



SCOPE IN CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN GEOGRAPHY TEACHING IN SCHOOL

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Abstract

The objectivity of Geography education as in Science and Humanities needs to have sound content and should have historical, scientific & environmental validity, and on the whole it has to be ethically meaningful. Going by the objectivity of the subject in education, the aim, content and pedagogy and assessment naturally varies at all stages. Geography as a subject in the school level is a compulsory affair up to standard X, and it is obvious that not all are going to choose geography as a career subject, however, they need to be Geography literate. Therefore, geography curriculum needs to orient towards developing understanding of interface between geography and society, to sensitize them to the issues of environment, health and hazard and its preparedness. The content has to be relevance, meaningful and interesting at every stage. The content need not to be same for the country as a whole, school system of every state should have freedom in designing their syllabus and must consider its geography while designing syllabus. A diverse country like India must reflect itself in terms of diverse syllabi. Syllabus has to be designed with a focus on discussion method and reflection over content dominated syllabus. Activity based course material can also be designed in order to understand the geographical theoretical concepts along with the practical exercise. It is said that geography is understood more through legs, meaning thereby, field work in geographical teaching has larger role to play. Information and communication technology has revolutionized the geographical realms, however, there is still ample of scope in associating those aired programme in teaching.

Keywords: curriculum development, geography teaching

The paper is a manifestation of realization of required changes to be brought in to develop the creative tempo of the students cum teacher more specific at the elementary stage. The aim of Geography education as in Science and Humanities needs to have sound content and should have historical, scientific & environmental validity, and on the whole it has to be ethically meaningful. In view of the fact that in almost all phenomenon among which a person find himself or in other words his environment/ milieu largely revolve around the understanding of geographical facts. Therefore, geography curriculum needs to orient towards developing understanding of interface between geography and society, to sensitize them to the issues of environment, health and hazard and its preparedness. Syllabus has to be designed with a focus on discussion method and reflection over content dominated syllabus. Field work in geographical teaching has larger role to play. This paper tries to look into the scope of curriculum development in Geography teaching in school by looking at the gap between the school & college/university level.

Method & materials

This work is based on the qualitative approach, where in tribal students of First Year B.A.B.Ed students of Calorx Teachers' University who opted Geography as one of their subject during their graduation programme were interviewed & counseled. Perception of the students in the beginning and the conceptual development of the students during the later course of their education have been examined and need for change was realized at a lower stage of their geography education. Also text books at secondary & higher secondary level were examined to

identify the gaps in curriculum.

Why need Education?

To do away with illiteracy and furnish the individual with fundamental skills and knowledge to use his very next environment. To encourage and approve of the value of national unity & cultural heritage. To inculcate ethical & moral values, self-discipline, integrity & the sense of brotherhood. To inculcate sense of community service, duty towards their community. To lead a successful personal, social, economic & healthy life and ultimately contributing towards the making of a sound nation in every aspects.

Objective of Geography Teaching

To be aware of his/her environment. To know what is to be done to take care of environment. To develop an approach (Geographical Approach) which will help in the understanding of global geographical variation. To understand the local milieu through geographical approach of study. To be able to interpret and correlate the physical & humanistic variables of any space in the classroom exercise & also through field observation.

Results & discussions

Based on required objective & aim of the geography teaching mentioned above, questions were framed covering all the above aspects and perception of students were analyzed. The basic questions such as; what is environment, Elements of their local environment, how they interact with their environment for a long lasting healthy relation, how they relate their economic aspects with the type of climate they have, how they look at the geographical variation, whether there is any correlation



between climate & physical features such as availability of River, lakes etc.

Majority of the students understood geography as the name of the place, their capital, continents & oceans. The understanding of basic component of geographical enquiry that is to look for what, where & why was missing among all the respondents.

In order to attempt these questions, observation & understanding of the subject is required. A country as vast as India has a wide variation in terms of the geographical milieu from north to south & east to west, and must also reflect in terms of diverse syllabi. The geography syllabus for country as a whole is almost same, which doesn't allow students or provide any scope in developing their own understanding of space. Some space must be given to the school system to design their syllabus as per their geographical conditions where they find themselves, so that students can learn through experiences. Students should be taught how to write geography through first hand observation than to learn geography from the secondary sources. According to Professor V. L. S. Prakasa Rao, "Geography is learnt by foot", implies the importance of field work in geographical studies. In the absence of desirable syllabi & orientation, students were not in a position to define environment correctly neither they could identify the elements of environment. During the course of their education at our institute, several educational trips both local and at distance places were organized and were informed about the environment and elements of environment of the place visited and were asked to write reports on the visit. Later on the same task was given during their vacation to be carried out at their respective villages or towns and the results were surprisingly positive. The field visits changed their approach to look on to the geographical facts. The text which accumulates as a part of such exercises is the real original geographical interpretation or is the construction of knowledge through activity.

Similar approach was adopted to make the students learn themselves regarding the sustainable use of their resources, what is grown in which area, what type of settlement emerges in which type of geographical space, probability of occurrence of particular relief in different climatic regimes etc. In order to understand the various geographical processes, local trips were also organized during different seasons of a year to acquaint students with the role of different geographical agents of geomorphic processes.

A tremendous change can be seen in the outlook of students after going through the innovations in the method of teaching. It was revealed through the respondent that field study is nil in their course curriculum. The other things being, the geography classes

are engaged by non geographers, which eventually retard the geographical (holistic) thinking.

Geography practical, which has an important place in geography teaching and a pull factor for students towards choosing geography as a career discipline, is very less being taught and is given less of space even in course curriculum.

The result of field study initiative had a far reaching affect. Our students are not only grasping the understanding of their geographical milieu but also helping the students of nearby Prathamik Shala of Ognaj, Gota, Lapkama, Nandoli and Ranchadra in Ahmedabad in understanding their natural & cultural environment. Similar initiatives have been floated by the institute to carry out the similar task in their villages during vacation.

To overcome such problems related to the discipline in question, necessary changes needs to be incorporated, right from geography syllabus at school level to the mode and method of delivery. The required changes can only bridge the gap between what they know and what they ought to know at entry point of college or university level.

Conclusion

It is apparent from the discussion that a true long lasting knowledge can only be generated through activity based exercises, and that will be the real creativity. Development of geographical thought should necessarily naturally start by correlating the physical & cultural phenomenon provided the students are developed to look the things with a holistic approach. Field visits & geography practical and also who is teaching what being the gist of geography teaching need to be given due importance.

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