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The Effects of Well-Being and Mindfulness on Teacher Enthusiasm

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of well-being and mindfulness on teacher motivation, exploring how these factors affect emotion regulation, stress levels, job satisfaction, and classroom dynamics. The study synthesises existing literature and uses quantitative methods to analyse data from 100 teachers with different educational levels. The study results show that both happiness and mindfulness can significantly improve teachers' motivation, and mindfulness moderates the relationship between happiness and motivation to a certain extent. The study concludes with practical recommendations for integrating wellness and mindfulness practices into teacher professional development programs to create more positive and effective teaching environments.

Keywords: Teacher Well-Being, Mindfulness, Teacher Enthusiasm, Emotional Regulation, Job Satisfaction.

Introduction

Background

Teacher enthusiasm is essential for effective teaching and student engagement. However, teachers often face stress and burnout, undermining their motivation. Teachers' enthusiasm significantly affects students' motivation and learning experience. Recent research has highlighted the importance of teacher wellness and mindfulness in creating a passionate teaching environment (Madigan & Kim, 2021; Keller, Hoy, Goetz, & Frenzel, 2016; Roeser, Skinner, Beer, & Jennings, 2012). This study explores how these factors affect teacher motivation and have implications for professional development and educational practice.

Enthusiasm is a sensory-perceptual emotion that gives one the capacity to notice, validate, assess, or physically respond to something. Excitation from intense stimulation might result in happiness or satisfaction from an activity. The causes and repercussions of these definitions are explained (Nafisah & Setianingsih, 2024). According to Kunter and Holzberger (2014), enthusiasm can improve student relationships and decrease conflict by increasing educators' attention to students in the classroom, and enhancing students' positive influence by sharing emotional reactions (Frenzel et al., 2019).

As for Teacher well-being, it is a vital issue for both schools and society. It is considered to be related to teaching effectiveness, student outcomes, and educational management (Duckworth, Quinn, & Seligman, 2009; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). It has been shown that increasing productivity helps schools function more stably and increases staff engagement (Creemers & Reezigt, 1996). In contrast, low teacher well-being is considered a barrier to school improvement

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and educational reform and may lead to higher rates of teacher absenteeism (Parker, Martin, Colmar, & Liem, 2012). Besides, teacher well-being is related to other psychological concepts, including negative associations with resilience and thriving (Beltman, Mansfield, & Price, 2011) and satisfaction and positive emotions (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2009),

In terms of mindfulness, it refers to being fully present in the present moment, being aware of one's physical, mental, and social experiences, as well as one's feelings, mental images, and thoughts, while accepting them without judgment (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Taylor et al., 2016). Martin (1997) described it as a clear and focused awareness of what is happening to and within us in successive moments of consciousness. Much of the psychological, psychiatric, and philosophical literature suggests that high-quality mindfulness is essential for achieving well-being and happiness (Brown & Ryan, 2003). However, few studies have examined the relationship between well-being and mindfulness.

Moreover, integrating mindfulness into programs for teacher professional development can enhance teachers' productivity and well-being sustainably. Teachers who engaged in mindfulness-based professional development reported lower levels of burnout, higher levels of self-efficacy, and better interactions with students, all of which enhanced their overall effectiveness, according to a recent study by Schussler et al. (2020).

Purpose of the Study

This study aims to:

- Explore the relationship between well-being, mindfulness, and teacher enthusiasm.
- Provide evidence-based recommendations for improving teacher enthusiasm through well-being and mindfulness practices.

Literature Review

Teacher Enthusiasm

Teacher enthusiasm has been described as a nonverbal expression that educators respond to (Baloch & Akram, 2018); teacher performance, such as giving effective presentations, enabling communication, and interaction (Hadie et al., 2019; Wang, Derakhshan, & Zhang, 2021); teacher characteristics consistent with constructive emotional states (Keller et al., 2018).

