

The Impact of Happiness Curriculum on the Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing of Government School Children of Delhi

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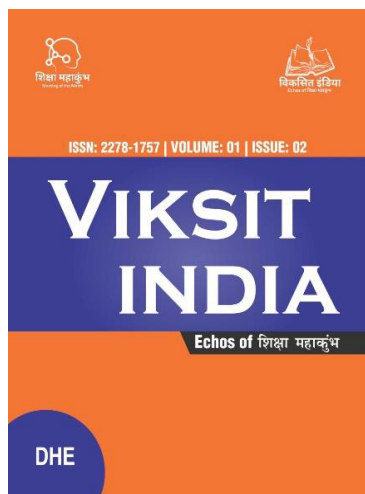
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Abstract

Purpose: Every person who enters this world has the right to happiness. In actuality, happiness is the only goal we have in life. It is a common saying that a person who is emotionally healthy and psychologically stable can be recognized by the happiness in their eyes the goal of this project is to emphasis the value of the happiness curriculum in Delhi government schools. To comprehend the idea and concept of emotional and mental wellbeing. It will examine the value of happiness and how happiness curriculum affect kids' development in building their emotions and making them emotionally stable being.

Design/methodology/approach: The research will be qualitative because it will evaluate the most recent developments in the sector. Because the data gathered will be more descriptive and conclusions may be made from them with ease, the research will be qualitative. The researcher used information from secondary sources, such as books, papers, and websites that had already been published in relation to these variables. It will be an educational research project because it will help to improve educational practices.

Findings: It has been noted that happiness curricula are created with the sole purpose of enhancing a person's mental health. The core of an emotionally secure person is resilience. The study also noted that individuals become intellectually and emotionally fit by default as a result of the syllabus or content presented in the happiness curriculum. The policy covers numerous activities that improve social relationships, rapport building, resilience, adaptability, and other personal qualities in a person, such as mindfulness training, stimulating activities, story-telling, meditation, and yoga. It also enables quicker return to the initial posture when faced with difficult situations and obstacles in life. Research

Limitations/implications: The study only considers how a happiness curriculum affects a person's mental and emotional well-being; numerous other outside elements have been disregarded. Additionally, because the concept is relatively new, the researcher must rely on a very little amount of data, which leaves room for future investigation. Additionally, the trainers, resource people, and instructional tools lack adequate training and development. Another restriction is the professors' lack of earnestness. Although the effects or influences of the variables on one another are understood, their association or correlation is still a mystery. One can further study about the regression or correlation analysis.

Originality/value: The entire research article is the author's own creation. We all know that the Happiness Curriculum is the most recent development in the field of education, and the researcher makes an effort to some extent contribute and supply some literature for this fresh topic. Before reaching the findings and conclusions, the researcher reviewed a large number of secondary sources of data and observations.

Keywords: Happiness, Happiness Curriculum, Mental Health, Emotional Wellbeing.

Introduction

The light that flows from inside cannot be dimmed by anything” quoted by *Maya Angelou*. It is true that in order to live life to the fullest, a person must be satisfied on the inside. If a person wishes to thrive in a rapidly evolving culture, they must be content and fulfilled with their lives. Since happiness helps people survive their current circumstances and build resilience for what the future may bring, it should be the current goal of all living things. A common belief that achieving happiness is the most important aim in life, makes Happiness, ranks first when persons all over the world are asked to choose between the factors that are crucial to them. Happiness is seen as an essential aspect in determining an individual's mental health, and vice versa, according to several studies that are periodically undertaken. In India, historically, there hasn't been much

conversation regarding mental health. Although the topic of physical health is one that is frequently discussed, mental health is more recent. Our mental health includes all aspects of our physical, psychological, emotional, and social wellbeing. It affects our attitudes, feelings, and actions. It also affects how we deal with stress, communicate with others, and make wise decisions. The topics or syllabus of the Happiness curriculum, which the AAP Government adopted in the Government schools of Delhi in 2019, are all that have an impact on a person's mental health. The curriculum emphasizes coping with challenges in your life, creating relationships, and engaging in mindfulness exercises. The adjustment process is key to emotional and mental wellness. A psychologically stable and emotionally healthy person is built on resilience. Positive feelings are essential to emotional and mental wellbeing. It has to do with how effectively an individual fits in with daily life. It aids in managing the stresses of daily life, recognizing one's full potential, learning, and performing effectively in life. Activities like meditation, mindfulness, yoga, understanding self-esteem, etc. should be prioritized in order to help people achieve mental calm, and all of these are currently included in the Happiness Curriculum. Therefore, it would not be incorrect to say that the Happiness Curriculum being implemented in Delhi's government schools has an important contribution to foster emotional stability and mental tranquility in a person. In this study, the researcher would like to make an attempt to relate children's mental and emotional health to Happiness Curriculum. The researcher would further find out the potential in Happiness Curriculum to bring the mental peace and stability in the lives of those school children.

I. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are:

- ❖ To comprehend the idea and meaning of happiness, happiness curriculum, and emotional and mental wellbeing.
- ❖ The study focuses on how the introduction of a happiness curriculum in Delhi's government schools has affected the students' mental and emotional health.
- ❖ To comprehend how teaching happiness to children can result in improvements to their mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- ❖ To help educators and resource people comprehend how the perception of happiness curriculum fosters resilience in students attending public schools.
- ❖ To support teachers and resource people in the creation of instructional tools to promote mental and emotional stability

II. Research Questions

- What is the meaning of the terms Happiness, Happiness Curriculum, Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing?
- What are the effects of Happiness Curriculum on Mental and Emotional health of government school children of Delhi?
- Does teaching Happiness to children results in improvement of their mental and emotional wellbeing?
- Does teaching Happiness Curriculum fosters resilience among the school children?

III. Review of Related Literature

Happiness: Happiness is an enjoyable and fulfilling experience, or it can be thought of as a state of wellness characterized by feelings ranging from contentment to ardent joy. Favorable feelings, a good mood, a sense of wellbeing, and favorable attitudes towards oneself and others can all be results of happiness. Happiness is a sense of well-being that one experiences in response to good feelings or as a result of a specific happy event. The cornerstone of the idea of happiness is composed of two ideas: inclusive and cognitive. According to the broad definition of happiness, happier people experience more positive feelings than negative ones. According to the cognitive theory of happiness, when asked to recall pleasurable memories, a joyful person will always recall those that are associated to positive feelings and affirmations. Happiness is a holistic idea and a fundamental object of human existence; thus, the World Health Organization is increasingly emphasizing happiness as a component of health. To understand what a person aspires to live a happy and healthy life, it is necessary to mention the PERMA model of happiness presented by an American psychologist and educator. POSITIVE EMOTIONS, ENGAGEMENT, RELATIONSHIPS, MEANING, AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS are the five main components of the PERMA model, which are further described. (*Happiness Curriculum Is a 'Massive Success': Sisodia | Education News, The Indian Express*, n.d.)

Positive Emotions: Positive emotions are commonly referred to as the "feel good factor," as they are all about making one feel good and are obviously closely related to happiness. However, it involves more than just pretending to smile; it also involves accepting the past and having hope for the future. Even though a person's pleasure is not always described by positive feeling, it is nevertheless necessary because it influences the other factors in this model.

Engagement: Engagement is the process of becoming involved in or immersed in anything that a person enjoys doing. Even if a work he finds delightful doesn't produce anything, it still makes him feel incredibly happy to be engaged in it. For instance, a 35-year-old woman who enjoys singing is currently singing along to a karaoke machine in her hotel room, which is undoubtedly making her very happy.

Relationships: According to the PERMA model, the third component is relationships. Every human being desire and want to be a part of various social groups like organisations, gangs, social groups and circles. All of us require love, engagement, focus and adoration in our day to day lives. In order to obtain emotional support when times are tough, it is important for people to build ties with their family, friends, coworkers, and peers.

Meaning: The search for meaning in one's life is a key aspect of the everlasting model. This connotation shifts depending on the individual. Additionally, this significance can be rapidly regained by giving to charities or by simply helping others. We can't satisfy ourselves by looking only within. One can do this by volunteering more of the time, giving a percentage of their money, or having a stronger impact on the world.

Accomplishments: The accomplishment element is the final part of the PERMA model. it is a positive sensation that results from reaching a goal. It gives us self-assurance and a sense of worthiness. Additionally, it encourages us to take on more tasks.

Happiness_Curriculum: Since July 2018, the Delhi government has run the educational initiative Happiness Curriculum for children in kindergarten through eighth grade. With the goal of improving their mental health, students are taught mindfulness, social-emotional learning, critical thinking, problem solving, and connection building. Its objectives are to support students' emotional development, aid decision-making with that understanding, provide them with the resources and environment they need to be motivated by purpose, and explore various elements of pleasure. It has been said that the introduction of the curriculum into Delhi's public schools is a revolutionary breakthrough for Indian education. In 2017, Delhi's Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia developed the idea for developing a curriculum that addresses concerns in modern culture. Consequently, this programme is referred to as the "happiness curriculum." A group of forty experts including government-run school teachers in Delhi, education consultants, volunteers, psychologists and the State Council of Educational Research and Training. On this panel were senior officials from the Delhi government's Directorate of Education as well as representatives from a number of NGOs. The Delhi government launched this new initiative in schools with the intention of training the young minds in order to build their sense of identity and make them content, self-assured, and involved people. This curriculum emphasises human-focused education and incorporates mental stimulation, meditation, and education in values. There won't be any formal exams given on the entire curriculum; it will all be activity-based. However, a happiness index will be used to periodically evaluate the development of the kids.

