



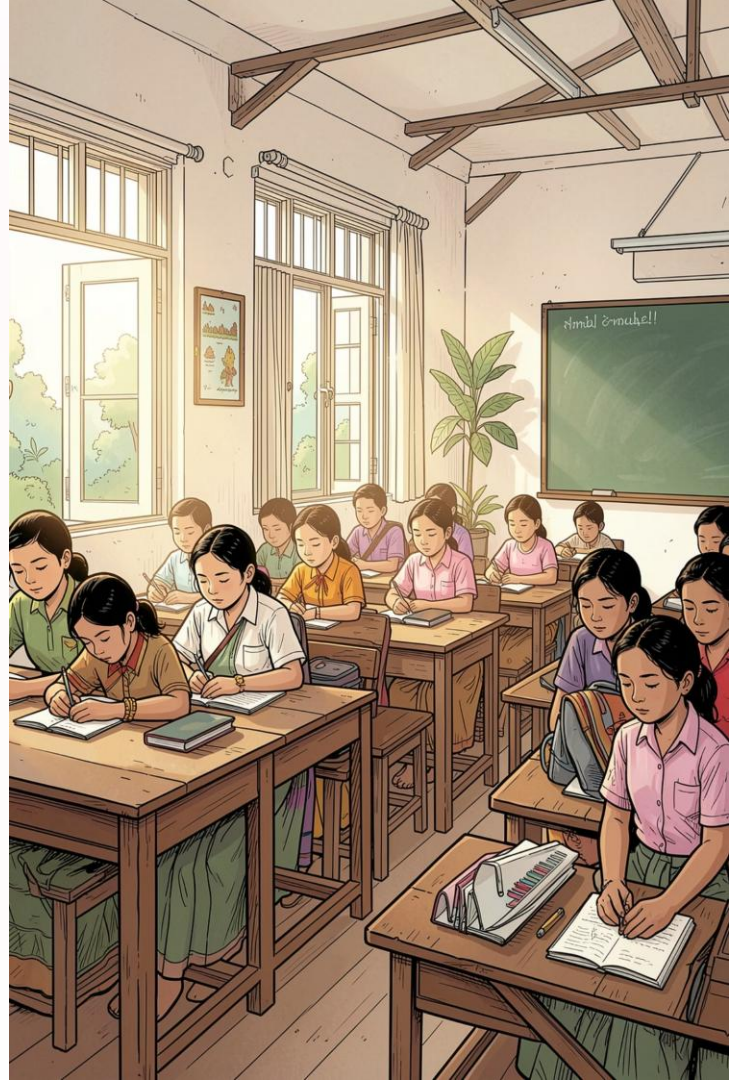
National Institute of Education

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“Teachers and AI in Digital Transformation”

Exploring the Integration of Mindfulness Practices:
Teachers’ Perceptions, Benefits, Challenges, and
Recommendations — A Case Study of a Public Secondary
School in Cambodia

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The Problem: A Disruptive World

Technology & Social Media

Emerging tech and AI give students greater freedom but also expose them to stress, anxiety, and attention difficulties daily.

Mental Health Crisis

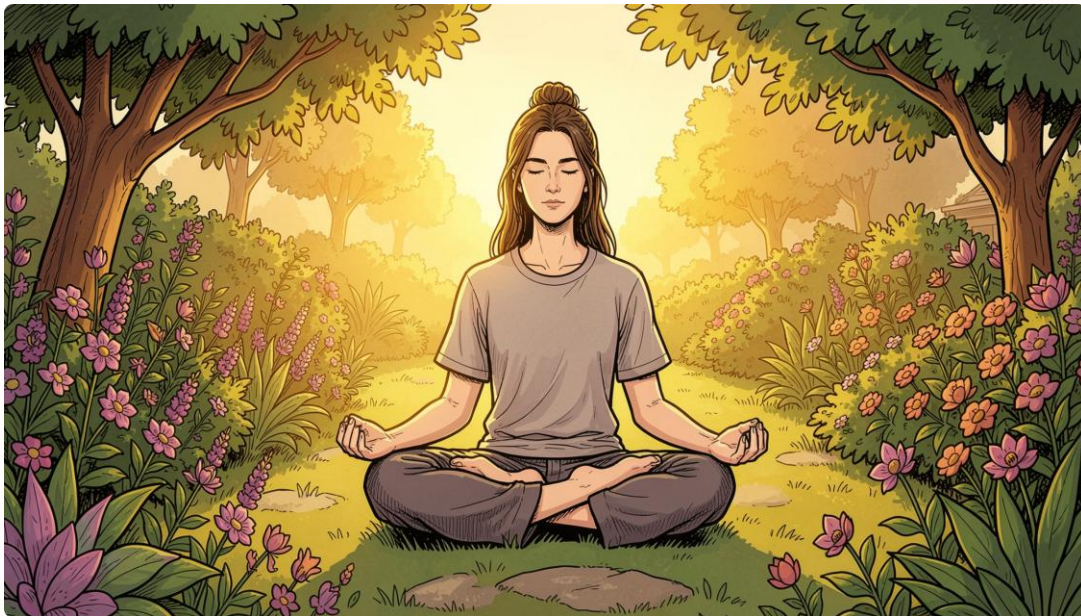
Stress, depression, and anxiety adversely affect adolescents' behavior, well-being, and academic performance (Hudson et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2024).

The Mindfulness Solution

Mindfulness practice encourages students to feel calm, relaxed, and ready to participate — promoting positive teacher-student interaction and academic success.



