

MINDFULNESS AND TEACHERS' SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING IN THE PROFESSIONAL DOMAIN

Ivo Strante¹, Ieva Margeviča-Grinberga²

¹Director of the association "Klusuma skola", Latvia

²University of Latvia, Latvia

ABSTRACT

The research examines how mindfulness interventions affect educators' emotional well-being and professional engagement while studying the necessity for building teachers' emotional resilience and more effective Social-Emotional Learning (SEL). Professional educators worldwide now recognise mindfulness as a viable option to develop their mental balance, classroom capabilities, and self-awareness because teacher distress and burnout rates have reached concerning levels (Taylor et al., 2024; Schonert-Reichl, 2017). This mixed-methods study combined qualitative semi-structured interviews with nine educators and a quantitative online survey of 98 teachers to examine perceived impacts of mindfulness on well-being and professional practice. Qualitative data were transcribed, anonymized, and analyzed in NVivo using inductive in-vivo coding to remain grounded in participants' language, aligning with established rigor practices in qualitative analysis. The survey comprised 21 Likert-scale items derived from themes identified in the qualitative phase, covering personal (well-being, emotion regulation) and professional domains (classroom relationships, instructional practice). The survey data has been analyzed using MS Excell descriptive statistic measures. All study participants had completed a nine-month mindfulness professional development program with daily formal and informal practice options, supporting integration of practice exposure with reported outcomes. The research documented clear findings about how mindfulness teachers developed superior stress management capabilities, emotional resilience, and stronger classroom relationships. More than sixty per cent of participants experienced personal advantages, and fifty-five per cent documented enhanced professional competencies focused on student emotion regulation. The findings support evidence that mindfulness is important in supporting teacher welfare and could support teachers ability to model SEL. Long-term evaluation of mindfulness's implications on teaching development with extended research in schools will help determine its usefulness for educational policy and classroom practice.

Keywords: *Emotional regulation, Mindfulness-based interventions, Social-emotional learning (SEL), Stress management, Subjective well-being, Teacher burnout, Teacher professional development, Teacher well-being*

Introduction

Current theory and research data suggest two educational trends to which mindfulness in teachers' professional development could significantly contribute. One is the teacher's subjective well-being and burnout problem. The well-being of teachers directly affects the education system and their professional performance (Dreer, 2023). According to Taylor et al. (2024), teacher burnout is a global concern that can profoundly affect educators' well-being and students' educational outcomes (Alves, Lopes & Precioso, 2021). The systematic review of teacher burnout's association with academic achievement and student-reported outcomes provides evidence that teacher burnout is associated with worse academic achievement and lower-quality student motivation. Madigan & Kim (2021) argues that the systematic review of research on the outcomes of teacher well-being highlights the significant relationship of teacher well-being with several factors and desirable outcomes, including teacher retention, teacher-student relationships, and student outcomes.

According to a study by UNESCO (2024), the other area is SEL, which is rapidly entering school curricula. Teachers' influence reduced subjective well-being and the ability to manage their social-emotional domain. Research conducted by Schonert-Reichl (2017) indicates that educators with stronger SEC (Social and emotional competencies) have more positive student-teacher interactions and more effective classroom management (Dorman, 2015; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009; Jennings et al., 2017). In addition, Braun et al. (2019), Jennings (2018), and Roeser et al. (2013) note that they are better equipped to teach and model social-emotional skills for students and to help students with emotional challenges.

Several studies demonstrated strong links between teachers' characteristics, such as self-awareness, social awareness, empathy, and warmth, particularly for affective and behavioural student outcomes (Scheirlinckx et al., 2023). However, there is a gap in how mindfulness practices affect teachers' well-being and students' academic outcomes. This study explores how mindfulness practice affects teachers' subjective well-being and how teachers perceive the ways mindfulness has changed their professional practice. The research questions of this study are: What is the potential contribution of mindfulness practice to education and teachers' professional development? How do teachers experience and perceive the impact of mindfulness practice in their personal and professional lives? What are the most effective ways to promote integrating mindfulness practices into teacher professional development and educational settings?

