

CHAPTER III

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION: ASIAN FEMALE GENDER ROLES IN *EVERYTHING EVERYWHERE ALL AT ONCE (2024)*

This chapter presents the results and discussion of this study, focusing on the portrayal of Asian female gender roles in *Everything Everywhere All at Once* (2022). This chapter is divided into two main sections: intrinsic discussion and extrinsic discussion. The intrinsic discussion examines the movie's narrative and cinematic elements, such as characters, settings, and conflicts, to explore Evelyn and Joy Wang's experiences. The extrinsic discussion analyzes the portrayal, factors, and effects of Asian female gender roles in social and cultural contexts. Together, these perspectives provide a comprehensive view of the challenges and transformations of Asian-American women in the movie.

3.1 Intrinsic Discussion

The intrinsic discussion explores the narrative and cinematic elements that construct the movie's portrayal of Asian-American women. This section examines the characters and their development, the physical and social settings in which they operate, and the conflicts that drive the story. By analyzing these elements, the study demonstrates how the movie uses storytelling techniques to reflect the complexities of Evelyn and Joy Wang's lives, their emotional struggles, and the challenges of navigating familial and cultural expectations.

3.1.1 Characters & Characterization

Characters are the central element in understanding the narrative of *Everything Everywhere All at Once*. This section focuses on the main characters, Evelyn Wang and Joy Wang, analyzing their personality traits, motivations, and development throughout the story. By examining their actions, dialogues, and interactions with other characters, the study reveals how the movie portrays the complexities of Asian-American women navigating family responsibilities, cultural expectations, and personal identity

3.1.1.1 Evelyn Wang

Evelyn Wang is portrayed as a first-generation Asian-American woman who finds herself at the intersection of multiple roles and identities. In the context of gender roles, Evelyn challenges traditional stereotypes of Asian women by defying expectations of passivity and submission. Instead, she is depicted as a strong, independent, and resilient character who navigates the complexities of family, business, and personal identity, as described in the picture below:



Picture 1. Medium Shot of Evelyn preparing for the IRS audit (Everything Everywhere All at Once 01.11)

Based on the picture, it can be seen that Evelyn is juggling multiple roles, embodying the complex intersection of family, business, and personal responsibility. In this scene, she is seen preparing files for an IRS audit while also managing the day-to-day operations of the laundromat, showcasing her resilience and multitasking abilities. Evelyn's ability to balance the demands of her small business and her familial obligations reflects her strength and determination, breaking the stereotype of the passive, submissive Asian woman.

From a gender perspective, Evelyn's role as the primary decision-maker in both her family and business challenges traditional gender expectations. She is not just fulfilling caregiving responsibilities, but she is also the one steering the family's financial future. This scene highlights the burden that many immigrant women carry, where they must navigate both cultural expectations and the practical demands of survival in a foreign land. Evelyn's ability to manage these challenges further emphasizes her evolution from a character constrained by traditional gender roles to one who takes charge of her own destiny.

3.1.1.2 Joy Wang/ Jobu Tupaki

Joy Wang, Evelyn's daughter, embodies the generational shift within Asian-American families, representing the younger, more progressive generation that challenges traditional cultural expectations. She is the character through which the tension between cultural tradition and modern identity, including queer identity, is explored, as described in the picture below:



Picture 2. Close-up Shot of Joy's struggle with her identity (Everything Everywhere All at Once, 03.18)



Picture 3. Medium Close-up Shot of Joy as Jobu Tupaki (Everything Everywhere All at Once, 53.32)

Based on the picture, it can be seen that Joy's character represents the conflict between tradition and modernity. In the scene where she talks to Evelyn about her girlfriend, Becky, Joy's struggle with her mother's traditional values and her own queer identity is evident. Evelyn's discomfort with Joy's identity illustrates the generational divide between immigrant parents and their children, particularly when navigating issues like gender and sexuality.

In contrast, when Joy transforms into Jobu Tupaki in the multiverse, she embodies rebellion and chaos, serving as a foil to Evelyn's need for control and stability. This transformation highlights Joy's resistance to the roles imposed on her by both her family and society. The tension between tradition and change is underscored in their interactions, symbolizing the broader challenges that second-generation Asian-Americans face as they reconcile their heritage with modern societal values. The dynamic between Evelyn and Joy is the emotional core of the narrative, showcasing the generational and cultural conflicts that are central to the immigrant experience.

3.1.2 Settings

The setting in the movie is not merely a backdrop but an active element that shapes the narrative and the characters' experiences. This section explores how different types of settings—place, time, and social environment—contribute to the audience's understanding of the characters' challenges and societal pressures. Through the depiction of physical locations, temporal contexts, and social spaces, the movie highlights the intersection of family obligations, cultural norms, and the immigrant experience.

