

## Social Science Education

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### INTRODUCTION

The beginnings of social science research, or more specifically, treatise on social philosophy and normative social thought in India can be traced at least as far back as Manu's *Dharam Shastra*, completed in the second or third century BC.

The social sciences are inextricably connected with a country's social thought. Social sciences, as Kabir, H. (1956) pointed out, give us basic information and knowledge about man in society, but the laws we derive from them are neither impersonal nor immutable. Where man is the object of his own study—as is the case in all the social sciences—we have to take into consideration not only what he is but also what he thinks he ought to be. As is commonly understood, the social sciences include, centrally, history, geography, civics economics, sociology (and anthropology) and political science. At their boundaries, the social sciences reach into the study of the individual in relation to society (social psychology) and of nature (social biology, social geography). Methodologically, they straddle the normative (law, social philosophy, political theory) and the historical approaches (Dahrendorf, R. 1989).

While at the university and college levels, the various disciplines that form the part of 'social sciences' are offered as separate fields of specialisation, subjects, specially such as history, geography and civics, have been

included as school subjects for several years, perhaps over a century or so now (Vedanayagam, E.G., 1991). It may be relevant to point out that while the nomenclature of these subjects does not get changed at the school level, it is in terms of their orientation that one finds a difference. It is in this context that one may find great merit in Popkewitz, T.S.'s (1994) observation: We think of school subjects as what the French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu, has called an "Alchemy", the reorganisation of phenomena from one system of practices into another form. "Alchemy" is a passage from one social space (e.g. physics) into another (e.g. school physics) that presupposes a change in the mental ordering but does not acknowledge that change in social space.

In the post-Independence period in India, the subjects of social sciences such as history, geography, civics and economics have been taught in different forms at school level. These forms organisationally could be labelled either as being discipline-oriented or being in the form of integration. While the former form would be labelled as the teaching of social sciences, the latter came to be known as the teaching of 'social studies'. Social studies is a combination of history, geography and civics with a tinge of economics, but these are taught as separate subjects under the umbrella of 'social studies'. The teaching of either social studies or for that matter teaching of various social sciences has not been governed by any



research support or empirical evidence, but by the 'consensual lore' of the experts. The questions: "Why should we teach social studies"? and "How should we teach it?" (Ghosh, B. and Gupta, L.N., 1968) and seem to have largely remained unanswered. In addition, such questions become critical: What has been the nature of the research base for the social science education? Has there been enough research conducted in this area to help the curriculum framers, textbook writers and classroom practitioners in their respective areas of work and activities.

### THE APPROACH IN THIS TREND REPORT

In the present Survey, in addition to the studies referred to the author, the abstracts of the research papers appearing in the *Indian Educational Review* (IER), for the period 1988-92 and the earlier period have also been taken into consideration for developing the trend report.

A few reviews have been attempted earlier (Rao, S.R. 1987; and Vedanayagam, E.G. 1991) in the field of social science education. These, by and large, have taken the shape of almost annotated bibliographies. With few exceptions, they have not attempted to interpret findings or arrive at any general conclusions. What is usually lacking is a critical review of research in which an effort is made to attack "broad and fundamental" problems facing research on the teaching of social sciences. The purpose of this trend report is not to review the literature in a traditional manner, but rather to examine the various ways in which issues and topics on the teaching of social sciences have been studied. A major issue which this report has tried to respond to is: Why has researching social science education at the school level remained a low priority for the educational research community in this country?

### RESEARCHING SOCIAL SCIENCE EDUCATION: AN AREA OF INDIFFERENCE FOR THE EDUCATIONAL RESEARCHERS

Educational research in this country is not more than half-a-century old (Buch, M.B. 1991). An area-wise analysis of researches carried out in India during the past fifty years or so would indicate that these have been predominantly influenced by the topics of psychology and the processes related to it (Buch, M.B. 1991; and Raina, V.K. 1993). Curricular areas in general, and social science education in particular, have suffered because of the apathy of the educational researchers. Concern to this effect was expressed long back by Ghosh, B. and Gupta, L.N. (1968), who for the first time made a systematic analysis of researches carried out in the area of curriculum and observed that: "Studies on general curriculum are very scanty, indeed...when the components of the curriculum are studied, science receives a preponderant emphasis. There is not a single study on the curriculum for the mother-tongue and only one each on English and social studies. Mathematics has just two." While the position in other curricular areas seems to have improved, the situation in the area of social science education has not changed.