Theoretical Framework

In recent years, mindfulness has gained increasing attention across various professional domains, including education, due to its potential to enhance psychological well-being, emotional regulation, and interpersonal relationships. As educators face growing demands and stressors, mindfulness practices are emerging to foster emotional

resilience, improve mental health, and support professional effectiveness. Within this context, the current research draws on Jon Kabat-Zinn's conceptualization of mindfulness as "the awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally to the unfolding of experience." According to Kabat-Zinn, 1990; Schuman-Olivier et al. (2020), mindfulness has been categorised as a state or trait, and repeated meditative practices create a mindfulness state, like mindfulness meditation. Increased trait mindfulness, and those with more significant increases in state mindfulness had greater increases in trait mindfulness (Kiken et al., 2015). Both state and trait mindfulness are associated with cognitive and emotional benefits. However, state mindfulness is associated with immediate benefits, such as improved attention and reduced stress. In contrast, Kim & Park, (2023); Lomas et al. (2017) note that trait mindfulness is associated with long-term psychological well-being, emotional regulation and resilience. To this idea, Abaker et al. (2025) argue that mindfulness enhances self-awareness, emotional regulation, and stress management, increasing job satisfaction and resilience.

Mindfulness practices help mitigate teacher burnout by fostering emotional balance and reducing work-related stress (Wu & Qin, 2025; Carroll, Hepburn, & Bower, 2022). According to Henriksen and Gruber (2024), improved communication and stronger relationships with colleagues and students improve decision-making, effectively helping teachers manage classroom challenges

SEL involves acquiring and applying skills to manage emotions, build healthy relationships, promote self-awareness, and make responsible decisions (CASEL, 2020; Henriksen & Gruber, 2024). Since SEL is becoming an important topic, it would be important to address teachers' ability to model SEL competencies and qualities for students, and mindfulness can become a significant support for teachers. As per research conducted by Shi and Cheung (2024), enhanced self-awareness and emotional regulation cultivated through mindfulness practice can help them effectively model these competencies for their students. Improved communication and stronger relationships associated with mindfulness practice can foster a culture of empathy, understanding, and respect in the classroom, essential for effective SEL implementation. Research suggests that teachers who incorporate mindfulness in SEL report stronger student engagement and improved classroom environments (Wu & Quin, 2025). Furthermore, evidence suggests mindfulness-based SEL programs enhance students' emotional intelligence and resilience, leading to better academic and social outcomes (Schonert-Reichl et al., 2015; de Carvalho, Pinto & Maroco, 2017; Rodríguez-Ledo et al., 2018).

Research Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods approach to investigate how educators perceive the impact of mindfulness on their well-being and professional practice. The research design included a literature review, qualitative semi-structured interviews ($N = 9$) with content analysis (NVivo), and a quantitative survey (MS Excell descriptive statistics) ($N = 98$).

All research participants were educators who had completed the professional development program “*Mindfulness and its Teaching and Application Methods in Educational Institutions*,” in which they were encouraged to practice mindfulness daily for 9 months. Practices included both formal and informal ways of practising. As the leading formal practice, most participants chose mindfulness meditation – sitting for 10 to 20 minutes still and maintaining attention to physical sensations in the body, primarily sensations of breath. Another way of practising has been to bring mindfulness practice to the classroom by exploring different mindfulness practices with children – e.g., scanning the body for physical sensations, mindful listening, mindful observing, mindful eating, etc. Along with formal practices, participants have been encouraged to introduce informal mindfulness practices or mindful activities in their daily routine – mindful walking, SIFT (Sensations, Images, Feelings, Thoughts) (Siegel, 2013) practice and mindful communication.

43.4% of the participants who participated in the research revealed that they continue to perform formal mindfulness meditation practice daily, and 41.4% once a week after finishing the professional development program. 58.6% of the participants showed they continue to practice mindfulness in the classroom daily and 39.4% once a week.

Research has been conducted in two phases: the primary objective of the first phase was to identify the significant ways in which teachers perceive mindfulness as influencing their subjective well-being and how they believe mindfulness practice has impacted their professional activities. This was a qualitative study: semi-structured interviews were conducted with nine teachers who incorporated mindfulness practices into their daily routines. The participants were randomly selected from those who had most recently completed a professional development program in mindfulness for educators, ensuring representation from all levels – preschool (3), elementary (3), and upper-grade teachers (3). The interviews explored participants’ experiences, focusing on the impact of mindfulness practice on their well-being, teaching methods, and students’ socio-emotional learning.

Nine random participants were interviewed remotely using Zoom, and a set of standardised questions were posed: What topics or skill development opportunities do you believe are lacking in Latvia’s professional development programs for educators? Reflecting on your initial motivation, were any challenges or difficulties working with children that prompted you to enroll in the program? What professional support does/did the program provide? What personal support does/did the program provide?

