

Do The Textbooks Reflect the Curriculum? A Comparative Analysis of Social Studies Textbooks Taught in Public and Private Sector in Pakistan

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Abstract

Text book ought to be viewed as one of the numerous sources educators can attract after making a powerful exercise and may offer a system of direction and introduction. The analysis of textbook forms a necessary part in academics so as to devise the most appropriate content. The present study made a comparative account of textbooks for Grade 5 Social studies taught in public (i.e., Punjab textbook) and private sector (Oxford textbook) of Pakistan. The comparison was made on key features and on themes suggested by National Curriculum Council (2017) as a standard for textbook publishers. The findings demonstrated that both books contain activities and are clearly written, however, PTB is cheaper, possess low paper quality than OTB and was revised in 2018 whereas OTB has not revised since 2010. It is also suggested that both textbooks do not contain enough information as per NCC's standard. It is suggested that government should take notice about it and publishers should be bound to deliver only that material in education sector that is according to the devised set of standards.

Keywords: textbook; curriculum; social studies; public sector; private sector; education

Introduction

Textbook is the compilation of content based on the curriculum that is pre-settled by the educational boards (Abate, 2013; Ham & Heinze, 2018). Textbook provide a way to provide the basic guidelines in a systematic manner for the instructors as well as the students (Mahmood, 2010). The exercises and activities present in the end of each lesson encourage the students for further readings (Reinders & Balcikanli, 2011). It also encourages the teachers to supplement material from other sources or reference books (Laabidi & Nfissi, 2016). Textbook is closely associated with curriculum as it channels the guidelines and key academic goals in the form of the most appropriate content (Herbel-Eisenmann, 2007).

The National Education Policy has been formulated for maintaining the consistency of curriculum over the country. It is responsible for the following exercise for curriculum policy making that should be pragmatic, deliverable and easily understanding and implementable (Ali, 2012; Aly, 2007). Besides it the teachers especially of elementary sector are facing problem of direction due to non-availability of valuable course books. There is a culture of multi-medium of guidelines in schools. This causes confusion for both instructors and the students (Channa, 2014; Khan, 2011). National Curriculum Council (NCC) has been established, however, to introduce uniform curriculum throughout the country and is also struggling to achieve this aim (Associated Press of Pakistan, 2019).

The present study analyzed the textbooks of social that are being used in public and private sector. Social Studies is a subject which helps humans become a part of the society as knowledgeable individuals and which gives importance to the promotion of good social relationships (Dhandhania, 2019; Edinyang, 2016). This course covers topics like effects of the environment on individuals and also how they affect the environment, formation of institutions in the past, strategies used by the individuals to cope with the difficulties in the past and how

they are doing till today (Sadik & Sadik, 2014; Tan & So, 2019). Social Studies has been defined as a subject that trains citizens who are able to make decisions and solve problems in situations of changing conditions through using information and method from social sciences (Aketin, Harnett, Ozturk & Smart, 2009). The primary aim of Social Studies course is to facilitate students develop an effective social personality. The key features of a good social personality are as follows:

- Being a good citizen; one who knows his/her responsibilities, is familiar with society's culture, and promoting good virtues in the society (Bayir, 2016; Tronto, 2011; Yesilbursa, 2015).
- Learning to live together and develop good social relationship (Deaux & Snyder, 2012; Lanning, 2017).
- Promoting national and global trends, citizenship education, safety and hygiene etc (Fuchs, 2011; Moon, 2009).
- Being aware of national heroes, national days and events (Pramono, Ahmad, & Wijayati, 2019; Yazici & Aslan, 2011).
- Generating a sense of unity among all the members of society (Al-Nofli, 2009; Arisi, 2012).