3.1.2.1 Settings of Place

The physical spaces in *Everything Everywhere All at Once* serve as key indicators of the characters' lives and struggles. Locations such as the Wang family laundromat, the IRS office, and the multiverse settings reflect the characters' emotional states and the challenges they face in their personal and social environments. These places also symbolize the tensions between tradition, responsibility, and personal freedom, providing insight into the characters' experiences as Asian-American women.

3.1.2.1.1 The Wang's Family Laundromat

The Wang family laundromat symbolizes both economic hardship and the cultural heritage of the immigrant family. This modest setting acts as a microcosm of the gendered expectations placed on Evelyn as a first-generation Asian-American woman. She is expected to balance traditional roles as a mother, wife, daughter, and

business owner, all while dealing with the financial pressures of running a family business, as described in the picture below:



Picture 4. Medium Shot of Evelyn managing the laundromat (Everything Everywhere All at Once, 08:17)

Based on the picture, it can be seen that the laundromat is not just a place of work, but also a symbol of the gendered burdens that Asian-American women like Evelyn bear. The caretaker role is reinforced by Evelyn's dual responsibility of running the laundromat while also caring for her aging father. As a woman in a patriarchal society, Evelyn is expected to fulfill both domestic and professional duties, reflecting the communal roles outlined in gender role theory. The laundromat, a space of hard work and survival, represents the constant pressure to meet familial obligations, embodying the sacrifice that is often expected from Asian women in immigrant communities. This setting highlights the conflict between individual desires and cultural expectations, as Evelyn struggles to meet both her family's needs and her own aspirations.

3.1.2.1.2 The IRS Office

The IRS office is an impersonal administrative space that alienates Evelyn and emphasises the systemic gender and race inequalities that Asian-American immigrant families encounter in Western institutions, as described in the picture below:



*Picture 5 Evelyn in IRS Office
(Everything Everywhere All at Once, 16:26 – 17:46)*

Based on the picture, it can be seen that the IRS office serves as a symbol of systemic alienation faced by Evelyn as an Asian-American woman. In this scene, Evelyn's audit experience becomes a site where systemic gender and racial biases surface, revealing how bureaucratic institutions reinforce marginalizing narratives about immigrant identity. The setting highlights the gendered expectations placed on Evelyn to manage her family's economic survival, while simultaneously dealing with the discriminatory structures that undermine her competence as both a woman and an immigrant. This scene emphasizes how institutional structures can often reinforce gender roles, where women's contributions are undervalued or scrutinized more harshly due to their cultural background.

3.1.2.1.3 The Multiverse Settings

The multiverse in this movie represents alternative versions of Evelyn's life and identity, exploring the gender roles that might have defined her in different circumstances. These fantastical settings illustrate her internal journey as she navigates conflicting traditional values and modern expectations, as described in the picture below:



Picture 6. Medium Close-up Shot of Evelyn as a celebrity in the multiverse (Everything Everywhere All at Once 45:25)

Based on the picture, it can be seen that the multiverse functions as a mirror to Evelyn's internal struggle. Each alternate reality forces her to reflect on the various roles society expects her to play, such as the roles of a businesswoman, mother, or independent woman. The scene of Evelyn in a multiverse reality allows her to confront the limitations placed on her by both family traditions and societal norms, providing her the opportunity to explore and redefine her identity. This setting represents Evelyn's quest for autonomy, pushing her to challenge and expand the roles she's been confined to in her real-life environment.

3.1.2.2 Setting of Time

Temporal settings in the movie highlight both linear and nonlinear aspects of the characters' lives. By situating events in the present day and recalling Evelyn's past in China, the narrative contrasts generational perspectives and emphasizes how historical and personal timelines influence identity, relationships, and cultural expectations. Time functions as a lens through which viewers can understand the pressures and choices confronting the characters.

3.1.2.2.1 Present Day

The present-day setting in *Everything Everywhere All at Once* grounds the movie in the contemporary Asian-American immigrant experience, focusing on themes of generational divides, assimilation, and identity formation in a multicultural society, as described in the picture below:



Picture 7. Establishing Shot of the Wang's Family Laundromat (Everything Everywhere All at Once, 11:25)

Based on the picture, it can be seen that the Wang family laundromat serves as a significant representation of Evelyn's present-day life, symbolizing both the

immigrant struggle and the demands of maintaining cultural heritage. The laundromat is not just a place of business but a constant reminder of Evelyn's dual role as a business owner and a caretaker. This setting reflects the complexities of the Asian-American immigrant experience, where traditional family expectations often intersect with the need to adapt to a new society.

