Interest of Rural and Urban Students of Secondary Schools in North 24 Parganas towards Learning Geography

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Abstract:
Geography is the compulsory subject in secondary level of education. It provides the knowledge of whole world. It gives information regarding how, why, where, when & what of our surroundings. Students learn in accordance with their needs and interests. Education must have psychological bases (Montessori & Froebel). There are various psychological factors which determines students learning. The present study will focus on the influence of students' interest towards learning Geography. Specifically, the present study investigated urban and rural students' interest towards learning Geography. In this study, analytical survey research design was used and self-developed Questionnaire was presented before 200 students of class IX from urban and rural areas. After collection of data, the analysis was completed based on frequency analysis and t-test. The findings has shown that majority of the students from urban (N = 83) and rural (N = 72) area had moderate level interest towards learning Geography. There is no significant difference between urban and rural students in regard to their interest towards learning Geography also. Thus the study investigated the students' interest in learning Geography. Teacher educator must introduce interactive teaching methodologies, innovative teaching strategies and identify students' learning difficulty to promote interest towards learning Geography.

Keywords: *Interest, Geography, Secondary level, Urban students, Rural students.*

Introduction

Geography is a compulsory subject till the secondary level of education. It not only provides the knowledge of physical environment, space and place but also helps students to know the cultural environment of many natural environment, land and resource availability and how that has influenced man's economic and cultural activities are also known by the subject Geography. Students can connect worlds' physiography, diverse culture and economy by learning Geography at secondary level of education. Students' engagement with the learning environment is very necessary factor in the field of education. Their emotional issues, interests, attitudes contribute to effective learning and academic achievement. Interest is that motivational process which affects students' learning outcomes. According to Renninger & Hidi (2022), "*Interest empowers learning activity and leads Pedagogical and Professional*

paths to get success". At the secondary level, students belong to a transitional stage (Sarif et al., 2020) and their psychological aspects also change abruptly. They are included in the formal cognitive developmental stage also. That is why teachers, educators keep all the views, must create interest towards the subject by effective teaching methodology. Instructional materials which captivate students' interest are effortless to learn because interest enhances educational activities (Meyzilia et al., 2019). Basically Geography makes awareness regarding world and our country also (Mansfield, 2014). Interest productively intensify students' imagination and reflection power. According to Hidi (1990) and Hidi and Anderson (1992), *"Interest is predominantly trussed to the content materials and controls and amplifies learning"*.

The present study has focused on the urban and rural students' interest towards learning Geography. It is speculated that students of rural background experienced lesser education compared to the urban students (Ajai and Imoko, 2014) in this study researcher. The study will search rural and urban students' interest towards learning Geography of North 24 Parganas district, West Bengal and also find out the comparison between students' interest belong to urban and rural area respectively.

Delimitation of the Study

The present study was delimited to 200 secondary school students from urban and rural area of North 24 Parganas district, West Bengal. The study can be further extended to investigate impact of students' interest towards learning Geography. A similar study can further be made at a higher secondary level in any other districts of West Bengal and a further study can be conducted by taking large sample.

Reviews of Related Literature

Review of related literature helps to find out the gaps in the related fields and supports to make tools for the study. Some related literature reviews are discussed following:

Ajai et al. (2014) explored academic achievement and interest in Geometry of urban and rural students. The study sample was made up of 70 urban students and 59 rural students. The study revealed that rural students are better in interest scores than urban students.

Essien et al. (2015) investigated students' interest in social studies and academic achievement in tertiary institutions of cross river state, Nigeria. 753 students were selected randomly as sample of the study. Social studies questionnaire and social studies achievement test were developed to collect the data. The result showed from the study that the relation between students' interest in social science and the academic achievement is quite significant.

Warsani and Ruhimat (2016) examined the effect of Interest and Motivation in learning Geography towards Spatial Intelligence of Senior High School students. By using Quantitative approach with survey method, the study used Questionnaire to collect data from 96 respondents. It was revealed from the result that significant effect of learning interest and motivation exist in learning Geography towards the spatial intelligence.

Sarif et al. (2020) examined on students' interest, learning difficulty and teachers' training method in Geography in secondary schools of Meghalaya. Qualitative research design followed by semi-structured Questionnaire was used to collect the data. Based on the frequency distribution, percentage analysis and content analysis, the findings revealed that maximum number of students had interest in learning Geography in secondary schools of Meghalaya.

