

Happy Schools for Quality Education in Fiji

*¹Dr. Rajesh Krishna, ¹Prathika Gounder

¹Principal at Swami Vivekananda College, Nadi, Fiji

²Lecturer at University of Fiji

*Corresponding Author

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ABSTRACT

Every human being wants to be happy. In reality humans try hard to achieve happiness throughout their life. Schools are the most influential place to promote happiness. Schools play a key role in ensuring better well-being, health and achieving success in future life. Promoting happiness in schools does not imply that less learning will take place, but rather, it will help initiate love for learning. The study attempts to explore the practices and processes that are in place in the secondary schools in Fiji and whether these practices and processes promote positive human and social relationships among members of the school community. The findings would be contextualized and reflect the true nature of happiness and well-being in the secondary schools. This will have implications for policy developers of the education sector, example, The Ministry of Education who embarks on making Fiji a knowledgeable society through quality education.

A mixed method approach is used to identify the key factors that makes the schools happy or unhappy place. The results of the study showed that happiness and well-being has not been the priority in schools. The study showed that Fiji secondary schools are making progress, though attitude of the teachers and school heads should be improved. The school level stakeholders should prioritise happiness and well-being of learners in order have a peaceful and a happy society.

Key Words: Happiness, well-being, infrastructure, relationships, learning environment, process, teaching and learning, attitudes, attributes

INTRODUCTION

“Happiness is the meaning and purpose of life, the whole aim and end of human existence” [1]. In reality humans try hard to achieve happiness throughout their life. Schools are the most influential place to promote happiness. Building “happy schools” has been one of the key concerns by many countries in recent years with an aim to create a friendly, safe, and happy teaching and learning environment so that teachers and students can have more motivation in improving their teaching and learning achievements, thus bringing forth more happiness to the involved individuals and organizations [2]. Today, schools are becoming more complex due to rapid change in technology that is affecting the current socio-economic landscape as well as changing structures and demands of families. It now seems that children are not happy going to school due to enormous pressures and high expectations on academic achievements, exams and competitions. All children deserve to be happy and must enjoy their school life.

Quality of education is influenced by a number of external and internal factors that undermines learner happiness. External factors such as disregard for the human rights, inequity, poverty, racial discrimination, intolerance and violence are all creating an unhappier society [3,4]. This has resulted in an increase in violence and bullying within the school system. Rapid technological advancement has become widespread with competition, thus, putting immense pressure on our learners to compete in this globalised world [3,4]. On the other hand, internal factors within school system such as uncondusive learning environment, ineffective teachers, lack of learning resources, outdated curriculum, over emphasis on academic content and exam scores

and lack of parental support are all contributing towards unhappy schools [3,4].

In June 2014, UNESCO Bangkok launched the Happy Schools Project looking at the important relationship between happiness and the quality of education by capturing the voices and viewpoint of stakeholders at the school level in relation to what constitutes a happy school [5]. The report highlights the Happy Schools Framework and tries to bring happiness and quality of education by shifting from traditional education methods to recognising diversity of talents and intelligences that will enhance happiness [5].

This study will be the first of its kind to explore the possibilities of making our schools happy to achieve quality education. No such study regarding Happy School for quality education in Fiji schools has been carried out to date. This research would therefore, reveal the importance of happiness and well-being in the teaching – learning process and broaden the knowledge in the area of Happy School. The study attempts to explore the practices and processes that are in place in the secondary schools in Fiji and whether these practices and processes promote positive human and social relationships among members of the school community. The findings would be contextualised and reflect the true nature of happiness and well-being in the secondary schools. The practices and processes identified in this research will help suggest better strategies for implementing happiness and well-being in schools. These suggestions and strategies will be a guiding framework for implementing strategies that encompasses teaching and learning methodologies to enhance learner’s sense of well-being for schools not only in Fiji but also across the Pacific.

METHOD

Study Setting and Period

This multicentre study was conducted in four large secondary schools in the Western division of Fiji. The schools selected were the only large schools in the Western division with student roll up to 1000 students and teacher roll up to 50 teachers. All the four schools offer education from year 9 to 13 and have students and teachers of diverse cultural background. This study was conducted from 1st October 2017 to 14th November 2017.

Study Design and Population

This mixed study includes students, teachers and school heads from four large secondary schools in the Western division. Participants were selected through random sampling to ensure selection of participants from various levels and grades. Administration group will be selected from Principal, Vice Principal and Assistant Principal. The teachers’ group from each school will be selected from the Heads of departments and assistant teachers from different subject domains. The students’ group will include students from year 13 level only since they have spent greater time in their respective schools. Wherever, possible gender and ethnic equality will be taken into consideration to avoid any biasness in the research sample and participants. (Table 1)

Table 1 - Distribution of the sample size

SCHOOLS	LOCATION	GRADE	STUDENTS	TEACHERS	SCHOOL HEADS
W	URBAN	LARGE	40	20	3
X	PERI-URBAN	LARGE	40	20	3
Y	URBAN	LARGE	40	20	3
Z	URBAN	LARGE	40	20	3
TOTAL: 255			160	80	15

Data Collection Instruments and Techniques

A questionnaire was prepared by the author using data from available literature and using questions after modification from other similar studies. It was internally pre validated by the 3 subject experts. The questionnaire was then distributed among the school heads, teachers and students of the selected secondary schools. Participation was voluntary and no incentives were proposed and confidentiality was ensured. The questionnaire had 3 sections with 46 questions with categorical answers.

Data Analysis and Presentation

Data were collected and entered into Microsoft Excel and analysed using SPSS version 25. Categorical statistics were presented as both frequencies and percentages in tabulated forms.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical clearance was obtained from permanent secretary of Ministry of Education, Fiji. A formal approval was obtained from school heads of respective secondary schools for participation of teachers and parental consent was obtained for participation of students.

