

**ANALYSIS OF CHINA COMPLIANCE TO CONVENTION ON ELIMINATION
OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW):
STUDY CASE OF BRIDE TRAFFICKING IN CHINA**

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Submitted: December 12th 2024 | Accepted: January 26th 2026

ABSTRACT

This study evaluates China's compliance to Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in the response of the rise of case study of *Bride Trafficking* in China. Past studies about Bride Trafficking have had found that this issue is originated from demographic crisis whereas girls is less than boys in China. Quantitative methods is used to perceive about how China's managing their policy after ratificate CEDAW to battling *Bride Trafficking*. There is 3 Indicator that can determine China's compliance for CEDAW in battling *Bride Trafficking*; Output, Outcome, and Impact that concluded from Sara McLaughlin Mitchell dan Paul R. Hensel theory. From the Output, China's already have 2 internal policies, and it align with the Outcomes that China's actively seeking for international cooperation mostly in ASEAN. But the Impact revealed that China's is in the *Active* category but *Non-Compliance*. China's still actively spreading information they know about *Bride Trafficking*, but ironically this issue is still not over yet. This study aims to contribute to International Relations study, especially about Human Trafficking. Moreover, hopefully this study can helps NGOs or China's Goverment to construct policy making in practical way

Keyword: *China; CEDAW; Bride Trafficking; International Regime; Compliance to International Regime*

INTRODUCTION

Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is an legal instrument that forced every country to subjugate discrimination that happened to women in every sector. This convention is also called 'international bill of rights for women' because they give instructions for countries that ratified the convention about how to achieved the rights of women (Rana and Perrie, 2019). Until this day, there is 189 countries that ratified CEDAW, marked it as the 2nd most ratified United Nation Human Rights Treaty (Waldorf et al., 2007). Within it's articles,

CEDAW also stated about protecting women that being a victims of trafficking and prostitutions, according to CEDAW's committee as follows (UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 1979):

Article 6 of CEDAW:

“States Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to suppress all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of prostitution of women.”

Human Trafficking is a horrific crime and an all-out assault on people's rights, safety and dignity (Guterres, 2022). This serious crime is commonly happened in a country or even transcended border and eventually becomes an international problem(UNODC, 2025a). In this, women and children are often targeted as the victim(International Labour Organization, 2025)

In China, human trafficking constitutes a highly serious and persistent issue. According to a 2020 report by the United States Department of State, Authorities of China claimed to have tracked and rescued more than 4,000 missing children through the use of an app-based system, including as many as 120 trafficking victims (United States Department of State, 2024). Between 2010 and 2014, Chinese courts tried 7,719 cases of human trafficking of children and women, with a total of 12,963 traffickers indicted, more than half of which received a minimum sentence of five years in prison. While in the year 2014, only 978 cases were convicted (Wang et al., 2020). According to the Vietnamese official data, more than 3,000 women and children were trafficked between 2012 and 2017 (Vu, 2018). In the same period, Kachin Women's Association Thailand (KWAT) has estimated that 7,500 Myanmar women had gone through forced marriage and childbearing to Chinese men, and those women suffered from both psychological and physical abuse (Robinson & Branchini, 2018).

Discussing about human trafficking, there is one kind of human trafficking that is particularly pervasive and persistent in form of “Bride Trafficking”. This form of phenomenon has existed for a long time and remains unsolved in many context. Unlike sex trafficking, bride trafficking is primarily rooted in the commercialization of marriage, although sexual exploitation frequently follows. In such cases, women are sold to buyers to serve as “wives” and are subsequently subjected to sexual exploitation, reproductive coercion, and unpaid domestic labour. These marriages constitute a form of human trafficking because they commonly involve abduction, coercion, abuse of power, deception, and fraud, all of which fall under the internationally recognized definition of trafficking in persons as outlined by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2025).

Bride trafficking already existed from 1980, when the border of ASEAN to China is started to open (Lhomme et al., 2021). In addition, China is also located in border of Mekong River, makes it connected to other countries and easier for human trafficker mobilized its victims from other countries to China.