The curriculum's main components are as follows:

1. Self-awareness is one of the goals of the curriculum.
2. The curriculum aims to promote resilient character, good mental health, and mental well-being.
3. The kids' cognitive abilities would be enhanced by the curriculum on happiness.
4. Students' anxiety, despair, and intolerance would decrease as a result of the happy curriculum.
5. Students are also equipped by the curriculum to overcome obstacles and resolve social issues.

Mental Health: In the words of WHO (WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION) "Mental health is a condition of mental wellbeing that helps people to manage life's stressors, recognise their potential, learn and function well, and give back to their communities." It is the foundational element of mental health. The term "mental health" refers to more than only the absence of mental illness or disorders of the mind. It covers every aspect of life that a person needs in order to function well. It is necessary to compare the idea of mental health to that of physical health in order to properly grasp it. First off, those who are physically fit maintain their physique and keep themselves physically active to combat physical risks by engaging in gym exercises, getting the right vaccinations, taking supplements, etc. When dealing with life's daily stresses, mentally healthy people engage in practises like yoga, mindfulness, and meditation to build and restore their mental health. Second, in terms of physical health, parents would prefer to shield their kids from diseases or unsanitary conditions; in terms of mental health, they would prefer to shield their kids from unneeded trauma or mental abuse. It's also a prevalent concept that if we focus over the signs of being mentally or physically healthy, we tend to generate a sense of being unwell. According to The

Mental Health Foundation (2001, 9), the following characteristics of children's mental health are important:

- Self-assurance or dignity.
- Emotional, physical, social and spiritual development.
- Flexibility and adaptability
- A toolbox of problem-solving techniques.
- The drive to face challenges and learn from them.
- Judgement towards right and wrong.
- The capacity to form healthy-personal relationships.

Emotional Wellbeing: Emotional wellbeing is essential for total physical and mental health. Being emotionally healthy involves being able to handle life's stresses and bringing out pleasant emotions. Only those who are emotionally stable can overcome the problems that life presents to them, with ease and positivity because life is difficult and presents many of them to you every day. Resilience is at the heart of emotional well-being. Resilience is the capacity to deal with situations, to be flexible, and to return to the initial favourable circumstances. In order to live a long, healthy life, emotional health is crucial. It is unavoidable to some level that a person's ability to grow personally, professionally, and in their overall social relationships would be hampered by a lack of emotional wellbeing. An emotionally stable person, on the other hand, is in a better position to understand the difficulties life presents and overcome them successfully. An emotionally stable person maintains positive relationships with others in society, in work, and in the family as a whole. The most well-known and important author for promoting emotional literacy, emotional intelligence, and emotional well-being is Daniel Goleman (1996). Despite the fact that these ideas are vague on purpose, they are frequently associated with feelings of self-worth, being aware of one's own and other people's emotions, and, especially, the ability to control their own emotions. Ecclestone and Hayes (2008) presented "circle time" tactics based on this idea. The topic of therapeutic education comes up. They went on to explore how therapeutic education is very risky since it places more emphasis on a person's vulnerability than on the transmission of knowledge. They believe that under therapeutic education, children are more susceptible and require more assistance rather than difficulties.

The Present Study: The focus of the current study will now be on how the Delhi Government's brand-new "Happiness Curriculum" is affecting students enrolled in public schools. The study will focus on the relationship or influence between the three factors—mental health, emotional wellbeing, and a happiness curriculum. The government has taken initiatives to improve mental health and emotional wellness, despite the fact that these concepts are still relatively new. Now, this study will show whether the happiness curriculum is successful in light of the mentioned factors.

IV. Research Design and Methodology

1. As it will examine novel theories in the field, the research will be qualitative.
2. It will be qualitative research as the data collected will be more descriptive and inferences can easily be drawn from the collected data.
3. The researcher used secondary sources of data, such as articles, papers, and websites that have previously been released in the context of these variables.
4. It will be research in the field of education as it will lead to the betterment of educational practices.

