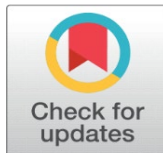
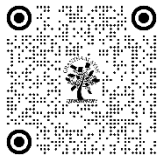


A STUDY OF TEACHER'S PERCEPTIONS ABOUT HAPPINESS CURRICULUM PROGRAM - CLASSES VI -VIII

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ABSTRACT

This paper will emphasize the importance of happiness in the self-satisfaction of an individual particularly children in their lifetime. There are many ways in which one can note and encourage happiness in children and the first one is through mindfulness. There is a marked beneficial correlation between Mindfulness with critical thinking, clarity, problem solving abilities, stress, emotions and attitude of the person. These components provide children with the ability to always approach tasks in a cool and calm manner thus making them happy individuals. On the same note, awareness of other virtues inclusively, forgiveness, dignity of work, helpfulness, empathy, trust, patience, honesty, hard-working culture, responsibilities, and gratitude develops the kind of personalities emotionally and socially needed by children. These aspects not only make one happy but also nurture a good character and moral person. The love between family and friends is also a critical aspect in determining the level of happiness of a child. Punctuality, peer relations, respect for children and elders together with the maintenance of family values make children better manage their behaviors and have positive attitudes towards life milestones. Love and cooperation with others and the ability to know what the true definition of happiness is being healthy, cheerful and the presence of many other factors such as sharing and caring are part and parcel of personified joy. When children experience positive interactions and a positive environment during childhood, then they are likely to develop a balanced personality and perception about life and this makes them grow up to become emotionally and intelligent individuals. Teachers being caretakers of students are in an ethical capacity to bring 'positivity' in the lives of children. Positive education which is a relatively novel idea in psychology focuses on achievement of positive subjective states in the learning process. This paper aims to focus on the function of teachers in the pursuit of happiness of children, including analyzing the lessons learnt from 'Happiness Curriculum' launched by the Delhi government. From this, the paper suggests that for the holistic aspect of education, the government should embrace all the aspects and dimensions of learning and well-being if children are to be happy.

Keywords: Classes VI and VIII, Government School, Good Behaviour, Education

1. INTRODUCTION

Fulfilment of happiness in life is significant in the creation of self-satisfaction especially among children. You can identify various aspects to be used to promote and monitor happiness levels of children from these aspects of mindfulness. A Mindful person involves intellectual ability to evaluate and analyze and to arrive at a decision in addition to being able to handle stress, being emotionally healthy and a positive mind. These components enable children to be problem-solvers with the right attitude towards the problems thus enhancing their happiness and satisfaction. Also, the acquisition of moral values such as forgiving spirit, making work a sacred, helpful mindset, empathy, trust, being punctual, honesty, integrity, dedication, and thankfulness improve the emotional and social health of the child. These values do not only result in happiness but also in the production of the ethical and compassionate person. Relationships

between the family and friends are also important factors in the child's happiness. Praise, friendly attitudes towards peers, as well as good manners with elders and maintaining family values are critical aspects that assist the child in socialization and give them optimism on life issues. Interaction, as well as tender and caring, bring about understanding of what constitutes happiness. It means that all positive experiences that children received during their childhood depending on friendly and patronizing relationships in home or other institutions make them fully developed individuals with successful personality and outlook of life based on patience, emotional intelligence and personal resilience. Positive education is a relatively recent phenomenon in the field of psychology that targets incorporating well-being into learning. This paper aims at reflecting on the subject of teacher and children's happiness and reflects on the 'Happiness Curriculum' proposed by the Delhi government. Thus, specifying such parameters of learning and well-being, the paper contributes to the discussion of the holistic approach to children's education that would result in happiness.

2. TOPIC OF THE RESEARCH

To study the effect of the Happiness Curriculum program on developing Critical thinking skills in Government school children of classes VI-VIII.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

To understand the impact of Happiness classes on the behaviour of students of class 5th & 8th qualitatively as well as quantitatively.

