

# CONSUMER EDUCATION IN JAPAN: MOVING TOWARDS A DIGITAL SOCIETY

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# The consumer education system, and provider of education per life stage

Areas of priority		Life stage		Adulthood				
		Infancy	Elementary school	Junior high school	High school	Mostly youths	Adults in general	Mostly the elderly
Creating a society of consumer-citizens	Understanding consumer impact Responsible spending habits Consumer participation and cooperation	Family	School	University	Workplace	Community		
Safety of products, etc.	Understanding product safety and danger-avoidance skills Problem-handling skills							
Life management and contracts	Astute understanding of, and an attitude towards choice and contracts Life design and management skills							
Information and media	Skills to gather, process, and share information Critical thinking regarding consumer habits and information Understanding the rules and ethics of an information society							

# Consumer education in Japanese schools

	Home economics	Social studies
Elementary school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Importance of goods and money, shopping (1947–)</li> <li>- The mechanics of shopping (the basics of sales contract), the role of consumers (2020–)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ideas for sales jobs/businesses</li> <li>- Laws and rules of social life</li> </ul>
Junior high school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Purchasing methods, characteristics of payment methods</li> <li>- Necessity of a well-planned management of money</li> <li>- Basic knowledge on sales contract, the background of consumer damage and the way to deal with</li> <li>- Purchases that utilize the information that is necessary to choose goods and services</li> <li>- An understanding of basic consumer rights and responsibilities</li> <li>- Ideas and practices for environment-friendly consumer life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Importance of agreements and the compliance of such, personal responsibility</li> <li>- Meaning of economic activity, especially towards everyday consumer habits</li> <li>- The workings and functions of modern production and finance</li> <li>- Roles of the national and local governments</li> </ul>
High school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Economic management and planning for life from a long-term perspective</li> <li>- Merits and issues of a cashless society to the family finance</li> <li>- Decision-making based on utilizing everyday information</li> <li>- Behavior based on an awareness of consumer rights and responsibilities</li> <li>- Consumer issues and/or the independence of and support for the consumer</li> <li>- Responsibility that comes with making an agreements, and how consumer protection works</li> <li>- Practicing a sustainable consumer habit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Limits of the mechanism and functions of a market, and it's problems and issues</li> <li>- Roles and responsibilities of individuals and companies engaging in economic activity</li> <li>- Economic growth, business cycles, and improving the welfare of the people</li> <li>- The government's role, public spending, taxes, and finance</li> <li>- Employment, labor, and social security in Japan</li> </ul>

# Consumer education in Japanese schools

## Extracurricular learning

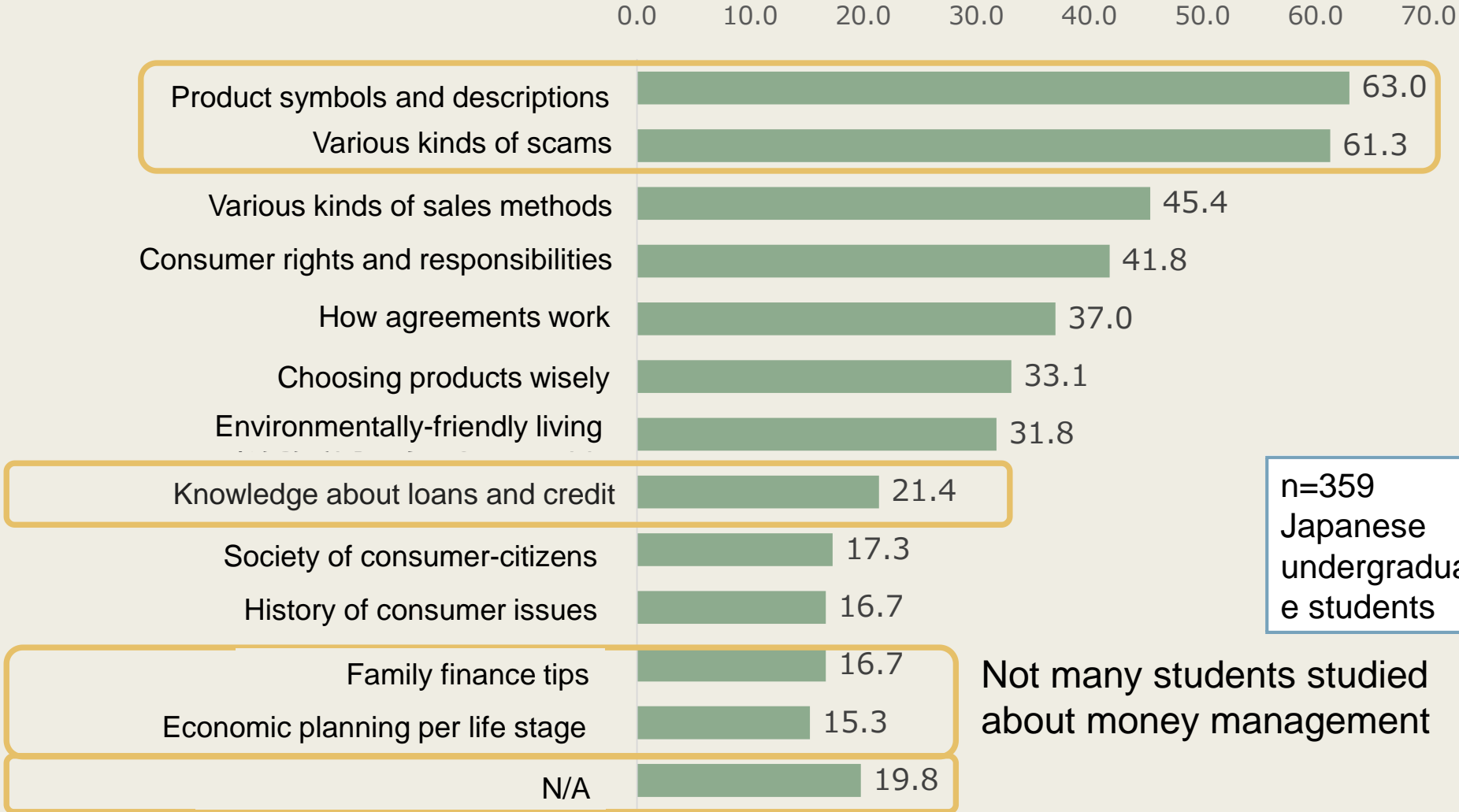
- Learning and education during integrated studies, etc.
    - Human rights education
    - Career education
    - Disaster prevention education
    - SDGs
    - Environmental studies, etc.
  - Special activities
    - Events such as school festivals
    - Club activities, etc.
- Proactive schools are engaged in advanced initiatives.