3.1.2.2.2 Evelyn's Past in China

The flashbacks to Evelyn's past in China provide crucial context for understanding her motivations and the cultural values that shape her character's actions and decisions. These moments transport the audience to a time before Evelyn's immigration to the United States, revealing the generational and cultural forces at play, as described in the picture below:



*Picture 8. Long Shot of Evelyn's past in China
(Everything Everywhere All at Once, 14:08 – 15:21)*

Based on the picture, it can be seen that this scene, showing Evelyn leaving China, marks the pivotal moment when she breaks away from her family's expectations. The image captures Evelyn's decision to leave her father Gong Gong and traditional values behind, setting the stage for her journey to America. This moment

highlights the generational tension between her father's patriarchal views and her desire for independence. The contrast between her past and present life emphasizes how Evelyn's cultural heritage continues to shape her identity, even as she strives to navigate a new life in the U.S.

3.1.2.3 Setting of Social Environment

The social environment encompasses the cultural, familial, and communal contexts in which the characters operate. This section analyzes interactions within the Asian-American immigrant community, the family environment, and the broader multiverse society. These social spaces reveal the expectations placed on Evelyn and Joy, including gender roles, filial duties, and societal norms, and illustrate how these factors shape their decisions and emotional struggles.

3.1.2.3.1 Asian-American Immigrant Community

The Asian-American immigrant community represents the social environment in which the Wang family operates. This community is characterized by the challenges of preserving cultural heritage while navigating the demands of a modern, often indifferent society, as described in the picture below:



Picture 9. Medium Long Shot of celebrating Chinese New Year in the laundromat (Everything Everywhere All at Once, 1:35:52)

Based on the picture, it can be seen that the Chinese New Year celebration symbolizes the Wang family's effort to maintain their cultural identity in the face of modern pressures. The scene reflects the generational divide between Evelyn's commitment to tradition and Joy's desire for freedom. While the celebration reinforces the importance of family and cultural values, it also highlights the conflict between preserving heritage and adapting to a new, multicultural society. This dynamic illustrates the challenges immigrant families face in balancing cultural continuity with assimilation.

3.1.2.3.2 Family Environment

The family environment in the movie is marked by generational and cultural tensions, primarily between Evelyn and her daughter Joy. It serves as a battleground for the conflicting pressures of cultural preservation and personal freedom, especially as these dynamics reflect the broader generational divide in immigrant families, as described in the picture below:



Picture 10. Medium Close-up Shot of Evelyn and Joy's tense interaction about identity (Everything Everywhere All at Once, 10:56)

Based on the picture, it can be seen that the family environment acts as the backdrop for the generational conflict between Evelyn and Joy. Evelyn's conservative views on gender roles clash with Joy's desire to explore her queer identity and break free from these traditional constraints. The picture of their tense interaction showcases the emotional distance created by differing values, with Evelyn's strict upbringing contrasting with Joy's desire for individuality. This scene is a microcosm of the larger immigrant experience, highlighting the struggle many second-generation children face in reconciling their parents' cultural expectations with the desire to forge their own identities in a modern world.

3.1.2.3.3 Multiverse Society

The multiverse settings in the movie present alternate realities that reflect different facets of Evelyn's potential self. These various universes provide a unique backdrop for exploring how Evelyn's identity could evolve in different social environments, challenging the constraints placed on her by both her family and society, as described in the picture below:



*Picture 11. Medium Shot of Evelyn in the multiverse
(Everything Everywhere All at Once, 51:20)*

Based on the picture, it can be seen that the multiverse acts as a mirror to Evelyn's internal struggle with gender and societal expectations. Each alternate reality forces Evelyn to reflect on the roles society expects her to play, whether as a businesswoman, mother, or independent woman. The multiverse allows her to challenge these roles and redefine her identity beyond the constraints imposed by culture and family.

3.1.3 Conflict

Conflict drives the narrative of *Everything Everywhere All at Once* and reflects the challenges faced by Asian-American women in negotiating identity, family, and cultural expectations. This section examines the central conflicts between Evelyn and

Joy, Evelyn and Waymond, and Evelyn and Gong Gong. By analyzing these tensions, the study highlights how interpersonal and intergenerational conflicts illuminate gender roles, emotional struggles, and the negotiation of autonomy within a culturally complex environment.

3.1.3.1 Conflict Between Evelyn Wang and Joy Wang

The conflict between Evelyn and Joy arises because of the generational and cultural tensions that often exist in Asian-American families, where the older generation holds on to traditional values while the younger generation seeks to forge its own identity. Evelyn's disapproval of Joy's queer identity and relationship with Becky reflects her conservative views on gender and relationships, rooted in her cultural upbringing, as described in the dialogue below:

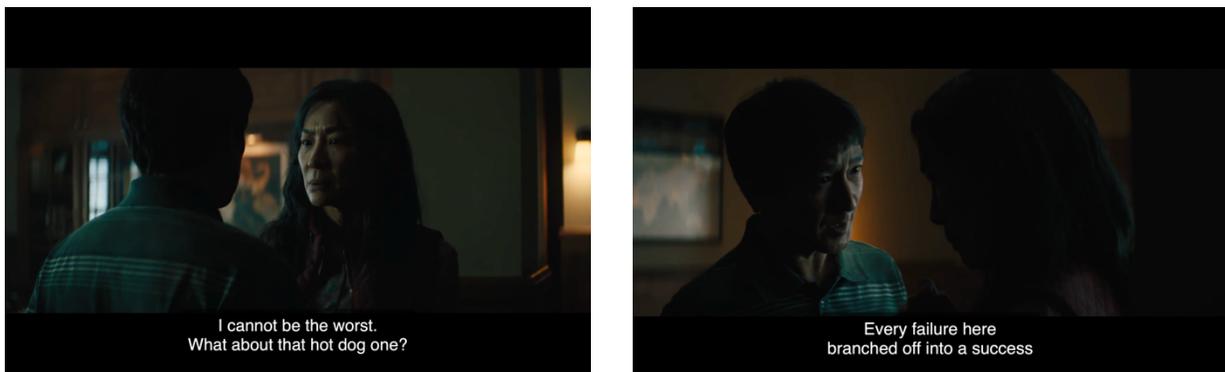
Evelyn	: “You know he doesn't have to stay.”
Joy	: “Who's he?”
Evelyn	: “Becky.”
Joy	: “Becky is a "she" mom.”
Evelyn	: “You know I always mix the words. "He", "she". In Chinese, jus tone word, tā, so easy. The way you two dress, I don't think I'm only one calling him: "he"... I mean her “him”... Anyways, our English is fine. And we have Google. You stay with Gong Gong, she can go. I'm sure she is very busy... with her full-time job.” <i>(Everything Everywhere All at Once, 04:21 – 04:41)</i>

Based on the dialogue, it can be seen that Evelyn's inability to fully accept Joy's identity and relationship creates tension between them because Evelyn cannot reconcile her traditional beliefs with Joy's modern self-expression. This conflict highlights the generational divide, where Evelyn's traditional mindset clashes with Joy's desire for autonomy. However, Evelyn's disapproval softens as she sees her daughter's pain, and

in a pivotal moment, she embraces Joy with unconditional love, accepting her identity despite her own traditional views. This resolution symbolizes Evelyn's growth and the bridging of generational gaps through love and understanding.

3.1.3.2 Conflict Between Evelyn Wang and Waymond Wang

The conflict between Evelyn and Waymond arises because of the pressure that Asian women often face to conform to gender roles within marriage and family. Evelyn is burdened with the expectation of fulfilling the traditional roles of wife and mother, while also managing the family business. This causes her to struggle with balancing caregiving responsibilities with being the family provider, traditionally a role reserved for men, as described in the picture below:



Picture 12. Two-Shot of Evelyn and Waymond in tension (Everything Everywhere All at Once, 01:02:30 – 01:04:09)

Based on the picture, it can be seen that Evelyn's frustration with Waymond stems from his more empathetic and kind approach to conflict resolution, which she perceives as weakness because it challenges her belief that she must always be the one in control and the protector. This conflict underscores the societal pressures placed on Evelyn to be both the emotional support and financial backbone of the family, while

Waymond's more nurturing approach challenges her view of strength. Over time, Evelyn comes to appreciate Waymond's kindness as a strength, not a weakness, allowing their relationship to transform as they learn to share responsibilities and move beyond traditional gender roles.

3.1.3.3 Conflict Between Evelyn Wang and Gong Gong

The conflict between Evelyn and her father, Gong Gong, begins because Evelyn makes the decision to marry Waymond and leave China, defying the traditional patriarchal values her father holds. Gong Gong, who believes that Evelyn's duty as a daughter is to uphold family values and marry according to cultural expectations, sees her decision as a betrayal of these values, as described in the picture below:



*Picture 13. Close-up Shot of Evelyn leaving her parents
(Everything Everywhere All at Once, 14:30)*

Based on the picture, it can be seen that Gong Gong's anger toward Evelyn reflects his deep sense of betrayal because he believes she is abandoning her familial and cultural duties. This conflict is rooted in the generational and cultural divide, where Gong Gong expects Evelyn to prioritize family and cultural preservation, while Evelyn desires autonomy. Her decision to marry Waymond and leave China creates a rift

between them, but as Evelyn understands Gong Gong's fear of cultural loss, they reconcile. Evelyn expresses that her choices do not negate her love for the family, allowing them to bridge their generational divide and find mutual understanding.

3.2 Extrinsic Discussion

The extrinsic discussion investigates the portrayal of Asian female gender roles as depicted in *Everything Everywhere All at Once* within the context of historical, cultural, and social influences. This part focuses on three aspects: the representation of gender roles, the underlying factors shaping these roles, and their effects on the characters' emotional and social experiences. By connecting the movie's narrative to real-world gender norms and immigrant experiences, this analysis reveals how the movie critiques traditional expectations while highlighting the evolving roles of Asian-American women in contemporary society.

