

Research Paper

Impact of Students' Attitude on Geography Learning Outcomes in Secondary Schools of North 24 Parganas District, West Bengal

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ABSTRACT

Students' attitude plays a crucial role in shaping their learning experiences and outcomes. A positive attitude towards a subject can spark curiosity, motivation and engagement, leading to deeper understanding and better academic performance. Negative attitude can lead to disengagement and poor learning outcomes. Geography at secondary level helps students to understand world around them including physical features, different cultures, environments and economics. The present study investigates the impact of students' attitudes on Geography learning outcomes of North 24 Parganas district, West Bengal. A descriptive survey research design followed by the statistical analysis mean, standard deviation, t-test, correlation to analyse the data. One hundred students from class IX of secondary schools of North 24 Parganas, West Bengal were selected randomly. A 'Geography Attitude Scale' followed by 5 point Likert Scale was presented before the students for data collection. The result shows that girls and boys do not differ in their attitude in learning Geography and they do not show any significant difference in Geography learning outcomes. A positive correlation between students' and Geography learning outcomes encourages that positive attitude is a significant predictor for learning outcomes and educators should focus on it.

Keywords: *Geography, learning outcome, Attitude, Secondary school*

Geography as a discipline, plays a vital role in fostering global citizenship environmental awareness and cultural understanding among students. In secondary schools, Geography education aims to equip students with essential knowledge, skills and values that enable them to navigate the complexities of the modern world. However, despite its importance, Geography education faces numerous challenges, including students' lack of interests, motivation and engagement. Attitude towards a subject can vary from person to person. Jung, a Freudian psychologist (1921) admitted that attitude has both visible and hidden aspects. Students' attitude towards subject is clearly expressed in all academic interactions. The attitude towards Geography can be influenced by different educational setting (Kubiatko & Janko, 2012). Government school students tend to have a more positive attitude (Sumesh & Gafoor, 2012). Attitude plays a crucial role in determining students' learning outcomes in Geography. An attitude is a complex mental state that influences an individual's feelings, thoughts and behaviors towards a particular subject or

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activity. In the context of Geography education, students' attitude can either facilitate or hinder their learning. Positive attitude towards Geography can motivate students to learn, engage them in the learning process and enhance their overall academic achievement. On the other hand, negative attitudes can lead to disengagement, lack of motivation and poor academic performance.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The review of related literature on the impact of students' attitude in learning Geography on learning outcomes is very significant. By examining existing research, educators and policymakers can identify the key factors that influence students' attitude towards Geography learning and also it helps to identify gaps in current research, informing the development of new studies that address these gaps and contribute to the advancement of knowledge in the field.

Candias and Rebelo (2008) have studied on students' attitudes toward school, learning, competence and motivation and the effects of the factors like gender, contextual background, school failure and development. The study has shown a strong effect of school level, school failure and socio-economic and cultural background of family on attitude toward school and learning.

Mendezabel (2013) investigated in the paper students' attitude and study habits in their academic success. Result of the study presented that maximum number of students showing unfavourable study habit and attitude and there is significant relationship between study habit – attitude and academic performance.

Dundar & Rapoport (2014) stated in their study "Elementary students' attitudes towards Social Studies, Math and Sciences: An analysis with the emphasis on social studies", that students show negative attitudes towards social sciences than others and they describe that social science is much harder than other subject.

Sarkar, De & Maiti (2015) have investigated students' attitude towards Geography. By administering the tool on 800 students of class IX of West Bengal, data was analysed by the t-test, Anova and Correlation which has found that boys and girls do not differ significantly in mean attitude scores towards Geography. Urban and rural boys significantly differ in attitude towards learning Geography and attitude & achievement in Geography are significantly correlated.

Kundu and Ghose (2016) have conducted a study on the relationship between attitude and self-efficacy in Mathematics among higher secondary students. The existing study revealed that the association between higher secondary students' attitude in learning mathematics and self-efficacy is high and the study concluded that healthy attitude nourished students' self-efficacy.

