

## RESEARCH

# Sexism in Mainland China and Taiwan: A Social Experimental Study

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*This study compares gender discrimination or sexism in mainland China and Taiwan by means of a social experiment. Mainland China, with its radical egalitarian socialist policies implemented in a centrally planned economy and during the Cultural Revolution, serves as the treatment group in this social experiment. Taiwan, with its conventional path of economic modernisation, political liberalisation and importation of post-material values, is set as the control group. Using the Sixth Wave World Values Surveys, this study finds a higher level of explicit sexism in mainland China than in Taiwan due to China's post-Mao market reform. Interestingly, Taiwan shows a stronger effect of hidden sexism than China. China's low level of hidden sexism could be attributed to its radical social and economic egalitarian policies from the 1950s to the 1970s. The article concludes by suggesting that while democracy is capable of promoting postmodern values such as feminism, it is less effective in eliminating hidden sexism, and that government policy is imperative to mitigating the negative effect of market capitalism on gender equality.*

At the end of the week-long 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) which began on 18 October 2017, China unveiled its new seven-member Politburo Standing Committee—the most powerful group in the Chinese leadership—that is entirely made up of men, and the absence of women in the committee again captured the eyes of the world. In the meantime, Tsai Ing-wen, who is the chairwoman of the ruling Democratic Progressive Party in Taiwan, has been Taiwan's first female president since 2016. International media highlighted the sharp contrast at the leadership level and the low proportion of female delegates (4.9 per cent in 2017) in the CPC Central Committee, and noted that China is still far from being a country that is “friendly to women”.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, BBC News, *The New York Times* and

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<sup>1</sup> Megha Rajagopalan, “Oh Look, China's Another Country That's Not Promoting Any Women”, *BuzzFeed News*, 19 October 2017, at <[https://www.buzzfeed.com/meghara/china-has-a-glass-ceiling-too-and-heres-why-it-wont-be?utm\\_term=.odn62DWVoY#.yhOPe0xDWN](https://www.buzzfeed.com/meghara/china-has-a-glass-ceiling-too-and-heres-why-it-wont-be?utm_term=.odn62DWVoY#.yhOPe0xDWN)> [29 March 2020].

other Western liberal media also reported the under-representation of women and male chauvinism in communist China.<sup>2</sup>

The truth, however, is more complex. This study compares public perceptions of gender equality in mainland China and Taiwan, and the role of women in the respective societies. The term sexism describes a public attitude that considers men as more capable than women, and that men should thus be treated with priority in social, economic and political lives. Sexism is often used interchangeably with other concepts such as gender bias, gender discrimination, male preference and gender stereotypes. Regardless of the specific terminology used, this study aims to demonstrate how women are viewed differently from men, and how such attitudes are related to one's political attitude and public policy preferences.

## SEXISM AND POLITICS

Sexism originated in human societies at the primitive stage of economic activities when men played a more dominant role in production than women, in accumulation of wealth, in controlling family assets, and in acquiring social and political powers outside the family. However, traditional gender roles experienced a significant change during economic modernisation and technological development when machines and later robots replaced human muscles as the main source of productivity. Hence muscle power no longer dominates wealth accumulation and men gradually lost their traditional advantage during this process.

Another consequence of economic modernisation is the rapid improvement of living standards. With increased wealth, families have more resources to invest in their children's education, boys and girls alike, resulting in greater opportunities of equal education for women in society. Improvement in female education further promoted female labour force participation and gender equality in income. Economic equality further strengthened women's position in family and government decision-making, as well as their voice in society.<sup>3</sup>

Market capitalism, as a driving force of economic development and modernisation, also created a spillover effect into social and political equality for women. As capitalism encourages individual property rights, economic freedom and market competition, these principles can be translated into protecting individual social and political rights, guaranteeing political freedom and encouraging political competition by various social groups. Therefore, democracy exists side by side with market capitalism.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Reality Check, "Reality Check: Does China's Communist Party Have a Woman Problem?", BBC News, 25 October 2017, at <<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-41652487>> [10 July 2020]; "As China Prepares for New Top Leaders, Women Are Still Shut Out", *The New York Times*, 16 July 2017, at <<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/16/world/asia/china-women-communist-party.html>> [6 April 2020]; "In Communist China, it's a Man's World at the Top", Yahoo News, 23 October 2017, at <<https://www.yahoo.com/news/communist-china-mans-world-top-071847501.html>> [6 April 2020].

<sup>3</sup> Jane Fishburne Collier, *Marriage and Inequality in Classless Societies* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988); Susan Okin, *Justice, Gender, and the Family* (New York: Basic Books, 1989).

<sup>4</sup> Milton Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1962).

A liberal democratic political system could benefit women in several specific ways. First, in a democratic system with universal suffrage, women enjoy equal say in selecting political leaders, while in many traditional societies, only men had the right to vote. Second, social and political pluralism in a democratic society further encourages women to organise themselves and voice their opinions through multiple channels such as contacting elected officials and non-governmental organisations. Third, a well-established legal system in a democratic environment protects women's rights and treats individuals equally before the law, regardless of one's gender, religion and class. Fourth, sustained economic modernisation and democratisation together created a postmodern political culture in most industrialised societies. Women's status had improved in postmodern political culture with the promotion of individualism, self-expression, feminism, among others,<sup>5</sup> which Inglehart describes as "post-materialist values".<sup>6</sup>

Although women's status has thus improved, sexism has not disappeared completely in society because of inertia as a social norm.<sup>7</sup> For example, women did not gain the right to vote in the United States until 1920, even though the country had already undergone significant industrialisation and democratisation. Studies have shown that sexism still plays a significant role in many societies.<sup>8</sup>

Early studies highlighted institutional and structural exclusions as a critical impediment for women candidates in democratic elections.<sup>9</sup> Other scholars also identified a broad cultural explanation for disadvantages for women in politics. For example, Fowlkes, Perkins and Rinehart uncovered the notion of women who serve in the positions of political power as an "anathema" to most public perception,<sup>10</sup> because traditional gender roles (that women belonged to the family) had been predominantly instilled as norms in most societies.

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<sup>5</sup> R. Darcy, Susan Welch and Janet Clark, *Women, Elections, and Representation* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1994).

<sup>6</sup> Ronald Inglehart, *Modernization and Postmodernization: Cultural, Economic, and Political Change in 43 Societies* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997).

<sup>7</sup> Pamela J. Conover and Virginia Gray, *Feminism and the New Right: Conflict over the American Family* (New York: Praeger, 1983).

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, Deborah Alexander and Kristil Andersen, "Gender as a Factor in the Attributions of Leadership Traits", *Political Research Quarterly* 46, no. 3 (1993): 527–45; Janet Flammang, *Women's Political Voice: How Women are Transforming the Practice and Study of Politics* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1997); David Niven, "Party Elites and Women Candidates: The Shape of Bias", *Women and Politics* 19, no. 2 (1998): 57–80.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, Irene Diamond, *Sex Roles in the Statehouse* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1977); Marianne Githens and Jewel L. Prestage, *A Portrait of Marginality: The Political Behavior of the American Woman* (New York: Longman, 1977); Wilma Rule, "Why Women Don't Run: The Critical Contextual Factors in Women's Legislative Recruitment", *Western Political Quarterly* 34, no. 1 (1981): 60–77; Susan Welch, "Recruitment of Women to Public Office", *Western Political Quarterly* 31, no. 3 (1978): 372–80; Donley Studlar and Susan Welch, "Multi-member Districts and the Representation of Women: Evidence from Britain and the United States", *Journal of Politics* 52, no. 2 (1990): 391–412; Susan Welch and Albert Karnig, "Correlates of Female Office Holding in City Politics", *Journal of Politics* 41, no. 2 (May 1979): 478–91.

