

# Interactive Online/Distance Workshop of Sexuality Education for University Students

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[Received July 2, 2021 ; Accepted February 7, 2022]

**Background:** In Japan, sexual health has been an important issue for a long time for many reasons. Considering the current state of abortions and sexually transmitted diseases among adolescents and teenagers, sexuality education, particularly for youth, should be further emphasized and enhanced.

**Objective:** The purpose of this study was to carry out a sexuality education workshop for university students, who as a group are likely to become sexually active, and to examine its effectiveness. In the workshop, a university student of the same generation as the participants provided information on sexuality and acted as facilitator. In addition, the workshop was designed to encourage students to actively participate.

**Methods:** In January 2021, a 60-minute workshop was held for students enrolled at University A in the Kanto region. The facilitator was a freshman from the university's faculty of education, and the number of participants was approximately 70. The first 40 minutes of this workshop provided information in a lecture-style, and the final 20 minutes used the chat function to exchange opinions among participants. We fully guaranteed the anonymity of the participants, who were not required to show their names or faces. The survey was conducted in February 2021 using the semi-structured interview method. We interviewed 7 students who had participated in this workshop and had consented to be interviewed. Interviews were conducted individually (approximately 60 minutes per student).

**Results:** As a result of data analysis, the data were coded and classified into 11 subcategories in 5 categories. Specifically, we identified the following 5 categories: [Advantages of online format], [Advantages of the facilitator being of the same generation], [Awareness of the importance of thinking and commenting on sexuality], [Opportunity to share opinions and worries about sexuality with the same generation], and [Awareness of the need for enhanced sexuality education for university students].

**Conclusion:** Regarding the workshop, positive opinions were shown about the fact that anonymity was ensured and that a university student of the same generation was the facilitator. This practice encouraged the participants to participate voluntarily and exchange opinions, suggesting that this workshop was meaningful. While sexuality education for university students is not sufficient in Japan, it is hoped that activities similar to this workshop will become widespread in the future. In addition to such activities, it is also important that the aim and content of sexuality education for university students be thoroughly examined.

**Keywords:** sexuality education, university students, online education, workshop, semi-structured interviews

[School Health Vol.18, 20-31, 2022]

## I. Introduction

In Japan, sexual health has been an important issue for a long time for many reasons. In particular, the

problems of abortion (due to unintended pregnancy) and sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS, need to be addressed. To this end, individuals should be equipped with sufficient knowledge and understanding

to act appropriately in their sexual lives. It is necessary to realize a society where the human rights of all people, regardless of gender, are respected, and where people lead a mentally and physically healthy lifestyle throughout their lives. To prevent and mitigate these problems, individual students should be provided with sexuality education according to their developmental stage. Considering the current state of abortions<sup>1)</sup> and sexually transmitted diseases<sup>2)</sup> among recent adolescents and teenagers, sexuality education, particularly for youth, needs to be further emphasized and enhanced to prevent unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.

Sexuality education for elementary, junior high, and high school students should be part of the regular curriculum, and it should be a guaranteed part of public education. Namely, it should be taught individual school subjects such as physical and health education, as well as being provided through student-led activities, integrated study, inquiry-based cross-disciplinary study, and a special subject called morality. The information provided should be tailored to the student's age<sup>3)</sup>. In 2008, the Central Council for Education issued a report<sup>4)</sup> on sexuality education in schools, which outlined the basic concept of sexuality education as "a correct understanding of the mental and physical growth and development of children". Revision of the National Curriculum Standards has expanded the learning content of sexuality education. Thus, it is considered that better practices are being developed in schools. For example, in the Course of Study for Elementary Schools<sup>5)</sup> revised in 1998, the subject of health was introduced for the middle grades of elementary schools. In the fourth grade, physical growth and development, and changes in the body during puberty were focused on in the subject "The Growing Body and Mind", placing sexuality education at an earlier stage. Thus, all school students are provided with sexuality education in their curricula.

