

# Primary and Secondary Educators' Attitudes on School Geography

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# Introduction

- Creation of New Curricula for the modernization of Geographical knowledge at schools
- Creation of new supporting educational material
- Organization of training seminars for geography teachers

# Despite all these efforts

- The improvement of Geography's image as well as changes in teaching this subject at schools has barely taken place

# Goal of the research

- Identification of the issues that affect educators' attitudes towards school geography

# Rational

- The role of educators is particularly important in the structuring of the subject's teaching.
- The way of teaching affects the "type" of students' knowledge and attitudes they adopt.
- The positive attitudes towards a subject affect what someone choose to learn more about later in his life.

# Research Sample

- From the Athens Metropolitan area
- 155 Primary School teachers  
(male:45,20%, female:50,30%, did not answer: 4,50%)
- 80 geography High School teachers  
(male: 40,00%, female:60,00%)

# High School Teachers' Specialty

Specialty	N	%
Physicist	20	25,00
Chemist	8	10,00
Biologist	10	12,50
Geologist	4	5,00
Mathematician	10	12,50
Musician	1	1,25
Technologist	1	1,25
Gymnast	3	3,75
Art educator	1	1,25
Home Economic	22	27,50
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100,00</b>

# Research Tools

- “Open ended” type questions
- “SPSS 10” Statistical Package
- One – way ANOVA

# Results

The results were categorized into four sections, related to:

- The teachers' point of view regarding the subject matter of Geography
- The subject of Geography
- The actual teaching of the subject of Geography
- The relationships Educators had as Students with the subject of Geography

# Results: First Section

- The subject of geography repels students because...

Encoded answers	P.T. (%)	H.S.T (%)
• Memorization is required	43,9	10,0
• The material is plenty and difficult	19,3	15,0
• It isn't taught properly	12,9	10,0
• There are no appropriate educational material	7,8	63,8
• Don't know/No answer	16,1	1,2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>100,0</b>

- An a educator has a good command of geography when...

<b>Encoded answers</b>	<b>P.T. (%)</b>	<b>H.S.T (%)</b>
• He has knowledge (of continents, countries...)	49,1	60,0
• He employs appropriate teaching method and educational material	24,5	12,5
• He knows to read maps	16,1	18,8
• He has experience on traveling, knows Greece	3,2	-
	1,9	-
• He loves the subject	5,2	8,7
• Don't know/No answer		
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

# Results: Second Section

- Both groups of teachers agree that Geography must be taught at schools (~ 90%)
- They disagree on the reasons:
  - The students learn about the world as well as their country (63,8% P.T., 22,5% H.S.T.)
  - They learn how to use maps (11,6%P.T, 48,0%H.S.T.)

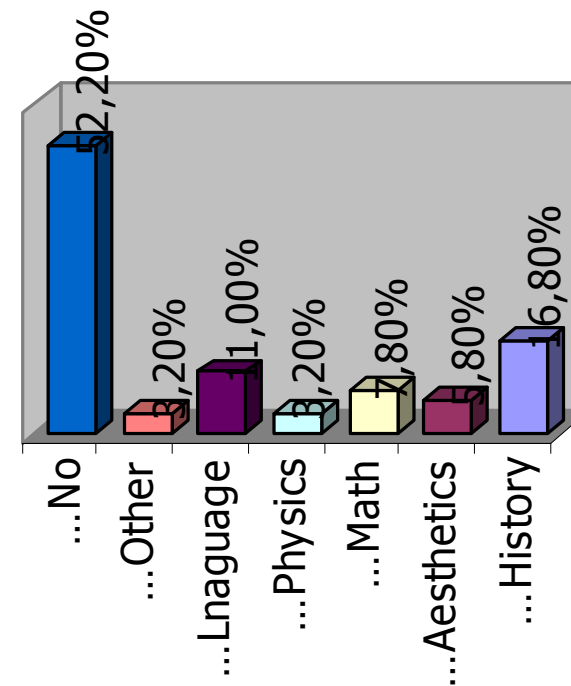
# Results: Third Section

- All teachers (both groups) do not enjoy teaching Geography (47,8% P.T., 65,0% H.S.T.)
- Their reasons:

<b>Encoded answers</b>	<b>P.T. (%)</b>	<b>H.S.T (%)</b>
• There is lack of appropriate educational material	15,5	22,5
• It is not my area of expertise	-	27,5
• I am not properly trained	13,5	-
• There are not appropriate books facilitating teaching geography	12,9	10,0
• I have bad experience as students	5,8	5,0
• Don't know / No answer	52,3	35,0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>100,0</b>

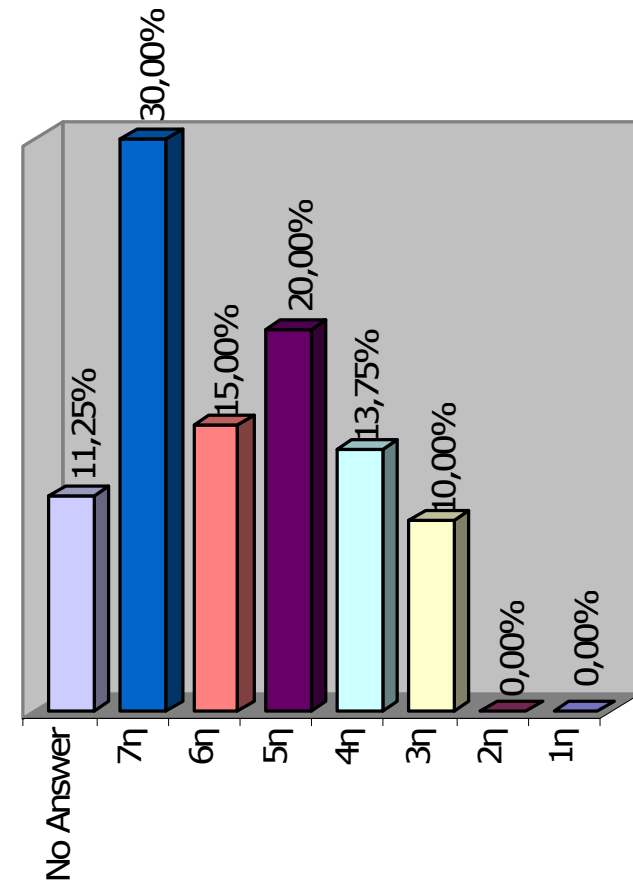
# Preference of Primary School Teachers

- Instead of Geography they prefer to teach:



# Preferences of H.S.T.

- The order that they prefer to teach geography:



The majority of educators feel that they do not teach geography properly (74,8%P.T., 72,5% H.S.T.)

Their Reasons:

- Lack of educational material
- Lack of preparation time
- Need for further specialization
- Need for appropriate training

# Results: Fourth Section

- As students they did not like Geography (P.T.: 49,10%, H.S.T.: 70,0,%)
- The reasons:
  - Memorization
  - Not interested exercises (copying maps)
  - Taught by non specialist teacher

## Revealing Statement:

“I do not remember anything. I feel as if I have not been taught Geography”

# Proposals

- Curriculum changes and introduction of new books and materials should follow the appropriate training of educators.
- Geography should be taught in all Pedagogical Departments as a cognitive subject including teaching techniques and methods.
- There is a need to redefine the position and significance of Geography within the Greek Educational System.