RESULTS

A total of 230 participants were included in this study (School heads-10; Teachers -73; Students – 147) with 91% response rate. (Table 2)

Table 2: Overall distribution and response rates

Categories	Target	Respondents	Response rate
<i>Students</i>	160	147	92%
<i>Teachers</i>	80	73	91%
<i>School Heads</i>	12	10	83%
<i>Overall</i>	252	230	91%

A) Importance of human relationships and interactions in school promoting happiness and well-being of learners.

A1- Parental involvement is encouraged by making schools open to the community.

Most of the respondents (50.7% students, 53.5% teachers and 70% school heads agree that their schools are making every effort to engage parents and the whole community while 26.1% students, 16.9% teachers and 20% school heads strongly agrees. (Table: 3)

TABLE 3	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	13 (9.2%)	-	-
Disagree	11 (7.7%)	14 (19.7%)	-
Neutral	9 (6.3%)	7 (9.9%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	72 (50.7%)	38 (53.5%)	7 (70.0%)
Strongly Agree	37 (26.1%)	12 (16.9%)	2 (20.0%)

A2 - Multi-grade clubs or houses are implemented to develop friendship across different grades.

Majority of the respondents (36.1% students, 37.0% teachers and 40% school heads) strongly disagrees that their schools are making any effort to form clubs or houses in order to develop friendship across diversity while 33.3% students, 20.5% teachers and 30% school heads disagrees. (Table 4)

TABLE 4	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	52 (36.1%)	27 (37.0%)	4 (40.0%)
Disagree	48 (33.3%)	15 (20.5%)	3 (30.0%)
Neutral	17 (11.8%)	9 (12.3%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	19 (13.2%)	12 (16.4%)	1 (10.0%)
Strongly Agree	8 (5.6%)	10 (13.7%)	1 (10.0%)

A3 - Various activities are implemented to foster positive friendships and relationships among students across different schools.

Most students feel that schools are doing very little to foster friendship among students across different schools as 41.6% strongly disagrees and 29.9% disagrees while 13.9% students agree that there are activities organized across different schools and 6.6% strongly agrees. Similarly, majority of the teachers (38.3%) strongly disagrees and 43.8% and 50% teachers and school heads disagree that schools are organizing activities to foster friendships across different schools. (Table 5)

TABLE 5	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	57 (41.6%)	28 (38.3%)	-
Disagree	41 (29.9%)	32 (43.8%)	5 (50.0%)
Neutral	11 (8.0%)	3 (4.1%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	19 (13.9%)	8 (11.0%)	3 (30.0%)
Strongly Agree	9 (6.6%)	2 (2.7%)	1 (10.0%)

A4- Schools create a family-like atmosphere to encourage positive relationships between teachers and students.

Majority of the respondents either strongly disagree or disagrees that schools are creating a family-like atmosphere. 37.2% students disagree while 43.1% teachers strongly disagree and 30% of school heads disagree. On the other hand, 10.3% students, 8.3% teachers and 10% school heads strongly agree that a family-like environment is created by the school to encourage positive relationships between students and teachers. (Table 6)

TABLE 6	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	43 (29.7%)	31 (43.1%)	2 (20.0%)
Disagree	54 (37.2%)	18 (25.0%)	3 (30.0%)

Neutral	11 (7.6%)	9 (12.5%)	2 (20.0%)
Agree	22 (15.2%)	8 (11.1%)	2 (20.0%)
Strongly Agree	15 (10.3%)	6 (8.3%)	1 (10.0%)

A5- Teacher evaluations are done to focus on whether or not they have positive attitudes and attributes.

32% students agree while 36.1% strongly agrees that their schools allow students to evaluate teachers in order to know whether teachers have positive attitudes and attributes. Teachers and school heads similarly feel that evaluations are done as seen in the table below where 28.8% teachers and 30% school heads agree and 64.4% teachers and 50% school heads strongly agree. (Table 7)

TABLE 7	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	12 (8.2%)	-	-
Disagree	22 (15.0%)	2 (2.7%)	1 (10.0%)
Neutral	13 (8.8%)	3 (4.1%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	47 (32.0%)	21 (28.8%)	3 (30.0%)
Strongly Agree	53 (36.1%)	47 (64.4%)	5 (50.0%)

A6 - Students are allowed to give feedback to the teachers to enable a democratic school management.

Results show that majority of schools do not allow democratic management system. 39.3% students, 53.5% teachers and 44.4% school heads strongly disagree. On the other 17.9% students, 12.7% teachers and 11.1% school heads agree that school provides opportunity to the students to give feedback about teachers. (Table 8)

TABLE 8	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	57 (39.3%)	38 (53.5%)	4 (44.4%)
Disagree	39 (26.9%)	17 (23.9%)	3 (33.3%)
Neutral	11 (7.6%)	3 (4.2%)	1 (11.1%)
Agree	26 (17.9%)	9 (12.7%)	1 (11.1%)
Strongly Agree	12 (8.3%)	4 (5.6%)	-

A7 - Diversity and differences are respected for the schools to be inclusive of different needs, abilities and background.

Most of the students (27.9% agree and 23.8% strongly agree) feel that schools respect diversity and differences. 52.2% teachers agree while 11% strongly agree that schools are inclusive whereas 15.1% disagrees. 50% school heads agree while 30% strongly agree. (Table 9)

TABLE 9	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	26 (17.7%)	7 (9.6%)	-

Disagree	28 (19.0%)	11 (15.1%)	1 (10.0%)
Neutral	17 (11.6%)	9 (12.3%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	41 (27.9%)	38 (52.1%)	5 (50.0%)
Strongly Agree	35 (23.8%)	8 (11.0%)	3 (30.0%)

A8 - Knowledge of other cultures both within and outside the school context is promoted.

Majority of the respondents agree that schools promote other cultures. 36.1% students strongly agree, 32% agree while 15% disagree and 8.2% strongly disagree. Majority of the teachers (64.4%) and school heads (50%) strongly agree that knowledge of other cultures is promoted in schools. (Table 10)

TABLE 10	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	12 (8.2%)	-	-
Disagree	22 (15.0%)	2 (2.7%)	1 (10.0%)
Neutral	13 (8.8%)	3 (4.1%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	47 (32.0%)	21 (28.8%)	3 (30.0%)
Strongly Agree	53 (36.1%)	47 (64.4%)	9 (50.0%)

A9- School encourage role play and discussions to create empathy and understanding.