However, on the other hand, sexuality education for university students is not necessarily ensured, and it is important to improve it in the future. It has been shown that the percentage of Japanese university students who have had sexual intercourse is significantly higher than that of high school students and is approximately 50% for both males and females<sup>6)</sup>. It is important to take into account the characteristics of the developmental stage of university students and to prevent sexual health problems through an educational approach different from that adopted in high schools. Thus far, research on the practices of sexuality education for university students has investigated education focusing on the acquisition

of scientific biological knowledge<sup>7)</sup>, on the concept of sexuality and reproduction<sup>8)</sup>, and on comprehensively covering "human beings and sexuality"<sup>9)</sup>. These were all provided by the university faculty in a lecture style. The research suggests that these lectures were effective for students in increasing their awareness of the importance of life and broadening their views on sexuality, in addition to acquiring knowledge.

To improve sexuality education for university students in the future, it is necessary to devise teaching methods which take into account modern issues. When we considered the situation today, we found that there are limits to the teaching of specific ideas and knowledge about sexuality, because they may include the use of stereotypes. The use of such ideas may not be effective because the values, ideas, and ways of thinking about sexuality have diversified, and science and technology, including reproductive medicine, have made advances. With this background, we believe that an interactive approach for young people of the same generation to discuss and exchange opinions with one another will be indispensable in sexuality education for university students in the future rather than the traditional, lecture-style "teaching" approach. In the interactive approach, young people will not only acquire new knowledge but also come in contact with the diverse values of various people and find their own "answers" to the questions for which there are no "right answers" as a result of exchanging opinions about sexuality. In other words, it is important for students to learn about sexuality through the experience of "talking together" rather than "being taught".

The purpose of this study was to carry out a workshop of sexuality education for university students, who are likely to become sexually active, and to examine its effectiveness. In the workshop, a university student of the same generation as the participants provided information on sexuality as a facilitator. Moreover, the workshop was designed to encourage students to actively participate. Sexual matters are extremely sensitive and private, and there is a great deal of shame and resistance to speaking out. In the workshop, we used an online method that guaranteed anonymity by keeping the names and faces of the participants secret.

## II. Methods

### 1. Outline of workshop

In January 2021, we conducted an interactive online

workshop entitled “Online Sexuality Education: We Are Surprisingly Unaware of Our Sexuality” for students at University A in the Kanto region. This workshop was conducted as part of the Tsukuba Action Project (T-ACT), which is an original project approved by the university and aims to promote the spontaneous and autonomous activities of students. Until 2011, T-ACT was a program for supporting students in response to new social needs known as Good Practice (GP) for Student Support by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. Since 2012, it has been a project for supporting personal development at target universities. In short, T-ACT is an educational project where students work primarily for other students.

In May 2020, the first author, who was a first-year university student at the Department of Education, planned the workshop. Afterwards, advice was received from a full-time teacher affiliated with T-ACT on how to realize the workshop and then from a teacher specializing in health education on how to teach sexuality, allowing the design of the workshop to be refined.

The aim of this workshop was to provide university students with information on contraception and abortion, which are particularly important topics in the field of sexuality and reproduction, as well as with opportunities to think about sexuality and to encourage them to actively exchange their opinions. We attempted to provide practical information that would lead to their own appropriate decision-making and behavioral choices as well as information that would be useful in their daily lives. In this way, we hoped to foster a positive awareness among the participants about sexuality, such that they would consider talking about sexuality not to be indecent or embarrassing, but rather healthy, if based on correct knowledge, and to allow them to recognize the variety of sexual values in the modern world.

The workshop was conducted using an online conference tool and lasted for 60 minutes. It was publicized at the university in advance, and 106 undergraduate and graduate students applied for the workshop. The number of actual participants in the workshop was approximately 70. The planner of the workshop served as the facilitator. Two students were assigned to be technical staff who supported the online workshop using PCs. The participants used pseudonyms to enter the online conference interface. The video and audio were kept off. A chat function was used to ask questions of the participants and to allow them to exchange opinions among themselves. All chats sent by the participants were first screened by the technical staff,

who checked the contents before disclosing them to the entire group, to ensure privacy and prevent inappropriate comments. Before starting the workshop, the participants were reminded not to engage in any malicious acts or pranks.

