis

To analyze the data from the interviews, the Grounded Theory was used, as it is an useful tool to analyze the data thoroughly and develop theories that cater to all the participants. The data first was transcribed with spoken words and sounds in a Microsoft Word file. Then, it was coded and themed. Interview participants were contacted for further data if needed.

In the process of coding and theming, the written interview data was coded line by line, participant by participant. Insightful comments from participants were color coded and were given a descriptive title. The common themes merged from the interview data were; Gender Safety and Freedom of Expression, Societal Gender Roles, and Gaps in Promoting Gender Equality Measures. These themes will be analyzed in-depth with supporting discussion in the next chapter.

3.5 Research Ethics and Limitations

A written informed consent of being interviewed and voice recorded were obtained before the interview. Participants were informed about their rights to withdraw from the interview, and not answer certain questions if they felt uncomfortable. For interviewees' privacy, participants' names, places of work, and studies were kept anonymous. To ensure privacy, participants are named Interviewee 1 (I1) to Interviewee 15 (I15), and to avoid any

¹³ The interviewer had efficient Chinese to conduct interviews in Chinese.

uncertainty, the participants were given unique codes that represent their backgrounds without providing any sensitive information on their identities (See Figure 2). Interview data containing participants' personal information will be stored in a password-protected database, which is only available for the researcher. Quotes used in this research will not be traceable to the participants in any way; personal identifiers will be removed from the transcriptions.

I1	NTE1, Sep 25
I2	UTE2, Sep 26
I3	UJTS1, Sep 26
I4	JTnS2, Sep 26
I5	UDTE3, Sep 28
I6	VNS3, Oct 1
I7	MTS4, Oct, 1
I8	SNE4, Oct 6
I9	UTTE5, Oct 6
I10	PTS5, Oct 5
I11	UNE6, Oct 12
I12	MTS6, Oct 12
I13	ITE7, Oct 19
I14	TTS7, Oct 20
I15	CTcE8, Sep 28

Figure 3. *Codes of Participants*

Note. Codes were given to the participants according to their countries, city of residency, employment status, and the time of the interview. The first employee that was interviewed was labeled as E1; the second interview was E2 and so on. The same for the students as well; S1, S2... City of residency codes were: T for Taipei City, NT for New Taipei City, Tc for Taichung City, and Tn for Tainan City. Participants with double nationalities were marked with the initials of both countries. The additional interview data was marked with the second interview date during the discussion.

Since this research is a qualitative research based on interviews with a small group of foreign women, there are several limitations. First, their race, occupation, social status, and place of residency may influence their experiences in Taiwan and the results may be very distinct from one another. Due to this reason, it is important to note that this research aims to shed some light on foreign women's experiences of gender equality but does not intend to

represent all foreign women in Taiwan. Further research could explore certain subgroups of foreign women to obtain more detailed insights into their experiences with gender equality in Taiwan. This issue will be discussed thoroughly in the conclusion chapter, following an analysis of the social experiences of foreign women.

Second, in recent times, gender studies have increasingly delved into issues and topics concerning LGBTQ+ communities; when terms such as ‘gender equality’ and ‘gender studies’ are highlighted, it may be perceived as a study on LGBTQ+ communities. In this context, this research would principally be ‘women’s study’. However, referring to it as a ‘women’s study’ would minimize the scope of this work, as it’s a research about societal gender (in)equalities (between males and females).



CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the data gathered from semi-structured interviews with 15 foreign women living in Taiwan is analyzed with a thematic approach. This chapter aims to have a comprehensive understanding of the gender experiences of foreign women and answer the research questions that have been discussed in chapter three. The analysis was structured into three subcategories of themes that developed from the interview data; Gender Safety and Freedom of Expression, Societal Gender Roles, and Gaps in Promoting Gender Equality Measures. Each theme will be explored in depth, and participants' gender perspectives and insights will be analyzed, supported by contextual literature and critical discussion.

4.1 Gender Safety and Freedom of Expression

One of the biggest indicators of a place that is gender equal is how safe that country is for women. I believe to discuss equality in different areas in the societal life of women; gender safety should be secured first. Gender safety and security is also one of the indicators of the Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) under the “restricted physical integrity” indicator, which indicates all forms of violence against women.

The relationship between women's safety and gender equality can be seen in the 2023 SIGI Report. Countries with higher scores in restricted physical integrity (higher scores indicates worse conditions) are classified as having higher gender discrimination, while countries with lower scores are classified as having lower gender discrimination in the 2023 Report. For instance, Saudi Arabia has the highest score in restricted physical integrity and it is classified as very high discrimination country, while New Zealand has the lowest score and it is classified as a very low discrimination country (OECD 2023, 161-165).

As it was mentioned in the Introduction Chapter, Taiwan is ranked 6th globally and 1st in Asia (Gender in A Glance in R.O.C (Taiwan) 2024); we should expect that gender

safety is a minimal issue and women rarely experience violence. The interview data this research gathered shares insights on foreign women's experiences on gender safety.

At the start of the interview, participants were all asked to compare their countries and Taiwan in terms of gender equality and attitude towards women's rights. Every foreign woman participated in the research, initiated their responses with safety in Taiwan for women. Foreign women coming from different parts of the world that had been interviewed for this research, other than one participant from New Zealand¹⁴, commonly acknowledged that Taiwan is safer than their own countries, which coheres with the 2023 SIGI Report. Participants reported that they have a 'sense of security' living in Taiwan.

A Japanese-American woman who grew up in the USA stated in her interview that;

"From what I have been seeing in my daily life, Taiwan is safer for women. I see fewer cases of sexual misconduct and rape than in the USA." (UJTS1, Sep 26)

Another participant from Scotland shares the same feelings as the Japanese-American participant. She says;

"I feel like Scotland is also pretty safe for women but I definitely feel a lot safer in Taiwan which is maybe a reason why I came back here... You can walk on the streets at night and not worry about anything but in Scotland or whatever you would be crazy walking outside (at night)." (SNE4, Oct 6)

A participant from the Philippines also states Taiwan is a lot safer in terms of gender security, and explains the feeling of security she experiences as a woman. She adds;

¹⁴ She states in her interview that, Taiwan and New Zealand both are very equal, liberal, and free when it comes to women's rights. (NTE1, Sep, 25)

“(...) in the Philippines (...) actually we were told even when we are young, don’t...like go home at night. Like, for instance, (if) I’m going home at night and I need to call someone at home to get me. But here in Taiwan, you can go around the city even if it’s at night. Maybe because, like, there are a lot of CCTVs and I feel more secure, like walking around even at night. (...)I feel safe going around Taipei City but if go to Manila, I need to be vigilant. For the past years, there has been a lot of news like, women getting abducted (in the Philippines), I’ve never heard, in the past year, of a woman getting abducted (in Taiwan).” (PTS5, Oct 5)

Feeling secure in the place of residency can be one of the most liberating feelings for a women, or any gender. If there is less concern on the physical integrity, opportunities for women naturally increases. The fear restricts women from pursuing their desires, hinders them from reaching their full potentions, and identity formation and development. For instance, when a women fears to go on a walk in the middle of the night to unwind, she will never know how much she might like going on walks at night and how helpful it might be for her mental health. The liberty women feel when its safe, can affect their personalities. The research data alligns with this observation.

