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Teaching of Social Science under Two-Year B.Ed. Programme of Gauhati University: An Analysis

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Abstract:

Teaching of Social Science Syllabus is an important part of B.Ed. Programme. The main purpose of this descriptive paper is to find out the objectives of Teaching Social Science prescribed by Gauhati University, Guwahati; and to analyse how far the objectives of Teaching Social science have been fulfilled by the syllabus prescribed by Gauhati University. In order to examine, a standardized tool was prepared. The questionnaire was distributed to 60 randomly selected samples through a disproportionate stratified random sampling technique. Data are analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results and findings that carried out revealed that, there is an urgent need to modify the Teaching of Social Science Syllabus and fulfilled the requirement as prescribed in the objectives of the syllabus. The results and findings would help the competent and appropriate authorities to restructure the Teaching of Social Science Syllabus.

Keywords: Teaching of Social Science, Syllabus Analysis

1. Introduction:

The present National Focus Group (NFG) recognises the efforts made in the past to create an ideal social science curriculum. Though, a lot of work remains to be done, particularly since in today's neo-liberal India the subjects that comprise the social sciences are considered inadequate for securing employment. They sense the need to first discuss the existing perceptions of the social sciences amongst the larger community, and then factor this into the proposed curricular framework. To make sure that the curricular recommendations are adequately translated into textbooks, the NFG has also highlighted the main issues to be

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addressed in order to make the social sciences professionally and intellectually valuable subject of study.

The social sciences encompass varied concerns of society and include a broad range of content, drawn from the disciplines of geography, history, political science, economics and sociology. The selection and organisation of material into a significant social science curriculum, enabling students to develop a critical understanding of society, is therefore a challenging job. The potentials of including new dimensions and concerns are immense especially in view of the student's own life experiences.

It is important to restore the significance of the social sciences by not only highlighting its increasing relevance for a career in the rapidly expanding service sector, but by pointing to its indispensability in laying the foundations for creative and analytical mindset.

It is frequently presumed that only natural and physical phenomena lend themselves to scientific inquiry, and that knowledge areas pertaining to the human sciences (geography, history, economics, political science etc.) cannot be, by their very nature "scientific". But it is essential to recognise that the social sciences lend themselves to scientific inquiry just as much as the natural and physical sciences do, as well as to articulate the ways in which the methods applied by social sciences are distinct but in no way inferior to those of the natural and physical sciences.

The social sciences carry a normative accountability to create and widen the popular base for human values, trust, mutual respect, namely freedom, respect for diversity, etc. Thus, social science teaching basically should be aimed at investing in a child a moral and mental energy so as to provide her with the ability to think by them and deal with the social forces that threaten these values, without losing her individuality. Social Science teaching can achieve this by promoting children's ability to take initiative to critically reflect on social problems that have a bearing on the creative coexistence between individual good and collective good. Critical reflection pre-supposes a comprehensive curriculum in which learners – both teachers and children – participate in generating knowledge without any hidden and manifest forces of coercion. It is through this non-coercive and participatory mode that children and teachers stand the best chance of making teaching and learning interesting as well as pleasant.

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The disciplines that make up the social sciences, namely geography, history, political science and economics, have distinct methodologies that often justify the preservation of boundaries. The borders of disciplines need to be opened up and a plurality of approaches may be applied to understand a given phenomenon.

In terms of Approaches to Teaching-Pedagogy and Resource, Social science teaching needs to be revitalized towards helping the learner acquire skills and knowledge in an interactive environment. The teaching of social sciences must adopt methods that promote aesthetics, creativity, and critical perspectives, and enable children to draw relationships between past and present, to understand changes taking place in society. Dramatization, Problem solving, and role play are some hither-to under explored strategies that could be employed. Teaching should utilize greater resources of audio-visual materials, including charts and maps, photographs, and replicas of archaeological and material cultures. In order to make the process of learning practical and participative there is a need to shift from mere imparting of information to debate and discussion. This approach to learning will keep both the teacher and learner alive to social realities.

Concepts should be clarified to the students through the practical experiences of communities and individuals. It has often been observed that cultural, social and class differences generate their own biases, prejudices and attitudes in classroom situations. The approach to teaching therefore needs to be open-ended or unrestricted. Teachers should discuss different aspects of social reality in the class, and work towards creating increasing self-awareness amongst themselves and in the students.

