



What next for Geography Education? A perspective from the International Geographical Union – Commission for Geography Education

Clare Brooks^a, Gong Qian^b, Victor Salinas-Silva^a

^aUCL Institute of Education, London, UK

^bUCL Institute of Education, London, UK and East China Normal University, Shanghai, China

Email: c.brooks@ucl.ac.uk

Received: April 2017 – Accepted: May 2017

Abstract

In the last two years the Commission of Geography Education of the International Geographical Union (IGU-CGE) has been involved in the declaration of two key documents: the 2016 International Charter, declared in Beijing, and the International Declaration on Geography Education, declared in Moscow in 2015. Both of these declarations emphasise the importance of international collaboration particularly around the sharing of research findings and understandings within geography education. One of the challenges facing the commission to meet these objectives is the huge variety in the status and scope of geography education in different countries. Based on the assumption that the status of geography education within National Curricula indicates the likely investment in research and research findings, the paper draws upon data on the prevalence of geography education around the world, to analyse the differing levels of importance prescribed to the subject. The results indicate that a coming together of international geography educators has never been timelier, as geography flourishes and waivers significantly in different places. The paper highlights the important role of organisations like the IGU- CGE to offer political support for geography education both within National Curricula but also as a field of enquiry and scholarly research.

Keywords: International, Curriculum, IGU-CGE, Collaboration, Research

1. Introduction

As with many other fields of enquiry, recent years have seen a satisfying growth of international collaboration in geography education. No doubt this has been facilitated by the prevalence of social networking and technologies, along with social and political changes that enable geography educators all

over the world to share and connect, and to some extent to debate, ideas. This is not to suggest though, that such collaboration is universal, and despite connectivity, the degree of involvement in collaboration still exhibits areas of “hot” and “cold” activity. But the growth of international collaboration, whilst something to be celebrated, is not to be embraced without due care and attention. We

consider now to be a key moment to stop and consider what are the implications of such growth and what role can an organisation like the International Geographical Union – Commission for Geography Education (IGU-CGE) play in supporting and enhancing our understanding of geography education worldwide.

In the last two years the Commission of Geography Education of the International Geographical Union (IGU-CGE) has been involved in the declaration of two key documents: the 2016 International Charter, (as declared in Beijing), and the International Declaration on Geography Education, declared in Moscow in 2015 (both can be viewed on the IGU-CGE website: <http://www.igu-cge.org>). Both of these declarations emphasise the importance of international collaboration particularly around the sharing of research findings and understandings within geography education. In this paper, we explore the huge variety in the status and scope of geography education in different countries around the world, and consider the implications this may have for the global geography education community to succeed in working together successfully.

2. Collaboration: a key aspect of the Commission's history

A recently written history of the Commission for Geography Education (Graves and Stoltman, 2015) places the origins of the Commission in 1952, although there is note that there were a group of interested individuals prior to that time. The account outlines why international collaboration has always been at the heart of the Commission, and indeed the account links the establishment of the Commission and the interest in geography education with the newly established United Nations (1945), a key global event that precipitates international unity and collaboration:

“There was an overarching belief among experts that geography education would develop a positive international worldview

among learners. At the time, a positive worldview included knowledge about the physical environment, the diversity of cultural groups who inhabited those environments, Over the years, the details of research and writing about international understanding and an informed worldview became more defined, presented greater clarity, and reflected the dynamism of the discipline of geography. Geographers weave ideas from human and physical aspects of the discipline to describe and explain how the world works”.

For geography education, such a perspective, is particularly important: the account outlines why that is, and also why such a perspective continues to be important:

“Geography Education enables students to critically analyze the world about them. International understanding is an essential product of the study of geography since understanding requires meaningful knowledge. The meaningful knowledge is necessary to make important decisions about the immediate and long human and environmental conditions on Earth”.

The authors of this history site international understanding as a foundational principle for the Commission and they chart how this has been facilitated through ongoing international collaboration through the ages.

