

A Mindful Teaching Training Program to Enhance Elementary School Teachers' Psychological Well-Being

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to test the effect of mindful teaching training on the psychological well-being of elementary school teachers. The research design used a quasi-experiment with a pretest–posttest control group model, involving eight teachers who were randomly divided into experimental and control groups. The instrument used was the Indonesian adaptation version of the Ryff Psychological Well-Being Scale (42 items). Data analysis was carried out by normality, homogeneity of variance, and Mann-Whitney non-parametric tests. The results showed that there was no significant difference between the experimental and control groups, nor between the pretest and posttest scores in the experimental group ($p > 0.05$). This indicates that short training with a limited number of participants has not resulted in statistically detectable changes. However, the results of in-depth interviews showed that there were real changes in teachers in several dimensions of psychological well-being according to Ryff, such as increased self-acceptance, positive relationships with students, autonomy, mastery of the environment, life goals, and personal growth. These findings confirm that although the quantitative results were not significant, the intervention still contributed to teacher change relevant to the psychological well-being framework. Further research is suggested using a larger number of participants, longer training duration, and more conducive conditions so that the influence of the intervention can be evaluated in more depth.

Keywords : elementary school teachers, mindful teaching training, mixed-method approach, psychological well-being, quasi-experimental design

Introduction

Teachers have a strategic role in shaping the nation's next generation through the learning process and the formation of students' character (Suyatno et al., 2022). Teachers' psychological well-being is an important factor that affects motivation, teaching effectiveness, and the quality of relationships with students (Hakanen et al., 2006). Teachers who have high psychological well-being tend to be able to manage emotions, build positive interactions, and create a healthy learning environment (Collie et al., 2015).

However, teachers often face high work pressure, administrative demands, and changes in the education system that trigger stress and emotional exhaustion (Kidger et al., 2016). This pressure is also experienced by elementary school teachers who are required to carry out various roles at once, both as educators, caregivers, and moral figures for students (Izzati et al., 2024). This condition shows that the dimensions of teachers' psychological well-being are not optimal, such as environmental mastery, autonomy, and self-acceptance as explained by Ryff (Ryff, 1989).

Ryff & Keyes (1995) define psychological well-being as the condition of an individual who feels satisfied with his or her life and can feel happiness (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). This concept has previously been put forward by Bradburn & Noll (1969), who emphasize the balance between positive and negative emotions as the basis of individual happiness. Ryff & Keyes (1995) then developed a model of psychological well-being consisting of six dimensions: self-acceptance, personal growth, life purpose, mastery of the environment, positive relationships with others, and autonomy. These six dimensions are important indicators to assess a person's psychological well-being.

One approach that has been shown to be effective in improving psychological well-being is mindfulness, which is full awareness of current experiences without judgment (Kabat-Zinn, 1990). Mindfulness is closely related to psychological well-being because it involves deep cognitive, motivational, and emotional processes (Brown & Ryan, 2003). Individuals who have high levels of mindfulness tend to show better autonomy, self-control, and emotional balance (Thanoi et al., 2023). In addition, mindfulness practices can help individuals reduce emotional reactivity as well as improve cognitive function, which ultimately strengthens psychological well-being (Parto & Besharat, 2011).

In the context of education, mindfulness is applied through a mindful teaching approach, which is a teaching practice that is carried out with full awareness and emotional management during the learning process (Schussler, 2020). Research shows that mindful teaching can reduce stress, improve teacher-student relationships, and strengthen teachers' psychological well-being (Flook et al., 2013). Teachers who teach mindfully tend to be more able to be present, patient, and non-judgmental, thereby creating positive interactions in the classroom (Maharani, 2019).

In addition, mindful teaching is also closely related to the perspective of transpersonal psychology, which emphasizes the importance of self-awareness, transcendence, and spiritual growth (Baer, 2003). Within this framework, mindfulness is seen as a path to achieving higher self-awareness as well as inner balance (Rimban et al., 2024). The practice of mindful teaching helps teachers recognize their emotions and work pressures, as well as develop self-reflection and empathy skills for students (de Carvalho et al., 2021). This is particularly relevant given the high levels of stress, workload, and professional demands faced by elementary school teachers (Zarate et al., 2019).

Thus, mindful teaching is an intervention strategy that has the potential to strengthen the dimensions of teachers' psychological well-being as stated by Ryff & Keyes (1995), including self-acceptance, personal growth, life goals, positive relationships, mastery of the environment, and autonomy. The application of *mindful teaching* training not only has an impact on reducing stress and improving emotional balance, but also on strengthening interpersonal relationships in the school environment.

Based on the description of the literature review, this study aims to test the effect of mindful teaching training on improving the psychological well-being of elementary school teachers. The hypotheses proposed are;

- 1) There was a difference in the level of psychological well-being between the group of teachers who participated in *the mindful teaching training* and the group who did not participate in the training.
- 2) There was an increase in the psychological well-being of teachers after participating in *mindful teaching training* compared to before the training.

