

Vote Patterns and Political Participation of New Immigrants from Indonesia in Taiwan Presidential Election (2024)



Yuherina Gusman¹, Wildan Faisol², Sekar Ajeng Hapsari³

^{1,2,3} Department of International Relations, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Al-Azhar Indonesia

ABSTRACT: This study aims to analyze the vote patterns of new immigrants from Indonesia in the 2024 Taiwan presidential election as a form of political participation. This study used a qualitative research method with the primary data collected by conducting in-depth interviews with 20 Indonesian new immigrants living in Taipei, New Taipei City, Taoyuan, Chungli, Neili, and Keelung. The theory of political participation and vote patterns was used to elaborate the findings. The research found that Indonesian new immigrants participate fairly well in politics, despite only being on a conventional level. Voicing the needs of Muslim new immigrants is one of the reasons new immigrants from Indonesia are involved in political participation. Due to educational and time constraints, most new immigrants from Indonesia prefer not to participate in non-conventional levels and higher forms of political participation. The vote patterns formed are independent voters (80%) and dependent voters (20%).

KEYWORDS: political participation, vote patterns, Indonesian new immigrants, presidential election, Taiwan elections, foreign brides

I. INTRODUCTION

New immigrants have a significant role in the development of democracy in Taiwan. Data from the National Immigration Agency – Ministry of the Interior, Taiwan (2024) states that there are at least 600,302 new immigrants from mixed-marriage couples domiciled in Taiwan, with 60% coming from China and 30% from Southeast Asia. Indonesia is the second-largest source of new immigrants from Southeast Asia, after Vietnam, with a total of 29,671 people. This large number makes their political rights an important issue for many governments, both by home and host countries. As a result, several studies have been conducted to observe the political participation of immigrants in many countries.

Finn and Vintila's research demonstrates an increasing trend of political participation among immigrants. They state that migrant political participation is not limited to the conventional level, but has grown beyond it. Conventional forms of political participation include participating in elections, communicating and providing direct input to government representatives, engaging in campaigns, attending political activities, and joining certain political parties. Non-conventional forms of political participation include marches, protests, boycotts, social media protests, and sit-ins. Momesso (2022) named this phenomenon as migrant political integration (MGI). MGI refers to the processes and factors that allow immigrants to actively participate in their host country's political life. This integration is critical for fostering social cohesion and ensuring that the interests of many populations are represented in political decision-making. Furthermore, MGI is a method of determining how well societies in the host country can transform the cultural diversity created by the migration process into resources for democracy development. MGI, as applied in many European nations, is used to increase immigrant participation in mainstream political institutions, reducing feelings of alienation and facilitating the integration process, hence avoiding societal instability. Taiwan, as one of the countries with a relatively large migrant population, has begun to pay attention to the presence of new immigrants in its political landscape. New immigrants in Taiwan are considered to be able to influence local politics, particularly in areas with a high concentration of new residents, such as New Taipei City, Taoyuan, and Kaohsiung. However, their impact has not been significant in influencing Taiwanese politics at the macro level. Only 289,024 of Taiwan's 574,852 new immigrants from mixed marriages, or approximately 1.5%, can participate in elections. However, their votes are quite important in local elections. As in the 2022 local elections, many politicians made a variety of campaign pledges to win voters among new immigrants. The number of candidates proposing immigrant policies this year was slightly higher than in 2018, increasing from 11.6% to 11.8%. A significant increase occurred in mayoral candidacy, reaching 22.5% in 2022 from 16.1% in 2018 (CEC, 2023).

