

COMPONENTS OF CURRICULUM OF SOCIAL SCIENCE TEACHING

(History, Geography, Civics and Economic)

Curriculum is the most important component in the educative process. It determines the “warp and woof” of the process of education. What to do and how to do, are its essence ? It is a medium through which the pupils make an effort to achieve the objectives of education. It “acts as a pivot in organising educational effort on some manageable basis and is undoubtedly the heart of the school and all that goes with it” In order to produce really useful members for our democratic society the school must provide knowledge and experience to its pupils. This is possible only through a well-planned curriculum.

SOCIAL SCIENCE IN SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The elementary course in Social Studies should aim at achieving the following general objectives :

(1) It should encourage students to explore, and observe systematically their social and cultural environment.

(2) It should help school children to understand the evolution of the community around them. This may be done by tracing mainly the different forces and influences that were, and are still, at work.

(3) It should invite pupils to find out and collect for themselves more and more relevant facts about the different problems that confront them. This should serve as a basis on which they could form, as they grow, an objective judgement on various issues which arise in their daily lives.

(4) It should provide the young with numerous opportunities for group work as a part of their learning process. This may include activities such as discussing and solving their problems collectively.

and also, planning and executing different projects, in a democratic atmosphere. All this should result in giving them enough practice in discipline and cooperation, that are implied in self-government.

(5) It should kindle among the growing citizens of tomorrow a passion to truth, and social justice. The social justice should, however, also cover respect for every individual—his views, worth and contribution.

(6) It should make children conscious of their rights and duties in a democratic society, and encourage them to undertake responsibilities. Its purpose is to enable them to contribute their best to the well-being of the society as a whole.

(7) It should develop, among the school children, the spirit of inter-group and inter-communal understanding and harmony. This should lead to the appreciation of the underlying unity of our culture, or a way of our life, in all its diversity.

(8) It should foster a sense of true patriotism in every child. The concept of patriotism, however, should include as pointed out in the Secondary Education Commission Report (1952-53);

- (i) A sincere appreciation of the social and cultural achievements of our country as a whole—both in the past and at present;
- (ii) A readiness to recognise our weaknesses frankly, and to work for their eradication; and
- (iii) As earnest resolve to serve the country to the best of one's ability, harmonising and subordinating individual interest to broader national considerations.

(9) It should lead the students to appreciate the contributions of different cultures, groups of individuals, which have helped the advancement of our present day civilization on a global scale. The purpose of it is to impress upon the growing citizens of tomorrow that patriotism needs to be supplemented by a lively realisation of the fact that we are all members of 'One World' and must be prepared to discharge the responsibilities of promoting international understanding, cooperation and peace.

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has outlined the need for the inclusion of Social Sciences (NCERT has not used the term Social Studies) in these words, The

study of Social Sciences as component of general education is of critical importance in facilitating the learner's growth into a well informed and responsible citizen. It should aim at developing in him/her an understanding of his/her physical and social environments, both immediate and remote, in terms of time and space, and an appreciation of the cultural heritage of India and various cultures of the world. The study of the present physical and social environment should help him/her in developing an understanding of the interaction of man with his physical and social environment and with the institutions— social, economic and political—through which human beings inter-relate with one another and function in the society. The study of social sciences should also aim at enabling him to see the present in the perspective of past developments.

Similar to the study of physical and natural environment in science education, the study of social environment in social sciences should have three aspects, namely, learning about the social environment, learning through the social environment and learning for the social environment. This would mean that a pupil will learn, for example, about the social customs, cultural heritage, history of society *etc.* Through observation, exploration and scientific study of social phenomena and events, and will thereby develop genuine interest in, and an urge for, preservation of what is good in our culture and improvement of existing socio-economic cultural set-up.

Social sciences is perhaps the singular curricular area which can prove to be the most effective tool for providing education in the context of all the core components indicated in the NPE-86. Special care should, hence, be taken in designing the curriculum in social sciences so as not to overlook any of the core components.

Curriculum of Social Sciences at the Pre-Primary

Although *Pre-Primary education* naturally does not deal with the study of social sciences, social development of the child is a major objective to be achieved at this stage of education. To attain this objective, a variety of activities and programmes are directed at providing ample opportunities for a child to interact with other

children and with his physical and natural environment. Education at this stage aims at, along with other things, developing in the child desirable social attitudes and manners which would encourage him for healthy social participation and sensitize him to rights and privileges of others. The child is encouraged for independence, dependability and self-expression.

Social Sciences at the Senior Primary Stage (Class I to V)

In Grades I and II, the child should be introduced to the environment as a whole without making any clear-cut distinction between natural and social elements that go into its making. It should be called environmental studies. In Grades III-V, while the environmental focus should continue, the physical and social aspects of the environment should be introduced into social studies as a broad and composite area of study, parallel to general science. The social studies at this stage should widen the child's mental horizon from his/her home, school and neighbourhood to the state, country and the world. Stories and narratives about major aspects of our cultural heritage and great personalities, events and developments that have acted as major influences in shaping the life of man in India and elsewhere may also be a part of the curriculum.

