

Searching for 'Happiness' in Happiness Curriculum

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ABSTRACT

This paper is an attempt to understand the idea of 'Happiness' in Happiness Curriculum. The paper focuses on analysis of the stories of Happiness curriculum for class 6-8 to identify the key idea/ideas of 'Happiness' in it. The key research questions that guide this analysis are: a) In what sense has the term 'happiness' been used?; b) What is the connection of happiness with ethical and moral values?; and c) Which aspects of Human life are touched by stories of Happiness curriculum. The study has been conducted by a detailed analysis of the stories included in the happiness curriculum. The analysis has been done by thematically categorising the stories based on the assumptions and understanding of happiness that has been culled out via thematic analysis. The paper concludes with highlighting the conceptual, theoretical, and pedagogical issues in the understanding of happiness in the happiness curriculum as well as in the idea of a happiness curriculum.

Keywords: *Happiness, Delhi Government, Happiness Curriculum, Concept of Happiness*

Background

Happiness Curriculum was introduced by Government of NCT of Delhi in July 2018 for the schools run by them. "According to the Chief Minister Mr Arvind Kejriwal "The Happiness curriculum is a solid step in creating good human being". Further, the Deputy CM Mr. Manish Sisodia stated that "It is our belief that modern day problems like terrorism, corruption and pollution can be solved through Human Centric Education" (PTI, 2018). Happiness Curriculum aims to develop happiness in feeling and practice (Happiness Curriculum, 2018, p.3, translated). It has four sections in it, Section 1 on 'Mindfulness', Section 2 on 'Stories', Section 3 on 'Activities' and Section 4 on 'Reflections'. Mittal (2019 b) raised multiple concerns related to pedagogical concerns in happiness curriculum. One of the key concerns was "what kind of happiness are

we seeking in Happiness Curriculum where a child will learn to accept the situation or adjust in situation or challenge the situation or learn to find solution of it" (Mittal, 2019 b, p.17). Further, we need to understand whether Happiness Curriculum aims for 'a happy human being', 'a happy child', 'a happy student' or 'a happy individual'. Thus, these concerns give reasons to identify idea or ideas of Happiness in Happiness Curriculum. However, the focus of this paper is stories section only.

The story section of Happiness Curriculum consists of 20 stories. It is stated in the curriculum that "stories selected in it are based on the real-life situations rather than the imagined situations, so that children can connect with them in their day to day life. The story section states that it is concerned with the development of logical reasoning ability and creativity in the students and enrichment of

their expression skill” (Happiness Curriculum, 2018, p.42, translated). An analysis of stories will reveal whether or not or in what ways the stories addresses these aims.

Nevertheless, an analysis of stories can help us in explicating the meaning of happiness in the Happiness Curriculum from various perspectives. Therefore, questions such as, a) In what sense has the term ‘happiness’ been used?; b) What is the connection of happiness with ethical and moral values?; and c) Which aspects of Human life are touched by stories of Happiness curriculum become important. To find answers to these questions, analysis of the stories is done on two bases: first at the level of the story i.e critical reflections on the stories aim- to look for coherence in the stories- and second context and character of the study for theoretical reflections.

Thematic Analysis

The following is a thematic presentation of the stories based on the idea of happiness that is implied in them. The themes are: Happiness is within; Happiness is in relationships; Happiness is in the pursuit; Happiness is in being virtuous; One’s Happiness is in the happiness of all; Happiness is in helping others. The twenty stories have been categorised in the above-mentioned themes in order to reflect on the overall conceptual, theoretical, and pedagogical implications of the policy document.

Theme 1. Happiness is Within

Introduction - The theme ‘Happiness is within us’ arrived from the four stories of Happiness. The stories are titled as ‘*Rabia ki Sui*’, ‘*Teen Majdoor teen nazariye*’, ‘*Khushiyon ka batwaraa*’, and ‘*Nirmal Pani*’. The story gives

answers to various questions, such as, where does our happiness lie?; Which quality(ies) should a person have to lead a happy life or to be happy?; What are the necessary conditions to become happy?; How can we continue to be happy? However, none of the stories actually discussed what happiness is.

