

Abstract

This thesis is a documentary research aiming to investigate role and operation including the operational outcomes of the state and local governments and private and civil citizens of Japan in the protective process of consumers in terms of food security. The result of the study is as follows.

Japanese government enacted a number of laws and regulations for protection of food consumers. They also launched a lot of campaigns to encourage the consumers to be aware of their own rights and to be self-independent. However, there had still been problems continuously occurring to the consumers. This might result from the control and inspection of the government. In particular, the control and inspection in the aspects thought not to be severe to the consumers were not strictly carried out. This resulted in ineffectiveness and in the protection of food consumers of Japan.

However, Japanese media played an important role in attracting the government to pay attention in punishing food entrepreneurs who were against the laws. Unfortunately, since the amount of foods was so much that the government sectors could not inspect thoroughly. The government was able to take an immediate action once the affected consumer cases were controversial and uncovered by the media; for example, Fujiya Candy Company used the expiry milk as an ingredient in candy production and the production of artificial beef.

Regarding the private sectors, it was found that economic conditions influenced the responsibility level of the sectors for the consumers' safety. Evidently, in the rise of economy, the companies were more responsible for society and consumers than when in the economy downturn. Mostly they just tried to abide by the laws instead of taking leading roles in creating means to protect food consumers. Also, it was likely that they breached the laws; this might derive from the need to reduce cost in their productions and lack of awareness of the manufacturers.

Japanese private sectors namely consumers and involved organizations were found to have role and participation more in than in the past in food safety protection for the consumers. However, function performance and the roles were not

apparent and high enough to form the groups or organizations in helping the consumers in their search for knowledge and launching of the campaigns to make the consumers aware of their own rights and functions.

In addition, the following aspects related to the food safety consumer protection were also found in this research.

1. There have been strict laws and regulations on both imported and domestic foods and goods.
2. There have been strict inspections on foods imported into Japan.
3. The strictness in control and inspections of foods that might have severe and sudden effects on consumers' health and life.
4. There have been the applications of computer networks in inspecting sources of foods.
5. There have been organization establishments to be the center of the administration in consumer protections.
6. There have been regulations for protection of the consumers in the 21th century.