DEMOGRAPHIC RESEARCH
A peer-reviewed, open-access journal of population sciences

DEMOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

VOLUME 55, ARTICLE 28, PAGES 925–968
PUBLISHED 28 OCTOBER 2026
https://www.demographic-research.org/Volumes/Vol55/28/
DOI: 10.4054/DemRes.2026.55.28

Research Article

Digital matches and marital roles: Online partner selection and nontraditional housework in Japan

Gina Potarca

Hiroshi Ishida

This publication is part of the Special Collection on "De/Re-institutionalization of Asian Families," organized by Lake Lui, Bussarawan Teerawichitchainan, and Adam Ka-lok Cheung.

© 2026 Gina Potarca & Hiroshi Ishida.

This open-access work is published under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Germany (CC BY 3.0 DE), which permits use, reproduction, and distribution in any medium, provided the original author(s) and source are given credit.
See https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/de/legalcode.

Contents

1	Introduction	926
2	Theoretical background	929
2.1	Division of unpaid labor	929
2.2	The online partner market in Japan	931
2.3	Selection into internet matching	933
2.4	Educational attainment	934
3	Method	935
3.1	Data	935
3.2	Measures	936
3.2.1	Dependent variable	936
3.2.2	Independent variables	936
3.3	Analysis	939
4	Results	940
4.1	Entropy balancing	940
4.2	Descriptive statistics	942
4.3	Multivariate results	945
5	Supplementary analyses	951
5.1	Variation by birth cohort	951
5.2	Variation by marriage cohort	952
6	Discussion	954
7	Acknowledgments	
	References	959

Demographic Research: Volume 55, Article 28
Research Article

Digital matches and marital roles: Online partner selection and nontraditional housework in Japan

Gina Potarca[1]

Hiroshi Ishida[2]

Abstract

BACKGROUND
In Japan, traditional male-breadwinner norms persist despite rising pressures for gender-egalitarian unions and women's increased economic participation. Meanwhile, the spread of online matchmaking offers an alternative to declining conventional forms of partner selection and is potentially associated with departures from traditional gender roles in intimate life.

OBJECTIVE
This study investigates whether meeting a spouse through online dating is linked to less traditional divisions of household labor in Japan, and whether this association varies by women's educational attainment.

METHODS
The analysis draws on data from 2,051 married women participating in the Japanese Life Course Panel Surveys (2007–2022). To account for selection into online dating, entropy balancing is applied. The study models the likelihood of less traditional divisions across specific household chores, including preparing meals, laundry, cleaning, and grocery shopping.

RESULTS
Findings show that women who met their spouse online – particularly those with a junior college education – are more likely to report nontraditional sharing of household chores like grocery shopping, with smaller associations for laundry and cleaning. While selection factors explain part of the observed patterns, the relationship between online matching and nontraditional sharing of grocery shopping remains robust.

[1] Independent Researcher. Email: contact@ginapotarca.com.
[2] Institute of Social Science (ISS), The University of Tokyo, Japan. Email: ishida@iss.u-tokyo.ac.jp.

CONCLUSIONS
These findings suggest that digital partner search is associated with differences in the division of household labor, but these patterns are not uniform across groups or tasks. Digital platforms appear to function as a selective partner-pool-expanding space in which certain groups are more likely to realize less traditional arrangements, particularly for more flexible, less strongly gendered tasks.

CONTRIBUTION
This study contributes to research on family change and digitalization in Japan by linking online partner formation with gender role renegotiation in marriage.

1. Introduction

Japan is undergoing significant demographic transformations in the area of marriage, with increasing numbers of people marrying late, marrying less, or drifting away from romantic and sexual relationships altogether (Raymo et al. 2015). Japan's late singlehood rate has been recently identified as one of the highest in East Asia (Esteve et al. 2020). Explanations for these trends include a persistent demand for high-earning male partners (Yamada 2017) in a context of increased precarious employment among men (Piotrowski, Kalleberg, and Rindfuss 2015), but also high opportunity costs of marriage and childbearing for women, who still disproportionately bear the burden of childrearing and domestic work (Kan and Hertog 2017). Some studies also point out growing discrepancies between men and women in terms of what they expect from a partnership, with women more frequently seeking and negotiating for egalitarian dynamics (Piotrowski et al. 2019; Yu and Hertog 2018), as well as placing more emphasis on emotional compatibility than men (Dalton and Dales 2016). Comparative research across several East Asian countries find that Japanese women, in particular, faced the largest mismatch between their aspirations for gender equality and the reality of household labor division, contributing to the lowest reported levels of marital satisfaction (Qian and Sayer 2016).

Despite these trends, marriage remains highly desirable among Japanese adults (Miwa 2019). While a recent survey (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2023) shows a slight dip in marriage intentions compared to 2015 (less than a 5% decrease), the vast majority (over 80%) of young Japanese adults (age 18 to 34, men and women) still express a desire to get married. Some argue, in fact, that recent trends are not necessarily driven by an intentional retreat from marriage but rather by "an unplanned drifting into singlehood" due to limited access to partner options (Raymo, Uchikoshi, and Yoda 2021: 69).

On the backdrop of these marriage market shortages, the decline of previous structures of mate selection (i.e., family, work) and rising individual preferences toward a less rigid dating culture (Beck 2014), the onset of Japan's *konkatsu* (i.e., spouse hunting) culture (Alpert 2022; Castro-Vazquez 2016; Miwa and Tanaka 2020) has helped liberalize marriage markets, spawning venues and spaces that each script courtship in distinct ways (Dalton and Dales 2016). The popularity of formal matchmaking services (e.g., through *miai* parties, where people with strong intentions of getting married can meet potential partners) and more informal group dating (*gōkon*) options reflects the shift from family-driven and work-related mate selection to more individualistic and agentic ways of searching for partners (Brinton, Mun, and Hertog 2021; Miwa 2022; Yang 2017). Online matchmaking sites represent one modality that have emerged within the burgeoning industry of partner hunting in recent years (Alpert 2022; Farrer and Gavin 2009; Woźny 2022; Yu and Hertog 2018). Digital dating is an important means of searching for partners, particularly for singles with reduced time availability or, some argue, limited communication skills (Nemoto, Fuwa, and Ishiguro 2013). In Japan, internet dating accounts for approximately 14% of newly formed marriages in the past five years (National Institute of Population and Social Security Research 2023). While this share remains lower than in Western contexts (e.g., the United States; Rosenfeld, Thomas, and Hausen 2019), it indicates that online partner formation constitutes a nonnegligible and growing pathway into marriage.

In Western contexts, research has already identified how online mate search and selection relates with various outcomes, such as timing of marriage, the marriage gap, or assortative mating (Potarca 2021; Rosenfeld 2017; Thomas 2020). For Japan, research has primarily focused on online dating records and partner preferences of users enrolled on a matchmaking agency (Yu and Hertog 2018). This gap leaves unexplored the link between digital mate selection and the reproduction (or the challenging) of the traditional gender system. In recent years, Japan has been showcasing a certain hybridization of gender and the rise of a new dichotomy opposing "herbivorous men" (passive, risk-averse, professionally unambitious) to "carnivorous women" (proactive, career-oriented); though this shift softens but does not overturn traditional hierarchies, it does mirror a marriage market reshaped by economic stagnation, unstable employment, and delayed marriage (Woźny 2022). As Japanese couples transition from gender-traditional toward more gender-egalitarian arrangements (Esping-Andersen and Billari 2015; Fukuda, Raymo, and Yoda 2020), the internet, much like recent research findings from Germany suggest (Potarca and Hook 2023), may provide a space associated with greater innovation in gender roles (Beck 2014). This trend might be due to several factors: Online dating platforms offer a more liberal space of interaction, more anonymity, and access to a wider dating pool, which often exhibits male-biased sex ratios (i.e., more men than women). Such conditions may be linked to more unconventional courtship dynamics and

more space for women – particularly those with higher levels of education – to assert their preferences more confidently. Compared to their less-educated counterparts, Japanese women with junior college or university degrees may be better positioned to navigate dating platforms in ways that challenge traditional gender norms and seek more compatible partnerships – an expectation echoing findings from Germany and Switzerland (Potarca 2020, 2021; Potarca and Hook 2023).

In the context of women's increasing levels of education (Hannum et al. 2019; Ishida 2022; Nakamura 2022) and overall changes in the landscape of marriage, the current study investigates how online dating marriage markets relate to the division of housework among married women in Japan. The study specifically examines the probability of a nontraditional division of various routine housework tasks, including preparing meals, doing laundry, housecleaning, and grocery shopping. These tasks are universally recognized as core or routine housework tasks that have traditionally been the responsibility of women (Coltrane 2000). Whereas tasks such as meal preparation, laundry, and cleaning are often viewed as more intensely gendered and symbolically linked to femininity and care work, grocery shopping, though still feminized, may be seen as more negotiable or flexible in their division (Kolpashnikova and Kan 2021), particularly under changing household dynamics. The study therefore anticipates that any association between meeting online and less traditional sharing would be more likely to emerge for these less rigidly gendered chores, such as grocery shopping.

Using random-effects logistic regression models and data on 2,051 married women from the Japanese Life Course Panel Surveys, we first scrutinize whether women in couples established via the internet have less traditional practices of dividing household labor compared to women in couples formed offline, while also accounting for observed selection into online dating via entropy balancing weights. The analysis focuses on women, given concerns about the reliability of men's self-reports on who performs most household tasks and how housework is divided (Kan 2008), including in Japan, where men not only report the lowest levels of participation among East Asian countries but also tend to overestimate their contributions (Kan, Hertog, and Kolpashnikova 2019). To examine whether the association between modern dating and nontraditional practices is universal to modern intentional dating or only relevant to online matchmaking, we divide the offline category into two groups and compare couples that met through online dating to both those who met in conventional ways (i.e., labeled as 'offline traditional') and through offline matchmaking (i.e., grouping together both the formal *miai* parties and encounters facilitated by marriage agencies, and the informal *gōkon* matchmaking options). Finally, we examine whether patterns differ by women's level of education. In particular, we assess whether the association between online matching and nontraditional divisions of housework is more conspicuous among women with postsecondary education.

This study makes several contributions. First, by examining the relationship between online dating and potentially less traditional expressions of gender within marriage in Japan, this study adds to current scholarship aiming to understand contemporary partnering in a country paradoxically showcasing both stability and progress (Raymo, Uchikoshi, and Yoda 2021). In particular, it speaks to broader debates on the de- or reinstitutionalization of Asian families by examining how increasingly individualized and agentic forms of partner selection, alongside the digital transformation of mate choice as a key dimension of contemporary modernity, reflect the weakening role of family as a social intermediary and the transformation of norms surrounding partner formation. Second, as Dalton and Dales (2016) remark, the patterns observed on online dating platforms, typically less constrained by social control, can reveal how masculinity and femininity are currently being constructed or reconstructed within marriage and families in Japan. By focusing on the relationship between changing modes of partner selection and gender enactment within marriage, this study highlights how processes of individualization and modernization may generate new possibilities for negotiating gender while remaining embedded within persistent expectations around marriage and gender. In so doing, it speaks to the central concerns of how Asian family institutions are being reconfigured under the pressures of modernization, while also demonstrating the resilience of existing norms and structures. The results of this study would then also inform contemporary patterns occurring in other East Asian countries undergoing comparable demographic transitions (Yu and Hara 2020), with similar tensions between institutional continuity and social transformation shaping marriage and family experiences. Last, in the context of below-replacement fertility, a rapidly aging society, and anticipated labor shortages, adding to our understanding of how marriage is experienced by women with higher education – an expanding demographic group – is of utmost importance (Brinton and Oh 2019). This study hence tackles the important and timely issue of gender enactment in the realm of marriage and family in a rarely examined non-Western context.

2. Theoretical background

2.1 Division of unpaid labor

Hochschild's concept of women's second shift (i.e., the unpaid domestic labor women perform after their paid workday ends) has long highlighted the gendered imbalance in domestic labor, particularly in Western societies (Hochschild and Machung 2003). Such disparities appear even more entrenched in East Asian contexts like Japan, where endorsement of traditional patriarchal norms around family roles remains strong

(Krumbein 2021; Raymo et al. 2015; Raymo, Uchikoshi, and Yoda 2021). Although the male-breadwinner model is increasingly unattainable for many men, Japan's enduring pro-work conservatism and adherence to gender essentialist norms (Brinton and Lee 2016) result in rigid gender-based marital roles: men as breadwinners, women as homemakers and caretakers. Japanese men are hence still expected to fully commit to a full-time job (Matsuda 2019), while women's economic contribution to the household mostly takes the form of a secondary wage (Brinton, Mun, and Hertog 2021). Even when encouraged to pursue employment, intense mothering norms (Bumpass et al. 2009) mean that women are expected to exit the labor market upon marriage and motherhood (Raymo and Lim 2011) and take up responsibility for both housework and childcare tasks (Kan and Hertog 2017; Qian and Sayer 2016). Within this context, domestic work is not only physical; it also involves the invisible mental labor of planning, scheduling, and organizing. Sharing this workload benefits Japanese wives' health, yet husbands rarely participate beyond final decisions (Taniguchi and Kaufman 2022).

