



A Critical Study on Attitude and Experience of Teachers toward Teaching Geography in Secondary School

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ABSTRACT

Among geography's scientific attributes is the study of human-natural interaction. A large amount of education is dedicated to geography. In Uttar Pradesh geography is provided as an elective for secondary school students. This research examines secondary school geography teachers' attitude viewpoints and personal experiences in relation to the academic field. This study uses both the qualitative research strategy and the semi-structured interview method. A semi-structured interview framework is utilized for the study topic. After the data are separated into seven categories the analysis is completed through the interpretations. Following a thorough examination of the research outcomes in relation to their thematic context a series of recommendations have been proposed. The present investigation offers valuable insights into the perspectives and pedagogical practices of geography educators regarding the instruction of geography in secondary schools within the state of Uttar Pradesh.

KEY WORDS

Teaching Geography, Experience, An Attitude, Pedagogy.

INTRODUCTION

The British Government introduced geography as a systematic topic in India in the early 1900s. Many changes were subsequently made on a regular basis. History shows that while geography classes were initially offered by Punjab University but Aligarh Muslim University was the first to promote the subject for graduate and undergraduate students. After Independent geography instruction expanded over the whole area. Geographical studies are no longer

restricted to a single field of study and include several facets.

From time to time, geography has also changed. Geography was a coordinated branch of human society science back then. The two main categories of geography that geography explains are physical geography and human geography. Geographical terms are used to describe the earth's surface. The concept of geography has its roots in ancient Greece where it was first employed by the renowned geographer Eratosthenes. Initially geographical representations of the Earth were limited, but contemporary depictions have expanded significantly, encompassing numerous significant events. Consequently geography has emerged as a captivating field of study in modern times.

Throughout the educational continuum, geography is regarded as a highly esteemed discipline. By studying geography, individuals acquire knowledge regarding human populations geographic locations environmental conditions and the intricate relationships between these factors. This academic pursuit addresses inquiries concerning population density residential patterns and motivational forces thereby fostering a profound comprehension of the global community in which we reside.

The etymology of the term "geography" literally translates to "graphing the Earth," underscoring the significance of this field in comprehending complex issues surrounding us including population growth migration resource scarcity and climate change. Acquiring a comprehensive understanding of geography is essential for students to develop into responsible global citizens and appreciate the intricacies of our shared world.

Geographic research focuses on the spatial changes of the Earth's surface and how humans interact with their surroundings. Furthermore it helps to comprehend how different places areas and locations interact and impact one another. Individuals who study geography acquire insight into the evolution of regions and eras throughout history.

Geography is a discipline that emphasizes hands-on learning enabling individuals to expand their understanding, values and spatial awareness skills. Through academic studies students have the opportunity to engage in rigorous examination and analysis of geographical concepts data and themes, thereby refining their geographic competencies. Studying geography gives you the chance to experiment with new resources such as Google Maps Google Earth Geographic Information System (GIS) and more. These tools support the learners in a variety of ways as they see, comprehend, understand, and visualize the data and information. Chorley and Haggett predicted that as we develop databases on the Earth and its environment using remote sensing and communication technologies we would come to appreciate the significance of geography. Learning about geography makes students conscious of spatial information. Spatial information is provided by geography education, ranging from the local to the global scale. Understanding historical and contemporary events-whether they be political social economic or otherwise-is largely aided by learning geography. Educational institutions employ an assortment of visual resources include maps photographs diagrams charts and graphs to help students learn about geography and develop their abilities. Students that engage in map studies learn about continents, seas, nations, and specific places as well as how to calculate distances between points determine directional correlations and collect pertinent geographic information. Maps play an important role in geography education, promoting cartographic literacy and spatial thinking. As a result geography is considered a crucial subject for pupils at all grade levels. Given the country's diversified geographical terrain educators urban planners policymakers and instructors must have strong geographic understanding. Given these circumstances Uttar Pradesh must adopt excellent geography instruction. Geography has been part of the Nepalese school curriculum since formal education began. However the subject receives little emphasis in the high school curriculum.