When the participants were asked if they experienced any changes in their personality living in Taiwan, some directly told the interviewer that “they are more free and open”. A participant from Turkiye pointed out that, she changed positively, because she feels freer, she doesn’t have the need to protect herself constantly, which makes her life less stressful and gives her the mental space to focus on other aspects of life. She says;

“I changed a little bit but in a very positive way (living in Taiwan). Because I’m, I do feel safe, so I don’t feel the need to like... I don’t know. I feel safe in general where I am and I don’t feel the need to check on myself, my stuff or for example or if

someone is following me or not... I don't think it's ever a matter a problem, no one ever looks at you in a different way, just because you are wearing or not wearing something. And honestly, no one actually cares of what you do and everybody is minding their own thing. I don't experience the daily anxiety; it gives me a space to grow.” (TTS7, Oct 20)

The interviewee from India stated similar experiences:

“Expressing myself completely changed here. Before, if you called me (for the interview) and I had to express my thoughts, I wouldn't be this clear (about my opinions). I'm more open than before, I learned about saying yes and no.” (ITE7, Oct 19)

The interviewee from Mexico also expressed her thoughts on the ways living in Taiwan influenced her personal growth;

“I'm a lot more confident. I feel a lot more comfortable. I'm able to, if I am suffering from insomnia or anxiety, which I am, often. I know that I can go to the park at 2 A.M. for a walk and I won't die. (...) I actually think, because I'm no longer on that kind of like, low-key stressed and fear of going outside and being killed, kidnapped, and raped, I think it allowed me to process a lot of that stress.” (MTS4, Oct 1)

Foreign women's insights during the interviews indicates Taiwan's safe and secure environment helps foreign women living in Taiwan to foster self-confidence and be more open in expressing their opinions. Whether it's through words, clothing, or makeup, women can express themselves freely and explore their personalities. Most of the women interviewed said they can express themselves freely in different forms of expression living in Taiwan, this directly influences women's liberty and development.

Another reason why women are feeling comfortable enough to express themselves freely might be the Taiwanese culture, which is kind, respectful, and welcoming to every opinion. In fact, moral education is being taught to Taiwanese kids in schools as a part of their formal curriculum, mostly Confucianist values. The children are taught how to be good and respectful citizens with virtue, and how to become individuals who respect others, society, and nature (Chen et al. 2015).

The moral education may be the reason there is a comfortable environment for women. Some of the participants mentioned Taiwanese morals when talking about equality and safety in Taiwan. Some suggested that the equal environment in Taiwan is the result of respectful Taiwanese morals which is different from their country and the rational behind their feeling of safety.

When a participant from the USA was asked whether or not she faced any challenges as a woman in Taiwan, she mentioned;

“Actually I find it in Taiwan... People are just politer to women. Like guys would move over on the MRT, or someone would give you their seat. (...) there is the politeness for women, like women and children first. If there is a mom and little kid in MRT, guys would give up their seats.” (UTE3, Sep 28)

The participant from New Zealand also stated that the reason why she trusts Taiwanese men more might be these morals they have been taught from a very young age;

“I know that a lot of these values are kind of taught from a young age, maybe it’s Confucianism, maybe it’s something else, I know when they go to school, they do moral classes. I don’t know why I trust Taiwanese men more. (It’s a feeling?) Yes.” (NTE1, Sep 25)

Indeed, these values can influence the way society thinks and acts, directly creating a free and safe environment. However, it's important to point out that in a gender-unsafe country where crimes against women's safety are happening, no matter how kind a society is, women wouldn't feel comfortable enough to express themselves. Many countries are known as friendly, kind, and welcoming societies, yet, not many are gender equal. For instance, in a 2024 research by InterNations on the friendliest countries for foreigners, the top 10 included cities in Mexico, Spain, Oman, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, Kenya, and Panama (InterNations 2024)¹⁵, which most of them are not known for their gender equality and safety.

I argue that the primary reason behind the feeling of safety and security in foreign women aside from the respectful Taiwanese morals and security laws is the representation of women in the decision making. As it was mentioned in the Introduction Chapter, female representation in cabinet members as well as the government officials are increasing through the years in Taiwan (Gender in A Glance in R.O.C (Taiwan) 2024). The female representation is crucial in ensuring gender equality, and it gives women a deeper sense of security. Seeing women in higher places and decision making, women may feel their rights are protected by these women, therefore feeling safer and included.

During the interviews, 86.67% of foreign women interviewed (13 of 15) were aware of the female representation in decision making in Taiwan and shared their insights on impacts of higher female representation. A Japanese participant shared how Taiwan is more advanced in promoting gender equality and the reason for this was the female representation in the Taiwanese parliament;

¹⁵ Please see for further information; <https://www.internations.org/expat-insider/2024/ease-of-settling-in-index-for-cities-40488>

“I think Japan and Taiwan seem to be very similar in terms of culture and customs. However, from my point of view, Taiwan is more advanced for women's rights and promoting gender equality, especially in terms of legal system. For example, Taiwan has quota system, certain percent of women should be members of Parliament.”
(JTnS2, Sep 26)

An American participant also mentioned she observes increasing numbers of female police officers and female politicians, which makes her feel safer.

“Like if there is a sexual harassment or like you are feeling unsafe, I would like 100% would go talk to the people at the station. I feel like they do a very good job training the government workers. I do notice a lot, female police officers (...) and (...) female politicians as well. (There is a) greater female presence in politics.” (UTE2, Sep 26)

I believe that the Taiwanese morals, security laws and the female representation in decision making work together to create a gender-safe and free environment. Based on the interview data analysis results, it can be concluded that Taiwan's gender-safe environment fueled by respectful morals and female representation, contributes to foreign women's feelings of self-assurance and exploration of self.

The secure environment in Taiwan helps foreign women to leave their anxieties behind and gives them a chance to explore and express themselves in various ways. When this security is provided, women get to understand who they are, what they like, maybe for the first time in their lives. It is essential to learn how Taiwan provides a secure environment for women and its effects. This is especially important in a global scale, as it can further improve women's empowerment globally. Therefore, this study sets Taiwan as a model for gender safety, if the steps Taiwan took studied and integrated to internal policies, it would benefit women all over the world and further improve global gender equality.

4.2 Societal Gender Roles

In the previous section, this research pointed out foreign women's feeling of security and how this feeling liberates them and improves self-confidence and empowerment. What contributed to "feeling of security" was argued to be respectful morals of Taiwanese society, security laws and female representation in decision making and government officials. However, literature review indicates that despite the security and gender equality laws, traditional gender roles still affect women's lives on social spheres in Taiwan. Therefore these two concepts (gender security and traditional gender norms), can be discussed separately, since they both can shed light on different societal experiences of foreign women living in Taiwan.

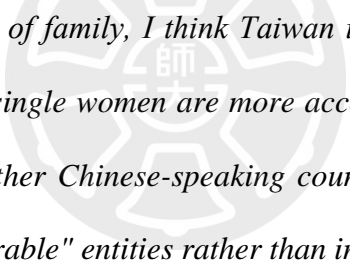
During the interviews, foreign women shared their experiences and reflections on traditional gender roles, their comments focused on two different aspects; women's role in society and expectations placed on women's body and personality. Hence, this section will discuss foreign women's experiences in two subsections; Marriage, Romantic Relationships, and Family Roles and Femininity, Health and Beauty Standards.

4.2a Marriage, Romantic Relationships, and Family Roles

As mentioned in the literature review, Taiwanese society has traditional values when it comes to marriage (Gao 2003), although with each new generation, these values lose their importance and impact more, previous studies show they are still practiced by the society and a considerable part of the women's lives are decided by these traditional values (Lin et al. 2003). Marriage and family are one of the most fundamental values in Taiwanese society women and men both have their dedicated roles within this system (Chin 2018). Such as, the women stay home, and take care of the family (both her and her husband's family), while the man works outside and provides for the family. From the low birth rates and rising numbers of double household incomes, we can see that there is a freedom to choose whether or not to

marry and give birth or work. However, marriage and family units, and traditions are still highly valued (Iida 2022). Women who are married and not married are always followed by these conservative opinions. The interview analysis results reveal foreign women are also aware of these traditional roles and ideas, and the value that is been given to the idea of marriage in Taiwanese society.

