Gender Representation in Politics and Public Administration: Taiwan and Asian Countries[*]

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I. Introduction

Equality in gender representation in the political decision-making process and public bureaucracy has been commonly accepted as a crucial source of the legitimacy of democratic governance. Yet, over the past decades, although a number of nations have achieved significant increases in the proportion of women in institutions such as legislature, cabinet, and civil service, women remain largely under-represented in the public sector in most countries.

This article attempts to evaluate the status of gender representation in politics and public administration in Taiwan in comparison with selected Asian and Western countries. It covers the following components: (a) general significance of women's representation in governance; (b) the political status of women in Taiwan and in Asia; (c) the major factors constraining women's participation in the public sector; and (d) remedial policies that need to be done to improve women's involvement in politics and public administration.

II. Significance of Gender Representation

Fair representation in gender has normative significance in political theory. Although from the traditional, *essentially formalistic* theory of representation, as long as there are representatives to act for women as their

trustees and to speak for their benefits, it does not matter whether these representatives are women or men (Pitkin 1967: Ch.3). However, from the *symbolic* perspective, people choose representatives not only as their trustees, but also as their delegates to stand for them in the decision making process "as if" they themselves are present in that process. In other words, "representation" is a kind of "symbol;" and the failure of appropriately incorporating women into politics would be seen as "an evidence" of structural discrimination against women (Pitkin 1967: Ch.5).

Moreover, theories of *descriptive* representation argue that the degree of electors' trust depends mostly on the representative's visible characteristics (e.g. gender) and shared experiences, for people with shared descriptive traits and experiences are more likely to understand their needs accurately and present their substantive interests. For example, it would be hard for a male representative to realize the value of a housewife or the need of a pregnant mother, since he has no such experiences. Given that the representatives are not only "standing for" or "acting for" their electors but also possessing a lot of rooms for free judgments, gender representation becomes salient because women can predict female representatives due to their similarity, thus trusting them to deal with the "un-crystallized issues." Also, the composition of the representatives should correctly reflect the gender composition of the society as a mirror, so that there will be enough female representatives to protect the rights of women proportionally (Mansbridge 2000: 99-123).

Furthermore, for scholars like Peter Bachrach and Charles Taylor, politics is not only about the pursuing of self-interest, but also about "*self-development*" (Bachrach 1967) and "*self-image*" (Taylor 1994). To be sure, an individual's identity and its way of life need to be recognized as having equal value with others in public, otherwise she would feel being oppressed and, even worse, a sense of incapability. The improvement of women's participation in all aspect of public affairs is thus essential to positive self-identity of women as well as the full development of their capacities.

Fair representation in gender also has political significance as it is essential in the credibility and legitimacy of the democratic regime. Although women are never homogeneous in their attitudes and female politicians are a diverse lot, thus more female representatives in politics and bureaucracy by no means guarantee the protection of the interests of women. Nonetheless, since one of the responsibilities of the democratic government is to ensure the equal rights and opportunities of citizens, the fact that women present half of the population makes their under-representation significant as a sign of discrimination, which decreases people's trust of the government and undermines the *de facto* legitimacy of the polity (Phillips 1995).

The lack of female involvement and participation in the government agencies would also have serious administrative consequences. As Hale and Kelly (1989) point out, unelected government officials, "who are largely a technological elite group, are shaping and determining policy as well as implementing it" (p.3). On one hand, the background, ideology, and experience of middle- and upper-level of officials can make differences in whether problems are defined, how the nature of interests and problems are defined and interpreted, and what decisions are made authoritatively. On the other hand, personal background and experience also affect how the lower-level civil servants serve their citizen clients. In order to avoid gender-biased service delivery, there should be enough women in the public administration, so that their specific preferences can be better comprehended and presented, and that their needs would not be overlooked or neglected. Women can also bring new insights and perspectives to the political process, which will enrich the focus and content of discourse in politics, thus making government more responsive to the needs of all people (Dolan & Ford 1995; Karl c1995).

Finally, there is economic significance of female representation in public administration. As Haque (2003) points out, along with the modernization and the globalization of production, consumption, and information, there

has been a growing need for female workforce in both public and private sectors. In order to increase the competitiveness of the government in this modern world, therefore, public bureaucracies should fully and wisely utilize the female talent pool as a valuable source of human resources.

III. The Status of Gender Representation in Taiwan and Selected Asian Countries

1. Criteria and Case Selection

In this section, I examine the status of gender representation in Taiwan in comparison with some other Asian and Western countries from two aspects: whether there are formal, institutional protections of gender representation, and in what degree the fair gender representation has been realized in these countries. Four groups of indicators are selected to examine real status of female representation: (a) GEM (gender empowerment measure) rank by UNDP;[1] (b) female representation in the legislature; (c) female representation in cabinet, local government, and public administration; (d) female representation in other higher-rank positions – including administrative and managerial positions, and professional and technical positions.

I choose sixteen countries in comparison with Taiwan. The distribution of ten Asian countries is as follows: three from East Asia (Japan, South Korea, China), one from South Asia (India), and six from Southeast Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam). Six examples of western, developed countries are used for references: two Nordic countries (Norway and Sweden, which are the top-two countries of the GEM rank), two other European countries (Germany and UK), USA, and Australia.

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[1] GEM is a composite index measuring gender inequality in three basic dimensions of empowerment: political participation and decision-making, economic participation and decision-making, and power over economic resources. Indicators include: (1) female and male shares of parliamentary seats; (2) female and male shares of positions as legislators, senior officials and managers; (3) female and male shares of professional and technical positions; and (4) female and male estimated earned income (women's GDP per capita).

Seven of these countries are categorized by UNDP as the "developing countries:" China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam; while others are all the "developed countries."

2. Formal/Institutional Protection of Female Representation

State may protect and promote better female representation in three ways. First, the legislature may amend the existing constitutional articles or legal rules, or make new laws or regulations, to better incorporate women into public office. Second, the executive branch may guarantee principles of equal opportunity and even take affirmative action for hiring, training, and promoting women. Finally, the judiciary may also end gender imbalance in public sphere by interpreting the laws differently (e.g. justifying affirmative actions as necessary for attaining equality) (Hale & Kelly 1989: 7-9).

