The Psychology of Mindfulness for Pre-Service Teachers Preparation Program

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Abstract:
The benefits of mindfulness in adults have been widely researched, and its positive impact on psychology and teacher performance has become a major focus in the field of education. These benefits include stress regulation and reduction, increased compassion, and improved teaching effectiveness. Many studies have highlighted the positive relationship between mindfulness traits and teaching readiness. This study specifically examines the role of prospective teachers' mindfulness traits in their readiness to teach. The theoretical model proposed by Manasia et al. (2019), which includes four key dimensions of teaching, was used to measure the teaching readiness of prospective teachers in three academic programs at the Department of Language Education at a leading state university in Malang, East Java, Indonesia. The Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) was employed to measure the mindfulness traits of students as future teachers. The study found that mindfulness traits were able to predict higher teaching readiness in participants. These findings also form the basis for a community service activity, which involves providing mindfulness psychology training during teaching preparation orientation for students as prospective teachers.
Keywords: Mindfulness, Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ), Teacher performance, Psychology, Education

Introduction

In the education sphere, mindfulness has become a strategy that is being used with increasing frequency and is receiving mainstream acceptance worldwide as a means to improve the well-being of students and teachers (Black, 2014). Mindfulness helps people to appreciate life from moment to moment, to confront life more patiently, and to recover when they are depressed (Paller, et al., 2015). In its original Buddhist context, mindfulness is derived from the Pali word sati which means to capture a kind of present-moment awareness. In simple terms, sati denotes 'remembrance' and 'recollection', meaning that it does not refer to historical memory per se, but to a mental state in which one recollects or remembers the activity that one is engaged in, in the present moment (Gethin, 2011). Trait mindfulness,

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therefore, refers to an individual's characteristic tendency to maintain awareness of the present moment in a non-reactive and non-judgmental manner (Carpenter et al., 2019).

Mindfulness for teachers is a growing area of focus in teacher learning programs. Implementations of mindfulness for teachers are becoming more noticeable and are oriented towards broader aims concerned with teachers' character (Linor and Ergas, 2022). With mindful teaching, teachers can implement learning more effectively and be able to overcome various stressful situations related to the teaching profession, through 5 main components, namely: (1) attentive listening; (2) acceptance without self-judgment of children; (3) awareness of self and children's emotional states; (4) self-regulation in teacher-student relationships; and (5) self and children, teachers can further improve the quality of relationships with students and use more effective learning strategies (Skinner & Beers, 2014; Kwon, 2015; and Tyng et al., 2017). Mindfulness helps teachers manage emotions, reduce stress, and focus the mind. These skills are essential for career success and satisfaction. When a teacher entering the classroom is fully aware of his/her role and state as a teacher who is able and ready to provide learning to his/her students, it will help students focus their attention, improve academic performance, and increase passion for learning (Schoeberlein, 2009; Davidson & Kaszniak, 2015; and Janssen et al., 2018).

Incorporating mindfulness into teacher-student interactions also provides an opportunity for teachers to see the current experience with students as a form of a long-term relationship, where there is an understanding of the child's needs, development of self-regulation, and child-oriented decision-making. At the experimental level, through mindful teaching, teachers can: avoid reactive attitudes; prioritize children's needs above their own; accept all students as they are without good judgment; and be able to cope with distress that may be experienced in the learning process (Gouda et al., 2016; Maharani, 2016; and Townsend, 2017). Mindful teaching involves acceptance without judgment of children's attitudes, attributes, behaviors, or themselves. Acceptance here does not remove the responsibility of giving direction and discipline, but rather acceptance of what is happening in the present moment with full awareness. For example, if a teacher-student conflict occurs, the teacher will be able to accept that being a teacher does and accept that being a child also has its own challenging factors. "Acceptance" here means realizing whatever challenges are faced, and that any mistakes that occur as a result of those challenges are part of the learning process (Bandura, 1999; Snyder & Lopez, 2008; and Xiao et al., 2017).

Teacher readiness refers to the preparedness, competence, and capacity of educators to effectively fulfil their roles in the teaching profession. It encompasses a range of attributes and skills that contribute to a teacher's ability to create a positive and productive learning environment, facilitate student growth, and respond to the diverse needs of learners. Readiness is a competency that a person must have so that someone who has competence means that someone has sufficient readiness to do something" (Arikunto, 2001: 54). The definition of a teacher is formally stated in Indonesian Law no. 14 of 2005 is defined as, "a

professional educator with the main task to educate, teach, guide, direct, train, assess and evaluate students in the early childhood education pathway formal education, basic education and secondary education."