Although there has been a gradual increase in employment after marriage and childbirth in recent decades, this rise is primarily driven by part-time employment (Mugiyama 2016, 2022). Yoshida (2021) reports that only half of the women in the 1975–1984 cohort remained employed one year after marriage, concluding that many women continued to withdraw from the labor market following life events such as marriage and childbirth. Overall, progress toward narrowing gender gaps in both paid and unpaid work has been stagnant, mirroring the situation in some Western countries (Kan et al. 2022). Though some changes in expectations and behaviors are happening – such as men returning home from workplace earlier (Fuwa 2020) or becoming more involved in parenting (Ishii-Kuntz 2021), or women more often prioritizing emotional compatibility (rather than just financial security) in unions (Dalton and Dales 2016) – these are not yet substantial or pervasive (Piotrowski et al. 2019). Furthermore, change in individual preferences toward a more progressive division of labor has not been accompanied by a change in family-related policies or workplaces (Fuwa 2020; Piotrowski, Kalleberg, and Rindfuss 2015). Men are not only still reluctant to embrace an egalitarian division of household labor (Piotrowski et al. 2019), but their long hours and after-hour engagements (Fuwa 2019; Kato, Kumamaru, and Fukuda 2018) leave little space for housework contributions.

In addition to this, housework is rarely outsourced, even in high-income households (Kolpashnikova and Koike 2021), leaving the full burden of domestic responsibilities within the household. This reliance on the household mirrors welfare-state patterns in South Korea and Southern Europe, where limited public or market care provision pushes caregiving back onto families and, in turn, constrains women's labor market participation (Kan et al. 2022).

2.2 The online partner market in Japan

The recent rise in partner search technology, such as dating websites, phone apps, or online social networks, may have ushered in certain partnering and gender innovations. Traditionally, partner selection in Japan was intermediated by family (Matsuda 2019) or the workplace (Nemoto, Fuwa, and Ishiguro 2013), but the gradual decline of these traditional marriage markets (Raymo, Uchikoshi, and Yoda 2021; Uchikoshi and Raymo 2021) has pushed singles to seek alternatives. The internet, offering wider opportunities, greater mobility, and easier access (Finkel et al. 2012), holds the potential to supplement or partially displace traditional channels. Although online dating has not yet become the leading avenue for mate selection in Japan as it has in the West (Miwa and Tanaka 2020) – due to factors such as lingering stigma, perceptions of unreliability compared with traditional intermediaries, and preconceived notions about online users and sexual behavior (Dalton and Dales 2016; Mantell 2018) – it has nonetheless achieved a fairly high level of popularity and uptake (Yu and Hertog 2018). Online partner search also reflects Japan's shifting dating culture, marked by more agentic, individualized choices and a diversification of intimate needs (Endo 2018; Yang 2017). Moreover, alternative digital partner markets operate under different rules and ecological structures (Miwa and Tanaka 2020). In addition to facilitating anonymized encounters with potential partners, allowing singles who work and have no time to search for partners to easily access a large and diverse pool of eligible candidates, the internet has the advantage of also minimizing the social costs of interaction (Farrer and Gavin 2009), which is often cumbersome for young Japanese adults with poor communication skills (Nemoto, Fuwa, and Ishiguro 2013) and limited inter-gender offline interactions (Endo 2018).

While different online dating services (e.g., websites, general or specialized geolocation apps) may cater to different audiences, they uniformly promote quick access to extensive user profiles, as a means to facilitate easy, compatible matches (Alpert 2022) and may offer a context for more personalized choices that deviate from traditional social scripts (Murai 2018). In this context, digital mate selection may be associated with less gendered divisions of household labor and may provide conditions where women could realize partnership preferences that challenge conventional gender norms. Internet matchmaking may be linked to less traditional marital dynamics through multiple pathways.

First, dating websites and apps typically attract more men than women, a pattern well documented in Western European countries (e.g., Potarca 2020; Skopek, Schulz, and Blossfeld 2011). Systematic evidence on the gender composition of online dating markets in Japan remains limited, but similar patterns of male oversupply have nevertheless been documented in comparable East Asian contexts (e.g., South Korea; Min-sik 2024) and may plausibly extend to Japan as well. The oversupply of men in digital partner markets may reflect gendered digital divides, with men more likely to have

access to and better use digital technologies, as well as women's greater exposure to harassment and unwanted contact (Anderson, Vogels, and Turner 2020). At the same time, sex-ratio imbalances and expanded choice sets may be associated with shifts in interaction dynamics, potentially strengthening women's position in the partner market and encouraging a more assertive expression of preferences. According to Guttentag and Secord's (1983) theory of imbalanced sex ratios, alongside related demographic/ macrostructural opportunity theory (South and Trent 1988) and marriage squeeze theory (Akers 1967), unequal sex ratios shape the distribution of relational power between men and women. An undersupply of women in online spaces, for instance, may be associated with a shift in bargaining positions that enhances women's leverage in negotiations both at the outset and later in marriage, while men in oversupply may have stronger incentives to actively engage in these negotiations. Importantly, digital platforms are conceptualized here not as a causal driver of behavioral change but as a structural facilitator that expands the pool of potential partners available to women, which may allow them to bypass the constraints of traditional breadwinner-oriented networks and exercise a mate selection advantage. Empirical research indeed demonstrates a connection between imbalanced sex ratios and the bargaining of fertility goals in Japan (Ogasawara and Komura 2021) or the division of household responsibilities among couples in Germany (Stauder and Röhlke 2022). Building on this, and reflecting how market structures shape gender performance in East Asian contexts, a Taiwanese study illustrates that while heterosexual men continue to enact hegemonic masculinity online, they also adopt alternative fronts (e.g., emotional, domestic, even passive), revealing an ongoing negotiation between traditional male norms and a changing gender order (Wang 2012).

Second, the anonymity, reduced intrusion from family and friends, and increased privacy offered by online platforms can foster a greater inclination, particularly among women, for risk-taking and self-affirmations in interactions with men. While there is evidence of online replication of gendered ways of relating between men and women, such as men predominantly initiating first contact (Dinh et al. 2022), the study contends that internet dating also provides opportunities for deviations from such traditional scripts. Several qualitative studies in the West, for instance, reveal that women perceive greater empowerment and agency in their communication with men as the primary advantages of using digital partner selection tools compared to conventional methods (Cooper and Sportolari 1997; Dwyer, Hookway, and Robards 2020; Lawson and Leck 2006). Similarly, in China, dating apps empower women to actively evaluate and select men based on appearance and profile details, thereby reversing traditional gendered dynamics of the gaze and disrupting the long-standing male privilege of objectifying women (Chan 2018). Research from Taiwan further shows that the (quasi)anonymity online and reduced male peer surveillance enable men to disclose private thoughts and emotions (Wang 2012), fostering nontraditional interactions (Chen 2016). Given that

progressive courtship dynamics can influence gender roles in marriage (Lamont 2020), online dating platforms, which, as shown, alter gendered interaction, may be associated with relationships in which women more effectively assert their preferences, both during dating and later in marital negotiations over matters like the division of housework.

The first hypothesis therefore claims that women in online-formed couples are more likely to report a less traditional division of housework than couples formed offline, either in traditional ways or via offline dating services such as *gōkon*, *miai* parties, or marriage agencies (Hypothesis 1). Though matchmaking through *gōkon* and *miai* events also represents a nonconventional way of selecting partners, they provide a less dense and less wide dating pool (e.g., *gōkon* parties often involve friends of friends) than online dating. More importantly, they do not remove the direct interference of third parties (as friends often mediate *miai* and *gōkon* meetings) and subsequent social pressures to conform to traditional courtship rules. Meeting someone through a marriage agency can emulate some of the specificities of online dating (e.g., matching with potential partners from outside one's social circle, less meddling from family and friends). It cannot, however, provide key affordances such as anonymity or a greater sense of agency over the selection process, which foster greater ease and willingness to innovate and assert nontraditional gender preferences.

2.3 Selection into internet matching

Several selection processes, however, may partially explain why couples that formed online might be less traditional than those formed elsewhere. First, online dating typically appeals to singles who were previously married (Robnett and Feliciano 2011; Sautter, Tippett, and Morgan 2010). As earlier mentioned, it may also interest those with a selectively progressive gender role orientation (Dwyer, Hookway, and Robards 2020) and who resort to internet dating services to better meet their demand for more egalitarian partners. Since these profile characteristics are strong predictors of more equal sharing of housework tasks (Greenstein 1996; Kleider 2015), the study needs to adjust for this potential covariate imbalance. Furthermore, a person's upbringing, including their family's financial situation and cultural background, can influence their approach to finding a romantic partner later on (Perelli-Harris et al. 2018). It can also shape their views on gender roles in general and how housework should be divided within a relationship (Ullrich, Becker, and Scharf 2022). Even though selection on observable characteristics may contribute to anticipated online dating effects, we expect the association between meeting online and housework to still be significant after adjusting for differences between couples formed through internet dating and couples formed using offline methods (Hypothesis 2). We further anticipate that this association will be more

robust for less rigidly gendered tasks, such as grocery shopping, than for more strongly gendered tasks like meal preparation, laundry, and cleaning. As a more flexible and negotiable activity, grocery shopping is easier to share or alternate, particularly in households where partners may already be more open to nontraditional arrangements, such as those formed online.

2.4 Educational attainment

Finally, we argue that the link between online dating and less traditional practices may be particularly visible among married couples in which the wife has higher education (i.e., a junior college or university education) (Hypothesis 3). Owing to the female educational expansion, the stock of eligible Japanese women with higher education in the marriage market has been progressively increasing in recent decades (Nakamura 2022; Yoshida 2010). In the past, given the persistence of the male-breadwinner model (Piotrowski, Bond, and Beutel 2020) and a preference for unions in which men hold the educational advantage (i.e., female hypergamy; Matsuda 2019), higher educated women used to face poor marriage prospects (Raymo and Iwasawa 2005). Recent evidence, however, has pointed out the reversal of the previously negative educational gradient in marriage for women in Japan (Fukuda, Raymo, and Yoda 2020; Miwa 2022; Uchikoshi and Raymo 2021). Nevertheless, when it comes to the division of housework, better education does not necessarily guarantee better outcomes. A recent comparative study, for instance, shows that higher levels of education were associated with fewer hours of housework for married women in the United States and Taiwan but not in Japan (Kolpashnikova and Koike 2021). Because traditional social settings can limit their options, higher educated women seeking gender equality in relationships may utilize online dating platforms to pursue more boundary-challenging forms of partnering and specifically find partners who are more willing to share housework duties.

Beyond possible selection effects, women with higher education, compared to the lower educated, may be better skilled at communicating online and setting up less gendered relationship dynamics that would ultimately be linked to a more balanced division of domestic work. In short, the third hypothesis posits that the association between online dating and less traditional housework practices is especially pronounced among women with higher education, with the association potentially being strongest for those holding two-year college degrees compared to university graduates. In Japan, two-year colleges traditionally cater more to women and are stereotypically seen as training grounds for homemakers (Brinton 1988). Subject to strong gender conditioning in offline spaces of interactions, women with college education might be drawn to online dating to find partners who share housework more equally. Additionally, research suggests men

might be more open to partners with moderate earning potential associated with a two-year college degree (Brinton, Mun, and Hertog 2021), especially in societies where men are traditionally the breadwinners (Eckhard and Stauder 2019). Since social status cues might still matter online in Japan, women with university degrees might be perceived as signaling a threateningly higher status, potentially narrowing their options. By contrast, online dating platforms may provide women with two-year college degrees a greater opportunity to find male partners more willing to challenge traditional gender roles in the division of housework.

3. Method

3.1 Data

The study uses the Japanese Life Course Panel Surveys of the Youth sample (JLPS–Y) and of the Middle-Aged sample (JLPS–M), which are ongoing annual nationally representative panel surveys conducted by the Institute of Social Science at the University of Tokyo. The surveys started in 2007 with a joint sample of 4,800 individuals aged 20 to 34 years (JLPS–Y) and 35 to 40 years (JLPS–M), respectively. A supplement of 963 respondents was added as of the fifth wave in 2011. The response rate for the first wave was 34.5% for the JLPS–Y and 40.4% for the JLPS–M, and then ranged from 76.0% to 80.7% for the JLPS–Y and from 79.0% to 88.0% for the JLPS–M, respectively, in subsequent waves. The response rate for the first wave of JLPS–Y is fairly low, and though a report looking at sample composition indeed revealed an overrepresentation of the highly educated, the extent of the bias was deemed trivial (Miwa 2008). In both surveys, participants were asked about work, family, socioeconomic status, attitudes, and values. Those who were in a partnership or marriage were also asked about where they met their partner or spouse. This study uses 16 waves of data (2007–2022). After excluding male respondents, unpartnered women, those in nonmarital unions, individuals in marriages formed before 1995 (i.e., prior to the internet dating era), observations from waves 2 (2008) and 4 (2010) due to the absence of housework measures, and cases with missing data, the final analytical sample included 2,051 married women with 16,591 person-observations.

3.2 Measures

3.2.1 Dependent variable

The division of household labor was measured using four items that asked respondents how frequently they and their spouse engaged in the following tasks: meal preparation, laundry, cleaning, and grocery shopping. Response options ranged from (1) every day, (2) five to six days per week, (3) three to four days per week, (4) one to two days per week, (5) one to three days per month, and (6) almost never. From these paired responses, we constructed a three-category variable for each task, indicating whether the wife performed it more often, both partners reported equal frequency, or the husband performed it more often. Due to the low incidence of husbands doing more, the latter two categories were combined into a single 'nontraditional' measure. We adopt a categorical approach rather than a continuous index to capture qualitative distinctions in the organization of household labor, particularly the shift between gender-specialized and nonspecialized arrangements. While the underlying response categories are ordinal, the transition from a predominantly wife-performed task to a shared or male-involved arrangement represents a meaningful social threshold not well approximated by a continuous scale.

