

# Changing Student's Environment Awareness

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study is to identify what university students at Kansai University in Osaka, Japan learned through environmental learning programs in depopulated areas in Japan. In recent years, universities and nonprofit organizations (NPOs) are actively conducting environmental learning that makes use of regional resources and problem solving, based learning. At universities, such fieldwork activities are focusing on promoting students' learning. The survey method used was the observation of the activities in Osugidani Nature School in Mie Prefecture and the students' reflections after the activity. The results of the fieldwork showed that there was "a change in awareness of how living in an good life." From their experiences, students realized that 1) They must make some changes in their lifestyle. They were consuming things they did not know had adverse effects on the environment. 2) They had the opportunity to rethinking about how they are exploiting the resources of the area without knowing the negative results. In this way, students realized that having a coordinator, similar to the person at Osugidani Nature School, who was capable of planning activities linking nature and students, is important. The fieldwork provided the opportunity for students to understand that some people, have negative influences on the environment without realizing it. This was an important outcome of this research.

**Keywords:** environmental learning, students

## INTRODUCTION

In recent years, universities, NPO corporations, etc. have actively conducted environmental learning that makes use of regional resources and learning problem-solving type. At universes in Japan, such fieldwork activities are gaining attention as promoting students' learning. Although students' environmental education has acquired interests and attitudes, it is currently the case that activities are not tied to action.

## PURPOSE AND METHOD OF RESEARCH

The purpose of this survey is to clarify what students learned through the environmental learning program conducted by NPO corporations in depopulated areas. The survey method is the observation in the activities at Osugidani Nature School and the reflection after the activity.

## Outline of Practice

In practice, students from Kansai University and students from the De La Salle University in the

Philippines participated in the environmental learning program of "NPO corporation Otsugidani Nature School" in Satoyama called Mt. Tama Town of Mie Prefecture in February 2018.

## Results and Reference

As a result, the chance to review the following two factors became clear. There was a change in consciousness to rich living. (1) You are consuming while you do not know things that have adverse effects on the environment; (2) You can have the opportunity to reconsider for yourself what you are exploiting without knowing the resources of the area.

*(1) You are consuming while you do not know things that have adverse effects on the environment*

Osugidani Nature School sponsored a workshop "Compare living environments and tools for 50 years ago and now". Through this activity, students recognized things that have negative influences on the environment that they did not know before.

Since all the old tools at Osugidani were handmade, it took time and effort to use them, but they were environmentally friendly as it used natural animal hair and bamboo. However, many companies are

focusing on mass production and mass consumption in order to build a sustainable society. For example, plastics are frequently used, but when they are discarded they will accumulate and the garbage will not decomposed, causing environmental problems. Furthermore, with raw material using fossil fuel with petroleum, carbon dioxide increases after burning, leading to global warming. It is not good to mass-produce without recycling. It is important that the consumption pace of renewable resources does not exceed the pace of rebuilding. Further examination revealed that Japanese companies have taken environmental measures, but they have not yet discussed these issues and understand that this strategy is important.

(2) *You can have the opportunity to reconsider for yourself what you are exploiting without knowing the resources of the area.*

Also, through dam visits and interviews with local people, students learned that most of the energy produced by the dam is used by people living in city areas like where the students live. For people in the area where the dam is located, the many dams in various areas, reduce places for animal to live and influence the level of the water of contamination in the river that affects the growth of sweetfish due to the dam. Students realized that they exploited the environment without knowing the resources of the area. From these two opportunities, "Changes in perception of rich living" occurred. Before activities in the community, students thought that the environment that they wanted and the things they wanted to eat were easily available in an environment that was richly filled, but the rich life is sometimes inconvenient. The perception has changed that there are individual differences in feeling rich.

As a result, students thought that the existence of a coordinator that can plan activities linking nature and students is important. In addition, they learned that it is important for students to participate in activities that encourage them to notice that there is people can have a bad effect on the environment.

Also, students' awareness of the environment is low. Students learned that they should do these two things, First, it is important to emphasize environmental subjects in compulsory education and second there is a need to increase activities that can involve such environments issues.

Looking back on the overall activities, it is important to understand how to reflect on your thoughts and your thoughts on the environment. In addition, it is important viewpoint to designing programs for environmental learning. Rather than consider environmental problems as other people's affairs, students understood again that the environment and humans must coexist, and should work on environmental issues involving students who have more flexible thinking

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FY2009 low-cost low-load soil contamination investigation countermeasure technology examination evaluation price of target technology

## SUMMARY AND OUTLOOK