PALACKY UNIVERSITY OLOMOUC
Faculty of Arts
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BACHELOR THESIS

# The Development of Women's Participation in Taiwanese Politics from 1990 to 2020

Vývoj zapojení žen do politiky na Tchaj-wanu mezi lety 1990-2020

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I hereby declare that this Bachelor thesis *The Development of Women's Participation in Taiwanese Politics from 1990 to 2020* is my own work, and all literature and materials used are clearly cited and listed.

In Olomouc, on …… Signature: ……

# ABSTRACT

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**Key words:** women's movement, The Republic of China (Taiwan), politics, gender quota, women's political participation

This thesis aims to present the situation regarding women's political participation in Taiwan. It focuses on the thirty years from 1990 to 2020, as Taiwan started having free democratic elections during this time. The goal of this thesis is to analyze the data from this period and look at how women's political participation developed. Moreover, the second objective of this thesis is to try and figure out what factors contributed to this development. While doing this, I will be working with both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include data and statistics from the government of the Republic of China. Secondary sources include academic works and research papers on various topics, such as feminism, the women's movement, Taiwan's history, etc. The data from primary sources shows an increase in the number of elected female candidates in both national and local elections. This thesis concludes that multiple factors contributed to the increase in women's political participation, including gender quota, education, employment, democratization, etc.

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| CCP | Chinese Communist Party |
| CEDAW | Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women |
| CSW | Commission on the Status of Women |
| DPP | Democratic Progressive Party |
| HUF | Homemakers United Foundation |
| IWRAW | International Women's Rights Action Watch |
| IWY | International Women's Year |
| IPU | Inter-Parliamentary Union |
| KMT | Kuomintang |
| NGO | Non-governmental organization |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| SMD | Single-Member Districts |
| SNTV | Single Non-Transferable Vote |

# EDITION NOTE

This thesis includes transcriptions of names taken from Chinese characters. For personal names, I have mainly used the most common way of transcription (e.g., Chiang Kai-shek, Kuomintang). Similarly, with names of places and cities, I have used the form commonly used in Taiwan (e.g., Penghu or Kaohsiung). For individuals born in Taiwan, I either used the widely accepted transcription of their name or a Wades-Giles romanization.

# INTRODUCTION

This thesis presents the situation regarding women's political participation in Taiwan. It focuses on the thirty years from 1990 to 2020, as Taiwan started having free democratic elections during this time. The goal of this thesis is to analyze the data from this period and look at how women's political participation developed. Moreover, the second objective of this thesis is to try and figure out what factors contributed to this development. This thesis is split into two main parts. The first is a theoretical section, which focuses on global women's movements and recent trends in politics regarding gender equality. The second part of my thesis is a case study of Taiwan and the development of women's participation in politics, from the year 1990 to 2020.

The first chapter of my thesis will serve as an introduction to the women's rights movement, specifically in relation to politics. The goal of this chapter is to give the reader historical background about the movement. Focusing mainly on the modern history of 1970 onwards, as during this time most women have already gained the right to vote and run for office. It will also focus on the main goals of said movement, explaining why there is a push toward more women in politics. The second chapter focuses on the current issue of gender equality in politics. The goal of this chapter is to provide the reader with information about the recent trends in gender equality. It will give additional background information on the issues and challenges that many women face when running for office and being a politician. Additionally, this chapter will also explore different measures and strategies that have been adopted in recent history to help encourage equality, like gender quotas.

The third chapter is a brief history of Taiwan and its historical development. Its primary purpose is to give basic knowledge and context as to why Taiwan developed into the democratic nation it is today. The main focus of the fourth chapter is the women's movement in Taiwan and women's education and employment. This part will look at data from the Taiwanese government and use these to examine women's position in Taiwanese society. The final chapter will give specific numbers and statistics on gender equality in politics in Taiwan. It will provide information on the measures Taiwan adopted and which trends it decided to follow in the process of achieving higher representation of women in politics. This part will look back at previously mentioned factors and analyze which of them also apply to

Taiwan and can be considered another reason for higher percentages of female politicians compared to most other Asian countries.

## Literature review

This bachelor thesis concerns itself with multiple different topics. Therefore, it uses a large amount of primary and secondary sources. The first two chapters comprise a theoretical section concerning women's movements, political trends, and gender equality strategies. For this part, I mainly worked with secondary literature sources. One primary source, which appears many times in this first part, is the "*Monthly Ranking of Women in National Parliaments*" by the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Out of the many secondary sources, the most important ones are "*The global women's movement: Origins, issues and strategies*" by Antrobus (2005), "*Feminism and the women's movement: A global perspective*" by Ferree and Mueller (2004), "*Gender quotas and female leadership*" by Pande and Ford (2012), and "*Trends in gender equality and women's advancement*" by Stotsky et al. (2016).

Many primary sources were used for the second part of my thesis, which serves as a case study of Taiwan's situation. They helped fill the gap of other secondary works cited, which often did not include information up to 2020. For the third chapter, which is mainly about Taiwanese history, the most important secondary source was "*Taiwan: A New History: A New History*" by Rubinstein (2015). The primary sources in the fourth and fifth chapters are tables and statistics from the Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics, and the Department of Household Registration. Lastly, the Election database website was used for statistics regarding women in Taiwan's politics.

As for secondary sources, the most important ones include "*Women's movements in twentieth-century Taiwan*" by Chang (2010), "*The Changing Status of Women in Taiwan: 1945–2010*" by Lu (2012), "*Factors Promoting Women's Participation in Taiwan's Politics*" by Clark and Clark (2018), and multiple works by Chang-Ling Huang (2012, 2015 and 2019) on the topic of gender quotas in Taiwan. However, most of the works used do not include information up to 2020, with many of them only presenting information and statistics from the 2000s. My thesis, therefore, strives to fill this gap and compile multiple statistics up to the year 2020. Moreover, it hopes to connect the different factors to women's political participation discussed in the works cited.

# 1. Feminism and Women's movement

This chapter focuses on the global women's movement and feminism. As this paper discusses women's participation in politics, I find it necessary to highlight important parts of women's history and the progress made by feminist activists in women's rights. Without the work of different feminist scholars and organizations, women's issues and suffrage would not become an important topic of discussion. Firstly, I will explain what is considered feminism and women's movements and the history of these social movements. This part will also introduce the four waves of feminism (Mohajan 2022; Cochrane 2013) and their defining features. Finally, in the second part, I will present the actions which led to the creation of the UN's Decade for Women and how this decade affected women's advancement and participation in politics.

## 1.1 Definition

The term feminism and women's movement are frequently used all around us - in the media, by politicians, or by scholars. Most people have a general idea of what it means to be a feminist or what movements classify as women's movements. Even though these terms have been around for quite a while and received global acknowledgment in the 1970s, it is hard to find a satisfactory explicit definition. The absence of a universally agreed-upon definition oftentimes creates issues like being unintentionally misleading and inaccurate in academic research, as we cannot be sure scholars are talking about the same concepts and using both terms correctly (McBride & Mazur 2008, 234-235). The strategy for defining feminism and the women's movement, which emerged in the 1990s, treats feminism as a subcategory of the women's movement. During this time, scholars from Latin America came up with two distinguished types of women's movements – the feminine and the feminist (Beckwith 2005, 584). Essentially saying that not all women's movements are inherently feminist unless their goal is to improve the position of women in our society.

The women's movement lacks many of the characteristics of a movement, such as common goals, coordination, and unity. Moreover, some activist groups' objectives and definitions of women's rights can often contradict those of others (Antrobus 2008, 10). This is precisely why defining the movement or agreeing on a common objective is complicated. However, we can conclude a few key features. A women's movement is a social political movement, which refers to any form of organizing by women made to strive for any sort of

social change. Although the movement can be confused with just organized feminism, women all over the world come together not only to fight for their rights but to support many other social issues. Therefore, it is important to understand that women's movements are not necessarily only focused on achieving equality to men. By acknowledging this, we can conclude that another key feature of the modern women's movement is intersectionality (Ferree & Mueller 2004, 578). Here we can see the difference between feminine and feminist women's movements. Feminine women's movements are made up of women coming together to fight for a social change, without it necessarily concerning women themselves, while feminist women's movements are for women and usually share a goal of wanting to improve the social standing of women, whether it be in the workplace, at home or in politics.

Feminism in the West often gets split into so-called waves, which are divided by time and common themes discussed by feminists during that time. Many scholars currently talk about the four waves of feminism (Mohajan 2022; Cochrane 2013; Rampton 2015; Malinowska 2020). The first wave dates back to the 19th century, while the fourth wave describes the ideals and goals of the movement as of today. First-wave feminism was mostly concerned with women's rights to vote and women's suffrage, but it also touched on other rights, such as legal ownership or access to education and employment (Sanders 2004, 21-23). Second-wave feminism spans roughly from the 1960s to the 1980s. During this time, feminists set out to expand upon the discussions around women's rights to include not only legal rights but other areas of life as well. The primary focus being issues like sexuality, family, workplace, and reproductive rights. Throughout this period, activists also shed light on important problems disproportionately affecting women all over the world, including rape and domestic violence. Eventually, second-wave feminists split into two major groups over questions of sex work and pornography.

While the first two waves brought more equality and better conditions for many women, it is also important to point out that up until this point, most of the movement was centered in the Western part of the world and primarily focused on white women from the middle and upper class. Poor women and women of color felt largely excluded from the movement while still contributing to the progress nonetheless (Mann & Huffman 2005, 59). Keeping in mind this criticism, it is easy to understand why third-wave feminism focused on diversity, intersectionality, and redefining what it meant to be a feminist (Gamble 2004, 43-44).

Another important feature of the third wave is sex positivity and reclamation of terms such as "bitch", "slut" or "whore", attitudes which extended from the pro-sex faction within second-wave feminism (Snyder 2008, 179-180).

The feminism we know currently is described as the fourth wave. Although it is highly disputed when this fourth wave began, the term has been around since the start of the new millennium (Kaplan 2003; Molyneux et al. 2021). However, it did not reach mainstream audiences until 2008 (Zimmerman 2017, 55). Continuing from third-wave feminism, the commonly discussed topics still include sexual liberation and the reclamation of misogynistic terms. The key issues for this wave continue to be intersectionality, trans issues, and the concept of privilege. Additionally, with the emergence of social media came an entirely new way of fighting for women's rights. It became much easier for women worldwide to stand up against sexism and create communities online to talk about shared experiences. Researcher Munro (2013, 24) suggests that the shift to internet activism is a reflection of insufficient political representation. Social media also helped to further other movements, e.g., the MeToo movement and the body positivity movement.

## 1.2 Development of a global movement

As we already established, the feminist movement is not a new social movement. The French Revolution (1789) saw the emergence of feminists like Olympe de Gouges, who went on to inspire first-wave feminists and political theorists such as Mary Wollstonecraft (Gamble 2004, 192). Later, in the nineteenth century, feminist ideas were no longer just a theoretical concept. Instead, women saw them as reasons to mobilize together in hopes of changing social structures. Ferree & Mueller (2004, 582) state that the first issues inspiring the mobilization of women[1] were "campaigns for women's education as well as increasingly for the right to vote, to retain their identity and property in marriage, and to participate more fairly and equally in the emerging wage economy . . ." These first campaigns were mainly concerned with women's rights. However, as women became more politically engaged, they stood behind other social campaigns, not necessarily only ones made for women.

The women's rights movement developed from women organizing on local, national, and transnational levels around issues that concern their daily lives. However, it went through

[1] Specifically, women in Europe and the United States.

a significant transformation during the UN Decades for Development, which spanned across the 1960s and 1970s and later shaped the following Decade for Women. Many of the themes that shaped the discussions during the UN's Decade for Women came from the debates on socio-economic development during the decade prior. Interest in political and socio-economic development grew as more countries gained independence and a seat in the UN.[2] This interest in bettering the lives of their people after newly gaining independence influenced and led to the start of the First Development Decade in the 1960s (Antrobus 2005, 29).