We acknowledge that reporting equal frequency does not necessarily mean an equal share of the labor, as the time and effort invested may differ (e.g., both partners may report preparing meals every day, but one might spend an hour cooking while the other spends only a few minutes microwaving a meal). Thus, our measure captures departures from strongly gendered arrangements in which wives carry the overwhelming share of household tasks rather than exact equality in time use. This relational measure of distribution provides valuable insight in the absence of detailed time-use data and aligns conceptually with Greenstein (2000)'s focus on the relative share of chores and not their absolute duration.

3.2.2 Independent variables

To assess the meeting context of couples, the study relies on a measure asking, "How did you first meet your spouse?" Respondents could provide multiple answers from the following list: (1) introduced by parent/sibling; (2) introduced by a relative other than parent/sibling; (3) introduced by a friend/acquaintance/childhood friend; (4) introduced by a colleague or boss at work; (5) met at work; (6) through school classes, groups, and activities; (7) through a part-time job; (8) through a hobby class; (9) through a group dating party (*gōkon*); (10) through a meeting arranged for finding potential partners (*miai*,

or an arranged marriage); (11) through a party that is arranged to meet somebody for potential partners (*miai* party); (12) met via the internet or cellular phone; (13) met on a street in town or during a trip; (14) through a marriage consultation service or marriage agency; or (15) other. Given sample limitations, we recoded the measure into a three-category variable, distinguishing between (1) meeting in conventional, nondigital ways (i.e., 'offline traditional') in general (n = 1,788 respondents); (2) meeting in 'offline dating services' combined (n = 225), comprised of respondents who met their spouse through a group dating party (n = 140), a *miai* party (n = 67), or, less frequently, a marriage agency (n = 26); and finally, (3) meeting through online dating services (n = 120). The few cases (n = 8) of overlap between the last two categories – for example, couples that met both online and through a group dating party – were classified as having met online, given that initial contact occurred digitally. As a robustness check, we also excluded these cases entirely, with substantively similar results (available upon request).

When investigating the selectivity of couples that formed in nonconventional ways (as described in Section 3.3, Analysis), we rely on a series of covariates that may have impacted both the probability of being part of an online-formed marriage and a nontraditional distribution of household labor. This includes birth cohort – distinguishing between the pre-digital/employment-security cohort (1966–1980) and the post-bubble/digital-age cohort (1981–1998) – as well as age at current marriage (in years) and prior marital experience. I also considered exposure to egalitarian gender values in their family of origin. Instead of relying on respondents' current gender attitudes, which are endogenous to marital experiences, we use premarital indicators of how gender roles were enacted in their household growing up. Specifically, we used information from items asking respondents whether, when they were 15 years old (when they graduated middle school), their fathers took part in housekeeping but relied on their mother for childrearing, they took part in childrearing but not housekeeping, or they took part in both housekeeping and childrearing. We synthesized the answers from both items to create a binary indicator of father's participation in housework (irrespective of their involvement in childcare). We also considered including the education levels of both parents in the analysis. However, a substantial number of participants did not provide this information, which would have significantly reduced the number of online couples that could be examined. Instead, we relied on retrospective measures on the respondents' family culture and material background at home during their teenage years. We therefore included questions such as whether respondents' family owned their home when they were 15 years old; what respondents' perception of their family's standard of living at age 15 was (based on a question measured on a five-point scale: "When you were 15 years old, which of the following fit your household's standard of living in comparison to the average standard of living at the time?," which we recoded to differentiate between (1) poor, (2) average, and (3) wealthy); and whether respondents felt the family

atmosphere lacked warmth when they were 15. These factors matter not only because they shape long-term partnership outcomes (Hua et al. 2025) and the adoption of a certain gender ideology (Cano and Hofmeister 2023), but also because they influence partner search strategies (Yu and Hertog 2018). For example, material deprivation or a negative home environment may weaken access to traditional partner networks or make individuals more likely to seek partners through nontraditional means, including online dating. At the same time, early exposure to such environments can foster less traditional gender dynamics, which may in turn affect how couples later organize housework.

In addition to accounting for the selectivity of online dating via entropy balancing weights (as explained in the next section), the main analyses of equal sharing of housework includes several basic controls, such as employment status (distinguished between (1) full-time employed (including those self-employed), (2) part-time work, (3) unemployed, and (4) all other arrangements, largely comprised of family workers or students), educational level (with options (1) middle or high school education, (2) vocational school, (3) junior college education, and (4) university or higher, and partners' educational pairing. The latter was constructed based on both spouses' education, distinguishing between (1) hypergamy (the male partner is better educated), (2) homogamy (partners have a similar level of education), and (3) hypogamy (the female partner is better educated). Here, we employed a measure of couples' relative education rather than solely considering the husband's education to partially gauge the distribution of (economic) power within the marital relationship. Our assumption is that wives who possess an educational advantage tend to earn more, enabling them to implement a less conventional division of domestic chores. The age gap between spouses was also examined as a potential factor in the division of housework, but its inclusion did not affect the results. Due to substantial missing data on partner's age, including this variable would have considerably reduced the sample size.

The study also accounted for whether the couples had children living at home, which can significantly impact the amount and type of housework required. This information was directly obtained from the participants in surveys conducted in 2007 and between 2012–2016. For remaining years, we indirectly inferred the presence of children from household rosters. The analysis also included variables on living arrangements. Living with parents is more common in Asian cultures compared to the West. Studies suggest that when couples live with parents (especially in-laws), husbands tend to do less housework (Tsuya et al. 2012). To account for this, we included a variable indicating whether the female respondent lives with either their mother or the husband's mother. The study focuses on mothers because they traditionally contribute more to housework than fathers.

Finally, other covariates that may influence how spouses negotiate the division of household labor include subjective standard of living (based on a question measured on

a five-point scale: "How do you evaluate your household's current standard of living?," which, like the previous question referring to the family home, we recoded to differentiate between (1) poor, (2) average, and (3) wealthy), marital duration (in years), and residing in an urban environment.

3.3 Analysis

The first analytical step is to check and adjust for differences in observed characteristics between respondents who met their partner through online dating and those who met their spouse in offline traditional ways or offline dating services. Our aim is to ensure that any gap in the likelihood of experiencing a nontraditional division of housework is not simply the result of selection bias in who meets where but instead reflects the particularities of the meeting context itself. To achieve this goal, we use entropy balancing (EB) (Hainmueller 2012), a multivariate matching technique that reweights the two control groups (i.e., couples that met offline in traditional ways and couples that met via offline dating services) to match the covariate distribution of the treatment group (i.e., couples that met online). Using the ebalance command (Hainmueller and Xu 2013) in Stata 17 (StataCorp 2021), we generated weights under the constraint of balance in the mean and variance of all variables across the three groups. As opposed to reweighting based on propensity scores, which requires a time-consuming iterative process of selecting covariates, weighting, and balance checking, EB directly estimates weights based on a prespecified set of balance constraints. In this case, exact balance on both the mean and the variance of every covariate across the three groups is required. Doing so, if we take prior marital experience (a key variable included when constructing EB weights) as an example, forces the weighted offline samples to mirror the online sample not only in the overall proportion of individuals with prior marriages but also in the variability of that experience. This is particularly important, as couples who met online tend to have been previously married, which may reflect different partner search strategies and potentially correlate with distinct expectations, partner dynamics, and housework arrangements. By balancing on both the mean and variance of prior marital experience, rather than excluding remarried women, EB allows us to retain the full sample while mitigating bias that would otherwise arise from unequal distributions of prior marital history.

The second step in our analysis was the estimation of random-effects logistic regression models using Stata's melogit command. To account for the hierarchical structure of the data, specifically the nesting of multiple observations within individual women over time, these models include individual-specific random intercepts, thereby modeling within-person clustering and ensuring that standard errors appropriately reflect the nonindependence of observations. This specification allows us to separate within-

individual variation over time from between-individual differences and provides more efficient estimates under the assumption of unobserved time-invariant heterogeneity at the individual level. In doing so, the model appropriately addresses the hierarchical structure of the data, in which multiple observations are nested within the same respondents.

We first estimated models to examine the association between meeting a partner online and the division of housework across the full sample, using unweighted, then weighted specifications. We then conducted separate analyses by education, based on the expectation that this association might vary depending on women's educational attainment. For these models, we applied weights estimated on the full sample and also reestimated them within each educational stratum. The results were consistent across both weighting approaches.

The specification of the models took the following mathematical form:

$$logit(p_{ij}) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{offline dating services}_{ij} + \beta_2 \text{online dating services}_{ij} + \gamma_{1,2,..,k} X_{ij} + \theta_{1,2,..,l} Z_i + u_j,$$

where p_{ij} is the probability of respondent *i* in wave *j* to experience a nontraditional division of household labor, modeled as a logistic function of meeting context. β_0 is the intercept. β_1 and β_2 capture the difference in housework sharing for couples who met through offline dating services or internet dating, respectively, compared to the reference category of having met via offline traditional contexts, adjusted for time-varying controls (vector $X_{ij}$with associated coefficients γ_1, γ_2,…, γ_k) and time-constant controls (vector $Z_i$with corresponding coefficients θ_1, θ_2, …, θ_l). The specification finally includes a between-individual (u_j) error term.

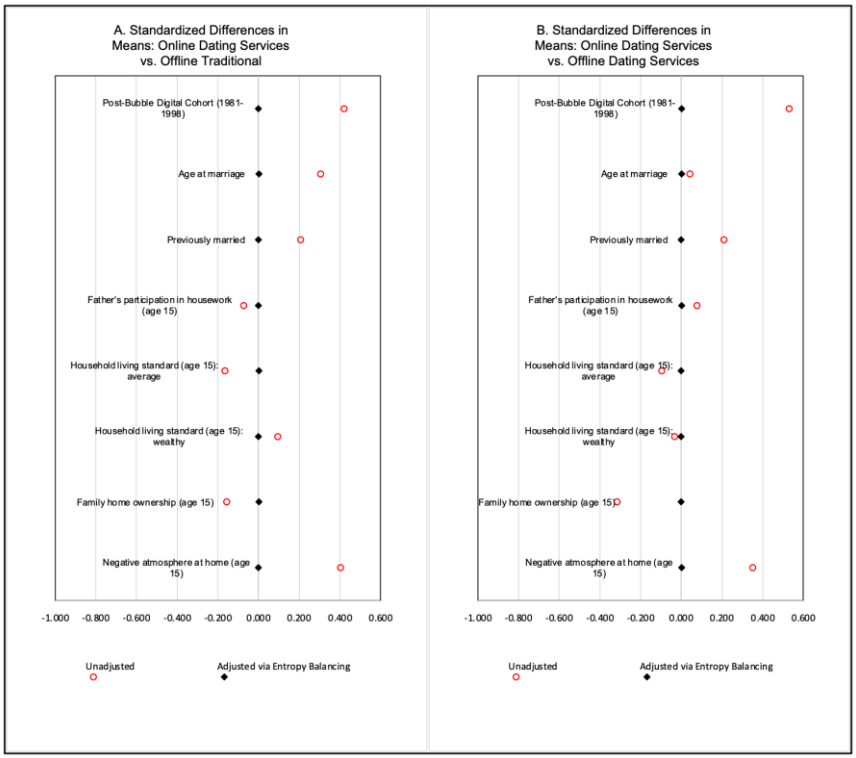
4. Results

4.1 Entropy balancing

To examine differences in observed characteristics between couples who met through conventional (offline) means and those who met online, Figure 1, Panel A presents standardized mean differences for each covariate. Focusing on unadjusted differences – particularly those exceeding ±0.20 – several notable patterns among couples who met online (hereafter referred to as 'online couples') are observed. Compared to their offline

counterparts, online couples were more likely to belong to the post-bubble/digital-age birth cohort, marry at older ages, have previous marital experience, and report less emotionally supportive family environments during childhood. Figure 1, Panel A also shows that, after weighting, differences shrank to zero, indicating that covariate balance was achieved. Figure 1, Panel B further inspect the selectivity of couples who met online compared to those who met via offline dating services. The findings are broadly similar, with two exceptions: There was no observable difference in age at marriage, and offline dating service users appear to have had more favorable early-life economic conditions, as indicated by higher rates of parental homeownership.

Figure 1: Standardized differences in means between women in couples formed via online dating services vs. (A) offline traditional or (B) offline dating services for selected covariates, before and after entropy balancing

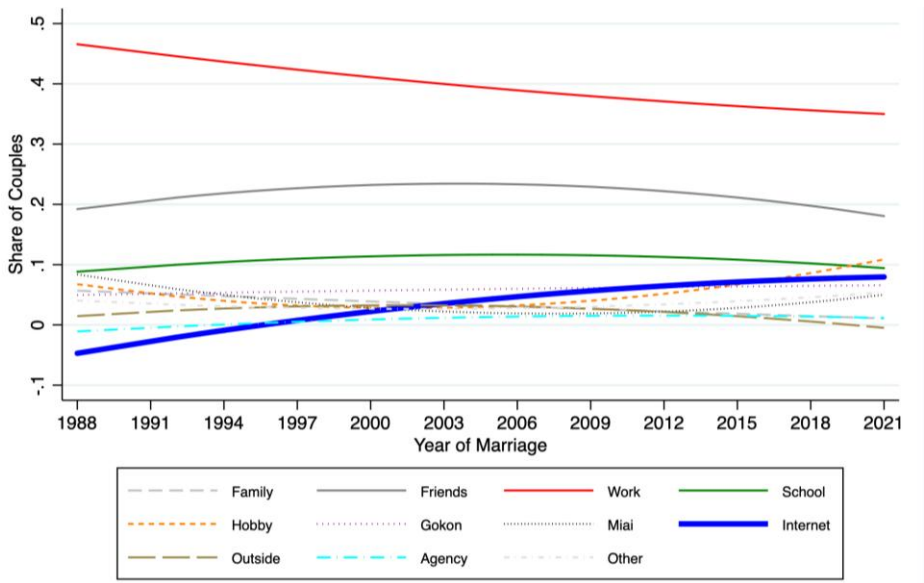


Note: Positive (negative) values indicate that the mean for online-formed couples is higher (lower) than for offline-formed couples.

