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## #フィリピンママあるある (#firipinmamaaruuru): (Re)presentations of Motherhood in Japanese-Filipino Children's TikTok Videos<sup>2</sup>

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### ABSTRACT

Digital media sites, such as TikTok, are promising spaces that have recently been explored as timely and accessible spaces for analyzing gender, agency, and the wider representation of mixed roots families in Japan. With Japan and the Philippines' differences in gendered norms, there is an incongruity between the real-life experiences of Japanese Filipino children (henceforth written as JFC) vis-à-vis the gendered expectations and views on motherhood in Japan. This gap is explored through a sample of ten comedic TikTok videos where young JFC users (re)present their Filipino mothers' identities via the hashtag #firipinmamaaruuru. Using a digital content analysis of their videos, this paper examines JFC's experiences and perceptions of their Filipino mothers. The analysis shows how Filipino mothers are (re)presented in their children's videos as bound by the gendered norms of motherhood in Japan. The humor in JFC's posts points out the reality that their representations of their mothers are not the standard desirable qualities of motherhood as expected in Japan.

**KEYWORDS:** humor, social media, Japanese Filipino children, motherhood, gender

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## Introduction

Throughout the years, Japan has become a regular destination for many foreign migrants around the globe. According to the Immigration Services Agency, the number of foreign residents as of December 2023, was at 3,410,992 (Immigration Services Agency of Japan 2024: 3). In conjunction with this increase of foreign residents, the number of children in Japan with foreign and mixed roots have also increased to 770,759 with 1,214 being Japanese Filipino children born to Filipino women with Japanese fathers (E-Stat Census Vital Statistics Japan 2022). However, studies about Japanese children with mixed roots have described their experiences as varying from being negative to sometimes positive, as well as being subject to a mixture of exoticism and othering. These issues range from terminological debates concerning different nuances of words used to describe mixed roots people, like *hāfu/daburu/konketsuji/ainoko* or *kokusaiji*, to the phenotypical and sociocultural differences. Additionally, it can further extend to issues of identity mis/underrepresentation in the media, which can result in racism, bullying and harsh treatment in society (Murphy-Shigematsu 2012; Iwabuchi 2014; Daanoy 2016; Shimoji 2018c; Törngren and Sato 2021).

On the other end are foreign/Filipino mothers whom having left their home countries, face many struggles in raising families in Japan. These difficulties include struggles dealing with the results of above-mentioned children's experiences of othering, as well as childrearing, language and cultural differences, work struggles, and welfare problems (Uayan et al. 2009; Landsberry and Kanai 2019; Celero 2021). In addition, these foreign/Filipino mothers of mixed-Japanese children are subject to precarities stemming from Japanese gendered societal expectations of motherhood and parenting in Japanese society. These expectations also result in some strains or friction with the parent-children relationships in mixed-households (Cheng-Chua and San Jose 2022).

These mothers and their mixed roots children's negative experiences are exacerbated by media outlets promoting nationwide Japanese identity discourses such as the idea of a distinct and homogenous Japanese people debunked by various scholars (Befu 2001; 2014) and Japan's own ethno-nationalist views of identity (Liu-Farrer 2020). This view, which includes normative gender ideologies of womanhood and femininity in Japan, has been rooted in society for generations (Ochiai 1997; Lebra 2007; Dalton 2013). It is also attributed to the practices of Japanese TV media, a male-dominated group of corporations with male-centric practices, where representations of male and female characters still embody traditional male-female roles (Golovina 2018; Ogawa 2020).

In this superficial industry where mixed-ness and commodification of looks are the norm, some mixed-roots children including JFC are able to leverage their unique physical features to succeed in the field of entertainment because they are commonly associated with ideals of “glamour” (Shimoji 2018b). However, this does not hold true for all, especially those not in the entertainment industry. Iwabuchi (2014) discusses this polarity with both the white and Asian mixed Japanese counterparts in terms of representation. Particularly those with western descent, some have become models and TV media celebrities such as Becky, Triendl Reina etc., where they become epitomized as the standard *hāfu*<sup>3</sup> definitions of people with mixed-roots. Likewise, these “model” *hāfu* also excel in sports, for example the famous wrestler Kondō Shuri, and tennis champion Ōsaka Naomi. Those who unfortunately fall short of the imagined *hāfu* “standard” e.g. model-like beauty, or dual/multiple language abilities, skillful athletic prowess, struggle to live up to the expectation. However, the reality is that mixed-roots people in Japan are a melting pot of different cultures, identities, and attributes, yet all are susceptible to negative experiences of alienation and contestation of their own “Japaneseness”, as well as their “*hāfu*-ness”. Unfortunately, this contestation and doubt also extends to their womanhood. This is because their womanhood is a mixture of their gendered literacies from their mothers in the household even as they are brought up in the gender order of larger Japanese society. Often, people with mixed-roots are either under-, or misrepresented in media in terms of diversity, while a select few are chosen to “represent” diversity but still within the terms of wider Japanese media lenses and definitions. Already facing unrealistic beauty and physical standards, such as the 2019 Nissin advertisement scandal of white-washing Ōsaka Naomi<sup>4</sup>, we see the continuous treatment of token mixed-roots subjects which – while famous and successful – are still fit into a set frame of “exotic” people juxtaposed to certain preconceived notions of Japaneseness including womanhood and beauty.

In the case of JFC, many have also been very successful in the television industry. Actresses, singers, and models such as Ikeda Elaiza, Takahashi Maryjun, and Akimoto Sayaka are just a few of these. However, Daanoy (2016) posits how this can be different to those not in the limelight.

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<sup>3</sup> In this paper, mixed roots people/children will be used as the preferred umbrella term for people with mixed-roots such as *hāfu* and JFC. While *hāfu* is also widely used as an umbrella term for mixed-roots children including JFC, it will only be used as relevant to its common use in media and hashtags used for the digital media trail as examined on TikTok, due to its contestation as a discriminatory term.

<sup>4</sup> In January 2019, the well-known noodle company Nissin faced backlash for releasing a video advertisement portraying Haitian-heritage Osaka Naomi with white skin (BBC News 2019).