The semi-structured interviews were recorded, generating audio data that formed the basis for qualitative analysis. The authors prepared the data by transcribing the recordings and anonymising all participant responses to ensure confidentiality. The qualitative analysis was conducted using NVivo software, facilitating a structured and transparent analytical process (Dalkin et al., 2021).

An inductive *in-vivo* coding approach was employed, whereby participants’ own words, expressions, and metaphors were highlighted to preserve the contextual meaning of their experiences (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2020). This method allowed the analysis to remain grounded in the language and perspectives of the participants. In line with

Glaser's (1978) criteria, codes were considered valid if they were useful, simple, stable, and relevant to the research questions.

The primary objective of the second phase was to quantitatively assess the extent to which teachers experienced the effects of mindfulness practice on their subjective well-being and professional activities. This phase employed a quantitative research design. A total of 224 participants who had completed the mindfulness program were invited to complete an online survey, and 98 educators responded by filling out a structured questionnaire composed of Likert-scale items. Each item was derived from the key benefits of mindfulness identified during the qualitative phase, and participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they had experienced that specific benefit. The survey consisted of 21 Likert-scale items, divided into two thematic categories: nine items addressed the personal domain (e.g., well-being and emotional regulation), while twelve items focused on the professional domain, including classroom relationships and instructional practice.

Ethics Guidelines Adherence

This study was conducted in strict compliance with ethical standards for human subjects research, ensuring participant protection and data privacy throughout all phases of the research process.

For the qualitative research component involving semi-structured interviews with nine educators, all participants signed informed consent forms prior to participation, which provided comprehensive information about the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks and benefits, and their rights as research participants.

The informed consent process explicitly informed participants of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage without penalty or negative consequences, ensuring voluntary participation was maintained throughout the research process. Participants were clearly advised that their decision to discontinue participation would not affect their access to professional development programs or any other services.

To protect participant privacy and confidentiality, all data collected during the qualitative phase underwent systematic anonymization procedures before analysis. Personal identifiers, institutional affiliations, and any information that could potentially link responses to specific individuals were removed or altered. Access to raw interview data was strictly limited to research team members directly involved in the study, with secure storage protocols implemented to prevent unauthorized access.

All participants were informed that research findings would only be published in aggregate form, ensuring individual responses could not be traced back to specific participants.

The quantitative survey component employed technological safeguards to ensure participant anonymity from the point of data collection. The electronic data collection system was specifically designed to prevent any collection of personally identifiable information, ensuring that researchers had no means of linking survey responses to individual participants.

Prior to survey participation, all potential respondents received clear explanations about the voluntary and fully anonymous nature of their participation. The data collection system was configured to ensure that no identifying information could be associated with any participant's responses, providing complete anonymity rather than merely confidentiality.

Throughout both research phases, data protection measures were implemented in accordance with international standards for research ethics. All personal data processing adhered to principles of lawfulness, fairness, and transparency, with participants fully informed about data collection purposes, storage methods, and intended use.

Data minimization principles were applied to ensure that only information directly relevant to the research objectives was collected. Secure storage protocols were established with appropriate technical and organizational measures to protect against unauthorized access, loss, or destruction of participant data. Access controls were implemented to ensure that only authorized research team members could access participant information, with clear accountability measures in place.

These ethical safeguards ensured that the research was conducted with full respect for participant autonomy, privacy, and welfare while maintaining the scientific integrity necessary to achieve the study's research objectives.

Results

The results are structured following the two-phases research design. First, qualitative data derived from semi-structured interviews are analysed to uncover recurring themes and categories related to teachers' challenges, motivations, and the perceived benefits of mindfulness (see Tables 1 and 2). Second, the quantitative findings from the structured questionnaire are presented, offering a broader view of how these perceived benefits are distributed across a larger sample of educators (see Tables 3 and 4). Together, these findings provide a comprehensive understanding of how mindfulness practice supports educators in managing stress, enhancing classroom dynamics, and modelling social-emotional competencies.