## 2. Contents of workshop (Table 1)

The workshop consisted of two main parts. In the first part, the facilitator provided the participants with information on sexuality in a lecture style for approximately 40 minutes. The second part was for the facilitator to answer questions from the participants and for the participants to exchange their opinions with each other using the chat function for approximately 20 minutes.

In the first part, the facilitator provided information on sexuality education in daily life using a slideshow to encourage the participants to reconsider and deepen their understanding and ideas. Specifically, it was explained that sexuality education is not only about the biological aspects related to reproduction, such as pregnancy and contraception, but also about physical and mental development, gender, values, and communication. The presentation also introduced overseas sexuality education<sup>10)</sup> that comprehensively covers these aspects from a foreign perspective. In addition, issues related to sexuality in Japan and the current status of sexuality education in schools were explained. The participants were prompted to review the content of sexuality education in Japan based on the Course of Study and to examine what type of educational approach is required to improve and resolve sexual issues such as abortion and sexually transmitted diseases, particularly for university students. Low-dose pills, condoms, and emergency contraceptives were introduced as practical methods of contraception, and abortion was explained. It was explained that contraceptive methods should be used appropriately, and even when used appropriately, they may not be fully effective. It was also mentioned that we need to respect the choice of women who have no alternative but to get an abortion, while at the same time highlighting the importance of minimizing abortion as much as possible because of the great physical and emotional burdens the procedure places on patients.

While the facilitator was providing information, questions and free comments were always accepted through the chat function, which was open to all the participants. There were 104 questions and comments, meaning that an active exchange took place. In addition

**Table 1** Development of sexuality education workshop

Contents	Main questions and their purpose	Devised teaching method
1. What is sexuality education? • Raising issues regarding sexuality education. • Introduction of comprehensive sexuality education.	"What is sexuality education?" • To establish the diversity of contents of sexuality education. • To find a need to clarify what sexuality education refers to when discussing sexuality education.	• Devised a way for students to rethink the education itself by introducing comprehensive sexuality education and asking "What is sexuality education?".
2. Current status and issues of sexuality education in Japanese school education • Purpose and goals of sexual guidance in school. • Cross-curricular sexual guidance • Issues of sexuality education at school.	"Is sexuality education at school really delayed?" • To create an opportunity to look back on sexuality education at school.	• Although there are growing opinions that sexuality education at Japanese schools is delayed, we encouraged students to make a decision based on the current state of sexual guidance at schools.
3. Current status and issues of sexuality in Japan • Activities to raise awareness of sexually transmitted diseases in Japan. • Current situation of syphilis and HIV/AIDS in Japan. • Current situation and issues regarding self-awareness in Japan.	(No question)	• We tried to help students recognize that sexuality education is not just a problem for schools, but a problem that Japan as a whole should deal with.
4. Purpose of this workshop • To confirm characteristics of sexuality education for university students and matters to be considered. • To confirm sexuality education policies and priorities for university students.	"Why do university students also need sexuality education?" • To understand that sexuality education is not completed by high school and is very important even for university students. "Why do we need to learn a specific method?" • To find a need to be prepared for sexual behavior as they are self-reliant and have sexual behavior. "How do you do if you get into an undesired situation?" • To explore the possibility that sexual behavior may lead to undesired situations for everyone. • To understand that it is effective to know what kind of contraceptive method is available.	• Asked many questions to help students understand that sexuality education is also important for university students. • Promoted the understanding of the ideal form of sexuality education that university students need by explaining that university students are unique as they can be self-reliant and have sexual behavior.
5. Contraceptive method • Condoms • Low-dose pills	(No question)	• Explained contraceptive methods to help students understand the need for contraception and the lack of reliable contraceptive methods.
6. If contraception fails • Emergency contraceptives and morning-after pills • Abortion (vacuum aspiration, curettage)	(No question)	• Introduced methods when contraception fails, keeping in mind that there is no reliable contraceptive method. • Explained that even abortion should be respected as an option, keeping in mind that there are various opinions regarding abortion, etc.
7. Summary	"What is sexuality education?" "Why do university students also need sexuality education?" "Why do we need to learn a specific method?"	• Represented the question and encouraged them to review the program and have an opportunity to think about the questions based on the learned contents.
8. Q & A, exchange of opinions	(No question)	• Encouraged interactive learning between the students and between the host and the students by using the chat function.

