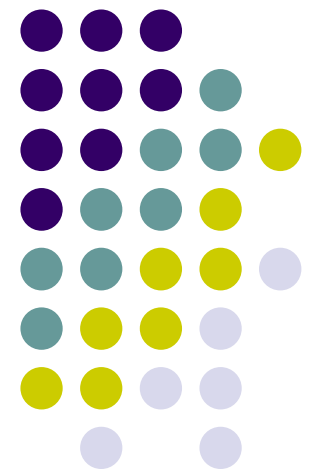


Elementary Education in Social Transformation and Happiness – Economics and Relevance: An Indian experience

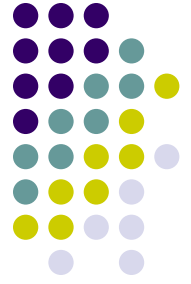
Saugata Bandyopadhyay,

*Fourth International Conference on GNH
Thimphu,
Bhutan*

25th November 2008



Elementary Education in Social Transformation and Happiness

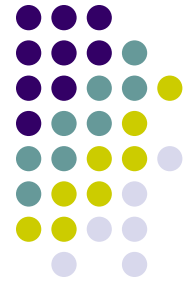


- **Fact of our world :**
- **“Nearly a billion people will enter the 21st century unable to read a book or sign their names and two thirds of them are women. And they will live, as now, in more desperate poverty and poorer health than those who can. They are the world’s functional illiterates—and their numbers are growing.”**
- **More than one third of the poor population of the world resides in South Asia**
 - **Can we talk about National Happiness in South Asia given such fact ?**
 - **Can we find out a solution to both these interlinked problems ?**
 - **Yes, We Can !!!**