<sup>10</sup> Diane Fowlkes, Jerry Perkins and Sue Tolleson Rinehart, "Gender Roles and Party Roles", *The American Political Science Review* 73, no. 3 (1979): 772–80.

Mayer and Schmidt have verified that politics carries a gender stereotype as most people view it as a male sphere, for example in the United States, Mexico, Japan and China.<sup>11</sup> Coffé concluded through a study conducted in the United Kingdom that women were more likely to be interested in local politics while men were more interested in national politics.<sup>12</sup> Fox and Lawless have shown that in the United States, women saw themselves as less qualified to run for office than men.<sup>13</sup> Other scholars also found that compared to men, women were typically perceived to be less ambitious to hold high-level elective office.<sup>14</sup>

Other studies have found significant gender stereotypes among voters in liberal democracies. Based on the early studies that utilised experimental designs,<sup>15</sup> recent scholars found further stereotypes between men and women.<sup>16</sup> They discovered that

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<sup>11</sup> Jeremy D. Mayer and Heather M. Schmidt, "Gendered Political Socialization in Four Contexts: Political Interest and Values among Junior High School Students in China, Japan, Mexico, and the United States", *The Social Science Journal* 41, no. 3 (2004): 393–407.

<sup>12</sup> Hilde Coffé, "Women Stay Local, Men Go National and Global? Gender Differences in Political Interest", *Sex Roles* 69, no. 5–6 (2013): 323–38.

<sup>13</sup> Richard L. Fox and Jennifer L. Lawless, "Gender Perceptions and Political Candidacies: A Central Barrier to Women's Equality in Electoral Politics", *American Journal of Political Science* 55, no. 1 (2010): 59–73.

<sup>14</sup> See, for example, Timothy Bledsoe and Mary Herring, "Victims of Circumstances: Women in Pursuit of Political Office", *American Political Science Review* 84, no. 1 (1990): 213–23; Susan J. Carroll, *Women as Candidates in American Politics*, 2nd ed. (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1994); Richard L. Fox, Jennifer L. Lawless and Courtney Feeley, "Gender and the Decision to Run for Office", *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 26, no. 3 (2001): 411–35.

<sup>15</sup> See, for example, Virginia Sapiro, "If U.S. Senator Baker were a Woman: An Experimental Study of Candidate Images", *Political Psychology* 3, no. 1–2 (1982): 61–83; Kim Fridkin Kahn, "Does Gender Make a Difference? An Experimental Examination of Sex Stereotypes and Press Patterns in Statewide Campaigns", *American Journal of Political Science* 38, no. 1 (1994): 162–95; Mark S. Leeper, "The Impact of Prejudice on Female Candidates: An Experimental Look at Voter Inference", *American Politics Quarterly* 19, no. 2 (1991): 248–61; Richard E. Matland, "Putting Scandinavian Equality to the Test: An Experimental Evaluation of Gender Stereotyping of Political Candidates in a Sample of Norwegian Voters", *British Journal of Political Science* 24, no. 2 (1994): 273–92; Shirley Miller Rosenwasser and Norma G. Dean, "Gender Role and Political Office: Effects of Perceived Masculinity/Femininity of Candidate and Political Office", *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 13, no. 1 (1989): 77–85.

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, Kim Fridkin and Patrick J. Kenney, "The Role of Gender Stereotypes in U.S. Senate Campaigns", *Politics & Gender* 5, no. 3 (2009): 301–24; Kim Fridkin, Patrick Kenney and Gina Serignese Woodall, "Bad for Men, Better for Women: The Impact of Stereotypes during Negative Campaigns", *Political Behavior* 31, no. 1 (2009): 53–78; Danny Hayes, "When Gender and Party Collide: Stereotyping in Candidate Trait Attribution", *Politics & Gender* 7, no. 2 (2011): 133–65; Jeffrey W. Koch, "Do Citizens Apply Gender Stereotypes to Infer Candidates' Ideological Orientations?", *Journal of Politics* 62, no. 2 (2000): 414–29; Jeffrey W. Koch, "Gender Stereotypes and Citizens' Impression of House Candidates' Ideological Orientations", *American Journal of Political Science* 46, no. 2 (2002): 453–62; David Paul and Jessi L. Smith, "Subtle Sexism? Examining Vote Preferences when Women Run Against Men for the Presidency", *Journal of Women, Politics, & Policy* 29, no. 4 (2008): 451–76; Kira Sanbonmatsu, "Gender Stereotypes and Vote Choice", *American Journal of Political Science* 46, no. 1 (2002): 20–34; Kira Sanbonmatsu and Kathleen Dolan, "Do Gender Stereotypes Transcend Party?", *Political Research Quarterly* 62, no. 3 (2009): 485–94; Nicholas J.G. Winter, "Masculine Republicans and Feminine Democrats: Gender and Americans' Explicit and Implicit Images of the Political Parties", *Political Behavior* 32 (2010): 587–618.

men are always viewed as more competent, assertive, and having stronger leadership skills and greater ability to handle crises. These so-called masculine traits are evaluated to be more important in politics than feminine traits, such as compassion, honesty, tolerance and a “people-oriented” personality.<sup>17</sup> In the words of Raewyn Connell, “public politics on almost any definition is men’s politics”.<sup>18</sup>

Moreover, people usually transfer their stereotypical expectations about men and women to the capability of male and female candidates in dealing with different kind of policies.<sup>19</sup> Dolan and Lynch have shown that women were assumed to be more competent in dealing with “women’s issues”,<sup>20</sup> such as childcare, education, poverty, health care and environmental protection, while men were thought to be more effective in the areas of economic development, military, taxes and agriculture, which were called “men’s issues”.<sup>21</sup>

Some scholars saw the stereotype as a double-edged sword. For example, King and Matland have found that gender stereotypes can both either hurt or help woman candidates.<sup>22</sup> Others, however, have demonstrated that because of the interchangeability of masculine values and political values, gender stereotyping has always played a negative role when women run for elective offices.<sup>23</sup>

In sum, existing studies have shown that while women’s economic, social and political positions improved under modernisation and democratisation, which in their sustenance created a postmodern political culture that enables women to play a more active role in economic, social and political lives, sexism exists and has persisted in people’s attitude and behaviour, and is institutionalised, thus creating structural barriers

<sup>17</sup> Lindsey Meeks and David Domke, “When Politics is a Woman’s Game: Party and Gender Ownership in Woman-Versus-Woman Elections”, *Communication Research* 43, no. 7 (2016): 895–921.

<sup>18</sup> Raewyn W. Connell, *Masculinities* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005), p. 204.