The picture becomes clearer by a comparison of the number of studies covered for review in the present Survey. Amongst the various curricular areas such as language education (90 studies), science education (61 studies), physical and health education (49 studies), mathematics education (47 studies), moral, art and aesthetics education (31 studies), the number of researches reported in the area of social science education is nine studies. To some extent, the reason for this small number of studies is the fact that in the present Survey a separate chapter on 'Population Education' has been included,



which earlier was a part of social science education.

The number of researches in social science education included in the Surveys is given in Table 1 below. While the first three Surveys did not have a separate chapter on social science education, the studies related to these were reported in the chapter on curriculum, methods and textbooks. It was only in the Fourth Survey that a separate chapter was devoted to social science education.

Table 1

Number of Researches in Social Science Education included in the Five Surveys

|                                 | Ph.D.<br>Research | Research<br>Projects | Research<br>Papers |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| First Survey<br>(prior to 1972) | 09                | 14                   | 01                 |
| Second Survey<br>(1972-78)      | 06                | -                    | -                  |
| Third Survey<br>(1979-83)       | 10                | 08                   | 02                 |
| Fourth Survey<br>(1984-88)      | 19                | 06                   | 03                 |
| Fifth Survey<br>(1988-92)       | 07                | 01                   | 03                 |
| Total                           | 51                | 29                   | 09                 |

The information in Table 1 shows that the number of researches carried out is not encouraging. Predominantly the Ph.D. researches have formed the greater chunk of the researches in comparison to research projects and research papers. Further, out of the nine papers, it is significant to note that seven papers have been contributed by scholars from overseas who have studied problems in their own settings. Only two papers have been contributed by Indian researchers.

Researches have been essentially pursued by novices with the definite purpose of

getting a degree. A similar observation was made by Ghosh, B. and Gupta, L.N. (1968) while analysing "Researches in Curriculum" for *The Third Indian Year Book of Education* (Adaval, S.B. 1968). Faced by almost a similar situation, Shaver, J.P. and Larkins, A.G. (1973), in a chapter on "Research on Social Studies Education" in the *Second Handbook of Research on Teaching* observed:

When novice researchers — the students whose dissertations constitute the bulk of research in teaching social studies — do not have the benefit of the propositions in a theory, it often appears that there is a dearth of worthy research topics, or the only apparent ones are those growing out of their own limited experience. Frequently seeing the dissertation as a hurdle to be overcome as quickly and easily as possible, the budding researcher clutches at any plausible, even if barely so, idea that he can come up with. Many researchers never get beyond the "budding" stage because they have picked a trivial topic for their first try at research. They recognize that the research is not worth pursuing further and are not able to generate other research problems of sufficient importance to motivate them to once again encounter the agonies of carrying out a research project (p.1247.)

The situation as it exists today the real crisis facing research in Social Science Education seems to be the crisis of research leadership.

Why is there a crisis of research leadership in this area? Is it, as Dass, V. (1993), in the context of sociological research in India identified as a crisis of "competence"? "Research in any field", as Dass, V. observed, "is sustained over a period of time not by the brilliance of a few outstanding scholars but by the patient building up of competence in the average researcher.... While students cannot be trained to do brilliant research, they can and must be trained to do competent research". The irony in our case, unfortunately is that the researches that have been conducted during the last 30 to 40 years, neither show any signs of brilliance nor of outstanding competence. This assignment may indeed sound harsh, but then the situation is like that. Such a situation gets amply classified and supported by the



topics that have been chosen for study, the methodologies that have been used in these and by the types of findings and conclusions arrived at.

### THE TRADITIONAL RESEARCH FOCUS: MEASUREMENT, STATUS-STUDIES AND TEXTBOOKS

Traditionally, research in the area of Social Science Education has remained sporadic, repetitive, touching only peripheral issues and pursued predominantly with a motivation to get a degree in "Education". It is largely marked by an absence of rigour and sound methodology which generally should characterise researches in the area of social sciences. The researches conducted seem to be influenced more by the conservative and narrow pedagogical issues and stereotype methodologies rather than choosing and pursuing problems in an innovative manner. A cluster analysis of all the research studies (89) reflected in Table 1, showed that these studies mostly related to measurement and evaluation, textbooks and curriculum, and were status studies. Table 2 below gives the classification of these studies into various areas.

