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Development of Geography in India: A Geographical Thought

Rama Shankar* and Surendra Kumar**

*Department of Geography, Shri Ganesh Rai P.G. College, Dobhi, Jaunpur, U.P.

** Department of Geography, Handia P.G. College, Handia Prayagraj, U.P.

Email Id: rsggeobhu1986@gmail.com ,skssgeobhu101991@gmail.com

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Abstract

Till the second half of the 19th century, the field of geography in India was limited to schools only, which was taught as history and civics. During this period, the Survey of India (established in 1767) located in Dehradun was the only institution where land maps and atlases were prepared for geographical information. The establishment of postgraduate geography departments in Indian universities started after 1930. The first postgraduate department of geography was established in Aligarh Muslim University in 1936. After this, Calcutta University (1941), Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi Postgraduate departments were established in the University of Delhi (1946), Allahabad University (1946), Madras University (1948) and Patna University (1949). Till 1950, all the founders of the Geography departments established in various universities of India had obtained doctorate degrees from foreign universities - London and Paris. Till then, facilities for higher education and research work in geography were not available in India. The real development of geographical study and teaching in India became possible only after independence.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the map of the whole of India had been prepared. Surveys related to it had been conducted. Due to the lack of geography scholars in higher education, these data were not being used for knowledge creation. Anu Kapoor (2004) believes that due to these circumstances, there was a delay in starting the teaching and research of geography in Indian higher education centers. The

first department of geography was opened in France in 1809, in Germany in 1817, in Britain in 1887, while the first department of geography in India was opened in the year 1924. Open in.

Key words: *Development of geographical thinking in modern India, Establishment of geography in India.*

Introduction

Geography as a high level teaching subject in India started later than in European countries. In the 19th century and the first half of the twentieth century, India remained untouched by the progress made in the field of geography in Germany, France and the United States. Mainly two reasons were responsible for this. One is that the spread of education in India was very less, secondly, due to foreign rule, Indians did not have any opportunity to gain information about the problems of different parts of the country and to think about the development of the country, perhaps till independence, the study of geography in India was limited to merely introducing the world.

After the First World War, the study of geography as a social study started at the high school level. At the college level, it started in 1920 in Lahore (presently Pakistan), in 1924 in Aligarh and in 1934 in Patna. Geography education at the postgraduate level started in 1931 in Aligarh Muslim University. The first head of the department here was Prof. Ibadur Rahman Khan (Ir. Khan). For the first time in 1986, the subject of Geography was introduced here in teacher training along with postgraduate studies. In 1932, the study of Geography started in Madras (Chennai) under the guidance of Prof. N. Subrahmanyam, first in the Teacher Training College and later at the graduate level. Thus, before 1950, the study of Geography started at the graduate level in colleges in India at places like Agra (Uttar Pradesh), Kolkata (Calcutta), Bombay (Mumbai), Madras (Chennai), Baroda, Mysore, Hyderabad, Ranchi, Varanasi, Allahabad, Nagpur, Udaipur, Jodhpur, Guwahati etc.

Development of geographical thinking in modern India

The period before 1950 is called the initial period in this direction. After this, the decade of 1950-60 is known as the creative period. During this period, Australian geographer O.H.K. Spate first surveyed the geographical works of 'India and Pakistan' in 1950 and wrote a book 'India-Pakistan'. After this, from 1964-1973, Prof. S.P. Chatterjee wrote articles related to the progress of geography in India.

When geography was established as a discipline in the universities

of Germany in the 19th century, then scholars of history, mathematics, geology, biology were appointed as teachers there. Geography was developed on the basis of information available about different regions. In this way, the development of regional geography began. French geographer Bloch's contribution in the development of regional geography was important. He contributed to the work of defining and analyzing different regions. French geographers did not accept the concept of determinism like German geographers. These geographers gave the concept of possibilism, where man makes a choice according to his needs from the available options of nature. A solid foundation of the discipline of geography was laid in Germany and France. The development of geographical study-teaching and thinking in India is mainly in three phases which are as follows:

1. First phase of development of Geography in India (1920-1955),
2. Second phase of development of Geography in India (1955-75),
3. Third phase of development of Geography in India (after 1975).

Table No. 1 Establishment of Geography at Undergraduate Level in India

Sl. No.	University	Year of Establishment
1.	Punjab University	1920
2.	Patna University	1927
3.	Aligarh University	1928
4.	Agra University	1935
5.	Allahabad University	1937
6.	Calcutta University	1939
7.	Mysore, Hyderabad, Banaras, Ranchi, Udaipur, Jodhpur, Guwahati and Madras	1940-1950

Source: Official websites of universities.

