

The Postwar Reorganization of Home Economics as one of the Disciplines in Universities

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1. Purpose and Means of this study

This study investigates three points: 1) how faculties and departments of Home Economics were established at new universities in post-war Japan, 2) as to how Home Economics was ranked, and 3) how Home Economics itself, and the contents of the education, transformed the process of those above.

The author considers the position of Home Economics historically with the system, discipline, and education connected, and engages in case studies: 1) faculties or departments of Home Economics in new universities, and 2) a college that aimed for women's independence and contribution to the community. Also, including the University of the Ryukyus in Okinawa before return to Japan as a case of this study, the author clarifies the difference between mainland Japan and Okinawa in those days, and explains the general picture of the process of understanding, adoption, establishment, and transformation of Home Economics in post-war Japan.

2. Main findings and Conclusion

Home Economics was institutionalized during the postwar-Japan educational reformation in the two ways. Firstly, it was included as one of the social studies subjects in the University Standards (Daigaku Kijun). Secondly, the Minimum Standards in the field of Home Economics (*Kaseigakubu Secchikijun*) was enacted.

Although Home Economics was built in universities in this way, it was only as a means of providing women opportunities to study there. Rather, the male-dominant

academic circles in Japan didn't exactly understand that Home Economics was a suitable discipline learned in universities. They only agreed because of the fact that it was taught in universities in the United States. Even leaders pushing on establishment of women's universities made use of this fact in order to realize their ambition.

Consequently, faculties of Home Economics in mainland Japan were usually composed of researchers and educators of the disciplines existing in universities from before the war. And each faculty was shaped in its own way under the strong influence of the surroundings and people concerned, because no one tried to form the standard learning of Home Economics.

On the other hand, in the Ryukyus, Home Economics as a discipline was introduced exactly as it was in US universities. That was because the area was governed directly by U.S. troops, and there was no functioning university at the end of war. In addition, the advisory group from Michigan State University, one of the leading land-grant colleges, took an important part in the management of the research and education of Home Economics in the University of the Ryukyus. The aim of land-grant colleges is serving the community and extension programs are the essential services for them. Therefore, Home Economics as well as Agriculture was set up as the main branch of learning and extension programs based on those disciplines were recognized as the key activities in the University of the Ryukyus.