

Differences in Gender-Role Attitudes between China and Taiwan

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Abstract

This study examines differences in gender-role attitudes between Taiwan and China using data from the 6th wave of the World Values Survey. The results show Taiwan, which began modernizing earlier, to exhibit more egalitarian gender attitudes than China in the domains of education, political leadership, and economic leadership. However, the mainland Chinese are more likely than the Taiwanese to approve of women working for pay, and less likely to feel that women should adopt a solely domestic role, whereas the Taiwanese are more likely than the Chinese to approve of women both working outside the home and staying at home. The results of a multinomial logit model demonstrate the gap in gender-role attitudes on both sides of the Taiwan Strait to be most pronounced in the oldest cohorts. The differing trajectories of the socioeconomic transformation in the two societies explain the differences in their gender-role attitudes.

Key words

gender-role attitudes, gender equality, generation, Taiwan, China

Introduction

Taiwan and mainland China both inherited a Confucian cultural heritage, but have experienced different political, social, and economic development and institutional arrangements over the past century. After a period of Japanese colonization, Taiwan transitioned from an authoritarian to a democratic regime while undergoing rapid industrialization, whereas China has remained an authoritarian socialist polity since the end of the communist revolution in 1949, and did not embark on socioeconomic reforms until the late 1970s. The distinct social and economic trajectories of the two societies have given rise to different gender relationships and values. The study reported herein investigated the impact of socioeconomic forces and cultural

traditions on differences in gender-role attitudes across the Taiwan Strait.

The two societies have pluses and minuses with regard to the progress they have made toward gender equality. For example, based on the UN's Gender Inequality Index (GII) for 2012, the Taiwanese government reports the country to have the second highest gender equality ranking in the world, higher than neighboring China, Japan, or South Korea (Liu, 2013).¹ Across the Strait, China's female labor participation rate was among the highest in the world during the Mao era, remained above 70% in the late 1980s and 1990s,² and the gender wage gap is remarkably small by international standards (Maurer-Fazio, Hughes, & Zhang, 2007; Cook & Dong, 2011). The primary challenge in this study was to establish appropriate measures of gender equality in the respective societies and to compare the differences between them. An inequitable division of labor between the public and private spheres for men and women grants the former the advantage of control and relegates the latter to an inferior social and economic status (Plutzer, 1988). This paper examines the attitudes toward family and work life held by individuals in mainland China and Taiwan for the purpose of comparing the two societies' gender-role designations.

The paper also traces why gender-role attitudes differ in the two societies. Research comparing gender-role attitudes in Taiwan and China is relatively scarce and inconsistent. Chia, Allred, and Jerzak (1997) argued that, owing to the two societies' differing degrees of modernization, women in Taiwan generally hold more egalitarian attitudes than their counterparts on the mainland. Hsieh and Burgess (1994), in contrast, found the mainland Chinese to display more egalitarian views of marital roles than the Taiwanese. They argued that although capitalist societies tend to offer women more employment and education opportunities and adopt more egalitarian gender attitudes as they modernize and industrialize, the pace of change is relatively slow compared with socialist societies in which the state can implement top-down policies imposing such values. In comparing ur-

¹ Since Taiwan is not a member state of United Nations, this calculation was reached by Taiwan's Directorate General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics (DGBAS) by applying the UN's Gender Inequality Index (GII). Taiwan's high score is generally attributed to the high percentage of women in parliament (Liu, 2013).

² World Bank Report indicated that the rate stood at about 70% before 2000, but has declined since 2001, and stood at 64% for 2014. Retrieved April 12, 2016, from <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TLF.CACT.FE.ZS?locations=CN>

ban China and Taiwan, Cornman, Chen, and Hermalin (2003) noted that although Taiwan is more economically advanced, its family structure remains more traditional than that in highly bureaucratized China. Hence, socialist-capitalist institutional arrangements appear to be more important to family structures than the level of economic development per se. Others have argued that socialist societies do not necessarily have more egalitarian attitudes than their capitalist counterparts, but rather a smaller gender gap in those attitudes (Braun, Scott, & Alwin, 1994; Tu & Liao, 2005).³

These inconsistent findings highlight the importance of considering various theoretical factors in explaining gender-role attitudinal differences. Given their shared cultural heritage, the different perceptions of gender equality in Taiwan and China may be attributable to their different socio-economic systems and societal transformations, which have weakened or strengthened existing cultural practices to differing extents. Here, socio-economic institutions and developments are considered crucial explanatory factors in the two societies' divergent gender-role attitudes.

However, as their socioeconomic differences have narrowed over time, their attitudinal differences might also be expected to have gradually faded away. Hence, the paper also examines whether the gap in cross-strait gender-role attitudes has shrunk or expanded over time. The study hypothesized that the gap has shrunk in conjunction with growing socioeconomic similarity. To test that hypothesis, I compared cross-cohort variations in gender-role attitudes in both countries. The results show the cross-strait attitudinal gap to indeed be more pronounced in the older generations, who were socialized under starkly different socioeconomic systems, with the gap gradually narrowing as those systems have converged.

