

Mindfulness as a Transformative Learning Paradigm: Uncovering Teachers' Perspective in Public Elementary School Setting

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Abstract. This phenomenological study explored the mindfulness-based teaching approaches of ten elementary school teachers from five schools in the Maco North District. In today's fast-paced and stress-inducing world, mindfulness-based teaching is essential for promoting holistic development, equipping individuals with critical life skills, and fostering well-being within educational settings. Through qualitative analysis, the study uncovered three primary themes from the teachers' experiences: stress reduction, creating a conducive learning environment, and improved student academic achievement. Additionally, it identified three coping strategies employed by teachers: personal mindfulness practices, explicit teaching of mindfulness skills, and maintaining a positive mindset and emotional management. Key lessons learned include the importance of mental health and well-being and enhancing the teaching and learning process through mindfulness. These findings underscore mindfulness's significant impact on teachers and students, advocating for its broader integration into educational systems. The study highlights that mindfulness practices empower individuals to manage life's complexities and that research was essential to optimize their application in education. The academic landscape, mental health, and well-being were paramount. Comparably, mindfulness teaching emerges as a valuable practice for nurturing educational success and the essential skills needed to navigate life's complexities.

KEY WORDS

1. Mindfulness practices
2. Transformative learning
3. Teaching and learning process

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1. Introduction

Many people consider teaching to be one of the noblest professions. It can be highly fulfilling, but it takes significant effort to succeed. To be an excellent teacher, one must have essential skills and compassion for the young minds being nurtured. However, this compassion is frequently accompanied by various difficulties and challenges. To succeed in teaching, teachers must be receptive, adaptable, and equipped with effective practices to support their journey. This pushed me to explore the mindful-based teaching practices of public elementary school teachers. As they grapple with the complexities of the modern educational landscape, they must possess the will to push forward and create a healthier environment where they can prosper. Jon Kabat-Zinn, who initiated mindfulness-based stress reduction, defines mindfulness as

”awareness that arises through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally” (Kabat, 2021). It involves paying attention to the present moment with intention and without judgment, allowing us to observe our experiences without getting overwhelmed or overreacting. Mindfulness can help us enhance our mental clarity, regulate our emotions, and improve our overall well-being, leading to a more balanced and fulfilling life. It teaches us to respond to situations with a calm mind rather than impulse. In her paper, Aish (2020) stated that being mindful will likely result in reduced stress, enhanced performance, gained insight and awareness through observing our mind, and increased attention to others’ well-being. In a Harvard Health article mentioned in her paper, she says, “There is more than one way to practice mindfulness, but the goal of any mindfulness technique is to achieve a state of alert, focused relaxation by deliberately paying attention to thoughts and sensations without judgment.” As shown by Maloney et al. (2016), as cited in Weare (2019), prominent organizations such as the Mindfulness in Schools Project (MiSP) in the United Kingdom and MINDUP in the United States have been actively producing mindfulness curricula, training educators, and establishing these practices in various schools throughout the world. According to reviews and reports from these organizations, these curricula have reached thousands of teachers and touched millions of students of different ages. The study of mindfulness in education has grown to include substantial state-funded initiatives, such as the Oxford Mindfulness Centre’s MYRIAD, which involves 84 UK schools and approximately 6,000 students. Violago and Martin (2023) conducted a study among elementary teachers and staff in the Philippines to understand teachers’ motivation to improve their students’ learning outcomes. The findings showed that mindfulness helped participants better understand their motivations, resulting in a more substantial alignment with their teaching objectives. Furthermore, mindfulness encouraged the development of an attitude that values intrinsic rewards, which increased overall motivation. Furthermore, incorporating mindfulness into the school environment positively impacted the teacher community, cultivating a culture of empathy, support, and collaboration. Similarly, Chua (2020) explored the real-life experiences of professionals who consistently practice mindfulness in their daily lives. The results suggest that participants found mindfulness advantageous in managing challenging internal experiences such as emotions, thoughts, and physical sensations. It also helped take skillful action, cultivate calmness, foster calm relationships and compassion, increase openness and tolerance towards difficulties, and enhance self-understanding and presence with others. However, the study also identified several risks and disadvantages associated with mindfulness practices. The research participants also unanimously agreed on the feasibility of teaching mindfulness to school youth. They emphasized the importance of guidance from a well-trained mindfulness practitioner for students engaging in mindfulness practices. In another study, teachers in the Philippines are forced to adapt to the workplace due to current circumstances. This adaptation includes adjustments not only in pedagogical methods but also in dealing with their own physical and social limitations, which can lead to increased stress levels (Espino-Diaz et al., 2020). The previous year saw a significant increase in teachers’ workload, which included tasks such as module creation, development of supplementary materials, evaluation of activity notebooks and performance tasks, and fulfillment of additional responsibilities. Prioritizing the transition to new learning modalities, as well as recognizing and nurturing teachers’ well-being, while also improving organizational health within schools, should be paramount. In the locality of Maco, Davao de

Oro, it has been observed that some students would rather skip school whenever there are oral recitations or quizzes expected on that day because of the fear of being humiliated and scolded for getting the wrong answer. That is why it is important for teachers to have compassion towards their students and to never display any negative judgments to boost their morale and confidence. Incorporating mindfulness in their teaching approach helps teachers build a healthy and safe student environment. However,

research studies about the effects of mindfulness on the teaching and learning experience of students and teachers are scarce in this field. It was in this context that this study was conceptualized. This study uncovered the experiences and challenges encountered by elementary school teachers about mindful-based teaching and explored how they cope with it. I wanted to know how teachers deal with this in their teaching process to help improve the well-being of the students and eliminate any stressors.

1.1. Purpose of the Study—The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the experiences of technology and livelihood education teachers in assessing the performance tasks of their students. This research also dealt with the coping mechanisms of the TLE teachers who were teaching in the secondary level.

Their insights about their respective experiences in their classes were also determined.

1.2. Research Questions—This study delved comprehensively into elementary school teachers' experiences and coping strategies regarding mindful-based teaching. The research was executed to address the following inquiries:

- (1) What are the lived experiences of public elementary school teachers regarding mindful-based teaching?
- (2) What are the coping practices of public elementary school teachers regarding mindful-based teaching?
- (3) What lessons can be learned from employing mindful-based teaching?

Therefore, considering the cited problem situation indicated in the previous sections and stipulated in the research questions, the researcher realized the urgency and necessity of conducting this study. This researcher desires to illuminate the perspective and practices of elementary school teachers regarding the employment of mindfulness learning with students. The researcher hopes that this study benefited the identified sectors of the academe. This includes the educational leaders, school heads, teachers, other stakeholders, and future researchers. Educational leaders. The findings of this study can benefit educational leaders as they offer them a substantial contribution in terms of the perspective and practices ingrained in mindfulness-based teaching. The school

heads. The findings of this study might help school heads or principals gain a glimpse and fresh perspective on mindfulness-based teaching. This study can be a basis for possible curricular redirection and program development in the school. The teachers. The study can serve as a reference for mindfulness-based practices, strategies, and future programs for teacher development that lead to better employment and enhancement of mindful teaching. Other stakeholders may provide better support and assistance to guide and help implement mindfulness-based teaching. Future researchers. This would be helpful as an additional contribution to their references for future research in mindfulness-based teaching. It can offer them a substantial contribution to their academic arsenal.

1.3. Review of Significant Literature—

1.3.1. *Experiences of Teachers in Mindful-Based Teaching*—Learning is a two-way process where both teachers and learners must be in a conducive mental, physical, and emotional state. Mindfulness teaching practices foster a stress-free environment, positive school climate, and higher academic attainment. Waldman and Carmel (2019) and Moyano et al. (2023) found that teachers practicing mindfulness have higher self-efficacy and well-being, leading to a stress-free environment. Lensen et al. (2021) noted that mindfulness significantly reduces teachers' stress levels and improves emotional regulation, self-efficacy, and overall well-being. Bonde et al. (2022) highlighted that mindfulness reduces stress and improves mental health among primary school teachers. Carroll et al. (2022) showed that Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) outperformed the Health Enhancement Program (HEP) in reducing stress and enhancing cognitive functioning in teachers.

Todd et al. (2019) found that mindfulness courses and MBSR reduce stress and anxiety among teachers, with MBSR significantly addressing depression. Ergas (2019) noted that mindfulness interventions improve brain plasticity and reduce rumination, contributing to social-emotional learning (SEL) among students. de Carvalho et al. (2021) demonstrated that mindfulness programs enhance teachers' social-emotional competencies and well-being, leading to improved classroom habits and student involvement. Schuman-Olivier et al. (2020) found mindfulness effective in managing classroom behaviors and fostering a conducive learning environment. Perera and Lekamge (2021) observed that mindfulness improves classroom climate and teaching methods, aligning with broader educational trends. Norton and Griffith (2020) revealed that mindfulness enhances emotional regulation, self-compassion, and resiliency among teachers. Hirshberg et al. (2019) suggested that integrat-

ing mindfulness in preservice teacher education improves classroom management and student-teacher relationships.