The First United Nations Development Decade spanned from 1960 to 1970 and concerned itself with development, growth, and change ("1st Development Decade" n.d.). As mentioned, the entrance of new countries into the UN brought forth many underlying problems which needed to be addressed. This is why, during this time, it became common to name international days, years, and decades as a way to highlight issues and concerns. The main economic objective of this decade was to increase the national incomes and savings of developing countries. Issues facing the developing countries that the UN saw as essential to address included – unemployment or insufficient foreign trade (Shaw 2002, 104-105). The strategy adopted to reach the goal of development in underdeveloped countries was of a Keynesian approach. A large emphasis was placed on economic growth and transferring capital from developed to developing countries (Koehler 2015, 737-738). However, by the end of the decade, it was apparent that this strategy was not sufficient, and governments couldn't rely solely on the market to reduce poverty. Following this acknowledgment, a change of strategy was essential for the Second Development Decade in the 1970s. There was a general shift to include both economic growth and social development in policy formulations (Antrobus 2005, 30). The major conferences taking place during this decade focused on racism, water and the environment, and women ("2nd Development Decade" n.d.).

Three international movements worked together at the United Nations to appoint 1975 as the International Women's Year – the women's rights movement, the human rights movement, and the movements against colonialism. The additional membership of many Third World countries in the UN brought an increase to the number of women in the UN, particularly women with backgrounds in liberation struggles from their respective countries.

[2] Mostly African, Asian, and Caribbean countries

As for the women's rights movement, they had already formed international alliances as they had previously fought to advance a common cause – women's suffrage (Antrobus 2005, 33). While the focus within the UN was gradually shifting towards women, women all around the world were coming together and identifying their struggles within a larger scope as their countries became democratic and liberated. The UN's reception of the International Women's Year (IWY) was greatly influenced by the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and women on delegation teams of member countries. The CSW is tasked with promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women. Established by the resolution of the Economic and Social Council in 1946, it serves to document women's lives around the world and maintain a gender perspective in UN activities ("Commission on the Status of Women" n.d.).

The first world conference on women coincided with the IWY after it was suggested by the CSW. It was held in Mexico in 1975 and was attended by a total of 133 governments (United Nations n.d.). There was also a parallel forum called the International Women's Year Tribune, which was attended by 6,000 non-governmental organization representatives (Ghodsee 2010, 5). The outcome of this conference was a World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objective of the International Women's Year ("World Conferences on Women" n.d.). After the conferences during IWY, it was clear that one year was not enough time for women to present their concerns. Therefore, it was recommended by the conference to designate a whole decade's worth of conferences to the matter. During this decade, three conferences took place – Mexico City (1975), Copenhagen (1980), and Nairobi (1985). The 1980 conference in Copenhagen saw a gathering of 145 Member States, and it aimed to review the progress in goals established during the first conference in Mexico City ("World Conferences on Women" n.d.). The topics discussed were employment, health, education, and improving the protection of women's rights. One final conference took place at the end of the Decade for Women in Nairobi. Once again, the number of countries, delegates, and representatives increased significantly. Following the last conference is a series of five-year reviews ("World Conferences on Women" n.d.).

One of the most productive outcomes of the discussions during the Decade for Women was the establishment of international networks, which were to promote the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Another result

of the discussions held at the conference in Nairobi was the establishment of the International Women's Rights Action Watch (IWRAW) (Friedman 2018, 23-24). As CEDAW was a new convention, it was decided that there should be another organization to oversee their actions. IWRAW serves to help this Commission that oversees CEDAW, especially in terms of research and connecting women's activists.

Another result of the Decade for Women was the interconnection of work done by activists/advocates with the technical work of policymakers. This link made it possible for the global women's movement to grow in diversity. The UN provided women with a space to formulate their programs as well as instruments for achieving them. As Antrobus (2005, 61) states: "Most importantly, UN conferences provided a space where the women's movement could interact with and challenge governments to sign on to pledges, declarations and resolutions that would change the condition and position of women." Thus, what originally started as a few organizations, developed into a more prominent international movement encompassing more than 40,000 people from more than 180 countries who came together in Beijing for the Fourth Global Conference on Women in 1995 (Dutt 1996, 519).

The Fourth Global Conference on Women in 1995 took place after it was suggested at a conference that the UN should hold an additional fourth conference on women in ten years. As said, this conference took place in Beijing, and its goal was to reflect on the implementation of plans discussed and formulated in 1985. It was a celebration of the global women's movement and a showcase of its current concerns, strategies, and motivations. Notably, the conference was addressed by the head of the World Bank (Wolfensohn 2005, 23) as well as a representative of the Pope (Buss 1998, 346).

## 1.3 Conclusion

To conclude this chapter, feminist women's movements played a crucial role in creating official spaces where women could come together and discuss the issues they faced. Although this movement is certainly not a new one, the big turning point only happened pretty recently. The 1960s and 1970s, which were designated as the first and second Decades for Development, helped to push forward the conversation regarding women's rights. The UN then decided to create an International Women's Year to raise awareness surrounding the treatment of women worldwide. However, one year was not enough time, so it was decided to establish the Decade for Women spanning from 1975 to 1985. During this decade, three international conventions were held in cities across the globe, bringing governments and activists together. After this decade came to an end, countries and delegates agreed on additional conferences being held to examine the progress of women's rights worldwide. Therefore, in 1995 a fourth conference was held in Beijing, gathering over 40,000 people from more than 180 countries.

# 2. Gender equality in politics

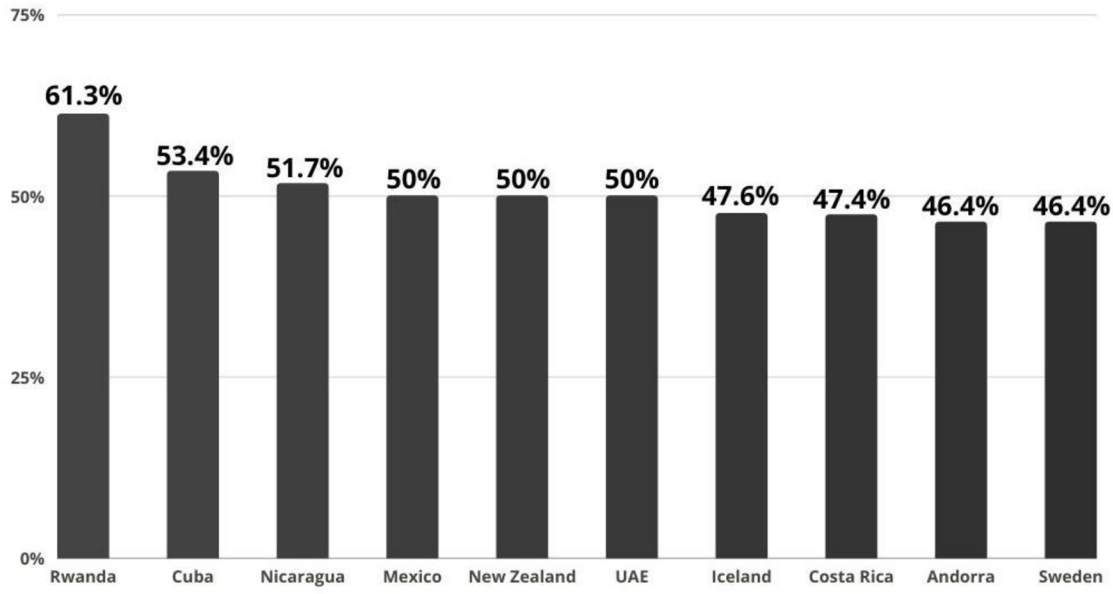
The topic of this chapter is women's participation in politics. Therefore, we will look at data surrounding gender equality in politics, focusing on national-level politics primarily. This part also discusses the obstacles women face when going into politics, expanding on why gender equality has not been achieved in most countries of the world. The second part of this chapter looks at trends in gender equality in politics, which can give us a hint into future developments regarding women's participation. Finally, we look at one of the most commonly used strategies for increasing the number of women in politics – gender quotas.

## 2.1 Issues women face

Women activists have made a significant amount of progress during the last few decades. Bringing women better access to education, healthcare and educating the public on issues women face, such as sexual assault. However, despite these accomplishments, women still face many obstacles, and it cannot be said that discrimination against women has been completely eradicated. This is apparent when we look at statistics concerning women in decision-making roles. According to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, women make up only 26,5 percent of global parliamentary positions. With some regions like South Asia, the Pacific, and the Middle East being way below this global average. As of January 2023, there are only six countries in the world where women hold 50 percent or more of parliamentary seats ("Global and regional averages" n.d.). The situation is very similar when we look at women in executive government positions. As per UN Women calculations, there are only 31 countries where women serve as Heads of State and/or Government[3] ("Facts and Figures" n.d.).

[3] This excludes countries with monarchy-based systems.

Figure 1: Top 10 Countries by Percentage of Women in Lower/Single House (Jan 2023)




Source: "Monthly Ranking of Women in National Parliaments." n.d.

Having balanced political participation and shared power in decision-making between men and women is the internationally agreed goal, which was set during the Fourth Global Conference on Women in 1995 in Beijing (U.N. Women 1995, 8-11). However, almost thirty years later, most countries in the world have not been able to reach this target. According to the UN General Assembly resolution on Women and political participation (2011, 2): ". . . women in every part of the world continue to be largely marginalized from the political sphere, often as a result of discriminatory laws, practices, attitudes and gender stereotypes, low levels of education, lack of access to health care and the disproportionate effect of poverty on women."

Most of the world has been making progress toward more gender equality (Stotsky et al. 2016, 42), like allowing women to vote and run for office. Some countries in the world, like the US, New Zealand, and Sweden, even consistently have higher female voter turnout than male (CAWP 2023; Johnston 2017). However, these improvements have not directly translated into a bigger representation of women in politics globally (Pande & Ford 2012, 2). Some women have been successful in breaking into influential decision-making roles, but

those are few and far between. As previously mentioned, women are often disadvantaged right from their childhood. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2015, 2) notes: "Although gender equality in access to primary schooling has almost been achieved in most countries, there are still 68 countries where the disparity remains significant. Girls' enrolment in basic education is lowest in sub–Saharan Africa, Oceania, and the Middle East. Moreover, gender disparities widen in secondary and tertiary education in most developing countries." Moreover, women also typically do informal level work with poor earnings and lower security, increasing their risk of poverty. Overall, it can be said that women are overrepresented in low-paying jobs and almost absent from senior positions (OECD 2015, 8-9).

This inequality between men and women is instrumentally important as it has been shown to play a key role in a wide array of development outcomes. Improving women's legal standing and access to resources has been linked to improving children's education, less corruption (Dollar et al. 2001), and increased economic growth (Klasen & Lamanna 2009). Statistics like this show us that higher participation of women in politics can be largely beneficial to our society as a whole. Researchers Fraile and Gomez (2017, 13-14) also argue that promoting gender equality positively impacts women's interest in political issues and engagement with politics.

When looking at struggles and barriers to female leadership, we find two types. The first one is a problem in the supply (women don't aspire to be politicians), and the second one is a problem with demand (people generally prefer leaders to be male). On the supply side, we see issues like a lack of representation or skills. Women usually have less experience than their male counterparts, with childcare mostly being done by women and therefore interrupting their careers results in less experience and promotions. As Pande and Ford (2012, 7) state: "Women face an additional barrier to entry from the lack of female predecessors and role models demonstrating that it is a place where women can be successful."

On the demand side, we see issues with discrimination, mainly because, through societal norms women are not thought of as leaders. People see leadership as a masculine activity. Researchers Kelley and McAllister (1984, 460-461) have found evidence of discrimination against women amid voters in elections. As previously mentioned, the lack of women in politics itself is a reason why women are often not interested in being politicians.

This is also an issue on the demand side, as the lack of statistical information on women's abilities can cause discrimination.