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 reviews the theoretical explanations for gender-role attitudinal changes and compares the different trajectories of gender attitude-related social, political, and

³ In Tu and Liao's study, "gender-role attitudes were found to significantly differ by gender in the same society, but the pattern of gender gap did not significantly differ by society" (2005, p. 561). Given that the gender gap is larger in Taiwan than in coastal China for various individual-level reasons (gender self-interest, parental role models, family dependence, and socialization), they argued that it is necessary to incorporate gender when accounting for societal differences in gender-role attitudes. The current paper considers gender differences in such attitudes, but focuses more on generational differences in explaining the cross-strait differences documented in different time periods.

economic developments in China and Taiwan. Section 3 presents data on attitudes toward gender equality in the two societies from the 2012 World Values Survey (WVS), and employs WVS answers on women's work and family roles to generate a typology of cross-strait gender-role attitudinal differences. Finally, Section 4 models the cross-strait attitude differences using a multinomial logit model, and Section 5 concludes with a summary of the findings and a few caveats.

Explanations for Cross-strait Gender-role Attitudinal Differences

Researchers consider cultural and socioeconomic institutions and development to provide the primary explanations for similarities and differences in gender values across time and countries (Inglehart & Norris, 2003; Pampel, 2011). The similarities between Taiwan and China can largely be explained by their shared Confucian tradition, which have been challenged to differing extents by their divergent socioeconomic institutions and developments. A comprehensive appraisal of the distinct changes in gender roles and attitudes toward them in the two societies requires examination of their particular socioeconomic context and trajectories. The following paragraphs consider China and Taiwan in turn.

The Case of China

The changes in modern China's socioeconomic system can be divided into two periods: the Maoist (1949–1976) and reform (1979–present) periods. After the 1949 revolution, women's oppression was attributed to class exploitation and historical conditions rather than to any innate differences between men and women. Women's liberation was therefore equated with class liberation. In conjunction with Mao's antipathy toward Confucianism and deliberate attempts to uproot it, the party-state extolled women's non-domestic workforce participation and reallocated household responsibilities to achieve gender egalitarianism. Inequality between men and women is said to have been reduced during the Mao period by state-sponsored social programs that provided support for working women, such as free medical care for women and children, child-care centers and kindergartens, and paid maternity leave (Yuan, 2005). The prominence of state-run work units in providing social support also diminished the tradi-

tional role of the family in shaping people's lives. Although Mao has also been charged with subscribing to a materialist reductionist theory of women's liberation, neglecting the complex interaction between women's economic roles and cultural practices, thereby placing gender equality secondary to class equality and creating a "revolution postponed" (Wolf, 1985, p. 8) or "unfinished liberation" (Andors, 1983, p. 1), nevertheless, the revolution rendered "worker" a central identity for women by removing the stigma attached to working outside the home, redefining women as honorable laborers and transgressing dichotomous gender boundaries (Croll, 1983; Hershatler, 2007).

The reform period has placed greater emphasis on economic growth than political ideology, raising doubts about whether women's gains during the Mao era have held. China's dramatic transition from a collective to individualistic social system, with greater emphasis on individual autonomy and choice (Rofel, 1994; Li, 2000; Pimentel, 2006; Hershatler, 2007), and introduction of the capitalist mode of production has reinforced gender segregation in the urban labor market and the gender division of labor in rural households (Fan, 2003). The state implemented *protective* legislation in the 1980s and early 1990s that instead stresses the biological differences between women and men by focusing on women's reproductive function, thereby reinforcing the stereotype that women's primary role is reproduction and implying that their employment incurs extra costs (Woo, 1994).⁴ As men have sought out newly available economic opportunities outside rural areas, women have been left to fill the void, leading to a phenomenon known as the "feminization of agriculture" (Berik, Dong, & Summerfield, 2007, p. 8).⁵ Men's over-representation in the wage labor

⁴ Woo (1994) cited several protective laws and regulations enacted after the adoption of the 1982 Constitution, including the 1992 Women's Rights Protection Law, 1986 Health Care Regulations, and 1988 Labor Protection Regulations, all of which imposed limits and rules structured around women's reproductive functions and established the types and conditions of women's work (pp. 280-281).