One Japanese participant mentioned her dissatisfaction with such traditional ideas in society. She mentioned that when she was a student at a Chinese Language Center, the students were asked if they want to get married and have babies in the future. She said the conversation made her quite uncomfortable because she didn't want to involve herself with the idea that 'every woman wants to marry and raise children'. She then adds her thoughts on marriage;



“Regarding the concept of family, I think Taiwan is more conservative than Japan. In Japan, it seems that single women are more acceptable in society, but personally in Taiwan (or let say other Chinese-speaking countries), single women seem to be regarded as more "miserable" entities rather than in Japan.” (JTnS2, Sep 26)

A Chinese participant who is married to a Taiwanese man also stated her frustration;

“At my first job interview, the manager asked me if I had any plans to have a baby. I was a bit surprised that companies want to know this before hire you. (...) I go to a language exchange event every week. Sometimes after people know I'm married, they ask me: Is your husband OK with it? I was like, of course. We're couple but I'm still an individual. It happens in Taiwan sometimes (...) the first job I got in Taiwan, I worked there for 3 months. Before I quit my job, the manager said I can just let my husband give me financial support, and I don't really like that. I always do things on my own. Some people think once you're married you become your husband's

property! I always tell them I do what I want to do; it's about me, not my husband."

(CTcE8, Sep 28)

Another participant who is half Taiwanese married to a foreign man talked about the freedom to choose whether or not to marry and work as a woman. She stated that women are expected to work and make a living for themselves, until they marry. She explains;

"I would say, in general, people are getting married a lot later... Um, and, but it's just the cost of living... There is not really a benefit in having a baby in this economy... What doesn't make sense that people still value it so much as the ideal for your life should be to find your partner and find a husband that takes care of you? It's not like, i think especially as a girl, like, you should work hard to have a career but drop that as soon as you find a husband that pay for you and pop out some babies.." (UTTE5, Oct 6)

These traditional values and ideas can be seen in relationships outside of marriage too, such as dating. Several foreign women in relationships with Taiwanese man stated that they first handily experienced these traditional roles and ideas (men provide, women accept) in their relationships. Sometimes these traditional practices are from their partners, sometimes are from their partners' family.

One participant from the UK shared her experiences with dating Taiwanese men;

"When dating, (there is rules) how a girl should be and a guy should be. (...) The guy will always pay for your meal. Whereas in the UK, I would probably would split the bill, or take turns. Like the way I'm treated here by the guys. (They are) much more considerate,¹⁶ more caring, nicer... I've been driven around everywhere, they

¹⁶ The participant used the term tiēxīn (貼心) during the interview.

treat me but... I feel like it's slightly filtered down into, you as a woman having a more passive role and guy has more of an active role." (UNE6, Oct 12)

Another participant expressed that her long-term Taiwanese boyfriend doesn't want her to meet his parents before marriage because of his family's traditional ideas on women's roles;

"Especially one of the reasons I haven't met my boyfriend's family yet, is because he said if you meet them, they will expect you to fulfill this traditional role, like go there help with cleanings and cook stuff... So he is like, I want to protect you from that as long as... He said, if I go, his grandma would tell me I need to have a child, and I'm like... It's a bit..umm.." (SNE4, Oct 6)

Every country and society has many differing practices and ideas around marriage. Of course, it's not entirely correct to say these practices are what make us believe what we believe, however, one could argue that they are one of the contributing factors. They can influence the way we think, which for some, is the key concept for gender equality. Living in a society where traditional practices on marriage and relationships are still in the day-to-day lives, these "traditional" ideas can become every day "customs". When something becomes widespread, everyone might follow the same customs even though it's unintentional. That's how social practices, even the smallest details, are what shape our ideas and habits. The participant from New Zealand shared her experience on this topic with the researcher, stating that she became more conservative in Taiwan. She explained;

"I was talking to my landlord, I just moved in to my new apartment and I pointed to a knife in the kitchen. "Oh! Whose is that?" She said "To the previous girl lived here, she only cut fruit, she didn't cook." And then I said... "Oh... But she got married?"....I was like... Girl... You are a feminist. But like.. Because I'm back to

this society, where I see the women are expected to do x,y and z, that naturally came to me only because I was in Taiwan. I don't think I would never say that in New Zealand, ever.” (NTE1, Sep 25)

This situation was also shared with the participant from the UK who stated that she became a lot more reserved in Taiwan due to relationship dynamics;

“I actually think, this is especially recently, I had, I think I become more, when dating, I think I've become slightly more reserved... More worried about concerned about being polite and like, sometimes be more passive. I think my, I don't being this age has to do with this but... I did meet some crazy people who had some certain expectations of how you should behave. I think that made me little bit more, think more when I'm saying something or the way I behave. Swearing for example, or asking for permission or like, I don't know being polite.” (UNE6, Oct 12)

From the interview data analysis, it can be observed that foreign women began to perceive several traditional gender roles as womanly attributes and unintentionally began to perform these roles in their daily lives. I argue that Taiwanese society's traditional practices around marriage and relationships between men and women can and do influence foreign women's idea of a woman in a relationship. It may cause foreign women to develop more conservative ideas unintentionally and cause a regression on these women's personal stance on the idea of a "woman", which many feminists are working against this regression of women's self-reflection. This may even cause some women to intentionally not get into relationships, or be married in the future, to avoid taking a more passive role in their relationships.

Cultural gender norms are not something that can be changed overnight, especially if these norms become social practices. Taiwan's Gender Equality Committee has been paying

great attention to these details and making progress on changing the social gender norms throughout the years with gender mainstreaming¹⁷. However, when these traditional ideas are seen as cultural customs, for some, there might not be a problem to solve. It's important to emphasize the problem from a different standpoint for more clarity. Of course, with still many challenges on gender equality in Taiwan, this may seem like a very little bump on the road, however, its' influence on foreign women (and potentially Taiwanese women as well) shouldn't be overlooked.

4.2b Femininity, Health and Beauty Standards

Femininity has many differing definitions by linguists, sociologists, feminists, and many more, however, if we take the simplest approach and look at its definition in the English language, femininity is the fact or quality of having characteristics that are traditionally thought to be typical of or suitable for a woman¹⁸, whether it is implied as being soft, nurturing, emotional, vulnerable, wearing makeup, wearing skirts and dresses or the color pink, being thin, eating healthy, valuing their own beauty, or being the one who makes the secondary decisions, quiet, femininity has many definitions.¹⁹ As Simone De Beauvoir puts in her revolutionary book, *The Second Sex* (1949, 267), one is not born but rather becomes a woman. These are the characteristics of an ideal woman and these are the characteristics that shape our idea of a woman. We can see and experience these ideas everywhere in the world in different forms, and Taiwan also, despite its high scores on gender equality. Foreign women discussed their experiences with the idea of femininity in Taiwan with the researcher during the interviews.

