Transformation of Home Economics Education Theories of the Japan Teachers’ Union in the 1960s: With a Focus on Mitsuhiro Sotozaki’s Criticism

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Abstract

The Home Economics Working Group in the Central Curriculum Study Committee (Chukyoken), which played a key role in the 1960s’ educational research in the Japan Teachers’ Union (Nikkyoso), proposed a curriculum plan for Home Economics in January 1961. The Home Economics Working Group was highly motivated to oppose the government and to demonstrate an entirely new curriculum based on the ruling idea in Nikkyoso that curricula should be systematic and scientific-based. However, the plan brought a fierce backlash, and afterwards, the Working Group was forced to withdraw the plan and change the basis of their theory after August 1962. Around the same time, Sotozaki Mitsuhiro, who was an assistant professor at Kochi Junior College, and Home Economics teachers belonging to the Kochi Teachers’ Union criticized the Working Group’s plan, but earlier studies do not have much information on Sotozaki and the teachers’ criticism. Focusing on Sotozaki’s assertion, this article reveals the following: 1. Sotozaki and his followers claimed that curricula should put importance on not just academic information but also relevance to children’s actual life. 2. Sotozaki and his followers’ criticism caused the withdrawal of the Working Group’s plan, and lead to changes in the Working Group’s thought to the one that prioritizes both children’s life and science, and in addition, the transformation affected the subsequent studies on Home Economics education in Nikkyoso and private educational research organizations.

Key words: Sotozaki Mitsuhiro, the Kochi Teachers’ Union, the Japan Teachers’ Union, Nikkyoso, History of Home Economics Education