Among various institutional settings, many scholars find that "electoral system" is the most powerful determinant of the level of female representation in democratic polities. In particular, three types of electoral systems have been found to contribute to achieving a higher level of female representation: (a) proportional representation (PR) system; (b) large multi-member districts; and (c) quota systems that ensure women a minimum level of representation (Rule 1987; Norris 1987; 1988; Lee 2000; Dahlerup 2002; Matland 2002; Htun 2004).[2]

The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) establishes a *global database of quotas for women*, in which it examines countries with quota systems in four different levels: (a)

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[2] Rule's research (1987) compares the percentage of women elected to the lower house of the national legislature in 23 industrial democracies in the 1980s, and finds that women did much better in multi- member districts with PR and a "party list" of candidates. In another research, Katz (1986) also finds that district size (number of seats to be elected) has a separate and independent effect (cited from Rule 1987). One main reason is that, under PR system, political parties have an incentive to place at least some women high enough on their slates to win in order to broaden their appeal, and all candidates on a list run as a team. Thus, this system overcomes the problems of gender bias by voters and leaders and reduces the "political risk" level (Norris 1987).

constitutional quota for national parliaments; (b) constitutional or legislative quota for sub-national level legislatures; (c) election law quota or regulation for national parliament; and (d) political party quota for electoral candidates. Table 1 lists the electoral systems (under the country name), quota types, the regulations of quota, and the number and percentage of female representatives elected in the latest national elections.

Among seventeen cases, six countries have no electoral quotas for women: USA, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, with two communist countries China and Vietnam (which do not hold direct elections). For countries with quotas for women, there are three observed tendencies: (a) the most popular quota type is the "party quota for electoral candidates." (b) In Asia, there are tendencies for quota provisions to be legislated and/or for quotas to take the form of reserved seats, rather than only relying on political parties to implement their own informal party quotas, as is common in Europe. (c) The quotas for women in Europe and Australia range from one-third (minimum) to 50%; while in Asia the quotas are usually below 30%.

In eleven Asian countries, only India and Thailand hold *pure* first-past-the-post plurality electoral system (although India has quota system, it only applies to the local level bodies). This might be one reason that female representatives in both countries remain below 10%. Indonesia and South Korea have their election law including a quota for women *candidates*, but there are no guarantees that they will be *elected*. As a result, the female representatives in both countries are below the number recommended in the election laws. Only Philippines and Taiwan have *reserved seats* for women in national parliaments (for Philippines, the lower house), thus these two countries have higher percentage of female representatives – 17.8% in Philippines and 22.2% in Taiwan – than other countries.

3. Female Representation in Practice: Numbers and Implications

(1) Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM)

The first and second columns of Table 2 present the worldwide ranking of HDI (Human Development Indicators) and GEM of seventeen countries. By comparing each country's HDI rank with its GEM rank, one gets the first impression of how a country attaches importance to the issue of gender inequality. Not all the developed countries take care of this issue as seriously as they do on other developing issues. For example, both Japan and South Korea stand high on their HDI rank (9 and 28, respectively), with relatively poor GEM records (rank 38 and 68). On the contrary, Philippines is just a "developing country" (HDI rank: 83), but its GEM rank (37) is even higher than that of Japan. The GEM records of Malaysia and Thailand are also better than that of South Korea (Malaysia 44, Thailand 57).

Taiwan is not member state of the United Nations, thus there are no data about Taiwan in UN's official reports. However, the levels of female representation in Taiwan in the major domains (which will discuss later) are usually one of the highest in Asian countries. According to the official report of Taiwan government, its estimated GEM rank shall be 20, similar to or even higher than that of Singapore.

(2) Female Representation in the Legislatures

In terms of female representation in the legislature (Table 2), one finds that three European countries with PR system set a model for women's equality: Sweden 45%; Norway 36.4%; and Germany 32.2% (1994 data). Besides, the socialist countries have better records in this category: Sweden and Norway are the top-two of the world, and Vietnam and China are two of the top three in Asia (27% and 20%, respectively).

Among the democratic regimes, countries without quotas for women usually lead to lower female representation in the legislature, as the cases of USA (14%, 2004), Japan (9.9%, 2004), and Singapore (6.5%, 2001). The

exception is Malaysia, where the percentage of female representatives in national parliament is increasing gradually since the 1990s, from 6% (1990) to 16% (2003) (Table 3; Graph 1). Yet, female representatives in state legislatures and local councils still remain less significant (the first and second columns of Table 4).

The effect of electoral quotas for women is salient when looking at the case of South Korea. The status of female representation in South Korea used to be extremely poor in the past decades: only 2%~4% in the 1980s-90s. However, after its Political Party Law was reformed in 2004 to include a quota for women, it resulted in an increase of women elected to 13% in the April 2004 election, up from 5.9% in the previous legislature.

In the case of Indonesia, Table 5 and Graph 2 shows that female representation has declined slightly over the last decade. However, in the past (during Suharto's authoritarian rule), many women obtained their seats in the DPR through their nepotistic relations with officialdom. After 1998, the economic crisis and the chaos happened during the democratizing process all make the overall environment unfavorable for women's participation in politics, thus causing the decline of the number of women elected in the DPR in 1999 and 2002.

Table 6 and Graph 3 presents the situation of female representation in four levels of Taiwan's legislative bodies: National Assembly and the Legislative Yuan (national level), Provincial Assembly, Taipei and Kaohsiung City councils (Provincial level), City/County Assemblies (county level), and Township/village Councils (village level). As stated in Table 1, because of its forced, "reserved seats" for women in the 1946 Constitution[3], plus its electoral system design (multimember districts and single non-transferable vote), women have held approximately 10% or more of the seats in all of Taiwan's legislative bodies throughout the postwar era. Initially, women appeared to win many of their seats because of their quota, as women never

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[3] For example, if one seat is reserved for women in a multimember district with 5 seats, the woman candidate receiving the most votes wins a seat even if she finishes 6th or lower.

won more seats than their reserved minimum. However, the records have gradually improved, especially since the 1980s; and now women's shares of seats across all levels of election are above 20% (20.9% in 2004 Legislative Yuan, 32.7% in 2002 Taipei City Council, 22.7% in 2002 Kaohsiung City Council, and 22.1% in 2002 City/County Assemblies). This shows that women in Taiwan have been able to gain their seats by their own efforts rather than relying on the "privileges" prescribed for them by law.

Nonetheless, the situations are different between city and town, and between north and south. For Taipei City, the most urbane, liberal and educated capital of Taiwan, the quota system has always been irrelevant to the election result. Actually, women have come doubling their quota (5 seats) since 1989, and tripling in 1998 (winning 17 seats). Many female candidates even won the top-3 most votes in their districts. However, for Kaohsiung City, the largest city in the south, it was until 2002 that women won more seats than their reserved minimums.