Political promises to attract voters among new immigrants include having an annual New Immigrant Day celebration, establishing an Immigrant Museum, expanding the New Immigrant Economy, and forming an autonomous organization to address

new immigrant issues. This method was successful in electing 58.2% of candidates who advocated for immigrant policy in local elections (Giang Nguyen & Terchalertkamol, 2022). This demonstrates that the presence of new immigrants in Taiwan is becoming increasingly important politically, and that their political participation is a fascinating issue to investigate further.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Political participation is an action that citizens undertake to influence the political system and express their opinions on how society should be run. Voting, protesting, participating in public consultations, advocating for problems through interaction with public authorities, campaigning at the local, regional, or national level, and engaging in the election process outside of voting are all examples of common types of political participation. Political participation is an essential component of a democratic system, as it ensures that the government represents the will of the people. Furthermore, political participation reduces the distance between citizens and institutions, hence improving social cohesion and democratic quality (Soare & Gherghina, 2024). However, not every element of society is willing to participate politically. According to Goksu & Leerkes (2022), there are three reasons why people do not wish to participate in politics: (1) they do not have the right to be involved; (2) they choose not to be involved; or (3) no one invited them to participate.

Immigrants represent an important part of today's society. Over the last few decades, the global migrant population has grown significantly. According to IOM data, there are currently at least 281 million migrants worldwide, accounting for 3.6% of the global population (IOM, 2022). The enormous amount makes their political rights an essential concern for many governments, both in the home and host countries. However, their existence is not reflected in democratic institutions and policies (Rosca, 2019) along with minimal political participation. According to Momesso (2022), the political integration of migrants is a measure of the receiving society's ability to accommodate its cultural diversity into a resource for democratic progress. For example, in numerous European countries, immigrant communities are encouraged to participate in political institutions to facilitate assimilation and prevent the creation of societal instability. Political participation allows migrants to learn more about democracy while also developing a sense of belonging and shared identity. Furthermore, political participation is an effective instrument for conveying information about immigrants' contributions to society and promoting social change. In Taiwan, immigrant political participation has increased in recent years, particularly among new migrants.

Research conducted by Giang and Techalertkamol (2022) revealed that as many as 1.5% of new immigrants participated in elections. The political participation of these new immigrants is not only in elections but also by actively participating in electoral campaigns and forming their political entities. Major political parties, who have included them in consultation committees and the founding of independent parties, have also noticed their existence. In 2016, the Kuomintang (KMT) nominated Lin Li-chan, a new immigrant from Cambodia, to serve in the Legislative Yuan. This marked a significant step in the representation of new immigrant groups. Lin Li-chan became the first and to date the only new immigrant council member in Taiwan who served from 2016 to 2020. In addition to the Kuomintang, Taiwan's other two major parties, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) and the Taiwan People's Party (TPP), promote a better living for new immigrants in Taiwan. The DPP strongly promotes the rights and social welfare of new immigrants, particularly those from Southeast Asia. During Tsai Ying Wen's presidency, the DPP encouraged cultural and social links with ASEAN countries through the New Southbound Policy, while also improving the status of new immigrants and their families. Meanwhile, the TPP is more realistic and aims to attract young people who value inclusive policies (Y. Tseng, 2019).

Various points of view and concerns emerged within Taiwanese society regarding the major parties' approach toward new immigrants. The KMT, for example, has been criticized for being inconsistent in its struggle for new immigrants' rights. The KMT is thought to be more supportive of new Chinese immigrants than those from Southeast Asia. The KMT's image of new immigrants as "gold diggers" or victims of exploitation weakens their place in society and discriminates against them. This reduces their contribution to society and impedes their integration process. The KMT is additionally considered to have neglected to take significant legislative actions that sufficiently dealt with new immigrants' rights. For example, access to health care, labor rights, and the naturalization procedure remain impediments that have not been effectively addressed under KMT government. Furthermore, KMT immigration policies frequently reflect a national security mindset that views new immigrants as threats rather than helpful contributors to society (Thanh Ha & Cheng Isabelle, 2021). Meanwhile, regarding DPP, the public considers the DPP is taking too long to respond to concerns with new immigrants compared to the KMT. KMT has dealt with these issues for more than two decades. Another criticism is directed at the DPP's decision to emphasize new immigrants from Southeast Asia while ignoring the needs of other groups, particularly those from mainland China. This selective strategy is feared to exacerbate conflicts within migrant communities. Furthermore, the DPP's efforts to involve new immigrants in political conversations have been condemned as purely symbolic, with no practical impact on new immigrants (H. Tseng, 2016; Zheng, 2023).