35.7% students, 51.4% teachers and 50% school heads disagree that schools provide role play and discussions to create empathy and understanding while 27.3% students, 18.6% teachers and 12.5% school heads strongly disagrees. Some respondents (18.8% students, 15.7% teachers and 25% school heads) agree that schools encourage role play and discussions. (Table 11)

TABLE 11	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	39 (27.3%)	13 (18.6%)	1 (12.5%)
Disagree	51 (35.7%)	36 (51.4%)	4 (50.0%)
Neutral	11 (7.7%)	5 (7.1%)	1 (12.5%)
Agree	27 (18.8%)	11 (15.7%)	2 (25.0%)
Strongly Agree	15 (10.5%)	10 (7.1%)	-

A10 - School promotes understanding of others by teaching various religion and languages.

This is very much agreed by all the respondents. 50.7% students, 53.5% teachers and 70% school heads agree that school allow understanding of other religion and languages while 26.1% students, 16.9% teachers and 20% school heads strongly agree. (Table 12)

TABLE 12	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	12 (9.2%)	5 (12.7%)	-

Disagree	17 (7.7%)	9 (12.7%)	1 (10.0%)
Neutral	9 (6.3%)	7 (9.9%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	71 (50.7%)	38 (53.5%)	7 (70.0%)
Strongly Agree	33 (26.1%)	12 (16.9%)	2 (20.0%)

A11- Students with special needs are included in the mainstream learning.

It seems from the result that most schools are not ready to accommodate special needs students in the mainstream. Most of the students (36.1%), teachers (37%) and school heads (40%) strongly disagree that the mainstream learning is inclusive. On the other hand, some respondents strongly agree that schools support inclusive mainstream learning as indicated by 5.6% students, 13.7% teachers and 10% school heads strongly agrees. (Table 13)

TABLE 13	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	52 (36.1%)	27 (37.0%)	4 (40.0%)
Disagree	48 (33.3%)	15 (20.5%)	3 (30.0%)
Neutral	17 (11.8%)	9 (12.3%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	19 (13.2%)	12 (16.4%)	1 (10.0%)
Strongly Agree	8 (5.6%)	10 (13.7%)	1 (10.0%)

A12 - Positive values, attitudes and practices are infused throughout the school activities.

Surprisingly, most of the students (41.6%) strongly disagree that school activities throughout the school are infused with positive values, attitudes and practices. Similarly, majority of teachers (43.8%) and school heads (50%) disagree. Only few respondents either agree (13.9% students, 11% teachers, 30% school heads) or strongly disagree (6.6% students, 2.7% teachers, 10% school heads). (Table 14)

TABLE 14	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	57 (41.6%)	28 (38.3%)	-
Disagree	41 (29.9%)	32 (43.8%)	5 (50.0%)
Neutral	11 (8.0%)	3 (4.1%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	19 (13.9%)	8 (11.0%)	3 (30.0%)
Strongly Agree	9 (6.6%)	2 (2.7%)	1 (10.0%)

A13 - Dual-purpose learning is encouraged by the school and integrated throughout various subjects.

37.2% students and 30% school heads disagree while 43.1% teachers strongly disagree that dual-purpose learning is encouraged by the school and integrated in all the subjects. Overall majority of the respondents disagree. (Table 15)

TABLE 15	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	43 (29.7%)	31 (43.1%)	2 (20.0%)

Disagree	54 (37.2%)	18 (25.0%)	3 (30.0%)
Neutral	11 (7.6%)	9 (12.5%)	2 (20.0%)
Agree	22 (15.2%)	8 (11.1%)	2 (20.0%)
Strongly Agree	15 (10.3%)	5 (8.3%)	1 (10.0%)

A14 - Teachers' contributions to the school and society is celebrated by the school.

This is evident as majority of the respondents (36.1% students, 64.4% teachers and 50% school heads) strongly agree that teachers' work is celebrated by the school. On the other hand, few respondents (15% students, 2.7% teachers 10% school heads) disagree and feel that not much is done to appreciate teacher's contributions to the nation building. (Table 16)

TABLE 16	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	12 (8.2%)	-	-
Disagree	22 (15.0%)	2 (2.7%)	1 (10.0%)
Neutral	13 (8.8%)	3 (4.1%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	47 (32.0%)	21 (28.8%)	3 (30.0%)
Strongly Agree	53 (36.1%)	47 (64.4%)	3 (50.0%)

A15 - School enhances teacher skills and competencies through regular professional development, school networks and peer support.

High percentage (39.3% students, 53.5% teachers and 44.4% school heads) of respondents strongly agrees that schools conduct professional development and provide support to enhance teacher skills. However, 16% respondents disagree and think otherwise. (Table 17)

TABLE 17	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	12 (8.3%)	4 (5.6%)	-
Disagree	26 (17.9%)	9 (12.7%)	1 (11.1%)
Neutral	11 (7.6%)	3 (4.2%)	1 (11.1%)
Agree	39 (26.9%)	17 (23.9%)	3 (33.3%)
Strongly Agree	57 (39.3%)	38 (53.5%)	4 (44.4%)

B) To what extent is teaching and learning used by teachers in schools determine whether or not learning is fun and enjoyable?

B1- Standardized test and exams are reduced in order to reduce student's stress.

Students (54.9%), teachers (52.1%) and school heads (60%) strongly disagree that schools are reducing test and exams to reduce stress while 28.9% students, 32.4% teachers and 30% school heads disagree. In fact, they feel that unreasonable and unfair workload due to overemphasis on test and exams makes schools unhappy. (Table 18)

TABLE 18	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	78 (54.9%)	37 (52.1%)	6 (60.0%)
Disagree	41 (28.9%)	23 (32.4%)	3 (30.0%)
Neutral	9 (6.3%)	3 (4.2%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	11(7.7%)	5 (7.0%)	-
Strongly Agree	3 (2.1%)	5 (4.2%)	-

B2 - Homework is reduced with optional activities to extend learning which is meaningful and enjoyable.