The objectives of teaching the social sciences at the secondary stage (NCF, 2005): The objectives of teaching the social sciences at the secondary stage are to develop among the learner analytical and conceptual skills to facilitate the learners (1) to understand the processes of economic and social change and development with examples from modern and contemporary India and other parts of the world, (2) to critically examine social and economic issues and challenges like poverty, child labour, destitution, illiteracy, and various other dimensions of inequality, (3) to understand the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democratic and secular society, (4) to understand the roles and responsibilities of the state

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in the fulfilment of constitutional obligations, (5) to understand the processes of change and development in India in relation to the judicious utilisation of resources and the need for the conservation of the environment, the world economy and polity, appreciate the rights of local communities in relation to their surroundings.

2. The rationale of the study:

The National Curriculum Framework-2005 states that teacher-education programmes today train teachers to adjust to a system in which education is seen as the transmission of information. Efforts at curricular reform have not been adequately supported by teacher - education. Existing teacher -education programmes neither accommodate the emerging ideas in context and pedagogy nor address the issue of linkages between society and school. There is little liberty for engagement with innovative educational experiments. Experiences in the practice of teacher-education programme indicate that knowledge is treated as 'given', embedded in the curriculum and accepted without question. Curriculum, syllabi and textbooks are hardly critically examined by the regular teacher or student-teacher.

Subsequently, in 2014, the NCTE brought out a curriculum framework for a two year B.Ed. course of studies and provided some suggestive guidelines for syllabus designing in the light of the new norms and standards 2014. Consequently, Gauhati University, Guwahati, Assam prepared a two year B.Ed. course of studies. This paper aims at objectively and critically analysing and interpreting the basic issues involved in the Teaching of Social Science Syllabus of two year B.Ed. prepared by Gauhati University, Guwahati, Assam. Being very thoughtful of the above significance, the investigator prepared his mind to carry out the study.

3. Statement of the Study:

"Teaching of Social Science under Two-Year B.Ed. Programme of Gauhati University: An Analysis"

4. Objectives of the Study:

(i) To find out the objectives of teaching social science prescribed by Gauhati University.

(ii) To analyse how far the objectives of Teaching Social science have been fulfilled by the syllabus prescribed by Gauhati University

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5. Research Questions:

(i) What are the Objectives of Teaching Social Science prescribed by Gauhati University?

(ii) To what extent the objectives of Teaching Social Science have been fulfilled by the Syllabus prescribed by Gauhati University?

6. Methodology:

Design of The study: The present study falls under the domain of qualitative research. The researcher used an exploratory descriptive survey method in this study.

Sampling: The research was conducted for the B.Ed. Student-Teachers (2nd Year only) and Teacher Educators of Private and Govt. Colleges which are affiliated to Gauhati University, Guwahati. In this study, the researcher took a randomly of 40 Student-Teachers (8 from each college) and 20 Teacher Educators (4 from each college) belongs to five (three Private and two Govt.) B.Ed. Colleges affiliated to Gauhati University, Guwahati, Assam namely (1) Govt. B.T. College, Goalpara (2) Govt. Shikshan Mahavidyalaya, Nagaon (3) Nazir Ajmal Memorial College of Education, Hojai (4) College of Education, Morigaon and (5) Dhubri Post Graduate Teacher Training College, Dhubri.

Table 1: Distribution of the Sample

Sl. No.	Categories	Male	Female	Private College	Govt. College	Total
1	Student-Teachers	11	29	20	20	40
2	Teacher Educators	05	15	10	10	20
	Grand Total	16	44	30	30	60