A good standard of learning material is the base of good education system. Educational system in Pakistan is dependent on federal decision as Ministry of Education selects the learning material and sets up the curriculum for government schools and this ministry is working under the federal government. On the other hand, NGO led schools and self-governed schools are independent in their approach to pick the curriculum subject after being approved by ministry of education (Barber, 2010). After the 18th Amendment, the education sector has attained grand autonomy as provinces are free to design their curriculum according to their own needs and now the Ministry of Education of all provinces, is custodian of the curriculum,

coursebooks and learning stuff (Siddiqui, 2010). Whereas, other school systems such as NGO based and private schools are using textbooks by other publishers such as AFAQ and Oxford textbooks with the inclusion of concerned educators in devising the curriculum (Gulab & Khokhar, 2018).

It is very essential thus to analyze the textbooks being taught in public and private school systems so as to identify the strengths and shortcomings of both systems. Content analysis is the most appropriate one to accomplish this objective. It is a conventional name for an assortment of ways for leading methodical, objective, quantitative, and/or subjective printed investigation that includes looking at, differentiating, and ordering a lot of information basically to test speculations. This sort of investigation generally depends on some factual methodology for inspecting and setting up between coder unwavering quality. Basically, subjective substance examination includes deciphering, hypothesizing, or understanding information by first separating it into fragments that can be sorted and coded, and afterward building up an example for the whole informational collection by relating the classes to each other (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017; Humble, 2009). Content analysis could also be made by comparing the content to be analyzed on the set standards and then drawing the conclusion accordingly (Porter, McMaken, Hwang, & Yang, 2011). The current study used six themes presented by National Curriculum Council (2017) as a standard to set the curriculum in shape of textbooks. These six themes include citizenship, economics, government, history, culture, and geography. The brief description of these themes is given as below:

Citizenship. The first theme is Citizenship. The topics that have been mentioned under this theme are citizenship (i.e., differentiation between citizen and global citizen), human rights, diversity (i.e., between individuals and societies), tolerance (i.e., harmony by respecting differences), peace and conflict management, and etiquettes (i.e., civic sense and good manners).

Economics. The second theme is: Economics. The topics under this theme are good and services, trade, evolution of money, and bank. Understanding about good and services is very important one as it assists in differentiating private and public one, understanding the taxes and loans. Trade is also very important to be aware of exports and imports as well as significance of international trade for country's development. Evolution of money included the origin and significance of money, and how the current rise and fall. The information about banks and its importance also form part of economics theme.

Government. This theme involved the understanding about how the government runs at both federal and provincial level. It includes the topic like need for government and formation of federal and provincial type of government and how their structure varies. Also, this theme underlies the rights and responsibilities of citizens along with importance of law. The function of political parties in democratic system and interdependence between both types of governments is also included in this theme.

History. The theme of history comprised of topics like prehistoric man and origin of civilization (i.e., Greeks and Romans), recognizing the services of national and international heroes (i.e., Quaid-e-Azam, Abdul Sattar Edhi, Mother Teresa, and Nelson Mandela). It also comprised of the role of regions or provinces in creation of Pakistan.

Culture. This theme includes the concept of nationalism; that is, the way of living together. The second topic of concern under culture is communication; including, mass media, social media, difference between both medias, advantages and disadvantages of information means. Culture of Pakistan underlying the cultural diversity of crafts, languages, festival, clothes, important events, folk songs, foods also form part of this theme.

Geography. The theme of geography is so wide and contains multiple topics. The first topic is globe and map skills which comprised of reading and explaining the map, recognizing

the basic types of maps (i.e., road map, tourist map, weather map, political map, topographical map), recognizing the latitudes and longitudes, understanding time zones, and understanding the scales. Physical regions or landforms also comprised part of this theme; including identification and distinctive features of all types of landforms.

The theme also includes topic of interaction between land and people comprised of explaining ecosystem and its impact, and comparing life of people from different regions of Pakistan. The next important topic is weather and climate; including understanding of the terms, factors affecting climate, climatic zones and life of people there. National disaster and safety measures is also an important topic comprising of major natural disasters, their effects, and safety measures for them. The last important topic is population; defining growth rate, population density, and factors affecting population increase in Pakistan.