to questions and opinions about the information provided by the facilitator, the participants shared their own ideas and knowledge and asked and answered questions among themselves, indicating an active exchange among the participants. Examples of comments included, “I want you to tell me more about low-dose pills.”, “When we talk about sex, people often see it with frosty eyes in Japan, but thinking about sex while living is very important, I think.”, “As long as pregnancy is something that only women can do, we should give more information to men who cannot experience it”.

### 3. Evaluation

A survey was conducted using a semi-structured interview method in February 2021. The participants in the survey were seven undergraduate students (three males and four females) with ages of 19 to 22 years who participated in the program entitled “Online Sexuality Education: We Are Surprisingly Unaware of Our Sexuality” and who agreed to cooperate in the survey (Table 2).

Each participant was individually interviewed to collect data. The interviewer was a researcher specializing in health education. The duration of the interview was approximately 60 minutes per participant. The interviews were conducted following an interview script that consisted of 22 questions. In this study, we evaluated the appropriateness of the content and method of this online sexuality education workshop using the answers to 5 questions. We also evaluated the achievement of the goals of this workshop from the perspectives of whether or not the participants’ understanding was deepened through this workshop and whether or not the participants enjoyed taking part in this workshop.

**Table 2** Demographic characteristics of participants

ID	Gender	Years
A	Female	2nd
B	Male	1st
C	Female	1st
D	Female	1st
E	Male	3rd
F	Female	1st
G	Male	1st

These 5 questions were:

- 1) Why did you participate in this online sexuality education workshop?
- 2) Did you gain any new knowledge in the online sexuality education workshop? If yes, what?
- 3) What were the good points of the online sexuality education workshop, and what should be improved?
- 4) Do you think that online sexuality education is better than face-to-face sexuality education, or do you think face-to-face sexuality education is better? Why?
- 5) Would you personally be willing to provide this kind of sexuality education to your fellow university students in the future?

The interviews were recorded with the consent of the participants, and transcripts were prepared.

The survey was conducted with the approval from the Research Ethics Committee of Health and Sport Sciences, University of Tsukuba (Project Number: Tai020-153, 28 December 2020). We explained the purpose and content of the survey as well as ethical considerations both orally and in writing, and obtained the participants’ written informed consent in advance.

The obtained data were analyzed as linguistic records (transcripts) using a qualitative descriptive method. To maintain the consistency of the data, a researcher specializing in health education extracted the opinions related to the evaluation of the workshop and categorized and coded them according to their similarity. Next, the researcher and a doctoral student classified the codes from the viewpoint of similarity in meaning and grouped them into subcategories. The subcategories were then categorized with a higher-order concept to clarify the details of the evaluation of the online sexuality education workshop.

## III. Results

As a result of data analysis, the codes were classified into 11 subcategories in 5 categories. Below, we describe the characteristics of each category and show some representative content. Here, the categories, subcategories, and codes are denoted by [ ], < >, and “ ”, respectively.