According to the explanation above, there has been a substantial development in the political participation of new immigrants in Taiwan. Even new immigrants participate not only as voters in general elections but also as council members. However, new immigrants only have one representation in the legislative Yuan, which is insufficient in comparison to other minority groups. The Indigenous Taiwanese group, with a total population of 589,038, nearly equal to the entire number of new immigrants, has four

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representative seats in the Legislative Yuan (*The Indigenous World 2024_ Taiwan - IWG...*, n.d.). The absence of representation by new immigrants will undoubtedly influence policies aimed at them and their families.

Therefore, more research is needed to determine how political participation has affected government policies that support new immigrants. Furthermore, there are not many studies in the field of migration studies that examine how new immigrants engage in Taiwanese politics. Furthermore, there is relatively little information on how other democracies with sizable immigrant populations manage migrant integration and political participation because most research on migrant political participation has been conducted in North America and Europe (Momesso, 2022). Referring to this, this paper aims to enrich the literature on the political participation of new immigrants in the Asian region by analyzing the political participation of new immigrants from Indonesia in Taiwan. More specifically, this study explains the voting patterns of new immigrants from Indonesia in the presidential election in Taiwan.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study used qualitative research methods, which are a sequence of scientific research activities designed to understand phenomena by prioritizing the process of in-depth communication contact between researchers and the phenomenon under consideration (Purhantara, 2010). One of the strengths of the qualitative technique is the ability to describe observed events using narrative rather than statistical means. The power of the words and sentences employed has a significant impact on the analysis and clarity of qualitative research. Mcleod (2023) highlights that the procedure and interpretation of qualitative research results are the most important aspects.

The data in this study consists of primary data acquired from in-depth interviews with 20 new Indonesian immigrants in Taiwan, located in Taipei, New Taipei City, Taoyuan, Neili, Chungli, and Keelung. Interviews were conducted at the respondents' residences in September 2024. Respondents were selected using the snowball sampling method, with each respondent recommending other respondents who fit the requirements. The respondents were asked about their experiences participating in the general election process after undergoing the naturalization process in Taiwan. Thus, the informant must meet the following conditions to become a respondent: 1) Married or were married to a Taiwanese; 2) Domiciled in Taiwan, including divorced new immigrants; and 3) Possess a Taiwanese ID card, indicating that they have completed the naturalization process to become Taiwanese citizens.

The data gathered was then classified and processed according to the theory of immigrant political participation, and voting patterns were evaluated using a model established by Kim and Vang. The basic argument of the political participation theory is that citizen participation in politics assists in narrowing the gap between citizens and allows immigrants to contribute to the improvement of social cohesion and the quality of democracy. In other words, immigrant political participation might be interpreted as a sign of integration. In the political domain, this integration will involve political participation in the same form and subject as the participation of native residents (Kende et al., 2024).

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Respondent Characteristics

According to the interview data, there were 20 respondents aged 35-55 who had been married to Taiwanese for an average of 18.95 years, or between 13 and 24 years. Three respondents were divorced due to domestic abuse, forced to separate by her husband's family and afterwards remarried, and because her husband passed away. A total of 18 respondents had children ranging in age from one to three, while the other two had not been blessed with sons or daughters. All respondents were employed, with the majority working in the private sector as restaurant employees, while others worked in manufacturing, certified elderly caregivers, cleaning services, or as owners of Indonesian shops or restaurants. Almost all respondents worked in two or three places at the same time, earning between 40,000 and 60,000 NT each month. The majority of responders were junior and high school graduates, with only 30% having graduated from universities in Indonesia. They live in northern Taiwan, particularly in areas densely populated with new immigrants from Southeast Asia: Taipei, New Taipei City, Neili, Taoyuan, Chungli, and Keelung.