1. First phase of development of Geography in India (1920-1955)

Under the first phase, teaching of Geography started in India at the undergraduate and postgraduate level. During this period, research work was being done in name only. The personality and work of the leading scholars of that period had a clear influence on the geographical study and teaching. The lecturers or professors appointed in the Geography departments established during the first phase (initial period) of geographical development had obtained doctorate degrees from the

universities of London or Paris. On the basis of their experiences and knowledge gained from abroad, they guided the students with great dedication and promptness for the teaching and research work of Geography in India. Among the geographers of this period, Prof. Shiv Prasad Chatterjee was prominent, who was an expert in geomorphology and natural geography. Under his leadership, Calcutta University became the main centre for teaching natural geography. He also encouraged the study of human geography and regional geography. His disciples Prof. Ramlochan Singh and V.L. Prakash Rao did useful work in the field of human geography and regional planning. Prof. S.P. Chatterjee's contemporary geographer H.L. Chhinbar presented original research in geomorphology. Prof. Ramnath Dubey and Prof. George Kurien, the founding presidents of Allahabad and Madras respectively, specialized in economic geography. Special work was done on resource geography and cartography under the leadership of Prof. Tahir Rizvi and Prof. Muzaffar Ali at Aligarh University.

Before 1955, after obtaining a postgraduate degree in Geography from Indian universities, research scholars had to go at their own expense to obtain a doctorate degree. The first generation of geographers who had received training from Western countries took interest in being research directors in addition to teaching and MA, MSc, PhD and post doctorates started being prepared in our country itself. Thus, after 1955, there was a significant increase in higher studies of Geography in India.

Table No. 2 Establishment of Geography Department at postgraduate level in India

S. No.	Year	Establishment of Universities
1.	Before 1950	Aligarh (1936) Calcutta (1941), Banaras (1946) Allahabad (1946) Ludhiana (1948), Madras (1948), Patna (1949)
2.	1950-1960	Karnataka (Dharwad), Ranchi, Poona, Osmania (Hyderabad), Bhagalpur, Baroda, Siliguri, Sagar, Gorakhpur, Guwahati, Mysore Delhi.
3.	1960-1970	North Bengal (Darjeeling), Magadh, Jodhpur, Ravishankar (Raipur), Jaipur, Jawaharlal Nehru University (New Delhi), Kurukshetra.
4.	After 1970	Garhwal (Srinagar), Kumaon (Nainital), Himachal (Shimla), Shillong etc.

Source: Official websites of universities.

Second phase of development of Geography in India (1955-75)

In the second phase, the command of Geography came in the hands of the second generation of geographers. In this, most of the geographers had obtained research degrees from London. In 1955, when Prof. H.L. Chhibber retired from Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, Prof. Ram Lochan Singh took over as the new Head of the Department of Geography. Prior to this, he was a professor in the same department. Postgraduate Geography Departments were established in Ranchi and Poona Universities in 1954, where Prof. Inayat Ahmed and Prof. B.S. Ganathan were appointed as the Heads of the Geography Department respectively. After this, the names of Prof. Parmeshwar Dayal (Patna), Prof. Ram Pravesh Singh (Bodh Gaya) and Prof. Muzaffar Ali (Sagar University) are notable. These geographers emphasized on research work according to their speciality. As a result, research work was done in the field of settlement geography in Varanasi (Banaras), agricultural geography and land use in Aligarh, economic geography in Patna, geomorphology in Ranchi and cartography in Sagar. In 1956, map making work started under the aegis of the National Atlas and Thematic Mapping Organization established under the leadership of Prof. Chatterjee. Research work was done in the field of population geography under the leadership of Prof. Gurudev Singh Gosal in Punjab University. Thus, it can be said that this period was the period of the rise of geography in India. In this, research work started being done on various aspects of human and economic geography. Along with this, special awareness was also created towards geographical thinking and concepts and the system of law.

The study of geographical thinking and methodology was included in the curriculum of various universities of India. Emphasis was laid on systematic study as compared to general regional study. Relatively less attention was paid to natural geography. The reason was also clear that there was a need for economic development in the country, hence problems related to agriculture, industry, transport, irrigation, minerals attracted geographers. The problem of population growth and the needs of city and regional planning were also more attractive. It was natural that geographers started studying these problems from a geographical point of view to solve them. From which it is clear that geography developed and expanded the most in India during this period. This was the same time when the International Geographical Congress (IGC) was held in India in 1968.