Table 2

#### Area-wise Classification of Researches in Social Science Education in Five Research Surveys

| Sl. No. | Area                                    | No. of<br>Researches |
|---------|---|----------------------|
| 1.      | Measurement and Evaluation              | 21 (24%)             |
| 2.      | Status Studies                          | 18 (20%)             |
| 3.      | Textbooks and Instructional<br>Material | 15 (17%)             |
| 4.      | Methods of Teaching                     | 1 2 (13%)            |
| 5.      | Curriculum                              | 10 (11%)             |
| 6.      | Concept Development                     | 06 (7%)              |
| 7.      | Attitudes and Interest                  | 06 (7%)              |
| 8.      | Audio-Visual Aids                       | 01 (1%)              |
| Total   |   | 89                   |

Table 2 indicates that almost one-fourth of the researches carried out relate to one single area—that of measurement and evaluation.

Looking at the nature of the topics studied under this category, one finds great fascination amongst the researchers to construct and standardise achievement tests in various subject areas such as history, geography and social studies (Aram, A. 1957; Shukla, S. and Tutoo, D.N. 1959; Buch, M.B. et al., 1960; Gujarat Research Society 1963; Saraf, S. 1964; SIE Kerala, 1965; Dash, S.C. 1967; Muzaffar, 1967; Srivastava, D.D. 1967; Misra, L.M., 1968; Vanajakshi, A., 1970; Misra, V.S. 1970; Deshpande, M.V. 1972 and Sharma, H.R. 1981). This trend is visible in a pronounced manner in the researches that have been carried out from 1950 to the late 1970s. Research studies related to evaluation are spotty, with none measuring growth in affective and psychomotor domains.

There is a proliferation of status studies on various issues such as curriculum, textbooks, methods of teaching and audio-visual aids. Such studies, by and large, are restricted to providing information in simple percentages without arriving at any meaningful results or making a critical analysis of the findings and suggesting alternatives to the existing situation. Identical problems with almost similar procedures have been explored (Sunderaraj, S., 1978; Thakore, R. 1979; Gupta, B.P. 1983; Patel, A.M. 1984; Ingole, R.N. 1985; Muthappan, A., 1986 and Jani, J.T. 1987) with a slight difference in the locale and subject-areas. Looking at these researches, one gets a distinct feeling that the motivation of these researchers was not to 'search' for any new solutions and paradigms, but somehow to acquire a 'degree'.

Research in the area of textbooks in social science education had restricted objectives, scope and methodology. Such studies have been mostly conducted to evaluate social science textbooks in terms of their promoting or hindering national integration (NCERT 1970; Karim, P.I.A. 1982; Kher, S.V. 1972; Basu, B. and Rao, V.K. 1979; Chavan, C.V. 1990). One finds an occasional study such as that of



Gagneja (1974) in which an attempt has been made to find out the treatment given to various foreign countries such as the USA, the UK, the USSR, Japan, etc., in social science textbooks. Another study which deviates from the routine topics is that of Patyal, C.B. (1977) who tried to study the readability indices of geographical material and its effectiveness in terms of reading comprehension.

The studies on methods of teaching besides making a comparative study of different approaches (Khusdil 1960; Veerkar 1980; Bhattachary 1984; Dhamija 1985 and Shahi, 1989) have explored the use of the personalised system of instruction (Dasgupta, D. 1987) and the use of the case study method (Vishwanathan, T.V. 1987) in the teaching of economics. The fashionable 'models of teaching' has also made its inroads as Pandey, S.N. (1986) tried to explore the effectiveness of advance organisers and inquiry training models for teaching of social studies at Class VIII level.