### 1. [Advantages of online format] (Table 3)

This category is related to the opinions on the advantages of the workshop on sexual themes and



**Table 3** Subcategories and codes in category [Advantages of online format]

Subcategories	Codes
<Importance of anonymity to talk about sexual content>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “With a certain degree of anonymity, I am willing to send out information about sexuality.”</li> <li>• “Because we did not use our real names, we were able to discuss anything in a free atmosphere and on equal terms.”</li> <li>• “In face-to-face lessons, I did not express my honest opinions because I was worried about the people around me.”</li> <li>• “I think that the exchange of opinions was active because privacy was taken into consideration.”</li> <li>• “I felt that everyone expressed opinions because we were anonymous.”</li> <li>• “I feel it is hard to talk with each other about sexual topics in a non-anonymous condition.”</li> <li>• “Because anonymity was guaranteed, I was able to give my opinion.”</li> <li>• “I think that various opinions were given because they were anonymous.”</li> <li>• “I am not comfortable discussing sexual themes with people I have never met face to face before using my real name.”</li> <li>• “Because we did not know who made each comment, the chat was active and I felt more motivated to participate in the chat.”</li> <li>• “Being online and anonymous also motivated me to participate.”</li> </ul>
<Advantages of chat-style speaking tools>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I felt that it would be easier to organize and convey my thoughts by writing them rather than speaking.”</li> <li>• “It was good to open other people's opinions in letters and review them.”</li> </ul>
<Characteristics of online environment>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I think the online format is advantageous because of anonymity and the protection of privacy.”</li> <li>• “In the online environment, the number of things that participants shared with each other, such as the atmosphere of the place, was smaller than that in the face-to-face environment; so, I think that many opinions were given by the participants.”</li> <li>• “I felt comfortable while listening to the lecture because we did not have to follow normal etiquette, such as being formally dressed.”</li> <li>• “I think the online program is easy to participate in because we can access it anywhere.”</li> </ul>

consists of three subcategories. The subcategories are <Importance of anonymity to talk about sexual content>, <Advantages of chat-style speaking tools>, and <Characteristics of online environment>.

It was found that the participants were concerned about anonymity, which is difficult to realize in a face-to-face situation, as shown by the following codes: “I am not comfortable discussing sexual themes with people I have never met face to face before using my

real name” and “I feel it is hard to talk with each other about sexual topics in a non-anonymous condition”. In this workshop, the video was turned off, the chat function was used for comments, and nicknames were used instead of real names. The participants felt that anonymity was guaranteed and were satisfied with these measures, as represented by the following codes: “I felt that everyone expressed opinions because we were anonymous”, “Because we did not use our real names,

we were able to discuss anything in a free atmosphere and on equal terms”, and “Because we did not know who made each comment, the chat was active and I felt more motivated to participate in the chat”. The participants also considered that the online method was effective, as shown by the following codes: “I felt comfortable while listening to the lecture because we did not have to follow normal etiquette, such as being formally dressed” and “I think the online program is easy to participate in because we can access it anywhere”.

## 2. [Advantages of the facilitator being of the same generation] (Table 4)

This category is related to the opinions on the workshop as peer education and consists of two subcategories. The two subcategories are <Motivation for participation> and <Impact on change of awareness of oneself and others>.

We found that the motivation for participation in the workshop was the facilitator being a young person of the same generation as the participants, as shown in the following code: “I was very surprised that a first-year student like myself has his/her own class, and I was interested in what kind of class it was; so, I took the class”. In addition, the participants considered it important for young people of the same generation to be interested in sexuality and work on their own initiative, as represented by the following codes: “I think that young people who participated in the workshop will be able to educate younger generations, such as their children, with correct knowledge when they become parents” and “I think that the activity done by young people on their own

initiative will have an impact on other generations who learn about it and change their sense of values”.

## 3. [Awareness of the importance of thinking and commenting on sexuality] (Table 5)

This category is related to the opinions about how the participants have considered sexuality thus far and what action to take in the future and consists of two subcategories. The two subcategories are <A sense of discomfort toward the tendency to view sex as taboo> and <Need to think and change consciousness about sexual matters, including diverse and important issues>.