Third phase of development of Geography in India (after 1975)

In the third phase, after 1975, Geography departments were established in most of the universities of India. Till 1990, generally third generation geographers were professors and heads of Geography departments. During this period, specialization in Geography started at a very fast pace and many new branches of Geography developed. Various branches of Geography have developed significantly due to the teaching, research and writings of the geographers and researchers of this period. As a result of the inclusion of PhD or M. Phil degree in the mandatory qualification for professors of universities and colleges by the University Grants Commission, there was a lot of progress in research work. The University Grants Commission did an important job of encouraging research work by making a provision of providing paid leave to working professors for research work. Thus, a large number of research works were done in various branches and sub-branches of Geography. Among the geographers who actively contributed to the development of geography through research and writing from 1975 to 1990, the names of S.L. Kayastha, K.N. Singh (Varanasi), Munis Raza, R.C. Sharma (New Delhi), C.D. Deshpande (Bombay), B.N. Sinha (Bhubaneswar), S. Chakraborty (Burdwan), R.D. Dixit (Patiala), Ujagir Singh and Jagdish Singh (Gorakhpur), R.L. Dwivedi, Lekhraj Singh, Savindra Singh (Allahabad) etc. are notable.

Apart from the above, Geography departments were also established in many colleges affiliated to various universities. Geography departments were established before 1950 in St. John's College and Balwant Rajput College of Agra, DAV College and VSSD College of Kanpur and K.K.G. College of Moradabad. After this, teaching of undergraduate and postgraduate courses in Geography started in other colleges of the country. Now facilities for postgraduate teaching and research work in Geography subject are available in hundreds of colleges of the country.

Modern trend in the development of geography

Prof. Munis Raza presented an account of the modern trend of geography under the aegis of ICSSR. According to him, modern geography has matured with refinement in its method of analysis. At present, the following trends of geography are visible-

3. In the modern era, geographers are engaged in in-depth study of the

conceptual and practical aspects of regional planning and regional development and are engaged in presenting development models for regional development. Prof. R.P. Mishra is one of those geographers who presented a revised development model for regional planning.

4. In economic geography, most of the studies were done in the field of land use, pattern, regional imbalance, agriculture and industrial productivity. The prominent geographers working in this field are Prof. Mohd. Shafi, Jasbir Singh and Noor Mohammad etc.
5. K.P. Sundaram, R.P. Mishra, R. Ramachandran, Prakash Rao and H. Ramachandran have done remarkable work in the direction of urban geography. K.P. Sundaram gave the concept of urban area which was used in the census.
6. Moving away from the traditional subject matter, some geographers also stepped into the field of new subjects. R.D. Dixit, Sudipta Adhikari and C.P. Singh did remarkable work in the field of political geography.
7. Trade and transportation is a new subject matter for geography. Indian geographer Munis Raza has done remarkable work in this direction. Munis Raza's book 'Bvuuuuaajal Sivata Nda Achanjpan Aijtanbjantam' (1988) has done commendable work in this direction.
8. Social geography is now becoming the favorite field of geographers. However, in recent years, the attention of geographers has been drawn towards the study of social issues such as caste, tribe, health, crime and migration. In 1989, Prof. Munis Raza prepared the Tribal Atlas of India.
9. Scholars like Savindra Singh, A.V. Mukherjee, S.K. Pal etc. have contributed in the field of geomorphology. At present, the new generation of geomorphologists are using remote sensing (interdisciplinary) data and satellite images on a large scale in their studies. Along with this, work is also being done in the field of practical geomorphology.
10. Geographers contributing in different fields have now become aware of the interdisciplinary (GIS) dimensions of research. Inspired by this, many geographers seem to be ready for ideological exchange with subjects close to their research subject.
11. Statistical methods are now being used more cautiously and confidently in geography. In fact, the statistical revolution that took place at the international level in the 1950-60s has had its full effect on Indian geographers in the current period.
12. After the Stockholm Conference (1972), the attention of the whole world was attracted towards environmental degradation. Indian

geographers have been more inclined towards the study of regional environmental problems and their solution for the past decade. From this point of view, Geographic Information System (GIS) and Remote Sensing (RS) have been promoted. In this context, the Remote Sensing Institute, Hyderabad and other regional centers Dehradun, Nagpur, Jodhpur and Banaras played a special role. The Government of India is also making efforts to spread regional information system through the geography departments of universities.

India's major geographical councils and research journals

Geographical councils have played a major role in the development and systematic form of geography. They were first established by European countries in the 19th century. The world's first geographical council - Paris Geographic Council (Paris Geography Council) was established in France in 1821.

