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Student Teachers' Perspectives on Mindfulness-Based Approaches to Teaching and Classroom Management in Sri Lanka

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Abstract: Mindfulness-based approaches may offer practical possibilities for improving teaching and classroom management by promoting calmness, awareness, emotional regulation, and thoughtful responses to student behaviour. This study examined the perspectives of Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) student teachers in Sri Lanka regarding the suitability and application of such approaches in school teaching and classroom management. A convergent parallel mixed-methods design was employed with 44 student teachers from several Sri Lankan universities, representing Years 1–4. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire comprising five-point Likert-scale items and open-ended questions, analysed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis, respectively. Participants reported positive perspectives on mindfulness as a teacher quality (M = 4.48), its contribution to professional skills (M = 4.59), patient communication (M = 4.55), calm responses to challenging situations (M = 4.45), and stress reduction (M = 4.43). Overall, 95.5% agreed that mindfulness enhances teaching effectiveness. Qualitative findings suggested breathing exercises, grounding activities, reflective practices, relaxation music, and calming sounds as potential classroom approaches, while limited time, syllabus demands, and inadequate training were identified as challenges. The findings support considering practical, inclusive, and non-religiously prescriptive mindfulness-based approaches within teacher education and wider school education in Sri Lanka, while recognising the need for appropriate training and context-sensitive implementation.

Keywords: Mindfulness-Based Approaches, Teaching, Classroom Management, Student Teacher, Teacher Education, Sri Lanka

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1. Introduction

Education is a complex process that involves not only the transmission of knowledge and the development of academic skills but also the creation of supportive, respectful, and productive learning environments. Teachers are expected to manage classroom interactions, respond appropriately to students' diverse needs and behaviours, maintain positive relationships, and create conditions that support effective learning. These responsibilities require not only pedagogical knowledge and instructional skills but also personal and interpersonal qualities such as patience, emotional awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and the ability to respond thoughtfully to challenging situations. Therefore, attention to teachers' emotional awareness and well-being is an important consideration in discussions of effective teaching and classroom management.

One concept that may be relevant to these responsibilities is mindfulness. Mindfulness has historical roots in Buddhist contemplative traditions, where it involves the cultivation of awareness and the careful observation of present-moment experiences. Anālayo (2003) examined the foundations of mindfulness through a detailed analysis of the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, a key Buddhist discourse on mindfulness practice. Although mindfulness originated within religious and contemplative traditions, contemporary discussions have also considered its potential applications in secular settings, including education. In the present study, mindfulness is considered in relation to present-moment awareness, emotional regulation, calmness, and thoughtful responses to classroom situations rather than as a religious practice that student teachers must adopt.

The Dalai Lama has also emphasised the importance of compassion, ethical understanding, and emotional development in education. In a discussion on secular ethics in modern education, the Dalai Lama (2020) highlighted the relevance of compassion and ethical values to the holistic development of children. These perspectives are relevant to considering how teachers might respond to students with patience, understanding, and care. The researcher's interest in mindfulness-based approaches developed partly through reading about Buddhist teachings and the Dalai Lama's perspectives on compassion and education. These readings encouraged consideration of whether mindfulness-related practices could be incorporated into teaching and classroom management in ways that are appropriate for different educational settings and religious or cultural backgrounds.

Research has also examined mindfulness and contemplative approaches in educational contexts. Weare (2019) reviewed evidence concerning mindfulness in schools and reported promising findings, particularly in relation to psychosocial health and well-being, while noting that evidence for outcomes such as behaviour, cognition, and learning was less definitive. In teacher education, Draper-Clarke (2020) explored compassion-based mindfulness training with student teachers at a South African university. The study highlighted the importance of contextualising mindfulness and considering compassion, ethics, and social engagement within teacher education. Such research provides a basis for examining mindfulness in educational settings, although findings from other contexts should not automatically be generalised to Sri Lankan classrooms.

From a classroom perspective, brief mindfulness-based activities may be considered before a lesson begins or when teachers need to respond to challenging situations. For example, guided attention to breathing, a short reflective pause, or a simple grounding activity may provide opportunities to settle attention before engaging in learning. However, these activities should be selected according to students' needs, lesson objectives, available time, and the cultural and religious diversity of the classroom. Relaxation music and calming sounds may also be considered as possible classroom resources, although they should not automatically be classified as mindfulness practices. Their relevance and suitability need to be considered in the particular teaching context.

The researcher's interest in this topic was further informed by practical engagement with mindfulness-related approaches in face-to-face teaching. This

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experience encouraged the researcher to consider whether such approaches might be relevant to classroom management and whether they could be considered within teacher education. Nevertheless, the researcher's own experience cannot establish the effectiveness or suitability of these approaches across different educational settings. It was therefore important to examine the perspectives of other student teachers regarding their perceived usefulness, possible applications, and implementation challenges.

Against this background, the present study examines student teachers' perspectives on mindfulness-based approaches to teaching and classroom management in Sri Lanka. The study focuses on 44 Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) undergraduate student teachers from the campus where the researcher teaches. It seeks to understand how these student teachers view the relevance of mindfulness-based approaches, how they believe such approaches might be applied in teaching and classroom management, and what challenges could affect their implementation. The findings may provide context-specific insights for discussions of teacher education and contribute to further research on inclusive, culturally sensitive, and context-appropriate mindfulness-based approaches in Sri Lankan education. Although the findings may inform wider discussions about educational practice and policy, broader evidence from different institutions and teaching contexts would be required before drawing national-level conclusions.

1.1. Background to the Study

Language teaching involves more than the transmission of linguistic knowledge and the development of students' language skills. Teachers are expected to encourage participation, respond to learners' individual needs, manage classroom interactions, and create supportive environments in which students feel comfortable engaging in learning activities. These responsibilities may become particularly challenging when teachers encounter student anxiety, lack of confidence, disengagement, or disruptive behaviour. Consequently, effective language teaching requires not only pedagogical knowledge and appropriate instructional strategies but also patience, emotional awareness, and the ability to respond thoughtfully to different classroom situations.

Classroom management is closely connected to teachers' ability to recognise and regulate their emotional responses. When unexpected situations arise, teachers may need to make immediate decisions while maintaining positive relationships with students. Mindfulness-based approaches have received attention in educational research because of their potential relevance to teachers' well-being and emotional regulation. Emerson et al. (2017), in their systematic review of mindfulness-based interventions for teachers, examined evidence concerning teachers' psychological well-being and professional experiences. Similarly, Weare (2019) reviewed mindfulness and contemplative approaches in education and discussed their potential benefits, particularly in relation to psychosocial well-being. Although these studies suggest that mindfulness may be relevant to educational practice, further consideration is needed regarding its suitability for different teaching contexts, including language classrooms.

The researcher's interest in the present topic developed through reading about mindfulness and reflecting on its possible applications in teaching. In particular, the researcher considered whether mindfulness-based approaches could be useful before commencing a lesson and when responding to challenging classroom situations. Such approaches may provide opportunities for teachers and students to direct their attention towards the present moment, settle themselves before engaging in learning, and respond more thoughtfully to classroom interactions. Possible practices include brief breathing exercises, grounding activities, and reflective pauses, depending on the needs of the students and the requirements of the lesson. However, the suitability of these practices needs to be considered in relation to the classroom context, available time, learning objectives, and students' cultural and religious backgrounds.