Accordingly, “the children borne of intermarriage between Japanese and former Filipino entertainers, rural and urban brides of the 1980s through mid-2000, bear the marked stereotypes of their mother” (ibid., 164). This validates the abovementioned multifaceted experiences of belonging in a multiethnic household – particularly on how having a Filipino mother may affect their children negatively (Seiger 2019). In Cheng-Chua and San Jose’s work (2022), they analyzed manga by Maeda Musashi entitled *Firipin Kāchan Funtōki* (‘My struggles with my Filipino wife’) published by Bunkasha in 2013. They concluded Filipina women’s “static representations” in the manga as “boisterous, a bit rough, and carefree” (ibid., 218). While they mention Maeda’s work as one with a comedic tone, the work also arguably tends to reinforce preconceived notions of Filipinas as entertainers who are rescued by their Japanese husbands in marriage; further noting that the demographic of Filipinas in Japan have changed and do not reflect those stereotypes. As mentioned above, FJCs can find that having a Filipino mother works as a double-edged sword affecting their parent-child relationships as well. In Cheng-Chua and San Jose’s (2022) analysis of another manga entitled *Kurasumeito-wa Gaikokujin* (‘My classmates are foreigners’), they analyzed a chapter *Mama Gakkō-ni Konaide* (‘Don’t come to school, mom’). It tells a story of Keiko Tanaka, a JFC who, as a result of being bullied, was admittedly ashamed of her mother. In addition to this, her mother’s inability to speak Japanese led her to always choose her father to accompany her to parent-teacher meetings. Indeed, having Filipino mothers has a significant effect on children not just due to their heritage, but also due to outside factors such as school bullies. While the children face these difficult struggles and ambiguous feelings of identity denial, due to not having Japanese mothers, the mothers are also met with the same.

With both Filipino mothers and their JFC facing various types of difficulties in adjusting to Japanese society, this research discusses the interplay of the mothers and their children’s relationship in the space of digital media using gender as an analytical lens. Along with above-mentioned precarities, this research problematizes the Filipina embodiment of their pre-existent Philippine cultural norms, and concepts of femininity and womanhood while having to live with new ones within Japanese society and their new households. In Cheng-Chua and San Jose’s research (ibid.), it was apparent how Filipino women are represented in a different light in comparison with Japanese women. While the stereotypes of the “boisterousness, a bit rough, and carefree” (ibid., 218) attitudes of Filipino women reflected in their study are not always true, this contrasts with Japanese norms of femininity which

are the opposite. Hence, this becomes an overarching struggle in the new generation who absorb these understandings of identity: both Filipino and Japanese as well as their knowledge of gender in both cultures.

The Filipino mothers, who have already faced specific gendered expectations in Filipino society, do not just carry the burden transnationally, rather, they experience an additional layer of expectations in their new homes. After the mothers migrate to Japan, the expectations of fitting into the mold of womanhood due to the new motherhood concepts and practices in Japan are manifested towards their treatment of their JFC offspring. It is also seen through their children's reactions and feelings toward the Filipino mothers' ways of mothering. These realities reflected in their digital media (re)presentations are highlighted and dissected in this paper.

Furthermore, as they establish their mixed families in Japan, newer expectations become reinforced by the people around them, such as their extended family, neighbors, peers, children's teachers, and the JFC themselves. Therefore, this paper aims to answer two questions. First, how are these expectations represented through the digital media practices of JFC on short videos hosting platform TikTok? Second, what do these (re)presentations reveal about the realities and precarities of Filipino motherhood in Japanese society? The liminality between converging beliefs about the old and new societal pressures has a significant impact on homes and relationships, both the mothers and their Japanese-Filipino children's identities, and therefore shapes young JFC's beliefs about their Filipino and Japanese heritage as well as their gender identities as they grow older within Japanese society.

Through an exploration of representations of Filipino mothers using the hashtag #firipinmamaaruaru – *aruaru* being the Japanese slang for typical/common things, hence 'typical Filipino mom things' (further explained in section 2) – from the lens of young JFC's use of digital media, particularly TikTok, this paper reveals how even the lighthearted medium of humor can expound on deeper seated issues of race, gender, intergenerational family issues, and motherhood in Japan. It also shows how digital media practices on social media sites like TikTok can contribute to a more personal, if not better, representation of mixed roots/*hāfu* in Japanese society compared to conventional television media.

### **1. From conventional media to new media: television and/or TikTok**

The above section provided a background on Filipino mothers and their JFC's various struggles stemming from preexistent homogenous and

gendered frames of Japanese society, as well as stereotypes about Filipino mothers and JFC as popularized through television media including manga. However, now that we are in an age where digital media, particularly SNS (Social Networking Sites) such as TikTok has been gaining wider audience and reach, we should not discount its utility to shift and shape the representations and narratives of minorities such as JFC and their mothers. When identity performance is available in other forms of media, where one can control their own representation, these tools can be empowering agents for awareness which can challenge and “erode” certain views about groups of minorities such as people with mixed roots, including JFC (Shimoji 2018a) and their foreign mothers. Ultimately, even though foreign mothers and mixed roots children such as JFCs are still considered a minority in Japan, it is important to dissect and discuss their situation because it contributes attention to minority inclusivity in Japanese society.

TikTok is a platform increasingly recognized as a promising explorative site for analyzing JFC, and other *hāfu* mixed roots children in Japan’s cultural and identity presentations. TikTok is a social media platform created in 2016 by a Beijing company Bytedance for international users as an equivalent of its home-version Douyin. An application focusing on videos, it has over 1 billion monthly active users and is in the top five of the most popular social network sites used as of April 2024 (Dixon 2024). With its appeal to the youth, and thanks to gaining steam during the isolating days of the Covid-19 era, it has presently become one of the go-to applications of the youth including those in Japan due to its mobile accessibility. According to Sandvine reports, “time spent on mobile apps has grown from about three hours pre-pandemic to a global average of about 5 hours per day, currently”. In addition, TikTok was noted to be in the top 3 in terms of mobile video traffic reach globally (Sandvine 2023).

In the past, the absorption of media and the internet occurred in a one-way linear fashion. For conventional media, users watched and consumed information straight from television screens. In the case of internet use, the early 2000s also saw a unidirectional flow, namely Web 1.0. This was when consumption of data and information was passive, like television media where people sat, watched, and consumed videos. However, in the era of Web 2.0 in the late 2000s, the shift to two-way bidirectional flows of data allowed users of social media to post their own information and videos on websites. This way, “users without technical knowledge can easily transmit information, and the knowledge and information of various transmitters combine to form the ‘wisdom of crowds’” (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications 2023). As a result, communal practices of creating,

sharing, and consuming digital media have evolved and become the latest norm. So much has changed during the last two decades including the worldwide pandemic, leading to these new social media practices of sharing online all over the world including Japan. According to online statistics, “the number of social media users in Japan is forecasted to increase from 102 million in 2022 to 113 million in 2027” (Dixon 2024). There is no doubt why several researchers have set their sights on the viability of research on these digital media platforms in its many forms.