¹⁷ See Gender Equality Committee's website on gender mainstreaming measures, previous meeting records and future strategies here: <https://gec.ey.gov.tw/en/5BF83D33AF66B2FA>

¹⁸ See Cambridge Dictionary

¹⁹ See United Nations Girls's Education Initiative Gender Glossary <https://www.ungei.org/gender-transformative-education-glossary/gender/femininity>

“(...)Certain things are for reserved only for man, drinking too much alcohol and chewing betel nuts²⁰, even smoking. Because when I smoke, they are like.. You are going to give birth someday, why you are smoking! (...) So it’s okay for my husband to have a cigarette, or chew on betel nuts but the second I do it, half of the room is looking at me...” (UTTE5, Oct 6)

The participant from Mexico also shared the same experiences in different behaviors within genders, she stated;

“(...) I was sitting in a room studying with a bunch of Taiwanese students and one of the guys was completely inconsiderate and he was just throwing his things around and just being like loud and the girls were...but girls by comparison, they were really considerate they would move immediately out of the way, they would pick up their things, and that’s.. That surprised me. To see it bluntly put in my face, even though I am, I am used to sexism back in my country. It surprised me”. (MTS4, Oct 1)

Another participant from Malaysia also stated the pressure of being woman who fits in the boxes;

“When I’m out with my friends and we pass through a night club, if they see a girl with heavy makeup, they would say ‘Oh, she is for the streets’. But they wouldn’t say that for a guy. (...) I also know a lot of (Taiwanese) girls going to dance classes just to be thinner, not to learn any dance.” (MTS6, Oct 12)

The interview analysis reveal that, despite its free environment in different ways of expression, more than half of the foreign women feel the pressure of being more feminine in

²⁰It is essential to recognize that chewing on betel nuts are an important cultural practice in indigenous cultures in Taiwan for both females and males. See National Museum of Prehistory e-newsletter for more insights on indigenous tribes (Amis people specifically) and betel nut culture here; https://beta.nmp.gov.tw/enews/no397/page_02.html#:~:text=檳榔在臺灣原住民,的定情之物。

Taiwan. This pressure of being more “feminine” affects foreign women’s image on their bodies as well. Several women shared their experiences on how being thin is valued and seen as being beautiful in Taiwan.

“When I first came to Taipei....It wasn’t too bad in Tainan. In Taipei, I seriously (started to) see some bad body issues. It wasn’t like an eating disorder but I started doing things I knew would make me not hungry. I started smoking, you know, because I knew I wouldn’t get hungry and I lost a lot of weight, really quickly. Because everyone is so thin... and... But the thing is no matter what you do, you will never be as small (as Taiwanese women)...” (UTE2, Sep 26)

The participant from New Zealand also went through similar experiences;

“Something i started doing in Taiwan, i started looking at the sugars and fats in things, maybe because I’m a woman. Because the advertisements in Taiwan are a lot more, i think i pay attention to it more. A lot of things came from my ex-boyfriend commenting on my weight and habits. I think that’s something influenced my live, constant health reminders. Is it related to gender? I’m not sure.” (NTE1, Sep 25)

As previous scholars (Chang 2017; Chao 2005; Lin et al. 2003; Iida 2022; Yi and Chang 2020) explained in their works, traditional gender roles are still tacked with Taiwanese society. When people think about traditional gender roles, the “women takes care of the family, man works and provides for the family” idea comes up first. However, traditional gender roles also imply to these kinds of characteristics (girls should be quiet, well-behaved, good-looking, and thin) mentioned above, which are not discussed enough by other scholars. For some, dressing nice, being beautiful, thin, and quiet, and not smoking or drinking²¹, these are the characteristics that make women, *women*. This is the *real* feminine. When these

²¹ See “Gender Dimensions in Taiwanese Society (性別向度與台灣社會) (2007)” for further information on Taiwanese femininity standards and society.

characteristics are performed by society unknowingly, it supports the traditional gender roles and affects how we see ourselves as a woman and how we perform femininity.

Judith Butler explains this phenomenon as “gender performativity” in her works. According to her, gender identity is constructed by the things we ‘perform’. It is how we act, speak, dress, and move, on the surface these might seem as natural habits or maybe personal preferences but it’s a social practice of femininity and masculinity. Our idea of gender is based on these social practices, it affects how we see and express ourselves, it is not something we inherit, rather it is something we learn (Butler 1990). Butler’s theory point out that gender is fluid and femininity can be performed by a female and a male, and vice versa. Therefore gender performativity remains a timeless theory and it is still can be referred to in modern societies when LGBTQ+ visibility continues to grow.

Both in the cases of societal gender norms (marriage and relationship roles, and beauty and health standards) data shows that these new practices affect their idea on gender identity and feed into this traditional image; what femininity *is*, or how a woman *should be*. Foreign women feel the pressure to be healthier, thinner and dress accordingly, take a more passive role, have certain expectations on marriage or married women, be more “feminine” than they used to because it’s how femininity performed in Taiwanese society. It should be noted that this situation is different from the freedom of wearing what you want or behaving how you want. This is not a concept of freedom of expression, it’s the gender identity we perform and reflect on others.

On the other hand, the interview analysis shows health and beauty standards’ influence on foreign women living in Taiwan primarily was observed in the interview data with the foreign women coming from Western societies and/or societies with more development on gender equality. During the interviews with foreign women coming from eastern countries

and/or societies with less development on gender equality, interviewees didn't talk about or mention health and beauty standards or femininity in Taiwanese society. From their point of view, if it's safe enough to wear whatever you want, it's gender equal. In some cases, it is even perceived as a negative aspect. Two of the interviewees stated that they, sometimes, feel like Taiwan is *too equal*.

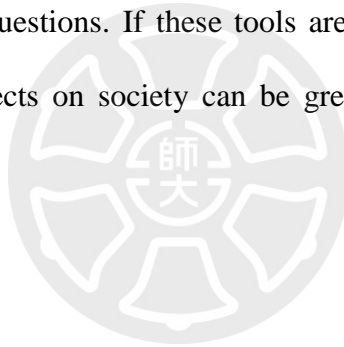
"I think Taiwanese bosses don't distinguish between what tasks are for girls and what tasks are for boys. Some things require more strength but they still let girls do it. I find it hard to accept. In Vietnam, we make a clear distinction: light tasks are given to girls, while heavy tasks such as moving things are given to boys. I don't think this is right...I think the working culture here is... Not good." (VNS3, Oct 1)

These differences in gender perceptions are the result of the societal gender ideas their societies practice, and the gender we 'perform', it's what influences our gender identity. It also affects our concept of gender equality. Interview results indicate that these foreign women coming from countries with less development in gender equality have low expectations of gender equality. With these low expectations, their main concern is safety, other gender problems are secondary. This doesn't guarantee that these foreign women don't realize societal gender practices in Taiwanese society, rather, due to their everyday safety concerns, once their safety needs are met, they are satisfied. Therefore, this also supports that the gender we are 'performing' in a society, is in fact, crucial for gender identity.

I argue that foreign women can clearly see these gender practices when they move to a completely new place with different, because it differs from how they used to practice gender before. I believe that these differing practices can influence our attitude toward marriage, relationships, and body image. Moreover, foreign women may adapt to these new social

practices (whether the change is positive or negative) and influence their personal ideas on gender.

From the work of respective scholars, it's clear that traditional ideas and social practices are the things that create barriers to achieving substantive equality. The question then arises, is it possible to achieve change in social practices and traditional ideas? If it's achievable, what strategies could be considered? Could gender mainstreaming strategies provide a solution? As it's discussed before, the Taiwanese government is often criticized for not understanding and misusing gender mainstreaming strategies and tools (Chang 2017; Chang 2018b; Chin 2018; Huang 2024; Hwang 2008; Iida 2022). However, when it's implied correctly and effectively with the support of feminist NGOs, gender mainstreaming tools could be the solution to these questions. If these tools are implemented and carried out by municipal governments, the effects on society can be greater, as it can reach out to more specific demographics.



4.3 Gaps in Promoting Gender Equality Measures

When discussing about gender equality, government participation is one of the topics that must be mentioned. Social change can be possible with the first step of establishing gender friendly laws in education, employment, health, etc. whose main purposes are to protect and provide unequal women with equality and justice and the driving force for substantive equality. However, not every country has the resources to make such laws. As a result, international laws and strategies like CEDAW and gender mainstreaming we explored in the literature review, have been put in place. With these almost standardized international laws, gender equality became more accessible for many societies. Even with the internal

attitude and traditions towards gender, it gave the feminists the base to push for more equal agendas.