V. Findings and Recommendations

- ❖ It has been observed that happiness curriculum is laid down with the sole objective of improving the mental health of an individual. Its obvious focus is demonstrated by the lessons it imparts on relationship building, critical thinking, mindfulness exercises, problem resolution, and other topics. Consequently, can be observed to directly affect and be related to a person's emotional and mental health.
- ❖ The trainers and resource persons engaged in the happiness curriculum teach them how to form relationships and reach agreement on their ideas, feelings, and beliefs. Through a variety of training tools, the teachers or trainers further assist students in developing friendly relationships with their family, friends, co-workers, and society at large. These attempts to establish a friendly relationship with society as a whole significantly contribute to an individual's mental stability and emotional welfare.
- ❖ The desire to overcome obstacles and learn from them is one of the characteristics of a mentally healthy person. Through its educational methods, the Happiness Curriculum creates an environment that is interesting and will provide kids the motivation they need to take on difficulties.
- ❖ The ability to distinguish between right and wrong is a crucial aspect of mental health and emotional wellbeing. An individual can acquire clarity of decision-making and make real choices with the aid of a happiness curriculum. Through numerous reflective talks, it enables students to think creatively and choose what is right or wrong. This helps them to rise above the stereotypes.
- ❖ The development of social-emotional skills through the happiness curriculum aids people in better coping with daily stressors, regulating anxiety, handling conflicts, and developing empathy for others. With the use of the Happiness Curriculum, all of the aforementioned traits can be fostered in someone, resulting in a person who is mentally and emotionally stable.
- ❖ The happiness curriculum increases a person's self-esteem, self-awareness, and self-confidence. It also helps them create a balanced attitude on life and an awareness of their personal hygiene, cleanliness, and health.
- ❖ The key to mental wellbeing is resilience, as we all know. It is closely related to adaptability. It demonstrates how quickly a person adjusts to changes and returns to its previous state. With the use of role-plays, skits, presentations, stimulating activities, yoga, mind-games, rapport-building exercises, teamwork, etc., happiness curriculum assist people in becoming resilient.
- ❖ The evaluation of the Happiness curriculum is qualitative, but it can also be translated into quantitative data. The main emphasis of its evaluation methodologies is on an individual's level of happiness, mental health, and emotional fitness. then offering remedial classes if necessary

VI. Gaps, Limitations and Future Implications

There are many policies introduced in government schools to improve students' physical health, protect the environment, and improve the nutritional status of young children; however, no programme has yet been established with the aim of improving students' mental health. One such programme that has the capacity to deal with and enhance a person's mental state is the Happiness Curriculum;

- There are not many researches available on this as the independent variable "Happiness Curriculum" is quite a new concept. So, the researcher has to rely upon the less available data.
- The researcher has observed that many instructors and trainers in schools do not take the happiness curriculum seriously. They merely view the first few minutes of class as supplemental time that must be devoted to the activities covered under happiness curriculum.
- The extrinsic influences that affect an individual's happiness and, consequently, their mental health are ignored by happiness curriculum. These causes range from an abusive home environment to ignorant or illiterate parents.
- In this study, the researcher has solely discussed how a happiness curriculum affects a person's mental health and emotional wellness. The lack of knowledge regarding the correlation or cause-and-effect relationship leaves room for additional research.
- The objectives of the happiness curriculum cannot be met in a thirty-minute window at the start of the day. To take full advantage of this policy's potential for promoting people's mental and emotional health, additions must be made. This also leaves room for future study.

VII. Conclusion

Every person who enters this world has the right to happiness. In actuality, happiness is the only goal we have in life. A person who is emotionally healthy and psychologically stable can be recognised by the happiness in their eyes, according to another saying. Focusing on flexibility, resilience, handling life's stresses, realising their potential, and contributing to society in a healthy way are traits of a mentally and emotionally healthy individual. Additionally, they are better equipped to handle challenging situations and quickly return to daily life as usual. Even while physical fitness is a hot topic, little is said about mental health and emotional welfare. Therefore, policies must be developed by the department to work upon the similar issues. Happiness curriculum is one of these policies. Manish Sisodia had originally presented the idea. The Delhi government started this new programme in schools with the goal of educating the next generation to help them develop their sense of self and become happy, confident, and engaged adults. If truly implemented, this approach has the potential to transform education. Not just in the area of education, but also in the development of the young minds of our developing country. However, it has also been noted that the policy is not actually being put into practise in the sense intended; the teachers, or trainers, are not properly qualified, and the trainers do not take the programme seriously. It is even harder to put it into practise when parents are unaware of it or have little awareness of it. Since the idea of a "happiness curriculum" is

relatively new, there is unquestionably need for additional research. For the similar variables, regression and correlation analysis can be performed further. The curriculum's contents and scope can also be studied separately as variables

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