



Reasons for Delaying Marriage By Japanese Women and its Impact and the Shoushika Phenomenon in the Japan Reporter Youtube Channel: Japan's Rise of Unmarried and Childless Women | Birthrate Crisis (EP.4)

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the causes and effects of marriage delay by Japanese women on the shoushika (low birthrate society) phenomenon as depicted in The Japan Reporter's YouTube video: "Japan's Rise of Unmarried and Childless Women | Birthrate Crisis (Ep.4)". This research employs a qualitative method to explore the factors influencing Japanese women's decisions regarding marriage and family, and their impact on Japan's declining birth rate. Findings from the content analysis and literature review indicate that changing social values, economic challenges, and difficulties in balancing work and personal life play significant roles in shaping Japanese women's perspectives and contribute to the shoushika phenomenon.

Introduction

Japan's birth rate has been showing an alarming decline for decades, placing Japan as one of the countries with the lowest birth rates in the world. According to data from the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, the birth rate in 2024 reached only 720,988 children, down 5% compared to the previous year and the lowest record since records began in 1899.(Takenaka, 2025). This decline is not a temporary phenomenon, but rather a long-term crisis that is worrying for the country's demographic and socio-economic sustainability (Glonti et al., 2015; Wirth et al., 2016; Chenic et al., 2018).

The decline in birth rates is influenced by various interrelated factors. One of the main factors is the change in demographic structure, where the proportion of the elderly population is increasing while the number of productive and fertile age population is decreasing. In addition, economic factors such as job instability, high cost of living, and financial pressures in raising children also contribute to couples' decisions to delay or even not have children at all. Changes in social values and lifestyle preferences also play an important role in the decline in birth rates.(Mulyadi, 2018; Taye et al., 2024; Lu & Wu, 2024; Wang et al., 2024).

Economically, the decline in the productive age population can lead to labor shortages, decreased productivity, and increased pension and social security costs for the younger generation. Socially, Japanese society faces challenges in maintaining community vitality, preserving traditions, and ensuring the sustainability of the social system. Therefore, a thorough understanding of the factors underlying Japan's low birth rate is crucial to formulating effective policies to address this demographic challenge (Takao, 2024; Respatiadi et al., 2024; Bengana et al., 2025).

In contrast to the declining birth rate, Japan in 2024 experienced an increase in the number of marriages. The number of marriages increased by 2.2% to 499,999 in 2024, an increase that occurred only after a sharp decline, such as a 12.7% drop in 2020.(Takenaka, 2025). However,

the increase in marriage rates experienced by Japan does not make this phenomenon have a direct impact on the birth rate, because marriage has traditionally been the main context for having children in Japan (Tsuya, 2024; Woźny, 2025; Mogiet et al., 2024).

Japan's declining marriage rate is a complex issue rooted in a variety of interrelated factors, reflecting profound changes in the fabric of society. Economic instability, especially among younger generations who are often trapped in part-time or temporary contract jobs, has created a financial uncertainty gap that leaves many individuals feeling unprepared for the responsibilities of marriage and family. Prolonged economic constraints and little hope for future growth have further reinforced reluctance to make long-term commitments such as marriage. The ever-increasing cost of living, including basic needs such as housing, education, and healthcare, is also a crucial consideration that makes many couples think twice about getting married and having children (Anggraeni et al., 2024; Afiyah et al., 2024; Hendriansyah et al., 2024).

On the other hand, there has been a significant shift in social values and gender roles. Changes in gender roles and the increasing participation of women in the workforce have also affected the dynamics of marriage. (Nugroho et al., 2022). Women now have more career options and financial independence, which may ease the social pressure to marry early. Japanese women increasingly prioritize higher education, career development, and personal independence, as opposed to the traditional role of housewife. This has led many women to delay marriage or even choose not to marry at all, as they do not want to be tied down by conservative social expectations. Persistent gender role inequality, where women are often expected to take primary responsibility for household chores and childcare, is also a contributing factor to women's reluctance to marry (Rehman & Shahzadi, 2025; Huynh, 2025; Sun & Li, 2025).