The researcher also became interested in whether awareness of mindfulness-based approaches could be incorporated into teacher education. B.Ed. student

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teachers are developing the knowledge and competencies required to plan lessons, manage classrooms, establish positive relationships, and respond appropriately to different teaching situations. Raising awareness of approaches that may support teachers' self-awareness and emotional regulation could therefore be worth considering as part of their professional preparation. Research examining compassion-based mindfulness training in teacher education provides a relevant basis for this consideration (Draper-Clarke, 2020). Nevertheless, the inclusion of mindfulness-related content in teacher education should be considered in relation to the perspectives of student teachers, the practical demands of teaching, and the available research evidence.

The researcher's practical engagement with mindfulness-related approaches in face-to-face teaching further motivated an investigation into this topic. Rather than relying exclusively on personal experiences, the researcher considered it important to explore the perspectives of other B.Ed. undergraduate student teachers. Their views could provide insight into how they understand the relevance of mindfulness-based approaches to language teaching and classroom management, how they believe such approaches might be applied in educational settings, and what practical challenges they anticipate. Examining these perspectives is particularly relevant when considering whether mindfulness-related awareness deserves further attention within teacher education programmes.

The issue may also have broader relevance to teacher preparation and educational development in Sri Lanka. Understanding student teachers' perspectives may provide an initial basis for further discussion about the possible place of mindfulness-based approaches in professional development and teacher education curricula. In the longer term, context-specific research may contribute to wider discussions concerning educational practice and national education policy. However, broader consultation with student teachers, practising teachers, teacher educators, and other relevant stakeholders across Sri Lanka would be necessary to assess the suitability and feasibility of wider implementation.

Against this background, the present study examines student teachers' perspectives on mindfulness-based approaches to teaching and classroom management in Sri Lanka. It focuses on 44 Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) undergraduate student teachers from the campus where the researcher teaches. The study was undertaken to understand their perspectives on the relevance and possible application of mindfulness-based approaches and the considerations involved in using them in educational settings. Through this investigation, the researcher seeks to contribute to discussions about the potential role of mindfulness-related awareness in language teaching, classroom management, and the professional preparation of future teachers.

1.2. Problem Statement

Classroom management is commonly associated with the use of rules, routines, instructional strategies, and approaches to managing student behaviour. However, teachers' internal awareness and emotional self-regulation may also be relevant to how they respond to classroom challenges, communicate with students, and maintain supportive learning environments. Mindfulness-based approaches have been examined in international educational research for their potential relevance to teachers' well-being and emotional regulation (Emerson et al., 2017; Weare, 2019). Nevertheless, further context-specific investigation is needed to understand how such approaches are perceived by student teachers within the Sri Lankan educational context.

Although mindfulness may offer a possible approach to developing awareness and encouraging considered responses to classroom situations, its perceived relevance to language teaching and classroom management, as well as its potential place in teacher education in Sri Lanka, requires further examination. In particular, it is important to understand whether B.Ed. undergraduate student teachers recognise the possible benefits of mindfulness-based approaches, how they believe these approaches could be applied in teaching and classroom management, and what practical challenges might affect their use. Without an understanding of student teachers' perspectives, it is

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difficult to assess whether mindfulness-related approaches warrant further consideration within teacher preparation and professional development.

Therefore, the problem addressed by this study is the need for context-specific evidence concerning B.Ed. undergraduate student teachers' perspectives on mindfulness-based approaches to teaching and classroom management in Sri Lanka. Focusing on 44 B.Ed. undergraduate student teachers from the campus where the researcher teaches, the study examines their perspectives on the relevance, possible applications, and perceived challenges of these approaches. The study may provide an initial basis for further research and discussion about raising awareness of mindfulness within teacher education and considering its potential relevance to educational practice in Sri Lanka.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following primary objectives:

The first objective was to examine B.Ed. undergraduate student teachers' understanding and perspectives on mindfulness-based approaches to teaching and classroom management. This objective focused on exploring how student teachers understand mindfulness and how they perceive its relevance to their future teaching practices and classroom management responsibilities.

The second objective was to explore student teachers' perspectives on the perceived benefits of mindfulness-based approaches in relation to teachers' professional skills, stress management, emotional regulation, and classroom management. Particular attention was given to how student teachers perceive the potential contribution of these approaches to maintaining calmness, responding thoughtfully to challenging classroom situations, and establishing supportive learning environments.

The third objective was to investigate student teachers' views on the practical application of mindfulness-based approaches in teaching and classroom management, the challenges associated with their implementation, and their potential inclusion in Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) teacher education programmes. This objective aimed to understand how student teachers believe these approaches could be incorporated into teaching practices and teacher preparation, while identifying possible practical considerations and barriers to their use.

2. Material and Methods

This study adopted a convergent parallel mixed-methods research design to explore student teachers' perspectives on mindfulness-based approaches to teaching and classroom management in Sri Lanka (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The selection of this design was guided by the nature of the research problem and the objectives of the study, which required an understanding of participants' general response patterns as well as their explanations, opinions, and suggestions. Since the study aimed to examine student teachers' understanding of mindfulness-based approaches, explore their perspectives of the potential benefits of these approaches, and investigate their views on practical applications, implementation challenges, and possible inclusion in teacher education programmes, relying exclusively on quantitative or qualitative data would have provided only a partial understanding of the topic. A mixed-methods approach was therefore considered suitable because it enabled the researcher to examine the research problem through complementary forms of evidence.

The convergent parallel design involves collecting quantitative and qualitative data during the same general phase of a study, analysing each dataset separately, and integrating the results during interpretation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In the present study, the quantitative component was intended to identify general patterns in participants' responses to structured questionnaire items, while the qualitative component was designed to obtain a deeper understanding of the meanings and explanations participants attached to their views. The quantitative data provided an overview of participants' levels of agreement with statements concerning mindfulness-based approaches, whereas the qualitative data enabled them to elaborate on their perspectives, describe possible applications, identify anticipated benefits and challenges, and

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make suggestions relevant to teacher education. The two components were therefore intended to complement one another and provide a more comprehensive account of the research topic.

The quantitative and qualitative components were treated as distinct but related strands of the research process. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistical procedures to summarise participants' responses and identify patterns across the questionnaire items. These results helped establish an overall picture of the perspectives expressed by the participating student teachers. However, numerical summaries alone could not fully explain why participants held particular views, how they understood mindfulness-based approaches in relation to their teaching responsibilities, or what practical considerations they believed might influence their application. The qualitative component addressed this need by allowing participants to express their views in their own words. Their responses provided additional context for interpreting the quantitative findings and helped identify recurring ideas concerning the relevance, practical use, and potential limitations of mindfulness-based approaches in teaching and classroom management.

The selection of a mixed-methods design was also relevant because mindfulness-based approaches may be understood and interpreted differently according to individuals' educational backgrounds, teaching experiences, and professional circumstances. For example, participants may perceive these approaches as potentially useful for preparing themselves before a lesson, maintaining calmness during challenging classroom situations, responding thoughtfully to student behaviour, or developing greater awareness of their own emotional responses. Others may identify practical concerns relating to lesson time, classroom conditions, student needs, cultural or religious considerations, or the suitability of particular activities for different educational settings. The questionnaire was therefore intended to capture both structured responses and participants' explanations of such considerations. The study did not assume that all participants shared the same understanding of mindfulness or that they necessarily supported its use in educational settings. Instead, it sought to examine the range of perspectives expressed by the participating student teachers.