Studies in Pakistan have worked on the standardization of textbook evaluation criteria by development of certain quality textbook indicators (Mahmood, 2009, 2011; Mahmood, Iqbal, & Saeed, 2009). The indicators were based on the sociocultural perspective and political diversity of Pakistan. The problems faced in the development of the quality textbooks were also identified. Similarly, some Pakistani studies also evaluated the textbooks of English taught at different education level (Aftab, 2012; Gulzar, 2017; Hameed, 2014; Kausar, Mushtaq, & Badshah, 2016; Naeem, Shah, & Tabassum, 2015). Some other studies also analyzed the textbook of Biology (Ghazi, Ali, Shahzada, Khan, & Nawaz, 2011) and of Pakistan Studies taught at secondary education level (Hashmi, 2014). However, none of the Pakistani studies found has yet analyzed the textbooks of Social Studies or made a comparative account of textbooks taught in public and private sector of Pakistan.

Rationale of Study

The purpose behind taking these two textbooks is to compare the content between these two course books and also to see if both these books contain what has been suggested/guided by NCC. National Curriculum Council gives a guideline thorough careful study of trends, traditions, needs, understanding level, and surroundings of the people (students) by educationists, social sciences' scholars and curriculum developers. It is not a production of one day's effort but a collaborative effort of weeks and months sometimes. So, the aim is to help students attain the knowledge of key ideas from the social sciences disciplines and later on develop skills such as communication skills, decision making, critical thinking and formative analysis. Also, none of Pakistani literature demonstrated the comparative analysis of Social Studies' textbook for public and private sector of Pakistan. The current study thus took a step to fill this gap in literature and attempt to address this significant issue.

Objectives

The main objective of the study was to explore whether content of the textbooks matches the criteria set by National Curriculum Council (2017).

Method

Research Design

The present study involved qualitative exploration design, which is meant to explore the ideas or themes related to specific topic of interest which are not known earlier to the people. Confirmatory studies may not always provide the true results that fits in every situation, neither it is appropriate to try fitting the findings of one situation to the other that vary significantly from the studied one. Exploratory studies are thus of due importance to explore the facts existing within the specific context. The qualitative exploration deals with exploring the research question in qualitative manner; that is, in terms of themes and categories not in

terms of numbers (Ragin, 2009; Reiter, 2017). Exploration is also found in literature to be a significant part of comparative studies so as to maintain the evidence-based approach (Esser & Vliegthart, 2017; Takwoingi, Leeflang, & Deeks, 2013). Also, for making the comparative account of the educational policies explorative type of studies are found to provide best outcomes (Bingham, Dean, & Castillo, 2019).

Recent literature demonstrated that comparative studies have used qualitative exploration to accomplish the objectives. Fasterholdt, Lee, Kidholm, Yderstraede, and Pedersen (2018) studied the early assessment methods used by private and public hospitals on five themes; context, basis of decision making, process and structure, perception, and handling cognitive bias. Similarly, Daniels (2016) conducted a comparative exploratory case study on employment engagement of studies from two universities. Another study (Biswas, 2010) made a comparative exploration of news coverage of various social policy issues like education, healthcare, employment, and economy etc. in both mainstream and ethnic media. The content analysis of news stories from both types of media were analyzed.

Research Instrument

Social Studies Grade 5 by Punjab Textbooks. Punjab Textbook is being taught in most public schools of Punjab. Since after 18th amendment, provinces have acquired the authority to make their own curriculum according to their needs and thoughts so PTB is being given free of cost in public schools. PTB is also being taught in some other non-governmental organization (NGO) led schools and some other private schools especially in far off years where people cannot afford to buy expensive reading material. PTB is of very low price so it becomes easier for local people to buy it for their children.