The challenge of balancing work and personal life is also a major contributor to the decline in marriage rates. Japan's work culture, notorious for long hours, pressure to work overtime, and lack of flexibility, makes it difficult for many individuals, especially women, to juggle careers and family life. The lack of support from employers and society for working mothers, such as adequate parental leave and affordable childcare facilities, further exacerbates the situation. Fear of discrimination in the workplace and limited promotion opportunities for women with children also drive many women to delay or avoid marriage and pregnancy (Takdir et al., 2024; Gaspari et al., 2025).

In addition, there has been a shift in Japanese society's view of family and relationships. More people are choosing to live alone or delay marriage for a variety of personal reasons, such as a desire to enjoy individual freedom, focus on hobbies, or avoid commitments that are perceived as binding. The shift in values that emphasize personal fulfillment and individualism over traditional values such as sacrifice and lifelong commitment has also contributed to the decline in marriage rates.

This phenomenon of declining marriages is directly correlated with *shoushika* (少子化), or a society with a low birth rate. *Shoushika* is not just a demographic issue, but a reflection of fundamental changes in Japan's social, economic, and cultural structures. Demographic factors such as an aging population and a decline in the number of women of childbearing age automatically reduce the potential for births. Low fertility rates, triggered by the various social and economic factors mentioned above, further exacerbate this condition. Changes in social values that emphasize individualism and gender equality, as well as shifts in traditional family structures, also play a significant role. The lack of social and economic support for families, coupled with government policies that are considered ineffective in addressing this problem, further accelerate the rate of decline in Japan's birth rate. (Kaneda et al., 2024; Takao, 2024;

Respatiadi et al., 2024). Relatively strict immigration policies also limit the potential influx of foreign labor that could help stabilize an aging and declining population.

The Japan Reporter YouTube channel's video, *Japan's Rise of Unmarried and Childless Women | Birthrate Crisis (Ep.4)*, explores the phenomenon in depth through direct interviews with Japanese women from a variety of backgrounds. They share personal and systemic reasons why they are rejecting or delaying marriage and childbearing (Pourtaheri et al., 2024; Seraj Shirvan & Latifnejad Ruodsari, 2024).

This study aims to explain the influence of the phenomenon of marriage delay by Japanese women on the shoushika phenomenon, with a focus on Japanese women's views on marriage and having children, and their impact on the shoushika phenomenon.

Methods

This study uses qualitative methods to explore in depth Japanese women's views on marriage and childbearing, and their impact on the shoushika phenomenon. Qualitative methods allow for a rich and contextual understanding of individual experiences and perspectives. The primary data in this study is the content of The Japan Reporter's YouTube video: "Japan's Rise of Unmarried and Childless Women | Birthrate Crisis (Ep.4)". This data includes transcripts of interviews with Japanese women, narratives and explanations provided in the video, and statistical data and factual information presented in the video. Additional data in the form of literature studies, including journal articles, books, and credible government reports are used to support and strengthen the analysis.

The subject of this study specifically refers to the perspectives, opinions, and values expressed by Japanese women regarding marriage as presented in the YouTube video content entitled "Japan's Rise of Unmarried and Childless Women | Birthrate Crisis (EP.4)" on The Japan Reporter channel. This subject is the main focus of the analysis to understand how these views can influence the shoushika phenomenon. Meanwhile, the object of this study aims to understand whether and how the postponement of marriage by Japanese women has an influence on the occurrence of the shoushika phenomenon in Japan. The data collection techniques used in this study are documentation and literature study. The data collection technique using documentation is carried out by watching YouTube content repeatedly to understand the context, identify key themes, and record statements or information relevant to the research questions. Video transcripts are made to facilitate more in-depth analysis. Meanwhile, literature study is carried out by collecting relevant literature from various sources to provide theoretical background, factual context, and academic perspectives on the shoushika phenomenon and the factors that influence Japanese women's views on marriage.

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with content analysis techniques. The primary data source is a YouTube video from The Japan Reporter channel, Episode 4, which contains statements and analysis of the shosushika phenomenon from the perspective of Japanese women. Secondary data were obtained from scientific journals, online media articles, and official reports from the Japanese government. The analysis technique was carried out by categorizing factors that influence women's decisions, and linking them to the latest statistical data on marriage and birth rates.

Results and Discussion

A content analysis of data obtained from a YouTube video (hereinafter referred to as the "video") provides an in-depth understanding of how Japanese women's views on marriage correlate with the shoushika phenomenon, a significant decline in the birth rate in Japan. The video effectively presents a rich and diverse spectrum of perspectives through a series of face-

to-face interviews with women from different walks of life, spanning different ages, socio-economic backgrounds, and marital statuses. The video has a strong narrative strength with informative narrative and relevant contextual data. Below, we will discuss in a structured manner the key findings identified from the in-depth content analysis of the video. Each point of analysis will be carefully explored, supplemented with direct quotes from the video, as well as translations and interpretations. All of this aims to strengthen the validity of the arguments presented.

The Phenomenon of Marriage Postponement

As a significant demographic trend, delayed marriage among Japanese women has become a characteristic of modern Japanese society.(Nugroho et al., 2022). This is not just a temporary trend, but reflects a major shift in the lifestyles and expectations of many women. These changes are collectively reshaping the country's social and demographic structure, demonstrating how society's values and priorities are changing over time. In other words, more and more Japanese women are choosing to marry later in life or not at all.

This phenomenon has changed the dynamics of the traditional Japanese family. The nuclear family that was once the standard has now been supplemented by other forms of households, including single households. This change has created different consumption patterns and social needs, requiring adaptations in housing, goods and services, and community infrastructure. The social stigma associated with singlehood, which was once quite strong, has now faded significantly. Japanese society is increasingly accepting the existence of single women as a legitimate life choice.

This shift indicates an acceptance of individualism and freedom to choose one's own path in life. Overall, the phenomenon of delayed marriage among Japanese women is evidence of a larger social transformation. It shows that the aspirations and realities of Japanese women's lives have changed significantly. This is a complex and multifaceted trend that continues to shape the future of Japan's population and society. It also brings new challenges and opportunities for how people interact, organize, and adapt to these changes.

Factors that Delay Marriage by Japanese Women

Japanese women do not only want to postpone marriage, but in this increasingly advanced era, there are more and more factors that influence Japanese women's reluctance to marry and form a family, both internal factors that can be considered factors originating from themselves or external factors such as economic, social, and cultural.

Internal Factors

One of the internal factors that causes Japanese women to delay marriage is the paradigmatic shift in Japanese women's perspectives on marriage. In fact, the main theme in the video is a significant transformation in the values and priorities of Japanese women. The concept of a woman's traditional role, which has historically been dominated by expectations, where a woman is expected to be a dutiful wife and a housewife who devotes herself to her family, is increasingly experiencing a progressive and real erosion. In contrast, the desire to focus on developing a professional career, realizing one's potential through various channels, and achieving financial independence is now increasingly gaining attention and dominating the life choices of many Japanese women.

The video explicitly and unambiguously illustrates how a large number of Japanese women today place a higher priority on building their careers and pursuing self-development over considerations of getting married and starting a family at a young age. They see achieving higher education and professional success as important and crucial means to achieving deep

personal satisfaction and solid economic independence. The statements made by the women interviewed in the video clearly reflect this shift in views:

Respondent 1 (TS 03:43):

"... もちろん子育てする暇もないし女性は孤立した子育てになってしまう。"

"... *Mochiron kosodate suru hima mo naishi josei wa koritsu shita kosodate ni natte shimau.*"

Translation:

"...*Of course, women don't have time to raise children, and they end up isolated in raising children.*"

Respondent 2 (TS 04:47) :

"... 結婚して早く子供を産んで作って行こうって気になるものなんですけどやっぱり仕事をしてたりすると子供を産むっていうことをちょっと躊躇する人たちは多くなっています。"

"... *Kekkon shite hayaku kodomo o unde tsukutte ikou tte ki ni naru monona ndesukedo yappa shigoto o shite rendauto kodomo o san mutte iu koto o chotto chūcho suru hitotachi wa ōku nattemasu.*"

Translation:

"...*I think people want to get married and have kids quickly, but when they have a job, a lot of them are a bit hesitant to have kids.*"

Respondent 1 (TS 07:49):

"私はいつもチーム育児、チーム稼ぎって言ってるんですけど、チームで最適化してやっていきましょうって言うんですけど、やっぱりどうしても女性は子育てや自分がやらなきゃいけない自分だけの責任だと思い込んでいるし。"

"*Watashi wa itsumo chīmu ikuji, chīmu kasegi tte itteru ndesukedo, chīmu de saiteki-ka shite yatte ikimashou tte iu ndesukedo, yappari dōshitemo josei wa kosodate ya jibun ga yaranakya ikenai jibun dake no sekininda to omoikonde irushi.*"

Translation:

"I always talk about childcare and team earnings, and how we should optimize our work as a team, but women still tend to believe that childcare and other responsibilities are theirs alone."

Respondent 4 (TS 13:15) :

"結婚とか私は興味なかった、結婚には結婚したいという気持ちはなかったですね。20代の時は私も結婚がなくて。"

"*Kekkon toka watashi wa kyōmi nakatta, kekkon ni wa kekkonshitai to iu kimochi wa nakattadesu ne. 20-Dai no toki wa watashi mo kekkon ga nakute..*"

Translation:

"I have no interest in marriage, and I have no desire to get married. When I was in my 20s, I was not married."

Through these statements, the women underlined how important it was for them to have an identity and accomplishment that came from outside their traditional roles as a wife and a mother. They had the ambition to make a significant contribution to society through the work they did and to achieve continued personal growth through the development of skills and knowledge. This strong focus on career and self-development indirectly delayed or even reduced the desire to marry and have children at a younger age.

The video also highlights a growing and increasingly powerful rejection of gender roles that have been deeply ingrained in Japanese society for generations. The women interviewed in the video often express frustration and dissatisfaction with social expectations that disproportionately place primary responsibility for housework and childcare on their shoulders after marriage. They actively demand greater equality and a fairer division of labor, both within the household and in the workplace.

This rejection of traditional gender roles reflects a broader and more fundamental value shift in Japanese society, where the concepts of gender equality and women's empowerment are increasingly recognized and upheld. However, this shift towards a more equal society also poses challenges. Long-standing traditional values and gender expectations still hold a strong influence, often creating internal and external conflicts for women trying to balance their careers with the desire to raise a family. These conflicts can ultimately lead to delays or even rejections of marriage and the decision to have children, which significantly contributes to the *shoushika* phenomenon.

External Factors

External factors that cause Japanese women to postpone marriage are divided into several, namely economic factors, cultural factors, social factors and government policy factors.

Economic Factors

A number of the women interviewed in the video expressed deep concerns about the job instability they face and the financial insecurity they feel. They are often trapped in part-time jobs with little or no security, temporary contracts with no long-term security, or even periods of unemployment. This uncertainty creates a fundamental sense of insecurity about their future. This economic uncertainty is a significant barrier to making long-term commitments such as marriage and decisions to have children, both of which require financial stability.

Data 1 (TS 02:55)

"...高収入とか誰も思っていないんですでもその高収入っていうのが昭和の頃の高収入なんですよね皆さんが思ってるような年収600万以上とかそういう人って本当に少ないわけなのでバブルの後に賃上げ全然日本はされなかったんですよこの今韓国にも賃金に抜かれてますから平均の長い時間働いてもお給料が低い..."

"...*Kō shūnyū toka dare mo omottenaindesu demo sono kō shūnyū tte iu no ga Shōwa no koro no kō shūnyūna ndesu yo ne mina-san ga omotteru yōna nenshū 600 man ijō wake toka sōiu hito tte hontō ni sukunaina node baburu no nochi ni chin'age zenzen Nihon wa sa renakatta ndesu yo ne kono ima Kankoku ni mo chingin ni nuka retecepatra heikin no nagai ygin hataraitte mo o kyūryō ga hikui...*"

Translation:

"...*Nobody thinks of it as a high income, but a high income is what was considered a high income in the Showa era. Very few people earned more than 6 million yen a year,*

as you all think, so there was no increase in wages in Japan after the bubble. Now, wages have been overtaken by South Korea, so even if you work long hours on average, your salary is still low..."

Respondent 1 (TS 04:31):

"チャイルドペナルティという子供を持つと収入が6割が7割減ってしまうんです。"

"Chairudopenaruti to iu kodomo o motsu to shūnyū ga 6-wari ga 7 warigen tte shimau ndesu."

Translation:

"There is something called the 'Child Penalty', which is a 60% to 70% reduction in income when you have a child."

Respondent 1 (TS 04:37):

"...だいたい非正規正規の仕事というのは出産を超えて継続できないんです。"

"...Daitai hi seiki seiki no shigoto to iu no wa shussan o koete keizoku dekinai ndesu."

Translation:

"...Often, formal and informal employment cannot be resumed after giving birth."

Respondent 1 (TS 07:17):

"日本の子育て世帯の平均600万円台ですから2人で結婚してその年収が維持できればなんとかなる。"

"Nihon no kosodate setai no heikin 600 man-en-daidesukara 2-ri de kekkon shite sono nenshū ga iji dekireba nan to ka naru."

Translation:

"The average household income for a family raising children in Japan is about 6 million yen, so if two people get married and can maintain that annual income, they will be able to manage."

Respondent 3 (TS 08:17):

"今の仕事はいつまで続くかわからない。"

"Ima no shigoto wa itsu made tsuzuku ka wakaranai."

Translation:

"I don't know how long my current job will last."

Respondent 1 (TS 15:25):

"やりたい人はいますけどもちろんお金は非常にかかります1年間いくらって"

"Yaritai hito wa idalamedo mochiron o-kin wa hijō ni kakarimasu 1-nenkan ikura tte dondon o-kin ga kakatteta wakedesu yo ne yahari o-kin ga naindesune."

Translation:

"There are people who want to do it, but of course it costs a lot of money. It costs a lot of money over the course of a year, and it's going to keep getting bigger. So, there's just no money."

This lack of financial security creates a pervasive climate of uncertainty, which makes many women reluctant to start a family. They feel that they do not have the resources to provide the financial stability and security necessary to raise a child well.

The video also highlights the rising cost of living in Japan, especially in densely populated urban areas. The ever-increasing cost of housing, high education costs, rising healthcare costs, and the increasing cost of basic necessities make raising children a huge financial burden for many families. Many of the women interviewed felt that they did not have the financial means to provide a decent, quality life for their children. This perception significantly discouraged them from making the decision to have children.

This huge financial burden has led many women to delay or even avoid marriage altogether, which has also led to the decline in the birth rate in Japan. This is because they do not want to put themselves or their families in a prolonged financial predicament.

In addition to job and financial instability and rising living costs, the video also highlights Japan's decades-long wage stagnation and lack of adequate economic opportunities, especially for women. Many women feel they are unable to save enough money to afford a proper wedding and raise children. This situation significantly contributes to their decision to delay or even avoid marriage altogether.

Lack of equal economic opportunities and gender wage inequality further exacerbate the financial hardships faced by Japanese women. This has a direct negative impact on their decisions to marry and have children, as they feel they do not have the financial resources to take on these responsibilities.

Social Factors

The women featured in the videos often express frustration with the lack of support and understanding from society for mothers who choose to work. They may face social stigma and criticism from various quarters for their decision to return to work after having children, with some arguing that the ideal role of a mother is to stay at home and devote herself entirely to the responsibilities of the home and caring for her children.

Data 1 (TS 05:10):

"...女性が社会進出することで余計に正直高齢化はどんどん増えますよね多分あらゆる女性が認めざるを得ない状況だと思うんです育児生活が行えない状態になってるでしょう。"

"...Josei ga shakai shinshutsu suru koto de yokei ni shōjiki kōrei-ka wa dondon fuemasu yo ne tabun arayuru josei ga mitome zaruwoenai jōkyōda to omou ndesu ikuji seikatsu ga okonaenai jōtai ni natterudeshou."

Translation:

"...As more women enter the workforce, the elderly population will increase. I think that's a situation that all women have to accept. They are in a situation where they can't raise children."

Respondent 1 (TS 08:08)

"結婚願望はないわけじゃないんですけども、まあ、でもやっぱりこういう安定しない。"

"Kekkon ganbō wa nai wake janai ndesukedomo, mā, demo yappari kōiu antei shinai."

Translation:

"It's not that I don't want to get married, but I don't want to live in an unstable relationship."

This lack of comprehensive social support can leave women feeling isolated, unappreciated, and unsupported in their choices, ultimately making it more difficult for them to decide to marry and have children.

Another social factor that the video points to is the significant increase in the average age of Japanese women when they first marry. More and more women are consciously choosing to delay their marriage until they are more mature, often past their 30s or even into their fourth decade of life. Key reasons behind this delay include a strong desire to build a stable and solid career foundation, achieve a sufficient level of financial independence before entering into the long-term commitment of marriage, and enjoy personal freedom and autonomy in decision-making before being bound by the responsibilities of marriage.

This delay in marriage age has had significant demographic consequences for Japan. As women marry later in life, their remaining reproductive time becomes increasingly limited. This directly contributes to the overall decline in the birth rate, as fewer women have the opportunity to have children, and those who do tend to have fewer children.

Cultural Factors

On the cultural front, the video highlights the significant conflict that Japanese women face in their attempts to balance the demands of their professional careers with the needs and responsibilities of family life. Japan's notoriously demanding work culture, characterized by long and often inflexible working hours, intense pressure to work overtime even when it is not always necessary, and a lack of policies supporting work flexibility, creates enormous challenges for women who also have aspirations to marry and have children.

Japanese work culture is often characterized by expectations of very long working hours and intense pressure to routinely work overtime, even in situations where the extra work may not be particularly urgent or productive. This makes it significantly harder for women to have enough time to devote to family and childcare responsibilities. The women interviewed in the video often complained about a lack of personal and quality time with their families as a direct result of the extremely demanding nature of their jobs.

Respondent 1 (TS 03:35):

"長時間労働をさせるという風習はずっと寝ず良かったんですけれども。"

"Naga ygi rōdō o sa exciting to iu fūshū wa zutto nezu yokatta ndesukeredo mo."

Translation:

"The habit of working long hours never goes away."

Respondent 1 (TS 07:26):

"夫がそのつもりでもあの子供持った途端に昇進できなくなったりあとは"

"Otto ga sono tsumoride mo ano kodomo motta totan ni shōshin dekinaku nattari ato wa yatoidome ni nattari suru koto mo aru wake janai desu ka."

Translation:

"Even if my husband intended to do it, as soon as I have a child, he might not be able to get a promotion, or might even lose his job."

This highly demanding work culture creates an environment that is not conducive and even hostile to women who desire to marry and have children. They often feel that they must make difficult and uncomfortable choices between pursuing their careers and fulfilling their desire to raise a family.

The video also highlights the lack of adequate support for working mothers in the Japanese workplace. Women often face various forms of discrimination and lack of opportunities for promotion and career development after they have children. They may feel that their career paths are significantly hampered or even ended altogether after they give birth and return to work.

The discrimination and career barriers faced by working mothers make many women reluctant to make the decision to have children, because they are afraid of sacrificing the career progress and stability they have worked so hard to build.

Lack of flexibility in work arrangements is also a significant issue for women trying to balance their career and family responsibilities in Japan. Many companies do not offer flexible parental leave policies, work hours that can be tailored to family needs, or provide on-site childcare services. This situation forces women to make difficult choices and often makes it impossible for them to effectively balance the demands of work and family responsibilities.

Government Policy Factors

The video found that existing government policies to support families are often considered inadequate and ineffective in addressing the challenges faced by parents. The length of parental leave offered may be too short and inflexible, and the financial incentives provided to encourage people to have children are often not significant enough to offset the high costs associated with raising a child. This lack of effective and comprehensive government support has left many women feeling unsupported in their decision to have children, and this has contributed significantly to Japan's continuing decline in birth rates (shoushika).