The methodological approach was aligned with the three primary objectives of the study. First, the quantitative and qualitative data were used to examine participants' understanding and perspectives on mindfulness-based approaches to teaching and classroom management. Second, the data were examined to explore participants' views on the perceived benefits of these approaches in relation to professional skills, stress management, emotional regulation, and classroom management. Third, the study investigated participants' views on the possible application of mindfulness-based approaches, the challenges associated with their use, and their potential inclusion in B.Ed. teacher education programmes. The combination of quantitative and qualitative evidence enabled the researcher to consider these objectives from both a descriptive and an interpretive perspective.

Following separate analyses of the quantitative and qualitative datasets, the findings were considered together during the interpretation stage. This process involved examining whether the two datasets presented similar perspectives, whether the qualitative responses helped explain patterns observed in the quantitative results, and whether differences emerged between the two forms of evidence. Areas of convergence could strengthen the interpretation of a particular pattern, while complementary or differing findings could highlight the complexity of participants' perspectives and the need for further investigation. The purpose of integration was not to assume that the two datasets would necessarily produce identical findings, but to develop a more balanced understanding of the research problem by considering both numerical patterns and participants' explanations.

The study was exploratory in its focus on participants' perspectives and perceived applications of mindfulness-based approaches. It did not involve an experimental intervention, a comparison group, or the measurement of changes in teaching performance or student outcomes following mindfulness activities. Consequently, the

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methodology was not intended to establish causal relationships or demonstrate the effectiveness of mindfulness-based approaches. Rather, it was designed to document and interpret the views of the participating student teachers and identify issues that may warrant further investigation in teacher education and classroom practice. The findings were interpreted in accordance with the scope of the design and the characteristics of the sample, with appropriate caution regarding the extent to which the results might apply to other educational contexts.

Overall, the convergent parallel mixed-methods design provided a systematic framework for examining student teachers' perspectives on mindfulness-based approaches to teaching and classroom management. By combining descriptive statistical analysis with thematic analysis of open-ended responses, the study sought to provide both an overview of participants' views and a deeper understanding of the ideas and considerations underlying those views. This methodological approach was intended to support a context-specific interpretation of the findings and contribute to further discussion about the possible relevance of mindfulness-related awareness in teacher preparation, professional development, and classroom practice in Sri Lanka.

2.1. Context and Participants

The study was conducted among 44 Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) undergraduate student teachers enrolled in an external degree programme at a state university in Sri Lanka. Convenience sampling was employed to select participants based on their accessibility and availability to participate in the study. All participants were pursuing a B.Ed. degree and had teaching experience, although the nature of their teaching engagement varied. Of the 44 participants, 35 (79.5%) were practising in-service teachers who were upgrading their academic qualifications while continuing their teaching careers. The remaining nine participants (20.5%) were student teachers undertaking a three-month teaching practice placement in government schools as a component of their degree programme. Therefore, although all participants were identified as B.Ed. undergraduate student teachers in the present study, most were already employed as teachers, while the others gained classroom teaching experience through the practical training required for their degree. This distinction was relevant to the study because participants could draw on their ongoing professional responsibilities or their supervised teaching practice when expressing their perspectives on mindfulness-based approaches to teaching and classroom management.

The participants represented all four academic years of the undergraduate programme. Of the total sample, 22 participants were in Year 1 (50.0%), three were in Year 2 (6.8%), eight were in Year 3 (18.2%), and 11 were in Year 4 (25.0%). This distribution enabled the study to include perspectives from student teachers at different stages of their undergraduate education. Their academic progression, together with their varying teaching circumstances, provided a relevant context for exploring how they understood the potential relevance of mindfulness-based approaches to teaching and classroom management. However, the distribution across academic years was uneven, with Year 1 students accounting for half of the sample and Year 2 students representing the smallest group. This imbalance was considered when interpreting the findings, particularly in relation to the perspectives of student teachers at different academic levels.

The participants were considered relevant to the study because teaching involves responsibilities such as lesson preparation, classroom interaction, effective communication, responding to challenging situations, and maintaining supportive learning environments. Both practising teachers and student teachers undertaking teaching practice may encounter situations that require patience, emotional awareness, and thoughtful responses. Exploring their perspectives therefore provided an opportunity to understand how they perceived the relevance of mindfulness-based approaches, how they believed these approaches could be applied in teaching and classroom management, and what practical challenges might influence their use. Nevertheless, the study examined participants' perspectives and perceived applications rather than implementing a

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mindfulness intervention or measuring its effects on teaching performance or student outcomes.

The findings were interpreted in relation to the characteristics of the participating group. Since convenience sampling was used and all participants were recruited from a single university context, the sample was not intended to represent all B.Ed. undergraduate student teachers in Sri Lanka. The differences in academic year and the nature of teaching experience were also recognised as contextual characteristics relevant to understanding the participants' perspectives. Accordingly, the findings provide context-specific insights into the views of the 44 participating student teachers and may inform further research involving larger and more diverse groups across teacher education institutions in Sri Lanka.

2.2. Research Instrument and Procedure

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher for the purposes of the present study. The questionnaire was designed to explore B.Ed. undergraduate student teachers' perspectives on mindfulness-based approaches to teaching and classroom management. It included both quantitative and qualitative components to obtain a comprehensive understanding of participants' views, perceived benefits, possible applications, anticipated challenges, and suggestions concerning the relevance of mindfulness-based approaches to teacher education. The instrument was developed in accordance with the research objectives to ensure that the questions addressed the main areas investigated in the study. The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended statements evaluated using a five-point Likert scale and open-ended questions that allowed participants to explain their perspectives in their own words.

The quantitative component comprised statements evaluated using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). This scale enabled participants to indicate their levels of agreement with statements concerning the perceived relevance of mindfulness-based approaches to teaching and classroom management. The statements addressed areas relevant to the study, including teachers' professional skills, emotional regulation, stress management, calmness when responding to challenging situations, communication, and classroom management. The responses provided numerical data that could be summarised to identify general patterns in participants' perspectives. The use of a consistent response scale also enabled the researcher to compare response patterns across the different statements and examine the extent to which participants expressed agreement or disagreement with the issues presented. However, the responses were interpreted as indicators of participants' reported perspectives rather than as objective measurements of their actual teaching performance or the effectiveness of mindfulness practices.

The qualitative component consisted of open-ended questions designed to obtain more detailed information about participants' understanding and perspectives. These questions allowed participants to express their views without being restricted to predetermined response options. They were intended to explore how participants understood mindfulness-based approaches in educational settings, how they perceived the potential relevance of these approaches to their teaching responsibilities, and how they believed such approaches could be applied in teaching and classroom management. Participants were also given opportunities to describe the benefits they associated with mindfulness-based approaches, identify potential difficulties in applying them, and provide suggestions regarding their possible inclusion in B.Ed. teacher education programmes. The open-ended questions were particularly useful for exploring the reasons underlying participants' views and identifying issues that might not be fully captured by the closed-ended statements. Their responses therefore provided contextual information that complemented the quantitative data.