Methods

1. Research Design and Participants

This study uses a quasi-experimental approach with a pretest-posttest control group design to examine the effect of mindful teaching training on the psychological well-being of elementary school teachers. The design involved two groups, namely the experimental group that participated in the training and the control group that did not receive the treatment.

Table 1. Research Design

Grouping	Pretest	Training	Post Test
Experiment	O1	X	O2
Control	O1		O2

The selection of this design was carried out because the research took place in a school environment with limited control over external variables. The research participants consisted of eight active teachers at SDN Semarangan 4, Godean, Sleman, who were selected using purposive sampling techniques with the criteria of a minimum working period of one year to understand the dynamics of work in schools. Afterwards, participants were randomly divided into experimental groups and control groups through a simple random assignment method to minimize potential bias.

2. Instruments and Procedure

This study uses a combination of quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data is collected through a measurement scale, while qualitative data is obtained through semi-structured interviews. The bound variable in this study is psychological well-being, which reflects satisfaction, happiness, and the meaning of life. These variables were measured using the Ryff Psychological Well-Being Scale (1989), which consisted of six main dimensions: autonomy, environmental mastery, positive relationships with others, personal growth, life goals, and self-acceptance.

The independent variable is mindful teaching training, which is a three-day intervention program designed to help teachers improve self-awareness, emotion regulation, and the ability to build positive relationships with students (approximately six hours pers day). This training is modified from the Mindful Teaching module (David & Sheth, 2009) is grounded in mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) that have been widely implemented and empirically tested in educational settings. Previous studies, including systematic reviews, have identified multiple mindfulness programs for teachers demonstrating improvements in emotion regulation, self-efficacy, and psychological well-being (e.g., Jennings et al., 2011; Roeser et al., 2013). These interventions are typically adapted from established

models such as Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), which have been extensively validated across various populations includes with eight sessions with five main focuses, namely attentive listening, emotional awareness of self and students, self-regulation in teaching interactions, compassion for self and students, and acceptance without judgment. Each session is carried out through lectures, group discussions, and hands-on practice of *mindfulness techniques* such as *grounding meditation, mindfulness of sound, and loving-kindness practice*.

Table 2. Calibration of Mindful Teaching Aspects and Techniques

Aspect	Activities
Attentive Listening	Grounding meditation; mindfulness of sound
Acceptance of Self and Students without Judgment	Mindfulness breathing; mindful walking meditation; mindfulness of breathing with Spaciousness
Awareness of Self and Students' Emotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body scan: 2 feet, 1 breath; 3Ps (pause, present, proceed) • Exploring unpleasant–neutral–pleasant experiences
Self-Regulation in Teacher–Student Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive Touch and the Self • Loving-kindness for self and others • Drawing the Mind: Enhancement for Take 1 Part 1: Current Mental State (15 minutes) Part 2: In Silence after the Sound (15 minutes) Part 3: Silence and Mindful Breathing (15 minutes)
Compassion for Self and Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking or movement meditation with loving-kindness • RAIN: Recognize, Acknowledge or Allow, Interest or Investigate, Non-Identify

The research instruments used include the Ryff Psychological Well-Being Scale (1989), the Mindfulness in Teaching Scale (Frank et al., 2016) which has been adapted by Khairani et al., (2021) to the Indonesian educational context, as well as semi-structured interview guides to explore participants' experiences during training. This research is carried out through three main stages, namely preparation, implementation, and evaluation. The preparation stage includes preliminary studies, validation of modules by experts, selection of facilitators, and provision of informed consent to participants. The implementation stage includes the provision of pretests, the implementation of mindful teaching training in the experimental group, and the provision of posttests in both groups. The evaluation stage is carried out by analyzing quantitative and qualitative data to assess the effectiveness of training.

3. Data Analysis

Data analysis was carried out quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative analysis uses non-parametric tests because the data do not fully meet the assumptions of normality. The Mann-Whitney U test was used to compare the differences between the experimental and control groups, while the Wilcoxon Signed Rank test was used to look at changes before and after training in the same group. Qualitative analysis was carried out by examining the results of interviews to understand teachers' subjective experiences in applying mindfulness and changes in

psychological well-being that they experienced. The results of the qualitative analysis were used to enrich the quantitative findings to produce a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of mindful teaching training on the psychological well-being of elementary school teachers.

This section presents the quantitative results of the study examining the effect of mindful teaching training on the psychological well-being of elementary school teachers. Descriptive statistics and hypothesis testing were conducted to compare the experimental and control groups at pretest and posttest stages.