<sup>19</sup> Kathleen Dolan, *Voting for Women: How the Public Evaluates Women Candidates* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2004); Jennifer Lawless, “Women, War, and Winning Elections: Gender Stereotyping in the Post-September 11th Era”, *Political Research Quarterly* 57, no. 3 (2004): 479–90.

<sup>20</sup> Kathleen Dolan and Timothy Lynch, “It Takes a Survey: Understanding Gender Stereotypes, Abstract Attitudes, and Voting for Women Candidates”, *American Politics Research* 42, no. 4 (2014): 656–76.

<sup>21</sup> See Clyde Brown, Neil Heighberger and Peter Shocket, “Gender-based Differences in Perceptions of Male and Female City Council Candidates”, *Women & Politics* 13, no. 1 (1993): 1–17; Leonie Huddy and Nayda Terkildsen, “Gender Stereotypes and the Perception of Male and Female Candidates”, *American Journal of Political Science* 37, no. 1 (1993): 119–47; Jeffrey W. Koch, “Candidate Gender and Assessments of Women Candidates”, *Social Science Quarterly* 80, no. 1 (1997): 84–96.

<sup>22</sup> David King and Richard Matland, “Sex and the Grand Old Party: An Experimental Investigation of the Effect of Candidate Sex on Support for a Republican Candidate”, *American Politics Research* 31, no. 6 (2003): 595–612.

<sup>23</sup> Maria Braden, *Women Politicians and the Media* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1996); Paul Herrnson, J. Celeste Lay and Atiya Kay Stokes, “Women Running ‘As Women’: Candidate Gender, Campaign Issues, and Voter-Targeting Strategies”, *The Journal of Politics* 65, no. 1 (2003): 244–55; Leonie Huddy and Nayda Terkildsen, “The Consequences of Gender Stereotypes for Women Candidates at Different Levels and Types of Offices”, *Political Research Quarterly* 46, no. 3 (1993): 503–25; Richard L. Fox and Zoe M. Oxley, “Gender Stereotyping in State Executive Elections: Candidate Selection and Success”, *The Journal of Politics* 65, no. 3 (2003): 833–50.

for gender equality. The next section discusses and compares the societies of mainland China and Taiwan which are culturally similar but politically distinctive.

## SEXISM IN MAINLAND CHINA AND TAIWAN

This study compares sexism in mainland China with Taiwan. The two societies in recent years experienced very different economic and political conditions. Taiwan's experience echoes most of the industrialised democracies with market capitalism, economic modernisation, and political democratisation from the 1960s to the 1990s, while mainland China adopted radical social experiments, including the centrally planned economic model in the 1950s, an egalitarian social movement in the 1960s, and market decentralisation and rapid economic growth since the late 1970s.<sup>24</sup> This study aims to explore the effect of China's social experiments on sexism through a comparative perspective to Taiwan, which resembles many post-industrial societies.

Prior to examining the differences between Taiwan and mainland China, it is necessary to briefly describe their cultural similarities. Historically, they share the same Confucian tradition. Confucian values, which originated in ancient China, were first brought to Taiwan by the mainland Chinese immigrants in the early 17th century. Although Confucian culture was never treated as a political ideology in Taiwan, "its legacy as a way of life" had impacted greatly public perceptions.<sup>25</sup> Several empirical studies support this claim.<sup>26</sup> Citing several social surveys conducted in the People's Republic of China and Taiwan, Shi Tianjian found a strong hierarchical orientation in both societies. Despite the fact that many respondents in Taiwan had been under democratic political institutions for decades, they still perceived their relationship with the authorities as hierarchical.<sup>27</sup> Obviously, both societies espouse the Confucian cultural tradition that stresses social hierarchy and systematically discriminates against women.<sup>28</sup>

Men had dominated the family in the Confucian tradition. They were entitled to inherit family property, carried the family name, and controlled family decision-making. Foot-binding was a practice encouraged among women to prevent their feet from growing normally so that they remained at home, not attending schools and

<sup>24</sup> Tang Wenfang, *Populist Authoritarianism: Chinese Political Culture and Regime Sustainability* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

<sup>25</sup> Shin Duh Chull, *Confucianism and Democratization in East Asia* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

<sup>26</sup> See as Lucien W. Pye, *Asian Power and Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1988); Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963); Ronald Inglehart, *Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Society* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990); Thomas Gold, "Civil Society in Taiwan: Confucian Dimension", in *Confucian Traditions in East Asian Modernity*, ed. Tu Weiming (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), pp. 244–58; Shi Tianjian, "Cultural Values and Political Trust: A Comparison of the People's Republic of China and Taiwan", *Comparative Politics* 33 no. 4 (2001): 401–19; Shi Tianjian, *The Cultural Logic of Politics in Mainland China and Taiwan* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

<sup>27</sup> Shi, "Cultural Values and Political Trust".

<sup>28</sup> Shin, *Confucianism and Democratization in East Asia*.

joining the workforce.<sup>29</sup> Women, who chose not to remarry when they became widowed, were praised by the government during the Qing dynasty and had their names publicly displayed as a commendation for their moral integrity.<sup>30</sup> Child marriage was another discriminatory practice against women. Young girls were sold and forced to work in their future husbands' family until such time that they became old enough to marry into the family.<sup>31</sup>

Gender bias and male superiority were prevalent in education in traditional China. Women were taught at a very young age to regard themselves as second-class citizens, and to always show obedience to their male masters.<sup>32</sup> Women were supposed to abide by the "three obediences and four virtues" (*sancong side*). The "three obediences" include obeying her father before marriage, her husband while being married and her son in widowhood. The four virtues required of women were her fidelity, physical charm, modesty in speech and needlework skills.<sup>33</sup>

Taiwan and mainland China, while sharing the same cultural tradition, went their separate ways in development in the early 20th century.<sup>34</sup> In 1949, the Nationalist Party (Guomindang or Kuomintang [KMT]) was defeated by the Communist Party, retreated from the Mainland to Taiwan and continued its rule as the Republic of China. Operating in a market capitalist environment, Taiwan's economy achieved rapid growth in the 1960s and 1970s, and became one of the four Asian dragons, alongside Singapore, South Korea and Hong Kong. In the early 1990s, Taiwan attained US\$10,000 in annual per capita gross domestic product (GDP), while China was still lagging at below US\$2,000 in per capita GDP.<sup>35</sup>

In the mid 1980s, Taiwan began its political liberalisation process. The single-party authoritarian political system gradually gave way to a lively multiparty political

<sup>29</sup> Patricia B. Ebrey, "Women, Marriage, and the Family in Chinese History", in *Heritage of China: Contemporary Perspectives on Chinese Civilization*, ed. Paul Ropp (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1990); Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985); Hill Gates, "The Commoditization of Chinese Women", *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 14, no. 4 (1989): 799–832.

<sup>30</sup> Linda L. Johnson, "Women's History in Cross-cultural Perspective", *Women's Studies Quarterly* 16, no. 1–2 (1988): 74–86; Wang Chuanman, "On Variations in Huizhou Women's Chastity Behaviors during the Ming and Qing Dynasties", *Chinese Studies in History* 45, no. 4 (2012): 43–57.