The questionnaire was developed to address the three primary objectives of the study. The first objective focused on examining B.Ed. undergraduate student teachers' understanding and perspectives on mindfulness-based approaches to teaching and classroom management. Questions related to participants' views on the meaning and relevance of mindfulness-based approaches contributed to

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exploring this objective. The second objective concerned participants' perspectives on the perceived benefits of these approaches in relation to professional skills, stress management, emotional regulation, and classroom management. The relevant statements and open-ended questions enabled participants to indicate their levels of agreement and elaborate on the benefits they perceived. The third objective focused on practical applications, implementation challenges, and the possible inclusion of mindfulness-based approaches in B.Ed. teacher education programmes. Open-ended questions addressing these areas enabled participants to describe potential classroom applications, identify practical considerations, and offer suggestions for teacher preparation. This alignment between the questionnaire and the research objectives helped maintain a clear relationship between the data collected and the purpose of the investigation.

The questionnaire was administered to the 44 B.Ed. undergraduate student teachers who participated in the study. All participants were enrolled in an external degree programme at a state university in Sri Lanka. The participating group included 35 practising in-service teachers who were upgrading their academic qualifications while continuing their teaching careers and nine student teachers undertaking a three-month teaching practice placement in government schools as part of their degree programme. The inclusion of participants with these different teaching circumstances provided an opportunity to explore perspectives informed by ongoing professional responsibilities as well as supervised teaching practice. Nevertheless, the study did not assume that these two groups had identical experiences or understandings of mindfulness-based approaches. The questionnaire provided a common set of questions through which all participants could express their views while allowing individual differences to emerge in their responses.

The use of a structured questionnaire supported consistency in data collection because all participants were presented with the same core questions. At the same time, the combination of closed-ended and open-ended items allowed the researcher to obtain both numerical summaries and descriptive accounts of participants' perspectives. The questionnaire was developed specifically for this study and was not a previously validated instrument. No pilot testing or formal expert review was conducted before data collection. Therefore, the responses were interpreted with consideration of this methodological limitation, and the findings were not presented as evidence of the established validity or reliability of the instrument. The purpose of the questionnaire was to obtain exploratory, context-specific information relevant to the research objectives rather than to establish a standardised measure of mindfulness or teaching competence.

The data obtained through the questionnaire formed the two datasets required for the convergent parallel mixed-methods design. Responses to the five-point Likert-scale statements constituted the quantitative dataset, while the responses to the open-ended questions constituted the qualitative dataset. These datasets were analysed separately using appropriate procedures and subsequently considered together during the interpretation of the findings. The quantitative data provided an overview of participants' response patterns, whereas the qualitative data offered further explanations of their views, perceived benefits, proposed applications, and anticipated challenges. Bringing the two forms of evidence together enabled the researcher to examine areas of agreement, complementary insights, and differences between the findings.

Overall, the questionnaire served as the principal instrument for exploring the perspectives of the participating B.Ed. undergraduate student teachers on mindfulness-based approaches to teaching and classroom management. Its quantitative and qualitative components enabled the study to address the research objectives from complementary perspectives. Since the instrument collected participants' reported views rather than observations of classroom behaviour or measurements taken before and after an intervention, the findings were interpreted in terms of perceived relevance, potential applications, and anticipated challenges. Accordingly, the study did not seek to establish the effectiveness of mindfulness-based approaches or determine their causal effects on teachers or students. Instead, it aimed to develop a context-specific understanding of the participating student

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teachers' perspectives that could inform further research and discussion concerning teacher education and classroom practice in Sri Lanka.

2.3. Data Analysis

The data collected through the structured questionnaire were analysed using quantitative and qualitative procedures in accordance with the convergent parallel mixed-methods research design adopted for the study. The quantitative and qualitative datasets were analysed separately before the findings were integrated during the overall interpretation stage. This approach enabled the researcher to examine the general patterns in participants' responses to the closed-ended questionnaire items while also exploring their explanations, opinions, and suggestions provided in response to the open-ended questions. The analysis was guided by the three research objectives, which focused on B.Ed. undergraduate student teachers' understanding and perspectives on mindfulness-based approaches to teaching and classroom management, their views on the perceived benefits of these approaches, and their perspectives on practical applications, implementation challenges, and possible inclusion in teacher education programmes.

The quantitative data were analysed using Microsoft Excel and descriptive statistical techniques. Frequencies and percentages were used to summarise the demographic and academic characteristics of the 44 participants. These characteristics included their academic year and teaching-related background, as presented in Table 1. Frequencies indicated the number of participants in each category, while percentages showed the proportion of the total sample represented by each category. This analysis provided an overview of the composition of the sample and helped contextualise the interpretation of participants' perspectives.

The responses to the five-point Likert-scale statements were also analysed using descriptive statistics. The response scale ranged from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). For each statement, the percentages of participants who selected Agree or Strongly Agree were summarised to indicate the overall proportion expressing agreement. The percentage of participants who selected the disagreement response categories was also calculated and presented in Table 2. These percentages enabled the researcher to identify general tendencies in participants' views concerning mindfulness-based approaches to teaching and classroom management. Mean scores out of five were also calculated for the individual statements to summarise the overall tendency of responses. Higher mean scores indicated a greater overall tendency towards agreement with positively worded statements, while lower scores indicated a greater tendency towards disagreement. The mean scores were interpreted alongside the response percentages to provide a more comprehensive description of participants' perspectives.

The demographic and academic characteristics presented in Table 1 were considered when interpreting the findings, particularly because participants represented different academic years and had different teaching-related circumstances. The sample included practising in-service teachers who were upgrading their academic qualifications while continuing their teaching careers, as well as student teachers undertaking a three-month teaching practice placement in government schools as part of their degree programme. These characteristics provided relevant context for understanding the perspectives expressed by the participating student teachers. However, the descriptive analysis was intended to summarise the characteristics of the sample rather than establish statistically significant differences between participant groups.

The qualitative data consisted of responses to the open-ended questions included in the questionnaire. These responses were analysed thematically to identify recurring ideas, patterns of meaning, and differences in participants' perspectives. The analysis involved familiarisation with the responses, initial coding, grouping related codes into categories, reviewing the categories, and synthesising them into broader themes. During familiarisation, the researcher read the responses repeatedly to develop an overall understanding of the information provided. Relevant statements were then assigned descriptive codes reflecting the ideas expressed by participants. Similar codes were

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grouped into broader categories, and these categories were examined to identify meaningful patterns related to the research objectives. The final themes were developed from the content of the responses rather than being assumed in advance.

The thematic analysis focused on participants' understanding of mindfulness-based approaches, the benefits they perceived in relation to teaching and classroom management, their views on possible classroom applications, the challenges they anticipated, and their suggestions concerning teacher education. The qualitative findings provided an opportunity to examine the explanations underlying participants' quantitative responses and to identify additional considerations that might not have been captured by the Likert-scale statements. The analysis also allowed differing perspectives to be recognised rather than assuming that all participants shared the same views.

