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MINI REVIEW: DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION OF A COMMUNITY CONSUMER EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR PARENTS AND CHILDREN

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ANNOUNCEMENT

- The 2019 International Conference on Quality of Life was held at Kyoto Pharmaceutical University from Sept 28-29, 2019. Further information can be found at <http://as4qol.org/icqol/2019/>
- We have moved to continuous publication. Beginning January 2019 the editing committee has decided to adopt a continuous publishing model for Journal publication. Individual articles will be released online as they become ready, allowing a steady stream of informative quality articles. We will also be moving to a calendar year issue cycle. In traditional terms, each volume will encompass a single year and consist of a single issue. Publishing on a just-in-time basis allows authors to present their results in a timely fashion, and our readers, students, and colleagues to access our content and cite articles more quickly and free from the restrictions of a predefined timetable. As a result of these changes, the look and style, as well as the function, of the Journal will be different, and hopefully improved.
- The 2019 International Meeting on Quality of Life was held recently. Proceedings as well as photos and other information can be found at <http://as4qol.org/icqol/>

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Mini-Review

Mini Review: Development and Evaluation of a Community Consumer Education Program for Parents and Children

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Abstract

Although the Consumer Education Promotion Act in Japan stipulates that "Education deepens the understanding of participation in planning for consumers forming a society," the goals for consumers – especially for elementary school children and their parents – have not been well established. A "community consumer education program" was developed, implemented, and evaluated according to the "image-map" framework for the consumer education system. Participant surveys using questionnaire in this study revealed that the program helped children to develop clear awareness of the issue of food waste at home and in society, developing a greater concern for the socially vulnerable. Adults were motivated to learn more about ethical consumption and developed improved awareness of the social consequences of consumption. Parent-child communication via this program enabled adults and children to learn from each other.

Keywords: consumer education image-map, parent-child dialogue, community consumer education program

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1. INTRODUCTION

Background: The Act on Promotion of Consumer Education (Law number: Act No. 61 of 2012), or the Promotion Act, was enacted in 2012.

Consumer education defined in the Promotion Act clearly implies education related to daily consumption executed in support of consumers' independence, including "education on consumer affairs for supporting the self-reliance of consumers to deepen consumers' understanding of and interest in the importance of independent commitment to the establishment of a Society with Consumer Citizenship (or SCC) and equivalent educational activities." The SCC stipulates that consumers - with optimistic participation - respect individual characteristics and diversity of consumers' lives with mutual interactions of consumers, self-awareness of how their actions are related to the consumption they do to support their lives, and in doing so, effects on future generation consumption within their overall socio-economic situation and the global environment promotes the forming of a fair society. In basic idea of consumer education, one of the 7 items contributing to its initial development and supporting its subsequent growth is that consumers, who are individual actors forming the SCC, are the major participants. Consumers with regional consumption life-centers are therefore the base upon which consumer education is founded .

However, consumer education under government administration frequently consists of single, randomized public lectures generally delivered to elderly and older teens and young adults (i.e. secondary school, college, or university students) with relatively less consideration given to younger children (i.e. elementary school students and below). In addition, the presentations mainly focus on educating 'independent consumers' on properly avoiding consumer risks and being victimized in cases such as inappropriate contractual paperwork, case-studies, business dealings, and situational remedies, etc. in their daily lives. In short, it mainly focuses on preventive and protective aspects of 'consumers' rights'. However, such educational program is inadequate in terms of providing a chance for consumer education and SCC program in relation to ethical consumer behavior: viz., consumers' duties (i.e. critical thinking, concern for the weak in society, as well as consideration for and solidarity with actions for environment). As of March 2020, the consumer education portal site (Consumer education system (CES) image-map) managed by the Consumption Agency has listed a number of teaching materials aimed at the following age groups, broken down by age, as follows: infant and pre-school (172 items), elementary school (759 items), lower (1224 items) and higher (1369 items) secondary school levels, and adulthood (3613 items). When broken down by priority areas, they divide as follows: construction of SCC (1203 items), product safety (2176 items), quality of life and contract (2023 items), information and social media (1635 items). In short, current teaching materials for construction areas of SCC with regard to infant and pre-school and elementary school levels are relatively lacking. Note that in this study an "SCC education program" refers to an education program intended for promoting the construction of SCC via ethical consumer behavior.

In this study, we endeavor to propose a Community Consumer Education (CCE) program for elementary school students and their guardians/parents and investigate the outcome of this CCE program.

2. INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES

Our CCE program was conceived based on outcomes from preliminary research and as a follow-up to current investigations: an approach espousing role-plays and a complementary workshop.