What their account also reveals is the diversity of involvement from around the world, and the importance of conferences and symposium as a vehicle for the sharing of the work of the Commission and of the geography educators who support it. The situation today is no different: conferences and symposium continue to be key sites of collaboration and networking: meeting points for both supporters of the Commission and the ideas that they generate through their research and scholarship. However, there are also now a network of over 60 Regional Contacts who act as local conduits to support the work of the Commission, and opportunities for newsletters, a LinkedIn group, a twitter feed and a website to spread the word further.

Engagement with the Commission from the Geography education community is strong: often the number of conference papers presented on geography education far outnumber those of other commissions; the membership and email distribution list are wide-ranging. However, levels of engagement do not necessarily correlate to quality or impact. Recent reports which review the state of geography education research take a critical view on the quality and quantity of research in geography education, and would seem to suggest that this vibrancy of community is not leading to significant “impact” (to use the vernacular) in the field (Bednarz et al., 2013).

One of the key features that determines whether research is undertaken, and indeed funded, is the relative status of geography as a school subject within national curricula. Anecdotally, and through conference attendance, the Commission is often made aware of countries undergoing a review of the curriculum structure and questioning the place of geography as a national curriculum subject. We also know that when geography is taken out of a national curriculum structure, the number of geography educators declines, research diminishes and a country’s capacity to ensure that young people are provided with a quality education complete with an understanding of geographical concepts is severely compromised. It has then long been a goal of the Commission to offer support for countries where geography is under threat as a curriculum subject and to disseminate and promote the results of quality geographical research where it exists. This paper is a modest step in this direction by reporting on the state of geography curriculum around the world and considering the implications of what this means for geography education globally as well as for the Commission for Geography Education.

3. Our personal stake and stance

We (that is the authors of this paper) do not write without a vested interest. The lead author (Brooks) is currently Co-Chair of the IGU-

CGE, having served a four-year term on the Steering Group as Honorary Secretary. She is also the Chair of the UK Committee of the Commission. Both Gong and Salinas are studying at UCL Institute of Education (Gong for one year during her PhD studies at East China Normal University), but both decided to locate their doctoral studies in London, through their familiarity with the network of geography educators in the Commission. In their home countries, both are connected with active IGU CGE Steering Group members: Salinas is a colleague of Arenas in Chile, whilst Gong’s Chinese supervisor is Duan). In other words, our own connections are a result of the work of the Commission, and we have a considerable interest in its continued success and growth. This is not to say however, that we are not mindful of a few challenges that the Commission faces, and are motivated to improve the status of geography education around the world.

Much of the Commission’s work relies on activities undertaken through conferences, and the activities led by the Steering Group. The expense and support needed to attend such conferences and meetings can be prohibitive for some nations to be represented. The Commission does not have strong representation everywhere in the world and is still dominated by English speaking networks and opportunities. Much of the current Commission’s programme of work is designed to strategically support and develop the work of Early Career Researchers and to grow the impact and reach of the research findings of Commission members (see <http://www.igu-cge.org>). However, these activities are peripheral to the very real concerns that face geographical educators globally which is the continued struggle for geography education to have a place within the geography curriculum. Therefore, a starting point for the current Commission is to review and respond to the state of geography education around the world: and to use the principles and declarations in the new Charter for Geography Education (2016) to support areas where geography education is under threat.

4. The state of geography education today

A definitive account of the state of geography education in the world today is very difficult to collate. During the last Commission (2012-2016), van der Schee undertook to start a wiki of national curriculum accounts of geography education (see <http://www.igu-ge.org/>). Even so the data available is limited, and complex. Different national systems reference different age and grade bands, have varying jurisdictional reach, and different levels of subject prescription. When reviewing national curricula, not only are there linguistic barriers but also regional variations as to the degree of detail publically available. Indeed, even the notion of a national curriculum is problematic in countries which allow for regional variation and local curriculum control.