4.2 Descriptive statistics

To gauge the evolution of internet dating in Japan, we provide a graph tracing changes in partner selection contexts from 1988 to 2021 (Figure 2). Results indicate that the first couples who met online began to emerge in the mid-1990s. However, the uptake was notably gradual, much slower than the rapid adoption observed in the US market (Rosenfeld, Thomas, and Hausen 2019), with prevalence values rising only slightly above 10% between 2016 and 2018. Due to the fractional polynomial smoothing applied, the visualized curve remains just below the 10% threshold to reflect the broader trend. Simultaneously, the data illustrates a steady decline in the workplace as a primary matchmaker, though it maintains a level of continued relevance alongside social circles (friends) and, to a lesser extent, educational institutions.

Figure 2: Evolution of partner selection contexts in Japan by year of marriage, 1988–2021



Notes: Trends are estimated using fractional polynomial smoothing. Mathematical curves may occasionally dip below zero in early periods due to near-zero prevalence in specific categories; these instances should be interpreted as a probability of zero.
Source: Japanese Life Course Panel survey waves 1–16 (2007–2022)

We continue by presenting weighted descriptive statistics of dependent and independent variables for the total sample by meeting context (Table 1a). As expected,

married women in Japan who met their spouses online were more likely to report a nontraditional division of housework compared to those who met through traditional means – particularly for tasks like grocery shopping, where the data shows suggestive evidence of a baseline descriptive difference, and to a lesser extent, meal preparation. Notably, nearly one-third of women in online-formed unions reported a nontraditional allocation of grocery shopping. However, nonconventional arrangements remained relatively rare for more feminized tasks such as cooking, laundry, and cleaning, with the proportion of nontraditional sharing not exceeding 20% in any of these categories.

Table 1a: Weighted sample descriptive statistics (percentages), by meeting context – total sample

	Offline traditional	*Offline dating services*	*Online dating services*
Nontraditional division of housework			
Preparing meals	10.9	7.6	13.9 *
Doing laundry	11.2	12.5	15.4
Cleaning	14.1	14.2	16.2
Grocery shopping	24.5	25.4	32.9 †
Employment status			
Full-time	30.4	33.8	30.0
Part-time	37.9	32.5	32.8
Unemployed	28.5	28.6	34.6
Other	3.3	5.2	2.7
Educational level			
High school or less	29.5	25.7	35.7
Vocational school	20.5	16.8	20.8
Junior college	21.9	29.3	19.0
University or higher	28.0	28.2	24.5
Partners' educational pairing			
Hypergamy	31.1	26.3	39.6 †
Homogamy	48.6	54.4	38.7 *
Hypogamy	20.3	19.3	21.7
Household living standard			
Poor	15.3	12.1	15.0
Average	63.0	62.0	64.9
Wealthy	21.7	25.9	20.1
Resident children	80.1	81.0	68.8 *
Coresident mother	5.4	6.3	7.6
Coresident husband's mother	9.0	11.7	8.7
Urban environment	58.1	47.2	61.0 †
Marriage duration	10.88 (0.16)	11.64 (0.52)	7.55 (0.50) ***
N (observations)	*14,372*	*1,578*	*641*
N (individuals)	*1,788*	*225*	*120*

Notes: Following journal policy, asterisks indicate the strength of evidence against the null hypothesis rather than arbitrary cutoffs: † indicates weak/suggestive evidence ($p \approx 0.10$), * indicates moderate evidence ($p \approx 0.05$), and *** indicates very strong evidence ($p \approx 0.001$).
Source: Japanese Life Course Panel Survey Waves 1–16 (2007–2022).

When looking at results by educational level (Table 1b) we see that the difference in grocery shopping arrangements between online- and offline-formed couples is especially pronounced among those where the wife holds a junior college degree – and to a lesser extent, a high school education. Specifically, among junior-college-educated wives, 38.5% of online couples reported a nontraditional division of grocery shopping, compared to just 21.5% among those who met through traditional offline means and 23.7% among those who met via offline dating services. By contrast, among university-educated women, nontraditional sharing of grocery shopping was consistently high across all meeting contexts, reflecting little descriptive variation by how partners met within this highly educated stratum.

Table 1b: Weighted percentage of nontraditional housework sharing (different outcomes), by meeting context – stratified by educational level

Nontraditional division of housework	*Offline traditional*	*Offline dating services*	*Online dating services*
Preparing meals			
High school or less	8.9	6.7	10.9
Vocational school	11.8	8.3	15.0
Junior college	11.0	6.5	16.4
University or higher	12.4	9.2	15.3
Doing laundry			
High school or less	9.1	6.6	9.6
Vocational school	10.3	11.8	16.5
Junior college	9.6	10.1	18.9
University or higher	15.3	20.6	20.4
Cleaning			
High school or less	11.4	9.5	10.5
Vocational school	12.0	12.1	11.3
Junior college	13.7	15.4	20.5
University or higher	18.8	18.5	25.5
Grocery shopping			
High school or less	20.7	20.7	33.2 (†)
Vocational school	25.7	23.5	31.6
Junior college	21.5	23.7	38.5 (*)
University or higher	30.0	32.7	29.3

Notes: Markers indicate the strength of evidence for differences compared to the 'offline traditional' category rather than arbitrary significance thresholds: † indicates weak/suggestive evidence ($p \approx 0.10$), and $*$ indicates moderate evidence ($p \approx 0.05$).
Source: Japanese Life Course Panel Survey Waves 1–16 (2007–2022).

4.3 Multivariate results

We next turn to multivariable analyses to evaluate our first hypothesis stating that married women who met their spouse online are more likely to have a nontraditional division of routine household labor than women in other couples. Tables 2 and 3 show results from a set of random-effects logistic regression models predicting nontraditional sharing across the four household tasks. For each outcome, we estimated two models – one using unweighted data and another using weighted data – to assess the extent to which the observed positive association between meeting online and a nontraditional division of labor may be accounted for by selection on observable characteristics (Hypothesis 2). We begin by analyzing the full sample (results in Table 2). To test Hypothesis 3, which posits that the association between meeting online and nontraditional housework sharing is particularly pronounced among highly educated women, we then stratify the analysis by educational attainment (see Table 3).

First, unadjusted results for the full sample indicate that married women who met their spouse online were generally more likely to report less traditional divisions, especially for laundry, cleaning, and grocery shopping. For instance, women in online-formed couples had approximately twice the odds of reporting a less gendered division of grocery shopping (exp[0.71] = 2.01, strong evidence, $p < .01$), and nearly twice the odds for laundry (exp[0.61] = 1.84, moderate evidence, $p < .05$) and cleaning (exp[0.61] = 1.84, moderate evidence, $p < .05$), relative to those who met their partner through offline conventional means. These patterns provide clear support for Hypothesis 1. In the case of meal preparation, meeting online was also positively linked to nontraditional sharing, though the data remain inconclusive.

When adjusting for selection into online dating (the weighted models), the coefficients for laundry and cleaning decline and show weak or inconclusive evidence of association, suggesting that the initially observed associations for these tasks are largely driven by selection effects. In contrast, while the coefficient for grocery shopping also decreases after weighting, it continues to provide suggestive evidence, indicating that selection explains part – but not all – of the association. Specifically, the coefficient for meeting online in relation to the nontraditional division of cleaning declines by 82% (= 1 – 0.11/0.61), while the reduction for grocery shopping is 44% (= 1 – 0.39/0.70). These findings, particularly those related to grocery shopping, lend support to Hypothesis 2, which suggests that the more nontraditional division of housework observed among online-formed couples is partly, though not entirely, driven by their selective characteristics. For more traditionally gendered tasks, such as laundry and cleaning, however, the association appears to be largely an artifact of selection.

Table 2: Results from unweighted and weighted random-effects logistic regression models predicting nontraditional housework sharing (different outcomes) among married women in Japan

	Preparing meals		*Doing laundry*		*Cleaning*		*Grocery shopping*	
	Unweighted	*Weighted*	*Unweighted*	*Weighted*	*Unweighted*	*Weighted*	*Unweighted*	*Weighted*
Meeting context (ref.: offline traditional)								
Offline dating services	–0.27	–0.44*	0.03	–0.06	0.28	–0.01	0.15	0.06
	(0.24)	(0.19)	(0.23)	(0.20)	(0.20)	(0.17)	(0.17)	(0.15)
Online dating services	0.50	0.16	0.61*	0.28	0.61*	0.11	0.70**	0.39†
	(0.31)	(0.26)	(0.29)	(0.24)	(0.27)	(0.23)	(0.23)	(0.21)
Employment status (ref.: full-time)								
Part-time	–1.04***	–1.15***	–1.33***	–1.18***	–1.11***	–1.02***	–0.75***	–0.86***
	(0.12)	(0.20)	(0.12)	(0.18)	(0.11)	(0.17)	(0.09)	(0.15)
Unemployed	–1.38***	–1.37***	–1.91***	–1.62***	–1.80***	–1.37***	–0.65***	–0.74***
	(0.14)	(0.21)	(0.14)	(0.22)	(0.13)	(0.20)	(0.09)	(0.15)
Other	–0.77**	–0.85*	–1.30***	–1.46**	–1.54***	–1.32**	–0.82***	–1.02**
	(0.26)	(0.35)	(0.29)	(0.51)	(0.26)	(0.47)	(0.20)	(0.36)
Educational level (ref.: high school or less)								
Vocational school	0.42†	0.14	0.05	0.34	0.41*	0.13	0.40*	0.01
	(0.23)	(0.27)	(0.23)	(0.27)	(0.20)	(0.27)	(0.17)	(0.23)
Junior college	0.17	–0.05	–0.20	0.14	0.24	0.35	0.09	–0.07
	(0.23)	(0.27)	(0.22)	(0.26)	(0.20)	(0.24)	(0.16)	(0.21)
University or higher	0.36	0.04	0.27	0.49†	0.75***	0.52*	0.49**	–0.02
	(0.22)	(0.27)	(0.22)	(0.28)	(0.19)	(0.25)	(0.16)	(0.22)
Partners' educational pairing (ref.: hypergamy)								
Homogamy	0.23	0.02	0.18	–0.04	0.20	0.03	0.10	0.04
	(0.19)	(0.24)	(0.19)	(0.24)	(0.16)	(0.21)	(0.14)	(0.18)
Hypogamy	–0.10	0.21	–0.15	0.02	–0.45*	–0.08	–0.12	–0.04
	(0.23)	(0.28)	(0.22)	(0.31)	(0.20)	(0.28)	(0.16)	(0.21)
Household living standard (ref.: poor)								
Average	–0.41**	–0.59**	–0.17	–0.27	–0.23†	–0.38*	–0.06	–0.04
	(0.13)	(0.20)	(0.13)	(0.18)	(0.12)	(0.18)	(0.09)	(0.15)
Wealthy	–0.12	–0.34	–0.05	–0.38	–0.15	–0.41†	0.15	0.06
	(0.16)	(0.24)	(0.16)	(0.24)	(0.14)	(0.22)	(0.12)	(0.18)
Resident children	–1.05***	–0.80***	–1.09***	–0.54**	–1.31***	–1.07***	–0.37***	–0.34*
	(0.14)	(0.22)	(0.13)	(0.21)	(0.12)	(0.18)	(0.10)	(0.15)
Coresident mother	1.46***	0.27	1.02***	0.41	0.69***	–0.07	0.30†	–0.09
	(0.20)	(0.27)	(0.19)	(0.27)	(0.19)	(0.30)	(0.16)	(0.24)
Coresident husband's mother	0.35†	0.05	–0.23	–0.42	0.33†	–0.14	–0.24	–0.47†
	(0.21)	(0.30)	(0.21)	(0.33)	(0.18)	(0.31)	(0.15)	(0.25)
Marriage duration	0.04***	0.01	0.00	–0.02	0.02*	0.00	–0.02***	–0.04***
	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Urban environment	0.04	–0.06	–0.09	–0.08	–0.24*	–0.28†	0.10	–0.10
	(0.13)	(0.19)	(0.13)	(0.18)	(0.12)	(0.15)	(0.10)	(0.14)
Constant	–2.92***	–0.80†	–1.93***	–0.96*	–1.52***	–0.27	–1.20***	–0.03
	(0.28)	(0.41)	(0.27)	(0.39)	(0.24)	(0.34)	(0.20)	(0.29)
Random effects								
Individual (level 2) variance	6.54***	0.68***	6.30***	0.94***	4.98***	0.58***	4.13***	0.81***
	(0.60)	(0.18)	(0.53)	(0.23)	(0.38)	(0.17)	(0.26)	(0.14)
Log likelihood	–3,886.7	–577.3	–4050.7	–627.3	–4,863.2	–700.9	–7,034.1	–1,007.3
N (observations)	16,591	16,591	16,591	16,591	16,591	16,591	16,591	16,591
N (couples)	2,051	2,051	2,051	2,051	2,051	2,051	2,051	2,051

Notes: (Robust) standard errors are within parentheses. Following journal policy, asterisks indicate the strength of evidence against the null hypothesis rather than arbitrary cutoffs: † indicates weak/suggestive evidence ($p \approx 0.10$), ∗ indicates moderate evidence ($p \approx 0.05$), ∗∗ indicates strong evidence ($p \approx 0.01$), and ∗∗∗ indicates very strong evidence ($p \approx 0.001$).
Source: Japanese Life Course Panel Survey Waves 1–16 (2007–2022).