As a result, it is critical to study the issues involved with educating the earth in middle and high schools. The intention of the investigation is to give insight into secondary geography teachers' actual perspectives and experiences. This inquiry is significant since it focuses on geography professors' viewpoints and experiences. Specifically, there is a lack of writing on the perspectives and experiences of secondary school teachers in

Uttar Pradesh. To fill this research vacuum, this study looks at how secondary school teachers view good geography education. The primary goal of this research is to investigate how geography teachers perceive and experience teaching the subject, including instructional strategies, curriculum strengths and weaknesses, teaching methods, textbooks, educational resources, classroom management, challenges encountered while teaching geography, and recommendations for improving geography instruction at the secondary level.

Review of Related Literature

Adhikari (2003) asserts that geography makes an effort to close the growing divide between the evolving biological and physical phenomena on the one hand and the evolving human phenomena on the other.

Wilmot and Irwin (2015) give an overview of how instructors feel about the geography curriculum. They found a wide range of intricate, frequently interrelated elements influencing school geography, especially in what are known as “no-fee paying schools,” according to their research on secondary school teachers’ views and experiences of school geography.

Sanil, Sezer, and Pinar (2016) discuss how “Future geography instructors should prioritize developing and deploying technologically advanced instructional resources for undergraduate geography courses. This entails using cutting-edge technology to design interesting, interactive, and informative classes that appeal to a variety of learning styles and preferences. This will provide students with a more immersive and effective educational experience, developing their comprehension and enthusiasm for geographical ideas and principles.

According to Artvinil (2017) who focuses on geography instructors’ perspectives on creative geography teaching, these educators are receptive to using modern educational tools into their lessons, however there are certain obstacles.

According to Research (Herman et al., 2020) people’s perceptions of geography have changed over time in response to scientific discoveries, technological innovations, and the amount of knowledge acquired on an evolutionary scale. These differences in perception have become apparent and are still present in human groups today on a social level.

According to study by Stefan Karol ik (2023) the most popular teaching strategy for presenting the geography curriculum in elementary and secondary schools is the lecture format supplemented by visual aids.

Methodology

This study uses qualitative research methods to acquire information from educators about their experiences and perspectives of teaching geography at the secondary level. A descriptive method is used to attain this goal. The study’s participants are geography teachers from CBSE-accredited secondary schools. From a pool of 20 community schools, 10 CBSE-affiliated schools that offer geography as an option were chosen purposefully. Ten geography professors were selected from these sampled schools.

The semi-structured interview procedure was employed to lead discussions with research participants. Data gathering entailed visiting chosen schools to get the necessary information. The essential data was found and analyzed using a thematic analysis method, which involved classifying the raw data into separate themes. The analysis revealed seven key themes, including introductory techniques, curriculum strengths and weaknesses, teaching methods, geography textbooks, classroom administration, educational resources, challenges faced by teachers when teaching geography, and recommendations for improving geography education in secondary schools.

Secondary data was collected through an examination of digital assets, organizational papers, and published and unpublished literature. Official documents had information on the spread of secondary schools that provide geography courses.

Results and Conversation

The study received responses from ten geography instructors working in ten different secondary schools in the Aligarh district area. There are Five male and five female secondary geography instructors that make up the research population. A thorough investigation indicates that all professors hold Bachelor's degrees in Geography from respected educational institutes. Furthermore, the data show that half of the instructors have more than a decade of teaching experience, one-quarter have served for five to ten years, and the remaining quarter have less than five years of tenure. Notably, each instructor undertook a thorough training program before taking on their duty as educators.

Introductory Techniques

Techniques used in instructional teaching help students acquire the necessary course information. An instructional strategy is a long-term plan implemented to achieve a certain goal, which is learning. Teachers use a range of ideas and methods referred to as instructional strategies to help pupils learn. According to Weston and Cranton (1986), the methods and materials employed in the teaching process were regarded as instructional strategies.

Teaching methods can be applied across various subjects and grade levels, and can be tailored to cater to diverse student populations with distinct learning styles and abilities.