Story 1. “*Rabia ki sui*”

This story is about an old lady Rabia, she lives in a village where everyone has a habit of making complaints about each other. One day, she was looking for her lost needle outside her house. Some neighbours also came up to help her and asked her where the needle had actually fallen? She said the needle has fallen inside her house but because there is no light inside her house that’s why she is looking it here. On hearing this, people said that even if there is no light inside the house, then we also need to find the needle inside it, there is no point to search the needle outside the house. Rabiya explained to everyone that you people search for happiness in others i.e, in their behaviour, in their praises, gifts, benefits etc, but your happiness is hidden inside your mann (मन). She advised them that they should search for their happiness where it is actually hidden.

The purpose of this story is to communicate to children that “Happiness is in ourselves not in behaviour of others” (Happiness Curriculum, 2018, p.43). In this story, through the example of a lost needle, an old lady Rabia taught her neighbours that we should search for our happiness where it actually lost i.e in our “mann”. For our happiness we should not be dependent or look in to people’s behaviours, in their praises, gifts, benefits etc.

However, the story assumes that, similar to a needle, everyone knows well about what

happiness is, without actually discussing happiness. Moreover, it is not clear what does the phrase 'Happiness is within' mean: Happiness is inside your mann'. How should 'mann' be defined? Does everyone have the same 'mann'? Is it a state of mind, a state of being, an emotional state, or a way of thinking?

Story 2 :“*Teen Majdoor Teen Nazariye*”

At some place, a school building was under construction, where three laborers were working. From there one traveller was passing, he asked the first labourer, 'What are you doing? The labourer said that 'I am breaking the stone'. Then that traveller asked second labourer that, what are you doing? That labourer said, 'I am earning for my daily bread'!

Then the traveller asked the third labourer that what are you doing? The third worker said that 'I am building the temple of education'. At the end of the story, the conclusion is that there are three ways to do the work - the first - to work in compulsion and to remain sad, second - to work as a machine for daily bread, and the third to be happy with the pleasure of others which they will get from your work. Lastly, A person's pleasure/ happiness depends upon his/ her life's vision. It comes from inside, not out.

The purpose of this story is to teach children that by “understanding the utility and need of any work and performing it with full acceptance will lead us towards happiness and success” (Happiness Curriculum, 2018, p.47). The story re-emphasises that Happiness is within. It posits that happiness is dependent on our vision of life. The key idea that the story promotes is concerned with the vision of the third labourer, i.e. we always have a choice to choose the perspective to look at life/work through. However, if happiness is really in the

perspective and if the labourer is hired to construct the building of a liquor shop instead of school building, then, does he have a choice of perspective and would he be happy at the same level?

Similarly, the story doesn't engage with the reasons of someone becoming a labourer or why manual labour is paid the minimum in our society. Also, in case, if a labourer loves his job but he is not happy with his low wages which made it difficult for him to support his family, then, should we blame him or the socio-economic structure for his unhappiness? What are the available choices for him in such conditions? In other words, the story undermines the importance of socio-economic and political conditions which affect the basic needs of any person.

Moreover, the story focuses on 'where to arrive' i.e. one must value what one is doing, without discussing or initiating 'how to arrive' or why do people have different value orientations in their lives. A reference to Maslow's need hierarchy which emphasised on basic needs (food, shelter, safety) first, than higher needs (self-esteem and self-actualization) might help us in challenging the view of happiness that has been put forth here.

The third story's purpose is to teach children that “to be mindful of maintaining your own happiness without being influenced by success or failure of others” (Happiness Curriculum, 2018, p.51). Thus, story emphasizes that comparison of ourselves with others is one of the main hindrances toward happiness.

However, at present, the school education policies give more weightage to exams, where

Story 3. “*Khushiyon ka batwara*”

A rich farmer had a vineyard, he called some laborers to break the baked grapes. Some workers came in the morning and some came in the afternoon and some came in the evening. After the work is over, the farmer will pay equally to all the laborers. Seeing that the workers who had come in the morning began to get angry and started saying that the workers who came in the afternoon and evening should get less wages.

