

**COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PRIMARY CLASSES TEXTBOOKS IN RELATION TO
ENVIRONMENTAL CONCEPTS**

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ABSTRACT

This paper was aimed to analyse the content of primary classes textbooks of major subjects prescribed by different boards. It is clear that the issue today is not whether Environmental Education should form an essential component of education, the issue is how to do it effectively. One of the major variables that conditions and controls the quality of school education is the quality of textbooks. An Analysis Sheet was used for content analysis of textbooks.

The content of text-books of major subjects prescribed by different boards of school education for class III, IV & V was found suitable and sufficient to provide full opportunities to make children environmentally aware.

Key-Words Primary Classes, Textbooks, Environmental Concepts.

"National Curriculum for Elementary and Secondary Education 1988" has visualised the school curriculum as a vehicle for social change. It observed, "In order to fulfil its role as a vehicle for social change, the school curriculum has to be dynamic enough to respond to the changing national priorities and long term developmental goals of the country." Curriculum is expected to change the values and attitudes of learners and create in them an urge for necessary modification for social change.

The evaluation of curriculum material occupies an important place as the provision of effective meaningful need based and rational curriculum material depends upon the growth of the learners. It has therefore to be assured that the curriculum materials are of good quality.

The Discussion Guide for UNESCO Training Workshop on EE (1980) has provided two conceptual models of the EE Curriculum : one is interdisciplinary or infused, the other is a multidisciplinary or infusion model.

In India, NCERT has adopted the multidisciplinary approach Social at primary level. Multidisciplinary approach includes the infusion or Studies integration of established disciplines wherever appropriate. But objectives of EE can not be realized simply by infusing environmental concepts in the existing curriculum. The effective infusion of EE curriculum into school programmes is dependent on various factors.

The process of education in most schools in India and even abroad, can be summed up in one phrase, "As the textbook, so the teaching learning." This is because of many reasons. The

textbook plays a crucial role in generating educational interactions in the classroom between teacher and learner. The text-book is also used for self learning by individual students either in class-room or at home. The textbook assumes a place of paramount importance in the field of formal education.

Dr. D.S. Kothari has rightly said, "The question of Text-book is the most important and urgent one for our country. Energetic action on a state and national basis is required to progress the preparation of high quality school Textbook. In words of Voltaire" All the known world, excepting savage nations, is governed by Books.

In the Indian situation, at the primary stage text books continue to be the most essential and in majority of cases the only aid in the hands of the teacher and learner through which the given curriculum is transacted. The situation consequently places a heavy responsibility on the quality of text-book for ensuring effective teaching-learning interactions and outcomes.

Having recognized this fact, NCERT has undertaken several programmes to improve the quality of school textbooks. Center of Environment Education, Ahmedabad established in 1984 to meet the country's need for creating high quality educational materials and for propagating awareness among children and Urban/Rural Communities. The educational material developed by the centre includes guide books and documents on the country's natural resources. Beside these efforts several researches have been carried out in India.

This particular educational research area needs to be intensified and the whole education pattern should be environment oriented, which requires innovative and holistic approaches. Realizing the need of the time, it therefore becomes all the more pertinent that this important sector of education related to human life must be thoroughly investigated and therefore, the need was felt to evaluate the content of textbooks from the perspective of environmental concepts at primary level.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

Comparative analysis of content of text-books of major subjects prescribed by different boards of school education for primary classes by (III,IV & V) in relation to environmental concepts.

SAMPLE

For the critical evaluation the text books of Class III, IV & V of all the major subjects (Hindi, English, Social studies, Science) prescribed by U.P., CBSE & ICSE boards were included and only thematic (content) part of books was taken into consideration.

Survey of text-books projected the fact that the UP board has prescribed a single book for each subject at primary level while CBSE & ICSE boards have more than one text book for the particular subject, but the researcher considered only one book for each subject for content analysis.

METHODS

Content analysis method was employed for comparative analysis of primary classes textbooks in relation to the environmental concepts.

