



Development of the consumption behavior that promotes sustainable society: Focusing on recycling of small waste home appliances

Takae Ichinose

HIROSHIMA University High School ,Hiroshima, Japan (pecopoco@hiroshima-u.ac.jp)

Hiroshima University High School (HUHS) became the first UNESCO Associated School in Japan in 1953, and since then it has practiced ESD in various educational activities in all ranges of education. As a teacher of home economics, I have focused on consumer affairs and encouraged my students to consider what each of them can do as an individual consumer in order to create a sustainable society.

In Japan, several acts related to consumer affairs have been enforced in recent years. “Act on Promotion of Consumer Education” was enforced in December 2012, and construction of the “Consumer Citizen Society” was proposed. It places emphasis not only on environmental concerns but also on the initiative of consumers and its influence on social and economic trends.

In addition, “Act on Promotion of Recycling of Small Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment” was enforced in April, 2013. It aims at protecting living environment and healthy development of the national economy by appropriate treatment of waste materials and effective use of resources.

For my lessons on “food, clothing and shelter in relation to consumption behavior and environmental problems”, I took up “the recycling of small waste home appliances” as the teaching materials to raise awareness on resources recycling. The purpose of the lessons is three-fold: (1) to make students aware of environmental load; (2) to deepen the understanding of the influence which excessive consumption has on developing countries; (3) to encourage the students to think positively toward the solution of the problems. I am currently practicing the lessons, and I have shown below the summary of the instruction.

Lesson 1: Give a quiz based on the database on environmental label from Ministry of the Environment website. Then show a film on whereabouts of the hi-tech industrial waste (e-waste). After the film, show some everyday products for which mineral resources are used in order to impress the idea of “urban mine”.

Lesson 2: Show a video site on “Act on Promotion of Recycling of Small Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment” uploaded by the Ministry of the Environment. The video site is shown with reference to “Basel Convention” and “Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive”, which have been already taught in social study class. After the video, tell the students what DOWA Holdings Co., Ltd. group has accomplished with its DOWA ecosystem as a frontrunner of the recycling of small waste home appliances, and make the students think about the responsibilities of consumers.

Through these lessons, I expect my students to be aware of the influence of their consumption behavior and think over eco-friendly lifestyles and support for developing countries. Consideration for others, not only for people at present but for future generations, will surely cultivate willingness to contribute to sustainable development.