These challenges notwithstanding, we have sought to undertake a limited survey of the global health of geography education. Our survey was limited to desk-research: an internet survey of the place of geography within national curricula in both the primary and secondary sectors. We limited our search to what is in the public domain, and that is easily accessible. The research was limited to seven key areas which would indicate the relative status of the subject, and replicate similar (historical) analysis undertaken in China (Wu, 2013):

- Is Geography a named subject in the National Curriculum?
- How is it categorised? (Social Studies, stand alone subject, Humanities, Earth Sciences?)
- Is it core/compulsory? for which ages?
- Is it an elective/optional? for which ages?
- How many credit hours?
- Is it included in the final examination?
- What, if any, are the stated Aims?

The sample was limited to what was accessible on-line, and for questions of scale we focussed on a small selection of countries in each continent, focussing primarily on

countries with wide influence on the neighbouring region. In this vein, data was collected from Argentina (Buenos Aires), Australia, Bolivia, Brazil (Sao Paulo), Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Ecuador, Egypt, France, Germany, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Malaysia, Morocco, New Zealand, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Korea, South Africa, Spain, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, UK (England), USA, Uruguay, and Venezuela, . The results were analysed from a number of perspectives including looking for regional approaches and similarities, and patterns across the style and approach of the provision. From that analysis, a number of interesting and pertinent trends emerged which we elaborate on below.

5. General observations

Across the data collated, it is possible to see some general trends in curriculum around the world. For example, at the primary level of education, it is unusual for Geography to be a named subject in the National Curriculum, even when it is listed as a compulsory subject. This is because geography is often subsumed within a curriculum area described variously as social studies, social sciences, environmental education, religion and culture, civics, or humanities. Within these curriculum areas, the stated aims of geography tend to fall into two main types: one is a very general aim for students to be responsible citizens and the other one is a specific explanation related to geographical knowledge and geographical thinking.

At the secondary level of education, Geography is much more likely to appear as a named subject in the National Curriculum. This would seem to suggest that secondary geography has a much higher status (than primary) and is more likely to be included in the final (ie, high stakes) examination. However, there are still many places where geography is included in an umbrella subject, like social studies and humanities, where presumably it has a lower status.

Exploring the number of credit hours given to Geography yielded some interesting but confusing insights. Take the comparison of China and Ethiopia as an example. In China, geography is a compulsory subject at the age of 12-14 and 15-16 and an optional subject at the age of 16-18 owning two credit hours per week. In Ethiopia geography is a compulsory subject at the age of 14-18 owning two credit hours/week at grade 9-10 and four credit hours/week at grade 11-12. This is further compounded by the complication that geography is a standalone subject in China but is a part of social sciences in Ethiopia. If curriculum status is reflected in both credit hours and having a named presence in the curriculum, this presents a confusing picture as to the relevant status of geography education with other curriculum subjects.

The examination of the aims of geography education also revealed two main categories; either aims were expressed as competence-led aims and knowledge-led aims, a division reflected in much of the current debate about the geography curriculum (see for example the selection of papers in Brooks, Butt and Fargher, 2017). Unsurprisingly, where geography is a named subject in the National Curriculum, the subject aims are more specific at secondary level than at primary level.

Beyond this general level, a more detailed analysis shows that it is not just how the curriculum is structured that can reveal the status of geography education. To illustrate this point we outlined a more details analysis of the situation across the range of countries in South America.

6. Geography across South America: Primary Geography

Seven out of ten countries studied do not declare Geography as a named subject in the National Curriculum. Brazil, Chile and Uruguay are the only ones who explicitly acknowledge the discipline in this level of education. However, geography does have a presence within the stated content of the curriculum. In the case of Argentina (Buenos Aires) there is a presence of urban studies. In

Bolivia geography is stated for primary as both a social science and a natural science, and in secondary is considered in the field of natural sciences. In the case of Colombia, social sciences comprise different subjects but history and geography are the only ones consistently referred to in the curriculum, although history is more prominent than geography. This is similar to the situation in Chile, where geography is named explicitly but a content analysis reveals an approach that is more akin to a history of geographical issues. Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela are the only three countries who do not address geography as a discipline within their curriculum design. However, both Ecuador and Peru state that pupils must exhibit competences that feature the understanding of space and environment in every level of primary and secondary education. Also, content analysis reveals that Venezuela addresses national geography and scale within its stated content.