After the quantitative and qualitative datasets had been analysed separately, the findings were integrated during the overall interpretation stage. The response patterns presented in Tables 1 and 2 were considered alongside the themes developed from the open-ended responses. This process enabled the researcher to examine whether participants' written explanations supported, expanded on, or differed from the general patterns identified in the quantitative results. For example, the agreement percentages and mean scores in Table 2 could be interpreted alongside qualitative responses describing the perceived relevance of mindfulness-based approaches to emotional regulation, professional skills, or classroom management, where these issues were raised by participants. Similarly, qualitative responses identifying practical difficulties could provide additional context for understanding participants' views on the possible application of these approaches.

The analysis remained descriptive and exploratory in nature. No inferential statistical tests were conducted to test hypotheses or determine statistically significant relationships or differences. The findings were interpreted as evidence of the participating student teachers' reported perspectives rather than as proof of the actual effectiveness of mindfulness-based approaches. Since the study did not involve an intervention, a control group, or pre- and post-intervention measurements, it was not designed to establish causal effects on teaching performance, classroom management, or student outcomes.

The interpretation of the findings also took account of the study's methodological limitations. The questionnaire was developed by the researcher for the present study and had not undergone formal validation, pilot testing, or expert review before data collection. In addition, the participants were selected through convenience sampling from an external degree programme at a single state university in Sri Lanka. Consequently, the findings were interpreted as context-specific insights into the perspectives of the 44 participants and were not assumed to represent all B.Ed. undergraduate student teachers or teachers in Sri Lanka.

Overall, the use of descriptive statistical analysis and thematic analysis enabled the researcher to examine participants' perspectives through complementary forms of evidence. Frequencies and percentages summarised the demographic and academic profile of the participants, while agreement percentages and mean scores described their responses to the Likert-scale statements. Thematic analysis provided a deeper understanding of the views and explanations expressed in the open-ended responses. Integrating these findings supported a comprehensive interpretation of participants' perspectives on mindfulness-based approaches to teaching and classroom management in the context of teacher education in Sri Lanka.

3. Results and Discussion

This section presents and discusses the findings of the study based on quantitative and qualitative data collected from 44 B.Ed. undergraduate student teachers in Sri Lanka. The findings are organised according to the research objectives and draw on descriptive statistical analysis of the closed-ended questionnaire items and thematic analysis of the open-ended responses. The quantitative findings provide an overview of participants' perspectives on mindfulness-based approaches to teaching and classroom management, while the qualitative

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findings offer further insight into their understanding, perceived benefits, possible applications, anticipated challenges, and suggestions for teacher education. Both sets of findings are considered together to develop an integrated understanding of the participants' perspectives. The discussion also relates the findings to relevant literature on mindfulness in education and teacher development, taking into account the exploratory nature of the study, the characteristics of the sample, and the limitations of the research instrument. As the study examined participants' reported perspectives rather than the outcomes of an implemented mindfulness intervention, the findings are interpreted in terms of perceived relevance and potential applications rather than the demonstrated effectiveness of mindfulness-based approaches.

3.1. Demographic and Contextual Profile of Participants

Table 1 presents the demographic, academic, and teaching-related characteristics of the 44 B.Ed. undergraduate student teachers who participated in the study. The profile includes participants' age groups, year of study, teaching status, and prior awareness of mindfulness. These characteristics provide contextual information for understanding the participants' perspectives on mindfulness-based approaches to teaching and classroom management.

Regarding age, the majority of participants were above 26 years of age (n = 35, 79.5%). Six participants (13.6%) were aged 24–26 years, while two (4.5%) belonged to the 21–23 age group. Only one participant (2.3%) was aged 18–20 years. This distribution indicates that the sample predominantly consisted of older undergraduate student teachers. However, age alone does not establish an individual's level of teaching experience, professional competence, or familiarity with mindfulness. Therefore, the age distribution is considered a descriptive characteristic of the sample rather than evidence of differences in participants' perspectives across age groups.

In terms of academic progression, participants represented all four years of the B.Ed. undergraduate programme. Year 1 students formed the largest group, comprising 22 participants (50.0%). This was followed by Year 4 students, with 11 participants (25.0%), and Year 3 students, with eight participants (18.2%). Year 2 students accounted for the smallest group, with three participants (6.8%). Although the inclusion of students from all four academic years provided perspectives from different stages of undergraduate study, the distribution was uneven. In particular, the substantial representation of Year 1 students should be considered when interpreting the overall findings, as the perspectives of this group may be more strongly reflected in the results than those of students in other academic years.

The participants' teaching status provides further insight into their professional backgrounds. Of the 44 participants, 35 (79.5%) were in-service teachers who were already employed as teachers while pursuing their B.Ed. degree. The remaining nine participants (20.5%) were pre-service student teachers undertaking a three-month teaching practice placement in government schools as part of their degree programme. Thus, the sample included both practising teachers with ongoing professional responsibilities and student teachers gaining classroom experience through supervised school-based practice. This distinction is relevant because participants could draw on their respective teaching contexts when considering the potential relevance of mindfulness-based approaches to teaching and classroom management. Nevertheless, the study examined the perspectives of the participating group as a whole and was not designed to establish statistically significant differences between the two teaching-status groups.

Prior awareness of mindfulness was also examined to understand participants' reported familiarity with the concept. The results show that 37 participants (84.1%) reported having prior awareness of mindfulness, whereas seven (15.9%) reported no prior awareness. This suggests that most participants were familiar with the concept before responding to the questionnaire. However, prior awareness does not necessarily indicate a detailed theoretical understanding of mindfulness, regular engagement in mindfulness practices, or the ability to apply such practices in teaching. The findings should therefore be interpreted as participants' self-reported awareness rather than evidence of their practical competence or depth of knowledge.

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Taken together, the participant profile shows that the sample predominantly consisted of individuals above 26 years of age, included student teachers from all four academic years, and was mainly composed of in-service teachers. In addition, most participants reported prior awareness of mindfulness. These characteristics provide a useful context for interpreting the subsequent quantitative findings and qualitative themes concerning participants' perspectives on the relevance, perceived benefits, and possible applications of mindfulness-based approaches in teaching and classroom management.

However, these findings should be interpreted in light of the study's sampling approach and the characteristics of the sample. Participants were selected through convenience sampling from an external B.Ed. degree programme at a single state university in Sri Lanka. Consequently, the sample was not intended to represent all B.Ed. undergraduate student teachers in Sri Lanka. The uneven distribution across age groups and academic years also limits comparisons between these categories. Furthermore, the questionnaire did not establish how participants had become aware of mindfulness or whether they had previously practised it. Accordingly, Table 1 provides a descriptive profile of the participating student teachers and a contextual basis for interpreting their perspectives, rather than evidence of relationships between demographic characteristics and their views on mindfulness.

Table 1: Demographic and Academic Profile of Participants (N = 44)

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age Group	18–20 years	1	2.3%
	21–23 years	2	4.5%
	24–26 years	6	13.6%
	Above 26 years	35	79.5%
Year of Study	Year 1	22	50.0%
	Year 2	3	6.8%
	Year 3	8	18.2%
	Year 4	11	25.0%
Teaching Status	In-service teachers (currently employed)	35	79.5%
	Pre-service student teachers (undertaking a three-month school teaching practice)	9	20.5%
Prior Awareness of Mindfulness	Yes	37	84.1%
	No	7	15.9%

Source: Survey Data (2026)

3.2. Quantitative Perspective of Mindfulness and Teacher Effectiveness

Table 2 presents the quantitative findings regarding the perspectives of the 44 B.Ed. undergraduate student teachers on mindfulness in education. The statements focused on participants' understanding of mindfulness, its perceived importance for teachers' professional development, and its potential relevance to emotional regulation, classroom management, communication, and teacher well-being. The findings are summarised using the combined percentages of participants who selected *Agree* or *Strongly Agree*, the combined percentages who selected *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree*, and the mean scores calculated on a five-point Likert scale. Overall, the findings indicate that participants expressed favourable perspectives on the potential relevance of mindfulness to teaching

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and classroom management, although the level of agreement varied across the statements.