## Utilize external personnel as educators

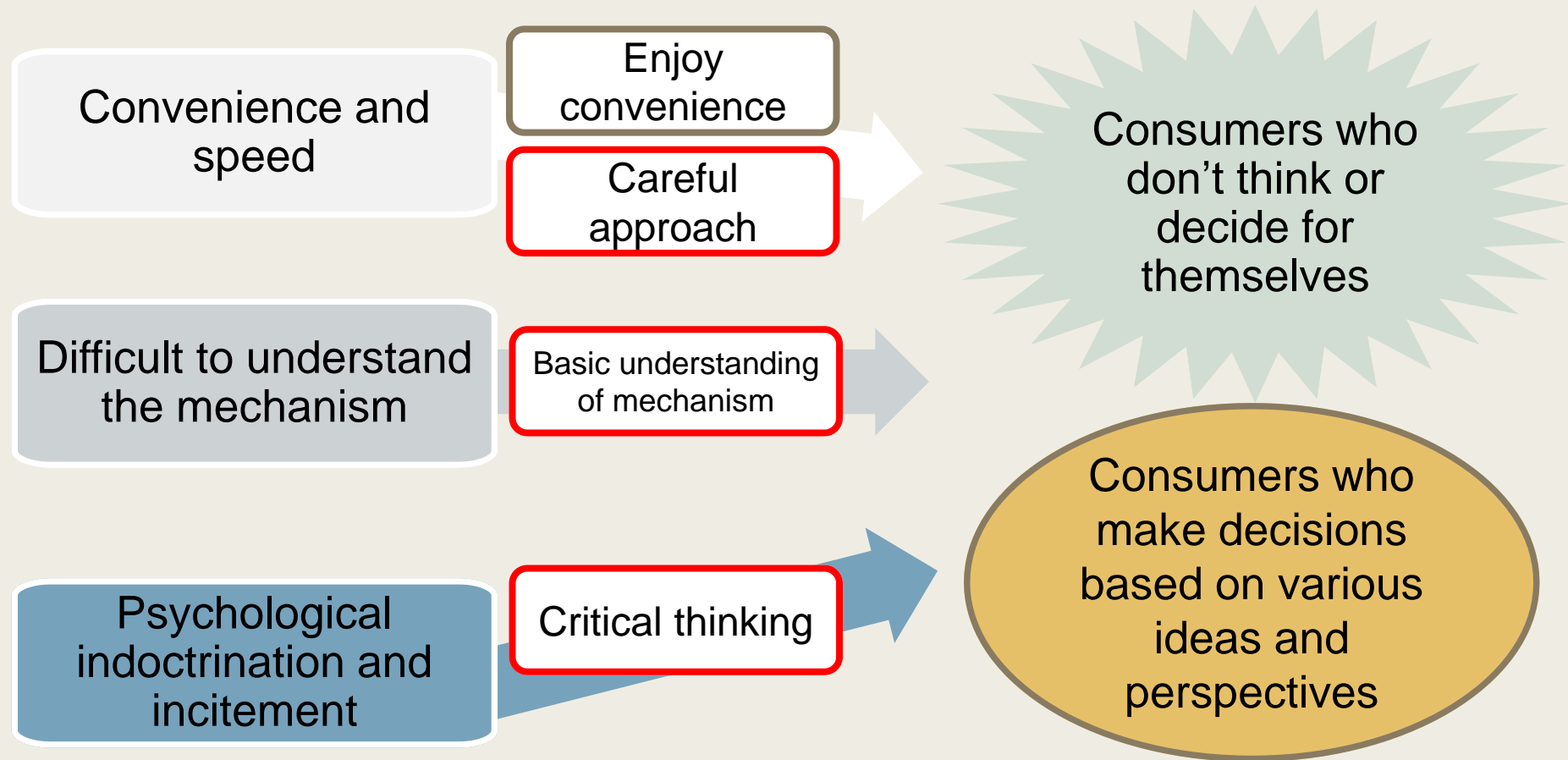
- Various special classes taught by visiting business owners, local experts, etc.
    - Online trouble
    - Dangers of drugs
    - Dental health
    - Environmental education
    - Consumer education
    - Career guidance, etc.
- Special visiting classes for preparing 18-years-olds attaining adulthood are taking place throughout the nation.

# Consumer education before university: survey of undergraduate students

Over 60% learned about product descriptions and scams, while about 20% did not.



# Challenges of consumer education in an age of digitalization



Consumers are led to not think for themselves and to let others make decisions for them.

We need to teach consumers how to think and decide for themselves.