

CRITICAL THINKING IN FINANCIAL EDUCATION

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Research interests and perspective

- Financial education in Danish primary school – a (rather) new topic
- How is critical thinking currently a dimension of financial education in Danish primary school? What is the content and limits of the given forms of critical thinking?
- Financial education seen as a branch of consumer education

Four types of consumer education and resultant type of consumer

Table 1 Four types of consumer education and resultant type of consumer^{20,21}

Type 1. Consumer information, protection and advocacy

Nature of consumer education

- Taught to navigate the consumer world and make better decisions
- Provided or transferred information
- Learn about rights and, to a lesser extent, responsibilities
- Taught technical skills (budget, interest)
- Intent it to avoid markets exploiting them
- Learn about consumer protection and competition policies
- Consumer advocacy and redress

Type of consumer shaped by this education

- Think consuming is good and natural
- Assume they must participate in the consumer culture (they have the key role in the economy)
- See consuming as a way to self-development, self-resilience and self-realization (buy more and spend more to succeed)
- Equate success with money, prestige, accumulation of brand name stuff

Type 2. Individual critique for self-interest

Nature of consumer education

- Taught to question the role of consumption in their own life – take responsibility for their self
- This questioning leads to people making individual changes in their spending patterns and lifestyles

Type of consumer shaped by this education

- Focus is on their self-interest so their level of reflection is still unsophisticated
- Just beginning to question what it means to live in a consumer society, with a focus on environmental impact
- Take individual action to simplify and ecofy their own lifestyles
- Too busy downshifting to reflect on the structure of the consumer society and the market as the real problem (the imbalance of power between citizens, government and business)

Type 3. Critical approach for self-interest

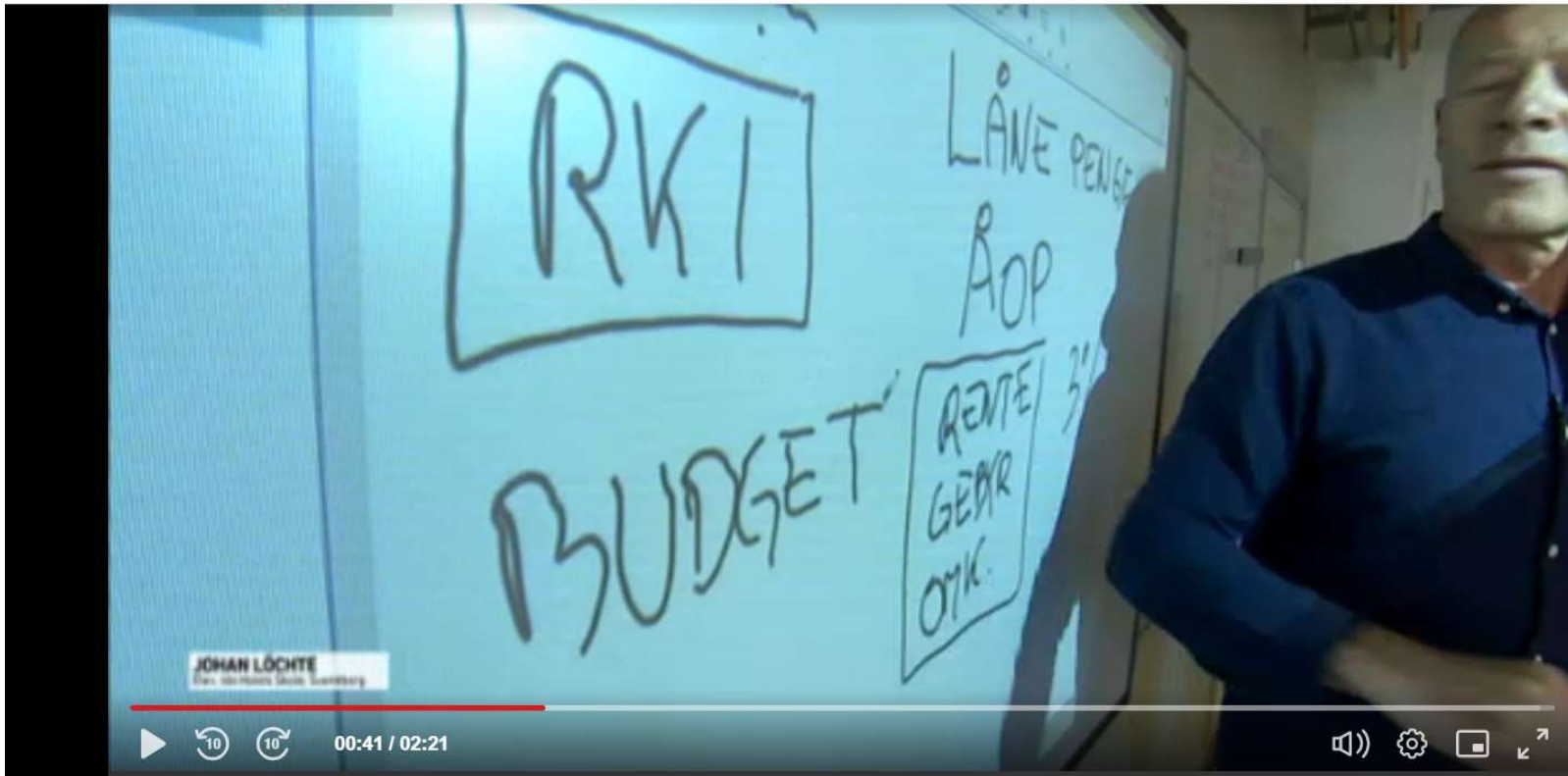
Nature of consumer education

- Teaches people to be critical citizens in their consumer role
- Taught to be critical of context within which they consume (market and consumer society)
- Addresses structural factors and economic and social inequities that disempowers the consumers to *act in their own self-interest*

McGregor, S.L.T. (2005) Sustainable consumer empowerment through critical consumer education: a typology of consumer education approaches. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 29, 5, 437–447



	Type 1. Reflected self-interest	Type 2. Self-interested directed by reflected values	Type 3. Ethical consumerism	Type 4. Critical citizenship
Critical thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Questions the information provided by public and private agents - Money management with respect to self-interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Questions the values that guides consumption - Money management with consideration to personal values (e.g. financial independence) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Questions the consequences of consumption - Money management with societal issues taken into account (e.g. choosing a bank with an ethical profile) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Questions the economic and financial system - Money management guided by common interest
Key concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consumer information - Consumer protection - Consumer advocacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Personal values - Life styles - Life goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CSR - Fair Finance guides - Social issues related to money management and the financial system (e.g. sustainability) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Protests (e.g. Buy Nothing Day, Bank Transfer Day) - Participation in social movements
Type of consumer promoted	Self-interested consumers who can navigate effectively and under given market conditions	Self-interested consumers who can navigate effectively with respect to personal values	Ethical consumers who adress societal issues through their management of money	Critical citizens who adress societal issues by engaging in social movements and activism



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Important skills	Budgetting and other "technical" skills	Downshifting		

Teaching downshifting

Stop buying stuff

Proponents of downshifting recommend that we skip the "shopping fix" and for long periods only buy what is needed to keep us alive. Imagine that you were to follow this recommendation for a month:

- 1) What would you have to stop buying and what would you still be buying? Try to write a list
- 2) Based on this list, how much money would you approximately save? What would you do with this money?
- 3) How would it affect your daily well-being? Explain possible negative and positive consequences
- 4) How would it affect society if many others chose to follow this recommendation. Explain possible negative and positive consequences

Thank you!

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