

Social media perspectives on Chinese and Japanese housewives: Women at the intersection of patriarchy and feminism



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RESEARCH QUESTION



This study began with a primary source survey of mainstream social media in Chinese and Japanese societies to explore the **intersection of patriarchy and feminism**: how do we perceive society's subtle attitudes toward housewives from the Internet in China and Japan?

BACKGROUND

- During the **Meiji Restoration** era, feminism in Japan began to sprout under the full influence of Western thought. The relevant status and rights of women gained some advancement until the **bursting of the bubble economy**, when fierce workplace struggles turned housewives into the best career choice for women.
- **専業主婦**: principal occupation + housewives
- **寿退社**・Kotobuki Taisya: A woman who resigns from a company because she is married.
- In the context of the **Second World War** and the call for social revolution, the Chinese people's conception of gender began to change from conventional male superiority to encouraging women to engage in social activities like men.
- **家庭主妇**: family + housewives
- Chinese official propaganda on the image of women 

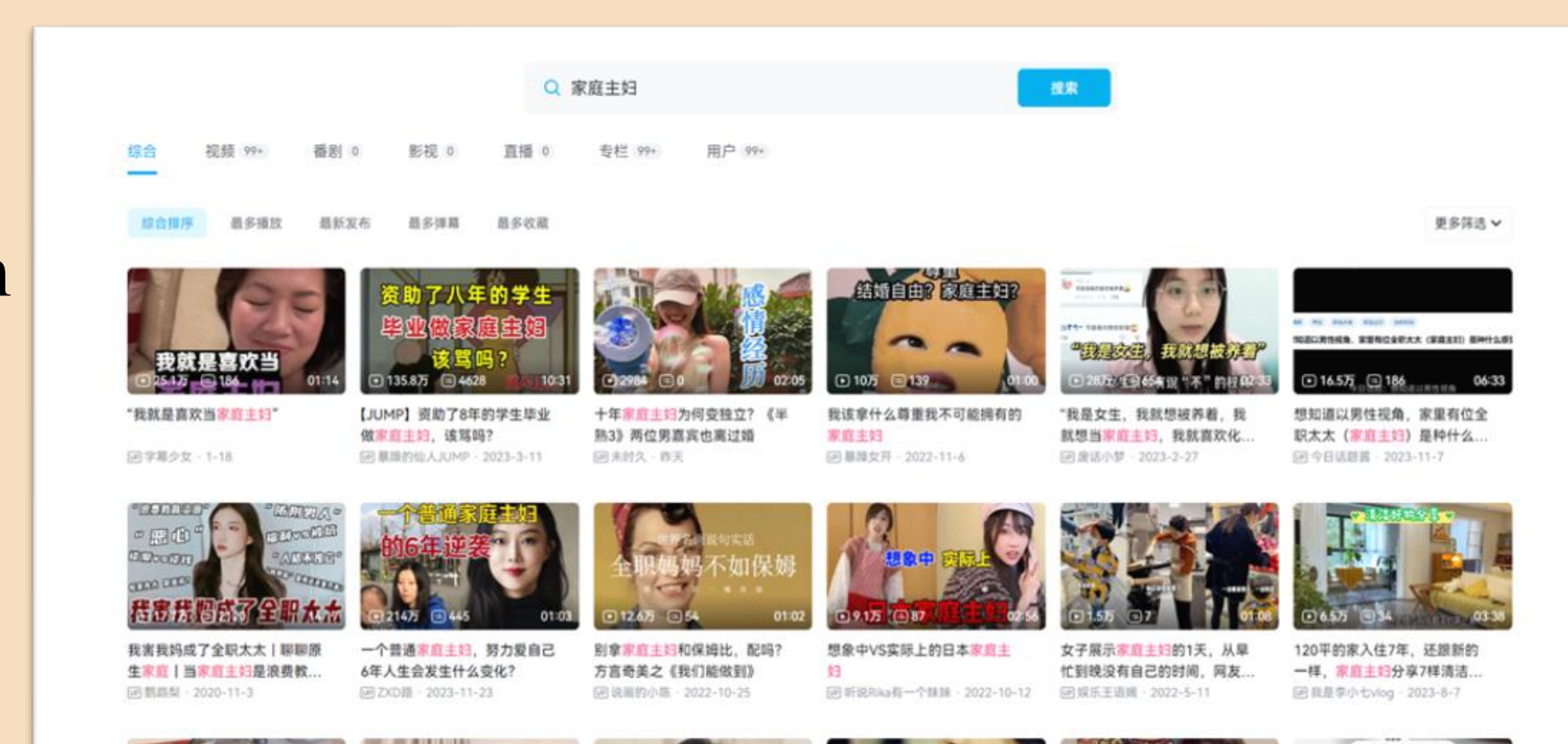
RESEARCH