Regarding their understanding of mindfulness, 86.4% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they understood the concept, while 6.8% disagreed or strongly disagreed. The mean score of 4.30 indicates a generally favourable assessment of their understanding. This finding can be considered alongside the demographic results presented in Table 1, where 84.1% of participants reported prior awareness of mindfulness. However, prior awareness and self-reported understanding do not necessarily indicate comprehensive theoretical knowledge or the ability to practise mindfulness effectively. As the study relied on questionnaire responses, the findings reflect participants' reported understanding rather than objectively assessed knowledge. Nevertheless, the results suggest that most participants considered mindfulness a concept with which they were familiar.

The importance of mindfulness as a teacher quality also received favourable responses. A total of 86.4% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that mindfulness was an important quality for teachers, while 6.8% disagreed or strongly disagreed. The mean score was 4.48. This finding suggests that most participants recognised the potential relevance of mindfulness to the personal and professional qualities required in teaching. Teaching involves interacting with students, responding to different classroom situations, and making decisions under varying circumstances. From the participants' perspectives, mindfulness may be relevant to approaching such responsibilities with greater awareness and consideration. However, the questionnaire findings do not establish that mindfulness directly improves teachers' performance; rather, they indicate that participants viewed mindfulness as an important quality for the teaching profession.

The highest mean score was recorded for the statement that mindfulness improves teachers' professional skills. A total of 97.7% of participants agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, while 2.3% disagreed or strongly disagreed. The mean score was 4.59. This result indicates that participants expressed particularly favourable perspectives on the potential contribution of mindfulness to professional development. Their responses may reflect an understanding that effective teaching involves more than subject knowledge and instructional techniques; it also requires awareness of classroom situations, thoughtful decision-making, and appropriate responses to interpersonal challenges. Nevertheless, the statement concerns participants' views about the contribution of mindfulness to professional skills, rather than measured improvements in those skills. Therefore, the result should be interpreted as strong support for the perceived relevance of mindfulness to teachers' professional development, not as evidence that mindfulness practice actually improved their professional skills.

Participants also expressed favourable perspectives on the potential role of mindfulness in helping teachers remain calm in difficult situations. For this statement, 90.9% agreed or strongly agreed, whereas 4.6% disagreed or strongly disagreed. The mean score was 4.45. This response pattern suggests that most participants considered mindfulness relevant to maintaining calmness when facing challenging classroom circumstances. Teachers may encounter situations involving disruptive behaviour, misunderstandings, competing classroom demands, or unexpected changes during lessons. In such circumstances, remaining calm may help teachers consider their responses rather than react immediately. The findings therefore highlight the perceived relevance of mindfulness to managing challenging teaching situations. However, because the study did not observe classroom behaviour or implement a mindfulness intervention, it cannot establish whether mindfulness practice enables teachers to remain calmer in difficult situations.

A related finding emerged for the statement that mindfulness encourages thinking before reacting. A total of 90.9% of participants agreed or strongly agreed, while 2.3% disagreed or strongly disagreed. The mean score was 4.55, the second-highest mean recorded in the table, alongside the statement concerning respectful communication

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with students. This finding suggests that participants particularly valued the potential role of mindfulness in encouraging thoughtful responses rather than immediate reactions. In classroom management, a teacher's response to student behaviour may influence subsequent interactions and the classroom atmosphere. From this perspective, taking time to consider a situation before responding may be regarded as a useful professional approach. Participants' responses indicate that they viewed mindfulness as potentially supporting this approach. Nevertheless, the findings do not demonstrate that mindfulness changed their actual decision-making or behavioural responses in classroom settings.

The findings concerning emotional management were similarly favourable. A total of 88.6% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that mindfulness supports emotional management, while 4.6% disagreed or strongly disagreed. The mean score was 4.50. This result suggests that most participants considered mindfulness relevant to managing emotions in teaching contexts. Teaching can involve emotionally demanding interactions, particularly when teachers respond to student difficulties, behavioural challenges, or unexpected classroom events. The ability to recognise and manage emotional responses may therefore be considered relevant to maintaining professional interactions. The participants' responses suggest that they viewed mindfulness as a potentially useful approach in this respect. However, the questionnaire did not directly measure emotional regulation or establish whether participants' emotional management abilities differed according to their awareness or practice of mindfulness.

Participants also expressed favourable perspectives on the potential relationship between mindfulness and respectful communication with students. A total of 90.9% agreed or strongly agreed that mindfulness promotes respectful student communication, while 6.8% disagreed or strongly disagreed. The mean score was 4.55. This was one of the highest mean scores in the table, suggesting that participants regarded respectful communication as an area in which mindfulness could be relevant. Communication in teaching requires teachers to listen to students, explain expectations clearly, and respond appropriately to questions or behavioural difficulties. A mindful approach may be viewed as encouraging greater attention to interactions and more considered responses. The findings suggest that participants associated mindfulness with the interpersonal aspects of teaching, rather than viewing it solely in relation to personal calmness. Nevertheless, the study did not directly assess teacher–student communication, and the result should therefore be understood as participants' views of the potential relationship between mindfulness and respectful communication.

Regarding classroom management, 90.9% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that mindfulness helps teachers manage student behaviour effectively. The proportion who disagreed or strongly disagreed was 4.5%, and the mean score was 4.36. Although the percentage of agreement was high, the mean score was lower than those recorded for professional skills, thinking before reacting, emotional management, and respectful communication. This suggests that participants generally viewed mindfulness favourably in relation to student behaviour management, although their mean rating was comparatively lower than for several other statements. Classroom management involves interconnected responsibilities, including establishing expectations, maintaining student engagement, responding to disruptive behaviour, and adapting strategies to different classroom circumstances. Mindfulness may be viewed as one approach that supports teachers' awareness and responses within these processes; however, it should not be considered a replacement for pedagogical knowledge, clear classroom rules, or appropriate behaviour-management strategies. Since the study did not measure actual student behaviour or classroom outcomes, the findings indicate participants' perspectives on the potential relevance of mindfulness rather than demonstrated effectiveness in managing student behaviour.

The statement concerning the reduction of teacher stress also received favourable responses. A total

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of 90.9% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that mindfulness reduces teacher stress, while 4.6% disagreed or strongly disagreed. The mean score was 4.43. This finding suggests that participants viewed mindfulness as potentially relevant to teachers' well-being. Teaching responsibilities can involve lesson preparation, assessment, classroom management, communication, and other professional demands. Participants may therefore have considered mindfulness a possible approach to responding to stress-related challenges. Nevertheless, the study did not measure participants' stress levels or compare stress before and after mindfulness practice. Consequently, the findings cannot confirm that mindfulness reduced stress among the participants. Instead, they indicate that most participants believed mindfulness could have a role in supporting teacher well-being.