(3) Women in Cabinet, Local Government, and Public Administration

Compared with quota systems in parliament/legislature elections implemented in many countries, there is no provision for guaranteed female representation in executive elections or appointments. Without legal protection, the disadvantages of women in Asian countries become salient. As shown in Table 2, at the ministerial level, in 1999, the percentage of female representation in western countries is mostly beyond 20% (55% in Sweden, the highest; 19.5% in Australia, the lowest). Female representations in cabinet or at ministerial and sub-ministerial positions in western countries are no less than – some are even higher than – their shares in parliament/legislature. However, in Asia, women's share at this level is below average – mostly below 10% (1996 data), except Taiwan (15.6% at ministerial level) and Philippines (25.3% at subministerial level).

Generally speaking, it is very difficult for Asian women to take

leadership positions at the federal/national government. It also appears that some of the women appointed to executive positions in the government are seen as having been rewarded for securing the support of women voters rather than based on their personal qualities or professional capabilities. Besides, women have tended to be assigned either to ministers seen as "suitable" to their roles, such as the ministers dealing with welfare, women and family affairs, or to junior ministers such as culture, tourism and arts.

At the local government level, the situation is more disappointing. For example, in Malaysia, there have been no female Mayors until 1999 (Table 4). In Indonesia, while there are 2 women in cabinet in addition to President Megawati Sukarnoputri in 1991, no women hold the position of provincial governor; and only 1.5% of regents and/or mayors, or 6 out of 336, are women (International IDEA 2003: 64).

Women's involvement in the public administration in Asia is not always promising either. While there are more and more women working in the government based on merit or passing the national exams for civil servants, they are hard to get promotion. Table 7 presents the number and percentage of women working in three levels of government in Malaysia – federal, state provincial, and local. Although at the professional and the management level, women contains 50% of the total workforce in federal government, 15.6% in state government, and 22.7% in local, the gap between male and female civil servants widens as they move into higher levels of the job position. Similarly, in Indonesia (Table 8), of the top-level decision makers in echelons I and II, only 12% and 5% are female. Women are much more numerous at the bottom of the pecking order, in echelon V, where 18% of posts are held by women, and where 63% of all women working at any echelon. Furthermore, even though 38% of the overall civil servant is female, only 16% of decision-making positions are held by women.

In Taiwan, there are relatively few women in the top leadership positions of government. It was until 1988 that a woman, Dr. Shirley W.Y. Kuo, gained a cabinet position in the government as minister of finance.

Since then the number of women in the cabinet has gradually increased. In 1998 there were six. However, because gender and ethnic issues are always hot and popular in Taiwan, male candidates tend to emphasize his pro-women characters during elections. Thus, when Taiwan held its first direct presidential election in 1996, there was a woman chosen by a president candidate as his vice-president partner. In 2000, there were two female vice-president candidates, and one became the first vice-president in Taiwan history. Later, the new DPP government nominated nine women into its cabinet out of thirty-five to show its commitment to gender equality. The percentage of female representation in cabinet is the highest in Taiwan history (25.7%). Regardless of this high-percentage record, however, female representation at the sub-ministerial level still remains low. The meaning of women in top leadership positions is still more symbolic than essential.

The situation of female representation at the local executive level is much less successful than that in the local legislative bodies (Table 6). In fact, women had not won any election as a county magistrate or city mayor before 1985 (Clark & Clark 2000). In the history of elected mayors in Taiwan, only one seventh were female; and until now, neither Taipei nor Kaohsing has female Mayor yet. It seems that people in Taiwan still do not believe that women can handle public affairs as a chief leader as well as men do. One interesting point is that, most of those female city/county mayors are either the relatives of ex-political prisoners ("Shounan Chiashu") from DPP camp (the political opposition in the past) or the relatives of local faction leaders (usually being pro-DPP).

It is relatively easy for women in Taiwan to get a job in public administration, as long as they pass Civil Service Examinations. Civil Service Examinations are held every year, with around 3% the qualification rate in past 5 years.[4] Since 1981, the number of qualified females and males are about equal. In 1993, the percentage of qualified females is 57.6% of total, beyond that of males. In 2004, the percentage of qualified females is 53.13%

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[4] The rate varies at different levels of exams. See Ministry of Examination (2005).

of total (1946 people), while that of males is 46.87%.[5] Two factors contribute to higher percentage of female civil servants. First, women are good at written examinations. Second, in Taiwan, women are encouraged to work in the government because the job is relatively stable and good-pay at the beginning.

However, Table 9 shows that although the number and percentage of female officers increase yearly, women usually work in lower positions than men. For example, the percentage of female officers equaled 38.8% in 1996 (increasing 0.8% a year), but regardless of the educational personnel section which is traditionally dominated by women, only 0.164% of women (1014 people) are in high positions (high-rank officials and ministers w/o portfolio). Another way to describe the gender inequality is that, although men and women's rate in low level positions is about 2:1, this rate in high level positions is 9.7:1~12.7:1. Besides, as shown in Table 10, most female employees in public sectors are young and inexperienced. Since opportunities for women to work in government have been increasing recently, women are not in a position to promote other women.

(4) Female Representation in Other Higher-rank Positions

After presenting the status of women in politics and public bureaucracy in Asia, there are two more indicators worthy of discussion: women's employment in managerial and professional/technical positions at the top of the hierarchy. In almost every society, people in these two occupational strata compose the bulk of the upper and upper-middle classes. Not only do they have the highest status and income in society, but they also form the eligibility pool from which most electoral politicians emerge. Therefore, women's ability to gain entrance to managerial and professional positions is important not only as a measure of occupational equality, but because entrance into such positions seems a prerequisite for gaining greater representation in the polity (Chou, Clark and Clark 1990: 61-62).

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[5] Data from Taiwan Women Web. http://taiwan.yam.org.tw/womenweb/

In terms of female representation in managerial positions (as shown in Table 2), the percentage in western countries is mostly above 30% (with the lowest 28% in Norway), while it in Asia is lower. It is interesting, however, that Philippines has the highest percentage of the seventeen countries (58%), while South Korea is the worst case (5%).

Among all the above indicators, the overall situation of female representation in professional and technical positions is the best one. Female professional/technical workers share about even percentage with men (43%~55%) in all countries but South Korea (34%). Once again, surprisingly, Philippines has the highest percentage of female representation of the seventeen countries (62%) while South Korea remains the worst case in this regard.