The participants reviewed their sexual situation and consciousness, as shown by the following codes: “I have a strong sense that sexual matters are embarrassing and something that should not be talked about” and “I feel that people of my parents’ generation strongly think that sexual matters are embarrassing and should not be talked about”. Based on the current sexual situation, the participants also considered what actions to take in the future, as represented by the following codes: “I feel that some people still discriminate against women and force younger people to behave in a masculine or feminine way, although I think that the number of such people has decreased since my mother’s time. Such a way of thinking should be eliminated and might have been partly affected by the surrounding environment. I think it is important to create an environment where people can learn about sexuality” and “We need to learn about sexuality, share our way of thinking about sex with our partners, and make them recognize that mutual consent is necessary for sex”.

**Table 4** Subcategories and codes in category [Advantages of the facilitator being of the same generation]

Subcategories	Codes
<Motivation for participation>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“I was very surprised that a first-year student like myself has his/her own class, and I was interested in what kind of class it was; so, I took the class.”</li> </ul>
<Impact on change of awareness of oneself and others>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“The practice of peer education was very beneficial to me and I was satisfied with the workshop.”</li> <li>“I think that young people who participated in the workshop will be able to educate younger generations, such as their children, with correct knowledge when they become parents.”</li> <li>“I think that the activity done by young people on their own initiative will have an impact on other generations who learn about it and change their sense of values.”</li> </ul>

**Table 5** Subcategories and codes in category [Awareness of the importance of thinking and commenting on sexuality]

Subcategories	Codes
<p>&lt;A sense of discomfort toward the tendency to view sex as taboo&gt;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I have a strong sense that sexual matters are embarrassing and something that should not be talked about.”</li> <li>• “The elderly generation feels that the sexual content is taboo, and the younger generation feels that it is regarded as a story.”</li> <li>• “I feel that people of my parents’ generation strongly think that sexual matters are embarrassing and should not be talked about.”</li> </ul>
<p>&lt;Need to think and change consciousness about sexual matters, including diverse and important issues&gt;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I feel that some people still discriminate against women and force younger people to behave in a masculine or feminine way, although I think that the number of such people has decreased since my mother’s time. Such a way of thinking should be eliminated and might have been partly affected by the surrounding environment. I think it is important to create an environment where people can learn about sexuality.”</li> <li>• “I think that some people discriminate against LGBTQ, so I think it is necessary to teach them how to remove, change, and deal with the discrimination.”</li> <li>• “I think that women can speak out today more than the previous days.”</li> <li>• “We need to learn about sexuality, share our way of thinking about sex with our partners, and make them recognize that mutual consent is necessary for sex.”</li> </ul>

**4. [Opportunity to share opinions and worries about sexuality with the same generation] (Table 6)**

This category is related to the experience of having opportunities to talk about and discuss sexual matters with peers and consists of two subcategories. The two subcategories are <Desire to share opinions and worries about sexuality> and <Few opportunities to share sexual content with young people of the same generation>.

The participants wished to share and talk about sexual matters with others but felt it difficult to do so because such matters are serious and private, as shown by the following codes: “I felt resistance to using a low-dose pill because I had no knowledge about it, and I wanted to ask and consult someone about its use” and “I hesitated to talk about sexual matters with people around me and felt uneasy, and I wanted a place where I can casually talk about such matters”.

Moreover, the participants had little experience in talking and sharing opinions about sexual matters with others, as indicated by the following codes: “Because it is difficult to hear the opinions of friends about sexual matters, this workshop was a very valuable opportunity for me to hear the opinions of peers” and

“I was interested in this workshop because I had no opportunities to talk about sexuality with my peers and I thought it difficult to ask them about it”.

**5. [Awareness of the need for enhanced sexuality education for university students] (Table 7)**

This category is related to the opinions on the necessity of sexuality education for university students and consists of two subcategories. The subcategories are <Characteristics of university students> and <Necessity of providing sexuality education for university students considering their developmental stage>.

The participants thought that they were likely to have real sexual experience particularly as university students, as shown by the following codes: “As I became a university student, I found that I did not know much about sex despite having real sexual experience” and “I realized that university students tend to have sexual intercourse when I actually had it with my lover while living alone apart from my parents”.

