

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

5.1 Conclusion

Based on the explanations, this thesis has explored how South Korea navigates the complex intersection of international gender equality norms and traditional Confucian discourse, particularly during the Yoon Seuk-yeol administrations. While international framework such as CEDAW and institutions like UN and OECD continue to exert for policy alignment, South Korea's internal political shift and cultural foundations have shown both resistance and adaption.

Despite the ongoing surge of anti-feminist discourse that re-emerged more to the surface under the Yoon presidency, data reveals that gender-related policy initiatives continue to expand, it showed the formal rejection of feminism does not necessarily halt institutional development. However, these advancements often reflect selective interpretation rather than full internalizations. The government's focus on economic incentives, family policy, and labor-related reforms tend to frame gender equality within the bounds of national interest, rather than as social rights.

Confucian values remain strong undercurrent, influencing norms are interpreted by both public and also institutions. Grass rooted ideas about family hierarchy, gender roles, and social harmony continue to shape responses to feminist discourse and often served as justifications for the backlash mostly by many men who view gender as threat to "fairness," Regardless, the women's activism in South Korea has evolved. From movements and beyond, expressing resistances towards the nonstop traditional Confucian discourse, specifically about the objectifications

towards women. These acts of everyday protest are just as vital as institutional reforms, and they reveal that norm change is never top-down alone. Instead, it is negotiated, challenged, and reshaped in every level of society.

South Korea, as a country stands at a crossroads. While it's formal commitment to international norms remain intact, domestic contestation from the political, social, and cultural spheres continue to serve as the main force of reshaping the gender equality norms. The future of this norm in South Korea depends not only on legal policy, but on the country's own ability to confront to its internal contradictions. Ultimately, the future of gender equality does not rest in treaties alone either, but in power of collective voices and the willingness of the state to make rooms for interpretations of equality that honor both global aspirations and local truths.

5.2. Recommendations

Based on the findings in this research, while it outlines how South Korea engages with international gender equality amidst traditional Confucian traditions, there remains a need for more detailed analysis of how specific local actors. These actors may be the local government, school curricula, or even religious institutions that either resist or facilitate the norm adaption within everyday level. Additionally, further research could examine how gender equality is negotiated differently across multiple group, regions, and social classes. As this thesis focused primarily on state-level analysis, future work could incorporate interviews and even local studies to capture lived experiences and perceptions of gender equality in more diverse

context. Lastly, as this research applied norm contestation theory, it's suggested deeply to dive it deeply not only related to gender equality but other marginalized community rights or reproductive justice, as it might reveal a broader structure of Confucian-informed governance influence the reception of human rights norms in South Korea.