The trend within the curriculum studies (Channa, P.S. 1967; Dedulkar, D. 1967; Gupta, B.P. 1983; Ingole, R.N. 1985; Muthappan, A. 1986 and Jani, J.T. 1987) has been mostly to make 'critical studies' which have turned out to be mainly an appraisal of the existing curricula. In most of such appraisal studies, which were essentially of the state-of-the-art nature, the focus was mainly on the content rather than the process of curriculum with the exception of a study (Raina, V.K. 1992) in which an attempt was made to take a holistic view of the curriculum development. This study tried to find out to what extent the existing curriculum had helped in attaining the objectives of history teaching. Further to this, the "practitioners" views (teachers) was elicited to suggest a curriculum that would be meaningful and would also help to attain the objectives laid down by the Rajasthan Board of Secondary Education. In addition to these, three studies (Pai, S.G. 1981; Sunderaraj, S. 1978; Thakore, R. 1979) have attempted to develop a curriculum in the area of environmental studies and population education.

Apart from the above studies, there have been sporadic researches in the areas which could be broadly classified as concept development studies (G.C.P.I. 1963; Patyal, C.B. 1977, Ahmad, A., 1983; Ponkshe, D.B. 1983; Gupta, R. 1989 and Pahuja, P.L. 1992) and attitudinal studies (Gupta, D.N.P. 1953; Bose, U. et al., 1970; Sattarshakwala, H.G., 1981; Bhandarkar, K.M., 1983; Govindaswamy, 1992 and Raina, V.K. 1992). However, studies which relate to concept development did not in any way consider the Piagetian or Brunerian models of concept development.

The nine research papers that have been published in the *Indian Educational Review* (IER) during 1967-1992 constitute a mere ten per cent of the total researches in social science education. It is further interesting to note that of the nine papers, five relate to the Canadian settings and are by one author only (Dhand, H. 1979, 1981, 1987, 1990 and 1991) and have rather a limited relevance in the Indian context. Similarly, two other papers (Bhola, H.S. 1967 and Adeyoyin, F.A. 1986) have explored issues which relate to the American and Lagosian settings. It is merely two papers (Vishwanathan, T.V. 1984 and Kidwai, Z. 1991) that have been contributed by Indians, and have tried to report on the use of the case study method in the teaching of economics and have developed an environmentally-oriented curriculum in geography at the secondary stage.

The researches reported above and covered under all the three categories have been mostly repetitive and of a stereotyped nature, with no major findings providing a new direction either to curriculum development or to teaching-learning strategies, etc. It is not only that the topics chosen have been studied repeatedly, or the choice of the topics has been influenced by the researches carried out in the neighbouring university, but that the approach or methodology followed in undertaking these studies is marked by pitying conservatism.



### THE CRISIS OF METHODOLOGY

An important assumption underlying the choice or selection of a method/methodology(ies) is that it should follow from, or at least be consistent with, the definition of the research problem. A major problem facing educational research in general, and Indian educational research in particular, is that "instead of methods being dictated by the problem and hypotheses, problems end up being construed to fit a research tradition—usually the classical statistical one. Even worse, many beginning researchers seem to turn to an approach, often the survey approach, because it seems less threatening than more 'sophisticated' approaches. Often the hope is to avoid statistical technique" (Shaver, J.P. and Larkins, A.G., 1973). A sensitive analysis of the American educational research scene, by Mitra, S.K. (1974) vividly pointed to the "tail (methodology) wagging the dog". His message is clear: problems are chosen, not first and foremost in terms of their importance, but rather their suitability for study by the scientific method. By equating "acceptable research methodology" with statistical thinking, the field has excluded the most complex and significant issues. In the field of education, however, one would like to see a systematic study of significant problems rather than a scientific study of insignificant problems (Schawebel, M. 1989).

Most of the researches carried out in social science education seem to be suffering from the above methodological bane. As was noticed in the preceding pages, almost one-fourth of the studies which related to construction and standardisation of achievement tests, have obviously made use of the psychometric approach. A good number of studies of status/positional nature have used the survey approach, making use of questionnaires followed by some superficial analysis. Not many attempts have been made to validate the data so gathered by any other methodologies (especially the qualitative ones). One tends to

be in strong agreement with Shaver, J.P. and Larkins, A.G. (1973) that "trivial studies are frequently conducted because of over emphasis on objectivity, quantification, and experimentation. If tests are not available which get at important variables, those variables are often abandoned in favour of less important but more readily measured behaviour. If important behaviour is exhibited in settings which make experimentation difficult, tidier if less significant research topics are frequently selected."