⁵ The feminization of agriculture caused by mass-scale rural-urban migration in the reform period has left many women running farms, with negative implications for women's relative income-earning capabilities. Women tend to be concentrated in the lower-income agricultural sector and more likely to lose their land rights upon marriage, which undermines their decision-making powers in the household. Such feminization is thus often associated with female poverty. For detailed reviews, see Aslanbeigui and Summerfield (1992), Berik, Dong, and Summerfield (2007), and Chen and Summerfield (2007).

market, and women's in agricultural work, means women are increasingly finding themselves back in the home fulfilling domestic duties (Gao, 1994; Rofel, 1994; Evans, 1997). In direct contrast to the Mao-era emphasis on the sameness of the sexes, reform era ideology emphasizes the innate differences between men and women, which justifies the resurfacing gendered division of labor. The resurgence of gender essentialist thinking resonates with the Confucian ideal of the "virtuous wife and good mother" (Pimentel, 2006, p. 345). Hence, the strategic retreat of the state in the reform era has created space for Confucianism to resurface.

In short, the gendered impact of the post-1979 market transition has been mixed. Some have argued that the growth of the market economy has boosted employment opportunities for both men and women, thereby reducing gender inequality and enhancing women's status relative to men (Liu, Meng, & Zhang, 2000; Matthews & Nee, 2000). Others argue that gender differences in wages and working status remained stable from the 1950s to 1990s (Shu & Bian, 2003). Still many others contend that the market economy discriminates against female workers in recruitment and wages, thereby widening the gender gap and lowering women's economic status relative to men's (Entwisle, Henderson, Short, Bouma, & Fengying, 1995; Maurer-Fazio, Rawski, & Zhang, 1999; Gustafsson & Li, 2000; Dong & Bowles, 2002; Maurer-Fazio & Hughes, 2002; Berik, Dong, & Summerfield, 2007; Hershatter, 2007). Despite these disagreements, most researchers concede that women's status in post-reform China has progressed little.

The Case of Taiwan

Taiwan has experienced a very different socioeconomic trajectory than its neighbor across the Taiwan Strait. Until the mid-1980s, postwar Taiwan was governed by an authoritarian regime in the context of a developmental state in which the state led political and economic development. In accordance with Confucian principles, the regime viewed women as the guardians of traditional family values and social order, and thus educated them to become good wives and mothers. The traditional gender order embedded in the developmental state changed as modernization began reformulating Taiwan's gender relationships. An export boom in the 1960s and 1970s led to dramatic economic expansion that has become known as the "Taiwan Miracle" (Gold, 1986, p. vii). The social changes that accompanied modern-

ization and rapid economic growth created tension in a social structure rooted in the patriarchal tradition. In 1969, the government extended compulsory education to the ninth grade to meet newly established industries' demand for an educated labor force. As a result, female labor force participation has risen steadily in the past 30 years, increasing from an average of 35.5% in the 1970s to 39.3% in the 1980s and 44.5% in the 1990s, reaching around 46% in the early 2000s (Chang, 2006).⁶ Some have dubbed the country a modified patriarchal society that provides ample job opportunities for highly educated women, thus necessitating a new pattern in the gender power relationship (Farris, 1994; Xu & Lai, 2002). Industrialization and rising education levels also created opportunities for women to leave the home and enter the workforce, granting them greater material independence and changing their career expectations, which in turn affected marriage patterns and the family (Thornton & Lin, 1994).

However, there is contestation concerning whether and to what extent economic development and modernization really brought about changes in gender roles (Boserup, 1970), with some researchers charging that greater education and employment opportunities for women led to neither substantial improvement in their status nor significant change in their familial roles in Taiwan (Gallin, 1984; Xu & Lai, 2002). Numerous studies show Taiwan's economic expansion to have effected only a negligible decline in gender wage disparities or perhaps no decline at all (Gannicott, 1986; Zveglich, Rogers, & Rodgers III, 1997), either because export-led growth relying on the greater international mobility of capital weakens female workers' bargaining power (Seguino, 2000) or simply because gender discrimination persists (Gannicott, 1986). Further, the rise in the number of women working in family-owned businesses actually bolstered the role of the traditional family in allocating resources and maintaining patrilineal authority (Whyte, Hermalin, & Ofstedal, 2003). Hence, capitalist development did not challenge the patriarchal system, but provided resources (jobs and education) that the family system used to reproduce traditional hierarchies (Greenhalgh, 1985). The traditional system of sexual stratification within the family was reinforced by capitalist development, which in turn took advant-

⁶ According to Taiwan's DGBAS (Taiwan's Directorate General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics, July 20, 2016, from <http://www.stat.gov.tw/public/Attachment/63251021453HCMH93O.pdf>), women's labor force participation rate stood at 50.74% in 2015.

age of women's lower status to offer them low-paying jobs. Women were basically treated as an efficient and flexible reserve army of labor that could be used to bring about economic prosperity. However, as economic prosperity gave rise to a new urban middle class in the 1970s, the authoritarian regime began to promote the wife-and-mother role as the proper sphere for women. Even today women are still expected to shoulder the vast majority of the household burden regardless of whether they have a full-time job (Chang, 2006).