Table 1

Introductory techniques	Frequency
Interactive	10
Collaborative	10
Teacher centred	10
Constructivist	07
Subject matter centred	06
Student centred	04

(Source: Primary Data)

According to the findings, all secondary school geography instructors have used the lecture, Q&A, fieldwork, and discussion formats. A teacher instructs a class of pupils verbally using the lecture technique. The question-answer teaching approach uses a shared discussion between the instructor and the student to fulfil cognitive objectives and bring information to a conscious level. Engaging students in discussion allows them to think critically about their own experiences. Every teacher agrees that fieldwork is one of the most efficient and pleasurable ways to teach and learn geography, and that it is a crucial component of the subject for both teachers and students. While some teachers use project-based learning, narrative, problem-solving, and demonstration techniques when instructing secondary school students.

Curriculum's Strength and Weakness

Instructors use the curriculum as a pedagogical resource to help students achieve their academic goals. The curriculum is made up of all planned and monitored interactions between a teacher and a student that attempt to achieve a certain learning objective. The curriculum allows students to have transformational learning experiences by taking into account their specific requirements, interests, and aptitudes. It also has a significant impact on the development of instructional materials such as textbooks, educational manuals, and additional resources.

Table 2: Curriculum strength

Strength of Curriculum	Frequency
Knowledge about climate and weather	7
Knowledge about natural resource and maps	9
Knowledge of our country	9
Knowledge about latitude and longitude	4
Knowledge about agricultural pattern	5
Encourage the use of technology	9
Encourage research through observation	7
Student centred curriculum	8

Table 3: Curriculum Weakness

Weakness of Curriculum	Frequency
Inadequacy of the infrastructure and resource for implementation	8
Lacking vertical as well as horizontal linkages	4
Not job oriented subject	7
Gap on practical skills and knowledge	4
Heavily theoretical curriculum	7

(Source: Primary Data)

The findings demonstrate the strengths of the geography curriculum, which include its ability to teach about our country, its climate and weather, its natural resources, its maps, and its agricultural practices. The promotion of technology usage, student-centred learning, observational research, learning by doing, and a grasp of latitude and longitude is another advantage of geography curriculum. The findings demonstrate some of the deficiencies in the geography curriculum. It is clear that one of the curriculum's shortcomings now unduly theoretical, the topic is not career-oriented, there is a dearth of practical knowledge and skills, the infrastructure and resources required for execution are insufficient, there are no vertical or horizontal links, etc.

Classroom Administration

According to Steins, Wittrock, and Haep's 2015 study, successful teaching requires not only pedagogical knowledge but also a diverse set of skills and abilities. Classroom management is specifically defined as a teacher's capacity to maintain a controlled learning environment by focusing on instructional tasks while reducing disturbances and guaranteeing a productive environment. This multidimensional component of teaching includes a variety of tactics and techniques.

Table 4: Classroom Administration

Classroom Administration	Frequency
Good dialogue and positive communication	7
Gathering attention by doing question-and answer	10
By providing active participation in the course	8
Eye contact	10
Active teacher role	7

(Source: Primary Data)

The results show that no teacher has trouble keeping their classroom in order. To get pupils to pay attention to them and the class, all teachers make eye contact and utilize the question-answer format. Geography teachers implement an assortment of various ways to manage their students. These include having a fruitful

discourse and engaging in constructive interactions in the classroom, as well as the instructor and student actively participating in the course and the classroom. This method of classroom administration makes it clear that they are more capable educators.

Educational Resources

Teachers can utilize educational resources to support students' visual and auditory learning. The initial motivation of students to learn is reinforced and maintained throughout the course with the aid of high-quality teaching materials. Providing students with instructional materials has two advantages: it encourages them to interact with information in different ways and increases their chances of success. Okobia (2011) summarized the benefits associated with employing instructional materials in the learning environment in the manner that follows: Giving the topic greater realism:

- Explaining complicated ideas.
- Allowing the student to experience what they are learning.
- Doodles that inspire learners' imaginations.
- Avoiding misunderstandings.
- Adding interest to education, among other things.