IV. Main Obstacles to Equal Gender Representation in Taiwan

In the above section, the article has presented the status of female representation in politics and public bureaucracy in Taiwan and ten selected Asian countries. It is obvious that, although the overall extent of female representation in the public sector in Asia is gradually improving, it is relatively low in comparison with the situation in western developed countries.

There are diverse economic, socio-cultural, ideological, and political factors influencing women's participation in political and administrative positions. First, economic development and modernization had brought higher levels of education for women, weakened traditional values, and led to better female representation in this region. However, financial crisis and economic recession in past years stroke women's political status in some societies as it restricted financial resources for women to participate in politics (e.g. Indonesia). Women's job opportunities also shrank when many governments tried to downsize the public section to reduce national deficit (e.g. Taiwan).

Second, socio-cultural and ideological factors play a significant role in Asia. As Haque (2003) points out, the culture in Asia is still quite patriarchal. There are many gender norms and stereotypes, such as that women's primary responsibility is to take care of children and family, and that women are not fully capable to assume public affairs, etc., which affect public perceptions and attitudes being against women's involvement in governance. Moreover, such traditional thought and customs are deeply cultivated from both women's and men's childhood onwards, which not only discourage women's active initiatives in expanding their representation in political and administrative institutions, but also causes low commitments for males who dominate political parties and government to take priority to gender-related policies. Although for the younger generation, men appear to be more willing to see women as partners in both the domestic and professional spheres, given that political leaders tend to be middle-aged or even order, it will take more years before this change is reflected at the higher levels of politics (Haque 2003: 578-583).

Finally, there are political constraints. Even though many Asian countries have implemented female-friendly electoral designs such as quota systems, reserved seats, and large multi-member districts, which help to increase female representation in politics, the politics in this region is still a "masculine model of politics." Men still dominate the political arena, formulate the rules of game, and define the standard for evaluation. There are still structural or informal constraints within many political parties that do not encourage women to advance beyond a certain level.[6] Also, there are few networks of public organizations, NGOs, and political parties to fight for the representation of women (Rashila & Saliha 1998: 100-101).

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[6] Wan Azizah in his research on Indonesia (2002) finds that the nature of the entrenched parties tends to be more conservative, while the opposition parties give more opportunities to women. In the ruling party UMNO, there is only one elected woman out of about forty members on its supreme council, while Parti keADILan has eight women elected its leadership council (including the president and the treasurer) – and two keADILan state committees in Sabah and Sarawak are also headed by women.

In the case of Taiwan, the status of female representation in political and public administrations is much better than many Asian countries. Three reasons may contribute to this situation. First, in line with Sun Yat-sen's beliefs in gender equality, and resulting from struggles of women's organizations with their male supports during the drafting process, the 1946 constitution guaranteed women's political representation by offering reserved seats to them. Along with related regulations and electoral system designs, women in Taiwan had begun their political participation very early since the early 1950s (Chou, Clark and Clark 1990; Chou & Clark 1994). Second, along with its processes of educational popularization, economic development and modernization, not only that women's ability in every respect is as good as men, but also some traditional gender-biased attitudes against women have gone with the wind. For example, women in Taiwan are usually encouraged to work in either public or private sectors even after their marriage. At the same time, there are fewer and fewer young women who would think that their primary responsibility is to raise children in the family. Third, during the political democratization process, women in the opposition camp played crucial roles when almost all of its important male activists were in jail or abroad. Then, as the campaign between KMT and DPP became more and more seriously, both camps are mutually forced to commit to improving female status in various aspects in order to attract women's votes. All these factors contribute to higher levels of female representation in politics and public administration in Taiwan.

However, the problem of female representation in Taiwan is not on its *quantity (number)*, but on its *quality (actual empowerment of women)*. Specifically, there are at least five main obstacles to women's pursuing top positions in politics and public administrations. First, the politics in Taiwan, especially in local level, rely largely on informal networks based on kinship, faction, and other types of patronage relations – the culture of which is very patriarchal and exclusive.

Second, although according to legal regulations that women and men are treated equally, the *informal* "rules of game" are mostly decided by men that are very masculine. As a result, a woman must force herself into behaving in a masculine way in order to be accepted "as if" she was a man; otherwise she may have difficulty to be included into this "men's club." Sexual discrimination still exists, although it may present in subtle ways (rather than structurally). For example, female representatives in the various state assemblies still face sexual harassment in the form of disparaging remarks and offensive jokes made during assembly sessions. There has been no effective action taken to ameliorate such abusive practices and both female and male members of parliament have not been successful in making any concerted effort to change the situation. In public administration, even though there are laws against sexual harassment and discrimination, not all female civil servants have courage to sue their boss under the risks of losing the job.

Another "subtle but profound way" of sexual discrimination is the way in which female representatives and governmental officials are portrayed in the mass media. Regardless that most of these women are highly educated, professional and talent, more often the media still depict them as beautiful objects and identify them according to their physical capacities than their mental faculties. The news reports care more about the sexual scandals, marital status, and fashion competitions of the famous women than their efforts on their professions. All of these not only reflect the traditional, masculine, culture which is brutal to women, but also negatively affect public perception on women and their values in public.

Moreover, although women are encouraged to participate and involve into politics and administrations, they are expected to participate as "supporting" roles to help men, but not to go beyond. In other words, the social values of Taiwan society remain not much encouraging and supportive of women to become top leaders in politics. Another conventional conception of labor division between male-political and

female-social is still unchanged. As a result, even though women in Taiwan are highly involved in the political institutions and decision making processes, they typically focus on issues of local or social concern, such as housing, childcare, education, and environment, but seldom take up the topics of natural defense or foreign affairs. In other words, such traditional attitudes of "labor division" in politics prohibit women from widely and fully participate in public affairs.

Furthermore, female governmental officials in Taiwan also face more extra expectations and tougher moral requests than men. Women officials not only should do their jobs better than men (otherwise why use them instead of men?), but also need to be good wives and mothers. Most important of all, because the social welfare system in Taiwan is still far from perfect, how to take care of children and the seniors in the family while concentrating on their work becomes an endless nightmare for most of the married office ladies. It is because of this reason that many female civil servants abandon (or miss) various promotion opportunities, or quit job early – as already shown in Tables 9~10.

V. Conclusion: Strategies to Increase Gender Equality in Taiwan

Haque (2003) suggests five ways to promote women's involvement in the public sector in Asia: (1) make constitutional and legal provisions in favor of gender equality; (2) take affirmative action that guarantees female quota in legislative and administrative institutions; (3) political parties take appropriate initiatives to expand female representation in the parties; (4) political commitment of top leaders to adopt and implement all necessary measures for ending gender-based discrimination and expanding female representation in various domains of governance; and (5) change traditional norms and perceptions by redesigning the education curricula at various levels in order to reduce female stereotyping (pp.585-587).