Taiwan's early modernization indeed granted women more economic resources and autonomy in the form of education and jobs, but did not substantially challenge their traditional role in the domestic sphere (Gallin, 1984; Greenhalgh, 1985, 1988; Xu & Lai, 2002). As Farris (1994) argued, socioeconomic changes were necessary but not sufficient to improve women's status in Taiwan. Following the lifting of martial law in Taiwan in 1987 and the country's subsequent democratization, a variety of women's organizations were formed, and the women's movement gained a new dynamism. These organizations persistently and successfully pressured the state to enact new gender-equality laws in employment and education and to revise the civil code to improve women's status (Yang, 2014). As a whole, modernization and democratization together have benefited Taiwanese women, both in terms of their material conditions and individual autonomy, but the majority must still cope with role conflicts and the double burden of work and home responsibilities.

In summary, both China and Taiwan have undergone numerous societal changes in modern times, and the role of women has fluctuated with those changes. Based on their respective paths of socioeconomic transformation and their impact on gender roles, I argue here that post-Mao China has witnessed a regressive or stagnant trend in gender-role attitudes, whereas Taiwan has moved more consistently as it modernized and democratized. Social modernization in both societies provides the impetus for value changes toward greater gender equality in education and employment, yet the market economy in post-reform China as well as in Taiwan has the incentive to resort to and reproduce the traditional gendered division to maximize economic outputs (Greenhalgh, 1985; Rofel, 1994; Evans 1997; Hershatter, 2007). Comparing cohort variations in gender-role attitudes can elucidate the changing patterns in each society and the differences between them.⁷ I hypothesize that the older cohorts in the two societies, who

reached adulthood under very different socioeconomic systems, are more likely to hold divergent gender-role perceptions, whereas the younger cohorts, who have grown up under and are living in similar socioeconomic systems, are more likely to hold similar such perceptions.

Data and Measures

The study reported herein used data on Taiwan and China from the 6th wave of the WVS to examine the differences in gender-role attitudes between the two societies. Both China's and Taiwan's research teams conducted the surveys in 2012 based on World Values Survey Executive Committee (WVSEC) sampling rules.⁸ The China 2012 WVS applied the *GPS Assisted Area Sampling Method*, which incorporates population as a measure of size, stratification, and multi-stage probability proportional to size (PPS), for an effective sample size of 2,300 (in the final report by China's WVS team). The Taiwan 2012 WVS applied stratified PPS and three-stage random sampling, for an effective sample size of 1,238 (in the final report by Taiwan's WVS team). In the following analyses of the Taiwanese and Chinese data, weighted samples are used. This section begins by describing the survey questions related to gender equality, and then presents the categorization of gender-role attitudes. A preliminary comparison of Taiwan and China is then made based on the distribution of responses to the gender equality and gender-role attitude measures.

⁷ Cohort replacements are often considered the engines of gender value changes (Brooks & Bolzendahl, 2004). Comparing gender value differences among different birth cohorts within a nation can identify the impact of the nation's social transformations on gender roles, whereas comparing the differences within the same birth cohort across countries can reveal the impact of differing degrees of national and societal development on gender value development. Finally, comparing gender value differences across both birth cohorts and nations allows a determination of both.

⁸ The WVSEC sampling rules are: samples are drawn from the entire population 18 years and above, the minimum sample is 1000, and some form of stratified random sampling is used to obtain representative national samples. The WVSEC further stipulates that the following principles should be strictly adhered to: The selection of primary sampling units (PSUs) must be probabilistic (and preferably PPS), the minimum number of PSUs is 30, and the selection of first-stage clusters within the PSUs must be probabilistic (and preferably PPS).

Measuring Gender Equality

Various scales measuring different dimensions of gender-role attitudes have been constructed, allowing us to identify the antecedents, correlates, and consequences of particular attitudes toward women (see McHugh and Frieze, 1997, for a detailed review). The categorization of gender role attitudes is considered the critical measure for comparing the two societies in this paper.

An overview of gender values in Taiwan and China is first provided. In the WVS, five questions directly address gender egalitarianism in the domains of employment, political leadership, university education, business leadership, and women's role as housewives. Respondents are asked whether they agree or disagree with the following statements⁹:

