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A Retrospective Analysis of Geography Curriculum at Higher Secondary Level

Koushik Mondal

Asst. Teacher of Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, Narendrapur, West Bengal, India

Abstract

Curriculum is the main determiner of the teaching learning process. Aim of any curriculum is making of human resource through fruitful transaction. The main objectives of the researcher are to find out the trend of the geography syllabus, evaluation system, and transaction process and its social relevance. The researcher has taken the geography syllabus of the higher secondary stage, has conducted semi structured interview with the experts to collect data. Various tools are used to collect data like-questionnaire, interview, and non-participatory observation. After collection, the data is analysed with various qualitative data analyse procedure. The researcher used content analysis, method of induction, method of deduction for data analysis and interpretation. After an elaborate analysis of the data, the researcher found that the present higher secondary syllabus is more utility based; and the paradigm of geography has been shifted from encyclopaedism to present positivism, pragmatism, and quantitative approach. Evaluation system has changed its rigidity and has become more flexible. In past traditional question pattern was followed, but now unit pattern is followed. It is also found that the knowledge of science is helping students to understand geography better. In case of transaction procedure it is also found that is not significant difference between present (2014) and past (2006, 2007). It is also found that geography helps students and people to concuss about society and environment. At present geography syllabus is directly related with the higher education. So, it can clearly conclude that present geography curriculum is too important and relevant for the present time.

“To learn not only from books and teachers, but to study and learn about yourself - this is basic education.”- Krishnamurti

1.0. Introduction: Curriculum is the way through which we can reach the ultimate goal of education .Syllabus is the part of curriculum and also a text book is one of the best supports of curriculum. Generally there are three basic components of any curriculum – content, transection process and student. Three components are the interrelated with each other. Geography is one of the most important subjects of social science. Geography mainly discuss about origin, evolution of land form, social and political involvements of man, economic activities of human beings. Now we are in the crucial time of the civilization, advancement and development occurred rapidly. So it is very necessary for us to stay update all-time. Education is the gate way of knowledge .So syllabus, curriculum should also be current and update .Some basic principle which is consider at the time of framing the curriculum, like- individual differences, social relevance of content, integration, low of

conservation,creativity.With the change of time geography change its syllabus, utility based various topic included in syllabus. As results students are being very knowlegeous and turn into human resource.

1.1. Objectives of Study:

1. To find out the trend of geography syllabus from the year 2006 to 2014.
2. To find out the change in evaluation system with the change of syllabus.
3. To find out the role of science and technology on geography syllabus.
4. To find out the trend of transactional process with the change of syllabus.
5. To find out the relevance of geography in relation to its social utility.

1.2. Research Questions:

1. Critically analyse the trend of geography syllabus from 2000 to 2014.
2. What are the changes in evaluation system over these years?
3. How does knowledge of science help to understand the geographic concepts?
4. What are the changing patterns of content transaction over these years?
5. How far is geography relevant in terms of social utility?

1.3. Delimitations:

1. The researcher will study the syllabus of class XI and XII.
2. The researcher will take the year 2006 as the base year and 2014 as the end year.
3. The researcher's research work will be delimited to the syllabus of H.S. level formulated by W.B.C.H.S.E.
4. The researcher's research work will be delimited to some selective school teachers of different district of West Bengal.
5. The research work will be delimited to the govt. added Bengali medium schools.

2. Review of related literature and research:

1. SCERT (Andhra Pradesh, 1980): 'Evaluation study of text books in environmental studies of class-iii and v based on revised curriculum in science.' It has found that-1. Most of head masters/mistress and teachers felt that, the old syllabus was not relevant to child cognitive level. 2. The new curriculum was relevant to the environment in which the children lived.

2. Muthappan(1983) worked on "A study of the history curriculum in schools in Tamilnaru science independence". The Researcher found that a significant percentage of teachers had not attended any in-service programmed. Teaching aids were not available to a large percentage of teachers. Excursions were very rarely conducted. Content validity of the question paper was very low, important topics were omitted.

3. Bhattachary (1984) worked on "Effectiveness of various models for teaching geography in relation to institutional resource". The Researcher found that -1.The student taught through concept attainment model showed better achievement in geography than traditional teaching technique group in average and low resource status educational institution. 2. The inductive teaching model grouped proved itself to be more effective for achievement in geography in comparison to the traditional teaching technique as well as concept to attainment model. 3. Students show better achievement in physical geography concept in comparison to human geographical concepts irrespective of the higher or low resource status of educational institution.

4. Patil (1985), worked on "An inquiry into the present position and problems of teaching geography in rural secondary schools of Solapur district". The Researcher found that - 1.no facilities of geography room nor museum was available in a large no of school and the

facilities of livery and teaching aids were inadequate 2. The teachers of geography were academically and professionally well qualified however they could not participate in the in-service programmed. 3. The majority of the teachers followed traditional method such as lecture or question-answer method-however they were aware of certain recent technique and method like evaluation approach. 4. Geography excursion was conducted by the least of the schools.