In the case of Taiwan, since the problem of female representation is

more on quality than quantity; and since its legal regulations already protect women's representation well, I only have two suggestions in mind at this point. First, the social welfare system must be further improved, especially the cares of children and the seniors. Without this supporting system, neither women nor men could concentrate on their jobs without worrying about their children and parents at home.

Second, the educational system shall pay much more attention on how to *essentially* improve gender equality by changing people's stereotypes and traditional attitudes toward men and women. Given the fact that those identities are formed in people's childhood and then consolidated via long processes of socialization, it is optimistically supposed that, as girls' and boys' childhood and adolescent learning experiences are changed, with the help of the transformation of the old cultural norms, there should be a parallel increase in women's interest and engagement in politics as well as in men's commitment on gender equality. Only when both men and women are willing to cooperate to move all obstacles such as masculine game rules, improper expectations and burdens on women, and gender-biased labor divisions, then can the gender gap in public sphere be eliminated indeed. It is valuable to note that, such "educations" shall never be limited in school curricula. Mass media, newspapers, TV programs, the movies, as well as social movement targeting on promotion of women rights, etc., are all effective channels for education.

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Table 1.   Selected Database of Quotas for Women

Country	Quota Type(s)	Regulation	Result
Norway List PR	Political party quota for electoral candidates	* **40%** quota for both sexes: Socialist Left Party (SV) since 1975; Norwegian Labour Party (DNA) since 1983; Centre Party (SP) since 1989; Christian People's Party (KrF) since 1993. * Liberal Party (V) also has a quota, but percentage unconfirmed.	60 of 165 (36.4%) (2001)
Sweden List PR	Political party quota for electoral candidates	**50%** quota for women on party lists: Left Party (VP) since 1987; Green Party of Sweden since 1987; Swedish Social Democratic Labour Party (SAP) since 1993 (with a zipper system: alternating men and women).	157of 349 (45.0%) (2002)
Germany <u>MMP</u> (PR)	Political party quota for electoral candidates	* **50%** quota for women on party lists: Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS); Alliance 90/The Greens since 1986. * **one-third** quota: Christian Democratic Union (CDU) in 1996. * Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD): quota system since 1988 – 25% by 1990, 33% by 1994, **40%** by 1998 (zipped: allocating every 5th place to someone of either sex).	194 of 603 (32.2%) (2002)
UK FPTP	Political party quota for electoral candidates	* Liberal Democrats: in each constituency at least **one-third** of the short-lists of candidates must be female. The party implemented a "zipping" system on their candidate lists for the last European election in 1999 which were conducted using List-PR. * The Labour Party in the 1997 General Election ring-fenced **50%** of their winnable seats for female candidate-only shortlists.	118 of 659 (17.9%) (L: 2001)
USA FPTP	No electoral quotas for women in this country		
Australia AV (Majority)	Political party quota for electoral candidates	Australian Labor Party (ALP): 40% quota for party positions, union delegations and for pre-selection for public office and positions at a State and federal level (2002) (35% in 1994).	38 of 150 (25.3%) (L: 2001)
Japan SNTV	No electoral quotas for women in this country. Yet in 2003, a Committee on Positive Action in the Ministry of Gender Equality was established to investigate different positive action measures in Japan. Debates are ongoing.		
S. Korea Parallel-FPTP (Semi-PR)	Election law regulation, national parliament	The Political Party Law of 2000 was reformed in 2004 to include a quota for women. Article 31 specifies that for the list PR portion of the election, whereby 56 deputies are elected, political parties *must* include 50% women in its list. For the majority portion of the election, whereby 243 representatives are elected in single member districts, political parties are *recommended* to include 30% women candidates.	39 of 299 (13.0%) (2004)
	Political party quota for electoral candidates	Grand National Party (GNP) supports quotas of 30% for women candidates	
China	No electoral quotas for women in this country		

India FPTP (Plurality)	Constitutional/legislativ quota, sub-national level	33% of seats in all local bodies are reserved for women according to the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments (1993). This includes the provision that 33% of the seats reserved for the scheduled classes, etc., shall be women.	45 of 541 (8.3%) (L; 2004)
	Political party quota for electoral candidates	Indian National Congress (INC) has a 15% quota for women candidates; Assa People's Council (AGP) has a 35% quota for women candidates	
Indonesia List PR	Election law regulation, national parliament	Article 65 of the election law: "Each participating political party may nominate candidates for the DPR, Provincial DPRD, and Regency/City DPRD, for each electoral district, giving consideration to representation of women of at least 30%."	61 of 550 (11.1%) (2004)
Malaysia	No electoral quotas for women in this country		
Philippines Parallel-FPTP (Plurality)	Constitutional quota for national parliaments	The Party List Law (RA 7941) (1995) makes it compulsory to include women on political party lists. It allocates 20% of the 250 seats in the Philippine House of Representatives for marginalized sectors of society and women. The law mandates that voters elect both a district representative and a party or sectoral group of their choice. To elect one candidate, each sector must get at least 2% of the total number of votes cast for the party list system.	38 of 214 (17.8%) (L: 2001)
	Election law regulation, national parliament	An Act passed in 1995 makes it compulsory to include women and other underrepresented groups) on political party lists.	
	Constitutional/legislativ quota, sub-national level	The 1991 Local Government Code requires that a woman be 1 of 3 sectoral representatives that sits in every municipal, city, and provincial legislative council	
	Political party quota for electoral candidates	Philippines Democratic Socialist Party (PDSP) has a 25% for women.	
Singapore FPTP+GRCs	No electoral quotas for women in this country * GRCs=Group Representation Constituencies (quota for minorities)		
Thailand Block (Plurality)	Political party quota for electoral candidates	Democrat Party (DP): has a target of 30% women candidates for election	46 of 500 (9.2%) (2001)
Vietnam	No electoral quotas for women in this country		
Taiwan Parallel- SNTV (Semi-PR)	Constitutional quota for national parliaments	The 1946 Constitution states that there should be reserved seats for women in each legislative body. But the exact number of seats is not regulated by the constitution but by the statutory law of each legislative body. The number of reserved seats varies from **10%~25%**.	50 of 225 (22.2%) (2001)
	Constitutional/legislativ quota, sub-national level	The Local Autonomy Act (1998) reserves 25% of all local council seats for women	
	Political party quota for electoral candidates	Democratic Progressive Party (DPP): 25% quota for women candidates (1996); Kuomintang (KMT): 25% quota for women to parliament (2000).	

