

Implications of Practicing Pedagogy of Happiness in Schools and Curriculum

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ABSTRACT

Happiness and sustainable happiness have been the thrusts of discussions for the last couple of decades. Since learning and memorization happen in a relieved state of mind, happiness has its on significance in school settings. Practicing happiness through school curriculum is also highly significant. Globally, there are many experiments in the pedagogy of happiness to ensure better studentship and sustained and comfortable learning. The author highlights the need for happiness pedagogy in this article. Gross National Happiness Index, as a measure, looks into the overall happiness index to test the comfortability in the learning environment with the Psychological wellbeing, health, usage of time, education, cultural, diversity, good governance, community vitality, ecological diversity and living standard. It is undoubted to opine that a well-designed pedagogy is essential for happiness in the institutional settings. Happiness pedagogic practices of select countries are also summarized in this write-up.

Keywords: *Happiness, pedagogy of happiness, happiness index, teaching for happiness, curriculum*

Introduction

1. Happiness and related Concerns

Happiness is a collection of positive emotional states with optimism, thinking positively, and the perception of the personal wellbeing of the individual (Diener et al., 1999; McCrae & Costa, 1991). As we know, happiness is determined by lots of external factors like home, schools, peer group, society, exposure to media and etc. I opine that similar to family,

school has also have a decisive role in making the stakeholders comfortable and satisfied. A happy school environment becomes an effective environment for the learning experience as well as for developing talents and experiences of the students, which increases their potential positively and may contribute in their further development (Ale Yasin, 2001). In this context, UNESCO has launched “The Happy

Schools Project” in 2014 intending to promote happiness in the school environment through enhanced learner wellbeing and holistic development. However, the outcome of the project was published in 2016, and the report features 22 criteria under three broad categories: People, Process and Place. Positive psychology has been coined with the terms ‘science of happiness’, with creativity, perseverance, kindness and teamwork, and explains the relationship between education and wellbeing also defined with the double helix of academics bonded with character and wellbeing.

Furthermore, happiness is a collective process obtained through friendships and relationships, though education is considered as holistic and multi-dimensional and lead to happiness within itself and around (UNESCO, 2017). Carol Ryff postulated six different dimensions of wellbeing are self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life and personal growth, and happiness (1989). Although the schools should not be devalued or reduced with difficulty and challenges around the school environment, nor the school should become centers for therapy, counseling or with psychiatric

support (Schoffham & Barnes, 2011). Similarly, Fredrickson’s broaden and build theory explained the positive emotions such as happiness, and it broadens the thought process and allows to create psychological resources, and the positive emotion have a decisive action on our thinking process (2000). How does the happiness can be instructed, imparted, or taught? Is it practical?

The term ‘Pedagogy’ is defined as the scientific investigation into educational and process of learning (Array, 2014). However, Apple (1982) described it as the educational settings that considered as institutions where state ideologies are developed and implemented. Education considered to be that binds the dimensions pillars, though the pedagogy of happiness believed to be the primary source of education, however, education a pre-requisite for achieving cultural, economic, and broader social goals that develop a nation is an essential factor that unites entire world (Karma et al., 2012; RGoB, 2013; Bhutan, 2013; Tshomo, 2016).

Moreover, Nell Noddings (2004) explained the connection between happiness and education, though, life-long learning is considered as one of the components of Taylor’s graduate capabilities as the students

accept changes and view methods in teaching as well as learning. Happy people are more encouraged to provide and accept new ideas which help and motivate them to accept changes and teach and assist the students in the best way as possible. However, happy teachers alone will not constitute to a better environment, though the students who engage in difficult situations and tasks should think deeply about the issues and develop problem-solving skills according to the level, and it is another fundamental approach for a happy learning environment (Seligman, 2002; Post, 2005). Notably, the 'Happiness Model' also known as 'The Hamburger Model' Ben-Shahar explained four significant archetypes: Nihilism; as no pleasure or reward expected from life, Hedonism; expect pleasure and comfortable life without thinking of future, Rat Racing; sacrificing the present for a better future, and happiness; a balance between current pleasure that benefits the future (2007). The human brain works better, and the creation of new ideas and productivity occur due to happiness (Achor, 2010); however, the PERMA Model on wellbeing theory expounds that of happiness that develops from the positive emotions and relationships, engagement, meaning, and accomplishment (Seligman, 2011). Similarly,

for a happy school environment, the reduction of scheduled time-table, life skills training, performing activities, promotion of talents, creativity and innovations, employing skilled teachers and staffs, and students involved in academic works are necessary on reducing the level of anxiety while improving their happiness (Sadeghi, 2006; Talebzadeh & Samkan, 2011).