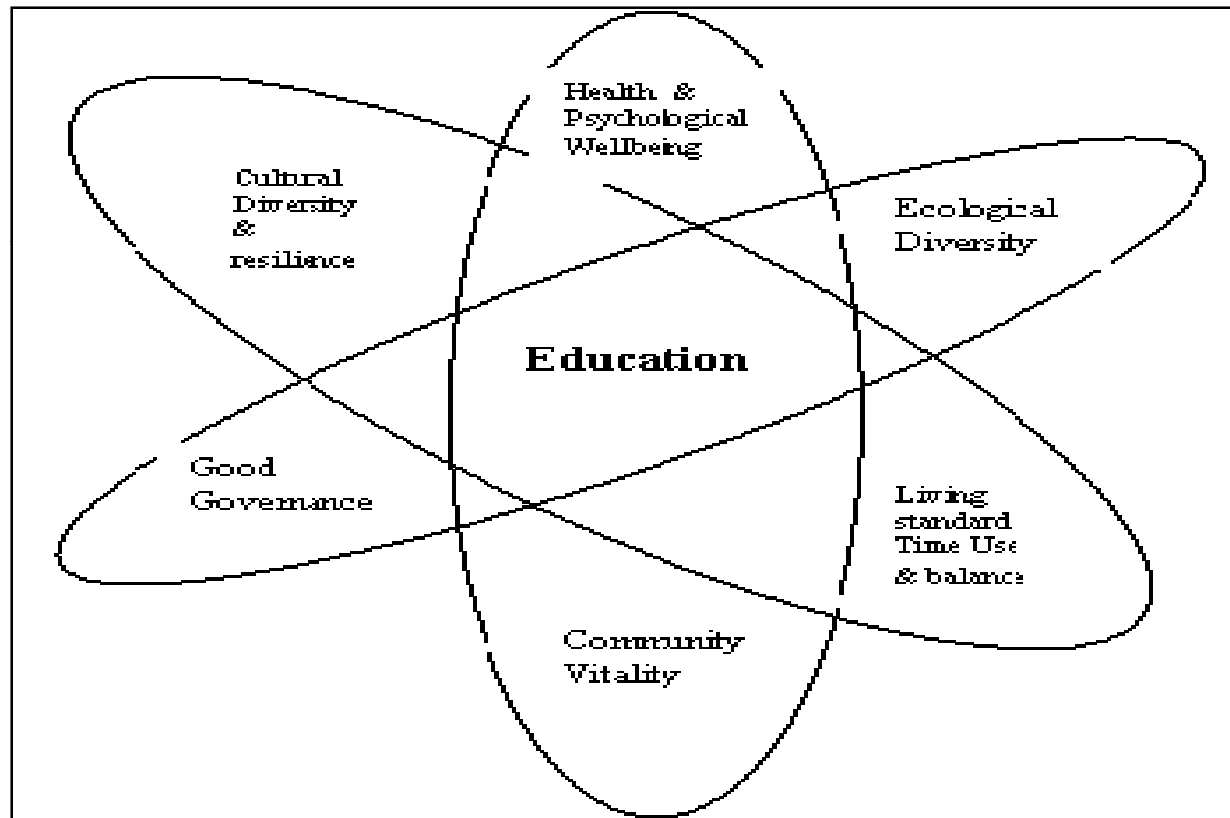


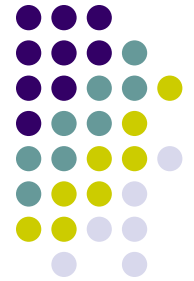
Education, Capability Building and Happiness

- The main purpose of education is the development of capability to achieve valued functioning
- According to Amartya Sen, *“Basic education, good health, and other human attainments are not only directly valuable as constituent elements of our basic capabilities, these capabilities can also help in generating economic success of a more standard kind, which in turn can contribute to the quality of life even more”*.
- A 1% increase in per capita income increases life expectancy by 0.073954% while a 1% increase in average years of schooling directly increases life expectancy by 0.055324%



Education is central to factors contributing to Happiness



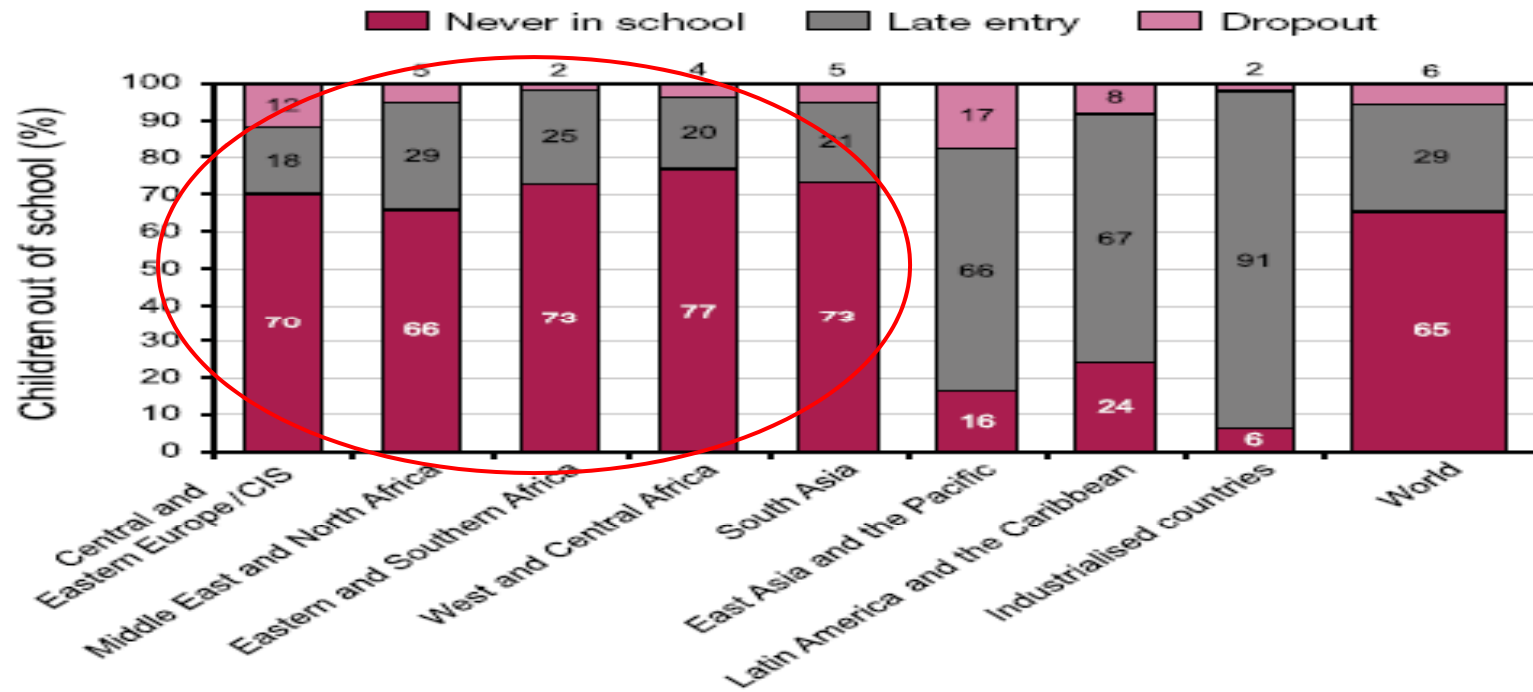
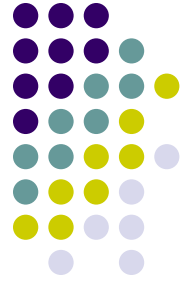


