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Best Practise : Teaching Method : Collective Critical Cartography

1. Introduction : Collective Critical Cartography (CCC) or mental mapping is a set of new mapping practices and theoretical critique grounded in critical theory. It differs from academic cartography in that it links geographic knowledge with practical knowledge about the surrounding. It is a process which use collaborative methods to complete or rewrite information which transmitted by traditional maps (and last but not at least, the world view which is mediated by them). Collective critical cartography or CCC is a method which uses co-operative mapping as a tool.

2. Objective : The following were the objectives :

1. Develop mapping skills
2. Apply theoretical knowledge to practical knowledge
3. Understand signs and symbols in Mapping
4. Work in teams .

3. Procedure

1. An activity on mental mapping was carried out with fifteen Post Graduate students of Geography of Parvatibai Chowgule College (Autonomous), Margao-Goa of the year 2018-19 These students were divided into three groups. The main aim of the activity was to mobilize the knowledge of a particular community about the surrounding area, which can then be improved and made more efficient. Therefore, the college campus area was taken into consideration as a particular community..

2. To start with the activity, a map of a particular area, a set of trigger questions (where is the canteen, gym, football ground, parking lot, danger zone of high electric lamp posts etc) and a series of signs and symbols are required to be prepared.

3. The activity of collective mapping was carried out based on three stages: 1) Prefield work, 2) Field work and 3) Post-field work.

a)Pre field work

In the Pre-field work, three groups were formed; each group consisted of five members. Group leaders were selected from within the groups. The map (Google Map with streets) of Chowgule College campus, colour paper strips and stationery was provided to each group and the instructions of the activity were given. An example of how a mental map should be prepared was delivered.

b)Field Work

During the fieldwork, respective group leaders conveyed the instructions of the activity to their respective group members which was then followed by a group discussion among the members to set trigger questions. All the group members contributed their work collectively, identified and figured out different features, places, attributes on the map which were then symbolically represented on the map. The group members had to draw a rough sketch with symbols symbolizing the cultural features, places and attributes on a chart paper and coloured sticky notes along with the name of the symbols were attached on the chart paper. The session of the activity was for one and half hour. A final sketch of a mental map representing.

c)Post Field Work

In Post-field work, all three groups reported back with their respective mental maps prepared by them and to know what was worked and how. This part of the activity is very important because learning is then shared and a debate emerges from the distinct points of views. Comparisons of all three maps were done by the groups. In the process of comparison, there was identification of unknown features that varied from each group. Elements such as roads, landmarks etc are important in mental maps because people use these features to orient themselves and to navigate within a place or region. The last step was to systematize all three maps to one common map. From all three maps, the information from different groups was condensed into one common map



Post-Graduate students engaged in the activity

4. Outcomes :

Firstly, It was noticed that each group had different perceptions about the surrounding area of the campus. Hence, this practice helps to understand how humans look at the particular area and process the information internally and externally

Secondly, the most important skill acquired by the students were, how to work together in a group, the communication between team members and most importantly how to imagine and memorize the geography of one's surroundings.

Thirdly, Collective Critical Cartography is a process of knowledge production and transformation. It is not just the "final product" but the process itself can involve learning together and producing new knowledge by bringing together multiple perspectives, by connecting different personal maps, or by creating collective maps through rotation, negotiation or consensus According to Kamini Raikar, "*Collective mapping is a fun based learning activity which helps one to think and produce a picture of a particular location or place*" and Apurva Desai remarked that, "*Though I am a part of my college for three years, I thought I knew everything around the campus. But after this activity I learnt some new elements that existed in my college which I never knew before*".

The question is where this engages and enhances teaching-learning of geography. Based on the above responses, it can be firmly stated that this activity helps one to think and produce a picture of a particular place, to explore things in greater detail and to provide greater understanding of places. Secondly, the most important skill acquired by the students were, how to work together in a group, the communication between team members and most importantly how to imagine and memorize the geography of ones' surroundings.

5. Evidences : The following is published article :

Sawant N N, Gaus Desai A Fernandes Dwayne, Patil V & Ferrao A (2018) Collective Critical Cartography- A Tool In Geographical Study, An International, Peer Reviewed, Quarterly Scholarly Research Journal For Interdisciplinary Studies,1-5

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COLLECTIVE CRITICAL CARTOGRAPHY- A TOOL IN GEOGRAPHICAL STUDY

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