Omachonu (2020) explored locational differences in students' interest in English oracy skills. 79 students from urban area and 75 students from rural area are the sample respondents of the

study. Hypotheses were analysed by the ANCOVA. The findings of the study revealed that there exists no substantial difference in the urban and rural students' mean interest score.

Rahman et al. (2021) analysed the increasing students' learning. Interest in Geography through outdoor study method. The study deals with classroom action research method. Senior high school students were the population of this study. The result revealed from the study was that the 'Outdoor Study' strategy was a successful teaching strategy to promote interest in learning.

Morgan and Aboaqye (2022) examined students' interest in Physics by gender, school type and programme of study. Survey method followed by questionnaire on students' interest was made to collect data. The findings of the result were that students' interest in Physics was moderate and male students were more interested in Physics than girls.

Emmanuel et al. (2023) investigated impact of school location and methodology on students' performance in English essay writing. It was a quasi-experimental study includes 300 students as sample respondents. The result of the study manifests that students of urban areas perform better than rural areas.

Objectives:

1. To estimate the interest of urban students towards learning Geography.
2. To estimate the interest of urban boys towards learning Geography.
3. To estimate the interest of urban girls towards learning Geography.
4. To estimate the interest of rural students towards learning Geography.
5. To estimate the interest of rural boys towards learning Geography.
6. To estimate the interest of rural girls towards learning Geography.
7. To compare the interest towards learning Geography between urban and rural students.
8. To compare the interest towards learning Geography between urban boys and rural boys.
9. To compare the interest towards learning Geography between urban girls and rural girls.

Hypotheses:

H_{01} There is no significant difference between urban and rural students in regard to their interest towards learning Geography.
H_{02} There is no significant difference between urban boys and rural boys in regard to their interest towards learning Geography.
H_{03} There is no significant difference between urban girls and rural girls in regard to their interest towards learning Geography.

Methodology of the Study

Method: The present study used 'Analytical Survey Method'.

Population: All the students of secondary schools of North 24 Parganas, West Bengal were the population of the present study. More specifically all the students of class IX were the target population of the study.

Sample: 200 students of class IX from 4 schools were the sample number of the study. Among 200 students, 50 boys and 50 girls were selected randomly from urban area and 50 boys and 50 girls were selected randomly from rural areas to study the interests' towards learning Geography.

Area	School	Number of Students
Urban	S1	50
	S2	50
Rural	S1	50

	S2	50
	Total	**200**

Table 1: *Showing the Number of Students selected from Urban and Rural School*

Tools for Data Collection: To collect data, investigator has made an 'Interest Inventory' tool. The questionnaire is having six categories followed by 30 statements. Five point rating scale was used to grade the statement. Every positive statement was being scored in the following manner - Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Neutral (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1) and each negative statement was being scored like – Strongly Agree (1), Agree (2), Neutral (3), Disagree (4) and Strongly Disagree (5). The entire questionnaire was categorized by six individual sectors. Each sector is having five statements to judge the students' interest towards Geography. The tool - *'Interest Inventory'* was finalised and accepted as valid on the basis of expert's judgement.

Data Analysis:

Objective 1: *To estimate the interest of urban students towards learning Geography.*

Groups	High (Greater than 120)	Moderate (60 – 120)	Low (Less than 60)	N
Urban Students	12	83	5	100

Table 2: *Frequency table showing high, moderate and low level of urban students' interest towards learning Geography*

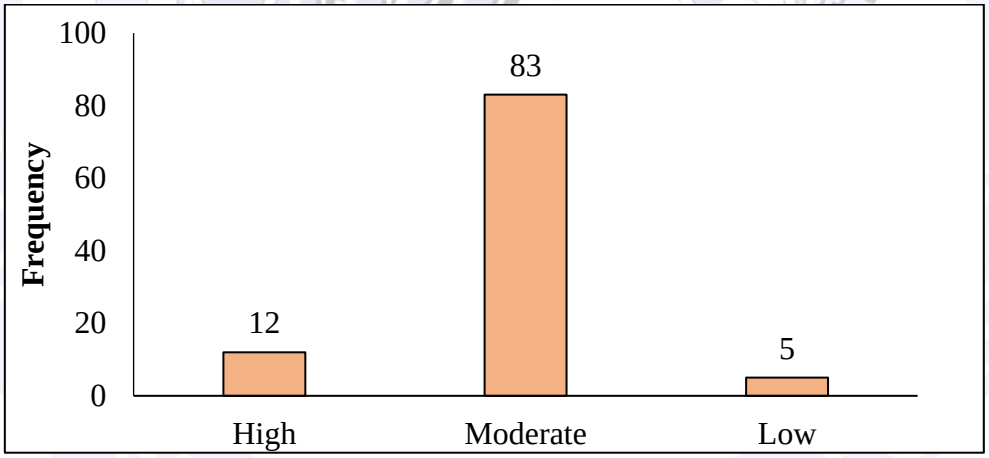

Figure 1: *Frequency of high, moderate and low level of urban students' interest towards learning Geography*