As the fundamental international principles, learning to know, do, to be, and to live together are considered to be mandatory for enacting learning (UNESCO), have colourful impact on the progress of the learner. Besides, the World Happiness Report on 2015 elaborately explains that consideration of the wellbeing of the learners develops better learning outcomes and more extraordinary achievements in the learner's world (Helliwell et al., 2015; Layard & Hagell, 2015). Generally, Gross National Happiness Index measures the overall happiness index in both teaching staffs as well as students to remain happy in teaching as well as in the learning environment with the Psychological wellbeing, Health, Usage of time, Education, Cultural, Diversity, Good Governance, Community Vitality, Ecological diversity and living standard

(Applasmayetal., 2014). Positive Psychology, however, the promotion of happiness and wellbeing, highlights the strengths and motivation that enhances the learning through education develops happiness and wellbeing of the students (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Seligman, 2002; Chen & McNamee, 2011; Zabihi et al., 2015). The promotion of the wellbeing of individuals depends on the vital elements that consist of their improvement in mental health, social relationships, safety, human rights, balance in their work-life and family life as well as emotional competencies should be taken into consideration in the educational settings (Francis, 2007; Goody, 2001; Matthews, 2006; Radja et al., 2008; Spence, 2003). Moreover, the vital life skills that emphasized by the World Health Organization included with improved psycho-social and inter-personal. Nevertheless, Delors' report (Delors et al., 1996) explains the four educational pillars which are learning to be, learning to know, learning to live together and also learning to do (Zabihi & Ketabi, 2013).

School children face many challenges in life sometimes it leads to an alternative effect to problem

behaviours (Weissberger et al., 2003) due to lack of happiness the personality growth of children affects their intelligence, cognitive skills, creativity as well as their educational achievements (Guilherme & De Freitas, 2017; Salavera et al., 2017). In the environment of education, the students, teachers, parents, principals and staffs became the influential persons that develop psychological growth of children, especially on the emotions. However, school's main component depends on the positive attitudes of the teachers, and their attributes such as kindness, enthusiasm and also being creative, nevertheless, the quality of life of children depends on the peer influences (Lee & Lee, 2014). Pedagogic modalities for happiness will definitely control the scene by minimizing the issues and problems at the schools and classrooms level and at the level of their broader social life.

The World Happiness Report release every year, and the origin of the idea of Happiness Index begins with the Bhutanese Gross National Index, which mainly focused on the factors such as wealth, comfort and economic growth. The term Happiness Index was coined in 2012 by the World Happiness Report. The Gross National Happiness (GNH) measures the total of

economic output and the net environmental impacts, spiritual and cultural growth of citizens, mental and physical health, and the strength of the corporate and the political systems. However, the World Happiness Report of 2019, Nepal is ranked as 100th among the 156 countries, which was released in the New York based United Nations sustainable development network. Finland is ranked as the top happiest country with 7.7 scores followed by Denmark, Norway, Iceland, Netherlands, though South Sudan appears at the bottom with 2.8 scores (Zurick, 2006; Acharya et al., 2020). As per the South Asia survey, Nepal ranks third after Pakistan (67th globally) and Bhutan (95th), Bangladesh (125th), Sri Lanka (130th), India (140th) and Afghanistan (154th) are included in the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh in SAARC region. The Maldives was included in the survey. Thus, it is significant that good education equips children with skills and strengths and helps the children to cope with the obstacles with the help of education. Furthermore, it is suggested that education increases the happiness of the children (Hartog & Goosterbeck, 1998; Uusitalo-Malmivaara, 2012). How the happiness is practiced in school settings? What is the global trend? A few initiatives, globally, by

select countries, are detailed out in the following discussions.

2. Pedagogy of Happiness: Practices across the globe

a. Happiness Pedagogy in Finland

Education in Finland considered as a public service; however, the general education, vocational education as well as higher education are done free of charge. The state mainly focuses primary as well as secondary education, and the local authorities and the university education has been financed by the government (Maatta & Uusitalo, 2012). Schools in Finland are maintained brightly with a clean environment. Furthermore, teachers have professional dignity, capable of making their own decisions on how to teach their students and help the children on learning rather than pressurizing them with the latest programs or hectic curriculum. They consider highly educated professions with massive experiences (Sahlberg, 2015). Although, Finnish educational system implemented early childhood education (ECE) as a positive pedagogical practice that focuses on the Teacher-child relationship, positive learning experiences, support for children's autonomy, and relationships among children and adults. Furthermore, the implementation of positive pedagogy has acquired

information about children's behaviour and interest, and it is effective with well experienced and aged teachers in the field (Ranta et al., 2020).

b. Indian Practices of Happiness in Curriculum

National Curriculum Framework (2005) explains the education as a liberating process for the learners, a process of self-discovery, and the understanding of oneself. Nagaraj (1999) proposed a model for happiness which consists of four dimensions involving material, behavioural, intellectual and experiential aspects, merging into a 'happiness triad' (Sisodia, 2019).