Tables 3a through 3d present results stratified by educational attainment, offering further support for Hypothesis 3. These findings highlight a particularly strong

association between online dating and a nontraditional division of labor among couples in which the wife has a junior college education. Specifically, unadjusted results in Table 3c indicate that women with a junior college degree who met their spouse online were substantially more likely to report a nontraditional allocation of tasks: 3.56 times as likely for laundry (exp[1.27], suggestive evidence, $p < .10$), 4.14 times for cleaning (exp[1.42], moderate evidence, $p < .05$), and 4.91 times for grocery shopping (exp[1.59], strong evidence, $p < .01$), compared to those who met offline through conventional means. To formally test these differences across groups, we estimated a pooled model including an interaction term between educational attainment and meeting context. From this model, we calculated marginal contrasts of predicted probabilities to compare the effect of meeting contexts at each educational level. These contrasts (calculated for both unweighted and weighted models) are reported in Table 4. For the junior college group, the results indicate a positive contrast between online- and offline-meeting contexts of 0.094 (suggestive evidence, $p < .10$) for laundry, 0.097 (suggestive evidence, $p < .10$) for cleaning, and 0.218 (strong evidence, $p < .01$) for grocery shopping. These findings are consistent with the interaction results from the pooled models, which formally confirm that the association between meeting context and the division of household labor varies across educational groups. While the effect sizes for laundry and cleaning are modest, the marginal contrast for grocery shopping indicates that the predicted probability of nontraditional task allocation is 21.8 percentage points higher for online-meeting couples than for offline-meeting couples within the junior college strata, representing a substantial effect size.

Among women with a high school education or less, results in Table 3a show that online meeting was also associated with nontraditional grocery shopping practices, with women being 2.12 times as likely (exp[0.75], suggestive evidence, $p < .10$) to report a nontraditional division compared to those who met their partner offline through conventional means. By contrast, among couples where the wife had at least a university degree, meeting online showed no clear association with a nontraditional division of grocery shopping; their odds were nearly the same (1.09 = exp[0.07]) as those who met their spouse offline (Table 3d). The pooled data model and the contrasts in predicted probabilities in Table 4 confirm these stratified findings.

As in the general sample, adjusting for potential selection factors affecting who uses internet dating altered the results (Tables 3a–3d). For junior-college-educated women who met their spouse online, the associations for laundry and cleaning attenuated, and the effect size for grocery shopping dropped by more than half – 52% (=1–[0.82/1.59]) – but it remained robust (moderate evidence, $p < .05$). Among women with a high school education or less, the reduction was smaller – only 16% (=1–[0.63/0.75]) – and the result remained suggestive. Contrasts in predicted probabilities (Table 4) further corroborate these patterns. For women with a junior college education, the contrast for grocery

shopping is 0.163 (strong evidence, p < .01), indicating that the predicted probability of a nontraditional division of this task is 16.3 percentage points higher among couples who met online compared to those who met offline within this educational group. While smaller than in the unadjusted models, this remains a substantively meaningful effect, underscoring the distinct position of this educational subgroup.

Last, couples who met through offline dating services (e.g., *gōkon*, *miai*) did not differ meaningfully from those who met through conventional offline contexts (e.g., family, work). In some cases – such as meal preparation among junior-college-educated women – offline dating services were even associated with suggestive lower odds of reporting nontraditional arrangements, though this association weakened further once selection was accounted for. Supplementary analyses that distinguished between *gōkon* and *miai* similarly showed only minor and statistically weak differences (available upon request). This suggests that, for junior-college-educated women, the significant and substantive association between online dating and nontraditional sharing is not merely a product of using a formal matching service, but may be more specifically linked to the digital nature and selection processes of the online dating environment.

Table 3a: Results from unweighted and weighted random-effects logistic regression models predicting nontraditional housework sharing (different outcomes) among married women with a high school education or less in Japan

	Preparing meals		*Doing laundry*		*Cleaning*		*Grocery shopping*	
	Unweighted	*Weighted*	*Unweighted*	*Weighted*	*Unweighted*	*Weighted*	*Unweighted*	*Weighted*
Meeting context (ref.: offline traditional)								
Offline dating services	0.35	–0.16	–0.19	–0.33	0.31	–0.14	0.51	0.25
	(0.43)	(0.40)	(0.54)	(0.37)	(0.45)	(0.39)	(0.38)	(0.36)
Online dating services	0.53	0.15	0.03	–0.02	0.59	–0.07	0.75†	0.63†
	(0.49)	(0.43)	(0.59)	(0.49)	(0.54)	(0.34)	(0.45)	(0.37)
Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Constant	–3.08***	–0.35	–3.34***	–1.10†	–1.69***	0.33	–1.26***	0.42
	(0.45)	(0.53)	(0.50)	(0.65)	(0.43)	(0.55)	(0.35)	(0.46)
Random effects								
Individual (level 2) variance	3.66***	0.75**	6.76***	1.10**	5.29***	0.29	5.09***	1.03***
	(0.75)	(0.28)	(1.24)	(0.38)	(0.90)	(0.41)	(0.68)	(0.29)
Log likelihood	–950.8	–156.2	–1,000.3	–151.8	–1,145.7	–168.7	–1,692.1	–278.1
N (observations)	4,367	4,367	4,367	4,367	4,367	4,367	4,367	4,367
N (couples)	545	545	545	545	545	545	545	545

Notes: (Robust) standard errors are within parentheses. Following journal policy, asterisks indicate the strength of evidence against the null hypothesis rather than arbitrary cutoffs: † indicates weak/suggestive evidence (p ≈ 0.10), ∗ indicates moderate evidence (p ≈ 0.05), ∗∗ indicates strong evidence (p ≈ 0.01), and ∗∗∗ indicates very strong evidence (p ≈ 0.001). Controls include employment status, partners' educational pairing, household living standard, resident children, coresident mother, coresident husband's mother, marriage duration, and urban environment.
Source: Japanese Life Course Panel Survey Waves 1–16 (2007–2022).

Table 3b: Results from unweighted and weighted random-effects logistic regression models predicting nontraditional housework sharing (different outcomes) among married women who completed vocational school in Japan

	Preparing meals		*Doing laundry*		*Cleaning*		*Grocery shopping*	
	Unweighted	*Weighted*	*Unweighted*	*Weighted*	*Unweighted*	*Weighted*	*Unweighted*	*Weighted*
Meeting context (ref.: offline traditional)								
Offline dating services	–0.44	–0.42	–0.17	–0.06	–0.17	–0.08	–0.02	–0.14
	(0.59)	(0.36)	(0.57)	(0.40)	(0.48)	(0.41)	(0.37)	(0.34)
Online dating services	0.67	–0.13	0.57	0.59	0.40	–0.04	0.59	0.08
	(0.71)	(0.34)	(0.61)	(0.51)	(0.59)	(0.50)	(0.48)	(0.40)
Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Constant	–1.52**	0.08	–0.65	–0.14	–1.07*	–0.76	–0.27	0.37
	(0.53)	(0.61)	(0.51)	(0.63)	(0.44)	(0.57)	(0.34)	(0.46)
Random effects								
Individual (level 2) variance	7.33***	0.00	6.58***	0.47	4.57***	0.49	3.45***	0.52*
	(1.46)	(0.00)	(1.28)	(0.35)	(0.80)	(0.39)	(0.47)	(0.24)
Log likelihood	–797.6	–105.2	–783.4	–124.0	–974.3	–123.3	–1510.8	–189.8
N (observations)	3,432	3,432	3,432	3,432	3,432	3,432	3,432	3,432
N (couples)	419	419	419	419	419	419	419	419

Notes: (Robust) standard errors are within parentheses. Following journal policy, asterisks indicate the strength of evidence against the null hypothesis rather than arbitrary cutoffs: † indicates weak/suggestive evidence ($p \approx 0.10$), ∗ indicates moderate evidence ($p \approx 0.05$), ∗∗ indicates strong evidence ($p \approx 0.01$), and ∗∗∗ indicates very strong evidence ($p \approx 0.001$). Controls include employment status, partners' educational pairing, household living standard, resident children, coresident mother, coresident husband's mother, marriage duration, and urban environment.
Source: Japanese Life Course Panel Survey Waves 1–16 (2007–2022).

Table 3c: Results from unweighted and weighted random-effects logistic regression models predicting nontraditional housework sharing (different outcomes) among married women with junior college education in Japan

	Preparing meals		*Doing laundry*		*Cleaning*		*Grocery shopping*	
	Unweighted	*Weighted*	*Unweighted*	*Weighted*	*Unweighted*	*Weighted*	*Unweighted*	*Weighted*
Meeting context (ref.: offline traditional)								
Offline dating services	–0.98†	–0.64	0.14	–0.10	0.62	0.23	0.06	0.08
	(0.58)	(0.43)	(0.49)	(0.34)	(0.47)	(0.31)	(0.33)	(0.26)
Online dating services	0.67	0.30	1.27†	0.49	1.42*	0.59	1.59**	0.82*
	(0.78)	(0.57)	(0.70)	(0.49)	(0.72)	(0.52)	(0.54)	(0.41)
Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Constant	–3.94***	–1.44*	–1.79***	0.23	–1.88***	0.22	–1.33***	–0.90
	(0.63)	(0.66)	(0.53)	(0.57)	(0.51)	(0.58)	(0.37)	(0.59)
Random effects								
Individual (level 2) variance	10.02***	0.67*	7.46***	0.39	8.99***	0.46†	4.09***	0.39*
	(2.02)	(0.29)	(1.45)	(0.24)	(1.60)	(0.26)	(0.56)	(0.19)
Log likelihood	–853.2	–124.4	–840.4	–134.8	–1,027.3	–164.1	–1,597.5	–228.0
N (observations)	4,029	4,029	4,029	4,029	4,029	4,029	4,029	4,029
N (couples)	452	452	452	452	452	452	452	452

Notes: (Robust) standard errors are within parentheses. Following journal policy, asterisks indicate the strength of evidence against the null hypothesis rather than arbitrary cutoffs: † indicates weak/suggestive evidence ($p \approx 0.10$), ∗ indicates moderate evidence ($p \approx 0.05$), ∗∗ indicates strong evidence ($p \approx 0.01$), and ∗∗∗ indicates very strong evidence ($p \approx 0.001$). Controls include employment status, partners' educational pairing, household living standard, resident children, coresident mother, coresident husband's mother, marriage duration, and urban environment.
Source: Japanese Life Course Panel Survey Waves 1–16 (2007–2022).

Table 3d: Results from unweighted and weighted random-effects logistic regression models predicting nontraditional housework sharing (different outcomes) among married women with university education or more in Japan

	Preparing meals		*Doing laundry*		*Cleaning*		*Grocery shopping*	
	Unweighted	*Weighted*	*Unweighted*	*Weighted*	*Unweighted*	*Weighted*	*Unweighted*	*Weighted*
Meeting context (ref.: offline traditional)								
Offline dating services	–0.11	–0.43	0.15	0.01	0.20	–0.12	0.06	0.06
	(0.39)	(0.29)	(0.36)	(0.39)	(0.30)	(0.23)	(0.28)	(0.26)
Online dating services	0.22	0.09	0.75	0.33	0.31	0.42	0.07	–0.04
	(0.54)	(0.50)	(0.51)	(0.46)	(0.44)	(0.38)	(0.43)	(0.45)
Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Constant	–2.14***	–0.90†	–1.50***	–1.04	–0.47	0.05	–0.82**	–0.23
	(0.40)	(0.55)	(0.39)	(0.73)	(0.32)	(0.46)	(0.29)	(0.46)
Random effects								
Individual (level 2) variance	6.15***	0.45†	5.30***	1.07**	3.43***	0.04	4.02***	0.63*
	(0.96)	(0.26)	(0.73)	(0.41)	(0.44)	(0.13)	(0.45)	(0.26)
Log likelihood	–1,247.5	–172.5	–1,390.1	–197.3	–1,687.4	–218.0	–2,205.0	–292.3
N (observations)	4,763	4,763	4,763	4,763	4,763	4,763	4,763	4,763
N (couples)	635	635	635	635	635	635	635	635

Notes: (Robust) standard errors are within parentheses. Following journal policy, asterisks indicate the strength of evidence against the null hypothesis rather than arbitrary cutoffs: † indicates weak/suggestive evidence ($p \approx 0.10$), ∗ indicates moderate evidence ($p \approx 0.05$), ∗∗ indicates strong evidence ($p \approx 0.01$), and ∗∗∗ indicates very strong evidence ($p \approx 0.001$). Controls include employment status, partners' educational pairing, household living standard, resident children, coresident mother, coresident husband's mother, marriage duration, and urban environment.
Source: Japanese Life Course Panel Survey Waves 1–16 (2007–2022).