<sup>31</sup> Wang Zheng, *Bainian Zhongguo nüquan sichao yanjiu (Chinese Feminist Thought in the 20th Century)* (Shanghai: Fudan University Press, 2005).

<sup>32</sup> Johnson, "Women's History in Cross-Cultural Perspective".

<sup>33</sup> Rodney Taylor, *Confucianism* (Philadelphia, PA: Chelsea House Press, 2004).

<sup>34</sup> Martin King Whyte and William L. Parish, *Urban Life in Contemporary China* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1984); Tang Wenfang and William L. Parish, *Chinese Urban Life under Reform* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Zheng Yongnian, *Tongwang daguo zhilu: Zhongguo de zhishi chongjian he wenming faxing (The Road to a Great Country: China's Knowledge Reconstruction and Civilisation Revival)* (Beijing: Dongfang Press, 2012).

<sup>35</sup> Angus Maddison, *The World Economy*, vol. 1 and 2 (Paris: Development Centre Studies, OECD Publishing, 2001 and 2003), at <[https://www.stat.berkeley.edu/~aldous/157/Papers/world\\_economy.pdf](https://www.stat.berkeley.edu/~aldous/157/Papers/world_economy.pdf)> [17 June 2017], p. 304.

competition. Since 2000 when the first non-KMT president was elected, Taiwan has witnessed the alternation of governments between the Nationalist Party and the Democratic Progressive Party. Accompanying Taiwan's democratisation was the introduction of post-materialist values and gender equality. Taiwan entered the post-industrial era characterised by values such as individualism, feminism, environmentalism and political scepticism that are similar to post-materialist values of liberal democracies.<sup>36</sup> In 2016, Taiwan welcomed its first female president.

The relationship between continuity and change in Taiwan lends an interesting contrast to that in China. While Taiwan had evidently undergone economic modernisation, political democratisation and post-materialist value change, such as the abolition of many traditional discriminatory practices against women like foot-binding, Taiwan remains a Confucian society and has never explicitly denounced Confucianism.<sup>37</sup> Hence, how the economic, social and political changes in Taiwan interact with its underlying traditional values would make an interesting study.

As discussed, Taiwan is expected to exhibit a low level of explicit sexism due to the influence from Western post-materialist values, but gender bias inherent in traditional Confucian values will likely affect Taiwanese people's political attitudes implicitly. In other words, ***the Taiwanese are expected to show weak explicit sexism but a relatively high level of hidden sexism.***

Mainland China, on the other hand, went through a distinctly different path to modernisation. In the 1950s following the Communist Party's successful attempt to establish the People's Republic of China, its leaders adopted the Soviet-style centrally planned economic system. From the 1960s to the 1970s, China launched the Cultural Revolution, a nationwide campaign to implement radical economic and social policies. Gender equality was among the many radical policies that were officially promoted, while Confucianism and traditional culture values were systematically denounced.<sup>38</sup> Women, particularly in urban areas, enjoyed equal access to education, which provided them with new opportunities to enter the labour force. The family planning policy, in controlling population growth, restricted women's childbearing, thus freeing them more time to receive education and pursue employment.<sup>39</sup> As a result, China had the highest rate of female labour force participation in the world in 2009, according to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics.<sup>40</sup> Women in state-owned organisations also enjoyed the same cradle-to-grave welfare benefits as men. By the late 1970s and early 1980s,

<sup>36</sup> Inglehart, *Modernization and Postmodernization*.

<sup>37</sup> Shi, *The Cultural Logic of Politics in Mainland China and Taiwan*; Shin Doh Chull, "Confucianism", *Encyclopedia of Quality of Life and Well-being Research* (New York: Springer, 2014).

<sup>38</sup> William L. Parish and Martin King Whyte, *Rural life in contemporary China* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1978); Whyte and Parish, *Urban life in contemporary China*.

<sup>39</sup> Tang and Parish, *Chinese Urban Life under Reform*; Esther Ngan-ling Chow and Catherine White Berheide, eds., *Women, the Family and Policy---A Global Perspective* (Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2004).

<sup>40</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Charting International Labor Comparisons*, US Department of Labor, 2011, at <<https://www.bls.gov/fls/chartbook/chartbook2011.pdf>> [16 June 2017].



women in China had attained higher levels of equality in education, employment, income and position in the traditional family than women in many other societies of similar or even higher levels of economic development.<sup>41</sup> Mainland China launched a large-scale social campaign aimed at “accelerated” social modernisation under the government’s gender equality policy, while it is still officially categorised as a low-income country by the World Bank.<sup>42</sup>

Since the late 1970s, mainland China had implemented market-oriented reforms to stimulate economic growth at the expense of radical social and economic egalitarianism. In many aspects of Chinese economic and social life, private entrepreneurship and market competition have replaced the state-sponsored affirmative action programmes. For instance, profit consideration had replaced central planning and became the driving force of an economic organisation’s success. Access to education became a privilege based on the highly competitive school entrance exams and family wealth. Job security is also no longer a guarantee and employment contracts are only renewable based on employees’ satisfactory performance. Companies openly avoided hiring women of childbearing age and forced women to retire early at 55 (men’s mandatory retirement age was and still is 60). Occupations have become gender oriented as increasingly more women are pushed into taking up “pink-collar” jobs, such as nurses, secretaries, kindergarten teachers and so on. Outright sexism is rampant as evident in the explicit requirements of women to fulfil certain good looks and height criteria in employment decisions.<sup>43</sup> In short, China retreated from its earlier socialist experiments of gender equality in the market reforms in the 1970s and women became victims in this process.<sup>44</sup>

As aforementioned, mainland China experienced two stages of development—first, from 1949 to 1978 under central planning and the social experiments of “accelerated” gender equality; and second, from 1978 to the present when market competition replaced the emphasis on social equality. As a result, due to the current emphasis on wealth accumulation, the Chinese may exhibit a louder expression of explicit sexism without much concern for political correctness. In the meantime, such explicit sexism may not impact strongly on how people view politics and policy issues with a gender lenses. In other word, *Mainlanders are expected to show stronger explicit sexism but weaker hidden sexism than Taiwanese.*

<sup>41</sup> Whyte and Parish, *Urban life in Contemporary China*; Barbara Nelson and Najma Chowdhury, *Women and Politics Worldwide* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994).

<sup>42</sup> Tang and Parish, *Chinese Urban Life under Reform*.

<sup>43</sup> Tong Xin and Liang Meng, “Nüduxuesheng jiuye guocheng zhongde xingbie qishi yanjiu” (Sexism in the Process of College Girls Finding Jobs) *Collection of Women’s Studies*, no. S2 (2006): 32–6.

<sup>44</sup> Guo Xiajuan, “Canyu bingfei lingdao: Gonggong zuzhi zhong nüxing de ‘sandi’ xunhuan jiqi yuanyin” (Participating But Not Leading: Women’s Under-representation in Government Leading Positions and its Constructive Deficiencies), *Gonggong xingzheng pinglun (Journal of Public Administration)*, no. 4 (2013): 50–81; Shi Fenglian, *Dangdai Zhongguo nüxing zhengzhi canyu yanjiu (Women’s Political Participation in Contemporary China)* (Jinan: Shandong University Press, 2011).

