Attitude and Achievement in Geography: A Stydy on Bengali Medium Students

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Abstract:

This study focused on the attitude of eight grade school students towards the learning of Geography in Purba Medinipur district of West Bengal. The design of the study is descriptive survey research design. Simple random sampling was adopted in selecting two hundred (200) male and female students. All those students in class eight from Contai and Egra subdivision constitute the population of the study. Data was collected using a validated 5-point Likert rated Geography Attitude Scale (GAS) instrument with a reliability coefficient of 0.73 (Test-Retest). Three research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and the obtained data were analysed using MS excel. Means, standard deviations were used as descriptive analysis, while t-test was used in testing the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that, locale of students had significant effect on their attitudes towards geography. Additionally, gender had no notable influence on students' attitude towards Geography. The study further exposed that, correlation between attitudes and achievements in geography was strongly positive. Therefore school students of Purba Medinipur appreciate Geography as a school subject and showed a positive relationship between attitude and achievement. Location has significant effect while, gender is not a significant factor influencing attitude towards Geography learning in the study area.

Keywords: *Attitude, Achievement, Geography, Location, Gender.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Geography as a subject enables us to comprehend the Earth we are living in from a spatial viewpoint. It offers anorganized structure for enquiry into questions about the world that surrounds us. Geography provides a link between the social sciences and the physical sciences, through the provision of an understanding of the dynamics of our cultures, societies and economies on the one hand, and those of physical landscapes and environmental processes on the other. Geography is an inclusive subject, encloses the entire observable province of the earth's surface and is experienced as part of science, social science, arts as well as technology in universities worldwide. Unfortunately in India, it is generally taught as a social science discipline in schools (Alam, 2016).The study of Geography will help students expand a sound knowledge of our nation. It will help students to face challenges created by population explosion, environmental pollution, regional socio-economic inequality, resource depletion, etc., all of which are becoming ever more prominent in West Bengal, as well as in India in general. Geographical education provides pupils with learning experiences which facilitate them to see the relationships between the individual, society and the environment, and through this to increase skills which can be transferred to other learning and life situations.

The findings (Onuoha & Eze, 2013) discovered that, students normally have a positive attitude towards the learning of Geography. They stated that, the findings revealed that, students usually have a positive attitude towards the learning of Geography. Furthermore, gender and location had no notable influence on students' attitude towards Geography, while a lesser number of students agreed that geography textbooks are expensive, difficult to understand and that Geography teachers do not teach well.Whereas Tomal(2010) concluded that, students' positive opinions about their teachers are the most effective factor that increases students' interest in the lesson.

But in the study ofArslanet al.(2012) indicated that attitude of the middle students toward mathematics and achievement scores in Mathematics had a significant difference in conditions of their gender and grade levels. Female students performed more positive attitudes than male students toward Mathematics and female students had higher grades than male students.Ayodele&Olatunbosun, 2015; Lee & Anderson(2015)suggested that gender differences in attitudes to mathematics may be more distinct in coeducational schools of Mubeenet al. (2013)also found the same concerning to secondary students in mathematics. According to Wong &Hanafi (2007) male and female students were differed in respect of attitude towards information technology in Malaysia.

The study (Ayodele&Olatunbosun, 2015) revealed that there was no significant difference between students' gender and achievement in Basic Science. The study also showed that there was a significant relationship between students' attitude and achievement in Basic Science.Present researchers found significant and positive relationship between attitudes and achievements in different subjects (Mitchell & Simpson, 1982; Michelli, 2013).Mubeen (2013) and Brown et al. (2015) found insignificant relationship between attitude and achievements ofsecondary students in mathematics and undergraduate student in chemistry respectively.

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There have been many studies conducted on attitude towards several subjects in relation to different variations i.e. living area, gender, management of schools, etc. But in West Bengal, such type of research were very few in number and in the district PurbaMedinipur, specific survey was rarely done.

Objectives

1. To compare the attitude towards geography of secondary students in respect of Location variation.
2. To compare the attitude towards geography of secondary students in respect of Gender variation.
3. To find out the relationship between attitude and achievements of secondary students in geography.

Hypotheses

$H_0$1: There is no significant difference between rural and urban students with regard to their attitude in geography subject.