Crystal Abidin, a pioneer on SNS studies has done substantial work on “influencers” – celebrities online, featured on different platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, Tumblr and TikTok. Her work on various sites of digital media shows the research potential of social media platforms across various disciplines. Furthermore, her research on internet celebrities and initial mapping of TikTok cultures of “Visibility Labor” shows TikTok’s business side of incentivizing and quantifying labor in terms of visibility and attention (2020). A few researchers have also studied the phenomenon of mixed-identity sharing on TikTok. King-O’Riain (2022) talks about multiraciality on the platform using the trend and hashtag *#wasian*, which refers to the identities of East Asian + White users. In Japan, focusing on the umbrella term of *hāfu*, Ariga (2023) has studied the phenomenon of TikTok hashtag sharing with *#hāfuaruaru*. This, as well as a comparison of media versus TikTok representation, strikes a familiar vein of research. In Ariga’s paper, it maintains how TikTok tends to mirror the representational tendencies of conventional media in terms of the overrepresentation of whites as opposed to the Asian counterparts. Ultimately, the paper posits that despite the lesser popularity of TikTok in Japan as compared to other digital platforms, its utility as an alternative space for the performance of personal identities should likewise be recognized. While these emerging literatures discuss the utility of TikTok as a performative space of mixed-roots identities, their focus still leans on more western tendencies (as agreeing with Ariga’s conclusions). Although the above-mentioned research on the umbrella term of *hāfu*, as well as studies on *#wasians* opens up a healthy discussion of mixed roots Japanese identities, there is a breadth of knowledge yet to be learned from specific cultures such as the non-white Japanese Filipino counterparts. This paper attempts to fill this gap by focusing on Filipino culture and JFC practices showcasing their mothers on TikTok.

Digital media’s appeal to the youth, as well as its accessibility as a space for mixed-roots families like those with FJC in Japan is indeed not just a tool for open performance of cultural identities but is viable tool for research as

well. As a welcoming space to share the youth's mixed-cultural and gender-diverse characteristics free from the constraints of traditional media, these new mediums such as TikTok are becoming a strong competitor of conventional TV media. It has therefore become a big part of our communication and consumption culture. As it is compact, appealing to the youth, and offers interesting connections worldwide, we can recognize its potential as a space without borders, and an accessible lens for examining changes in norms and cultural behaviors especially of those immersed in the digital media sphere. As Sawyer and Chen posit, "Intercultural dialogue is critical today in our globalized and blended world, where different cultures encounter each other daily, especially through social media such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and the iPhone" (2012: 154).

## **2. Hashtags as a collective culture: #*hāfu* and #*firipinmamaaru***

According to the Help Center website of X (formerly Twitter) "A hashtag—written with a # symbol—is used to index keywords or topics on X. This function was created on X and allows people to easily follow topics they are interested in" (X Help Center, n.d.). It is a powerful search tool that has spread across platforms including TikTok for its use in search functions.

Inputting the hashtag #*hāfu* on TikTok, a quick search generates 1.4 billion views on the hundreds of videos posted. As an accessible research tool, the symbol "#" hashtag serves as a tracing tool for keywords which can potentially benefit our understanding of the phenomenon of sharing not just by JFC but by all the possible mixed roots-*hāfu* identities and experiences featured through the SNS application.

With its utility to chain similar ideas together, it has the function to connect overlapping identities when used. With #*hāfu* for example, it can serve as an overarching representative of the wide range of *hāfu* identities presented in digital media. In addition, if you pair this symbol with specific groups of people, such as #*hāfu* and #*firipinhāfu* it will be chained with *hāfus* with Filipino roots' posts much like above-mentioned #*wasian* trends connecting to Western-Asian groups of people online (King-O'Riain, 2022).

As such, we see the collective culture that the hashtag function affords. It strings together various cultures with overlapping similarities which offers a breadth of knowledge and opens discussion on mixed-roots identities online.

The utilities on these platforms have been characterized as internet affordances and/or communication affordances (Schrock 2015). The internet, with its many digital platforms, has brought in novel ways of communication and representation, allowing individuals to exercise agency



and express themselves free from the constraints of conventional media outlets. Through quick access from their smartphones, people with mixed roots such as JFC can communicate their daily practices and their identity presentations efficiently. On their TikTok posts, they can curate and paint a more nuanced story of their personal experiences of living in mixed-roots households with Filipino mothers and share it to a collective culture (e.g. others of Japanese-Asian descent, wasians etc.) or of those who share similar experiences all over the world, and thus they are not limited to their own sphere e.g. #firipinhāfu who have #firipinmamas.

In this paper, #firipinmamaaruaru is studied in order to look at Japanese children with specifically Filipino roots, particularly those with Filipino mothers. This stems from the hashtag trend of “*aruaru*” or the Japanese slang of typical things/common things. #firipinmamaaruaru therefore means “typical Filipino mom things” but for Japanese children. These hashtags designate unique and humorous parodies and re-enactments of their mothers in the form of short videos. As JFC perform their mothers’ identities, this paper suggests a re-expression or (re)presentation. This is because, even though the personas performed in the study are not the JFC’s own, since they (re)present those of their mothers through mimicry posts, it is still arguably demonstrative of their whole identities as JFC as an interplay of their learned cultural and gendered literacies from their mothers. As such, this paper sees these (re)presented characteristics of their mothers as part and parcel of the JFC’s socio-cultural identities. In the context of performance, Butler (2006) helps clarify the significance of imitation in performativity. She explains how people frequently imitate or act out gender roles and behaviors that they consider to be norms, emphasizing the importance of mimicry in the formation of gender identities. In this context, the opposite is true as what is performed is opposite from the norm. It is thus the humor which signifies that the performed identity is regarded as the undesirable. Since JFC’s digital posts are all done in jest and presented in a comedic manner, this humor becomes instrumental in communicating the complexities of their identities and familial dynamics, elucidating certain Japanese gender stereotypes, and fostering a sense of connection within their online community.

### 3. Research methods and hypothesis

This research employs the various theoretical perspectives of social identity, internet affordances, and humor in contextualizing the practices of digital media posting by JFC. Through Gee’s proposition of “identity as an analytic lens” (2000: 100), he discusses “affinity-identity”, or “experiences shared in

the practice of affinity groups”. This paper argues that public sharing of the *#firipinmamaaruaru* videos helps connect, relate, and validate the group’s understanding of their mixed identities, therefore fostering mutual understanding among those with similar experiences, or “affinity groups”. Theories of the communicative affordances of mobile media posit an affordance perspective that links “individual and technological agency” (Schrock 2015: 1233). Within this perspective, the individual’s agency is afforded by the digital media instruments they use. In this case, their smartphones and TikTok applications. Therefore, social media can be seen as an agentic tool for representation and for shaping wider beliefs of the JFC TikToker group’s cultural identities.

While the videos are done in a meme-like humorous construct, they afford us a reflexive analysis of gendered norms in Japan pertaining to motherhood. Douglas’s famous theory on humor and social incongruities (1968) explicates Han and Kuiper’s depiction of “jokes in the social structure” in her work (2021). Also focusing on digital videos of Chinese mothers in the pandemic, her take on jokes in the social structure and how it reflects cultural norms of gender in China effectively translates if applied to this current *#firipinmamaaruaru* study; hence, we can apply her discussions and theoretical approach to fit the goals of this research.