Mindfulness significantly impacts students' academic performance and well-being. Simmons (2018) found that mindfulness enhances students' focus and motivation, leading to improved academic performance in online settings. Caballero et al. (2019) observed a positive relationship between mindfulness and academic achievement in middle school students. Wigelsworth and Quinn (2020) noted that mindfulness-based teaching improves students' grades due to a supportive classroom atmosphere. Baranski (2019) found that mindfulness meditation enhances academic achievement in higher education. Caruth (2018) emphasized mindfulness as essential for students' success and well-being. Zeilhofer (2023) demonstrated that mindfulness meditation improves academic performance and awareness in foreign language learning.

1.3.2. *Coping Practices in Mindful-Based Teaching*—Mindfulness-based teaching, which emphasizes present-moment awareness, is gaining popularity for its transformative impact on student well-being and learning. Research by Li et al. (2023) and Emerson et al. (2023) shows that mindfulness interventions enhance students' social-emotional well-being and academic performance. Agnoli et al. (2018) and Belardi et al. (2022) highlight that mindfulness reduces mind-wandering, which is linked to impaired task performance and learning. Johannes et al. (2018) and Gutierrez et al. (2019) found that mindfulness helps students focus and regulate emotions better than traditional reminders to pay attention.

Roeser et al. (2019) noted that mindfulness improves teachers' occupational health and relationships with students. Mrazek et al. (2019) emphasized the need for evaluating mindfulness training programs' impact on reducing mind-wandering. Yamaoka and Yukawa (2020)

and Jordão et al. (2019) linked negative affect with increased mind-wandering, suggesting that mindfulness can enhance mood and attention. Taylor et al. (2021) and Jha et al. (2019) demonstrated mindfulness's efficacy in reducing negative affect and improving cognitive functions in students and adults. Zarate et al. (2019) observed that mindfulness training reduces teachers' depression and anxiety, enhancing their attention and memory.

Beauchemin (2018) and Malboeuf-Hurtubise et al. (2018) found mindfulness meditation effective in reducing stress and anxiety and improving social skills in students with learning disabilities. Leyland et al. (2019) and Cavicchioli et al. (2018) highlighted mindfulness's role in emotional regulation and as a coping mechanism for mental health disorders. Strohmaier et al. (2021) noted that mindfulness reduces emotional distress, while D'Alessandro et al. (2022) emphasized its role in promoting positive relationships among students. Carroll et al. (2022) and Hj Ramli et al. (2020) reinforced that mindfulness improves executive functioning and academic gains.

This literature underscores mindfulness's essential role in enhancing teachers' and students' well-being, fostering a positive learning environment, and improving academic performance.

1.4. Theoretical Lens—The theoretical underpinning of this study was anchored on the Mindfulness-to-Meaning Theory (MMT) of Garland et al. (2005). The theory posited and proposed that the MMT has a specific and discrete aim: to provide a causal account for how mindfulness might promote a sense of meaning in the face of adversity. In brief, the MMT asserts that mindfulness allows one to decen-

ter from stress appraisals into a metacognitive state of awareness, resulting in broadened attention to novel information that accommodates a reappraisal of life circumstances. This reappraisal is then enriched when one savors positive features of the socio-environmental context, subsequently motivating values-driven behavior. Moreover, the theory also puts the welfare and well-being of the people involved into center stage, eliminating or eradicating possible stressors and being present. As applied in the study, the Mindfulness-to-Meaning Theory can be utilized to scrutinize the influence of mindful teaching on students' learning. The theory fully grasps how an elementary student learns and the role of their socio-environment in a successful teaching-learning process. The MMT further expresses the importance of finding meaning and motivation, which can reinforce positive behavior among students. The Transformative Learning Theory by Mezirow (1970) further reinforced the study. At its roots, Transformative Learning theory seeks to understand and promote human development through learning. Transformation is a lot and is more than just knowing more through time. When learners are transformed by education, they undergo a shift in perspective, and after that shift, they cannot go back to seeing the world the way they once did, at least in some small way. It concerns deep, helpful, and constructive learning. In the study context, the Transformative Learning Theory aids the researcher in understanding how far mindful teaching can penetrate a student's mindset. In transformative learning, learning tends to transcend simply acquiring knowledge. It offers constructive and critical ways for students to give meaning to their lives consciously.

2. Methodology

This chapter effectively addressed the study's specific objectives by outlining the systematic procedures and methodologies used in phenomenological research. It also explained the selected research design and my roles as the researcher throughout the study's implementation. Moreover,

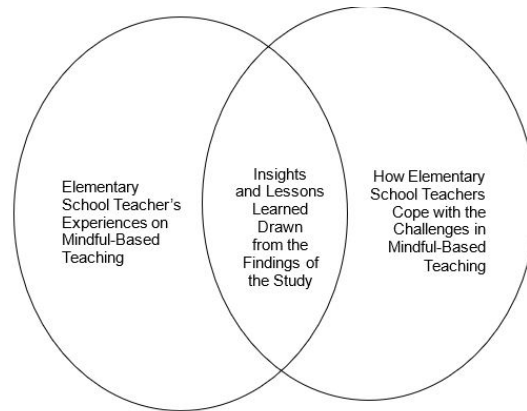


Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

it offered through insights into the research subjects, clarifying their procedures and selection standards. The chapter concludes by exploring the data collection and analysis techniques and the strategies used to uphold ethical standards during the research. Artificial intelligence (AI) was used for proofreading, as it is a common ethical practice in many articles today.

2.1. Philosophical Assumptions of the Study—A study’s philosophical and qualitative presumptions are vital in steering the investigation. Four fundamental assumptions—ontological, epistemological, axiological, and methodological—form the bedrock for comprehending qualitative research. These assumptions establish the groundwork for the research design and inform the researcher’s approach to the study. A paradigm is a broad framework or perspective that guides and shapes how researchers approach their studies, formulate research questions, gather data, analyze findings, and interpret the study’s results. It encompasses a set of beliefs, assumptions, methodologies, and theoretical foundations that influence how researchers conceptualize and conduct their research (Zukauskas et al., 2018). In this research, the paradigm guided the choice of methodology, methods, and techniques, shaping the overall research process and ensuring coherence in the study. **Ontology.** This study section focused on the relationship between the problem and reality. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), ontology can be defined as the study of the nature of reality. The authors also assert that the research participants’ per-

ceptions of reality are varied and subjective. This study recognizes the complexity and diversity of the realities faced by public elementary school teachers who employ mindfulness in their teaching practices. Every participant’s story adds to a diverse yet collective understanding of their experiences. I was solely responsible for using theme analysis to capture these various realities and provide a thorough picture of the experiences, challenges, and coping strategies that public elementary teachers use when utilizing mindful-based teaching techniques. **Epistemology.** Epistemology deals with the nature of knowledge and the relationship between the knower and the known. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), the researcher should try to reduce the gap between them and the participants based on the epistemological premise. By engaging directly with the participants of this study, I became an “insider,” facilitating a more authentic and nuanced collection of data. This approach supported the gathering of firsthand experiences and insights, which are critical in exploring the participants’ subjective realities. **Axiology.** It concerns the influence and importance of my values as a researcher in this study. According to Creswell and Poth

(2018), acknowledging and openly discussing the researcher's values that shape the study is crucial. The values which influence how data are interpreted and presented are explicitly acknowledged in the research process. As the researcher, I handled each participant's narrative with care and integrity and always had the utmost respect for the information they provided. This commitment guaranteed that the participants' experiences were communicated truthfully, mirroring their individual and research values. **Methodology.** According to Crotty (2020), this is "the strategy, plan of action, process, or design lying behind the choice and use of particular methods and linking the choice and use of the methods to the desired outcomes." Its objectives are to explain, assess, and defend procedures. This study explored the real-life experiences of public elementary school teachers employing mindful-based teaching practices using a qualitative methodology. In order to support the ontological and epistemological tenets, specific techniques like focus groups and interviews are employed, enabling a thorough and sympathetic examination of participants' stories. These techniques were chosen because they can successfully convey the complexity and depth of the participants' experiences. **Rhetoric.** In research, rhetoric is the skillful and convincing use of language, communication strategies, and presentation tactics to effectively communicate concepts, claims, and conclusions to sway the audience's opinion and comprehension of the study (Beqiri, 2018). I utilized an engaging and respectful narrative style that honors the participants' voices while effectively communicating the significance of the findings. This method not only made the research more accessible to read but also guaranteed that the interpretations were strong and based on the participants' experiences.