The farmer told those laborers that you have earned the full wages of your hard work, I have given you even more than that. The farmer said, "I have more money, so whether I distribute to others or I throw in river it's my choice. You have got more than your hard work, you should be happy in that. But the problem is that you are not unhappy about how much money you got but about, why the other workers got the same amount of money? Workers understood what that farmer is trying to tell them and they gladly went to their house.

comparison of children on the basis of marks and ranks is the norm. Policies like Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation system and No Detention Policy as proposed under RtE act 2009 were short lived as no strong steps were taken for further improvement. So, this creates a conflicting situation for the children that, on the one hand, they are taught that they shouldn't compare themselves with others and be satisfied with what they have and, on the other hand, the whole school system implicitly and explicitly teaches them to become better than others to succeed in the rat race. So, the concern is how happiness curriculum will resolve this conflict or dilemma it creates for children? Further, by a self-centric view of happiness, this story undermines the demand for rights and value of justice. The idea of

justice in the story is based on individualised expectations rather than a general rule.

Story 18. “*Nirmal Paani*”

Once upon a time a Guru and a disciple were going somewhere. When they got tired, stayed for some time under a tree. After some time, guruji asked his disciple to get some water. The disciple went to take water from the nearby river where he saw some animals running out from it. Due to their race, river's water appears dirty. After seeing the dirty water, the disciple returned without water. He told Guruji that the water was so messy that he did not bring it. Guruji again sent him to fill the water from that river but he returned without water again.

For the third time Guruji sent the disciple to take water. This time the pupil was surprised to see that the water was clean and calm, the mud went downhill. He took this water for Guruji this time. Guruji said, our mind is also like this river, every thought or incident keeps our mind shaken, and leads to upheaval as it was in the river. But if we act with peace and endurance, then the pure stream of compassion will be seen flowing in our mind, from which we can quench the thirst of ourselves and others.

Story 18 is “*Nirmal Paani*”, the purpose of this story is to teach children that ‘the basis of decision making is peaceful mind’ (Happiness Curriculum, 2018, p.105). Happiness is inside you, the only need is to make your mind peaceful”. The story explained that similar to the river, our life incidents which cause pressure, tensions, negative thoughts create upheaval in our mind and we get disturbed. But if we act with patience and endurance, then the pure stream of compassion will be seen flowing in our mind. From this story a child may learn the importance of ‘peace of mind’ for happiness. But how to achieve peace of mind is

not discussed in the story and one may only infer that through other sections, i.e. mindfulness this is assumed to happen.

Theme 2. Happiness and Positivity

Story4: “*Shikayton ka bhoj*”

The story is about a saint who asked all his disciples to keep the same number of potatoes with them for few days as the number of people they don't like. All the disciples follow the saint's order. After few days when potatoes started smelling, all the disciples went to saint and told him that they cannot keep potatoes because they are smelling badly. The saint smiled and said, in just seven days you started to feel the burden of the potatoes, then think about the burden of the people you are jealous of, on your mind.

The fourth story aims to teach children that we should keep ourselves away from negative feelings, such as jealousy and grudges for others. (Happiness Curriculum, 2018, p.54). According to the story when we have negative feelings for others, they burden our mind and affect our thinking process. The key questions that emerged from the story are: how can we prevent ourselves from feeling negative about others? Is having a positive feeling in every life situation a solution to our all life problems? Also, does having positive feelings towards others necessarily make us a happy person?

The purpose of this story is to teach “that love and trust are the key values that bring self-confidence and leads us towards success” (Happiness Curriculum, 2018, p.80). The story also gives the message that we should always have positive perspectives in our life and should give up the negative perspective. However, the reasons for emphasising love and

trust as key value for self-confidence and success are not clear in the story. Additionally, their relation with to positive perspective and happiness is merely assumed.

Story 11 “*Bekar Paudha*”

In this story, after a teacher taught for twelve years, he took the examination of his disciples before initiation. He asked all the disciples to make a list of useless plants in the examination. All the disciples made a list of useless plants, but a disciple gave blank sheet to Guru ji . Guruji asked that disciple why you did not make a list. The disciple said that every plant has some qualities/ speciality, for example a grass looks like a useless thing but it is used as fodder for animals and in the making of medicines. Guruji told all the disciples that only this disciple will be initiated because his thinking is positive. All other disciples took pledge to adopt a constructive approach by leaving a negative perspective in life.