Majority of the respondents strongly disagree that schools are making an effort to reduce homework with optional activities. 36.1% students, 37% teachers and 40% school heads strongly disagree while 33.3% students, 20.5% teachers and 30% school heads disagree. On the other hand, 13.2% students, 16.4% teachers and 10% school heads agree that there is reduction in homework. (Table 19)

TABLE 19	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	52 (36.1%)	27 (37.0%)	4 (40.0%)
Disagree	48 (33.3%)	15 (20.5%)	3 (30.0%)
Neutral	17 (11.8%)	9 (12.3%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	19 (13.2%)	12 (16.4%)	1 (10.0%)
Strongly Agree	8 (5.6%)	10 (13.7%)	1 (10.0%)

B3- Non-academic subjects are valued at the school so that students are assessed in their attitudes, character and experiences that make them good citizens of the world.

Respondents strongly disagree that schools value non-academic subjects. Most of the students (41.6%) strongly disagree while majority of the teachers (43.8%) disagree and 50% school heads also disagree. Most respondents claim that their non-academic subjects are compromised for academic subjects to prepare students for exam. However, only 6.6% students, 2.7% teachers and 10% school heads strongly agree that non-academic subjects are valued. (Table 20)

TABLE 20	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	57 (41.6%)	28 (38.3%)	-
Disagree	41 (29.9%)	32 (43.8%)	5 (50.0%)
Neutral	11 (8.0%)	3 (4.1%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	19 (13.9%)	8 (11.0%)	3 (30.0%)
Strongly Agree	9 (6.6%)	2 (2.7%)	1 (10.0%)

B4: Schools admission criteria also include non-academic factors such as extra-curricular activities and community involvement.

Majority of the students (35.2%) strongly disagree that schools include extra-curricular activities in their enrolment forms. This contradicts with what the teachers and school heads feel. Majority of teachers (44.4%) and school head (40%) agree that school includes extra-curricular activity as admission criteria. (Table 21)

TABLE 21	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	51 (35.2%)	11 (15.2%)	1 (10.0%)
Disagree	32 (22.1%)	23 (31.9%)	2 (20.0%)
Neutral	7 (4.8%)	3 (4.2%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	29 (20.0%)	32 (44.4%)	4 (40.0%)
Strongly Agree	26 (17.9%)	20 (27.7%)	2 (20.0%)

B5 - Group work is encouraged in the school for collaborative problem-solving and diverse teamwork.

32% students, 37% teachers and 30% school heads strongly disagree that schools encourage group work collaborative problem-solving diverse teamwork. Also 28% students, 30.1% teachers and 20% school heads disagree. On the hand 15.6% students, 11% teachers and 10% school head strongly agree that group work is encouraged. (Table 22)

TABLE 22	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	47 (32.0%)	27 (37.0%)	3 (30.0%)
Disagree	41 (28.0%)	22 (30.1%)	2 (20.0%)
Neutral	7 (8.8%)	6 (8.2%)	2 (20.0%)
Agree	29 (19.7%)	10 (13.7%)	2 (20.0%)
Strongly Agree	23 (15.6%)	8 (11.0%)	1 (10.0%)

B6: An open learning atmosphere is evident in the classrooms where mistakes are valued as part of the learning process.

TABLE 23	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	57 (39.3%)	38 (53.5%)	4 (44.4%)
Disagree	39 (26.9%)	17 (23.9%)	3 (33.3%)
Neutral	11 (7.6%)	3 (4.2%)	1 (11.1%)
Agree	26 (17.9%)	9 (12.7%)	1 (11.1%)
Strongly Agree	12 (8.3%)	4 (5.6%)	-

Majority of the students (39.3%) strongly disagree that open learning environment is encouraged in the school. Similarly, majority of the teachers (53.5%) and school heads (44.4%) strongly disagree. In fact, majority of the respondents feel that you are punished for making mistakes rather that valued as part of learning. (Table 23)

B7- Students are encouraged to ask questions in the classroom.

Respondents agree that students are encouraged to ask questions in the classroom. 27.9% students agree while 23.8% strongly agree to this. Teachers and school heads also agree with 52.1% and 50% respectively. 17.7% students and 9.6% teachers strongly disagree that students are encouraged to ask questions. (Table 24)

TABLE 24	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	26 (17.7%)	7 (9.6%)	-
Disagree	28 (19.0%)	11 (15.1%)	1 (10.0%)
Neutral	17 (11.6%)	9 (12.3%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	41 (27.9%)	38 (52.1%)	5 (50.0%)
Strongly Agree	35 (23.8%)	8 (11.0%)	3 (30.0%)

B8 - Teachers provide positive feedbacks to the students to ensure students see their accomplishments.

This is mostly agreed by students (50.7%), teachers (53.5%) and school heads (70%) that teachers provide feedback to the students while 26.1% students, 16.9% teachers and 20% school heads strongly agree. Only 9.2% students and 12.7% teachers strongly disagree. (Table 25)

TABLE 25	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	12 (9.2%)	5 (12.7%)	-
Disagree	17 (7.7%)	9 (12.7%)	9 (12.7%)
Neutral	9 (6.3%)	7 (9.9%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	71 (50.7%)	38 (53.5%)	7 (70.0%)
Strongly Agree	33 (26.1%)	12 (16.9%)	2 (20.0%)

B9 - A portfolio of students' ambition is created to enable students to develop their dreams and think about their future.