Table 3. Psychological Well-Being Scores of Experimental and Control Groups

Group	Measurement	Mean	SD	Mann – Whitney U	p-value
Experimental	Pretest	152.00	13.29	7.500	0.884
Experimental	Posttest	133.75	6.75	4.000	0.243
Control	Pretest	150.25	1.26	—	—
Control	Posttest	138.75	3.77	—	—

Descriptive analysis showed that the experimental group had a slightly higher mean psychological well-being score at pretest ($M = 152.00$, $SD = 13.29$) compared to the control group ($M = 150.25$, $SD = 1.26$). At posttest, the mean score of the experimental group decreased to 133.75 ($SD = 6.75$), while the control group showed a mean score of 138.75 ($SD = 3.77$). Normality tests using the Shapiro–Wilk and Kolmogorov–Smirnov methods indicated that the data were normally distributed (see Appendix III). However, Levene’s test showed that the variance between groups was not homogeneous (see Appendix IV). Considering the small sample size ($n = 4$ per group) and the violation of homogeneity assumptions, non-parametric analysis was applied.

Hypothesis testing using the Mann–Whitney U test revealed no statistically significant differences between the experimental and control groups at both pretest ($p = 0.884$) and posttest ($p = 0.243$) stages (see Appendix V). Additionally, within-group comparison in the experimental group showed no significant difference between pretest and posttest scores (see Appendix VI). Analysis at the dimension level indicated a significant difference in the personal growth dimension at the pretest stage, while no significant differences were found across all dimensions at posttest (see Appendix VII).

Discussions

This study aimed to examine the influence of mindful teaching training on the psychological well-being of elementary school teachers. Quantitative findings indicated that the intervention did not result in statistically significant differences between the experimental and control groups. A comparison across the six dimensions of psychological well-being (autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations, purpose in life, and self-acceptance) showed no statistically significant differences between pretest and posttest scores in both the experimental and control groups ($p > .05$). Although slight variations were observed

across several dimensions, these changes were not consistent or statistically meaningful, indicating that the intervention did not differentially affect specific aspects of psychological well-being. However, when interpreted within a broader theoretical and contextual framework, these findings provide important insights into the nature of mindfulness-based interventions in educational settings.

From a theoretical perspective, psychological well-being is a multidimensional construct encompassing self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth (Ryff, 1989). Changes in these dimensions often require sustained reflective processes and consistent practice. Previous studies have emphasized that mindfulness interventions tend to produce gradual and cumulative effects rather than immediate quantitative improvements, particularly when implemented over a short duration (Alsubaie et al., 2017) (Li et al., 2024) explain that mindfulness-based interventions tend to yield gradual and cumulative effects, particularly when implemented over longer periods and with consistent practice. In the present study, the mindful teaching training was conducted over a limited time frame, which may not have been sufficient to produce measurable changes in overall psychological well-being scores.

Contextual factors also appear to play a significant role in shaping the effectiveness of mindfulness-based programs. These contextual and procedural constraints can be considered confounding variables that may have influenced the outcomes of the intervention and contributed to the absence of statistically significant findings. The training sessions were conducted during limited break periods between teaching hours, when

participants were physically and mentally fatigued. In addition, the physical environment of the training, which was located near a busy road, may have reduced participants' capacity to engage fully in mindfulness practices. The sessions were conducted in a setting that was not fully conducive to mindfulness practice, such as a location near a busy road and during school break hours when participants were physically fatigued. These conditions align with Crain et al., (2017) who noted that an unconducive physical environment can undermine attentional stability and awareness during mindfulness practice.

Another important consideration is participant readiness and initial attitudes toward mindfulness training. Early sessions revealed resistance and low emotional engagement among some participants, which may have limited the depth of experiential learning. Shapiro et al., (2006) emphasized that openness and motivation are critical mediators in determining the outcomes of mindfulness interventions. Although engagement improved in later sessions, structural constraints such as time limitations and administrative demands continued to restrict optimal participation.

Additionally, structural and administrative constraints, including limited time allocation, long intervals between sessions, and demanding teaching schedules, may have further hindered consistent practice and skill development. These factors align with findings that inconsistent training frequency and high workload contexts can reduce the effectiveness of mindfulness programs (Alsubaie et al., 2017).

Despite the absence of statistically significant quantitative results, qualitative findings revealed meaningful subjective changes in teachers' psychological

experiences. Participants reported increased self-awareness, greater acceptance of personal limitations, improved emotional regulation, and enhanced patience in interactions with students. These experiences reflect core mechanisms of mindfulness, namely decentering, non-judgmental awareness, and emotional regulation, which have been associated with reduced stress and increased self-acceptance among teachers (Emerson et al., 2020).