Source: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA).

Table 2.   Selected Database of Women's Empowerment

	HDI rank	GEM rank	Seats in parliament held by women %					Ministerial/sub ministerial position %						Female manager/ administrator %				Female professional /technical worker %		
								Ministerial			Sub ministerial									
	2004	2004	87-91	92-97	00	01	04	94	96	99	94	96	98	85-97	2000	01	04	2000	01	04
Norway	1	1	35.8	--	--	36.4	**36.4**	--	28.6	42.1	--	22.7	--	--	30.6	31	28	58.5	58	49
Sweden	2	2	38.1	--	42.7	42.7	**45.0**	--	38.1	55.0	--	27.3	--	--	27.4	29	31	48.6	49	50
Germany	19	9	20.4	--	33.6	31.4	**32.2**	--	10.7	35.7	--	5.3	--	--	26.6	26	34	49.0	50	49
UK	12	18	6.3	--	17.1	17.9	24.4	--	8.3	33.3	--	6.6	--	--	33.0	33	31	44.7	45	44
USA	8	14	6.4	11	12.5	13.8	14.0	--	14.3	31.8	--	34.5	--	--	44.4	45	46	53.4	53	55
Australia	3	8	6.7	--	25.1	25.3	26.5	--	14.7	19.5	--	25.9	--	--	24.0	25	35	44.4	47	55
Japan	9	38	2.3	--	9.0	10.8	9.9	--	5.9	5.7	--	10.1	--	--	9.5	9	10	44.0	44	46
S. Korea	28	68	2.0	2	4.0	5.9	13.0	4	3.0	6.5	0	0.6	--	4	4.7	5	5	31.9	31	34
China	94	--	21.3	21	21.8	21.8	20.2	6	6.1	5.1	4	3.9	--	12	--	--	--	--	--	--
India	127	--	7.1	8	8.9	--	8.3	3	3.2	10.1	7	6.2	--	--	--	--	--	20.5	--	--
Indonesia	111	--	13.0	12.0	11.2!	8.8	9.0	6	3.6	5.9	1	1.6	1	17	--	--	--	--	--	--
Malaysia	59	44	6.1	7.8	10.4	10.4	16.3	7	6.1	16#	0	9.0	13	16	19.5	21	20	43.9	44	45
Philippines	83	37	9.0	9	--	11.8	17.8	8	4.5	10#	11	25.3	19	35	33.7	33	58	64.6	63	62
Singapore	25	20	4.9	4.3	4.3	6.5	--	0	0	5.7	4	9.6	8	36	20.5	21	26	42.3	42	43
Thailand	76	57	3.8	6	--	--	9.6	0	0	5.7	2	2.6	7	21	21.6	22	27	55.8	55	55
Vietnam	112	--	17.7	18	26.0	26.0	27.3	5	7.0	0#	0	4.4	5	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Taiwan	--	*20-1	12.9	14	19.1	22.2	20.9	--	15.6	>25+	--	1.4	1.4	--	14.3	14.8	15.9	--	--	--

Note: #Data in 1998. !Data in 1999. +Data in 2000. *Estimated.

Sources: Awakening Foundation Taiwan (2002), Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics (Taiwan), Division for the Advancement of Women (1996), Khofifah Indar Parawansa (2002), Rule (1994: 17, 23, 25), United Nations Development Programme (2000-2004).

Table 3.   Malaysia: Women in National Parliament, 1955-2003

	1955	1959	1964	1969	1974	1978	1982	1986	1990	1995	1999	2003
Total seats	52	104	104	144	154	154	154	177	180	192	193	--
Women MPs	1	3	3	2	5	7	8	7	11	15	20	--
%	2.0	2.9	2.9	1.4	3.3	4.5	5.2	4.0	6.1	7.8	10.4	16.3

Source: Wan Azizah (2002).

Table 4.   Malaysia: Women in State Legislatures, Local Councils, and Government, 1990-99

	State Legislatures		Local Councils		Federal Cabinet		State Cabinet		Mayors	
	Fe/Male	%	Fe/Male	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1990	15/428	3.5	--	--	2	8	--	--	--	--
1995	24/474	5.1	244/2785	8.1	2	8	10	6.3	0	0
1999	21/373	5.6	285/2921	8.9	2	8.3	--	--	1	0.7

Source: United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asian and the Pacific (UNESCAP).

Table 5.   Indonesia: Women in the DPR, 1950-2002

	1950-55	55-60	56-59*	71-77	77-82	82-87	87-92	92-97	97-99	1999-2002
Number	9	17	25	36	29	39	65	60	56	44
%	3.8	6.3	5.1	7.8	6.3	8.5	13.0	12.0	11.2	8.8

* Constituent Assembly formed by President Soekarno to revise the constitution. This assembly was dismissed in 1959 because it was deadlocked.
Source: Khofifah Indar Parawansa (2002).

Table 6. Taiwan: Women in the Legislatures and Local Government, 1950-2002

Year	Women Candidate #	Women Candidate %	Total seats	Gender quota #	Gender quota %	women winner #	women winner %
National Assembly (1969-1999; terminated in 2000)							
1969	2	6.9	15	2	13.3	2	13.3
1972	10	12.8	53	5	9.4	8	15.1
1980	17	9.2	76	7	9.2	12	15.8
1986	25	14.8	84	8	9.5	16	19.0
1991	--	--	325	--	--	42	12.9
1996	103	17	334	--	--	61	18.3
Legislative Yuan (Since 1969)							
1969	4	16.0	11	0	0	1	9.1
1972	6	10.9	36	3	8.3	4	11.1
1975	4	6.6	37	3	10.8	4	10.8
1980	17	7.8	70	5	7.1	7	10.0
1983	22	12.9	71	5	7.0	8	11.3
1986	12	8.8	100	6	6.0	8	8.0
1989	26	8.7	101	7	6.9	13	12.9
1992	46	11.4	161	10	6.2	17	10.6
1995	50	12.6	164	--	--	23	14.0
1998	86	17.3	225	--	--	43	19.1
2001	110	18.8	225	--	--	50	22.2
2004	--	--	225	--	--	47	20.9