T. L. Tuan (2016) has conducted a study on the relationship between motivation, attitude and Geography achievement and the findings of the study have shown significant impact of students' attitude towards Geography. Positive attitudes towards Geography are associated with better academic performance, while negative attitudes are associated with poorer performance.

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A. Dagneu (2017) investigated relationship students' attitudes towards school, values of education, achievement motivation and academic achievement in secondary school of Ethiopia. The study found that there was significant, positive relationship between students' attitude towards school, values of education, achievement motivation and academic achievement.

Falode, Usman, Chukwuemeka and Mohammad (2020) have conducted a study on improving secondary school students' attitude towards Geography through physical and virtual laboratories in North Central Nigeria. The study found that physical and virtual laboratories enhanced secondary school students' attitude towards Geography better than the administering lecture method.

Ntim, Gyamfi, Poomaa and Afari (2020) have investigated students' attitude towards the learning of Geography in senior high schools. The survey was basically administered on the students of Cape Coast Metropolis. The study revealed that students perceive Geography as difficult to learn and the study recommended to approach modern teaching and learning resources which will assist teachers to explain very well the Geographical concepts.

Ahammad (2021) has administered a study on teaching effectiveness, scientific attitude and achievement in Geography among higher secondary school students. The study reveals that effective teaching and scientific attitude, competent and dedication of the student increase quality of learners' achievement.

A. F. Melad (2022) conducted a study on students' attitude in statistics and its impact on learning outcomes. The study found a significant positive relationship between attitude components and academic achievement.

Das and Nag (2024) have investigated secondary students' attitudes and achievements in focusing the subject Geography. The result has shown the existence of gender disparities and positive correlation is found between attitude and Geography academic achievements.

Objectives

1. To compare the attitude between girls and boys in Geography in secondary schools.
2. To compare the Geography learning outcomes between girls and boys in learning Geography in secondary schools.
3. To find out the relationship between attitude and Geography learning outcomes in secondary schools.

Hypotheses

- H₀₁: There is no significant difference in attitude between girls and boys in Geographical learning in secondary schools.
- H₀₂: There is no significant difference in Geography learning outcomes between girls and boys in Geographical learning in secondary schools.
- H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between attitude and Geography learning outcomes in secondary schools.

Population:

The study covers all the secondary students of North 24 Parganas district, West Bengal.

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Sample:

The sample number of the present study is 100 out of which 50 were boys and 50 were girls from class IX of secondary schools of West Bengal.

Method:

The present study has adopted descriptive survey research design to investigate impact of students' attitude on Geography learning outcomes.

Tools:

The instrument for data collection comprised of a Geography Attitude Scale (GAS), designed by the researcher. The questionnaire is constructed by the researcher and it was validated by the concerned experts. The questionnaire contained 30 statements and the statements were being answered by giving (✓) mark to any one response. 5 point Likert Scale was organised for giving the answers – Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Neutral (3), Disagree (2), Strongly Disagree (1). Positive Statements were scored by following this manner - SA (5), A (4), N (3), DA (2), SDA (1).

Data Analysis

Objective 1: To compare the attitude between girls and boys in Geography in secondary schools (Corresponding to Hypothesis H₀₁)

Table 1 showing Attitude Level of Girls and Boys

	Gender	n	Mean	SD	MD	df	SE _D	t-value	Significance
Attitude in Learning Geography	Girls	50	95.82	21.81	0.06	98	4.06	0.01	Not Significant
	Boys	50	95.76	18.71					

*t-criterion value at 0.05 level is 1.98 for df 98.

Interpretation: The result indicates that the t-value (0.01) is not significant. The meaning thereby girls and boys do not differ in attitude significantly in Geography in secondary schools. Hence the null hypothesis H₀₁ is accepted and alternative hypothesis H₁ is rejected.