Theme 3 : Happiness is in relationships

There are five stories which emphasized on various types of relationships which a child has such as father, mother, brother, sister and friend. In each story the key protagonist are mother, father, sister, friend. Stories have emphasised on the importance of ‘trust, love, care, mutual coordination in human relationships. Noddings (2003) emphasised that ‘human relationships are perhaps the most important single ingredients in happiness’ (p,179).

The story 5 is titled “*Maa ka pyaar*”, and it aims to teach children that love and trust are values that make us confident and they are important for our success and happiness” (Happiness Curriculum,2018, p.58). Reading this story gives this sense that this

story is meant for parents and teachers that they should encourage the child to do better even if

Story 5: “*Maa ka pyaar*”

“During school days of Thomas Edison, his teacher gave him a letter and asked him to hand it over to his mother only. Thomas eagerly asked her to read for him also.

Mother said, in this letter it is written that your son is very talented. This school is very small in front of his talent, and we do not have such a skilled teacher to give him a better education. So, either you teach Thomas yourself or send him to study in some other better school.

After many years, Thomas became a scientist. One day he was cleaning his room where he found that old letter, in which was written that 'your child is mentally ill and because of which he cannot study further in our school, so don't send your child to our school. Thomas wrote in his diary after reading this letter that "I was a mentally ill child, but my mother's love and affection made my future and made me a talented man”.

they are not performing well initially. The story emphasises the importance of parenting style and its impact on child life. However, we can also argue that whether story wants to convey that parents always take right decision about the child? What is the key idea of Happiness a child should have learnt from the story is not clear from the story?

The story communicates the “importance of developing respect for parents and to develop this sense amongst children that they should not presume about someone without thinking” (Happiness Curriculum, p.62). In this story, we see three types of happiness: first from the perspective of child where his happiness lies in getting things he desired;

another, where the child feels valued and loved

The story 6: “*Badaa aadmi*”

This is the story about the child who always demands expensive gifts from his parents. The father didn't earn much but he always tried his best to fulfill his child's wishes. But the child never understood his father's struggles. His father borrowed 10,000 rupees to purchase mobile for him and also, he was planning to sell his scooter to purchase motorcycle for him. Later when the child came to know about what his father is doing for him, he realized his mistakes.

because he understands all the things that his father does for him; third, from the perspective of a father, where his happiness lies in fulfilling the wishes of his child. The fourth kind of happiness that the father feels is the happiness of being understood by his son.

Story 7: “*Kabir ki seekh*” In this story, ‘Kabir’ demonstrates to his guest, who was tensed with his own nature of fighting with his family members and neighbours, how trust between family members doesn't lead to conflicts and fights between them. Kabir showed him that when his wife bought snacks instead of sweets that he asked for, he didn't get angry because he understands that may be there is no sweet at home so she brought snacks for them. Also, his son didn't get angry at Kabir when he called for lanterns in daylight, Kabir explains his son understands that his father may need the lanterns on the sunny day for some purpose. Kabir explains to his guest that in society and home mutual trust and mutual coordination works. If one person in family has committed any mistake another family member should take care of it and vice versa. This is the key to happiness.

The story gives this message to students that “mutual trust and coordination helps in

preventing conflicts in family and society and they may contribute to our happiness” (Happiness Curriculum, 2018, p.62). But why there is lack of trust and mutual coordination in society in the first place? How can a child develop these attitudes/ virtues about mutual trust and values? Is mere awareness about them enough? The story gives the sense that children should learn values from their parents or elders in the family. However, in cases where children see fights between parents or other elders in families, how can they not learn negative values?

Story 10: “Bhai hai Bojh nahi”

Two friends met after a long time. While talking to each other, one of the friends shared that he is a little sad. He told that his father's demise has burdened him with the fees of his brother's school. Then they saw a girl of around 10-11 years old who hold her brother on her shoulders. When that girl passed in front of them then they stopped her and said in a concerned tone that, ‘you are sweating, you may be tired because of the burden of your brother, take your brother in your arms for some time, you will feel relaxed’. Angry girl said, ‘Uncle he is not a burden for me, he is my younger brother’. Upon listening to the girl, both friends realized that their perspective was making them feel sad. They understood that where there is love, there is no burden.

