

INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES OF PAKISTAN STUDIES IN URBAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF HYDERABAD CITY- AN EVALUATION

Ms Parveen Munshi

INTRODUCTION

The concluding century has experienced scientific break - through, such as, plunging into nuclear age, space age, and computer age signifying the achievements in the field of science and technology. On the other hand, world has fought two world wars and collected destructive material in many forms just enough to wipe out human race from the global scene or even put an end to life, on this unique planet, which reveals that inspite of the advancement in the natural sciences man has not eliminated the scourge of war. He is still illiterate to use vast natural resources of the oceans and land, and is not educated enough to keep the planet free from pollution. Still we find, here and there, rare resources spared for ammunition rather than fighting hunger, disease and sub-culturalization away from earth. We on earth are still intolerant to color, creed, religion and culture. Consequently education faces a great challenge of such adversities that has caused the beauty of this unique planet fading away.

Since every phase of educational activity has its human relation implication in time, place and circumstances, the study and thereby nurturing human mind to understand society, its administration develop sense to improve it and make judicious use of favours, that Almighty Allah has rewarded us and thus has become very significant component of education particularly that of social studies. "Social studies, in its simplest context, comprises a portion of school curriculum, wherein the content, finding and methods of social sciences are

simplified and reorganized for instructional purpose. Thus 'social studies' is the studies that provides an understanding of man's ways of living, his basic needs, the activities in which he is engaged to meet those needs and the institutions he has developed. Briefly 'social studies' is concerned with man and his relationships to his social and physical environment".¹

In Pakistan curriculum, the area of social studies, is focussed on Pakistan and is termed as "Pakistan Studies", having objectives similar to those of the social studies. It has been given its due place in the school curriculum, expecting to provide output that is to influence the society by the virtue of its healthy influence. The output is directly linked with the quality and mechanism of imparting instruction which, when studied, can indicate the loops and holes causing quality crises.

KEY QUESTIONS

Since the output of any system is directly linked with the quality of "input" and the efficiency have "through put" and over-all environment conduciveness, hence the study has been focussed on:

1. What is the quality of the teaching in terms of general and professional competencies of the teachers who teach the subject?
2. What are their priorities in achievement while teaching? What is their professional approach while communicating the information?
3. How do the teachers evaluate their achievement in order to improve the outcome?

DELIMITATION

The study is confined to urban secondary schools during the session 1998-99.

STUDY APPROACH

The following approaches were adopted to collect

information:

Observation

Schools in the city (Hyderabad) were taken as sample. The sample was confined to five (two boys and three girls) schools. Since observation is a time-consuming exercise the teachers and their method of communicating the subject were observed by visiting these schools. To avoid special caution by the teachers, these visits were made without prior intimation.

Questionnaire

A questionnaire of mixed (close and open) items was designed and administered to both male and female teachers, presently teaching the subject to classes IX - X, in Government High Schools of the city. The first twenty-five responded questionnaires representing different schools were processed for study.

Interview

The head of institutions imparting instruction in the subject, a team of three colleagues, having rich experience, being University Teachers in the Faculty of Education (now retired), and well-experienced, highly qualified and reputed male and female High School Teachers numbering two and three respectively, were interviewed. Thus sharing views with these leaders in the concerned field has been useful in developing the picture of teaching the subject in the study area.

Verification of Record

The last approach was the verification of record. This approach was persuaded for awareness of the trend of teachers teaching the subject. This was assumed through the identification of most common thought-concepts and skills. The cases of student-teachers, both, male and

female, involved in practice teaching, were taken into consideration. They carry out their practice, under the supervision of most senior, experienced, working and retired teachers of the related field. The student-teachers select topics, prepare plans and deliver lessons accordingly, during the practice. The record of 285 lesson-plans indicated the trend of popular topics from the content and their comparison with the list provided in the curriculum. It helped in the identification of omitted topics as well.