Education, Capability Building and Happiness

Country	HDI*	Population @ (In Million)	Growth (%) @	Literacy Rate % #	Education Spent as % GDP \$
Top Countries					
Norway	0.965	4.6	0.4%	100.0%	7.6%
Australia	0.957	20.4	0.8%	99.0%	4.9%
USA	0.948	301.1	0.7%	99.0%	5.7%
Mid Countries					
Cuba	0.826	11.3	0.3%	99.8%	18.7%
Russia	0.801	143.1	-0.5%	99.4%	3.8%
Brazil	0.800	186.4	1.0%	88.6%	4.2%
China	0.777	1304.5	0.6%	90.9%	2.8%
SAARC					
India	0.611	1130.0	1.6%	68.4%	4.1%
Pakistan	0.539	164.7	1.8%	49.9%	1.8%
Bhutan	0.538	2.3	2.1%	47.0%	5.2%
Bangladesh	0.530	154.4	2.1%	43.1%	2.4%
Nepal	0.527	28.9	2.1%	48.6%	3.4%
Srilanka	0.743	19.6	0.9%	90.7%	2.7%

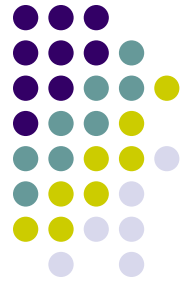
Need of Elementary Education :

Children out of School – 115 million primary age children



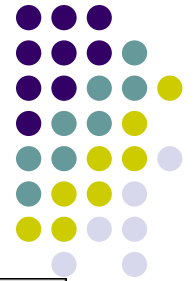
Education, poverty and vulnerability

"Education is not a way to escape poverty — it is a way of fighting it." — Julius Nyerere,



Poverty Estimates	India	Pakistan	Bangladesh	Nepal	Bhutan	Sri Lanka
Poor as % of total rural population, 1999-2000	30.2	35.9	53.0	44.0	33.0	26.0
GNI per capita (US\$), 2003	540.0	520.0	400	240.0	760.0	1300.0
Population living below US\$2 a day (%), 1999-2000	79.9	65.6	82.8	82.5	NA	41.6
Population living below the national poverty line (%), 1999-2000	28.6	32.6	49.8	42.0	NA	25
Literacy Rates (%) #	68.4 %	49.9%	47.0%	43.1%	48.6%	90.7%

Education helps in breaking away from the cycle of poverty



Education, Health, Nutrition

Country	Literacy Rate % #	Life expectancy at birth (years)	Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 births)	Under 5 mortality rate (per 1,000 births)	Neo natal mortality rate (per 1,000 births)
Top Countries					
Norway	100.0%	80	4	4	2.9
Australia	99.0%	81	5	5	3.1
USA	99.0%	78	8	8	4.0
Mid Countries					
Cuba	99.8%	77	6	8	4.0
Russia	99.4%	66	17	21	7.0
Brazil	88.6%	72	24	29	13.0
China	90.9%	73	23	29	18.0
SAARC					
India	68.4%	69	35	44	39.0
Pakistan	49.9%	64	69	102	53.0
Bhutan	47.0%	55	96	152	30.0
Bangladesh	43.1%	63	59	85	36.0
Nepal	48.6%	61	64	90	32.0
Sri Lanka	90.7%	75	11	13	8.0

There is a synergy between health, education and nutritional inputs in the overall development of children



Education and Child Labour

Child labour is the offshoot of poverty but due to the direct absence of primary education.