Table : 3 Study of the development of Geography in India till date

S.No	Geography of 1950	Geography from 2000 till date
1.	Study of regional diversity	Study of regional integration
2.	Study of balanced regional development	Study of sustainable development
3.	Study of nation and state	Study of globalization
4.	Study of political boundaries	Study of political landscape
5.	Study of external threat (border dispute)	Study of internal security
6.	Study of political displaced persons	Study of environmental displaced persons
7.	Study of climate type	Study of climate change
8.	Study of population explosion	Study of population decline
9.	Study of governance of majority community	Study of role of minorities
10.	Study of industrial area	Study of industrial park
11.	Study of city	Study of city system
12.	Study of food production and productivity	Study of food availability and food security
13.	Study of self-reliance	Study of interdependence

After this, in 1828, the Geographic Society of Berlin (GSG) was established, in 1830, the 'Royal Geographical Society' (RGS) was established in London, in 1830, the Imperial Russian Geographical Council (IGC) was established in St. Petersburg, Russia, in 1845, the

American Geographic Council (AGS) was established in 1852, and the Royal Scottish Geographical Society (RSG) was established in Edinburgh in 1884. The Bombay Geographic Council was established in 1832. etc. were established. The establishment of Geography Councils in India started from the second decade of the 20th century. At present, the following Geography Councils are working in India-

Table : 4 Major Geographical Councils of India

S.No.	Geographical Association	Year Established	Journals Published
1.	Aligarh Geographical Society, Aligarh.	1946	Geographer
2.	Allahabad Geographical Society, Allahabad.	1957	National Geographer
3.	The Association of Geographers Bihar and Jharkhand, Patna.	1999 - 2003	Geographical Perspective
4.	Association of North Bengal Geographers, Siliguri.	2011	Geographical Memoirs, Siliguri
5.	Association of Geographical Studies, Delhi	1979	Analytical Geography, Delhi
6.	Association of Punjab Geographers, Patiala	1998-99	Punjab Geographer
7.	Deccan Geographical Society, Pune.	1962	The Deccan Geographer
8.	Eastern Geographical Society, Bhubaneswar.	1971	Eastern Geographer, Bhubaneswar
9.	North Indian Geographers Association, Gorakhpur.	1964	North India Geography Journal
10.	Geographical Development Research Institute, Gorakhpur.	2010	Earth Surface Review, Gorakhpur
11.	Research Journal of the Association of Geographers, Goa (GEO)	1999	Goa Geographer, Goa
12.	Himalayan Review Council, Kolkata.	1976	Himalaya Prasanga, Kolkata
13.	Indian Environmental Society, Delhi.	1972	New Delhi
14.	Indian Geographical Foundation, Kolkata.	1993	Practicing Geographer

15.	Indian Geographical Society, Chennai.	1926	Indian Geographical Journal, Chennai.
16.	Indian Institute of Geomorphology (IGI), Allahabad.	1987	Indian Journal of Geomorphology, Allahabad
17.	Indian Institute of Geography (IIG), Pune.	1979	Transactions, Indian Institute of Geography, Pune
18.	Institute of Landscape, Ecology and Ecology, Kolkata.	1983	Kolkata, West Bengal
19.	National Association of Geographers, India (NAG), Delhi.	1979	Annals of the National Association of Geographers, India, Delhi
20.	National Geographical Society of India, Varanasi.	1946	National Geographical Journal of India, Varanasi.
21.	North-Eastern Geographical Society of India, Guwahati.	North-Eastern Geographer, Guwahati
22.	North-Eastern Hill Geographical Society, Shillong	1968	Hill Geographer, Shillong
23.	Indian Geographical Society, Kolkata.	1933	Geographical Review of India, Kolkata

Source: Official websites of geographical associations and universities.

Conclusion

After the study, it is seen that at present, geography is developing as a subject that has influenced almost all the regions of India. Being a coordinated form of arts and science, students of both the classes are showing interest in it. More research work is being done in this subject as compared to other social sciences. Flexibility related to the subject matter and keen eye on the current topics have made this subject quite popular among the scholars. Therefore, the developed studies and research trends after 2000 A.D. seem to be emerging as a new challenge for Indian geographers. If geographers are able to present scientific, logical, practical and useful subject matter on the required subject matter, then geography will emerge as a creative subject and there will be a definite recognition of the important role of geographers in the construction of 21st century India, which will prove helpful in the construction and development of the country. Therefore, if seen in the context of India, there has been a significant change in the epistemology and pedagogy of geography. For example, there has been a shift from descriptive to analytical, quantitative

to qualitative, from traditional maps to computer and GIS based maps and information. Since the nineties, the study of environmental problems and sustainable development has emerged as the main areas. 'Critical Geography' is being used in the study of social, economic and cultural characteristics. Even today, these changes are limited to the centers of metropolitan education, while traditional curriculum and methods are prevalent in regional universities and colleges. Therefore, it is very important for us to update the curriculum of geography and include contemporary and methodological research techniques.

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