3.2.1 The Portrayal of Asian American Women in *Everything Everywhere All at Once*

This section examines how the movie represents Asian female gender roles through the characters of Evelyn and Joy. By analyzing their roles as caregivers, dutiful daughters, and providers, the study identifies the ways in which the movie portrays traditional expectations, resistance, and negotiation of these roles. The portrayal demonstrates the balance between duty, personal ambition, and self-discovery, highlighting the nuanced depiction of Asian-American women.

3.2.1.1 Evelyn as Caregivers and Dutiful Mother

Evelyn's character clearly embodies the dutiful mother role as she takes on the emotional and physical responsibility of managing her family, often at the expense of her own happiness. Evelyn's frustration comes to a head as she navigates the stress of running the laundromat, dealing with Gong Gong's demands, and managing her relationship with Joy. Evelyn is overwhelmed by the responsibilities of both family and business, which leads to a tense moment in their conversation, as described in this dialogue below:

Joy	: "Could we talk about-"
Evelyn	: " 妳爸阿...过了这么多年(Your father... after all of this time). I still don't understand how his brain works..."
Joy	: "Can Becky come or-"
Evelyn	: "Stop changing the subject."
Joy	: "I'm not."

(Everything Everywhere All at Once, 07:08 – 07:30)

Based on this dialogue, it can be analyzed that this reflects Evelyn's overwhelming sense of responsibility as a mother and daughter. She is caught between trying to manage the laundromat's financial crisis and meet her father's needs, all while being unable to accept Joy's identity fully. Evelyn's frustration is clear here, she is not just dealing with the stress of business, but also fulfilling her role as the emotional caregiver for her family. Her reaction to Joy's attempt to talk about Becky shows how Evelyn tries to deflect her emotional needs in order to maintain family harmony and deal with the more pressing issues at hand.

3.2.1.2 Evelyn and Joy as Submissive Daughter

Evelyn's role as a submissive daughter is prominently seen in her relationship with her father, Gong Gong. She continuously seeks his approval and works hard to meet his expectations, even though those expectations weigh heavily on her as an adult. This tension is illustrated in the scene where Evelyn tries to hide Joy's relationship with Becky, as described in this dialogue below:

Joy : "公公... 這是 (Gong Gong... this is) Becky. Becky 她是我的 (is my). How do you say it again... shit, I mean, crap. She is my..."

Evelyn : "好朋友! (Good friend!). Becky is 係佢好朋友(a very good friend)."

Joy : "Mom!"

Evelyn : "What?"

(Everything Everywhere All at Once, 09:58 – 10:14)

Based on this dialogue, it can be analyzed that Evelyn's reluctance to acknowledge Becky as Joy's girlfriend, which is rooted in her submissiveness to Gong Gong's traditional views. Evelyn's deflection reflects her internal struggle between upholding cultural norms and supporting her daughter, but ultimately, she chooses to submit to the older, patriarchal values to preserve family honor.

Similarly, Joy also plays the submissive daughter role. Joy silently accepting her grandfather's critique of her English, even though it conflicts with her own personal identity and her growing desire to assert herself, as described in the dialogue:

Gong Gong : "哇, 佢D唐話越來越差啊 (Your Chinese is getting worse every time we talk)."

Joy : "Uh.. Yes."

(Everything Everywhere All at Once, 09:51 – 09:57)

Based on this dialogue, it can be analyzed Joy's silence reflects her submissive role to Gong Gong's authority within the family. She does not speak up to defend her dual cultural identity and instead concedes to his criticism, showing how deeply ingrained these submissive roles are in her character.

3.2.1.3 Evelyn as Provider and Protector

Evelyn's character embodies the role of a provider and protector, traditionally associated with male responsibilities, yet she fully embraces it within the context of her immigrant family. As a first-generation immigrant running a laundromat, Evelyn assumes the dual responsibility of financially supporting her family while also providing emotional stability. This is reflected in her constant balancing act between managing the laundromat's financial struggles and taking care of her family's needs, particularly those of her aging father, Gong Gong, and her daughter, Joy.

A significant moment that highlights Evelyn's role as a provider occurs during a tense encounter with the IRS agent, Deirdre, where Evelyn is confronted with the severe financial burden of her business. Deirdre aggressively reminds Evelyn of her tax liability, a looming threat to the family's property, as described in this dialogue below:

Deirdre : "Mrs. Wang, I'm sure you have a lot on your mind, but I cannot imagine anything mattering more than this conversation we are having right now concerning your tax liability. Need I remind you there is a lien on your property? Repossession is well within our rights."
 Evelyn: : "I know. I am paying attention."
 Deirdre : "Do you see this? You don't get one of these unless you've seen a lot of bullshit"
(Everything Everywhere All at Once, 16:26 – 17:46)

Based on this dialogue, it can be analyzed how Evelyn, as a woman and an immigrant, must prove her competency in ways that others might not have to, underscoring the additional burdens faced by Asian-American women in professional spaces. Her financial responsibility for the laundromat weighs heavily on her, further illustrating her dual role as both provider and protector.

