

REVIEW ON IMPORTANCE OF HAPPINESS EDUCATION

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Abstract

Education has a larger purpose to serve and hence, it cannot be seen in isolation from the dire needs of today's society. Educators and schools across the globe are realizing the need for a wellness lesson for school children. Boniwell & Ryan (2012), applied positive psychology researchers at University of California, Berkeley, have developed a curriculum that is being implemented in UK, France, Australia and Japan.

Numerous researches suggest that the primary purpose of education is to create confident, mindful, responsible and happy individuals who collectively build a happy and harmonious society.

The National Curriculum Framework, 2005 also mentions that education must be seen as a liberating process for the learners. According to the aims of education in NCF, 2005, education must be a process of self-discovery and of learning more about one's inner self.

"You see, the ultimate purpose of education is twofold: one, making me understand how to live a happy life; second, how to help others live a happy life. The ultimate purpose of education is happiness."

– Manish Sisodia, Deputy Chief Minister and Education Minister of Delhi

Keeping this in view happiness Education curriculum is implemented in New Delhi under able leadership like Manish Sisodia. Here in this paper there is an attempt to review Happiness Education Curriculum implemented in New Delhi and discuss its relevance with inclusive Education.



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Introduction:

Aristotle is often cited to have said: 'Happiness is the meaning and purpose of life, the whole aim and end of human existence' and 'Happiness is the only self-sufficient achievement of learning.' (Crisp, 2000). Indeed, all human endeavors, starting from birth and throughout life, are pursued to this end, and require for happiness to be embedded within them. Happiness is seen as something that is based on positive friendships and strong relationships.

The need for interventions that provide meaningful experiences for present wellbeing and future success appears indispensable. Dorothy Nolte (1998) says, 'children learn what they live', and it seems to be something both theory and wisdom agree with. The quality of what children experience in their childhood is a key determinant of how they learn, develop and live. According to A. Nagraj (1999), 'a state of no-conflict, synergy, or a state of being in acceptance is happiness.' He also stated that, when one is in harmony within and with the world outside,
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one experiences absence of struggle or synergy, and feels the need to make this state sustainable and continuous. Further, an inner state of happiness promotes factors that allow individuals, communities and societies to thrive and flourish. A concept of happiness was also developed by O'Brien (2008). It is defined as 'happiness that contributes to individual, community or global well-being without exploiting other people, the environment or future generations.' Happiness at the outset can be seen to come from the fulfilment of our desires. Many of our desires are to do with fulfilment through the five senses such as when we play a game, listen to pleasant music, eat a tasty meal, smell a flower, etc. The satisfaction we derive out of such actions is in the form of pleasure. In addition to such sensory pleasures, we also experience happiness and satisfaction, when our desire for feelings such as security, love, affection and care are fulfilled in all our relationships. From a developmental perspective, as children grow up, their cognitive, psychomotor and affective abilities develop further. As per Piaget's theory of cognitive and affective development (1983), theoretical and hypothetical thinking, and abstract reasoning start to develop during their developmental years. There develops a strong desire in them to seek knowledge, to understand the world and to find meaning and purpose in life. A. Nagraj (1999) proposed a model for happiness, in which he addresses the four dimensions of human living as an integrated form of the material, behavioral, intellectual & experiential aspects. These correspond to our senses, feelings, learning (understanding) & awareness. Put together, these form a 'happiness triad'. In other words, human beings seek fulfilment from all these aspects of living, which correspondingly results in happiness, peace, satisfaction, etc. that together constitute 'human happiness':

To promote '**happiness education**' through a critical perspective means to understand the pedagogical-political commitment between teacher and students, and between students, that creates the possibilities for regaining the pleasure to teach as well as that of studying within the **educational** setting.

Happiness has now become a part of the global policy agenda. In 2011, the United Nations General Assembly recognized happiness as a fundamental human goal in Resolution 65/309 entitled 'Happiness: towards a holistic approach to development'. According to the 2015 World Happiness Report (Helliwell, et. al., 2015), schools that prioritize learner wellbeing have the potential to be more effective, with better learning outcomes and greater achievements in learners' lives (Layard and Hagell, 2015). Research has begun to show that students learn better if they are happier. Professor Alejandro Adler, of the University of Pennsylvania (2016), led a study into the effect of happiness classes on performance in Bhutan. More than 8000 students

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at 18 schools were assigned either a placebo curriculum or a happiness curriculum which targeted 10 non-academic life skills including empathy and self-awareness. The study concluded that the happiness curriculum substantially and significantly increased students' performance on standardized tests.

UNESCO's fundamental principles (four pillars of learning) for reshaping education provide guidelines for educators for fundamental aspects of learning. They are –

- **Learning to know:** to provide the cognitive tools required to better comprehend the world and its complexities, and to provide an appropriate and adequate foundation for future learning.
- **Learning to do:** to provide the skills that would enable individuals to effectively participate in the global economy and society.
- **Learning to be:** to provide self-analytical and social skills to enable individuals to develop to their fullest potential psychosocially, affectively as well as physically, for an all-round complete person.
- **Learning to live together:** to expose individuals to the values implicit within human rights, democratic principles, intercultural understanding and respect and peace at all levels of society and human relationships to enable individuals and societies to live in peace and harmony which can be well established with happiness education

Following are the learning outcomes after happiness curriculum

The Learner:

A. becomes Mindful & Attentive: which helps him to

develop increased level of self-awareness & mindfulness

comprehend subject matter clearly

reflect better performance in academics and extracurricular activities

show increased interest in studies

develop active listening (with teachers, family, peers, etc.)

focus and sustains attention on the current task thus reducing distractions (E.g., on academics, sports, arts)

remain in the present, i.e., aware of what is happening within himself and in the surrounding environment.

monitor and is mindful of actions, and thinks before acting

B. develops Critical Thinking & Reflection: which help him to

observe self and others better

develop strong ability to reflect on one's thoughts and behaviors
think critically and not believe without evaluation
operate in a resolution-centric way
reflect clarity of choices and be able to choose and decide authentically
think beyond stereotypes and assumptions
think innovatively & executes work creatively

C. develops Social-Emotional Skills: which motivates him to

demonstrate empathy (understand feelings of others and see situations from own as well as others' perspective, and respond appropriately)
understand expectations in relationships
cope with stress & anxiety better
identify, reflects on, and takes mindful action in difficult circumstances
recognizes and maintains relationships and resolves conflict in a more appropriate manner
develops better communication & expression skills

D. develops Confident & Pleasant Personality: which help him to

develop balanced outlook on daily life
reflect self-confidence with pleasant behavior
reflect awareness towards health, cleanliness & hygiene
appreciate self, family, society and the natural environment
become more responsible

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