Moreover, China is widely classified in academic literature as a one-party authoritarian regime, in which political power is centralized under the Chinese Communist Party and

public participation in policymaking is highly restricted (Linz, 1975; Freedom House, 2023). This authoritarian structure enables the state to implement policies through top-down enforcement, generating high levels of public compliance primarily through political and legal control rather than ideological commitment alone. This context is essential for understanding the One-Child Policy, introduced in 1978 to curb rapid population growth. Implemented with limited public accountability, the policy interacted with deeply rooted patriarchal norms that favor male offspring, leading to sex-selective abortion and female infanticide. The resulting gender imbalance has become a key structural factor contributing to the rise of bride trafficking in China.

China has responded to this issue by modifying its national legal framework to combat human trafficking. Nevertheless, these measures remain limited, as China's domestic laws still contain very few provisions that explicitly address bride trafficking. In practice, China has undertaken efforts to cooperate with other countries to combat bride trafficking, including bilateral and multilateral cooperation with Vietnam, Myanmar, Indonesia, and countries along the Mekong River. Additionally, China has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) as part of its commitment to addressing bride trafficking.

Graphic 1. China's Ranking in Addressing Human Trafficking by Year



Source: (United States Department of State, 2024)

Despite these efforts, China has continued to be classified as Tier 3 in addressing human trafficking according to the United States Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report (2020). Tier 3 represents the lowest ranking, indicating that a country fails to meet the minimum standards set forth in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) and does not demonstrate significant efforts to achieve compliance. Consequently, this raises the question of whether China's actions can be considered a form of compliance with CEDAW, particularly in light of the persistent prevalence of bride trafficking cases.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

International Regime

A regime is defined as a social institution that guides coordinated behavior toward a specific set of activities (Puchala & Hopkins, 1982). Like other social institutions, regimes exhibit a unifying pattern of action. Accordingly, a regime constitutes a distinct social structure with particular functions, even though its activities often contribute to the fulfillment of broader objectives. Similar to other social institutions, regimes do not necessarily possess highly formalized structures or explicit organizational arrangements (Young, 1982).

Meanwhile, the international system refers to a system encompassing activities that intersect with the interests of its members. Many of these activities lie entirely outside the jurisdiction of sovereign states (such as deep-sea mining), cross international jurisdictional boundaries (such as fishing on the high seas), or involve actions that directly affect the interests of two or more members of the international community. Formally, the members of international regimes are always sovereign states; however, the actors whose behavior is regulated by these regimes are often private entities, such as fishing associations, banks, or private airlines. As a result, the implementation of international regime requirements frequently involves a two-step process, a feature less characteristic of regimes operating at the domestic level (Young, 1982).

International regimes consist of principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures, whether explicit or implicit, around which actors' expectations converge (Krasner, 1982). These regimes emerge from shared expectations among actors in international relations and are intended to facilitate international cooperation as well as joint policymaking processes. They may also be understood as patterned behavior grounded in norms or rules designed to manage conflict across various issue areas in international relations (Ruggie, 1998).

Compliance with International Regimes

International regimes function to facilitate cooperation among actors across multiple issue areas within international relations, making their contribution particularly significant. Such cooperation can be considered successful only when actors demonstrate compliance with established rules. The concept of compliance is used to assess the extent to which an actor—particularly a state—implements and adheres to the rules or agreements established under a regime.

According to Young, compliance is defined as follows:

“Compliance can be said to occur when the actual behaviour of a given subject conforms to prescribed behaviour, and non-compliance or violation occurs when actual behaviour departs significantly from prescribed behaviour” (Young, 2013).

From this definition, it is evident that compliance and implementation are distinct concepts. Implementation refers to the process by which policies are applied domestically within a state (Young, 2013). Compliance also differs from effectiveness,

as effectiveness evaluates the regime itself rather than the behavior of individual states. A state's compliance with a regime can only be assessed after the regime has been implemented domestically. Once targets and deadlines are established, programs are tested, and the necessary resources are allocated and secured, the implementation process can begin.

The concept of compliance is therefore used to evaluate how well member states adhere to and apply agreed-upon policies within their domestic systems. Based on this evaluation, it can then be determined whether a state complies with or violates its commitments under the regime.

According to Mitchell, there are three indicators that can be used to assess whether a member state is compliant or non-compliant with an international regime:

1. Outputs

Outputs refer to the collection of laws, rules, and regulations adopted by states in the implementation of international agreements, which are transferred from the international level into national policy frameworks.

2. Outcomes

Outcomes denote changes in the behavior of governments or sub-state actors. Outcomes can be observed through state behavior that aligns with the rules produced in the output stage, while effects may be reflected in changes in environmental or social conditions within member states.