What Is Mindfulness?



Core Definition

Kabat-Zinn (2003): *"Paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, nonjudgmentally."*

Rooted in Buddhist tradition (*sati* in Pali), mindfulness is described as a way of being, a characteristic, a practice, and a therapeutic intervention.

What It Does

- Reduces stress, anxiety, and suffering
- Develops cognitive, social, and emotional skills
- Promotes self-awareness and emotional balance
- Improves sleep, focus, and mental clarity

Study Design & Participants

Research Approach

Qualitative case study using **semi-structured, face-to-face interviews** conducted in Khmer. Data analyzed via thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) using MAXQDA.

Site

Prek Leap High School, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Sampling

Purposive sampling based on qualifications, experience, and teaching position.

Participant Profile (9 Teachers)

Gender	Count	Qualification	Subjects
Female	6	Bachelor, Master	Chemistry, Math, Khmer, History, English
Male	3	Bachelor, 12+2	PE, Physics, Geography, Biology
Experience	2–10 yrs		

Teachers' Concept of Mindfulness

Calm, Peace & Attention

Majority view (T1, T3–T8): Mindfulness trains students' minds to be peaceful, calm, and focused — preventing outside disruption.

Present-Moment Focus

(T1, T4, T6, T7): "When I close my eyes, I am more relaxed and stop thinking about anything." — T1

Finding Solutions

Minority view (T2, T3, T8): Some teachers saw MP as a tool to help teachers solve their own teaching challenges.



Perceived Benefits of Mindfulness Practice



Critical Thinking

Students become independent thinkers who reflect deeply (T1, T3, T5, T7, T9).



Positive Behavior

Students become organized, well-mannered, and better regulated (T1, T2, T4–T6, T8, T9).



Sympathy & Punctuality

Students show greater empathy and arrive on time (T1, T3, T7).



Academic Achievement

Motivates students to study harder and achieve better exam results (T1, T2, T3, T5, T6, T9).



Classroom Management

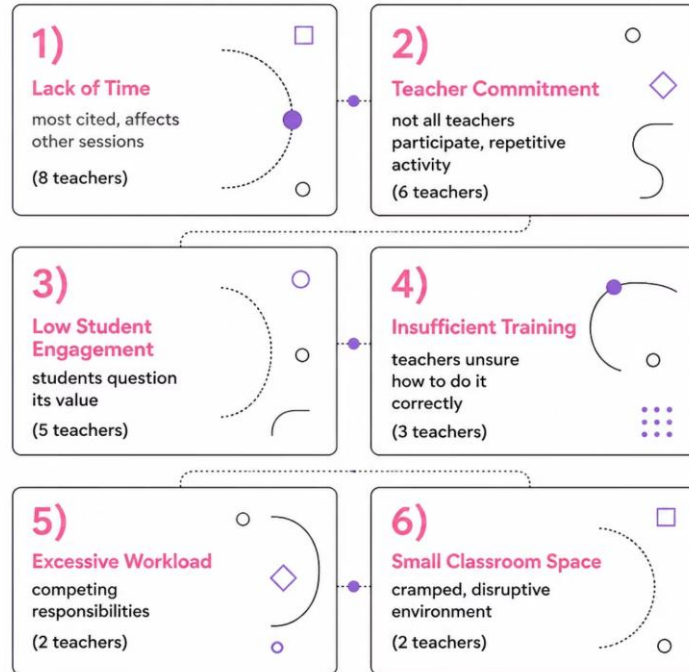
Classes become easier to control; students more active (T2, T3, T5, T6, T8).



Teacher-Student Rapport

Stronger relationships; students cooperate and enjoy lessons (T5, T6).

Perceived Challenges of Mindfulness Practice



Key Barriers

Teachers identified six main obstacles. **Lack of time** was the most widely cited challenge, affecting lesson flow and other sessions. **Teacher commitment** varied, with some finding the activity repetitive. **Low student engagement** reflected skepticism about MP's value. Others noted insufficient training, heavy workloads, and cramped classroom spaces.

Recommendations for Enhancing Mindfulness Practice

1

Integrate into Curriculum

Include MP as a formal subject in the school curriculum (T1, T2, T4, T5, T7–T9).

2

Provide Training

Invite monks or experts to train teachers; standardize practice across subjects (T2, T4, T5, T7).

3

Develop a Guidebook

Create booklets and resources to guide consistent mindfulness practice (T1, T2, T3, T7, T9).

4

Add Philosophy & Morality

Include lessons on morality, virtue, and psychology in public secondary schools (T2).



Key Findings at a Glance

9

Teachers Interviewed

Across 8 subject disciplines at Prek Leap High School

6

Perceived Benefits

Critical thinking, behavior, sympathy, achievement, classroom management, rapport

6

Challenges Identified

Time, commitment, engagement, training, workload, and space

4

Recommendations

Curriculum integration, training, guidebooks, and philosophy lessons

 **Core Insight:** Most teachers understood mindfulness as cultivating calm, peace, and present-moment attention — yet a minority lacked a clear conceptual understanding, highlighting the need for structured training.

Conclusion & Implications

This study reveals that Cambodian secondary teachers perceive mindfulness practice as a valuable tool for improving student behavior, academic achievement, and teacher-student relationships — despite facing real implementation barriers.

For Schools

Embed MP into curricula and provide dedicated time and space.

For Teachers

Access ongoing training and practical guidebooks to build confidence.

For Policy

Integrate mindfulness, morality, and psychology into national education frameworks.



*Thank
you for
your
attention*