Table 4: Contrasts in predicted probabilities of nontraditional housework sharing across meeting contexts, by wives' educational attainment among married women in Japan (unweighted and weighted random-effects logistic regression models)

	Preparing meals		*Doing laundry*		*Cleaning*		*Grocery shopping*	
	Unweighted	*Weighted*	*Unweighted*	*Weighted*	*Unweighted*	*Weighted*	*Unweighted*	*Weighted*
Offline dating services vs. offline traditional								
High school or less	0.013	–0.024	–0.016	–0.029	0.022	–0.022	0.068	0.034
Vocational school	–0.028	–0.030	0.002	0.017	–0.006	0.020	–0.011	–0.011
Junior college	–0.041†	–0.047†	0.007	–0.005	0.041	0.017	0.008	0.007
University or higher	–0.006	–0.030	0.010	0.003	0.021	–0.009	0.008	0.007
Online dating services vs. offline traditional								
High school or less	0.029	0.024	–0.006	–0.003	0.037	–0.002	0.085†	0.114†
Vocational school	0.058	0.017	0.039	0.056	0.037	–0.002	0.081	0.021
Junior college	0.034	0.016	0.094†	0.062	0.097†	0.037	0.218**	0.163*
University or higher	0.017	0.001	0.054	0.009	0.035	0.019	0.005	–0.022

Notes: Following journal policy, asterisks indicate the strength of evidence against the null hypothesis rather than arbitrary cutoffs: † indicates weak/suggestive evidence ($p \approx 0.10$), ∗ indicates moderate evidence ($p \approx 0.05$), and ∗∗ indicates strong evidence ($p \approx 0.01$). Estimates are derived from random-effects logistic regression models based on pooled data, including interactions between meeting context and wife's educational attainment. Models control for employment status, partners' educational pairing, household living standard, presence of resident children, coresidence with the respondent's mother, coresidence with the husband's mother, marriage duration, and urban residence.
Source: Japanese Life Course Panel Survey Waves 1–16 (2007–2022).

5. Supplementary analyses

To investigate whether differential exposure to digital media and related gender norms shape the relationship between digital matching and domestic labor, we ran two follow-up tests that stratify the original models: first by birth cohort and then by marriage cohort. These checks probe the robustness of earlier findings and offer a more fine-grained assessment of how generational context conditions the association between meeting online and housework sharing. If the observed association were driven solely by general period-level shifts toward more egalitarian domestic arrangements, we would expect similar patterns across meeting contexts and cohorts, rather than the systematic heterogeneity observed here.

5.1 Variation by birth cohort

EB already adjusts for the overrepresentation of online daters in the post-bubble/digital-age cohort (1981–1998). The persistence of some results, particularly for grocery shopping, even after applying weights, suggests that selection into online dating alone does not fully account for the observed association with nontraditional practices. To address generational differences more directly, however, and to account for the possibility that distinct online services attract different age groups, with different gender attitudes (Piotrowski et al. 2019), we reestimated the models separately for each cohort. Table 5 shows that the pronounced positive coefficient for meeting online when predicting a nontraditional allocation of grocery shopping appears only for the older cohort (1966–1980). A similar positive link emerges for meal preparation. For the post-bubble/digital-age cohort, we observe only a suggestive coefficient for doing laundry. For brevity, the table presents unweighted estimates only; weighted analyses (results available on request) indicate that accounting for observed selection into online dating renders all these coefficients inconclusive. Caution is, however, warranted because only 45 women who met their spouse online belong to the older cohort, which prevents definitive conclusions based solely on subgroup analysis.

Table 5: Results from unweighted random-effects logistic regression models predicting nontraditional housework sharing (different outcomes) among married women in Japan, stratified by birth cohort: the employment-security cohort (1966–1980) vs. the post-bubble/digital-age cohort (1981–1998)

	Preparing meals		*Doing laundry*		*Cleaning*		*Grocery shopping*	
	Employment security cohort	*Post-bubble/ digital-age cohort*	*Employment security cohort*	*Post-bubble/ digital-age cohort*	*Employment security cohort*	*Post-bubble/ digital-age cohort*	*Employment security cohort*	*Post-bubble/ digital-age cohort*
Meeting context (ref.: offline traditional)								
Offline dating services	–0.18	–0.28	0.28	–0.24	0.51*	–0.08	0.28	–0.03
	(0.28)	(0.48)	(0.28)	(0.39)	(0.24)	(0.36)	(0.20)	(0.31)
Online dating services	0.93*	–0.06	0.11	0.60†	0.43	0.51	0.92*	0.36
	(0.45)	(0.43)	(0.48)	(0.34)	(0.44)	(0.34)	(0.36)	(0.29)
Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Constant	–3.37***	–2.50***	–2.54***	–1.41***	–2.20***	–0.97*	–1.70***	–0.51
	(0.36)	(0.49)	(0.37)	(0.40)	(0.32)	(0.38)	(0.26)	(0.32)
Random effects								
Individual (level 2) variance	6.09***	7.01***	7.65***	4.12***	5.44***	3.94***	4.39***	3.48***
	(0.65)	(1.21)	(0.83)	(0.59)	(0.51)	(0.54)	(0.33)	(0.41)
Log likelihood	–2,725.5	–1,143.8	–2,643.7	–1,375.7	–3,329.9	–1,511.4	–4,889.4	–2,110.3
N (observations)	12,532	4,059	12,532	4,059	12,532	4,059	12,532	4,059
N (couples)	1,275	776	1,275	776	1,275	776	1,275	776

Notes: (Robust) standard errors are within parentheses. Following journal policy, asterisks indicate the strength of evidence against the null hypothesis rather than arbitrary cutoffs: † indicates weak/suggestive evidence ($p \approx 0.10$), * indicates moderate evidence ($p \approx 0.05$), ** indicates strong evidence ($p \approx 0.01$), and *** indicates very strong evidence ($p \approx 0.001$). Controls include educational level, employment status, partners' educational pairing, household living standard, resident children, coresident mother, coresident husband's mother, marriage duration, and urban environment.
Source: Japanese Life Course Panel Survey Waves 1–16 (2007–2022).

5.2 Variation by marriage cohort

To address similar questions about different marriage cohorts being exposed to different online dating modalities and overall matchmaking culture (Alpert 2022), we further stratified the analyses by marriage cohort: unions formed in the period before dating apps (1995–2011) and those formed after dating apps became mainstream (2012–2022). Recall that the analytic sample already excludes marriages that began before the internet dating era (pre-1995), and EB further levels the groups. Although the survey does not distinguish specific online modalities, this split aims to approximate differences between older ways of meeting partners online (e.g., through web-based sites or social networks) and newer app-based platforms. This strategy therefore allows us to indirectly probe search-strategy differences and test whether couples who met in the app-rich environment exhibit distinct patterns in gendered division of labor compared with those who partnered before widespread app adoption. Table 6 reveals that the positive coefficient for meeting online when predicting a nontraditional division of grocery shopping is indeed attributed to the post-dating-apps cohort and remains robust after weighting. These results are

consistent with the interpretation that the association is not static across marriage cohorts and appears more pronounced in the post-dating-apps context.

Taken together, these two tests suggest heterogeneity in the association between digital matching and housework sharing across generations and technological contexts prevalent at the time partners met, with app-era marriage cohorts being associated with more pronounced departures from traditional gendered domestic arrangements, even though causal claims cannot be made. Stronger associations between meeting online and nontraditional practices for the 1966–1980 birth cohort may also reflect rising ages at marriage and selective adoption of dating apps among older singles. Because the number of such cases is small, the result should be interpreted cautiously, yet it is consistent with the idea that period-specific technologies can relate to less traditional gender practices even among older cohorts.

Finally, the data do not allow us to distinguish, within the post-dating-apps marriage cohort, between couples who married before and after the onset of the pandemic, due to the limited number of post-2020 marriages in the sample. However, it is plausible that the pandemic coincided with additional period-level changes. Analyses looking at post-pandemic trends may capture broader cultural shifts in how digital relationships are initiated and navigated during times of crisis or transition, and could be consistent with a changing association between online dating and less traditional divisions of labor, given the surge in online dating activity during and after the pandemic.

Table 6: Results from unweighted random-effects logistic regression models predicting nontraditional housework sharing (different outcomes) among married women in Japan, stratified by marriage cohort: pre-Tinder (1995–2011) vs. post-Tinder (2012–2022)

	Preparing meals		*Doing laundry*		*Cleaning*		*Grocery shopping*	
	Pre-Tinder	*Post-Tinder*	*Pre-Tinder*	*Post-Tinder*	*Pre-Tinder*	*Post-Tinder*	*Pre-Tinder*	*Post-Tinder*
Meeting context (ref.: offline traditional)								
Offline dating services	–0.36	–0.60	0.12	–0.18	0.21	0.34	0.10	0.06
	(0.27)	(0.55)	(0.28)	(0.40)	(0.24)	(0.38)	(0.19)	(0.35)
Online dating services	0.52	0.31	0.63	0.40	0.29	0.63	0.33	1.15**
	(0.40)	(0.56)	(0.41)	(0.42)	(0.38)	(0.41)	(0.31)	(0.39)
Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Constant	–3.35***	–2.39***	–2.39***	–1.53**	–2.10***	–0.92*	–1.65***	–0.53
	(0.33)	(0.65)	(0.33)	(0.48)	(0.29)	(0.47)	(0.23)	(0.41)
Random effects								
Individual (level 2) variance	5.71***	10.01***	7.13***	4.38***	4.96***	4.62***	4.00***	4.41***
	(0.58)	(2.18)	(0.70)	(0.77)	(0.44)	(0.74)	(0.28)	(0.61)
Log likelihood	–3,071.7	–786.4	–3,098.5	–926.5	–3,767.7	–1,070.9	–5,615.3	–1,365.0
N (observations)	14,094	2,497	14,094	2,497	14,094	2,497	14,094	2,497
N (couples)	1,478	602	1,478	602	1,478	602	1,478	602

Notes: (Robust) standard errors are within parentheses. Following journal policy, asterisks indicate the strength of evidence against the null hypothesis rather than arbitrary cutoffs: † indicates weak/suggestive evidence ($p \approx 0.10$), ∗ indicates moderate evidence ($p \approx 0.05$), ∗∗ indicates strong evidence ($p \approx 0.01$), and ∗∗∗ indicates very strong evidence ($p \approx 0.001$). Controls include educational level, employment status, partners' educational pairing, household living standard, resident children, coresident mother, coresident husband's mother, marriage duration, and urban environment.
Source: Japanese Life Course Panel Survey Waves 1–16 (2007–2022).

6. Discussion

Japan's work and family landscape currently inhabits a transitional space (Fukuda, Raymo, and Yoda), where long-standing cultural norms prescribing traditional marriage and male-breadwinner arrangements paradoxically coexist with an undeniable rise in gender-egalitarian preferences and an increasing demand for women's education and income-earning capacity (Brinton, Mun, and Hertog 2021). Alongside these trends, there have also been stark changes in partner selection processes, including a decline in previous structures of matchmaking (e.g., family, workplace) and a concomitant rise in the marriage-hunting industry (Alpert 2022; Castro-Vazquez 2016; Dalton and Dales 2016). This study aimed to examine the link between these two trends by looking at the relationship between internet matchmaking and gendered marital practices. Compared to other modern go-between options, such as *miai* parties, marriage agencies, or *gōkon* gatherings, which often still involve the intermediation of family and friends, online dating not only enlarges the field of possibilities but also provides conditions of anonymity, limited interference by third parties, and, in the case of women, who are often underrepresented on these platforms, a structural mating advantage. Given these particularities, we argue that digital spaces of interaction may allow for a subversion of gender during the dating phase (e.g., women more often claiming power and expressing preferences in interactions with men), which, similar to patterns recently observed for Germany (Potarca and Hook 2023), may be associated with less gendered marriages later on (Lamont 2020). In so doing, this study examines how the digitalization of partner selection reflects the deinstitutionalization of mate choice, as family- and workplace-mediated pathways are increasingly replaced by more individualized forms of partner formation. By linking these transformations to gender dynamics within marriage, particularly the gendered division of household labor, this study examines whether these shifts are associated with the reconfiguration of gender relations in marriage.

To test this claim, we selected a sample of married women from the Japanese Life Course Panel Surveys. Based on sixteen waves of data (2007–2022), we performed random-effects logistic regression analyses that model the probability of engaging in a nontraditional division of housework tasks (such as preparing meals, doing laundry, cleaning, and grocery shopping), while also accounting for observed selection into internet dating via EB weighting.

Results first indicated that overall, women who met their spouse online were significantly more likely to report a nontraditional division of housework than women who met their spouse in either traditional ways or through other modern but nondigital matchmaking options. This pattern was noticed for laundry, cleaning, and especially grocery shopping, the task with the strongest positive link between meeting online and nontraditional practices. These findings lend support to theories of imbalanced sex ratios

(Guttentag and Secord 1983), suggesting that women's stronger bargaining position in digital partner markets may be associated with more gender-atypical partner arrangements. They also echo Lamont's (2020) argument that gender-progressive dynamics established during courtship can carry over into marriage, influencing how spouses divide household chores.

Controlling for online dating selectivity based on demographics and family background reduces, but does not eliminate, the association for grocery shopping, whereas the associations for laundry and cleaning fade away once selection is considered. This indicates that the link between meeting online and marital practices is chore-specific, varying directly with the task's degree of gender segregation. Results specifically indicate that couples who meet online are more likely to exhibit departures from traditional divisions of labor for less feminine-typed chores, already prone to sharing, such as shopping, but show less change for less desirable and more feminine-typed and gendered tasks like housecleaning and laundry (Kolpashnikova and Kan 2021). These patterns align with earlier East Asian research showing that modern 'marriage-hunting' channels, including online dating options, marginally contest but ultimately reproduce traditional gender hierarchies (Chan 2018; Wang 2012; Woźny 2022).

Results stratified by educational level revealed that the positive association between online dating and nontraditional practices was largely driven by couples with a junior-college-educated wife, who were significantly more likely to report a nontraditional allocation of laundry, cleaning, and especially grocery shopping compared to other marriages. Once the characteristics of who uses online platforms are controlled for, the association for laundry and cleaning mostly disappears. The association for grocery shopping was, however, robust beyond any selectivity based on observed characteristics. These patterns suggest that the observed associations are concentrated among a specific subgroup and may reflect both selection into online dating and differential opportunities to realize less traditional arrangements.