Geography is a compulsory content for all countries in primary education. Nine out of ten countries considered geography as part of social studies. Brazil is the only country in the region considering geography as a single school subject at this level, whereas Bolivia states geography as a body of knowledge with presence in both social and natural sciences.

A key driver for the presence of geography in the primary curriculum would appear to be the need for young people to gain an understanding of their nation states, and so there are many links with the idea of territory. However, in the case of Brazil and Bolivia there are different approaches to the term. The former incorporating an explicit and conceptual approach to the curriculum using geographical concepts. The latter mixing its common use with the social changes of the country considering it as a threshold concept to reflect indigenous knowledge about the world.

Uruguay is the only country which incorporates disciplines in early childhood education. Geography is taught to pupils from three to five years old. Content is related with orientation skills and the local community.

7. Geography across South America: Secondary Geography

The presence of school geography changes from primary to secondary curricula. There are more countries which have geography as a named subject in the national curriculum: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Guyana, Paraguay and Uruguay. Argentina, Brazil and Guyana consider geography as a standalone subject. It is the same in Uruguay but in upper secondary (16-17 years) which includes citizenship as a core module with a series of optional courses which include geography.

Ecuador appears to have a less geographical approach. The Ecuadorian guidelines do not recognise geography but they consider space and environment as both topics and content. In the last three years the category “Human beings and space” is “integrated and enriched with the subject of philosophy, considering nature as a whole, as cosmos and harmony, which is aligned with the notions of Sumak Kaway and the Pachamama, and is radically questioning the utilitarian, modern capitalist cosmovision” (Ministerio de Educación, 2016a, p. 55). Although geography is present as content within the curriculum, the notions of space are reflected through the curriculum areas of citizenship and philosophy; principles that do not consider geographical knowledge. On the opposite side of the spectrum Brazil has a stronger emphasis on geography as a school subject, where it is held as a standalone subject, with specific aims and content (Secretaria da Educação, 2010, p. 79) such as:

“1. Develop domains of spatiality and to function with autonomy; 2. Recognise principles and laws of nature and time of the geographical space; 3. To differentiate and establish relationships of geographical events in different scales; 4. To create, read and interpret maps and charts; 5. To differentiate elements of landscape; 6. To establish interactions among the concepts of landscape, place and territory; 7. To acknowledge themselves (by pupils) as transformative elements of space; 8. To use geographical knowledge to act considering ethics and solidarity, promoting environmental awareness and respect to equality and diversity to all cultures and individuals”.

The role of geography is acknowledged in the processes of consultation of many countries that have engaged in curriculum reform. Even in the context of Ecuador consultation with teachers suggested the importance of geography to understand the context (Ministerio de Educación, 2017):

“...it was discuss the possibility to reduce the quantity of competences of history and put more interest in economic and political geography. It was stated that the dimensions of the curriculum of history [...] should be meet by the principle of being flexible, considering the educational needs of the institution (schools) and the locality. It was stated that a large amount of information should not be taught, focusing not in factual content, but in meaningful things, contextualised and, overall, to foster thinking and historical thinking”.

Countries with curriculums structured as social sciences appear to pay down the focus on subject (geographical) knowledge. As a consequence geographical content takes a more generic approach, as the overall curriculum area is dominated by one discipline (often history) and other subjects are subservient to it. For example, in the case of Colombia, social sciences are taught from a historical perspective. The Columbian Ministry of Education states that:

“Geography is a discipline that in many occasions is juxtaposed to history. Other social sciences are non-existent in primary education. Case in point is the approach that editorials have towards social sciences in the text books, which -in turn- are used as guidelines by teachers across the country. Editorials are the ones that have developed the curriculum in the country” (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 2006, p. 17).

