

The Adoption of State Feminism by the Dominant Party: A Case Study in Japan

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Abstract : The study examines the proactive promotion of feminist agendas by states experiencing prolonged one-party dominance, with a specific focus on Japan. Through a case study approach, it explores why leaders of the dominant party, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), actively endorse women-friendly initiatives. The findings reveal three primary motivations: 1) the adoption of women-friendly policies for legitimation, 2) the establishment or funding of women's organizations for co-optation, and 3) the enhancement of women's economic and employment rights for state-building purposes. These findings bridge theories across the democracy/autocracy spectrum, emphasizing the need to restructure the research framework on state feminism beyond the binary categorization of regime types. Additionally, they underscore the significance of acknowledging the discretion exercised by state officials, providing insights into instances where state feminism may fail in certain democratic contexts.

Keywords : state feminism, feminist policies, national machinery, regime types, political parties, Japan

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