Through a digital content and contextual analysis of JFC’s online TikTok videos via the hashtag *#firipinmamaaruaru*, this paper examines the JFC’s experiences and perceptions of their mother’s child-rearing practices vis-à-vis normative motherhood and expectations in Japan. Using data collected from their digital videos, the study examines the contexts behind JFC’s (re)presentation of their mothers’ identities through humor, ultimately shedding light on prescriptive gender roles and motherhood expectations in Japan.

To gather a representative sample of TikTok videos, the paper employed the hashtag by searching *#firipinmamaaruaru* to sample videos between August and September 2023. It used a purposive sampling strategy by sampling over 300 videos to reach the number of 10 videos for this study. By analyzing the top posts using this hashtag and purposively filtering duplicating themes, it helped ensure that the data represents content that has gained significant visibility and engagement within the TikTok community while guaranteeing that the chosen videos represent a wide range of perspectives and content pertinent to the research goals and questions.

#### 4. *Firipinmamaaruaru* representations on TikTok<sup>5</sup>

##### 4.1. *Firipinmama* 1: A disciplinarian

In the first video, the *firipinmama* is represented through expressions of anger. With the caption translated as “When I was young, these were the things my mom used to scare me when I was misbehaving”<sup>6</sup>, the video shows four items for different levels of anger. First one shown is the fist, followed by a slipper, and a hanger. Finally, the belt is shown as level 100. In the video, it is not just the employment of corporal punishment that is highlighted, but the use of swear words such as *punyeta* (‘brat’) and shouting as strong expressions of anger (see Figure 1).

The visuals of employing a big almond eye and large mouth filter are a part of the humorous aspect of this video. TikTok’s filters are examples of affordances for the development of an online persona which may help users with both anonymity as well as showcasing a different character. This also highlights exaggeration in each of their videos. As one of the older proponents of this TikTok hashtag, this TikToker’s posts which use the same filter for most of the posts about her mother have indeed shaped the practices and encouraged those who followed to post under the same hashtag in a memetic fashion.

In using these filters, visual appeal is applied while agency is ensured as the creators are afforded freedom to do whichever impressions, they feel suitable without the risk of showing their real faces. Filters may serve as an agentic tool primarily because it acts as a mask. With this use, it eliminates a) the time to put on makeup for the sake of posting and going live online, and b) inhibitions and reservations in doing exaggerated movements, and actions.

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<sup>5</sup> The following data is part of a working dissertation and was orally presented in the Faculty of Intercultural Studies, Kobe University Colloquium, February 9, 2024.

<sup>6</sup> Translations in this paper are all done by the author from the original mixed Japanese and Filipino audio on TikTok.





Video 1: A depiction of a <i>firipinmama</i> holding up various implements angrily		
<p><b>Username:</b></p> <p><b>Juliana.kawaii1220</b></p> <p><b>383.9k likes</b></p> <p><b>6,138 comments</b></p>	<p><b>Caption:</b></p> <p>Things that my mom used to scare me with when I was misbehaving.</p> <p><b>Hook/introduction:</b></p> <p>Things that my mom used to scare me with when I was misbehaving.</p>	
 <p><b><i>Firipinmama</i> and fist</b></p>	<p><b>Transcript</b></p> <p>Things that my mom used to scare me with when I was misbehaving.</p> <p>Level 1: Fist</p> <p><b>M:</b> Do you want me to hit you?</p> <p>Level 2: Slippers</p> <p><b>M:</b> You brat! Don't make me count to three. One...two...!</p> <p>Level 10: Hanger</p> <p><b>M:</b> Which one is better, will you listen properly, or do you want to get hit?</p> <p>Level 100: Belt</p>	
 <p><b><i>Firipinmama</i> and slippers</b></p>	 <p><b><i>Firipinmama</i> and hanger</b></p>	 <p><b><i>Firipinmama</i> and belt</b></p>

Figure 1. Screenshots of Juliana.kawaii1220 (2020a).

With the visuals aside, the most telling of the comedic “punch” of this portrayal is the disciplining tactics of the *firipinmama* in the video which resonated with many of the JFC in the TikTok space. With 383 900 likes and

6,138 comments, many users agreed that they experienced the same. In addition, one user wondered in the comments whether Japanese children experienced the same when they were young (chiigyūko 2020)<sup>7</sup>. This is because in Japanese social context, corporal punishment is frowned upon, and is illegal. Society stresses the importance of using positive disciplinary techniques.

The jovial truth of a *firipinmama*'s child experiencing these tools for discipline is funny because many relate to the experiences, and it also sheds light on the norms of Japanese motherhood that do not condone this disciplinary practice. With the above comment, digital media becomes a tool for reflexivity on the difference of both cultures. While no one answered the above question, it reiterates an affordance of cultural inquiry that highlights a positive quality of digital media, which is the affordance of a cultural dialogue.

#### **4.2. *Firipinmama* 2: A tough fighter for her children**

In Video 2, the filter employed is the big face with big round eye. This is the usual filter the user Ouchi1213 uses when she (re)presents her *firipinmama* on her videos. To note, as observed in many of Ouchi1213's videos, this is not done to preserve anonymity due to many of her videos showcasing her real face. With 200,000+ Likes on this post, 641,000+ followers and a huge 22.6 million Likes on the platform, she is considered a micro-celebrity and thus filtering is done not as an anonymity tactic but rather as a (re)presentative persona of their *firipinmama*.

In analyzing her video content, it presents a strong expletive tone of language like Video 1. The (re)presentation is a strong, opinionated and loud mother who is ready to fight for her children. When her child was crying due to bullying, the reaction was to fight and reprimand the classmate. Like the first video, the strong Filipino accent is exhibited, and a directness and non-filtered way of speaking while criticizing the physical qualities of the classmate of the JFC was presented. In this video, it strikes a familiar chord in viewers of Filipino mothers' strong and tough expression of love that extends to their family, and in turn affects their children's peers. The willingness to fight in public for their children is evident and can be contrasted with the normative socio-cultural ideals in Japan which value the preservation of peace within the community, school, and peers of their children. This depicts the normative Japanese mother as expected to keep

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<sup>7</sup> While this paper does not cover the comments of all digital media posts, the inclusion and analysis of one comment aims to show how future research can be expanded by also employing an analysis of the viewers' engagement and comments.

the peace in public and restrain from causing a scene in public to save face. The humor lies with the normative ideals of group-conforming decorum of Japanese mothers which may not be completely gendered but nevertheless reflects the way mothers are expected to deal with the peers and classmates of their children in school and in the community.