To understand the perceptions of teachers for developing sensitivity towards identified values.

To relate, outside-in influences are not the only factors influencing an individual's happiness. Inside-out-factors also influence the well-being of an individual.

To understand how mindfulness education in the classroom can reduce students' sense of stress and lengthen attention spans.

4. HYPOTHESIS

School poses a lot of stressful moments but how children react to them can make all the difference.

A new study suggests that mindfulness education- lessons on techniques to calm the mind and body can reduce the negative effects of stress and increase student's ability to stay engaged helping them stay on track academically and avoid behavioural problems. Happiness is a conscious state of mind hence it can be measured by interrogation. Thus happiness can be assessed in large scale surveys.

At the micro level happiness depends on personal capabilities like efficacy, independence and skills that develop through critical thinking. Critical thinking is a liberating force in education and a powerful resource in one's personal and civic life.

5. SELECTION OF SAMPLE AND SAMPLE SIZE

This study was conducted on DOE school teachers. 65 teachers teaching class VI-VIII students from Sarvodaya Vidyalayas of DOE, Delhi.

6. METHODOLOGIES AND MEASURING TOOLS

The study was conducted as under:

Content analysis of Happiness Curriculum:

The content of the Happiness curriculum was analysed by organizing a workshop in which D.El.Ed Ist and IInd year trainees and DIET faculty members participated. After studying the content of Teacher's handbook for Happiness, Grade 6th to 8th for upper primary students, following components were identified.

Mindfulness:

1) Critical Thinking 2) Focused / Clarity of thought 3) Problem Solving approach 4) Stress Management

5) Emotional Balance 6) Positive Attitude

Developing sensitivity towards identified values:

1) Forgiveness 2) Dignity of labour 3) Helpfulness 4) Empathy 5) Trust 6) Patience 7) Honesty
8) Hard-work/Commitment 9) Gratitude

Understanding the relationship between family and friends:

1) Good behavior 2) cordial peer relationship 3) Respect elders 4) Family values 5) Identifying real happiness Inter personal relationship 6) Sharing and caring

Development of Rating Scale for identifying Teacher's Perceptions

Questionnaire of rating for teacher's perceptions was developed based on the content of the handbook.

On the basis of above identified components of the Happiness curriculum a five point rating scale was developed by the researcher and finalized in a workshop. The scale consists of 21 statements based on the three components. At the end of the rating scale the candidate has to write any information regarding the content of the happiness curriculum she/he wants to share. The scale has 14 positive statements and 7 negative statements. Each statement has 5 points i.e; Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (DA), and Strongly Disagree (SDA). For positive statements the scoring was done as -SA-5, A-4, U-3, DA-2 and SDA-1. The opposite was done for negative statements.

Information blanks were also prepared to collect the background information like -name, sex, age, qualification, experience etc.

Data Collection

The data on the teachers' perception was collected by administering the rating scale on 65 teachers teaching class VI- VIII in Sarvodaya Schools of DOE in District, SW, Delhi. The schools were randomly selected and D.EL.Ed Ist and IInd year trainees supported in collecting the data from the schools. Proper instructions were given to the teachers about filling the scale.

Focused Discussion

A focused group discussion was conducted with 20 teachers. First a brainstorming session was conducted in which the teachers were asked to think about the components and values given in the textbook. Then they were asked to explain what type of activities they organize to develop the values. They were also shown some of the pictures from the book and asked to identify the value and components that can be developed through these lessons. They have also written their views about the lessons for developing components and values among the students of class VI and VIII. They expressed that they never thought deeply about the components and values hidden into content.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The data gathered was tabulated, scoring was done and the percentage of scores was calculated.

A total 21 questions of each type i.e MCQ and marking answers on a scale of rating 1 to 5 were formulated. Provisional data was analysed on measurable parameters and sub-parameters captured through responses to questions. The data was interpreted by analysing the scores obtained by teachers.