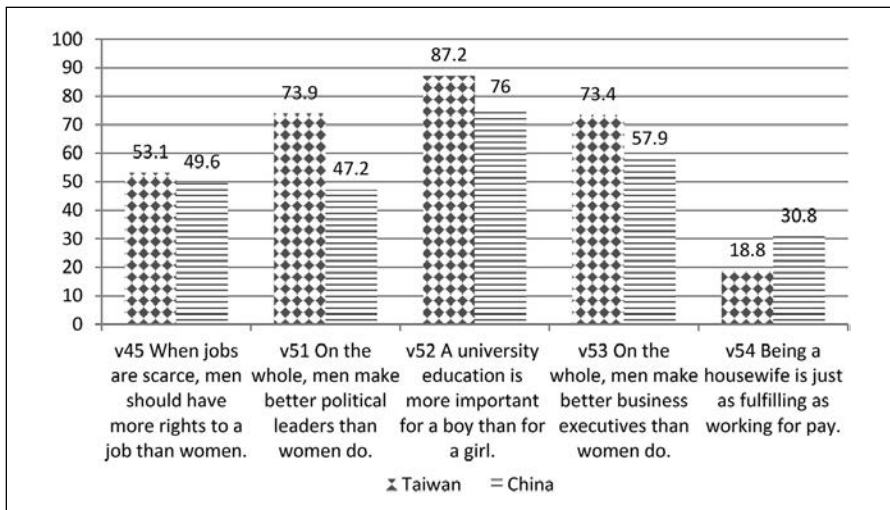
- V45. When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women.
- V51. On the whole, men make better political leaders than women do.
- V52. A university education is more important for a boy than for a girl.
- V53. On the whole, men make better business executives than women do.
- V54. Being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay.

A higher percentage of respondents in Taiwan than China support gender equality, as measured by the first four questions above and shown in Figure 1. The Taiwanese are also less likely than the mainland Chinese to believe that men should have better employment or university education opportunities or that men make better political leaders or business executives. Given the two countries' shared cultural heritage, these differences may be due to their different patterns of socioeconomic development. Nevertheless, the extent to which people in Taiwan and China support gender equality varies depending on the specific question asked. The former are well ahead of the latter in supporting gender equality in the domains of politics, higher education, and business management, with 73.9% of Taiwanese respondents disagreeing with the statement that men make better political leaders than women, relative

⁹ The preceded V-number (V45, V51, etc.) is the original variable ordering in the questionnaire. The first question is dichotomous: possible responses are agree or disagree (neither is omitted). The possible answers to the last four questions are: strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. All of the questions have a similar format and structure. For better comparison between different sets of questions, I combine *agree* and *strongly agree* into *agree* and *disagree* and *strongly disagree* into *disagree*.

to 47.2% of Chinese respondents. Taiwan's greater degree of democratization is likely to be the major explanation for this difference. In addition, 87.2% of Taiwanese disagree that a university education is more important for boys than girls, relative to 76% of Chinese, and 73.4% of Taiwanese and 57.9% of Chinese disagree that men make better business executives.

However, the responses to the two other statements constitute a departure from the general pattern of the Taiwanese expressing more progressive attitudes toward gender equality, with little cross-country difference in the percentage of respondents disagreeing that men should be granted more employment opportunities than women. More interestingly, the relative positions of the countries is reversed for V54, with a higher percentage of Chinese respondents disagreeing that being a housewife is fulfilling. These responses raise a number of questions. First, if the two countries have had very different patterns of socioeconomic development, then how can we account for the similarities in their attitudes toward equal employment opportunities for both men and women? Second, how can we explain a modernized society such as Taiwan having such a high percentage of citizens believing that a housewife's role is just as fulfilling as working for pay? Clearly, the countries' attitudes towards gender equality are complex, and cannot be summarized by a single measure.



Source: WVS Taiwan 2012/WVS China 2012

Figure 1. Percentages Disagreeing with Gender-related Questions in Taiwan and China

Measuring Gender-role Attitudes

Many consider Taiwan to be less egalitarian than China, which has long embraced a social-collectivist ideology that prioritizes class and gender equality and a high female employment rate (Hsieh & Burgess, 1994; Cornman et al., 2003; Whyte et al., 2003). However, the results from the 2012 WVS survey cited above suggest that Taiwan is generally more egalitarian than China in many respects. If their differing socioeconomic structures can explain their attitudinal differences, then we face yet another puzzle concerning their similar attitudes toward equal employment opportunities for men and women. How can we explain these discrepancies? First, the socioeconomic development gap between the two countries was largest in earlier periods, and has gradually diminished over time. Second, differences in their gender-role attitudes have also fluctuated over time. Accordingly, we need to take generational differences into account in our comparison. In addition, when comparing attitudes toward gender egalitarianism, we cannot ignore the cultural effects working against attitudinal change. The homogeneity in the two societies' cultures may be a driving force in the convergence of their gender attitudes.

Third, simply comparing equality between the sexes ignores more complicated questions of gender-role divisions and gender relationships. The differences in gender egalitarian attitudes between China and Taiwan are not only a matter of degree but also of kind. Therefore, the focus should be on gender-role attitudes instead of on gender equity. The approved gender roles in any society are primarily the result of interactions between socioeconomic forces and traditional cultural values (Inglehart & Norris, 2003). Clashes between family duties and employment opportunities lead to internal role conflicts for many women, and may explain women's relatively slow progress toward greater equality in the labor market in many societies (Fortin, 2005).