## 2.2 Trends in gender equality

The ways to look at data regarding trends in gender equality a women's development are through individual indicators or composite indices, with both having their advantages and disadvantages. In general, indicators provide information on one aspect of gender equality, and usually, it is needed to assess multiple different indicators to capture the developing trends. Composite indices offer an alternative to individual indicators and their main advantage is the ability to produce a broader perspective (Stotsky et al. 2016, 5). Great examples of composite indices are the UNDP's Human Development Index (HDI) or the later developed Gender Development Index (GDI), which both look at multiple different fields like education, income, and health and assess them to give a relative development level to countries around the world. In 2010 the UNDP presented a new index called the Gender Inequality Index (GII), which was supposed to improve on the shortcomings of the previously used GDI and GEM (Gender Empowerment Measure). The GII takes three different indices to calculate the metric of gender inequality – reproductive health, empowerment, and labor market participation (Permanyer 2013, 3-4).

Analyzing trends in gender equality is challenging in many ways. Firstly, it requires us to define what is meant by equality between men and women, which is why it is preferred to present trends and relative measures. Secondly, we must assess each variable on its own because while achieving equality in secondary education completion rates is a reasonable goal to strive towards, in other areas, such as life expectancy, it is difficult to achieve exact equality when women's natural life expectancy is some years longer than men's (Stotsky et al. 2016, 6). In terms of microeconomic data, most of it is derived from household surveys. Variables such as consumption, asset holdings, or income are often only available on a household basis. Only some data, for example, labor force participation, are surveyed by sex. In general, there is a lack of data on gender equality in the household and time use as it is difficult to obtain (Klasen 2007, 167-168). Women traditionally do a disproportionate amount of unpaid work. Having improved data regarding time use could provide us with a better understanding of gender equality between men and women.

One individual indicator, which is an integral part of analyzing global trends in gender equality, is political opportunity and representation. The data below is taken from "Trends in Gender Equality and Women's Advancement" by Stotsky et al. (2016, 22-23), in which they look at multiple indices and indicators to examine overall global trends in gender equality. They present the trends for the proportion of seats in national parliaments held by women. This data spans from the year 1990 up until 2014 and is disaggregated by region and level of economic development. Overall, it shows us that all regions of the world have made notable progress in women's legislative representation. However, it remains well below 50 percent in every region, with only three countries (Rwanda, Bolivia, and Cuba) in the world having achieved over half of the legislative body being women in 2020 ("Monthly Ranking of Women in National Parliaments" n.d.). Interestingly, the lack of economic development for women in regions such as the Middle East or Central Asia did not stop women from gaining political representation. Notable is also the rapid speed of improvement in sub-Saharan Africa, which quickly overtook Asia and the Pacific region, despite starting significantly lower on the scale. If we look at this data by level of income, we will find the same underlying developments. Countries of all income levels are making progress in increasing women's political participation, with low-income developing countries making more rapid improvements. Strikingly, Rwanda and Senegal have made a significant increase of women in their parliaments in the late 2000s, and this might be a direct effect of quotas (Bauer 2013).

The active participation of women in politics has mainly been pushed forward by three core strategies: candidate quotas, women's policy agencies, and gender mainstreaming (Squires 2007, 21-47). Candidate gender quotas have become widespread, with more than one hundred countries in the world adopting them (Krook 2007, 367). This widespread acceptance of candidate quotas is proof of the growing global commitment to increasing the political equality of women. Its primary aim is to counteract institutional processes, which are often discriminatory in nature. Gender mainstreaming was a strategy adopted by the United Nations at the 1995 conference on women in Beijing and later also accepted by the European Union (Moser & Moser 2005, 11). It can be described as a set of tools and procedures used to promote the integration of a gender perspective into various policies. This strategy requires those involved in the planning stage of a new policy to carefully consider the effects of said policies on both men and women and then adapt accordingly. However,

gender mainstreaming has not reached the potential people initially thought. It has been widely criticized (Obiora 2004; Moser & Moser 2005; Parpart 2009), and the adoption of gender mainstreaming is often not accompanied by a broader gender framework, resulting in the targeting of tools rather than of equality as a whole (Kantola & Squires 2010, 95). The last mentioned strategy is dedicated policy agencies, which became widely popular in the late 1970s and 1980s following the UN World Conference on Women in 1975. These agencies differ from nation to nation, but generally, it is a successful way of addressing women's issues by effectively creating a connection between women's movements and the state (Kantola & Squires 2010, 96).

## 2.3 Gender quotas

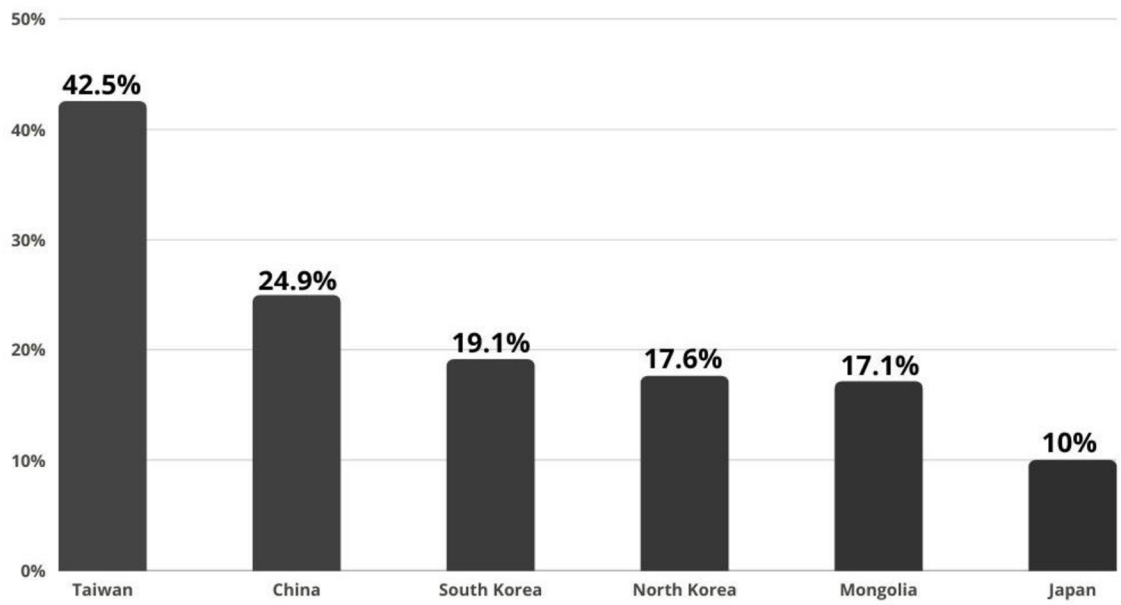
When looking at data about women in politics, it is important to look at the similarities shared between countries with a high percentage of female politicians. While many developed countries do indeed have a high level of female representation in politics, economic development does not directly correlate to female leadership. There are countries such as Japan, South Korea, and Russia which, despite being in the top 15 countries with the highest GDP (World Bank 2021), all have less than 20 percent of female legislators ("Monthly Ranking of Women in National Parliaments." n.d.).[4] That is because the implementation of gender quotas is more closely related to political factors rather than economic development. The transition to democracy or reform of an existing political system can positively affect the reception of measures to improve women's rights, including gender quotas, as it provides women with opportunities for introducing gender equality measures (Pande & Ford 2012, 5).

Similarities can also be seen in geographic regions due to the often similar political systems and shared histories across regions. One example is Nordic countries, which were one of the first countries to introduce quotas, specifically Norway's Socialist Left Party, which in 1975 established a minimum 40 percent representation of both sexes on electoral lists (Friedenvall et al. 2006, 72). Many parties in neighboring countries followed, but it should be said that even before establishing gender quotas these countries had already reached almost 25 percent of female representation (Matland 2005, 64). Therefore, quotas instead served as a tool to consolidate and sustain women's political representation. In East

[4] Both GDP and data on percentage of female legislators is from January 2020

Asia, we can see significant differences regarding quotas and the percentage of female politicians. On the one hand, we have the previously mentioned Japan, which has not adopted any kind of gender quotas, and thus their percentage of women in the lower house remains around 10 percent ("Monthly Ranking of Women in National Parliaments" n.d.). However, even South Korea, which has adopted both legislated and voluntary quotas, only has 19 percent of seats in the National Assembly held by women (IDEA 2023). This is a stark difference from the Republic of China (Taiwan) which, as of 2023, has reached 42,5 percent of female legislators ("Taiwan's 42.5% Female Legislature Is Record" 2022).

Figure 2: East Asian Countries by Percentage of Women in Lower/Single House (Jan 2023)




Source: "Monthly Ranking of Women in National Parliaments." n.d.; "Taiwan's 42.5% Female Legislature Is Record." 2022

Political quotas are pretty common, with more than half of the countries in the world using some type of them. Most of these have been established in the past thirty years, leading to a great increase in female leadership around the world. Historically the first country to pass a law regarding gender quotas in national politics was Argentina in 1991 (Jones 1996, 76). Just one year after, the UN Economic and Social Council set a target to raise female representation in decision-making positions to 30 percent by 1995. After the UN Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 called for ensuring the equal participation of women in national and international political spheres, political quotas emerged as a feasible policy option to achieve these goals (Pande & Ford 2012, 8).

There are three main types of political quotas: voluntary party quotas, legislated candidate quotas, and reserved seats (Krook 2010; Dahlerup 2006). Voluntary party quotas are adopted by specific political parties and involve a commitment to nominating a certain percentage of women as candidates for electoral lists. As previously mentioned, initially adopted by socialist and social democratic parties in Western European countries, these quotas later spread to various party types across the whole world. It was first established in the 1970s but only became popular around the world during the 1980s and 1990s (Krook et al. 2009, 784).

Legislated candidate quotas are upheld by the law of a country, and they stipulate that a certain number or percentage of candidate positions must be reserved for women. They also sometimes include other conditions, such as that every second entry on the list of candidates has to be a woman. They tend to be used in a lot of developing countries, especially in Latin America, but also in post-conflict countries to fast-track increasing women's participation in politics (Pande & Ford 2012, 9). As they are established through legal or constitutional reforms, they create mandatory provisions for all parties. These types of quotas have been continuously growing in popularity since 1995 (Paxton & Hughes, 344).

Reserved seats mean that there are certain positions for which only female candidates can compete, and it is a more direct way of gaining and regulating the number of women in elected positions. This type is used in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, with Taiwan being one of the first countries to use them since the 1950s (Tan 2016, 310). Since the year 2000, it has been increasingly used in countries with a very low percentage of female politicians. Typically, reserved seat quotas instruct a minimum amount of female legislators and are

established by reforming the constitution and electoral laws. Overall, they are more consistent in increasing the political participation of women compared to the previous quota types (Paxton & Hughes, 349). Currently, the most used quotas in the world are voluntary party quotas, which are often combined with other types as well. Of the countries that do use quotas, 61 percent have voluntary party quotas, 38 percent use legislated candidate quotas and only 20 percent have reserved seats (Pande & Ford 2012, 8).

## 2.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, gender equality in politics has yet to be achieved. Women still face numerous obstacles on their way to decision-making roles. However, looking at recent development trends, we can see the situation getting better, with countries taking measures to ensure women's participation in national-level politics. One of the most used strategies is gender quotas, of which exist three types used today. More than half of the countries in the world use some kind of quota, the most popular being voluntary party quotas. This type was also the first used quota in the world by a political party in Norway in 1975.

# 3. The history of Taiwan

While this paper only focuses on the year 1990 and onwards, I find it important to provide information on the history of Taiwan, primarily colonial and post-colonial era Taiwan. The development we see before the democratization of Taiwan is a key factor and can give us insight into why Taiwan smoothly and successfully transformed into a democracy. In this chapter, we will look at how Taiwan became a Japanese colony and what that meant for the island and its inhabitants. How the Republic of China eventually became the ruler after Japan lost in World War II, and some similarities between both of these periods. Lastly, this chapter will discuss the process of democratization and some factors like education and electoral systems.