Chinese attitudes towards housewives are generally **pessimistic** and **unsupportive**. Most of the videos or posts that result from searches on mainstream platforms with the keyword housewife center around in-depth discussions or critiques of what it means to be a housewife. Highly educated women in particular see becoming a housewife as a waste of their education.

  **Key words**: valuelessness / out of step with society / endorsement

Chinese netizens are more inclined to explore the existence of housewives from the following perspectives

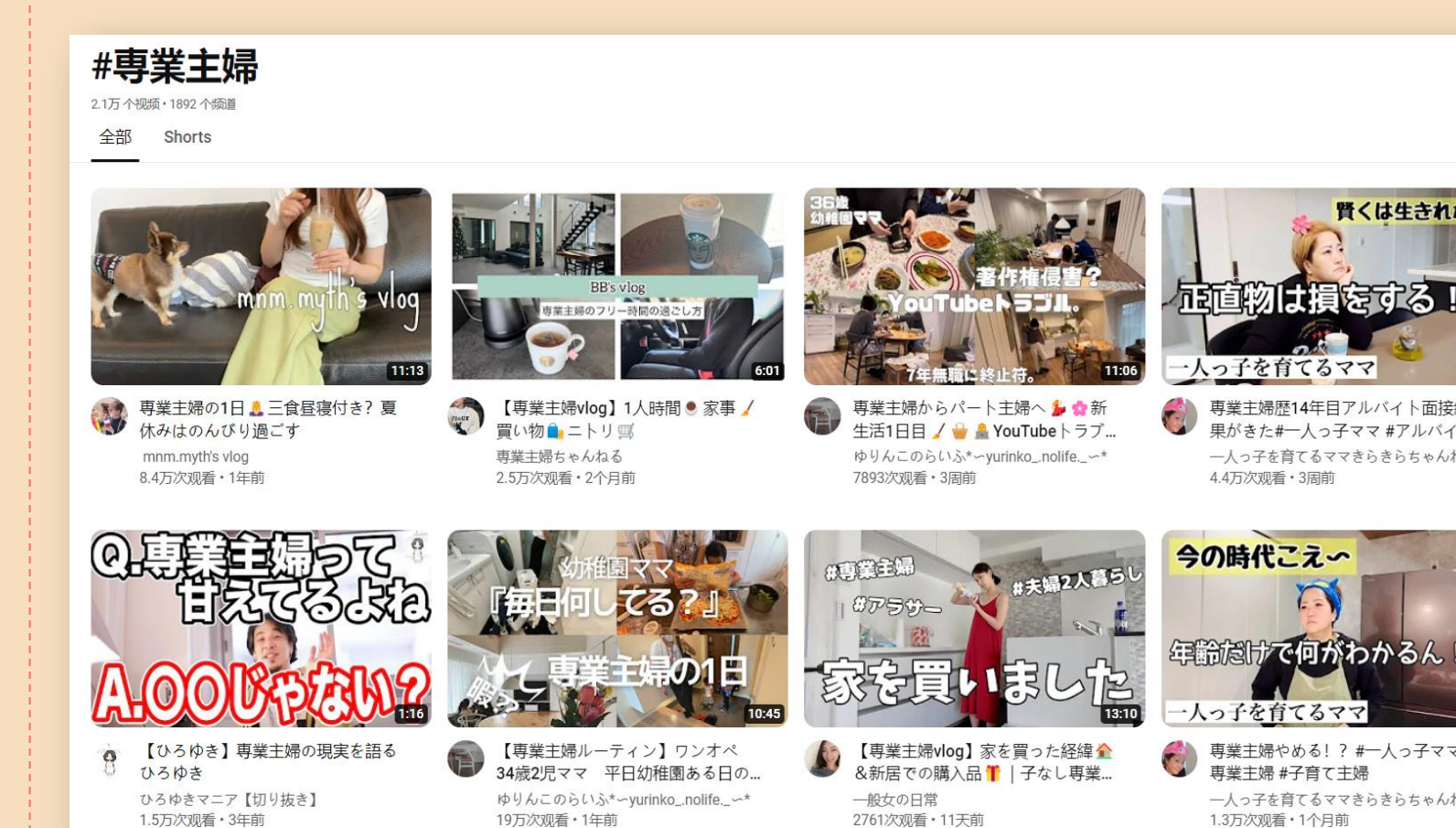
- Collectivism
- Full-time mothers
- Gender construction theory
- Women who engage in investment or financial activities are referred to as **freelancers** rather than housewives.
- Chinese families do not have a tradition of a housewife being in charge of finances, so Chinese women feel anxious about the lack of comparable resources and dependence on their husbands for financial support.
- Behind the criticism of housewives shown is a fear of the institution of marriage and the harm of procreation.
- Cyberfeminists don't see housewives' claims as part of feminists' fight for rights because it is widely believed that housewives contribute nothing to society and are a **potential support for the patriarchal system**.