3. Impacts

Impacts refer to the tangible results achieved through changes in the quality of the relevant environment or conditions within member states of the regime (Mitchell, 2007).

A state may be considered compliant when it fulfills all three categories. Conversely, a state may be regarded as non-compliant if it fails to fully adhere to and implement its commitments.

Furthermore, Sara McLaughlin Mitchell and Paul R. Hensel, in their work *International Institutions and Compliance with Agreements*, on categories for measuring levels of compliance with international regimes (Mitchell & Hensel, 2007). They argue that compliance among member states can be analyzed through four categories: active compliance, passive compliance, active non-compliance, and passive non-compliance.

RESEARCH METHODS

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Bride Trafficking and China's ratification to CEDAW

Trafficking with the intention of marriage is things that oftens happened in the world, especially in China. This absurd cases is often called as Bride Trafficking and exist as the other form of sex trafficking that focused their commodity in women. But Bride Trafficking is not necessarily an sex trafficking, because the exploitation that happened in Bride Trafficking is precisely centered in marriage. The pattern of Bride Trafficking

is selling bride to a men that wanted to get married or searching for a wife –even in most cases, that search for a wife is not necessarily the “groom”, but his family. Eventually, after the bride is sold, they will be used as an sex object, a slave for household chores, and baby machine maker (UNODC, 2025b).

Bride Trafficking phenomenon is directly linked to nearly all culture in Asia, matchmaking (Hackney, 2015). In this matchmaking tradition, the groom’s family will priced the bride matching the family financial situation (Molland, 2011). Trafficker sees the potential from this culture because the groom’s family will voluntarily paid for the price of the pride. This thing led to illegal trafficking across the border of China. In some cases, the “bride” would also voluntarily move to China in hope to marry a wealthy husband, but in reality, they will be sold to a husband from rural area in China; from poor family. In rural areas experiencing a severe shortage of marriageable women, the bride price for local Chinese women can reach between USD 15,000 and USD 25,000—an amount that far exceeds the average annual income of rural households. Consequently, men from economically marginalized backgrounds increasingly turn to trafficked foreign brides, particularly from Southeast Asia, whose “prices” are significantly lower, ranging from USD 4,500 to USD 5,500 (Yu & Gao, 2019; Lhomme et al., 2021).

Geographically, bride trafficking is concentrated in China’s border regions, particularly in Yunnan, Guangxi, and Jilin provinces. Yunnan and Guangxi serve as primary destinations for women trafficked from Myanmar and Vietnam due to porous borders and longstanding cross-border social ties. Jilin Province, meanwhile, receives a significant number of trafficked women from North Korea. North Korean victims are distinct in several respects: many are older, some are already married with children, and a number possess relatively higher educational backgrounds. Economic deprivation and limited livelihood opportunities in North Korea compel these women to cross into China, where they are subsequently sold into forced marriages with older, disabled, or economically disadvantaged Chinese men (Mei, 2023; Xia et al., 2020).

The trafficking process generally involves multiple stages, including recruitment, illegal border crossing, transportation to transit points, matchmaking, and final transactional exchange. Victims are often deceived with promises of employment or marriage to wealthy partners, while coercion, violence, and bribery of border officials are frequently employed to ensure compliance. Upon arrival in China, women are treated as commodities, subjected to direct financial transactions, and deprived of autonomy, constituting severe violations of fundamental human rights.

Structurally, the prevalence of bride trafficking in China is inseparable from the demographic consequences of the One-Child Policy implemented in the 1980s. Cultural preferences for male offspring led to widespread sex-selective abortions, abandonment, and neglect of female children, resulting in a profound gender imbalance. By 2019, China had approximately 31.6 million more men than women, and projections suggest that over 30 million men of marriageable age will remain unmarried by 2040 (National Bureau of Statistics of China; Tucker & Hook, 2013). This demographic distortion has created sustained demand for trafficked brides, particularly in rural areas where

women's out-migration to urban centers further reduces the pool of potential marriage partners.

Additional factors contributing to bride trafficking include rural poverty, limited educational opportunities, parental pressure, and perceived cultural compatibility between Chinese men and women from neighboring countries. Traffickers often exploit familial obligations and expectations of filial piety, persuading parents that transnational marriage offers an escape from poverty. In reality, victims are trapped in exploitative marital arrangements with little legal protection. These interconnected drivers have facilitated the expansion of transnational trafficking networks operating across China's borders, transforming bride trafficking into a form of transnational organized crime (Rani, 2022).