2.1 SCC Image-Map

The SCC image-map is a particular vision of community educational program, that identifies viewpoints **A** (understanding the influence of consumers), **B** (continuity of possible consumption practices), and **C** (consumer participation-cooperation) as priority areas for SCC development. **A** depicts knowledge influencing consumer behavior with regard to product selection and disposal based on 'child labor' and 'food loss' respectively; **B** is the practice of making fair-trade (FT) chocolate; while **C** is problem-solving around issues related to raising environmental and economic awareness via social participation, where bonding and learning between adults and children are promoted.

Program on 'Food and Children': Based on previous investigations, the CCE program modified the SCC image-map to one incorporating **A** (understanding of the influence of consumers in relation to child-labor and food-loss), **B** (possible continuity of consumer practice), and **C** (consumer participation and co-

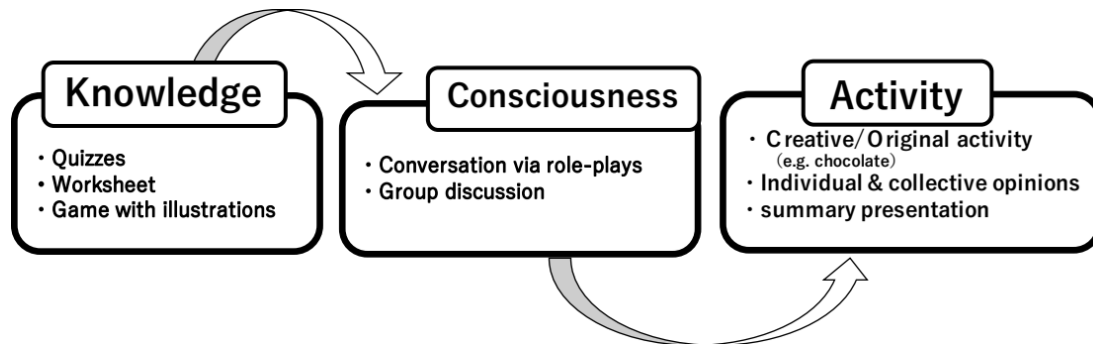


Fig. 1: Basic structure of educational program.

operation) and including ‘FT chocolate-making’ and strategies involving ‘parent-child cooperative in problem-solving’.

Moreover, it was purposely structured in such a way that consumers were given a chance to participate and contribute via the use of products with social value (FT products, donated product, etc.) by attending the program. The program followed the process of knowledge-based progress, consciousness-based content, and activity-based purpose (Fig. 1).

After self-introduction in each group (Table 1 – ①), quizzes incorporating elements of fun and play (②) (3 questions on cocoa, producing-country, and chocolate-making, as well as explanations with photos, globe-world model, and cocoa beans) followed by information sessions (including explanations of manufacturing processes). In dialog-based role-plays (③), the guardian (disguised as 9-year-old boy, Erukar) started talking with participating children via the facilitator (steering committee members or university students) about the current situation of children in the cocoa-producing country (affected by child-labor, lack of schooling, themselves not ever having eaten chocolate before), and compared their daily-life activities with those of the participating children (wake-up times, helping with housework, leftover foods (including visual aids related to food-loss). This was followed with illustrations of normal (certified and non-certified FT) and ethical (donated) chocolates with games (④) that demonstrated price differences, thus enabling the participants to learn about FT products and solutions for relevant social issues. Next, individual consumers were given FT chocolate (a mix of certified and non-certified FT products) that had been melted in a plastic bag in water bath while the parent-child group made chocolate to help understand children in the cocoa-producing country (⑤). While the melted chocolate was solidified for 20-min in a refrigerator, a group discussion on the theme - ‘What consumers can do in Japan’ - was conducted (⑥).

Children participated in a discussion with their guardians/parents concerning how to live within a consumerist society entitled ‘What they could do’ and further considered the question ‘how consumptions and items are possibly correlated’. They then expressed their thoughts in pictures and writing and through interactive communication within their respective parent-child pairs. Pairs then gathered to form groups of 4-5 individuals each. Each group shared and listened to each others’ ideas, further enriching collective and individual awareness, and then collaboratively summarized their discussions on “simili” sticker paper. Brief discussions with other groups followed expanding the flow of information. In the final episode (⑦), children who attended schools regularly as well as children from cocoa-producing country (supposedly ‘grown up’ to be high-school students) who had restarted school enjoyed their now ready-made chocolates. Additionally, the actors gained an enhanced awareness of the power/influence learned from their individual consumption behavioral pattern (i.e. selection-consumption-disposal). Note that independent programs can each be compounded from ②-⑥ or can further be condensed according to developmental stage of the participants and time available.

According to MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology; 2015),¹ children not only ‘know something’ but also ‘know something and using what they have known/learned [enables] them [to spend] a more useful life in terms of relationships with society and the world at large’, etc. In short, items/events associated with everyday life experiences are important for learning.