Objective 2: To compare the Geography learning outcomes between girls and boys in learning Geography in secondary schools (Corresponding to Hypothesis H₀₂)

Table 2 showing Geography Learning Outcomes of Girls and Boys

	Gender	n	Mean	SD	MD	df	SE _D	t-value	Significance
Geography Learning Outcomes	Girls	50	19.32	7.48	3.26	98	1.96	1.66	Not Significant
	Boys	50	22.58	11.70					

*t-criterion value at 0.05 level is 1.98 for df 98.

Interpretation: The result indicates that the t-value (1.66) is not significant. The meaning thereby girls and boys do not differ in Geography Learning Outcomes significantly in learning Geography in secondary schools. Hence the null hypothesis H₀₂ is accepted and alternative hypothesis H₂ is rejected.

Objective 3: To find out the relationship between attitude and Geography learning outcomes in secondary schools.

Table 3 showing Correlation between Attitude and Geography Learning Outcomes in learning Geography in secondary schools (Corresponding to Hypothesis H₀₃)

Groups	N	df	r	p-value	Significance
Attitude	100	98	0.31	0.00	Sig. at 0.01 level
Geography Learning Outcomes					

Interpretation: There is significant relationship between Attitude and Geography Learning Outcomes in secondary school as the correlation value (r) is 0.31. The positive value indicates that Geography Learning Outcomes increases when Attitude increases, significantly at 0.01 level as the observed p-value of 0.00 is below than the p-value of 0.01 for df 98. The result supports the rejection of the null hypothesis H₀₃ and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis H₃.

DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

The results of the study revealed a fascinating insight into the attitudes of girls and boys towards learning geography. Contrary to expectations, the mean values of the two groups did not differ significantly, suggesting that both girls and boys exhibit similar levels of enthusiasm and interest in geography. Specifically, the mean value for girls was 95.82, while that for boys was 95.76, a difference of a mere 0.06 points. This negligible difference indicates that both groups have a remarkably similar attitude towards learning geography, with neither group displaying a significantly more positive or negative disposition. This finding has important implications for educators and policymakers, as it suggests that geography education is equally engaging and relevant for both girls and boys. Furthermore, it highlights the need for educators to focus on developing instructional strategies that cater to the diverse learning needs and styles of all students, regardless of gender. Overall, the results of this study provide a reassuring indication that geography education is accessible and enjoyable for all students, and that efforts to promote geographical literacy can be effectively targeted towards both girls and boys.

The results presented in Table 2 provide insight into the comparison of geography learning outcomes between girls and boys. The t-test was employed to determine whether there were significant differences in the mean scores of girls and boys. The findings reveal that the t-value is 1.66, which is not significant. This indicates that the null hypothesis (H₀₂) cannot be rejected, and therefore, it is accepted. Conversely, the alternative hypothesis (H₂) is rejected. The acceptance of H₀₂ suggests that girls and boys do not differ significantly in their geography learning outcomes. This finding is supported by the mean scores, which show that girls have a mean score of 19.32, while boys have a mean score of 22.58. Although the mean score for boys is slightly higher than that of girls, the difference is not statistically significant.

The non-significant t-value indicates that the observed difference in mean scores can be attributed to chance rather than any underlying differences in geography learning outcomes between girls and boys. This finding has important implications for educators and policymakers, as it suggests that geography education is equally effective for both girls and boys.

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The rejection of H_2 , which posited that there would be a significant difference in geography learning outcomes between girls and boys, indicates that the data do not support this hypothesis. This finding is consistent with previous research, which has shown that girls and boys tend to perform equally well in geography.

The findings of this study have several implications for geography education. Firstly, they suggest that educators should avoid making assumptions about students' abilities based on their gender. Rather, they should focus on creating an inclusive learning environment that encourages all students to participate and engage with geography education.

Secondly, the findings imply that educators should focus on developing instructional strategies that cater to the diverse learning needs and styles of all students, regardless of gender. This can be achieved by using a variety of teaching methods, incorporating real-world examples, and providing opportunities for students to explore and learn about different geographical concepts.