## 3.1 Japanese rule

As I already mentioned, Taiwan was indeed under colonial rule for multiple decades. Before this, the island was ruled by the Qing dynasty, which also ruled over mainland China at that time. This period lasted almost two centuries, from 1683, when Taiwan was officially annexed, to 1895, when Japan took over ("History" n.d.). The takeover of Taiwan was a part of the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895). After the war was over, Japan demanded China cede the island, their demands were met with the signing of the Treaty of Shimonoseki in April 1895. Taiwan and Penghu formally became Japanese colonies in June of the same year. This lasted for 50 years, until the end of World War II, when Japan surrendered the colony to the Allied powers in August 1945.

The acquisition of Taiwan was seen as a great strategic move by Japan as it could provide raw materials for them and a market to sell Japanese goods. Strategically, the position of Taiwan was very advantageous as well, creating a southern point of defense and a base to further Japan's southward expansion (Rubinstein 2015, 204). However, they did not anticipate the resistance with which they would be met while taking over Taiwan and Penghu. This resulted in a five-month war of resistance against the takeover (Roy 2003, 34-35). After the war, Japanese forces continued to crack down on anyone opposing, with most major resistances ending by 1902. However, smaller groups and non-violent resistance continued beyond this time (Lai 2007, 47-49). Overall, estimates show that both the war of resistance caused 6000 deaths and the postwar pacification methods until 1902 resulted in another 12,000 deaths among the Taiwanese population (Rubinstein 2015, 207).

The period of Japanese rule in Taiwan can be categorized into three stages based on different policies used – military suppression, assimilation, and Japanization (Ching 2001). Assimilation was seen as an achievable goal due to the belief that Han Taiwanese people shared cultural and racial similarities with Japanese people. However, while the acculturation of the Taiwanese was relatively successful, the attempt to fully Japanize Taiwanese people was largely unsuccessful. During the later stages of Japanese rule, Taiwan went through major developments in terms of education, healthcare, and industrialization, as Taiwan was to be seen as a model colony and show of the modernity of Japan. Notably, the Taiwanese feminist movement developed during this time around 1920 as (mostly male) scholars traveled abroad to receive education and became concerned with modern feminist issues (Rubinstein 2015, 232-233). These included some major problems like old-fashioned marriages, unequal educational and economic opportunities, and lack of suffrage rights.

The last eight years of Japanese colonization is the Wartime Period. It was during this time that Japan moved towards the Japanization strategy, which was supposed to ensure that Taiwanese people did not regain a sense of their own national identity (Chen 2001, 181). As Japan became an active participant in World War II, many Taiwanese men were recruited to go and support their war efforts. Taiwanese women were not spared. It is estimated that between 1,000 and 2,000 were part of the comfort women system. These women were primarily aboriginal Taiwanese or came from low-income families of Han Chinese origin (Ward 2018, 2).

## 3.2 Kuomintang rule

When World War II ended and Japan unconditionally surrendered and ended its rule in Taiwan, the territory was back under the control of the Republic of China's government. The administration was given to the Chief Executive of Taiwan Province, Chen Yi, and Taiwan, therefore, became a province of China. The Allied Powers, however, did not recognize this annexation and argued that Taiwan's political status remains uncertain. Notably, Winston Churchill called the Cairo Declaration[5] outdated and categorized Taiwan as a military occupation (Middleton 1955, 1). Similar views were shared by the US government, while

[5] This declaration stated that the territories stolen by Japan from the Chinese shall be restored to the Republic of China.

they acknowledged that the Republic of China de facto controlled Taiwan and Penghu, they denied that this was officially supported by any treaties (Department of State 1954, 895).

Despite this, Taiwan was under the rule of the Republic of China, led by the Kuomintang (KMT). As mentioned, Chen Yi was appointed as the Chief Executive. This, however, did not last for long. Many Taiwanese people felt estranged from mainland China and Chinese culture, leading to tensions that eventually resulted in clashes between the police and citizens. Known as the February 28 incident in 1947, many prominent Taiwanese figures and opposing civilians were killed, essentially creating even bigger tensions among residents (McBeath 1978, 17). After this, the position of Chief Executive was abolished, and instead, a governor was to rule over Taiwan.

As the civil war in mainland China drew to an end in 1949, the defeated Kuomintang and Republic of China forces retreated to Taiwan, where they relocated the government—essentially making Taiwan the Republic of China, while the mainland was declared the Peoples Republic of China by the CCP. At first, this relocation was seen as a temporary measure, therefore, the Kuomintang led by Chiang Kai-shek prioritized militaristic preparation over economic development (Crook 2022). Continuing in the suppression campaigns, Kuomintang imprisoned many Taiwanese intellectuals, fearing they would sympathize with communism and leftist ideas and resist their rule. From this point onwards, Taiwan was placed under martial law, lasting from 1949 until 1987, when democratic reforms happened ("History" n.d.).

In many ways, this period of martial law is similar to the Japanese rule in Taiwan. Notably, researcher J. Bruce Jacobs (2008, 41-42) brings forward five similarities between both periods. Firstly, both regimes began with discrimination against native Taiwanese people. Then they continued to crack down on any kind of opposition, resulting in many deaths. The third similarity is political oppression, which was used by both regimes as a tool to keep their position of power. Fourth, after this prolonged period of oppression, they liberalized due to domestic and international pressures. Finally, both regimes eventually returned to oppressive measures as a result of their actions – World War II and the Kaohsiung Incident, respectively.

After it was clear that staying in Taiwan was not going to be just a provisional measure, Kuomintang moved its focus to economic development. A few important reforms took place,

like the land reform program and a new currency was established. The United States played a significant role in this development, as they provided economic and military aid to the island up until 1965 (Chan 1997, 39). By this point, Taiwan had developed a good financial base and was beginning to build its international trading power, which would later put them alongside other economic giants. Politically, things started to take a major turn after 1975, when Chiang Kai-shek died and was succeeded by his son (Rubinstein 2015, 439), who took on the leading role of Chairman of the Kuomintang. From this point on, we see a shift towards liberalization and a general loosening of controls.

All of these changes eventually resulted in the establishment of the first opposition party in 1986, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP). Although it was illegal up until that point, Chairman Chiang decided against resolving and punishing the group, creating an opportunity for them to run in elections. However, this did not come without prior liberalization. Taiwan has had at least two waves of liberalization since the 1970s, which contributed to its smooth democratization process (Jacobs 2012, 5-6). In 1987, Chairman Chiang officially ended martial law and opened Taiwan for familial visits. Before he died in 1988, he managed to reduce anti-Kuomintang sentiments through reforms, which were to give more power to native-born Taiwanese. He was succeeded by his vice president, Taiwanese-born Lee Teng-hui, who continued with the democratization reforms. This period of transferring control back to native citizens is referred to as Taiwanization (Jacobs 2005, 18).

Many factors in play contributed to the democratization of Taiwan. One of them is the previously mentioned economic development and liberalization. As Japan developed Taiwan to be its model colony and KMT later continued increasing the living standard, access to education increased greatly. By the year 1943, 71.3% of school-age children went to school (Jacobs 2012, 7-8). During this time, most children only went through primary education, however, that was also improved by the KMT administration. In the late 1960s, it was decided to extend compulsory education to 9 years ("History" n.d.), which was almost fully achieved during the next ten years. By 1977 virtually every child (99.57%) attended primary school, and from there, over 90 percent went on to junior secondary school. From this point on, the percentages started to drop. However, among the children who attended junior secondary, 60 percent continued to senior secondary school, and over half of them (77,2%)

went on to higher education (Jacobs 2012, 8). Economic development and increased access to education were necessary for a smooth transition to democracy. Aside from these factors, there are many others, such as – international political pressure, non-violent opposition, an increased amount of liberal KMT members, and more.

In terms of elections and voting rights, Japan finally allowed the election of advisory councils during the mid-1930s. However, the right to vote was only given to men above the age of 25 with sufficient property and approval from the Japanese police (Rubinstein 2015, 227; 260). After Kuomintang arrived in Taiwan, they introduced a system of elections, popular elections for village heads, and township assembly were established. This was later changed with the administrative reorganization in the 1950s and Taiwanese citizens began directly voting for township executive and county assembly. For the most part, these elections were considered fair as KMT candidates did not always win (Jacobs 2012, 10). This was probably because KMT was not afraid of ever losing power as the central government was not electorally chosen by the citizens. That changed only after the democratization period, with the central legislature being first popularly elected in 1992 and the president in 1996.

## 3.3 Conclusion

The goal of this chapter was to give the reader an understanding of Taiwan's history. This thesis starts assessing women's political participation from the year 1990, and I felt it was necessary to provide historical context as to why we cannot properly evaluate data before democratization. This chapter also looks at the developments made before 1990 in terms of education and living standards as they played a role in liberalization and Taiwanization. The next chapter will focus on Taiwanese women and the development of a women's movement in Taiwan. We will take a closer look at education, employment, and general attitudes toward women in Taiwanese society.

# 4. Women in Taiwan

This chapter focuses on the position of women in Taiwanese society. A significant part of this chapter looks at the women's movement in Taiwan – when it emerged, its history, and how it helped with increasing gender equality for Taiwanese women. The latter parts of this chapter look at the development of women's status in Taiwan through two indicators – education and employment. In education, we will look at how it has historically developed since the Japanese rule, and we will examine the 1990-2020 period in closer detail. In terms of employment, we will look at labor force participation rates, the gender pay gap, and how Taiwan fares compared to the global average.

## 4.1 Women's movement

As mentioned in a previous chapter, the women's movement emerged in Taiwan during the 1920s (Rubinstein 2015, 232-233; Chang 2010, 11). Both Japanese nationalist and their opposition improved the standing of women during that time with advances like the abolition of foot-binding practices, increasing education and literacy, as well as teaching positions (Chen 2009, 15). In a previous chapter, I presented the commonly acknowledged waves of feminism, though, in the case of Taiwan, we see unique waves of feminism which reflect the current political landscape. The first wave dates to the 1920s and early 1930s, when several autonomous women's associations were established. These aimed to challenge the patriarchal status quo and were largely supported by anticolonial activists. However, as the Japanese government began suppressing leftist radicals and organizations, the women's movement declined and eventually disintegrated in the 1930s (Chang 2010, 12). The second wave emerged many years later, in 1972 (Yang 1993; Chang 2010), and unlike the first one, it survived the authoritarian political system. After the democratization period, we talk about a third wave (Chang 2010, 12).

The Japanese colonial period saw the formulation of a Taiwanese women's movement as the island began to modernize. During this time, both sides – Japanese nationalist and anti-Japanese elites – interested themselves in bettering the lives of women, although the motives were often to gain the favor of women on their side. The Japanese colonial government hoped for girls and women to become assimilated into Japanese culture and contribute to the growing economy. Therefore, they encouraged access to primary education as a way to teach Confucian ethics (Chang 2023). Anti-Japanese elites, on the other hand, hoped that increased

liberalization of women and feminist thought would inspire anti-colonial sentiments and therefore help their cause (Lu 2020, 84-94). We talk about elites in this context because, at that time, higher forms of education were widely inaccessible to most people, and those rich enough to gain higher forms of education usually studied abroad. And it was while studying abroad, mainly in Japan and mainland China, that students came to understand the concepts of liberal feminism, which they would later spread to Taiwanese people. However, this was still limited by language barriers, therefore, they relied on Western feminist materials, which were already translated into either Chinese or Japanese (Chen 2009, 17).

And so, during the first half of the 20th century, liberal feminist thought found its way to Taiwan. Following the West, liberal feminists mostly fought for gender equality within the scope of a capitalistic society (Almender 1994, 299; Prügl 2015, 5). Instead of creating a new political landscape, the goal was to humanize the already existing system and try to achieve equality in all its aspects. Compared to the West, where most feminists advocated for complete individual freedom and independence, Taiwanese feminists sought out a balance between these liberal feminism ideals and Confucian family ideology (Chang 2010, 8). One notable exception to this was women' s rights activist Hsie Hsueh-hung (謝雪紅), who founded the Taiwanese Communist Party in 1928. Similar to other leftist activists, she saw the overthrowing of capitalism as a way to create an egalitarian society. As the Japanese colonial rule came to an end, she heavily advocated for independence and participated in opposition to the Kuomintang forces (Cheung 2016).