Table 1. The Consumer Affair Agency places priority areas in constructing a Community Consumer Society as follows: **A** (understanding of the effects that consumers have), **B** (practice of possible continuity in consumption), and **C** (participation and co-operation of consumers).

| No. | Min | Activity Procedure | Senses | Significance | Aim & Methods | Materials Needed |
|-----|-----|---|---|--------------|--|---|
| ① | 2 | Self-introduction | Listening Communication | | Transmitting self profile to others Lowering anxiety | |
| ② | 3 | Quizzes • Which is a cocoa tree? • Chocolate-making? • Where is the cocoa-producing country? | Sight Listening Smell Dialog Thinking | | Knowledge acquirement • 2 choices with photos and illustrations; marking right answers in worksheet quizzes; Use of powerpoint to match worksheet in explanations • Seeing, touching smelling and tasting raw cocoa seeds | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quizzes on illustration board or powerpoint • worksheet • Global map model • cocoa beans |
| ③ | 10 | In-person role-play (acting by guardians) | Sight Listening Dialog Thinking | A | Current understanding & concern for the socially weak/disadvantaged. • Guardians acted daily life activity of children in cocoa-producing country, while Japanese children compared and asked questions on daily activity. Casting roles between children of cocoa-producing country and Japanese on themes such as 'wake-up time', 'helping', 'favorite subject', 'favorite snack', 'detested food', etc.. For detested food, participants were reminded with photos of food-loss items from families in Kyoto City. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of face-board (used in first-half). Illustration of children from cocoa-producing country on board surface; what is to be spoken at the back of board. As reciting answers to questions is needed, no preliminary practice required. • Photos on food-loss (from Kyoto City) |
| ④ | 10 | Game (2 pieces of chocolate) | Dialog Sight Thinking | | Knowledge acquirement (taken from indication) • Fair-trade & normal chocolate are prepared: participants asked to find differences (price, fair-trade/contribution description attached) • Explain the meaning of fair-trade label | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 pieces each of fair-trade and normal chocolate |
| ⑤ | 30 | Making of fair-trade chocolate | Dialog Sight Smell Creativity | B | Creativity potential • Making of fair-trade chocolate parent-child pairing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heat-resistant bags, hot water • Decoratives for topping |
| | 5 | Breaks | | | • Solidifying of chocolate in refrigerator | |
| ⑥ | 20 | Group discussion | Dialog Thinking Writing Pasting Speaking Cooperating | C | Parent-child (or group) dialog; thinking together for issue-solving • Deep thinking for individual & group • Writing, thinking, dialog, summarizing, presentation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • simili paper • tag/label • pen |
| ⑦ | 10 | Summarizing Interactive role-playing (guardian) | | | Speech on reflection & opinion • Due to fair-trade children in cocoa-producing country return to school • Chocolate-tasting[| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face-board (used in second-half) |

Table 2. Summary of trial-run (TR) of cases collected (N): A profile of TR-1 and TR-2.

| No. | Date | Place | Subjects | N |
|------------------|-----------|-----------------------|--------------|----|
| TR-1 (No. 1 - 4) | | | | |
| 1 | 22-Jan-17 | Nakagyo-ku, Kyoto | Parent-child | 14 |
| 2 | 26-Mar-17 | Kita-ku, Kyoto | Parent-child | 9 |
| 3 | 28-Mar-17 | Taba, Sasayama City | Parent-child | 15 |
| 4 | 15-Apr-17 | Ikuno-ku, Osaka | Parent-child | 12 |
| TR-2 (No. 5 - 9) | | | | |
| 5 | 06-Aug-17 | Higashiyama-ku, Kyoto | Parent-child | 9 |
| 6 | 10-Feb-18 | Ukyo-ku, Kyoto | Parent-child | 10 |
| 7 | 28-Jul-18 | Higashiyama-ku, Kyoto | Parent-child | 15 |
| 8 | 30-Jun-19 | Kita-ku, Kyoto | Parent-child | 16 |
| 9 | 03-Aug-19 | Mizuru City, Kyoto | Parent-child | 19 |

The educational program – focused on the pressing social issue of child-labor – was based on a role-play where guardians of children participating in the workshop were introduced to a [role-played] 9-year-old child in a cocoa-producing country. Guardians with children in the same age group as a child in a far-away cocoa-producing country got to understand the connection between daily consumption behavior and forced child-labor. Apart from having fun, children were able to gain knowledge and build relationships by exchanging ideas and communicating with others via quizzes, games, role-plays, cooking, etc.. Through the important domains of consumer education incorporated with social contribution-type products, consumer product education has unconsciously been acquired.