As discussed previously in the literature review, Taiwan also has been progressing with the help of Taiwanese feminist NGOs and these international laws and strategies. To make a place more gender equal, women's participation in politics is also one of the important elements, Taiwan also made huge improvements in women's participation in politics resulting in more gender-friendlier laws and women's participation enhanced political competition (Huang 2016, 327). As this paper discussed in the Gender Safety and Freedom of Expression section, female participation was highly acknowledged by foreign women living in Taiwan and it was argued that this aspect of Taiwanese society contributed to foreign women's feeling of safety.

However, Taiwan ranking first in gender equality in Asia, or foreign women's perceptions of security, do not necessarily mean criminal offenses against women doesn't ever occur in Taiwan. In Taipei City alone, 12258 domestic violence cases were reported by the police; among them 1267 were sexual harassment, 416 were injury, 8 were rape and 5 were murder cases (Taipei City Police Department 2024). When this is considered, it is quite significant to analyze whether or not foreign women are aware of gender equality laws and means of protection.

During the interview, it was revealed that foreign women were conscious of gender equality policies and measures initiated by the government. A participant from Turkiye expressed her gratitude towards several government initiatives during the interview;

“For women's safety, I have seen a lot of ‘no harassment’ things literally everywhere in like buses and public restrooms, classrooms, it's everywhere. And it's

made pretty clear, if you do tend to, do anything on of the sort, you would be fined for it. It feels safe to know that. It's empowering and nice actually.” (TTS7, Oct 20)

A Malaysian university student also explained there are several gender equality measurements in her university;

“In terms of education, I think there are a lot of lectures on gender equality. Elementary schools start teaching people to respect each other's genders. Also there are many gender-friendly toilets in my university. Now there are many gender-equal toilets in Office of International Affairs. I heard that more gender-equal toilets will be built in the future.” (MTS6, Oct 12)

Nevertheless, when interviewees were asked about the details of such measures and initiatives, it appears that there is an absence of information on this matter. Interviewees were asked if they had seen anything that made them feel like the Taiwanese government is taking steps to ensure gender equality and a safe environment for women, there was a range of answers. The most common answer was; they do not know *what* exactly Taiwan is doing for gender equality, they only knew Taiwan is doing *something*, which supports the previous research on the lack of information on gender equality laws and rights. The second most common answer was; have seen initiatives and regulations (common answers were; sexual harassment buttons, reserved seats and sexual harassment flyers on public transportation, gender friendly bathrooms and free sanitary products on school campuses), however the number of women who is aware of or seen these kinds of examples at least once, were lower than foreign women who aren't aware of anything such.

When the participant from India was asked if she saw any of the government initiatives in public places, she answered;

“I don’t think so. (But) in Taiwan, they have proper things for women. They have free pads in the hostels and dorms.” (ITE7, Oct 19)

The Japanese-American participant stated that she is aware of several amenities available for pregnant women and women with kids, however, she was not fully informed on government measurements;

“I think from what I’ve seen in the MRT for example, or inside the buses, like public transportations, they have specific spots where they are reserved for people such as pregnant woman, or women with children. I think in general people tend to respect that services available, not many people would sit in those seats, unless there are no one that is in need of those services. In terms of the government, I’m not really sure because I don’t watch the news. And so... But those just little services like public parks having availabilities and even in the bathrooms there are changing stations for kids. I think it’s a very standard service the government provides.” (UJTS1, Sep 26)

Places like public transportation, school campuses, and bathrooms are the places these foreign women go to on a daily basis; it’s only natural that foreign women come into contact with gender equality and protection initiatives in such places. Additionally, some of these women don’t speak Chinese fluently, even if they do, because they didn’t grow up in Taiwan, these kinds of information don’t come to their knowledge unless it’s specially searched for. That is the reason why these initiatives and measurements in public places are important. The interview data shows, foreign women don’t come across gender equality and protection measures naturally.

In the literature review, it was explored in depth that Taiwanese women are also not aware of such laws or initiatives. The outcome scholars presented was, especially about laws surrounding the workplace, the women is not willing to use their rights because they don’t

have trust in the government and because of this reason they are not aware of them. Besides, an awareness study on gender equality and security initiatives haven't been done yet. That being said, the causes of the lack of awareness in Taiwanese women and foreign women living in Taiwan are not equivalent. Foreign women don't have the same distrust in the Taiwanese government, because most simply put, it's not their government. Therefore, we can assume from the interview analysis is that, especially when it comes down to means foreign women getting the information on these kinds of gender equality and protection measures, the Taiwanese government is not direct enough with these gender equality initiatives.

These kinds of gender equality and protection initiatives are some of the only ways foreign women can be aware of how to get help and where to get help if anything happens, these are the only ways to be aware of their rights. As it was explained above, for foreign women it's not a natural process. At this stage, it raises the question, how do foreign women get help when they need it, if they are not aware of these measurements? When it was asked the interviewees, responses varied. Some of the foreign women said they would contact the police, some of them said they would contact their friends, some of them said they would contact their schools, or their government's office in Taiwan, or they didn't know how to get help when facing this kind of situation.

One interesting response from two women going to the same school was recorded. Interviewees said, if anything happens they would use an app on their phone. The interviewees informed the researcher that their university had an orientation class about how to get help in Taiwan with foreign students;

“You know there is like an app right? You can click and report. During our orientation, they gave an orientation about like emergency and everything in our

school. They told us to upload this app, in case there is someone creepy or doing something creepy, you can just click it. There was a police giving us an orientation, in case of fire, in case of emergency... Like someone in the bus being creepy and everything. That's why I feel so much safer, you can easily ask for help.” (PTS5, Oct 5)

However, outside of this particular school, this kind of lecture wasn't received by other international students amongst interviewees. A participant stated that there were several similar orientations in her school but since it wasn't mandatory, she didn't participate. However, she talked about an alternative way her school provides assistance and information to foreign students;

“The teaching assistants do send emails saying like, here is this lecture, you can go listen. They don't force you to go and I wasn't interested. But we do have a teacher assigned to us, if foreign students need any help we can go talk with this teacher, whether it's about the life in Taiwan or go get help on other things.” (MTS6, Oct 12)

Furthermore, not every foreign woman living in Taiwan are student, they come to Taiwan for employment purposes, mostly for private companies, and their employers don't provide gender equality or protection lectures. For this reason, if this information doesn't come naturally and if they are not receiving any lectures or information, how can the government be sure foreign women do know the measures for protection? Indeed, it is possible to contact friends, the school, and the foreign consults but can women contemplate and assess the situation healthily in a moment of crisis? Isn't there a need for more direct resources like the app mentioned above?

An American woman working in a Taiwanese company expressed her fear of experiencing sexual harassment in her workplace because she is not fully informed about her ways of getting help;

“I would be most afraid to experience harassment in the workplace however, because I am not sure of whom to go to, but I feel that any internal processes would favor the perpetrator over the victim. Additionally, since my immigration status is tied to my job, I would be very scared of losing my job as retaliation.” (UTE2, Apr 2)

Several foreign women who have faced sexual harassment or witnessed others being sexually harassed in Taiwan expressed their frustration with help mechanisms as well. A participant talked about her experience with asking the police for help;

“I have a stalker... He comes to my work and like walk outside, stands there and follows me down the street. So we had to contact the police about that. (Did the police take any actions?) They said that because he hasn't physically harmed anybody... They can't really do anything about it... And they said they know about him because he has mental problems...but they can't do anything about him... They just said next time something happens I need to contact them directly. I feel like in that regard, it's a bit annoying. Even if he does make me feel scared and uncomfortable, they can't do anything. Because he hasn't hurt anybody, yet.” (SNE4, Oct 6)

This topic of foreign women and their awareness of protections and rights measurements were in fact, mentioned before by a committee member in the Gender Equality Committee, Chih-Chieh Lin (林志潔) on their 31st Executive Yuan Gender Equality Council Meeting. She pointed out that number of foreigners working in industrial parks is increasing, but when these foreigners face sexual harassment, they have fewer sources (Gender Equality

Committee of the Executive Yuan 31st Committie Member Meeting 2024, 10²²). She suggested that, industrial parks should increase the publicity and speeches on sexual harassment prevention to help foreign migrant workers. She also suggested Taiwanese government should develop suitable strategies for foreigners. I intend to build upon her suggestions and propose that the Taiwanese government can take relative measures with the help of gender mainstreaming tools, if implemented correctly.