Most respondents disagree that student's ambition portfolio is created to help students to develop their dreams about future. 35.7% students, 51.4% teachers and 50% school heads disagree while 27.3% students, 18.6% teachers and 12.5% school heads strongly disagree. On the other hand, 18.8% students, 15.7% teachers and 25% school head agree the portfolio of students is created. (Table 26)

TABLE 26	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	39 (27.3%)	13 (18.6%)	1 (12.5%)
Disagree	51 (35.7%)	36 (51.4%)	4 (50.0%)
Neutral	11 (7.7%)	5 (7.1%)	1 (12.5%)
Agree	27 (18.8%)	11 (15.7%)	2 (25.0%)
Strongly Agree	15 (10.5%)	4 (7.1%)	-

B10- School celebrates student’s achievement through prizes and rewards

High percentage of respondents agree and strongly agree at student’s achievement are celebrated in schools. 50% students, 54.9% teachers and 70% school heads agree and 28.9% students strongly agree. (Table 27)

TABLE 27	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	9 (6.3%)	-	-
Disagree	12 (8.5%)	13 (18.3%)	-
Neutral	9 (6.3%)	8 (11.3%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	71 (50.0%)	39 (54.9%)	7 (70.0%)
Strongly Agree	41 (28.9%)	11 (15.5%)	3 (20.0%)

B11 - School organizes events to celebrate national days in order to promote a sense of collective purpose in the school community.

Most respondents strongly agree that schools celebrate national days. High percentage of students (36.1%), teachers (37%) and school heads (40%) strongly agree. (Table 28)

TABLE 28	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	8 (5.6%)	10 (13.7%)	1 (10.0%)
Disagree	19 (13.2%)	12 (16.4%)	1 (10.0%)
Neutral	17 (11.8%)	9 (12.3%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	48 (33.3%)	15 (20.5%)	3 (30.0%)
Strongly Agree	52 (36.1%)	27 (37.0%)	4 (40.0%)

B12: Students are engaged through media clubs to improve students’ written communication skills, spelling and grammar.

High percentage of students (41.6%) strongly disagree compared to 43.8% teachers and 50% school heads who disagree that students are engaged through media clubs. Some respondents agree (13.9% students, 11% teachers, 30% school heads) or strongly agree (6.6% students, 2.7% teachers, 10% school heads) showing that some schools have media clubs. (Table 29)

TABLE 29	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	57 (41.6%)	28 (38.3%)	-
Disagree	41 (29.9%)	32 (43.8%)	5 (50.0%)
Neutral	11 (8.0%)	3 (4.1%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	19 (13.9%)	8 (11.0%)	3 (30.0%)
Strongly Agree	9 (6.6%)	2 (2.7%)	1 (10.0%)

B13- Textbooks are replaced by lesson plans designed by teachers through their own research in collaboration with students.

41.4% students, 43.1% teachers and 30% school heads disagree while 33.1% students, 25% teachers and 20% school heads strongly disagree that teachers are using lesson plans. This shows that teachers are mainly using textbooks in lesson delivery. (Table 30)

TABLE 30	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	48 (33.1%)	18 (25.0%)	2 (20.0%)
Disagree	60 (41.4%)	31 (43.1%)	3 (30.0%)
Neutral	8 (5.5%)	9 (12.5%)	2 (20.0%)
Agree	19 (13.1%)	8 (11.1%)	2 (20.0%)
Strongly Agree	10 (6.9%)	6 (8.3%)	1 (10.0%)

B14 - School ensures that students apply learning content beyond the classroom in daily life.

Most students, teachers and school heads with 36.1%, 64.4% and 50% respectively strongly disagree while 32% students, 28.8% teachers and 30% school heads disagree that schools ensure students apply what they learn in their life. Only 8.2% of the students strongly agree. (Table 31)

TABLE 31	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	53 (36.1%)	47 (64.4%)	5 (50.0%)
Disagree	47 (32.0%)	21 (28.8%)	3 (30.0%)
Neutral	13 (8.8%)	3 (4.1%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	22 (15.0%)	2 (2.7%)	1 (10.0%)
Strongly Agree	12 (8.2%)	-	-

B15 - Interdisciplinary approach to learning is applied across subjects so that learning is less passive and more collaborative.

Results show that interdisciplinary approach is not applied as 35.2% students, 45.1% teachers disagree while 44.4% school head strongly disagree. However, some schools do take this approach since 13.1% students, 12.7% teachers and 11.1% school heads agree. (Table 32)

TABLE 32	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	46 (31.7%)	24 (33.8%)	4 (44.4%)
Disagree	51 (35.2%)	32 (45.1%)	2 (22.2%)
Neutral	8 (5.5%)	3 (4.2%)	1 (11.1%)
Agree	19 (13.1%)	9 (12.7%)	1 (11.1%)
Strongly Agree	21 (14.5%)	3 (4.2%)	1 (11.1%)

B16 -School provides a qualified counsellor so that students have the opportunity to talk about their problems.

High percentage of respondents (39.3% students, 53.5% teachers and 44.4% school heads) strongly disagree that school provides a qualified counsellor for students. In fact, recently all schools with counsellors were removed. However, 17.9% students, 12.7% teachers and 11.1% school heads agree that some sort of counselling support is available for the students. (Table 33)

TABLE 33	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	57 (39.3%)	38 (53.5%)	4 (44.4%)
Disagree	39 (26.9%)	17 (23.9%)	3 (33.3%)
Neutral	11 (7.6%)	3 (4.2%)	1 (11.1%)
Agree	26 (17.9%)	9 (12.7%)	1 (11.1%)
Strongly Agree	12 (8.3%)	27 (5.6%)	-

B17- Schools implement health and wellness programs.

Very encouraging seeing that most schools implement health and wellness programs. 27.9% students, 52.1% teachers and 50% school heads agree while 23.8% students, 11% teachers and 30% school heads strongly agree. (Table 34)

TABLE 34	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	26 (17.7%)	7 (9.6%)	-
Disagree	28 (19.0%)	11 (15.1%)	1 (10.0%)
Neutral	17 (11.6%)	9 (12.3%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	41 (27.9%)	38 (52.1%)	5 (50.0%)
Strongly Agree	35 (23.8%)	8 (11.0%)	2 (30.0%)

B18- School displays posters suggesting ways to manage stress.