2.2 Trial Runs

We executed trial-runs (TRs) to verify the effectiveness of the program via questionnaires, participant observation, and description analysis. The study pooled 145 randomized parent-child pairs on invitations conducted in Hyogo, Kyoto, and Osaka Prefectures between January 2017 and August 2019. During the investigation period, TR-1 (4 repeats from January to April 2017) was designated as the preliminary study period, where the post-event questionnaire provided directions/hints for subsequent developments. As the effectiveness of the program was not adequately confirmed in TR-1, for TR-2 (5 repeats; from August 2017 – August 2019) pre- and post-event questionnaires and in-workshop observation (by researchers) of participants were performed to assess the shift in awareness in participating guardians/parents and children at the time of product selection.

A total of 9 TRs with 145 participants divided into 2 groups (I and II) were conducted between January 2017 and August 2019 (Table 2). TRs for Group I were held from January to April 2017. The parent-child pairs contributed to the data were pooled from 4 previous enrollments. Of the 67 (without any pre-elementary school children) who answered the questionnaire, 50 (male: 21, female: 29; age-group: guardians/parents were in the 30s with mostly infants, followed by elementary school children and then lower secondary students in that order). The questionnaires were filled in after completion of workshop, and all questionnaire sheets were collected on the day of investigation. Participants (including ethical consumers and those unaware of FT) consisted of parents in their 30s and child participants. However, as the number of participants per TR was limited, we could only gauge the outcome via cumulative results.

TRs for Group II were held from August 2017 to August 2018. Of the 78 participants (male: 21, female: 45; gender in 3 cases was not provided) who received the questionnaire, 69 answer-sheet submissions were collected. Responses on change of awareness before and after the investigation were pooled for comparative analysis. In terms of age-groups, elementary (n=14), lower secondary (n=3), higher secondary (n=2), and university students (n=17), guardians (n=17; working people in society) and the elderly (n=16) participated in the investigation. In group-discussion (Tables 2-5, 2-7), contents written on the simili paper were analyzed, and what children (below elementary school age) learned from the parent-child talks was verified according to answer-sheets. All of the sessions were conducted for 90 minutes each in canteens

and community activity centers within the Kinki District.

3. RESULTS and DISCUSSION

3.1 Previous and current studies

Katahira et al.² focus on after-school children clubs as a venue for consumer education in certain areas using food to formulate an educational program, and TRs in certain areas using post-event assessments. The results revealed that children have learned via participation in the activities: viz., ‘learning something while having fun from playing games’. Furthermore, it has been pointed out that through incorporation of activities such as not only seminars and hands-on workshops but also active learning, the effectiveness of ethical consumption education using interactive communication and the exchange of ideas among various participants can be improved.³ According to Matsushita (2015),⁴ once those who have acquired knowledge in problem-solving share this knowledge via talking and writing activities to re-orientate others, they tend to learn deeper (deepening acquirement), and raise issues combining the acquired and shared knowledge. Moreover, Noda and Wada⁵ have suggested that providing practical training to learners may improve cooking in lessons. For example, by refining cooking practice (intended mainly for deeper learning to establishing cooking skills) facilitates acquiring knowledge and techniques through improving skills in selection of food items, cooking procedures, and assessments of prepared food.

Based on these findings, we developed a program espousing the five aforementioned sensory (seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, tasting) “fun-elements” of acquiring ‘knowledge/learning via participation’, promoting ‘sense-making through interactive communication’, participating in ‘fun activities’, promoting ‘deep-learning’, and fostering ‘improvement through practice’ which are actually linked to the basic structure of educational program (Fig. 1). The program exploits various teaching methods – through the use of practical tools/objects as far as possible – to provide elementary school children with ‘fun’ activities which serves as an approach for their learning about the various aspects of consumption.

Note that in formulating the educational program and teaching tools/aids, participants included in their target audience children below the elementary school age, 2 foreign students (one each from China and Indonesia) harboring interest in problem-solving type of educational activity, and residents attending the open-workshop⁶ held at Doshisha University in Kyoto city. The theme ‘Food and children’ was chosen with content evaluations related to the domestic food-loss problem and the issue of overseas child-labor. Using chocolate - a processed food item - familiar to elementary school children and their guardians/parents facilitated the learning process in a more familiar fashion. In addition, the site was a local shopping district in cooperation with a company (Darik Co. Ltd.; <http://www.dari-k.cm/>), which directly imports cocoa beans from Indonesian farmers, specialty chocolatiers who self-manufacture and self-market FT chocolates, outlets selling FT-roasted coffee beans, children’s eateries, etc. This workshop therefore provided a familiar item whose use afforded an inclusive means for consumers to learn about FT issues.