Region	Child Labour as a % of Child Population	Number of Child Labour (millions)
Asia and Pacific	18.8%	122.3
Latin America & Caribbean	5.1%	5.7
Sub-Saharan Africa	26.4%	49.3
Other regions	5.2%	13.4
World	15.8%	190.7

Poverty forces parents to utilize their wards for economic activities for subsistence levels of living

“Modern State regards education as a legal duty, not merely a right”.



Education, Gender and Social Equality

The class/gender bias in education is the direct by-product of social, economic, cultural and political factors.

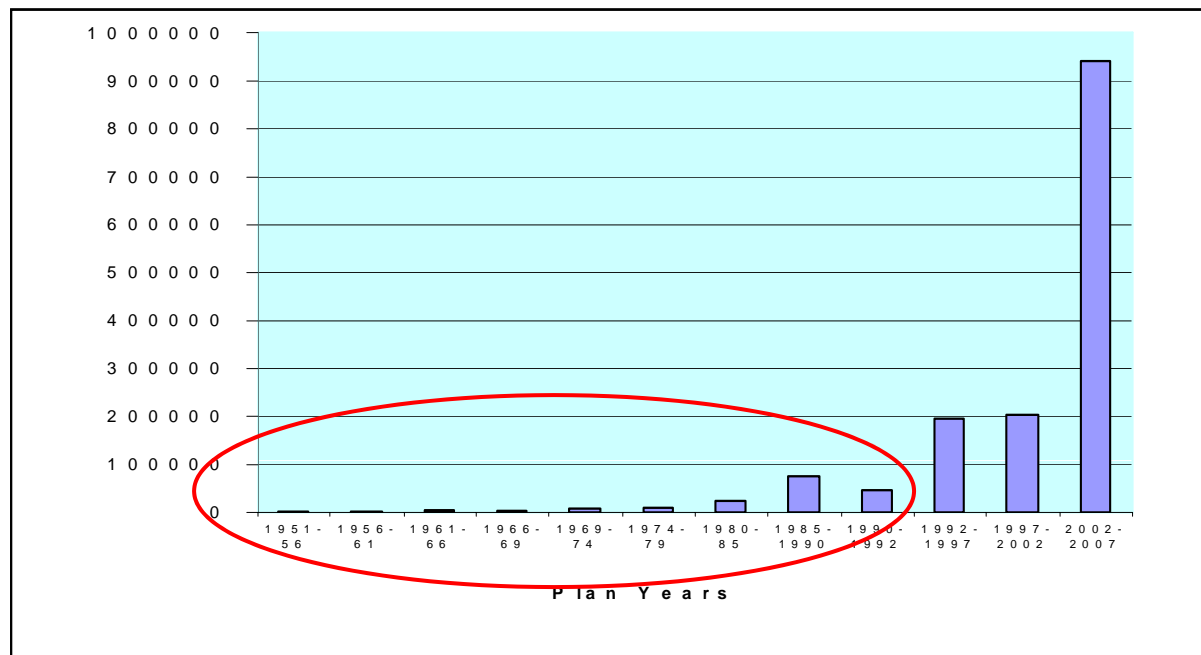
Country	Literacy Rate % #	Literacy Rates of Female as a % of Males @	Gender Parity Index (*)	Female Teacher % in primary class \$
Top Countries				
Norway	100.0%	100%	1.01	72.6%
Australia	99.0%	99%	1.00	71.5%
USA	99.0%	99%	1.01	88.6%
Mid Countries				
Cuba	99.8%	100%	0.97	77.1%
Russia	99.4%	100%	1.00	98.5%
Brazil	88.6%	100%	0.94	89.6%
China	90.9%	85%	0.99	55.2%
SAARC				
India	68.4%	66%	0.96	44%
Pakistan	49.9%	49%	0.78	35%
Bhutan	47.0%	55%	0.98	38.2%
Bangladesh	43.1%	61%	1.03	34.2%
Nepal	40.6%	40%	0.95	13.5%
Sri Lanka	90.7%	94%	1.00	78.5%



Elementary Education in India: Economics and relevance

"The remarkable neglect of elementary education in India is all the more striking given the widespread recognition, in the contemporary world, of the importance of basic education for economic development. Somehow the educational aspects of economic development have continued to be out of the main focus" in India - Professor Amartya Sen

Figure 5 : Five Year Plan Expenditure on Education (Rs Millions)





Some Improving trends in Education Statistics in India:

Gross Enrolment Ratio(GER) 1950-61 to 2004-05 [14]

Year	Primary (I – V)			Elementary (I – VIII)		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1950-51	60.6	24.8	42.6	46.4	17.7	32.1
1960-61	82.6	41.4	62.4	65.2	30.9	48.7
1970-71	95.5	60.5	78.6	75.5	44.4	61.9
1980-81	95.8	64.1	80.5	82.2	52.1	67.5
1990-91	114.0	85.5	100.1	100.0	70.8	86.0
2000-2001	104.9	84.1	95.7	90.30	72.4	81.6
2004-05*	110.7	104.7	107.8	96.9	89.9	93.5

- Improving GER both at Primary & Elementary level

- Post 1990 GER for girls are good at Primary level but not at Elementary level

Gender Parity Index (GPI) 1950-51 to 2004-05 [14]

Year	Primary (I – V)	Middle (VI – VIII)	Elementary (I – VIII)
1950-51	0.41	0.22	0.38
1960-61	0.50	0.34	0.47
1970-71	0.63	0.45	0.59
1980-81	0.67	0.53	0.63
1990-91	0.75	0.61	0.71
2000-2001	0.82	0.74	0.80
2004-05*	0.95	0.88	0.93

- Improving GPI both at Primary & Elementary level

- This shows that Drop out ratio for Girls are higher than boys after class V



Gender Bias, Class Bias & Rural-Urban divide in India:

COMPARATIVE LITERACY RATES, 1991 TO 2001

Item	Literacy Rates			Literacy gap of SC/ST to others in percentage points	
	SC	ST	Other than SC/ST	SC	ST
1991					
Male	49.91	40.65	69.53	19.62	28.88
Female	23.76	18.19	44.81	21.05	26.62
Total	37.41	29.60	57.69	20.28	28.09
2001					
Male	66.64	59.17	78.7	12.06	19.53
Female	41.90	34.76	58.17	16.27	23.41
Total	54.69	47.10	68.81	14.12	21.71

- **SC/ST – the backward classes : literacy is much lower than general classes**

- **Post 1991 improvement in literacy rates among backward classes are faster than normal class**

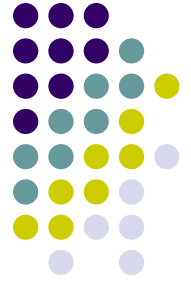
RURAL-URBAN LITERACY RATES 1991-2001

Year	Male	Female	Persons
1991 (7 years and above)			
- Rural	57.87	30.62	44.69
- Urban	81.09	64.05	73.08
- Total	64.13	39.29	52.21
2001 (7 years and above)			
- Rural	70.70	46.13	58.74
- Urban	86.27	72.86	79.92
- Total	75.26	53.67	64.84

Source: Census of India

- **Literacy rate in rural is much lower than that in urban area**

- **Post 1991 growth in literacy rates in rural areas overtook that in Urban areas : Gap Narrowing**



Social & Economic Challenges in India:

Social Issues

- Ruling religious traditions in India - Hinduism and Islam, shape policies reflecting prejudices of class divisions as well as traditional cultures
- The contrast between importance given to higher education and neglect of basic education is "intolerably large" due to elitist dominance in society
- Social traditions against education of girls and socially backward classes
- Leakage and inefficiency in the delivery of public services in elementary education and health care

Economic Issues :

- Resources Constraints - only 3 % of GDP spent on education of a large primary level child population
- Poor utilisation of central funds for elementary education by State Governments mainly due to poor administrative capacity at the provincial level
- Teacher Quality is a big problem especially in rural India
- Teacher absenteeism rate in India is on average 25% only preceded by Uganda with 27%
- On household cost front, the cost of spending on education of more than one child to school would be challenging to the most poor family, hence the drop out rate would increase.