Expressions of enthusiasm, which include verbal and non-verbal physical and visual expressions that reflect a great deal of energy and engagement, have been viewed as teacher enthusiasm (Collins, 1978). According to Keller et al. (2016) and Kunter et al. (2011), enthusiasm also refers to teachers' self-reported positive emotions and enthusiasm when it comes to teaching or the content being taught. These two forms of enthusiasm often overlap, leading teachers to feel excited and their actions are viewed as demonstrating "genuine enthusiasm" (Keller et al., 2018; Taxer & Frenzel, 2018).

On the other hand, teachers may display or demonstrate obvious enthusiasm or they may be enthusiastic but not show it and reduce anger and anxiety. These genuine displays of enthusiasm have also been shown to increase student engagement and reduce boredom (Keller et al., 2018). In contrast, faking enthusiasm can affect student achievement (Keller et al., 2018) and may even lead to teacher burnout (Taxer & Frenzel, 2018). According to research on the individual and combined effects of expressive enthusiasm and experiential enthusiasm, the advantage of expressive enthusiasm is less than that of experiential enthusiasm. It has been linked to learning

(Kunter et al., 2014), intrinsic motivation (Lazarides et al., 2018), and positive student outcomes (Frenzel et al., 2019).

Well-Being

Defining well-being is notoriously difficult, and there is no consensus on how the concept should be constructed. Despite the difficulties, some have suggested dividing it into objective well-being (measurable elements: economic resources, political conditions, physical health, number of social relationships, literacy) and subjective well-being (subjective experiences: happiness, emotions, engagement, purpose, life satisfaction, quality of social relationships, competence, achievement) (Forgeard, Jayawickreme, Kern, & Seligman, 2011).

Bad mood and emotional tiredness are negative indicators of teacher well-being. To verify whether these indicators could serve as indicators of possible well-being factors, they conducted a factor analysis (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017). One of the three main dimensions of burnout is emotional exhaustion (Maslach et al. 1998). Chronic job stress is the root cause, which may manifest as negative emotions brought on by certain parts of the job. Symptoms of emotional exhaustion include persistent fatigue and low energy (Schwarzer et al., 2000; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015). Additionally, research has linked emotional exhaustion to higher workload (Skaalvik & Skaalvik 2009, 2015), lower motivation levels (Hakanen et al. 2006), and lower career satisfaction (Skaalvik & Skaalvik 2009).

A comprehensive literature review by Sohail, Baghady, Choi, Huynh, Whetten, and Proeschold-Bell (2023) identified individual and organizational factors that influence teacher well-being, highlighting the importance of a supportive work environment and personal resilience. Similarly, a systematic review by Hascher and Mori (2024) found a strong link between teacher well-being and several positive outcomes, such as improved sleep quality, increased teacher retention, improved teacher-student relationships, and improved student achievement.

The relationship between teachers' average well-being (emotional exhaustion and behavioural engagement) and students' average achievement (reading, writing, and numeracy) was examined by Granziera, Martin, and Collie (2023). The research results showed that emotional exhaustion at the school level is significantly negatively correlated with academic performance. In schools where teachers have higher levels of emotional exhaustion, students also have lower average grades. There was no statistically significant relationship between teacher behavioural engagement and student grade point average.

Sandilos, Neugebauer, DiPerna, Hart, and Lei (2023) explored the associations between implementing a comprehensive SEL program in the classroom, teacher emotional well-being, and teacher-student interactions. Results showed that implementation of the SSIS SEL CIP curriculum was positively correlated with teachers' classroom organization skills at the end of the year. In addition, the findings also showed a relationship between treatment status and teachers' emotional well-being. Teachers with lower levels of emotional health reported poorer classroom organization, but this relationship did not hold for teachers in the intervention group. Even though teachers reported lower levels of emotional well-being, the results suggest that using the SSIS SEL CIP may help maintain positive interactions between teachers and students.

Besides, a systematic review by Hascher and Mori (2024) assessed teacher well-being outcomes and found significant associations with various positive factors, including enhanced sleep quality, increased teacher retention, improved teacher-student relationships, and heightened

student achievement. This review underscores the multiple benefits of supporting teacher well-being in educational contexts.