## DATA, MEASURES AND RESEARCH DESIGN

In many ways, Taiwan and mainland China are ideal cases for a comparative study of gender equality. Both societies share the same cultural tradition but underwent distinctive recent social and political changes. The availability of survey data from both societies also facilitates the study. This study used data from the Sixth Wave World Values Surveys. These surveys were conducted in 52 countries and regions between 2010 and 2014, including mainland China and Taiwan, using the same core questionnaire and relying on probability samples that were representative of the entire population in each society.<sup>45</sup> The Taiwanese survey drew a representative sample of 1,238 respondents and China's sample included 2,300 respondents representing the Mainland's population. Since the two surveys used representative samples and the same core questionnaire, they could be used to compare the two societies with greater confidence and accuracy instead of simply relying on anecdotal examples and case studies.

**Explicit sexism.** The following four statements from the Sixth Wave of the World Values Surveys were identified as measures of explicit sexism in Taiwan and mainland China:

- (1) On the whole, men make better political leaders than women do;
- (2) On the whole, men make better business executives than women do;
- (3) A university education is more important for a boy than for a girl;
- (4) When jobs are scarce, men should have more rights to a job than women.

For the first three questions, respondents could answer “strongly agree”, “agree”, “disagree” or “strongly disagree”. As for the fourth question, respondents could respond either “agree”, “neither” or “disagree”. Responses that agree with all of the aforementioned statements, which position men above women in importance and capability, indicate a high degree of explicit sexism; and responses in disagreement with the statements suggest a lower degree of explicit sexism. Besides comparing the statements individually, the four statements can be combined to construct *explicit sexism* as a single index in a factor analysis after imputing (estimating) the missing values, and then compare Taiwan and mainland China based on this unified measure.

**Individual characteristics.** Individual characteristics, including *gender*, *age*, *education*, *income* and *traditional values*, are examined to study their effects on sexism in both societies. Gender is treated as a binary variable (0=male and 1=female). Respondents are classified into five age groups, 18–29, 30–39, 40–49, 50–59 and 60 and above. Education is measured by the respondents' year of formal education. Income is divided into 10 categories in each society from low (1) to high (10) regardless the actual amount. The statement “Tradition is important to me to follow the customs handed down by my religion or family” measures the significance of traditional values. Responses to this statement are “very much like me”, “like me”, “somewhat like me”,

<sup>45</sup> See *WVS Wave 6* at <<http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSDocumentationWV6.jsp>> [8 April 2020].

“a little like me”, “not like me” and “not at all like me”. Agreement with the statement signals greater adherence to traditional values.

**Hidden sexism.** Hidden sexism is invisible on the surface, but it could result in gender-biased policy outcomes. Measuring hidden sexism is not as straightforward as measuring explicit sexism. One strategy is to select a few political issues that depict respondents’ political conservatism. In the second step, the aforementioned explicit sexism index will serve as an independent variable that may affect survey respondents’ political conservatism, while controlling for individual characteristics. Explicit sexism’s greater influence on political conservatism suggests a higher level of hidden sexism in that society.

Four variables in the Sixth Wave of the World Values Surveys were selected to represent political conservatism or authoritarian values:

- (i) **Socio-economic control:** It is more important to keep economic and social control than to promote a humane society in which ideas are more important than money (0–1);<sup>46</sup>
- (ii) **Respect for authority:** It is a good thing to have a greater respect for authority (“Yes”=1 and “No”=0);
- (iii) **Obeying rulers:** It is an essential characteristic of democracy for people to obey their rulers (1–10);
- (iv) **Military rule:** It is good for the military to govern our country (0=“very bad”; 1=“bad”; 2=“good”; 3=“very good”).

The missing values of the aforementioned four variables are imputed (estimated) and the four items are combined into a factor index, representing political conservatism. Appendix 1 shows the summary statistics of variables related to explicit sexism, political conservatism and their indices, and the individual-level control variables including gender, age, education, income and traditional values.

The following analysis (i) compares explicit sexism and the associated individual characteristics in China and Taiwan; and (ii) identifies hidden sexism by examining how explicit sexism affects political and policy issues related to political conservatism, while controlling for respondents’ demographic variables.

Overall, China’s radical socialist campaigns from the 1950s to the 1970s are taken as a treatment group in this nationwide experiment, while Taiwan serves as the control group that shares the same cultural origin as China but which followed the path of social development with similar value changes as most other post-industrial societies. In addition to a horizontal analysis with Taiwan, a historical comparison is also adopted to compare China’s gender equality in the radical social experiment period and post-Mao market reform period.

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<sup>46</sup> Socio-economic control is a combination of respondents’ preferences for economic stability and crime control over a humane society where ideas mean more than money. Respondents were given a score of “1” if they picked economic stability or crime control as the most important task in their societies, and “.5” if they selected these items as the second-most important. The two scores for each respondent were combined and divided by 1.5, resulting in a 0–1 scale of respondents’ preference for socio-economic control.

## EXPLICIT SEXISM

As discussed earlier, explicit sexism is measured by these four statements: “men make better political leaders”; “men make better business executives”; “college education should only be for boys”; and “men have more rights to a job”.

For each of the four dimensions, mainland China outranks Taiwan as being more sexist (see Table 1). For example, 47.9 per cent of mainland Chinese respondents agreed or strongly agreed that “men make better politicians”, but only 24.5 per cent of Taiwanese respondents agreed or strongly agreed. More mainland Chinese respondents (37.4 per cent) than Taiwanese respondents (25.6 per cent) thought men were better business executives. Similarly, 22 per cent of Chinese respondents agreed or strongly agreed that college education were only for boys, while only 12.3 per cent of Taiwanese respondents thought so. While 46.4 per cent of Taiwanese respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed that men should have more rights to work, only 37.5 per cent of mainland Chinese respondents did so.

TABLE 1  
EXPLICIT SEXISM IN MAINLAND CHINA AND TAIWAN (WEIGHTED %)

	Strongly disagree/disagree	Strongly agree/agree	Don't know	Total (%)	N
“Men make better political leaders” China	42.9	<b>47.9</b>	9.2	100	2,300
“Men make better political leaders” Taiwan	69.5	<b>24.5</b>	6.0	100	1,238
“Men have more rights to a job” China	<b>37.5</b>	38.0	24.5	100	2,300
“Men have more rights to a job” Taiwan	<b>46.4</b>	41.0	12.6	100	1,238
“Men make better business executives” China	51.4	<b>37.4</b>	11.2	100	2,300
“Men make better business executives” Taiwan	70.6	<b>25.6</b>	3.8	100	1,238
“College education should only be for boys” China	69.9	<b>22.0</b>	8.1	100	2,300
“College education should only be for boys” Taiwan	83.9	<b>12.3</b>	3.8	100	1,238

Source: Sixth Wave World Values Surveys 2010–2014.