Gusman et al. (2024) in their research on new immigrants from Indonesia to Taiwan stated that there were three waves of new immigrants from Indonesia entering Taiwan. The first wave was foreign brides from Singkawang, West Kalimantan, Indonesia, which was significant in number in the late 1980s. In this first wave, the majority of new immigrants from Indonesia were women of ethnic Chinese descent. They migrated as foreign brides to seek better economic opportunities. The process of finding a partner and marriage was assisted by an agency commonly known as *Mak Comblang*. The second wave occurred in 2002 when many prospective migrant workers from Indonesia entered Taiwan through marriage. At this time, the Taiwanese government limited the number of migrant workers from Indonesia due to the high number of illegal migrant workers, so the government temporarily stopped receiving workers from Indonesia. However, due to the high demand in Taiwan, many agencies sent prospective workers with marriage visas. Some of these workers married Taiwanese men in their real lives, while others had fictitious marriages. The third wave began in the 2010s when many Indonesian-Taiwanese couples married purely because of love. This was due to the increasing number of migrant workers from Indonesia interacting with Taiwanese men. In this study, the majority of respondents were new immigrants who entered Taiwan through the second wave (90%).

B. Overview of New Immigrants from Indonesia in Taiwan

In general, new immigrants from Southeast Asia have great difficulty in adapting to their new lives in Taiwan, which often results in stress and conflict, and even makes it difficult for them to raise their children. They face economic difficulties because most of their husbands are not from wealthy families, and it is difficult for them to get decent jobs. They were isolated because they came to Taiwan alone and did not have a strong support system. They also face discrimination and are even considered the cause of social problems because their marriages are considered fake, their qualities are considered not good enough to be the mothers of the next generation of Taiwan, and they are accused to be wasting social welfare funds. They also confront several legal obstacles, such as Taiwan's legal statutes that require a person to have a citizenship identity card to get state benefits or rights. On the other hand, the government makes the naturalization process more difficult for them (Hsia, 2021; Yang & Chang, 2017). New immigrants from Indonesia encounter similar conditions as other new immigrants. The challenges they encounter are significantly heavier because of their Muslim identity. Muslim immigrant brides frequently face cultural misconceptions and social discrimination from Taiwanese culture. Many are deemed social difficulties, resulting in a bad connotation among the Taiwanese community. This stigma causes feelings of exclusion and distrust toward the surrounding community, particularly among new immigrants who have experienced domestic violence or abuse (Gusman et al., 2024).

In 2012, the Ministry of the Interior launched the New Immigrant Torch Project to assist in the adaptation and assimilation of new immigrants to Taiwan. A total of ten projects on learning about Taiwanese society, language, and culture for new immigrants were implemented with funding exceeding NT\$100 million. Currently, the budget available to government and private organizations to assist and empower new immigrants is NT\$200 million per year. The activities focused on the following four activities: a) New Immigrant Social Security Network Services; b) Multiculturalism and child development of new immigrant families; c) Family service centers and innovative services for new immigrants; and d) Talent Development and Industrial Revitalization Plan (YW, Yang). Beginning in 2014, there was a shift in attitudes regarding new immigrants and their children. Those who were formerly deemed social problems were reclassified as social assets (Liang et al., 2020). Children of these mixed marriages, originally known as New Taiwan Children (NTC), have changed into Second-Generation Immigrants (SGI). The designation of SGI indicates that the government and Taiwanese society are increasingly accepting of the presence of new immigrants and their children. Especially when President Tsai Ying Wen seized over the government and implemented the New Southbound Policy, which established SGI as the primary cornerstone for Taiwan's future collaboration with ASEAN countries, Australia, and India.