To begin with, a gender analysis is a must. Gender analysis is as defined by the European Commission, the study of differences in the conditions, needs, participation rates, access to resources and development, control of assets, decision-making powers, etc., between women and men in their assigned gender roles (European Parliament 2002) and is the first step of implementing gender mainstreaming. Only with accurate analysis, suitable measures can be taken. This would help to further understand how many foreign men and women are working or studying in such organizations, what are their ages and social circumstances, what are their means of accessing gender equality measurements, and what are their needs. This data is crucial for the development of such strategies.

The second step involves the gender impact assessment. Gender Impact Assessment is a tool to compare and assess the effects of existing gender equality laws and policies (European Commission: Directorate-General for Employment 1998). The effectiveness of the current gender equality and protection measurements should be analyzed. Once this information has been collected and combined with the gender analysis data, it can be clearly seen in what ways these measurements need further improvement, and how they can be altered to fix foreign women's needs.

²² This information was cited from the meeting record of the 31st Committie Member Meeting of the Executive Yuan's Gender Equality Committee, held on December 30, 2024.

It is argued that existing gender equality and discrimination prevention laws can be adjusted to align the needs of foreign women. Universities and governmental institutions have already been providing lectures on gender equality. These lectures are mandatory for government officials and bachelor students; however, they do not include private sector and higher education degree (Masters and PhD program students). These pre-existing lectures can be revised as a graduation requirement without the additional credit in higher education programs. The private sector can provide gender equality lectures during the recruitment process. In addition, organizations can establish gender equality training for their employees, this can help to improve the awareness of gender equality problems and contribute to the creation of a more gender-friendly environment. While these changes can provide needed information on gender equality laws and means of protection to foreign people, it can also enhance the gender equality awareness within Taiwanese people as well.

It is, however, a theoretical concept. To carry out such strategies and develop policies, it is necessary to have a certain budget and manpower. With pre-existing problems Taiwanese society face on gender, governmental departments and organizations are less likely to give attention to this topic in particular. Nevertheless, a discussion can contribute to the understanding and recognition on this topic as well.

In conclusion, this part aimed to shed some light on the gender experiences of foreign women living in Taiwan and the gender equality circumstances of Taiwan's influence on their daily lives. The data analysis revealed that the participants find Taiwan much more gender safe than their countries, which coheres with the SIGI results by the Gender Equality Committee (Gender in A Glance in R.O.C (Taiwan) 2024) in some cases the first time they experience freedom of walking outside alone at night in their adult lives was in Taiwan. The gender-safe and free environment of Taiwan is contributing to rediscovering of their personalities with different ways of expression and empowering them as a woman.

However, participants also explained that they are aware of traditional roles and societal gender ideas in Taiwanese society, resulting in having more conservative changes in their behavior in romantic relationships or gender ideas. Some participants also expressed that they feel the pressure to be thinner, cuter, and more feminine than before when they were living in their countries, which can result in a regression in gender equality. It is explained in depth that the reason for possible transition is that with moving to a new country, the foreign women also alter their ways of how they perform gender, this theory aligns with Judith Butler's gender performativity theory (Butler 1990). On the other hand, participants coming from less developed countries in gender equality and/or eastern countries highlighted less interest in societal gender roles and more interest in gender safety. It is argued the reason for this difference is that these women have safety concerns which prevent them from having any other concerns about gender. It has been proposed that societal gender roles can be altered if gender mainstreaming tools are implemented effectively.

Another theme that was emerged from the interview data was the inadequate knowledge of gender equality measurements within foreign women, which supported by relative literature discussed in the Chapter Three (Chang 2018b; Huang 2024; Hwang 2008), indicates that the Taiwanese government's lack of active involvement in promoting gender equality measurements. This theory is significant as the information on gender equality policies doesn't come to foreign women naturally. It is suggested in the chapter that the Taiwanese government can make help more accessible with the help of several gender mainstreaming tools such as gender analysis, gender impact assessment, and gender awareness rising. Although it remains a theoretical concept, raising awareness through a discussion is also essential.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

In this study, gender experiences and differences in gender perspectives of 15 foreign women living in Taiwan were explored. The objective of this research was to shed new light on the gender experiences of foreign women living in Taiwan and by using this approach the current situation of Taiwan on gender equality in societal gender roles and policymaking was discussed, as well as the changes to improve and aspects that other countries can learn from Taiwan. With the intention of answering the research questions—how do foreign women living in Taiwan perceive gender equality and gender perspectives in Taiwan, how do these experiences influence them, and how do they compare with their home country? — this study consists of interviews containing eight semi-structured questions.

The data analysis results from the interviews found out that the foreign women who participated in this research shared the belief that Taiwan is a safe country for women, in most situations safer than their own countries. This research argued that the safe and secure environment contributes foreign women's empowerment and cultivation of self as a woman. The empowerment of women is critical since it helps to develop awareness on inequality matters in the society, more women are secure enough to voice their concerns or live the life as they desire, more gender equal a country can be. This finding is particularly essential as it suggests that the gender-friendly and safe environment of Taiwan can pave the way for more equality, and this may serve as a model for further gender equality research in other countries.

The interview analysis results also revealed that, while Taiwan sets an example of ensuring the safety of foreign women, the Taiwanese society still has internalized traditional gender roles and ideas that may influence (and in some cases did) foreign women's idea of what a woman is, how a feminine women should be. This theory aligns with Judith Butler's gender performativity theory (Butler, 1990), since these shifts in gender perspectives are

fueled by the changes in their environment, new culture comes with new ways to perform gender. With time, these new ways may merge with old versions of ourselves and create different perspectives on gender, which in the Taiwan model, can cause regression on equality and women's empowerment since these new gender perspectives tend to fit into more traditional ideas. This indicates that there is a need for change in societal norms, and it is a long process that can't be achieved overnight. However, by effectively using gender mainstreaming tools, this change is achievable when it is supported by educated professionals (such as feminist NGOs) in the policymaking process.

Gaps in Promoting Gender Equality Measures were one of the themes that emerged from the data analysis. The results showed although foreign women were aware of the gender equality measurements by the Taiwanese government, they were yet not informed about the details of such measurements and help mechanisms. This result indicates the Taiwanese government's passive role in promoting gender equality initiatives, which coheres with previous literature. Despite the feeling of gender security, criminal offenses against women continue to occur. Therefore, lack of information on gender equality laws and means of protection in foreign women are vital issues that need a solution as this kind of information is not easily accessible. It is suggested that the Taiwanese government can use several gender mainstreaming tools to find solutions to such problem, as it can both improve the awareness within foreign men and women, also Taiwanese people as well.