These studies illuminate the intricate interplay between teachers' enthusiasm and well-being, demonstrating that nurturing personal qualities such as self-efficacy and grit, along with creating engaging learning environments, can greatly enhance the learning experience for both teachers and students.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness involves being constantly aware of your thoughts, feelings, and surroundings. Research shows that mindfulness can reduce stress, improve well-being, and enhance emotion regulation (Kabat-Zinn, 1990; Brown & Ryan, 2003). Mindfulness practice can enhance focus and reduce emotional exhaustion for teachers (Roeser et al., 2012).

Recent research has confirmed the significant relationship between teacher awareness and passion for teaching and has highlighted the role of psychological factors in promoting well-being and engagement in the classroom. Xu and Wang (2024) investigated the mental health of English teachers in China and found that passion for teaching mediated the relationship between mindfulness, growth mindset, and overall well-being. This suggests that combining mindfulness practice with a growth mindset can enhance teacher motivation and thus improve psychological resilience.

Similarly, the effectiveness of a mindfulness-based intervention for reducing anxiety among Chinese university students has been examined by Li, Xu, Wan, Liu, and Liu (2023). The analysis showed that mindfulness-based interventions had a positive effect on reducing anxiety among Chinese college students. This emphasises the need to promote mindfulness interventions as a form of treatment and prevention of anxiety disorders among Chinese university students.

Methodology

Population and Sample

The sample of the study involved teachers from public and private schools (primary and secondary level). A random sampling technique has been used to select 100 teachers with at least two years of teaching experience. The sample included 50 teachers from public schools and 50 teachers from private schools, and efforts were made to ensure gender balance and diversity in teaching subjects.

Data Analysis

The study employed partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) to analyze the relationship between teachers' well-being, mindfulness, and passion. Data analysis was performed using SmartPLS 4 software, focusing on descriptive statistics, measurement model evaluation, structural model evaluation, and mediation analysis.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Teachers reported moderate to high levels of well-being ($M = 3.85$, $SD = 0.72$), mindfulness ($M = 3.92$, $SD = 0.68$), and enthusiasm ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 0.75$). Skewness and kurtosis values confirmed normal data distribution.

Measurement Model Assessment

The measurement model was evaluated based on reliability and validity indicators:

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Teacher Well-Being	0.89	0.91	0.67
Mindfulness	0.86	0.90	0.63
Teacher Enthusiasm	0.91	0.93	0.72

Table 1: Reliability and Convergent Validity

All Cronbach's Alpha and CR values exceed 0.70, confirming internal consistency reliability. All AVE values exceed 0.50, confirming convergent validity.

Construct	Well-Being	Mindfulness	Enthusiasm
Teacher Well-Being	0.82	0.61	0.58
Mindfulness	0.61	0.79	0.55
Teacher Enthusiasm	0.58	0.55	0.85

Table 2: Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Larcker Criterion)

The square root of AVE values (bolded) is higher than correlations, confirming discriminant validity.

Constructs	Well-Being and Mindfulness	Well-Being and Enthusiasm	Mindfulness and Enthusiasm
HTMT Value	0.71	0.65	0.62

Table 3: Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) Ratio

All HTMT values are below 0.85, confirming discriminant validity.

Structural Model Assessment

Path	β (Path Coefficient)	t-value	p-value	f ² (Effect Size)	Hypothesis Supported?
Well-Being → Teacher Enthusiasm	0.42	7.85	<0.001	0.28 (moderate)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
Mindfulness → Teacher Enthusiasm	0.36	6.42	<0.001	0.24 (moderate)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes

Path	β (Path Coefficient)	t-value	p-value	f ² (Effect Size)	Hypothesis Supported?
Well-Being → Mindfulness	0.55	10.21	<0.001	0.35 (large)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes

Table 4: Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

All path coefficients (β) are statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), confirming strong relationships. Effect sizes (f^2) indicate moderate-to-large effects.

Dependent Variable	R ² Value	Predictive Power
Teacher Enthusiasm	0.61	Strong Predictive Power
Mindfulness	0.42	Moderate Predictive Power

Table 5: Coefficient of Determination (R²) and Predictive Power

61% of the variance in teacher enthusiasm is explained by well-being and mindfulness. 42% of the variance in mindfulness is explained by well-being.