TOOLS

To collect the relevant data according to the objective of the study, no ready-made tool was available therefore researcher prepared an Analysis sheet for comparative analysis of content of text-books.

TECHNIQUES -

Percentage values were calculated in order to study the coverage of environmental concepts given in the text-books of various subjects prescribed by different boards of school education.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

After analyzing the content of text books of major subjects prescribed by different boards of education for primary classes, a global comparative view at a glance about the coverage of environmental concepts in the books of major subjects of classes III, IV & V done together. The percentages have been shown in the following Fig.

	HINDI		ENGLISH		SCIENCE		S. SCIENCE		
UP Board	26%	32%	-	-	92%	08%	14%	86%	III
	20%	28%	-	-	58%	42%	16%	84%	IV
	33%	33%	-	-	60%	40%	30%	70%	V
CBSE Board	12%	28%	23%	18%	81%	19%	10%	90%	III
	31%	15%	17%	17%	78%	22%	31%	69%	IV
	10%	31%	28%	16%	69%	31%	25%	75%	V
ICSE Board	11%	21%	30%	10%	71%	21%	16%	94%	III
	21%	18%	42%	21%	73%	27%	27%	73%	IV
	14%	21%	25%	17%	70%	30%	26%	74%	V
	HINDI		ENGLISH		SCIENCE		S. SCIENCE		

Pink – Manmade Environment

Blue – Natural Environment

HINDI TEXT BOOKS

In Hindi text books of class III, the maximum coverage of the concepts related to the natural and man-made environment was found in UP board's book.

In the class IV of CBSE board, more emphasis was placed on the natural environment with the highest percentage (31%) in comparison to UP board (20%) and ICSE (21%).

When the books of class V were compared, UP board was quite ahead on both the components- Natural and Socio-cultural (33% & 33% respectively). Hence it can be said that Hindi text books of Class III, IV & V of all the three boards have covered environmental concepts with satisfactory percentage but little variation was found.

ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS

For English textbooks, there was a comparison between ICSE & CBSE boards only because in U.P. Board, English is not being treated as a major subject upto class V. Among the two boards a clearly visible difference was found. For Class III, the ICSE board's book has a better percentage of natural environment concepts (30%) than CBSE (23%). This difference was just reversed in the case of manmade environment (18% in CBSE and 10% in ICSE).

The Class IV book was very rich in the concepts of natural environment 42% & 21% man-made environment for the ICSE board while CBSE showed a poor percentage for both Natural (17%) and manmade (17%) environmental concepts.

Books of English for class V were having almost similar percentage of coverage in both the boards. In English books the content was found related to the environment.

SCIENCE TEXTBOOKS

Science text books prescribed by all the three boards for Class III, IV & V were full of environmental concepts but in the coverage percentages there was a variation towards the higher side for the natural environment.

For class III, content related to the natural environment was maximum (92 %) in UP boards book, and little behind was CBSE board with 81%.

In class IV, CBSE board's book was on top (78%) than ICSE (73%) and UP board (58%).

For Class V, CBSE & ICSE were almost parallel (69 % & 70%) leaving behind the UP board (60%) .

In the socio-cultural environment UP board was much ahead in covering the environmental concepts. In the books of class IV & V, ICSE board gave much emphasis on Class III science book in comparison to UP & CBSE boards. Richness of content in the Science subject was quite relevant because science is based on natural phenomena. Science Text books of all the three boards & all three classes were rich in environmental content.

SOCIAL SCIENCE TEXT BOOKS

Social Science text books showed a very high percentage of content coverage related to manmade environment which seems logical. ICSE board book topped the list in class III while UP secured the same position in IV th class book. About class V, the percentage was almost similar. It means all the three boards have made more efforts to give cultural knowledge to small children (Class III) than other classes (IV and V). Content of social science text-books of all the three boards was full of man made environmental concepts.

Above analysis & interpretation lead to the conclusion that the content of text books prescribed by different boards for class III, IV, V classes is environment oriented leaving full scope to make the children environmentally aware.

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