Results show that schools are not assisting in managing stress. Most respondents either strongly disagree (27.3% students, 18.6% teachers, 12.5% school heads) or disagree (35.7% students, 51.4% teachers and 50% school heads). (Table 35)

TABLE 35	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	39 (27.3%)	13 (18.6%)	1 (12.5%)
Disagree	51 (35.7%)	36 (51.4%)	4 (50.0%)
Neutral	11 (7.7%)	5 (7.1%)	1 (12.5%)
Agree	27 (18.8%)	11 (15.7%)	2 (25.0%)
Strongly Agree	15 (10.5%)	5 (7.1%)	-

C) How are schools providing a safe and secured environment that creates a positive school atmosphere?

C1- School encourages student interaction and collaboration through shared learning and extra-curricular activities.

Majority of the respondents (36.1% students, 37% teachers and 40% school heads) strongly disagree that school encourages student interaction through shared learning and extra-curricular activities. 33.3% students, 20.5% teachers and 30% school head also disagree. (Table 36)

TABLE 36	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	52 (36.1%)	27 (37.0%)	4 (40.0%)
Disagree	48 (33.3%)	15 (20.5%)	3 (30.0%)
Neutral	17 (11.8%)	9 (12.3%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	19 (13.2%)	12 (16.4%)	1 (10.0%)
Strongly Agree	8 (5.6%)	10 (13.7%)	1 (10.0%)

C2 -A buddy bench is installed in the school to reduce bullying, promote friendships among students and reduce loneliness.

Interestingly no respondents (except 8.3% students) agree that schools have buddy bench to promote friendship and reduce bullying. In fact, majority of the respondents (overall 85%) either strongly disagree or disagree while 9.7% remain neutral. (Table 37)

TABLE 37	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	58 (40.0%)	37 (51.4%)	5 (50.0%)
Disagree	64 (44.1%)	26 (36.1%)	3 (30.0%)
Neutral	11 (7.6%)	9 (12.5%)	2 (20.0%)
Agree	12 (8.3%)	-	-
Strongly Agree	-	-	-

C3: Emphasis is placed on greetings and smiles in the school so that a warm and friendly learning environment is created.

It is encouraging to see most schools placing importance on greetings and smiles to create a friendly environment. 38.5% of the students, 52.9% teachers and 25% school heads agree while 54.3%, 27.1% and 37.5% strongly agree respectively. (Table 38)

TABLE 38	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	22 (15.3%)	3 (4.3%)	-
Disagree	17 (11.9%)	6 (8.6%)	2 (25.0%)
Neutral	11 (7.7%)	5 (7.1%)	1 (12.5%)
Agree	55 (38.5%)	37 (52.9%)	2 (25.0%)
Strongly Agree	38 (54.3%)	19 (27.1%)	3 (37.5%)

C4 - School bells and sirens are replaced with music so that the day starts positively; preserve and promote culture and tradition; refresh mind of students after lessons; support learning through music and end the day positively.

This is not happening in most schools as 37.2% students and 30% school heads disagree while 43.1% teachers strongly disagree. However, some schools do practice this as 15.2% students, 11.1% teachers and 20% school heads agree. (Table 39)

TABLE 39	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	43 (29.7%)	31 (43.1%)	2 (20.0%)
Disagree	54 (37.2%)	18 (25.0%)	3 (30.0%)
Neutral	11 (7.6%)	9 (12.5%)	2 (20.0%)
Agree	22 (15.2%)	8 (11.1%)	2 (20.0%)
Strongly Agree	15 (10.3%)	6 (8.3%)	1 (10.0%)

C5- Creative, colourful and meaningful visual displays are seen in the school.

Most respondents agree that creative, colourful and meaningful posters are on display. 27.9% students, 52.1% teachers and 50% school heads agree while 23.8%, 11% and 30% student, teachers and school heads strongly agree respectively. (Table 40)

TABLE 40	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	26 (17.7%)	7 (9.6%)	-
Disagree	28 (19.0%)	11 (15.1%)	1 (10.0%)
Neutral	17 (11.6%)	9 (12.3%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	41 (27.9%)	38 (52.1%)	5 (50.0%)
Strongly Agree	35 (23.8%)	8 (11.0%)	3 (30.0%)

C6 - Comfortable places are created for students to socialize and relax.

Majority feels that schools provide comfortable places for students to socialize and relax as seen in the result that 39.3% students, 53.5% teachers and 44.4% school heads strongly agree. (Table 41)

TABLE 41	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	12 (8.3%)	4 (5.6%)	-
Disagree	26 (17.9%)	9 (12.7%)	1 (11.1%)
Neutral	11 (7.6%)	3 (4.2%)	1 (11.1%)
Agree	39 (26.9%)	17 (23.9%)	3 (33.3%)
Strongly Agree	57 (39.3%)	38 (53.5%)	4 (44.4%)

C7 -Green school environment programs are in place for practical learning.

Most schools have green school programs in place. Highest percentage of students, teachers and school heads (35.4%, 63%, 50% respectively) agree while 32% students, 17.8% teachers and 30% school heads strongly agree. (Table 42)

TABLE 42	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	19 (12.9%)	-	-
Disagree	22 (15.0%)	8 (11.0%)	1 (10.0%)
Neutral	7 (4.8%)	6 (8.2%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	52 (35.4%)	46 (63.0%)	5 (50.0%)
Strongly Agree	47 (32.0%)	13 (17.8%)	3 (30.0%)

C8 - Students are allowed to study outdoors so that they enjoy learning in a natural environment setup.

Majority respondents disagree to this which shows that schools do not prefer outdoor teaching environment. Highest percentage of students (36.1%), teachers (37%) and 40% school heads strongly disagree. However, notably some schools do allow for outdoor learning as 13.2% students, 16.4% teachers and 10% school heads agree. (Table 43)

TABLE 43	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	52 (36.1%)	27 (37.0%)	4 (40.0%)
Disagree	48 (33.3%)	15 (20.5%)	3 (30.0%)
Neutral	17 (11.8%)	9 (12.3%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	19 (13.2%)	12 (16.4%)	1 (10.0%)
Strongly Agree	8 (5.6%)	10 (13.7%)	1 (10.0%)

C9 - School vision is prioritized and promoted for happiness.