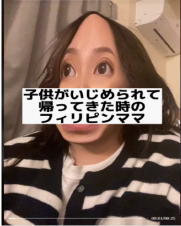
<b>Video 2: A depiction of a <i>firipinmama</i> having a conversation with her child</b>	
<p><b>Username: Ouchi1213</b></p> <p><b>200.5K likes</b></p> <p><b>1,813 comments</b></p>	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <div style="margin-left: 10px;"> <p><b>Caption:</b></p> <p>Filipino mom when her child comes home after being bullied.</p> <p><b>Hook/introduction:</b></p> <p>Filipino mom when her child comes home after being bullied.</p> </div> </div>
 <p><b><i>Firipinmama</i> watching</b></p> <p><b>TV</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Firipinmama</i> fleeing scene angrily</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Transcript</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>M:</b> Welcome back! Ay!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">What's wrong with you, you're crying, ha?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Why are you crying, ha?</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>FJC:</b> I got bullied (cry)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>M:</b> Bullied? Who? Which? Which?</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>FJC:</b> My seatmate Takashi-kun (cry)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>M:</b> Your seatmate, that idiot boy? That ugly boy that one!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">You were beaten by that? ha?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Where is that (boy) I will get that boy that (brat)!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Where? Where?</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>FJC:</b> No, mama!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mama!</p>

Figure 2. Screenshots of Ouchi1213 (2023a).

### 4.3. *Firipinmama* 3: A critical mother

In Video 3, the *firipinmama* is critical of their child's makeup style. With cultural differences including the ways of putting on makeup, the *firipinmama* could not help but criticize her own daughter's way of doing

makeup. This represents a feature similar to Ouchi1213’s mother lacking restraint in using strong words such as *hoy*, used to call one’s attention, and in further criticizing their physical attributes. However, in this case, she criticized their own children and admonished her to take the makeup off. The makeup translated as “baby-eyes” is a makeup trend in Japan to create a cute image like that of an innocent baby. Having this kind of eye makeup signifies youth and childlike appearance. This is humorous because it shows both the apparent gaps in knowledge and styles of makeup due to age and culture. While to a Japanese mother, this makeup style may be understandable, the cultural gap as well as the age gap adds to the joke. However, in the motherhood role perspective, as a recurring theme, the joke lies on the unthinkable way that a Japanese mother would be like this outright and outspoken critical *firipinmama* to their children. It suggests and paints a picture of a normative Japanese mother who is gentle with their words to their children and is supportive of the makeup trends they follow.




<b>Video 3: A depiction of a <i>firipinmama</i> having a conversation with her child</b>	
<p><b>Username:</b> Juliana.kawaii1220 574.9K likes 2,369 comments</p>  <p><b>Hook captioned:</b> “When I tried to go out with thicker makeup than usual”</p>	 <p><b>Caption:</b> In the Philippines, they don't draw baby eyes...(wondering)</p> <p><b>Hook/introduction:</b> Mom's reaction when I go out with thicker makeup than usual.</p> <p><b>“Take it off”</b></p>
 <p><b>Firipinmama captioned:</b> “That does not look good on you!”</p> <p><b>Transcript</b> M: Hoy, there's something swollen under your eyes! FJC: Oh no, it's not that. It's just baby eyes. Baby eyes? M: What's that?</p> <p><b>FJC:</b> I drew makeup on, so my eyes look bigger. <b>M:</b> What the...That doesn't look good on you! Take it off!</p>	

Figure 3. Screenshots of Juliana.kawaii1220 (2020b).

#### **4.4. *Firipinmama* 4: An enabling mother**

In Video 4, the representation extends to a broader Filipino audience as the hashtag describes a general culture of Filipinos when committing the act of lying. When Filipinos lie, their body language may employ winking to those who understand the same joke, or the same lie they are committing to signify mutual understanding. This user depicts their mother doing the action sometimes, therefore it is still suitable to be used for the hashtag of *#firipinmamaaruaru*. The translation shows how the *firipinmama* sometimes lie to their JFC's teachers so they can take a break from school, thereby enabling their children to commit school misdemeanors from time-to-time. The comedic tone of this action both explicates how body language is cultural and how it is understandable to members of the same culture with the same affinity. The hashtag including "I cannot copy/do it well" symbolizes the knowledge of the culture of being Filipino and solidifies the affinity in this regard, but by being Japanese as well, it may not be a commonly occurring practice and therefore entails more practice and skill. In terms of discussions about normative Japanese motherhood, the humor lies in that education is placed with utmost importance, as with the existence of terms such as *kyōikumama* ('education mothers') where placing intense devotion and investment in one's children's education is a normative Japanese mother's role. The "joke in the social structure" hence shows how this practice of skipping school for leisure would not be possible if your mother was Japanese.



<b>Video 4: A depiction of a <i>firipinmama</i> having a conversation with her child</b>	
Username: <u>_9cmn9_</u> 82.1K likes 783 comments	<b>Caption:</b> I cannot copy it well (laugh)
	<b>Hook/introduction:</b> My Filipino mother uses it a lot, and it's something she always does when she's talking to someone while telling a lie or a joke.
	<b>Transcript</b>  <b>M:</b> Hello, good morning! This is Keina's mother! Yes. Well, Keina has a fever. Is it okay to take a day off from school?  (wink)  Oh, I'm sorry, thank you, thank you! (wink)
<b><i>Firipinmama</i> winking at her daughter while telling a lie</b>	

Figure 4. Screenshots of \_9cmn9\_ (2022).

#### 4.5. *Firipinmama* 5: A mother with limits

While the previous video (re)presented a mother enabling their children's whims of not attending classes, this video presents a characteristic that shows Filipino mothers' limits. In the Philippine context, when a mother counts from one to three, the number three suggests a limit and will entail further consequences if not acted upon. In this case, the mother was asking her child to eat after dinner had been served. However, the JFC was still busy watching their drama series which was in an interesting scene at the time. However, since the mother reached the count of three already, the JFC jumped up startled and acted in the common knowledge that reaching the third count meant consequences such as tongue-lashings, anger, etc. The hashtag translates 'If you are not there by the time she finishes counting, you are in trouble'.



Video 5: A depiction of a FJC having a conversation with her <i>firipinmama</i>	
<p>Username: kajimari222</p> <p>Likes:4,421K</p> <p>Comments:221</p> 	<p>Caption:</p> <p>If you are not there by the time she finishes counting, you're in trouble. (laugh) (clap)</p> <p>Hook/introduction:</p> <p>Filipino mom when the meal is ready.</p>
<p>FJC: I'm coming!</p> <p><u>FJC startled by</u> <u>firipinmama's counting</u></p>	<p>Transcript</p> <p>When the meal is ready.</p> <p>M: My child, dinner is ready!</p> <p>FJC: Yeah, I'm watching a drama right now, wait a minute.</p> <p>M: The food will get cold, hurry up!</p> 
	<p>FJC: It's just getting to the best part!</p> <p>M:</p> <p>One...Two...Three!</p>

Figure 5. Screenshots of kajimari222 (2021).