There are four dimensions in the use of central dimensions of teaching for teacher readiness. The first is professional knowledge. Professional knowledge which is a central element of the teaching profession is defined by Wang et al. (2014) as knowledge accumulated from initial and ongoing training, as well as active participation in a professional network or workgroup which is then used in educational practice by educators. The second dimension is professional practice. Based on Manasia et al. (2020), professional practice refers to the ability to use professional knowledge in teaching practice which includes setting goals and objectives, designing effective teaching strategies, designing assessments and assessment tools, creating feedback features, and creating a learning environment that encourages students to learn independently. independently, and meet the needs of each student. The third is professional engagement. In his research, Danielson (2004) involved professional engagement with elements and components related to practice, such as reflection, respect for a value, ethical behavior, and feedback from colleagues. Therefore, this dimension can be a supporter of teacher career development and professionalism. The last dimension is self-management. Danielson (2004) explained that self-management refers to teachers as people who control actions, activities, and processes related to schools which also involve the allocation of time and other resources to achieve targets or goals.

There are several studies conducted to investigate the role of mental preparedness in the teaching readiness of teachers (Massouti, 2021; Elmahdi & Fawzi, 2019; Manasia et al., 2019; Atkin & Rodgers, 2016). However, the study of mindfulness role in teaching readiness done in Indonesian setting has not been found, to date. Therefore, some previous studies discussed here are drawn from global perspective where Trait Mindfulness plays a significant role in influencing various aspects of teaching readiness and commitment among educators. Research in Thailand and Malaysia highlights the mediating effect of readiness for change (RFC) between transformational leadership (TL) and commitment to teaching entrepreneurship (CTE) (Chavaha et al., 2021; Yeap et al., 2021). Additionally, in the context of kindergarten teachers in China, trait mindfulness directly predicts subjective well-being, with emotional intelligence and work-family balance acting as sequential mediators between trait mindfulness and subjective well-being (Shafiee et al., 2019). These findings emphasize the importance of mindfulness in enhancing educators' readiness for change, commitment to teaching, and overall well-being, showcasing the multifaceted benefits of incorporating mindfulness practices in educational settings. Therefore, this study investigates the relationship between mindfulness at the trait levels with teaching readiness. At the correlational level, we predict that mindfulness has a positive association with the teaching readiness of pre-service teachers (Hypothesis 1)

Research Methodology

Approach and Design

This study employs correlational research design, as a quantitative method to determine the relationship and degree of association between the two variables (Trait Mindfulness and Teaching Readiness) without the researchers controlling or manipulating any of them. Despite its usefulness in analyzing data and making predictions, caution is advised in drawing causal conclusions from correlational studies. By understanding the level of relationships between variables, researchers can strengthen existing theories, reject hypotheses, or inform decision-making processes in various domains, making correlational research a valuable tool for generating knowledge and driving positive change.

The participants in this study were 55 undergraduate students of Brawijaya University who were going to join the Introduction and Learning Management Program, known as P4 (Program Pengenalan dan Pengelolaan Pembelajaran) teaching practice. P4 is a practical compulsory subject which is also a form of teaching service carried out in the school's environment around Malang and Batu area in East Java. It is carried out by students of the Faculty of Cultural Sciences in Brawijaya University. This activity is organized by the Language Education Department under the faculty. Participants in this research were majoring in English Education (29.1%), Japanese Education (29.1%), and Indonesian Education and Literature (41.8%), with the majority in semester 7 (92.7%). The majority of this research sample was female (81.8%) and the average age of the participants was 21.05 years old (SD = 0.731).

Table 1. Demographic Data

No.	Variable	Frequency	Percent
	Gender		
1	Male	10	18,2
2	Female	45	81,8
	Age		
1	20	11	20,0
2	21	32	58,2
3	22	10	18,2
4	23	2	3,6
	Study Program		
1	English Education	16	29,1
2	Japanese Education	16	29,1
3	Indonesian Education and Literature	23	41,8
	Semester		
1	6	2	3,6
2	7	51	92,7
3	9	2	3,6

Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) is one of the most thorough and widely used tools for determining how individuals differ from one another in their levels of

mindfulness. FFMQ evaluates the five components of mindfulness; observing, describing, acting with awareness, non-judging of inner experiences, and non-reacting to inner experiences (Danielson & Jones, 2018). According to Deng et al. (2011), most of the components of mindfulness have incremental validity in the prognosis of depression and anxiety. Furthermore, FFMQ has acceptable psychometric qualities and is a reliable tool for measuring mindfulness (Deng et al., 2011). This research uses the Indonesian language adaptation version of FFMQ by Meindy et al. (2022). There are 38 items with a 5-point Likert Scale response (1 = very rarely, 5 = very often; e.g. "When I'm walking, I deliberately notice the sensations of my body moving"). The higher the total score, the higher the participant's trait mindfulness.