Against this backdrop of systemic gender-based exploitation, China's ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) represents a significant normative commitment. China signed CEDAW on 17 July 1980 during the Second World Conference on Women in Copenhagen and ratified the Convention later that year, becoming one of its earliest State Parties. The ratification occurred during a period of major political and economic transformation, as China—under Deng Xiaoping's leadership—redefined itself from a “revolutionary socialist state” to a “modern socialist state” and began reintegrating into the international system (Song & Yang, 2023).

China's engagement with CEDAW was closely tied to its broader reform and opening-up strategy. Seeking to modernize its economy and attract foreign investment, China aimed to project an image of a law-abiding state that respected international legal standards, including human rights norms. As a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, China also faced increasing international scrutiny regarding its human rights practices, prompting greater engagement with global human rights instruments (Chen, 2009; Z. Wang, 2010).

Although China ratified CEDAW with a reservation to Article 29(1) concerning the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice, the Convention nonetheless carries significant legal, academic, and practical implications. Legally, it establishes gender equality as a binding norm within China's domestic framework. Academically, it introduced international feminist legal discourse into Chinese scholarship. Practically, CEDAW provides a mechanism for international monitoring and encourages legislative and institutional reforms aimed at eliminating discrimination against women, particularly in areas such as marriage and family relations governed by Articles 2 and 16.

However, the persistence of bride trafficking highlights the limitations of formal treaty ratification in addressing deeply entrenched structural and cultural inequalities. While China's commitment to CEDAW reflects alignment with international gender equality norms, the continued commodification of women through forced marriage underscores a significant gap between international obligations and domestic enforcement. Bride trafficking thus serves as a critical lens through which to assess the effectiveness—and shortcomings—of CEDAW's implementation in China.

China's Compliance to CEDAW

Output

Outputs within an international regime refer to the set of rules, policies, and regulatory frameworks adopted by states on the basis of internationally agreed norms. These outputs represent the institutionalization of regime norms that are subsequently translated from the international level into domestic legal systems and national policies. In this sense, outputs function as implementation guidelines through which states operationalize their international commitments at the domestic level (Mitchell & Hensel, 2007).

In this context, on 17 July 1980, China officially signed and ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (The Ratification and Implementation of CEDAW in China—China Human Rights, n.d.). By ratifying CEDAW, China formally accepted international norms concerning gender equality and the elimination of discrimination against women. This commitment obliges the state to align its domestic laws and policies with the principles enshrined in the Convention, thereby integrating international gender norms into the national legal framework (Fikra, 2018).

At the domestic level, particularly in response to the issue of bride trafficking, the Chinese legal system has taken steps to criminalize the trafficking of women and children. The Supreme People's Court has issued judicial interpretations and legal provisions addressing human trafficking cases, reinforcing the illegality of practices that commodify women under the guise of marriage. One of the key legal instruments is the *"Interpretation of the Supreme People's Court on Several Issues Concerning the Specific Application of Law in the Trial of Criminal Cases of Trafficking in Women and Children"* or “最高人民法院关于审理拐卖妇女儿童犯罪案件具体应用法律若干问题的解释” (The Supreme People's Court of the People's Republic China, 2016).

These interpretations contain several important provisions, including:

Article 3. Anyone who, under the guise of arranging marriages, illegally detains a woman's identity documents, restricts her personal freedom, or takes advantage of her unfamiliarity with the place, language barriers, or isolation to sell her to others against her will shall be held criminally liable for the crime of trafficking in women. Anyone who, under the guise of arranging marriages, colludes with the women being introduced to defraud others of money, and the amount involved is substantial, should be held criminally liable for fraud.

Article 4. If a state official conceals, transfers, or otherwise obstructs the rescue of a child he has purchased while investigating or rescuing a child of unknown origin, and refuses to cooperate after being persuaded and educated, it constitutes "obstructing the rescue of such a child" as stipulated in Article 241, Paragraph 6 of the Criminal Law.

Article 5. If a woman who has been trafficked has been bought and a stable marital and family relationship has been formed, and the woman who was bought voluntarily chooses to continue living in the local area at the time of

rescue, it can be considered as "in accordance with the wishes of the woman who was bought, without hindering her return to her original place of residence".