Mindfulness:

1) Critical Thinking 2) Focused / Clarity of thought 3) Problem Solving approach 4) Stress Management
5) Emotional Balance 6) Positive Attitude

Developing sensitivity towards identified values:

1) Forgiveness 2) Dignity of labour 3) Helpfulness 4) Empathy 5) Trust 6) Patience 7) Honesty
8) Hard-work/Commitment 9) Gratitude

Understanding the relationship between family and friends:

Good behavior 2) cordial peer relationship 3) Respect elders 4) Family values 5) Identifying real happiness Inter personal relationship 6) Sharing and caring

Data was collected from selected schools during SEP. on the bases of developed tool,

To understand how mindfulness education in the classroom can reduce students' sense of stress and lengthen attention spans

Mindfulness:

- 1) Critical Thinking 2) Focussed / Clarity of thought 3) Problem Solving approach 4) Stress Management
- 5) Emotional Balance 6) Positive Attitude

Table 1: Perception of teachers towards Mindfulness

Sr. No.	Statements	Strongly Agree%	Agree%	Undecided%	Disagree%	Strongly Disagree%
1.	Enough activities are given in the textbook to develop critical thinking.	35.4	60	1.5	3.1	
2.	Some of the topics in the curriculum are concerned with increasing the attention/ focus.	67.7	29.2	3.1		
3.	The curriculum does not deal with the problem solving approach.	6.2	9.2	16.9	61.5	6.2
4.	The curriculum does not deal with stress management.	3	12.3	7.7	70.8	6.2
5.	The content of the curriculum has no concern with emotional balance.	3	10.8	7.7	72.3	6.2
6.	The content of the curriculum provides the opportunity to develop a positive attitude.	44.6	52.3	1.5	1.5	

There are 6 items under this component. Out of these 6 statements Sr. No. (1, 2 and 6) are positive statements and three (3, 4 and 5) are negative.

Following are the responses of teachers on this component:

The table clearly shows that the responses of teachers on the items Sr. No. (1, 2 and 6) are more on the strongly agree and agree side. It reflects that more teachers feel that happiness curriculum help in mindfulness education in the classroom can reduce students' sense of stress and lengthen attention spans. The highest percentage of teachers responding on DA point is at item Sr. No. (3, 4 and 5), which is a negative statement. It can be interpreted that almost all teachers feel that there are areas given in the topics of the curriculum that relate with the sensitivity towards mindfulness. The responses for item no 3 are higher than the other items on the U point of rating scale. It reveals that the % have no knowledge about the happiness curriculum in terms of dealing with the problem solving approach

To understand the perceptions of teachers for developing sensitivity towards identified values.

Values:

- 1) Forgiveness 2) Dignity of labour 3) Helpfulness 4) Empathy 5) Trust 6) Patience 7) Honesty
- 8) Hard-work/Commitment 9) Gratitude

Table 2: Perceptions of teachers for developing sensitivity towards identified values

Sr. No.	Statements	Strongly Agree%	Agree%	Undecided%	Disagree%	Strongly Disagree%
1.	Some of the topics in the book are related to the forgiveness value.	26.2	69.2	4.6		
2.	There are topics that help in developing the feeling of respect for every profession.	32.3	66.2	1.5		
3.	There are no topics in the text book for developing gratitude value.	4	12.3	6.8	67.7	9.2
4.	The content of the book provides the opportunity to develop the habit of hardwork/commitment.	32.3	66.2	1.5		
5.	The content of the curriculum provides the opportunity to develop the empathy value among students.	35.4	61.5	3.1		
6.	There are the topics that deal with developing respect for trust value.	26.2	70.8	3		
7.	The curriculum deals with patience value.	27.7	69.2	3.1		
8.	The topics of the book are not concerned with honesty value.	1.5	9.2	4.6	67.7	16.9
9.	Enough activities are given in the textbook to develop feeling of helpfulness to others.	24.6	69.2	3.2	1.5	1.5

This component is on values. This component has 9 items (Sr. No. 1,2,4,5,6,7,and 9 are positive) and 2 items (Sr. No. 3 and 8) are negative.