The interview data suggest that teachers face external and internal challenges in their professional lives, many of which mindfulness training appears to mitigate. First, a significant challenge highlighted by participants relates to difficulties establishing meaningful connections with students. The category "Difficult to connect with children and people" was the most frequently mentioned (20 references), and several subcodes elaborate on this theme. Teachers reported issues such as children being emotionally disengaged, unfocused, or lacking human connection with adults. These findings reflect a broader concern about the relational climate in classrooms and suggest that educators feel a pressing need for tools that help build authentic interpersonal engagement. Additionally, while some references touched on systemic stressors, such as burnout and the pressures of a fast-paced routine, the dominant concerns focused on the emotional and behavioral

Table 1 Teachers' Challenges in Applying for and Participating in Mindfulness-Based Professional Development Programs

Nr.	Categories and codes	Mentioned in interviews
1.0	Difficult to connect with children and people	20
1.1	Children are not present	3
1.2	Children have difficulties regulating emotions	1
1.3	Children need human contact from the teacher	2
1.4	Children are restless and unfocused	6
1.5	Difficulties in creating engagement	2
1.6	It is necessary to build a connection with the child	2
2.0	Teachers burn out	2
3.0	A fast-paced daily routine causes stress	2

Table 2 Perceived Personal and Professional Benefits of Mindfulness Practice Among Educators

No.	Categories and codes	Mentioned in interviews
1	Ability to maintain peace and balance in everyday situations.	13
2	Higher self-awareness. And greater confidence in professional skills.	6
3	Ability to cope with difficult moments and situations in life more easily.	6
4	A wider perspective on life and work.	8
5	Ability to create more humane contact with children.	5
6	Focused work	2
7	Gained practical techniques to help children regulate emotions	6
8	Opportunity to meet like-minded people and receive support	4
9	Personal experience that allows understanding of spiritual and psychological phenomena	2
10	Professional benefits are hard to separate from personal ones	4
11	Understanding of how your inner state reflects in your work with children.	4
12	Ability to manage stress more easily.	4
13	More relaxed attitude in the classroom, Not following the plan at all costs	2
14	A wider and deeper perspective on children	1
15	Understanding that teachers must practice what they teach	3
16	They started valuing their time more highly	4

challenges of working with students. This supports the rationale for introducing mindfulness in teacher training as a personal well-being intervention and a professional strategy for classroom engagement and emotional support.

The second set of interview data reveals the perceived benefits of mindfulness practice, which closely align with personal and professional domains (see Table 2).

The most frequently cited benefit – “Ability to maintain peace and balance in everyday situations” (13 mentions) – indicates that mindfulness helps teachers respond more calmly to daily stressors. Several additional codes point to improved emotional regulation, self-awareness, and the capacity to cope with life’s difficulties, suggesting that mindfulness contributes to a broader sense of psychological resilience.

These benefits were not abstract or theoretical but grounded in deeply personal experiences. As one teacher reflected: *“You know, this sense of peace came over me! As if nothing changed, but at the same time, everything changed.”* (Respondent 1)

Moreover, several responses reflected an enhanced professional identity. Participants noted a *“greater confidence in professional skills,”* *“a wider perspective on life and work,”* and an *“ability to create more humane contact with children.”*

Respondent 1 describes how mindfulness shifted her professional perspective: *“I no longer try to save the world so frantically... If someone needs help, they will ask. Teachers often suffer from excessive empathy – we throw ourselves into rescuing, helping, explaining everything—but we do not need to! That is something we must learn.”*

Another teacher (Respondent 3) emphasized the practical benefit of slowing down and breaking problems into manageable parts: *“You can resolve any issue – slowly, calmly, by breaking it into parts. It works, and that is incredibly valuable.”*

These outcomes suggest that mindfulness supported internal self-regulation and translated into external relational improvements, including more empathetic and responsive teaching. Notably, some teachers stated that professional and personal benefits were difficult to separate, indicating that mindfulness blurred the boundary between personal growth and pedagogical practice. Interestingly, several respondents emphasized the importance of embodying what they teach, stating, for example, that *“teachers must practice what they teach”* and that their *“inner state reflects in work with children.”*

Participants also highlighted changes in their classroom interactions and relationships with students. Respondent 2 explained how self-awareness enhanced her ability to understand children: *“When you become aware of yourself, something shifts—and through that, you can more easily understand the children.”* She also described how mindfulness improved communication: *“You realise a child is angry or jealous, and this emotional awareness helps you understand that it’s not aimed at you – it’s just how the child feels. It also helps the child verbalize those feelings and become aware of them. Now, my students say things like: ‘Leave me alone for now, I want to be by myself,’ or ‘I’m solving a crossword puzzle—please don’t interrupt.’ It’s no longer offensive between them.”*

Respondent 3 expanded on this interpersonal benefit: *“When I hear myself, I can hear the children too—not just the students, but also my colleagues. I can ask them deeper questions to help them find solutions.”*

These reflections point to a deeper internalization of mindfulness principles, beyond technique, into a mindset that influences daily interactions and pedagogical choices. Finally, some responses touched on the social and community aspects of the training, such as the value of meeting like-minded colleagues and receiving support. This suggests that the program fostered a sense of professional belonging and collective learning, which

may reinforce its positive effects. Overall, the qualitative data support the conclusion that mindfulness training addressed teachers' emotional challenges and aspirations to become more reflective, connected, and responsive educators. These findings align with prior research that associates mindfulness with increased emotional regulation, improved teacher-student relationships, and reduced burnout, affirming the program's relevance for professional development.