2.2. *Qualitative Assumptions*—Using a phenomenological research methodology, I explored the impactful experience of public-

school elementary teachers in employing mindfulness in their teaching and learning process. I aimed to gather information about their experiences, challenges, and coping strategies for the phenomenon I was studying. Utilizing phenomenology as my guiding qualitative framework, I uncovered the essence and significance of the roles played by these individuals, emphasizing their unique viewpoints and the intricate details of their experiences. As the study's qualitative researcher, I supported a level of investigation beyond cursory observations. My research investigated participants' experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms in relation to the phenomenon. I emphasized the significance of understanding the complexities of the human experience in light of the various perspectives shaped by unique contexts, backgrounds, and personal histories (Neubauer et al., 2019). My study strongly emphasizes in-depth interviews, reflective dialogues, and the analysis of participants' narratives to capture the profound and complex nature of mindful-based teaching. I hoped to contribute a thorough and contextually rich understanding of the challenges, accomplishments, coping mechanisms, and insights related to mindful-based teaching practices while upholding phenomenological principles.

2.3. *Design and Procedure*—Determining the precise approach used in a study is crucial to customize the best research design, data collection strategy, and data analysis approach to the study's objectives. I used a qualitative research design in this investigation. Hammersley (2013), cited in Aspers and Corte (2019), states that verbal rather than statistical analysis studies are appropriate for qualitative research. The qualitative design is the most fitting since I studied the lived experiences, coping strategies, and insights of public elementary school teachers who employ mindful-based teaching practices. This meant that I described and elaborated on this phenomenon rather than estab-

lishing or refuting theories. However, specialized methods are used in qualitative research, including grounded theory, narrative, case studies, phenomenology, and ethnography. Using a qualitative phenomenological research design, I explored the participants' lived experiences in this particular setting. I selected this approach because, according to Asper (2009), cited in Aspers and Corte's (2019) work, the scientific side of phenomenological research focuses on communicating the subjects' viewpoints and the importance of their experiences, then applying scientific concepts to analyze these perspectives. Furthermore, according to Creswell (2018), a phenomenological study is a method of inquiry that describes the complex and collective experiences of the participants concerning a particular phenomenon. A key idea in phenomenology is to reduce one's interpretations of a particular phenomenon to a description that can be applied to all situations. Therefore, I identified a phenomenon that revolved around the participants' experiences employing mindful-based teaching practices. I then collected information from people with direct experience with this phenomenon to create detailed and accurate descriptions.

2.4. Research Participants—Qualitative analyses typically require a smaller sample size than quantitative analyses. Qualitative sample sizes should be large enough to obtain feedback for most perceptions. Obtaining most or all the perceptions leads to the attainment of saturation. Saturation occurs when more participants are added to the study, which does not result in additional perspectives or information. Glaser and Strauss (2017), as cited in Hennink and Kaiser

2.5. Ethical Considerations—Ethical considerations were crucial because they relate to the moral principles and guidelines that govern my conduct as a researcher. These principles ensure that I carry out my investigations respon-

(2022), recommend the concept of saturation for achieving appropriate sample sizes in qualitative studies. For phenomenological studies, Creswell (1998) recommends 5 to twenty-five 25. According to Subedi (2021), larger samples in qualitative studies hinder an in-depth exploration of the study phenomenon. There are no specific rules when determining the appropriate sample size in qualitative research. Qualitative sample size may best be determined by the time allotted, resources available, and study objectives Patton (2002) as cited in Mullet (2018). The participants in this study consisted of 10 elementary schools from 5 different public schools in the North District of Maco. These schools are Liboac Elementary School, New Barili Elementary School, Gayab Elementary School, Singanan Elementary School, and Sangab Elementary School. 2 participants will represent each school, one for the In-Depth Interview and 1 for the Focus Group Discussion, which totaling to 5 participants for IDI and 5 participants for FGD. These participants were selected based on specific criteria: they had to be currently teaching as elementary teachers in any of these public schools, have been teaching for a minimum of three years in elementary school, either public or private, and actively employ mindfulness in their teaching approach. I utilized the purposive sampling design, which is also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling. The participants were chosen based on the criteria or purpose of the study (Creswell, 2018). The selection of the participants was purposefully done to ensure that the findings would be authentic (Marshall, 1996), as cited in Vasileiou et al., (2018).

sibly, treating participants respectfully and striving to generate reliable and precise information. I adhered to established ethical standards in my research practices to protect participants, maintain scientific integrity, and foster trust within

the research community (Resnik, 2020). Social value. This concerns the potential benefits and favorable outcomes that research can bring to society, like addressing problems or improving people's quality of life. I evaluated the societal value of my study by acknowledging its potential impact and importance for the larger community. This ensured that resources are directed toward research that has the potential to create significant advantages for society. Informed Consent. This involved obtaining a participant's voluntary agreement to participate in a research study after they have been provided with sufficient information about the study's purpose, methods, potential drawbacks, and benefits. In this research involving teachers, I was responsible for ensuring that the participants fully understood the study and their rights. This explanation allowed them to make an informed decision about participation, thereby preserving participants' autonomy and dignity and ensuring parental consent. Vulnerability. The vulnerability of research participants pertained to their increased risk of experiencing harm, exploitation, or coercion due to factors such as age, cognitive ability, or socioeconomic status. As a researcher, I needed to acknowledge and consider the potential vulnerability of these participants and take appropriate measures to protect them. This involved providing additional safeguards and support, such as obtaining informed consent from the participants, ensuring confidentiality, and carefully explaining their rights and the study's procedures in a way they can understand. Additionally, I mod-

ified research methods to minimize potential adverse effects, ensuring that the well-being of these participants is prioritized throughout the study. Risks, benefits, and safety. In research, it is essential to carefully evaluate the potential risks and benefits associated with participation in a study and implement measures that safeguard the well-being of participants. These elements involved assessing the potential disadvantages and advantages of participating in a study, along with establishing strategies to ensure the welfare of participants. In this investigation, as the researcher, I meticulously assessed and balanced these factors, ensuring that the potential benefits outweigh the risks. I put adequate precautions in place to minimize harm while optimizing participants' safety, particularly considering student participants' vulnerabilities. This comprehensive approach was crucial to maintaining ethical standards and protecting the participants throughout the research process. Community involvement. This encompasses the dynamic involvement and active engagement of community members, stakeholders, or the intended study population throughout the research journey, from initial planning to sharing research outcomes. In this study, I engaged the community to guarantee the study's relevance, acceptability, and potential impact. Additionally, this involvement fosters trust and cooperation between me and the community. Engaging with the community not only helped to tailor the research to be more effective and meaningful but also enhanced the overall quality and applicability of the results.

2.6. Data Collection—This study employed a systematic data collection procedure. Several steps were taken to adhere to the proper data collection procedure, which ensured the accuracy and objectivity of the data collection. The following is the step-by-step process of gathering the data needed. Securing

endorsement from the Dean of Graduate School, the Schools Division Superintendent, and the School Principal. To initiate the data collection process, I secured endorsements from key stakeholders, including the Dean of the Graduate School at Rizal Memorial Colleges, the Schools Division Superintendent, the School Principal,

and the participants' parents. This process involved submitting formal letters outlining the research objectives and methodology, accompanied by any supporting documents. This crucial step took place within the last two weeks of May 2024, ensuring that all necessary permissions were in place before proceeding with data collection. This proactive approach not only facilitates compliance with ethical standards but also fosters a cooperative environment among all parties involved. Asking permission from the Schools Division Superintendent. Upon receiving the endorsement, I requested permission from the school's division superintendent. This required submitting a formal letter detailing the research proposal's significance to the educational community. Along with the letter, I attached Chapters 1 and 2 of my dissertation and the research instrument, clearly explaining the study's objectives and participant identification process. Moreover, I waited for the response from the Schools Division Superintendent (SDS) before proceeding with the data collection. This step was undertaken during the first week of February, 2024, ensuring that all necessary approvals were in place to conduct the research ethically and effectively. Asking for permission from the school heads. Once permission was granted, I sought approval from the school heads of the selected institutions. This step involved submitting formal request

2.7. *Data Analysis*—After collecting the data, I began data coding and thematic content analysis. This involved methodically structuring the transcribed data into categories, subcategories, and themes from the interview dialogues. By discerning patterns and connections within the data, I formulated conclusions and gleaned insights directly related to the research objectives. This process allowed me to interpret the data effectively, ensuring that the findings accurately reflect the experiences and perspectives

letters to each school head, outlining the research's purpose and the expected data collection timeframe. I asked permission to conduct the study from the third week of March 2024 to the last week of the same month. Obtaining consent from the participants. With the school heads' approval, I asked for consent from the research participants through informed consent forms that were provided to them. These forms clearly explained the research purpose, participant rights, and confidentiality measures. This consent process ensured that the participants were fully informed and agreed to participate. Asking for consent from the participants and their parents or guardians was done in the third week of March 2024. Conducting the interview. Upon securing consent from all participants, I scheduled and conducted the interviews using a structured or semi-structured interview guide to ensure consistency and reliability in data collection. The interviews took place in the third week of March 2024. Transcribing the interviewees' responses. Following the interview sessions, I transcribed the interviewees' remarks, diligently taking account of non-verbal cues and contextually relevant details. This procedure used audio recordings and field notes to comprehensively capture the breadth of participants' reactions. The transcription of interviewee responses took place in the last week of March 2024.

