

## Gender and Welfare States in East Asia: Confucianism or Gender Equality?



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Is a Confucian cultural climate hostile to gender equality in families and public decision-making? What is the impact of gender equality legislation in East Asia? Approaches to these welfare regimes have ignored gender, while gendered accounts of welfare have neglected East Asia. Comparisons with Western welfare states show strong economies with life expectancy in Japan and South Korea above those of Western social democracies but in contrast there are extremely large gender gaps in employment, earning, unpaid work and parliamentary representation and conjoined with this low fertility rates and and minimal public social spending on childcare and early education.

In this volume, contributors address questions about gender equality in a Confucian context across a wide and varied social policy landscape, from Korea and Taiwan, where Confucian culture is deeply embedded, through China, with its transformations from Confucianism to communism and back, to the mixed cultural environments of Hong Kong and Japan. Overall, the collections asks: Has East Asia's rapid economic transformation been accompanied by social and cultural transformation?

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