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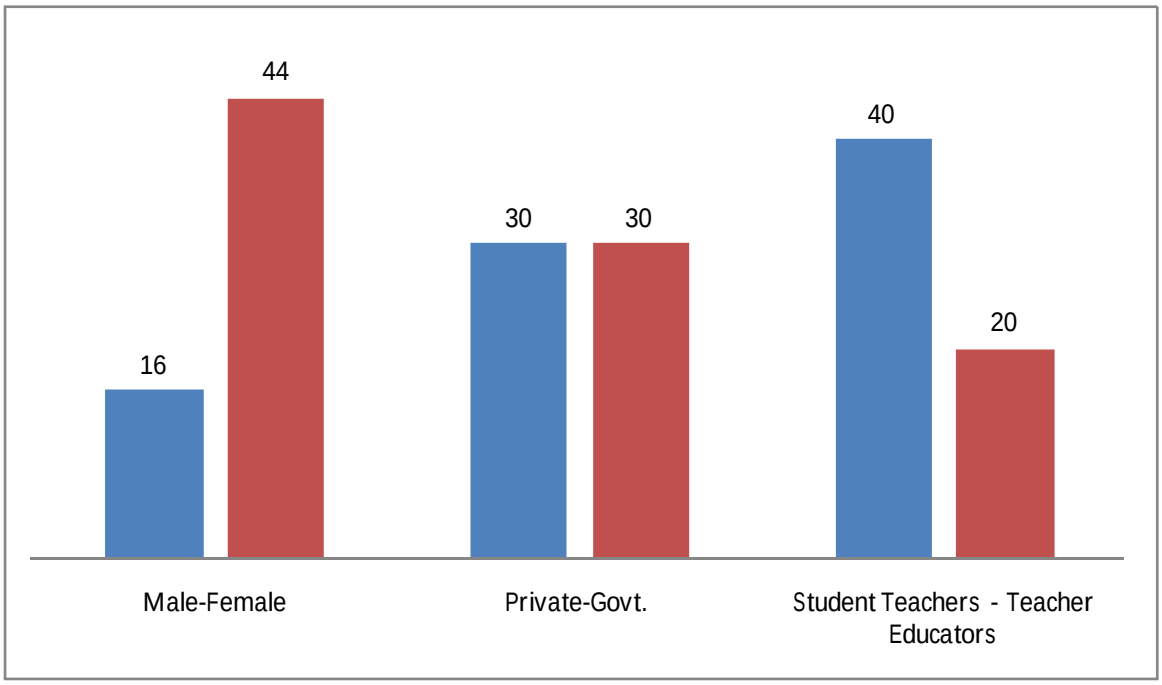

Figure 1: Distribution of the Sample

Tool: The tool i.e. 'Pedagogy and Syllabus Assessment Scale' was prepared and standardized by the researcher himself. It is an open ended and closed type questionnaire. The tool has been standardized by establishing validity. Content validity of the tool has been established by using the Lawshe method (Lawshe, 1975) and the Content validity index (CVI) was found to be 0.77.

Data Analysis: The researcher used descriptive statistics, simple percentage, and histogram for analysis of data.

7. Result and findings:

In order to answer the first research question i.e. what are the Objectives of Teaching Social Science prescribed by Gauhati University? The researcher has gone through the Gauhati University B.Ed. Syllabus (2015) and fund the these objectives of Teaching of Social Science: to refresh and enrich his/her knowledge on the subject, to understand the nature, structure and scope of Social Science and its importance in the, to context of emerging concerns and need of Indian society, to understand the correlations of different components of social science, to apprise with the latest methodologies and technologies of teaching Social Science, to understand the need and significance of teaching Social Science at secondary

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level, to comprehend and adopt various methods and techniques of evaluations, to prepare and use different kinds of instructional materials for teaching Social Science.

In order to answer the second research question i.e. to what extent the objectives of Teaching Social Science have been fulfilled by the Syllabus prescribed by Gauhati University? The researcher has used 'Pedagogy and Syllabus Assessment Scale', where seven questions were asked to Student-Teachers and Teacher Educators whish are related to the objectives of Teaching of Social Science Syllabus prescribed by Gauhati University, Guwahati. The questions were as such- (i) Whether the teaching of social science syllabus enriches student teacher's knowledge on the subject? (ii) Do you think the present social science syllabus is able to contextualize emerging concerns and need of Indian society through its structure and components? (iii) Whether it is possible to understand the correlation of different components of social science through this syllabus? (iv) Whether this syllabus appraises latest methodologies and technologies to understand the need and significance of teaching social science at the secondary level? (v) Whether this syllabus comprehends and adopts various methods and techniques of evaluations? (vi) Whether social science syllabus is able to justify the need and importance while teaching social science subject at secondary level? (vii) Give your overall opinion on how far the syllabus of social science is appropriate for developing teaching competency among the student teacher for teaching social science subject at secondary level? And responses were (a) Yes (b) No (c) Can't Say (d) Do not know and also asked to give reasons in support of their response.

Item wise tables were formed and analysed on the basis of responses given by Student Teacher and Teacher Educators. Accordingly following results are found:

Table 2:

Responses of Student Teachers (showing item wise no (N) and percentage (%) of Student Teachers opted a, b, c and d options in support of the question asked)

Response -	a		b		c		d	
Item No.	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
i	28	47%	6	10%	6	10%	0	0%
ii	23	38%	10	17%	7	12%	0	0%
iii	28	47%	3	5%	5	8%	4	7%
iv	23	38%	4	7%	10	17%	3	5%
v	28	47%	4	7%	6	10%	2	3%
vi	34	57%	1	2%	4	7%	1	2%