As a protector, Evelyn's dedication to her family is seen in her constant attempt to shield them from external judgment and internal conflict. The climax of Evelyn's protective nature is shown when she faces the villainous multiverse version of Gong Gong, who has turned into a tyrant in a parallel universe. In this universe, Gong Gong is part of a powerful force that threatens Joy and Waymond. Before engaging in battle with Gong Gong and his troops, Evelyn has an emotionally charged moment with Joy, where she acknowledges the pain her daughter has been carrying and offers her own support, as described in the picture below:



Picture 15. Medium Shot of Evelyn having a conversation with Joy and Waymond (Everything Everywhere All at Once, 01:10:58 – 01:11:54)



Picture 14. Wide Shot of Evelyn fighting Gong Gong and his troops (Everything Everywhere All at Once, 01:13:17 – 01:22:11)

Based on the picture, it can be analyzed that Evelyn's empathy for Joy is clear as she addresses her daughter's emotional struggles. Evelyn acknowledges Joy's pain

and, then, makes the decision to fight back, even if it means adopting a more ruthless, aggressive persona. This is a turning point, as Evelyn prepares to fight Gong Gong and his forces, not just as a protector, but as someone who is willing to break free from her previous self-imposed limitations to ensure the safety of her family.

When Evelyn confronts the multiverse version of Gong Gong, she is no longer just a mother and a wife, she becomes a warrior fighting to protect her loved ones. This battle serves as the emotional and physical culmination of her protective instincts. Evelyn's fight against Gong Gong's troops is a reflection of how determined she is to protect her family from both external threats and internal struggles.

3.2.2 The Factors of Asian Female Gender Roles in Everything Everywhere All at Once

The factors influencing Asian female gender roles in the movie include intergenerational expectations, immigrant role strain, and cultural identity conflicts. This section explores how these external pressures affect the characters' behaviors, decisions, and self-perceptions. By understanding these factors, the study contextualizes the characters' struggles within broader social, cultural, and historical frameworks, emphasizing the challenges faced by Asian-American women in navigating traditional and contemporary expectations.

3.2.2.1 The Pressure of Traditional Roles in Evelyn Wang's Life and Her Father's Expectations

Evelyn Wang faces immense pressure from her father to fulfill traditional roles, especially regarding her marriage and family life. This pressure begins at the moment

of her birth, where her father's disappointment about having a daughter influences his treatment of her. This continuing control over her life is apparent throughout Evelyn's journey, especially as she navigates her decision to marry Waymond and move to America, defying her father's wishes. One of the most significant moments showing the depth of Evelyn's father's disappointment in her gender, as described in this line:

Doctor : “唔好意思，係個女 (I'm sorry, it's a girl).”
(*Everything Everywhere All at Once*, 14:10)

Based on this line, it can be analyzed that the expression of disappointment sets the tone for Evelyn's entire life, as she is continually judged for not fulfilling the family's expectations. Later, after Evelyn makes her own choices, such as marrying Waymond and leaving China, her father scolds her again, as described in the line below:

Gong Gong : “如果你真係跟哩個傻仔走，你以後都唔洗翻來啦！我就當沒生過你！ (If you abandon this family for that silly boy, then we will abandon you. You are not my daughter anymore).”
(*Everything Everywhere All at Once*, 14:25 – 14:32)

Based on this line, it can be analyzed how Evelyn's gender becomes a point of contention. Her father believes that, as a woman, she should remain dutiful to her family and adhere to the societal expectations placed upon her. By running away to marry Waymond, Evelyn's father sees her as shirking her role, making her actions seem irresponsible and selfish. His scolding further reinforces the deeply ingrained belief that a woman's place is within traditional family structures, and anything outside of

that is seen as unacceptable. Evelyn's constant battle to break free from these constraints is a central theme that shapes the course of her life.

3.2.2.2 The Challenges of Evelyn Wang as an Immigrant Navigating Social and Economic Realities

When Evelyn Wang first arrives in America, she is filled with doubt and uncertainty about their new life. The house and laundromat business provided by Waymond are far from what she has envisioned, and the reality of their situation starts to sink in. Over time, the laundromat struggles to attract customers, and Evelyn's dreams of achieving the American Dream seem to slip further away. She begins to feel the weight of her decision to leave China, longing for the life she left behind, and the comforting presence of her father, as described in this line:

Evelyn : “啊爸，又係我。你𨀉完未啊？等緊你電話！
(Ba..It's me again, wondering when you'll call back...)”
(Everything Everywhere All at Once, 14:42)

Based on this line, it can be analyzed that Evelyn's sense of isolation and her need for guidance from her father, whom she misses deeply. She feels disconnected from her roots, and the pressure of trying to make her life in America work weighs heavily on her. The laundromat business, which she has hoped would be their fresh start, continues to struggle, leaving Evelyn feeling helpless. Later, Evelyn faces an IRS audit that further amplifies the sense of being overwhelmed by her new life. The audit process is confusing, and Evelyn struggles to understand the legal and financial systems in this foreign country, as described in the dialogue:

Deirdre : "With this many 'honest mistakes,' even if you aren't charged with fraud, we'll have to fine you for gross negligence."
 Evelyn : "You're always trying to confuse us with these big words."
 Deirdre : "Didn't you say you'd bring your daughter to translate?"
(Everything Everywhere All at Once, 21:14 – 21:40)

Based on this dialogue, it can be analyzed Evelyn's deep frustration with the systems around her. The language barrier and the overwhelming paperwork further alienate her, making her feel like an outsider in her own country. The isolation she feels, both from her family and from the country she is trying to build a life in, is certain.

3.2.2.3 Identity Conflict Between Evelyn and Joy Wang

The relationship between Evelyn and Joy is defined with a deep identity conflict rooted in generational and cultural differences. Evelyn, shaped by her traditional Chinese upbringing, holds on to the role of a protective mother who strives to guide her daughter according to familiar cultural norms. Joy, on the other hand, seeks autonomy and freedom, challenging the expectations placed on her by her mother and their family. This tension culminates in moments where their contrasting views on life, love, and identity come to a head. One pivotal moment occurs when Evelyn and Joy discuss Joy's relationship with her girlfriend, Becky. While Evelyn initially tries to present herself as supportive, her underlying cultural concerns surface. This moment encapsulates the generational conflict between Evelyn's desire to protect Joy while grappling with traditional values rooted in her family's culture, as described in the dialogue:

Joy : “Mom, this is what it's always like... Look, I know you haven't always liked Becky, but...”

Evelyn : “I like Becky. She is very nice.”

Joy : “But...”

Evelyn : “ 你很 lucky 啦。。。你媽對你交往女朋友的事，已經很 open 了。還是個老外。(You are very lucky, your mother is open to you dating a girl. A white girl).”

Joy : “She’s half-mexican”

Evelyn : “But Gong Gong, I don't think his heart could take that. Especially not after that flight. Coming all of the way from China just to die like that.”
(Everything Everywhere All at Once, 05:30 – 06.03)

Based on this dialogue, it can be analyzed that Evelyn tries to express her support for Joy's relationship, but her underlying concern for how their traditional family values will be perceived by Gong Gong emerges. Evelyn's words reveal her internal conflict, while she is somewhat open-minded, her fear of disobeying her father's expectations continues to shape her actions. The reference to Gong Gong's disapproval and his journey to America underscores the weight of generational tradition and the emotional burden Evelyn feels to conform to those expectations.

This scene highlights the clash between Evelyn's desire to honour traditional family values, particularly in the eyes of her father, and her desire to support Joy's individuality and freedom. It exemplifies how deeply ingrained cultural norms, passed down through generations, can affect familial relationships, especially when it comes to personal autonomy and love.

3.2.3 The Effects of Asian Female Gender Roles in *Everything Everywhere All at Once*

This section investigates the emotional, relational, and psychological effects of gender roles on the characters. By examining role strain, role innovation, and role integration, the study highlights how Evelyn and Joy navigate emotional struggles, transformations in motherhood, and reconciliation of identity and familial expectations. The analysis demonstrates how gender roles influence personal growth, resilience, and the negotiation of autonomy in the context of immigrant and multigenerational family life.

3.2.3.1 Evelyn and Joy's Emotional Struggles

Both Evelyn and Joy experience role strain as they struggle to meet the conflicting demands of their familial and societal roles. Evelyn's strain is due to the overwhelming pressure of balancing her responsibilities as a mother, wife, businesswoman, and daughter, while Joy faces emotional burdens from trying to assert her independence in a family where traditional expectations weigh heavily on her, as described in the statement below:

Evelyn : “Everyday here is a battle. I fight I fight I fight for all of us. Everything I do, I try to make things simpler, easier, 但妳爸... 有時候我在想,如果沒有我他怎麼 survive... (but your father... sometimes I wonder how he would have survived without me...).”
(*Everything Everywhere All at Once*, 05:30 – 06:03)

Based on this statement, it can be analyzed that Evelyn's role strain is clearly expressed, where she feels the emotional burden of trying to manage all aspects of her

family's life. She fights tirelessly to keep the laundromat afloat, meet her father's needs, and manage her relationship with Joy. The exhaustion from balancing these competing roles, especially in the face of overwhelming responsibilities, weighs heavily on Evelyn. This constant battle between fulfilling her roles as a mother, wife, and businesswoman results in emotional and psychological strain, leaving her feeling disconnected from her own desires and overwhelmed by the obligations she faces.