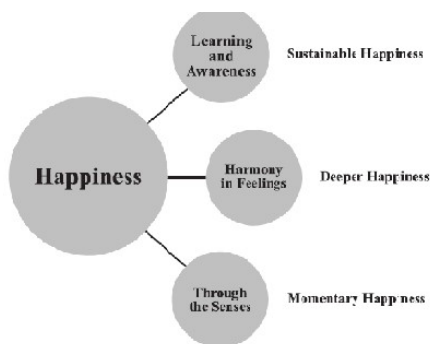


Figure 1

source: Happiness Curriculum 2019, SCERT

Through our senses contribute to the five senses of our system so that we can observe and experience them through the senses. Hence happiness is obtained from a few seconds to a couple of hours can be referred to as 'Momentary happiness'. Feelings in relationships focus on affection, gratitude, respect, these feelings establish the value of

a relationship called values. Moreover, happiness stays with us for a longer time than through the senses, which are known as 'Deeper Happiness'. Learning (change in behaviour according to constructive understanding) and Awareness explains the experience when we solve a problem, learning something new. Furthermore, understanding the concept or some meaning which stays for a much more extended period and this is known as 'Sustainable Happiness' with clarity in thoughts, a more profound understanding of one-self, being mindful, purpose and interconnection in our living (Mittal, 2019; SCERT, 2019; Khan & Jabin, 2020).

c. United Arab Emirates and Happiness Pedagogy

Quality of life for nationals are the oil revenues which help the individuals to build and support the pensions and employment schemes as well as education, housing, health, recreation and finance of the country. Happiness education is modern as well as adopting the traditional ways of both cultural and religious strengths (Findlow, 2000; Lambert, 2008). The First world happiness Report which scores with wealth, economic activity, social relations and also public welfare gave UAE the position of the seventeenth happiest

country(Khwaja,2012) which increased to the fourteenth position in the recent era(Helliwell.et.al,2012;Lambert & Pasha,2015).Badrietal., (2018) explained that happiness on students depends on the gender, age,nationality,the type of school they are studying and the rest; furthermore, home-school climate as integrated with family, an increase in children's happiness has been found and enhancement of school excellence, and satisfaction progress with the development.

d. Denmark for Happy Children

According to Dierneretal. (2009), Denmark ranks in the top three happiest nations in the International surveys of well-being (Gallup World Poll,2007;Inglehart and Klingemann,2000). Berntsson and Kohler (2001) showed an increase in the quality of life of children from 1984 compared with the quality of life in Norway and Sweden. Dierner et al. (1995) displayed the increased score of Denmark on civil rights and individualism. Nevertheless, Vogel (2002) signifies that Denmark is a country which comes up with low-income inequality, low poverty with high welfare expenditures.However, the education policy of Denmark clarifies the current situation of the educational system to promote it to the next level for the development of the nation.

As an exceptional policy for the development of language, a mandatory assessment was developed for the three-years-old to identify language problems at the early stage together with their comfort and happiness (Pont et al., 2014)

e. Happiness Practices in Sweden

Theconvergence on higher education and pedagogical training serves as a most prioritized concern in the country, thoughthe development of higher education training proceeds to maintain professionalism.For 25 years,higher education has formed a dramatic transformation.This quality of educational system provides a valuable lesson for the professionalism of teaching for other countries as teacher training is mandatory in higher education (Hanburyetal.,2008;Trowler &Bamber,2005).In Sweden schools, National Curriculum to provide equal education to all the students independent of gender,class and ethnicity. Schools also should make sure that they provide education to all the students irrespective of any special needs. Furthermore, the system concentrates on the health, wellbeing, peculiarly, happiness of children as it considered as the essential aspect of life, though teacher training amalgamates on the evolution of self-assessed pedagogical

skills to provide betterment of students (Backman, 2016; Ödalen et al., 2018).

3. Conclusion

However, the pedagogy of happiness is associated with positive psychology and education. The structure of the learning environment with positive emotions, engaging the teachers and students actively in the learning environment develops happiness which forms a product of the Gross National Happiness in the educational environment which is inevitable for learning a balanced life. Notably, it provides a positive impact on both teachers and their disciples with a happy environment in their life and it ensured their mental health and hygiene in an improved fashion. Plus, the development of new ideas as well as coping with the obstacles improves the overall growth of children. Most countries elaborately plan to activate positive education upon children. Unfortunately, much of their policy continues to grow inside the box of obstruction. Fundamentally, education is an imperative procedure, with a festive atmosphere, all-embracing growth of children facilitates to the utmost further enabling the growth of nations. It is suggested that all the curriculum should have specific planned elements of happiness in it as a flavor.

Considering the contextual specialties and vibes of the local culture, teachers have to demonstrate specific pedagogic modalities to ensure specific levels of happiness among the learners. Participatory planning will definitely help in designing the same. Happiness is to be trained over all. Let us design happiness instilled schools in near future with no worries with sustainable goals.

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