Provincial Assembly (terminated in 1998)							
1951	12	8.6	55	5	9.1	5	9.1
1954	18	16.4	57	6	10.5	6	10.5
1957	22	18.6	66	9	13.6	9	13.6
1960	18	14.3	73	9	12.3	10	13.7
1963	14	10.2	74	9	12.2	10	13.5
1968	19	14.7	71	10	14.1	11	15.5
1972	21	17.4	73	10	13.6	12	16.4
1977	23	18.4	77	10	13.0	13	16.9
1981	34	17.1	77	9	11.7	10	13
1985	28	17.7	77	9	11.7	13	16.9
1989	30	19.1	77	9	11.7	14	18.2
1994	32	18.0	79	9	11.4	16	20.3
Taipei City Council							
1969	8	10.4	48	4	8.3	7	14.6
1973	8	12.7	49	4	8.2	7	14.3
1977	8	13.1	51	5	9.8	8	15.7
1981	11	13.3	51	5	9.8	7	13.7
1985	10	13.5	51	5	9.8	9	17.6
1989	24	24	51	5	9.8	10	19.6
1994	29	20	52	5	9.6	12	23.1
1998	27	25	52	5	9.6	17	32.7

2002	--	--	52	5	9.6	17	32.7
Kaohsiung City Council							
1981	15	18.5	42	5	11.9	6	14.3
1985	13	18.3	42	5	11.9	6	14.3
1989	14	14.9	43	5	11.6	6	14.0
1994	16	12	44	5	11.4	6	13.6
1998	14	14.4	44	5	11.4	5	11.4
2002	--	--	44	5	11.4	10	22.7
City/County Assemblies							
1950	116	6.3	814	70	8.6	69	8.5
1952	224	12.1	860	74	8.6	74	8.6
1954	142	9.0	928	94	10.1	94	10.1
1958	168	10.4	1025	102	10.0	101	9.9
1961	162	9.9	929	91	9.8	95	10.2
1964	230	14.7	907	108	11.9	123	13.6
1968	208	16.5	847	100	11.8	123	14.5
1973	206	13.9	850	99	11.6	119	14.0
1977	190	14.9	857	93	10.8	121	14.1
1982	226	13.4	799	89	11.1	115	14.4
1986	209	14.2	837	97	11.6	127	15.2
1990	265	15.2	842	--	--	128	15.2
1994	--	--	842	94	11.2	128	15.0

1998	316	16.2	891	--	--	151	17.0
2002	454	22.0	897	--	--	198	22.1
Township/Village Councils							
1952	--	--	5695	0	0	11	0.2
1954	--	--	6397	--	--	550	8.6
1958	--	--	6834	--	--	629	9.2
1961	1068	12	5260	--	--	660	12.5
1964	668	7.8	4776	--	--	411	8.6
1968	736	9.5	4709	--	--	497	10.6
1973	516	9.3	3757	--	--	378	10.1
1977	872	13.5	3793	--	--	488	12.9
1982	878	13.1	3700	397	10.7	490	13.2
1986	901	14.9	3754	417	11.1	560	14.9
1994	--	--	6317	--	--	937	14.8
1998	1104	16.5	3663	--	--	322	8.8
2002	--	--	3717	--	--	--	--
City Mayor/County Magistrate (Since 1951) * No women were elected to these executive positions before 1985							
1985	--	--	21	0	0	2	9.5
1989	--	--	21	0	0	3	14.3
1994	--	--	23	0	0	1	4.3
1997	5	6.6	23	0	0	3	13.0
2001	--	--	23	0	0	2	8.7

Township/Village Mayors (terminated in 2006)						
1994	--	--	309	0	0	6	1.9
1998	67	7.6	319	0	0	18	5.6
2002	67	7.5	319	0	0	19	6.0

Sources: Chou & Clark (1994: 164-166), Lee (2000: 53-55), Ministry of Personnel (1997), Taiwan Women's Link, Awakening Foundation Taiwan (1999).

Table 7.   Malaysia: Women in Public Administration, 1999

	Federal		State Provincial		Local	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Chief Secretary to the Government	0	0	0	0	0	0
Staff Post (1-3 Levels)	1	5.9	0	0	0	0
Superscale Level (A,B,C)	21	10.9	0	0	0	0
Professional and the management	30965	50	517	15.6	135	22.7

Source: The Information Technology Unit, Public Service Department, Malaysia.

Table 8.   Indonesia: Women in Public Administration, 2000

	Men		Women		Total		Women at each Echelon %
	#	% of men	#	% of women	#	%	
Posts with decision-making power							
Echelon I (director generals, deputies)	235	0.1	31	0.1	266	0.1	12
Echelon II (directors, bureau chiefs)	1359	0.8	72	0.2	1431	0.7	5
Echelon III (section chiefs)	14379	8.2	1374	4.2	15753	7.5	9
Echelon IV (subsection chiefs)	64814	36.8	10637	32.2	75451	36.0	14
Echelon V (Uuit chiefs)	95532	54.2	20901	63.3	116433	55.6	18
Total	**176319**	**100.0**	**33015**	**100.0**	**209334**	**100.0**	**16**
Civil Service level (individual civil servants)							
Level IV (highest)	91677	3.7	36444	2.5	128121	3.2	28
III	1167710	47.4	821734	55.3	1989444	50.4	41
II	972193	39.5	600310	40.4	1572503	39.9	38
I	229434	9.3	26276	1.8	255710	6.5	10
Total	**2461014**	**100.0**	**1484764**	**100.0**	**3945778**	**100.0**	**38**

Source: Mayling Oey-Gardiner (2002: 108-109).

Table 9: Taiwan: Women in Public Administration, 1981-1996

Year	Sex	Ministers w/o portfolio		High-rank official Level 10-14		Middle-rank Level 6-9 (%)	Lower-rank level 1-5 (%)	Employed staff (%)	Educational personnel (%)	Total official	
		number	%	number	%					Number	%
1981	Male	125	0.028	12814	2.89	14.79	27.71	8.50	16.46	311,772	70.38
	Female	0	0.000	289	0.07	2.03	9.29	3.54	14.69	131,219	29.62
1986	Male	136	0.027	15602	3.13	14.69	25.04	9.97	7.49	339,908	68.13
	Female	0	0.000	636	0.13	2.85	11.71	3.51	14.55	159,001	31.87
1991	Male	184	0.032	9424	1.64	16.28	26.88	6.56	12.67	368,115	64.06
	Female	0	0.000	413	0.07	4.88	12.73	2.42	15.84	206,543	35.94
1992	Male	188	0.032	9782	1.65	16.14	26.36	6.75	12.53	376,248	63.46
	Female	0	0.000	585	0.10	5.25	12.69	2.64	15.87	216,728	36.55
1993	Male	231	0.038	9958	1.64	16.03	26.11	6.59	12.87	384,477	63.29
	Female	0	0.000	714	0.12	5.54	12.91	2.58	15.56	222,980	36.71
1994	Male	269	0.044	9750	1.59	15.95	26.21	6.34	12.54	383,875	62.67
	Female	23	0.004	777	0.13	5.77	12.86	2.53	16.04	228,639	37.33
1995	Male	268	0.043	9658	1.56	15.85	25.54	6.34	12.67	383,238	62.00
	Female	23	0.004	869	0.14	6.93	12.32	2.52	16.09	234,932	38.00
1996	Male	305	0.049	9604	1.54	16.09	25.09	6.13	12.31	381,116	61.20
	Female	24	0.004	990	0.16	7.44	12.06	2.58	16.56	241,583	38.80