Mediation Analysis (Mindfulness as a Mediator)

Path	Indirect Effect (β)	t-value	p-value	Mediation Type
Well-Being → Mindfulness → Teacher Enthusiasm	0.20	4.97	<0.01	Partial Mediation

Table 6: Mediation Effect of Mindfulness

Since the direct effect remains significant, mindfulness partially mediates well-being and enthusiasm.

Model Fit Indices

Fit Index	Value	Recommended Threshold	Model Fit Status
SRMR	0.057	< 0.08 (Good Fit)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good Fit
NFI	0.92	> 0.90 (Good Fit)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good Fit

Table 7: Model Fit Assessment

The SRMR value (0.057) and NFI value (0.92) confirm an overall good model fit.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the impact of teacher well-being and mindfulness on teacher motivation. The results showed that both well-being and mindfulness significantly increased teacher motivation, with mindfulness acting as a mediator in this

relationship. These findings are consistent with previous research, highlighting the importance of psychological well-being and mindfulness practices in promoting positive teaching experiences and professional engagement.

Teacher Well-Being and Enthusiasm

There was a strong positive correlation between teacher happiness and passion ($\beta=0.42$, $p<0.001$), indicating that teachers with higher happiness were more likely to show passion in their teaching. This result is consistent with research showing that teachers with high levels of well-being have higher levels of engagement, motivation, and overall job satisfaction. Positive well-being can help teachers maintain emotional resilience, which in turn enhances their passion for teaching. Additionally, research has found that well-being is associated with teacher retention and student engagement, highlighting its importance in educational settings (Granziera et al., 2023; Hascher & Mori, 2024; Sandilos et al., 2023).

Mindfulness and Teacher Enthusiasm

The substantial correlation between mindfulness and teacher motivation ($\beta = 0.36$, $p < 0.001$) validates previous findings regarding mindfulness's ability to lower stress and foster constructive classroom interactions (Li et al., 2023). According to research by Xu and Wang (2024), mindfulness can enhance teachers' professional commitment and foster pleasant emotional states. These findings are in line with the idea that mindfulness can assist teachers with controlling their emotions.

The Mediating Role of Mindfulness

It has been found that there was a partial mediation effect of mindfulness on the relationship between teacher enthusiasm and well-being ($\beta = 0.20$, $p < 0.01$). Accordingly, this result has been confirmed by research showing that mindfulness can improve cognitive and emotional control, reduce burnout, and enhance sustained engagement in instruction (Flook et al., 2024; Hirshberg et al., 2024). The mediation results suggest that well-being interventions should be combined with mindfulness training to enhance their effects on teacher motivation.

The study found that mindfulness partially mediated the relationship between teacher motivation and well-being ($\beta= 0.20$, $p< 0.01$). Thus, research confirms this result, showing that mindfulness can improve cognitive and emotional control, reduce burnout, and enhance sustained engagement in teaching (Flook et al., 2024; Hirshberg et al., 2024). To increase the effects of well-being on teacher motivation, the results recommend that well-being should be combined with mindfulness training.

Implications for Educational Practice

Schools should prioritize teachers' physical and mental health and practice mindfulness to increase teachers' motivation and effectiveness in teaching. Professional development programs should integrate mindfulness techniques, stress management strategies, and well-being support systems to help teachers build emotional resilience and motivation.

Limitations and Future Research

Causal inferences are limited by the cross-sectional design of the study. To gain a more thorough understanding of teacher passion, future research should employ longitudinal methods and incorporate observational data.

Conclusion

This study highlights the important role that teachers' well-being and mindfulness play in promoting enthusiasm in the classroom. The results suggest that mindfulness not only improves motivation but also amplifies the effects of well-being on motivation, making mindfulness an important component of teacher support programs. By prioritizing well-being and mindfulness, schools can help teachers maintain high levels of motivation, engagement, and effectiveness in their professional roles.

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