The purpose of the story stated in the curriculum is “to develop trust towards family relationship and how to live those relationships” (Happiness Curriculum, 2018, p.77). In the story, the man who is capable of bearing the financial responsibility is not willing to do so. He neither perform his duty towards his brother and nor acted as carer to him. Second, the little girl who couldn't handle

the weight of her brother for a long time was still bearing that because she feels she is responsible for her little brother. Her happiness lies in fulfilling her duty as elder sister and caring for her brother in difficult life circumstances. Thus, the girl's case can be understood from both the perspectives of Kant's ‘duty ethics’ and Nel Noddings's ‘care ethics’. In other words, the story emphasises the importance of ‘care’ and ‘duty’ in the family relationships.

Story 20. In this story there was a girl named Gita. She was very scared of her father.

Once Gita's grandmother was admitted to the hospital, so Geeta's mother also stayed with her grandmother for that night. Both Gita and her father stayed at home. That night, Gita was not getting sleep and electricity also went, due to which she was shivering with fear. At mid night her father called her name to check whether she has slept or not. She told her father that she is feeling scared. His father came to her and saw that she was suffering from fever. Her father took care of her the whole night, he gave her milk, medicines and also put wet strips on her forehead. In the morning Geeta saw that his father sleeping beside her on the chair. Geeta realized that her father loves her a lot and she felt secure in his shadow. Geeta's faith in her father became stronger and all her fears ended.

The purpose of the story is to teach children “the importance of family relationships and encourage children to develop trust in them” (Happiness Curriculum, 2018, p.112). The story does not discuss the reasons for Geeta to be scared of her father? Was it Geeta's fault that she could not develop faith in her father? It is quite unclear.

The key purpose of this story, as stated in the curriculum, is that “human relations are more important than physical objects” (Happiness Curriculum, 2018, p.84). Sudesh maintained his friendship despite not being trusted by his friend Sumit. This story shows how trust and patience are important in maintaining the bond of friendship. Also, the key characters in the story Sudesh and Sumit took decisions on their own by using their own sense and thought. Thus, this story not only gives the message about the importance of bond of friendship, but also presents the case for children that they can also be good decision makers.

Story 12: *Kimti Kaun Pen Ya Mitr*

Sumit and Sudesh were good friends. One day Sudesh went to Sumit's house to return a notebook. Sumit showed his new pen and his family album to Sudesh. He liked that pen too much. After Sudesh's departure, Sumit's attention went to his pen but even after searching everywhere he didn't find his pen. He was sure in his mind that Sudesh cannot take his pen. However, next day in school, he saw his pen in Sudesh's pocket and asked him ‘you have my pen?’ First Sudesh refused, and after thinking of a minute he gave it to him. A few days later, Sumit cleaned his closet where he found his pen in the album. Sumit now had two pens. He went back to Sudesh with one of the pens and asked him, you have not taken my pen, so why did you give me your pen in school that day? Then Sudesh said, my friend is more valuable for me than a pen.

Theme 3. Happiness is in the pursuit

The story gives this sense that ‘an individual is solely responsible for his life achievements and failure. It emphasises the importance of an

The story 8 ‘*Ruk Jana nahi*’ to encourage children to face difficulties in life boldly. The story is about life struggles and achievements of scientist Stephen Hawking. Through his story, it is attempted to communicate that due to his strong will power he has overcome his physical disability and become a great scientist. Whereas we become so much worried in our small failures and small life issues.

individual's will power, motivation, sense of discipline, and trust on oneself without which we cannot achieve our aims or fight with odds in our life’ (Happiness Curriculum, 2018, p.70). The story does not emphasize the importance of socio-economical-political-cultural context of a person which may also impact the person's life struggle. For example, Stephen Hawking belonged to a developed country, therefore the availability of a quality health care system, including, facilities for persons with disabilities, scholarships for researchers, and advanced technology could help and support him realise his potential leading to his work and achievements. Thus, the importance of individual efforts is essential, but we cannot undermine the importance of socio-political-economic and cultural context of a person.

Theme 4. Happiness is in counting your blessings

The purpose of this story as stated in the happiness curriculum is to “draw student's attention to the qualities and abilities given to us by nature” (Happiness Curriculum, 2018, p.73). The story didn't give much importance to learning through textbook, rather it emphasises the importance of learning based on our own experiences, feelings, and observations, which Chhutki had done.