The participants also recognized the importance of sexuality education for university students, as represented by the following codes: “We are at the stage of becoming



**Table 6** Subcategories and codes in category [Opportunity to share opinions and worries about sexuality with the same generation]

Subcategories	Codes
<Desire to share opinions and worries about sexuality>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I felt resistance to using a low-dose pill because I had no knowledge about it, and I wanted to ask and consult someone about its use.”</li> <li>• “When I participated in this workshop, I felt relieved that there were many people who had similar opinions to me.”</li> <li>• “I think it is important that there are people with whom I can discuss sexuality seriously.”</li> <li>• “I hesitated to talk about sexual matters with people around me and felt uneasy, and I wanted a place where I can casually talk about such matters.”</li> </ul>
<Few opportunities to share sexual content with young people of the same generation>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Because it is difficult to hear the opinions of friends about sexual matters, this workshop was a very valuable opportunity for me to hear the opinions of peers.”</li> <li>• “I was interested in this workshop because I had no opportunities to talk about sexuality with my peers and I thought it difficult to ask them about it.”</li> <li>• “Although my friends investigate sexuality, I feel that many people find it unpleasant to talk about sexuality seriously.”</li> <li>• “There is a hurdle to talking about sexual knowledge and consciousness, and I think it is completed within the individual.”</li> </ul>

**Table 7** Subcategories and codes in category [Awareness of the need for enhanced sexuality education for university students]

Subcategories	Codes
<Characteristics of university students>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “As I became a university student, I found that I did not know much about sex despite having real sexual experience.”</li> <li>• “I realized that university students tend to have sexual intercourse when I actually had it with my lover while living alone apart from my parents.”</li> <li>• “We are at the stage where the percentage of people with sexual experience is increasing, so I think that skill-based and practical educations are important.”</li> <li>• “As the number of people who start living alone increases and the environment becomes free, I think that the frequency of actual sexual experiences, including sexual intercourse, will increase.”</li> </ul>
<Necessity of providing sexuality education for university students considering their developmental stage>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “We are at the stage of becoming adults in terms of legal age and are required to behave in a grown-up manner. It is important to provide education considering that, for example, university students are not children but may become parents.”</li> <li>• “Practical sexuality education is needed for university students because they may have lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) friends, but I do not think that is provided.”</li> <li>• “I’m sure some people still don’t know how to actually use pills and condoms.”</li> <li>• “I feel that sexuality education is necessary for university students, but I feel that there are few opportunities to receive sexuality education in my immediate surroundings. I hope that an environment where everyone can receive sexuality education is created.”</li> </ul>

adults in terms of legal age and are required to behave in a grown-up manner. It is important to provide education considering that, for example, university students are not children but may become parents” and “Practical sexuality education is needed for university students because they may have lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) friends, but I do not think that is provided”.

#### IV. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to carry out an online interactive program of sexuality education for university students in a workshop style that encouraged their active participation and to examine its effectiveness. The facilitator was a university student of the same generation as the participants. Semi-structured interviews were conducted after the workshop. The survey results indicated that the participants had positive opinions on the educational method and learning content of the workshop, suggesting that the online interactive program was effective for promoting the exchange of opinions among the participants as an approach to sexuality education.

One of the characteristics of this workshop was the guaranteed anonymity that enabled the participants to keep their faces and names secret. The survey result showed that the online method is effective and advantageous. University students are more sexually active than they were in their high school days,<sup>6)</sup> and they are more likely to think about sexuality in a realistic way. As shown in the results of this study, the participants had sexual concerns but found that their peers were also concerned about the same thing through the exchange of opinions in this workshop. This made them feel relieved and allowed them to recognize the importance of exchanging opinions about sexuality, which is a great achievement. It was also shown that the discussion was active in the workshop where anonymity was guaranteed, suggesting the significance of this workshop that took anonymity into consideration. The exchange of opinions on sexuality can empower individuals with knowledge on what actions to take to solve sexual health problems, such as unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. In a society where talking about sexuality is considered taboo, people tend to keep their sexual anxieties and concerns to themselves without discussing them with others, which may lead to sexual problems. Correct knowledge acquired by sharing anxieties and concerns with others will enable people to make

appropriate decisions and behavioral choices.