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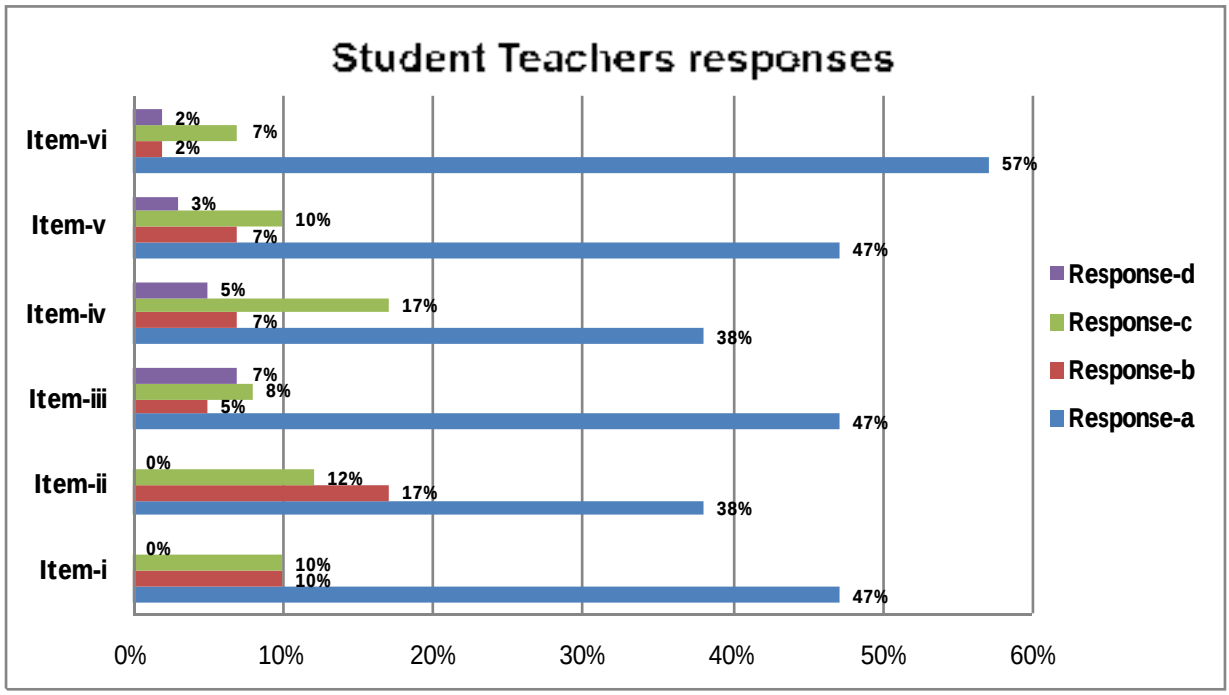

Figure 2: Item wise comparison (in %) of Student Teachers responses

Table 3:

Responses of Teacher Educators (showing item wise no (N) and percentage (%) of Teacher Educators opted a, b, c and d options in support of the question asked)

Response -	a		b		c		d	
Item No.	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
i	12	20%	7	12%	1	2%	0	0%
ii	13	22%	1	2%	3	5%	3%	5%
iii	18	30%	1	2%	1	2%	0	0%
iv	11	18%	2	2%	4	7%	3	5%
v	11	18%	2	3%	4	7%	3	5%
vi	18	30%	1	2%	0%	0%	1	2%