of the participants. In this study, I employed Creswell's Thematic Analysis approach, which is particularly suited for encompassing a range of perspectives and portrayals in participants' feedback. Adopting thematic analysis authenticates the portrayal of individual components and facilitates categorizing identified patterns within the provided responses. Thematic analysis is a qualitative research technique used to recognize, scrutinize, and interpret patterns or themes present within qualitative data in tex-

tual, visual, or other formats. As a qualitative research approach, thematic analysis allows researchers to arrange and dissect complex data sets systematically. It involved searching for overarching themes that encapsulate the narratives embedded within the data. This process necessitated the identification of themes through meticulous examination and repeated review of transcribed data (Dawadi, 2020). This methodical approach helped ensure the analysis was comprehensive and reflective of the data collected, providing deep insights into the study's objectives. Therefore, my research used Creswell's Thematic Analysis, necessitating extensive theming and transcript interpretation. According to Caulfield (2020), there are multiple essential phases in Creswell's Thematic Analysis, including familiarization, coding, gen-

erating themes, reviewing themes, defining and labeling themes, and writing up. I became fully immersed in the intricacies and subtleties of the content as I became acquainted with the data to begin this process. After that, I started categorizing the data using semantic richness to group different informational components. I created themes that encapsulated the main ideas of the data using these codes. After that, these themes were examined and improved to ensure they appropriately depict the dataset. Every theme had a definition and name that elucidates the fundamental ideas. The last step entailed combining the themes and insights into a cohesive article that conveyed the study's conclusions. This methodical approach guaranteed a comprehensive examination and enhanced the comprehension of the information.

2.8. *Analytical Framework*—The analytical framework in phenomenological research was a methodical and structured approach to data analysis, interpretation, and presentation. In this research study, I used Colaizzi's method to analyze data from the interviews and discussions with the participants regarding the impactful experience of the mindful-based teaching approach. According to Morrow et al. (2021), Colaizzi's (1978) method features a distinctive seven-step process that offers a rigorous analysis, closely adhering to the data at each stage. This method culminates in a concise yet comprehensive description of the phenomenon under study, validated by the participants who experienced it. The effectiveness of this approach relies on rich first-person accounts of experiences, which can be collected through various means. Although face-to-face interviews are joint, data can also be gathered from written narratives, blogs, research diaries, online interviews, and other forms. This method enables researchers to uncover emergent themes and explore their intricate relationships (Wirihana et al., 2018).

Data Familiarization. By reading and rereading the transcripts several times, I fully understood the meanings conveyed by the participants and gained a global sense of the phenomenon being studied. This thorough review process was crucial for grasping the nuances of participants' statements, enabling a deeper analysis of their experiences. Identifying Significant Statements. I carefully identified every statement in the narratives directly related to the phenomenon I was studying. To identify and highlight phrases and descriptions that shed light on the particular experiences under study, a thorough examination of the gathered data—such as written narratives or transcripts of interviews—must be conducted. This step was essential to ensuring that my analysis stayed on topic and provided a strong basis for future thematic development. Formulating Meanings. After carefully examining the critical statements, I determined meanings pertinent to the phenomenon. Although Colaizzi admits that complete bracketing is never truly possible, I have to reflexively "bracket" my own presuppositions to stick closely to the phenomenon

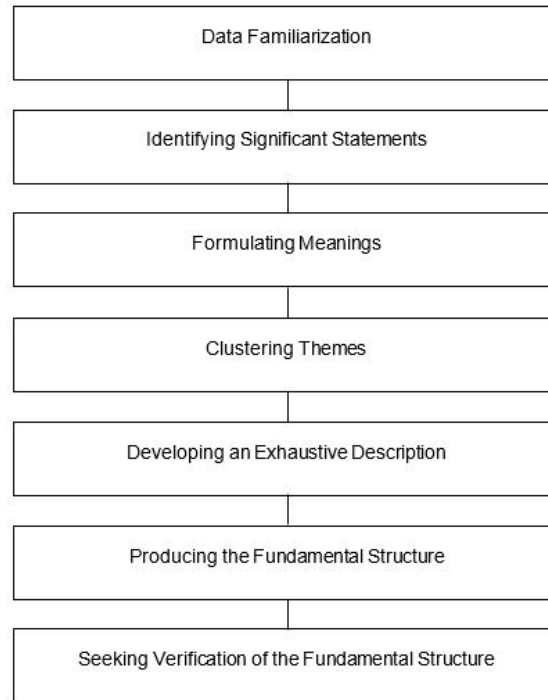


Fig. 2. Analytical Framework of the Study

as experienced. To guarantee that the analysis stays rooted in the participants' real experiences, this process entailed putting aside my interpretations as much as is practical. Clustering Themes. By grouping the identified meanings into themes shared by all accounts, I ensured a rigorous analysis that remained true to the participants' experiences. Throughout this process, presuppositions must be bracketed, especially to avoid any possible influence from existing theories. Letting the themes naturally arise from the data rather than being influenced by outside forces preserved the integrity of the analysis. Developing an exhaustive description. I incorporated every theme generated in the previous step into a comprehensive and all-encompassing description of the phenomenon that I wrote. By identifying common themes from the participant accounts, this thorough description conveyed the essence and complexity of the phenomenon. By taking this step, it was ensured that the final representation presents a compre-

hensive perspective of each participant's experiences. Producing the fundamental structure. I broke down the lengthy explanation into a succinct statement that highlights the key elements that I believe are crucial to understanding the phenomenon's structure. This succinct synthesis effectively and concisely communicated the essence of the participants' experiences, concentrating on the essential components necessary for comprehending the phenomenon. Seeking verification of the fundamental structure, I asked participants if the fundamental structure statement accurately reflects their experience by returning it to all participants. I then went back and changed the earlier stages of the analysis in light of their comments. Through this iterative process, the validity and credibility of the findings increased, and the analysis remained firmly based on the participants' perspectives. The following figure illustrates this rigorous process, highlighting each step to comprehensively explain the actions taken to analyze the data.

3. Results and Discussion

This part of the study dealt with the research questions and the answers extracted from the first-hand narratives of the participants. This chapter shed light on the perspective and practices of public elementary school teachers regarding mindfulness-based teaching.

3.1. Experiences in Mindfulness-based Teaching—Mindfulness-based teaching and learning have gained popularity around the world in recent years, reflecting a shift toward innovative educational practices. This growing interest is attributed to mindfulness, which provides a novel approach to delivering instruction and managing classrooms. Mindfulness practices are techniques that promote present-moment awareness and emotional regulation, and they can be seamlessly integrated into daily teaching routines, sometimes unconsciously by educators. Mindfulness promotes a calm and focused classroom environment, allowing both teachers and students to navigate the myriad challenges of the educational environment more effectively. In this study, the first question tackles the experiences of elementary teachers at public schools in the North District of Maco, Davao de Oro while utilizing mindful teaching. They have shared authentic narratives during the interview.

3.1.1. Stress Reduction—Engaging in mindfulness practices can promote educators' well-being through stress mitigation, preventing burnout, and promoting resilience in the face of job-related challenges. Teachers develop greater emotional regulation and coping mechanisms when they are able to be compassionate with themselves and the students which in turn cultivates a healthy and productive classroom setting. According to the participants, mindfulness-based teaching reduced the stress they were feeling in their profession. Based on their narratives, some elementary teachers use mindfulness to handle stress and manage their emotions better. The teachers shared that they experienced stress reduction. On IDI1's

response, the teacher experienced a significant stress reduction, and it also improved their emotional regulation through mindfulness which immensely helped them efficiently manage their classroom. Through regular mindfulness practices, the teacher managed to maintain focus and tackle tasks sequentially, reducing the overwhelm from merging teaching duties and schoolwork. This result is supported by Moyano et al. (2023), who inferred that mindfulness in teaching helps teachers effectively manage their emotions, thereby creating a stress-free environment for both teachers and students. IDI5 also found mindfulness essential for dealing with the stress of teaching, leading to a more relaxed and aware decision-making process that benefits student learning. By incorporating mindfulness practices, IDI5 navigated their emotions more effectively and felt more active and aware in making educational decisions. This finding also corroborates the assertions made by Lensen et al. (2021) whose study revealed that mindful practices can significantly alleviate stress levels among teachers. Lensen et al. (2021) also stated that this may lead to potentially improved teaching and student outcomes. As a first-year teacher in a public school, FGD8 felt anxious but found that mindfulness helped improve their teaching approach and build confidence. The participant utilized mindfulness as a tool to cope with the anxiety of a new teaching environment, leading to enhanced pedagogical methods and self-improvement. This supports the study of Bonde et al. (2022) which showed that teachers who practice mindfulness significantly reduced their stress and also improved their mental health. This result exemplifies that mindfulness can help teachers

enhance their well-being through developing stress management, emotion regulation, and teaching efficacy- contributing to the refined classroom environment and student success. After being asked about their experiences, the participants were also followed by the question about how employing mindfulness teaching affects the teaching and learning process inside their classroom. According to FGD10, teachers collectively agreed that mindfulness provides substantial benefits, particularly in stress reduction, crucial for delivering practical and refined learning experiences to students. Additionally, teachers experienced a sense of collective agreement on the benefits of mindfulness, particularly in stress reduction, which enhanced their ability to provide high-quality learning experiences. As shown by the study of Ergas (2019), mindfulness interventions are helpful in lowering stress and boosting brain plasticity, which also improves students' accomplishments in their education. The essence of using mindfulness-based teaching with public elementary teachers is stress management, improved focus, active decision-making, and increased teaching confidence. Teachers see mindfulness as an essential tool that helps them manage their emotional well-being and improves their pedagogical approaches and interactions with students. For new teachers, mindfulness is a foundational practice for navigating the challenges of the classroom and fostering professional growth and self-confidence. Todd et al. (2019) illustrated that when teachers are free from stress, anxiety, depression, or any negative emotions, they are better equipped to create a supportive learning environment that also increases students' learning motivation.