One of the positive evaluations of this workshop was that the facilitator was a university student of the same generation as the participants. In sexuality education for children up to high school, the practice of peer education has been reported, and its effectiveness has been shown<sup>11)12)</sup>. In addition, it has been pointed out that one of the issues in peer sexuality education is the fostering of peer educators<sup>13)14)</sup>. The results of this study suggest that having a facilitator of the same generation was a motivation for the participants and their awareness of sexuality increased after the workshop. Therefore, it was found important to set up a place where people of the same generation, such as university students, can frankly exchange their opinions, as done in this workshop, as a means of providing sexuality education to university students. Unlike high school students, university students may be effectively provided with sexuality education from a “think together” stance rather than a “teach–taught” relationship between facilitators (instructors) and participants (learners).

Future tasks are considered as follows. First, we need to further examine the content of sexuality education according to the developmental stage of university students. In this workshop, we provided information mainly on contraceptive methods and abortion. However, it was pointed out that sexuality education should comprehensively cover not only biological aspects but also social themes<sup>10)</sup>. University students need to be further educated as members of society and acquire the ability to live as an individual<sup>15)</sup>. Sexuality education for university students should aim not only at preventing sexual health problems but also at educating them from a viewpoint of diversity and human rights, including fostering a sense of values on various sexualities and genders and understanding the sexuality of people with disabilities. For example, Fukuda and Ushitora<sup>16)</sup> stated that sexuality education should be based on the perspective of respecting the value and dignity of all individuals and realizing their human rights. In addition, one report shows that school sexuality education appears to be ineffective, with high school students scoring poorly when tested on their sexual knowledge<sup>17)</sup>. Therefore, basic sexual knowledge may also need to be complemented by sexuality education for university students.

Second, we should emphasize approaches to prevent sexual violence and its resulting health damage in Japan, as the serious problem of sexual violence has become increasingly apparent in the world. Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has developed

teaching materials and guidelines for life safety education<sup>18)</sup> with the aim of strengthening measures against sexual crimes and sexual violence. In the guidelines, information on measures against sexual harassment and sexual consent, as well as counselling departments, is given for university students. The guidelines also make it clear that sexual violence is never acceptable. Communication based on human relationships is an important factor in the prevention of sexual violence and should therefore be taken into consideration in sexuality education.

Third, we should design educational programs where participants can engage in interactive discussions rather than simply having opinions transmitted in a one-way manner with the aim of fostering their various values on sexuality and promoting their understanding of the diversity of people. It is desirable to examine both the merits and demerits of anonymous programs, such as our workshop, and face-to-face programs.

Finally, sexuality education programs for university students should be continuously provided in the future because such programs are still insufficient. We also need to increase the interest of university students in sexuality education so that it can be provided more widely. To this end, the aim of sexuality education for university students should be clarified. Sexuality education for children up to high school is designed to encourage the harmonic development of their mind and body, form their personality, and ensure their healthy growth<sup>19)</sup>. Nozu<sup>20)</sup> stated that in a society where various problems and values related to sexuality exist, it is essential to conduct sexuality education with the aim of fostering the children's ability to independently think/judge and to act appropriately based on their values and knowledge as they build their self-worth. Considering that these are the aims of sexuality education for children up to high school, it is necessary that the aims of sexuality education for university students should be examined in more depth.

## V. Conclusion

Regarding the workshop, positive opinions were shown about the fact that anonymity was ensured and that a university student of the same generation was the facilitator. This practice encouraged the participants to participate voluntarily and exchange opinions, suggesting that this workshop was meaningful. While sexuality education for university students is not sufficient in Japan, it is hoped that activities such as this workshop

will become widespread in the future. In addition to such activities, it is necessary to examine the aim and content of sexuality education for university students.

## Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank the students who cooperated in this study.

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