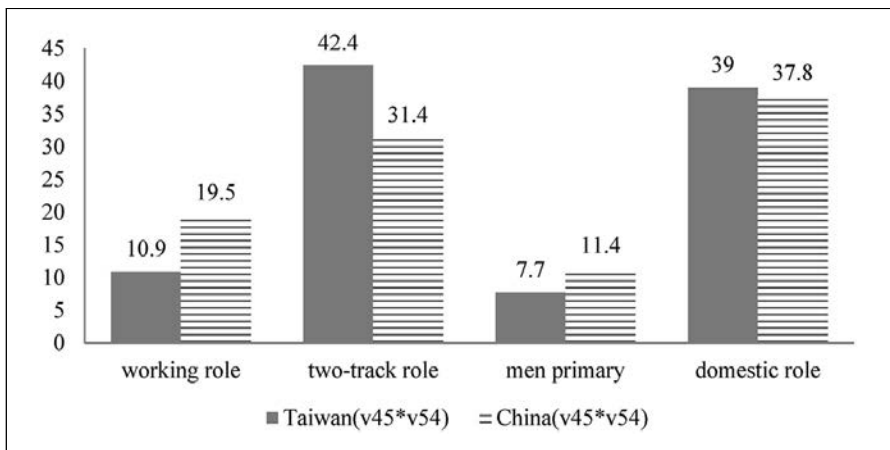
Two of the WVS questions are of particular interest in discerning the patterns of gender-role attitudes in Taiwan and China. To better understand the two sets of respondents' attitudes toward the gender-role division, I combined their responses to statements V45 and V54, which concern men's greater right to a job when the unemployment rate is high and the fulfilling nature of being a housewife, respectively, to generate the four attitudes toward the role of women shown in Table 1. Those who agree with

both statements are labeled as supporting a domestic role for women, whereas those who disagree with both are labeled as supporting a working role. The two groups with mixed views, that is, those who disagree that job opportunities should be prioritized for men but view housewife as a fulfilling role for women, and vice versa, are deemed to support a two-track role (either working or staying at home) for women and adopt a men-primary role position, respectively.

Table 1.
*Typology of Gender-role Attitudes (V45*V54)*

		(V45) When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women	
		Agree (0)	Disagree (1)
(V54) Being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay.	Agree (0)	Domestic role	Two-track role
	Disagree (1)	Men primary	Working role

As can be seen in Figure 2, the distribution of role attitudes using this typology is quite different for Taiwan and China, with 42.4% of Taiwanese respondents supporting a two-track role for women, relative to just 31.4% of mainland Chinese. However, more Chinese than Taiwanese support a working role, at 19.5% and 10.9%, respectively. The percentage supporting



Source: WVS Taiwan 2012/WVS China 2012

Figure 2. *Distribution of Gender-role Attitudes (V45*V54)*

a traditional domestic role is roughly the same, almost 40% in both societies, whereas 7.7% and 11.4% in Taiwan and China, respectively, take the men-primary stance. In general, then, more mainland Chinese see women's primary function as firmly in the world of work than their counterparts across the Strait, where the Taiwanese are more inclined to view women as playing a dual role in the worlds of work and home.

Modeling Gender-role Attitudes

Gender-role attitudinal differences may be explained by either individual social status or collective historical experiences. Inter-cohort transitions and cross-time transformations are regarded as macro-level forces that shape the gender attitudes of the same age group in a collective manner (Shu & Zhu, 2012). The pronounced differences in gender-role attitudes between Taiwan and China are assumed to exhibit a marked generational pattern. However, two levels of difference need to be disentangled. First, different generations possess different gender-role attitudes, which are shaped by their collective historical experiences in their formative years of socialization and their society's socioeconomic transformations. Hence, the generational effect itself reflects historical and time-variant differences within a single country. Second, the patterns of inter-cohort differences also differ between Taiwan and China. Comparing the same age groups across the societies reveals clear cross-strait inter-cohort differences.¹⁰

As can be seen from Table 2, in general, the youngest generation in both countries is most likely to endorse a two-track role for women, although there is still a large discrepancy between the two countries. In the 30-39 age group, more Taiwanese than Chinese support that role (51.4% vs. 31.1%). The older generation in both countries is more likely to favor a domestic role, although that is particularly true for Taiwan, with roughly half of those aged 40-49 and 60+ approving of that role relative to China, which has a more even distribution across the generations. In China, about one-fifth of the population approves of women having a working role, and

¹⁰ The generational divisions in the two countries are quite different owing to their starkly divergent socio-historical developments. For ease of comparison, I use the same classification scheme for age groups in both China and Taiwan, but readers should remain cognizant of the different social and gender relationships of individuals in the same age groups.

that proportion holds roughly constant across the age groups. In Taiwan, in contrast, only about one-tenth of the population approves of such a role for women, and the percentage declines dramatically with age. In every age group, the percentage of Chinese who identify women with a work role is higher than that of Taiwanese, but the biggest gap is between the older cohorts, with 20.8% of Chinese above the age of 60 supporting that role, relative to just 4.5% of their Taiwanese counterparts, an almost fourfold difference.

