

FIELDWORK

-Scientific study of geography using the environment as a laboratory or source of information.

Types of Field Work

1. Field Excursion

-Visiting an area near or far from the school to see geographical phenomena then note down and discuss later in class.

Aim

- ✓ Reinforce what has been learnt in class
- ✓ Gain more geographical knowledge
- ✓ Identify and appreciate geographical features
- ✓ Identify problems of geographical interest

2. Field Research

-Systematic problem solving done by experts in which scientific methods of collecting, recording and analysing data are used.

3. Field Study

-Study conducted within a neighbourhood in which one theme is pursued e.g. 'A study of a local farm'.

Importance of Field Work

- ✓ Reinforces what has been learnt in class.
- ✓ Enables one to gain more geographical knowledge.
- ✓ It breaks the monotony of classroom work.
- ✓ It provides learner with practical skills of collecting, recording and analysing data and report writing.
- ✓ Gives students an opportunity to go out and practise what they have learnt in class.
- ✓ Enables students to familiarise themselves with the environment and develop a positive attitude towards it.
- ✓ Enables students to develop a positive attitude towards manual work.
- ✓ Promotes development of virtues like cooperation by working in groups.

Field Work Procedure (Steps Followed)

1. Identification of Topic/Theme

-Reason why you want to carry out field study e.g. 'A study of rocks around the school'

2. Identification of the Area of Study

-Determining the area to be used for study.

-Should be chosen carefully to ensure that the field study is successful.

Conditions It Should Meet

✓ Should contain sufficient information

✓ Should be within a convenience distance to reduce expenses

3. Statement of Objectives

-Stating aims of carrying the field study.

-Act as guidelines to activities to be undertaken during field work.

They should be simple, brief, testable and achievable. E.g. for the topic 'A study of a local farm' objectives could be stated as follows:

- To **find out** methods of farming in a local farm
- To **identify** the cattle breeds in the farm
- To **investigate** the problems facing the farm.

4. Formulation of Hypotheses

-Assumptions set before field work whose validity or acceptance is to be proved.

Types of Hypotheses

☐ **Null Hypothesis (H₀)**

-One stated in negative form e.g. 'There is no relationship between rainfall and crop yield'.

☐ **Alternative/Substantive hypothesis (H₁)**

-One stated positively e.g. 'most foodstuffs sold in the neighbourhood come from the immediate neighbourhood'.

Quantitative words should be used e.g. more, most, majority. It should not be obvious.

5. Preparation of the Field Study

It involves:

a. Seek Permission from Relevant Authorities

-Seeking permission from school and authority in the area you are visiting.

It is important to:

- To avoid being denied permission to enter there
- Enables individuals to set early the suitable date and time of visit
- Helps to arrange for a guide to conduct you around

b. Conduct Reconnaissance (Pre-Visit)

-A familiarisation tour of the intended area of study.

It is important to:

- Familiarises the researcher with an area of study
- To determine appropriate routes to be taken
- Enables to get documents from officials
- Helps one to identify the appropriate methods of data collection
- Helps to identify appropriate equipment to be used
- Helps determine the suitability of the area for the study
- Helps identify any problems researcher is likely to encounter giving him opportunity to prepare on how to cope with the situation
- Helps estimate the cost of the study and plan accordingly
- It is useful in designing a working schedule.

c. Hold Discussion In Class

-Looking through formulated objectives and hypotheses.

It's important to:

- Determine their suitability
- Make adjustments
- Decide upon data recording methods

d. Preparation of a Questionnaire

-Important where the interviewer is not able to be with respondents for a long time.

e. Dividing Into Groups

- To ease congestion in the area of study
- To create order during field work
- To reduce fatigue among participants
- To help participants collect data within the time given

f. Preparation for Documents

- Topographical maps to show the routes you will follow
- Tables for filling in information
- Permission documents

g. Reading through Relevant Books

-Reading about the topic and the area of study

Important in that it helps participants to know:

- The kind of data they need to collect
- The techniques to be employed in the field.

h. Preparation of a Work Schedule

-A timetable to be followed on the day of field study.