Apart from the Japanese colonial side and the anti-Japanese elites, there were also small women's organizations during this time. However, it is not known whether or not these organizations were influential enough to change the status of women. For example, typical gender roles, paying dowry for wives, and the concept of some jobs being for men only, remained unchallenged at that time (Chen 2011, 54). After 1949, when the KMT lost the civil war and retreated to Taiwan, there were only a few numbers of organizations concerned with women. The only semi-governmental women's meetings and conferences were led by Soong Mei-Ling (Chen 2011, 5), also known as Madame Chiang Kai-shek. However, she rarely went outside of the limitations set by KMT, like developing actual feminist NGOs or pushing local Taiwanese feminist theories (Chen 2009, 16). This only started to change in the 1970s, coinciding with the enormous economic boost of the mid-1970s and 1980s, which saw an

emergence of middle-class society and kickstarted political liberation (Lu 2012, 121). And as Taiwan began to modernize and gain wealth, a second women' s movement emerged in 1972. This second emergence is often connected to Lu Hsiu-lien (呂秀蓮) and her book "New Feminism" as well as her speech made during International Women's Day in 1972 (Lu 2016, 293). Following the trend from the first wave, many of the members of women's groups studied abroad and became influenced by Western liberal thought, which they later introduced to people in Taiwan (Lu 2012; Chang 2010).

Before this, the status of women in Taiwan was quite complicated. Although the Constitution guaranteed equality between men and women, there were still many discriminatory laws in place, such as the marital property law (Lu 2016, 291). In terms of political standing, both men and women were given suffrage at the same time. However, even with a quota system, women still lacked compared to male politicians. Until 1973, only 13.43 percent of the Provincial Assembly members and only 28.57 percent of Taipei City Council members were women, and there were no female mayors at all (Lu 2016, 292).

Greater tolerance from the KMT regime in the 1970s enabled Lu Hsiu-lien to begin the first stage of the autonomous women's movement from 1972 to 1977, also known as the pioneering period (Ku 1989, 15). Another thing that fueled the rise of the women's movement was a murder case that took place in the summer of 1972 (Lu 2016, 293). The sympathy shown to a man who killed his unfaithful wife was another evidence of a male chauvinistic society. One year before this, there was much discussion in the government concerning preferential quotas for male admissions to some majors in higher education. As more women began taking the entrance exams and their scores were getting higher each year, many people feared that they would become the majority (Chang 2010, 81).

During the pioneering period, Lu gave many speeches in which she criticized male supremacy, preference for male children, double standards in morals, and many more (Ku 1989, 16). She managed to gain sympathies of other women at that time because she did not question marriage or traditional familial roles, seeking to improve women's social standing while understanding that men and women take on different roles in the home. The women's movement at this time focused on multiple categories – consciousness-raising, business, organizations, services, research, and activities (Lu 2016, 294). Lu's writing and speeches inspired much public discussion about traditional Chinese values and attracted many

supporters. As the leader of the autonomous women's movement, she emphasized raising awareness of the need for gender equality. To achieve this, she went to visit campuses, organized discussions and wrote articles for one of the most prominent newspapers in Taiwan (Chang 2010, 86).

The next group of feminists following in Lu Hsiu-lien's footsteps emerged ten years after the beginning of the pioneering period. In 1982 Lee Yuan-chen became the next leading figure of the autonomous women's movement. They were often referred to as the Awakening period (Lu 2016, 299) because, during this time, Lee and other feminists founded a monthly feminist magazine called Awakening (Chang 2010, 107). One of the main goals of this magazine was to continue promoting women's development and potential. Lasting from 1982 to 1989, this period was influenced by many Western feminist ideas, such as the fight to legalize abortion (Ku 1989, 19). Five years after the establishment of Awakening, Homemakers United Foundation (HUF) was created in 1987. After martial law was lifted, these groups were included in independent organizations (Frost 2021).

Both groups played a crucial role in advancing women's empowerment in Taiwan. HUF has had great success with community-level campaigns and educational initiatives, like the implementation of a national recycling program. Awakening takes on a different approach and advocates for changes at the highest levels of decision-making. They stood behind abortion being legalized in 1984 and also the Gender Equity Education Act in 2004 (Frost 2021). Legislative lobbying became the primary strategy for post-martial law era feminists, with lawyers amongst them helping to draft new bills and amendments (Chang 2010, 157).

## 4.2 Education

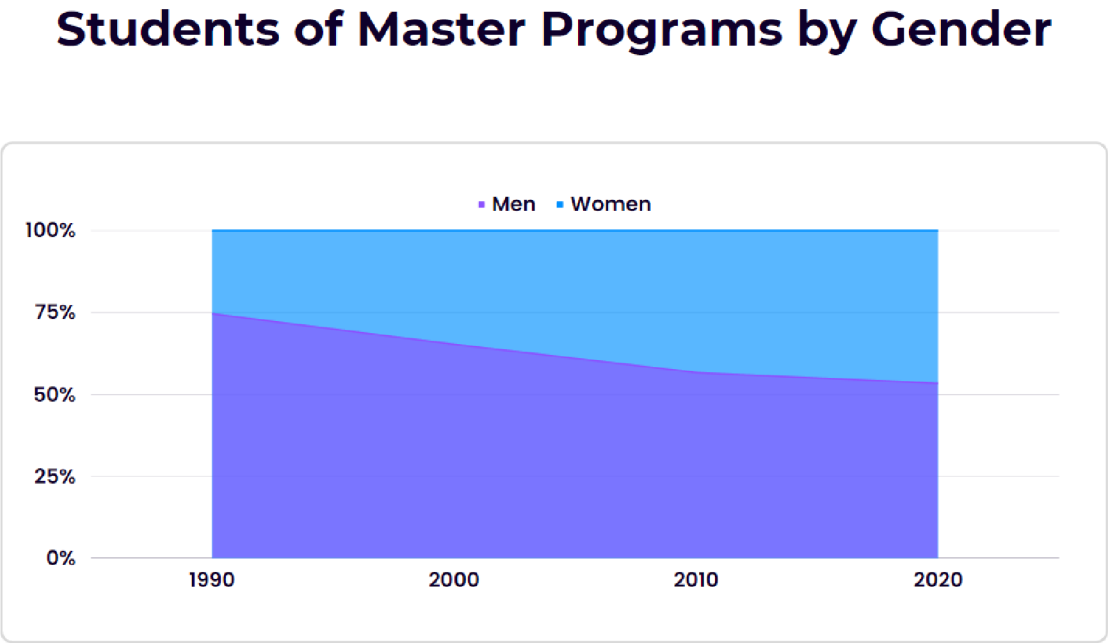
In the previous chapter, we looked at how education and increasing access to higher forms of education helped the democratization process. Education is considered a crucial part of improving the status of women (Roy et al. 2008; Sundaram et al. 2014). Taiwan has made great progress over the last couple of decades, and by 1976 many of the inequalities vanished from the education system, especially for younger age groups aged 6 to 11 (Lu 2012, 168). The first efforts to increase school enrolment of young girls were made during the Japanese rule in the early twentieth century. This was seen as beneficial as it allowed the government to assimilate Taiwanese children and teach them Japanese culture and values as part of the Japanization strategy (Chang 2023).

This significantly increased the number of kids who went to primary school, and by the 1940s, more than half of Taiwanese girls (60.9%) were enrolled in primary school. While this made Taiwan one of the countries with the highest enrollment of young girls in Asia compared with the boys' enrollment which was 80.9%, there was still much to be desired in terms of equality (Jacobs 2012, 7). Comparing these numbers to the ones from 1920, which show only 10% of young girls attended school, much progress has been made in the 20 years (Lee 1997, 27).

At that time, most girls could only afford to attend primary school as families usually needed children to work unless they were already well off. Therefore, only daughters from wealthy families went and got high-school education (Chang 2023). Out of those who did go, most would apply to colleges and universities abroad (mostly in Japan), as Taiwanese universities were seen as lower quality by the colonial elites. By the year 1977, most girls would complete junior secondary school as part of the then-compulsory nine years of education. From this point on, we see the numbers decrease as of those girls who finished junior secondary, only 58.14 percent continued to senior secondary school, compared to 61.53 percent of boys (Jacobs 2012, 8). However, girls were in the majority when it came to higher education. It seems that while girls suffered in the transition from junior to senior secondary, most girls who did attend senior secondary school then went on to university/college. Specifically, 89.84 percent of girls compared to 67.83 percent of boys (Jacobs 2012, 8).

The gender gap was almost nonexistent in many education levels after the 1980s. Looking at data concerning the total number of students of different levels of education by sex, we see that the situation has been slowly improving over the years. The data below is taken from the Directorate General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics of Executive Yuan (2020). In 1990 boys formed the majority of students in almost all levels of education with few exceptions – vocational education, 2-year junior college, and supplementary schools. The situation changes around the year 1997, when we can see girls becoming the majority of total students in higher education. This trend generally continues forward, with women either forming the majority or the numbers of male and female students being very close to each other. Interestingly, if we look at different university levels, we can still see a noticeable gender gap in Master's and Ph.D. programs.

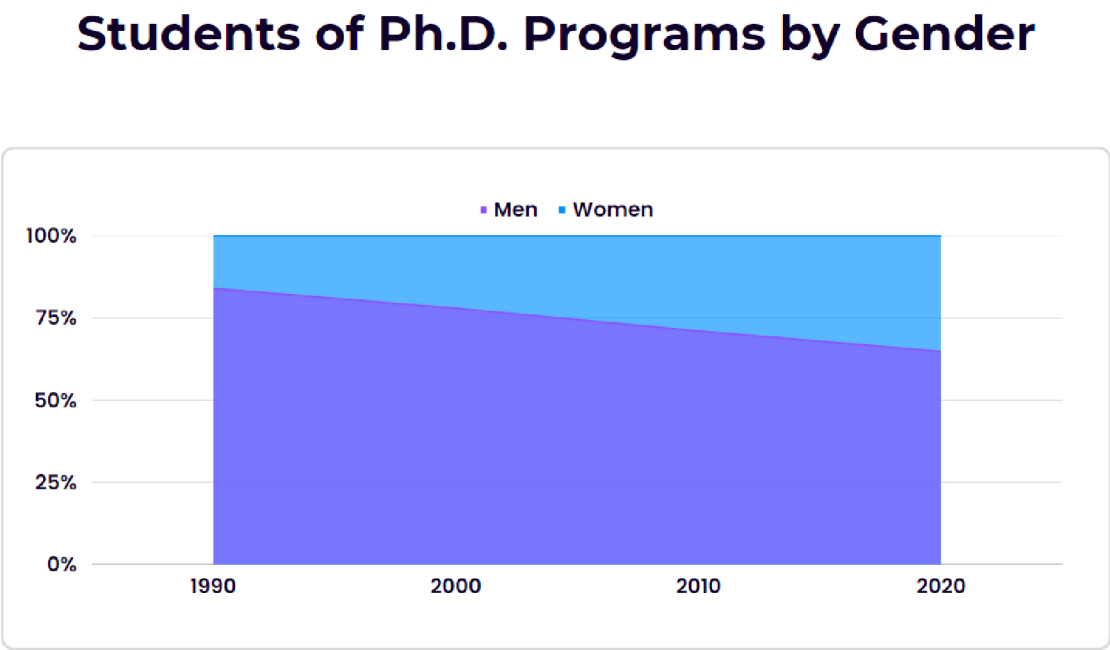
Figure 3: Students of Master Programs by Gender




Source: Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics 2020

In the number of Master's program students, the situation is slowly getting better, the number of students is steadily rising, and additionally, the gender gap seems to be getting smaller. For example, while in 1990, the percentage was 25.4% female and 74.6% male students, by 2020, it was 46.6% female and 53.4% male students. This gap gets even more noticeable in the numbers of Ph.D. students, which in 2020 were 35.1% female and 64.9% male. Although this is an improvement to the 1990 16% female students, it is still a major problem considering Taiwan's gender equality in other levels of education.