Venezuela exhibits a similar generic approach to geography but from a different angle. The notion of spatial scale is used in almost every level of secondary education but is not defined as part of a discipline. In a different level, the environmental perspective is present in most of the countries, however is not clear to what extent that perspective is geographical. In the case of Bolivia it is used

indistinctively as part of the natural sciences or social sciences.

Uruguay is the only country with an elective route for geography in upper secondary, as an optional course of “Human and Economic geography” for year Five of secondary (16-17 years old) with a period of four hours per week: because: “Geography allows pupils to enhance their critical thinking capacity in relationship with space, using its integrative dimension of reality, and reification of territoriality”.

Education for citizenship is receiving increasing attention in South American curricula, especially in upper secondary education where the content tends to appear in the final years of schooling if not in previous years. Citizenship is consistently stated as one of the aims of the subject, and together with the acknowledgement of environmental issues, is stated as one of the purposes of including the subject in the education provision.

Most of the countries examined use the notion of scale (local-regional-national, global) as a route to incorporate space in the curriculum. This might suggest an implicit learning progression across different levels, but this is not explicitly stated in the curriculum.

8. Geographical Concepts evident when the Curriculum is less visible

There are several concepts across the region that are used repeatedly in different national curriculums: space, place, landscape, territory, scale and locality. The most explicit link across regions is with the use of the term territory that has similar applications in Brazil, Chile and Uruguay and even similar content with French curricula where the concept of region is considered as part of the territory. Although there is no information in National Curricula stating a connection this might suggest that the countries share a similar focus within school geography. Such a focus would be situated within classical political geography (Ratzel, 2011) related to the function of the state in defining the territory. However, the

most interesting aspect of the term is its function as a threshold concept, meaning its integrative role “bringing all viewpoints on concepts together” (Brooks, 2013, p. 85). In national curriculums of the region, territory is normally used interchangeably with the notion of space that encapsulates all other categories such as place or landscape. The notion that certain concepts may define the subject landscape is not foreign to geography education in the region (Araya Palacios, Manuel Souto and Herrera Nunez, 2015; Arenas Martija and Salinas Silva, 2013; Souza Cavalcanti, 2012), but it could be further developed by research to clarify the focus on geographical content and the support offered to students to develop their understanding of those concepts.

Although the local scale is emphasised in different curriculums the use of the concept of place seems to be neglected. Local studies tend to use different concepts related to the city and the locality as ways of understanding proximal places. This understanding builds in the notion of belonging and locational studies (Storey, 2012) but not in the scaled notion of place as an interconnected space (Massey, 2008). Conversely, the case of Brazil is an exemption, where there is an explicit procedural treatment of the concept of place with methods and theoretical notions informing its understanding. According to Lana de Souza (2012) the use of scale is highlighted from a didactical or pedagogical perspective because it presents a way of analysis that fosters a scaled understanding of the world, rather than an object of study in and of itself.

Curriculum approaches using social studies tend to be presented as (1) an appropriate approach to understand current problems and (2) linked with current discussions in social sciences. However, in different national curricula the social sciences approach creates a mixture of contents that can make it difficult to grasp the origin of the ideas that are in discussion and neglects the knowledge basis informing the curriculum. We consider that this approach exhibits the same risks that Mitchell (2016) has identified for curricula that are hyper-socialised. In other words, the hybridity of ideas reflects the social

construction of curriculum by teachers, without further consideration of the influences and political agendas that have informed particular curriculum resources or ideas, or the influences exerted on individual teachers by the schools they work in. In the same line of argument, a contradiction appeared when environmental issues are introduced into national curricula, as the danger arises where environmental issues are represented too simplistically, as a struggle between the social and the physical, without paying attention to geographical processes and influences. This reflects what Marsden described as taking the geography out of geography education (Marsden, 1997).