Table 5: Educational Resource

Educational Resource	Frequency
Audio visual materials (tape, cassette, radio, photo, slide, overhead projector, television, computer and video)	7
Graphic materials (chart, graph, map, atlas, globe, poster and diagram)	10
Local materials (mud floor, stones, Bricks, stick, culture and tradition etc.)	0
Printed materials (text book, reference book, magazine, journal, newspaper, teacher's manual)	10

(Source: Primary Data)

The results show that all secondary school geography instructors regularly utilize printed resources (textbooks, reference books, magazines, and journals, newspapers, and teacher's guides). When teaching geography in the classroom, all instructors occasionally employed graphic elements such as charts, graphs, maps, atlases, globes, posters, and diagrams. There is sporadic use of audio-visual resources in classrooms, such as computers, radios, photos, slides, overhead projectors, televisions, and videos. Teaching materials made of local resources (such as sticks, stones, bricks, mud floors, and cultural and traditional artefacts) are not used.

Geography Textbook

A textbook is a fact book that is used by students studying a particular subject and is produced in response to requests from educational establishments. In teaching and learning, textbooks are essential, according to w.sonand Lambert (2005). The textbook is essential in both pedagogical and academic contexts, acting as a helpful resource for both teachers and students. Textbooks, being the major instructional medium used in educational institutions, have long been depended on by both teachers and students. However, a geography instructor has uncovered various flaws in present secondary-level geography textbooks. Specifically, it appears that important geographical subjects are missing from the curriculum, failing to meet set requirements. Furthermore, the chapter on mathematical geography has been declared out of date, with little practical use in real-world situations. Furthermore, various errors have been discovered in the textbook's question bank, including some demanding calculations using latitude and longitude coordinates. The majority of educators thought that the text book's account of the geography of the continents was unduly detailed. In terms of the human and economic dimensions, some of the statistical data in the textbook is out of date. There are unsuitable statistics and occurrences in the textbook. Textbooks should emphasize locally based geographical examples.

Issues with Teaching Geography

- Several challenges and impediments exist when it comes to instructing geography in secondary educational institutions.
- Not all secondary schools have a specialized geography lab or classroom, despite the fact that these areas are required for effective learning.
- There is a limited amount of geography reference books available in the market
- It is very difficult to teach geography ideas mathematically in higher education since there is no mathematical geography curriculum.
- There aren't enough teaching resources accessible for geography subjects in secondary education.
- Classroom environments are not appropriate for teaching geography, according to some scientific studies that bolster this claim
- Moreover, neither educational institutions nor the appropriate authorities give any workshop or seminar, nor do they offer any teacher training programs.
- Classrooms are cramped and lack sufficient space.

CONCLUSION

A teacher's main responsibility is to facilitate students' learning through the use of presentations and classroom directions. Teachers in schools are crucial to the general development of pupils. In the teaching profession, an educator serves as a role model for the students, exhibiting both cognitive and emotional behaviours as well as reflecting these characteristics in their own interactions, attitudes, and behaviours. According to the findings, the geography classroom employs interactive, teacher-centered, and collaborative technologies and practices. The geography curriculum and textbooks have several pros and downsides. The study's findings indicate that there are various concerns with geography education in secondary schools, including curriculum, textbooks, instructional tools, and reference materials. Despite a variety of challenges, instructors have a good outlook and experience teaching geography.

Suggestion

The geography instructors at secondary schools made several recommendations to enhance secondary geography instruction which are undermentioned:

- Each school should have a separate geography lab and classroom, as determined by the instructor.
- Refresher courses for instructors should be provided by the relevant authorities. A training program should be supplied to keep geography professors' knowledge up to date. Geography instructors should be encouraged to participate in a range of courses, seminars, symposiums, and meetings for both professional and personal development.
- Schools should have access to reference books and materials, and their geography curricula should be career-focused. According to the respondents, curricula needed to be changed to meet societal and commercial demands.
- Additionally, new technologies like audio-visual gadgets have to be used to modify teaching and learning processes. According to the responders, in order to address new difficulties, the syllabus should also be modified.
- A program to raise public awareness of geography education was scheduled to begin. It was necessary to give practical courses, RS, and GIS more weight.

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