Teaching readiness was measured using the Teaching Readiness Scale developed by Manasia et al. (2019). This scale measures participants' teaching readiness based on 4 dimensions, namely professional practice, professional knowledge, professional engagement, and self-management. There are 45 items with a 5-point Likert Scale response form (1 = totally disagree, 5 = totally agree; e.g. "I am ready to plan the teaching process based on the curricular documents").   The higher the total score, the higher the participant's teaching readiness.

Data Analysis

The purpose of this study is to discover the role of the Trait Mindfulness in Teaching Readiness. The total score of the scales is examined using Simple Linear Regression. Bootstrapping was conducted with 5000 samples in order to correct and minimize the concern of bias (Field, 2018). Data analysis procedures were conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics software version 26.

Figure 1. Simple Linear Regression Model

Results and Discussion

This study examines the role of Trait Mindfulness on Teaching Readiness. Analysis based on demographic data found that there were no differences in Trait Mindfulness and Teaching Readiness between male and female participants (p = > 0.1), so the data were homogeneous. In addition, the reliability of the scales used is sufficient, specifically Facet Mindfulness (Cronbach's α = 0.864) and Teaching Readiness (Cronbach's α = 0.984) (see Table 2). As predicted in the alternative hypothesis (H1), the Trait Mindfulness has a role in Teaching Readiness (B = 1.122, p = 0.000). This means that the Trait Mindfulness is able to

predict higher Teaching Readiness in participants. As can be seen in Table 2, it's known that the R square value is 0.360. This means that the contribution of the Trait Mindfulness in explaining Teaching Readiness is 36% and the remaining 64% is explained by other factors not involved in this study (see Table 2).

Table 2. Reliability Scales, Regression Coefficient, and Confidence Intervals

Antecedent	Teaching Readiness ($\alpha = 0.984$) (Y)					
	B	t	R	R^2	Coef. (SE)	95% CI
Facet Mindfulness (α = 0.864) (X)	1.122	5.460	0.600	0.360	0.000*** 0.206	0.78; 1.47

Alternative hypothesis (H1) was tested with a bootstrapped simple regression model based on 5000 samples with a 95% bias-corrected confidence interval. The Trait Mindfulness was placed as a predictor and Teaching Readiness as a result (see Table 2 and Figure 1). The analysis results show mindfulness's role in teaching readiness, which means that the higher the level of individual Trait Mindfulness, the higher the teaching readiness. It extends past research on the role of mindfulness in teaching. Based on Crane et al. (2012) research, teachers have achieved an appropriate level of competence through mindfulness-based teaching.

Mindfulness is concerned with standards, formation, and teacher readiness in teaching. Through mindfulness, rather than defining the teaching process, mindfulness-based teaching can be descriptive in terms of what we see, hear, and feel when participating in the teaching process. Teachers will naturally embody the qualities inherent in the exploration process, such as intentional focus, curiosity, equanimity, and compassion (Crane et al., 2012). In addition, a study by Flook et al. (2013) found that mindfulness can increase effective teaching behavior and reduce attentional biases, so it can be said that mindfulness can be a tool for enhancing teaching quality. Furthermore, this study looks at teaching readiness from four interrelated dimensions, namely professional knowledge, professional practice, professional engagement, and self-management. When examined further, three out of the four dimensions pertain to professionalism. Professionalism refers to the skills, competencies, and practices required in the profession (Sexton, 2007). Similarly, Epstein and Hundert (2002) define professional competence as the judicious use of communication, knowledge, reasoning, emotions, values, and reflection for the benefit of the individuals and communities served. Significantly, in keeping with the principle of mindfulness, the

definition of professional competence depends on habits of mind, namely attention, curiosity, awareness, and presence (Crane et al., 2012).