The study's second phase aimed to quantitatively assess the extent to which the benefits of mindfulness practice, identified in the qualitative interviews, were perceived across a broader sample of educators. A total of 224 participants who had completed the mindfulness-based professional development program were invited to participate in the survey, with 98 respondents completing the questionnaire. The survey consisted of 21 Likert-scale items, each reflecting a specific personal or professional benefit previously identified in the qualitative phase. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they had experienced each benefit, using a five-point scale (1 = No improvement, 5 = Very significant improvement). The quantitative data has been analyzed using MS Excell tools for descriptive statistics. The results demonstrate that mindfulness practice was associated with marked improvements in both personal well-being and professional functioning. In subjective well-being, over 60% of participants reported significant or significant improvements in areas such as maintaining peace and balance in everyday life, managing stress, coping with difficult situations, and developing a broader life perspective (see Table 3). For example, 63.27% of participants reported a significant improvement and 20.41% significantly improved their ability to maintain emotional calm in everyday situations. Similarly, over 60% reported moderate to significant gains in managing stress and prioritising tasks effectively – key factors in avoiding burnout. The statistical analysis reinforces these results. Across most well-being-related items, the mode and median values were consistently 4 or 5, indicating that the most frequent and central responses reflected substantial perceived benefit. Standard deviations were relatively low, suggesting consensus among respondents regarding the effectiveness of mindfulness in supporting their emotional well-being. In the professional domain, teachers also reported substantial improvements (see Table 4). More than 55% of respondents indicated significant or very significant gains in forming closer bonds with students, supporting children's emotional regulation, and fostering attention and engagement in the classroom. Notably, 55.1% of participants reported significant improvement, and an additional 21.43% reported significant improvement in their ability to help students regulate emotions. Similarly, 39.8% of participants reported significant improvement, and 41.84% very significant improvement, in their awareness of how their internal state affects student interactions.

The responses also indicated increased self-awareness and enhanced communication skills, translating into more responsive, empathetic teaching. These findings suggest that mindfulness training promotes individual well-being and strengthens core pedagogical competencies, such as emotional attunement, relational capacity, and classroom presence. Overall, the quantitative findings validate and expand upon the qualitative results. They confirm that integrating mindfulness into teachers' personal and professional routines

Table 3 Improvements in personal domain

Category	Significant improvement %	Very significant improvement %	Mode	Median	SD
Ability to maintain peace and balance in everyday situations	63.27%	20.41%	4	4	0.78
The ability to manage stress more easily	56.12%	20.41%	4	4	0.77
Ability to cope more easily with difficult moments and situations in life	46.94%	20.41%	4	4	0.85
A broader perspective on life and work	28.57%	59.18%	5	5	0.86
The ability to set priorities and use time more effectively	43.88%	17.35%	4	4	0.90

1 – No improvement experienced, 2 – Slight improvement, 3 – Moderate improvement, 4 – Significant improvement, 5 – Very significant improvement

Table 4 Improvements in professional domain

Category	Significant improvement %	Very significant improvement %	Mode	Median	SD
Awareness of how your internal state is reflected in your work with children	41.84%	39.80%	5	4	0.87
Ability to help children regulate their emotions	21.43%	55.10%	4	4	0.80
Ability to form closer bonds with children	25.51%	55.10%	4	4	0.79
The ability to promote children’s presence and attention	21.43%	48.98%	4	4	0.85
The ability to generate greater engagement in the learning process	11.22%	43.88%	4	4	0.87

1 – No improvement experienced, 2 – Slight improvement, 3 – Moderate improvement, 4 – Significant improvement, 5 – Very significant improvement

is highly beneficial, supporting emotional resilience, relational depth, and effective classroom engagement. These outcomes highlight the value of mindfulness-based professional development as a comprehensive strategy for supporting educators’ well-being and enhancing the learning environment.