DATA ANALYSIS

The approaches provided data as under:

a) Observation reveals that:

i) The teaching practice is conducted on the subject matter coverage approach instead of intention to achieve the objectives mentioned in the curriculum. Thus, for teachers the main objective of instruction virtually happens to be the coverage of topic of the content i.e. Textbook Unit.

ii) The unit was elaborated to class, in smaller sub-units under recitation method and some new concepts or bits of information when required were explained by the teacher according to his/her own level.

iii) Pupil participation was extremely low; mostly the teacher dominated explanation and presentation.

iv) Hardly any audio-visual material was used to clarify the information or involve the pupils in any activity contributing to the achievement of the objective.

v) Discipline happens mostly authoritarian in traditional way. Book and birch dominated the class situation.

vi) Intensity of explanation depended wholly on the will of the teacher, who considering the utility of the unit reminded the pupils about its importance from examination point of view.

vii) Subject matter centered teaching method, which happens to be the examination dominated method. The topics considered potential for examination were emphasized more as compared to the rest.

viii) Use of black board and writing black board summaries were not seen to be methodical.

ix) Teacher preparation was mostly his/her experience. Special preparation for the class was not observable.

x) Taking down notes by the pupils, from lecture / recitation situation, was experienced in a very few cases.

xi) Importance to subject in school timetable or attention of the pupils happens to be of third level.

xii) Over-all dull environment prevails during the teaching learning situation. Such a generalization is based on the observation during surprise visit mostly. Attempt was made not to mentally disturb the real situations, to let the teacher continue his usual approach; he/she was not made aware of the fact that he/she is being observed while teaching.

b) A questionnaire, consisting of 11 closed and open questions, was administered to 25 (13 male, 12 female) teachers of Government High Schools of Hyderabad City. The responses were processed as stratified random sample representing all the male and female schools of the city. The respondents are present teachers actually teaching the subject to IX, X classes. Item-wise responses are shown below:

ITEM NO.1:

On inquiring the academic qualifications it is revealed that 24% teachers in urban schools are either science teachers or qualified in science subjects who teach Pakistan Studies in their respective schools.

ITEM NO.2:

So far the professional qualifications of the teachers teaching Pakistan Studies are concerned, all are qualified as secondary teachers, out of which 44% possessed M.Ed. degree.

ITEM NO. 3 & 4:

The question about teaching experience reveals that the subject is mostly taught by experienced teachers having teaching back-ground of ten years and above. Whereas 56% teachers have been teaching the subject for less than 5 years when 32% are teaching for more than 10 years.

ITEM NO.5:

No body has been given any chance to undergo any refresher course since no such program has been organized for the subject for the last fifteen years.

ITEM NO.6:

Majority of the teachers teaching Pakistan Studies has not specialized in the area. Only 48% claim to have specialized in the subject.

ITEM NO.7:

No one, out of the sample-teachers, has been involved in writing the textbook on the subject.

ITEM NO.8:

As high as 64% confine themselves in teaching to achieve cognitive objectives. Only 24% claim to touch affective area, whereas none is interested in psychomotor domain of the objectives.

ITEM NO.9:

The dependence of the teachers is exclusively on

the content/matter of textbook. However 28% supplement the same with allied material from news papers/magazine.

ITEM NO.10:

A great majority of 80% use Lecture-cum-recitation method while teaching the subject. However, only 08% use group discussion method. Astonishingly only 36% bother to use A.V. aids.

ITEM NO.11:

In urban schools, formative evaluation is being popularized and the study reveals that 72% try written tests. However, 48% confine, such exercise, to oral tests. As much as 8% drop down to black board testing procedure.

c) Interview: The situation was discussed with the heads of the institutions and the panel of the senior teachers (including University teachers) was interviewed. They all agreed that the phenomenon resulting out of various reasons emerging from the overall education system has been dominated by the examination system, which in turn has been spoiled by a number of causes.

d) Verification of record: Owing the richness of the subject for potential to contribute to the achievement of the general objectives of the Secondary stage, the subject has been generously awarded, to the tune of 115 objectives. They are distributed in 44 cognitive, 38 Affective and 33 Psychomotor. According to a curricular scheme, 6 periods of 35 minutes each are allocated in a week of 43 periods.

From observation, no-where seems that psychomotor objectives were attempted to be achieved. The same is confirmed by questionnaire item No.8. The psychomotor components of all the chapters have been

ignored, due to non-availability of A.V. Aids and the subject is confined to theoretical component only in most of the schools.

The second set of objectives, termed as affective, deal with feelings, appreciation, being thankful, to be proud, get committed for certain values and virtues mentioned in 38 objectives in the curriculum. The communication of this component of the objectives requires typical mechanism, to make the learner receive, respond, value, organize and characterize.