Apart from the contributions and implications of this research, limitations also need to be acknowledged. This is a gender (in)equality research with a focus on exploring lived societal experiences of a quite detailed and small sample size—middle-class (or higher) foreign women in their 20s and early 30s, studying or working in the larger cities in Taiwan who received higher education—thereby potentially resulting in outcomes shaped by personal experiences. Although this research can help us to understand a small group of women's

experiences and contribute to studies and discussions on gender equality, there still may be potential complications when integrating into a larger scope of people. Firstly, it has been addressed by scholars, advocates, and lawyers throughout the years that disadvantaged groups are being exposed to greater social injustice and inequality. Therefore, social class and race become an essential indicator when discussing the daily societal experiences of foreign women. The interview analysis results might be entirely distinct if the focus group was lower-class caretaker foreign women doing physical labor. Further research can focus on different socioeconomic groups and races, and explore their unique daily gender experiences.

Another complication is the residential environment of the focus group. The interview participants all reside in larger cities in Taiwan; Taipei City, New Taipei City, Taichung City, and Tainan City. Living in a larger city comes with several advantages such as access to border resources and extensive community. Unfortunately, if a foreign woman is living in a smaller city, their means of accessing several services would require greater effort. It is suggested that further research on the contrast of foreign women living in larger and smaller cities would bring significant insights and provide clarity on Taiwan's societal gender equality in a local context.

To conclude, this study emphasizes the importance of ensuring gender-safer communities and environments for women on a global scale for the empowerment of women. Concurrently, also encourages various changes in both social and political spheres by incorporating gender mainstreaming tools and strategies. Through this approach, ensuring more substantive equality for both foreign and Taiwanese women could be easier to achieve. Even though the interview results and theories discussed cater to smaller groups of people, it serves as an onset for future research on gender equality and women's rights in Taiwan. By initiating a discussion on foreign women's experiences in Taiwan and providing meaningful insights into their day-to-day lives, the cultivation of an equal society becomes one step closer.

APPENDIX

The questions asked in the interview are listed below. Questions number 13, 14 and 15 were asked after grounded theory method was applied to the initial interview data.

1. Where are you from? (Background question)
2. How long have you been in Taiwan? (Background question)
3. Why did you decide to move to Taiwan? (Background question)
4. Compared to your home country, what do you think about Taiwan's state regarding protecting women's rights and promoting gender equality?
5. Have you faced any problems/challenges as a woman in Taiwan?
6. If you are working here, would you say that you can express yourself freely at work as a woman?
7. If you are studying, would you say that you can express yourself freely in the classroom as a woman?
8. Do you think there are cultural differences regarding women's role and expectations for women in the society compared to your home country? If so, do you think this effects woman's lives in Taiwan?
9. As a foreign women living in Taiwan, how do you feel about Taiwanese view on marriage and women having a career? Have you noticed anything different?
10. What do you think about Taiwanese government role in protecting women's rights and raising public awareness about gender equality? Do you think they are actively working on it?
11. Has living in Taiwan changed your habits, how you express yourself, how you act in public etc?
12. What do you think can be improved regarding women's rights in Taiwan?

13. If something bad happens to you (harassment or something), do you know how to get help, where to call?
14. Do you feel sexualized as a foreign woman; do you feel like there is an unwanted attention around you?
15. Have you ever been to a gynecologist for women's health issues or to get any tests done? What was your experience like? Did you have any trouble accessing women's health products?



REFERENCES

English and Turkish Sources:

Beauvoir, Simone de. 1989. *The Second Sex*. Translated by H. M. Parsley. New York: Vintage Books, A Division of Random House, Inc.

Butler, Judith. 1990. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge.

Cağlar, Gülay. 2013. "Gender Mainstreaming." *Politics & Gender* 9 (3): 336–44.

<https://doi.org/10.1017/S1743923X13000214>.

Cambridge University Press & Assessment. 2025. "femininity"

<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/femininity> (accessed 10 20, 2025).

Chang, Doris T. 2018a. "Studies of Taiwan's Feminist Discourses and Women's Movements." *International Journal of Taiwan Studies* 1 (1): 90-114. <https://doi.org/10.1163/24688800-00101006>

Chang, Doris T. 2018b. "Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Policies in Contemporary Taiwan." *Journal of International Women's Studies* 19 (6): 344-58.

<https://vc.bridgew.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2076&context=jiws>

Chao, Elaine. 2005. "A Study in Social Change, The Domestic Violence Prevention Movement in Taiwan." *Critical Asian Studies* 37 (1): 29-50.

doi:10.1080/1467271052000305250.

Charlesworth, Hilary. 2013. "International human rights law: A portmanteau for feminist norms?" In *Feminist Strategies in International Governance*, edited by Gülay Cağlar, Elisabeth Prügl and Susanne Zwingel. Routledge.

Cheng, Isabelle. 2013. "Making foreign women the mother of our nation: the exclusion and assimilation of immigrant women in Taiwan." *Asian Ethnicity* 14 (2): 157-79.

doi:10.1080/14631369.2012.759749.

Chin, Ting-Fang. 2018. *Everyday Gender at Work in Taiwan*. Singapore: Springer Nature.

Daly, Mary. 2005. "Gender Mainstreaming in Theory and Practice." *Social Politics:*

International Studies in Gender, State, and Society 12 (3): 433-50.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/sp/jxi023>.

Englehart, Neil A., and Melissa Miller. 2014. "The CEDAW Effect: International Law's

Impact on Women's Rights." *Journal of Human Rights* 13 (1): 22–47.

doi:10.1080/14754835.2013.824274.

European Commission: Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion.

1998. *A guide to gender impact assessment*. Publications Office.

European Parliament, Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities. 2002. *Report*

on the communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on the programme of action for the mainstreaming of gender equality in Community development cooperation.

Gao, Xiongya. 2003. "Women Existing for Men: Confucianism and Social Injustice against

Women in China." *Race, Gender & Class* 10 (3), 11425.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/41675091>.

Gender Equality Commission of the Executive Yuan, 2024. *Gender in A Glance in R.O.C*

(Taiwan).

Hacaloğlu, Hilmi. 2021. *Kadıköy'deki Kadın Eyleminde En Az 6 Eylemci Gözaltına Alındı (At least 6 Activists Detained in Kadıköy Women's Protest)*. March 6.

<https://www.voaturkce.com/a/kadikoydeki-kadin-eyleminde-en-az-6-eylemci-gozaltina-alindi/5804325.html> (accessed 11 17, 2024).

Hsiao. 2024. *Taiwan eyes 50% female representation in parliament: VP-elect*. April.

<https://focustaiwan.tw/politics/202404180022> (accessed 10 7, 2024).

Hu, Shu, and Wei-Jun J Yeung. 2019. "Education and Childrearing Decision-Making in East Asia." *Chinese Sociological Review* 51 (1): 29–56. doi:10.1080/21620555.2019.1571903.

Huang, Chang-Ling. 2016. "Reserved for Whom? The Gender Quotas in Taiwan." *Pacific Affairs* (Pacific Affairs, University of British Columbia) 89 (2): 325-43.

<https://doi.org/10.5509/2016892325>.

Huang, Chang-Ling. 2024. "Critical Actors and the Challenges in Mainstreaming Gender in Taiwan's Parliament." *Politics and Governance* 12. <https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.8242>.

Iida, Aki. 2022. "How Do Traditional Gender Roles Influence Women's Lives in Taiwan? An Investigation of Highly Educated Women's Willingness to Create Families." *East Asia* 40: 81–100. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12140-022-09392-3>.

InterNations. 2024. *Expatriate City Ranking 2024*. <https://www.internations.org/expat-insider/2024/ease-of-settling-in-index-for-cities-40488> (accessed March 19, 2025).

Kaplan, Robert D. 2015. *Asia's Rise Is Rooted in Confucian Values*. February 6.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/asias-rise-is-rooted-in-confucian-values-1423254759> (accessed 11 17, 2024).

Ku, Yen-Lin. 1989. "The Feminist Movement in Taiwan, 1972-87." *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 21 (1): 12–22. doi:10.1080/14672715.1989.10413188.