Discussion

This study suggests that mindfulness-based practices can meaningfully improve teachers’ subjective well-being and professional functioning. The qualitative interviews and the quantitative survey data indicate that participants experienced enhanced emotional regulation, reduced stress levels, and increased calmness in their daily lives and

professional activities. Rather than reiterating individual benefits identified in earlier phases, this discussion highlights key patterns that emerged across both data sets. Many participants reported using mindfulness techniques to foster emotional intelligence and develop greater patience, core competencies aligned with the principles of Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL, 2020). Teacher well-being is widely recognized as foundational for effective teaching and student engagement (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Integrating mindfulness into professional development programs offers a promising strategy for preventing teacher burnout and equipping educators with the emotional competencies necessary to support their students' socio-emotional growth. The findings from this study add localized, qualitative depth to existing research, aligning with outcomes reported in mindfulness-based teacher training initiatives such as the CARE (Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education) program (Jennings et al., 2017). However, the findings should be interpreted with caution. Participation in the study was voluntary, and all data were self-reported, which introduces the potential for bias and limits the generalizability of the results. Furthermore, the study design does not allow for causal conclusions, and the outcomes reflect perceived rather than objectively measured changes. These findings represent initial evidence rather than definitive proof of effectiveness. Future research should consider longitudinal or experimental designs to explore the sustained impact of mindfulness training and to assess student outcomes alongside teacher development. Nevertheless, this study offers valuable insights into how mindfulness may be a supportive resource in teacher professional development, particularly in emotional well-being and relational pedagogy.

Conclusions

The results of this study strongly suggest that mindfulness practice is an effective tool for enhancing teachers' well-being, with clear positive implications for their professional roles, particularly in the classroom. The findings indicate that developing emotional balance, stress management, and self-awareness through mindfulness improves teachers' internal coping mechanisms, interactions with students, and professional confidence. As supported by prior research (Wu & Qin, 2025; Carroll, Hepburn, & Bower, 2022), mindfulness enables educators to maintain a sense of calm and emotional regulation in everyday and high-pressure classroom environments. Over time, this stability can foster stronger self-efficacy and resilience, essential to sustaining effective teaching practices. The present findings are consistent with previous studies showing that mindfulness helps mitigate teacher burnout by reducing work-related stress and promoting emotional well-being. Moreover, the study highlights that mindfulness practice can enhance teachers' relational capacities. Increased self-understanding allows educators to build deeper, more empathetic connections with students and to apply practical techniques that support children in regulating their own emotions. These findings align with research by Roeser et al. (2022) and Gebre, Demissie, and Yimer (2025), demonstrating that mindfulness contributes to improved decision-making and more effective classroom management.

by fostering present-moment awareness and emotional clarity. Integrating mindfulness into teacher professional development may offer a valuable pathway for supporting educator well-being and the quality of teacher–student relationships.

Limitations and Considerations for Future Research

One limitation of this study is its reliance on self-reported data, which may be subject to biases such as social desirability or inaccurate self-perception. These factors can affect the reliability of the findings, as participants may overestimate or underestimate the impact of mindfulness practice. Future research could address this limitation by incorporating objective measures or triangulating self-reports with independent data sources, such as classroom observations or feedback from colleagues and students, to increase the validity and robustness of the results. Another important consideration is that the participants in this study covered the costs of the mindfulness-based professional development program themselves. This element may have influenced their motivation to engage with the intervention and their perception of its effectiveness. Specifically, self-funded participants may have been more inclined to perceive the program as beneficial to justify their financial investment – a phenomenon known as self-justification bias. Furthermore, the sample may reflect a degree of selection bias, as individuals willing to invest in such training may already be more motivated, reflective, or predisposed to believe in the benefits of mindfulness. This means the sample may not fully represent the broader teaching population. In addition, participants who have made a financial commitment to the program may be more likely to report positive outcomes, which could influence the interpretation of the results. To address these potential biases, future research could compare the experiences and reported outcomes of self-funded participants with those who participate in programs that are subsidized or institutionally supported. The intervention used in this study was also relatively extensive, combining practical mindfulness activities with theoretical content over a prolonged period. While this structure provided rich qualitative insights, it may limit comparability with other studies. Future research should consider using standardized mindfulness-based interventions, such as Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) or adapted school-based programs, to isolate the specific effects of mindfulness practice and enhance the replicability of findings across contexts. It would also be beneficial to compare the effectiveness and appropriateness of different mindfulness training models for educators, including considering how mindfulness can be sustainably implemented within school settings. To validate and extend the findings of this study, future research should include larger and more diverse participant samples, which would improve the generalizability of the results. Longitudinal designs are also needed to assess the long-term effects of mindfulness on educators' well-being and professional functioning. An important avenue of investigation is to explore what happens when mindfulness practice is discontinued – for instance, whether the benefits diminish over time, and to what extent. Including a control group in future studies would also strengthen the evidence base by allowing for more accurate assessments of the intervention's effectiveness and its causal impact.