From the observation and the response to questionnaire, it can be analyzed that atleast to the level of receiving the lecture of the teacher and responding to his questions on the part of the learner, is possible in every affective objective, provided the teacher intends, in normal situation, to communicate the objective purposefully. Such affirmation is only from 24% who are supposed to create an environment for valuing, then organizing and lastly for characterizing. It calls upon a model personality presented physically/imaginatively to design scheme, in a pattern to develop liking for the values and virtues prescribed for such phenomenon. Practical/Psychomotor evidences do not provide any expression. Just on the basis of optimism can not be accepted sufficient to believe the achievement of this very delicate domain. Thus another chunk of 38% objectives is also slipped off.

The third domain, which commonly emphasized in every schooling, is cognitive which is intentionally or unintentionally developed while imparting instruction. Wherever instruction is formally imparted, cognition is bound to take place; however, its level depends upon the competency of the communicator, facilities available and

meaningfulness of the objective.

The existing system, in our country, is mostly the subject-matter (content) oriented rather than objectives oriented. Thus, objectives are attempted to be achieved through subject-matter which is presented in the textbook. Through this textual material, all the teachers of the subject according to their specific competency attempt 44 cognitive objectives. This textual material provides 100 concepts relating the subject describing the subject-matter, at their appropriate places.²

The subject-matter, with 44 cognitive objectives and 100 concepts, is distributed in 9 chapters of the textbook.³

Each chapter provides a number of units.⁴ The detailed number of units in each chapter is presented in table. The verification of the record of 285 practice-teaching lesson plans reveals that some chapters are very popular with the teachers while the others do not retain the same level. As a results though all claim that they cover all chapters yet it appears that some are taught with interest and in details and nearing the learners to achieve the objectives in cognitive domain, while some are superficially touched and are not discussed or elaborated in the class in details.

TABLE - A

Ch: No.	Title of the Chapter	Subtopics	f	r
I	The Foundation of Pakistan	09	16	1.77
II	Making of Pakistan	15	31	2.06
III	Pakistan State and Government	06	00	0.00
IV	The Land of Pakistan	35	17	0.48
V	Resources of Pakistan	34	116	3.41
VI	The People & Culture of Pakistan	21	42	2.00
VII	Pakistan and World Affairs	14	30	2.14
VIII	Relations of Pakistan with Muslim countries	16	31	1.93
IX	Pakistan as a Welfare State	09	02	0.22
Total		159	285	

On verification of the record 285 plans of B.Ed. Off-Campus Program 1998 (Table-A), the frequencies when divided by the number of the units give the picture as under:

A- The most popular chapters in the textbook are:

- i) Chapter-V: Resources of Pakistan
- ii) Chapter-VII: Pakistans and World Affairs
- iii) Chapter-II: Making of Pakistan.

B- The average chapters from teaching point of view are:

- i) Chapter-VI: The people and culture of Pakistan
- ii) Chapter-VIII: Relations of Pakistan with Muslim Countries
- iii) Chapter-I: The Foundation of Pakistan.

C- The most neglected and omitted chapters are:

- i) Chapter-IV: The land of Pakistan
- ii) Chapter-IX: Pakistan as Welfare State
- iii) Chapter-III: Pakistan State and Government.

The concepts listed in the popular chapters are mostly commonly taught while those listed in the neglected chapter are supposed to be usually omitted.

FINDINGS

The information collected through all the sources was compared, analyzed and then synthesized, which presents the composite picture as under:

1. From individual or social aspect of objectives, Pakistan Studies has great importance, almost next to Islamiat, because it has potential to contribute to all the goals of Secondary stage. This is what is presented in the curriculum draft but in real situation the scenario in the schools is quite different. The importance to subject falls behind English and Science subjects who contribute mainly to activities having job orientation.

2. The subject is expected to help the learner to achieve 115 objectives and learn 100 concepts, out of these 71 objectives being approached by affective and Psychomotor strategies during teaching learning situation are virtually neglected, while the main role of Pakistan Studies is to develop patriotism and social affiliation. Pakistan Studies can play such a role through mental/association but the omission of such major components have left the subject confined to cognition which again requires rich presentation of information, according to Edgar Dale, in terms of real purposeful experience or derived experience.

The non-availability of audiovisual material reveals that only least influencing experiences, that are verbal expressions, are used which have the least effect on retention or transmission to long term memory.