Table 2.
Gender-role Attitudinal Differences by Age Groups and Nations

	China					Taiwan				
	18-29 (%)	30-39 (%)	40-49 (%)	50-59 (%)	60† (%)	18-29 (%)	30-39 (%)	40-49 (%)	50-59 (%)	60† (%)
Working role	69 (19.7)	88 (20.3)	65 (18.6)	45 (17.6)	46 (20.8)	29 (12.2)	32 (14.4)	25 (11.7)	21 (10.0)	8‡ (4.5)
Two-track role	137† (39.0)	135 (31.1)	89‡ (25.4)	76 (29.8)	69 (31.2)	130† (54.6)	114† (51.4)	68‡ (31.9)	71 (36.8)	60‡ (33.7)
Men primary	30 (8.5)	48 (11.1)	47 (13.4)	35 (13.7)	23 (10.4)	15 (6.3)	18 (8.1)	17 (8.0)	16 (8.3)	12 (6.7)
Domestic role	115‡ (32.8)	163 (37.6)	149† (42.1)	99 (38.8)	83 (37.6)	64‡ (26.9)	58‡ (26.1)	103† (48.4)	85 (44.0)	98† (55.1)
Total (100%)	351	434	350	255	221	238	222	213	193	178
	$F=21.415$ ($df=12$), $p<.05$					$F=69.3$ ($df=12$), $p<.001$				

Note: † indicates that the residual is 2; ‡ indicates that it is -2. Sourced from WVS Taiwan 2012/WVS China 2012.

To permit analysis of both the cross-strait and cross-generational differences in gender-role attitudes, I merge the two datasets into one, and run a multinomial logit model.¹¹ The dependent variable, gender-role attitude, is classified into three types: domestic role (reference category), working role, and dual-track role. The men-primary role is omitted because there are insufficient cases to generate meaningful comparison. The independent variables are respondent gender, education level, marital status, family status

¹¹ The multinomial logit model assumes the independence of irrelevant alternatives (IIA), meaning that all else being equal, a person's choice between two alternative outcomes is unaffected by what other choices are available. The IIA assumption was tested for the model, with the results showing that it was not violated.

(having children or not), employment status, age group and a country dummy variable. Respondents' gender and education level are related to their social status, and marital and family status are situational factors generally considered to affect gender-role attitudes. To identify various patterns of gender differences in attitudes, the interaction terms between female and the situational factors of family, marital, and employment status, as well as country, are entered into the model. And to detect cross-national and inter-cohort differences, the main explanatory variable age group is interacted with the country dummy.

The results, presented in Table 3, show gender, education level, marital status, generation, and country to exert an impact on gender-role attitudes, albeit to differing degrees. As expected, more educated respondents prefer the working and two-track roles to the domestic role, and that preference is stronger for women than men. Furthermore, employed women are more likely to prefer the two-track role to the domestic role. The key attitudinal differences between Taiwan and China are that respondents from the latter are more likely to favor a working role for women, whereas their counterparts from the former are more supportive of a two-track role relative to a domestic role. Interacting country with gender shows Chinese women to be more likely to espouse the two-track role relative to the domestic role. Taken together, the two results suggest that Chinese women are less likely to support a domestic role for women than Taiwanese women.

Generation is a critical factor that reflects social transformation and requires further clarification. The results show that the older people are, the more likely they are to agree that women should play a solely domestic rather than dual work and domestic role, which is consistent with modernization theory. However, analyzing the results separately by country and generation informs us only of the rough differences between the countries and generations without specifying which generation accounts for the cross-country differences. The interaction of generation and country allows us to see that a major explanatory factor in those differences is that older Chinese respondents (those over 60) are likelier to espouse a working rather than domestic role for women than their Taiwanese counterparts. They are also more likely to approve of a two-track role. This finding suggests that the older Chinese generation was heavily influenced by its experiences of the collectivist era. The lack of significant attitudinal differences between the younger generations of Taiwanese and Chinese implies that the coun-

try's converging socioeconomic conditions have transformed their gender-role attitudes in a similar direction.