Article 6. Anyone who buys trafficked women or children and then organizes or forces them into prostitution, begging, or other activities that violate public security regulations, and whose actions constitute other crimes, shall be punished in accordance with the provisions on concurrent offenses.

Article 7. Anyone who buys trafficked women or children and then obstructs state officials from rescuing them by means of violence or threats, or who gathers a crowd to obstruct state officials from rescuing them, shall be punished in accordance with the provisions on concurrent punishment for multiple crimes if such actions constitute the crimes of obstructing official duties or obstructing the rescue of trafficked women or children.

Article 8. If a person buys a trafficked woman for the purpose of marriage or a trafficked child for the purpose of raising the child, and multiple family members or relatives are involved, the person who plays a major role in such a transaction shall be held criminally liable in accordance with the law.

The overarching objective of this plan is to strengthen long-term mechanisms that integrate prevention, law enforcement, victim assistance, and rehabilitation. In terms of prevention, the plan emphasizes the reinforcement of coordinated interdepartmental actions to address human trafficking in key industries and regions. In addition, robust law enforcement measures are expected to deter and suppress trafficking perpetrators and related offenses. The plan also underscores the importance of international cooperation in preventing cross-border human trafficking, as well as the need for organizational coordination and systematic evaluation of the effectiveness of action plan implementation. Collectively, these measures aim to foster a safer environment and to enhance the protection of citizens, particularly those who are most vulnerable to human trafficking.

Based on the provisions and long-term action plans, it is evident that legal frameworks have been established to regulate and address human trafficking, particularly involving women and children. This indicates that China's ratification of CEDAW has produced tangible policy and legal outcomes aimed at protecting vulnerable groups.

Outcomes

In the context of international regimes, *outcomes* refer to changes in the actions or behavior of a state or actor in pursuing the objectives of the regime. Behavioral change is a useful indicator because regimes typically specify the types of changes required to achieve agreed goals. Following the ratification of CEDAW, China has demonstrated various changes in its actions and behavior, particularly those related to the resolution of bride trafficking cases.

Post-ratification, behavioral changes aimed at eliminating the trafficking of women have largely been pursued through international cooperation. China has increasingly prioritized cross-border cooperation, given that the majority of victims of bride

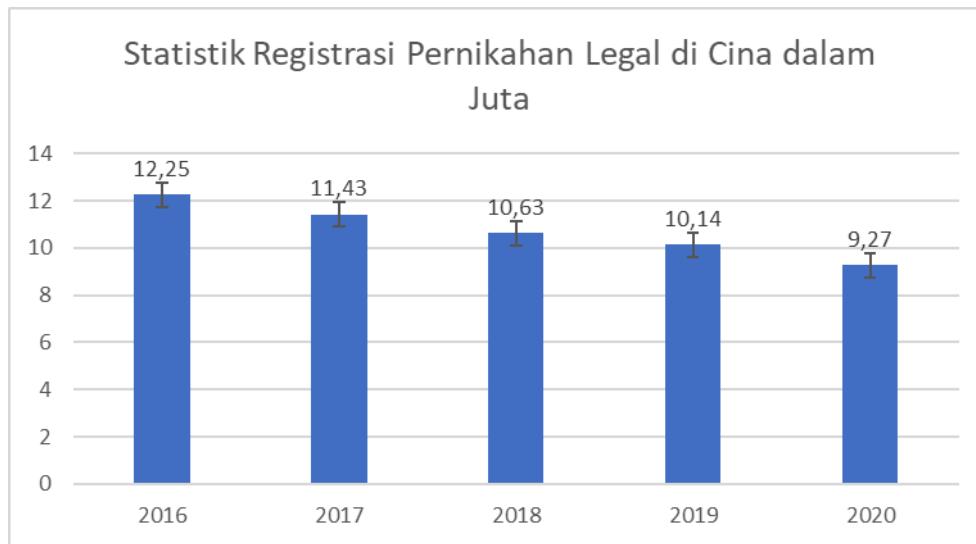
trafficking originate from neighboring countries. Following the introduction of the *Action Plan for Combating Trafficking in Persons*, China expanded its engagement in international cooperation. In 2016, China entered into bilateral cooperation with Cambodia, and in the same year participated in multilateral cooperation under the Lancang–Mekong framework.

