

Meaning of Human Geography

The study of the interrelationships between people, place, and environment, and how these vary spatially and temporally across and between locations. Whereas physical geography concentrates on spatial and environmental processes that shape the natural world and tends to draw on the natural and physical sciences for its scientific underpinnings and methods of investigation, human geography concentrates on the spatial organization and processes shaping the lives and activities of people, and their interactions with places and nature. Human Geography as a discipline only came in prominence with the work of Friedrich Ratzel in his book "Anthropogeography" in the year 1882. In the words of Ratzel, human geography is "synthetic study of the relationship between Human societies and the Earth's surface". Ratzel was a strong supporter of Darwin and believed in the concept of the survival of the fittest. He was convinced that the course of history, the mode of life of a people and the stage of development are closely influenced by the physical features and location of a place in relation to mountains and plains.

Ellen Churchill Semple defined human geography as the "study of changing relationship between the unresting man and the unstable earth".

Elsworth Huntington defined human geography as the "study of the nature and distribution of the relationships between geographical environment and human activities and qualities."

In conclusion it can be said that Human geography is a sub branch of the subject Geography which is mainly interested in the study of the mutual relationship which exist between the nature or the physical elements and the human beings. The nature and humans are both complimentary to each other and process of development takes place with mutual understanding and cooperation of humans and nature. Moreover the path shown by Griffith Taylor has even made easier to strike a balance between the two.