36.1% and 33.3% students strongly disagree and disagree respectively, most teachers (37%) strongly disagree and highest percentages of school heads also strongly disagree. However, overall, 22.5% respondents either agree or strongly agree indicating that some schools are prioritizing vision for happiness. (Table 44)

TABLE 44	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	52 (36.1%)	27 (37.0%)	4 (40.0%)
Disagree	48 (33.3%)	15 (20.5%)	3 (30.0%)
Neutral	17 (11.8%)	9 (12.3%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	9 (6.3%)	8 (11.0%)	1 (10.0%)
Strongly Agree	18 (12.5%)	14 (9.2%)	1 (10.0%)

C10 - Punishment is replaced by constructive activities that encourages regulation.

35.9% students disagree and 27.5% strongly disagree showing that punishment is still used by most schools. 50.7% teachers also disagree that punishment is replaced by constructive activities. On the other hand, 9.9% students and 8.5% teachers strongly agree that punishment is replaced by constructive activities. (Table 45)

TABLE 45	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	39 (27.5%)	13 (18.3%)	2 (70.0%)
Disagree	51 (35.9%)	36 (50.7%)	5 (50.0%)
Neutral	11 (7.7%)	5 (7.0%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	27 (19.0%)	11 (15.5%)	2 (20.0%)
Strongly Agree	14 (9.9%)	6 (8.5%)	-

C11 - School ensures that healthy food is sold in the canteen.

Good to note that majority of the respondents (41.4% students, 43.1% teachers and 30% school heads) agree that schools are making an effort to sell healthy food in the canteen, however, 13.1% students, 11.1% teachers and 20% school heads strongly disagree. (Table 46)

TABLE 46	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	19 (13.1%)	8 (11.1%)	2 (20.0%)
Disagree	10 (6.9%)	6 (8.3%)	1 (10.0%)
Neutral	8 (5.5%)	9 (12.5%)	2 (20.0%)
Agree	60 (41.4%)	31 (43.1%)	3 (30.0%)
Strongly Agree	48 (33.1%)	18 (25.0%)	2 (20.0%)

C12 - School organizes clean-up activities within the community to keep the school and community litter free.

Majority of the schools are engaged in clean-up activities as indicated by the respondents where 32.8% students, 30.1% teachers and 50% school heads agree while 28.4% students, 45.2% teachers and 20% school heads strongly agree. (Table 47)

TABLE 47	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	17 (12.4%)	6 (8.2%)	-
Disagree	26 (19.0%)	7 (9.6%)	2 (20.0%)
Neutral	10 (7.3%)	5 (6.8%)	1 (10.0%)
Agree	45 (32.8%)	22 (30.1%)	5 (50.0%)
Strongly Agree	39 (28.4%)	33 (45.2%)	2 (20.0%)

C13 - Students are allowed to make recommendations and suggestions for improvements around the school.

Majority of the students feel they are not allowed to make recommendations and suggestions as seen in the result where 41.4% disagree while 33.1% strongly disagree. Teachers also disagree (43.1%) and 25% strongly disagree. 30% school heads disagree. However, some schools do encourage students' suggestions and recommendations for improvement as agreed by 13.1% students, 11.1% teachers and 20% school heads. (Table 48)

TABLE 48	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
Strongly disagree	48 (33.1%)	18 (25.0%)	2 (20.0%)
Disagree	60 (41.4%)	31 (43.1%)	3 (30.0%)
Neutral	8 (5.5%)	9 (12.5%)	2 (20.0%)
Agree	19 (13.1%)	8 (11.1%)	2 (20.0%)
Strongly Agree	10 (6.9%)	6 (8.3%)	1 (10.0%)

D) Is your school a happy place to be?

TABLE 49	STUDENTS N (%)	TEACHERS N (%)	SCHOOL HEADS N (%)
YES	51 (35.7%)	19 (26%)	6 (60%)
NO	92 (64.3%)	54 (74%)	4 (40%)

Majority of students and teachers indicated that the schools are not a happy place to be. 64.3% of the students and 74% of the teachers surveyed said that they are not happy in school. However, interestingly 60% of the school heads said that school is a happy place. Overall, 33.6% of the respondents said that school is a happy place to be and 66.4% said that school is not a place to be. (Table 49)

DISCUSSION

This study highlights importance of human and interaction in promoting happiness and wellbeing of learners. Majority (75%) of the respondents agreed that schools should give importance to enhancing teacher skills and competencies through professional developments and support. Professional development plays an important role in improving student outcomes by keeping teachers up to date with latest teaching strategies and knowledge; it also boosts teacher retention, job satisfaction, and classroom management skills [5,6,7]. Investing in professional development not only benefits teachers but also positively impacts students, schools, and the broader educational community. Most respondents (77%) agreed that schools should promote understanding of different religion, culture and language for wellbeing of learners and maintaining happy schools. Schools can foster an inclusive environment of different culture, ethnicity, religion, and language to promote social cohesion, with need to eliminate competition and favouritism to encourage more teamwork and collaboration [5]. Teacher evaluation and celebrating teachers' contribution for happy school was agreed by majority of respondents (77%). Teachers' evaluations should focus on positive attitudes and attributes rather than evaluating through exam results. Students want their teachers to be enthusiastic and able to listen to them. Students should also be given opportunity to give feedbacks to the teachers. This will encourage mutual respect and understanding between teachers and students. Celebrating Teachers' Day and recognizing valuable contribution teachers make towards nation building will enable students and other stakeholders develop greater respect for the profession [5,8]. Most respondents (75%) that parental involvement is crucial in promoting happy schools. Parental involvement is a cornerstone of creating a happy school. When parents actively engage in their children's education, it enhances students' academic performance, emotional well-being, and overall happiness [5]. Furthermore, it fosters a positive school climate, strengthens the home-school relationship, and

creates a supportive and inclusive community [5,9].