3. Affiliation is developed through positive constant interaction and thereby satisfaction of psychological needs. Such a learning situation can be created through use of audio-visual aids and activities avoiding repetition and rehearsal of past experiences.

The non-availability of such material and on provision of the co-curricular activity leave the instructional situation tough and dry, for achievement of even cognitive objectives.

4. Though all the teachers of the subject are B.Ed. qualified yet less than half of them (48%) are specialized in teaching of Pakistan Studies while one fourth of them are science teachers. Naturally those

who do not belong to the field and are not specialized in teaching the subject, can not be expected to do justice with the subject, under conditions without facilities.

5. Recitation method, which is applied, suits to only small groups, which permits involvement of the pupils in developing the unit. But large groups in the class push the method to lecture for which the pupils are too young and are not in a position to catch up the ideas of the teacher to develop concepts or change their behaviour.

6. Even qualified teachers, specialized in the subject, do not apply the appropriate method. Negligence of black board, development of the unit with the help of the teachers or infusing the spirit of feeling i.e. appreciation, pride, courage etc. happens to be absent, resulting a dull atmosphere added by the bitterness of the strict harsh attitude on the part of the teacher, reflecting at the time. The pupils show uneasiness due to boring communication of the lesson.

7. Teachers mostly are not aware of the objectives expected out of the units. The practice has prevailed that the coverage of some content matter is assumed to be objective which is communicated in the class in dull manner and pupils are commanded to cram it from home, stressing that, it would be beneficial for them (pupils) from examination point of view.

8. The examination-centered education has spoiled the tempo of teaching and teachers do not find it necessary to come prepared in the class while the pupils depend mostly on the solved papers.

9. Essay type examinations encourage cramming of the subject matter, some times even without understanding the concepts.

10. The objectives, concepts, activities, audiovisual material, and evaluating strategies have been mentioned in the syllabus and mostly the relevant subject matter for objectives etc. is in the textbook but its use seems neglected in a way that the objectives be correlated with the content activity and evaluated accordingly.

11. The paper get up and supplementing text book with relevant maps, charts and scenarios significantly lack. No supplementary studymaterial is provided. The textbook is expected to be sole sufficient but the textbook lacks attraction internally or

externally. In the whole book only one colour map of Pakistan, physical features, is given.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Pakistan studies being a subject of social understandings, awareness of man's living and basic needs in the context of Pakistan requires more than cognitive approach.

In the process of socialization besides cognition, affective approaches do offer more, hence just communication of information may enhance cognitive domain objectives but the real domain, concentration on affective area, remains neglected; hence:

1. Generous allocation of sources in terms of teachers, time, and techniques to ensure availability of affective objectives, may be made possible.
2. Co-curricular programs may be given opportunities to contribute to the achievement of the objectives.
3. Serious notice of negligence of psychomotor area may be taken. Hence classroom instruction should be linked with relations involving possible bondages of realities relating to subject.
4. Cultural promotion measures may be encouraged to make learning affiliated with life.
5. Textbooks may be supplemented by allied material enriching the vision of the learner and developing the exploratory attitude among the students.
6. Teachers involved in the teaching of the subject should be provided chances to attend refresher courses to boost up their awareness and skill.
7. Use of appropriate A.V. material for teaching of the subject has received a set back during recent years which may be

over turned with fully equipped subject hall/room.

8. Formative evaluation may be encouraged followed by problem-solving and building confidence there-by enjoying the achievements out of the subject.
9. Evaluatory system may be judiciously made consonant with the real objectives out of the subject.
10. Research in the field to identify flaws in the successful communication of the subject may be carried out, published and discussed and the remedial measures may be adopted.

REFERENCES

1. Wesley Edgar B. *"Teaching of Social Studies in High Schools"*, 3rd ed. Heath, 1950, p.296.
2. Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, *"Scheme of Studies and Syllabi for Secondary School Certificate Examination (IX - X Classes)"*, 1994.
3. Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Education and Provincial Coordination, *"Pakistan Studies Curriculum"* for (IX - X), National Curriculum Committee, National Bureau of Curriculum and Textbooks, Islamabad, 1976.
4. Sindh Textbook Board, Jamshoro, Sindh, *"Pakistan Studies"*, for Classes (IX - X), Rashid and Sons, Urdu Bazar, Karachi, 1997.