Taiwan's government aims to integrate Southeast Asian languages into elementary schools' compulsory education curriculum. This curriculum requires students to choose one of four languages: Taiwanese, Hakka, an Indigenous language, or a new immigrant language. In junior high, these languages are optional, whereas in high school, they are the second foreign language. Currently, almost 20,000 students are enrolled in new immigrant language classes, with over 800 new and second-generation immigrants serving as support teachers. The Ministry of Education will implement the "New Immigrant Talent Cultivation Project" from 2024 to 2027, with three key goals: developing the skills of new immigrant children, empowering new immigrants, and creating a welcoming and inclusive society. The law also protects children of new immigrants and foreign nationals living in Taiwan under various immigration schemes, such as professionals and investors with APRCs (Alien Permanent Resident Certificates). This law was passed after a long journey experienced by new immigrants in Taiwan where many of them experienced various difficulties in adapting to the language, culture, and daily life in Taiwan. This law requires the government to provide eight services for new immigrants, including a) consultation services, especially marriage, family, and psychological consultation; b) health services, including medical health services and maternal and child health services; c) labor rights protection and job placement services; d) cultural education and empowerment through Mandarin language classes and cultural integration programs; e) multilingual services; f) new immigrant family service centers; g) community involvement, by encouraging new immigrants to participate in community activities and promoting integration into Taiwanese society; h) information dissemination through multilingual hotlines that provide information on housing, employment, taxes, social welfare, and other topics.

According to the 2023 New Immigration Needs Survey, which was published on July 19, 2023 by the National Immigration Agency-Ministry of the Interior, the labor force participation rate of new immigrants has increased, demonstrating the effectiveness of the series of projects. In total, 31.5% of new immigrants engaged in local social activities, 14.2% of new immigrants expressed interest in launching a business, and their average family income increased. In addition, 77.3% of new immigrants over 50 wish to retire in Taiwan, 92% of them said they were happy, and 63% have used government-provided care services for new immigrants. Despite positive advances in Taiwanese society's policies and treatment of new immigrants, new immigrants continue to confront numerous difficulties, challenges, and barriers. In response to these circumstances, Taiwan's Legislative Yuan passed a new law targeted at new immigrants on July 17, 2024, mandating the Ministry of Interior to establish a new administrative agency to assist them in dealing with the difficulties they face in adjusting to life in Taiwan. In this instance, new immigrants include foreign nationals, stateless people, and those from China, Hong Kong, or Macau who are allowed to live in Taiwan (as dependents, long-term, or permanent residents), or whose spouses are Taiwanese citizens and whose marriages are

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recognized in Taiwan. According to this definition, the category of new immigrants primarily includes foreign brides and children, as well as other eligible foreign people.

For new immigrants from Indonesia, a prevalent issue that has received little attention from the government is their minority status as new immigrants and Muslims. Religious differences are a major source of contention for new Indonesian immigrant families, particularly when confronted with Taiwanese families' patriarchal culture. Not all extended families can accept a Muslim daughter-in-law, let alone demand their children and husbands to practice the faith they believe in. This discrepancy frequently causes trouble for new immigrant families with their husband's relatives. Raising children according to Islamic traditions presents its own set of challenges. Challenges also occur when raising children according to Islamic teachings. The problem lies in the limited knowledge of new immigrants and the considerable external pressure so that often children from new immigrant families after entering adolescence to adulthood lose their Islamic identity.