Social Studies Grade 5 by Oxford Publishers. Oxford Textbook is a product of Oxford University Press that is located in Karachi, Pakistan. This book has long been taught in

different private schools throughout the country. Some NGO led schools who have good affordability, have made it a part of their syllabus. Its cost is nine times higher than PTB , pages are comparatively of fine texture and graphs, pictures clearer than in PTB.

Procedure

The content of two textbooks for Social Studies Grade 5 was analyzed; one being taught in public schools published by Punjab Textbooks (PTB) and other being taught in private school by Oxford Publishers. The comparative analysis of both books was made by keeping National Curriculum as the standard that has been formulated by National Curriculum Council (NCC) in 2017. The overall curriculum has been divided in to six themes and furthermore, these themes have topics and sub-topics by NCC. These themes are citizenship, economics, government, history, culture, and geography. The comparison is made based on these six themes and the conclusion is drawn. The limitations, suggestions, along with the implications of the study were mentioned.

Results and Findings

The comparative analysis of both books was made on the basis of key features and content included. The findings obtained of the analysis are mentioned in following subheadings.

Comparison of Key Features

The comparison of key features (i.e., year of edition, paper quality, price, exercises, and writing style) for Punjab textbook and Oxford textbook can be summarized as follows:

Table 1.

Comparative Analysis of Key Features for Punjab Textbook and Oxford Textbook

Key Features	Punjab Textbook	Oxford Textbook
Year of edition	2018	2010
Paper quality	Not fine	Fine
Price	Low price	Expensive
Exercise and activities	Present	Present
Writing style	Pleasing and easy to read	Pleasing and easy to read

Comparison of Content

Citizenship. The study found slight information in chapter 5 of PTB regarding rights of citizens. Similarly, the text book of Oxford contains one lesson as: “Human Rights”. It covers the definition of UNO and the other national and international organizations that are working for human rights. A brief description of personalities like Mother Teresa, Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, Abdul Sattar Edhi and Dr Ruth Pfau have been given in OTB. Both the textbooks do not have any information regarding peace and conflict management, etiquettes and tolerance.

Economics. The study found that PTB contains all the four topics that form part of the theme economics; that are, good and services, trade, evolution of money, and bank in last chapter: “Economics” following almost the same order. Oxford’s book does not contain any information or material regarding good and services. Looking at PTB, it was also found that trade and its importance is discussed. Whereas, only a little information regarding this topic is in Oxford’s book except a little information on exports and imports in lessons 9 and 11 namely “Minerals” and “Industrial Development” respectively. The history of money as evolution of

money with examples was found in PTB along with the currencies of different countries. On contrary, no information related to these subtopics was found in Oxford's book.

Government. Chapter 5 of PTB: "Federal System of Government" mentioned information regarding need to have a government particularly Federal Government. Whereas, the researcher did not find much information on provincial style of government neither the difference between federal and provincial government. On contrary, the Oxford's book does not contain any information or material on government style of Pakistan. In PTB, important rights of citizens according to Pakistan's constitution of 1973 have been given. Oxford's book does not contain any information on this topic. Some information relevant to interdependence between two types of government is discussed in PTB but no such information was found in Oxford's book.

History. No information regarding prehistoric civilization was found in PTB and Oxford's book. Lesson 17 and 20 of Oxford's book contain information on great personalities who did noble services nationally or internationally. PTB, though, contain no information on national or international personalities. None of the two textbooks mentioned any information regarding the role of provinces in creation of Pakistan

Culture. PTB contains a brief introduction of nationalism whereas Oxford's book does not contain any information on culture as such. In PTB, a separate chapter with title "Means of Communication" has been given. This chapter beautifully covers topics related to mass media and social media. Oxford's textbook does not contain this topic. PTB has covered the cultural diversity of Pakistan in detail. Whereas, Oxford's book does not contain any information on culture of Pakistan.

Geography. PTB defines the globe and map skills in chapter 1. Types of map along with longitude and latitude are also given. Term scale is mentioned but types are not mentioned.