In contrast, Joy also experiences role strain, but from a different angle. Joy feels invisible and neglected by Evelyn, who is overwhelmed by her own responsibilities. As Evelyn is consumed by the demands of the laundromat and the emotional weight of her father's expectations, Joy becomes increasingly frustrated with the lack of attention and emotional support from her mother. She expresses her dissatisfaction and pain in a moment of emotional vulnerability, challenging Evelyn to recognize her needs, as described in the statement below:

Joy : "Seriously... can you please just... stop, Mom. Good for you. You're figuring your shit out. And that's great. But I'm tired. I don't want to hurt anymore. And for some reason when I'm with you, it hurts both of us. So, let's just go our separate ways... Please."
(Everything Everywhere All at Once, 02:03:50 – 02:04:41)

Based on this statement, it can be analyzed Joy's role strain becomes evident as she confronts her mother, feeling neglected and emotionally unseen. Her statement "You're so busy fighting everyone, you don't even see me" shows how deeply frustrated she is by her mother's inability to recognize her emotional needs. Joy feels trapped in a cycle where her identity is overshadowed by her mother's constant battle

to fulfill traditional expectations. This moment reveals how role strain affects Joy's emotional well-being, as she tries to assert her own identity while being caught in the web of familial duty and expectation.

3.2.3.2 Evelyn's Transformation in Motherhood

Evelyn undergoes a transformative shift in her understanding of motherhood, moving away from the pressures of traditional expectations to an empowered, more self-affirming approach. She no longer sees herself as solely defined by the role of a mother who must sacrifice her identity for her child. Instead, she comes to realize that she can love and support Joy deeply while nurturing her own desires and growth. This transformation is particularly evident in her emotional confrontation with her father, Gong Gong, where she finally confronts the traditional roles that have long burdened her, as described in the statement below:

Evelyn : “你可能喺佢身上睇倒你自己最大嘅恐懼。我一直都好希望佢唔會似我。(You may see in her all of your greatest fears squeezed into one person. I spent most of her childhood praying she would not end up like me). But she turned out stubborn, aimless, a mess just like her mother. But now I see it's okay that she's a mess. Because just like me, 讓他在這個空間找到一位善良, 有耐性又可以包容她的人)(the universe gave her someone kind, patient, and forgiving to make up for all she lacks).”
(Everything Everywhere All at Once, 02:00:08 – 02:00:53)

Based on this statement, it can be analyzed that this moment marks a pivotal point in Evelyn's emotional and psychological journey. For years, she has lived her life

in trying to meet her father's expectations in fulfilling the traditional role of a dutiful daughter. However, in this confrontation, Evelyn rejects the need to conform to those expectations, realizing that she is allowed to define her own identity. She acknowledges that, even though her father may not approve of her choices, she has finally found the courage to live for herself.

The dialogue shows Evelyn's role innovation as she embraces her independence and the courage to be herself. It highlights her rejection of the traditional notion that she must constantly seek her father's approval and instead finds her own sense of pride. Evelyn's newfound self-acceptance reflects a deep shift in her maternal identity as well. She no longer feels obligated to shape Joy into an idealized version of what she thinks her child should be; instead, she realizes that she can accept both herself and Joy without the need for validation from others.

3.2.3.3 Evelyn's Acceptance and Joy's Reconciliation

Evelyn's journey culminates in role integration, where she finds a way to harmonize her roles as a mother, wife, and individual. Throughout the movie, Evelyn has struggled to balance her traditional cultural expectations with her personal desires. By the end, she achieves a sense of balance, recognizing that her love for her daughter does not have to come at the expense of her own identity and personal growth. Evelyn and Joy finally have an open and vulnerable conversation, where Evelyn expresses her deep love and commitment to Joy, despite the confusion and chaos they both face, as described in the statement below:

- Evelyn : "Maybe it's like you said, maybe there is something out there, some new discovery that'll make us feel like even smaller pieces of shit. Something that explains why even after seeing everything, and giving up, you still went looking for me through all of this noise. And why no matter what, I still want to be here with you. I will always want to be here with you."
- Joy : "So....what? You're just going to ignore everything else? You could be anything, anywhere. Why not go somewhere where your daughter is more than just... this. Here, all we'll get are a few specks of time where any of this actually makes sense."
- Evelyn : "Then I will cherish these few specks of time."
(Everything Everywhere All at Once, 02:06:06 – 02:07:39)

Based on this dialogue, it can be analyzed Evelyn's acceptance of the fact that she can love her daughter deeply and she is allowed to find meaning in her own life beyond her role as a mother. Joy's response challenges Evelyn to reconsider her own desires, and Evelyn's response shows that while she cannot escape her role as a mother, she acknowledges the importance of living her own truth, not just for Joy, but for herself.

In this moment, Evelyn reconciles her deep maternal love with her personal need to find meaning in her life. She realizes that being a mother does not mean sacrificing her own sense of self or remaining stuck in the confines of traditional expectations. This represents a significant step in role integration, where Evelyn no longer feels torn between her personal desires and her obligations to her family.