From table 2, it is found that 12 urban students having interest towards learning Geography. 5 students having low level of interest towards learning Geography and 83 students out of 100, having moderate level of interest towards learning Geography. So it is observed that maximum number of urban students having moderate level of interest towards learning Geography.

Objective 2: *To estimate the interest of urban boys towards learning Geography.*

Groups	High (Greater than 120)	Moderate (60 – 120)	Low (Less than 60)	N
Urban Boys	6	43	1	50

Table 3: *Frequency table showing high, moderate and low level of urban boys' interest towards learning Geography*

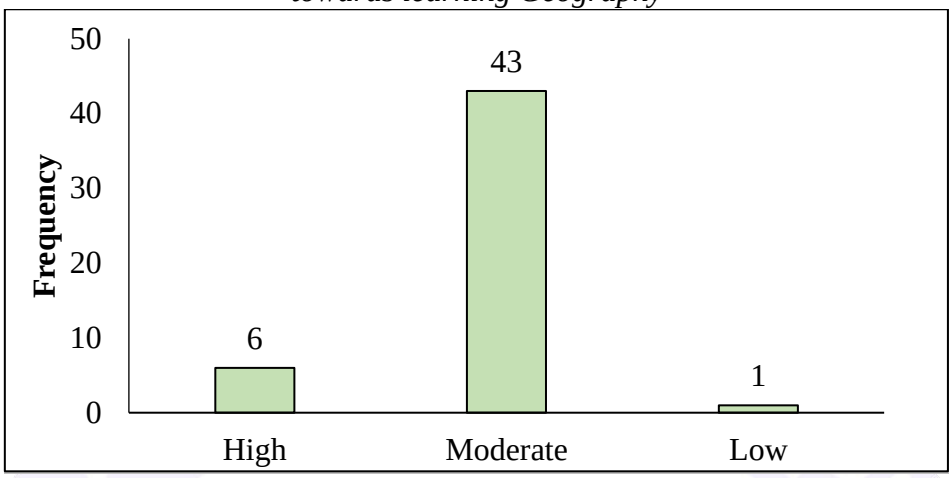

Figure 2: *Frequency of high, moderate and low level of urban boys' interest towards learning Geography*

From table 3, it is found that 6 urban boys having interest towards learning Geography. 1 students having low level of interest towards learning Geography and 43 students out of 100, having moderate level of interest towards learning Geography. So it is observed that maximum number of urban boys having moderate level of interest towards learning Geography.

Objective 3: *To estimate the interest of urban girls towards learning Geography.*

Groups	High (Greater than 120)	Moderate (60 – 120)	Low (Less than 60)	N
Urban Girls	6	40	4	50

Table 4: *Frequency table showing high, moderate and low level of urban girls' interest towards learning Geography*