In 2017, the Chinese government issued a judicial interpretation through the Supreme People's Court concerning the application of law in criminal cases involving the trafficking of women and children. Furthermore, between 2014 and 2017, the Chinese government enhanced its counter-trafficking efforts by utilizing DNA technology. This technological development, led by the Ministry of Public Security, aimed to establish a database to support the identification of victims of bride trafficking. Finally, cooperation between China and Indonesia in 2019 produced concrete outcomes, resulting in the repatriation of 18 Indonesian victims to their country of origin.

After examining outputs and outcomes, the next indicator for assessing a state's compliance is **impacts**. Impacts can be observed through the results achieved in terms of changes in the quality of the domestic environment within member states of a regime. These environmental changes arise as a consequence of behavioral shifts undertaken by governments or sub-state actors.

In China, marriages conducted through the purchase of brides constitute illegal practices that violate national law. Such marriages fail to comply with established legal procedures and are often not officially registered with civil affairs authorities. As a result, the couples involved lack legally recognized marriage documents, such as official marriage certificates acknowledged by the state. The illegality of this practice is reflected in statistical data illustrated in the diagram below, which demonstrates a significant decline in the number of legally registered marriages in China between 2016 and 2020. This downward trend indicates a growing prevalence of unregistered marriages, one contributing factor of which is the increase in illegal marriage practices, including those involving bride trafficking.

Diagram I. Statistic of Legal Marriage Registration in China



Source: (Statista, 2024)

Based on the bar chart above, the data illustrate statistics on legally registered marriages in China (in millions) from 2016 to 2020. The data reveal a consistent downward trend in the number of officially registered marriages throughout this period. In 2016, the number of legal marriages reached its peak at 12.25 million couples, representing the highest figure within the five-year timeframe. In 2017, registrations declined by approximately 6.7% compared to the previous year, falling to 11.43 million couples. This downward trend continued in 2018, when legal marriage registrations decreased to 10.63 million, marking a 7% decline from 2017. In 2019, the decrease persisted, albeit at a slower rate, with 10.14 million registered marriages, a reduction of around 4.6% compared to the previous year. The sharpest decline occurred in 2020, when the number of legally registered marriages dropped to 9.27 million couples, representing an 8.6% decrease from 2019.

One contributing factor to this trend is the practice of bride trafficking, which typically involves individuals or organized groups exploiting the economic vulnerability or social marginalization of women, either domestically or from neighboring countries. In such cases, women are often transported to other regions and married without undergoing legally mandated procedures. Because these marriages occur outside the formal legal framework, they are not recorded in official government statistics, thereby contributing to observable disparities in registered marriage data.

This trend not only reflects violations of national law but also underscores serious social problems. The decline in officially registered marriages indicates ongoing challenges in law enforcement and the protection of human rights, particularly for women who are victims of such practices. Moreover, this phenomenon has implications for children born from illegal marriages, as they may face difficulties in accessing basic public services such as education and healthcare due to the legal status of their parents. However, despite the illegality of these marriages, children born from them are still legally recognized as Chinese citizens. This is evidenced by data on victims from

Myanmar, which show that out of 9,269 children born from illegal marriages, 5,532 (59.7%) possessed *hukou* or birth registration (Qiu et al., 2019). Obtaining *hukou* requires a birth certificate issued by a hospital and the identity number of at least one parent (Refugees, n.d.). Furthermore, Article 4 of China's Nationality Law states that "any person born in China whose parents are both Chinese nationals or one of whose parents is a Chinese national shall have Chinese nationality" (Laws and Regulations_National Immigration Administration, n.d.). This provision confirms that even when a marriage is illegal, as long as one parent holds Chinese nationality, the child is entitled to Chinese citizenship.

Consequently, such legal arrangements may contribute to population growth in China despite the prevalence of illegal marriages. This condition suggests that China's efforts to combat bride trafficking have not been entirely stringent, as the practice may indirectly serve certain national demographic interests.

China's Level of Compliance with CEDAW

CEDAW aims to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women worldwide. To achieve this goal, it encourages ratifying countries to enact laws that promote gender equality and to gradually eradicate cultural practices and social norms that perpetuate discrimination against women. Compliance can be assessed by examining how a state controls its actions and strives to adhere to the agreements it has collectively committed to under the regime (Chayes, 1993).