Barring two studies (Laul, V. 1990 and Raina, V.K. 1992) which have attempted to make use of qualitative methodology, the rest of the studies seem to have followed the usual positivistic approach. This is, perhaps, not only typical of the social science education research, but is true of most of the educational research being carried out in India. Scrase, T.J. (1993) made a broad analysis of the methodologies used in the Indian educational researches and observed that "for the most part, comparative methods (such as ethnography), or discussion incorporating critical social theory were absent in the majority of these studies". The only notable exceptions were the studies of Kalia, N. (1979), Acharya, P. (1986), Kumar, K. (1989), and Thapan, M. (1991) who have made use of qualitative methodologies. Scrase also made an analysis of the methodologies used in the research papers published in the NCERT's journal, *Indian Educational Review* (IER), for the period 1970-80, and found that none of the studies had made use of qualitative research methodologies.

A critical analysis of the research topics explored and the methodologies used in social science education reveals that the social science education research is largely cast in the colonial mode. It is paradoxical indeed, that while the colonial masters themselves have undergone a radical change in their orientation to research, we are still showing the symptoms of what the distinguished Malaysian sociologist, S.H. Alatas, calls the "captive minds". After all isn't the influence of colonial epistemologies



often intrusive and pervasive, and to non-critical observers, unobtrusive? There is a need for us to come out of our narrow grooves and profit from the researches carried out in various social science disciplines, learn from international experiences, and thereafter identify research issues and methodologies which suit our own situations and realities.

### IDENTIFYING RESEARCH ISSUES AND ALTERNATIVE METHODOLOGIES

A survey of the nature of the research topics and problems that have been explored indicates absence of serious attempts to systematically pursue researches to build any model(s) of social science teaching and learning. What Metcalf, L.E. (1963) long back observed about the American social studies research is reflected in Indian researches also. Metcalf observed: "Research in the field currently reflects little sustained concern with building and clarifying a theory for teaching social studies. The empirical studies have also not been the kind likely to contribute to theoretical knowledge." In fact, a dominant theme for the criticism of research in social science education could be its being of a theoretical nature. However, this criticism is not only applicable to social science education research, but generally plagues research on teaching, which lacks any models or theories that could guide research. It is high time that we abandon the blind, hit-or-miss attack on any target, which has so long characterised our research activities. Instead, it is important to concentrate in an organised, sustained and systematic manner on really significant issues from regional and national perspectives. By way of an example, there is a strong need for taking up large scale institutional curricular research projects somewhat on the lines of the *School Council Curriculum Projects* in the U.K. Unfortunately, in the situation as it exists presently in India, the school curriculum in most of the subjects including social sciences, lacks a strong research base. This is, in fact,

one major area which deserves a great deal of research intervention. However, it may be difficult to visualise all the possible issues that need to be researched in the future. Some suggestions are as follows:

1. Research so far has been conspicuous by its absence in studying major philosophical and epistemological issues relating to social science education/social studies. There is a need to undertake studies which may define the goals, the nature and role of the knowledge, and also the scope and focus of the field.

Further, it will be worthwhile to analyse the 'structure' of various social science disciplines which can act as a primary source for curriculum development. In fact, to reiterate what Rao, S.R. (1987) in the *Third Survey of Research on Education* pointed out:

It is important to realize that the controversies that characterized the debate in the past few decades in the area of curriculum and methods were really rooted in certain fundamental issues relating to epistemology, psychology and educational theory and centered around questions such as: what is knowledge most worth? how does learning take place what constitutes readiness for learning and how should objectives be expressed? It is only by reference to these issues that their particular manifestation in curriculum, methods and textbooks can be understood?

While we can tread our own research path, there is evidence (Popkewitz, T.S. 1972, 1977a, 1977b) that the practice of teaching the structure of Social Science disciplines and of presenting knowledge as predetermined sets of rules, standards and ideas has come under criticism. Popkewitz supports "inquiry as a constructed social system in place of the view of knowledge as reproduced ideas" (Armento, B.J. 1986). Popkewitz's work is essentially based on the application of the critical sciences to theory-building which represents a dramatic departure from the prior rationale-building efforts based on the ideas of such leaders as Dewey or Bruner.