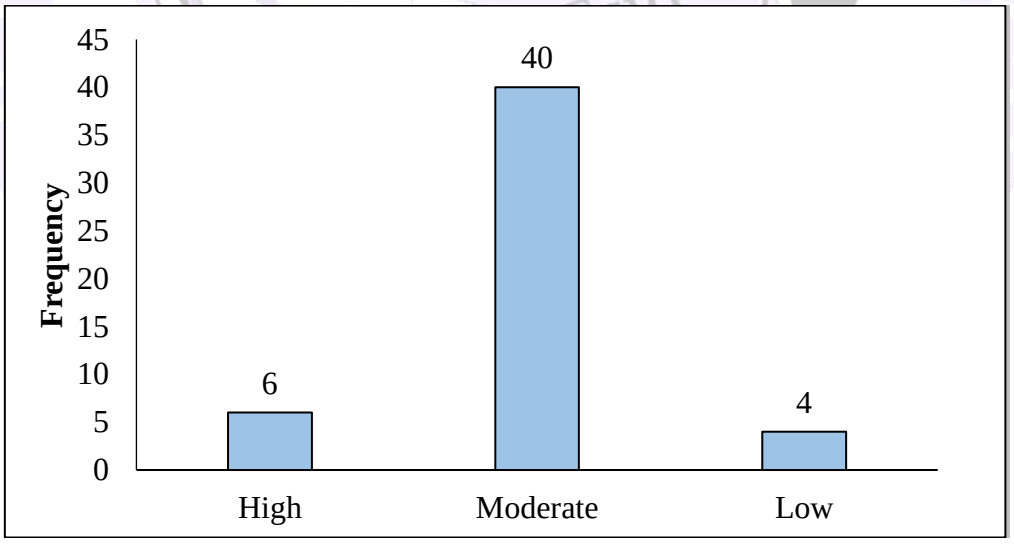

Figure 3: *High, moderate and low level of urban girls' interest towards learning Geography*

From Table 4, it is found that only 6 urban girls having high level of interest towards learning Geography, 40 urban girls having moderate level of interest towards learning Geography and 4 urban girls having low level of interest towards learning Geography out of 50 urban girls. Here also maximum number of urban girls having moderate level of interest towards learning Geography.

Objective 4: *To estimate the interest of rural students towards learning Geography*.

Groups	High (Greater than 120)	Moderate (60 – 120)	Low (Less than 60)	N
Rural Students	16	72	12	100

Table 5: *Frequency table showing high, moderate and low level of rural students' interest towards learning Geography*

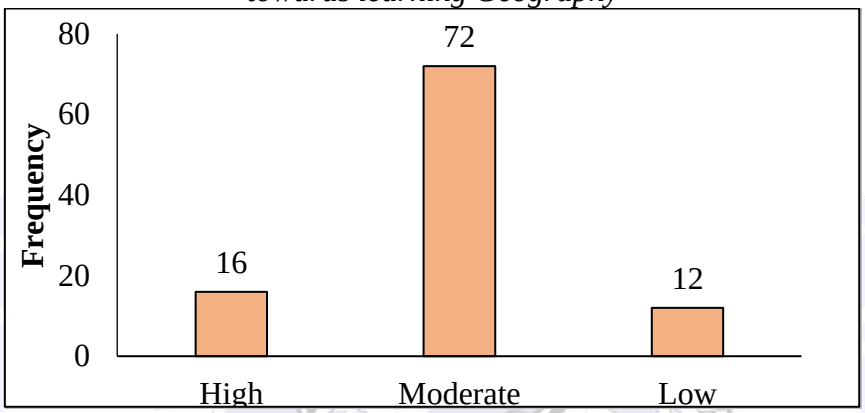

Figure 4: *Frequency of high, moderate and low level of rural students' interest towards learning Geography*

From Table 5, it is shown that 72 rural students having moderate level of interest towards learning Geography. Only 16 rural students containing high level of interest and 12 rural students having low level of interest towards learning Geography. Maximum number of rural students having moderate level of interest towards learning Geography.

Objective 5: *To estimate the interest of rural boys towards learning Geography*.

Groups	High (Greater than 120)	Moderate (60 – 120)	Low (Less than 60)	N
Rural Boys	9	37	4	50

Table 6: *Frequency table showing high, moderate and low level of rural boys' interest towards learning Geography*

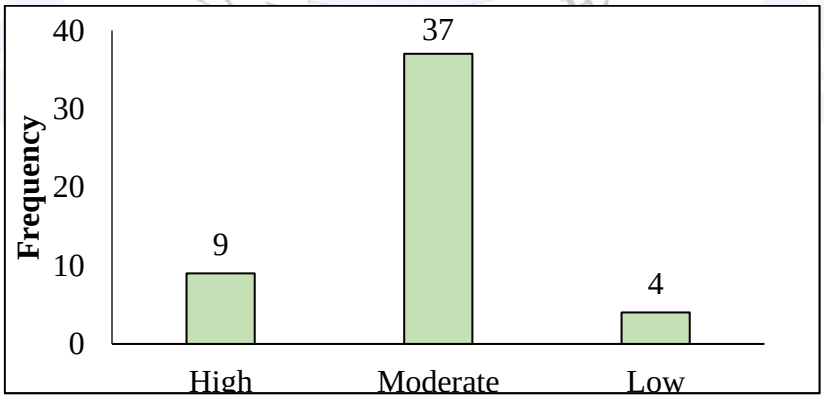

Figure 5: *Frequency of high, moderate and low level of rural boys' interest towards learning Geography*

From Table 6, it is shown that 37 rural boys out of 50, having moderate level of interest towards learning Geography. Only 9 rural boys having high level of interest towards learning

Geography and 4 rural boys' interest level having less than 60 and resulting low level of interest.