Finally, 95.5% of participants agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that mindfulness makes them more effective teachers. Only 4.5% disagreed or strongly disagreed, and the mean score was 4.45. The high percentage of agreement indicates that most participants viewed mindfulness as relevant to their own professional development and perceived teaching effectiveness. This finding complements their responses concerning professional skills, emotional management, calmness, and respectful communication. Taken together, these responses suggest that participants considered mindfulness potentially relevant to several dimensions of teaching. However, the statement reflects participants' own assessments rather than an objective evaluation of teaching performance. The study did not include classroom observations, student achievement data, or other independent measures of teacher effectiveness. Accordingly, the result should not be interpreted as evidence that mindfulness had already made participants more effective teachers.

Overall, the quantitative findings show favourable perspectives on mindfulness across all ten statements. The highest mean score was recorded for the perceived contribution of mindfulness to teachers' professional skills (M = 4.59), followed by thinking before reacting and respectful communication with students (both M = 4.55). Emotional management received a mean score of 4.50, while the perceived importance of mindfulness as a teacher quality received a mean of 4.48. The statements concerning remaining calm in difficult situations and perceived teaching effectiveness both recorded means of 4.45. The mean score for reducing teacher stress was 4.43, while student behaviour management recorded 4.36. Understanding of the mindfulness concept received the lowest mean score (M = 4.30), although the result still indicated a generally favourable response pattern.

These findings suggest that participants expressed particularly favourable perspectives on the potential relevance of mindfulness to professional skills, thoughtful responses, and respectful communication. They also viewed mindfulness positively in relation to emotional management, classroom management, teacher well-being, and their own perceived teaching effectiveness. However, the differences between mean scores should be interpreted descriptively rather than as statistically significant differences, because the study used descriptive analysis and did not conduct inferential statistical tests. Furthermore, the combined agreement and disagreement percentages do not include participants who selected the neutral response. Therefore, the two percentages are not expected to total 100% for each statement.

Although the quantitative results provide an overview of participants' perspectives, they do not fully explain why participants held these views, how they understood mindfulness in practice, or what challenges they anticipated in applying it to teaching and classroom management. The qualitative findings from the open-ended questionnaire responses are therefore important for exploring participants' explanations, perceived applications, concerns, and suggestions in greater depth. Integrating these qualitative insights with the quantitative findings can provide a more comprehensive understanding of how the participating B.Ed. undergraduate student teachers viewed the role of mindfulness in their professional contexts.

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Table 2: Participants' Perspective of Mindfulness in Education (N = 44)

Likert Statement	Agree / Strongly Agree (%)	Disagree / Strongly Disagree (%)	Mean (out of 5)
Understanding of mindfulness concept	86.4%	6.8%	4.30
Mindfulness is an important quality for teachers	86.4%	6.8%	4.48
Mindfulness improves teacher professional skills	97.7%	2.3%	4.59
Mindfulness helps teachers stay calm in difficult situations	90.9%	4.6%	4.45
Mindfulness encourages thinking before reacting	90.9%	2.3%	4.55
Mindfulness supports emotional management	88.6%	4.6%	4.50
Mindfulness promotes respectful student communication	90.9%	6.8%	4.55
Mindfulness manages student behaviour effectively	90.9%	4.5%	4.36
Mindfulness reduces teacher stress	90.9%	4.6%	4.43
Mindfulness makes me a more effective teacher	95.5%	4.5%	4.45

Source: Primary Survey Data (2026)

3.3. Qualitative Synthesis and Thematic Discussion

The qualitative findings provided deeper insights into how the participating B.Ed. undergraduate student teachers understood mindfulness and considered its possible applications in teaching and classroom management. While the quantitative findings presented in Table 2 indicated generally favourable perspectives on the relevance of mindfulness to teachers' professional skills, emotional management, communication, and classroom management, the open-ended responses offered further context regarding the meanings participants associated with mindfulness, the practical strategies they considered appropriate for educational settings, the potential benefits they anticipated, and the challenges that might influence its implementation. The qualitative synthesis was organised around four interconnected themes: mindfulness as a teacher disposition, pedagogical applications of mindfulness, the perceived relevance of mindfulness to classroom management, and barriers to implementation. Together, these themes highlight that participants' understanding of mindfulness extended beyond formal meditation and included its possible integration into everyday teaching practices and professional interactions.

The first theme, *mindfulness as a teacher disposition*, reflected participants' understanding of mindfulness as a form of internal awareness, present-moment attention, emotional composure, and empathetic understanding. Rather than associating mindfulness exclusively with silent meditation or a separate activity conducted before a lesson, participants viewed it as potentially relevant to how teachers think, feel, communicate, and respond to classroom situations. This perspective suggests that mindfulness may be understood as a professional disposition that influences teachers' awareness of their own emotions and reactions while remaining attentive to students' needs and classroom circumstances. In teaching, such awareness may be particularly relevant when teachers encounter unexpected behaviour, disagreements, learning difficulties, or emotionally demanding interactions. From this standpoint, mindfulness could encourage teachers to recognise their immediate reactions and consider more thoughtful responses before acting. This interpretation also corresponds with the quantitative finding that 90.9% of participants agreed or strongly agreed

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that mindfulness encourages thinking before reacting, with a mean score of 4.55. Similarly, the high level of agreement concerning emotional management (88.6%; M = 4.50) provides quantitative context for the importance participants attached to emotional awareness and composure. Nevertheless, these findings represent participants' understandings and perspectives rather than direct evidence that mindfulness improved their emotional regulation or professional behaviour.

The second theme, *pedagogical applications of mindfulness*, concerned the practical strategies participants considered suitable for introducing mindfulness into teaching. The responses highlighted short, accessible activities such as one- to two-minute breathing exercises, silent reflection, gentle stretching, and grounding breaks. These activities were viewed as potentially adaptable to both face-to-face and online teaching contexts. Their brief duration may make them more practical for teachers who must balance classroom activities with syllabus coverage, lesson objectives, and time constraints. For example, a teacher might begin a lesson with a brief breathing activity or a quiet moment of reflection to encourage students to settle their attention before introducing the main lesson content. Similarly, a short grounding activity during an online lesson could provide an opportunity for students to pause and refocus. Such practices could be presented as optional, inclusive classroom routines rather than religious rituals, making them potentially suitable for students from different religious and cultural backgrounds. However, their appropriateness would depend on the age, preferences, comfort, and needs of the students, as well as the teaching context. Teachers would also need to ensure that participation remained respectful and non-coercive. The emphasis on short and practical activities therefore suggests that participants considered flexibility and ease of implementation important when integrating mindfulness into educational practice. At the same time, the qualitative findings do not establish that these activities were systematically implemented or that they produced measurable improvements in students' attention, emotional well-being, or learning outcomes.