Moreover, the actual conditions of children in cocoa-producing countries could be gauged by referring to children’s episodes described on websites of organizations, such as international NGOs (non-governmental organizations; e.g. <http://acejapan.org/info/category/children>), concerned with child-labor and working to erase and prevent child-labor abuses. To consider the actual present working conditions of children, interactions with the following organizations were conducted: i.e. large confectionary manufacturers and conglomerate business groups (Morinaga & CO. LTD. and the Association of Japanese cake better business), non-certified FT conglomerate chocolatiers, and internationally recognized FT labeled organizations (FT-labeled Japan; <https://www.fairtrade-jp.org/>). Briefly, large confectionary conglomerates invited corporates with ‘social responsibility’ or CSR-promotion officers, and confectionary manufacturers to a gathering in May 2017. The current situations of cocoa supplies and local living conditions in Ghana were assessed by initiatives of corporate and business organizations. Non-certified fair-trade (FT) chocolatiers confirmed in writing the issues and present conditions of non-certified FT transactions of cocoa-producers and social business in Indonesia from July 15 to 16, 2017. The was followed by further confirmation by the international FT-labeled certified organization – as documented in the program and teaching materials

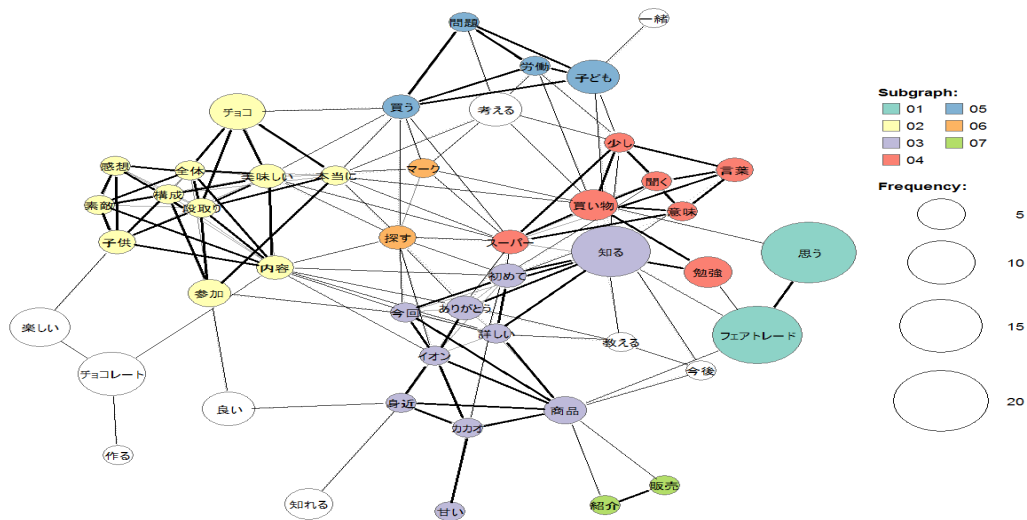


Fig. 2: Co-occurrence network interlinking free-description columns (encircled by broken lines) comprising 6 main items of ‘content-structure-setup’, ‘child-labor’, ‘shopping’, ‘fair-trade’, and ‘known’ encircling ‘mark.’ The content-structure-setup espouses (sub-items in yellow) chocolate (チョコ)、impression (感想), in totality (全体), delicious (美味しい), in actuality (本当に), wonderful (素敵), children (子供) linked to fun (楽しい), structure (構成), handling (設取り), content (内容), participation (参加) linked to (sub-items in white) chocolate (チョコレート) and good (良い), and making (作る). As for child-labor includes (blue sub-items) purchase (買う), issues (問題), labor (労働), children (子ども) with (white sub-item) think (考える) and together with child (一緒). The above links to labeling associated with (orange sub-items) fair-trade label (マーク) and select (探す), words (言葉), meaning (意味) and learning (勉強). The above items interlink with the acquiring (sub-items in purple) such as knowing (知る), initially (初めて), this time (今回), gratitude (ありがとう), mall (モール), in detail (詳しい) linked to (sub-items) disseminating (教える) and future (今後), nearby (身近) linked to good (良い) and acquired (知れる), cocoa (カカオ) linked to sweet taste (甘い), and products (商品) linked to (greenish blue sub-items) such as introduction (紹介) and buy/sell (販売). These further link to the FT aspect (sub-items in greenish blue) where perception and understanding of FT are established. Note that the circle sizes are designated with in order of 5, 10, 15 and 20; circle sizes smaller than 5 have frequencies of <5.

– of the present conditions and effects of FT in August 2017.

3.2 Trial-run (TR) Investigation-1: Awareness change in program participants

Overview of TRs: According to measurement text analysis (KH coder, <https://kncoder.net>) of free-description columns in the questionnaire (Fig. 2), frequencies of certain words and their links were visualized, associating certain words in appearance in sentence patterns relevant with other words (Fig. 2). Words with higher appearance frequencies were noted, and those with higher relevance are drawn with thicker lines: i.e. words such as ‘FT’, ‘think’, ‘know’, ‘chocolate’, ‘fun’, ‘children’, and ‘consider’ are words with higher appearance frequencies.