Figure 4: Students of Ph.D. Programs by Gender




Source: Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics 2020

Another area in which we see a remnant of gender segregation is the specific fields of higher education. Men are much more likely to major in science and engineering, while women form the overwhelming majority in humanities. Data from 2018 shows that the percentage of female graduates was highest in "Education" at 71.3% and lowest in "Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction" at 18.4% (Department of Gender Equality 2022, 21).

The data from 2020 shows us that male students are the majority in preschool, primary school, and junior high. Numbers generally start to equalize in senior secondary schools. Female students have become a majority in higher education ever since 2014, following an educational reform. However, it is important to state that Taiwan has a high ratio of male births. In 2020 there were 107.7 baby boys born for every 100 baby girls, which is comparable to the global average (Chien 2021; Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics 2022). Therefore, it makes sense that male students are the majority in many of the early levels of education, as they have formed the majority of the population aged 0-29 for the past 30 years (Department of Household Registration 2022).

Overall, Taiwan has seen significant improvement in educational attainment. Due to the government's efforts, since the 2010s, most women below the age of 40 have gotten a

bachelor's degree. The biggest advancements can be seen looking at gross enrollment rates for female students, which for tertiary education used to be only 29.09% in 1990 and rose to an overwhelming 92.82% in 2020 (MOE 2021). Taiwan's literacy rate has also increased steadily, and significant differences between men and women can only be seen in ages 65+ (Lu 2012, 170-171).

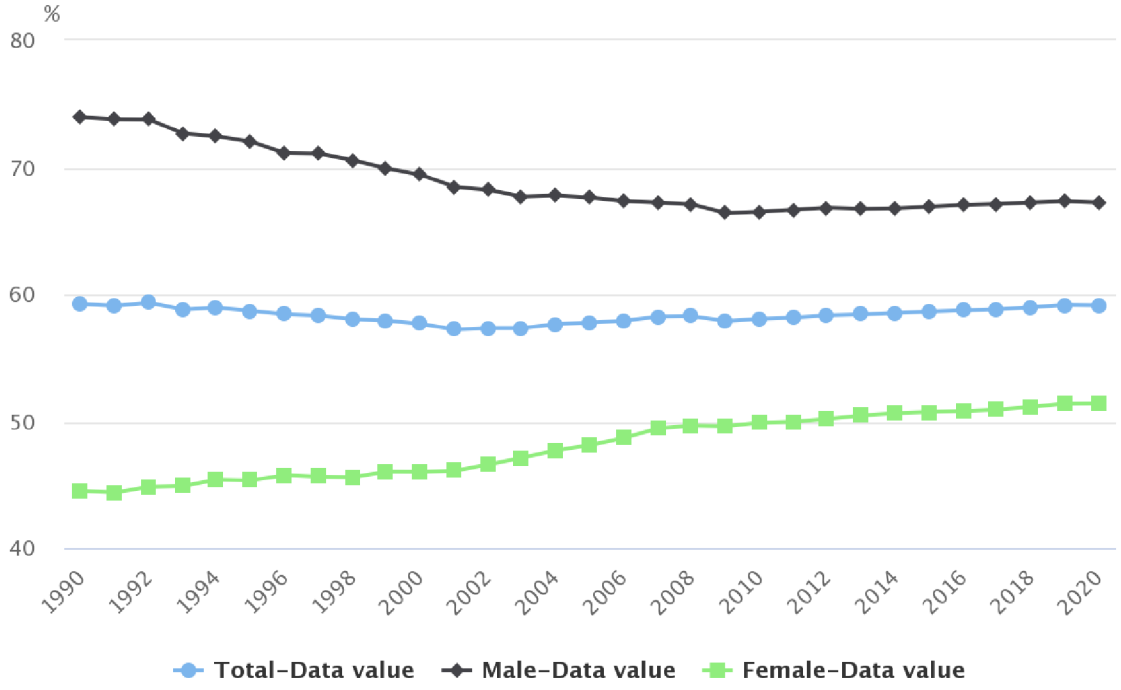
## 4.3 Employment

As mentioned previously, the Awakening Foundation stood behind many improvements to women's lives in Taiwan. In 1989 they drafted a bill for equal employment of men and women, which was presented to the Legislative Yuan a year later (Chang 2010, 130). However, there were strong oppositions to the bill at that time and so the passage of said bill was postponed. The bill officially passed in 2001 and introduced things such as eight weeks of paid maternity leave, guidelines for the prevention of sexual harassment, and a maximum of two years of parental leave (Chang 2010, 130-132).

The employment structure has developed drastically over the last couple of decades. In the 1980s, 40% of employed women worked in manufacturing and 20% in agriculture. By 2010, this percentage had gone down significantly, and instead, more women began working in sectors like service jobs (44%) or technician jobs (32%) (Clark et al. 2014, 11). This is most likely because of Taiwan's economic boom, liberalization, and democratization, which has enabled Taiwan to become a leader in the semiconductor industry. Because they account for the majority of the global market, Taiwan has been able to raise its GDP significantly. In 1991 their GDP was 187 100 million USD, and in 2020 it was 669 324 million USD (Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics 2022, 78).

Back in 1980, women comprised only 33.53% of the total labor force, which was a total of 2.223 million women (Lu 2012, 173-174). By the year 1990, the total number of women in the labor force jumped to 3.16 million, which is an increase of 42%. In this short amount of time, the number of women participating in the labor force increased more than the number of men. However, even with the gender gap narrowing down, women still fall behind men regarding their share of the total labor force.

Figure 5: Labor Force Participation Rate 1990-2020



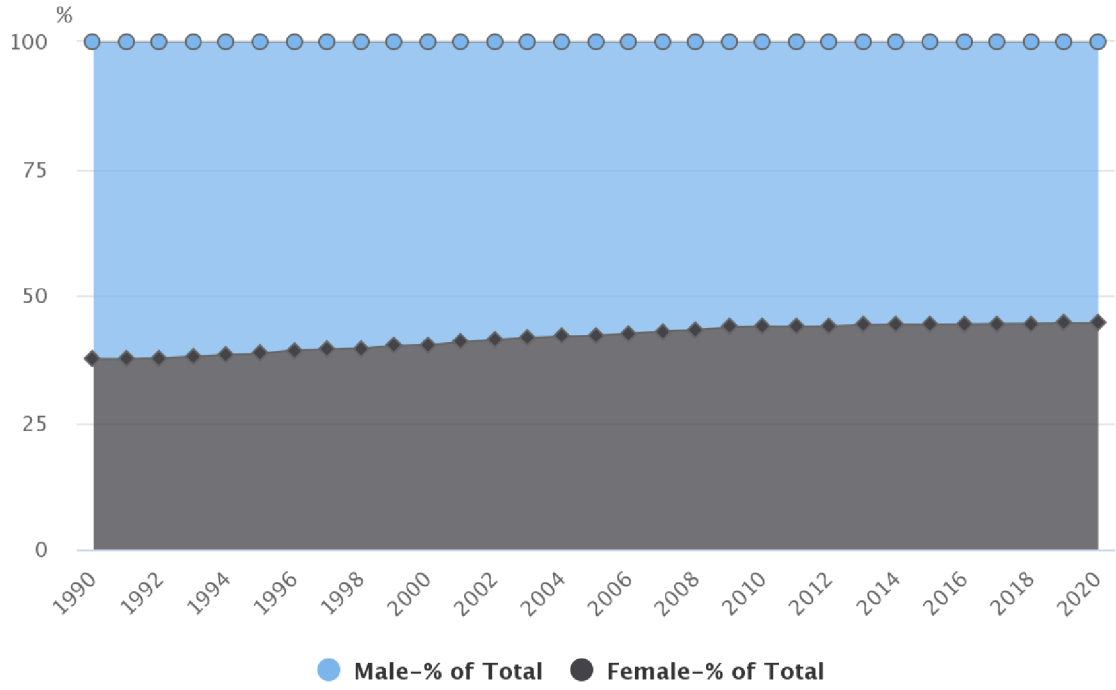

Source: Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics n.d.

Looking at the graph above, we can see that women are still much less likely to participate in the labor force compared to their male counterparts. In 1990 their participation rate was 44.5%, and in 2020 it was 51.41%. Women only broke through the 50% barrier in 2012, and while we can see some progress, it is not significant. This is most likely a result of traditional Confucian values, which remain in Taiwanese society to this day. The woman in the family is expected to take care of the children and do housework, which might be why women have notably lower labor force participation rates throughout history. We can see this trend even when we look at the same data divided by age groups. It seems that many women do not return to work after having children. However, globally in 2019, the female labor force participation was at 52.4%, meaning that Taiwan is only slightly below average.

Class is another issue dividing women. Women from middle-class families are more likely to return to the workforce after having children than women from working-class backgrounds (Chang 2023). Middle-class households have the means to hire caretakers,

giving women the option of continuing the pursuit of their careers. Meanwhile, many working-class women quit their jobs to take care of either children or elderly family members.

Figure 6: Employed Persons by Sex 1990-2020




Source: Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics n.d.

In this graph, we see how the total number of employed people is divided by sex. In this sense, Taiwan is doing quite well, with women slowly narrowing the gap. In 1990 women made up 37.43% of employed persons, and in 2020 it was 44.56%. Interestingly, men's unemployment rate is higher than women's across all social groups.

Along with these two factors, the gender pay gap has also decreased. However, there are still gendered gaps in wages across different occupational groups. The ones with a bigger pay gap included services and sales, agriculture, and machine operators (Lu 2012, 185-186). Compared to other neighboring countries, like Japan and South Korea, where the gap remains above 30%, Taiwan seems to be doing quite well, with 14.8% as of 2020 (Department of Gender Equality 2022, 16).

## 4.4 Conclusion

The status of women in Taiwan has undoubtedly developed for the better since the 1990s. With martial law coming to an end and democratization, feminists took the opportunity to establish foundations and organizations. These were used to communicate directly with the government, bringing forward much improvement to women's lives. While not directly discussing these issues in this chapter, I would like to point out other indicators of well-being showing the improvement of women's lives – life expectancy, infant and maternal mortality, and urbanization. With that being said, we can still see the effects of Taiwan being a patriarchal society when looking at SRB (Sex Ratio at Birth) – where we see an increase after the 3rd birth, with the ratio climbing up to 136.6:100 in 2006 (Department of Household Registration 2021). Despite this, there has been significant progress in education, especially in increasing the number of girls in higher education. Even in Master's and Ph.D. students, where the gender gap remains, the ratio is slowly equalizing. As for employment, there is still space for improvement, especially concerning women's labor force participation rates which are lower than the global average.

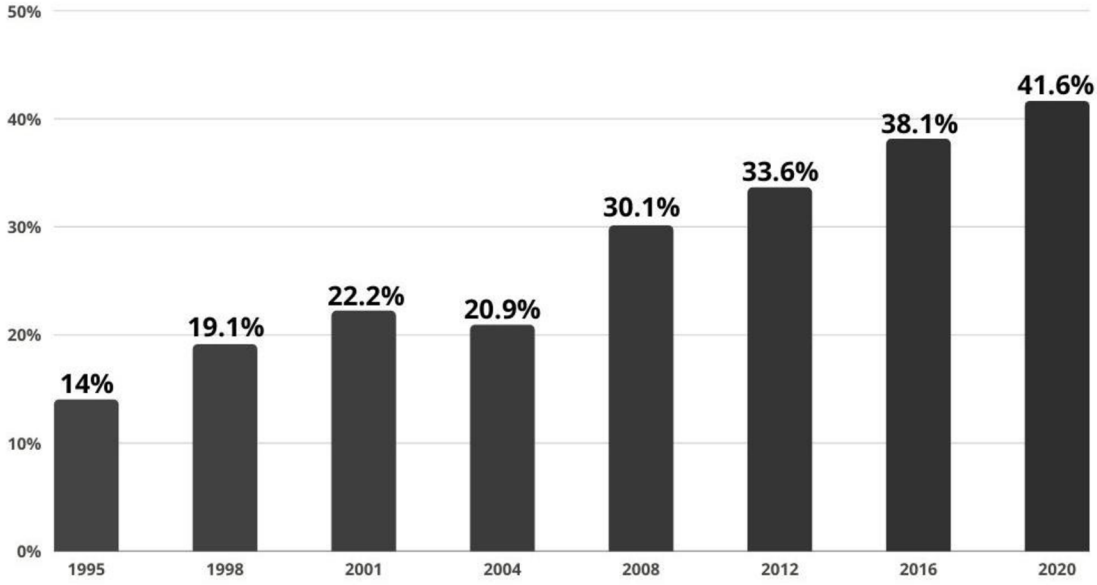
# 5. Women in Taiwan's Politics

This chapter delves into the representation of women in Taiwanese politics. We will discuss what changes have been made to facilitate the higher participation of women. The first part will look at data regarding women's political participation and how they have changed over the years. The second part will draw from previous chapters to try to explain what factors contributed to this change. I will discuss the implementation of gender quotas, how Taiwan overcame some of the barriers women face when going into politics, and other previously discussed factors like education, employment, and democratization.