REFERENCES

- Abaker, M., Noureldin, A., Aboueldahab, M., Fakhfakh, A., Al-Hariry, B. (2025). Mindfulness and work engagement: How emotional intelligence bridges the gap. *Journal of Management World*, 2, 320–332. <https://doi.org/10.53935/jomw.v2024i4.928>
- Alves, R., Lopes, T., Precioso, J. (2021). Teachers' well-being in times of Covid-19 pandemic: factors that explain professional well-being. *IJERI: International Journal of Educational Research and Innovation*, (15), 203–217. <https://doi.org/10.46661/ijeri.5120>
- Braun, S. S., Roeser, R. W., Mashburn, A. J., Skinner, E. (2019). Middle school teachers' mindfulness, occupational health and well-being, and the quality of teacher-student interactions. *Mindfulness*, 10, 245–255 (2019). <https://doi-org.colorado.idm.oclc.org/10.1007/s12671-018-0968-2>.
- Carroll, A., Hepburn, S.-J., Bower, J. (2022) Mindful practice for teachers: Relieving stress and enhancing positive mindsets. *Front. Educ.* 7, 954098. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2022.954098>
- de Carvalho, J. S., Pinto, A. M. & Marôco, J. Results of a Mindfulness-Based Social-Emotional Learning Program on Portuguese Elementary Students and Teachers: a Quasi-Experimental Study. *Mindfulness* 8, 337–350 (2017). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12671-016-0603-z>
- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). (2020). CASEL's SEL framework: What are the core competence areas, and where are they promoted? <https://casel.org/casel-sel-framework-11-2020/?view=true>
- Dalkin, S., Forster, N., Hodgson, P., Lhussier, M., Carr, S. M. (2021). Computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS; NVivo) will assist in the generation, refinement, and testing of complex realist theory. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 24(1), 123–134.
- Dorman, E. (2015). Building teachers' social-emotional competence through mindfulness practices. In D. J. Finders & C. M. Moroye (Eds.), *Curriculum and Teaching Dialogue*, 17, 103–119. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.
- Dreer, B. (2023) On the outcomes of teacher wellbeing: a systematic review of research. *Front. Psychol.* 14, 1205179. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1205179>
- Gebre, Z. A., Demissie, M. M., Yimer, B. M. (2025). The Impact of Teacher Socio-Emotional Competence on Student Engagement: A Metaanalysis. *Frontiers in Psychology*. Vol. 16. <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/psychology/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2025.1526371/abstract>
- Glaser, B. (1978). Theoretical sensitivity: Advances in the methodology of grounded theory. Mill Valley: Sociology Press.
- Hennink, M., Hutter, I., Bailey, A. (2020). Qualitative research methods. Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Singapore: SAGE.
- Henriksen, D., Gruber N. (2024). System-wide school mindfulness: addressing elementary students' social-emotional learning and wellbeing. *Frontiers in Education*. Vol. 9. <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/education/articles/10.3389/feduc.2024.1272545>
- Jennings, P. A., Norton, W. W. (2018). The trauma-sensitive classroom: Building resilience with compassionate teaching.
- Jennings, P. A., Brown, J. L., Frank, J. L., Doyle, S., Oh, Y., Davis, R., Rasheed, D., DeWeese, A., DeMauro, A. A., Cham, H., Greenberg, M. T. (2017). Impacts of the CARE for Teachers program on teachers' social and emotional competence and classroom interactions. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 2017; 109, 1010–1028. <https://doi.org/10.1037/edu0000187>
- Jennings, P. A., Greenberg, M. T. (2009). The prosocial classroom: Teacher social and emotional competence about student and classroom outcomes. *Review of Educational Research*. 2009; 79(1), 491–525. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654308325693>
- Kabat-Zinn, J. (1990). Full catastrophe living: Using the wisdom of your body and mind to face stress, pain, and illness. Delacorte Press.
- Kiken, L. G., Garland, E. L., Bluth, K., Palsson, O. S., & Gaylord, S. A. (2015). From a state to a trait: Trajectories of state mindfulness in meditation during intervention predict changes in trait mindfulness. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 81, p. 41–46.