Finally, the findings of this study highlight the need for further research to investigate the factors that influence geography learning outcomes. While the current study found no significant difference in geography learning outcomes between girls and boys, there may be other factors, such as socio-economic status, prior knowledge, or learning style, that affect students' performance in geography. Future studies should aim to explore these factors in more detail to provide a more comprehensive understanding of geography learning.

The results presented in Table 3 reveal a significant relationship between attitude and geography learning outcomes in secondary schools. The correlation value of 0.31 indicates a positive and moderate relationship between the two variables. This suggests that as students' attitudes towards learning geography become more positive, their learning outcomes also tend to improve.

The positive correlation value implies that there is a direct relationship between attitude and geography learning outcomes. In other words, as students develop more positive attitudes towards learning geography, they are more likely to achieve better learning outcomes. This finding is consistent with previous research, which has shown that students' attitudes and motivations play a crucial role in determining their academic achievement.

The rejection of the null hypothesis (H_{03}) and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis indicate that there is a statistically significant relationship between attitude and geography learning outcomes. This suggests that attitude is a significant predictor of geography learning outcomes, and that educators should focus on developing strategies to promote positive attitudes towards learning geography.

The implications of this finding are significant for educators and policymakers. Firstly, it highlights the importance of creating a positive learning environment that encourages students to develop a love for learning geography. This can be achieved by using innovative and engaging teaching methods, providing opportunities for hands-on learning, and incorporating real-world examples into the curriculum.

Secondly, the finding suggests that educators should focus on developing strategies to promote positive attitudes towards learning geography. This can be achieved by providing

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feedback and encouragement, setting achievable goals and targets, and celebrating students' successes.

Finally, the finding has implications for the development of geography education policy. Policymakers should focus on creating policies that promote positive attitudes towards learning geography, such as providing resources and support for teachers, developing innovative and engaging curriculum materials, and promoting geography education as a vital part of the school curriculum.

In conclusion, the results presented in Table 3 provide strong evidence of a significant relationship between attitude and geography learning outcomes in secondary schools. The positive correlation value and rejection of the null hypothesis indicate that attitude is a significant predictor of geography learning outcomes, and that educators should focus on developing strategies to promote positive attitudes towards learning geography.

Delimitation:

1. The present study is delimited to secondary school students in North 24 Parganas district, West Bengal.
2. The present study is delimited to North 24 Parganas district, West Bengal.
3. The investigation is delimited to girls' and boys' attitude in learning Geography and its impact on learning outcomes.

A similar study can be conducted at a higher secondary level in any area of West Bengal.

Educational Implications

The present study focused on the influence of students' attitude towards Geography which helps to educators to develop their strategies to enhance students' engagement, motivation and interest in the subject. This study contributes to the existing literature on students' attitudes and learning outcomes in Geography, providing new insights and perspectives on this topics. The study's findings have implications for other subjects, such as Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), where attitudes and learning outcomes are also critical.

CONCLUSION

The study's findings underscore the significant of students' attitudes in shaping their Geography learning outcomes, highlighting the need for educators and policy makers to prioritize the development of positive attitudes towards the subject. By incorporating innovative teaching methods, real world examples, and hands-on activities into the curriculum, educators can foster a love for Geography among students, promoting greater engagement, motivation and academic achievement. Furthermore, the study's findings suggest that targeted interventions are necessary to support students who struggle with geographical concepts, particularly girls, who tend to exhibit more negative attitudes towards the subject. The present study's result is incorporated with the study of Sarkar, De and Maiti (2015), Dagnev (2017) and Melad (2022) and is not aligned with the study of Das and Nag (2024). By offering the opportunity to develop a deep understanding and appreciation of geographical concepts, regardless of their background or demographic characteristics.

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The study's findings have important implications for educators, policymakers and future researchers. The study's findings suggest that there are significant differences in the attitudes and learning outcomes of boys and girls in Geography. Boys tend to perform slightly better than girls tend to exhibit more negative attitudes towards the subject. The findings highlight the importance of promoting positive attitudes towards Geography among students and suggests educators and future researchers to foster love for Geography among students.

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Conflict of Interest

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