Of these items, the degree of relationships with ‘know’ appeared high. Based on the co-occurrence network, those who followed the lectures got to ‘know about FT through children and chocolate while having fun.’ The written message was: “the issues (quizzes) were easy to understand. From now on, I will like to purchase FT chocolates.” Additionally, “Even the kids are willing to help out; would not like to see forms of force-labor being used,” and the meaning of the word ‘FT’ is well understood now. According to children’s perception: It was real fun with comments such as: “I would like to play the game again.” As for the guardians, they cited: “It was great to have learned something with my child.”; “It was great to note that, children of the same age-groups realized that they led completely different ways of life through participation in the role-playing.”. Further inputs from guardians include: “I think the chocolate-making program was very good. The structural organization was very useful on the whole.”; “It was indeed fun with delicious chocolates; the contents comprising role-playing and actual chocolate-making were easy to follow even for children.”.

With regard to questionnaire in response to the item: “Workshop: do you think that it affects consumer behaviors?” those who answered ‘Yes’, or ‘So, so’, accounted respectively for 34 or 13 participants, or cumulatively 98% in saying: “Yes, the workshop affects consumer behaviors.” Furthermore, as to the following question: “Would you like to join such a workshop again in future?”, all (n=50), except the unanswered questionnaire sheets, answered in affirmative. Based on this verification, the program was positively accepted by the participants. However, as to changes in awareness in product selection (including children

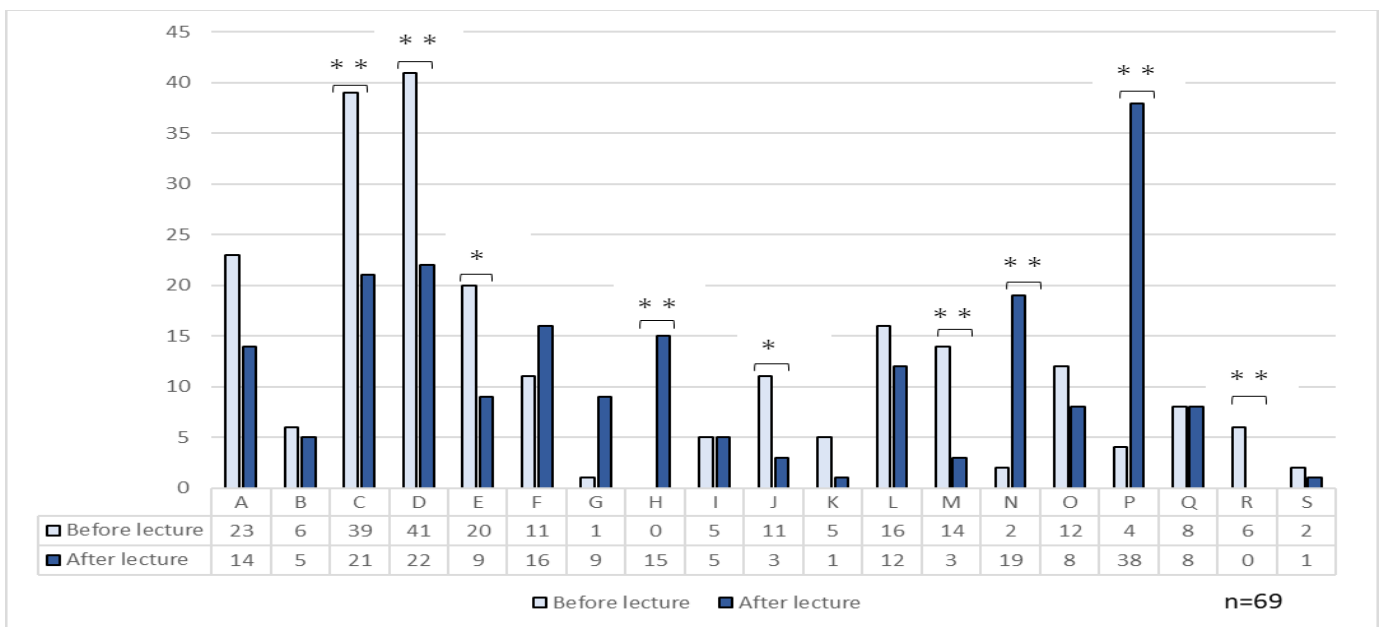


Fig. 3: Changes in awareness in product selection before (open column) and after (filled dark-blue column) lecture with reference to maker (A), shops (B), price quote (C), taste (D), quantity (E), production site of raw materials (F), manufacturing process (G), concern of manufacturer (H), organic (I), package design (J), high-grade sense (K), safety (L), health-minded (M), environmental concern (N), expiration date (O), FT or fair-trade (P), original raw material (Q), advertisement (R), and miscellaneous (S). Differences where $p < 0.05$ (*) and $P < 0.01$ (**) are statistically significant when verified before and after lecture with the χ^2 -test.

below the elementary school-attending age) in post-survey analysis, the collected information was inadequate for drawing a conclusion. Therefore, TR2 was repeated for reassessment (Table 2).