Improvements were also reported in the domain of positive relations with others. Teachers described increased empathy, tolerance, and sensitivity toward students and colleagues. This finding supports previous research demonstrating that mindfulness-based interventions enhance teachers' social-emotional competence and interpersonal relationships (Jennings et al., 2011). Furthermore, participants reported greater autonomy and reflective decision-making in classroom management, such as intentionally incorporating brief breathing exercises before lessons. These practices are consistent with the work of (Roeser et al., (2012) and Meiklejohn et al., (2012) who highlighted the role of mindfulness in strengthening self-regulation and fostering a more supportive learning climate.

Taken together, these findings suggest that mindful teaching training may exert stronger effects at the subjective and reflective levels than at the level of short-term quantitative outcomes. In small-scale and short-duration interventions, qualitative indicators of change may serve as early signals of longer-term development in psychological well-being. This highlights the importance of integrating mixed-method approaches when evaluating mindfulness-based interventions in educational contexts.

Although, based on what has been explained previously, there are several factors influencing the absence of a significant effect, there are still some qualitative changes. Returning to the hypothesis, namely these confounding variables provide a plausible explanation for why the hypothesis was not supported. Although the intervention did not yield statistically significant quantitative effects, the findings are consistent with prior research suggesting that mindfulness interventions may initially manifest through subjective and reflective changes before being captured in quantitative measures (Emerson et al., 2020; Jennings et al., 2011).

The present study underscores the need for future research to implement mindful teaching programs with longer durations, greater practice intensity, and more supportive environmental conditions. Institutional support and systematic integration of mindfulness into teachers' daily routines may enhance the sustainability and impact of such interventions. Within these conditions, mindful teaching has the potential to contribute meaningfully to teachers' psychological well-being and the overall quality of the educational environment.

Conclusion

This study concludes that mindful teaching training did not produce statistically significant quantitative improvements in the psychological well-being of elementary school teachers. No significant differences were found between the experimental and control groups, nor between pretest and posttest scores within the experimental group. Nevertheless, qualitative findings revealed meaningful psychological changes among teachers who participated in the training, including increased self-awareness, self-acceptance, empathy toward students, and improved emotional regulation in

managing classroom situations. These findings further confirm that the initial hypothesis was not supported under the present experimental conditions.

These findings suggest that the impact of mindfulness-based interventions may initially manifest as reflective and internal processes that are not easily captured through short-term quantitative measurement. From a practical perspective, mindful teaching training holds promise as a teacher capacity-building approach that supports psychological well-being and enhances the quality of teaching practice. Sustained and consistent mindfulness practice may help teachers manage work-related stress, strengthen interpersonal relationships, and reconnect with the deeper meaning of their professional role.

Therefore, future implementations are recommended to involve longer intervention durations, more conducive scheduling and learning environments, and broader institutional support. Further research with larger samples and additional methods, such as behavioral observation and longitudinal designs, is also needed to better understand the long-term effects of mindful teaching in educational contexts.

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Appendix

Appendix I

CODE	Shapiro-Wilk Statistic	df	Sig.
Pretest (Experiment)	0.981	4	0.908
Pretest (Control)	0.895	4	0.406
Posttest (Experiment)	0.935	4	0.624
Posttest (Control)	0.994	4	0.976

Appendix II

Variable	Living Statistic	df	df2	Sig.
By Mean	4.389	3	12	0.02
By Median	4.084	3	12	0.03
Based on Median with adjusted df	4.084	3	5.115	0.08
Based on Trimmed Mean	4.392	3	12	0.02

Appendix III

Pretest Difference Test between Experimental Group (KE) and Control Group (KK)

Statistics	Psychological Well-Being
Mann-Whitney U	7.500
Wilcoxon W	17.500
Z	-0.146
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.884
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	0.886

Posttest Difference Test between KE and KK

Statistics	Psychological Well-Being
Mann-Whitney U	4.000
Wilcoxon W	14.000
Z	-1.169
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.243
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	0.343

Appendix IV
 Difference Test Between Time (Pretest and Postest) Experimental Group

Statistics	Psychological Well-Being
Mann-Whitney U	2.000
Wilcoxon W	12.000
Z	-1.732
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.083
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	0.114

Appendix V
 Table of analysis results per aspect Pretest

Statistics	Self-Sufficient	PL	PP	HPOL	TH	PD
Mann-Whitney U	5.500	7.000	0.500	6.000	7.500	6.000
Wilcoxon W	15.500	17.000	10.500	16.000	17.500	16.000
Z	-0.769	-0.290	-2.191	-0.661	-0.146	-0.584
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.442	0.772	0.028	0.508	0.884	0.559

Table of analysis results per aspect Postest

Statistics	Self-Sufficient	PL	PP	HPO L	TH	PD
Mann-Whitney U	3.000	6.500	7.500	8.000	6.500	7.000
Wilcoxon W	13.000	16.500	17.500	18.000	16.500	17.000
Z	-1.470	-0.436	-0.147	0.000	-0.441	-0.294
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.142	0.663	0.883	1.000	0.659	0.769