Increasing Government Focus in India:

- In the last two decades the government focus on education has increased especially post 2001, partly due to internal pressure, and partly due to International pressure due to International pressure of achieving Millennium Development Goal (MDG)
- For the first time 5% of GDP would be spent on education
- The major successful schemes :
 - **National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (Mid-day Meals Scheme) :**
 - => To attract primary age children to school
 - = > The scheme addresses directly the problems of basic education, child labour problem, health and nutrition issues, and overall the larger issue of poverty
 - **National Elementary Education Mission to provide functional literacy to all adults (Goal 3 & 4 of MDG)** - mainly focused on improving female and backward class literacy rates
 - **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (means Education for all) [SSA] launched in 2001 (Goals 2 & 6 of MDG)** - mainly focused on improving infrastructure, quality, teacher recruitment and training for sustainable educational attainment

HOWEVER, Are these enough ? Are these all encompassing ?Answer is NO

Alternative Initiative :

“The government does, of course, have a huge part to play, but other people and other organisations also have responsibility.”

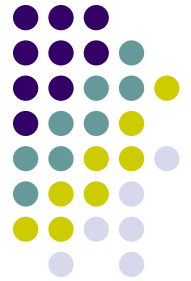


Given the magnitude of the target of education for all in India, only efforts of the Government is not enough. Innovative and mass involvement are the requirement

• **Teach India by Time of India Group**

- a nation-building initiative
- wide reach as initiated by the largest newspaper group in India.
- common people as volunteers who can contribute a little time each week towards teaching underprivileged children
- to link them to various NGOs already working for providing education services to out of the school children.
- This army of volunteers is a multi-lingual, multi-talented drawn from diverse streams - doctors, lawyers, company executives, educationists, actors, businessmen, housewives, writers, artists, retired folk, government employees and college students - Zero cost, High Quality, High motivation and abundant supply
- Various companies – national and MNCs on board with the promise that at least 50 employees will commit two hours a week on company time to teaching. This is a major shift in corporate approach towards social responsiveness.
- With a population of over 287 million illiterate Indians, we need motivated teachers in every corner of the country to go back to school that should be available free of cost given the resource crunch.
- This is a very promising initiative which will create a greater awareness in the society towards making India fully literate country.

Indicators of Education level in society : linking to Happiness Index



Literacy Indicators :

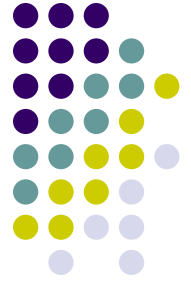
1. Literacy Rates *
2. Percentage of the population ageing 5 to 14 that has completed elementary education *
3. Gross Enrolment ratio *
4. Number of Girls enrolled per 100 boys enrolled @
5. Gender Parity Index enrolment @
6. Repetition rate *
7. Drop-out rate *
8. Percentage of passed children to total enrolment *
9. Percentage of Out of School children of primary school age*
10. Percentage of children of primary school age who never attended school*

Education- economics Indicators:

11. Utilisation of initial public funds for primary education vis-à-vis plan expenditure
12. Expenditures per student in public and private institutions of higher education, converted using Purchasing Power Parities (PPPs);
13. Public expenditures for elementary education as a percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP),
14. Elementary Education Expenditure per capita to Per capita Income

* Overall, minority class wise, genderwise and rural & urban-wise @ Overall, minority class wise and rural-urban wise

Indicators of Education level in society : linking to Happiness Index



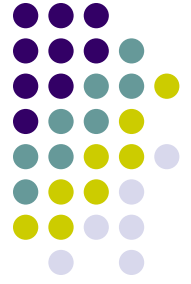
Education- Infrastructure Indicators :

15. Ratio of full-time-equivalent students to full-time-equivalent teachers in primary schools,
16. Availability of schools per 1000 population
17. Average student-classroom ratio,
18. School without drinking water facilities,
19. Schools with separate toilets for boys and girls
20. Pupil-teacher ratio
21. Percentage of female teachers @
22. Teachers without professional qualification
23. Number of effective School days
24. Percentage of Teachers Absenteeism in the elementary level@

Education- Social Indicators:

25. Child labour as a of percentage of Child Population by age group *
26. Percentage of Child labour with basic primary education*
27. Students having Mother with secondary qualification

* Overall, minority class wise, genderwise and rural & urban-wise @ Overall, minority class wise and rural-urban wise



Conclusion

- Indian experience in this paper has been used as a metaphor of millions of under privileged people devoid of elementary education, their plight in the pursuit of happiness to bring about the necessary changes in the policy document and social discourse.
- The most important driver for happiness is the elementary education especially for the poor - to break the shackles of poverty cycles themselves and to build their capabilities for valued functioning

Mahatma Gandhi pointed out, “Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony.”

Elementary education is required to bring this harmony in place.