## 5.1 Changes between 1990 and 2020

Firstly, I would like to look at how the number of women in Taiwan' s politics changed during these 30 years. Specifically, we will look at data concerning the number of women in the Legislative Yuan (立法委員), county/city councilors (縣市議員), and city mayors (縣市長). I am not going to be examining data regarding the National Assembly, as it was dissolved in 2005 by the constitution (R.O.C Laws & Regulations Database 2005).

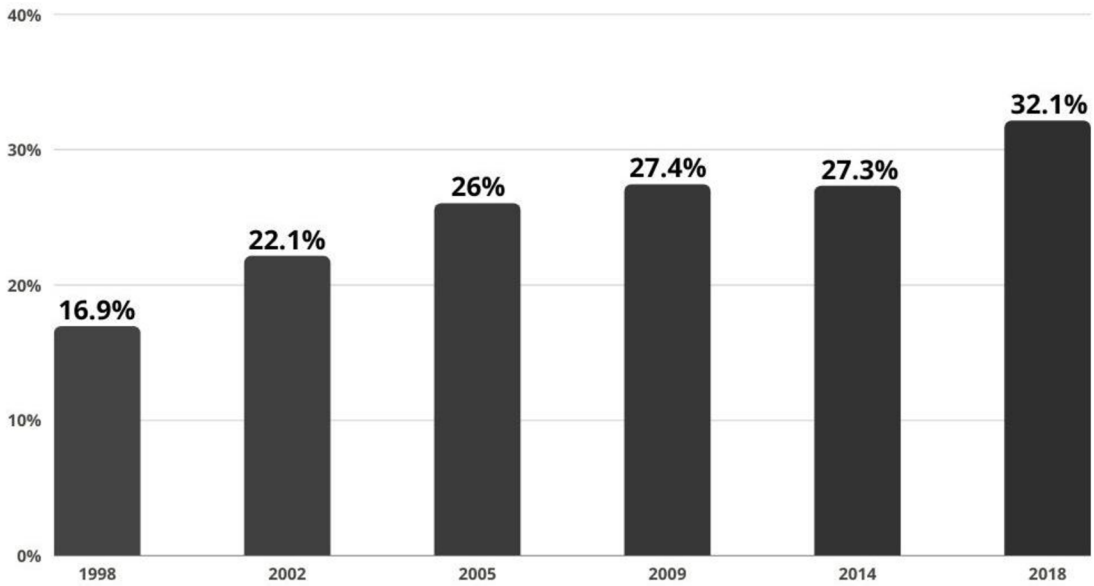
Figure 7: Percentage of Women in Legislative Yuan




Source: Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics 2022, 162

Unfortunately, neither the Statistical Yearbook nor Central Election Commission have information regarding the number of women elected in elections before 1995. Author Copper (1992, 75) claims the number of female legislators elected in 1992 was 12, which comes out to 7.5%. However, researcher Lu (2012, 192) writes that the number was 17 female legislators, which would change the percentage to 10.6%. Looking at the graph above, we can see that the number of female legislators has been steadily increasing. Except for 2004, every election saw an increase in female legislators compared to the previous. As Legislative Yuan represents the lower house, I will compare it to statistics by the Inter-Parliamentary Union regarding women in national parliaments, which date back to 1997 and do not include Taiwan. In January 1997, Taiwan would have been in 31st place worldwide, just behind Mexico (IPU Archive 1997). In January 2020, Taiwan would occupy 18th place, overtaking Switzerland by 0.1% ("Monthly Ranking of Women in National Parliaments." n.d.). Notably, this also means that Taiwan would rank 1st amongst other Asian countries. This shows us that Taiwan increased women's participation in their lower house (Legislative Yuan) even in a global comparison.

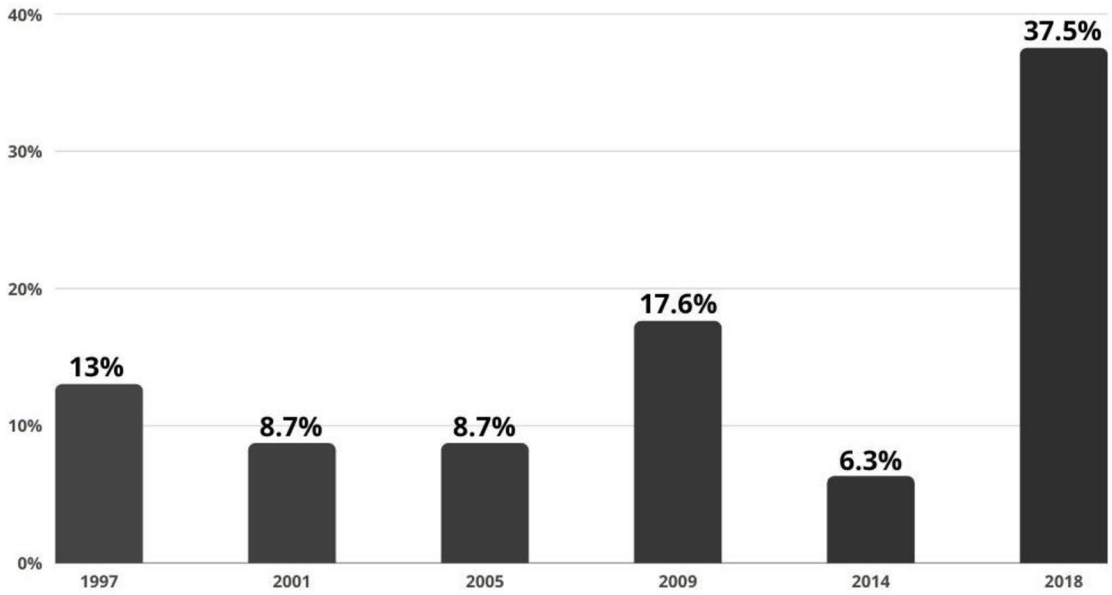
Figure 8: Percentage of Female County/City Councilors




Source: Election Database 2023

County/City Councils are the local legislative bodies that are meant to check and balance the city government (Lu 2012, 190). Looking at the number of female county (city) councilors, we see a trend similar to the number of female legislators. Except for one year (2014), the percentage has been increasing and managed to climb from 16.9% to 32.1% in 10 years. Unfortunately, the Central Election Commission does not provide data before the 1998 elections. I would also like to point out the differences in gaps between elections. The elections were always held every four years. However, in some years, instead of being held in January, they were held in December of the previous year. This is the reason why the years displayed are 2005 and 2009 instead of 2006 and 2010.

Figure 9: Percentage of Female Mayors




Source: Election Database 2023

City Mayors, also referred to as County Magistrates, show a different trend compared to the previous two graphs. However, it is important to point out that the amount of city mayors is comparatively lower than legislators or city councilors. Another factor is the ratio of candidates. Up until the 2014 elections, women consistently made up lower than 15% of the candidates. In 2014 the percentage jumped to 18.8% female candidates, and in 2018 it grew to 23.5% (Election Database 2023). Considering this, it seems that the low percentage of female mayors was at least partially caused by a low number of female candidates.

One more position which deserves to be mentioned is the president. In January 2016, Taiwanese voters elected their first female president, Tsai Ing-wen (Hickey & Niou 2017, 111). This can be seen as another proof of Taiwan's continued growth of female representation in its politics. Many women's groups celebrated this win as it broke down some of the stereotypes women face in decision-making positions. Not only was Tsai a woman, but she was also unmarried and childless, something that is often looked down on (Tseng 2018, 85-86). While many celebrated her win, Tsai also received critique from some women's groups, which were disappointed with her cabinet. Initially, only four of Tsai's

cabinet members were women, the lowest number in the past 20 years (Clark & Clark 2018, 111).

## 5.2 Factors affecting women's political participation

In previous chapters, I have mentioned a quote by the UN General Assembly (2011, 2), which talked about reasons why women are marginalized from the political sphere. The reasons they presented were low levels of education, effects of poverty, attitudes and stereotypes, and discriminatory laws. In the second chapter, we learned about the three main strategies for increasing women's political participation – quotas, gender mainstreaming, and women's policy agencies (Squires 2007, 21-47). Because gender quotas are one of the most used strategies in the world, I will start by explaining Taiwan's use of this strategy. Continuing, we will look at other official strategies in use, like gender mainstreaming. Finally, I will look at factors that have previously been linked to women's political participation and expand on how they tie into Taiwan's unique situation.

The island has had reserved seats for women since the 1950s (Huang 2015, 207-208). Taiwan was one of the first countries in the world to adopt gender quotas. Even twenty years later, in the 1970s, only a few countries in the world used some type of gender quotas (Hughes et al. 2019, 219). During the 1950s, Taiwan was still under authoritarian rule and had not gone through liberalization or the economic boom it would experience later. Instead, gender quotas were inherited from the KMT government and the Constitution of the Republic of China, which was established in 1946. Therefore, reserved seats for women were established even before the government relocated to Taiwan as a result of women's movement efforts in China. Women's organizations demanded to be recognized as a representative group and attended a national conference with Sun Yat-sen in 1924 (Huang 2015, 208). This resulted in efforts being made to establish both universal suffrage and reserved seats (Huang 2012, 89-90).

When the Republic of China moved its government to Taiwan in 1949, this version of the constitution was subsequently implemented. However, Taiwan was placed under authoritarian rule, and elections were only held for local government positions and for part of the parliamentary seats in 1969 when elections were first held for Legislative Yuan (Clark & Clark 2018, 104). Local elections were used by the KMT to effectively create rivalry

amongst Taiwanese political factions (Rigger 1999, 47-48). Despite this, roughly 10% of seats in these elections were reserved for women (Clark & Clark 2018, 104).

By the 1960s, the limited number of reserved seats was seen as meaningless and instead obstructed political participation. In the late 1980s, the system began to be heavily criticized by feminists. These critiques came from both liberal and pragmatic views (Huang 2015, 209). The previously mentioned Lu Hsiu-lien was one of the liberal feminist critics, along with other elected female politicians. Liberal critics called for parties to nominate more women instead of relying on the reserved seats system. Pragmatic critics claimed that the system was used by KMT to maximize their seats, as they rarely nominated more women than the number of reserved seats for them (Liang 1989, 26).

After the Fourth Conference on Women in Beijing took place, Taiwan saw the new trend of countries adopting gender quotas. This led to changes and quota reforms in the late 1990s to keep up with international standards. In 1996 the Democratic Progressive Party adopted a voluntary party quota, which stipulated that 25% of their candidates are women (Sun 2004, 171). Not wanting to stay behind, KMT adopted the same quota in 2000. According to researcher Matland (2005, 102), political parties oftentimes adopt quotas initiated by other parties to keep up with the competition, which was precisely what happened in Taiwan. The establishment of candidate quotas by the DPP also influenced local elections. In 1998 the Local Government Act was approved, which reserved a quarter of seats in local elections for women. This means that the quota increased from around 10% to 15-25% (depending on the number of seats in districts) (Huang 2015, 212).

