

MOÉ: THE ECONOMICS OF OTAKU AS DEVOTEES*

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Abstract

Moé is the most recent significant key word that represents a new POP culture in Japan. It means the affection to three-dimensional figures or figurines that symbolizes attractive animated cartoon characters in *mangas* and video games. They are made of plastic or die casting. Especially, some famous prototype modelers who have made figures of pretty girl characters have overwhelming popularity. Let us call ‘Moé goods’ as objects that *otaku* as devotees adore, where ‘o’ is a prefix concerning politeness and ‘taku’ is a home. By making a use of an analytical framework based on the theories and concepts *à la* Gorman-Lancaster-Sen, this paper presents the model for the Moé goods with the price attribute and color attributes. Optimization problems are solved by Otaku and brand figure makers. It is verified that any consumer maximises his/her happiness function, by selecting an individually optimal selection of Moé goods. It is also shown that otaku may be

tempted by Moé goods producers.

Key Words: attributes *à la* Gorman-Lancaster, differentiated markets, Moé, nostalgia, sentimental value and characteristics, Otaku as devotees, Sen’s capability and functionings, temptation

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