$H_0$2: There is no significant difference between male and female students with regard to theirattitude in geography subject.

$H_0$3: There is no significant correlation between attitudes and achievements in geography subject.

II. METHODS

Survey research techniques adopted in this study. All the secondary students from PurbaMedinipur district of West Bengal considered as population. First of all four Bengali medium schools affiliated by W.B.B.S.E. were chosen purposively from Contai and Egra Sub-Division then two hundredstudents (Class VIII) selected randomly. An attitude Scale (Five point Likart type)consisted with 60 items prepared by the investigators.Test retest reliability was 0.73. Similarly aself made achievement tool prepared by researchers consisted with 20 MCQ items,covering the text book (Geography) of class VIII. To analyse the data Mean, S.D. and t test were used.

III. RESULTS

Table 1: Difference in the mean score between rural & urban students in respect of attitude towards geography.

Locale	N	Mean	S. D.	df	t	P	Remarks
Rural	80	124.0	17.5	198	4.97	0.000	Significant*
Urban	120	136.8	18.1				

*0.05 level

From the above (Table 1) it is shows thatmean score of attitudes towards geography of urban students (136.8) were higher than rural student (124.0). Study also shows that, Probability value (0.00) was less than the alpha level (0.05), as a result significant difference was established. Hence, the null hypothesis (H01) was rejected.

Table 2: Difference in the mean score between boys &girls students in respect of attitude towards geography.

Gender	N	Mean	S. D.	df	t	P	Remarks
Boys	80	131.3	19.8	198	-0.21	0.833	Insignificant*
Girls	120	131.9	18.4				

*0.05 level

From the above (Table 2) it is shows that, the mean score of attitudes towards geography of girls (131.9) were higher than boys (131.3). Study also shows that, Probability value (0.83) was more than the alpha level (0.05), as a result insignificant difference was established. Hence, the null hypothesis (H02) was not rejected.

Table 3: Coefficient of correlation between attitude & achievement towards geography subjects.

Variables	N	df	r	Remarks
Attitude	200	198	0.826	Significant*
Achievement	200			

*0.05 level

From the above (Table 3) it is shows that, the co-efficient of correlation (r) between attitudes and achievement in geography was 0.83, which was significant at 0.05 level of confidence. Hence, the null hypothesis (H03) was rejected.

IV. DISCUSSIONS

Result of this study revealed that, attitude towards geography was not differed in respect of students'locale in Bengali medium schools of West Bengal. The present study is supported by earlier study by Onuoha&Eze (2013) in case of geography subject.Study also found that, there was significant difference between boys and girls in attitudes towards geography. This result corroborated by Arslanet al. (2012), Ayodele&Olatunbosun (2015), Lee & Anderson (2015), Mubeenet al. (2013).But, this study was inconformity of the earlier studies byKaiser-Messmer (1993),Onuoha&Eze (2013), Wong&Hanafi (2007) in connection with the attitude towards information technology in Malaysia.The study further revealed that, there was significant relationship between attitude and achievement in geography of upper primary students. The similar significant correlation was recorded by Ayodele&Olatunbosun (2015) in respect of basic science in junior secondary schools in Nigeria and by Mitchell & Simpson (1982) in case of college biology students.Michelli (2013) also found significant relationship between those variables. The present research was inconformity of the earlier studies by Mubeen (2013), andBrown et al. (2015) concerning to attitude and achievement of undergraduate student in chemistry.

V. CONCLUSIONS

From the above study researchers conclude that, attitude of the students (Grade- VIII) towards Geography is changeable in respect of their location, but not changeable in respect of gender of students. Therefore, to create attitude towards geography among the school students, habitat or living area has play a significant role in PurbaMedinipur District, West Bengal. In case of gender variation no influence happened. Attitude and achievement in geography subject has a strong positive correlation in Bengali medium schools, affiliated by WBBSE. Here, it is suggested that, subject teacher have to take such initiatives or approaches to increase attitude towards their subject, consequently achievement will be higher. Finally researchers concluded that, this study will play a role in developing new understandings about these

situations and investigating ways to improve the teaching and learning of geography in school contexts.

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