Learning progression for school geography is acknowledged in some countries of the region but it does not fully account for knowledge acquisition and the relationship with assessment (Muñiz Solari, Solem and Boehm, 2017). However, in some curricula, learning progression does have an implicit presence, through the structure of curriculum as starting with the local through to the global. This is a common feature which could be indicative of how different countries understand geography as a discipline. In the case of Chile, there is a cycle from year one to year six where children's understanding of the world progress from the neighbourhood, to the city, region, country and then the global. However, this spiral of understanding is abandoned when they reach secondary education. Lower secondary school geography (years 12 to 16) content is mostly historical supplemented by the use of maps as a skill to support historical understanding. Undoubtedly this approach is problematic as it disrupts students' learning and puts pressure on upper secondary school geography to bridge the gap between content studied in primary education and the last two years of schooling.

9. Concluding comments: implications for the Commission on Geography Education

Our brief and partial analysis reveals some interesting trends about geography curricula around the world. The division between a

competency-based or knowledge-based curriculum is indicative of the relative importance placed on a subject like geography, but our more detailed analysis of one region shows that this can belie important geographical concepts that are inherent in the overall curriculum structure. This raises important questions about how the deliberate naming of geographical concepts can relate to the status and importance of the subject, and the role of the academic community in helping policy makers to understand the important conceptual and developmental factors pertinent to the design of an effective curriculum which enables progression in geographical understanding. If one takes the view that geography is an important contribution to a child's education regardless of whether it is named as such, then there is much solace to be had in these findings. However, a more pragmatic approach might suggest that unless the subject is visible and explicitly named as Geography, then its future is less secure. From an academic perspective, one can question the ideological influences (see Rawling, 2001) that are affecting how policy makers decide how to define and determine what is contained within their curriculum.

Our findings also suggest that there is no agreement in how geography is learnt showing inconsistencies with how progression in geography is understood, how geography can be learnt alongside other subjects, and the extent to which the curriculum should respond to local contextual needs and environmental concerns. All of these concerns are central to research in geography education, and to the concerns of the IGU Commission. However, it is not the place of the Commission to suggest a universal curriculum or approach to the teaching and learning of geography, as regional variations, and the right for local determination are just as important as an informed approach to curriculum development. What the Commission can do, however, is to offer support for how we can share our understandings about how geography is best taught and learnt. We contend that this is more than a pragmatic stance, but requires intellectual leadership, informed by a detailed and informed understanding of geography education around the world.

The IGU's Commission for Geography Education is predominantly an organisation made up of geography educators based in higher education institutions. When a curriculum subject such as geography loses its status and place within a national curriculum, one of the consequences is the closure of subject-specific initial teacher education programmes and hence the capacity for that community to undertake and disseminate research and scholarly insights. Friedson (2001) goes a step further and makes a powerful argument for why universities are key to the status of professionals:

“Professional schooling is an indispensable component of the ideal type [of profession], but this is not solely because it produces the credential. It does much more than that. As an institution it is responsible for formalizing the particular kind of knowledge and skill claimed by an occupation, and for providing an intellectual basis for its jurisdictional claims and its relation to other occupations. It is the factory that produces new knowledge and skill, and to some degree, tests and approves it. It is the authoritative source establishing the legitimacy of the practical work activities of the occupation's members, and it is the primary source of the status of its members and their personal, public and official identities. It also contributes to the development of commitment to the occupation as a life career and to a shared identity, a feeling of community or solidarity among all those who have passed through it”.

In other words, Friedson argues that universities provide intellectual authority as well as the conditions for a profession's occupational community. University educators do this through the legitimation and control of new knowledge, and often through the socialisation and accreditation of new recruits. No doubt this is an argument that one would expect of someone embedded within the university sector, but we would argue that it serves as a timely reminder as to the role that universities and scholars need to play to service the communities they serve.