3.1.2. Conducive Learning Environment— Mindfulness-based teaching has been increasingly recognized for its role in cultivating a conducive learning setting that promotes student well-being and engagement. A positive and enriching environment contributes to the creation

of a space where both learners and educators can thrive through rapport and mutual respect that can enhance engagement and build a sense of belongingness. When asked about their experiences, the participants shared that they were able to create a conducive learning environment by utilizing mindfulness-based teaching. The narratives of the participants share the same thing: they find that mindfulness helps establish a positive and focused learning environment and this conducive atmosphere benefits both students and teachers by reducing stress and distractions. According to IDI3, they experienced improved preparation of a conducive learning environment through mindfulness, which promoted focus and concentration. By integrating mindfulness practices, the teacher prepared a focused and concentrated learning environment for both them and their students. This is similar to the findings of Norton and Griffith (2020) which implied the potential benefits of mindfulness in education. It reflects a remarkable impact on the wellness of teachers and in nurturing a resilient learning environment. The teachers, through mindful-based approaches, were able to create a conducive learning environment wherein both teachers and students could focus and concentrate on learning while nurturing their resiliency. Through mindful teaching, FGD9 created a conducive learning space that minimized stress and distractions, benefiting the learning process. The teacher observed that mindfulness created a stress-free, distraction-free, and negative-free environment, leading to smoother and more effective learning. This corroborates the assertion made by Perera and Lekamage (2021) who concluded that mindfulness-based teaching enhances the classroom climate and helps assist teachers to focus and calm their minds. When both teachers and students are calm, it positively affects the learning environment making it more conducive, supportive, and healthy. FGD10 also applied mindfulness to manage their emotional

and behavioral challenges, leading to increased awareness and proactivity, and fostering a safe and positive classroom environment. The participant found that mindfulness helped manage emotions and student behaviors, fostering awareness, proactivity, and a positive classroom atmosphere. This result is in accordance with the results of the study of Schuman-Oliver et al. (2020) wherein they found that teachers use mindfulness as an enabling tool to manage classroom behaviors. This essentially supports a conducive learning environment- students are more inclined to engage in discussions by eliminating negative behaviors and improving positive behaviors in the classroom. Implementing mindfulness-based teaching in elementary education entails several key steps, including creating a conducive learning environment, effectively managing emotions and behaviors, improving focus and concentration, and cultivating a positive classroom environment. According to Hirshberg et al. (2019), by incorporating mindfulness training into teacher education, educators can develop skills in emotional regulation, empathy, and fostering positive relationships with students. This indicates that mindfulness practices have the potential to create a more conducive learning environment. For teachers, mindfulness is a powerful tool that not only helps with emotional and behavioral regulation but also creates an ideal learning environment for students. This dual effect, which benefits both teachers' well-being and students' academic outcomes, demonstrates mindfulness's broad influence in the classroom.

3.1.3. Improve Students' Academic Achievement—Teachers are using mindfulness-based teaching practices more often as a potent tool in their efforts to improve students' academic performance. It has been demonstrated that practicing mindfulness, which entails developing present-moment awareness and nonjudgmental observation of thoughts and emotions, has several advantages in the classroom. Teach-

ers who incorporate mindfulness practices into their lessons help students develop emotional control, focus, and resilience in addition to helping them manage their own stress and create a peaceful learning environment. Better focus, improved comprehension, and increased academic achievement are directly correlated with these improvements in the classroom environment and student well-being. Teachers can foster a more encouraging and productive learning environment and ultimately assist students in realizing their academic potential by implementing mindfulness-based teaching practices. When questioned about their experiences, the participants revealed that implementing mindfulness-based teaching significantly enhanced their students' academic performance. According to the teachers' narratives, mindfulness practices increased their confidence and improved their teaching quality, resulting in better learning opportunities and student performance. Mindfulness practices enable teachers to create better learning opportunities, which improves student motivation and academic achievement. Simmons (2018) supports this finding, emphasizing the positive effect of mindful teaching on improving students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Mindfulness in the classroom is essential for creating a conducive environment that reduces stress, increases focus, and improves students' academic performance. IDI3 also discovered that mindfulness helped both teachers and students, resulting in a positive cycle of increased teaching efficacy and learning outcomes. Mindfulness has a positive impact on teaching efficacy, resulting in a mutually beneficial relationship between teacher and student well-being and academic success. Similarly, this finding is consistent with a study conducted by Wigelsworth and Quinn (2020), which found that teachers who practice mindfulness-based teaching have higher student grades. This was influenced by the positive atmosphere created in mindfulness teaching, which allowed for a

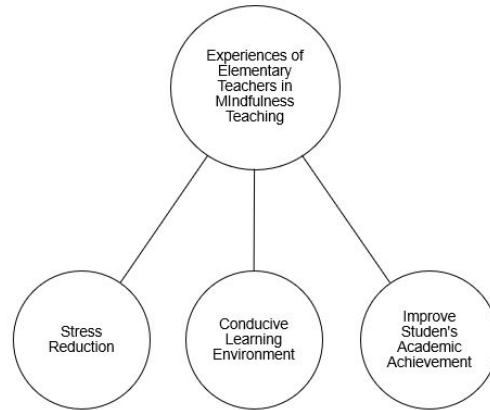


Fig. 3. Experiences of Elementary Teachers on Mindfulness Teaching

supportive relationship between teachers and students. Participant IDI4 reported increased student motivation and performance as a result of incorporating mindfulness into teaching practices. Mindfulness promotes student motivation and participation, resulting in a positive classroom environment and improved student performance. This supports the findings of Caruth’s (2018) study, which concluded that mindfulness is important for students’ academic success. Additionally, it was stated that one of the primary goals of mindful teaching is to support students’ mental and emotional well-being. Students benefit from this assistance in reaching their full learning potential. The benefits of mindfulness-based teaching for elementary teachers go beyond individual well-being, promoting a symbiotic relationship between teacher and student outcomes. Mindfulness improves teaching efficacy, leading to better learning opportunities, increased student motivation, and improved academic performance. According to Caballero et al. (2019), mindfulness skills may unlock the key to maximizing the learning outcomes and overall academic achievement of students. This reciprocal rela-

tionship demonstrates mindfulness’s transformative potential in creating enriching teaching and learning experiences. Mindfulness-based teaching has received worldwide attention for its transformative effects on both teachers and students. In this study of elementary teachers in public schools in the North District of Maco, Davao de Oro, teachers reported that mindfulness practices significantly reduced their stress, improved emotional regulation, and improved their teaching methods. This, in turn, created a positive learning environment that boosted student well-being, focus, and engagement. Teachers reported that mindfulness improved students’ academic performance by increasing motivation and participation. These findings are supported by numerous studies, which highlight mindfulness as a powerful tool for improving teaching efficacy and fostering a positive, effective learning environment. A figure illustrating these findings is presented on the following page. Figure 3 shows the experiences of elementary teachers in mindfulness Teaching and the emergence of the three themes: stress reduction, conducive learning environment, and improved students’ academic achievement.

3.2. *Coping Practices of Teachers in Employing Mindfulness Teaching*—Elementary school teachers deal with various challenges, such as balancing the demands of administration

and standardized testing with the needs of students from various backgrounds. The application of the practice of mindfulness has become apparent as an effective coping strategy in the

face of these stresses. With psychological stress-reduction techniques at its foundation, mindfulness provides educators with a toolkit for preserving emotional equilibrium, improving classroom management, and creating a supportive learning environment. This method helps teachers control their stress levels and encourages an environment where students feel more focused and supported. Elementary school teachers can better manage the challenges of their work and enhance student outcomes by incorporating mindfulness into their daily routines. The second research question deals with teachers' coping strategies and practices concerning mindfulness-based teaching.