3.3 TR-2 (August 6, 2017 – July 28, 2018): Awareness changes before and after lecture on product selection

Awareness changes in product selection standards before and after lecture in the program were investigated (Fig. 3). In the questionnaire on chocolate selection, of the 19 choices, 5 product-selection standards were allowed for multiple-use in the answers. Results were statistically verified using the χ^2 -test, and the following were significant: ‘price quote ($p < 0.01$)’, ‘taste ($p < 0.01$)’, ‘manufacturing process ($p < 0.01$)’, ‘environmental considerations ($p < 0.01$)’, ‘health-minded ($p < 0.01$)’, ‘concern of manufacturer ($p < 0.01$)’, ‘FT ($p < 0.01$)’, ‘advertisement ($p < 0.01$)’, ‘quantity ($p < 0.05$)’ and ‘package design ($p < 0.05$)’. However, while awareness changes in ‘taste’, ‘price quote’, ‘quantity’, ‘health-minded’, ‘package design’, and ‘advertisement’, ‘environmental concern’, and ‘FT’ were significantly increased, significant changes were not detected in items such as ‘maker’, ‘vendor’, ‘producing country’, ‘organic’, ‘high-class sense’, ‘safety’, ‘expiration date’, or manifested awareness change in the selection criteria pivoted on ethicosocial perspectives. In short, brewing developmental effects in progressive global perspective on consumer behaviors were indicated.

3.4 Learning in adults and children

Children posing as their peers in foreign countries of the same age-group were pretending to communicate with their own guardians/parents via a facilitator (university students). Observations by the author confirmed that parent-child pairs created FT chocolates while enjoying the buying and selling activities. During the 20-min interval for chocolate solidification by refrigeration, the parent-child pairs discussed the theme ‘What consumers can do in Japan?’ among themselves: The participants then recorded their conversation in the comments column. Children below elementary-school age expressed their opinions not only in writing but also via illustrations (FT mark, etc.), proactively sticking and relocating post-it (sticky paper-slips) on illustrations drawn on simili paper, summarizing group opinions, and giving presentations with their guardians with much enthusiasm.

In TR-2, a description analysis of the group discussion comprising 35 parent-child participants was conducted. All notes written by each group were categorized by day and activity. They were re-categorized and analyzed as a group on observations of the following 5 items: i.e. ‘food-loss reduction’, ‘volunteer tendency’, ‘learning via transmission-vs-dissemination’, and ‘promoting learning motivation.’ The

