

INNOVATIONS IN GEOGRAPHY

Computer applications and the use of Educational Technology:

Technology has revolutionized social life and education and has reaped great benefits. The advent of computers led to the process of technology feeding technology. And naturally the tempo of technological change is touching new heights with every passing moment with direct effect on the end-users. Several instruments/equipments of drawing and measurements have been replaced by the use of techno uses. But as a matter of fact these machine-teachers can act as mere aids but they would never be the replacement of a human teacher. The computer-aided designs are broadening the horizon of knowledge and it is not only being utilized by the younger generation but also by the geo-teachers to keep them abreast of the immense information.

Computer-Based Learning (CBL), as is also known Computer Aided Learning (CAL) or Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) in several countries and are being increasingly employed for classroom instruction as well as for individualized and distance education. This

has been helped by the continuing spread of access to personal computers and the development of user-friendly course/ software packages. But, it is absolutely necessary to integrate the four components of CAI, e.g. computer hardware, course/software packages, overall objectives of the course, and teaching-learning environment including the human resources like teachers, students, supportive staffs, administration etc. In a classroom environment CAI helps to demonstrate the lessons, compute the change in behavioural skills, enhance the scope of practice and revision, and facilitate simulated learning. The ability of computers in regard to repetition with perfect accuracy and fastness is incomparable to human beings. Therefore, CAI helps a lot in supplementing conventional teaching-learning and evaluation methods. However, the character of learners in terms of their diverse requirements and ability of learning is very important and that should be kept in mind while designing CAI modules in a particular institution.

In the developing countries, like India, and especially in the rural areas of these countries, there are many constraints to CAI. The basic educational requirements, like a good school building, adequate safe

drinking water, sanitary provisions, medical facilities, teachers and teaching aids are not available in many occasions. Other infrastructural facilities like transport, electricity, social awareness and economic conditions do not permit modernization of school education in these countries.