It is important to:

- Indicate the specific time when each activity should take place
- Reduce time wastage by ensuring proper time management
- Ensure all important areas are covered and none is forgotten
- Provide an estimate of total time required for study

i. Selection of Important Tools and Equipment

-Tape measure and rulers for measuring, pencils for drawing sketch maps, notebooks for writing notes, polythene bag for sorting and carrying samples, cameras for taking photographs, geological hammer getting rock samples and hoe for digging to get soil samples, etc.

6. Carrying Out the Field Study

-Setting off to go to the area of study to look for data where techniques of collecting and recording data are applied.

Follow Up Activities

-After data is collected and recorded it's summarised in the following ways:

- Discussing the findings in class giving reports through group leaders
- Writing reports in essay form
- Calculation of percentages, means, medians and modes
- Laboratory testing of samples
- Presentation of data using methods such as graphs, pie charts, etc.

Problems Encountered in Field work

☐ **Language Barrier**

-Inability to communicate due to the interviewer and the respondent not sharing the same language or respondents may be illiterate and thus unable to fill questionnaire. The problems are:

- Data may not be collected
- Illiterate people may give wrong answers while attempting questionnaires
- An interpreter may have to be engaged who would be paid which would raise costs.
- Answers may be distorted by the interpreter

☐ **Hostility**

Those being approached to give answers may become harsh due to feeling that their time is being wasted which would cause the field study to be unsuccessful.

☐ **Dishonest Respondents**

-Respondents giving wrong information due to suspicion fear of shame or superstition.

☐ **Bad Weather**

Raining heavily making it impossible to proceed with data collection and difficulty in movement.

Becoming very hot making participants uncomfortable and thus unable to proceed with data collection smoothly.

Becoming misty or foggy causing invisibility problems.

☐ **Accidents in the Field**

One may fall and get injured when walking on rugged areas.

Injuries may result when using tools to get samples by cutting using pangas or knives and digging using hoes.

□ **Attacks by Wild Animals**

-Participants may encounter wild animals when carrying out the study in bushy areas e.g. snakes which may bite them, rhinos which may charge at them, etc.

□ **Inaccessibility**

-physical barriers such as swamps, rivers without bridges, steep slopes and thick vegetation may hinder participants from reaching areas with vital information.

FIELD WORK PREPARATION

- 1. Read on the topic from books*
- 2. Discuss in class*
- 3. Form discussion groups*
- 4. Consult geography teacher*
- 5. Assembling necessary tools*
- 6. Draw out work schedule*
- 7. draw route maps*

Importance of field work

- i. It enables collection of samples for future reference*
- ii. Enable one to get first-hand information*
- iii. Allows for easy recall*
- iv. Makes learning real/meaningful*
- v. Helps learners understand better theoretical concepts taught in class/teaching becomes easier*
- vi. Helps students develop skills of data collection*
- vii. Makes learning interesting*

Problems of field work

- i. Inaccessibility of some areas/thick/thorny vegetation/rugged terrain*
- ii. Accidents /injuries*

- iii. *Fatigue due to difficult terrain/tiredness*
- iv. *Unfavourable/adverse weather condition/heavy rain/high temperatures*
- v. *Attack by wild animals like snake,insects*
- vi. *Difficulty in identifying some features/rocks*
- vii. *Difficulty in breaking some features like rocks*
- viii. *Inadequate time for data collection*
- ix. *Getting lost/loss of direction*
- x. *Uncooperative/unwilling/absent respondents*

SOURCES OF INFORMATION YOU ARE LIKELY TO USE BEFORE THE ACTUAL FIELDWORK

- i. *1.relevant text books*
- ii. *2.journals/magazines*
- iii. *3.internet/electronic media*
- iv. *4.newspapers*
- v. *5.professionals/botanists/forest officers*
- vi. *6.geography notes*
- vii. *7.Photographs/video tapes*
- viii. *8.maps*

Tools/items to be carried during fieldwork kcse 2019qd i

- i. *Hammer*
- ii. *Spades*
- iii. *Polythene bag*
- iv. *Notebook/stationery*
- v. *Geological map*
- vi. *Route map*
- vii. *Camera*

- viii. *Jembe/hoe*
- ix. *Magnifying lens*

Types of data likely to be collected during a field work in a weather station

- I. *Types of weather recording/measuring instruments*
- II. *Statistical data on previous weather records*
- III. *Diagrams/photographs on weather instruments*
- IV. *Information on weather forecasting*
- V. *Information on operations of weather measuring/recording instruments*