No significant associations were found for women with lower educational attainment or for those with university training. This null finding among university-educated women is consistent with their higher baseline levels of nontraditional sharing, as observed in the descriptive results, indicating a potential ceiling effect that leaves less room for differences linked to meeting a partner online. Online dating is therefore most strongly associated to nontraditional divisions of certain and already more flexible housework chores (e.g., grocery shopping) among Japanese women with some college education. Finding a greater association between online matching and nontraditional practices among women with two-year college degrees, compared to those with university degrees, may also reflect that these women have both the educational background and some financial resources (but not necessarily a lot) to be attractive partners on these platforms. This may suggest that junior college provides just sufficient

economic independence and communication skills to give women leverage in online interactions with men without being perceived as overly intimidating. Additional cross-tabulations reveal that, compared to university-educated women, most women with junior college are less likely to hold full-time jobs and more likely to be in part-time employment. Therefore, in alternative social spaces such as digital partner markets, having junior college education and some employment is seemingly valued (Brinton, Mun, and Hertog 2021), enabling women to partially challenge the 'professional housewife' script that rigid societal norms often assign them. Semi-traditional relationships initiated online – such as 1.5 male-breadwinner couples with a less traditional division of housework – also allow full-time working men to move away from the role of sole financial provider and assume a greater share of domestic responsibilities, though not across all tasks. As results indicate, even for junior-college-educated women who met their spouse online, nontraditional arrangements tend to be limited to certain already flexible tasks and do not typically extend to more deeply gendered forms of housework.

Although digital partner selection in Japan has not yet reached the widespread popularity seen in contexts like the United States (Rosenfeld, Thomas, and Hausen 2019), it has become a notable feature of the contemporary dating landscape. Our results suggest that it may be associated with less traditional relationship dynamics, particularly around gender (Beck et al. 2014), and especially among the growing demographic of women with postsecondary education. The fact that these less traditional arrangements are more visible among couples who met through digital platforms than those meeting through other modern, nondigital matchmaking avenues (e.g., *gōkon*, *miai* parties, marriage agencies) suggests that certain affordances of digital media, such as reduced third-party involvement, greater anonymity, and a wider pool of options, are linked to the emergence of alternative, potentially less traditionally gendered, forms of partnership. However, these associations remain context-dependent and are not uniformly observed across different housework tasks.

The study comes with certain limitations. First, although we use EB weights to account for observed selection, endogeneity or bias from unobserved time-varying traits cannot be entirely ruled out. This implies that the observed associations may partly reflect unobserved characteristics of individuals who select into online dating rather than particularities of the meeting context itself. Second, the four outcome measures rely on respondents' reports of their own and their spouses' task frequencies rather than perceived share or precise time-use data. Consequently, these measures identify deviations from traditional, female-centered task allocation rather than exact egalitarianism. We recommend that future research collect data capable of capturing egalitarian arrangements more directly. Third, the data do not allow us to account for the outsourcing of domestic labor (e.g., cleaning services or meal solutions), which, although

relatively uncommon in Japan, may affect both the division and reporting of household tasks; future research should incorporate such measures. Fourth, as mentioned earlier, the content and size of the data did not allow for a more detailed examination of specific digital dating options or looking at interactions with other factors (e.g., the online effect for junior-college-educated women who are at the same time better educated than their partner). We recommend that future work apply fixed-effects models to longitudinal data that capture enough within-person change in how couples meet. This strategy would control for unobserved, time-invariant factors tied to both housework allocation and the use of online dating. As the mate value and preferences of both men and women continue to evolve, especially as secure employment becomes harder for men (Piotrowski, Kalleberg, and Rindfuss 2015), such causal analyses could clarify whether the associations observed here represent actual platform effects signaling a broader shift, one that may intensify as the digitalization of partner selection (and specifically the consolidation of app dating) continues to expand.

Overall, the results presented here offer an early look at how digital tools for partner selection may be associated with shifts in Japan's partnership culture. Similar to research using European data (e.g., Potarca 2021; Potarca and Hook 2023), results indicate that the internet tends to be especially advantageous for women with postsecondary education. For this group, online dating can broaden communication channels, enlarge dating pools, and offer a structural mating advantage, possibilities that may be linked to different gender dynamics during courtship and, in turn, to less traditional patterns in marriage. This study complements earlier work (e.g., Potarca 2020; Thomas 2020) and supports the view that digital technologies are associated with more individualized and diverse personal choices (Castells 2009), even in staunchly traditional contexts, though these patterns are concentrated among specific subgroups rather than uniformly across the population. Taken together, the findings are more consistent with a pattern of selective matching into less traditional arrangements than with a transformative impact of online dating or a broad 'technology effect' on gender dynamics. At the same time, the fact that particular groups sort into digital partner markets and appear more likely to realize less traditional divisions of labor speaks directly to ongoing transformations in mate selection and gender norms in a traditionally structured context such as Japan. This tension between the persistence of established gender expectations and emerging changes in partner selection reflects the broader concerns of the de- or reinstitutionalization of Asian families. Thus, the findings highlight the paradox at the heart of contemporary Asian family change: While rigid gender norms and institutional expectations continue to endure, digitally mediated individualized practices and new pathways into marriage may create possibilities for more flexible gender arrangements. Ultimately, these findings align with Ogburn's (1922) cultural lag hypothesis: While broader cultural norms around marriage in Japan remain rigid, changes in technological conditions, particularly in

partner search, may be associated with emerging shifts in lived relationship practices. Our findings point to a possible alignment between transformations in the mating market and a narrowing gap between traditional expectations and contemporary experiences, albeit in limited and uneven ways.

7. Acknowledgments

This study benefited from the support of an Ambizione grant from the Swiss National Science Foundation (grant number PZ00P1_174197). This research was also supported by an KAKENHI Grant-in-Aid for Specially Promoted Research (grant numbers JP25000001 and JP18H05204), Scientific Research (S) (grant numbers JP18103003 and JP22223005) and Scientific Research (B) (grant number 25K00704) from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science. The research support in conducting the Japanese Life Course Panel Surveys (JLPS) was obtained from the Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo, and The Outsourcing, Inc. The Research Ethics Review Board at the Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo, approved the JLPS study. The permission to use JLPS data is obtained from the Management Committee of the Japanese Life Course Panel Surveys.

References

Akers, D.S. (1967). On measuring the marriage squeeze. *Demography* 4(2): 907–924. doi:10.2307/2060328.

Alpert, E.R. (2022). *The relationship people: Mediating love and marriage in twenty-first century Japan*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books. doi:10.5040/9781978735217.

Anderson, M., Vogels, E.A., and Turner, E. (2020). The virtues and downsides of online dating. https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2020/02/06/users-of-online-dating-platforms-experience-both-positive-and-negative-aspects-of-courtship-on-the-web/.

Beck, T. (2014). Can dating apps solve Japan's sex crisis? https://www.fastcompany.com/3035612/sex-apps-and-stigmas-online-dating-adventures-in-japan.

Brinton, M.C. (1988). The social-institutional bases of gender stratification: Japan as an illustrative case. *American Journal of Sociology* 94(2): 300–334. doi:10.1086/228993.

Brinton, M.C. and Lee, D.-J. (2016). Gender-role ideology, labor market institutions, and post-industrial fertility. *Population and Development Review* 42(3): 405–433. doi:10.1111/padr.161.

Brinton, M.C., Mun, E., and Hertog, E. (2021). Singlehood in contemporary Japan: Rating, dating, and waiting for a good match. *Demographic Research* 44(10): 239–276. doi:10.4054/DemRes.2021.44.10.

Brinton, M.C. and Oh, E. (2019). Babies, work, or both? Highly educated women's employment and fertility in East Asia. *American Journal of Sociology* 125(1): 105–140. doi:10.1086/704369.

Bumpass, L.L., Rindfuss, R.R., Choe, M.K., and Tsuya, N.O. (2009). The institutional context of low fertility: The case of Japan. *Asian Population Studies* 5(3): 215–235. doi:10.1080/17441730903351479.

Cano, T. and Hofmeister, H. (2023). The intergenerational transmission of gender: Paternal influences on children's gender attitudes. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 85(1): 193–214. doi:10.1111/jomf.12863.

Castells, M. (2009). *The rise of the network society: The information age: Economy, society, and culture Volume I*. 2 edition. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

Castro-Vazquez, G. (2016). *Intimacy and reproduction in contemporary Japan*. London: Routledge. doi:10.4324/9781315636542.

Chan, L.S. (2018). Liberating or disciplining? A technofeminist analysis of the use of dating apps among women in urban China. *Communication, Culture and Critique* 11(2): 298–314. doi:10.1093/ccc/tcy004.

Chen, C.-P. (2016). Playing with digital gender identity and cultural value. *Gender, Place and Culture* 23(4): 521–536. doi:10.1080/0966369X.2015.1013455.

Coltrane, S. (2000). Research on household labor: Modeling and measuring the social embeddedness of routine family work. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 62(4): 1208–1233. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2000.01208.x.

Cooper, A. and Sportolari, L. (1997). Romance in cyberspace: Understanding online attraction. *Journal of Sex Education and Therapy* 22(1): 7–14. doi:10.1080/01614576.1997.11074165.

Dalton, E. and Dales, L. (2016). Online *Konkatsu* and the gendered ideals of marriage in contemporary Japan. *Japanese Studies* 36(1): 1–19. doi:10.1080/10371397.2016.1148556.

Dinh, R., Gildersleve, P., Blex, C., and Yasseri, T. (2022). Computational courtship understanding the evolution of online dating through large-scale data analysis. *Journal of Computational Social Science* 5(1): 401–426. doi:10.1007/s42001-021-00132-w.

Dwyer, Z., Hookway, N., and Robards, B. (2020). Navigating 'thin' dating markets: Mid-life repartnering in the era of dating apps and websites. *Journal of Sociology* 57(3): 647–663. doi:10.1177/1440783320948958.

Eckhard, J. and Stauder, J. (2019). Partner market opportunities and union formation over the life course: A comparison of different measures. *Population, Space and Place* 25(4): e2178. doi:10.1002/psp.2178.

Endo, K. (2018). Singlehood in 'precarious Japan': Examining new gender tropes and inter-gender communication in a culture of uncertainty. *Japan Forum* 31(2): 165–186. doi:10.1080/09555803.2018.1441167.

Esping-Andersen, G. and Billari, F.C. (2015). Re-theorizing family demographics. *Population and Development Review* 41(1): 1–31. doi:10.1111/j.1728-4457.2015.00024.x.

Esteve, A., Kashyap, R., Garcia Roman, J., Cheng, Y.-H.A., Fukuda, S., Nie, W., and Lee, H.-o. (2020). Demographic change and increasing late singlehood in East

Asia, 2010–2050. *Demographic Research* 43(46): 1367–1398. doi:10.4054/DemRes.2020.43.46.

Farrer, J. and Gavin, J. (2009). Online dating in Japan: A test of social information processing theory. *CyberPsychology and Behavior* 12(4): 407–412. doi:10.1089/cpb.2009.0069.

Finkel, E.J., Eastwick, P.W., Karney, B.R., Reis, H.T., and Sprecher, S. (2012). Online dating: A critical analysis from the perspective of psychological science. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest* 13(1): 3–66. doi:10.1177/1529100612436522.

Fukuda, S., Raymo, J.M., and Yoda, S. (2020). Revisiting the educational gradient in marriage in Japan. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 82(4): 1378–1396. doi:10.1111/jomf.12648.

Fuwa, M. (2019). Kikon Dansei No Hatarakikata to Shugyo Kankyo (Married men's workstyle and employment conditions). In: Sato, H. and Ishida, H. (eds.). *Deai to Kekkon (Meeting opportunities and marriage)*. Tokyo: Keiso Shobo: 103–124

Fuwa, M. (2020). Shokuba No Waku Raifu Baransu Kankyo to Patona Kankei (Work-life balance environment at work and partner relationship). In: Ishida, H., Arita, S., and Fujihara, S. (eds.). *Jinsei no Ayumi wo Tsuiseki Suru (Tracing people's lives)*. Tokyo: Keiso Shobo: 171–194

Greenstein, T.N. (1996). Husbands' participation in domestic labor: Interactive effects of wives' and husbands' gender ideologies. *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 58(3): 585–595. doi:10.2307/353719.

Greenstein, T.N. (2000). Economic dependence, gender, and the division of labor in the home: A replication and extension. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 62(2): 322–335. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2000.00322.x.

Guttentag, M. and Secord, P.F. (1983). *Too many women? The sex ratio question*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Hainmueller, J. (2012). Entropy balancing for causal effects: A multivariate reweighting method to produce balanced samples in observational studies. *Political Analysis* 20(1): 25−46. doi:10.1093/pan/mpr025.

Hainmueller, J. and Xu, Y. (2013). Ebalance: A Stata package for entropy balancing. *Journal of Statistical Software* 54: 1–18. doi:10.18637/jss.v054.i07.

Hannum, E., Ishida, H., Park, H., and Tam, T. (2019). Education in East Asian societies: Postwar expansion and the evolution of inequality. *Annual Review of Sociology* 45: 625–647. doi:10.1146/annurev-soc-073018-022507.

Hochschild, A. and Machung, A. (2003). *The second shift*. New York: Penguin Books.

Hua, J., Mao, L., Liao, H., Li, Y., Zhang, H., Liu, W., and Tang, H. (2025). The influence of childhood socioeconomic status on Chinese female university students' fertility intentions: The chain mediating effect of parental emotional warmth and subjective well-being. *Frontiers in Psychology* 16. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2025.1620780.