3.2.1. Personal Mindful Practices—The value of preserving mental and emotional health in today's fast-paced world cannot be emphasized. Individual mindful practices provide a way to become more in tune with oneself and the present moment while also leading to a calm and balanced state of mind. These techniques, which can include mindful breathing, yoga, gratitude journals, and meditation, can help develop awareness and lower stress levels, resulting in a more contented and peaceful existence. By incorporating mindfulness into everyday activities, people can improve their general well-being, sharpen their focus, and grow more resilient and at peace with life's obstacles. The teachers were asked about the challenges they faced while employing mindfulness teaching and what coping strategies they used to face these challenges. In order to manage stress and distractions, participants such as IDI3 and FGD7 find that mindful breathing and meditation are essential. These techniques assist them in maintaining composure and enhancing their mental clarity, both of which enhance their ability to teach and their students' learning. The focus on relaxation techniques implies that instantaneous stress-relieving strategies are highly appreciated in the high-stress setting of teaching. This is similar to the study conducted by

Zarate et al. (2019), who stated that teachers who received training in mindfulness observed that it reduced their depression and anxiety and also enhanced their attention and working memory capacity. Additionally, this is supported by the findings of the study conducted by Gutierrez et al. (2019), which revealed that mindfulness can help provide people with resources to help them succeed by improving their focus and emotional control. Furthermore, FGD6 points out that practicing strategies for extending attention span is critical. To sustain motivation, this entails deliberately focusing on maintaining focus and connecting mindfulness exercises with beneficial results. It can be challenging to pay attention in a classroom full of distractions, so developing attention-boosting skills is essential to practicing mindfulness successfully. Emerson et al. (2023) noted that mindfulness interventions significantly enhance the attention and concentration of people who employ them. Increased attention and concentration are essential skills that teachers must possess, particularly in teaching. To add, Jha et al. (2019) suggest that mindfulness training among adults may reduce negative effects such as stress, anxiety, and depression in a manner that it enhances attention and working memory. Furthermore, as FGD6 points out, the technique of associating positive outcomes with mindfulness practices suggests a proactive coping approach. When faced with challenges, educators can stay committed to mindfulness practices by connecting them to positive outcomes. Studies have indicated that practicing mindfulness can enhance an individual's executive functioning, working memory, and attention span. Carroll, Sanders-O'Connor, and Forrest (2022) claim that engaging in mindfulness practices can enhance one's executive functioning. This helps people stay organized, pay attention to what's going on at the moment, and remember specifics. All of these strategies point to the fact that although stress, diversions, and mind-wandering

can make mindfulness-based teaching difficult, teachers who engage in mindfulness practices such as focused attention span improvement, mindful breathing, and meditation reap substantial rewards. These techniques improve the learning environment and the teachers' efficacy in addition to helping them manage their own stress and emotions.

3.2.2. Explicit Teaching of Mindfulness Skills—Integrating mindfulness practices into the curriculum can contribute to educators' personal well-being and stress management. It equips teachers with valuable strategies that they can use to guide the learners through mindfulness breathing, body scans, and meditation to develop greater self-awareness, emotional regulation, and attention control for handling the demands of the academe. It also builds a communicative relationship with the students that fosters trust, empathy, and mutual respect. According to the responses provided by the teachers, they were queried about the obstacles encountered in implementing mindfulness teaching and the corresponding coping mechanisms employed to address these challenges. Incorporating mindfulness practices into teaching is deemed adequate by participants, such as IDI1, IDI4, and FGD8. This includes practices that promote a collectively mindful atmosphere, such as mindfulness sessions and breathing exercises. Teachers and students gain from each other's actions in this way, which also improves relationships and learning opportunities in the classroom. This practice, where teachers and students employ mindfulness together, is supported by Sottile (2022). According to one of his suggestions, teachers should lead by example in teaching mindfulness to the students. Because the teacher would be participating in the activities in the present moment alongside the students, it was explained how this would support the idea of being fully present in a current experience. Additionally, this finding is similar to the study of Paulsen (2018), in which, ac-

ording to him, one great solution for the overwhelming demands from teachers is to use mindfulness as an activity during transition times or brain breaks for students. Incorporating mindfulness practices into the curriculum promotes students' self-awareness, emotional control, and attention span while improving the teachers' well-being and stress management. Instructors stated that in spite of difficulties, they practiced mindfulness with their students to foster a supportive learning environment and utilized it as a coping mechanism. As stated by D'Alessandro et al. (2022), teaching students how to work together in the classroom—including sharing and getting along with one another—is one way to guarantee close and positive relationships among the students. For early elementary educators, such tasks are regarded as significant undertakings. In this sense, practicing mindfulness could be a great way to help students learn how to be mindfully aware and to let others express their feelings honestly, as well as how to coexist with peers respectfully and collaboratively—this group effort enhanced interactions and educational opportunities.

3.2.3. Positive Mindset and Emotional Management—In the field of education, teachers have a significant impact on the development of students' minds and futures. However, the demands of the job can frequently result in high levels of stress and burnout. Maintaining a positive outlook and proficient emotional regulation techniques are essential for educators to ensure their well-being and productivity in the classroom. A positive outlook promotes optimism and creativity in educators, which in turn creates a nurturing and motivating learning environment. On the other side, emotional management gives educators the skills they need to control their emotions, handle stress, and react coolly and rationally to situations in the classroom. Teachers who prioritize their mental and emotional well-being not only improve their own quality of life but also foster a more

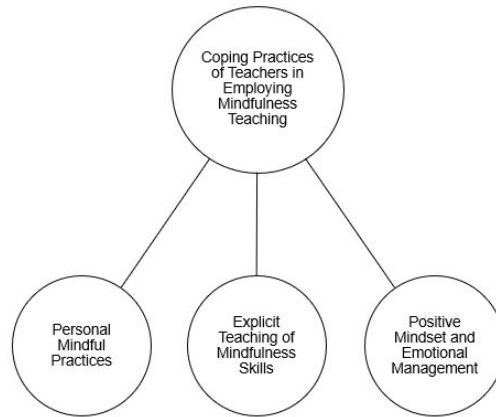


Fig. 4. Coping Mechanisms of Elementary Teachers in Employing Mindfulness Teaching

positive and productive learning environment for their students. In addition to being questioned about the difficulties they encountered when implementing mindfulness teaching, the teachers were also asked about the coping mechanisms they employed to overcome these difficulties. IDI5, FGD9, and FGD10 emphasize that maintaining an optimistic mindset and regulating emotions are crucial aspects of their mindfulness practice. These methods include concentrating on important duties, paying attention to their environment, and instilling optimistic ideas. By emphasizing emotional control and positive thinking, teachers can reduce stress and maintain their effectiveness in the classroom. In their study, Roeser et al. (2019) hypothesized that using mindfulness-based coping techniques in the classroom can improve teachers' health outcomes and foster stronger, more positive relationships with students. Additionally, teachers who are conscious of their behavior, especially when instructing, are better able to control their emotions and themselves. According to Leyland et al. (2019), practicing mindfulness has been demonstrated to provide participants with

numerous emotional advantages. As a result, people are taught how to control their emotions in a healthy way. Mindfulness encourages us to experience our emotions rather than suppress them. Rather than discarding them, it teaches us how to deal with them. Although educators deal with much stress, it is essential for their well-being and productivity that they retain a positive outlook and emotional control. Through mindfulness practices, teachers develop optimism and emotional regulation skills, which foster a supportive learning environment. Coping mechanisms such as boosting alertness and ingraining positivity aid in stress management and attention retention. Studies back up the advantages of mindfulness for students' relationships with teachers and their own health. A figure is provided below to briefly summarize the themes of the second scope of inquiry. Figure 4 shows teachers' coping practices when employing mindfulness teaching and the emergence of three themes: personal mindful practices, explicit teaching of mindfulness skills seeking support and collaboration, and positive mindset and emotional management.

Insights and Lessons of Teachers Regarding Mindful-Based Teaching

The viewpoint of elementary school teachers about mindful-based teaching converges on

a singular lens. Despite the disparity of the participants' school contexts, mindful teaching is collectively perceived to influence their teaching careers positively. Although specific gaps

and issues are recognized in the practice, some find it beneficial to some extent, as it is not to others. Still, it is undeniably considered beneficial to the academe. In this paper section, I will explore the key themes that surfaced during my interviews with the ten participants. Drawing from their perspectives, encountered obstacles, and the strategies they utilized in implementing mindful-based teaching, I inquired about the educational management insights they could offer, given their substantial knowledge and experience in this practice implementation. During the interview, I gathered two themes. These themes will be discussed thoroughly and individually.