Table 3.
Multinomial Logit Model Analysis, WVS2012 (Merged Sample)

	Working role			Two-track role		
	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>Exp (B)</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	<i>Exp (B)</i>
Constant	-2.021	.359		-.139	.246	
Female	1.519***	.362	4.568	.843**	.277	2.322
Age group(18-29)						
30-39	.500	.357	1.649	.128	.267	1.136
40-49	.028	.381	1.028	-.959**	.283	.383
50-59	.022	.391	1.022	-.476†	.272	.621
60+	-.643	.471	.526	-.689*	.287	.502
Education (primary and below)						
high school	.196	.186	1.217	.266†	.147	1.305
senior high school	.543**	.192	1.722	.513**	.151	1.670
university and above	.957***	.206	2.603	.744***	.163	2.105
At least one child (no children)	.384	.497	1.469	.114	.329	1.121
Marriage(single)	-.819	.513	.441	.095	.344	1.100
Have a job(no job)	-.066	.237	.936	-.248	.173	.781
China(Taiwan)	.864**	.326	2.372	-.579*	.242	.561
Country×age group						
China×age30-39	-.104	.409	.901	-.314	.317	.731
China×age40-49	.164	.404	1.179	.446	.317	1.562
China×age50-59	.334	.424	1.397	.314	.313	1.368
China×age60+	1.164*	.482	3.204	.522†	.314	1.685
Female×children	-.466	.695	.627	-.530	.492	.589
Female×marriage	-.634	.746	.531	-.580	.545	.560
Female×job	.291	.282	1.338	.468*	.214	1.596
Female×China	.057	.286	1.059	.765***	.201	2.149

Model information $N = 2340$
 $LR\chi^2 = 325.036$, $df = 40$, $p < .001$
 Nagelkerke Pseudo- $R^2 = .148$

Note: Reference groups are in the parentheses. Domestic role is the reference category of the dependent variable. Sourced from WVS Taiwan 2012/WVS China 2012.

† $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

Conclusion

The gap between gender-role attitudes in Taiwan and China has followed a circuitous route. The two societies' shared Confucian cultural heritage explains the slow-to-change gender division of labor in both, with the majority of women still being assigned domestic duties regardless of whether they work outside the home. As women become increasingly educated and employed, they have to cope with the inevitable role conflicts that arise between home and work life. The traditional idea of women staying at home and men working outside the home has been greatly weakened by the socio-economic transformations that have taken place in both societies. However, attitudinal change has not followed the simple linear trajectory that modernization theory predicts.

At first glance, having undergone industrialization and economic development earlier than China, Taiwan has also performed comparatively well in terms of gender egalitarian values, which is consistent with the assumptions of modernization theory. Whether it be in the arena of education, politics, or business leadership, a growing majority in both societies, but Taiwan in particular, is unable to accept men's overwhelming advantages. Nevertheless, the counteracting effect of cultural tradition is more clearly manifested in the persistent gender-role conflicts that women experience between employment and domestic duties. In response to the WVS question concerning equal employment opportunities, about half the respondents in both societies agreed that men should be granted priority when job opportunities are scarce. Also, quite a few in both agreed that a housewife's role is as fulfilling as that of paid work. The responses to these two questions exhibit a lingering Confucian spirit that is resisting change to prescribed gender-roles, although the way that spirit is manifested differs because of the different challenges arising from the countries' different pace of socioeconomic transformation.

The results turned up a number of cross-country differences. For example, the Chinese are more likely to approve of women working for pay, the Taiwanese are more likely to approve of women adopting a two-track role, and Chinese women are less likely to agree that women should play only a domestic role. The different historical and socioeconomic trajectories of the two societies have also led to generational differences in gender-role attitudes. The general pattern of the Chinese being more accepting than the Taiwanese of women's working role can be attributed to the very different

historical and socioeconomic experiences of the older generations in the two societies. Although those who experienced the collective era in China are now growing old, their gender-role attitudes are no more traditional than those of the younger generations. In Taiwan, in contrast, the older generation has more traditional attitudes than both their mainland Chinese counterparts and the younger generation in their own country.

As the two countries' socioeconomic development has grown more similar in recent years, the gap in gender-role attitudes between Taiwan and China has narrowed, particularly between the younger generations. However, converging gender-role attitudes do not necessarily mean more progressive attitudes, as indicated by the relatively large numbers of WVS respondents in both societies agreeing that the housewife's role is a fulfilling one and that men should be afforded priority in times of job scarcity. Although there are differences between China's post-reform system and Taiwan's developmental economy, the two countries are moving along the same path of capitalist modernization. Socioeconomic modernization opens up more chances for women to become educated and find jobs, but it does not necessarily lead all women to eschew the role of housewife.

As a final caveat, China is a large and diverse country. Hence, although the findings of this study are true on average, they may not apply to every region. China's household registration system and the mass migration in recent years from rural to urban areas make regional comparisons difficult. Also, the cross-sectional data used in this study do not allow direct examination of value shifts over time. Future research using time-series data is needed to more comprehensively investigate the gender value changes that have occurred within each country. Despite these limitations, however, this paper makes important contributions to aggregate understanding of the inter-generational differences between and impacts of socioeconomic transformations on gender-role attitudes in Taiwan and China.

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