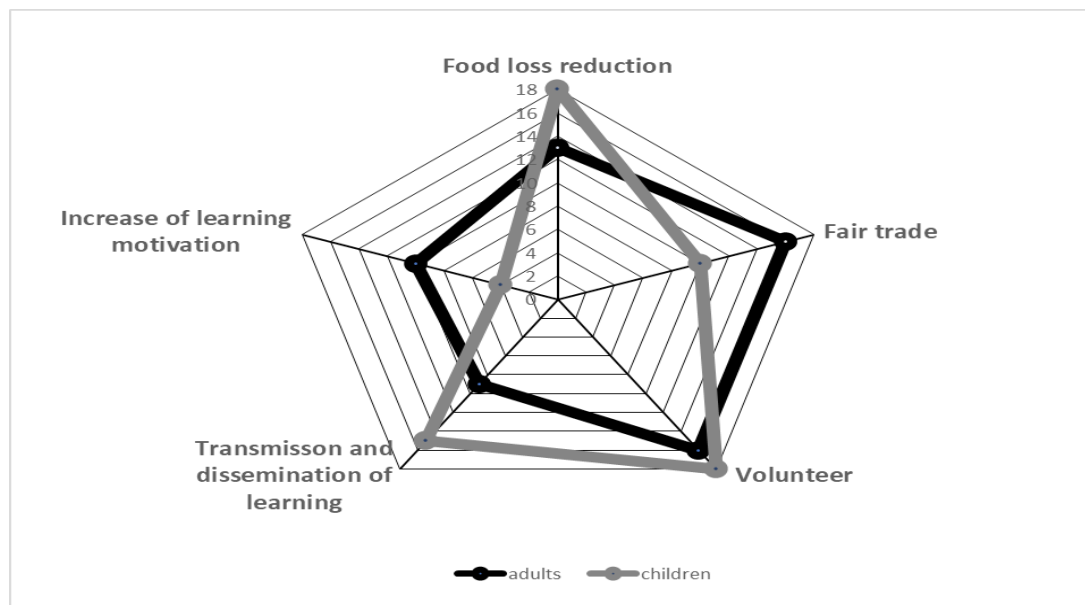


Fig. 4: Changes of awareness in product selection in adults (thick dark lines) and children (thick grey lines). Note that adults acquired knowledge about fair-trade (FT), more proactive as volunteers, and became more aware of food-loss, although they are not so keen in learning and transmitting/disseminating acquired knowledge. Children learned to become more aware of becoming volunteers, food-loss reduction, as well as transmission and dissemination of acquired learning, although they are unsure of the implications of FT, and tend not to be motivated with learning.

findings were then pooled, and participants were grouped into adults, children (elementary school and pre-elementary school age-groups) before the respective groups were analyzed accordingly (Fig. 4).

Based on analyses, ‘volunteer tendency’ (i.e. contribution, assistance, helping with cooking, etc.) was most frequently cited (18 adults, 16 children). Participants were able to: 1) learn about the current food-loss situation in Japan by linking the situation in Japan to situations in distant cocoa-producing countries concerning familiar chocolate products; and 2) understand the difficult situation of children in the same age-group, such as their lack of alternatives to working, and learning of social contribution awareness based on ‘wanting to be useful to others’ on the part of participants.

With regard to ‘food-loss reduction’ a significant number of children (n=18) expressed appreciation of being able to eat food made by producers, not generating food-loss for foods produced by others, and recognizing the importance of foods, etc. Apart from the area of food-loss, 15 cases confirmed that learning via transmission-vs-dissemination of information accompanied by written messages of ‘letting others know about child-labor’, ‘teaching others of the meaning of FT’, and ‘letting friends know’ were also involved. Through the program, they became aware of matters they were previously unaware of in daily life, such as the meaning of terms like food-loss and FT via play and experience, writing out of parent-child communication, talking to others, summarizing group opinions, and giving presentations. These dissemination activities were actually linked to their daily activities and prompted changes in consumption behavior.

In the case of adults, however, only ‘FT’ (n=16) and ‘enhanced tendency to learn’ (n=10): viz., awareness of social contribution and tendency to engage in consumption-related activity showed significant enhancement.

Therefore, awareness of the following were promoted: 1) reduction of food-loss for the sake of others (e.g. children) in difficult situations; 2) to be useful through modification of everyday activity to include volunteering; 3) knowing the term and meaning of FT; and 4) the importance of disseminating information.

3.5 **Issues of future concern**

Based on results of the present program, awareness changed after a single learning session, although median- and long-term views were not verified.

In addition, since consumers have rights to suggest in the formulating the Consumer Education Promo-

tion Act, it is not only necessary to promote consumer education via school education, but essential to provide opportunities to learn about consumer education to those people and generations that are either deprived of or not given the likelihood to receive it. Given the complexity of current economic and social structure, consumers are now faced with greater social responsibility. Incorporating guidelines where learning alone is not enough for adults to cope with ongoing social and economic development issues, not least to mention how these guidelines would affect the children. Therefore, it is now that efforts in facilitating understanding must be formulated. This must provide an overview of issues in terms of the actual social structure and development situation, and be taught using methods befitting the life-stage of the learner. In so doing, major issues should be formulated by educating relevant leaders according to the guidelines formulated. In cases where activities require leaders, they should first learn through practice and then educate others through CCE. Therefore, it is necessary to verify if reproducibility of results from these methods can be achieved by repeating the practice with university students and the general public to see if effects similar to those in this study can be realized.

Furthermore, a community consumer education (CCE) program from a new perspective incorporating another life-stage (i.e. children) should be proposed. The present program focused on topics 'inclusive of all without leaving anyone behind': i.e. education related to proper food-use, multicultural interdependence, human rights, SDGs (sustainable development goals). In cooperation and collaboration with regional children and food providers, as well as businesses, organizations supporting post-divorce parent-child interaction, or foreigners, and so on, future endeavors to work on practical approaches to serve as consumers with CCE will be undertaken.

4. Conclusion

In planning this program, clear life-stage issues and priority areas served as an opportune platform for CCE for multiple generations of participants (infants/children and their guardians) related to the aforementioned issues, which were based on guidelines of the consumer education system (CES) image-map. In pursuing the objectives, the formulation of the constituent areas of the community consumer society (CCS) - even in constructing programs of other themes - was based on the basic structure of educational program for consumers (Fig. 1). In so doing, awareness related to consumer behavior was enhanced.

5. References

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