Curriculum of Social Sciences at the Upper Primary Stage (Classes VI to VIII)

At the *Upper Primary stage*, the study of social sciences should comprise the study of history, geography, civics and contemporary issues and problems. The learner at this stage should be initiated into the study of India's past in all its major aspects such as social, cultural and scientific development. He/she should also be helped to appreciate diversities in ways of living and interdependence of various regions of India and the world. He/she should know the civic and political institutions and understand contemporary social and economic conditions and problems. Social skills and civic competencies, an a national perspective would thus equip him/her to participate in the task of social and economic reconstruction.

Curriculum of Social Sciences at the Secondary Stage (IX and X)

At the *secondary stage*, the study of social sciences should comprise elements of history, geography, civics and economics to promote an understanding of contemporary India. He/she should be introduced to the stages of development of human civilization and to the historical forces and factors that have shaped the modern and the contemporary world. His/her understanding of contemporary historical perspective of India's heritage and the struggle for freedom should be enhanced. The other social science subjects should help him/her understanding Indian society, polity and economy and the social, economic and political challenges facing the country. The study of social sciences at this stage should also develop his/her understanding of contemporary world problems and of India's role in relation to problems like world peace and international cooperation, decolonization and safeguarding of human rights.

The teaching of history should be objective and free from any communal, parochial and other prejudices. The perspective of the past should help in understanding the contemporary developments. Independent work by the learners through challenging assignments and project work should be encouraged. They should be introduced to the method of geography through practical work. Group activities such as organizing youth parliament, seminars and discussions should be increasingly used to encourage the learners participation. The study of newspapers and the use of newspaper clippings in teaching-learning are of particular importance in promoting an understanding of contemporary events and problems. The study of economic activities, institutions and problems should be used to promote economic literacy among the learners.

Difference Between Curriculum & Syllabus or Course of Study

A syllabus or courses of study, which related to different subjects only, indicate the frame work and amount of knowledge and facts which will be imparted to pupils of different age levels. They are generally verbal, bookish, and theoretical. But the modern

concept of curriculum and its scope, as described above, fully explains that curriculum is a wider and broader term. Its stress is not on memorisation and learning facts by rote. The emphasis is on the child and the primary consideration is to develop his personality to the fullest. It includes all that will affect the behaviour pattern of the pupils, how the responses could be organised and directed towards desirable modes of behaviour. *Courses of study* are thus a part of the curriculum. We should never think syllabus, and courses of study and curriculum as synonymous terms. Curriculum embraces, besides academic courses, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities of the pupils, community relationships, work experiences of the pupils, and the study of their growing needs and their planning, co-ordinating and executing of diverse measures and means to satisfy those wants, giving them as high a sense of achievement as possible. "The understandings, attitudes, and appreciations, abilities and skills which pupils need now in the solution of his current problems, turn out to be similar to those which, he will need later in solving adult problems. Understandings, attitudes, and abilities needed in adult life begin their growth in nursery and are developed through continuing by experiences until the learner emerges into an adult replaced by a wealth of suggested

CURRICULUM OF COMPONENTS AT THE DIFFERENT STAGES

The main curriculum of component at the different stage have been given the following points :

- {1} Curriculum Approach at the Primary Stage
- {2} Curriculum Approach at the Middle Stage
- {3} Curriculum Approach to Social Science in Class IX & X.

The details of curriculum of component at the different stage have been given in the following paragraphs :

{1} Curriculum Approach at the Primary Stage

"The primary concern of the school at this stage should be to develop the necessary social skills, values and attitudes that would enable the child to contribute his mite, as he grows, towards the development of the society to which he belongs.

Components of Curriculum of Social Science Teaching

During the five years of primary school the child's mental horizon would be gradually widened from the home to the school and the local community to the world. In the process, the child would begin to appreciate the geographical elements of his environment. Various human activities, which help him to understand how the gifts of man, would also be studied. He would also get an idea of the social and cultural life in different parts of the country as well as of some different ways of living in certain parts of the world. Stories and narratives about personages and events that have contributed to our national heritage and human heritage will also be studied. In addition to these, the child would get ample opportunities to develop socially desirable habits, attitudes and values besides becoming broadly acquainted with the functioning of political and social institutions."

{2} Curriculum Approach at the Secondary Stage

For the organisation of content in social sciences, comprising history, geography, civics and economics, in the next two stages of school education, three different approaches can be visualized.

History, geography and civics may be introduced as separate disciplines in the middle classes and carried over as such to high school classes, while economics may be introduced at the high school stage as a separate discipline.

History and civics may form one group and geography and economics other group, and these two groups may be introduced right in Class VI and carried up to Class X.

The contents of History, Geography, Civics may be identified and economics may be identified in an integrated manner for all the five years taken together.

While the first two approaches are common today and do not need any elaboration, except that they contribute to the isolation of the disciplines amongst themselves and disciplines form problems or situations, in the third approach it would be necessary to identify essential units in each subject into two cycles of three years and two years. The units thus identified for the first cycle of three years may be integrated and arranged sequentially between and within subjects in the form of a common syllabus for Social

Science. For the next two years of education a similar exercise may be done treating the earlier cycles as the base, Some old units may be taken at a greater depth while new ones may be introduced in each subject so as to lead to a slightly more advanced integrated syllabus in these subjects. While selecting units from individual subjects care may be taken to preserve the general structure of the discipline and include those facts and principles which are useful to a growing adolescent and serve as a base for a systematic study of the subject subsequently. The scope of different subject areas as visualized at the middle and lower secondary stages is given below.)