The Impact of Japanese Women's Delay in Marriage on the Shoushika Phenomenon

The shift in values and priorities clearly documented in this video is a reflection of a broader process of modernization and individualization underway in Japanese society as a whole. More and more women are seeking fulfillment and meaning in their lives outside the traditional roles they have been assigned, and they are actively demanding greater equality in their personal relationships and in the professional environments in which they work. The profound changes taking place in our society are having a profound impact on family life, the way people build homes, and personal decisions about having children.

However, the journey towards a more equal and inclusive society is not always smooth. In Japan, traditional values and expectations about gender roles are still very strong and often create dilemmas for women. Women often feel caught between their desire to pursue a career and their dream of starting a family. The tension between these expectations and the realities of life can lead many women to delay or even avoid marriage and having children. This all contributes to the problem of the shoushika phenomenon which is a major concern in Japan today.

The economic pressures and uncertainty about the future expressed in the video contribute to the anxiety and insecurity felt by many women in Japan. They often find it difficult to plan for the future with confidence, especially when faced with issues such as job instability, rising living costs, and lack of opportunities for economic advancement. This uncertainty greatly impacts their decision to marry, as many women are hesitant to start a family without a strong sense of their future financial stability.

In addition, these economic issues are often intertwined with deeper social and cultural issues, creating even more complex challenges. For example, traditional gender roles that persist in Japanese society can exacerbate the financial difficulties faced by women. They may experience discrimination in the workplace, face barriers to career advancement, and be expected to retire after marriage or having children, significantly reducing their earning potential. Addressing the shoushika phenomenon, therefore, requires a holistic approach that thoroughly addresses both the interconnected economic and social factors.

The conflict between the demands of work-life balance and the pressures of Japan's intense work culture, as revealed in the video, reflects the deep structural challenges faced by women in a society that is still very much work-oriented. Not only does the demanding work culture but also the lack of adequate support for working mothers make the work environment unpleasant, but it also discourages women from having children and starting a family. This situation could lead to an alarming decline in the birth rate, as well as draining the talent and potential of women from the workforce. This could have a negative impact on Japan's overall economic growth and progress.

In addition, inadequate government policies and weak social support make life in Japan difficult for women who want to have children. Feelings of isolation and unsupported are caused by perceived inadequate government policies, social stigma against working mothers, and the availability of cheap, quality childcare services. Ultimately, this impacts the decisions women make about marriage and having children.

Addressing this complex issue requires broader and more fundamental cultural changes in Japanese society, as well as the implementation of more comprehensive and responsive government policies to support families. These measures may include increasing the length and flexibility of parental leave, investing more in more affordable and quality childcare services, promoting a work culture that values work-life balance, and providing more significant financial incentives to encourage individuals and couples to have children. Only with an integrated and comprehensive approach can Japan hope to overcome the shoushika challenge and build a more stable demographic future.

Conclusion

Content analysis of the YouTube video "Japan's Rise Of Unmarried And Childless Women | Birthrate Crisis (Ep.4)" clearly shows that Japanese women's delay in marriage is greatly influenced by a complex interaction of social, economic, and cultural factors. Shifting values and priorities, economic pressures and uncertainties, work-life balance conflicts, and lack of adequate social support and government policies all contribute to the decline in marriage and birth rates, which ultimately accelerates the shoushika phenomenon.

Direct quotes from the women interviewed in the video provide deep and personal insights into the complexities of the considerations they face. They express a desire for independence, concerns about the financial burden and responsibility of childcare in an unstable economic context and demanding work culture, and frustration with the lack of support from society and government, highlighting the real impact of the shoushika phenomenon on individual lives.

The purpose of this study is very significant. The postponement of marriage by Japanese women has a significant impact on the shoushika phenomenon, which is not just a demographic issue, but also has broad social, economic, and cultural consequences for Japan's future. An aging and shrinking population can lead to labor shortages, increased burdens on the social security system, and loss of economic vitality. In addition, changes in family structure can affect social norms and cultural traditions.

Addressing Japan's ongoing demographic crisis requires a holistic approach that includes cultural change, economic reform, and more effective government policies. This is not just a demographic issue, but a deep-seated social, economic, and cultural problem that requires comprehensive and sustainable solutions.

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