The findings of this study indicate that China has implemented only a limited portion of CEDAW's provisions. This partial implementation is particularly evident in government efforts to combat bride trafficking, which rely more heavily on international cooperation than on domestic policy measures. Based on the indicators of compliance with international regimes outlined by Ronald B. Mitchell, the researcher concludes that China is non-compliant with the provisions set forth in CEDAW.

Flowchart I. Output, Outcomes, dan impact

Output	Outcomes	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of laws in cases of crimes against women and children Action Plan for Combating Trafficking in Persons (2013–2020) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> China's cooperation with Cambodia China's cooperation under the Lancang-Mekong framework China's cooperation with Indonesia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bride trafficking remains high Decline in legally registered marriages

Source: Analyzed by the researcher using the framework of Mitchell & Hensel (2007).

China's compliance with CEDAW can be analyzed through the indicators of *outputs*, *outcomes*, and *impacts*.

In terms of outputs, China has incorporated certain CEDAW principles aimed at eliminating bride trafficking into its national legislation. However, these efforts remain limited, resulting in only one law and one action plan.

Regarding outcomes, the government has demonstrated behavioral changes through international cooperation to combat bride trafficking. Between 2016 and 2020, China engaged in three collaborations, both bilateral and multilateral, including partnerships with Cambodia, the Lancang-Mekong countries, and Indonesia. Additionally, China established a DNA-based database to identify victims of human trafficking.

Nevertheless, in terms of impacts, the tangible results of these efforts remain minimal. Data indicate that bride trafficking continued to rise between 2016 and 2020, while legally registered marriages decreased, suggesting a relative increase in illegal marriages compared to legal ones. This highlights the limited effectiveness of China's measures in practice.

Based on this analysis, China's level of compliance with CEDAW can be assessed using Ronald B. Mitchell's framework, which categorizes state compliance into four types: *active compliance*, *passive compliance*, *active non-compliance*, and *passive non-compliance*. The findings of this study categorize China as an active non-compliant state.

A state is considered actively non-compliant when it implements CEDAW measures without producing significant real-world outcomes. This category also includes states that continuously provide information, introduce new regulations to address existing

issues, and maintain legitimacy in the international regime. In short, a country fits this category if it fulfills four indicators: offering policy options, enhancing information exchange, establishing institutional resolutions, and demonstrating state legitimacy.

China meets the first indicator by providing policy options to address bride trafficking. Through domestic law enforcement, China imposes severe criminal penalties on traffickers, including those involved in purchasing women for marriage, while providing legal protection and access to rehabilitation and social reintegration for victims. Cross-border cooperation with neighboring countries such as Vietnam, Myanmar, and Laos further strengthens its policy options.

Regarding the information exchange indicator, China actively shares information through its international collaborations. For example, in 2016, China partnered with Cambodia—a neighboring country from which many women are trafficked—to reduce bride trafficking. Additional collaborations include multilateral cooperation under the Lancang-Mekong framework and bilateral engagement with Indonesia. These initiatives indicate an increase in information sharing among the countries involved, satisfying this indicator.

For the institutional resolution indicator, China has implemented an action plan covering 2013–2020. Finally, state legitimacy is reflected in the adoption of CEDAW principles within domestic law. By fulfilling all four indicators, China can thus be classified as an ***active non-compliant*** state with respect to CEDAW.

CONCLUSION

China is already attempted to tackling bride trafficking by ratified CEDAW in 1980. China did not reserve CEDAW but more focused its refusal within the procedure than substantive. The form of this ratification is concluded as China's seriousness in addressing bride trafficking cases. Regardless the fact China has commitment to protecting women rights from international cooperation, those commitment had not implemented in more specific way by making a law or certain rules that criminalized bride trafficking.

From Ronald B. Mitchell theory, international activities from a country is not always determined the country compliance for a norms that they adopted. In China, there's many international approach and participation in multilateral agreement that shows China's position in tackling bride trafficking issues. However, there's no special regulations to addressing bride trafficking shows the weak commitment of a country to implemented the intended protection.

China's can be said as active in international way, but not compliance to CEDAW from its way addressing bride trafficking. This research shows that China's more intended to show the positive image in international stage than actively changed the domestic law so it can be equal to CEDAW's standart. This concluded that international convention as CEDAW did not guarantee a change in tackling issues in one's country if the government does not intended to do so.

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