Oxford's book also defines terms associated with globe and map reading. Both PTB and Oxford's book have presentation of longitude and time zones in the form of graphics. Study found that PTB covers information on landforms of Pakistan in its chapter 2. Oxford's book does not contain physical regions of Pakistan, however, the unit 1 of it contains different climatic regions of the world like deserts, forests and polar regions. Both of the books provide no knowledge about the interaction between land and people. Oxford's book contains climatic regions of the world in detail in unit 1, covering all the related topics. PTB does cover this topic but not in detail as in Oxford's book. Both the books do not contain topics of natural disasters and population.

The analysis of geographical figures in both books was also made. It indicated that in PTB, the map does not contain Antarctica on it and shows only six continents, however, OTB indicate all seven continents.

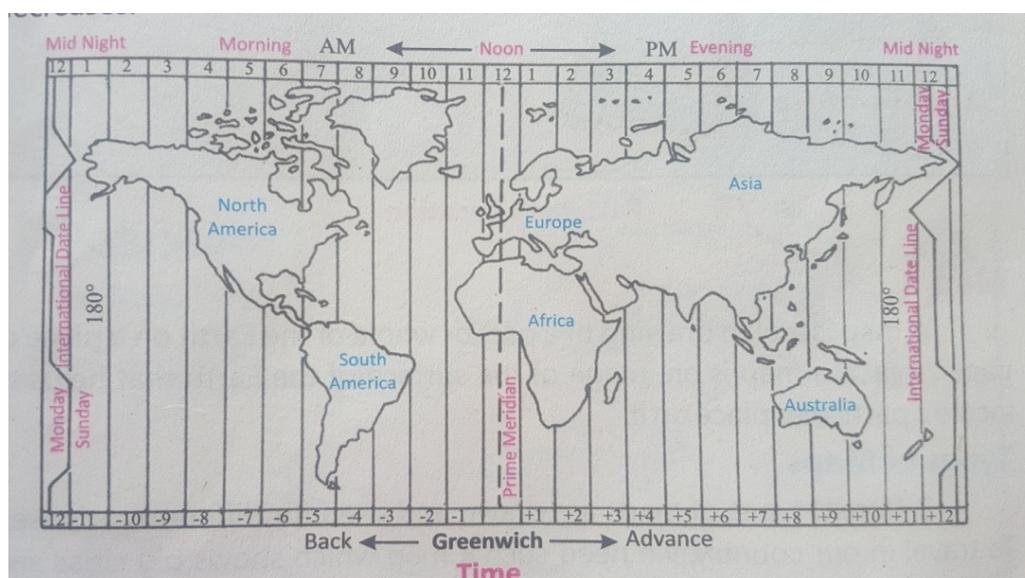


Figure 1. World map showing continents in Punjab textbook

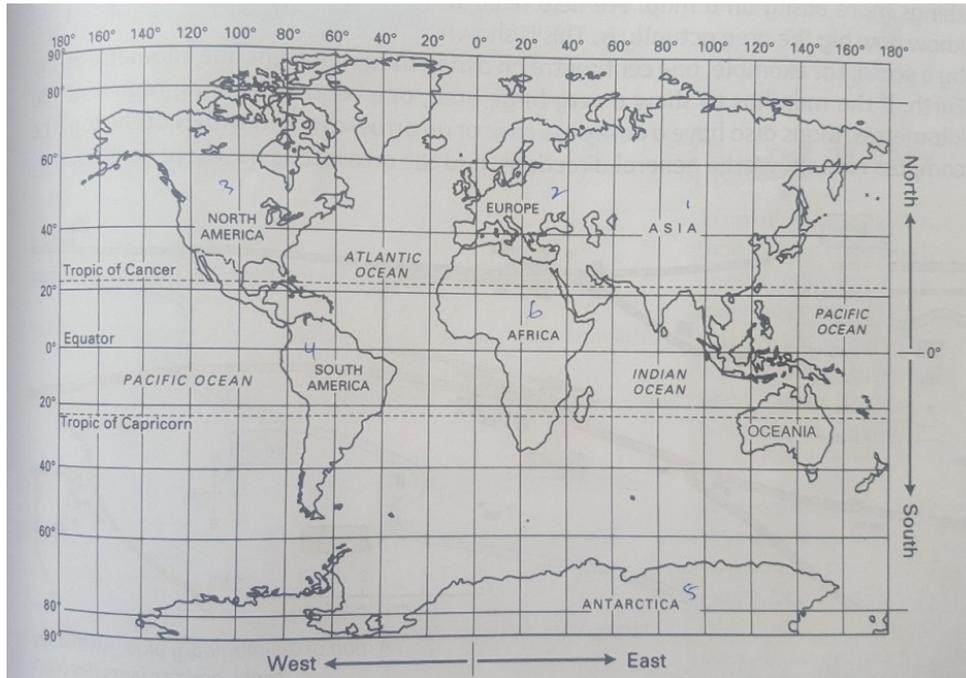


Figure 2. World map showing continents in Oxford textbook

Different world climatic zones are also given in both PTB and OTB as demonstrated by following figures

