

UPSC Civil Services Examination

UPSC Notes [GS-I]

Topic: Geography as a Discipline [Geography Notes for UPSC]

What is Geography?

- The term geography was first devised by Eratosthenes, a Greek scholar (276-194 BC.)
- Geography is a discipline of the combination of spatial synthesis and temporal synthesis.
- According to geography, Earth is described as the abode of human beings.
- Landforms provide the foundation on which anthropogenic activities are placed.
- The plains are used for agriculture.
- Plateaus provide a platform for minerals and forest.
- Mountains make available space for meadows, forests, tourist spots, etc. They are regarded as the sources of rivers.

Branches of Geography

1. Physical Geography
2. Human Geography
3. Biogeography

Physical Geography

- **Geomorphology** is a branch of Geography dealing with the study of landforms, the formation of landforms, and associated courses.
- **Climatology** includes the study of atmosphere structure, elements of weather, climate, climatic types and climatic regions.
- **Hydrology** deals with the study of water present on the surface of the earth comprising oceans, rivers, lakes and other water bodies, its influence on various life forms on earth and allied activities.
- **Soil Geography** is to study the courses of soil formation, types of soil, fertility status of soils, soil distribution and utilization.

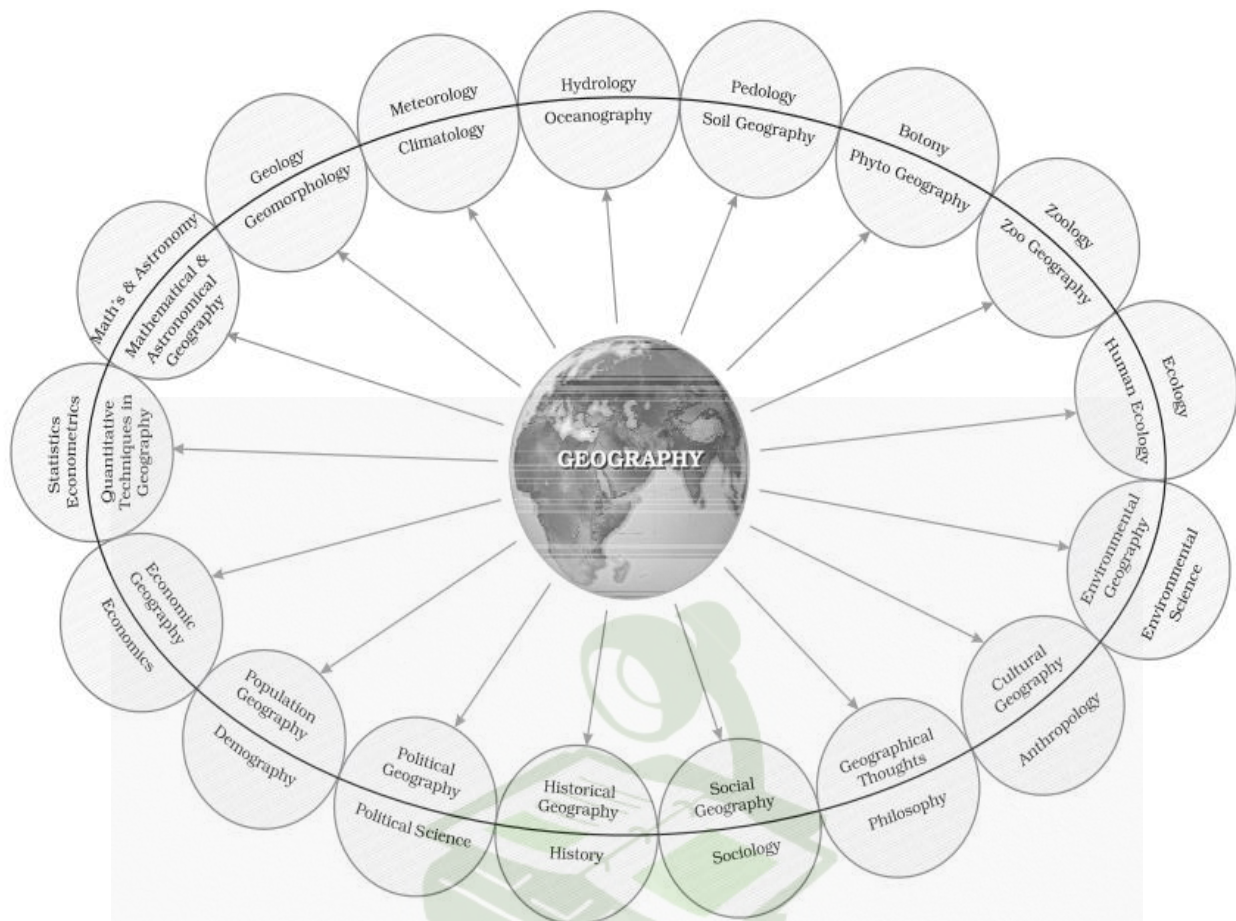


Figure 1.1: Geography and its relation with other subjects

2. Human Geography

- **Social/Cultural Geography** covers the study of society and the spatial dynamics of society and the cultural aspects caused by society.
- **Population Geography** encompasses the population growth, density, distribution, migration, sex ratio and occupational structure, and so on.
- **Settlement Geography** deals with the features of urban and rural settlements.
- **Economic Geography** is related to people's economic activities comprising agriculture, industry, services, trade, transport, infrastructure, etc.
- **Historical Geography** deals with the historical processes by which space gets organised. The geographical features also go through temporal changes; these are the issues of historical geography.

- **Political Geography** is the study of the spatially unbalanced results of political courses and the various manners in which political processes are themselves influenced by spatial structures.

3. Biogeography

- The interface between human geography and physical geography has led to the progress of Biogeography which contains:
 - **Ecology and Ecosystem** deal with the scientific study of the habitats features of species.
 - **Plant Geography** which deals with the spatial structure and order of natural vegetation in their environments.
 - **Zoo Geography** which is concerned with the spatial patterns as well as geographic features of various fauna and their habitats.



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