Objective 6: *To estimate the interest of rural girls towards learning Geography.*

Groups	High (Greater than 120)	Moderate (60 – 120)	Low (Less than 60)	N
Rural Girls	7	35	8	50

Table 7: *Frequency table showing high, moderate and low level of rural girls' interest towards learning Geography*

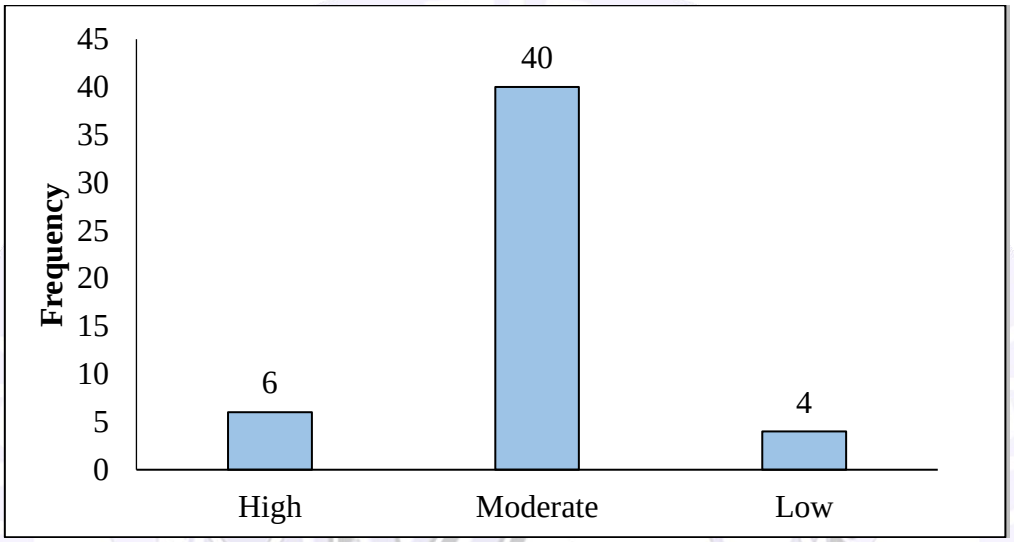

Figure 6: *Frequency of high, moderate and low level of rural girls' interest towards learning Geography*

From Table 7, it is shown that 40 rural girls out of 50, having moderate level of interest towards learning Geography. Only 6 rural girls having high level of interest towards learning Geography and 4 rural girls' interest level having less than 60 and resulting low level of interest.

Objective 7: *To compare the interest towards learning Geography between urban and rural students.*

H_{01} *There is no significant difference between urban and rural students in regard to their interest towards learning Geography.*

Urban Students			Rural Students			MD	df	SE_D	t-value	Significance
n_1	Mean	SD	n_2	Mean	SD					
100	95.47	21.21	100	93.98	28.52	1.49	198	3.55	0.42*	Not Significant
*t-criterion value at 0.05 level is 1.97 for df 198										

Table 8: *Difference between urban and rural students in regard to their interest towards learning Geography*

The result indicates that the t-value (0.42) is not significant. The meaning thereby rural and urban students do not differ in interest significantly. Hence the null hypothesis H_{01} is accepted.

Objective 8: *To compare the interest towards learning Geography between urban boys and rural boys.*

H_{02} *There is no significant difference between urban boys and rural boys in regard to their interest towards learning Geography.*

Urban Boys			Rural Boys			MD	df	SE_D	t-value	Significance
n_1	Mean	SD	n_2	Mean	SD					
50	99.84	18.05	50	95.90	25.02	3.94	98	4.36	0.90*	Not Significant
*t-criterion value at 0.05 level is 1.98 for df 98										

Table 9: *Difference between urban and rural boys in regard to their interest towards learning Geography*

The result indicates that the t-value (0.90) is not significant. The meaning thereby rural and urban boys do not differ in interest significantly. Hence the null hypothesis H_{02} is accepted.