Findings in Table 1 have corroborated the hypothesis of a higher level of explicit sexism in the Mainland than in Taiwan. As China undergoes economic liberalisation, market competition and rapid economic growth, social equality no longer takes high priority in addressing political correctness, as it did during the Cultural Revolution, the years of radical social movement. Instead, competition, performance, profitability and economic efficiency are keywords that have taken over in determining people’s attitude and behaviour. By contrast, Taiwanese respondents have demonstrated a clear pattern of postmodern thinking, seemingly the result of industrialisation, democratisation and the embrace of the post-materialist values including feminism.

Apart from comparing explicit sexism, a further examination is necessary of the type of individual characteristics which include gender, age, education, income and traditional values that have contributed to sexism in both societies. To do so, the four statements in Table 1 that measure explicit sexism were combined into a single factor index of “0” to “1” range, where “0” denotes sexism is absent and “1” indicates the maximum level of sexism.

A multivariate ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analysis was performed and regression coefficients interpreted (Table 2), whereby explicit sexism is the dependent variable, and gender, age, education, income and traditional values are independent variables. As expected, women in both Chinese and Taiwanese societies are less sexist than men, education leads to less likelihood of sexist attitudes, and traditional values result in a higher degree of sexist attitude, and in Taiwan, age is a contributing factor to gender bias as older respondents show greater sexism. Income plays no role in affecting sexism when other variables are controlled.

Comparing Taiwan and China yields some interesting contrasts between the two societies (Table 2). While women in both societies display a lower degree of sexism, such an effect is stronger in mainland China (coefficient=-.069) than in Taiwan (coefficient=-.044).<sup>47</sup> In other words, women in China show greater potential than women in Taiwan to play a more important role in reducing sexism. A possible explanation is that women in China experienced more radical political indoctrination in gender equality during China’s socialist past of “accelerated modernisation”, compared to Taiwanese women. Family planning in China may have further reinforced women’s sense of gender equality as, being in single-child families, girls were brought up to have the same career expectations as boys.<sup>48</sup> A higher level of gender equality in education and labour force participation in China may have further strengthened anti-sexist tendencies of mainland Chinese women.

Another interesting finding from Table 2 is the age effect in mainland China. While Taiwanese respondents in the older age groups are more sexist, a predicted pattern, such a pattern, however, does not exist in mainland China. In fact, the reverse is true in the Mainland in terms of age effect as the older age groups (50–59 and 60+) are interestingly less sexist than the younger groups (18–29, 30–39 and 40–49). Such age effect is particularly noticeable in the combined sample in Table 2 (see the rightmost column) in the interaction coefficients between the Mainland and various age groups. People of the 50 and older groups experienced the radical social and political campaigns of the Cultural Revolution in the 1960s and 1970s, and they were more exposed to China’s egalitarian ideology. The younger groups, on the other hand, grew up in the market environment and were less bothered by explicit sexism than their older counterparts.

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<sup>47</sup> The STATA 16’s seemingly unrelated estimation test (suest) indicates that the difference between the two coefficients is statistically significant at  $p < .0001$ .

<sup>48</sup> The authors are grateful to one of the anonymous reviewers for highlighting this fact.

TABLE 2  
EXPLICIT SEXISM IN CHINA AND TAIWAN: A MULTIVARIATE ORDINARY LEAST SQUARES (OLS) REGRESSION ANALYSIS

VARIABLES	Mainland China Sexism	Taiwan Sexism	Combined sample sexism
Female	<b>-0.0693***</b>	<b>-0.0443***</b>	-0.0437***
Age18–29 (comparison)			
Age 30–39	0.0206	0.0262*	0.0258
Age 40–49	0.0523***	0.0775***	0.0793***
Age 50–59	0.0275*	0.0757***	0.0777***
Age 60+	0.0178	0.118***	0.122***
Education (year)	-0.00432***	-0.00614***	-0.00499***
Income	-0.00361	-0.000159	-0.00254
Tradition	0.0419**	0.0465**	0.0437***
Mainland China			0.117***
Mainland* female			-0.0256*
Mainland* age18–29 (comparison)			
Mainland* age 30–39			-0.00622
Mainland* age 40–49			-0.0284
Mainland* age 50–59			<b>-0.0523**</b>
Mainland* age 60+			<b>-0.106***</b>
Constant	0.507***	0.395***	0.392***
Observations	1,824	1,132	2,956
R-squared	0.055	0.129	0.119

Notes: \*\*\* p<0.01; \*\* p<0.05; \* p<0.1

Source: Sixth Wave World Values Surveys 2010–2014.

The shifts in sexist attitudes towards women as manifested from the 1960s–70s period to the market reform era in the late 1970s and in different age groups suggest a deviating trend in explicit sexism in China. China achieved a high level of gender equality when it was subject to radical socialist policies in the 1960s–70s period. Such equality eroded under the market reforms, as reflected by an increase in sexism among the younger generations.

## HIDDEN SEXISM

This section examines the level of hidden sexism in China and Taiwan. As discussed earlier, four variables from the Sixth Wave World Values Surveys—support for socio-economic control; respect for authority; obeying rulers; and support for military rule—were chosen to represent political conservatism or authoritarian values. If explicit sexism has a significant effect on people's attitudes towards these four variables, then there is a greater possibility that government policies related to these areas would be dominated by men, and this may lead to the institutionalisation of sexism. In this study, such an effect of explicit sexism on political conservatism is defined as hidden sexism.

Table 3 presents the interaction effects between regions (mainland China and Taiwan) and explicit sexism. In models 1 to 5, support for socio-economic control,

respect for authority, obeying rulers, military rule and the conservatism index are the dependent variables examined against explicit sexism, region and the interaction between region and explicit sexism, while controlling for age, gender, education and income are maintained.

TABLE 3  
EFFECTS OF EXPLICIT SEXISM ON POLITICAL ATTITUDES  
(OLS COEFFICIENTS, COMBINED SAMPLES OF CHINA AND TAIWAN)

VARIABLES	(1) Socio-economic control	(2) Respect for authority	(3) Obeying rulers	(4) Military rule	(5) Political conservatism index
Explicit sexism	0.119**	0.433***	0.201***	0.206***	0.256***
Mainland	0.048*	0.378***	0.185***	0.0963***	0.189***
Mainland* explicit sexism	-0.151**	-0.416***	-0.191***	-0.177***	-0.241***
Constant	0.657***	0.328***	0.395***	0.292***	0.362***
Observations	2,915	2,915	2,915	2,915	2,915
R-squared	0.023	0.102	0.054	0.035	0.128

Notes: \*\*\* p<0.01; \*\* p<0.05; \* p<0.1

Socio-economic control is an index that measures respondents' preferences for economic stability and crime control over a humane society where ideas matter more than money. Region (China vs. Taiwan), age, gender, education and income are controlled but not shown in Table 3. See Appendix 2 for the full regression models.

Source: Sixth Wave World Values Surveys 2010–2014.

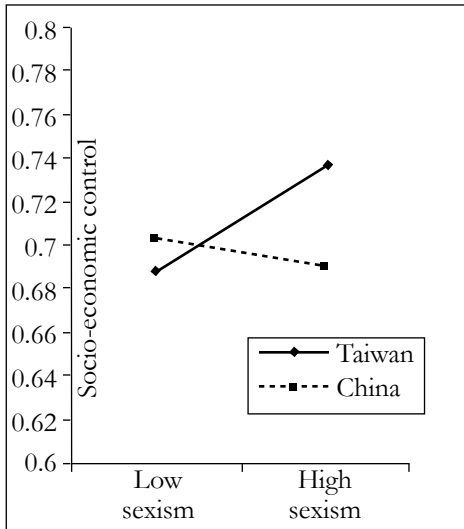
Figures 1 to 5 show graphically the impacts of the variables of explicit sexism on political conservatism in mainland China and Taiwan (based on Table 3).

