

PART I

CHAPTER 1

HUMAN GEOGRAPHY : NATURE AND SCOPE

Difference between physical geography and human geography:

Physical geography studies physical environment and human geography studies “the relationship between the physical/natural and the human worlds, the spatial distributions of human phenomena and how they come about, the social and economic differences between different parts of the world”.

Definitions of human geography:

- “Human geography is the synthetic study of relationship between human societies and earth’s surface”. Ratzer
- “Human geography is the study of “the changing relationship between the unresting man and the unstable earth.” Ellen C. Semple

NATURE OF HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

Human geography studies the inter-relationship between the physical environment and socio-cultural environment created by human beings through mutual interaction with each other. While physical environment has been greatly modified by human beings, it has also, in turn, impacted human lives.

Naturalisation of Humans and Humanisation of Nature

Human beings interact with their physical environment with the help of technology. It is not important what human beings produce and create but it is extremely important ‘with the help of what tools and techniques do they produce and create’. Technology indicates the level of cultural development of society. Human beings were able to develop technology after they developed better understanding of natural laws.

Environmental determinism

- Frederich Ratzel and Carl Ritter were the main advocates of this idea.
- They consider man as a passive agent in the development of his character.
- The point of view is that the physical environment controls the course of human action.

Possibilism

- This idea was put forward by Lucien Febvre.
- It presents man as an active agent.
- Nature sets limits and offers possibilities for human settlement, human beings make use of these and slowly nature gets humanised and bearing the imprints of human endeavour.

Neo determinism

- Introduced by Griffith Taylor.
- It reflects a middle path (Madhyam Marg) between the two ideas of **environmental determinism** and **possibilism**.
- He termed it as **Neodeterminism** or **stop and go determinism**.
- The concept shows that neither is there a situation of absolute necessity (environmental determinism) nor is there a condition of absolute freedom (possibilism).
- It means that human beings can conquer nature by obeying it.

Different approaches in geography and its broad stages

- **Welfare or humanistic school of thought** in human geography was mainly concerned with the different aspects of social well-being of the people. These included aspects such as housing, health and education.
- **Radical school of thought** employed Marxian theory to explain the basic cause of poverty, deprivation and social inequality. Contemporary social problems were related to the development of capitalism.
- **Behavioural school of thought** laid great emphasis on lived experience and also on the perception of space by social categories based on ethnicity, race and religion, etc.

Period

Early colonial period
Later colonial period
1930s
1950-1960
1970
1990s

Approaches

exploration and description
regional analysis
areal differentiation
spatial organisation
humanistic, radical and behavioural schools
post modernism in geography

Human Geography and Sister Disciplines of Social Sciences

Fields of human geography	Sub fields	Interface with sister disciplines of social sciences
Social geography	-	Social sciences- sociology
	Behavioural geography	Psychology
	Geography of social well being	Welfare economics
	Geography of leisure	Sociology
	Cultural geography	Anthropology
	Gender geography	Sociology, anthropology, womens studies
	Historical geography	History
	Medical geography	Epidemiology
Urban geography	-	Urban studies and planning
Political geography	-	Political science
	Electoral geography	Psephology
	Military geography	Military science
Population geography	-	Demography
Settlement geography	-	Urban/rural planning
Economic geography	-	Economics
	Geography of resources	Resource economics
	Geography of agriculture	Agricultural sciences
	Geography of industries	Industrial economics
	Geography of marketing	Business studies, economics, commerce
	Geography of tourism	Tourism and travel management
	Geography of international trade	International trade