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CHIHAN CHOU : VIETNAMESE BRIDES' COPING STRATEGIES WITH STIGMATIZATION IN TAIWAN. ADVISOR: ASSOC. PROF. SORAVIS JAYANAMA, 95 pp.

Since the 1980s, due to rapid industrialization and urbanization, Taiwan has faced the novel phenomenon of "global householding," indicating the increasing needs of Taiwanese males to find spouses from Mainland China and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) (Lin, 2012). However, considering more social and criminal problems, the Taiwanese government implemented border interviews in 2004, and then the rate of the transnational marriage sharply decreased to 23.82 percent that year. These foreign-born spouses migrating from countries of a lower socioeconomic level face prejudiced expectations and commercial manipulation of marriage brokers; these conditions worsen their situation in Taiwan. Studies related to transnational marriage are numerous. T.C. Lin (2007) contends that the coping strategies that foreign brides in Taiwan have adopted to cope with stigma are: decreasing the frequency of their interactions with the locals, hiding their identities as foreign brides, isolating themselves and being distant from others, and softly using their resources to cope with stigma, and actively fighting back with threatening strategies. However, recently, it is common to observe the Vietnamese restaurants open on the street, some Vietnamese brides gathering outside and speaking Vietnamese in public, which has completely contradicted with what Erving Goffman has asserted that people carrying with spoiled character tends to readjust stigmatized identity on the stage and off the stage. This writer finds out some employed Vietnamese brides don't hesitate to openly display Vietnamese ethnicity in certain conditions in order to cope with demeaning stigma under certain conditions. They display their differences from rather than seeking similarities with the Taiwanese. Thus, the writer argues that as the number of the Vietnamese brides in Taiwan has grown since 1960s, and as their network has grown and they have gained employment outside the household, the group of employed Vietnamese brides who arrived in Taiwan in the mid-1990s and later are more assertive than Vietnamese housewives to represent or reproduce their Vietnamese ethnicity to openly cope with stigmatization in Taiwan. The research findings show that employed Vietnamese brides tend to openly acknowledge Vietnamese culture and to adopt challenging strategies to cope with stigma. However, Vietnamese housewives tend to adopt passive coping strategies, including hiding their Vietnamese identity and avoiding contact the locals. There is a positive correlation between employment and willingness to reveal Vietnamese identity. Additionally, it also indicates that employment offers extra resources to cope with stigma and also redefines Vietnamese brides in the journey of transnational marriage.

Field of Study: International Development Studies.. Student's Signature *Chihan Chou*
Academic Year:.....2012..... Advisor's Signature *[Signature]*