Overall, as demonstrated in Figures 1 to 4, in Taiwan, the explicit sexism index has a significant and positive effect on each of the four statements. In other words, Taiwanese who have stronger sexist tendencies are the ones more likely to support socio-economic control, respect authority, obey rulers and support military rule. These are the expected effects as the four variables have been traditionally dominated by men in most societies. As shown in Figure 5, in Taiwan, explicit sexism also has a significant positive impact on the political conservatism index which combines the four variables. These findings confirm the existence of hidden sexism in Taiwan.

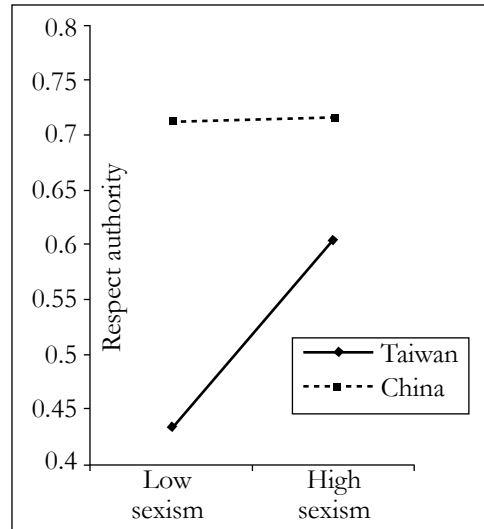
Also based on Figures 1 to 5, the results interpret an interesting and “surprising” finding for the case of mainland China, whereby the explicit sexism index does not have a significant effect on socio-economic control, respect for authority, obeying rulers and military rule. In other words, explicit sexism does not generate or result in political conservatism or authoritarian values in mainland China. Instead, in a separate analysis that is not shown in this article, respondents' education and income have more significant impacts on the four variables. That is, the higher the respondents' education, the lower is their support for the four variables. By contrast, the higher the respondents' income, the stronger is their support for political conservatism. The insignificant

influence of explicit sexism on political conservatism suggests that hidden sexism is less apparent in mainland China than in Taiwan.

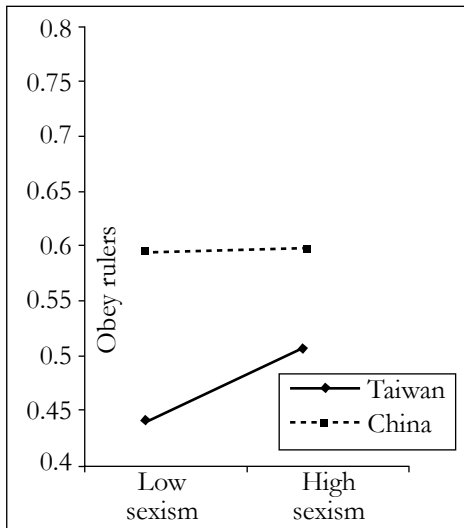
**Figure 1.** Socio-economic Control by Explicit Sexism (Interaction Term)



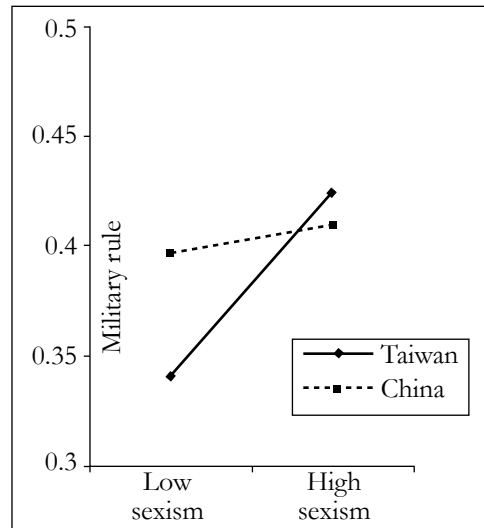
**Figure 2.** Respect for Authority by Explicit Sexism (Interaction Term)



**Figure 3.** Obeying Rulers by Explicit Sexism (Interactive Term)

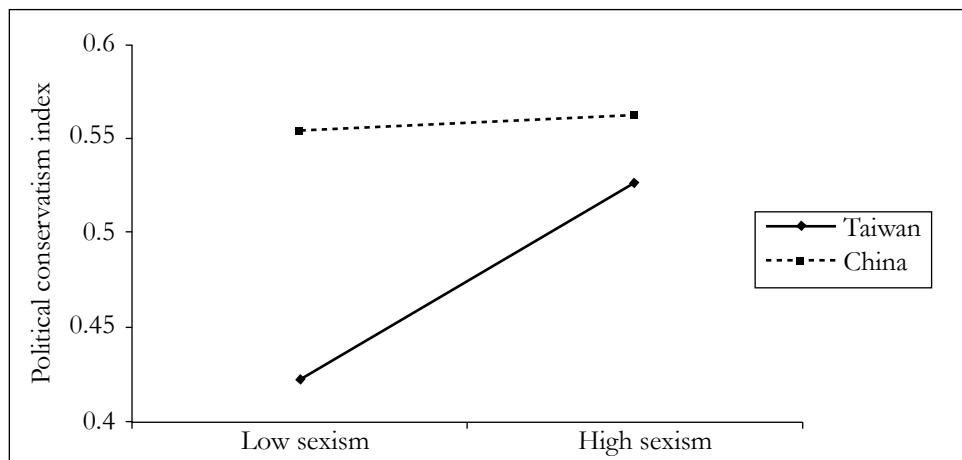


**Figure 4.** Military Rule by Explicit Sexism (Interaction Term)



Notes: Refer to Appendix 3 for further details.  
 Source: Sixth Wave World Values Surveys 2010–2014.



**Figure 5. Political Conservatism Index by Explicit Sexism (OLS Interaction Effect)**

*Notes:* Political conservatism index is the combined factor score of the four variables in Figures 1 to 4 (socio-economic control, respect authority, obey rulers and military rule). Refer to Appendix 3 for further details.

*Source:* Sixth Wave World Values Surveys 2010–2014.

## CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

This study, at the outset, had hypothesised that Taiwan exhibits weak explicit sexism but stronger hidden sexism in comparison to China. The findings provide empirical support for these hypotheses. China and Taiwan essentially have different political systems and ideologies, and their societies are shaped by different policies. Taiwan imported the Western political system and post-materialist values while implicitly adhering to Confucian tradition, which results in more political correctness, less explicit sexism, but perpetual hidden sexism. In the meantime, China under the CPC's rule explicitly rejected the traditional values of Confucianism during the Cultural Revolution but later imported market capitalism. Market competition replaced gender equality that underlies political correctness, and thus encouraged gender bias in public opinion. Nevertheless, such explicit sexism does not seem to contribute to political conservatism in mainland China. In this sense, this study finds little influence of hidden sexism in China.