Kuan, Hsiaowei. 2021. "The Law on Domestic Violence and Its Practice in Taiwan." DEP: Deportate, Esuli, Profughe 45 (January): 24–34.

Laws & Regulations Database of the Republic of China (Taiwan). 2023. "Gender Equality in Employment Act" August 16.

<https://law.moj.gov.tw/ENG/LawClass/LawAll.aspx?pcode=N0030014> (accessed 11 17, 2024).

Laws & Regulations Database of the Republic of China (Taiwan). 2023. "Gender Equity Education Act" August 16.

<https://law.moj.gov.tw/ENG/LawClass/LawAll.aspx?pcode=H0080067> (accessed 11 17, 2024).

Liebowitz, Debra J., and Susanne Zwingel. 2014. "Gender Equality Oversimplified: Using CEDAW to Counter the Measurement Obsession." *International Studies Review* 16 (3): 362-89. <https://doi.org/10.1111/misr.12139>.

Lin, I-Fen, Noreen Goldman, Maxine Weinstein, Yu-Hsuan Lin, Tristan Gorrindo, and Teresa Seeman. 2003. "Gender Differences in Adult Children's Support of Their Parents in Taiwan." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 65 (1): 184–200. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2003.00184.x>.

Ministry of the Interior. 2023. National Immigration Agency "2023.9 Foreign Residents by Nationality". October 25.

https://www.immigration.gov.tw/5475/5478/141478/141380/358530/cp_news (accessed 11 17, 2024).

Ministry of the Interior. 2024. National Immigration Agency "2024.9 Foreign Residents by Nationality." October 25.

https://www.immigration.gov.tw/5475/5478/141478/141380/380959/cp_news (accessed 4 19, 2025).

Mor Çatı Kadın Sağlığı Vakfı (Mor Cati Women's Shelter Foundation), 2024. "*Kadına yönelik şiddet ve cezasızlık (Violence against women and impunity)*", October 18.

<https://morcati.org.tr/basin-aciklamalari/kadina-yonelik-siddet-ve-cezasizlik/> (accessed 11 17, 2024).

OECD, *Social Institutions & Gender Index Dashboard*.

<https://www.oecd.org/en/data/dashboards/social-institutions-gender-index.html> (accessed 11 17, 2024).

OECD. 2023. *SIGI 2023 Global Report: Gender Equality in Times of Crisis, Social Institutions and Gender Index*. Paris: OECD Publishing.

Samizadeh, S. 2022. "Beauty Standards in Asia." In *Non-Surgical Rejuvenation of Asian Faces*, edited by S. Samizadeh, 21-25. Springer, Cham.

Sayın, Ayşe. 2020. *İnfaz paketi: Uyuşturucu ve cinsel istismar suçlarına indirim, terör ve örgütlü suçlar kapsam dışı (Execution package: Discount for drug and sexual abuse crimes, terrorism and organized crimes are excluded)*. March 24.

<https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-turkiye-52011385> (accessed 11 17, 2024).

Study in Taiwan, "*Scholarships*" <https://www.studyintaiwan.org/scholarship> (accessed 11 17, 2024).

Taipei City Police Department. 2024. *Cases about Women and Children's Safety Dealt by the Taipei City Police Department*.

Taştan, İnan Özdemir, Ezel Buse Sönmezocak, and Anjelik Kelavgil. 2022. *İstanbul Sözleşmesini Savunmak: Toplumsal Cinsiyet Temelli Nefret Söylemiyle Mücadele İçin Politika Önerileri (Defending the Istanbul Convention: Policy Recommendations for Combating Gender-Based Hate Speech)*, Toplumsal Cinsiyet Eşitliği Dayanışma Ağı

The Garden of Hope Foundation. 2024. "The Three Gender Equality Laws have been Amended in Taiwan on March 8th: Here's what we need to know" March 26.

<https://global.goh.org.tw/the-three-gender-equality-laws-have-been-amended-in-taiwan-on-march-8th-heres-what-we-need-to-know/> (accessed 11 17, 2024).

True, Jacqui, and Laura Parisi. 2013. "Gender mainstreaming strategies in international governance." In *Feminist Strategies in International Governance*, edited by Gülay Çağlar, Elisabeth Prügl and Susanne Zwingel, London: Routledge.

UN Women. 1979 "The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)", December.

<https://wrds.unwomen.org/practice/resources/convention-elimination-all-forms-discrimination-against-women-cedaw#:~:text=CEDAW%20was%20adopted%20in,action%20to%20end%20such%20discrimination.> (accessed 11 17, 2024).

Walby, Sylvia. 2005. "Introduction: Comparative Gender Mainstreaming in a Global Era." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 7 (4): 453–70. doi:10.1080/14616740500284383.

Wu, Ya-Ling, and Hsing-Chen Wu. 2015. "Higher Education Learning Experiences Among Vietnamese Immigrant Women in Taiwan." *Adult Education Quarterly* 65 (2): 133–51.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0741713614566673>.

Yang, Yung-Mei, Hsiu-Hui Wang, and Debra Anderson. 2010. "Immigration Distress and Associated Factors Among Vietnamese Women in Transnational Marriages in Taiwan." *The Kaohsiung Journal of Medical Sciences* 26 (12): 647–57. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1607-551X\(10\)70099-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1607-551X(10)70099-1).

Yi, Chin-Chun, and Chin-Fen Chang. 2020. "Family and gender in Taiwan." In *Routledge Handbook of East Asian Gender Studies*, edited by Jieyu Liu and Junko Yamashita, London: Routledge.

Zwingel, Susanne. 2020. "Gender Equality Norms in International Governance: Actors, Contexts, Meanings." In *Rethinking Gender Equality in Global Governance - The Delusion of Norm Diffusion*, edited by Lars Engberg-Pedersen, Adam Fejerskov and Signe Marie Cold-Ravnkilde.

Chinese Sources;

行政院性別平等會 (Gender Equality Committee of the Executive Yuan). 2024. “行政院性別平等會第 31 次委員會議紀錄” 行政院性別平等會會議紀錄

呂嘉鴻 (Lu, Jia-Hong). 2019. *美麗島事件 40 週年：盤點重要政治人物參與見證台灣民主化*. 12 月 10 日 <https://www.bbc.com/zhongwen/trad/world-50726110> (accessed 4 19, 2025)

張瓊玲 (Chang, Chiung-Ling). 2017. 〈性別主流化政策的策略思維與作法：以友善家庭政策作為實踐之道〉。《文官制度》9 (4) : 1–28。

<https://www.airtilibrary.com/Article/Detail?DocID=P20210507001-201710-202105180013-202105180013-1-28>。

傅鳳琴 (Fu, Feng-Chin). 2019. 戀戀情深：臺灣阿美族檳榔傳說. 國立臺灣史前文化博物館史前館電子報, 6 月 15 日。 https://beta.nmp.gov.tw/eneews/no397/page_02.html#:~:text=檳榔在臺灣原住民,的定情之物 (accessed 7 22, 2025)

黃淑玲 (Hwang, Shu-Ling) & 美惠游. 2007. 《性別向度與台灣社會》. 巨流.

黃淑玲 (Hwang, Shu-Ling). 2008. 〈性別主流化－台灣經驗與國際的對話〉。《研考雙月刊》32 (4) : 3 - 12。 <https://doi.org/10.6978/YKSYK.200808.0003>。

陳延興 (Chen, Yen-Hsin), 李琪明, 方志華, 且劉秀嫻. 2015. 〈十二年國民基本教育品德課程組織模式建構之研究〉。《課程與教學》18 (2) : 79 - 99。

[https://doi.org/10.6384/CIQ.201504_18\(2\).0004](https://doi.org/10.6384/CIQ.201504_18(2).0004)。