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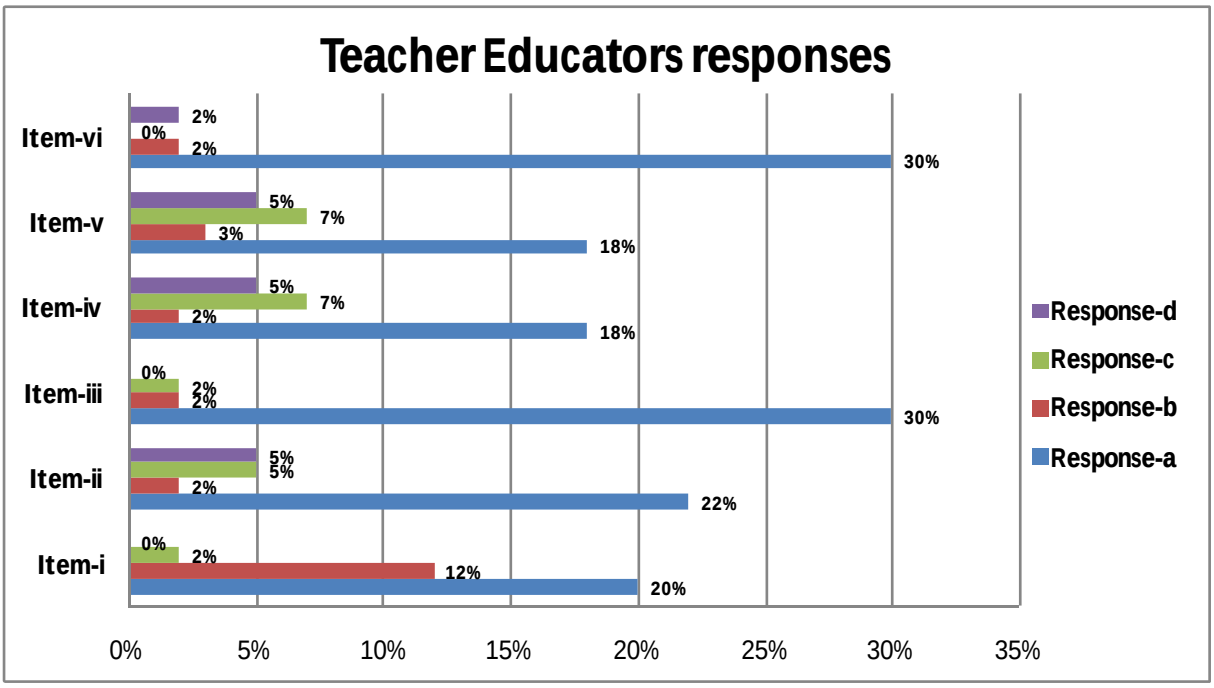

Figure 3: Item wise comparison (in %) of Teacher Educators responses

In the Table-2 and Figure-2 (Student Teachers responses) and Table-3 and Figure-3 (Teacher Educators responses) clearly shows the following results:

Item no (i) points that out of total 60 respondents almost 47% from Student Teacher and 20% from Teacher Educators say that 'the teaching of social science syllabus enriches student teacher's knowledge on the subject'.

Item no (ii) concludes that out of total 60 respondents about 38% from Student Teacher and 22% from Teacher Educators agreed that 'the present social science syllabus is able to contextualize emerging concerns and need of Indian society through its structure and components'.

Item no (iii) concludes that out of total 60 respondents about 47% from Student Teacher and 30% from Teacher Educators agreed that 'it is possible to understand the correlation of different components of social science through this syllabus'.

Item no (iv) concludes that out of total 60 respondents about 38% from Student Teacher and 18% from Teacher Educators agreed that 'this syllabus appraises latest methodologies and technologies to understand the need and significance of teaching social science at the secondary level'.

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Item no (v) concludes that out of total 60 respondents about 47% from Student Teacher and 18% from Teacher Educators agreed that 'this syllabus comprehends and adopts various methods and techniques of evaluations'.

Item no (vi) concludes that out of total 60 respondents about 57% from Student Teacher and 30% from Teacher Educators agreed that 'social science syllabus is able to justify the need and importance while teaching social science subject at secondary level'.

8. Conclusion:

It is quite clear that there is a vast difference between Student Teachers and Teacher Educators perceptions in terms of all the items but most of the respondents are agreed that objectives of Teaching Social Science have been fulfilled by the syllabus prescribed by Gauhati, University though there is a need of improvement in certain areas as mentioned by the respondent are as such-

The teaching of social science syllabus does not enrich student teacher's knowledge on the subject; there is no updated knowledge about the subject in the syllabus.

The present social science syllabus is not able to contextualize emerging concerns and need of Indian society through its structure and components; It is outdated and would be obsolete in some coming days.

It is not possible to understand the correlation of different components of social science through this syllabus; there is no such element to correlate the other components.

This syllabus do not appraises latest methodologies and technologies to understand the need and significance of teaching social science at the secondary level; rather some most used techniques are being provided.

This syllabus do not comprehends and adopts various methods and techniques of evaluations; nothing is there as such.

Overall in the syllabus, the basic knowledge of the subject social science is being introduced and the qualities which a social science teacher must borne but it is not competent as the latest techniques and methodologies have not been discussed and old tradition has been put up in the same.

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9. Recommendations:

Though Gauhati University, Guwahati brought out changes in the B.Ed. Syllabus in the light of the new norms and standards of NCTE, 2014. But, significant content has not been added to the Teaching of Social Science courses of studies. Rather, the old wine has been poured into a new bottle. Only certain cosmetic and unsuitable changes in the operational part of the course have been made. The social science syllabus is a classic case of hotchpotch. Even after the revision and reconstruction of the syllabus, this is a very unsatisfactory situation for teacher education. Therefore, there is an urgent need to modify the Teaching of Social Science Syllabus and fulfill the requirement as prescribed in the objectives of the syllabus.

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