- Kim, J. S., & Park, H. J. (2023). How Service Employees' Mindfulness Links to Task Performance through Psychological Resilience, Deep Acting, and Customer-Oriented Behavior. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 20(16), 6297. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph20166297>
- Lomas, T., Medina, J. C., Ivztan, I., Rupprecht, S., Hart, R., Eiroa-Orosa, F. (2017). Mindfulness in the Workplace. The impact of mindfulness on wellbeing and performance in the workplace: An inclusive systematic review of the empirical literature. <https://repository.uel.ac.uk/download/e42d7252dbce1a60e39d8c8ad925aa9c17094a25165eec62c5a27b859cef02ad/1155624/Lomas%20et%20al.%20%282017%29%20-%20Mindfulness%20in%20the%20workplace.pdf>
- Madigan, D. J., Kim, L. E. (2021). Does teacher burnout affect students? A systematic review of its association with academic achievement and student-reported outcomes. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 105, 101714. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2020.101714>
- Rodríguez-Ledo, C., Orejudo, S., Cardoso, M. J., Balaguer, A., & Zarza-Alzugaray, J. (2018). Emotional intelligence and mindfulness: Relation and enhancement in the classroom with adolescents. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9, 2162. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.02162>
- Roeser, R. W., Mashburn, A. J., Skinner, E. A., Choles, J. R., Taylor, C., Rickert, N. P., Pinela, C., Robbeloth, J., Saxton, E., Weiss, E., Cullen, M., Sorenson, J. (2022). Mindfulness training improves middle school teachers' occupational health, well-being, and interactions with students in their most stressful classrooms. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 114(2), 408–425. <https://doi.org/10.1037/edu0000675>
- Roeser, R. W., Schonert-Reichl, K. A., Jha, A., Cullen, M., Wallace, L., Wilensky, R., Oberle, E., Thompson, K. C., Taylor, C., Harrison, J. L. (2013). Mindfulness training and reductions in teacher stress and burnout: Results from two randomised, waitlist-control field trials. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 2013, 105(3), 787–804. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0032093>
- Shi, J., Cheung, A. C. K. (2024). Effective Components of Social Emotional Learning Programs: A Meta-analysis. *J. Youth Adolescence* 53, 755–771 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-024-01942-7>
- Scheirlinckx, J., Van Raemdonck, L., Abrahams, L., Teixeira, K. C., Alves, G., Primi, R., John, O. P. and De Fruyt, F. (2023). Social-emotional skills of teachers: Mapping the content space and defining taxonomy requirements. *Front. Educ.* 8:1094888. <https://doi.org/10.3389/educ.2023.1094888>
- Schonert-Reichl, K. A. (2017). Social and emotional learning and teachers. *The Future of Children*, 27(1), 137–155.
- Schonert-Reichl, K. A., Oberle, E., Lawlor, M. S., Abbott, D., Thomson, K., Oberlander, T. F., Diamond, A. (2015). Enhancing cognitive and social-emotional development through a simple-to-administer mindfulness-based school program for elementary school children: A randomized controlled trial. *Developmental Psychology*, 51(1), 52–66. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0038454>
- Schuman-Olivier, Z., Trombka, M., Lovas, D. A., Brewer, J. A., Vago, D. R., Gawande, R., Dunne, J. P., Lazar, S. W., Loucks, E. B., & Fulwiler, C. (2020). Mindfulness and Behavior Change. *Harvard review of psychiatry*, 28(6), 371–394. <https://doi.org/10.1097/HRP.0000000000000277>
- Siegel, D. J. (2013). *Brainstorm: The Power and Purpose of the Teenage Brain*. New York, NY: Penguin.
- Taylor, L., Zhou, W., Boyle, L., Funk, S., & De Neve, J-E. (2024). Wellbeing for Schoolteachers (Report No. 2). *International Baccalaureate Organization*. <https://www.ibo.org/research/wellbeing-research/well-being-for-schoolteachers-2024/>
- UNESCO. (2024). Mainstreaming social and emotional learning in education systems: Policy guide. <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/mainstreaming-social-and-emotional-learning-education-systems-policy-guide>
- Wu, Y., Qin, L. (2025). Enhancing wellbeing among pre-service teachers through a mindfulness-based social and emotional learning curriculum: a quasi-experimental study in China. *Frontiers in Psychology*. Vol. 16. <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/psychology/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2025.1405676>