In the story 9 “*Chhutki ke saat ashcharya*” there is a girl named Chhutki. She never follows rote learning methods in her studies, she always tries to connect the teacher's teaching to life around. One day the teacher asked all the children to write the names of the seven wonders of the world. All children of the class wrote, Taj Mahal, the Great Wall of China, Statue of Christ the Redeemer etc. but when the teacher reads the copy of Chhutki, her answers were seeing, hearing, feeling something, laughing, loving, thinking, compassion. The teacher was surprised by her answer and felt that the girl from the village had given the glimpse of the precious gifts given to us by god, to whom she never gives attention in the class.

The key strength of the story- which is quite visible but not emphasised in the story- is the importance of ‘having the perspective of one’s own’ which Chhutki demonstrated in the class. Also, the importance of having ‘Joy of learning’, which Chhutki has experienced is not experienced by other students. It is mentioned in the story that ‘chutki belongs to village and teacher never use to give attention to her’. Does it mean that Chhutki’s background is the reason for her being close to ‘nature’? Lastly, how the purpose of the story and Happiness is interlinked is not clear from the story.

Theme 5. Happiness is in the well-being of all / Justice

The purpose of the story stated in the Happiness Curriculum is that “the meaning of stealing is not just to take someone’s belongings without asking them, but when any work is done with unethical means it is also stealing (Happiness Curriculum, 2018, p.87). The story emphasises on the importance of becoming an ethical person. Can our ethical actions always lead us towards happiness?

Story 13: “*Asli Chor Kaun*”

Once a king had appointed a very honest person for the post of minister. The king had given his new minister the responsibility of hearing and prosecution of theft and crime lawsuits in the city.

Once a wealthy person's house was stolen. On the arrest of the thief, the minister punished him for 6 months. Along with thief the minister also punished that rich man for six months. Hearing his punishment, the wealthy person complained to the minister's king and asked the reason for his punishment. The minister told the rich man ‘whatever wealth you have kept in your safe, have you not filled up your safe by plundering and threatening poor people of the state? Also you do not maintain the proper accounts for your money. You have more money than your labour and hardwork! It also implies that most of the people in the state are poor and becoming poorer because of you. The King also supported the minister for his decision.

The story emphasises on the value of ‘justice’ and gave equal imprisonment to both rich man and the poor. Nevertheless, is there any relationship between justice and happiness? Secondly, whether punishment was an effective means to bring desired changes in both the rich and the poor without changing their existing socio-economic conditions?

Theme 6. Happiness is in helping others

The purpose of this story stated in the curriculum is “to teach children that we should not think about education in terms of gaining the marks only. Rather making oneself useful for society is also a part of the education” (Happiness Curriculum 2018, p.108). The story shows how Nandni
s e l f l e s s l y

Story 19 *Shiksha Ka Aarth*

Anita and Nandani were in the same class. Anita always topped the class and was better than Nandni in studies. On one of the days of examinations, Nandani reached half an hour late in class. After the exam, Anita taunts Nandni for coming late to class. When Anita reached her home, she saw that her father is on the bed and many relatives and doctors are also standing there. Her father told that in the morning when he had gone for a walk, he got a heart attack on the road and her friend Nandani took him to the hospital. Upon hearing this, Anita was very ashamed of herself and the next day in school she went to Nandni, hugged her and cried a lot.

helped Anita's father without caring about her exam and her relationship with Anita. Nandni kept humanity above everything. The story emphasises the importance of humane aspect of education and also shows faith in child agency and their decision-making skills.

Theme 7: Happiness in having 'No Ego'**Story 14- *Ahankaar ka kamra***

In this story, a man and his wife lived in a big house which had 100 rooms. They used to show their house to everyone who visits them. Once upon a time a saint came to their home and they showed him their house. The saint asked the husband wife that "if you live in a single room, so who lives in other ninety-nine rooms? They said no one lives in these ninety-nine rooms. The saint said I feel someone lives in your other ninety-nine rooms? The couple asked who? The saint said "your Ego", listening that both husband and wife understood what the saint wants to teach them. Later the couple leave their big house and started to live happily in a small house.