没错 还扯社会价值 家庭主妇对社会有什么价值 她们为老公当家当牛做马 只要主人家满意不就行了 她们的价值仅限于此

梁, 如果一个人只做了全职妈妈, 她作为桥梁的作用几乎只剩传递dna, 而不是利用学识, 做更有创造性的工作, 这个

Most of the results of searching for housewives on Japan's mainstream social and video platforms are related daily vlogs on topics such as preparing bento, home budget management, and housework tips.



Japanese women's attitudes towards housewives are more neutral. Although there were many comments that they had received criticism for being a housewife, there was no in-depth discussion on whether housewives could be considered a labor role in society. Beyond that, the more common comment is a call to encourage diversity in the lives of individuals.

 **key words**: Vlog / daily life / housework / Part-Time Jobs / Diversity

- Some people perceive the costs associated with workplace etiquette as extravagant. As a result, they view transitioning to a housewife role as a strategy to mitigate household expenses.
- The glass ceiling, discrimination, and bullying in the formal workplace have caused Japanese women to view homemaking as an alternative career.
- Housewives are asked to keep the household in Japan. Therefore, they actively seek opportunities to earn extra money, such as part-time jobs or investments.
- Many of the experiences shared in the comments section show that the wife is responsible for more of the household chores in a family, so the lifestyle of a full-time housewife plus a part-time job - is a balanced state for Japanese women.

働いていたほうがメイク代、洋服代、交際費などなどお金かかるものね 専業主婦だと、そこは貯まるかも

働かないで暮らせるなんて、最高の勝ち組! 働くて、本当に地獄だよ

99 66 The example of Mrs. Watanabe

CONCLUSION

The root of the intersection of patriarchy and feminism discussions can be attributed to the competition for labor in society. The intersectionality of housewives lies in whether the contribution of their labor is recognized by both sides, and this is the starting point for the difference in attitudes between China and Japan.

Similarity:

- Both Chinese and Japanese feminism advocates for **economic independence** as a primary demand.
- Changes in women's perspectives often stem from reactions to an oppressive society.

