

CUTE GIRLS

AS THE FACE OF JAPAN'S EMOTIONAL CONSUMERISM

PRESENTER: REO BARBORICA
19056061@BROOKES.AC.UK

SUPERVISOR: KERRI RUSSELL
KERRI.RUSSELL@BROOKES.AC.UK



#1

KEY TERMS



IDOL

Entertainers who sing and dance. Usually young, attractive, and not outstandingly talented, as the industry focuses more on fan appeal and interaction rather than performance. Think of the Backstreet Boys!



MAID

Café workers who, on top of serving food and drink, wear maid-inspired outfits and perform fanservice for the customers, similar to the idol.

OSHI

Can loosely be translated as 'favourite'. In fan circles, it refers to someone's favourite person (in this context, an idol or maid).
'Oshikatsu' a compound of the words *oshi* and *katsu* (activity), refers to any activity that has to do with the *oshi*.

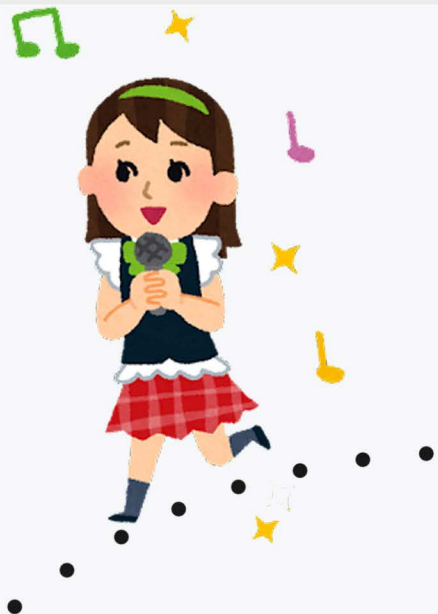
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STUDY RATIONALE

IDOLS

THE PERFECT REPRESENTATION OF JAPANESE CONSUMERISM

- ◆ Lack of outstanding talent
- ◆ Commodified
- ◆ Disposable and replaceable
- ◆ Produced by the thousands
- ◆ Sell affection & comfort



FANS

THE INHERENT CONSUMERS

The fan cannot exist without consumerism. The relationship between the two is one of **sympiosis** - the fan feeds on the temporary gratification of consumerism, while becoming a stable source of revenue for the industry.

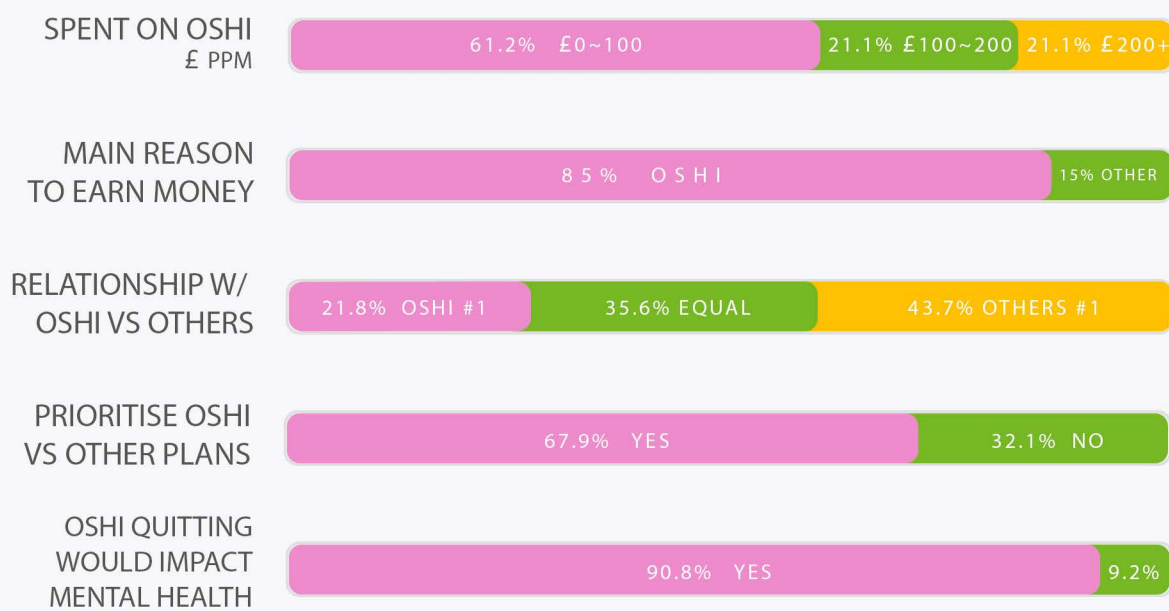
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RESEARCH

METHODOLOGY

- ◆ Ethnographic research
- ◆ Participant observation
- ◆ Questionnaires - 87
- ◆ Interviews - 5
- ◆ Content Analysis

RESULTS



"SHE'S THE BEST. I LOVE HER. I WANT THE BEST FOR HER, AND I WANNA GIVE HER ALL MY MONEY."

"Usagi", 2024

LIMITATIONS

SAMPLE BIAS

Due to time constraints and lack of resources for translation, all interviewees were non-Japanese English speakers working in Japan. Questionnaire participants are both Japanese and non-Japanese.

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TREAT, J.W. (1993) "YOSHIMOTO BANANA WRITES HOME: SHOJO CULTURE AND THE NOSTALGIC SUBJECT," *JOURNAL OF JAPANESE STUDIES*, 19(2), PP. 353-387. DOI:10.2307/132644.

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#4

SOURCES

OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY