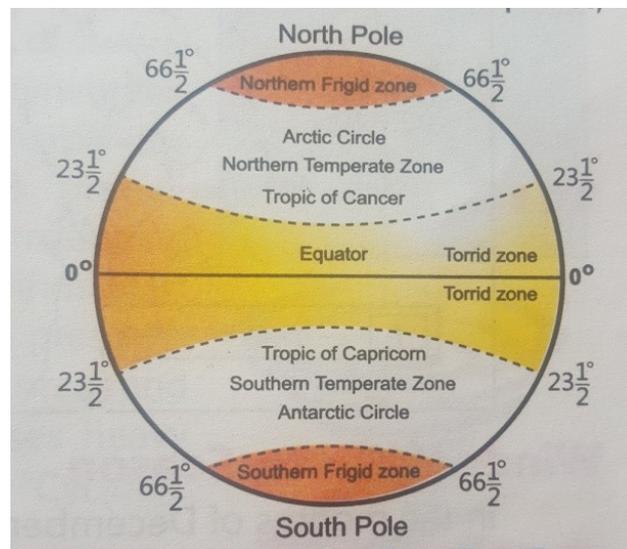


Figure 3. World climatic zone in Punjab textbook

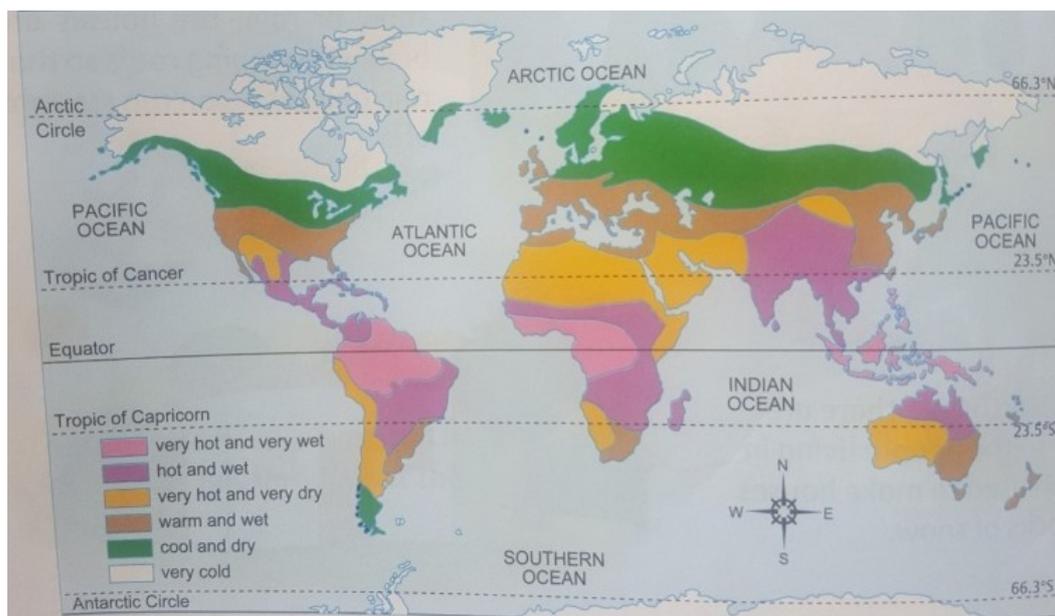


Figure 4. World climatic zone in Oxford textbook

The overall comparison of content present in both books; Punjab textbook and Oxford textbook, can be summarized as follows:

Table 2.

Comparative Analysis of Content for Punjab Textbook and Oxford Textbook

Themes	Punjab Textbook	Oxford Textbook	Missing in both textbooks
Citizenship	Rights of citizens	Human rights, UNO, renowned personalities	Peace and conflict management, etiquettes and tolerance
Economics	Good, services, trade, evolution of money, bank	Import and exports	-
Government	Nature and style of governments in Pakistan, interaction between two types of government	No information found	Style of provincial government in Pakistan
History	No information found	Historic personalities (i.e., national and international)	Prehistoric civilizations, role of provinces in creation of Pakistan

Continued...

Themes	Punjab Textbook	Oxford Textbook	Missing in both textbooks
Culture	Nationalism, mass media, social media, cultural diversity	No information found	-
Geography	Types of maps, longitude, latitude, time zones, Pakistan's landforms	Map and globe reading, time zones, climatic regions	Interaction between land and people, natural disaster, population

Conclusion

The study concluded that price of PTB is quite less as compared to Oxford's textbook. The latest edition of PTB is of 2018 whereas Oxford's book did not bring new edition after 2010. Paper quality of Oxford's book is very fine and of high quality as compared to PTB. Both textbooks do contain activities or exercises for the students at the end of each chapter. Writing style has also found to be appropriate in both textbooks. Both textbooks contain enough pictures, graphs, or maps to give students and teachers a clear understanding of the topic but Oxford's book does contain well described diagram or map at some places like climatic zones.

From the findings, it is also suggested that both textbooks do not contain enough information as per NCC's standard. The government should take notice about it and publishers should be bound to deliver only that material in education sector that is according to the standards of NCC as standards are created after careful study, research, need, demand according to the structure of the society. The study discovered that Oxford textbook was revised lastly in 2010 so that could be a reason of not having updated information according to NCC standard. It was good to see very reasonable price of PTB that is being taught in public schools where children are mostly from low income background.

Limitations and Suggestions

- The study is limited to only two textbooks of Grade 5 Social Studies for content analysis.

- The study considered only the textbooks being taught in formal educational setting. The textbook of non-formal or distance education are also suggested to be studied.

Implications

In future, educationists and textbook publishers are suggested to develop better understanding about NCC's criteria for content selection. The main implications of this study are as follows:

- Consensus based educational modules could be made as directed by National Curriculum Framework and National Standards for both public and private sectors.
- Scheme of studies need to be revised to make it progressively far reaching and need based.
- Publishers ought to incorporate models and pictures in the book's substance and furthermore precedents alluded by the instructor during educating to them on the grounds that through along these lines the fundamental strides to be taken towards the advancement of observational learning and furthermore be fortified nature students with the standards and guidelines and social connections.
- Providing an assortment in models ought to be in the substance of the book and furthermore instructor express in procedure of educating. All things considered, the premium and eagerness of understudies will increment towards their course material and is caused that students are effectively engaged with learning.
- All textbook publishers should amend their productions with the goal to incorporate up to date information.

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