

Developmental Changes of Distribution and Allocation Behavior in Young Childhood

YOKOTA Seiko

Graduate School of Science for Human Services, Ritsumeikan University

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The purpose of this study is to investigate the developmental changes of distribution and allocation behavior in young childhood.

In this study, children from one to four years of age were asked to distribute wooden blocks onto plates. Three conditions were stipulated: (1) simple distribution (8–12 blocks/2–3 plates) (N=69), (2) allocating eight blocks onto two plates, one that was named to be the child's plate and one that was named to be the author's plate (n=54), (3) allocating nine blocks onto three plates, one that was named to be the child's plate, one that was named to be the author's plate, and one that was named to be the child's mother's or father's plate (who was not present at the observation) (n=51).

The results indicate that children one to four years of age exhibit a complex process in distribution and allocation behavior. Early two-year-olds (24–29 months) are able to distribute and also start to show equal distribution, while older two-year-olds (30–35 months) tend to allocate unequally and also tend to allocate more blocks onto their own plate. Three-year-olds (36–47 months) again tend to equally distribute, and early four-year-olds (48–53 months) show stable equal distribution.