As with the previous video, the humor lies in the collective knowledge of the cultural nuances behind the counting of one, two, three. To some, these may just be numbers but in the cultural affinities of JFC, they understand how it means trouble if the limit of counting is reached. This also applies to the JFC's use of *'nak* which is an abbreviation for *anak*, meaning 'my child'. With the gender roles of both Filipino and Japanese mothers in this context, the similarity of roles such as the role of cooking is evident although the humor in this being applicable to the Japanese context is not evident.

#### 4.6. *Firipinmama* 6: A multifaceted mother

In Video 6, the description of a *firipinmama* has more content as it uses a memetic copying of the TikTok *doremi* trend wherein users will try to fit as much in their dialogue that corresponds to the beginning of each syllabic sound of the song. With music in the background, this video was one of the longest ones spanning 1:08 minutes.

“Do” describes mother’s exclamations of *dōshita* (‘why’), also recreating the mother of Juliana.kawaii1220’s disapproval of her eyelashes and asking them to remove it as it looks *kimochiwarui* (‘gross/weird’).

“Re” describes the mother’s request to call her when she goes out to hang out with friends. It also asks her to show the faces of her friends to ensure that they are safe, but then moves on to criticize the ugliness of her friends.

“Mi” describes the mother showing off her clothes and how cute they are, while offering praise for her own sexiness.

“Fa” describes the mother eating Seven Eleven chicken<sup>8</sup>, and reminding her JFC that it was chicken from Seven Eleven that she wanted. The mother initially thought it was Family Mart’s chicken, and the JFC kept on saying that it was indeed Seven Eleven as they requested, but the mother does not listen and further comments on how it was not so bad after all even if it was Family Mart’s chicken.

“So” describes the mother’s distinct pronunciation of the term for homework, (translated as ‘humwork/homework’ for relatability) which is *shukudai*, the distinct Filipino accent makes it sound like *sokodai*, leading to the JFC not comprehending what the mother was saying. The tendency to pronounce “so” instead of “shu” is a representation of the variety of ways people in the Philippines speak stemming from different regions of the country.

“La (Ra)” talks about the JFC’s tendency to attend live (*raibu*) shows or concerts which therefore accounts for her not having money.

“Ti (Shi)” describes *shiranai* which means ‘I don’t know [where the items are]’, showing how the mother is angry because the JFC keeps on leaving her items out untidily, which results in the *firipinmama* throwing out her possessions.

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<sup>8</sup> Seven Eleven and Family Mart are two popular convenience stores chains in Japan.


<p><b>Video 6: A depiction of a confused <i>firipinmama</i></b></p> <p><b>Username: Ouchi1213</b></p> <p><b>278.1K likes</b></p> <p><b>1,210 Comments Caption:</b></p> <p>Filipino Mama's Doremi Song</p> <p><b>Transcript</b></p> <p><b>Hook/introduction:</b></p> <p>Doremi song introduction (Music)</p>  <p><b>Do</b>M: What's wrong with that? The one on your eyes, what's that?</p> <p><b>FJC:</b> Oh, these false eyelashes.</p> <p><b>M:</b> What the. That looks weird, take it off!</p>	<p><b>Re</b>M: Please call me, you know that already! Who are you going out with? Show me who you are with, do you have a picture? Is this your friend?</p> <p><b>FJC:</b> Yeah.</p> <p><b>M:</b> Well, they're ugly!</p> <p><b>FJC:</b> Mom, you're the worst!</p> <p><b>Mi</b>M: Look at my clothes, these are cute right? I bought it!</p> <p><b>FJC:</b> Oh, really?</p> <p><b>M:</b> What do you think? I'm still sexy right?</p> <p><b>FJC:</b> No way!</p> <p><b>Fa</b>M: Is this family mart chicken?</p> <p><b>FJC:</b> No, it's seven eleven's</p> <p><b>M:</b> Well, seven eleven is my favorite.</p> <p><b>FJC:</b> Huh? Yeah, I told you it was seven eleven's!</p> <p><b>M:</b> Well, if it isn't it's not that bad.</p> <p><b>So</b>M: Do your hum work!</p> <p><b>FJC:</b> What's hum work?</p> <p><b>M:</b> Huh?</p> <p><b>FJC:</b> Oh! Homework!</p>	<p><b>Ra</b>M: You're too obsessed with live concerts! Ha?</p> <p><b>FJC:</b> What's wrong with that?</p> <p><b>M:</b>Whose concert are you going to this time?</p> <p><b>FJC:</b> It doesn't matter right?</p> <p><b>M</b> :That's why you don't have any money!</p> <p><b>Si</b>M: I don't know</p> <p><b>FJC:</b> I've just left it here, the card!</p> <p><b>M:</b> Didn't I tell you</p> <p><b>FJC:</b> Did you throw it away?</p> <p><b>M:</b> Ha? You never clean up by yourself, so it's your fault!</p> <p><b>FJC:</b> You're the worst, mom!</p> <p><b>M:</b> I threw it all away.</p> <p>And I will throw away all those other things too!</p> <p><b>FJC:</b> I don't understand you!</p> <p><b>M:</b> I'll even throw these away too!</p> <p><b>FJC:</b> What? Mom!</p> <p><b>M:</b> Because you never clean up!</p>
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Figure 6. Screenshots of Ouchi1213 (2023b).

This video, with its lengthy form and comedic structure, encapsulates the experiences of user Ouchi1213 in her household. What is unique in this video as compared with the previous ones is *firipinmama*'s expression or admittance of personal sexiness. The jovial self-praise is contrasted with the Japanese norms of humility and lowering down oneself especially in public.

Furthermore, the “So” section on pronunciation as in *sokodai* instead of *shukudai* (‘homework’) is reflective of certain biased stereotypes and depictions of Filipino mothers who may come from different educational backgrounds and those who may have broken Japanese, or perhaps users of “non-standard” Filipino resulting in a distinct pronunciation of *shu* (*so*).

For “Shi”, the humor lies in the frowned upon disciplining aspect of the mother which does not respect boundaries around the items of their children. While cleaning is encouraged in the disciplining norm of both cultures, respecting personal space is apparently not a common ground for both cultures hence the comedic appeal of this practice of throwing away their children’s items when they are unorganized.

Ultimately, humor in this video shows a myriad of (re)presentations of Ouchi1213’s *firipinmama* which effectively affords her agency in representing her own experiences at home with her mother. It affords her “affinity experiences” to connect with her peers and to those who have the same kind of mothers with every single post. However, the affordances do not always reach the same goal with different audiences. This is because in the process of sharing, the digital media can also serve as a tool to spread the pervasive stereotypical view of Filipino mothers which may not fully represent the diverse realities and characteristics of Filipino mothers and Japanese mothers alike all over the world.