3.2.4. Importance of Mental Health and Well-Being—The teaching profession necessitates flexibility and proactiveness to address the changing needs of the students. This responsibility exhausts the developmental domains of teachers. More so, it affects their mental health and overall well-being. Consequently, it harms teachers' teaching performance (White, 2020). Nevertheless, mindfulness is found to be one of the practical tools to combat this obstacle. Participants IDI1 and IDI4 emphasize how mindfulness promotes teachers' mental health and well-being. Meanwhile, participant IDI5 emphasizes the challenges of being a teacher. As mentioned, being a teacher is not an easy job. Consequently, part of its role is to learn how to ask for help. Also, these circumstances emphasize the importance of personal health- to improve self-efficacy and well-being, whereas Participant FGD10 discusses the relevance of teachers' investment in health. This is so they can optimally provide students with better and more conducive learning. Health is indeed the epitome of wealth. However, wealth comes in different forms. In the teaching field, it is interpreted as the capacity of teachers to impart learning to their students abundantly. As mentioned in the comparative study of Benevene et al. (2020), teachers in good mental health con-

ditions are inclined to perform better in teaching than in the controlled group. It infers that better mental health is a good indicator of better teaching performance. This is substantiated by the study of Billett et al. (2022), which found that teachers have higher self-efficacy with improved mental health and well-being. This further helps in improving the performance of teachers in the classroom. That being said, the participants accentuate the need for teachers to treat themselves as humans rather than as machines for learning. Although teachers are prompted to be equipped to face the dynamics of education, it must be a constant to optimize their health and wellness. Thus, teachers are the prime movers of learning. Ergo, being holistically healthy is the teachers' arsenal for providing a better learning experience (Shelemy et al., 2019). The participants narrowed mental health and well-being to emotion regulation and stress management. The two factors indicated are the common obstruction of teachers to mental health and well-being. With multiple students to teach and manage, added to school paperwork to process, teachers are subjected to being physically, mentally, and emotionally compromised. On the other hand, this negatively affects learning delivery and may cause disruptions to the class. Consequently, being mindful is pivotal in teaching. Responses of participants IDI2 and FGD6, mindful teaching aids in regulating emotions, while IDI5 emphasizes its importance in handling stress. This is supported by the study of Schussler et al. (2018), which purports the effects of mindful teaching on emotion and stress. The study's findings revealed that mindful teaching practices engage teachers in actively monitoring emotions, thus helping reduce stress levels. Also, another study conducted by Todd et al. (2019) found a positive correlation between mindfulness and stress reduction. Teachers who integrated mindful practices in teaching have experienced lower stress and improved teaching performance.

3.2.5. *It improved the Teaching and Learning Process*—Every educational research aims to seek additional knowledge to improve learning. The enhancement of the teaching and learning process is bound to adopting innovative strategies and practices that cater to the diverse needs of the students. Furthermore, through a dynamic and inclusive educational environment—the promotion of a deeper understanding and retention of knowledge. Contextually, this paper found valuable insights augmenting mindful practices for the teaching and learning process. Participants' IDI1 and IDI2 indicate the importance of mindful teaching in the teaching and learning process. This is reinforced by the statements given by participant IDI4, which focus on the positive effects of mindfulness on teaching and learning. According to the study of Albrecht (2018), mindful teaching enables a healthier learning environment, which fosters more motivated and engaged learners. Meanwhile, a positive learning space is also advantageous for teachers' well-being—allowing them to design more effective learning. However, mindful teaching has its limitations. Zimmerman's (2018) scholarly literature revealed the subjective nature of mindfulness in teachers' teaching performance. The study results imply that the variation of its effects causes inconsistency. This prompted a further study to draw a line between its positive and negative effects. Contextually, the responses of participants FGD8, FGD9, and FGD10 acknowledge the imperfection of the practice. Nevertheless, they still cannot simply leave out mindfulness's benefits to the teaching and learning process. Furthermore, mindfulness is considered an element that provides a better learning experience.

In the study of Henriksen et al. (2020), the teachers' insights on mindful teaching were explored. The study results revealed that teachers concede the positive effects of mindful teaching on improving students' learning experiences. By ensuring that teachers can holistically handle the hurdles along the teaching-learning process, they could also craft and manage better learning. These responses imply that teachers acknowledge the difficulties of their profession. Nonetheless, it did not discourage them but motivated them to grow as teachers and individuals. Moreover, this showcases teachers' passion for providing the right learning experiences to their students. Thus, with mindful teaching, teachers have made this prospect more feasible. This is similar to the study of Moyano et al. (2021), where teachers are encouraged to apply mindful-based teaching. It found that teachers have improved personally and professionally. This includes development in their mental health and their teaching performances. Ultimately, the insights about mindful-based teaching garnered in this study can be categorized into The importance of mental health and well-being and the improved teaching and learning process. This remark shows that the participants view mindful teaching as a positive and effective practice. It supports the improvement of teachers' mental health and the betterment of their overall well-being. Hence, these complement the elements of an improved teaching and learning process—educating a mind open for supplemental learning opportunities. Figure 5 shows teachers' Insights and Lessons Regarding Mindful-Based Teaching and the emergence of three themes: the importance of Mental Health and Well-Being and the Improved Teaching and Learning Process.

4. Implications and Future Directions

In this chapter, the study's summary was presented. From the summary of the findings, I drew the implications and future directions. The purpose of my study was to explore the real-life

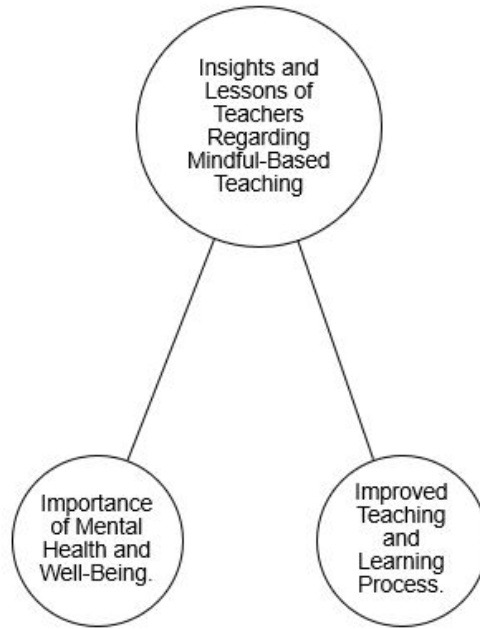


Fig. 5. Insights from Employing Mindful-Based Teaching Among Elementary School Teachers

experiences and coping strategies of public elementary school teachers regarding mindfulness teaching. In connection with that, to ensure the achievement of the research objectives, I have utilized a qualitative phenomenological method with thematic analysis. This is done with an adherence to Cresswell’s (2006) guidelines in which open-ended interview questions were applied to get an authentic understanding of people’s experiences. Furthermore, through this interview approach, I encouraged my participants to fully and openly discuss their definition or meaning of the phenomenon being explored, which were the narratives of public elementary school teachers. The participants in this study consisted of 10 elementary schools from 5 different public schools in the North District of Maco. These schools are Liboac Elementary School, New Barili Elementary School, Gayab Elementary School, Singanan Elementary School, and Sangab Elementary School. 2 participants will represent each school, one for the In-Depth Interview and 1 for the Focus Group Discussion which totaling to 5 participants for IDI and 5 participants for FGD. These participants were selected based on specific criteria: they had to be currently teaching as elementary teachers in any of these public schools, have been teaching for a minimum of three years in elementary school either public or private, and actively employ mindfulness in their teaching approach.

4.1. Findings—The study aimed to explore the real-life experiences of elementary school teachers who employ mindfulness in their teaching practices, investigating how impactful it is to the teaching and learning process. Three themes emerged from the personal narratives of elementary teachers, three themes also emerged regarding how teachers cope with the challenges in employing mindfulness in their teaching approach and another two themes for the lessons learned by the teachers regarding mindfulness. The first research question elucidated the firsthand accounts of elementary school teachers from two public elementary schools in Maco, Davao de Oro’s North district. Three recurring themes surfaced from a thorough thematic analysis of the interviews with these educators. According to the teachers,