Note: all figures from various data sources (listed below) are re-calculated by the author.
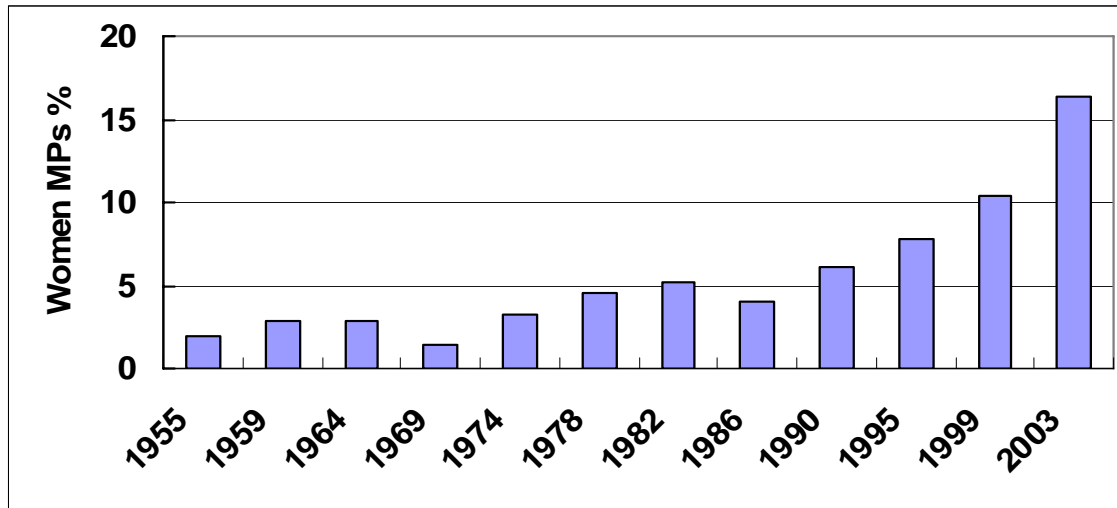
Sources: Awakening Foundation Taiwan (1999), Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics (Taiwan); Ministry of Personnel (1997); Taiwan Women Web.

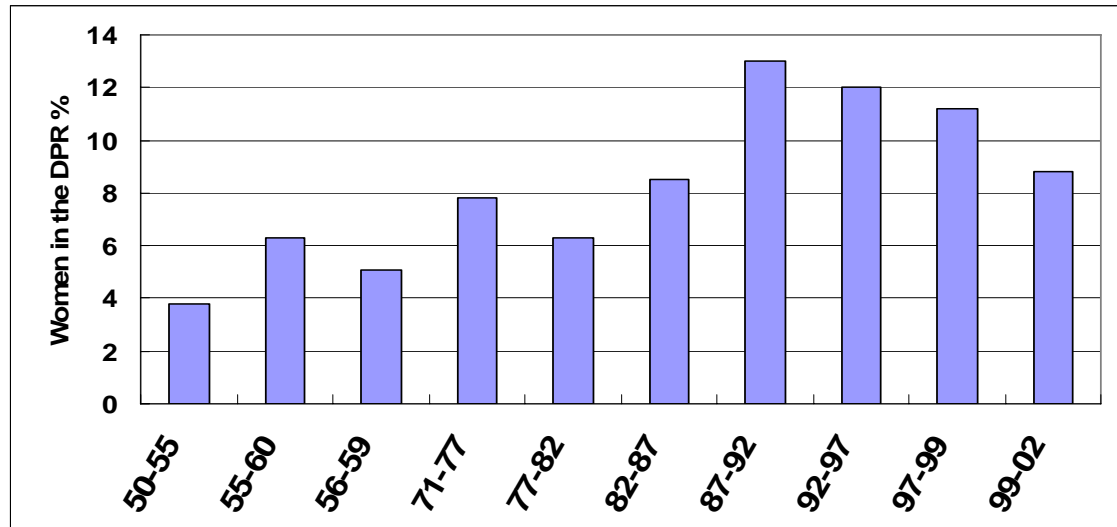## Table 10: Taiwan: Women in Public Administration, by Length of Service, 1996

Class of Work	Gender	Under 5 years	1- 10 years	11- 15 years	16- 20 years	21-25 years	26 years & over	Total
Ministers w/o portfolio	Male	52	14	18	18	33	141	276
	Female	8	0	1	2	3	5	19
High rank	Male	429	334	726	959	1,123	2,255	5,826
	Female	45	49	128	156	134	101	613
Middle-rank	Male	8,452	7,131	7,541	6,091	4,108	8,842	42,165
	Female	5,995	4,424	4,470	2,488	1,270	1,108	19,755
Lower rank	Male	14,563	7,690	5,738	3,665	2,108	3,815	37,849
	Female	21,541	6,765	5,272	2,883	1,798	1,867	40,026
Total	Male	23,444	15,425	14,005	10,715	7,339	14,912	85,840
	%	27.31	17.97	16.32	12.48	8.54	17.37	100
	Female	27,581	11,238	9,870	5,531	3,202	3,076	60,394
	%	45.67	18.61	16.34	9.15	5.30	5.09	100

Sources: Taiwan Women Web, Ministry of Personnel (1997).

Graph 1.   Malaysia: Women in National Parliament, 1955-2003

Graph 2. Indonesia: Women in the DPR, 1950-2002

Graph 3. Taiwan: Women in the Legislatures

Legend:
- National Assembly
- Legislative Yuan
- Provincial Assembly
- Taipei City Council
- Kaohsiung City Council
- City/County Assemblies
- Township/village Councils