Much behavior in organizations occurs in a relatively automatic and non-conscious manner, including in educational institutions. Teachers must be psychologically ready to serve a wide spectrum of pupils with various backgrounds, learning styles, and skill levels. In essence, mental preparedness equips teachers with the resilience and determination needed to navigate the challenges and complexities of the teaching profession effectively. Therefore, mental readiness is necessary for teachers in order to manage diverse needs. While there are many cases that have emerged from the educational sphere in Indonesia in recent years related to aggression, bullying, self-harm, sexual harassment, suicides, etc., various studies indicate that implementing mindfulness interventions can lead to significant improvements in teachers' and students' emotional regulation, thereby decreasing instances of aggression (Utami & Yudiarso, 2023; Patri, 2024; Yusainy et al., 2018). Though some evidence supports the effectiveness of mindfulness in mitigating aggressive behavior, some studies suggest that the impact may vary based on individual differences and contextual factors. (Yusainy, 2013)

At the University, the activity of P4 (Program Pengenalan dan Pengelolaan Pembelajaran) is commonly referred to as PPL (Praktik Pengalaman Lapangan) or Field Experience Practice held in actual schools by synergizing KKN (Kuliah Kerja Nyata) program for internship activities and teaching practices because previously students had undergone teaching practice on campus which would be a provision for them. Students (the preservice teachers) will be tested in terms of mental readiness and the adequacy of their knowledge in providing material and evaluating the learning process. The goal is that students can implement theories related to pedagogical competence into real situations at school so as to gain direct experience and obtain other professional competencies of educators including social, personality, and professional competencies. The four competencies can only be obtained through direct practice in schools. In addition, P4 is organized to facilitate students to get to know the intricacies of the latest curriculum applicable in schools, recognize the characteristics of students, school environment management, and classroom management strategies.

Through P4, students are also trained to conduct research in the field of education. The goal is for students to practice being sensitive to the problems that occur in the classroom or school where they practice. Then these problems are analyzed and researched using educational research methods. In order to contribute to society, the results of the research are written in the form of scientific research articles. In addition, the research findings can be used as a reference for learning so it is expected that various learning tools, methods, and media used in schools are the result of research. In can be concluded that the type of works should be done by the preservice teachers are similar to the real teachers.

Becoming a teacher fundamentally means that one will always face academic pressure. Similar to the subjects in this study, ultimately, preservice teachers will become

actual teachers obligated to professionally practice all the knowledge they have learned. At this critical stage of career development, they are susceptible to emotional outbursts, failing to manage themselves from academic stress and social situational challenges that lead to distinct mental health disorders, such as stress. Teachers, particularly at the "trainee" level when they are set to delve right into using their expertise in teaching, often experience negative stress if they feel underprepared or lack confidence given the pressure to be professional. In this regard, a study by Bernay (2014) found that mindfulness has a significant impact on the ability to cope with stress in the first year of teaching. A similar notion is also put forth by a study from Konstanski (2007), stating that mindfulness is one way of proactively striving to reduce stress in pre-service teachers' education. Additionally, readiness in teaching is also assessed through self-management, which is related to how individuals can effectively organize their time and goals in teaching. This certainly requires mindfulness, which can enhance attention, memory, concentration, and management skills, promoting a teacher's performance outcomes (Bhuvaneswari & Jayanthy, 2022), for when the mind is clear, the body becomes physically active, emphasizing concentration and memory retention in teachers (Fetterman, Robinson, Ode, & Gordon, 2010).

The limitation of this study is the small number of sample participants. Although this study has tried to overcome this by bootstrapping, various problems can still arise due to the small number of samples. The number of male and female participants was not balanced, as male participants were not representative enough. This study also did not obtain a lot of demographic data on participants that could enrich the discussion and examine the results of this study, for example, the socio-economic conditions of the participants. Therefore, additional analysis of these demographics could not be carried out.

Conclusion

Based on the findings it can be concluded that the Trait Mindfulness plays a role in influencing Teaching Readiness. The thoughts drawn from this study is that Trait Mindfulness is one of the factors that can explain Teaching Readiness. Through Trait Mindfulness, preservice teachers not only define the teaching, but also actively explore seeing, hearing, and feeling during the teaching process. Hence, incorporating mindfulness interventions in teacher preparation programs might promote pre-service teachers' mindfulness and well-being, leading to positive effects on their teaching effectiveness. Practicing mindfulness can help pre-service teachers focus on the present, and improve attention, self-awareness, and emotional regulation, which can reduce stress and enhance well-being. Further research is needed to explore these nuances and optimize mindfulness applications in diverse educational settings, especially in Indonesia.

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