Geography education is a young and niche academic community; often smaller than its

counterparts in mathematics or science education, who have significantly more journals and outlets for both academic and professional publications. Structurally within the academy, Geography education is sometimes split between academic geography communities and education communities, which can mean that the link with both the parent discipline and the occupational community can vary in strength. Research in geography education, whilst often good quality, can be characterised as small scale and limited in impact (Bednarz et al., 2013).

However, regardless of the size, active research communities provides the means to understand how resilient a school subject or discipline is. We do know that when geography is taken out of a national curriculum structure, the number of geography educators and the field in general declines, but there is no reason to believe that this is the only direction. For example in one of the regions studied, Chile's 2013 curriculum changes reduced the quantity and quality of school geography in secondary education. However, since that year the Commission of Geography Education of the Chilean Geographical Society (Sochigeo) have been working together with the Chilean Ministry of Education to reverse that situation. In this process, the institutional support provided by the academic society mattered: as it facilitated access to decision makers and offered legitimacy to the process of consultation, opening it up to diverse actors and institutions of different regions in the country. The participation of national members in the IGU-CGE meetings and conferences helped to provide an international perspective to the challenges ahead right after the setback of 2013. Networks are helpful in different scales and the culture of collaboration can help to transcend individual or national efforts.

The IGU-CGE provides an institutional infrastructure for the dissemination and sharing of research which in turn can foster long term initiatives required to support ambitious goals for geography education. There are countries where geography's place in the curriculum continues to be at risk. Even when geography is re-introduced to a national curriculum, there are significant issues around the capacity of

geography educators to raise awareness and improve positive attitudes towards geography. In this context research can not only generate knowledge for change, but can also create capacity by positioning researchers, validating their work, creating possibilities and fostering the influence of the discipline in local contexts. International collaboration can provide a sense of perspective and support for these long term challenges providing valuable insights that can be adapted for different local regions.

So the challenges for the academic community are great, and the need is strong. Within such a context, the IGU's Commission for Geography Education has an important role to play. This role and in particular the advocacy of the Commission for Geography Education is clearly articulated in the 2016 Charter. Moreover the 2016-2020 Programme of work for the Commission focusses on the strategic objectives needed to offer academic leadership and support for the community:

1. Increasing the visibility of the Commission for Geography Education (particularly through social networks)
2. Developing the CGE network and supporting the work of early career researchers
3. Enhance the quality of geography education research
4. Diversify the possible outlets for geography education research for both academic and professional audiences.

The aim of the Commission is to provide an authoritative and scholarly home for research in geography education, so that in the future, policy makers and curriculum developers have access to an informed and authoritative account of the most successful ways to articulate, outline and structure a geography curriculum to educate and inform young people of all ages.

References

1. Araya Palacios F., Manuel Souto X. and Herrera Nunez Y., "The geographical space, a school construction. A case study: the pupils of the of the Limari Valley (Chile)", *Scripta Nova-Revista Electronica De Geografia Y Ciencias Sociales*, 19, 503, 2015, pp. 1-34.
2. Arenas Martija A. And Salinas Silva V., "Giros en la Educación Geográfica: renovación de lo geográfico y lo educativo", *Revista de Geografía Norte Grande*, 56, 2013, pp. 143-162.
3. Bednarz S.W., Heffron S. and Huynh N.T. (Eds.), *A Road Map for 21st Century Geography Education: Geography Education Research*, A Report from the Geography Education Research Committee of the Road Map for 21st Century Geography Education Project, Washington, DC, Association of American Geographers, 2013.
4. Brooks C., "How do we understand conceptual development in school geography?", in *Debates on Geography Education*, London, Routledge, 2013, pp. 75-88.
5. Brooks C., Butt G. and Fargher M. (Eds.), *The Power of Geographical Thinking*, Springer, 2017.
6. Caribbean Examinations Council, *Geography Syllabus*, Kingston, Caenwood Centre, 2015.
7. Consejo de Educación Primaria, *Programa de Educación Inicial y Primaria*, Montevideo, CEIP, 2013.
8. Consejo de Educación Secundaria, *Reformulación 2006. Programas de Bachillerato*, 2015.
9. Friedson E., *Professionalism: The Third Logic*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2001.
10. Ganimian, "Operativos Nacionales de Evaluación", Buenos Aires, 2013, http://www.educaciontuc.gov.ar/nsitio/?page_id=5356 consulted 28/03/2016.
11. Governo Do Estado De São Paulo, *Curriculo do Estado de São Paulo*, São Paulo, Secretaria da Educação, 2010.
12. Graves N. and Stoltman J., "History of the Commission", <http://www.igu-cge.org/>.
13. Marsden B., "On taking the geography out of geographical education: some historical pointers", *Geography*, 82, 3, 1997, pp. 241-252.
14. Massey D., *For space*, London, Sage, 2008.