Objective 9: *To compare the interest towards learning Geography between urban girls and rural girls.*

H_{03} *There is no significant difference between urban girls and rural girls in regard to their interest towards learning Geography.*

Urban Girls			Rural Girls			MD	df	SE_D	t-value	Significance
n_1	Mean	SD	n_2	Mean	SD					
50	91.10	23.32	50	92.06	31.78	0.96	98	5.58	0.17*	Not Significant
*t-criterion value at 0.05 level is 1.98 for df 98										

Table 10: *Difference between urban and rural girls in regard to their interest towards learning Geography*

The result indicates that the t-value (0.17) is not significant. The meaning thereby rural and urban girls do not differ in interest significantly. Hence the null hypothesis H_{03} is accepted.

Result and Discussion

By analysing the data, the results indicates that the maximum number of students having moderate level of interest towards learning Geography. Table No. 2 comprised of analysis of objective 1. To determine urban students' interest towards learning Geography. 12 students from urban area were showing high level of interest towards learning Geography and 5 students were showing low level of interest towards learning Geography. 83 students out of 100 were having moderate level of attitude in learning Geography at urban area. Table No. 3 is analysing objective No. 2 : To determine urban boys Interest Towards learning Geography and it shows that 43 urban boys from 100 were approaching moderate level of interest towards Geography, 6 urban boys having high level of interest and 1 urban student having low level of interest towards learning Geography. Table No. 4 and supporting graph shows that 40 urban girls having moderate level of interest, 6 urban girls having high level of interest and 4 urban girls having low level of interest towards learning Geography respectively. Table No. 5 is incorporating the objective 5 shows that 72 rural students out of 100 having moderate level of interest, 16 rural students having high level of interest and 12 students having low level of interest towards learning Geography.

Table No. 6 is incorporated with the objective 5 is showing that 37 rural boys having moderate level of interest, 9 rural boys having high level of interest and 4 having low level of interest towards learning Geography. Objective 6 which is analysed by frequency table and bar graph, showing that 40 rural girls having moderate level of interest towards learning Geography, 6 rural girls having high level of interest and 4 rural girls having low level of interest towards

learning geography. Table No. 8 is analysing hypothesis H_{01}: There is no significant difference between urban and rural students in regard to their interest towards learning Geography which is incorporated with objective 7. The result indicates there is no significant difference in interest between urban students and rural students towards learning Geography. The t-criterion value is 0.42. The mean value of urban students is 95.47 and mean value of rural students is 93.98. Hence the null hypothesis H_{01} is accepted.

Table No. 9 is analysing hypothesis H_{02} which is incorporated with objective 8. The result indicates that 't' criterion value is 0.90 which is not significant. Boys of urban area do not differ with rural boys in regard to their interest towards learning Geography. Mean value of rural boys is 95.90 and mean value of urban boys is 99.84. Hence the null hypothesis H_{02} is accepted. The Table No. 10 indicates the analysis of H_{03} which is incorporated with objective 9. There is also no significant difference between urban girls and rural girls in regard to their interest towards learning Geography. Table 10 is showing that 't' criterion value is 0.17 which is not significant. The mean value of urban girls is 91.10 and mean value of rural girls is 92.06. Hence the null hypothesis H_{03} is accepted.

The findings of the present study matched and incorporated with the result of the related literature consistent with Omachonu (2020). On the other hand the result of the present study not matched and despaired of the prior studies by Ajai et al. (2013), Sarif et al. (2020), and Emmanuel et al. (2023).

Conclusions and Suggestions:

Basically Geography is the compulsory subject in secondary level of Education. It provides a comprehensive understanding of both physical environment and cultural environment and also reveals interaction between two. It stimulates students' feelings of 'Weness' and helps them to make a sense to understand dynamically changing society.

Based on the results of present study, it may be concluded that a large number of students of urban and rural areas have moderate level of interest towards learning Geography. Very few students from urban and rural areas have high level of interest towards learning Geography. There is no significant difference between urban students and rural students in regard to their interest towards learning Geography. Maximum students of urban and rural areas have not shown their interest towards higher studies and research on Geography. It is really serious matter in the field of Education. High or positive interest towards learning Geography not only positively effect on their academic performance but also help to global progress in broader sense knowledge of Geography assists students to acquire the concept of cultural, physical, economical life of a country and also makes understand the cultural life of whole world. So this is the high time to make our students aware to the subject Geography. By using interactive teaching methodology, innovative teaching strategies, showing maps, models, charts, educator should motivate students and to make them understand teacher will discuss the relevance and contribution of Geography in the present society.

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