The above table clearly indicates that the percentage of teachers is more towards SA and A side than DA and SDA side on all the 7 items except on item no 3 and 8, which depicts that most of teachers perceive that the curriculum has the content for developing respect to forgiveness ,dignity of labour ,empathy, trust, patience ,honesty and feeling of helpfulness to others. But the higher scores towards the disagreeing side on negative items shows that the teachers feel the curriculum has helped in developing the gratitude and honesty values. The percentages of teachers on U point is (1.5 to 6.8 %) for all the items. This reflects that some of the teachers have no idea about the happiness curriculum in terms of developing values among students.

Understanding the relationship between family and friends:

Table 3: Perceptions of teachers for understanding the relationship between family and friends

1) Good behavior 2) cordial peer relationship 3) Respect elders 4) Family values 5) Identifying real happiness Inter personal relationship 6) Sharing and caring

Sr. No.	Statements	Strongly Agree%	Agree%	Undecided%	Disagree%	Strongly Disagree%

1,	The curriculum helps in understanding the relationship between the family members.	33.8	64.6	1.6		
2.	The curriculum helps in understanding the cordial relationship between peers.	67.7	27.7	4.6		
3.	There are no topics in the text book for developing family values.	2.4	13.8		70.	13.8
4.	There are topics that deal with developing respect for elders.	29.2	69.2		1.6	
5.	The content of the curriculum does not provide the opportunity to develop the habit of sharing and caring among students.	6.2	18.5	3	60	12.3
6.	The curriculum is designed in such a way that the teacher can develop good behavior among students.	40	56.9	3.1		

This component is on Understanding the relationship between family and friends. This components has 6 items (Sr. No 1, 2, 4 and 6 are positive) and 2 (Sr. No.3 and 5) are negative.

The above table clearly indicates that the percentage of teachers is more towards SA and A side than DA and SDA side on the 4 items (Sr. No 1, 2, 4 and 6), which depicts that most of teachers perceive that the book has the content for developing respect to relationship between the family members, understanding the cordial relationship between peers, respect for elders, good behavior among students. But the higher scores towards disagree side on negative items shows that the teachers feel the curriculum is related with developing the family values and habit of sharing and caring among students. The percentages of teachers on U point is (Sr. No 1, 2, 5 and 6 for the items. This reflects that few teachers have no idea about the happiness curriculum in terms of developing values among students.

Analysis of focused group discussion:

During focused group discussion the teachers reflected that there are areas given in the topics of the curriculum that relate with the sensitivity towards the mindfulness, values and the understanding the relationship between family and friends. But sometimes they feel that they are not able to identify the sensitivities inbuilt within the topic.

7. CONCLUSIONS

For all constructs higher scores reflect greater learning of values or effectiveness of values inculcated in a child's behaviour. The group of Schools for which survey was done suggests that students of these schools display the requisite behavioural improvement.

The Happiness curriculum is an effective tool of improving critical thinking skill of the students.

- Human values can be taught and critical thinking can be inculcated if introduced effectively.

It was found that the well-being of an individual is influenced by both the outside environment and the real happiness which lies within the individual. The main thing is to develop the ability to identify real happiness.

Happiness curriculum classes increase awareness in terms of skills and values i.e. sensitivity of the students towards themselves, family, society and nature.

The findings also indicate that through mindfulness education it is possible to train the attention span of the students to the present moment without dwelling of what has happened in the past or worrying about the future.

- It also helps the students managing the stress in the daily routine. Students developed values like gratitude, respect, dignity, kindness, Sharing and carrying, Helpfulness', Empathy, Forgiveness etc. for self, fellow beings and family members.

If the Project is further implemented in all the schools of Delhi, it surely will enhance the ability of the students to think critically and indeed help make students better individuals/citizens with good emotional skills having sensitivity towards self, family, society and nature.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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