C. Political Participation of New Immigrants from Indonesia in Taiwan

Indonesia has the third-largest new immigrant population in Taiwan, after China (60.74%) and Vietnam (19.81%), with 37,053 or 5.37% of the new immigrant population coming from Indonesia. The political participation of new Indonesian immigrants will undoubtedly be crucial, particularly in assisting their assimilation and integration process. From the interview process conducted in this study, it was found that the majority forms of political participation of new immigrants from Indonesia are still at the conventional level, such as participating in general elections both at the local and national levels. 90% of respondents stated that they participated in the election because they wanted to be directly involved in the policy-making process that favoured new immigrants by entrusting their votes to candidates they believed would fight for them. Only 10% stated that their participation in the election was only to enliven it. Several respondents even stated that they were directly involved in political party campaigns in the Taiwanese presidential election which took place on January 13, 2024.

Because the new immigrants from Indonesia gathering in this study are those who arrive in the second and third waves, and they were all Muslims, one of the reasons they actively participate in political activities in Taiwan is to express their concerns as new Muslim immigrants. Currently, the government and private sector have assisted new immigrants in establishing their independence and forming their own union. However, efforts to address the needs of new Muslim immigrants through their own union remain limited.

“We first intended to start a foreign brides association (Indonesians who married in Taiwan) in our city that would be exclusively for Muslims. Because, so far, many of those who have joined the government-formed associations are foreign brides from the first wave who are not Muslims. We felt our voices had not been heard. It's simply that, in the end, the government proposed that the association we formed not be limited to Muslims because not all foreign brides from Indonesia are Muslim. We followed what the government advised, but we gradually began to express our requirements as Muslim foreign brides. For example, we ask our members to take Mandarin classes at the mosque. So that government teachers have a chance to interact with mosque officers. Through the interaction, the teachers begin to understand Muslims' demands. Our colleagues who are entrusted to teach the Indonesian language in the schools are gradually incorporating knowledge about Muslim living in Taiwan. For example, at cultural events, we all wear hijabs and explain what is hijab and why we use it. When providing Indonesian cuisine, we include information regarding halal foods.” (Melati, 45 years old, Taoyuan)

According to Melati's statement above, new immigrants from Indonesia recognize the need to be directly involved in expressing their aspiration. Some of them even actively participate in one of Taiwan's major political parties.

Regarding new immigrants as parliament members, all respondents agreed and were eager to support candidates who were willing to express their concerns, particularly about life as a Muslim. However, they were unsure if the persons offered were new immigrants from Indonesia due to educational concerns. All respondents were skeptical about the abilities of new immigrants from Indonesia as parliament members, who were largely junior high or high school graduates. Currently, some new immigrants from Indonesia have won scholarships from the Taiwanese government to further their study to the Masters level. However, they are not currently interested in running for parliament member as representatives of Muslim foreign brides from Indonesia. In addition to educational issues, time constraints make it difficult for new immigrants from Indonesia to participate in politics. 75% of respondents work in two or three places at once to meet family needs. Most of the work they do is manual labor. So, in addition to the lack of time, they are discouraged if they are required to engage in extra duties as part of their political participation.

D. The Vote Patterns and Political Participation of New Immigrants from Indonesia in the 2024 Presidential Election in Taiwan

In their study on the political participation of married immigrants in South Korea, Kim and Vang (2022) identified three types of immigrants voting patterns: independent voters, dependent voters, and transitional voters. Independent or self-reliant voters are those who decide who they will vote for without being pressured or coerced by outside parties, such as their husbands or extended family. According to their research, independent voters typically live only with their nuclear family, not with their

husband's extended family or those who are divorced. Dependent voters are those who make their decisions depending on input and interference from their husband or his family. This is due to their lack of knowledge concerning the political structure, history, and candidates being nominated. Meanwhile, transitional voters are those who shift their initial preferences, which were made by their husband or his family, to their own. This transformation develops as a result of interactions with other migrants who believe their husband or his family has no authority to "teach" them. By making the move, these immigrants are indirectly attempting to change their place within the family. They have always been subjugated, regarded as incapable of independence, and deprived of information.