incorporating mindfulness practices into their classes significantly reduced stress, improved the learning environment, and raised academic achievement. These anecdotes demonstrate the many advantages of mindfulness, implying that it enhances not only the health of educators but also the educational process for learners as a whole. This demonstrates how mindfulness has the potential to be an effective teaching tool in elementary school, supporting students' academic success and emotional resilience. Stress reduction was the first theme derived from their experiences. The participants reported notable improvements in their mental well-being and reduced stress levels since they began implementing mindfulness practices into their daily lives. Numerous participants mentioned how practicing mindfulness helped them control and reduce the unnecessary stress that comes with their line of work. They claimed to feel more grounded, composed, and focused, which helped them approach their teaching duties more calmly and easily. This stress reduction improved their personal health and had a positive impact on their interactions with students, which made the classroom a more productive and happier place to be. The second theme explores how incorporating mindfulness into teaching practices has created a conducive classroom environment that benefits both teachers and students. The participants mentioned that mindfulness helped them establish a positive and focused learning atmosphere, free from stress and distractions. This improved the overall classroom dynamics, fostering a sense of calm and order. Teachers observed that both their own and their students' attention to lessons significantly improved, leading to more effective teaching and learning experiences. By promoting mindfulness, educators were able to cultivate an environment where students felt more engaged and receptive, thus enhancing the quality of education and interpersonal interactions within the classroom. According to their responses, one of the advantages they have noticed since introducing mindfulness into their instruction is the significant improvement in the academic performance of the students. Teachers noticed that students were able to concentrate better on their studies because the learning environment had improved and was free of distractions like misbehavior or unpleasant emotions like stress and anxiety. Improved focus and emotional stability resulted in better academic performance. Teachers reported that their students showed higher levels of academic achievement, better information retention, and increased attention and engagement. The implementation of mindfulness practices has been shown to enhance students' emotional and mental well-being and improve their academic performance. This has resulted in a more productive and harmonious learning environment for both teachers and students. In a classroom, desirable outcomes are anticipated, particularly when teachers know what is best for their students. The process of teaching and learning has been greatly enhanced by the incorporation of mindfulness into instruction. But challenges are inevitable. The first theme drawn from the coping strategies shared by the participants during the interview is personal mindfulness practices. these practices include deep breathing, exercises, and meditation. According to their narratives, they incorporate these practices into their daily routine to help them have a clear and calm mind thereby improving their teaching effectiveness. This study highlighted the coping strategies of elementary teachers from public schools, revealing three key themes: personal mindfulness practices, explicit teaching of mindfulness skills, and fostering a positive mindset and effective emotional management. These strategies helped teachers manage stress, model positive behaviors, and create a supportive learning environment. The second theme that emerged from the analysis is the explicit teaching of mindfulness skills. Instead of practicing mindfulness

alone, teachers reported integrating these techniques into their daily routines and sharing them with their students. Activities such as breathing exercises and mindfulness sessions became regular parts of the classroom schedule. Both teachers and students contributed to creating a healthy and conducive teaching and learning environment through these shared practices. The last theme drawn from the participants' coping strategies is maintaining a positive mindset and properly managing emotions. The participants emphasized the importance of cultivating a positive mindset and managing emotions as integral components of their mindfulness approach. They reported that by focusing on positive thoughts, prioritizing what is important, and maintaining awareness of their surroundings, they could better handle stress and remain effective in the classroom. This approach not only helped them cope with daily challenges but also contributed to a more harmonious and productive teaching environment. Drawing lessons from elementary teachers' experiences and coping strategies, participants shared how mindfulness greatly contributed to their instruction. The significance of mental health and well-being was the first theme from their observations. Teaching was an exceptionally demanding profession, requiring both grit and passion. Many teachers experience negative emotions like burnout, especially in their early years, which frequently causes them to give up on the career they had always wanted. The participants discussed how mindfulness greatly enhanced their general well-being and mental health. They noticed a noticeable improvement in the quality of their lives when mindfulness was incorporated into their daily routines and instruction. This ultimately promoted a healthier, more contented personal and professional life by assisting them in better stress management, keeping a positive mindset, and retaining their teaching enthusiasm. The study's participants also learned how mindfulness can im-

prove instruction and learning. Teachers who regularly practiced mindfulness reported better mental health and overall well-being, which positively impacted the caliber of their instruction. Since introducing mindfulness into their teaching, they have seen improvements in themselves, their students, and the classroom as a whole. Instructors observed a more focused and encouraging environment, lower levels of stress in the classroom, and greater student engagement—all of which added to a more successful and pleasurable learning environment. Research suggests that mindfulness teaching could yield tangible benefits in academic settings. Studies have shown that mindfulness interventions in schools improve students' social and emotional well-being, as well as enhanced attention and concentration. Beyond academic performance, mindfulness teaching equips students with valuable life skills, promoting resilience and emotional intelligence that can have lasting effects on their overall development. Ergo, integrating mindfulness in teaching supports emotional well-being and provides a strategic approach to boosting academic performance and overall success. The teaching profession was fraught with several difficulties and hurdles, including high stress levels, emotional exhaustion, and the dynamic needs of diverse learners. These inflict pressure, which may affect teachers' well-being and effectiveness. Dealing with the same challenges, the participants in this study underscore the utilization of mindful practices, cultivating optimism and emotional management as part of their professional coping strategies. It infers the positive contribution of mindfulness in managing stress and inherent challenges in the profession. Pursuing mindfulness to teachers' mental health and well-being can lead to greater job satisfaction. More so, mindfulness offers dual benefits to teachers and students. As implied in this study, teaching mindful practices to students supports the well-being of teachers and, at the same time, empowers students' coping

strategies for learning. Encouraging the dissemination of mindful practices within the classroom can help develop essential skills for emotional regulation, focus, and resilience- leading to improved well-being and academic success. Furthermore, this reciprocal practice implies the transformative potential of mindfulness in the creation of a supportive and holistic educational experience. Ultimately, mindful-based teaching highlights its critical role in promoting teachers' mental health and well-being. It serves as a powerful instrument in addressing the mental health of teachers and students. Thus, Recogniz-

ing the value of integrating mindfulness in the educational context creates a healthier and more supportive environment that enhances the overall learning experiences. In this study, public elementary school teachers recognize and appreciate mindfulness practices because of their positive impact on classroom management and the improved teaching-learning process. They have shared their perceptions and experiences regarding it mostly on the positive aspect. The practices they shared during the interviews were meant to enhance the impact of mindfulness practices further.

4.2. Implications—After thoroughly examining the data, I identified several particularly important key outcomes. These findings provide valuable insights and have notable implications for the analysis's subject. The experiences of elementary teachers in mindfulness Teaching and the emergence of the three themes: stress reduction, conducive learning environment, and improved students' academic achievement. While, teachers' coping practices when employing mindfulness teaching and the emergence of three themes: personal mindful practices, explicit teaching of mindfulness skills seeking support and collaboration, and positive mindset and emotional management. Moreover, Teachers' Insights and Lessons regarding mindful-based teaching, and the emergence of the three themes: the importance of mental health and well-being and the improved teaching and learning process. Mindfulness teaching involves imparting techniques that cultivate present-moment awareness, fostering a non-judgmental and accepting mindset. Rooted in ancient contemplative practices, mindfulness has found its way into modern education as a powerful tool for enhancing cognitive and emotional well-being. With mindfulness practices, educators developed greater emotional regulation and coping mechanisms to mitigate stress

and burnout while dealing with work-related challenges. Moreover, it enabled a focused and systematized course of action, which reduced the overwhelming merging of teaching duties and schoolwork, ultimately contributing to a more positive and effective learning atmosphere. Thus, this implies the integration of mindfulness practices as an essential tool to manage stress, a prevalent issue in educational settings. With this, the incidence of stress-related issues such as anxiety and burnout could potentially decrease, thereby improving the overall well-being of teachers and students. In addition, mindfulness-based teaching emphasizes the relevance of a holistic approach to education. The practices are deemed to help create a classroom atmosphere characterized by calmness, focus, and emotional self-efficacy—the elements supporting effective learning. This also promotes safety and respect for teachers and learners, fostering a healthy classroom relationship. Hence, mindfulness was an asset that could be advocated by policymakers for professional development programs to support the construction of a conducive learning environment. The educational landscape, mental health, and well-being were paramount. Comparably, mindfulness teaching emerges as a valuable practice for nurturing educational success and the essential

skills needed for navigating the complexities of life. Overall, mindfulness teaching was crucial in promoting holistic development, equipping individuals with essential skills for navigating the intricacies of life and fostering a culture of well-being in educational institutions and beyond.

4.3. Future Directions—Based on the study's findings, it was important that the significant people for whom this research was intended properly relay and use the findings. Educational leaders are more informed about authentic narratives, teachers' experiences, and coping strategies regarding mindfulness teaching. Once they have recognized its impact and reflected on it, they may implement programs, seminars, workshops, or published book guides targeting and focusing on how to implement mindfulness teaching in the broader scope. They can also develop different teaching materials to assist teachers in practicing mindfulness in the classroom. The school heads. They are more informed regarding the state of mindfulness teaching in their school. They could find ways to ensure that teachers are appropriately utilizing it in the best way possible for the students' good. They may also extend assistance and support to teachers by providing adequate learning materials and space to promote mindfulness in the school. Also, through the findings of the study, they would design an information drive in order to educate other teachers who are not yet well-acquainted with the concept. The teachers. The other teachers may be more informed and aware of mindfulness teaching. Through the study's findings, they may be able to reflect on the experiences and coping strategies of the participants to learn more about the concept. They may also use the lessons and recommendations stated by the participants if they are planning to employ mindfulness practices as well. Other stakeholders. Other stakeholders may provide avenues and opportunities to broaden the positive impact of mindfulness teaching. They may also suggest different ways or aspects of the community where mindfulness can be applied, such as in mental health. Future researchers. The study contributes to their academic arsenal, especially in the field of mindfulness teaching. They may conduct this study but take a quantitative approach. They can further study the influence of mindfulness practices on the students' academic achievement. This is in order to see if there are any changes in the implementation of mindfulness teaching.

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