To add on, teaching and learning methods are important aspects of making schools a happy place. Sadly, from the survey, it was found that many teaching and learning methods that can be fun and enjoyable are not being practiced in schools. Because of pressure of academic achievement, many schools neglect non-academic skills and competencies. Students and teachers felt unreasonable and unfair workload with regard to examinations which lead to significant increase in stress. Stakeholders have the perception that examination results are the best way to measure student learning and success in school. However, one must realize that everyone has their own abilities in different things. Therefore, students' performance must be evaluated through a holistic approach. 50% respondents felt that emphasis should also be given to the non-academic subjects and this should be used as one of the admission criteria. Teachers and students who participated in the survey mainly felt that examinations should be reduced and adopt other forms of assessment that focus on evaluating students' progress and development of non-academic skills. Homework can be replaced with optional activities as an extension of learning which are meaningful and enjoyable. Survey respondents also felt that teamwork and collaborative spirit is important in making schools happy. Schools can encourage group work and introduce diverse teamwork activities. This creates a sense of belonging and encourage students to learn together [5]. Collaborative learning encourages students and teachers to work together and help each other. Respondents also highlighted the importance of having more fun and enjoyable learning processes. Such approach will increase a genuine love for learning and will enable learners to succeed in school.

In some cases, respondents indicated that some school environment suppresses learner freedom, creativity and engagement. Students feel afraid to talk and this led to fear of making mistakes. Mistakes are important because they tell you where to focus [10]. Students and teachers felt that happy school is a place where there is freedom of expression and shared responsibilities without any form of threatening. Many respondents (56.5%) felt that teachers are giving them opportunity to ask questions in the classroom. Through questioning students take greater ownership of learning, deepen their understanding, make new discoveries and able to see the application [11]. Many respondents (76.7%) appreciated the schools recognizing students' achievements and accomplishments through rewards and prizes as it attracts students' interests, foster good learning habits, establish a positive learning atmosphere, and increase students' motivation [12]. Survey participants highlighted that schools should engage in more extra-curricular activities in order to make schools a happy place. Such activities are beneficial in inculcating important character strengths such as perseverance, kindness and teamwork. Students feel such activities will make them happier in school. According to the participants, learning content should be relevant and engaging. They feel there is a gap between the content taught in class and assessed and the content that is useful in real-life. Learning content can be applied by using real-life scenarios, creative spaces, and encouraging learners to share their learning [13]. Respondent also believed that interdisciplinary approach across subjects can make learning more meaningful and applicable to real-life. Many respondents cited that mental well-being and stress management is not given attention by the schools. According to the survey many schools do not have qualified counsellors to provide to the students.

Furthermore, Schools will be a happy place if learning environment is safe and secured and creates a positive atmosphere. Unsafe environment that involves bullying and violence leads to unhappy school leading to isolation, fear, anxiety, and loneliness [14,15,16]. Bullying and violence is caused by competition, therefore, it is very important that schools engage students in activities that reduces stress which is caused by competitions. Majority respondents (70%) feel that a warm and friendly environment fosters happiness in schools thus schools need to ensure a learner-friendly classroom, use of visual aids and music. Promoting greetings and smiling in schools is one of the easiest ways for creating a warm and friendly environment [17]. Having open learning environment will encourage more student interaction. Replacing bell or sirens with music will prompt students to start and end the day positively with a refreshing mind. Many schools have taken the initiative of encouraging students to display creative, meaningful and visual displays around the school raising awareness on various issues. Majority respondents (71%) felt that improvement in infrastructure, sanitation facilities and ICT facilities to create a positive learning environment. Schools should allow outdoor learning spaces so that learners can connect with nature. It is encouraging to see many schools are making an effort to ensure good and healthy food is sold in the canteen, outdoor spaces are created for relaxing and establishing gardens. This study indicates that majority of teachers and students (74% and 64.3% respectively) are not happy in schools, however 60% of head of schools are happy in school.

CONCLUSION

Schools can be a happy place if there is collective opinions and perspectives of all school-level stakeholders. The factors under people – human relationships and interactions – show the importance of inspiring friendships and relationships among the school community. This also shows how schools can ensure an inclusive environment where there is respect for the diversity and differences. Under process – teaching and learning methods – schools can use fun and engaging approaches to make learning enjoyable for students and teachers. Schools can promote learner freedom and encourage students to express opinions freely without any fear of making mistakes. Schools also can reduce workloads for students and teachers to prevent excessive stress. Furthermore, encouraging participation in extra-curricular activities can play a most role in making schools happy. Under place – learning environment – schools need to ensure safe, secure, warm and friendly environment by ensuring a bullying and violence free environment, good infrastructure in place, good sanitation and availability of resources. In general, simple ideas and small changes can make positive differences in learners' well-being and learning outcomes.

RECOMMENDATION

Considering the extent to which importance is place on happiness and well-being, this study has pointed to number of important policy implication that causes us to question existing education policies and practices. It also questions the motive behind education policymaking in regards to the type of assessment system that focuses on benchmarks and results from examinations. This study calls for an underlying shift in our education assessment system to not only focus on formative and summative assessments but have a holistic approach towards skill based training and lifelong learning to allow our students to strengthen their unique talents and shine. In order to make our schools a happy place, this study calls for two levels of intervention – policy level and school level. Intervention at each level is independent, for example, schools may implement a happy school plan but may be restricted in implementing by national education policy, curriculum and assessment practices. On the other hand, national education policy and curricular may strongly promote happy school concept but schools may lack its implementation. Therefore, reforms at the national levels must be in harmony with the reforms at the school level.

It is clear that quality of education and school happiness and well-being are inseparable. Excellence is being recognized as a result of happier learners and happier school systems against the exam system alone. Through this study it is clear that there is a need for more time and space for students and teachers to enhance happiness and well-being in schools. More time is needed for the learners to reflect on their learning and identity and their passion. More time is needed to prepare engaging and fun teaching and learning methods. More space is needed for learners to overcome their fears, learn from their mistakes, express themselves freely without fear and apply learning content in their daily life.

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