This study found similarities between what happened in Korea and new immigrants from Indonesia in Taiwan, however, the new immigrants from Indonesia in Taiwan tend to be more independent. Nearly 80% of Indonesian new immigrants in Taiwan are independent voters. They learn about the candidates from television or discussions with their spouses, coworkers, campaigns, and foreign bride organizations. 70% of respondents live solely with their nuclear families, limiting the influence of their spouses or husbands' families in their political decisions. Another factor to consider is that the majority of them have resided in Taiwan for over ten years, thus the 2024 presidential election was not their first time voting.

"My boss frequently criticizes my choice of president. He always persuades me to change my mind, but he never forces me. My husband and his relatives also do not have the same options as me. However, this is not a problem for our family, because we have always been used to diversity and appreciate each other's choices." (Mida, 44 years old, Taipei)

Lini, who has lived with her mother-in-law and sister-in-law since the beginning of her marriage, had the same opinion as Mida.

"I live with my mother and sister-in-law. Thank God, they are both incredibly kind and never meddle with my or my husband's affairs. This includes making a preference in the presidential election. I'm not sure what my husband, mother-in-law, or sister-in-law would choose. We never discuss it. But I can predict who my husband, mother-in-law, and sister-in-law will pick. They also appear to understand who I choose. But we never have a problem with it. We only debated while watching television together, about the presidential nomination. But it ends there—small debates just for fun. This year, my two sons took part in the election, and I never forced them to vote for my candidate. At most, I merely coax them a little; for example, I tell them that I chose this presidential candidate because he supports Islam. Many of the reforms he implemented while in office were aimed at making life easier for Muslims. However, I leave the decision to my children." (Lini, 44 years old, Taipei)

The difference in vote patterns between marriage migrants in Korea and Taiwan is due to Korea's more patriarchal cultural features. Likewise, in terms of free expression and democracy, Taiwan appears to allow more people at all levels of society to participate and make their own decisions. However certain groups in society continue to oppose new immigrants' involvement as active voters in elections.

"You're a foreigner. You know nothing about Taiwanese politics. So, you are not required to vote in the election." (Mia, 47, Neili)

Mia, who had spent decades working in the family bakery, depicts the above sentence. Mia's brother-in-law, who was also the boss at the bakery where she worked, made the statement. Mia decided to ignore what her brother-in-law said. Mia's first ten years of marriage were miserable due to the pressures of her brother-in-law and her husband's family. However, after her children were independent, Mia decided to socialize more, particularly with other recent immigrants. Mia enrolled in government-sponsored Mandarin classes and joined a foreign bride organization. In this organization, Mia gained confidence and gradually dared to challenge her brother-in-law and her husband's family. In the 2024 presidential election, Mia made her political decision without anyone's orders or the involvement of her husband's family. Mia decided based on what she learned from her engaging and discussion with other new immigrants. Mia even attended all of the presidential candidate campaigns to comprehend their visions and missions before selecting one of them.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates the significance of immigrant political engagement, not only in the development of a healthier democracy in the host country but also in facilitating the process of immigrant integration and assimilation. In Taiwan, new immigrants are frequently labeled negatively and subjected to discrimination since they are viewed as a burden on the country and undeserving of being mothers to the next generation of Taiwanese children. Attitudes toward them are gradually shifting, along with changes in government policies that are more welcoming to new immigrants, particularly those from Southeast Asia. Those who were once deemed a societal problem have now become national assets. The political participation of new immigrants, conventional and non-conventional, influences policy changes and public views. Although new immigrants' political participation in Taiwan is still limited, efforts to improve the situation appear to be supported.

For new immigrants from Indonesia, political participation remains limited to voting and engaging in government-sponsored programs or activities. The main barriers to their involvement in various forms of political participation are a lack of education

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and limited time. In the 2024 presidential election, the majority of new immigrants from Indonesia are independent voters who are well-informed about the presidential candidate or candidates they support. They can obtain this information through news or television programs, chats with coworkers, relatives, and other new immigrants, and by closely monitoring each candidate's political campaigns.

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