Local races use Single Non-Transferable Vote elections (SNTV), meaning that if three seats are up for election, the three candidates with the most votes get elected. In local elections for representative bodies, every fourth seat must be reserved for a woman (CEC 2016). The Legislative Yuan is elected by parallel voting – 73 seats from Single-Member Districts elected by simple majority, 34 seats from the party list system, and six seats for indigenous legislators voted by SNTV (CEC 2016a). The participation of women is ensured by requiring that at least half of each party's elected candidates must be female (CEC 2016). Before 2008 Taiwan also had gender quotas for the legislators elected in Single-Member Districts (SMD). This means that in the Legislative Yuan, only around 15% of the seats are reserved for women as of 2008. Despite this, the percentage of female legislators continues

to rise, and this increase is coming from more female candidates being elected in the SMD (Huang 2019, 26).

At first, the reserved seats system essentially created two races – a general race and a women's race. This forced the competing parties to invest in recruiting and supporting their female candidates because if they didn't have enough of them, these seats would automatically be lost to a party that did have candidates to fill them. Therefore, over time the women's race became just as competitive as the general one (Adams 2021). This helped women gain experience and valuable skills, which are one of the barriers to women's participation in politics I mentioned in Chapter 2 (Pande and Ford 2012, 7). It also brought more representation for women, showing them that a woman can enter and be successful in the political sphere. Additionally, it helped to combat the stereotypical view of decision-making as a masculine activity. Proof of this is the fact that approximately 70% of female mayors and 80% of SMD Legislative Yuan members won their first election in districts with reserved seats (Huang 2019, 35). The reserved seats system, therefore, helped female politicians break into local politics. There they gained enough experience and support, which in turn helped them in elections without reserved seats. So, while Taiwan regularly elects more female candidates than their quotas require, the reserved seat system remains an essential strategy for helping women break into politics.

Gender mainstreaming is another strategy for reaching gender equality that Taiwan uses. In 1997 Taiwan established the Women's Rights Promotion Committee and has actively worked on gender mainstreaming since 2005 in 4-year phases. Worth mentioning is the Gender Awareness Training, which began in 1994 and serves to increase civil servants' and political officials' gender awareness and sensitivity (GEC n.d.). Due to the demands of activists, gender mainstreaming has been implemented throughout the government, which is a stark difference from most countries, where gender mainstreaming tends to be used in smaller projects instead (Hwang & Wu 2019, 18).

In the previous chapter, we looked at women's educational attainment in Taiwan. What we found out was that the gender gap has virtually vanished from most levels of education, with very few exceptions. Women's literacy rate is also equivalent to the men's in most age groups. This matters as education has been linked to increasing political participation in the past (Verba & Nie 1972; Verba et al. 1995; Lewis-Beck et al. 2009). Access to higher

education also helps women gain more skills, opportunities and achieve independence (Clark & Clark 2018, 99). Looking at data regarding elected legislators and previous presidential candidates, we see a preference for candidates with higher education. Since 2001, more than 90% of elected legislators have received at least a bachelor's degree. As for the presidential elections, from 1996 – 2016, there was not a single candidate without a university degree (CEC 2020).

Education is, however, not the single deciding factor for higher political participation. Other countries in the world that have a high percentage of women attending higher education do not have a particularly high number of female legislators, and vice versa. For example, as of 2020, 45.5% of students enrolled in universities in Japan were women (The Japan Times 2020). Despite this, their percentage of female legislators remains way below the global average. The use of gender quotas is also not the only factor at play, as in this chapter, we discussed how female candidates continue to perform well and be elected even in races without reserved seats. Moreover, in a previous chapter, I mentioned South Korea, which uses gender quotas as well, but does not have above 20% of female legislators ("Monthly Ranking of Women in National Parliaments" n.d.).

Another factor that can affect women's political participation is democracy. Researchers Paxton, Hughes, and Painter (2010, 46) state: ". . . we found that democracy, although it does not influence the level of women's political representation in the earliest period, does influence the growth of women's political representation over time." The transition to democracy presents people with a chance to change and challenge the traditional structures. This is supported by a study by Viterna and Fallon (2008, 685-686), which found that women's movements play a key role in helping increase women's representation during democratic transitions. We see this play out in Taiwan, where the women's movement emerged more than 15 years before democratization and had time to develop its groups and connections. After the lifting of martial law in 1987, many more organizations were formed – Feminist Studies Association, Warm Life Association, etc. (Clark & Clark 2018, 106). In the following years, these groups focused on different gender concerns, including legal reforms for gender equality. Indeed, it seems the women's movement was able to take advantage of the reforms and insert women's issues into the agenda.

The women's movement in Taiwan also worked to combat patriarchal culture and traditional beliefs. Previously I mentioned the remaining Confucian beliefs in Taiwan, which dictate traditional gender roles for men and women. It might seem that Confucian values are in turn inherently putting women at a disadvantage. This is, however, challenged by the work of Robert Weller (1999), who presents a broader view. According to him, Confucianism helped women create reliable connections as they played a leading role in many different social groups. In modern times, this resulted in women taking part in conventional political groups (HUF), charitable groups, and smaller businesses. However, these women's groups were not always feminist. In fact, one of the most popular ones in the 1990s (Compassionate Relief Merit Society) pushed traditional religious values (Clark & Clark 2018, 107-108).

In the previous chapter, I also discussed women's economic situation, specifically their participation in the labor force and the gender pay gap. We found out that Taiwan is keeping up with the global average in terms of women's employment. Looking at wealthy democratic countries, we see the increase of women in the labor force correlate with the increase in women's political representation. Researchers Iversen and Rosenbluth (2008, 492-493) conclude that this is consistent with demand-side and supply-side theories, which I have mentioned in part 2.1. The involvement of women in the labor force can change general attitudes and prejudice people have towards women (demand-side) while also helping women gain experience and market skills (supply-side). However, they also mention that this correlation fails to consider the international variations in women's political participation, meaning that in some countries, this correlation is much stronger than in others.

Considering what I mentioned above, it is clear that one single indicator cannot be the sole reason for increasing women's political participation. Therefore, I argue that the reason for Taiwan's high female political participation is a combination of the factors mentioned above and the historical context. Education, employment, democratization, etc., all play a role in women's political participation, with gender quotas arguably playing one of the most important roles as they can facilitate higher participation through the Constitution. Taiwan's unique situation is proof of this. They inherited quotas from the R.O.C. Constitution in the 1950s, however, the number of reserved seats was not high enough. Combined with lower levels of education and employment and not being an industrialized country yet, women's political participation did reach above the number of reserved seats. As Taiwan started to

industrialize and the authoritarian rule became more lax, the women's movement emerged in the 1970s.

Along with the women's movement, increasing access to education and employment gave women an opportunity to better their social standing. Access to education became common, and due to the economic boom, more and more women started working in the third sector instead of being farmers. With the end of the martial law and democratization reforms, the women's movement took this as an opportunity to lobby behind gender equality laws and reforms. The new competitive environment pushed the two major parties, DPP and KMT, to adopt candidate party quotas to try to appeal to as many voters as they could. Therefore, more women started to break into the political sphere. This, in turn, inherently raised women's political participation even more. From the demand side, we see issues like discrimination because people view decision-making as a masculine activity, and there is a lack of data regarding women's political skills. Taiwan raising their quotas to 25% seemed to solve the demand-side issues at least partially, as people got to see the skills of female politicians, and it broke the stereotype of it being a man's job. The issues on the supply side were solved by Taiwan's focus on equal education and employment opportunities – compulsory education, the Gender Equity Education Act, the Act of Gender Equality in Employment, etc.

## 5.3 Conclusion

To conclude this chapter, women's political participation has increased a lot since 1990. Taiwan now stands in first place among other East Asian countries as the country with the most female legislators. Improvements can be seen in different positions as well, with Taiwan even electing a female president in 2016. Overall, Taiwan has achieved female representation in politics that most countries in the world have not, placing it 18th in worldwide statistics. In the second part of this chapter, I present different factors that have been linked to increasing political participation. We look at how Taiwan fares in each one of them and how they affected women in politics. These include education, employment, democratization, Confucian values, and gender quotas. I argue that all of these things combined influenced the increase of women's political participation, with gender quotas arguably playing the most significant role.

# CONCLUSION

The topic of this thesis was women's political participation in Taiwan starting from 1990 to 2020. The first goal of my thesis was to show and analyze this development. Additionally, I also wanted to try to explain what factors contributed to this development. Overall, these goals were achieved. In conclusion, this thesis concludes that there has been a significant increase in women's political participation in both national and local politics. As for the second goal, I have explored multiple factors such as education, employment, democratization, the women's movement, etc. However, I do feel like additional research into other factors, like healthcare or international involvement, would be beneficial.

The first part of my thesis gave a theoretical background on global women's rights movements and trends in recent politics in relation to gender equality. It also delved into issues women face when entering the political sphere. This part found that the UN's Decade for Women was a crucial moment in getting women's issues into the global spotlight. Governments attending the conference in Beijing in 1995 agreed to strive for balanced power between men and women in decision-making roles. The barriers to women's political participation discussed in this part were discriminatory laws, low access to education and healthcare, and the effects of poverty. Additionally, strategies for raising women's involvement in politics were also explored, with a focus on gender quotas as the most used strategy worldwide.

The second part of my thesis was a case study of Taiwan and the development of women's participation in national-level politics, from the year 1990 to 2020. This part looked at the history of Taiwan to provide the context in which Taiwan developed into a democratic country. It also discussed the position of women in Taiwanese society, taking a closer look at key factors such as employment and education. In conclusion, Taiwan has made notable progress in narrowing down the gender gap in education, which was most noticeable in Master's and Ph.D. program students. During the 30 years, the gap has narrowed from women making up 25.4% of Master program students in 1990 to 46.6% in 2020. Similarly, the percentage of female Ph.D. program students has grown from 16% in 1990 to 35.1% in 2020. In terms of employment, Taiwan has increased women's participation in the labor force and narrowed the gender pay gap. Women's labor force participation rate was 44.5% in 1990, and by 2020 it grew to 51.4%. In the final chapter, I connect the theory from the first part

with Taiwan's specific situation to analyze why Taiwan was able to raise the percentage of women in their politics successfully.

In conclusion, women's political participation has increased a lot since 1990. The percentage of female legislators has grown from 14% in 1998 to 41.6% in 2020. Similarly, the percentage of female councilors increased from 16.9% to 32.1%, and the percentage of female mayors rose from 13% to 37.5%. Taiwan now stands in first place among other East Asian countries as the country with the most female legislators. I found that multiple factors contributed to raising the political participation of women, and there is not just one deciding factor. Moreover, the specific historical context and development of Taiwan's women's movement in the 1970s played a key role. Specifically, I mention gender quotas, education level, raising women's employment, democratization, and political competition, as I believe these collectively helped increase women's political participation. This is supported by other research studies done on the topic of raising political participation.

# RESUMÉ

Tato bakalářská práce si klade za cíl představit situaci ohledně zapojení žen do Tchajwanské politiky. Zaměřuje se na dobu třiceti let od roku 1990 do roku 2020, jelikož v této době začaly na Tchaj-wanu svobodné demokratické volby. Cílem práce je zanalyzovat data z tohoto období a zjistit, jak se politická participace žen změnila. Druhým cílem práce je se pokusit zjistit, které faktory tento vývoj ovlivnily. Při psaní práce používám jak primární, tak sekundární zdroje. Primární zdroje zahrnují údaje a statistiky od vlády Čínské republiky. Sekundární zdroje zahrnují akademické práce a výzkumy na různá témata, jako feminismus, ženské hnutí, historie Tchaj-wanu atd. Údaje z primárních zdrojů potvrzují, že za posledních 30 let narostl počet zvolených žen ve státních i komunálních volbách. Tato práce dochází k závěru, že politickou participaci žen ovlivnilo několik faktorů najednou, jako např. genderové kvóty, vzdělání, zaměstnanost, demokratizace atd.

**Klíčová slova**: ženské hnutí, Čínská republika (Tchaj-wan), politika, genderové kvóty, zapojení žen do politiky

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