2. There is a need for carefully planned



and cumulative research to guide major decisions in matters relating to curriculum development in the teaching of the social sciences. Research is needed on the various bases of the curriculum which may finally determine the content to be reared. For instance, in recent years, there has been increasing interest in the studies based on the Piagetian developmental stages as applicable to the various social sciences. It may be fruitful to study the developmental pattern of Indian children with reference to the teaching of various social sciences. Psychological analysis of the curricular materials and pedagogical methods may suggest ways in which specific psychological theories can be translated into pedagogical prescriptions (Rao, S.R. 1987).

Since much of Social Science instruction is concept oriented, there is a strong need to base researches on the theoretical works of Piaget, Bruner and Kohlberg, testing their stages of cognitive and moral development. A good deal of work in this direction has been done in Western countries, which has been reviewed by Langford, P. (1987). Specifically, there is a great possibility for researching the historical, geographical, economic and politico-legal understanding of children following the Piagetian-Peel models of cognitive development (Downey, M.T. and Levstik, L.S. 1991). While the Piagetian model has been criticised for being hypothetical-deductive, there is a scope for researching alternative approaches (for instance see the research work of Booth, M. (1980) in the case of history). The findings of such researches may suggest important implications for curriculum development, instructional materials and classroom learning.

Related to this, such research questions as children's concepts and understanding of time can be pursued. By its very nature, a subject like history is linked to time and chronology. It seems obvious, then, that children's concepts of time must be connected to the development of historical understanding. We know little about the connection. To begin with, there are many different aspects of time,

including the past, present and future; conventional clock and calendar time; duration of physical processes; historical succession and duration (Friedman, W.J. 1978, 1982). For example, children's ability to distinguish between past, present, and future time, and their grasp of historical duration might be presumed to be relevant to conceptual change in history (Downey, M.T. and Levstik, L.S. 1991). Another example may be taken from geography. The formation of correct geographical concepts is an important objective of learning geography. What are these concepts? How are they to be graded for the purpose of the curriculum? What about the skills involved in the reading and drawing of maps? How should they be ordered and taught? Questions of such nature need to be raised and answered to provide an empirical-research base to curriculum development in social sciences, which is presently lacking noticeably. By way of an instance, while one may not refute, but may at the same time question the research basis for the recent claim of the latest committee on curriculum (The Yash Pal Committee). One would like to know whether the basis of the recommendations is the "collective wisdom" of the committee members or are these supported by any research evidence!

3. Related to curriculum development studies, it is important to consider research possibilities in such areas as textbooks and instructional materials. Researching the development and preparation of a textbook is not only important, but we should also investigate the role of textbooks in social science instruction? "Although the textbook is a major instructional tool," Armento, B.J. (1986) pointed out, "we know little about the ways in which students process written social studies material. Two sources of information interact when reading—the form and content of the material itself and the abilities and predilections the reader brings to the task." There is virtually no work available on how social science domain-specific knowledge and attitude influence the



processing of textual material.

4. Researches largely carried out in the area of teaching-learning strategies, including the teaching of social sciences, have usually examined the relationship between instructional techniques or teacher behaviours and their effects on student outcomes. Such typical investigations examine the correlational or causal relationship that is thought to exist between selected instructional techniques or particular teacher behaviours and student outcomes. While such studies have their own place and importance, there is a need to research the viability of various methods/instructional strategies which are specific to the social science disciplines. Research into the use of inquiry, discovery and other discipline-centered approaches as would be applicable to the teaching of social sciences will be rewarding. For instance, while problem-solving in mathematics and physics has been rather extensively explored, little work has been conducted on the process of problem-solving in social science and allied subjects. Researches conducted have only examined the processes students employ as they solve well-defined and well-structured problems. But problems in social sciences are not always as clearly defined as they are in mathematics or physics (Armento, B.J. 1986).