#### **4.7. *Firipinmama* 7: A publicly affectionate mother**

In this video, upon calling the school, the mother appends the term of endearment *-chan* to their child’s name, which is commonly used at the end of younger toddlers’ names. The joke in the usage of this video, with the JFC asking in the captions “Is it just my mom who is like this?”, reflect norms in Japan of not showing too much affection and endearment in public even with their own children.

The use of expressions such as *ay* or exclamations of surprise or mistake, as well as the hashtag *#saramappo* written in hiragana meaning ‘thanks’ in Filipino or *salamat po* as typically incorrectly pronounced by Japanese native speakers points to the strong affinity markers of both the combined cultures of Japanese and Filipino.


Video 7: A depiction of a <i>firipinmama</i> talking on the phone	
<p><b>Username:</b> rrules_riyo</p> <p><b>161.4k likes</b></p> <p><b>1,220 comments</b></p> <p><b>Transcript:</b></p> <p>When calling the school</p> <p><b>M:</b> Hello, I'm the mother of Nishijimaruyo-chan from the fourth-year class.</p> <p><b>FJC:</b> "Why use ~chan?"</p>	<p><b>Caption:</b></p> <p>Is this just my mommy? (laugh) (laugh)</p> <p><b>Hook/introduction:</b></p> <p>My mom when I was in elementary school.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>"FJC Wondering why ~chan?"</b></p>

Figure 7. Screenshots of rrules\_riyo (2020).

#### 4.8. *Firipinmama* 8: A caring yet strict mother

Both Video 7 and Video 8 show how *firipinmama* show their affection in different situations. The 8th video shows how both the Japanese and Filipino mother are asking where their children are. For the “typical” mother’s case, the response was to go have fun and come home. However, in the *firipinmama*’s case, their child was scolded and told to go home as it is already late.

The video format has an interesting comparative tone of what a typical mother/person does, as opposed to their *firipinmama*. In this, it is even more obvious how the comedic tone of the videos in the hashtag certainly work as a social commentary on why their mothers are such. Furthermore, the inclusion of typical mothers in the scene exemplifies the “joke in the social construct” aspect, alluding to the desirable characteristics of the “typical” mother (in this case is we are to assume a Japanese person). In this, it is

evident how the goal of social media is also to complain about their mothers to the same audience who understands them. The digital media TikTok affords them that platform. These kinds of posts enable inference, critique and analysis of why JFC's mothers' attributes are (re)presented as such; and it is because these are not the desirable attributes of mothers in Japanese society. It also suggests how JFC children indeed may have polarizing feelings of why they have mothers who are "different" from the typical.




<p><b>Username:</b> 9cmn9_</p> <p><b>23.4k likes</b></p> <p><b>147 comments</b></p>	<p><b>Video 8:</b></p> <p><b>A comparison of two people talking on the phone</b></p>	
<p>The difference between a typical person and my mom</p>	<p><b>Transcript:</b></p> <p>Mom when Keina is out at night.</p>	
	<p>普通の人</p> 	<p>私のママ</p> 
<p><b>Caption:</b></p> <p>Isn't she too overprotective? (facepalm)</p> <p><b>Hook/introduction:</b></p> <p>The difference between a typical person and my mom.</p>	<p><b>Typical person/mom:</b> Hello, where are you now?</p> <p>Oh, you're going to be late today?</p> <p>I see. Well, be careful and have fun!</p> <p><b>Child:</b> Yes. Bye!</p>	<p><b>My mom:</b> Hoy! Where are you?</p> <p>What time will you be home?</p> <p>Huh? Look at the time! It's so late!</p> <p>Hurry home!</p> <p>Okay?</p> <p>(Do you understand?)</p>

Figure 8. Screenshots of \_9cmn9\_ (2021).

#### **4.9. *Firipinmama* 9: A hardworking and earnest mother**

In this video, the JFC was asking help to do her homework, but then was later scolded for not trying her best on her own. The mother was pictured washing plates in the video and describing her hardships in Japan angrily to her child. This is a common theme in parenting and in socio-cultural norms of Filipinos encouraging resiliency in the face of hardships. According to the mother, she came to Japan without knowledge of any Japanese, unable to read nor write hiragana, or *kanji*. But with her wit and street-smarts, she was able to differentiate whether the things she bought in the supermarket were pork, or fish, etc.

Contrary to the videos above referring to Japanese mothers' placing high importance on education, here the mother is too occupied with her roles and burdens (in this situation, washing the plates) to help her child. To add to this, her hardships, and role as a migrant mother in a different country is expressed. Therefore, helping her JFC with their education and homework may not be the priority. This is an interesting facet of *firipinmama* identity, reflecting nuances of difficult migrant experiences. It also touches on the great value placed on resilience imposed on Filipino children, which can affect JFC's experiences of having a Filipino mother and their identities as being Filipino. With this trivial post about hoping that her parents help her with homework just like other typical mothers, this video highlights the intersectional issues facing migrants in other countries like Japan, where they experience a transnational double layer of motherhood expectations from both Japan and the Philippines, while experiencing a myriad of migrant struggles in adapting to the broader Japanese society. In a single video, viewers can see multifaceted issues of gender, identity, and representations of migrant issues which are important to highlight and problematize.



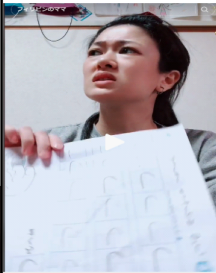

<p><b>Video 9: A depiction of FJC doing homework while a <i>firipinmama</i> is washing plates</b></p>	
<p><b>Username:</b> mikupanpi86</p> <p><b>10.3K likes</b></p> <p><b>168 comments</b></p>	 <p><b>Caption:</b> Mom Series (raise hands) (women)</p> <p><b>Hook/introduction:</b> When I ask mom to help me with schoolwork</p> <p><b>I cannot understand!</b></p> <p><b>Please teach me, mama!</b></p>
 <p><b>“I did not know Japanese coming to Japan but here I am, I studied well!”</b></p>	<p><b>Transcript:</b></p> <p><b>FJC:</b> Hey, mom, I don't understand this, please teach me!</p> <p><b>M:</b> Huh, what? schoolwork? not again!? Why is it when you do not understand, you ask right away!? Try it by yourself more using your own head!</p> <p>Look at me, I came here from the Philippines, and I couldn't read Japanese. When I went shopping, I didn't know if it was beef, pork, or fish, I didn't know anything. I didn't even know how to ask anybody. But I did my best to learn! You are my child so I know you can do it if you think about it well.</p> <p>But if you still don't get it, you can call the school and ask your teacher.</p>

Figure 9. Screenshots of mikupanpi86 (2022).