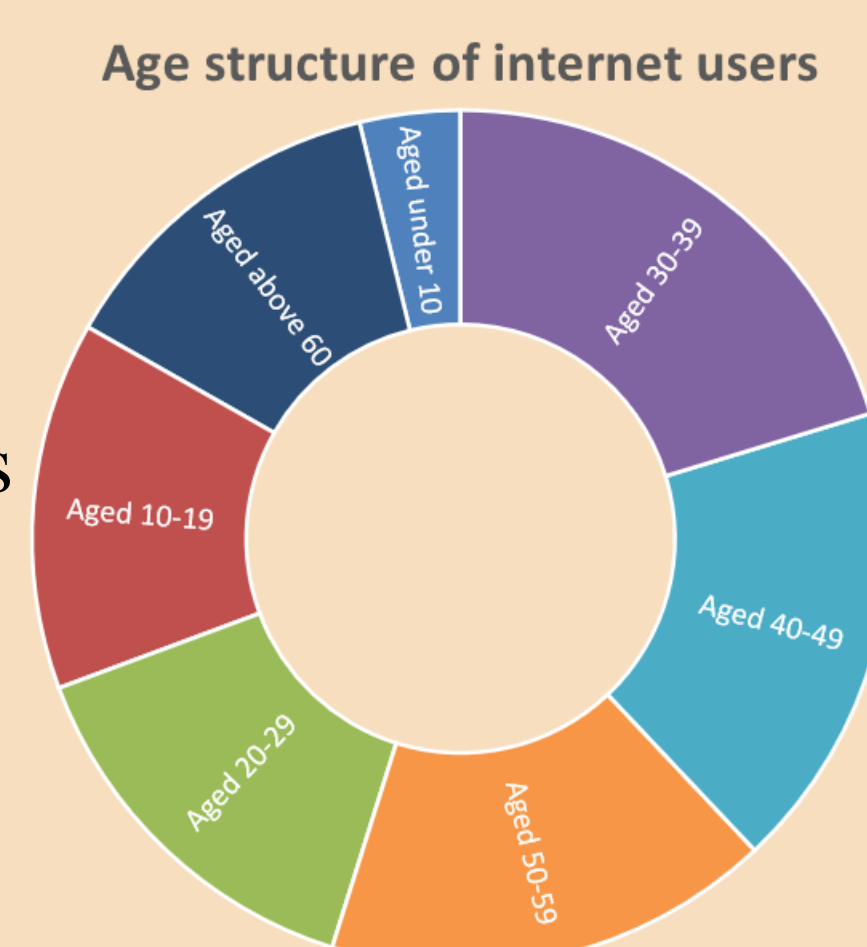
Distinction:

- In China, women's emancipation began with significant **governmental** and **official** leadership, actively pursued as a means of **resolving** social conflicts.
- In Japan, housewives are regarded favorably as a social occupation and receive substantial government support and public approval.
- Conversely, in China, housewives are seen as contradicting the ideals of the **burgeoning** feminist movement and are viewed as **complicit** in perpetuating women's oppression under the patriarchal system.

Overall, the critique of housewives is present in both China and Japan, but the attitudes towards them differ significantly. In China, the existence of housewives is often viewed as a perpetuation of women's oppression within patriarchal society. Conversely, Japan tends to have a more positive and inclusive perspective on housewives, with even criticism-focused discussion of personal values rather than a condemnation of their role in society.

LIMITATIONS

- Attitudes of individuals speaking out socially may not accurately reflect prevailing societal views on housewives.
- Trends in mainstream media attitudes towards housewives could be influenced by **political factors**.
- The accurate **percentage of housewives** among social media users cannot be determined.
- Preferences for software platforms differ significantly between the two countries in social media surveys.
- Social media users tend to be clustered within the **younger generation** demographic.
- Search results for social media content may be influenced by **personalized recommendations** from the platform.



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