The third theme, *the perceived relevance of mindfulness to classroom management*, highlighted participants' views on how mindfulness might support a more considered and less confrontational approach to managing classroom situations. The responses suggested that mindfulness could help teachers move from immediate, reactive responses towards more reflective and proactive approaches when addressing student behaviour. Rather than responding to every difficulty through immediate correction or confrontation, teachers may be able to pause, consider the circumstances, and select responses that maintain professional respect while addressing classroom expectations. Such an approach may be particularly relevant in language classrooms, where students may experience anxiety when speaking in front of others, making mistakes, or participating in unfamiliar learning activities. A calm and respectful teacher response may help create a classroom atmosphere in which students feel more comfortable participating and communicating. This theme is consistent with the quantitative findings, in which 90.9% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that mindfulness promotes respectful communication with students (M = 4.55), while the same proportion considered it relevant to managing student behaviour effectively (M = 4.36). The findings also showed that 90.9% agreed or strongly agreed that mindfulness helps teachers remain calm in difficult situations (M = 4.45). Considered together, these results indicate that participants viewed mindfulness as potentially relevant to teachers' interpersonal responses and classroom management practices. Nevertheless, mindfulness should be understood as a possible complement to established classroom management strategies, rather than a substitute for clear expectations, appropriate disciplinary procedures, sound pedagogical decisions, or responses to serious behavioural concerns. Furthermore, although participants associated mindfulness with the possibility of reducing anxiety among language learners, the present study did not directly measure student anxiety or

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evaluate changes in student behaviour. These points should therefore be interpreted as participants' views about potential applications rather than the outcomes demonstrated.

The fourth theme, *barriers to the implementation of mindfulness*, drew attention to practical and contextual factors that could influence the integration of mindfulness into teaching. The challenges identified included pressure to complete the syllabus within limited time, large class sizes, insufficient structured teacher training, and initial hesitation among students. Time constraints may discourage teachers from incorporating additional activities when they are expected to complete prescribed content within a fixed period. Similarly, large classes may make it difficult to facilitate activities that require individual attention, quiet reflection, or careful monitoring of students' participation. A lack of structured training may also limit teachers' confidence in selecting suitable practices, explaining their purpose, adapting them to different age groups, and responding appropriately when students feel uncomfortable. In addition, some students may initially be reluctant to participate because they are unfamiliar with mindfulness activities or uncertain about their purpose. These challenges indicate that positive perspectives alone may not be sufficient to support the effective integration of mindfulness into classroom practice. Teachers may require practical guidance, appropriate training opportunities, and context-sensitive resources that allow them to adapt activities to their classroom environments. Short activities that require minimal equipment and preparation may be more feasible in time-constrained settings, while clear explanations and voluntary participation may help address initial hesitation. However, such approaches would need to be explored further to determine their suitability across different educational contexts in Sri Lanka. The identified barriers also suggest that teacher education programmes could consider introducing mindfulness as part of broader discussions of classroom management, professional awareness, emotional regulation, and respectful communication, while avoiding the assumption that a single approach will suit every teacher or student.

Taken together, the four themes provide a more detailed understanding of the participating B.Ed. undergraduate student teachers' perspectives on mindfulness in education. Mindfulness was understood not merely as a formal meditative activity but also as a potential teacher disposition associated with awareness, composure, and thoughtful responses. Participants identified brief classroom activities as possible ways of incorporating mindfulness into face-to-face and online teaching, while also recognising its potential relevance to respectful communication and non-confrontational classroom management. At the same time, the discussion of implementation barriers highlighted the influence of institutional demands, classroom conditions, training opportunities, and student readiness on the practical use of such approaches. These qualitative insights complement the quantitative findings in Table 2 by helping to explain the areas in which participants expressed favourable perspectives and by identifying practical considerations that may shape the application of mindfulness in teaching. Nevertheless, the findings should be interpreted within the exploratory scope of the study. The qualitative responses represent the views reported by the participating student teachers and do not independently establish the effectiveness of mindfulness practices. Further research involving classroom observations, practical implementation, and a wider range of teacher education contexts could examine how these perspectives relate to actual teaching practices and the experiences of students in Sri Lankan classrooms.

4. Conclusion

This study explored B.Ed. undergraduate student teachers' perspectives on mindfulness in teaching and classroom management in Sri Lanka. Using a convergent parallel mixed-methods design, the study examined participants' views on the relevance of mindfulness to teachers' professional development, emotional regulation, interpersonal communication, and classroom management. The quantitative findings indicated generally positive

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perspectives on the potential value of mindfulness in educational settings. The highest mean score (M = 4.59) was recorded for the statement that mindfulness improves teachers' professional skills, followed by emotional management (M = 4.50) and overall teaching effectiveness (M = 4.45). Furthermore, 90.9% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that mindfulness helps teachers remain calm in difficult situations, think before reacting, and promote respectful communication with students. These findings suggest that participants regarded mindfulness as a potentially valuable quality for reflective, emotionally aware, and responsive teaching.

The qualitative findings provided additional insights into participants' perspectives through four themes: mindfulness as a teacher disposition, practical pedagogical applications, perceived relevance to classroom management, and barriers to implementation. Participants' responses highlighted awareness, emotional composure, empathy, and thoughtful responses to challenging classroom situations as important aspects of mindfulness in teaching. Short breathing exercises, silent reflection, gentle stretching, and grounding activities were identified as possible approaches for incorporating mindfulness into face-to-face and online classrooms. Participants also associated mindfulness with a less reactive and more considerate approach to classroom management. However, these findings represent participants' perspectives and suggested applications; they do not establish that mindfulness directly improves classroom behaviour, reduces student anxiety, or increases teaching effectiveness.

Based on these findings, teacher education institutions in Sri Lanka could consider incorporating introductory mindfulness-related content into Bachelor of Education curricula and continuing professional development programmes. Training could focus on self-awareness, emotional regulation, reflective decision-making, patient communication, and constructive responses to challenging classroom situations. Brief, practical activities could be explored as possible strategies that can be adapted to different teaching environments. Such activities should be introduced in culturally sensitive and inclusive ways, with clear explanations and consideration of individual preferences. Teacher education programmes should also consider the implementation challenges identified in the qualitative findings, including syllabus completion pressures, large class sizes, limited structured training, and initial student hesitation.

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings. The study involved 44 B.Ed. undergraduate student teachers recruited through convenience sampling from an external degree programme at one state university in Sri Lanka. Although the sample included both in-service teachers and pre-service student teachers undertaking school teaching practice, it cannot be considered representative of all B.Ed. undergraduate student teachers in Sri Lanka. The study also relied on self-reported questionnaire data and descriptive statistical analysis. As the researcher-developed questionnaire had not undergone formal validation or pilot testing, the findings should be interpreted cautiously. Furthermore, the study did not include a mindfulness intervention, classroom observations, a comparison group, or pre- and post-intervention measurements. Therefore, it cannot establish causal relationships or determine the actual effectiveness of mindfulness in teaching and classroom management.

Future research could address these limitations by involving larger and more diverse samples from multiple teacher education institutions and universities in Sri Lanka. Further studies could use interviews, focus group discussions, classroom observations, and appropriately reviewed research instruments to obtain a deeper understanding of how student teachers understand and apply mindfulness in educational settings. Intervention-based studies could also investigate the feasibility and potential outcomes of short mindfulness activities in different classroom contexts. Overall, this study offers preliminary empirical insights into B.Ed. undergraduate student teachers' perspectives on mindfulness and highlights its perceived relevance to professional preparation and classroom management. The findings provide a basis for further research and

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informed consideration of mindfulness within teacher education, while recognising that additional evidence is needed before conclusions can be drawn about its effectiveness.

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