

DEFINITION OF HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

- The reach of **geography** is extensive and each and every event or phenomenon, which varies over space and time, can be studied geographically.
- According to Livingstone, David and Rogers, **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”.
- The core concern of geography is to understand the earth as home of human beings and to study all those elements which have sustained them.

DUALISM / DIACHOTOMY in HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

The three dualism in the discipline of geography:

- a. Whether geography as a discipline should be a **law making/theorising (nomothetic) or descriptive (idiographic)**.
- b. Whether approach of the study should be **regional or systematic**?
- c. Whether geographical phenomena be interpreted **theoretically** or through **historic-institutional** approach?

METAPHORS – NATURE AND HUMAN ARE INSEPARABLE

Nature and human are inseparable elements and is described in metaphors using symbols from the human anatomy.

- i. ‘face’ of the earth, ‘eye’ of the storm, ‘mouth’ of the river, ‘snout’ (nose) of the glacier, ‘neck’ of the isthmus, ‘profile’ of the soil.
- ii. Regions, villages, towns have been described as ‘organisms’.
- iii. Networks of road, railways and water ways are described as “arteries of circulation”.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NATURE AND HUMAN

The elements of **physical environment** are landforms, soils, climate, water, natural vegetation and diverse flora and fauna.

The elements of **socio-cultural environment** are Houses, villages, cities, road-rail networks, industries, farms, ports and items of our daily use which are created by human beings using the resources provided by the physical environment.

Q.1 While physical environment has been greatly modified by human beings, it has also, in turn, impacted human lives. Justify the statement.

- Ans.
- i. Human beings interact with their physical environment with the help of technology.
 - ii. Technology indicates the level of cultural development of society.
 - iii. Human beings were able to develop technology after they developed better understanding of natural laws. Technology loosens the shackles of environment on human beings.
 - iv. There is direct dependence of human beings on nature for resources which sustain them. Nature provides opportunities and human being make use of these and slowly nature gets humanized.

Q.2 “Human beings were able to develop technology after they developed better understanding of natural laws.” Justify the statement

Ans.

- a. The understanding of concepts of friction and heat helped us discover fire.
- b. Similarly, understanding of the secrets of DNA and genetics enabled us to conquer many diseases.
- c. We use the laws of aerodynamics to develop faster planes.

- d. In the early stages humans were greatly influenced by nature and adapted to its dictates. This is so because the level of technology was very low.
- e. With social and cultural development, humans develop better and more efficient technology. They move from a state of necessity to a state of freedom.

Naturalization of Humans or Environmental determinism

Q.3 “Primitive societies lived in complete harmony with their natural environment.” Justify

Ans. Environmental deterministic approach states that:

- a. Environment controls human actions and activities. Humans were directly dependent on the natural environment.
- b. Humans were not free and they adapted according to the nature. Humans were naturalized they were afraid of natural forces.
- c. It states that human history, culture, life style, and stages of development are influenced by the physical environment like climate, soil, relief, etc.
- d. It considers human as passive agents, whose attitude, decision making is influenced by physical environment. Example: the life of nomads or tribal people living in mountains or forests.

Humanisation of Nature or Possibilism

Q.4 Describe important features of the concept of Humanisation of Nature.

Ans. Possibilistic approach states that:

- a. Humans were free to choose/decide. Nature did not control him.
- b. The nature provided/offered opportunities/possibilities for humans to exploit it for their benefits.
- c. It considered humans as active agents rather than a passive one.
- d. It's the technology, attitude, habits, values of humans which influenced its action not the nature. The nature got humanized.

Neodeterminism or Stop and Go determinism.

Q.5 Which approach in the study of human geography was followed by Griffith Taylor?

Ans. Griffith Taylor introduced the concept of neodeterminism of **stop and go determinism**.

- a. Neither is there a situation of absolute necessity (environmental determinism) nor is there a condition of absolute freedom (possibilism).
- b. It states that nature has provided possibilities and scope for development but also put limits on it.
- c. Human beings can conquer nature by obeying it. They can continue in their pursuit of development when nature permits.
- d. Possibilities can be created within the limits which do not damage the environment and there is no free run without accidents.
- e. The free run has already resulted in the greenhouse effect, ozone layer depletion, global warming, receding glaciers and degrading lands.
- f. The neo-determinism conceptually attempts to bring a balance nullifying the 'either' 'or' dichotomy.

Q.11 Describe the Thrust of Human Geography through broad stages of time.

Ans. Dynamism in human geography approaches are:

- i. An encyclopedic description of the area during early colonial period.
- ii. **Regional analysis:** Elaborate description of all aspects of a region.
- iii. **Areal differentiation:** identifying the uniqueness of any region and understanding how and why is it different from others.
- iv. **Spatial organization:** use of computers, statistics, Laws of physics were often applied to map and analyse human phenomena. It was called the quantitative revolution.
- v. **Humanistic, Radical and Behavioural approach:** Study of relevant socio-political reality
- vi. Post-modernism: understanding each local context in its own right was emphasized.