5. Khalwania (1986), worked on 'Effectiveness of concept based curriculum in developing cognitive structure and acquisition of process skills among high school students.' The Researcher found that-1. Concept based curriculum was more effective than the conventional curriculum in terms of acquisition of process skills as well as in developing the better cognitive structure. 2. The high socio-economic status group and the low socio economic group did equally well in the acquisition of process skills in science.

6. James (1989), worked on "A study to identify the causes of the inadequate qualitative progress of high school students of Meghalaya". The researcher found that inadequate time was devoted to teaching and teachers fail to provide individual attention to students.

7. Jani (1989), worked on "A study of present position of teaching geography in secondary school of Gujarat". The researcher found 50% of teacher were not qualified in subject in geography, 42% teacher did not attend any refresher course. About 72% of teachers were teaching geography through lecture method and without the use of any teaching aids.

8. Begum (1990), worked on "Problems of teaching new science syllabus for standard VII in Andhrapredesh and their impact on pupils achievement". The researcher found that more than 60% of the teachers found the content in the recent syllabus new as well as over loaded. Lack of facilities for science teaching continued to bother teacher a lot.

9. Idayavani (1991), Worked on "Developing a video programmed on weathering and work of the river in physical geography for H.S students". The Researcher found video programming method is more effective in geography than the other methods which are used in geography. Researcher also found that students' concentration fully absorbed in teaching-learning process.

10. Kidwai (1991), worked on "Development of a environmentally oriented curriculum in geography at secondary stage". Researcher found that environment related least topic is introduced in syllabus.

11. NCF (2005): suggested following recommendation:

1. The curriculum must be able to show, how the nation and national unity figures in local perception of the people.
2. The notion of text book is changed from being merely instructive to more suggestive. it is argued that this would offer enough scope for the learner even to go beyond the very textbook, creating more appetite for further reading that is necessary to enrich the understanding of a given phenomenon.
3. The major thrust of the social science curriculum, has remained utilitarian in nature. There is need to achieve a shift in focus from utilitarianism to egalitarianism that would address the normative concerns as mentioned above.

3.0. Methodology of the study:

3.1. Source of data: Syllabus of geography formulated by WBCHSE is one of the main sources of data. Geography books and question paper of examination from 2006 to 2014 are the other sources. Geography books of class IX and X also taken as a data source. B.Sc. and M.Sc. syllabus and book of different university of West Bengal has taken the source of data. More over interaction with the

geography teacher of rural and urban areas school has done and also discussion with the subject expert to get the dependable information.

3.2. Tools used: The major data gathering tools which are used to collect the data are: self-made semi-structure interview schedule, questionnaire, and non-participatory observation.

3.3. Sampling: The purposive and convenient sampling methods are used to gather data from teachers of geography of different district of West Bengal.

3.4. Sample size: The sample is collected from different districts of West Bengal. The Researcher has taken 30 samples from rural and urban areas.

Type of Teacher	Urban	Rural	Total
No. of Teacher	15	15	30

3.5. Methods: The researcher used various techniques for the analysis of the data- content analysis, method of induction, method of deduction etc.

4.0 Major Findings and Conclusion:

4.1. Introduction: Finding of any research is very important for a researcher as well as society. Findings take an important role to formulate any educational plan it is the result of the whole research work process. From the findings ability of researcher can determined.

4.2 Major Findings: the following are the major findings—

1. At present we live in Holocene epoch of quaternary period of Cenozoic era of Phanerozoic eon. The era of Geography has shifted from Homer, Thales (700b.c), and Anaximander (610-546 B.C) to recent geographer Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859), Carl Ritter (1779-1859), Fredric Ratzel (1844-1904), Welterpenk (188-1923), and Alfred Wagner (1880-1930). With the analytical description researcher found that philosophy of geography change entirely from the past. Geography starts its journey from encyclopiadism to pragmatism. With time to time geography emphasis on pragmatism, utilitarianism. so it is the significant dimension of geographical thought.

2. Evaluation is one of the process through which determined that how much the particular candidate adapt the syllabus as well as the curriculum. Researcher concentrates on the evaluation system through the year 2006-2014. At the time of 2006 traditional question pattern are followed and maximum question are broad. In the year 2007 question pattern changed and emphasis on short marks. In the year 2014 unit question pattern are followed. Alternative are more included in the question. So evaluation systems follow the rule of flexibility instead of rigidity which is followed in previous years (2006).

3. Knowledge of science helps student to understand the different theory and work of different geomorphic process. Technology helps students the particular topic in easiest way. From the analysis of data which are collected from various sources the present higher secondary syllabus (2014) has framed on the basis on science mainly physical part. Previous syllabus (2006) is also followed the basic science concept in various topic of syllabus but not much like present syllabus. It also the researcher found that it is very necessary to implication technology to understand the topic of geography new syllabus but it is quite impossible to use technology in rural areas.