The purpose of teaching this story is "to help the students realise that respect does not lie in showing off, rather in an acceptance and finding the best of utilities of resources that one has. Possession of more items is often done to satisfy the ego. To flaunt is same as being egoistic". (Happiness Curriculum, 2018, p.90).

The story emphasises that we should not accumulate wealth and possessions beyond our needs i.e because showing off of the wealth may make us egoistic. However, is possession of material wealth justified if a person is not egoistic, but is humble?

The purpose of the story stated in the curriculum is to teach children that ego

Story 15: *Mujhe sab pata hai*

This is the story of a boy who was very good in his studies. But slowly he becomes overconfident about his studies and started to think that he knows everything. One day, the teacher took out a new way to make children understand. He called that child at his home and served tea with kettle. Even when cup was fully filled with tea, he continued to put tea in it. Seeing that, the child said to him, "sir stop! Did you forget that tea cup is full? There is no place in this cup but you are continuously putting tea in it".

Teacher said, Son, you are concerned more about this cup, than about your own mind. Like this, full cup of tea, your mind is filled with vanity in which there is no longer a place to teach. If you have to become a big man in your life then you have to maintain a place of learning in your mind. "I know everything" this vanity will never let you learn something. The child has understood the point of the teacher and then he changed his habit.

prevents us from learning (Happiness

Story 16 *Sharir ka Ghamand*

There was a king who was very attractive in appearance. But his Guru he respects a lot in his kingdom was not attractive and handsome like him. One day, the king jokingly told Guru Ji that he has not seen wise men like him till today, but it would have been nice if nature had given him beauty too.

Listening to that, the guruji understood that the king has developed the great pride on his beauty. The next day, before the king came to the court, guruji asked the servant to fill water in a gold pitcher and in a pitcher of mud.

When the king arrived in the palace and asked for water, the king was given water from the golden pitcher. The king did not like water because the water was hot and its flavour is also changed. Then following the order of guruji, the water from earthen pot was served to king. The king got great satisfaction in drinking this water. When King asked the reason for the change of water taste, then Guruji said, 'king, we thought that you would love to enjoy the water from beautiful gold pitcher instead then from the earthen pot. The king immediately understood his point.

Curriculum, 2018, p.93). The story emphasises that learning is a never-ending process, therefore we should never think that we know everything, such thought stops our growth. What is unclear in the story is 'what kind of idea of Happiness are we seeking from this story and how it is related or interlinked with ego?

The purpose of this story in the curriculum states that "Utility has more importance than beauty and money, and without being useful beauty and money has no relevance" (Happiness Curriculum, 2018, p.97).

The story parallels the beauty of king which has no value with the golden pitcher whose water is not suitable for drinking and contrasts it with the water in earthen pot that is as nourishing as the Guru's wisdom. Contrary to the purpose of the story, something which has great utility may also become a source of ego. Moreover, the relation between utility and happiness is not clear in the story.

The purpose of the story stated in the curriculum is "to teach children about judicious use of natural resources" (Happiness Curriculum, 2018, p. 101). The whole story is based on questioning the 'Egoistic attitude of

Story 17: *Ek glass pani ki kimat*

This story is about an episode from life of 'Alexander the Great'. Alexander dreamed of conquering the whole world, because of which he had killed many other people. Once he went to meet a **fakir/saint**. Seeing him, Fakir started laughing loudly. Sikandar asked for the reason of his laugh and said, do you know who am I? Fakir said to Sikander that tell me: if you wandered in the desert and all around you is heat and you are dying because of thirst. Then how much part of your state you can give to save your life?

Alexander said I can give half of my state. Fakir said if I refuse to sell a glass of water for half of the state then? Alexander said I will give the whole state. Fakir laughs, it means your state's price is just a glass of water and which will be enough to shaken your pride.

Alexander the Great' for the possessions he has. The story emphasises on the importance of a glass of water, which is a basic necessity for any human being whether he is Alexander the Great or any other person. Thus, according to the story, the importance of materialistic things is temporary and one should focus on

preserving natural resources essential for basic necessities. The questions emerged from the stories are, how does judicious use of natural resources is interlinked with happiness? Is a person whose basic needs are fulfilled is a happy person?

Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to identify the key idea of 'Happiness' from the thematic analysis of the stories of Happiness Curriculum. The whole analysis reveals that the stories do not provide us with a clear understanding of what happiness is. Rather, it tells us about the sources of happiness i.e. healthy relationships with family and friends; condition for happiness i.e peaceful mind, positive feeling, unegoistic self, caring attitude etc.; and the nature of happiness i.e something non materialistic, solely determined by human beings, can be found within the human being and unrelated to socio-political-economic-cultural context of human beings. Should we think that sources, nature, and conditions for happiness are more important for children to become a happy human being than to understand the definition of happiness in Happiness Curriculum?

One of the key ideas about 'Happiness' that emerged from all the stories is that 'individual is sole responsible for determining her/his happiness'. The stories emphasise on good human values to make children good human beings. For example, stories emphasize on individual good qualities such as caring, helping, loving, and positive nature of humans, which may lead him towards happiness. The stories also emphasised on the negative qualities of individuals such as greed, ego, jealousy which may create obstacles in

happiness of an individual. Thus, entails a particular view about human being which seems to be self-centred. In other words, stories propagate one-way approach to Happiness.

One step beyond individual self the stories emphasises the importance of interpersonal relationship but the focus of the story is limited to family and friends. The stories like 'Maa ka Pyaar', 'Geeta ke papa', 'Bhai hai Bhoj nahi', 'kabir ki sikh', 'keemti kaun pen ya mitr'. Two stories also tried to emphasises the importance of human relationships with nature they are 'ek glass pani ki kimat it emphasises on importance of judicious use of natural resources. The second story is 'chutki ke saat ashcharya' which emphasis on wonders of nature which we often take for granted. But the two stories don't explicitly discuss how this relationship with nature will lead to happiness or our own happiness or collective happiness. Moreover, the role of character in these stories had also led other interpretation other than the central theme.

The stories emphasise on the one-way relationship of humans with community and public life i.e how happy individuals/ humans can contribute to solves problems of community and public life and make them more peaceful. Whereas how community and public life can contribute to individual happiness and unhappiness which Noddings (2004) has emphasised upon was missed in the stories.

According to Noddings (2004, p.21)

“as educators, we believe that good character has something to with happiness, and so we continually try to find effective methods of character education. But social pressure also

causes both temporary and permanent unhappiness by inducing envy, guilt, self-denial, self-indulge, greed and hosts of other ills. As a result of internal and external conflicts many people are not sure what would make them happy or why they are unhappy. And a few, nagged by an overzealous conscience, religion, or family, come to believe that they have no rights to happiness”.

This relationship between social- emotional aspects of person and socio-economic- political and cultural context of person is missed in Happiness Curriculum. A neglect of this relationship may impact individual’s motivation, decision making power, actions etc in her life.

Also, Happiness Stories completely negate the role of state in contributing individual’s happiness’. For example the stories ‘*Ruk Jana nahi*’ and ‘*Asli chor Kaun*’ over emphasises the importance individual qualities such as values, morals, will power etc in determining the individual happiness rather the role of the state that can play an important role in creating conditions for supporting their life struggles. Such an addition of the state context can help students to know their rights which they can demand from them and can drive happiness by being a citizen of a nation. Noddings (2003)

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also raised this question that do we need some form of public life to be happy?

One of the problems with the stories that it is not related to child lived reality rather most of the stories have the protagonist such as saints, teachers, labourers, old lady, husband-wife, king ." Also, only five stories out of twenty stories have children as protagonists and there are only two such stories where children did positive acts on their own, no situation and where no elder was responsible for making them realize what is wrong and what is right"(Mittal, 2019 (a)).

None of the stories states such ‘purpose’ stated in the curriculum section such as development of ‘logical ability, creativity, expression skills’ in children rather they are limited to teaching about good human values to make them good human beings. What is not clear from happiness curriculum is whether it is asking to become happy child first or happy human being? The question left unanswered in Happiness Curriculum is whether a person with values, morals, and ethics is a happy person?

Lastly, this introduction of Happiness Curriculum in mainstream schooling raise questions for further exploration, such as, why are we seeking Happiness via education? Unlike Happiness Curriculum what can be the other approaches through which schooling can help in attaining happiness?

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