15. Ministerio de Educación, *Diseño curricular 2014-2020*, Buenos Aires, Ministerio de Educación/Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires, 2013.
16. Ministerio de Educación, *Educación Primaria Comunitaria Vocacional*, La Paz, Ministerio de Educación, 2014a.
17. Ministerio de Educación, *Educación Secundaria Comunitaria Vocacional*, La Paz, Ministerio de Educación, 2014b.
18. Ministerio de Educación, *Bases curriculares. 1° a 6° básico*, Santiago, Ministerio de Educación, 2015a.
19. Ministerio de Educación, *Bases curriculares. 7° básico a 2° medio*, Santiago, Ministerio de Educación, 2015b.
20. Ministerio de Educación, *Currículo de EGB y BGU. Ciencias Sociales*, Quito, Ministerio de Educación, 2016a.
21. Ministerio de Educación, *Currículo Nacional de la Educación Básica*, Lima, Minedu, 2016b.
22. Ministerio de Educación, *Propuesta curricular para 3° y 4° Medio*, Documento de consulta pública, Santiago, Ministerio de Educación, 2017.
23. Ministerio de Educación Nacional, *Estándares básicos de competencias*, Bogotá, MEN, 2006.
24. Ministerio de Educación Nacional, *Lineamientos curriculares*, Bogotá, MEN, 2014.
25. Ministerio de Educación y Ciencias, *Programas de Estudio de Educación Escolar Básica*, Asunción, MEC, n.d.
26. Ministerio de Educación y Cultura, *Actualización curricular del Bachillerato Científico de la Educación Media. Plan común Ciencias Sociales y sus tecnologías*, Asunción, MEC, 2014.
27. Ministerio del Poder Popular para la Educación, *Curriculo del subsistema de Educación Primaria Bolivariana*, Caracas, Cenamec, 2007a.
28. Ministerio del Poder Popular para la Educación, *Curriculo del subsistema de Educación Secundaria Bolivariana. Liceos Bolivarianos*, Caracas, Cenamec, 2007b.
29. Mitchell D., "Geography teachers and curriculum making in 'changing times'", *International Research in Geographical and Environmental Education*, 25, 2, 2016, pp. 121-133.
30. Muñiz Solari O., Solem M. and Boehm R. (Eds.), *Learning Progressions in Geography Education*, New York, Springer, 2017.
31. Ratzel F., "The laws of the spatial growth of states. A contribution to a scientific political geography", *Geopolítica*, 2, 1, 2011, pp. 135-156.
32. Rawling E., *Changing the Subject: the impact of national policy on school geography 1980-2000*, Sheffield, Geographical Association, 2001.
33. Souza Cavalcanti L., "The school geography in Brazil and challenges for the teaching practice", *Geoenseñanza*, 17, 1, 2012, pp. 23-38.
34. Storey D., *Territories. The claiming of space* (2nd edition), New York, Routledge, 2012.
35. Wu G., "The Curriculum Reform Running in Mazes", *Peking University Education Review*, 11, 4, 2013, pp. 20-50 (in Chinese).