4. Transaction is one of the important parts of curriculum through which the content receive the learner and also interaction can take place. Through the selected year it is showed that there has been no change in transaction process. Traditional transactional process is being

followed in whole syllabus. Also it is found that teachers are used the traditional teaching learning material (T.L.M).

5. At the time of curriculum framing the social utility and responsibility is always considered. In case of geography curriculum it also maintained. Geography maintained the social demand and aspiration of society. Researcher found that geography fulfills the social demand and consciousness of learners and people also.

4.3 Discussion: Research is the standardized procedure to search the new knowledge. Main purpose of any curriculum is to prepare human resource. Researcher analysis the curriculum, syllabus and feedback sheet of teachers.

- The philosophy of geography changed its area significantly. Maximum teachers are eager to know the philosophy of geography. The teacher of Belur high school (Howrah, W.B) also expresses her opinion importance of pragmatism and utilitarianism. They said the impact of psychology in geography and how psychological principles are related to content of geography at H.S syllabus. Pragmatic thinking is widely increased in the area of geography.
- Evaluation system is an important part of any curriculum. The present (2014) evaluation system is significantly different from the previous (2006). Unit question patterns are followed now and traditional question patterns are followed in the year 2006. The use number of short question in question paper increase which was few in the past (2006). Maximum teacher express their opinion that-‘present question type cannot explore the creativity of the student.’ yet they said that practical is one of the part of the present syllabus where the students can express their creativity and also skills. Subject expert prof. Pradeep Sarkar (Prof. of geography, Ramakrishna mission Sikshanamandira, Belur Math, Howrah, W.B) said that –‘present syllabus increases the area of knowledge but the knowledge is shall owe down. Some experienced teachers fail to adjust with the new syllabus. Teachers of Belur Boys’ High School (Howrah, W.B) opine shortage time is to complete the practical work as the main problem.
- At present, physical geography is widely adopted– the concept and theory of which are science based. Various geographic process and theory significantly depend on the scientific knowledge. To understand the concept and theory of geography basic scientific knowledge is necessary. Maximum teachers express their opinion that the basic science knowledge is too poor among the students. Maximum time is taken to complete the scale problems. Teacher of Belur boys’ said that-‘geography should include topic which are maximum science based and the students who have no basic science knowledge should not take geography as a subject. All the teachers agree that –technology helps to understand the various concepts of geography. But it is a quite impossible to use in schools situated in rural areas.
- Transactional process is an important part of any curriculum. From the discussion it is said that teachers use the traditional teaching methods and hardly use the electronic media. A traditional lecture method is used generally. Constructive approach and question answering method are also used. Local field survey also is conducted and various projects are also done.
- At present it is said that, geography curriculum is inseparably related to social utility and demand. Various environment concerned topics are included in the syllabus. The practical topic is widely related to social life (statistics, weather map, projection). Climatology deals with the various concerns of present issue of society. Some teachers said that the present

geography syllabus fully adopts the environment concerned topic. So it can be clearly said that, the environment concerned message has been spread through geography curriculum.

The study has relational bondage with the following past studies:

- Muthappan's (1983) work on history curriculum states that –teaching aids are too short in the schools and excursion were very rarely conducted. The same things found in the work of present researcher.
- Patil (1985) found that there is no facility of geography room and museum. Majority of teacher used the traditional lecture method which is also found by the present researcher.
- Idaayavani (1991) found that –video programming is more effective than other methods. The present researcher also found importance on the use of modern technology.
- Kidwai (1991) found that least topic related to environment is included in syllabus. The Present researcher also found the same. Of course comparatively less weightage is given to the topic related to environment in 2006 syllabus which is increased in 2013 syllabus.
- Khalwania (1986) found that Concept based curriculum was more effective than the conventional curriculum in terms of acquisition of process skills as well as in developing the better cognitive structure. The Researcher realized the matter through the present study. Present curriculum also touches that matter.

4.4 Conclusion: At present geography is very important subject of social science. It has significant demand as schools subject as well as in higher education. The Present geography has high co-relation with higher education.

So at last it is clearly mentioned that geography curriculum criteria of can fulfill the four pillar of education which is very important at the present time and can active the ultimate goal of the curriculum.

4.5 Limitations of the Study:

The researcher has the following limitations-

1. He could not survey huge number of teachers and students.
2. Some geography teachers and head masters were found none co-operating
3. The researcher was unable to avail the benefit of subject experts who were supposed to give their opinion but could not due to different reasons.
4. Sample size was not satisfactory.
5. The researcher could not follow some international and national journals related to the work which must have increased the authenticity of the study.

4.6 Suggestion for Further Research: At the time of research work, the researcher could not explore some areas of geography curriculum. So researcher suggested for the new researcher—

1. Any other researcher with a reasonable sample size would get better result.
2. Other researchers are advised to take the opinion of pass out students.

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