**OUTLINE**

**Introduction:** The religion, the ancestral origins and the characteristics of my family are heavily related to who I am today.

1. **Me**

a) Born in Taiwan

b) Born and raised in a Taoism home

c) Born in a close-knit home

1. Be educated in the Catholic junior and private high school
2. Non-religion
3. Language: mandarin (Taiwanese)
4. **Physical characteristics within family members**
5. Black hair
6. Black/Brown eyes
7. Yellow skin
8. Straight hair
9. **My mother’s side of family and ancestors**
10. Family history of my grandmother
11. Grandmother’s parents are born in Taiwan
12. Be educated in Japanese School
13. Traditional family
14. Non-religion
15. Language: Taiwanese, Japanese
16. Family history of my grandfather
17. Grandfather’s parents immigrated from China
18. His ancestors are Shandong people
19. Traditional family
20. Non-religion
21. Language: Taiwanese, Shandong dialects
22. Family characteristics
23. No gender stereotypes
24. Non-religion
25. Cultivate children by openness education
26. Language: Taiwanese, Mandarin, and Japanese
27. **My father’s side of family and ancestors**
28. Family history of my grandmother
29. Grandmother’s parents born in Taiwan
30. Traditional family
31. Language: Taiwanese, Mandarin
32. Family history of my grandfather
33. Grandfather’s parents born in Taiwan
34. Traditional family
35. Language: Taiwanese, Mandarin
36. Family characteristics
37. Conservative moral and value
38. Traditional family
39. Gender stereotypes
40. Non-religion
41. Language: Taiwanese, Mandarin
42. **My immediate family characteristics**
43. No gender stereotypes
44. Both of them attend Taiwan’s high School
45. Cultivate us by openness education
46. Non-religion
47. Language: Mandarin

**Conclusion:** These above factors heavily influence how I identify myself. If it were not for these characteristics of my ancestors, I would not be who I am today. I really appreciate my ancestors who escaped from China to Taiwan at all costs in order to provide their descendants with a better future.

Culture and Identity

People’s identities, especially regarding racial and ethnic features, are closely related to their genealogy (Tutton 105). This statement means that our identity is based on our family history; where our ancestors came from. In any case, it can thus be argued that we do not have much power in choosing our identity because it all depends on those people that were there before us. Interestingly, our identity is based on our genealogy and other essential elements such as religion and family characteristics. This essay is going to discuss the racial and ethnic features of my identity. This analysis will be based on my ancestral origins and how my heritage has influenced who I am today. Factors such as language, physical characteristics, religion, and family customs and traditions will be evaluated.

I was born in Taiwan and raised in a Taoism home. The family in which I was born was close-knit, and this means that the family was extremely close. Regarding education, I was educated in a Catholic junior school, and I also have the privilege to attend a private high school. Just like my family history and family characteristics, I do not ascribe to any religion. Having been born and bred in Taiwan, I speak Mandarin (Taiwanese).

There are some common physical characteristics within my family, and these are evident in my family members. The first characteristic concerns black and straight hair and all family members have it. Additionally, family members have either black or brown eyes, yellow skins.

It would be challenging to talk about me without having to consider my grandparents. I will start with my grandmothers, whose parents were born in Taiwan. They were both educated in a Japanese school and they ascribed to the traditional family setting. These parents did not subscribe to any specific religion, and they were also multi-lingual based on their ability to speak Taiwanese and Japanese languages.

On the other hand, my grandfather’s parents are Chinese, having emigrated from China. My grandfather’s ancestors are the Shandong people and they have always ascribed to the traditional family setting. One similarity between my grandfather’s and grandmother’s parents is their lack of religion. However, unlike my grandmother’s parents, my grandfather’s family spoke Taiwanese, Japanese, and Mandarin languages. This family is also dedicated to the growth and development of children’s lives by cultivating a culture of education openness. It is interesting to note that in my grandfather’s family, gender stereotypes existed. This observation can be explained by the fact that the household lived traditionally and in the traditional setting; there were gender stereotypes (Kwok-bun 513). For example, in relation to household chores, women were expected to carry them out and they included; cooking, cleaning, and taking care of children. Additionally, women were not expected to get employment and provide for the family. On the other hand, men were not expected to cook for the family, clean, or even babysit children. However, men were expected to earn a living and provide for the family. Additional traditional family characteristics also included conservative and moral.