The lack of hidden effects of sexism on political conservatism in China is not surprising because political conservatism in China is likely to suggest support for an ideological tradition of social egalitarianism from the radical Cultural Revolution. In this sense, sexism could play an opposite role as compared with other societies that have not experienced similar social experiments. In China, those who are politically conservative are those who benefited more from the socialist gender equality policy and who prefer to return to the good old days.

The key finding of this study is that China achieved its gender equality through radical egalitarian social policies during the Cultural Revolution, arguably the largest social experiment in human history, and not via the typical social development brought

about by industrialisation, modernisation, political liberalisation and post-materialism. While the Cultural Revolution, as a social experiment, led to tremendous political, economic and human costs in Chinese society, it nevertheless brought positive impacts in promoting gender equality. In addition, compared to Taiwan, China exhibits little or weak evidence of hidden sexism. This is also reflected in the stronger desire for gender equality among Chinese women and the older generations, who went through the “treatment” of the radical social experiment during the Cultural Revolution.

China’s embrace of market capitalism has resulted in great economic benefits. Yet the rise of explicit sexism during this process is alarming. The lesson to be learned in combating the negative impact of market capitalism on women’s position is that post-materialism alone, derived from economic modernisation and liberal democracy, cannot guarantee the elimination of sexism. Government regulation of gender equality needs to be enhanced, particularly as China becomes a middle-income society that will possess more resources to supplement any losses in economic efficiency that may be the result of increased regulations of protecting women’s rights.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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## APPENDICES

## Appendix 1 Summary Statistics for Variables in Tables 2 and 3, and Appendix 2

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Mainland	3,538	.6500848	.4770103	0	1
Female	3,538	.5141323	.4998709	0	1
Age	3,530	44.46346	15.81771	18	85
Age 18–29	3,530	.2135977	.4099041	0	1
Age 30–39	3,530	.1926346	.3944243	0	1
Age 40–49	3,530	.2056657	.4042445	0	1
Age 50–59	3,530	.1852691	.3885708	0	1
Age 60+	3,530	.2028329	.402166	0	1
Education	3,306	10.951	3.669891	3	16
Income	3,229	4.526788	1.801223	1	10
Tradition	3,538	.6208618	.2598881	0	1
Menleadr	3,229	.443481	.4968723	0	1
Menjob	2,806	.486814	.4999152	0	1
Menceo	3,202	.3725796	.483567	0	1
Univerboy	3,290	.2039514	.4029945	0	1
Sexism	3,410	.4399803	.1980257	0	1
Mainland * female	3,538	.3318259	.4709354	0	1
Mainland * age 18–29	3,530	.1320113	.338551	0	1
Mainland * age 30–39	3,530	.1339943	.3406945	0	1
Mainland * age 40–49	3,530	.1464589	.3536158	0	1
Mainland * age 50–59	3,530	.1130312	.3166757	0	1
Mainland * age 60+	3,530	.1260623	.3319666	0	1
Eco.& social control	3,408	.6822363	.2822926	0	1
Respect authority	3,408	.5659628	.4079986	0	1
Obey rulers	3,408	.5696887	.2869143	0	1
Army rule	3,408	.2878986	.2204669	0	1
Pol conservatism	3,408	.4718654	.188058	0	1
Mainland * sexism	3,410	.3017276	.2758198	0	1

## APPENDIX 2 Political Conservatism by Explicit Sexism (OLS Coefficients, Combined Samples of China and Taiwan)

VARIABLES	(1) Socioecon control	(2) Respect for authority	(3) Obeying ruler	(4) Military rule	(5) Political conservatism index
Sexism	0.119**	0.433***	0.201***	0.206***	0.256***
Age	0.00131***	0.000101	0.000963**	-0.000480	0.000218
Female	0.00483	0.00570	-0.00301	0.0109	0.00532
Education (Year)	-0.00759***	-0.00946***	-0.00359**	-0.00697***	-0.00681***
Income	0.00223	0.00618	0.00540*	-0.00209	0.00246
Mainland	0.0481*	0.378***	0.185***	0.0963***	0.189***
Mainland * sexism	-0.151**	-0.416***	-0.191***	-0.177***	-0.241***
Constant	0.657***	0.328***	0.395***	0.292***	0.362***
Observations	2,915	2,915	2,915	2,915	2,915
R-squared	0.023	0.102	0.054	0.035	0.128

Notes: \*\*\* p<0.01; \*\* p<0.05; \* p<0.1

Economic and social control is an index of respondents' preferences for economic stability and crime control over a humane society where ideas matter more than money.

Source: Sixth Wave World Values Surveys 2010–2014.

## APPENDIX 3 Computation of Individual Effects of Explicit Sexism in Mainland China and Taiwan in Figures 1-5

From Table 3, the individual effects of explicit sexism in mainland China and Taiwan on political conservatism can be calculated. For example, as shown in model 1:

Socio-economic control = .657 + .119 (explicit sexism) + .048 (mainland) – .151 (mainland\*explicit sexism) (Table 3, Model 1)

If mainland = 1 (Mainland), socio-economic control  
 = .657 + .119 (explicit sexism) + .048\*1 – .151 (1\*explicit sexism)  
 = .657 + .119 (explicit sexism) + .048 – .151 (explicit sexism)  
 = .70 – .03 (explicit sexism) (equation A1)

If mainland=0 (Taiwan), socio-economic control  
 = .657 + .119 (explicit sexism) + .048\*0 – .151 (0\*explicit sexism)  
 = .66 + .12 (explicit sexism) (equation A2)

In equation A1, explicit sexism shows a weak and negative effect in mainland China, but a strong and positive effect on socio-economic control in Taiwan in equation A2. These individual effects are shown more intuitively by drawing two regression lines in Figure 1.

Using the same methods, the separate effects of explicit sexism in China and Taiwan on the other three masculine variables (respect for authority, obeying rulers, military rule) and on the masculinity index can be calculated.

For respect for authority:

$$\text{China} = 0.71 + 0.01 (\text{explicit sexism}) (\text{equation B1})$$

$$\text{Taiwan} = 0.33 + 0.43 (\text{explicit sexism}) (\text{equation B2})$$

For obeying rulers:

$$\text{China} = 0.58 + 0.01 (\text{explicit sexism}) (\text{equation C1})$$

$$\text{Taiwan} = 0.39 + 0.2 (\text{explicit sexism}) (\text{equation C2})$$

For military rule:

$$\text{China} = 0.3 + 0.03 (\text{explicit sexism}) (\text{equation D1})$$

$$\text{Taiwan} = 0.29 + 0.21 (\text{explicit sexism}) (\text{equation D2})$$

For political conservatism index:

$$\text{China} = 0.55 + 0.02 (\text{explicit sexism}) (\text{equation E1})$$

$$\text{Taiwan} = 0.36 + 0.26 (\text{explicit sexism}) (\text{equation E2})$$

The information in the above equations allows us to draw the regression lines in Figures 1 (equations A1 and A2), 2 (equations B1 and B2), 3 (equations C1 and C2), 4 (equations D1 and D2) and 5 (equations E1 and E2).