Ishida, H. (2022). Class structure, education, and social mobility in post-war Japan. In: Shirahase, S. (ed.). *Social stratification in an aging society with low fertility: The case of Japan*. Singapore: Springer: 7–34. doi:10.1007/978-981-19-3647-0_2.

Ishii-Kuntz, M. (2021). Caring masculinity: Fathers' childcare in Japan and Norway. In: Ishii-Kuntz, M., Kristensen, G.K., and Ringrose, P. (eds.). *Comparative perspectives on gender equality in Japan and Norway*. London: Routledge: 36–52. doi:10.4324/9781003185222-3.

Kan, M.-Y. (2008). Measuring housework participation: The gap between 'stylised' questionnaire estimates and diary-based estimates. *Social Indicators Research: An International and Interdisciplinary Journal for Quality-of-Life Measurement* 86(3): 381–400. doi:10.1007/s11205-007-9184-5.

Kan, M.-Y. and Hertog, E. (2017). Domestic division of labour and fertility preference in China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. *Demographic Research* 36(18): 557–588. doi:10.4054/DemRes.2017.36.18.

Kan, M.-Y., Hertog, E., and Kolpashnikova, K. (2019). Housework share and fertility preference in four East Asian countries in 2006 and 2012. *Demographic Research* 41(35): 1021–1046. doi:10.4054/DemRes.2019.41.35.

Kan, M.-Y., Zhou, M., Kolpashnikova, K., Hertog, E., Yoda, S., and Jun, J. (2022). Revisiting the gender revolution: Time on paid work, domestic work, and total work in East Asian and Western societies 1985–2016. *Gender and Society* 36(3): 368–396. doi:10.1177/08912432221079664.

Kato, T., Kumamaru, H., and Fukuda, S. (2018). Men's participation in childcare and housework and parity progression: A Japanese population-based study. *Asian Population Studies* 14(3): 290–309. doi:10.1080/17441730.2018.1523977.

Kleider, H. (2015). Paid and unpaid work: The impact of social policies on the gender division of labour. *Journal of European Social Policy* 25(5): 505–520. doi:10.1177/0958928715610996.

Kolpashnikova, K. and Kan, M.-Y. (2021). Gender gap in housework time: How much do individual resources actually matter? *The Social Science Journal* 63(1): 117–135. doi:10.1080/03623319.2021.1997079.

Kolpashnikova, K. and Koike, E.T. (2021). Educational attainment and housework participation among Japanese, Taiwanese, and American women across adult life transitions. *Asian Population Studies* 17(3): 266–284. doi:10.1080/17441730.2021.1920147.

Krumbein, F. (2021). Who will be Asia's next unicorn? Comparing marriage equality in Taiwan with Hong Kong, Japan and South Korea. *Asian Studies Review* 46(1): 55–73. doi:10.1080/10357823.2021.1920886.

Lamont, E. (2020). *The mating game: How gender still shapes how we date*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press. doi:10.1525/9780520970724.

Lawson, H.M. and Leck, K. (2006). Dynamics of internet dating. *Social Science Computer Review* 24(2): 189–208. doi:10.1177/0894439305283402.

Mantell, E.H. (2018). Searching for a partner on the internet and analogous decision-making problems. *Cogent Economics and Finance* 6(1): 1435442. doi:10.1080/23322039.2018.1435442.

Matsuda, S. (2019). Young men's employment and their marriage: A comparison among Japan, South Korea, Singapore, the UK, France, and Sweden. *Comparative Sociology* 18(2): 204–228. doi:10.1163/15691330-12341491.

Min-sik, Y. (2024). Dating apps in Korea overflowing with men, but women use them more: Data. https://www.koreaherald.com/article/3293205.

Miwa, S. (2008). 'Hatarakikatato Lifestyle No Henkanikansruzenkokuchousa 2007 Niokeru Hyouhontokuseito Keppyounituiteno Kisobunseki' (Sample bias and the unit nonresponse cases for JLPS-2007). (Discussion paper series of University of Tokyo, Institute of Social Sciences Panel Survey 10). Tokyo: University of Tokyo, Institute of Social Sciences: 1–17.

Miwa, S. (2019). 'Kekkon Wo Habamu Kabe No Arika' (The presence of walls hindering marriage). In: Sato, H. and Ishida, H. (eds.). *Deai to Kekkon (Dating and marriage)*. Tokyo: Keiso Shobo: 15–43.

Miwa, S. (2022). The changing marriage market and status homogamy. In: Shirahase, S. (ed.). *Social stratification in an aging society with low fertility: The case of Japan*. Singapore: Springer: 35–49. doi:10.1007/978-981-19-3647-0_3.

Miwa, S. and Tanaka, A. (2020). Donoyona 'Konkatsu' Ga Kekkon Heto Michibikuka (What kinds of partner-searching behaviors lead to marriage?). In: Ishida, H., Arita, S., and Fujihara, S. (eds.). *Jinsei no Ayumi wo Tsuiseki Suru (Tracing people's lives)*. Tokyo: Keiso Shobo: 151–170.

Mugiyama, R. (2016). Kekkon Wa Shokugyo Kyaria Ni Ikanaru Eikyo Wo Ataeruka (How does marriage affect male and female career?). *Japanese Journal of Family Sociology* 28(2): 122–135. doi:10.4234/jjoffamilysociology.28.122.

Mugiyama, R. (2022). Shussan Ikujiki Niokeru Jyosei Shugyo to Sono Gakurekisa No Chouki Susei (Long-term trends in women's employment and its educational differentials in childbearing and childrearing). *Japanese Sociological Review* 73(2): 86–102. doi:10.4057/jsr.73.86.

Murai, S. (2018). For young Japanese seeking romance, beauty is in the eye of the dating app. *The Japan Times Online* February 13.

Nakamura, T. (2022). Relative indices of educational attainment and trend analysis of inequality of educational opportunity using the 2015 SSM survey data. In: Shirahase, S. (ed.). *Social stratification in an aging society with low fertility: The case of Japan*. Singapore: Springer: 51–76. doi:10.1007/978-981-19-3647-0_4.

National Institute of Population and Social Security Research (2023). Marriage and childbirth in Japan today: The Sixteenth Japanese National Fertility Survey, 2021 (Results of Singles and Married Couples Survey).

Nemoto, K., Fuwa, M., and Ishiguro, K. (2013). Never-married employed men's gender beliefs and ambivalence toward matrimony in Japan. *Journal of Family Issues* 34(12): 1673–1695. doi:10.1177/0192513X12462573.

Ogasawara, K. and Komura, M. (2021). Consequences of war: Japan's demographic transition and the marriage market. *Journal of Population Economics* 35: 1037–1069. doi:10.1007/s00148-021-00826-5.

Ogburn, W.F. (1922). *Social change with respect to culture and original nature*. New York: B.W. Huebsch, Inc.

Perelli-Harris, B., Hoherz, S., Addo, F., Lappegård, T., Evans, A., Sassler, S., and Styrc, M. (2018). Do marriage and cohabitation provide benefits to health in mid-life? The role of childhood selection mechanisms and partnership characteristics across

countries. *Population Research and Policy Review* 37(5): 703–728. doi:10.1007/s11113-018-9467-3.

Piotrowski, M., Bond, E., and Beutel, A. (2020). Marriage counterfactuals in Japan: Variation by gender, marital status, and time. *Demographic Research* 43(37): 1081–1118. doi:10.4054/DemRes.2020.43.37.

Piotrowski, M., Kalleberg, A., and Rindfuss, R.R. (2015). Contingent work rising: Implications for the timing of marriage in Japan. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 77(5): 1039–1056. doi:10.1111/jomf.12224.

Piotrowski, M., Yoshida, A., Johnson, L., and Wolford, R. (2019). Gender role attitudes: An examination of cohort effects in Japan. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 81(4): 863–884. doi:10.1111/jomf.12577.

Potarca, G. (2020). The demography of swiping right. An overview of couples who met through dating apps in Switzerland. *PLOS One* 15(12): e0243733. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0243733.

Potarca, G. (2021). Online dating is shifting educational inequalities in marriage formation in Germany. *Demography* 58(5): 1977–2007. doi:10.1215/00703370-9420350.

Potarca, G. and Hook, J. (2023). Does online dating challenge gendered divisions of household labor? *Social Forces* 102(2): 633–657. doi:10.1093/sf/soad080.

Qian, Y. and Sayer, L.C. (2016). Division of labor, gender ideology, and marital satisfaction in East Asia. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 78(2): 383–400. doi:10.1111/jomf.12274.

Raymo, J.M. and Iwasawa, M. (2005). Marriage market mismatches in Japan: An alternative view of the relationship between women's education and marriage. *American Sociological Review* 70(5): 801–822. doi:10.1177/000312240507000504.

Raymo, J.M. and Lim, S.-j. (2011). A new look at married women's labor force transitions in Japan. *Social Science Research* 40(2): 460–472. doi:10.1016/j.ssresearch.2010.10.005.

Raymo, J.M., Park, H., Xie, Y., and Yeung, W.-j.J. (2015). Marriage and family in East Asia: Continuity and change. *Annual Review of Sociology* 41(1): 471–492. doi:10.1146/annurev-soc-073014-112428.

Raymo, J.M., Uchikoshi, F., and Yoda, S. (2021). Marriage intentions, desires, and pathways to later and less marriage in Japan. *Demographic Research* 44(3): 67–98. doi:10.4054/DemRes.2021.44.3.

Robnett, B. and Feliciano, C. (2011). Patterns of racial-ethnic exclusion by internet daters. *Social Forces* 89(3): 807–828. doi:10.1353/sof.2011.0008.

Rosenfeld, M.J. (2017). Marriage, choice, and couplehood in the age of the internet. *Sociological Science* 4: 490–510. doi:10.15195/v4.a20.

Rosenfeld, M.J., Thomas, R.J., and Hausen, S. (2019). Disintermediating your friends: How online dating in the United States displaces other ways of meeting. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 116(36): 17753–17758. doi:10.1073/pnas.1908630116.

Sautter, J.M., Tippett, R.M., and Morgan, S.P. (2010). The social demography of internet dating in the United States. *Social Science Quarterly* 91(2): 554–575. doi:10.1111/j.1540-6237.2010.00707.x.

Skopek, J., Schulz, F., and Blossfeld, H.-P. (2011). Who contacts whom? Educational homophily in online mate selection. *European Sociological Review* 27(2): 180–195. doi:10.1093/esr/jcp068.

South, S.J. and Trent, K. (1988). Sex ratios and women's roles: A cross-national analysis. *American Journal of Sociology* 93(5): 1096–1115. doi:10.1086/228865.

StataCorp. (2021). *Stata statistical software: Release 17*. College Station, TX: StataCorp LP.

Stauder, J. and Röhlke, L. (2022). The partner market as a resource in couples' bargaining on housework division. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 84(2): 612–635. doi:10.1111/jomf.12802.

Taniguchi, H. and Kaufman, G. (2022). Sharing the load: Housework, joint decision-making, and marital quality in Japan. *Journal of Family Studies* 28(3): 914–933. doi:10.1080/13229400.2020.1769707.

Thomas, R.J. (2020). Online exogamy reconsidered: Estimating the internet's effects on racial, educational, religious, political and age assortative mating. *Social Forces* 98(3): 1257–1286. doi:10.1093/sf/soz060.

Tsuya, N.O., Bumpass, L.L., Choe, M.K., and Rindfuss, R.R. (2012). Employment and household tasks of Japanese couples, 1994–2009. *Demographic Research* 27(24): 705–718. doi:10.4054/DemRes.2012.27.24.

Uchikoshi, F. and Raymo, J.M. (2021). *Educational assortative mating in Japan: Insights into social change and stratification*. Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore. doi:10.1007/978-981-16-3713-1.

Ullrich, R., Becker, M., and Scharf, J. (2022). The development of gender role attitudes during adolescence: Effects of sex, socioeconomic background, and cognitive abilities. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 51(11): 2114–2129. doi:10.1007/s10964-022-01651-z.

Wang, Y.-J. (2012). Internet dating sites as heterotopias of gender performance: A case study of Taiwanese heterosexual male daters. *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 15(5): 485–500. doi:10.1177/1367877911422855.

Woźny, A. (2022). Herbivorous men, carnivorous women: Doing masculinity and femininity in Japanese 'marriage hunting.' *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 47(3): 715–740. doi:10.1086/717703.

Yamada, M. (2017). Decline of real love and rise of virtual love: Love in Asia. *International Journal of Japanese Sociology* 26(1): 6–12. doi:10.1111/ijjs.12066.

Yang, C. (2017). *Television and dating in contemporary China: Identities, love and intimacy*. 1 edition. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Yoshida, A. (2010). Role of cultural lag in marriage decline for Japan's boom and bust cohorts. *Marriage and Family Review* 46(1–2): 60–78. doi:10.1080/01494921003648589.

Yoshida, T. (2021). Jyosei No Raifukosu to Kyaria Keisei Katei (Women's life course and career formation process). In: Watanabe, T., Kikkawa, T., and Sato, Y. (eds.). *Jinsei Chuki no Kaiso Kozo (The structure of social stratification in the middle-stage of life)*. Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press: 81–93.

Yu, W.-h. and Hara, Y. (2020). Job characteristics, marital intentions, and partner-seeking actions: Longitudinal evidence from Japan. *Demographic Research* 43(52): 1429–1464. doi:10.4054/DemRes.2020.43.52.

Yu, W.-h. and Hertog, E. (2018). Family characteristics and mate selection: Evidence from computer-assisted dating in Japan. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 80(3): 589–606. doi:10.1111/jomf.12473.