**4.10. *Firipinmama* 10: Different from Kansai and Kantō mama**

In this video, it is seen how mothers are depicted in different contexts. The comparison of a Kantō, Kansai, and *firipinmama* is presented in three personas. Together they have created a few videos describing the differences of motherhood styles.

The Kantō region is located in the east of Honshu Japan and is known to be where Japan's capital, Tokyo, is located along with the six prefectures of

Ibaraki, Tochigi, Gunma, Saitama, Chiba, and Kanagawa. Since it is home to Japan's most famous center, it is also the epitome of "standard" notions that is regarded as representative of "true" Japaneseness. On the other hand, the Kansai region is located in the western part of Japan, which includes the prefectures of Kyoto, Ōsaka, Hyōgo, Nara, Shiga, and Wakayama. With these borders, there is a perceived cultural difference from their counterparts in the capital in Kantō. These differences include language use, way of life, decorum, and this extends to motherhood practices.

When a child loses a game, mothers have different ways of expressing support. The Kantō mother implores "It is okay, you grow and learn with the experience". The Kansai mother on the other hand also shows encouragement by saying the child will become "stronger with the failure". Further offering *okonomiyaki*, a Kansai comfort food particularly from the city of Ōsaka. The Filipino mother on the other hand expresses the above-mentioned criticizing of their children's peers with *busu* or 'ugly', and emphasizing self-praise with "It is okay, you win because you are *kawaii* ('cute') and they are *busu* ('ugly')". This indicates that the physical appearance is the win for the mother.

This captures the argument of the paper on how posting *firipinmama* videos have afforded the users the ability to complain in a comedic manner, while at the same time helped them relate and connect with common affinities and experiences. With the users (re)presenting their own identities, even in different circumstances of having a *Kantō* or *Kansai* mother, they can share humor as afforded by digital media and indicate the "joke in the social structure".

The Kantō mother (re)presents the normative characteristic of a gentle and soft-spoken mother and is visible in many other videos of this group. On the other hand, the Kansai mother also describes the stereotypical ways of the strong, direct and fast way of speaking in the Kansai region. Hence mothers there are also marked as different from their Kantō counterparts.

In this comedic video 10, we see a summative picture on how Kantō represents the ideal, while the Kansai and *firipinmama* are the "odd" ones. The inclusion of the Kansai mother on the other hand shows how each mother can be different from the standard. By recognizing both the Kantō mama and the Kansai mama as differently marked, it alludes to the fact that there is a hegemonic ideal of a Japanese mother. However, adding the layer of *firipinmama*, and laughing at the Kantō mama also shows how it is not true and representative of all Japanese mothers in the Kantō region. As with many different prefectures, both in Kantō and Kansai, one type of motherhood which is from the "standard" Tōkyo and one Ōsaka mother who

always cooks okonomiyaki cannot arguably be representative, as there are many prefectures and many cities, as with many unique mothers in Japan.




<p><b>Username:</b> am0princess</p> <p><b>324.1K likes</b></p> <p><b>698K comments</b></p>	<p><b>Video 10:</b></p> <p><b>A comparison of a <i>Kanto</i>, <i>Kansai</i>, and <i>Firipin</i> mother</b></p> <p><b>Caption/Hook/introduction:</b></p> <p>Parents' reactions when we lose a match</p>	
<p><b><u>Kanto</u></b></p> 	<p><b><u>Kansai</u></b></p> 	<p><b><u>Firipin</u></b></p> 
<p>It's okay, it's a learning experience</p>	<p>Don't feel down. You'll be stronger next time! Let's have okonomiyaki for dinner!</p>	<p>Did you lose? Who did you lose to? Oh! They are all ugly, and you're all cute that's why you're winners to me!</p>

Figure 10. Screenshots of am0princess (2023).

Although Japanese gendered norms are prescriptive in their ideals of motherhood, social media shows how various experiences exist. The representative archetype of the Kantō mama, although desired and strongly highlighted by traditional media, is not the reality of all Japanese children including JFC, and children from other region such as Kansai. Thus, every mother is different.

## Conclusions

This paper showed snippets of experiences and online (re)presentations of Filipino Japanese Children's various *firipinmama* through a study of ten videos. The Filipino mothers were (re)presented in many ways, being tough but also caring even in public, being disciplinary but sometimes enabling, being loud and unable to speak "standard" Japanese but also street-smart and witty enough to survive despite the language barrier and their migrant burdens.

These depictions through their children show the viewers a portion of their lives and identities. However, the jokes and humor in the hashtag *#firipinmamaaruaru* afford a sense of truth to their collective cultural experiences of not having a Japanese mother. It reflects a candid admittance to the fact that their mothers are different from what one would expect of a mother in Japanese societal standards.

It was also revealed how digital media affords them a space to vent and connect with members of the same affinity groups. Through the internet affordance and utility of hashtags, the various users were able to connect to their "affinity-identity" markers of having Filipino mothers.

In the process, their TikTok posts also give space for an alternative voice which stems from their own experiences and depictions, a voice different from conventional media, which tends to highlight the Kantō or "standard" norms of a mother.

While not explicit in their goals, the process of posting videos also gave space for a new affordance other than the intended, which is an open space for reflexive thinking of cultural and gendered norms as well as an open online dialogue on the social structure of what is desirable in a mother in Japanese society.

The above (re)presentations, no matter how lighthearted and funny they are, sheds light on the reality that these are not the desirable traits of a mother in Japan. However, the inclusion of the Kantō, Kansai and *firipinmama* archetypes importantly shows how things will not be the same for all Japanese and Filipino mothers as well as for any child in general.

To note, with the positive affordances of a cultural collective, online connections and the fostering of online communities, this paper recognizes the digital space also as a possible echo-chamber of spreading stereotypes about a particular people/culture (one of the pitfalls of viral memes), as seen with the Filipino mothers' accents (re)presented.

The examples on the TikTok posts discussed in this paper confirm that digital media/social media sites are instrumental to increasing dialogue about diversity and contribute not only to our knowledge of culture, but also

to the sense of belonging had by JFC. Through further research on these topics, we can foster deeper discussions on the vital issues of gender and identity representation of migrant mothers, and mixed minority youth in Japanese society. With the above-mentioned changing landscape and habits of media consumption in Japan, as well as the changing constructs of Japanese families, e.g., mixed-race, LGBTQ, etc., there is indeed a need to explore alternative platforms that paint a better picture of minorities and their experiences.

Finally, because the internet knows no borders, research on this phenomenon should not just be limited to within Japan but can also extend to those mixed-roots children who share similar experiences all over the world be it *hāfu* or *firipinhāfu*, or wasian, etc. for as long as they share the same #hashtag.

### Abbreviations

JFC Japanese Filipino Children  
M *Firipinmama*

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#フィリピンママあるある ...

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「カウントの前にいかないと大変なことになる#japinay #フィリピンママあるある #オススメにのりたい #フィリピンあるある #フィリピン」.

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