However, my immediate family characteristics deviate from the family characteristics of my family history especially in regard to gender stereotypes. In my ancient family history (especially my grandfather’s side), gender stereotypes existed. This means that society during that time perceived men and women differently (Kwok-bun 513). In my immediate family, however, gender stereotypes do not exist. This means that in my family, there are no specific roles for women and men such as cooking, cleaning or taking care of children. It can be argued that the major contributor to the lack of gender stereotypes in my immediate family is education. Education has played an imperative role in enlightening all members of gender-based values and characteristics and on the need for equality (Pattnaik 339). Therefore, all people are treated equally. Moreover, my immediate family has always been open to other cultural environments, which is a factor that explains my stay in America. Had my immediate family been against development and prosperity, I would not have found myself seeking for educational development in America. An unusual family characteristic in my immediate family is the fact that my parents attended Taiwan’s high school. This observation is an interesting feature because it coincides with the family’s involvement in the Taiwan culture, whereby the family history is based. My parents have been dedicated to the cultivation of openness in education. However, in regard to religion, there has been consistency. All members of the family have leaned towards non-religion.

These characteristics define my ethnic and racial characteristics. Based on the genealogy of my ancestors, I can proudly say I am Taiwanese. Although my grandparent’s family had emigrated from China, I am more Taiwanese than Chinese. From the family evaluation, it can be seen that the majority of my ancestors are from Taiwan and this makes me more Taiwanese than Chinese. In terms of language, for example, I consider myself Taiwanese because it is the language that I learnt, having been born in Taiwan and raised in a Taoism home. More fundamentally, my grandmother’s parents were also born in Taiwan and although they were educated in a Japanese school, I still consider them Taiwanese. Interestingly, my grandfather’s parents, although from China, among the Shandong people, speak Taiwanese and Shandong dialects. The fact that both my grandfather’s and grandmother's parents speak Taiwanese, although they come from different ethnic backgrounds, makes me believe I am Taiwanese. In essence, Vaish (28) asserts that language classifies people together and because Taiwanese is the dominant language in my family, I consider myself Taiwanese.

In regard to family characteristics, I have come to learn about the influence of family genealogy on personal characteristics. For example, my family’s personalities have come to show that there are no gender stereotypes in the family. This is interesting based on the observation that there was a history of gender stereotypes in my grandfather’s lineage (Kwok-bun 513). The lack of gender stereotypes in my immediate family has influenced me on how I regard people. Having been brought up in a family that does not have gender stereotypes has also seen me embrace gender equality. I do not consider that there are specific roles for men and women. I believe that all should work together towards the enhancement of their lives and those of their children. I do not see the need for discriminating against people of a different gender just because other people do so. I believe that stereotypes hinder effective social interactions and growth and therefore, I do not uphold gender stereotypes. It can be said that the characteristics of disowning gender stereotypes in my immediate family have also influenced my perception of gender. I hold people to account based on their conduct and responsibilities and not based on their gender.

Through the characteristic of openness to education that has been embraced by my family for years, I have also come to love school. I have come to see the need to invest in education for the betterment of a person’s future. The love of learning can be used to explain my pursuing of studies abroad and thus points to the influence of culture and ethnicity on a person’s character and decision making.

In conclusion, the above factors heavily influence how I identify myself. What I am, is highly influenced by my ancestors and I would not be who I am today without them. The language I speak, my perceptions in life, and the decisions I make are also influenced by my family genealogy. I appreciate my ancestors who escaped from China to Taiwan at all costs in order to provide their descendants with a better future.

Works Cited

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