5. Most of the researches conducted so far to measure the student gains in social science education have been dominated by psychometric orientation. This is very clearly reflected in the obsessive concern of most of the researchers to construct and standardise achievement tests in various subject-areas. There is a tendency to measure outcomes which are tapped by paper-and-pencil tests of knowledge, criterion-referenced to the content of the instructional treatment. Perhaps, this problem cannot be seen in its isolation as our whole approach of teaching-learning is very much dominated by teaching only for 'cognitive outcomes' (Raina, V.K. 1989). The problem, in fact, is that, "student behaviours are typically viewed as outcomes of instruction; they are seldom defined as

independent variables. The trend has been to measure some component of short-term gain as the product of instruction (Armento, B.J., 1986). There is a need to devote more attention to the teaching and assessing of affective outcomes, and research may be focused on this. Unfortunately, the situation as it presently prevails, indicates that most of our teachers are not even conversant with the non-cognitive outcomes of teaching. (Raina, V.K. 1992).

6. One important trend that has emerged from this review is that an empirical-analytic orientation dominates the field. A good number of researches which are survey-based have made use of questionnaires to elicit information from the respondents, and such researches are of limited value. Survey research tends to mask the great diversity of information that may characterise the teaching of the various social sciences. It focuses attention on central tendencies, on what most teachers do most frequently. The great diversity of teaching styles and methods emerge more clearly in ethnographic studies based on sustained classroom observation. Such studies also provide a much clearer picture of the dynamics of teacher-student interactions in the classroom (Downey, M.T. and Levstik, L.S. (1991).

Vedanayagam, E.G. (1991) made a spirited case for the use of qualitative research techniques including ethnographic studies. A plea is made that "more 'subjective' studies on ethnographic models are also necessary, not to supplant but as a supplement to the quantitative, natural science paradigm based studies in social science education". A comparison of the positivistic approach (dominated by statistical research) and the interpretative approach (ethnographic studies) would possibly reveal that it is the latter approach, which is particularly appropriate for generating theory about the teaching of the social sciences.

Intensive ethnographic studies can help in yielding significant insights into the internal dynamics of social science classrooms and into



how the interactions among teachers and learners, and amongst the learners (peer interaction) influence the way Social Sciences are being taught in the schools. To conclude, Shaver, J.P. and Larkins, A.G. (1973) have rightly pointed out: "Ethnography entails intellectual involvement and risk-taking, especially when the intent is not just to describe a setting but to generate theory. There is too frequently a tendency in statistical research to assume that the computer can do one's thinking. Of course, computers can provide the basic reasoning in any kind of study, but research aimed at developing explanatory propositions in particular demands that the researcher himself come to grips with his data". Obviously, it is important to develop suitable theory (theories) of social science teaching which presently do not exist. It is, possibly, the use of alternative methodologies such as ethnographic approaches, that can help us significantly in this direction.

However, in suggesting the use of qualitative research techniques such as ethnography, participant observation, etc., the idea is not to look at these techniques as being antithetical to quantitative techniques, but as being complementary. In fact, one can look for proper opportunities to combine the use of two paradigms to have a better understanding of various research issues. It is in this context, that Mukherjee, B.N. (1993) has pertinently observed:

The advantages in the integration of the two paradigms may be seen in the light of the changing conceptions of the world and models of man. For enriching educational research, we need both analytical and synthetic orientations, micro and macro data, statistical and clinical predictions, deductive and inductive inferences, as well as theoretic objectivity and practical valuations. The unification is expected to pave the way for more precision, objectivity as also synthesis in understanding different educational phenomena (p. 383).

### CONCLUSION

Researching social science education has

remained an area of limited concern for the educational researchers. Quantitatively, the state-of-the-art is such that it is difficult to derive any clear pattern(s). Obviously, most of our common assumptions about how various social science subjects should be taught have not been tested empirically. It is difficult to derive any principles or implications from these studies. Researches so far conducted have yielded little useful knowledge for classroom social science teachers to improve upon their practices.

Sensitivity to identifying significant issues in the area of social science education among the researchers is vital. By way of an instance, there is always a need for continued development and testing of curricula in the Social Sciences. There is also a need for using relevant and alternative methodologies to explore various identified issues as listed above. The situation warrants pursuing in a concerted manner, serious, in-depth researches by the institutions which are engaged in work related to school education. No less is it important to promote and encourage independent research, which is presently almost non-existent. The future also demands that researches in the area of social science education should not remain the exclusive concern of the 'pedagogues' but should interest other social science scholars as well. That will enrich the field and provide alternative designs to construct Social Science Education.

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